

INTRODUCTION

His eyebrows were massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy white moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth. These protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. For the rest, his ears were pale, and at the tops extremely pointed. The chin was broad and strong and the cheeks firm though thin.

The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor. Hitherto, I had noticed the backs of his hands as they lay on his knees in the firelight, and they had seemed rather white and fine. But seeing them now close to me, I could not but notice that they were rather coarse, broad, with squat fingers. Strange to say, there were hairs in the centre of the palm. The nails were long and fine and cut to a sharp point. As the count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder. It may have been that his breath was rank, but a horrible feeling of nausea came over me, which, do what I would, I could not conceal.

If this description conjures up a cross between Albert Einstein and Dr. Spock with halitosis and orthodontic issues, you have met Bram Stoker's authentic Count Dracula.

True, he sheds some wrinkles and gray hairs as the tale progresses, but he was a far cry from the sleek Bela Lugosi (1931)—or Christopher Lee (1958), Jack Palance (1973), Louis Jourdan (1977), Frank Langella (1979), Gary Oldman (1992), Leslie Nielson (1995), Gerard Butler (2000), or Marc Warren (2006). And he was certainly no Rutger Hauer, despite the mustache.¹

In fact, if Francis Ford Coppola had wanted to produce a really faithful adaptation of Stoker's classic bedtime story, he would have made a chick flick.

That's not to say that Count Dracula isn't scary; he is. But the book is not so much about him.

Dracula is mostly the story of two young women, who were childhood friends, and of their changed lives after a mysterious ship from Eastern Europe sailed into stormy English waters.

The reader of the original might also be surprised at the amount of scriptural content and biblical symbolism in the book.

Abraham Stoker (1847-1912) was an Irish Protestant. Of the strength and depth of his faith, we know virtually nothing. Religion, during the Victorian era, was as much cultural and political as it was theological. Tensions between Catholics and Protestants divided nations and continents. Virtually everyone took sides, and if nothing else, knew their Bible, which was quoted in social circles as freely as popular contemporary authors.

While Stoker frequently misquotes Scripture in *Dracula*, we don't know whether it was the result of ignorance, laziness, or characterization.

That said, whether you are into vampires, horror stories, chick flicks, or classic literature, *Dracula* is a fun read.* And you stand a better-than-even chance of having a delicious nightmare or two while you read it.

And now *Dracula* is also a Bible study.

The purpose of this unique edition of the classic is simply to explore the kingdom of God and discover how we can deepen our intimacy with Jesus Christ.

Each of the twenty-seven chapters is treated as a parable, in a similar way that Jesus used the flora, fauna, and culture of his day, to present the gospel of the kingdom of God.

At the end of every chapter is a FOOD FOR THOUGHT feature—a brief lesson gleaned from the text.

This is followed by GETTING PERSONAL—where I leave off teaching and start meddling.

For readers who want to use *The Gospel According to Dracula* as a small group study, I offer some discussion questions in the LET'S TALK ABOUT IT section, just to keep everybody awake after the snacks.

Finally, the N'Stuff feature offers a plethora of random, sometimes bizarre, phenomena, n'factoids, n'trivia that didn't fit anywhere else... all of which should be more'n 'nuff stuff to make up what I pray will be an enlightening and enjoyable little Bible study (best read beside a reassuring fire, with a nice cup of tea...and, perhaps, just a small clove of garlic).

* The original manuscript can be a bit tedious in spots. So I have modified Stoker's mind-numbing use of parenthetical phrases and abridged the text slightly by cutting out excessive scene description, irrelevant cultural and historical rabbit trails, and the ramblings of a couple of minor characters. You'll thank me later.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

COUNT DRACULA: Romanian aristocrat and warlord; immortal; subsists on human blood.

JONATHAN HARKER: solicitor in the employ of Mr. Peter Hawkins; acting estate agent for Count Dracula; fiancé, then husband, of Mina Murray.

MR. PETER HAWKINS: solicitor; employer of Jonathan Harker; suffers chronically from gout.

MINA HARKER, née Murray: fiancé, then wife, of Jonathan Harker; childhood friend of Lucy Westenra.

LUCY WESTENRA: friend of Mina Harker; fiancé of Arthur Holmwood, aka Lord Glendenning.

DR. JOHN SEWARD: administrator of an insane asylum next to Count Dracula's first home at Carfax Abbey; suitor of Lucy Westenra.

R.M. RENFIELD: inmate of Dr. Seward's asylum.

QUINCY MORRIS: wealthy Texan; suitor of Lucy Westenra.

ARTHUR HOLMWOOD: later Lord Godalming; fiancé of Lucy Westenra; best friends with Dr. John Seward and Mr. Quincy Morris.

PROFESSOR ABRAHAM VAN HELSING, M.D., D.Ph., D.Litt., etc.: Dutch doctor, called in by former student, Dr. John Seward, to consult regarding the mysterious condition of Lucy Westenra; arch-enemy of Count Dracula.

CHAPTER 1

Jonathan Harker's Journal

3 May, Bistritz—Left Munich at 8:35 P.M., on 1st May, arriving at Vienna early next morning; should have arrived at 6:46, but train was an hour late.

Budapest seems a wonderful place, from the glimpse which I got of it from the train and the little I could walk through the streets. I feared to go very far from the station, as we had arrived late and would start as near the correct time as possible.

Having had some time at my disposal when in London, I had visited the British Museum and made search among the books and maps in the library regarding Transylvania; it had struck me that some foreknowledge of the country could hardly fail to have some importance in dealing with a nobleman of that country.

I find that the district he named is in the extreme east of the country, just on the borders of three states—Transylvania, Moldavia, and Bukovina—in the midst of the Carpathian Mountains, one of the wildest and least-known portions of Europe. I was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey Maps. But I found that Bistritz, the post town named by Count Dracula, is a fairly well-known place.

It was on the dark side of twilight when we arrived.

Count Dracula had directed me to go to the Golden Krone Hotel. I found it, to my great delight, to be thoroughly old-fashioned. I was evidently expected, for when I got near the door I faced a cheery-looking elderly woman in the usual peasant dress—white undergarment with a long double apron, front and back, of colored stuff fitting almost too tight for modesty.

“The Herr Englishman?” she asked, bowing.

“Yes,” I said, “Jonathan Harker.”

She smiled and gave some message to an elderly man in white shirtsleeves who had followed her to the door. He went, but immediately returned with a letter:

My friend,

Welcome to the Carpathians. I am anxiously expecting you. Sleep well tonight. At three tomorrow, the stagecoach will start for Bukovina; a place on it is kept for you. At the Borgo Pass, my carriage will await you and will bring you to me. I trust that your journey from London has been a happy one and that you will enjoy your stay in my beautiful land.

Your friend,
Dracula

4 May—I found that my landlord, too, had got a letter from the count, directing him to secure the best place on the coach for me. But on making inquiries as to details, he seemed somewhat reticent and pretended that he could not understand my German. This could not be true because, up to then, he had understood it perfectly. At least, he

answered my questions as if he did. He and his wife, the old lady who had received me, looked at each other in a frightened sort of way. He mumbled that the money had been sent in a letter and that was all he knew. When I asked him if he knew Count Dracula and could tell me anything of his castle, both he and his wife crossed themselves, and saying they knew nothing at all, simply refused to speak further. It was so near the time of starting that I had no time to ask anyone else, for it was all very mysterious and not by any means comforting.

Just before I was leaving, the old lady came up to my room and said in a hysterical way, “Must you go? Oh! Young Herr, must you go?”

She was in such an excited state that she seemed to have lost her grip of what German she knew and mixed it all up with some other language which I did not know at all. I was just able to follow her by asking many questions. When I told her that I must go at once, and that I was engaged on important business, she asked again, “Do you know what day it is?”

I answered that it was the fourth of May. She shook her head.

“Oh, yes! I know that! I know that, but do you know what day it is?”

On my saying that I did not understand, she went on.

“It is the eve of St. George’s Day. Do you not know that tonight, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway? Do you know where you are going and what you are going to?”

She was in such evident distress that I tried to comfort her, without effect.

Finally, she went down on her knees and implored me not to go or at least to wait a day or two before starting. It was all very ridiculous, but it made me feel uncomfortable. However, there was business to be done, and I could allow nothing to interfere with it. I tried to raise her up and said as gravely as I could that I thanked her but my duty was imperative and I must go.

She then rose and dried her eyes. And taking a crucifix from her neck, she offered it to me.

I did not know what to do, for as an English Churchman I have been taught to regard such things as in some measure idolatrous. And yet it seemed so ungracious to refuse an old lady who meant so well and who was in such a state of mind.

She saw, I suppose, the doubt in my face, for she put the rosary round my neck.

“For your mother’s sake,” she said, and went out of the room.

I am writing this part of the diary whilst I am waiting for the coach, which is, of course, late. The crucifix is still round my neck. Whether it is the old lady’s fear or the many ghostly traditions of this place or the crucifix itself, I do not know. But I am not feeling nearly as easy in my mind as usual. If this book should reach Mina before I do, let it bring my goodbye. Here comes the coach!

5 May—The gray of the morning has passed and the sun is high over the distant horizon. I am not sleepy, so I write till sleep comes.

When I got on the coach, I saw the driver talking to the landlady. They were evidently talking of me, for every now and then they looked at me, and some of the people who were sitting on the bench outside the door came and listened and then looked at me, most of them pityingly. I could hear a lot of words—often repeated, queer words—for there

were many nationalities in the crowd. So I quietly got my polyglot dictionary from my bag and looked them up.

I must say, they were not cheering to me, for amongst them were *Ordog*—Satan, *Pokol*—hell, *stregoica*—witch, *vrolok* and *vlkoslak*—both meaning the same thing, one being Slovak and the other Servian for something that is either werewolf or vampire. (memorandum: I must ask the count about these superstitions.)

When we started, the crowd round the inn door all made the sign of the cross and pointed two fingers towards me.

With some difficulty, I got a fellow passenger to tell me what they meant. He would not answer at first. But, on learning that I was English, he explained that it was a charm or guard against the evil eye. This was not very pleasant for me, just starting for an unknown place to meet an unknown man. But everyone seemed so kindhearted and so sorrowful and so sympathetic that I could not help but be touched.

I shall never forget my last glimpse of the inn yard and its crowd of picturesque figures, all crossing themselves as they stood round the wide archway with its background of rich foliage of oleander and orange trees in green tubs.

Then, our driver cracked his big whip over his four small horses and we set off on our journey.

I soon lost sight and recollection of ghostly fears in the beauty of the scene as we drove along. Had I known the languages which my fellow passengers were speaking, I might not have been able to throw off those fears so easily.

The road was rugged, but still we seemed to fly over it with a feverish haste. The driver was evidently bent on losing no time in reaching Borgo Prund. I was told that this road is excellent in summertime, but it had not yet been put in order after the winter snows. In this respect, it is different from the general run of roads in the Carpathians, for it is an old tradition that they are not to be kept in too good order. Of old, the Rumanian nobles would not repair them, lest the Turk should think they were preparing to bring in foreign troops and so hasten the war which was always at loading point.

Beyond the green swelling hills of the Mittel Land rose mighty slopes of forest, up to the lofty steeps of the Carpathians themselves. Here and there seemed mighty rifts in the mountains, through which we saw now and again the white gleam of falling water.

One of my companions touched my arm as we swept round the base of a hill and opened upon the lofty, snow-covered peak of a mountain.

“Look! *Isten szek!*” — “God’s seat!” — and he crossed himself reverently.

As we wound on our endless way and the sun sank lower and lower behind us, the evening shadows began to creep round us.

By the roadside were many crosses. And as we swept by, my companions all crossed themselves. Here and there, a peasant man or woman knelt before a shrine, not even turning round as we approached. They seemed, in the self-surrender of devotion, to have neither eyes nor ears for the outer world.

As evening fell, it began to get very cold. The growing twilight seemed to merge into the misty gloom of oak, beech, and pine trees against the background of late-lying snow.

The darkness closed upon us. Great grey masses here and there bestrewed the trees, producing a peculiarly weird and solemn effect which brought back the thoughts and grim fancies from earlier in the evening.

Sometimes the hills were so steep that, despite our driver's haste, the horses could only go slowly. I wished to get down and walk as we do at home, but the driver would not hear of it.

"No, no," he said. "You must not walk here. The dogs are too fierce."

Then he added, with what he evidently meant for grim pleasantry, for he looked round to catch the approving smile of the rest, "and you may have enough of such matters before you go to sleep."

The only stop he would make was a moment's pause to light his lamps.

When it grew dark, there seemed to be some excitement amongst the passengers. They kept speaking to him, one after the other, as though urging him to further speed.

He lashed the horses unmercifully with his long whip, and with wild cries of encouragement urged them on to further exertions.

Then, through the darkness, I saw a patch of grey light ahead, as though there were a cleft in the hills.

The excitement of the passengers grew greater, as the crazy coach rocked on its great leather springs and swayed like a boat tossed on a stormy sea. The mountains seemed to come nearer to us on each side and to frown down upon us. We were entering on the Borgo Pass.

Several of the passengers offered me gifts, pressing them upon me with an earnestness which would take no denial. These were certainly of an odd and varied kind, but each was given in simple good faith with a kindly word and a blessing, the sign of the cross, and the guard against the evil eye.

As we flew along, the driver leaned forward. On each side, the passengers craned over the edge of the coach and peered eagerly into the darkness. It was evident that something very exciting was happening or expected. But though I asked each passenger, no one would give me the slightest explanation.

This state of excitement kept on for some little time. And at last we saw before us the Pass, opening out on the eastern side. There were dark, rolling clouds overhead and the heavy, oppressive sense of thunder.

I was now looking out for the conveyance which was to take me to the count. Each moment I expected to see the glare of lamps through the blackness. But the only light was the flickering rays of our own lamps, in which the steam from our hard-driven horses rose in a white cloud.

We could see now the sandy road lying white before us, but there was no sign of a vehicle. The passengers drew back with a sigh of gladness which seemed to mock my own disappointment.

I was thinking what I had best do when the driver, looking at his watch, said to the others something which I could hardly hear. It was spoken quietly and in a low tone. But I thought he said, "An hour less than the time."

Then turning to me, he spoke in German worse than my own.

"There is no carriage here. The Herr is not expected after all. He will now come on to Bukovina and return tomorrow or the next day, better the next day."

Whilst he was speaking, the horses began to neigh and snort and plunge wildly, so that the driver had to hold them up.

Then, amongst a chorus of screams from the peasants and a universal crossing of themselves, a light, low-wheeled carriage with four horses drove up behind, overtook us, and drew up beside the coach.

I could see from the flash of our lamps that the horses were coal-black, splendid animals. They were driven by a tall man with a long, brown beard and a great, black hat, which hid his face from us. I could only see the gleam of a pair of very bright eyes, which seemed red in the lamplight.

“You are early tonight, my friend,” he told our driver.

“The English Herr was in a hurry,” the man stammered.

“That is why, I suppose, you wished him to go on to Bukovina. You cannot deceive me, my friend. I know too much, and my horses are swift.”

As he spoke, he smiled, and the lamplight fell on a hard mouth with very red lips and sharp teeth as white as ivory. One of my companions whispered to another the line from Burger’s *Lenore*:²

Denn die Todten reiten Schnell
 (“For the dead travel fast”)

The strange driver evidently heard the words, for he looked up with a gleaming smile. The passenger turned his face away, at the same time putting out his two fingers and crossing himself.

“Give me the Herr’s luggage,” the driver said. And my bags were briskly handed out and put in the carriage.

Then, I descended from the side of the coach, the driver helping me into the carriage with a hand which caught my arm in a grip of steel.

Without a word, he shook his reins, the horses turned, and we swept into the darkness of the pass.

As I looked back, I saw the steam from the coach horses by the light of the lamps and pictured my late companions crossing themselves. The driver cracked his whip and called to his horses, and off they swept on their way to Bukovina. As they sank into the darkness, I felt a strange chill and a lonely feeling come over me.

But a cloak was thrown over my shoulders and a rug across my knees.

“The night is chill, mein Herr,” the driver said in excellent German, “and my master the count bade me take all care of you. There is a flask of slivovitz (the plum brandy of the country) underneath the seat if you should require it.”

I did not take any, but it was a comfort to know it was there all the same.

I felt a little strangely and not a little frightened. Had there been any alternative, I think I should have taken it instead of pursuing that unknown night journey.

The carriage went at a hard pace straight along. Then, we made a complete turn and went along another straight road. It seemed to me that we were simply going over and over the same ground again, so I took note of some salient point and found that this was so. I would have liked to have asked the driver what this all meant, but I feared to do so. I thought that any protest would have had no effect, in case the delay had been intentional.

By and by, I struck a match and looked at my watch. It was within a few minutes of midnight. This gave me a sort of shock, for I suppose the general superstition about

midnight was heightened by my recent experiences. I waited with a sick feeling of suspense.

A dog began to howl somewhere in a farmhouse far down the road—a long, agonized wail, as if from fear. The sound was taken up by another dog and then another and another till, borne on the wind which now sighed softly through the pass, a wild howling began. It seemed to come from all over the country, as far as the imagination could grasp through the gloom of the night.

At the first howl, the horses began to strain and rear. But the driver spoke to them soothingly and they quieted down. Yet, they shivered and sweated as though after a runaway from sudden fright.

Then, far off in the distance from the mountains on each side of us, began a louder and a sharper howling—that of wolves, which affected the horses and myself in the same way. I was minded to jump from the carriage and run, whilst they reared and plunged madly so that the driver had to use all his great strength to keep them from bolting.

In a few minutes, however, my ears got accustomed to the sound, and the horses so far became quiet that the driver was able to descend and stand before them. He petted and soothed them and whispered something in their ears as I have heard of horse tamers doing with extraordinary effect. And under his caresses, they became manageable again, though they still trembled.

The driver took his seat and started off again at a great pace.

This time, after going to the far side of the pass, he suddenly turned down a narrow roadway which ran sharply to the right.

Soon, we were hemmed in with trees, as if passing through a tunnel. And again great frowning rocks guarded us on either side.

Though we were in shelter, we could hear the rising wind as it moaned and whistled through the rocks, and the branches of the trees crashed together as we swept along.

It grew colder still, and fine, powdery snow began to fall, so that we and all around us soon were covered with a white blanket.

The keen wind still carried the howling of the dogs, though it grew fainter as we went on our way. But the baying of the wolves sounded nearer and nearer, as though they were closing round us from every side.

I grew dreadfully afraid, and the horses shared my fear.

The driver, however, was not in the least disturbed. He kept turning his head left and right, but I could not see anything through the darkness.

Suddenly, away on our left, I saw a faint flickering blue flame. The driver saw it at the same moment. He at once checked the horses, jumped to the ground, and disappeared into the darkness.

I did not know what to do, as the howling of the wolves grew closer. But while I wondered, the driver suddenly appeared again, wordlessly took his seat, and we resumed our journey.

I think I must have fallen asleep and kept dreaming of the incident, for it seemed to be repeated endlessly. And now, looking back, it is like a sort of awful nightmare.

Once, the flame appeared so near the road that, even in the darkness around us, I could watch the driver's motions. He went rapidly to where the blue flame arose, and gathering a few stones, formed them into some device.

Another time, there appeared a strange optical effect. When he stood between me and the flame, he did not obstruct it, for I could see its ghostly flicker all the same. This startled me. But as the effect was only momentary, I took it that my eyes deceived me as I strained to see through the darkness.

For a while, there were no blue flames and we sped onwards through the gloom, with the howling of the wolves around us as though they were following in a moving circle.

At last, there came a time when the driver went further afield than he had yet gone. During his absence, the horses began to tremble worse than ever and to snort and scream with fright. I could not see any cause for it, for the howling of the wolves had ceased.

Just then, the moon, sailing through the black clouds, appeared behind the jagged crest of a pine-clad rock. By its light, I saw around us a ring of wolves with white teeth and lolling red tongues, long, sinewy limbs, and shaggy hair. They were a hundred times more terrible in the grim silence which held them than even when they howled.

I felt paralyzed with fear.

All at once, the wolves began to howl as though the moonlight had suddenly had some peculiar effect on them.

The horses jumped about and reared and looked helplessly round, with eyes that rolled in a way painful to see.

I called to the coachman. I shouted and beat the side of the carriage, hoping to scare the wolves back and give him a chance of reaching the trap. How he came there, I know not, but I heard his voice raised in a tone of imperious command. And looking towards the sound, I saw him stand in the roadway. He swept his long arms, as though brushing aside some impalpable obstacle, and the wolves fell back.

Just then, a heavy cloud passed across the face of the moon so that we were again in darkness. When I could see again, the driver was climbing into the carriage, and the wolves had disappeared.

This was all so strange and uncanny that a dreadful fear came upon me. I was afraid to speak or move. The time seemed interminable as we swept on our way, now in almost complete darkness as the rolling clouds obscured the moon.

We kept on ascending with occasional periods of quick descent.

Finally, the driver pulled up the horses in the courtyard of a vast ruined castle from whose tall, black windows came no ray of light and whose broken battlements showed a jagged line against the sky.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“She then rose and dried her eyes, and taking a crucifix from her neck, offered it to me.”

Everything begins and ends with the cross.

The Old Testament is about law and judgment prior to the cross; the New Testament is about the grace and reconciliation procured by the cross.

The cross is the ensign of Christianity. It’s also the amulet-of-choice of superstition, believed to repel evil and misfortune.

Superstition is a weapon by which Satan demeans and dilutes the power of the cross in my mind and in my life. Superstition denies the omniscience and omnipotence of God's Son.³ It's about luck and fortune, rather than God's providence and purpose. It declares that I am a pawn of whimsical or malevolent forces.

Ask any Christian if he's superstitious, and he'll probably say no. He doesn't give a second thought to black cats or Friday, the thirteenth. She doesn't read horoscopes or believe in luck.

But superstition is no stranger to religion.

When Israel grew impatient and grumbled against Moses, "the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died." When they repented, the Lord told Moses to make a snake and hoist it up a pole, so anyone who was bitten could look at it and live.⁴ But after the deaths stopped, superstition set in, and the people burned incense to the bronze snake until Hezekiah, King of Judah, destroyed it.⁵

Anything can become superstition.

Sunday meetings become a superstition when we attend to keep God from "getting" us. Tithes become a superstition when we give to keep the devil from stealing from us.

Superstition is the nagging feeling that, if we don't pray enough, read the Bible enough, or worship vigorously enough, bad things will happen.

Even ending every prayer with "in Jesus' name" can become superstition when we think the prayer won't work without it. When Sceva's sons "tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus Christ over those who were demon possessed," the demon recognized that it was merely an incantation and "gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding."⁶

In like manner, we can turn corporate worship and bible study into charms to ward off evil and attract blessings. We can turn good works into a counterweight to bad deeds.

Superstition is idolatry.

With his wonderful sense of humor, and maybe a touch of holy sarcasm, God tried to make Israel see that idolatry was not only sacrilegious, but also really stupid.

The carpenter...cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak. He let it grow among the trees of the forest, or planted a pine, and the rain made it grow. It is man's fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it.... He prays to it and says, 'Save me; you are my god....' He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say 'Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?'"⁷

God created a tree, fashioned it into a cross, and saved mankind. Mankind cut down a tree, carved it into an idol, and lost God.

GETTING PERSONAL

God cannot be manipulated. To a superstitious person, that's bad news. The good news is we don't *need* to manipulate him.

He defines himself as love.⁸ Love is not just what he *does*; it's who he *is*. God's love is unavoidable.

Nothing we can do can make him love us less—”not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture.”⁹

Our Father’s love is constant and absolute.

But superstitions change *our* behavior toward *him*. Unchecked, they grow into strongholds that influence our choices and interfere with our intimacy with God. Strongholds are natural, not spiritual. We can’t rebuke them or bind them. A stronghold is a structure built of lies. We tear it down by replacing it with truth.

Check yourself out. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any superstitions that have crept stealthily into your life. If any pop up, ask him to lead you to the truth in his Word. Displace the lies, one by one, and strongholds collapse like Jericho’s walls.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

Few Westerners worship stone statues. But we do have idols.

1. What do you think are the most common idols in our culture?
2. What do you think are the most dangerous idols? Why?

N’STUFF

Vampire lore is a good illustration of a stronghold. For centuries, ignorance and misinformation built a fortress of fear that ruled the behavior of thousands of people throughout Europe and kept them at arm’s length from God—despite their crosses and what appeared to be “the self-surrender of devotion” before their shrines. For example:

- ✦ A vampire in the grave could be told by holes in the earth, an undecomposed corpse with a red face, or having one foot in the corner of the coffin.
- ✦ Living vampires were found by distributing garlic in church and seeing who did not eat it.
- ✦ Graves were often opened three years after death of a child, five years after the death of a young person, or seven years after the death of an adult to check for vampirism.
- ✦ Measures to prevent a person from becoming a vampire included removing the caul¹⁰ from a newborn and destroying it before the baby could eat any of it; careful preparation of dead bodies, including preventing animals from passing over the corpse; and placing a thorny branch of wild rose in the grave, in addition to placing garlic on windows and rubbing it on cattle, especially on St. George’s and St. Andrew’s days.¹¹

CHAPTER 2

Jonathan Harker's Journal, continued

5 May—I must have been asleep, for certainly if I had been fully awake I must have noticed the approach of such a remarkable place. In the gloom, the courtyard looked of considerable size, and as several dark ways led from it under great round arches, it perhaps seemed bigger than it really is.

When the carriage stopped, the driver jumped down and held out his hand to assist me to alight. Again, I could not but notice his prodigious strength. His hand actually seemed like a steel vise that could have crushed mine if he had chosen. Then he took out my suitcases and placed them on the ground beside me, as I stood close to a great door—old and studded with large iron nails and set in a projecting ancient doorway of massive, carved stone. The driver jumped again into his seat and shook the reins. The horses started forward, and carriage and all disappeared down one of the dark openings.

I stood in silence. Of bell or knocker there was no sign. And through these frowning walls and dark windows, it was not likely that my voice could penetrate.

The time I waited seemed endless, and I felt doubts and fears crowding upon me. What sort of place had I come to and among what kind of people? What sort of grim adventure was it on which I had embarked? Was this a customary incident in the life of a solicitor's clerk sent out to explain the purchase of a London estate to a foreigner?

Solicitor's clerk! Mina would not like that, for just before leaving London I got word that my examination was successful, and I am now a full-blown solicitor! I began to rub my eyes and pinch myself to see if I were awake. It all seemed like a horrible nightmare, and I expected that I should suddenly awake to find myself at home, with the dawn struggling in through the windows. But I was indeed awake and among the Carpathians. All I could do now was to be patient and await the coming of morning.

Just then, I heard a heavy step approaching behind the great door and saw through the chinks the gleam of an approaching light. There was the sound of rattling chains and the clanking of massive bolts drawn back. A key was turned with the loud grating noise of long disuse, and the great door swung back.

Within, stood a tall old man, clean shaven, save for a long white moustache, and clad in black from head to foot. He held in his hand an antique silver lamp, in which the flame burned without a chimney or globe of any kind, throwing long quivering shadows as it flickered in the draught of the open door.

The old man motioned me in with a courtly gesture.

"Welcome to my house!" he said in excellent English, but with a strange intonation. "Enter freely and of your own free will!"

He made no motion of stepping to meet me but stood like a statue, as though his gesture of welcome had turned him to stone.

However, the instant that I had stepped over the threshold, he moved impulsively forward. Holding out his hand, he grasped mine with a strength which made me wince—an effect which was not lessened by the fact that it seemed cold as ice, more like the hand of a dead man than a living one.

“Welcome to my house!” he said again. “Enter freely. Go safely, and leave something of the happiness you bring!”

The strength of the handshake was so much akin to that which I had noticed in the driver whose face I had not seen that, for a moment, I wondered if it were the same person to whom I was speaking. So to make sure, I said, “Count Dracula?”

He bowed as he replied, “I am Dracula, and I bid you welcome, Mr. Harker, to my house. Come in. The night air is chill, and you must need to eat and rest.”

As he was speaking, he put the lamp on a bracket on the wall, and stepping out, took my luggage. He had carried it in before I could forestall him. I protested, but he insisted.

“Nay, sir, you are my guest. It is late, and my people are not available. Let me see to your comfort myself.”

He insisted on carrying my bags along the passage, then up a great winding stair and along another great passage on whose stone floor our steps rang heavily. At the end of this, he threw open a heavy door, and I rejoiced to see within a well-lit room in which a table was spread for supper and on whose mighty hearth a great fire of logs, freshly replenished, flamed and flared.

The count halted, put down my bags, and closed the door. Crossing the room, he opened another door which led into a small octagonal room lit by a single lamp and seemingly without a window of any sort. Passing through this, he opened another door and motioned me to enter.

It was a welcome sight, for here was a great bedroom, well lighted and warmed with another log fire. The count himself left my luggage inside and withdrew.

“You will need, after your journey, to refresh yourself by making your toilet,” he said before closing the door. “I trust you will find all you wish. When you are ready, come into the other room where you will find your supper prepared.”

The light and warmth and the count’s courteous welcome seemed to have dissipated all my doubts and fears. Having then reached my normal state, I discovered that I was half famished with hunger. So making a hasty toilet, I went into the other room, where I found supper already laid out.

My host, who stood on one side of the great fireplace leaning against the stonework, made a graceful wave of his hand to the table.

“I pray you, be seated and sup how you please. You will excuse me that I do not join you, but I have dined already and I do not sup.”

I handed him the sealed letter which Mr. Hawkins had entrusted to me. He opened it and read it gravely. Then, with a charming smile, he handed it to me to read. One passage of it, at least, gave me a thrill of pleasure:

“I must regret that an attack of gout, from which malady I am a constant sufferer, forbids absolutely any traveling on my part for some time to come. But I am happy to say I can send a sufficient substitute, one in whom I have every possible confidence. He is a young man, full of energy and talent in his own way and of a very faithful disposition. He is discreet and silent and has grown into manhood in my service. He shall be ready to attend you when you will during his stay and shall take your instructions in all matters.”

The count came forward and took off the cover of a dish, and I fell to at once on an excellent roast chicken. This, with some cheese and a salad and a bottle of old tokay, of which I had two glasses, was my supper.

The count asked me many questions as to my journey, and I told him by degrees all I had experienced. By this time I had finished my supper, and by my host's desire, had drawn up a chair by the fire and begun to smoke a cigar which he offered me, excusing himself that he did not smoke.

I had now an opportunity to observe him and found him of a very marked physiognomy.

His face was a very strong, aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils, with lofty domed forehead and hair growing scantily round the temples but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see under the heavy moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth. These protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. For the rest, his ears were pale and at the tops extremely pointed. The chin was broad and strong, the cheeks firm though thin. The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor.

Hitherto, I had noticed the backs of his hands as they lay on his knees in the firelight, and they had seemed rather white and fine. But seeing them now close to me, I could not but notice that they were rather coarse, broad, with squat fingers. Strange to say, there were hairs in the center of the palm. The nails were long and fine and cut to a sharp point.

As the count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder. It may have been that his breath was rank, but a horrible feeling of nausea came over me, which, do what I would, I could not conceal.

The count, evidently noticing it, drew back. And with a grim sort of smile which showed more his protuberant teeth, sat himself down again on his own side of the fireplace. We were both silent for a while, and as I looked towards the window I saw the first dim streak of the coming dawn.

There seemed a strange stillness over everything. But as I listened, I heard from below in the valley the howling of many wolves.

The count's eyes gleamed.

"Listen to them," he said, "the children of the night. What music they make!"

He must have seen some expression in my face that revealed my discomfort.

"Ah, sir, you dwellers in the city cannot enter into the feelings of the hunter."

Then he rose.

"But you must be tired. Your bedroom is all ready, and tomorrow you shall sleep as late as you will. I have to be away till the afternoon, so sleep well and dream well!"

And with a courteous bow, he opened for me the door to the octagonal room and I entered my bedroom.

I am all in a sea of wonders. I doubt. I fear. I think strange things which I dare not confess to my own soul. God keep me, if only for the sake of those dear to me!

7 May—It is again early morning, but I have rested and enjoyed the last twenty-four hours. I slept till late in the day and awoke of my own accord. When I had dressed myself, I went into the room where we had supped and found a cold breakfast laid out, with coffee kept hot on the hearth. There was a card on the table:

I have to be absent for a while. Do not wait for me. D

I set to and enjoyed a hearty meal. When I had done, I looked for a bell so I might let the servants know I had finished, but I could not find one. There are certainly odd deficiencies in the house, considering the extraordinary evidences of wealth which are round me. The table service is of gold and so beautifully wrought that it must be of immense value. The curtains and upholstery of the chairs and sofas and the hangings of my bed are of the costliest and most beautiful fabrics and must have been of fabulous value when they were made, for they are centuries old, though in excellent order.

But in none of the rooms is there a mirror. There is not even a toilet glass on my table, and I had to get the little shaving glass from my bag before I could shave or brush my hair.

I have not yet seen a servant or heard a sound near the castle except the howling of wolves.

Some time after I had finished my meal (I do not know whether to call it breakfast or dinner, for it was between five and six o'clock when I had it) I looked about for something to read, for I did not like to go about the castle until I had asked the count's permission. There was absolutely nothing in the room—book, newspaper, or even writing materials—so I opened another door in the room and found a sort of library. And when I tried the door opposite mine, I found it locked.

In the library, I found to my great delight a vast number of English books, whole shelves full of them, along with bound volumes of magazines and newspapers. A table in the center was littered with English magazines and newspapers, though none of them were of very recent date. The books were of the most varied kind—history, geography, politics, political economy, botany, geology, law—all relating to England and English life, customs, and manners. There were even such books of reference as *Kelly's Post Office London Directory*, the "Red" and "Blue" books, *Whitaker's Almanack*, the Army and Navy Lists—and it somehow gladdened my heart to see the Law List.

Whilst I was looking at the books, the door opened and the count entered. He saluted me in a hearty way and hoped that I had had a good night's rest.

"I am glad you found your way in here, for I am sure there is much that will interest you. These companions," and he laid his hand on some of the books, "have been good friends to me and for some years past, ever since I had the idea of going to London, have given me many hours of pleasure. Through them, I have come to know your great England. And to know her is to love her. I long to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity, to share its life, its change, its death, and all that makes it what it is. But alas! As yet I only know your tongue through books. To you, my friend, I look to teach me to speak it better."

"But, Count," I said, "You know and speak English thoroughly!"

He bowed gravely.

"I thank you, my friend, for your all too flattering estimate. Yet, I fear that I am but a little way on the road I would travel. True, I know the grammar and the words, but I know that, did I move and speak in your London, none there would not know me for a stranger. That is not enough for me. Here, I am noble. I am a *boyar*,¹² a member of an ancient aristocracy. The common people know me, and I am master. But a stranger in a strange land, he is no one. Men know him not, and to know not is to care not. I am content if I am like the rest, so that no man stops if he sees me or pauses in his speaking if he hears my words to utter, 'Ha, ha! A stranger!' I have been so long master that I would

be master still or at least that none other should be master of me. You shall rest here with me a while, so that by our talking I may learn the English intonation. I am sorry that I had to be away so long today, but you will forgive one who has so many important affairs in hand.”

Of course I said all I could about being willing and asked if I might come into that room when I chose.

“Yes, certainly. You may go anywhere you wish in the castle, except where the doors are locked, where of course you will not wish to go. There is reason that all things are as they are, and if you saw with my eyes and knew with my knowledge, you would perhaps better understand.”

I said I was sure of this.

“We are in Transylvania,” he continued, “and Transylvania is not England. Our ways are not your ways, and there shall be to you many strange things. Nay, from what you have told me of your experiences already, you know something of what strange things there may be.”

This led to much conversation. I asked him many questions regarding things that had already happened to me or come within my notice. Sometimes he sheered off the subject or turned the conversation by pretending not to understand, but generally he answered all I asked most frankly.

“Come,” he said at last, “tell me of London and of the house which you have procured for me.”

And with an apology for my remissness, I went into my room to get the papers from my bag.

Whilst I was placing them in order, I heard a rattling of china and silver in the next room. As I passed through, I noticed that the table had been cleared and the lamp lit, for it was by this time deep into the dark. The lamps were also lit in the study or library, and I found the count lying on the sofa, reading, of all things in the world, a copy of *Bradshaw’s General Railway and Steam Navigation Guide for Great Britain and Ireland*.

When I came in, he cleared the books and papers from the table, and I went with him into plans and deeds and figures of all sorts. He was interested in everything and asked me myriad questions about the place and its surroundings. He clearly had studied beforehand all he could get on the subject of the neighborhood, for he knew very much more than I did.

When I remarked this, he answered, “Well, my friend, is it not needful that I should? When I go there, I shall be all alone, and my friend Harker Jonathan—nay, pardon me. I fall into my country’s habit of putting your patronymic first—my friend Jonathan Harker will not be by my side to correct and aid me. He will be in Exeter, miles away, probably working at papers of the law with my other friend, Peter Hawkins. So!”

We went thoroughly into the business of the purchase of the estate at Purfleet. When I had told him the facts, signed the necessary papers, and written a letter to accompany them to Mr. Hawkins, he began to ask me how I had come across so suitable a place. I read him the notes I had made at the time, and which I copy here:

At Purfleet, on a byroad, I came across just such a place as seemed to be required, and where was displayed a dilapidated notice that the place was for sale. It was surrounded by a high wall of ancient structure, built of heavy stones, and has not been repaired for a large number of years. The closed gates are of heavy old oak and iron, all eaten with rust. The estate is called Carfax—

no doubt a corruption of the old Quatre Face, as the house is four-sided, agreeing with the cardinal points of the compass. It contains in all some twenty acres, quite surrounded by the solid stone wall above mentioned. There are many trees which make it gloomy in places, and there is a deep, dark-looking pond or small lake, evidently fed by some springs as the water is clear and flows away in a fair-sized stream. The house is very large and reflects all periods to medieval times, for one part is of immensely thick stone with only a few windows high up and heavily barred with iron. It looks like part of a castle stronghold and is close to an old chapel or church. I could not enter it, as I had not the key of the door leading to it from the house. But I have taken with my Kodak views of it from various points. There are but few houses close at hand, one being a very large house, only recently added to and formed into a private lunatic asylum. It is not, however, visible from the grounds.

“I am glad,” he said when I had finished, “that it is old and big. I myself am of an old family, and to live in a new house would kill me. A house cannot be made habitable in a day. I rejoice also that there is a chapel of old times. We Transylvanian nobles love to think that our bones may not lie amongst the common dead. I seek not gaiety nor mirth nor the bright voluptuousness of much sunshine and sparkling waters which please the young and gay. I am no longer young, and my heart, through weary years of mourning over the dead, is not attuned to mirth. Moreover, the walls of my castle are broken. The shadows are many, and the wind breathes cold through the battlements and casements. I love the shadow and would be alone with my thoughts when I may.”

Somehow, his words and his look did not seem to accord, or else the cast of his face made his smile look malignant.

Presently, with an excuse, he left me, asking me to pull my papers together. He was some little time away, and I began to look at some of the books around me. One was an atlas, which I found opened naturally to England as if that map had been much used. Looking at it, I found in certain places little rings marked. And on examining these, I noticed that one was near London, on the east side, manifestly where his new estate was situated. The other two were Exeter and Whitby on the Yorkshire coast.

It was the better part of an hour when the count returned.

“Aha!” he said. “Still at your books? Good! But you must not work always. Come! I am informed that your supper is ready.”

He took my arm and we went into the next room where I found an excellent supper ready on the table. The count again excused himself, as he had dined out. But he sat as on the previous night and chatted whilst I ate.

After supper, I smoked, and the count stayed with me, chatting and asking questions on every conceivable subject hour after hour. I felt that it was getting very late indeed, but I did not say anything for I felt under obligation to meet my host’s wishes in every way. I was not sleepy, but I could not help experiencing that chill which comes over one at the coming of the dawn. They say that people who are near death die generally at the change to dawn or at the turn of the tide.

All at once, we heard the shrill crow of the cock in the clear morning air.

Count Dracula jumped to his feet.

“Why there is the morning again! How remiss I am to let you stay up so long. You must make your conversation regarding my dear new country of England less interesting, so that I may not forget how time flies by us.”

And with a courtly bow, he quickly left me.

I went into my room and drew the curtains, but there was little to notice. My window opened into the courtyard, and all I could see was the fading grey of warm, quickening sky. So I pulled the curtains again and turned to my diary.

8 May—I began to fear as I wrote in this book that I was getting too long-winded. But now I am glad that I went into detail from the first, for there is something so strange about this place and all that is in it that I cannot but feel uneasy. I wish I were safely out of it or that I had never come. It may be that this strange night existence is telling on me, but would that that were all! If there were anyone to talk to, I could bear it. But there is no one. I have only the count to speak with, and he... I fear I am the only living soul within the place. Let me be prosaic, so far as facts can be. It will help me to bear up, and imagination must not run riot with me. If it does, I am lost. Let me say at once how things stand or seem to.

I only slept a few hours when I went to bed, and feeling that I could not sleep any more, I got up. I had hung my shaving glass by the window and was just beginning to shave when suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder and heard the count's voice.

“Good morning.”

I started, for it amazed me that I had not seen him, since the reflection of the glass covered the whole room behind me. In starting, I had cut myself slightly but did not notice it right away.

Having answered the count's salutation, I turned to the glass again to see how I had been mistaken. This time there could be no error, for the man was close to me and I could see him over my shoulder. But there was no reflection of him in the mirror! The whole room behind me was displayed, but there was no sign of any man except myself.

This was startling. Coming on top of so many strange things, it was beginning to increase that vague feeling of uneasiness which I always have when the count is near.

As soon I saw that the cut had bled a little and the blood was trickling over my chin, I laid down the razor, turning as I did so to look for some sticking plaster.

When the count saw my face, his eyes blazed with a demoniac fury. Suddenly, he made a grab at my throat. I drew away, and his hand touched the string of beads which held the crucifix.

It made an instant change in him, for the fury passed so quickly that I could hardly believe it was ever there.

“Take care,” he said. “Take care how you cut yourself. It is more dangerous than you think in this country.”

Then, seizing the shaving glass, he went on.

“And this is the wretched thing that has done the mischief. It is a foul bauble of man's vanity. Away with it!”

And opening the window with one wrench of his terrible hand, he flung out the mirror, which shattered into a thousand pieces on the stones of the courtyard far below. Then he withdrew without a word.

It is very annoying, for I do not see how I am to shave, unless in the reflection of my watchcase or the bottom of the metal shaving pot.

Later, when I went into the dining room, breakfast was prepared. I could not find the count anywhere, so I breakfasted alone. It is strange that as yet I have not seen the count eat or drink. He must be a very peculiar man!

After breakfast, I did a little exploring in the castle. I went out on the stairs and found a room looking towards the south. The view was magnificent. The castle is on the very edge of a terrific precipice. A stone falling from the window would drop a thousand feet without touching anything! As far as the eye can reach is a sea of green tree tops with occasionally a deep rift where there is a chasm. Here and there, silver threads of rivers wind in deep gorges through the forests.

But I am not in heart to describe beauty, for when I had seen the view, I explored further.

Doors, doors, doors everywhere and all locked and bolted. In no place, save from the windows in the castle walls, is there an available exit.

The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“Welcome to my house! Enter freely and of your own free will!”

One difference between a bunny and a butterfly is the way they’re hunted.

A young trapper puts a carrot under a box, tilts one end up with a stick, ties a string to the stick, and waits for the bunny to go after the veggie. The lepidopterist chases his prey with a net.

The butterfly is pursued; the bunny is lured.

You and I are bunnies.

The apostle James explained that “the temptation to give in to evil comes from us and only us. We have no one to blame but the leering, seducing flare-up of our own lust. Lust gets pregnant, and has a baby: sin! Sin grows up to adulthood, and becomes a real killer.”¹³

We’re seduced.

Back in the early 70s, comedian Flip Wilson used to appear in drag as a character named Geraldine Jones, whose tagline, “The devil made me do it,” became both a national expression and a widely-held belief.¹⁴

The devil often gets the rap for what we do in the flesh. Or else we blame circumstances, environment, dysfunctional family members, education or lack thereof, the economy, our culture, and even “genetic determinism.”

Actually, there’s some truth to the heredity thing.

Long before *The Flip Wilson Show*, God told our First Parents to give a certain fruit tree a wide berth. They didn’t. And when God confronted them, our First Dad blamed our First Mom, and our First Mom blamed the First Serpent, who found himself at the end of the food chain.

“The woman you put here with me,” Adam whined, “she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

Adam began by blaming God for giving him Eve. Then, he blamed Eve for handing him the fruit. Finally, looking around for another fall-guy and finding none, he ‘fessed up and mumbled, “I ate.”

[Camera pans to Eve]

“The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Though Eve was trying to pass the buck, too, she unwittingly gave us an important piece of intel about the serpent: deception is his chief power over God’s people. If the devil had a bigger gun, he would have used it, given what was at stake.

Yes, he steals, kills, and destroys,¹⁵ but only when our choices give him a legal right after we’ve surrendered to his temptation.

“Be alert and of sober mind,” Peter warned. “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith...”¹⁶

The devil can’t devour just anybody; he prowls around, like a hunter today, looking for something to shoot that’s in season. Think about it, if the devil could steal, kill, and destroy with impunity, he wouldn’t be “looking for someone to devour;” he’d be stuffing himself with six billion people.

But Peter says we can resist him by standing firm in the faith. By getting under, and staying under, God’s protection and provision.¹⁷

Only when we step out from under the divine umbrella do we get clobbered.

Which brings us back to Castle Dracula.

“Enter freely,” the count told Jonathan Harker, “and of your own free will.”

It was a warning, but Jonathan didn’t get it.

In like manner, only when we will it, when we exercise our God-given free will in the enemy’s favor, does Satan have free access to our lives.¹⁸

Every bad thought is not necessarily sin, because every thought that goes through my head is not necessarily mine. It might be from God, or it might be from the devil. It only becomes sin—or virtue—when I embrace it and act on it.

The good news is that we always have the God-given power to say no and the God-provided way out of our enemy’s enticements and deceptions.

The trick is to take up residence in God and see to it that his Word resides in us.

GETTING PERSONAL

Whoever first said, “It’s all in your head” might have been the wisest man since Solomon. That combat zone between our ears is where battles, even wars, are won and lost.

When the apostle Paul said “we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ,”¹⁹ he wasn’t using a metaphor. He meant it literally.

So how do we do that?

Two steps.

First, stuff yourself with God’s Word. Become a glosso-glutton.

The fact is that if you don’t *mine* Scripture, you won’t *mind* (obey) it. Scripture is the litmus test for everything. It’s the lens that keeps the world and God’s kingdom in focus. It is our binding arbitration, the final word, the ultimate truth, reality, and authority. It’s God’s revelation of himself.

Ignorance of the Word is inexcusable if you own a bible.

Second, slow down and pay attention! Start watching for the Holy Spirit’s red flags. When you have one of those where-did-that-come-from moments, stop and ask yourself:

Does that line up with God's Word? Is that characteristic of God? Is it characteristic of me? Do I really want that or want to do that?

The more you practice, the more quickly and easily you will begin to recognize alien thoughts.

Taking thoughts captive is like downloading Norton or McAfee. You watch for the malware, spyware, Trojans, and worms that infect your thought life, and the moment you spot one, you zap it with God's Truth.

Antivirus software keeps your computer safe and clean; just imagine what ThoughtCapture 6.0 will do for that hard drive on the end of your neck.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

While Satan and his demons are not worth much thought or attention, Paul suggests that it's a bad idea to be "unaware of his schemes."²⁰

1. In addition to planting thoughts in your head, what have you observed to be another classic strategy of the enemy?
2. How does the Bible say we are to avoid or overcome such an attack?

N'STUFF

Back in 1978, the news media carried an story that was a classic illustration of blame-shifting:

On Monday, November 27, former San Francisco supervisor Dan White shot and killed Mayor George Moscone and supervisor Harvey Milk over political disputes. During the trial, the media coined and inaccurately reported "the Twinkie insanity defense." But White was not driven to kill the city officials because of a sugar high, which has become a popular misconception. The actual defense was "diminished capacity due to depression," of which his recent change from health food to junk food was said to be one symptom. The jury found White guilty of manslaughter instead of murder. He served five years, was paroled, and committed suicide in 1985 by carbon monoxide poisoning.

¹ Rutger Hauer played the vampire Lothos in the 1992 motion picture *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, starring Kristy Swanson as the flighty Buffy.

² Edgar Allan Poe, *Lenore*, a poem first published in 1831 under the title *A Pæan*.

³ "He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together." Colossians 1:15-17 NLT.

⁴ Numbers 21:4-9.

⁵ 2 Kings 18:4.

⁶ Acts 19:13-16.

⁷ Isaiah 44:13,14-15,17,20.

⁸ 1 John 4:8, 16.

⁹ Romans 8:38-39 MSG.

¹⁰ Part of the amniotic membrane enclosing a fetus that is occasionally found on a child's head at birth, believed to bring good luck—The New Oxford American Dictionary, 2001.

¹¹ <http://monstropedia.org>.

¹² The highest rank of Wallachian aristocracy. Wallachia was the region in historical Romania that lay between the Danube River and the Carpathian Mountains.

¹³ James 1:13 MSG.

¹⁴ The popular Flip Wilson Show ran on NBC from 1970 to 1974. Another of Geraldine's popular catch phrases was "What you see is what you get," which computer users today knows as WYSIWYG, meaning that the editing content is the same as the output content.

¹⁵ John 10:10.

¹⁶ 1 Peter 5:8-9.

¹⁷ "For no temptation (no trial regarded as enticing to sin), [no matter how it comes or where it leads] has overtaken you and laid hold on you that is not common to man [that is, no temptation or trial has come to you that is beyond human resistance and that is not adjusted and adapted and belonging to human experience, and such as man can bear]. But God is faithful [to His Word and to His compassionate nature], and He [can be trusted] not to let you be tempted and tried and assayed beyond your ability and strength of resistance and power to endure, but with the temptation He will [always] also provide the way out (the means of escape to a land ing place), that you may be capable and strong and powerful to bear up under it patiently." 1 Corinthians 10:13 AMP.

¹⁸ ... Job notwithstanding (Job 1:6-12), which is a lesson for another book.

¹⁹ 2 Corinthians 10:5.

²⁰ 2 Corinthians 2:11.