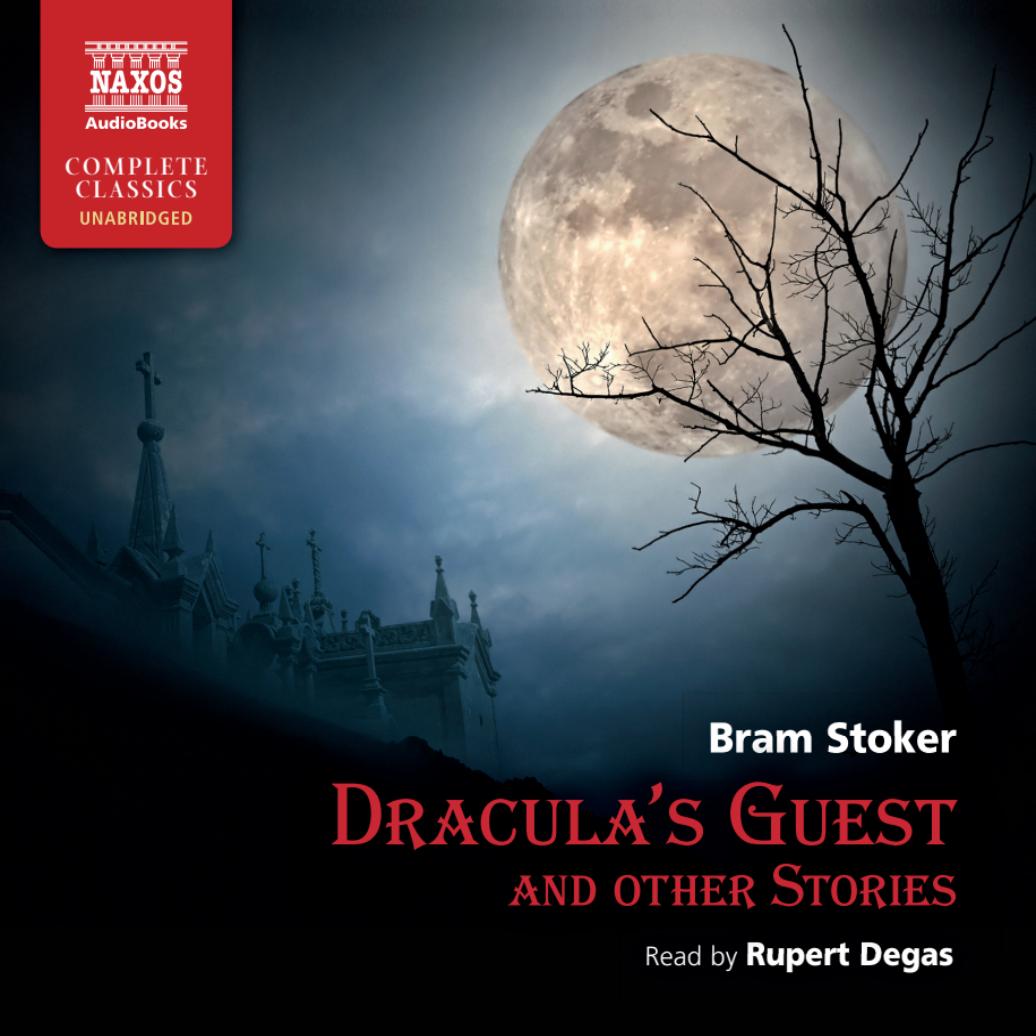




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The background of the book cover is a dark, atmospheric scene. A large, full moon is visible in the upper right, partially obscured by the bare, silhouetted branches of a tree. In the lower left, the dark silhouette of a gothic-style building with multiple spires and crosses is visible against a cloudy night sky.

Bram Stoker

DRACULA'S GUEST
AND OTHER STORIES

Read by **Rupert Degas**

1	Dracula's Guest	4:27
2	Whilst we were talking, we heard a sort of sound between a yelp...	4:56
3	With a light heart I turned down the side road through the...	4:34
4	As the snow had ceased to fall, I walked out from the shelter...	6:29
5	Gradually there came a sort of vague beginning of consciousness...	5:52
6	'What became of it?' asked the man who was holding up my head...	5:24
7	The Judge's House	7:00
8	After his examination of the house, Malcolmson decided to take up...	4:20
9	Then it was that he began to notice for the first time...	8:01
10	And so the early part of the night wore on...	4:28
11	'I shall look up my friend's habitation in the morning,' said the student...	6:44
12	When Malcolmson arrived home he found that it was a little...	7:42
13	Looking up, however, he saw in the dim light the great rat...	7:43
14	The Squaw	6:41
15	Amelia turned quite faint, and I had to lift her back from the wall.	6:44
16	We were the only visitors who had entered the Torture Tower...	6:29
17	When we got back to the chamber we found Hutcheson...	5:16
18	The custodian must have had in him some of the blood of his...	3:54
19	The Secret of the Growing Gold	6:39
20	Some weeks had since passed; and it was understood...	6:37

21	Geoffrey Brent seemed more happy than he had ever before...	6:22
22	For reply he merely kissed her and went out, closing the door behind him.	6:07
23	That very evening she came into the hall after her drive...	5:30
24	The Gipsy Prophecy	7:53
25	'Amen!' said Gerald. With an imperious gesture...	5:38
26	Breakfast was late the next morning, but during it Joshua received...	5:18
27	He could not find a single sharp knife in the sideboard...	2:47
28	The Coming of Abel Behenna	5:32
29	At length there came a time which Sarah dreaded...	5:51
30	During her brief walk on the hillside...	5:51
31	Presently Abel looked up and caught sight of Eric's face...	5:50
32	The 11th April was Saturday, so that in order to have the marriage...	5:53
33	The old fisherman's weather prophecy was justified.	6:46
34	The remainder of that night he passed lying on his bed...	4:42
35	The afternoon of that day, when the children had left school...	5:33
36	The Burial of the Rats	7:29
37	As I passed along I saw behind the dust heaps a few forms...	5:52
38	I was now sitting in the centre of the low hut...	7:11
39	'I once lost a ring – a beautiful diamond hoop that had...'	4:27
40	It was growing darker and darker; the night was coming.	5:25

41	As nonchalantly as I could I turned slightly on my stool...	6:02
42	In front was a bleak, flat waste that seemed almost dead level...	7:02
43	My pursuers rushed after me. Had only one of them held the rope...	4:54
44	That was the first sound I had heard from human lips...	5:34
45	A few of the men in front had powerful lanterns.	6:08
46	A Dream of Red Hands	6:07
47	When I got home I made my arrangements for the night...	6:13
48	Here Jacob Settle had to pause, for something seemed to rise in...	6:19
49	I listened as in a spell as Jacob Settle spoke.	6:52
50	Crooken Sands	6:40
51	Markam tried the dress on in his office one evening...	4:44
52	It might have been that the eagle's feather...	5:59
53	For a good while Mr Markam sat and looked at the rising moon...	6:08
54	As Mr Markam and the salmon-fisher walked together...	6:21
55	It was manifest after a few days that...	6:34
56	This did not in any way tend to lessen Mr Markam's concern...	6:47
57	So the two stood facing each other, as though in some weird...	6:38

Total times: 5:41:36

Bram Stoker

(1847–1912)

DRACULA'S GUEST AND OTHER STORIES

If we were asked to name the most famous fictional character in world literature, Dracula would surely come at or near the top of everyone's list. He is in fact more than a character: he is a modern legend, an icon, the centre of a complex web of images, ideas, emotions and baffling questions. That this is largely due to Dracula on film rather than on the page is undeniable; yet the book itself survives and overshadows all the film re-creations of it. It is powerful and haunting, full of originality and a deep sense, carefully and vividly constructed, of something utterly strange rising up to threaten human life. The man who wrote this masterpiece of horror is himself an enigma, wrapped in his own strangeness, which years of research have done little to penetrate, and which grows still deeper if we read his other works – several full-length novels and a number of stories –

like those presented here.

Bram (Abraham) Stoker was born in Dublin in 1847 into a socially well-connected family. He studied law but was more strongly drawn to literature and the theatre, and he knew the family of Oscar Wilde. In his twenties he worked as a civil servant but also wrote journalism and short stories. His meeting with the great actor Henry Irving in 1876 was a turning-point in his life. Irving's towering and magnetic personality fascinated Stoker, and in 1878 Stoker settled in London to work as Irving's business manager at the famous Lyceum theatre, which then functioned almost as an unofficial national theatre. For 25 years Stoker would be immersed in this hectic life, which brought him into contact with many of the leading figures of the time, and he travelled much abroad. He married the beautiful Florence Balcombe, for

whose hand Oscar Wilde had once been a suitor. Stoker continued to write, but his time was strictly limited, and *Dracula* was a work in progress for some seven years before finally appearing in 1897. After Irving's death in 1905, Stoker published his *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*, a valuable source of information on the great man.

Stoker had one son, born the year following his marriage. Stoker died in 1912, but rumours that the cause was syphilis are unsubstantiated. His widow survived him for a quarter of a century, and guarded his literary legacy well, fighting copyright battles with the youthful film industry. After the publication of *Dracula*, Stoker wrote eight more novels and many stories, and they all point to a mind drawn to horror and the supernatural in their strangest forms. Yet we have no real clues to his inner life: there is no bridge which links the lawyer, the busy man of the world and the socialite, with the man who wrote compulsively of another world filled with nightmare, horror, fear and cruelty. This is the enigma of Bram Stoker. His two best-known novels after

Dracula are *The Jewel of the Seven Stars* and *The Lair of the White Worm*. The first is probably the original 'Egyptian-mummy-comes-back-to-life' story, while for sheer strangeness the second almost defies belief: the story of a beautiful, aristocratic woman who periodically transforms herself into a gigantic and murderous snake. Both these novels have been filmed, the second in outrageous style by Ken Russell. Of the short stories represented here, nearly all seem to develop themes relating to the fear of pursuit; of being trapped, tormented and usually killed. Sometimes the agency is demonic, as in *The Judge's House*; sometimes human but utterly pitiless, as in *The Burial of the Rats*. Retribution is also a strong theme, as in *The Squaw*, which has a sharp, realistic setting, and an intensely physical horror. The influence of Poe's tales of mystery and nightmare is strongly evident throughout.

Dracula's Guest is an episode from the novel, cut because the book was growing too long, and published separately; this was a wise decision, as the story to some extent pre-empts what comes later. *The*

Secret of Growing Old is a Poe-like story of a murderer haunted by his actions. It cannot be claimed that Stoker wrote as well as Poe, with all Poe's fiendish penetration of the mind on the edge of insanity, yet some of these stories, once read, will never be forgotten. Stoker is more concerned than Poe with building up the social setting, and this sometimes results in a loss of atmosphere. *Crooken Sands* treats the theme of the mysterious double, the other self-pursuing and haunting the subject of the tale, but Stoker's attempts at social humour defuse some of the tension. The place Crooken Sands is modelled on Cruden Bay on the Aberdeenshire coast, where Stoker would often stay while seeking the solitude in which to work on *Dracula*.

Largely absent from these short stories is the sexual or biological threat that we find in *Dracula*, *The Lair of the White Worm* and *The Jewel of the Seven Stars*. In these novels there is a hidden, alien form of life that emerges into the pragmatic world of Victorian England, threatening the novels' characters with a kind of primitive horror, always accompanied by

much blood-letting, that seems to come out of some ancient, pagan darkness. When *Dracula* was published, Stoker's mother wrote to him of the 'terrible excitement' which the book arouses. 'No book,' she wrote, 'since Mrs Shelley's *Frankenstein*, or indeed any other at all, has come near yours in originality or terror.' True: but we wonder, what did his mother really feel about its scarcely veiled sexual undercurrents? What did the refined and elegant Florence Stoker feel when she looked into her husband's mind through the pages of his novels and stories? What did all the upper-class Victorians of Stoker's acquaintance really think of his work? How much did Stoker himself understand about the psychological motivation behind it? Did he realise he was exposing a bizarre, almost pathological set of obsessions in these novels and stories? We cannot say, for no contemporaries cared to dig beneath the surface of the sensational body of fiction created by this enigmatic man. But if Stoker had lived a little longer, he would certainly have found Freud and

his later followers turning a keen eye on these strange works.

Notes by Peter Whitfield



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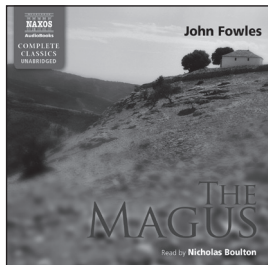
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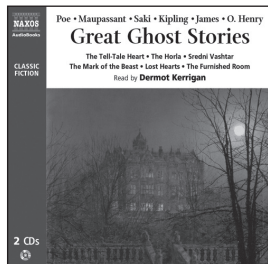
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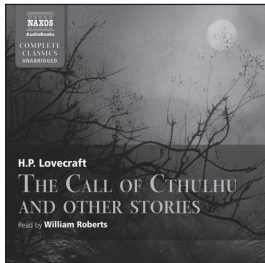
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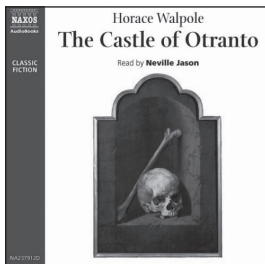
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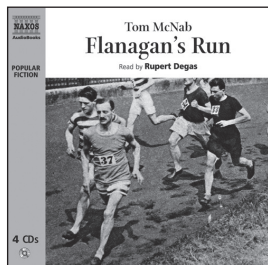
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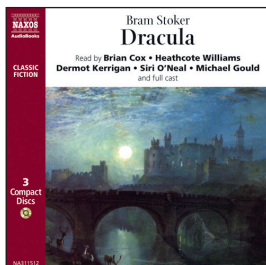
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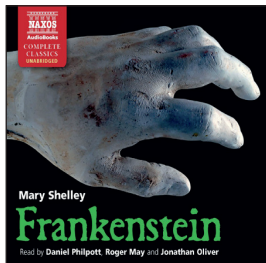
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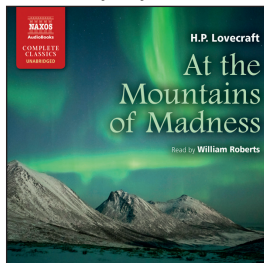
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Bram Stoker

DRACULA'S GUEST AND OTHER STORIES

THE JUDGE'S HOUSE, THE SQUAW,
THE SECRET OF THE GROWING GOLD, THE GIPSY PROPHECY,
THE COMING OF ABEL BEHENNA, THE BURIAL OF THE RATS,
A DREAM OF RED HANDS AND CROOKEN SANDS

Read by **Rupert Degas**

Best known for his masterpiece of horror, *Dracula*, Bram Stoker wrote a number of other novels and many short stories, all on supernatural themes or filled with a physical terror reminiscent of Poe. *Dracula's Guest* was originally part of the great novel, but was excised and published separately. Some of these stories, such as *The Squaw*, *The Judge's House* and *The Burial of the Rats*, rank very high among classic tales of the macabre. These stories deserve to be better known for the light they shed on the enigmatic author of one of the world's supreme literary adventures into the realm of nightmare.



Rupert Degas, a versatile and charismatic audiobook reader, has read a substantial list of books for Naxos AudioBooks, notably Haruki Murakami's *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* and *Dance Dance Dance*, Kafka's *The Trial*, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, Rose Tremain's *Restoration*, Tom McNab's *Flanagan's Run*, and *The Adventures of Brigadier Gerard* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

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