

The Tall Tales of
Dracula's Daggers



Dracula's Revenge

(In which an intruder in the crypt disturbs Vlad's kip...)

Gary Morecambe

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The Tall Tales of Dracula's Daggers

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藏书章



Dracula's Revenge



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Other titles by Gary Morecambe:

Count Krinkelfiend's Quest
The Return of the Count

The Tall Tales of Dracula's Daggers



Dracula's Revenge

Dedication

*To Count Henry, George, Bartolomé of Buckhorn,
Westonia and London*

*Extract from the writings of
Marvin The Blind Monk*

...And the one called the Prince of Darkness came to me on hearing of my strange powers. The task he set before me, and over which I had no say or control, was to create a number of magical daggers. Daggers that would contain inside them energy of colossal quantity, which would then join together in one mighty force and enter the soul of the Prince of Darkness, making him ruler supreme of our whole planet...



Tall and proud himself, he looked a small and bent figure in the presence of Vlad Dracula.

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✱ Chapter One

The Second Dagger

When Dracula scraped back the lid of his coffin, the light of a flickering candle danced on his sickly, transparent features. He had heard the footfalls on the cold cellar steps almost before they had happened.

“Who is it who disturbs my rest?” he asked, his voice deep and toneless.

“It is only I, oh great one,” answered Count Krinkelfiend, stumbling down the stone steps.

"Why are you here?" said Dracula, a note of irritation appearing in his voice.

"Well, oh master, you summoned me here!"

Dracula slowly and carefully removed the lid completely, and emerged tall and immaculate from his coffin. "Yes, I did," he said, looking Krinkelfiend in the eye.

"I was so excited to hear from you, my master, I rushed over at once. Oh, the honour you do me is surely—"

"Be quiet, Krinkelfiend," interrupted Dracula.

"Oh, right. Sorry."

Krinkelfiend stood still. Tall and proud himself, he looked a small and bent figure in the presence of Vlad Dracula.

"I have work for you, Krinkelfiend," Dracula finally said. Krinkelfiend found it hard not to jump for joy. For the last couple of years, he had lived in the hope that he would hear such words from Vlad Dracula.

"You do, master?" he smiled. Then Krinkelfiend remembered the last time they had met. "I'm sorry about the two-headed dragon," he said.

"It was nothing," said Dracula.

"My son, Rupert, was irritating me, you see. I thought it best to frighten him a bit."

"As I have said: it was nothing."

"Yes, indeed," nodded the count. "He has never been a full vampire, you see. His mother was mortal, and—"

"As I have said – twice, already – it was nothing!"

Silence.

Dracula took a step closer to Krinkelfiend. "You recall the dagger, no doubt? You, who found it? You, who thought you had awoken me from my slumber within the dagger?"

Krinkelfiend couldn't tell if Dracula was congratulating him on the past deed, or reprimanding him. He decided to play it safe.

"Well, yes, master," he said. "Though your return from it was an accident, I have to say. I had merely read of the dagger's existence and traced it to Viktoria Palace in Gertcha, and—"

"There is a *second* dagger!" Dracula interrupted.

"A . . . *second* dagger?" gasped Krinkelfiend.

"That is why I have been inactive this last few years. I have been awaiting news from various agents I have dispersed to likely places. And now. . ." Dracula

rubbed his hands together, a little how Krinkelfiend often would. "I have agents operating around the globe, and one has reported back to me from London. He has word that the dagger described has been seen on display in this city."

"This dagger, your greatness," said Krinkelfiend in a hoarse whisper. "Is it . . . powerful, too?"

"As powerful as the first," said Dracula, his dark eyes glazing over as he pictured the two identical daggers together for the first time in centuries. "Marvin the blind monk created them. Of course, it is currently inactive. It needs to be in my possession for its powers to be realized."

"But then—" began Krinkelfiend, visualizing the power Dracula would possess.

"Yes, Krinkelfiend. Then I would be the ruler of earth – nothing could prevent it. And one hundred years of darkness would reign, as the wise and remarkable Marvin predicted."

"But, my lord," said Krinkelfiend after a short pause for thought, "why did you not combine the daggers powers back in the early days – when Marvin first created them?"

Dracula tried to smile in an ironical way, but it hurt him to do so. "I turned my back on them," he admitted. "I had to. Firstly, Marvin died of some mortal illness that these human weaklings are always seeming to get. Then word reached me that my lands were under threat from my enemies. Battles were raging all over the homeland during this time."

"Where did the daggers go?" Krinkelfiend pressed gently, knowing this could be the only time he would ever find Dracula in a reflective, trance-like mood, and thus content to answer the count's questions.

"The first, as you know, I had hidden in Viktoria Palace. I knew the king. He, of course, had no idea I was a vampire. I gave him the dagger as a gift, and encouraged him to display it with his other daggers and artefacts, fully intending to one day return and claim it back when the wars were at an end. *You* saved me that task," Dracula reminded him. "The second. . ." His eyes glowed in the dim light. ". . .The second was stolen. I sensed its presence for some time after, but then that feeling faded. I realized it was lost. Lost and far from the homeland."

"I see," whispered Krinkelfiend.

"Until now!" said Dracula, suddenly spinning round to face Krinkelfiend full on.

He flicked his fingers and a dozen flame torches on the wall burst into light. "London, England, Krinkelfiend. That is where you are destined."

"Oh, thank you, my lord," bowed the count. "A busy city, I am told. Is the dagger . . . visible, shall we say?"

"Very visible. I have an agent who believes it to be on display at the British Museum."

"Oh, this is fine news indeed, master."

"My agent will fill you in on your arrival there," Dracula told him. "His name is Grog. He is unmistakeable, as you will discover."

"Very good, great one."

"But you must employ others," said Dracula. "I do not wish to hear of any slip-ups. No more interfering sons and their comrades in arms."

"What of Helsing?" said Krinkelfiend, the word uncomfortable on his tongue.

Dracula frowned. "Helsing *will* interfere for certain. It is the way of the Immortal Ones. But we can outwit him. And then, when the moment is right – when I, Vlad Dracul have command over

the planet – I will be able to finally destroy him.”

“Of course, master,” replied Krinkelfiend. Then he began thinking of Vermyn and the two oafs that Vermyn had employed. He knew no others from the daylight world he could trust. Unfortunately, it *had* to be them.

“I know of some humans,” he told Dracula. “I think they could be made available.”

“Excellent. Your coffin, with *you* inside it, sails tomorrow morning.” He pushed a packet into Krinkelfiend’s hands. “Travel details and all the money you could possibly require.”

“Thank you,” said Krinkelfiend, accepting the packet.

“Good luck,” said Dracula. “Grog will make contact with you in London. He will observe the harbour front at Portsmouth, where your ship will land, to be sure you are not followed.”

“Yes, great one.”

“And one last thing,” said Dracula. “If you are thinking of returning without the dagger, then it would be best not to return at all.”

Krinkelfiend gulped. What was he getting himself into in working for his lord and master?