

CARMILLA

Reckoning by Vampire

Written by Eric Webster

CHARACTERS

Carmilla (*Mircalla/Carillam*)

Milarca Countess of Karnstein (*Carmilla's mother*)

HOUSE 1 – SPIELSDORF'S

Bertha Spielsdorf

Deidra Spielsdorf (*Bertha's sister*)

Lady Spielsdorf (*Bertha's Mother*)

Enola (*Berthas Governess*)

Tilda (*Berthas nurse*)

Mr. Gray (*Butler*)

General Spielsdorf

Doctor Spielsberg

HOUSE 2 – BLACKBURN'S

Governess Vesta

Maid Nannette

Lady Blackburn (*Mom*)

Geneva Blackburn (*Sister/Daughter*)

Farrah Blackburn (*Sister/Daughter*)

HOUSE 3 – VINTER'S

Laura Vinter

Young Laura Vinter

Lord Vinter (*Laura's Father*)

Lady Vinter (*Laura's Mother*)

Lucretia (*Laura's Sister*)

Mr. Stone (*Butler*)

Florence (*Nurse*)

Mademoiselle De Lafontaine (*Governess*)

Dr. Hesselius

Baron Vordenburg

Delfina (*Soothsayer Traveler selling charms*)

Mr. Graves (*Woodsman/Ensemble*)

Mr./Mrs. Rhodes (*Coachman/Ensemble*)

Mrs. Kahlo (*Painting Cleaner/Ensemble*)

Madame Perradon (*The Prophet*)

Father Bishop (*Priest*)

THE TRIAL

Judge Griffin

Chief Constable Chase

Barrister Ginsburg (*Defense Lawyer*)

Barrister Darrow (*Prosecuting Lawyer*)

Villager 1

Villager 2

Villager 3

Villager 4

Gallery Person 1

Gallery Person 2

ENSEMBLE

Funeral attendees

Trial attendees in gallery

Jury

Villagers

MUSIC CUES CARMILLA
SOM = Sisters of Mercy

<p>PRE -SHOW https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOBKgOj-qqg</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 10 "I WAS WRONG" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 2 "DRIVEN LIKE THE SNOW DELUXE VERSION" SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 11 "TORCH" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 3 "FLOOD 1" SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 12 "RIBBONS" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 4 "1959" SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 13 "FLOORSHOW" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 5 "Colours" SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 14 "EMMA" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 6 "DRIVEN LIKE THE SNOW" VINYL VERSION SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 15 "AFTER HOURS" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 6.5 "LIGHTS" SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 16 "ON THE WIRE" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 7 "GIMME SHELTER" SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 17 "TRAIN" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 8 "LUCRETIA MY REFLECTION" SOM</p>	<p>MUSIC CUE 18 - INTO BOWS "THIS CORROSION" SOM</p>
<p>MUSIC CUE 9 "NEVER LAND (FULL LENGTH) SOM</p>	

Pre show

Red Curtains are open. House lights are dim, at about half. Stage is set with the Vinter house. Stage is dimly lit on one side, the SL side where the front door and the window next to the front door are. The door and the window face the audience. The rest of the stage is very dark. There is the sound of a Snow storm, loud wind, and we hear very faint vintage Christmas music playing, as if it's off in the distance.

On the window next to the front are shutters. The wind is clattering the window shutters occasionally, and there is wind coming through the window as the curtains on the window blow. We can see snow falling outside the window. There is a dim light. (moonlight) outside the window which illuminates the falling snow. There are occasional lightning flashes in the window, and low thunder SFX.

SCENE 1

*The distant Christmas music fades as the lights on stage go out to dark. But the wind is still heard. The audience sits in the dark for about a minute. **No pre-show announcement.** In the dark on the other side of the stage, in the family room part of the Vinter house, Father, Mother, Laura, Lucretia, Baron, and the Dr. enter in the dark and take their places in the family room. They begin to sing "Hark the Herald" (Just the last few lines) in the dark. The lights slowly come up revealing them all holding carol books and singing, some holding a glass or a cup. There is a fireplace, some chairs, a couch, a few tables and another window, where we see snow falling and lit by moonlight. There is a Christmas tree. Above the fireplace a large portrait of the Countess of Karnstein, Milarca . They end the song. Wind continues throughout scene.*

LUCRETIA:

Oh well done everyone! Thank you all ever so much!

FATHER:

Again my apologies gentleman, Lucretia is just so excited for the holiday to begin.

BARON:

Not at all Lord Vinter. Tis the season. Never too soon to start regaling I say. Or put up the tree.

LUCRETIA:

You see? He agrees!

There is a thunderclap and lightning

MOTHER:

I say, that is odd. Lightning during a blizzard.

DR:

“Thundersnow.” It’s rare. But it occurs when unstable air is lifted, it can create enough static charge through the collision of ice crystals and other particles within the clouds to result in a lightning discharge.

Shutters clatter (first time we hear them clatter at start of show – lights up on sr revealing the window and the front door),

LAURA:

Startled What was that?

MOTHER:

Oh, don’t worry Laura, I believe it’s just a window open in the next room. The wind must have blown it open. I’ll go check.

Mother goes to SL to shut the window while the others start a conversation and are eating and drinking. As mother goes - the conversation gets softer as she crosses the stage to the other room and the window. The conversation now sounds like it’s in another room. Mother go to shut the window. She looks out. She see’s something.

MOTHER:

Calling out “Someone is running up to the house”

Music (2) comes in, and the lights fade out. In the dark all actors leave stage. A bed and a side table with a candle and a floor to ceiling window come out DSC.

There is a voice over – “Centennial Theater presents; Carmilla – reckoning by vampire.”

Lights up on bedroom. Music continues through to young Laura’s Scream. Wind stays through transition and through next scene.

SCENE 2

We see a very young girl in her bed, (this is Laura) about 8 years old, and is being put to bed by the nurse. Their hands are clasped in prayer.

NURSE FLORENCE:

"O God, our Lord and Father, we humbly thank Thee for Thy abundant blessings, especially for the grace and love that Thou dost bestow upon us. Guide us in our daily tasks, protect us from harm, and fill our hearts with Thy peace. We ask for Thy mercy upon those in need, and for wisdom to discern Thy will. Bless our families and friends and help us to live in accordance with Thy holy teachings. Amen."

YOUNG LAURA:

Amen.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Gets up and starts to prepare the room. Now go to sleep young lady. You've had a long day.

YOUNG LAURA:

Yes Florence.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Sleep tight. *She blows out candle.*

Lights fade to just shadows. Enough to see action. and. We hear thunder and see lightning. A figure appears, backlit by moonlight, at a window, all black and shadowy with drapery fabric whipping in the wind. The figure opens the window and walks in. She approaches the bed of young Laura. There is a blackout – complete silence – Laura screams. Music out. The servants (governess /nurse/butler) come running into the room from SR. The nurse lights the candle and the lights come up and the governess goes to Laura and holds her in her arms.

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

What is it my child? What happened?

YOUNG LAURA:

Scared I was just falling asleep, when I saw the window open and a young woman came in.

BUTLER STONE:

What's that? Someone came into your room?

YOUNG LAURA:

Yes. I swear it. And she came to my bed and kneeled down. She whispered "We are one", and then I felt like there was a tiny needle poking me in the neck. That's when I screamed.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Let me see your neck dear. *She looks* Well there are no marks.

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

I imagine you had a dream.

YOUNG LAURA:

A nightmare.

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

Yes, well with this storm, it's easy to have nightmares.

BUTLER STONE:

Relieved that there is no real emergency She has an overactive imagination this one.

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

That's enough Mr. Stone. Come now child, lay back down. All is well. Just a bad dream.

YOUNG LAURA:

A nightmare.

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

Yes indeed. A nightmare. But you are all right now. Lay back down.

Laura lays down. They tuck her in. They walk SR.

YOUNG LAURA:

Wait don't leave. Please someone stay with me.

They glance at each other and the nurse nods.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Of course. I'll stay with you child.

YOUNG LAURA:

Promise?

NURSE FLORENCE:

Promise.

*THE BUTLER LEAVES. THE NURSE AND GOVERNESS GO OVER SLIGHTLY
DSR AND WHISPER.*

NURSE FLORENCE:

"The window is open. Someone *was* here"

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

We keep that to ourselves Florence. But watch her well. From now on, we will watch her always.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Understood Mademoiselle.

SCENE 3

Lights fade. Music up.(3) Scene is “Restructured” SL using same pieces from opening scene to create a different house. We are now at General Spielsdorf’s residence. Lights up. (3) fades. In the drawing room are Lady Spielsdorf, her daughters Bertha and Deidra. Lady S is knitting, Bertha is reading and Deidra is pacing about. There are three servants coming in and out.

DEIDRA:

Mother, with Christmas only 4 weeks away, don’t you think it’s time we had a tree?

LADY S:

A tree? No no. That does not happen until Christmas Eve. You know that.

DEIDRA:

But we thought...it’s such a bother to put up for just one day. And perhaps if it was already up, we would have more time for singing and games...

BERTHA:

And presents. That’s what your concerned with. *She smiles at her sister:*

DEIDRA:

That is not true! I only wish to give. I don’t care about presents.

LADY S:

I’ll remember that. Noted. “Deidra does not care about presents”.

Deidra snaps her head at her mom in surprise. Bertha and Lady S Laugh.

BERTHA:

I’ve not seen you react that quickly since you saw that wolf coming home from school.

DEIDRA:

Stop teasing me. I only wish the holiday to hurry up and get here.

LADY S:

It’s the anticipation that is the true joy, Deidra. Not the destination.

BERTHA:

Speaking of anticipation, when will father be back from his trip?

LADY S:

Not for another week I imagine. He's meeting with heads of state. They are trying to negotiate peace talks.

DEIDRA:

We're not going to go to war again are we Mother?

LADY S:

Not if the talks are successful dear.

BERTHA:

I wonder if Father *wants* them to be successful.

LADY S:

Bertha! Don't say such things. You should not speak ill of your Father.

BERTHA:

Apologies Mother. But he seems...Happier when there is war.

LADY S:

It's just his duty. He takes no pleasure in it.

Deidra and Bertha look at each other with a knowing glance of "Yes he does".

DEIDRA:

I wonder if Father will be bringing back anything for us.

BERTHA:

Presents! That's all that's on your mind!

DEIDRA:

It is not! Stop!

Governess Enola enters with a tray

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

Here's a present for you.

DEIDRA:

OH! Biscuits and tea! Thank you ever so much Enola!

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

You're welcome. Lady Spielsdorf, do you wish me to begin dinner?

LADY S:

Yes, that would be fine.

Butler Gray has entered and has been looking out the window.

BUTLER GRAY:

My Lady, someone is coming to the door.

LADY S:

Who would be coming on the Lords Day?

BUTLER GRAY:

It appears to be two woman my Lady.

BERTHA:

Well that will disappoint Deidra, I'm sure she was hoping for Santa Claus.

DEIDRA:

You're teasing is wearing thin Bertha.

Knock on door. Butler goes to answer. Opens door. Nurse Tilda has entered the room

BUTLER GRAY:

Whom may I say is calling?

MILARCA:

Pardon our intrusion, but I have a most dire situation.

LADY S:

Let them in Mr. Gray.

BUTLER GRAY:

Please come in.

They enter. Butler takes their coats. Carmilla (Mircalla) is carrying one small bag. Carmilla is ill.

LADY S:

I am Lady Spielsdorf. These are my daughters, Bertha and Deidra.

BERTHA AND DEIDRA:

Pleasure / Hello

MILARCA:

As I said, I am in a predicament that requires asking quite a large favor. My daughter has become ill.

NURSE TILDA:

Oh! Here come with me. Sit.

She gets her to a chair

Let me get you some tea.

She hands her the tea that was on the tray for Deidra. Deidra has a moment of "no" but quickly relents.

LADY S:

What is wrong with her.

MILARCA:

I don't know. But I am in need of housing for her. She is quite ill, whatever it is. However, I am on a journey of great importance. I cannot delay. She cannot make the trip any further. I will leave her here with you.

LADY S:

Taken aback... I am sorry but you cannot leave your daughter here, we are not able....

MILARCA:

Then leave her outside to die. That will be your conscience and your choice. But I must be on my way. Time is slipping away. I must leave, and I must leave now. And be warned, do not ask about her past or her family. It is ...a strain on her. Her name is Mircalla.

LADY S:

But you can't just leave her here...

MILARCA:

I depart...NOW!

She heads out the door. Butler Gray watches her through the door.

BUTLER GRAY:

Such Speed. It's as if she floats over the snow!

NURSE TILDA:

Shut the door. The cold. The girl is ill.

He shuts the door

NURSE TILDA:

Feeling her forehead She does not seem to have a fever.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

None the less I'll bring her blankets. *She leaves*

LADY S:

Can you speak my dear? Mircalla is it?

CARMILLA:

Yes. I just need to rest. I am ever so tired.

LADY S:

Of course.

BERTHA:

Mother is she to stay with us?

LADY S:

It seems so.

DEIDRA:

Father will not be happy.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

Returning with blankets That's an understatement.

LADY S:

We will deal with the General when he returns. In the meantime, we must protect this girl.

BERTHA:

Such a mother. To just leave her daughter at the home of strangers.

DEIDRA:

I think it's nice. A guest for Christmas!

BERTHA:

She's not a present Deidra.

NURSE TILDA:

To herself No indeed. This girl is no gift.

SCENE 4

Lights Fade. Music up.(4) A quick transition as everyone leaves the stage. Lights Up. Music fades. No one is in the room. There is a knock at the door. Butler Gray enters. Goes to door and opens. In walks Dr. Spielsberg.

BUTLER GRAY:

Dr. Speilsberg, please come in.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Thank you. *Hands him coat* The General still out of town?

BUTLER GRAY:

Yes. Not due back for until tomorrow.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Yes, I see. Where is the patient?

BUTLER GRAY:

I will have Nurse Tilda bring her in.

He leaves. The Dr. opens medical bag and starts taking things out. Nurse Tilda and Carmilla enter with Butler Gray, Bertha, Deidra and Lady S behind.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Startled by a feeling when he see's her Ah...hello, I am Dr. Speilsberg. And you are...?

CARMILLA:

Mircalla.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Mircalla. Yes. Well, just have a seat here. *She sits.*

BERTHA:

She is so very tired all the time Doctor.

LADY S:

This is the first time she's been downstairs since she's arrived.

DEIDRA:

Quietly And she can walk through locked doors.

Bertha hits her arm. Lady S shoots Deidra a look. The Dr. is examining her. Governess Enola Enters.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

Shall I prepare one more for dinner my Ladyship?

LADY S:

Oh yes. Dr. would you stay and dine with us?

There is no answer from the Doctor.

LADY S:

Doctor?

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Looking perplexed What's that? Oh..I umm...I don't think I will.

LADY S:

Oh unfortunate. Are you sure?

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Standing up Quite. I am...I must be leaving.

LADY S:

So soon? What of Mircalla?

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Mircalla is staring in a sinister way at the doctor. Her back is to everyone else as she is seated. I find ...well...nothing. Nothing is wrong with her in the least.

BERTHA:

But her exhaustion...

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Curtly Nothing is wrong I say.

DEIDRA:

Quietly to Bertha That was a quick examination. I wish my doctor visits were as quick.

LADY S:

Very well then...

DR. SPIELSBURG:

May I speak to you? *Looks around* And your staff?

LADY S:

Of course. Children take Mircalla to her room.

DEIDRA:

Yes mother. *They go to Mircalla and help her up and lead her out.*

LADY S:

Doctor your demeanor has me worried.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

As it should. Listen to me, all of you. There is something...something not right.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

How do you mean not right?

DR. SPIELSBURG:

Her pulse is normal, eyes are good...there is no sign of any illness.

NURSE TILDA:

I could have told you that.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

I don't know what else to say. But I find nothing wrong with that girl.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

There is plenty wrong with that girl.

NURSE TILDA:

Sleeping all morning. I've never seen her at night. Except that once.

BUTLER GRAY:

She walks through locked doors.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

What's that?

LADY S:

Mr. Gray, all of you, stop with the nonsense. She is just a girl.

BUTLER GRAY:

Who can walk through locked doors.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

It's true we've seen my Lady. So have you.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

What have you seen?

NURSE TILDA:

I couldn't sleep one night, and I went downstairs here to grab a book I wanted to read. It was the middle of the night. The door did not open; I looked up and she was standing in front of me.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

She must have simply opened the door, and you did not hear her enter.

BUTLER GRAY:

That door was locked. She had no key.

NURSE TILDA:

She walked by me as if in a daze. I concluded she was sleepwalking.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

After Tilda told us, for her safety, we began to lock the door to her room from the outside.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

And yet every morning when I bring her breakfast, the door is unlocked.

BUTLER GRAY:

And none of us did it. We asked the children of course. They deny unlocking it.

GOVERNESS ENOLA:

She never touches her breakfast. She never eats a morsel.

NURSE TILDA:

Except for chocolate. She eats that.

LADY S:

Sounds like the eating habits of a child. She is young and is food picky. That's all. And as for the doors, there is reasonable explanation. To make accusations of her being ...what? A ghost?

DR. SPIELSBURG:

I'm afraid there is more Lady Speilsdorf. Have you seen her one front tooth?

NURSE TILDA:

Yes, we all have. Longer than the others. Somewhat sharp.

DR. SPIELSBURG:

I don't want to be an alarmist or...have you think I've become a lunatic.

LADY S:

What of it?

DR. SPIELSBURG:

It doesn't look like it belongs in her mouth. It's like the tooth of an animal. Like a wolf.

SCENE 5

Lights fade. Music up.(5) Actors leave the stage. Lights back up. Music fades. Everyone is standing looking at the door. Butler gray is looking out the window.

BUTLER GRAY:

He has arrived.

The door opens and the General walks in.

LADY S:

My love! She goes to him and hugs him. The daughters do as well. Butler takes his coat, the Governess takes his bag.

GENERAL:

Looks over and see's Carmilla. Who is this then?

LADY S:

This is Mircalla. Mircalla does not speak or rise from her chair.

GENERAL:

And what is Mircalla's business in my home?

LADY S:

She is ill. Her mother brought her here about a week ago.

DEIDRA:

She said she had important business and Mircalla couldn't make the journey any longer. So she begged us to let her stay with us.

NURSE TILDA:

She didn't beg, did she? She up and left her.

GENERAL:

Are you saying a woman just brought this...her daughter...here and left her?

BERTHA:

Yes father. But she is ill and needs our help. We can't just turn her away.

GENERAL:

We can. And we will. Take her to the convent this very minute. That is where she belongs, they are charged with such duty. I want this vagrant out of my house immediately!

Mircalla rises and is visibly angry

GENERAL:

He walks toward her. Looks her in the eye. I said leave my house.

CARMILLA:

Have you ever committed an unspeakable horrific act? Have you ever felt the stinging needle of justice?

SCENE 6

Lights out. Music up.(6) Stage changes to lights downstage. Milarca and Carmilla are walking, wind is blowing.

CARMILLA:

We have been walking for so long. How far to the next village mother?

MILARCA:

We are close. Kapfenburg should be just around this bend.

CARMILLA:

I am in need of feeding. A horse is no substitute of nourishment.

They walk a few steps as Carmilla thinks

Mother, the coachman was pure of heart. He should not have perished.

MILARCA:

Sometimes others become a necessary sacrifice for the greater good my dear.

CARMILLA:

Yes. Of course.

I grow so tired.

MILARCA:

I too am growing tired my dear Carmilla. But we must keep on. We must get to the chosen one.

CARMILLA:

I don't want you to go. I want you to stay. Forever.

MILARCA:

The time has come Carmilla. The General was a narrow escape. I almost didn't arrive in time. I am at my end my dear. It is time for the chosen one to assume her destiny, and my bloodline to carry on.

CARMILLA:

I have not seen her since I visited her as a child. I have not been able to visit her since, as there is a nurse by her bedside every night.

MILARCA:

She is of the age now of independence. She is ready.

CARMILLA:

Faltering I am so tired. I must feed and rest.

MILARCA:

Here. *She points to other side of the stage, lights up on a door. Carmilla and Milarca approach.* I sense a call of reckoning at this home. Fate has brought us here. We will serve our justice and then continue on to the chosen one. *They knock on door. Governess Vesta opens the door.*

MILARCA:

We apologize for the intrusion, but we are on a desperate journey and have a long way to go. But my daughter, Carillam, is ill, and she can no longer continue on. My daughter must stay here with you.

SCENE 6.5

Lights fade. Music up.(6.5) We now transition to the village. Madame Perrodon is standing on a box above a crowd of Villagers. In the crowd and visible to the audience down stage is Governess Vesta, Geneva and Farrah. Vesta is holding a basket of food purchased in the village and they have stopped to listen to Madame Perrodon.

MADAME PERRODON:

Hear me citizens of Kapfenburg. There is evil in our midst. Evil most foul. Three men in less than a week have been murdered, by means of which are at best unhinged and at worst unholy. And I know by who's hand they have been slayed.

There is a loud murmur in the crowd.

VILLAGER 1:

SILENCE! Let her Speak!

MADAME PERRODON:

Among us, perhaps even here, right now, is the manifestation of wicked, a power that is beyond our earth, from the very depths of the netherworld.

VILLAGER 2:

Why should we listen? She is raving!

VILLAGER 3:

Why would you silence her? Unless you are hiding a truth that you know?

MADAME PERRODON:

Many years ago, the same occurrences were among the people of Karnstein. Murders of men. Their hearts cut out, their blood drained. There is only one entity that can perpetrate such a heinous crime. I speak of the creature that subsists by feeding on our vital essence, our blood. The blood of the living. I speak of...Vampires.

Murmur in the crowd. Some frightened, some laughing and mocking.

MADAME PERRODON:

Hear me. After the murders in Karnstein, There was a nobleman who vanquished a vampire in Karnstein by cutting off its head. He moved her tomb so that her body would not be exhumed to see if she was a vampire. She was never found. And she is now back! She is among us! She is here to vanquish all of us from the earth!

VILLAGER 4:

And what would you have us do?

MADAME PERRODON:

Stay vigilant. Look to your neighbor. The evil could be standing right next to you. Look in your own homes. Do not be fooled or taken in by their demeanor. They will not appear to your eye as evil. They will have the aura of sweet and pure. It is who you least expect. Hear my words, we must find the abhorration, flush them out. If you suspect anyone, turn them in!

The crowd murmurs and begins to disperse. Madame Perrodon see's Farrah, Geneva and Governess Vesta and make her way to them.

MADAME PERRODON:

You there! Stop!

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Are you speaking to me?

MADAME PERRODON:

I sense that you are troubled? Yes?

GOVERNESS VESTA:

What would ever make you say that?

MADAME PERRODON:

I sense things. I see things. When evil is near, it speaks to me.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Well I do have concerns.

FARRAH:

Over what Vesta? What is it that concerns you?

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Our guest.

FARRAH:

Carillam? Surely you don't think...

GOVERNESS VESTA:

What do we know of her? She appeared at our door. We took her in.

MADAME PERRODON:

What is this? You are harboring the evil in your house?

FARRAH:

Of course not! Stop this, Vesta. You know very well this woman only speaks to incite, and to provide herself with notoriety.

MADAME PERRODON:

Heed my words young lady. You have no sense of the dark forces that are around you.

GENEVA:

You are nothing more than a provocateur. You are stirring things up and frightening the whole village based on nothing but old myths and legends, and beliefs that cannot be sustained. And that you would have us turn on our neighbor for such hearsay is despicable.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

How else do we protect ourselves? We know nothing of Carillam. And she is a strange child.

MADAME PERRODON:

You should heed the words of your elder ladies. Be vigilant.

GENEVA:

Come Vesta, we need to head home.

They all begin to leave. Vesta stops and turns and looks at Madame Perrodon who is glaring at them.

SCENE 7

Lights fade. Music up.(7) We now transition inside of the Blackburn house. Carmilla – who is now known as Carillam – is entering the room where the family is all gathered. Mother, two sisters and 2 servants. Another house with another configuration different from the first two homes.

LADY B:

Carillam! So good to see you up and about!

FARRAH:

Yes my dear Carillam! *Runs to her and embraces her* Oh! It's so good to see you look so well!

GENEVA:

I thought you were going to stay in your room forever.

LADY B:

Geneva, enough.

GENEVA:

I've just never seen someone sleep so much.

CARMILLA:

I have been ill. I needed my rest.

FARRAH:

Yes of course you did Carillam. Come sit with us. We were just discussing the upcoming holiday. Christmas is only 2 weeks away!

CARMILLA:

I do not celebrate....*She catches herself* I have never celebrated a Christmas.

GENEVA:

Never celebrated a Christmas? How is that possible?

CARMILLA:

My mother and I, we travel a lot.

LADY B:

Where is it that you travel?

CARMILLA:

I believe my mother said to not talk of my past.

LADY B:

Of course. But know that you can trust us Carillam. It's only been 5 days, but you are like family to us. We are here for you if you ever want to speak of it.

GENEVA:

It must have been something horrible!

LADY B:

Geneva! You are being most rude.

FARRAH:

Changing subject We will be going out to cut down our tree soon. We were thinking today of going into the village to do the shopping for presents! You could join us?

CARMILLA:

I ...yes...of course. I would love to have a "Christmas". It sounds delightful.

Governess and maid enter – Vesta is holding a tray of tea.

GENEVA:

It's very delightful. Most delightful thing God has ever given us.

Carmilla bristles and makes a low moan.

FARRAH:

Are you ok Carillam?

CARMILLA:

Yes. I'm sorry.

GENEVA:

The shiver! Someone must have walked on your grave.

CARMILLA:

I doubt that.

FARRAH:

Yes superstitious nonsense.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Staring at Carmilla Yes. Superstition. Nonsense.

MAID NANNETTE:

Vesta you should put the tray down.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Yes. Of course, Nannette. Tea.

MAID NANNETTE:

Apologies for Vesta. She has been...frazzled by the events in the village.

LADY B:

Yes. Dreadful affairs.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Dreadful affairs. You mean murders.

GENEVA:

Three murders in three days.

FARRAH:

Terrible. Just Terrible.

MAID NANNETTE:

There's a madman loose.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

We should hope. But I fear it's a deeper evil. Madame Perrodon spoke truth in the village. The bodies of those men. The unholy nature of their demise

LADY B:

How so?

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Their hearts. They were cut out and removed from the body. And all their blood drained.

LADY B:

OH! *She crosses herself*

GOVERNESS VESTA:

It was done with an almost surgical precision. And there was no sign of struggle from the victims. He said it was as if they laid perfectly still and let the procedure happen. And they had a look on their face, their last moments and thoughts on earth captured with a look of fear that he said he could not get out of his mind.

FARRAH:

You don't know this! That was not said!

GOVERNESS VESTA:

This is no madman. It is the work of something unholy, not of this world.

Gasps and crossings again

LADY B:

Surely Vesta, you don't believe in such things?

GOVERNESS VESTA:

I don't know what I believe anymore. But this girl you have brought in this house....*Accusingly points at Carmilla* And then her mother just leaving her here. An "important business she needed to attend and could not bring the daughter along any further because she was ill". And at the same time the murders occurred.

GENEVA:

Vesta, I must protest your unfounded candor.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

She is, at her base, suspicious.

FARRAH:

You mean you really think...

MAID NANNETTE:

Surely, it's just coincidence.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Enough coincidences eventually lead to fact Nannette.

LADY B:

Goes to Carmilla But this girl is too ill, too tired to be able to do such madness. Speak for yourself Carillam.

CARMILLA:

Why are you attacking me? I have done nothing.

GOVERNESS VESTA:

Then there's that tooth.

CARMILLA:

Stands I will not sit here and listen to these lunatic ravings. I have done nothing to hurt any of you to bring this on. And this tooth you are so interested in? Would you like to see it?

Carmilla lunges at her opening her mouth and makes a loud hissing sound.

Lights go black for a few seconds. Then come back on. They are all shivering and in recoil position. Carmilla is gone.

FARRAH:

Carillam? Where did she go?

GOVERNESS VESTA:

We can only hope back to the depths of hell where she came.

SCENE 8

Light out to dark. Music up.(8) Transition entire stage to courtroom. Courtroom gets set SR to C. There is a judge at an elevated bench. Next to him is a chair where the witness, Bertha is seated. There are two tables facing the judge. At one sits the accused servant, Butler Gray, and his lawyer. At the other sits the prosecuting attorney. Behind them is a galley of people, including the Dr. and the Baron plus the Generals wife, daughter and servants. Upstage are members of the jury seated facing the audience. The chief constable is on the other side of the judges bench. Music fades out.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Please state your name.

BERTHA:

Bertha Speilsdorf.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

And your Father is General Speilsdorf. Is that correct.

BERTHA:

Yes.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Please tell us, in your words, the events that took place the day your father was murdered.

BERTHA:

We had a guest staying with us. Mircalla. She was ill. So we took her in. We nursed her back to health the best we could. Father returned from business about a week later. When he saw Mircalla, he flew into a rage. He demanded we take her to the convent and get her out of the house.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

He was angry then?

BERTHA:

Oh yes. Very angry. I can't say I was surprised.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

What did you do then?

BERTHA:

We did as he said. We packed her things, and we all left that next morning and headed by carriage to deliver her to the nuns. There was nobody in the house but Father and Mr. Gray.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Mr. Gray. Your Butler.

BERTHA:

Yes.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

The man sitting over there on trial for the murder of your father?

BERTHA:

Yes.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

And there was no one left in the house, but him? Is this your testimony?

BERTHA:

Yes. The other servants went in the village on errand. My mother and sister and I took Mircalla to the convent. But we never arrived.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Never arrived?

BERTHA:

On the journey to the convent, we all became very tired. A tired like I have never known. It came on suddenly. We all fell asleep. When we awoke, the coachman was dead, his heart had given out. The horse was gone, and ...Mircalla was gone...

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Yes. Interesting, but it is not relevant to the matter at hand. I request that that testimony be stricken from the record.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

Objection your honor. The counselor asked about them not arriving at the convent and she is merely answering his question. In addition, we believe that this information could possibly show the jury an alternate theory to the murder of the General. Whatever happened to the coachmen, their guest and the horse on the carriage ride could have been perpetrated by the same person who killed the General. He could have followed them. And if the accused was at the house when the General was murdered, it stands to reason that he could not have been two places at once.

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

Sustained. The witness testimony will stand in the record.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Very well. But, if you please Miss Speildorf, continue with how you found your father.

BERTHA:

Well, we had to make our way back home by foot. And when we arrived....

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

That's when you found your father.

BERTHA:

Yes. It was horrible. He was on the floor...his heart...*she begins to sob* And his face, such terror on his face. A man that has never known fear in his life. He was not a great man. I know his legacy during the war well. Everyone does. The prisoners of war that he had shot. How he showed no mercy at all to the enemy, burning down towns and murdering thousands of civilians. I know all this...But still, he was my father.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Miss Speilsdorf – I'm sorry for your loss, and sorry for yourodd happenings of your trip to the convent. But the matter at hand is quite a simple question. Was there anybody else at the house other than the defendant, Mr. Gray?

BERTHA:

No but...

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

And did you *See* anyone else leaving, or even nearby?

BERTHA:

No. But Mr. Gray is a dear man, and he wouldn't have done this...*Begins crying again.*

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

Your honor I believe the witness would benefit from some time to recoup.

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

Agreed. You may step down miss Speilsdorf.

Bertha, sobbing, leaves the stand and goes to sit in the galley.

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

Your next witness Counselor?

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

We call Lady Spielsdorf to the stand.

Lady S comes from the gallery to the witness stand.

CHIEF CONSTABLE CHASE:

Raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?

LADY S:

I do

CHIEF CONSTABLE CHASE:

You may be seated.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Lady Spielsdorf, is the testimony you have just heard from your daughter true?

LADY S:

Yes. Absolutely.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

And you also did not see any other person at the house when you arrived?

LADY S:

No.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Just Mr. Gray, correct?

LADY S:

Yes, but he does not possess the ability to do what was done to my husband.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

I didn't ask that Lady Spielsdorf. Your honor...

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

The jury will disregard.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

Your honor...!

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

I have made my ruling counselor. Sit down.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

I have no further questions for this witness. We rest your honor.

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

Does the defense have any questions for this witness/

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

No, your honor.

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

Very well, the defense may call your first witness.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

We call Dr. Hesselius to the stand.

Mumbles of rhubarb from the gallery. Dr. Hesselius moves from the gallery to the witness stand

CHIEF CONSTABLE CHASE:

Raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?

DR. HESSELISUS:

I do

CHIEF CONSTABLE CHASE:

You may be seated.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

Dr. Hesselius, you have been in attendance for the whole trial correct?

DR. HESSELISUS:

Correct.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

And you were also the Dr. that examined the body of the victim, General Speilsdorf?

DR. HESSELISUS:

Correct.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

And you have a different theory of the cause of death then what the prosecution claims. Is that correct?

DR. HESSELISUS:

Yes. I do. Emphatically.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

So what you are saying, Dr. Hesselius, is that in your findings, you do not believe that the accused committed the murder of General Speilsdorf?

DR. HESSELISUS:

That is correct.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

Please elaborate.

DR. HESSELISUS:

I have received these letters from my colleague Dr. Speilsberg in the village of Kapfenburg, *Shows letters.* in the last week, similar murders have occurred there in similar fashion.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

And what is that fashion?

DR. HESSELISUS:

Hearts torn out with surgical precision. All blood drained from their body. No sign of struggle and a ungodly fear pasted and frozen on their faces.

THE GALLEY GASPS AND MURMURS

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

Banging gavel ORDER! ORDER!

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

And in your opinion Dr. could the accused possess the skills to perpetrate such and act?

DR. HESSELISUS:

No. I'm not sure with my experience I could have removed a heart so delicately.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

And in your opinion Dr. does the accused, Mr. Gray, possess the mindset of someone who would commit such a depraved act?

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Objection your honor. The witness could not possibly know the mindset of the accused.

JUDGE GRIFFIN:

Agreed. Sustained. The jury will disregard.

BARRISTER GINSBURG (DEFENSE LAWYER):

In your opinion Dr., if not my client, then who?

DR. HESSELISUS:

That I don't know. But I do know that whatever it is, whoever it is, is pure evil. It may be doings not of this world.

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Objection your honor!

GALLEY MEMBER 1:

He's lying! Those letters are fake!

GALLEY MEMBER 2:

He's protecting the General! That man got what he deserved! He was a terrible man!

The galley responds loudly in support

BUTLER GRAY:

Stands yelling But I am innocent! I swear to you all! I am innocent.

The galley yells him down

BARRISTER DARROW (PROSECUTING LAWYER):

Yelling over the din The people have a right to be heard your Honor!

JUDGE:

Banging gavel ORDER! ORDER! We are going to take a break from these proceedings. Emotions are obviously running high and we need to all have some time. We will pick up here tomorrow. Court adjourned. *Pounds gavel.*

The courtroom is abuzz with conversation as everyone clears out. The Dr. Tugs on the sleeve of the village chief constable and motions for the judge.

DR. HESSELISUS:

A word if you please Chief Constable, and your honor.

They move downstage away from the exiting crowd.

Hear me. *Showing letters* I am convinced that we have the wrong man.

CHIEF CONSTABLE CHASE:

But Dr., the servant was the only one in the house and he has ample evidence he was the only one with opportunity. He should be convicted. We need to put this village at peace.

The Baron steps into their conversation and grabs the letters from the Dr. The courtroom is now clear except for Bertha, who is listening in to the conversation from upstage.

BARON:

I agree with the Dr. I have been attending the trial because I too am convinced that there is more to this than meets the eye. And possibly of something supernatural not of this world, because of the nature of how the General died, and the similarity of these reports...

CHIEF:

So, the great Monster Hunter Baron Vordenburg is here to save us. I won't have you coming into *this* town and stirring everyone up with your nonsense and talk of demons. You are nothing more than an opportunist on another monster hunt. I will not stand here and listen to your wild theories and stories of existing monsters.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Chief Constable, the Baron's work is well documented, and he is not the Charleton you make him out to be. I would ask for a little respect.

BARON:

It's quite all right Dr. The Chief Constable is right to doubt. That is his job. And when it comes to turning a blind eye to evidence, he is quite remarkable at his job.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Your honor, all I ask for is some time to offer more proof. The Baron and I would like to visit Kapfenburg and investigate the murders that have taken place. I have a friend we can stay with in Kapfenburg, Lord Vinter. I beg of you, grant a stay in the trial until our investigation is over.

JUDGE:

Well the last thing we want to do is convict the wrong man.

CHIEF:

Your Honor you can't possibly...

JUDGE:

Chief Constable, I will make my rulings as I see fit. And I agree there is something to the similarity of these murders, and we must do our due diligence and investigate. The man on trial could not have possibly committed the murders in Kapfenburg. So either we have the wrong man or it's a wondrous coincidence and we have the right man. I will grant you a stay of two weeks for further investigation, but no more. I can't hold this town off any longer that. The entire village is at a fever pitch as it stands.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Thank you, your honor. You're doing the right thing.

JUDGE:

May God feel the same.

They all exit leaving us seeing only Bertha in the courtroom. Lights fade, music up.(9) - we re-set stage at intermission to opening scene. Vintage christmas music and wind clattering the window shutters occasionally, and there is wind coming through the window as the curtains on the window blow. We can see snow falling outside the window. There is a dim light. (moonlight) outside the window which illuminates the falling snow. There are occasional lightning flashes in the window, and low thunder SFX.

INTERMISSION

SCENE 9

Mother, Father, Lucretia enter and sit in family room. Servants are about. Father enters and sits and is reading the magazine "the dark blue". Lights come up, House lights down, music fades out. Laura enters SL

FATHER:

Hello Laura. Nice of you to join us this evening.

LAURA:

Hello Father. Everyone. Sorry I was reading upstairs.

LUCRETIA:

We are going to sing carols tonight!

LAURA:

You just can't wait can you Lucretia?

LUCRETIA:

Who can? *Starts singing as she decorates the tree* Deck the halls with boughs of holly...

LAURA:

Laughs and joins in Fa la la la la, la la la la! Oh we sound lovely!

FATHER:

I've been meaning to ask, how was your sleep last night?

LAURA:

Oh it was wonderful! One of the most restful nights I can remember.

FATHER:

Refers to the nurse standing near by. I hear tell that you were in your room alone last night. First time in 12 years.

LAURA:

Yes. I felt it was about time. I felt like I had finally outgrown the fear of the dream I had that night.

FATHER:

Yes. Well. I'm sure Florence is grateful to be in her own bed again.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Slight laugh Yes indeed my Lord.

LAURA:

I'm ever so grateful to you Florence for all those years of comfort you gave while I slept.

NURSE FLORENCE:

It was my duty and privilege miss. *She touches her back* Besides, I love you.
They both smile at each other.

FATHER:

I am afraid I do have some bad news Laura. I've already shared this with everyone else. *Hands Laura a letter* This came this morning. It's from Bertha. The planned visit of her and her father General Spielsdorf has been cancelled.

LAURA:

Oh dear! No! I was so looking forward to seeing Bertha!

FATHER:

There has been a tragedy, Laura. The general has died.

LAURA:

Reading letter "Father was killed by some kind of Monster in the village of and that she would hunt the monster until the end of her days". A monster?!

The servants look at each other

FATHER:

Yes. I'm not quite sure what to make of that. Perhaps the shock of it has dimmed her reason. However, *Takes letter back, reading from letter* "They have accused our Butler Mr. Gray, as he was the only one in the house at the time. But I don't believe him to be guilty of this crime. He is not the kind of man that would commit such an atrocity. And he was loyal. The trial is underway and I am determined to prove his innocence. I am sorry that I cannot visit, but I assure you I will see you soon..."

There is a knock on the door. Father goes to the door to answer, and opens. The Dr. and Baron step in out of the storm, snow on their shoulders. The butler steps in and takes their jackets and hats and departs.

FATHER:

Dr. Hesselius! Welcome! To what do I owe this gift of a visit on such a terrible night?

DR. HESSELISUS:

Lord Vinter! *They shake hands* Permit me to introduce to you Baron Vordenburg.

BARON:

Pleasure your lordship.

FATHER:

Well, indeed a pleasure to have the revered Baron Vordenburg in our house. *They shake hands.*

BARON:

Not everyone would agree with your assessment of my character I'm afraid.

DR. HESSELISUS:

We are here on a bit of an investigation.

FATHER:

What sort of investigation?

DR. HESSELISUS:

The unexplained, mysterious murders in your village.

FATHER:

Ah yes. And you have been called in?

DR. HESSELISUS:

I was testifying in KnittleField, at the trial of the murder of your friend General Speilsdorf.

FATHER:

"Friend" is an embellishment. Our association was due to our daughter's fondness for each other. But, still, a terrible thing that.

DR. HESSELISUS:

I believe the servant accused to be innocent.

BARON:

It seems that the murders in your village have a similar modus operandi. Hearts torn out, all blood drained, fear on their face, no sign of struggle.

FATHER:

Dear God! Is that how they found the General?

DR. HESSELISUS:

I'm afraid so, yes. We were hoping....we need a place to stay while we conduct our investigation in the village...

FATHER:

Say no more. Of course. Our house is your house. You are most welcome but...*Gesturing toward family room* let's not talk of such things tonight as we are in preparation for Christmas festivities and dinner will be soon. You can dine with us.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Christmas festivities already?

FATHER:

The youngest, Lucretia, has a fondness for the holiday that cannot be contained.

They all laugh and cross stage – from front door to the family room.

FATHER:

Dear, you remember Dr. Hesselius?

MOTHER:

Oh my! Yes! Welcome Dr. So good to see you.

DR. HESSELISUS:

My lady *Kisses her hand*

FATHER:

And this is his colleague Baron Vordenburg.

MOTHER:

Well! I've read extensively of your exploits! A pleasure Baron.

FATHER:

They will be staying with us. They have some business in town they need to attend to.

MOTHER:

Oh but of course! You're just in time for dinner!

BARON:

Thank you ever so much.

FATHER:

And this is Laura.

LAURA:

Courtesy's – Dr. , Baron. What are your exploits mother refers to?

LUCRETIA:

With Awe He hunts monsters!

LAURA:

Monsters?

FATHER:

And our youngest Lucretia. Forgive her impudence. She is full of the spirit.

BARON:

Not at all, it is the truth after all. And one should be full of the spirit this time of year.

LUCRETIA:

Courtesy's –Well, Dr., Baron, then you absolutely MUST engage in the evening's festivities! We are going to sing Carols!

MOTHER:

Now Lucretia, I don't think...

BARON:

Marvelous! Of course! The time is now! I see you have your tree up! So very early!

MOTHER:

Lucretia thinks it should be up year-round. We had to fight to wait this long.

LUCRETIA:

But isn't it beautiful!

The Butler Stone enters with drinks

FATHER:

Ahhh! Most fortuitous timing Stone. *They all grab a glass* A toast to the Dr. and the Baron!

ALL:

CHEERS! *They all clink glasses and drink. Lucretia hands out carol books.*

LUCRETIA:

Here we go. One for everyone. Page 15.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Oh yes one of my favorites!

They all begin singing hark the herald. At the conclusion...

LUCRETIA:

Oh well done everyone! Thank you all ever so much.

FATHER:

Again my apologies gentleman, Lucretia is just so excited for the holiday to begin.

BARON:

Not at all Lord Vinter. 'Tis the season. Never too soon to start regaling I say. Or put up the tree.

LUCRETIA:

You see? He agrees!

There is a thunderclap and lightning

MOTHER:

I say, that is odd. Lightning during a blizzard.

DR. HESSELISUS:

“Thundersnow.” It’s rare. But it occurs when unstable air is lifted, it can create enough static charge through the collision of ice crystals and other particles within the clouds to result in a lightning discharge.

Shutters clatter – lights up on sr revealing the window and the front door.

LAURA:

Startled What was that?

MOTHER:

Oh, don’t worry Laura, I believe it’s just a window open in the next room. The wind must have blown it open. I’ll go check.

Mother goes to SL to shut the window while the others start a conversation and are eating and drinking. As mother goes - the conversation gets softer as she crosses the stage to the other room and the window. The conversation now sounds like it’s in another room. Mother go to shut the window. She looks out. She see’s something.

MOTHER:

Calling out “Someone is running up to the house”

They all come to SL and to the window and pear out. Then father moves to the door and opens it. A coachman comes in, frazzled.

COACHMAN:

There has been a carriage crash on the road at the end of your property. They need a Doctor!

DR. HESSELISUS:

Well, you are in luck.

Coachman, Dr., Baron, mother, Laura and Laura's father puts on jackets and run out the door. The servants have now come in and watch them leave. The servants and Lucretia stay inside and watch out the window. There is a wait and then the door bursts open. They all come back in with Carmilla and her mother. There is snow on their shoulders.

MOTHER:

Help me get them into the drawing room.

They all hurriedly cross stage and sit them down. Governess and nurse bring some bandages and such to tend to some wounds, the butler brings them tea. Carmilla is dazed and out of it.

FATHER:

So what happened?

COACHMAN:

I was having a hard time seeing the road through the snow. I took a turn to sharp, and we toppled over. I'm ever so sorry.

MOTHER:

Well thankfully everyone seems to be all right. I'm Lady Vinter. This is my husband Lord Vinter and our daughters Laura and Lucretia.

MILARCA:

I am her mother. This is my daughter, Carmilla.

ALL:

Nice to meet you/ Pleasure / Hello...etc...

FATHER:

Where were you headed in such weather?

COACHMAN:

We were heading to...

MILARCA:

I have business. Very urgent business that I must get to. *She is staring at the portrait of herself above the fireplace, looks for a moment, turns around and looks deeply at Carmilla.* And I must be leaving.

MOTHER:

You can't possibly travel in this weather...

MILARCA:

But I must. I cannot stay. Coachman, is the carriage serviceable?

COACHMAN:

Yes my Lady, but...

MILARCA:

And the horses? They are all right?

COACHMAN:

Yes, I brought them to the barn, they are being watered as we speak.

MILARCA:

Then we must carry on, without haste.

MOTHER:

But your daughter...she is no shape. She needs rest.

MILARCA:

That she does. *She looks deeply at Carmilla and nods.* She shall stay here with you.

Carmilla understands and nods back

FATHER:

Now see here...

MILARCA:

Or kick her out into the storm if you wish. But I must continue on. It is quite urgent.

BARON:

What is so urgent that you have to leave your daughter behind?

MILARCA:

Ignoring him and not looking at him I will be back in three month's time. If she is here when I return, so be it. And be warned, do not ask Carmilla about her past or her family. It is ...a strain on her. *BEAT* to Coachman, let us depart...NOW!

Coachman hesitates, shrugs at the family, and heads sr to the front door. Milarca is already out and gone. Coachman shuts the door behind him. Father and mother and the Baron have followed, and stand staring at each other for a few moments after the door shuts.

MOTHER:

I guess we have a guest.

FATHER:

For three months. What an odd evening this has turned out to be.
They return to the drawing room. The Baron stays and looks out the window. Pulls out a ledger and makes some notes, then returns to the drawing room.

LUCRETIA:

To Carmilla Do you like Christmas Carols?

MOTHER:

Not now Lucretia darling. Mademoiselle, Florence, please see Carmilla to a guest room and attend to her.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Yes my lady.

They rise and help Carmilla out

LAURA:

I'll go with, I'll make sure she feels welcome and comfortable.

SCENE 10

Lights out. Music up.(10) We transition into guest room with Carmilla and Laura. It is a bed and table DS center. Carmilla is lying on the bed, and Laura is sitting on the bed talking with her.

LAURA:

Well, you've had quite the frazzle this evening haven't you?

CARMILLA:

Yes. But I'm all right.

LAURA:

So...your mother has left us in your charge.

CARMILLA:

She smiles Yes. I think I will quite like it here.

LAURA:

Oh I hope so. We'll see to it you are as comfortable as possible. *There is a pause as Laura stares at Carmilla.*

CARMILLA:

What is it?

LAURA:

Oh...Nothing. It's just...You look so much like...no it's silly.

CARMILLA:

Tell me.

LAURA:

You resemble a woman I saw many years ago. Well, I didn't really see her. I had this dream. Nightmare actually. A woman coming into my bedroom. Scared me so.

CARMILA:

Sits up I had the same dream when I was young.

LAURA:
Honestly?

CARMILLA:
Yes. I mean not exact. But similar. A woman coming into my room and talking with me. She was beautiful.

LAURA:
Well, I was unable to sleep without the nurse in my room for almost 12 years after that!

CARMILLA:
I'm aware.

LAURA:
You are?

CARMILLA:
Moving on Twelve years! It really did have an effect on you! *She smiles.*

LAURA:
Yes. It did. Well....*Recovering from her memories* That's enough talk of that. You need rest. I'll see you in the morning.

CARMILLA:
Thank you. I believe we are going to be very close, you and I. I feel like you have been chosen for me.

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SCENE 11

Lights out. Music up.(11) Transition from bedroom to dining room scene. It is slightly upstage of the previous set. It is the next morning. Breakfast. Laura, father, mother, Lucretia are at table. Servants are nearby doing servant work.

MOTHER:

Only a week to Christmas. I will need your help with some things to prepare Laura.

LAURA:

Yes of course!

LUCRETIA:

What of me? I want to help!

MOTHER:

Of course dear. You can string the popcorn.

LUCRETIA:

I'll try not to eat most of it.

LAURA:

Like last year!

They all laugh

LAURA:

Are the Baron and the Dr. Not joining us for Breakfast?

FATHER:

They left early to continue their investigation in the village. They are running out of time. They only have 5 days left before the trial begins again.

MOTHER:

Have they uncovered anything of consequence?

FATHER:

Not that I know of. I haven't talked with them much about it.

LUCRETIA:

I heard in school another man has been murdered! Just yesterday! It was that man who some said stole money from the church offerings!

LAURA:

And a woman claimed that same man had beaten her little boy with a horse whip.

LUCRETIA:

And they could never prove it!

MOTHER:

Let's not make this breakfast conversation.

LUCRETIA:

His heart was cut out! And no blood left in him and no other marks on him. And Anne at school said that she heard his face looked like this! *She makes a frightened face*

FATHER:

Enough Lucretia. Eat your breakfast.

LAURA:

Maybe he'll leave and terrorize another village soon.

FATHER:

Laura...

LAURA:

Aren't you the least bit concerned or curious about the madman in the village? There have been 4 murders, all the same, in just under a few weeks?

FATHER:

I'm concerned. But what am I to do? The Dr. and the Baron and the local law are doing their job. They'll catch him, I have no doubt.

MOTHER:

Changing topic Speaking of not joining us. Is Carmilla feeling up to joining us yet? She's been in bed for days now.

LAURA:

I haven't spoken to her this morning.

FATHER:

You are the only one it seems that does speak with her. How is she?

LAURA:

She seems fine. I guess. She has some strange habits.

LUCRETIA:

OOOH! Like what?

LAURA:

She never wakes before one o'clock in the afternoon. She sleeps all morning. And she never eats anything, and only drinks cups of chocolate.

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

That is a fact. I retrieve her dishes from her room and the only thing she has touched is the bit of chocolate I give her. It's all she asks for.

NURSE FLORENCE:

She's also very tired, all of the time.

LAURA:

Have you seen her tooth?

NURSE FLORENCE:

I have.

LUCRETIA:

What about her tooth!?

LAURA:

She has one odd long seemingly pointed sharp tooth, in the front. She hides it when she speaks.

LUCRETIA:

Maybe she's some kind of wolf!

Carmilla enters, as if out of thin air.

CARMILLA:

Maybe I am.

ALL:

Carmilla! / You're up!/ Glad you can join us!

MOTHER:

How are you feeling dear?

CARMILLA:

I am feeling much better thank you.

LUCRETIA:

I didn't mean anything by that.

CARMILLA:

I'm not offended. Do you want to see it?

LUCRETIA:

Hesitant Sure...

Carmilla lunges at her opening her mouth and makes a loud hissing sound. There is a beat of stunned silence. Then Carmilla begins to laugh. They all join in.

LAURA:

Well Carmilla, since you are feeling better, how about we go for a walk this morning and I show you around the grounds?

CARMILLA:

That sounds lovely!

MOTHER:

Well you should eat something before you go.

CARMILLA:

I'm all right, thank you. I recently dined.

SCENE 12

Lights fade out. Music up.(12) Stage clear. Lights come back up. Music fades We are in the village. Villagers are everywhere going about various business. The Dr. Is on one side of the stage, the Baron on the other. They are interviewing townspeople. It's a montage. Lights slightly up a little brighter and down to each side of the stage for each "interview". We see Madame Perrodon watching intently.

Lights SL

BARON:

Taking notes in a ledger. Tell me about your husband's death.

VILLAGER 1:

It's like I told the Chief Constable. I left him alone that morning to go to the market...I came home...it was terrible. Blood everywhere. ...but I won't pretend I was sad. He was no good that one. He'd beat me. Any little thing would set him off. Like a match to oil. Say the wrong thing...BOOM...and there was hell to pay.

Lights switch to SR

DR. HESSELISUS:

Taking notes in a ledger. So your Father in law, did he have any enemies?

VILLAGER 2:

Everyone. Wasn't a tear spilled by one person. It was a gruesome way to die. And I'm not happy about the fact that there is a madman loose somewhere in this village...but...he conned everyone he met out of any money they had. Promises of fortune. Taking their money and spinning it into gold. Then...nothing. Destroyed a lot of families that one.

Lights switch to SL

BARON:

Taking notes in a ledger. You're saying you weren't close?

VILLAGER 3:

Oh yeah. No. James may have been my friend, but only in the sense that he was around a lot of the same people I was friends with. But we all know for a fact that he was the one that burned down the Palmer house. It was revenge for not being granted Mary Palmers hand. He had a temper that one. And never a sign of regret about anything he did.

Lights switch to SR

DR. HESSELISUS:

Taking notes in a ledger.

VILLAGER 4:

I know it just happened yesterday. And maybe I'm in shock. But I feel know sorrow. I feel such a sense of relief he's not on this earth anymore. It's like I can breath again. That Madman did me a favor he did.

The Dr. walks from Villager 4 to the Baron, they are comparing notes as they walk off stage. Madame Perrodon approaches Villager 4.

MADAME PERRODON:

That "Madman" is no man. She is back! Hear me! There is an unholy creature among us. Your celebration of her actions will bear bitter fruit.

Villager 4 walks away terrified of Madame Perrodon.

MADAME PERRODON:

You cannot run from the truth that you know in you soul.

Turns to the rest of the villagers who are moving about there business

ALL OF YOU! Beware! Evil descends closer upon you every second!

SCENE 13

Lights fade out. Music up.(13) Stage clear. Green CYC curtain with foliage GOBO. CYC is blown slightly by fan to create wind movement in trees. Lights come back up. Music fades. Carmilla and Laura are walking.

LAURA:

And that's the end of our property. Over there is the family graveyard. Beyond the that are just woods and then the village.

CARMILLA:

It's quite lovely.

LAURA:

Yes. I love it here. *She is staring off at where she pointed to where the family graveyard is.*

CARMILLA:

You seem...pre-occupied Laura. Anything the matter?

LAURA:

No...I just...I had a dream last night. I was in our family graveyard. And I could see the names of the murdered men from the village on the tombstones. And then I turned around and they were all standing. Right there. Terrifying. *Carmilla is silent and staring.* What? Oh I know it's silly.

CARMILLA:

No. No, it's not that. It's just that...I had the same dream.

LAURA:

You did?

CARMILLA:

Yes.

A group of people have entered and are walking slowly by. They are singing a hymn. Carmilla makes a strange animal sound.

LAURA:

Carmilla? Are you...

CARMILLA:

I'm sorry. I just. That's a funeral procession.

LAURA:

Yes it is. It's probably for the man they found murdered yesterday. They are heading to bury him in the woods. I heard the church won't allow him to be buried on sacred ground.

CARMILLA:

I just... I don't like hymns. I detest... funerals.

LAURA:

I think we all do.

Delfina the Soothsayer comes up behind them. She is carrying things to sell.

DELFINA:

Pardon my intrusion ladies. But could I interest you in a talisman?

LAURA:

No thank you. I don't believe in such things.

DELFINA:

One should always keep their minds open to the possibilities of wondrous abilities beyond our comprehension. It's always bad luck to witness a funeral of someone you do not know. Besides, with a madman loose in our village, you should have all the protection you can carry. I have many to choose from. Only a pence!

LAURA:

I said no.

CARMILLA:

Oh what could it hurt? I'll take one of your superstitious charms.

She takes one. Holds it up, places it on her forehead. Waits a beat. Nothing happens. Carmilla laughs hard.

DELFINA:

She has a look of realization. Not fear I guess that proves you are not evil. She smiles.

CARMILLA:

It proves nothing. Other than you don't know how things like this work.

LAURA:

Is that the funeral procession for the man who was found murdered yesterday?

DELFINA:

It is. See how many attend? It is curious. He was terrible man. Beat a boy with a whip. Some say he did it just because he enjoys it. But It is why he is being buried in the woods and not sacred ground.

CARMILLA:

Justice.

DELFINA:

That it is my lady. That it is. Say...you have a very interesting tooth there.

Carmilla does the same lunge and his she did to Lucretia earlier. Carmilla laughs. Delfina does not flinch. Laura looks bewildered. Woodsman enters and observes, but keeps hidden.

DELFINA:

To Laura You seem like someone that perhaps would like their fortune read?

CARMILLA:

No!That is just superstitious nonsense. We don't need that.

LAURA:

From the same person who just purchased one of her talismans? You just said "what could it hurt?"

DELFINA:

Sit. I will read from the cards. *They Sit. She pulls out tarot deck. She flips first card.* For you *To Laura* – Death card.

LAURA:

OH MY! That's terrible!

DELFINA:

It is not. It is upright. It means metamorphosis. A significant change is coming in you.

LAURA:

Oh, that's better. What's the change?

DELFINA:

That is up to you. You cannot read that in the cards. For you. *To Carmilla. Flips card.* Justice.

LAURA:

Oooh! That's what you just said a minute ago! Maybe there's something to this?

CARMILLA:

Yes indeed. I believe in Justice. Just not Charleton's.

DELFINA:

But it is reversed. It means dishonesty, unaccountability.

CARMILLA:

Noticeably angered That is enough don't you think?

DELFINA:

Are you not accountable for your actions?

CARMILLA:

Angry I'm accountable every single day. My actions follow me and haunt me. Who are you to judge how I achieve justice? As long as there is justice, then the means are just.

DELFINA:

I am not here to judge. I just reveal the cards.

LAURA:

It doesn't mean anything Carmilla. She's right. She's just randomly picking cards.

DELFINA:

My hand is guided. I choose nothing.

LAURA:

Well even so, nobody can predict...

DELFINA:

How about a card for the both of you? One card that defines you both?

LAURA:

Yes. Let's see how are fate intertwines shall we Carmilla?

CARMILLA:

Do as you wish.

Delfina turns over another card and sets it between them.

DELFINA:

The fool.

LAURA:

Laughs That's probably only intended for me!

DELFINA:

The upright way faces you. *To Carmilla* New beginnings. You will be starting a new chapter.

CARMILLA:

I'm always starting a new chapter.

DELFINA:

The reversed is at you. *To Laura* It means you are being taken advantage of.

CARMILLA:

No she is not!

LAURA:

Carmilla!

CARMILLA:

We are done. I want to go home. NOW!

LAURA:

Of course. *They all rise* What do I owe you?

DELFINA:

This was for free. *She is looking earnestly at Carmilla.* Free. I meant nothing. *She is backing away* Goodbye. May the stars align for you both. *She laughs loud as she turns and walks away.*

SCENE 14

Lights fade. Music up.(14) Transition back to Vinter home later that evening. There is a knock on the door. Lord Vinter enters to answer. Opens door. The Woodsman, Mr. Graves is at the door.

MR. GRAVES:

Good evening your lordship. I'm here for my stipend. I have finished taking out the trees you asked. And I've hauled all of the wood to the pile.

FATHER:

Very well. I'll fetch your pay. Stay here.

Father leaves. Woodsman is all alone. He wanders into the drawing room where there is the Governess and a painting cleaner on a ladder, cleaning the countless painting. The Governess and the Woodsman share a knowing glance and smile. Governess exits passing the Woodsman and slightly touches his shoulder.

MR. GRAVES:

To Sign Cleaner Kahlo Spill something?

MRS. KAHLO:

Turns and looks Who are you?

MR. GRAVES:

The woodsman for the Vinters. I just finished some work for them. Here to get paid. What are you doing?

MRS. KAHLO:

What's it look like? I'm cleaning the portrait.

MR. GRAVES:

That picture gives me shivers. She looks evil.

MRS. KAHLO:

I don't judge them. I just clean them.

MR. GRAVES:

Have you....seen any strange goings on around here?

MRS. KAHLO:

Like what?

MR. GRAVES:

I don't know. Just strange things. I have.

MRS. KAHLO:

What have you seen?

MR. GRAVES:

Just saw their daughter, Laura at the edge of the property. She was with that girl they took in.

MRS. KAHLO:

I don't know anything about any border.

MR. GRAVES:

She's a strange one. Never see her much during the day. It's why I was surprised to see her out.

MRS. KAHLO:

Well, she has every right to take a walk with whoever.

Father has entered and is listening.

MR. GRAVES:

I've been around here a long time. My whole life. You?

MRS. KAHLO:

No, I just arrived a few months back. I'm from a few villages over,

MR. GRAVES:

Then you don't know anything about the vampires?

MRS. KAHLO:

Stops cleaning Vampires? What are you talking about?

MR. GRAVES:

Vampires used to run rampant around here. That was before my time of course. They attacked the villages nightly before being defeated by a Moravian nobleman.

FATHER:

Why are you telling this story?

MR. GRAVES:

Spins around Well your lordship, sometimes history repeats itself.

FATHER:

Meaning what?

MR. GRAVES:

Meaning maybe you should keep an eye on your daughter and that girl you have taken in.

FATHER:

What do you know about her?

MR. GRAVES:

I saw them, in the woods. I was watching them.

FATHER:

Perturbed I will kindly ask you to stop watching my daughter. And also to get out of my house. *He escorts him to the door and pushes him out* And don't come back looking for work. You're not welcome here anymore.

The Governess is nearby watching and visibly upset.

MR. GRAVES:

Just trying to help you out. Give you some information. This house is cursed!

He leaves. Father shuts the door. He angrily walks through drawing room and off stage. The Governess exits in tears. The door opens again and it's Carmilla and Laura back from their walk.

CARMILLA:

Who was that man?

LAURA:

That's Mr. Graves. He does work around the property for us.

CARMILLA:

Would you say he is a man who has committed an unspeakable horrific act.

LAURA:

Well...I wouldn't know. I don't know him very well at all.

They make their way to the drawing room.

LAURA:

Would you like something to eat?

CARMILLA:

No, thank you. I'm very tired. I think I will head to bed.

LAURA:

Yes, it was quite a long walk today. Sleep well, Carmilla.

CARMILLA:

Oh I probably won't sleep for awhile. *She Exits.*

Laura watches her leave and then turns and sees painting cleaner.

LAURA:

Hello. Bringing back the luster to the countess I see?

MRS. KAHLO:

Yes miss *They step off small ladder and steps back to look.* There. She's back as beautiful as ever. Countess did you say?

LAURA:

That is a portrait of Countess Karnstein, from...uh... 1698 I believe, a distant family relative.

MRS. KAHLO:

The eyes in this painting really draw you in. It's like she's staring into my soul.

LAURA:

I've never really looked at before...or given it much notice.

There is a beat of silence as they both stare at the painting mesmerized. Then cleaner breaks the silence.

MRS. KAHLO:

When I was a young, there was a woman who came into our town. She had a daughter. She was beautiful. And all the men in town swooned around her, trying to earn her fancy. Eventually one of the young men won her heart. Then one day, that young man went out cuttin' trees in the woods outside of town. When he didn't come back everyone went looking. He was found hanging upside down in a tree. All the blood was out of him. Everyone figured he'd fallen from the tree and his rope got caught. Local beasts, bears or wolves or what not, killed him off, drank all his blood... *Recovers from her enchanting tale* Anyway, this here countess looks a lot like the Mother.

There is another beat of silence. Well... Another Snowstorm is coming in, so I better be off. Goodnight my Lady.

Laura is standing staring at the painting and doesn't respond. The cleaner awkwardly leaves. After a few beats, there is a knock at the door. Laura answers and it is Madame Perrodon.

LAURA:

Hello...who?...

MADAME PERRODON:

I am Madame Perrodon. Forgive my unannounced intrusion. But I come bearing a grave warning to you.

LAURA:

A warning? Of what?

MADAME PERRODON:

You are in danger dear. Imminent danger. You must heed my words. Be wary of the stranger in your midst.

LAURA:

Stranger? There is no stranger in my midst. ...Wait, I know you. You're the woman from the village that is...

MADAME PERRODON:

Crazy? Yes? That is what you were going to say? You and everybody else can call me what you wish.

Father comes back in, sees the conversation and makes his way over

But your last thoughts on this earth will be of me and regret of not marking my insight. I know. Evil speaks to me when it is nearby. I can sense it. And it is near you, with you. You must destroy it...

FATHER:

Be gone! Leave! Stop filling everyone with your ridiculous fears and nonsense! Be gone this minute!

He ushers her out the door.

MADAME PERRODON:

As she is going out the door You will regret this! You are doomed! DOOMED!

FATHER:

The whole town is losing their minds over these murders. I've had enough of it all for one day. Pay her no heed Laura. All is well. They will catch the murderer, you will see. *He touches her face* Goodnight Laura.

He leaves. Laura goes back to staring at the painting.

SCENE 15

Lights fade and music up (15) as Laura just stares at the painting.

Transition to Laura's room – same set up as top of show when she was young but this time stage right. Lights up. Snowstorm with the odd lightning again. Snow falling past window. Wind blowing. Laura blows out candle as she crawls into bed under blankets. Room is now shadow lit with moonbeam illumination of window. After a delay we see a figure moving like a huge cat in her room – we hear it softly cat howl while she sleeps which jumps up on the bed, and Laura wakes up she sees the figure /woman on her bed. She screams and music out and the figure leaps away and runs out across the stage and opens a (locked) door on the other side of the stage into her (Carmilla's) room, which this time is stage right. Again the staff runs in and the Doctor, Baron and father

FATHER:

Laura! What is it? What's happened?

LAURA:

Oh Father! *She hugs him while in bed.*

The Baron makes his way to the window and inspects. He takes out ledger and begins writing.

BARON:

Please tell me exactly what happened.

LAURA:

It was just like that dream I had 12 years ago. I was in bed, falling asleep, and I noticed a very large person, almost cat like, walking toward me. It jumped on to my bed and I felt a needle like sensation in my neck again.

The servants are noticeably startled by the information. The nurse and Dr. look at her neck and he shakes his head "no".

MOTHER:

You're alright now. Just try and lay back down. Nobody is here.

LAURA:

But mother, it was so real.

MOTHER:

I know dear. Dreams can have that effect. Florence will stay with you tonight.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Of course I will.

LAURA:

Could...Could someone please check on Carmilla?

BARON:

Carmilla? Why would you want us to check on her?

LAURA:

Well...Carmilla and I ...well we have discovered that we share dreams.

BARON:

I see.

MOTHER:

Share dreams? You mean you have the same dreams?

LAURA:

Yes. I mean...I'm sure it's just coincidence but...could your check on her? I want to make sure she didn't have this awful dream.

BARON:

Yes. I would like to check in on her as well.

They all say their goodnights and leave the room. They all walk across stage to Carmilla's room door and find that the door is locked.

BARON:

Who has the key to this room?

BUTLER STONE:

Aye. I have it here.

He unlocks door. They go in and find the room empty.

BARON:

She is not here.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Where could she be?

BARON:

Wherever she is, we must find her. It is imperative. Split up and search everywhere!

They all leave stage in different directions. Lights up on Laura's room. Laura is getting out of her bed.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Laura where are you going? You mustn't leave. You have to rest.

LAURA:

I'm all right Florence. I promise. I just want to go check on Carmilla myself.

Laura leaves her room crosses stage to Carmilla's room. The door is shut and locked like before. The butler is still nearby.

LAURA:

Stone? Can I have the key to the room? The door is locked.

BUTLER:

That's strange. It shouldn't be. I just unlocked it a minute ago for everyone to go in and check on her.

LAURA:

Where is everyone now?

BUTLER:

She wasn't in her room ma'am. So, they all split up to go looking for her.

She unlocks door. As door opens the room lights up now we see that Carmilla is back in her bed, asleep. She backs out of the room and runs into father and the Baron and the Dr.

FATHER:

Laura! What are you doing out of bed?

LAURA:

I was just checking on Carmilla.

BARON:

She is not in there. We are looking for her.

LAURA:

But she is. I just saw. She is safe in her bed.

They peer in, see her, shut door.

FATHER:

I don't understand it. Maybe she is a sleepwalker.

BARON:

And maybe she isn't.

FATHER:

Well we know she doesn't sleep well. Laura says she sleeps until after noon every day.

LAURA:

It's true.

FATHER:

Laura, you don't look well at all.

LAURA:

I'm fine father.

BARON:

I'm going to talk with her.

LAURA:

Please don't. She is finally sleeping, and she struggles so with sleep.

BARON:

Regardless, I have questions.

The Baron and Dr. And Laura go to door of Carmilla's room only to find it locked again.

LAURA:

Strange that it's locked...

They are puzzled but Laura has the key and opens the door. They go to her bedside.

LAURA:

Carmilla. I'm so sorry to wake you. But I have to check on you.

CARMILLA:

Waking up What is it? What's wrong?

LAURA:

I had a nightmare. I just wanted to check on you and make sure you didn't...

CARMILLA:

Oh Laura...I did as well! A woman who looked like a cat came into my room and came to my bed.

LAURA:

The same dream! Again!

BARON:

We have been searching for you. Why were you not in your room minutes ago when we checked?

CARMILLA:

I was frightened by my nightmare. I went downstairs to get some water. I must have come back to my room while you were searching for me, and we just passed each other in the shadows.

FATHER:

Laura dear, you really do not look well. I fear you might be ill. Please, I beg of you to lay down.

DR. HESSELISUS:

I'll take her to her room and examine her. Come my dear.

LAURA:

Goodnight Carmilla.

CARMILLA:

Good night Dear Laura. I'll see you...soon.

The Dr. takes Laura across stage to her room to examine her. Father and Baron remain in the room with Carmilla.

BARON:

Carmilla, I would like to ask you a few questions.

CARMILLA:

I am so very tired. Can it not wait?

BARON:

I'm afraid it can't. Where are you from?

CARMILLA:

I don't like to talk about it. My life has been a kaleidoscope of happenings. The future becomes the present. Time seeps like a leaky bucket. There are wonders and evil all jumbled into one cauldron of boiling water.

BARON:

You are not speaking sense.

Carmilla sits up tall in the bed and stares maniacally at both of them for a beat.

CARMILLA:

Have either of you ever committed an unspeakable horrific act? Have you ever felt the stinging needle of justice?

The Baron and father are stunned and confused and look at each other. The Dr. enters the room.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Could I speak to both of you out here?

They leave Carmilla's room out into the hall

DR. HESSELISUS:

I examined Laura. I discovered a small pinprick on her neck.

FATHER:

But you looked earlier and said there was nothing!

DR. HESSELISUS:

It is there now. Lord Vinter, something is wrong. Very wrong.

BARON:

I agree. The evil we have been looking for might be in this very house.

FATHER:

Are you saying Carmilla...?

BARON:

I am saying nothing. For now. I just know that we need to keep an eye on both Laura and Carmilla through the night. I will be here in the hallway and watch her door. Dr., stay with Laura.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Understood.

FATHER:

Very well. *He looks heavenward.*

SCENE 16

Lights fade. Music up.(16) Transition to main house next day. Lights up. Music fades. The family is in the drawing room. Dr., mother, father, Laura, Lucretia, servants. Laura is laying on the couch. The Baron walks in.

MOTHER:

To Laura Are you feeling any better dear?

LAURA:

Yes. Slightly. What a horrible dream. Such a dreadful night.

MOTHER:

Today you rest. You will recover by tomorrow.

BARON:

Looking at the painting. This woman...Who is this?

MOTHER:

That is the Countess. She's a distant relative of our family.

FATHER:

The painting has been handed down. She died over 100 years ago. But she is buried on the property in the family mausoleum.

BARON:

She looks very familiar...*He takes out ledger and makes notes.*

There is a knock at the door. Father goes to door and opens it. It's Bertha.

FATHER:

Bertha! I wasn't expecting...

BERTHA:

I'm sorry to intrude and arrive without warning. But I must see the Dr. and the Baron. They are here? Yes?

FATHER:

Yes. They are in the drawing room.

They cross to the drawing room

MOTHER:

Bertha! *They embrace*

LAURA:

Bertha?

Bertha goes to Laura on the couch. They embrace.

BERTHA:

Hello my dear Laura. It's me. *They embrace.*

MOTHER:

What brings you here?

BERTHA:

I was at the trial of our Butler Mr. Gray for father's murder. I overheard the Baron and the Dr. say they were coming here to investigate. I had to come. *Goes to Baron* Mr. Gray is innocent.

BARON:

We are well aware. We are doing all we can to prove it.

BERTHA:

You saw my father. How his heart was torn out. All of his blood drained. That is not the doings of a man. That is a monster. And there have been others? The same way?

DR. HESSELISUS:

Yes. Four that we know of.

BERTHA:

And what have you discovered?

DR. HESSELISUS:

Not much I'm afraid. Nothing to prove his innocence.

BERTHA:

I think I know who is responsible.

BARON:

I would welcome any plausible resolution. What is your theory?

BERTHA:

We had a guest staying with us. Her name was Mircalla.

DR. HESSELISUS:

Yes. I recall you saying that at the trial.

BERTHA:

She wasn't just a guest. She wasn't anyone we knew. Her mother and her mysteriously came to our door one day. She said that she was in a great hurry and her daughter was too ill to travel, and she just left. And left Mircalla in our care.

Everyone becomes alarmed.

BARON:

Why have I not heard this before?

BERTHA:

It didn't seem connected. We were gone, and then we came home...that was it. I assumed Mircalla had just left on her own. Or the person who murdered father also murdered Mircalla. But when I overheard you talking at the trial I began thinking...what if this was not a madman? What if this was a monster? I started to remember the odd things about Mircalla and ...So I came to find you. Do you think it's possible?...Mircalla?... Why is everyone so quiet?

BARON:

I believe that woman...and your "Mircalla", have found their way here, to this house.

BERTHA:

They are here? Mircalla and her mother are here?

LAURA:

As in a trance Mother...I don't feel well. I wish to lay down.

MOTHER:

Of course dear. Are you all right?

MOTHER:

Yes Mother. Bertha, I would very much like it if you joined me. Come. *She Takes Bertha by the hand out of the room.*

BARON:

He is looking at painting. Then realizes something. Wait! Give me a pencil and paper. *Grabs pencil and paper* Carmilla...Mircalla...This women – this painting – what is her name?

FATHER:

That is the countess.

BARON:

FULL NAME! WHAT IS HER FULL NAME!?

FATHER:

It's...uh... Countess of Karnstein, Milarca

BARON:

Anagrams!

DR. HESSELISUS:

What?

BARON:

All these names...Milarca, Carmilla, Mircalla – they are all anagrams of each other. These are the same people. And I know where I have seen her before. That is Carmilla's mother. The woman who left her here that night!

FATHER:

That cannot be...But now that you say it, there is a resemblance.

BARON:

Tell me about her.

FATHER:

Well she was a widower. Her husband died soon after she gave birth to her only daughter. The family legend says that he was murdered and that the murderer was never caught.

BARON:

And what was his profession?

FATHER:

He was a usurer I believe.

DR. HESSELISUS:

The exploiters of the poor. Scourge of humanity.

BARON:

Flipping through his notes. Of course...I don't know why it had not occurred to me before.

DR. HESSELISUS:

What is it Baron?

BARON:

The murdered...all of them have a commonality. They were all Blackguards. Dishonest, unprincipled men.

MOTHER:

Has been staring at the painting and turns around excitedly. We must go to the mausoleum immediately!

FATHER:

Why?

MOTHER:

I know what needs to be done. We must go now! *They head quickly to the door, hurriedly put on jackets.* And we will need a priest.

They exit –The servants are now alone in the drawing room.

GOVERNESS MADEMOISELLE DE LAFONTAINE:

To Nurse and Butler I need to...get some air. This is all so unnerving. *She puts on jacket and exits.*

NURSE FLORENCE:

It's not air she's getting. She's off to see Mr. Graves.

BUTLER STONE:

What? Mademoiselle De Lafontaine and that Woodsman? They are...

NURSE FLORENCE:

They are. Don't look so surprised. He's a good man. She deserves her own happiness, Mr./Miss Kahlo, the painting cleaner, said that father threw him out of the house last night.

BUTLER STONE:

What had he done?

NURSE FLORENCE:

[He was angry about him talking of the old folk tale of the Moravian Nobleman.

BUTLER STONE:

The vampire legends. Will they never die. Rubbish.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Interesting what the Baron was saying about all the murdered men. Being Blackguards I mean.

BUTLER STONE:

What about it?

NURSE FLORENCE:

It's just...seems everyone who's being murdered...maybe they deserved it.

BUTLER STONE:

Nobody deserves to die because of some simple mistakes.

NURSE FLORENCE:

God works in mysterious ways. And I don't consider those mistakes. We all have choices. We can make the right one or the wrong one. Simple as that.

BUTLER STONE:

What a bunch of nonsense. It's not a God or a Monster killing those men. It's just a lunatic on the loose.

NURSE FLORENCE:

Maybe you should be a little more worried.

BUTLER STONE:

Why should I be worried?

NURSE FLORENCE:

I am referring to your wife, Mr. Stone.

BUTLER STONE:

What about her?

NURSE FLORENCE:

There are rumors. People sayin' her disappearance was no accident.

There is a pause as he glares at her.

BUTLER STONE:

Well people tellin' those rumors better watch themselves. That's what I say. Besides, nobody can prove nothin'. *He laughs.*

Music (17) starts The nurse is suddenly frozen, in a trance.

BUTLER STONE:

Aye? What's wrong with you?

Carmilla slowly enters room. She descends on the butler. He screams as lights fade.

SCENE 17

Lights out. Scene change to Mausoleum. Lights back up. Dr., Baron, Mother and father enter with a priest. They are holding swords. Music out.

FATHER BISHOP:

Pointing back to where they came from That man we passed back there in the woods he was dead! and that woman howling in grief over his body! Why do we not stop? We must provide comfort and aid!

BARON:

There is no time for that Father.

FATHER BISHOP:

Who is he?

FATHER:

That is...was...my Woodsman. Mr. Graves.

FATHER BISHOP:

He was butchered!

BARON:

As we explained Father, I believe we are dealing with vampires.

FATHER BISHOP:

I must go back out and give him last rights!

MOTHER:

It is too late for that Father, we must focus on our responsibility. We have to end this.

FATHER BISHOP:

End what? Vampires? This is insanity. You cannot listen to the superstitious villagers and their old folk tales.

BARON:

They are not folk tales Father. The enemies of God are among us.

They come to the mausoleum of the countess.

MOTHER:

Open it up.

FATHER:

Trying the door It's locked. I'm not sure if there is a key...

The door begins to open slowly, with a loud creak. The door fully opens and Milarca steps out. They all back away. Father Bishop crosses himself and prays.

MILARCA:

Have any of you ever committed an unspeakable horrific act? Have you ever felt the stinging needle of justice?

BARON:

It's her!

FATHER:

Countess Milarca!

FATHER BISHOP:

Stepping forward towards her I rebuke you evil and unclean spirit. Cast away!

Milarca raises her hand. He freezes in place. The others come at her with swords drawn. She waves her hand and freezes them

MILARCA:

You cannot stop us.

Carmilla steps out from the mausoleum

BARON:

Be gone! Leave us in peace!

MILARCA:

Leaving in peace is exactly our covenant.

MOTHER:

What Covenant do you speak of?

CARMILLA:

We have been tasked with ridding the world of its evil. Village to village. One village at a time.

MILARCA:

Those that have committed an unspeakable horrific act, will feel the stinging needle of justice.

CARMILLA:

None of you are to be condemned. Leave us to our work.

MOTHER:

And what of the Woodsman? What crimes did he perpetrate?

CARMILLA:

Sometimes others become a necessary sacrifice for the greater good.

MOTHER:

Exerting herself she breaks free from the hold Milarca has on her and steps towards them, sword drawn. This is not the way. You are not appointed by God or anyone but yourselves. You are nothing more than tools of evil itself.

MILARCA:

And yet, you wish to kill me. Whose tool would that make you?

Laura and Bertha appear behind them coming out of the mausoleum.

MUSIC STARTS. (18)

FATHER:

Laura? Bertha? Why are you here?

MILARCA:

They are chosen. They will carry on our purpose.

MOTHER:

You will not have my daughter!

In slow movement to match the music, Mother lunges and grabs Laura's arm and pulls her past her, Father grabs Bertha and pulls her past, Mother points her sword at Carmilla and Milarca. She raises her sword and as she swings blackout with a boom. (lights out boom SFX). Music out. Lights are out for a few beats, and then a lone spotlight comes up slowly on Laura and Bertha. They turn their heads slowly toward the audience in the quiet and a smile creeps on to their face. Spotlight fades. Music (18) continues as lights come back up into bows.

THE END