

Corigliano · Adamo The Lord of Cries

BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT

GIL ROSE





The Lord of Cries (2021)

Music by **John Corigliano (1938)** · Book by **Mark Adamo (1962)**

A tragedy for singers and orchestra, adapted from The Bacchae of Euripides, with elements of the novel Dracula by Bram Stoker.

Disc 1

Act 1

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1 | Prologue: Taking the Mask. "I, Dionysus, son of Zeus" (Dionysus) | 3. 36 |
| 2 | Chorus: London in Chaos. (Chorus, Correspondent) | 4. 23 |
| 3 | The Odd Sisters. "He flies tonight, on dragons' wings"
(Sisters, Correspondent, Chorus) | 3. 23 |

Scene 1

- | | | |
|---|---|-------|
| 4 | Jonathan in Madness. (Jonathan, van Helsing, Seward, Lucy) | 5. 58 |
| 5 | Lucy's Entrance and Jonathan's Interrogation. "My God! Jonathan!"
(Lucy, Jonathan, van Helsing, Seward, Sisters) | 4. 31 |
| 6 | Aria. "And oh, how new! How pure we felt!" (Lucy) | 4. 21 |
| 7 | Lucy Departs; Seward Remembers. "Hush: no more now"
(Seward, van Helsing, Lucy) | 2. 13 |
| 8 | Aria. "Weakness! Weakness!" (Seward) | 7. 09 |

Scene 2

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 9 | Montage. (Lucy, Correspondent, Captain, Sailors, Jonathan) | 9. 13 |
| 10 | Interlude: Lightning over London. (Orchestra) | 0. 52 |

Scene 3

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 11 | The Stranger in Chains. (Maids -Sisters, Seward, van Helsing, Stranger - Dionysus) | 5. 59 |
| 12 | Aria. "His temple. How you profane it" (Stranger, Maids) | 5. 12 |
| 13 | Seward Resists. "He casts no reflection" (Van Helsing, Seward, Maids, Stranger) | 3. 43 |
| 14 | Duet, Interrupted. "Give him what he wants, Seward"
(Van Helsing, Seward, Lucy) | 2. 50 |
| 15 | Dialogue. "So I shall tend to him" (Lucy, Seward) | 2. 43 |
| 16 | Duet, Echoed. "July twelve: midnight..." (Seward, Lucy, Sisters) | 6. 50 |
| 17 | Dionysus on High. "Listen!" (Dionysus, Madwomen) | 2. 31 |
| 18 | Bacchanale: Finale, Act One. (Dionysus, Madwomen, Seward) | 5. 56 |

Total playing time Disc 1: 81. 27

Disc 2

Act 2 · Scene 1

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1 | Trio, Narrated. "The beauty of it!" (Sisters, Correspondent, Seward) | 3. 48 |
| 2 | Dialogue in the Ruins. "Listen a moment" (Sisters, Seward) | 2. 48 |
| 3 | Vocalise: Seward Fails a Third Time (Dionysus, Sisters) | 1. 28 |
| 4 | Seward, Seduced. "I ask" (Sisters, Seward) | 9. 11 |

Scene 2

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 5 | Lullaby. "Hush, darling: hush" (Lucy, Jonathan) | 8. 15 |
| 6 | Entrance of the Wolf-Prince. "Lucy..." (Wolf-Prince - Dionysus, Lucy) | 1. 34 |
| 7 | Lucy, Baited. "Your husband seems subdued tonight" (Wolf-Prince, Lucy) | 4. 18 |

8 The Wolf-Prince, Relentless. "Who is Lucy tonight?" (Wolf-Prince, Lucy) 7. 28

Scene 3

9 Danse Macabre. "I cannot say it!" (Van Helsing) 1. 12
10 Seward, Transformed. "Oh, Father, gaze upon me!" (Seward) 5. 25
11 Recognition Scene. "Look at the sky" (Van Helsing, Seward, Sisters) 3. 10
12 Vengeance of the Lord of Cries. (Dionysus, Sisters, Seward, Correspondent) 4. 28
13 Finale Ultimo. "The lure of frenzy" (Chorus) 3. 04

Total playing time Disc 2: 56. 10

Dionysus	Anthony Roth Costanzo , Countertenor
Correspondent	William Ferguson , Tenor
Agave	Leah Brzyski , Soprano
Autonoe	Rachel Blaustein , Soprano
Ino	Felicia Gavilanes , Mezzo-Soprano
Jonathan Harker	David Portillo , Tenor
Abraham Van Helsing	Matt Boehler , Bass
John Seward	Jarrett Ott , Baritone
Lucy (Westenra) Harker	Kathryn Henry , Soprano
Captain	Matthew DiBattista , Tenor

Boston Modern Orchestra Project

Conducted by **Gil Rose**

Odyssey Opera Chorus

Soprano

Allyson Bennett
Kristen Buabin
Ashley Victoria Jones
Aurora Martin
Laura McHugh
Erin Merceruio Nelson
Kay Patterson
Cynthia López Pérez

Mezzo-Soprano

Emerald Barbour
Jade Espina
Ashley Gryta
Kristin Hagan
Kyle Hutchinson
Kimberly Martinez
Madison Smith
Mauri Tetreault

Tenor

David Rivera Bozón
Colin Campbell
Daon Drisdorn
Brian Gonzalez
Thai Johnson
Srinivasan Raghuraman

Bass

Wayne Arthur
Keith Brinkley
RaShaun Campbell
Anthony Pilcher
Marcus Schenck
Juan Suarez

Chorus master

Mariah Wilson

Orchestra

Dana Oakes
Andrew Sorg

Flute

Sarah Brady
Rachel Braude

Oboe

Jennifer Slowik
Laura Pardee

Clarinet

Jan Halloran
Gary Gorzcyca

Bassoon

Ron Haroutunian
Greg Newton

Horn

Whitacre Hill
Neil Godwin
Alyssa Daly
Sarah Sutherland

Trumpet

Eric Berlin

Trombone

Hans Bohn
Alexei Doohevskoy

Bass trombone

Chris Beaudry

Tuba

Benjamin Vasko

Timpani

Craig McNutt

Percussion

Robert Schulz
William Manley
Michael Williams
Aaron Trant

Harp

Ina Zdorovetchi

Piano

Julia Scott Carey

Synthesizer

Yukiko Sekino

Violin I

Gabriela Díaz
Colleen Brannen
Piotr Buczek
Ben Carson
Sonia Deng
Nicole Parks
David Rubin
Betsy Hinkle
Aleksandra
Labinska
Sue Faux

Violin II

Katherine
Winterstein
Susan Jensen
Paola Caballero
Lilit Hartunian
Judith Lee

Annegret Klaue
Sasha Callahan
Kay Rooney
Edward Wu

Viola

Peter Sulski
Noriko Futagami
Alexander Vavilov
Joan Ellersick
Emily Rideout
Amelia Hollander
Ames Emily Rome

Cello

David Russell
Nicholas Johnson
Darry Dolezal
Ming-Hui Lin
Ben Swartz

Double bass

Anthony D'Amico
Bebo Shiu
Kate Foss

On the Music of *The Lord of Cries*

When Mark Adamo proposed telling the story of Euripides' *The Bacchae* using the characters of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, I was fascinated by the musical worlds into which this opera could lead me. Both play and novel — their divergent endings excepted — told the same terrifying, surreal tale, demanding soundscapes totally different from those in my first opera, *The Ghosts of Versailles*, which also melded phantasmagorical and naturalistic elements, but in an elegant, often comic score that reveled in its own artifice.

The Lord of Cries works differently. *Prologue: Taking the Mask* lays out the story's premise and the score's method. Dionysus, the Greek god of ritual madness, wine, and religious ecstasy, must return to a time and a world which has forgotten those cruel lessons that, long ago, he'd taught

to the people of Thebes. I first set the countertenor's speech in a spare, rational, aristocratic frame of piano, harp, and percussion. But then the god summons a raving chorus and an orchestra lashed by drumbeats, which tell of the terrors now plaguing London and launch the tale.

In drama, character generates plot: in sung drama, vocal contour should generate orchestral texture. So, to color the rôle of traumatized Jonathan, who rants in unpitched phrases, I frame his tenor with pointillistic solo instruments and undulating clusters of sound; he sings lyrically only in dreams, when recalling a time before he went mad. Lucy begins her rôle in tender phrases, supported by pure triads; only later, when she admits the rage she's repressed, do her harmonies grow jagged and heedless as her now-rangy vocal line. In Seward's music you can hear most clearly how these characters use tonality as a shield against



John Corigliano

knowledge. Seward traces a long vocal arc, from his sturdily key-driven first aria to his surreal solo scene at the opera's end.

Dracula promises that, no matter how deliciously we'll let them scare us for a time, our animal urges can be, literally, compartmentalized and slain with the right stake to the heart. *The Bacchae* counters that these urges will always be with us — that they *are* us — and all we can do is give them some of what they want, lest they rebel and take all we have. This insight convinced me that this opera needed a civilized, triadic, "surface" score through which you could hear, more and more, an obsessive, ecstatic music of truth. When our characters lie to each other and themselves, it's in clear keys in elegant *arpeggi*: the more truth they tell, the more we hear incessant drumbeats, trumpeting conchs, and dense clusters. One motive is made from the letters B-A-C-C-H-A-E: just

as Johann Sebastian Bach spelled his last name in pitches (B= B flat, A, C, H=B natural), I took Euripides' title and built of their letters a "tower of sound:" a *Bacchae* motive I use throughout, to remind the listener that Euripides' design tells a truth that Stoker's characters — and we, all too often — try desperately to avoid.

John Corigliano

On ecstasy and ruin

Notes on **The Bacchae** as an opera

First comes desire. Next comes taboo: those doctrines, religious or otherwise, demanding that human beings repress erotic desire and demonize its subjects. Those Biblical stories which veil, or stone, or magically virginize women, and these recent headlines describing how some pious bishop or anti-gay senator was dragged, blinking, from his boyfriend's flat: what have they in common? Only this: humans' need to blame and attack others for what they can neither resist nor accept in themselves.

The most searching theatrical exploration of this theme, and the one best suited to the opera house, remains *The Bacchae* of Euripides, written over 1600 years ago. Its plot is simple. An ecstatic, foreign god inflames the desires of the women of Thebes and threatens to dominate them

permanently unless their city accepts his divinity. The city's leader is, secretly, as violently desirous as the god is and the women are. But the leader cannot admit this. He denies the god as an alien fraud. The god gives the leader three chances to acknowledge what he is—what, in truth, they both are. The leader refuses; once, twice, three times. After that third refusal, the god seduces the leader himself, and wreaks on him a terrible revenge.

Classics don't age. That's what makes them classics. But — while the theme of *The Bacchae* is timeless — the play's enmeshment in arcane high-Athenian religion can mask its relevance to a contemporary audience. I wanted to tell this story in an idiom clearly intelligible to modern listeners. But I didn't want to locate it in so flatly contemporary a setting that the play's uncanniness would be lost.



Mark Adamo
© Henry Fair

And then I remembered Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, which is to *The Bacchae* what Nahum Tate's *King Lear* is to Shakespeare's: that is, it's the same story, with only a falsely happy ending distinguishing Tate's and Stoker's compromised copies from Euripides' and Shakespeare's terrifying originals. Euripides admitted what Stoker couldn't: that the monster isn't on the mountain, or in the city, but in the mirror. (Which is what makes the novel thrilling, but the play profound.)

I learned that, by superimposing *Dracula* onto the *The Bacchae*, I could accomplish two things. By using only what the book shared with the play, I could strip away all the needless Gothic kitsch of the novel to reveal its true, urgent subject. (This may be the first adaptation of the Stoker to include not one coffin, corpse, or crucifix, nor a single drop of blood; indeed, the name "Dracula" appears only twice in the libretto, and the word "vampire" not at

all.) And because the Stoker's Victorian England is more familiar to today's listeners than Euripides' Thebes is, the opera could use the novel to make the themes of *The Bacchae* clearer than even the original play could.

When researching another opera libretto I adapted from Greek sources, I came across the quote that "all classicism is neo-classicism;" meaning that, from earliest times, the past, in the theatre, has always been a mask we wear to speak more clearly about the present. I can't summarize more succinctly the method, and the goal, of *The Lord of Cries*.

Mark Adamo

The theater is not so much the place where humans set themselves off from the rest of nature, secure in their moral virtue, but the place, instead, where these fluidities and insecurities are enacted, these risks explored. Where, with pity, terror, and peculiar awe, a community pieces itself together from the fragments of limbs torn in ecstatic rage. Dionysus presides.

Martha Nussbaum, *University of Chicago*

~

Wer mit Ungeheuren kämpft, mag zusehen, dass er nicht dabei zum Ungeheurer wird.

He who fights with monsters might take care, lest he thereby become a monster.

**Friedrich Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*
(Beyond Good and Evil)**



Gil Rose, BMOP
© Robert Torres

Libretto

Disc 1

Act I

1

Prologue: TAKING THE MASK.

Dionysus.

From on high, a mysteriously beautiful young man appears.

Dionysus

I, Dionysus, son of Zeus,
have been here before.
Not to this city, no, but to another,
long ago;
To another pristine city that lied about
itself, to itself
And sacrificed its children before its
illusions.
I, Dionysus, son of Zeus,
I came down to Thebes.
I offered that city three chances to
acknowledge me, to honor me;
To learn from me, rather than from
terror, from blood.

They chose blood.
Still; they learned, I'd thought.
But, no.

Gradually the Chorus becomes visible.

So I, Dionysus, son of Zeus,
must come down again:
To this gray, granitic city in the proud
North
And teach once again my disconsolate
lessons.
I have my power, which does not fail me.
I have my women, who do not fail me.
But I need a name,
I need a form,
A way for people to recognize me.
Who shall I be?
Who shall I be?
Who shall I be?

2

Chorus: LONDON IN CHAOS.

Sisters: Correspondent; Chorus.

Chorus:

London in chaos!
The city's daughters missing under
moonlight,
Wounded of flesh, wild of eye,
the city a maelstrom of rumor, of
fright,
Of chaos!
London in chaos!

*Now appears a newspaper
Correspondent, visibly a creature of his
place and time — London, the 1890s.
As the Chorus refracts their language
into a strange, percussive ostinato, he
relays his latest.*

Correspondent

(spoken, amplified)
For *The Westminster Gazette*, 3
August. Hampstead is just the
latest neighborhood in London to
be exercised with a series of events

which seem to run on lines parallel
to those of what are known to the
writers of headlines as "The Kensington
Horror," "The Stabbing Women," or
"The Women in White." During the
past three days more and more cases
have occurred of girls or young women
neglecting to return from their strolling
on the Heath...

Chorus

Behold! Marvel! What miracle is this?
See: their throats encrimsoned by the
god's deranging kiss,
See the daughters of London, flamed
by the Master's spark,
Fleeing their curtained bedrooms,
swarming into the dark!
London in chaos!

Correspondent

In all these cases the girls were too
confused to give intelligible account
of themselves, but the consensus of
their excuses is that they had been
with three "odd Sisters." All of those

maidens who have been missed
at night have been slightly torn or
wounded in the throat. The wounds
seem such as might be made by a rat
or a small dog, and although not of
much importance individually, would
tend to show that whatever animal
inflicts them has a system or method
all its own...

Chorus

(whispered)

Who are in the streets, in the streets?
Who are in the woods, on the hills, in
the glades?

Sing of the joyful devouring: sing of the
tooth and claw:

Onward, hounds of frenzy, slaves to
Desire's law!

London in chaos!

London in chaos!

*Now into view—their wrists chained
together yet themselves untroubled,
possessed by a private glee — glide
three Fatal Sisters: Agave, Autonoe,*

Ino.

Correspondent

The police of the division have been
instructed to keep a sharp lookout
for straying girls, especially those
of marriageable age, in and around
Hampstead Heath: for any stray dog
that may be about; and, of course,
for the three "odd Sisters." But the
continuing unrest is turning greater
London into a maelstrom of rumour
and of fear...

Chorus

(whispering)

Maelstrom! Rumor! Fear!

Correspondent

Even the city's venerable Lord Mayor
Seward has been found dead of fright
in his bed...

Chorus

(echoing)

Dead! Fright!

Correspondent

...and in their terror the people have
turned to his only son, Doctor John
Seward...

Chorus

Terror! John Seward!

Correspondent

...leader of Carfax Asylum, "father and
comfort of London's mad"—to stop the
scourge and save the city.

Now mayor in all but name, Seward
rules the city with stony eye and with
will of steel: guards with weapons hunt
the streets, "protect" their women with
lock and key.

Chorus

(echoing)

John Seward!

Lock them in stone, bind them in steel!

Correspondent

...Some voice objections—curfews,
pistols? In this, free London?—but the

success of the doctor's Draconian
measures silences them: last night
his guards found the odd Sisters! and
swept them into cells in Carfax Asylum.

*The Correspondent's voice refracts,
echoes itself, becomes rhythmicized...*

Correspondent

Strange: when accosted, did they
falter? Did they flee?

No: (the strangest smile illumined their
faces,
They gave their wrists to the shackles'
embraces, saying...)

*...and the voices of the Chorus take
over the narrative.*

Chorus

Strange: when accosted, did they
falter? Did they flee?

No: the strangest smile illumined their
faces,
They gave their wrists to the shackles'
embraces, saying—

The bound Sisters have reached us.

3

Sisters

He flies tonight, on dragons' wings,
Under the smoking skies:
His high, thin voice:
Ecstasy and ruin!
Our brother, our master: the Lord of Cries!
Deny him not his place...

Correspondent

(speaking normally again)
Bold Seward will have none of it. "Lock
them in stone; bind them in steel."
Safe under guard, weird or mad, these
new prisoners will await his questions.
Foreign madness now may rule the
city: but, Seward vows, London will
return to reason yet.

Sisters, Chorus

Deny him not,
Deny him not,
Deny him not,
Deny him not his—
Deny him not his—

*A wave of orchestra sweeps us into the
next scene.*

4

Act I

Scene 1

JONATHAN IN MADNESS.

**Lucy: Sisters; Jonathan; Seward;
Van Helsing; Attendants.**

*Seward's chambers in Carfax Asylum:
high in a tower, the blazing white "eye"
of the building. A mirror: a portrait of
Seward's father, the late Lord Mayor:
a window, through which one can
glimpse the ruin of Carfax Abbey — a
once-grand cathedral, now collapsed
and overgrown. Fragile, reedy, young
Jonathan Harker, hair shocked white,
raves, bound to a chair. Tremulous Van
Helsing looks on in horror.*

Jonathan

To the mountain, to the mountain!
How, the blue flames on the rocky
plain? How, no face in the silver mirror?

*Behold, my reflection! "Ask for what
you want," they said with their wicked
red lips... Sing, sing, you children of the
night! I lower my lashes, I shiver and
admire: But no, it is unmanly--! Lucy!*

Van Helsing

The torments of the mad make one
doubt the plan of God.

*Seward — young, brittle, his coat white
as virtue — enters.*

Seward

"Yet all shall be well, and all shall be
well,
And all manner of thing shall be well."

Van Helsing

But what, what has befallen him?

Seward

Some months ago, a letter came.
Some petty *boyar* from the East
(I cannot now recall his name)
Presumptuously staked a claim

To Carfax Abbey.

Van Helsing

The ruined church.

Seward

The very same.

Jonathan

...worship at the altar of the oldest
god...

Seward

The deed, a clever counterfeit:
Ancient, yellow, brittle, creased—
But not a word of truth to it.

Jonathan

...and the thousand singing wolves,
and the drumbeats, the drumbeats...

Seward

Yet still, this Count demanded, with
adamant persistence,
that I or Father meet him:
But I refused to travel so vast and wild

a distance,
So Jonathan agreed to go and—
Well, how best to put it?

Van Helsing

Cheat him?
This deed seems authentic.
The Count may hold claim.

Seward

I take your point. Yet all the same:
Carfax is holy ground.
His kind have no place here.

_____ 5 _____

Lucy (*entering*)

My God! Jonathan: what has befallen
you?

*As Lucy enters, horrified to see her
husband's madness, Jonathan
suddenly calms, assumes an unearthly
gravity.*

Jonathan

Dracul, Dracula:

the Lord of Cries!

Van Helsing

The Sisters' very phrase!

Jonathan

Dracul, Dracula:
the Lord of Cries!

*Seward and Van Helsing wheel on
Jonathan.*

Seward

(*rapidly*)
Jonathan, concentrate,

Van Helsing

(*rapidly*)
Jonathan, think:

Seward

Tell us! Remember!

Van Helsing

Who were the criminals?

Seward

What did they do to you?

Van Helsing

What did they want from you?

Seward/Van Helsing

Jonathan, Jonathan, tell us, tell us!
Think! Reason! Think!

*But the moment has passed. Jonathan
raves again.*

Jonathan

Who, who is in the castle, and who,
who is in the chambers?

Seward

Weakness! Weakness!

*He hurls Jonathan to the floor. Lucy
gasps. Seward turns to his Attendants.*

Seward

Take him!
We shall break him of his weakness,

Or his weakness will break him.

Attendants move to take Jonathan.

Lucy

(*formally*)
Doctor Seward...

Seward

(*formally*)
Mrs. Harker...

Seward

(*simultaneously*)
I'm sorry you had to see him like this...

Lucy

(*simultaneously*)
It frightens me so to see him like this...

Lucy

Let me help him.

Seward

(*overlapping*)
You cannot help him.

Lucy

Then keep me near him.

Seward

(overlapping)

Do not go near him.

Van Helsing

Listen: listen! He speaks!

Jonathan, eerily calm again, speaks as if in a dream:

Jonathan

(serene)

He lands tonight, on his ship of ghosts,
Under the scudding skies.

His high, thin voice—

Ecstasy and ruin!

Dracul, Dracula: the Lord of Cries!

Deny him not his place...

Seward

Take him!

Jonathan

(still serene)

Suffering John Seward!

(a formula)

Now he has asked you once.

The Attendants take Jonathan away.

Lucy

Let me help him.

Seward

(overlapping)

You cannot help him.

Lucy

Then keep me near him.

Seward

(overlapping)

Do not go near him.

Lucy

But must you jail him?

Seward

overlapping

Indulge him, and you fail him.

6

Lucy

(non sequitur)

And oh, how new! How pure we felt!

And, oh, how true! How sure we felt!

As if some angel of virtue

Had whispered: "I'll never desert you..."

Stung (but why?), Seward looks at her.

Lucy looks away, remembering...

Lucy

Windswept and sunlit: the twelfth of
May.

He, trembling, brave in his morning

coat:

His ring on my finger, his pearls at my

throat;

Jonathan: Jonathan.

Jonathan, shining in bright clean air:

A drift of white petals, a drift of brown

hair!

The sky stood still for our kiss.

Even to breathe was bliss.

And oh, how new we felt!

And, oh, how pure we felt!

As if some angel of virtue

Had whispered: "I'll never desert you."

And oh, how true we felt!

And, oh, how sure we felt!

All we could feel was right:

All we could see was light!

But darkness falls early, this dreadful day.

The black branches shudder, the hot

winds rise,

And night-birds flee the devouring

skies.

Jonathan: Jonathan!

Jonathan, raving, gone mad with

fright:

Reason gone glimmering, hair gone

white!

The dry leaves rattle and hiss.

How have we come to this?

Seward

Hush: no more now. Trust us: yield.
 You will be the first to know
 If—no, *when*—he's healed.

*Van Helsing, interrupting, presents Lucy
 with a book.*

Van Helsing

His diary, Madam.
 We return it to you: unread.

Lucy accepts it, turns again to Seward.

Lucy

(*formally, as before*)
 Doctor Seward...

Seward

(*as before*)
 Mrs. Harker...

Lucy

(*as she leaves*)
 Jonathan:
 Even to breathe...

*She is gone. Seward stands suffering,
 lost in memory. He echoes Lucy's
 music.*

Seward

The sun stands still as his lips find hers.
 My breath goes shallow, my vision
 blurs.
 Her eyes are shining, her cheeks are
 wet:
 I shiver, I swallow, I seethe, I sweat —

Van Helsing

(*pitiless*)
 We still do not know what's befallen him.

Seward

Secure Carfax Abbey.
 Should anyone try to enter, bring him
 to me.

Van Helsing takes his leave.

Seward

(*in anguish*)
 The sun stood still as they kissed.

Weakness! Weakness!

(*To his father's portrait*)
 Oh, Father, listen to me!
 I am infected.
 I would not rave like this!
 I would not suffer, tremble, groan,
 I would not crave the kiss
 Of a woman not my own—

But now, just listen to me!
 I am infected.
 It is this foreign threat,
 It is this beast outside these walls.
 It has not triumphed yet—
 I still am priest within these halls—
 But it has weakened me:
 It terrifies me!
 Father, were you living, were you here,
 How would you advise me?

You'd say: keep hold.

You'd say: repress, restrain.
 You'd say: hold the horses of passion
 On a tight, on the tightest rein.
 You'd say: think cold.
 You'd say: the goal is plain.
 You'd say: if it can't be controlled,
 Then it can, then it *must* be slain.
 Begin!
 Begin, you'd say.
 Only fools, only women, doubt.
 It cannot lie within, you'd say:
 It lurks without:
 It lurks without.

And if I listened to you:
 We'd be protected.
 Nothing could lure me then:
 Nothing corrupt my very soul.
 I would be pure again.
 I would be rescued, be made whole,
 No more obsessed with Lucy,
 No longer cursed with Lucy,
 No more to ache for Lucy,
 No more to thirst for Lucy—
 This holy kill will save us from our sins.
 Thank you, thank you, Father!

The work: the hunt; the joy begins!

_____ 9 _____

Scene 2

MONTAGE.

Lucy: Jonathan; Captain; Sailors (TTTB); Sisters.

Four locations. Lucy's mirrored bedroom, on a high floor. Later, the shabby-genteel office of the Dailygraph newspaper, wherein the overworked Correspondent teletypes his reports: the salt-scored deck of the ramshackle Greek schooner Semele; and the rough stone crypt in Carfax Asylum to which Seward has confined the straitjacketed Jonathan.

First, Lucy. She wakes with a scream.

Lucy

That dream, again!
A second time it's come to me —
That dream, again:
That prince of night!

Something girlish in his dress,
In his long and flowing hair,
Yet something savage in his walk,
Something lupine in his stare:
A pagan dancer, to a strange, unholy
tune;
A prince of wolves, whose mother
is the goddess of the moon...
Ask for what you want," he said,
Ask it in..."

No, no dream: beware!
A prince of nightmare!

*Lucy begins to open Jonathan's diary.
Resists. Looks again.
Now we see the Correspondent,
teletyping in the iodine-lit Dailygraph
office...*

Correspondent

(spoken)
Cutting from the *Dailygraph*, 8 August.
One of the greatest and suddenest
storms on record has just been
experienced here, with results both

strange and unique...

*...and also the Captain aboard the
Semele, keeping his log of shipboard
events as his Sailors (TTBB) grow ever
the more restless.*

Captain

Sixteen, July.
Noon, set sail,
Crew: four mates.

Cloudless sky,
East wind: fresh:
Bosphorus Straits.

Captain, Sailors

Nothing untoward...

Correspondent

...The wind fell away entirely during
the evening, and at midnight there
was a dead calm, a sultry heat, and
that prevailing intensity which, on the
approach of thunder, affects persons
of a sensitive nature...

Captain

Nineteen, July.
Port fees: bribes.
Customs service.

Tensions high:
Crew, four mates:
Strangely nervous.

Captain, Sailors

Still, nothing untoward...

*Lucy has opened Jonathan's diary. As
she reads, Jonathan, delirious in his
asylum cell, joins her.*

Lucy, Jonathan

Forgive me, Lucy!
They will not let me be.
I do not want them.
I do not want to want them:
But they will not let me be...
*Jonathan falls silent. Now spoken, like
the Correspondent, Lucy goes on.*

Lucy

(spoken)

"In the moonlight opposite me were three young women, ladies by their dress and manner. I thought at the time that I must be dreaming when I saw them, they threw no shadow on the floor..."

Her speech cross-fades into the Correspondent's.

Correspondent

The only sail noticeable was a foreign schooner with all sails set: a Greek ship, from Volos, called the *Semele*. Before the night shut down she was seen with sails idly flapping as she gently rolled on the undulating swell of the sea: "As idle as a painted ship/Upon a painted ocean..."

Captain

Winds howling,
Strangely cold.
Something's growling—

In the hold?
Heavy fog,
Crew in terror—

Sailors

There is something:
Something...

Lucy's bedroom, and the asylum.

Lucy, Jonathan

Forgive me, Lucy!
They are transforming me.
I do not want them to.
I do not *want* to want them to:
But they're transforming me...

Lucy

(spoken)

"All three had brilliant white teeth that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips. There was something about them that made me uneasy, some longing and at the same time some deadly fear. I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire

that they would kiss me with those red lips..."

Correspondent

Then, without warning, the tempest broke: the whole aspect of nature at once became convulsed. The waves rose in growing fury, each overtopping its fellow, till in a very few minutes the lately glassy sea was like a roaring and devouring monster. The schooner *Semele*, with all sails set, was rushing at such speed that, in the words of one old salt, 'she must fetch up somewhere, if only in hell...'

Captain

Lightning flashing:
Men are cracking:
May rebel.
Gale: rising.
Rain: hissing.
Crew in panic:

Sailors

There is something onboard:

Something onboard!

The Captain is attacked: he vanishes. Jonathan, in delirious memory, in the asylum, echoed, off, by the Sisters.

Jonathan, Sisters

'Ask for what you want,
Ask it in,
Regardless if it's wrong for you—
Are you too strong for that?
Or do you long for that?
If you do,
Then tell me what you long for...'

Correspondent

Then, *mirabile dictu*, between the piers, leaping from wave to wave as it rushed with headlong speed, swept the strange schooner before the blast. The searchlight followed her, and a shudder ran through all of us who saw her, for lashed to the helm was a corpse, with drooping head, which swung horribly to and fro at the motion of the ship...

Sailors

(as the corpse of the Captain, lashed to the helm, looms into view behind them)

Can no longer

Be ignored—

Load the pistol:

Draw the sword!

Help us, Captain:

Save us, Lord!

Something's haunting us,

Something's taunting us,

Something's prowling:

Something onboard!

Correspondent

But strangest of all, at the very instant the shore was touched, an immense dog sprang up on deck from below as if shot up by the concussion, and, running forwards, jumped from the bow onto the sand, and disappeared into the darkness...

Lucy closes the diary. Jonathan in the asylum.

Jonathan

(an ecstatic vision)

He lands tonight, on his ship of ghosts,
Under the scudding skies.

His high, thin voice—

Ecstasy and ruin!

Ecstasy and ruin...

—————10—————

Interlude: LIGHTNING OVER LONDON.

—————11—————

Scene 3

THE STRANGER IN CHAINS.

**Lucy; Maids (Sisters;) Dionysus
(Stranger;) Seward; Van Helsing;
Attendants; Chorus.**

Late afternoon. Seward's aerie: as before, the ruin of Carfax Abbey visible. White-clad Seward enters to greet the waiting Van Helsing as three silent Maids (the Sisters, in disguise) tidy his already immaculate office.

Maids

(a child's chant)

His office is in disarray, disarray,
disarray,

His office is in disarray—

And disarray's disaster!

Seward

(entering)

"Still, all shall be well, and all shall be well,
And all manner of thing shall be well."

Bring the odd Sisters to me.

Now.

Van Helsing

I cannot do so.

Seward

Why?

Van Helsing

They were imprisoned:

Then came that storm.

Their guards insisted their bonds were fastened tight.

Yet somehow— when the thunder clapped—

Their doors unbarred: their shackles snapped.

And thus they vanished, laughing, into the night.

Seward

Is there good news?

Van Helsing

They caught an intruder in Carfax Abbey.

(inadvertently quoting the first Chorus)

Strange: when accosted, did he falter?

Did he flee?

No: the strangest smile illumined his face,

He gave his wrists for the shackles' embrace,

Saying---

Seward

I care not what the Stranger said.

Bring the intruder to me.

Attendants lead into Seward's presence

*a pale, lissome young Stranger
(Dionysus,) in exotic, "Eastern," flowing
clothing: bound, like the Fatal Sisters in
the prologue, at the wrists, and similarly
untroubled. Seward is spellbound.*

Seward
(rapt)

What eerie beauty:
Like a night-blooming flower!

(As Lucy sang, in her 1-2 dream)
Something girlish in his dress,
In his long and flowing hair,
Yet something savage in his walk,
Something lupine in his stare:
A pagan dancer, to a strange, unholy
tune;
A prince of wolves, whose mother
is the goddess of the moon...

Such eerie beauty....

Stranger
I am in your power.

Van Helsing
He says his name is Renfield.

Seward
(himself again)
He's in my net: unbind his wrists.
He won't be dancing out of this.
What were you doing at Carfax Abbey?

Stranger
Inspecting it for its rightful Master.

Seward
What do you know of Jonathan Harker?

Stranger
Just that he tried to cheat my Master.

Seward
Where is your master now?

Stranger
Perhaps he's gone.

Seward
What do you know of London's women?

Stranger
My Master goads them on.

Seward
What do you know of the odd Sisters?

Stranger
Wherever they are, my Ma—(ster is.)

Seward
What does your master want of
London?

Stranger
Only what is his.

*The Stranger's gaze is drawn to the ruin
of Carfax Abbey.*

Stranger
(to himself)
His temple.
How you profane it...

*Seward's chamber dissolves. All stand
within the shattered sanctuary of
Carfax Abbey. Late-afternoon sunlight
pierces the dust-dimmed rose windows,
bathes the broken statuary in blood-
red light. Lost in memory, the Stranger
walks the ruins, trailed by the Maids.*

Stranger
Before you built these marble towers,
Before you raised these iron gates,
Before this crimson glass, this gilded
plaster—
This temple was a moonlit glade:
Sacred to my Master.

Before you sculpted Mother Eve,
Before you painted Noah's Flood,
The cherubim, the virgin in her crèche—
My Master here would celebrate
His rites of blood and flesh.
They were
Rites of frenzy: rites of ecstasy;
Rites of hunger; rites of heat.
They weren't gentle, weren't tender,
Were not consoling; but were

complete.
 This child's gospel you profess now!
 Your every passion, you name a sin.
 You may assuage the priest without:
 But not the beast within.
 You enrage the beast within.

So give him back these toppled towers,
 Give him back these ruined gates,
 Allow him to reconsecrate this space.
 Acknowledge that you know him,
 And render what you owe him,
 And your girls return,
 Your wives return,
 Your loves return,
 Your lives return:
 All London, once again, abides in grace.
 But do not deny my Master:

Stranger, Maids

Deny him not his place.

*The chapel has vanished. All are back in
 Seward's chambers.*

Van Helsing

(to himself)

He casts no reflection!

Seward

"His place."

His place?

Where is the place for a phony *boyar*
 Waving a phony deed?
 Where is the place for a filthy heathen
 Scorning our noble creed?
 No place: no place in this godly city,
 This city of self-restraint:
 No place: no place in this *Western* city,
 Untouched by foreign taint —

*As one, the Maids quote, mockingly,
 Seward's soliloquy.*

Maids

"Oh, Father, listen to me!

I am infected.

I would not rave like this!

I would not suffer, tremble, groan,

I would not crave the kiss

Of a woman not my own—
 Weakness! Weakness!"

*Seward, incandescent with rage, strikes
 the Stranger to the ground.*

Seward

Tell me who he is, and what he wants!
 And how he overhears us, when alone!

Stranger

I've told you who he is, and what he
 wants:
 My Master only wants what is his own.

And these are his: these broken towers,
 These are his: these ruined gates.
 His privilege, to reconsecrate this space.
 Acknowledge that you know him,
 And render what you owe him,
 And your girls return,
 Your wives return,
 Your loves return,
 Your lives—

Seward

(as he ordered for Jonathan in I-1)
 Bind him in steel,
 Lock him in stone:
 Seize him!
 Cast him into the darkest cell:
 See if his master frees him.

Stranger

You don't know what you do, nor who
 you are.

Seward

Bind him in steel,
 Lock him in stone:
 Seize him!

*The Stranger, humming his aria, is led
 away by Attendants. He turns.*

Dionysus

(calmly)
 Obstinate John Seward!
(a formula, as Jonathan uttered in I-1)
 Now he has asked you twice.

Van Helsing is unable to contain himself.

14

Van Helsing

Give him what he wants, Seward.
Don't you see?
The Count's already won.
We don't know how to fight, or what
we're fighting:
He has just begun.

Seward

(as in I-1)
Carfax Abbey is holy ground.
His kind have no place here!

Van Helsing

Give him what he wants, Seward.
Look at me!
There's nothing you can do.
He's conquered our women, conquered
Jonathan:
Next he'll conquer you.

Seward

(his I-1 aria)

Old man: think cold.
Old man: the goal is plain.
Old man: if it can't be controlled,
Then it can, then it *must* be slain—

Van Helsing

Use your mind!
If we resist him any longer,
What more, what deadly havoc will he
wreak?
Are you blind?
Can you not see what makes him
stronger?
He's strong because he knows where
we are weak,
Knows when we lie,
Know what we cannot face,
What we deny...

Seward

to his father's image
Begin!
Begin, you'd say.
Only fools, only women, doubt.
It cannot lie within, you'd say:
It lurks without: it lurks without!

Van Helsing

Give him what he wants, Seward.
Give it free,
If just for Lucy's sake.
Look at what the Count has done to
Jonathan: your friend.
Faced with his dilemma, will you break?
Or will you bend?
Jonathan could only break.
Do not make the same mistake.
Give him what he wants, Seward.
Give him what he—

Lucy

(entering)
"Break?" Jonathan could only break?

Van Helsing

His mind has broken.
He will never recover.

(as he exits)

Give him what he wants, Seward.
Give him what he wants.

Van Helsing leaves Seward alone with the devastated Lucy.

15

Lucy

(echoing the strophe of Seward's I-1-aria)
So I shall tend to him
Each waking moment of my life:
Be nurse, be friend to him,
If I can no more be his wife—

Seward

But that is right.

Lucy

Yes, that is right.
(Quoting a child's catechism)
"And to do right is to be good,
And to be good is to know joy,

Seward

(joining her)
And so I say: today, I beam with joy!"

Lucy

The first day I saw you we sang that song.

In Carfax Abbey.

Were we six? Were we seven?

Seward

Seven. The age of reason.

Lucy

So long ago: so long...

She produces Jonathan's diary.

It's his diary. I wish he had destroyed it.
It's the truth of him. I wish I could avoid it.

Still: what it contains...

And: what it explains...

We need it. Please: Read it.

Seward takes the diary.

_____ 16 _____

Seward

"July twelve: midnight...

Forgive me, Lucy!

They will not let me be.

I do not want them.

I do not *want* to want them:

But they will not let me be.

All I want to be is good.

All I want to do is right.

But they come to haunt me,

Every night, saying—

Unseen, the Sisters echo him.

Seward, Sisters

'Ask for what you want,

Ask it in,

Regardless if it's wrong for you—

Are you too strong for that?

Or do you long for that?

If you do,

Then tell me what you long for..."

I should not go on.

Lucy

(*oddly relentless*)

Go on.

Seward

(*resuming*)

"July fifteen: before dawn...

Forgive me, Lucy!

They are transforming me.

I do not want them to.

I do not *want* to want them to:

But they're transforming me.

I only wanted to be pure.

I only wanted to be strong.

But then they come to lure me,

All night long, saying—

As before, the Sisters echo him.

Seward, Sisters

'Ask for whom you want,

Ask us in,

Whatever hell we make for you—

Whatever shell we break for you.

Are you too strong for that?

Or do you long for that?

If you do,

Then tell me what you ache for..."

Lucy

(*reckless, confessional*)

He proposed because he thought he should.

I accepted for the same reason.

We hoped we'd be exemplary:

At the very least, we'd strive.

So we did the very best we could.

And yet—reading this— I blame Reason.

For what's the point of being good

If you never feel alive?

Do you ever feel alive?

Seward

Mrs. Harker...

Lucy

You know my name!

Don't you yearn to feel alive?

Seward

(*anguished*)

You should not ask me!

Lucy

Tell me, Seward!

You are destroying me.

I've always wanted you.
I did not want to want you:
So you're destroying me.
I only wanted to be pure.
I only wanted to be dutiful.
But seeing you—so dour,
So beautiful—I have to ask you—

Lucy

Do you not chafe to
Ask for what you want,
Ask it in,
Regardless if
it's wrong for you?
Are you too strong for that?
Or do you long for that?
If you do,
Then tell me
what you long for...
I'll tell you what I long for...
For so long I've longed for...

Seward

It is not safe to
Ask for what you want,
Ask it in,

Regardless if
it's wrong for you!
You are too strong for that:
You mustn't long for that!
If you do,
Don't tell me
what you long for...
I've nothing that I long for...
I have never longed for...

Madwomen (SSAA)

(off)
Ecstasy and ruin!
Ecstasy and ruin!

*A rumbling in the earth. The walls
tremble. Van Helsing bursts in.*

Van Helsing

The Stranger has vanished!
Only a wolf within his cell!

Seward

Take her away, shield her!

Van Helsing spirits Lucy to safety as the

*asylum walls shiver. Suddenly on high
appear Dionysus (no longer disguised
as the Stranger) and the Fatal Sisters —
lupine, brilliant — calling into view the
madwomen of Carfax.*

17

Dionysus

Listen!
Listen to me, O my Sisters!
I am calling!

(Madwomen (SSAA)

Who? To whom listen? Whose call?)

Dionysus

Again! Listen! I call again!
The Lord of Cries, the Lord of Frenzy
calls again!

Madwomen

Dracul! Dracula! You! Lord!
Come to us: oh, be here, Lord!

Dionysus

Earthquake! Be here! Shake the world!
Come, shudder the foundations of the

world!

Madwomen

Earthquake! Be here! Shake the world!
Shudder the foundations of the world!

Dionysus

Dance in the woodland, tear the flesh:
Make the wounds holy!

Madwomen

Dance in the woodland, tear the flesh:
Make the wounds holy!

Dionysus, Sisters

(variously)
Rise, my sisters, from below, from the
maze:
Dracula calls his band!
Surge, my sisters: billow and blaze:
Make the walls shatter: make the
stones craze!
Dance in the woodland, tear the flesh:
Make the wounds holy!

Madwomen

Dance in the woodland, tear the flesh:
Make the wounds holy!

Dionysus, Sisters

Dracul, Dracula: Lord of Cries—
Dracula calls his band!
We are the godhead this man denies:
Open our glade to the soaring skies!
Dance in the woodland, tear the flesh:
Make the wounds holy!

Madwomen

Dance in the woodland, tear the flesh:
Make the wounds holy!

Dionysus, Sisters

Hear me, O Sisters, heed me, O Sisters;
Make them understand:

18

Boil and seethe and roil and rise,
Exalt your Master: the Lord of Cries!
*As Dionysus and the Fatal Sisters
exhort the Madwomen to destroy the
asylum, Seward struggles to be heard
over the maenadic din.*

Seward

This is holy ground:
Never a place in this godly city,
Not for you, not now, not ever—
We shall prevail!

Act II

Scene 1

Disc 2

DIALOGUE IN THE RUINS.

Sisters: Correspondent; Seward.

*Midnight. A park looms as a green oasis
against the bricked, squared streets:
every now and then, a young woman,
graceful as a ghost, appears from
the wreckage and darts towards its
green hills. But, in the foreground, only
wisps of smoke: only dust motes in the
moonlight; an eerie calm. Picking their
way through the wreckage, as at home
in it as if it were their parlor, come
the Sisters, beautifully and uncannily
arrayed.*

Sisters

(rapt, whispering)

The beauty of it!
It stops the breath!

Look: the tumbled buildings,
Look: the toppled trees,

Smell the smoke, the scent of burning
Luscious on the breeze.
Every wall has shattered,
Every street has cracked:
Nothing left entire,
Nothing left intact—

The beauty of it!
And still as death.

*As they embroider this contrapuntally,
the Correspondent appears, reporting:*

Correspondent

...Not only the city police but even
Her Majesty's army have been
thwarted in their attempts to reach
the besieged district of Carfax
Asylum, which collapsed in rubble
under circumstances still, at this
writing, not fully understood: stranger
still, the Army reports not one, but
numerous instances of would-be
rescuers rounding a final corner and
finding themselves not, as the extant
maps would suggest, directly in front

of Carfax but, instead, in some other quarter of the city altogether. The question of whether this is a widespread but hitherto undetected error of the city's cartographers is being investigated at the time of this dispatch...

Sisters

(finishing)

...The beauty of it!
And still as—

Seward

(off, roaring)
Silence!

Sisters

(acid)

Almost as still as death.

Enter Seward: his white coat ragged and smoke-stained, as exhausted as he is enraged.

Sisters

Doctor John Seward!

(merrily, as in I-3)
Your office is in disarray.

Seward

Who are you?

_____ 2 _____

Sisters *(variously)*

Listen a moment. Pretend we're wise.
Can you imagine no compromise?
If all this is due to the Lord of Cries,
(As well you know it is)
And all you need do is to recognize
That which you know is his—

(quoting Dionysus's aria)

Acknowledge that you know him,
And render what you owe him,
Let London, once again, abide in
grace.
Do not deny our Master:
Deny him not his—

Seward

No! He has no place here!

Visible to the Fatal Sisters but unseen

by Seward, Dionysus, as beautifully and uncannily arrayed as they, appears — and the Sisters, one final time, invoke the formula spoken by Jonathan in I-1 and the Stranger in I-3.

Sisters

Suffering John Seward!
First he asked you once.
Obstinate John Seward!
Then he asked you twice.

How many towers must topple:
How many fires roar?
For you: for her; for London—
We ask you one time more...

Seward

Not now, not ever!

Sisters

We ask you one time more....

Seward

Not now, not ever!

Sisters

Never? Never? Never?

Seward

Not now, not ever!
I shan't give up the fight.
He may be real, he may be true,
He is not *right*!
Let the city burn:
Let it disappear!
Long as I shall live,
He has no place here,
He has no place here,
He has no—

_____ 3 _____

Dionysus, Sisters

Ah!

Dionysus (still unheard by Seward) and the Sisters stop time with a strange, elaborate vocalise. This is a turning point. If Jonathan's mad scene was Seward's first test, and his interview with Dionysus-as-Stranger his second, this is his third: and he remains obdurate.

Sisters

Will you, then, do anything to stop him?

Is that what you want?

Seward

It is.

Sisters

Ask for it.

Ask for what you want.

Ask it in.

_____ 4 _____

Seward

I ask.

The Sisters begin to entrance Seward.

Sisters

Tonight: watch! The moon shall rise.

And, at its peak,

Dracul shall take a wolf's disguise—

Seward

A wolf?

Sisters

Listen! Yes: a wolf's disguise—
Silver; sleek.

And then, mark! Dracul shall run

Into the green:

And, from your daughters, choose one

To be his queen.

And last, hear! Dracul shall roar

His fierce call,

Fierce and most sweet:

And they shall boil forth, yes!

Out of the forest, into the street,

Yes, they shall boil forth once more,

And conquer all:

And conquer all!

Unless...

Seward

What must I do?

Sisters

(suddenly rapid, like Seward's strophe in I-1)

Take up the blade,

Pierce his heart,

Cut off his head,

Slay him!

Sisters, Seward

Take up the blade,

Pierce his heart,

Cut off his head,

Slay him!

Hunt in the woodland, tear the flesh:

Make the wounds holy!

Hunt in the woodland, tear the flesh:

Make the wounds holy!

Cut off his head,

Cut off his head,

Cut off his head—

Seward

But I cannot!

Sisters

(singly)

Why not? Why not? Why not?

Seward

(tempted)

I would need, then, to become him.

Sisters

Indeed.

But for a moment only.

Seward

To take his power from him:

I would need, then, to become him,

Would I not?

"Hunt in the woodland, tear the flesh:

Make the wounds holy?"

That is *his* way: *his* cry.

He is the beast: not I.

Sisters

But if it were the only way?

Of course, it's true:

He is the beast: not you.

But if it were the only way?

And for a moment only...

Seward*(tempted)*

If it were the only way...
 And for a moment only...

Sisters

You would know frenzy,
 You would know ecstasy,
 You would know hunger,
 You would know heat.

Seward**Frenzy...**

Ecstasy...
 Hunger...
 Heat...

Seward, Sisters

For a moment only...

Sisters

You'd not be gentle,
 You'd not be tender,
 Not be compassionate,
 But be complete.

Seward

Frenzy...
 Ecstasy...
 Passionate...
 Complete...

Seward, Sisters

For a moment only...

Sisters

Fulfill this mission,
 This sacred duty,
 And you'll be rescued,
 Purified.

Seward

Mission...
 Duty...
 Rescued...
 Purified...

Sisters

This once, to free the god within:
 First you must free the beast inside...
 You must *be* the beast inside...

Seward

The beast inside...

Sisters

(a bit louder)
 Take up the blade,
 Pierce his heart,
 Cut off his head,
 Slay him!

Seward

The beast inside!

Sisters

(louder yet)
 Pierce his heart,
 Cut off his head,
 Slay him: slay him!

Seward

I shall slay him:

Seward, Sisters

And I/you shall
 Rage, rage, with the demons of the
 night!

Race with the hounds of madness,
 Under the flaming skies!
 Sacred the work, and fierce:
 Savage, and slash, and pierce!

Sisters

(whispered)
 Ask for what you want:
 Ask it in.

Seward

For a moment only...

Sisters

(a bit louder)
 Ask for what you want:
 Ask it in!

Seward

For a moment only...

Sisters

(louder yet)
 Ask for what you want!

Seward

I ask: I ask; I ask!

Make me ecstasy and ruin:

Make me Lord of Cries!

5

Scene 2**LUCY AND WOLF PRINCE.****Lucy: Jonathan; Dionysus.**

Lucy's bedroom, and its windswept terrace. Within, Lucy tends to the muttering Jonathan. Moonlight sears the scene. Faintly, from afar, ululating women, shouting men, bullhorns, hoofbeats: but here, only the midnight breeze; only the cries of wolves.

Lucy

Hush, darling: hush.

Do not tremble: do not fear.

There is a horror, there's a beast outside these walls,

But not in here:

Never in here.

You are safe with me.

Jonathan

(muttering)

To the mountain, to the mountain!

How, the blue flames on the rocky plain?...

Lucy

No, darling: hush.

Slow your breathing: close your eyes.

We have defenders—no, we have heroes at these walls,

And they are wise.

I know they're wise.

So you are safe with me.

Out there, under that hot white moon,

Searing, pitiless as noon,

How are we to hide?

Where is there to hide?

No: better lock the doors, draw the shades:

Stay inside.

Always inside...

Jonathan

(suddenly alert)

No face in the silver mirror? Behold my reflection!!

Lucy

(begging for response)

Jonathan? Nothing for your Lucy?

Nothing?

(her I-1 aria)

Windswept and sunlit, the twelfth of May...?

Even to breathe...

(offering)

Water? Wine? Nothing?

Jonathan

(again in dreams)

Who, who is in the castle, and who, who is in the chambers?

Lucy

Nothing.

Jonathan subsides.

Lucy

Well, darling: sleep.

Do not tremble: do not fear.

No matter where, no matter how far you wander in your dreams,

I shall be here —

Forever here.

Yes, however grave the threat,

I shall be your amulet:

Ever near, ever true.

You are safe with me,

And—to my regret,

I am safe with you.

Jonathan is gone. Lucy empties a wine bottle into her glass. The wolf cries come closer.

Lucy

(suddenly impetuous)

Sing, wail, you children of the night!

Wail for the wild women,

Wail for the yearning girls!

Cloaked in your silver coats,

Sing from your savage throats!

Lucy aches to join you,

But she's yoked;
Choked by her husband's pearls...

Even to breathe:
Even to breathe!

*Dionysus, as the Wolf-Prince—half
man, half beast, all god— appears on
the terrace.*

————— 6 —————

Wolf-Prince

Lucy...

Lucy

(delighted)
My dream, again!
My prince of night!

Wolf-Prince

Lucy, whose very name means light!

Lucy, Wolf-Prince

(in unison)
This is the third time you/I have come

to me/you...

Lucy

Always, though, by moonlight: as if by
law.

Wolf-Prince

I prefer the shadow, the shade, for awe.
Ask me in.

Lucy

Not now, not ever.
'T'would be sin.
You stay there, I stay here.
That's the rule.

Wolf-Prince

You are cruel.

Lucy

Persevere.

*They laugh. They stroll, Lucy carefully
keeping to within the room, the Wolf-
Prince as carefully keeping to the
terrace. Their conversation falls into a*

familiar-seeming pattern.

————— 7 —————

Wolf-Prince

Your husband seems subdued tonight.

Lucy

(laughing)
"Subdued?"
You are clever.

Wolf-Prince

But surely he'll recover.

Lucy

They think not. They think never.

Wolf-Prince

Then how is Lucy, tonight?
Lucy, whose very name means light?

Lucy

(strongly)
Lucy beams with joy!
I beam with joy!
Now I must tend to him,

Forgo all semblance of a life,
Be nurse, be friend to him,
Neither his widow nor his wife—
But it is right.
I choose what's right.
(quoting the catechism from I-3)
And to do right is to be good,
And to be good is to know joy,
And so I say: tonight, I beam with joy!

Wolf-Prince

Ask me in.

Lucy

So: not so clever.
'T'would be sin.

Wolf-Prince

Then you should drink.

Lucy

There's nothing left.

Wolf-Prince

Ah, so you think.
But look again.

*She tilts the bottle. A magical elixir
sparkles into her glass.*

Lucy

How very deft.

She pours, and toasts him...

I drink to you, then,

My prince of night!

*...and drinks. Catching herself, but not the
Wolf-Prince, in the mirror:*

He casts no reflection...

*The Wolf-Prince begins the pattern again.
(This section is metrically identical to
the one beginning, "Your husband seems
subdued tonight.")*

Wolf-Prince

John Seward has withdrawn tonight.

Lucy

(laughing, but bitterly)

"Withdrawn?"

You *are* clever.

Wolf-Prince

Perhaps he'll reconsider?

Lucy

I think: not. I think: never.

Wolf-Prince

So, what of Seward, tonight?

Seward, in his coat of white?

Lucy

(more effortfully this time)

Seward glows with joy!

He glows with joy!

Yes, I was stunned by him.

He knew my ev'ry word was true,

Yet I was shunned by him

(Although I know he wants me, too)

Still, he did right.

He chose what's right.

And to do right is to be good,
And to be good is to know joy,

Wolf-Prince

No joy?

Lucy

Know joy!

And so I know: tonight, he glows with
joy!

_____ 8 _____

Wolf-Prince

(patiently)

Who is Lucy, tonight?

Lucy, so intent on being right?

Lucy

(furious)

Lucy's what her mother was!

Lucy is as Lucy does!

And Lucy tries her hardest!

Wolf-Prince

True!

But what does Lucy do?

(tenderly)

Lucy declines: Lucy defers.

And, little by little, Lucy blurs.

Playing a rôle that isn't hers.

For whom, Lucy: and why?

Lucy

(dogged)

...But it is right.

I choose what's right.

And to do right is to be good,

And to be good is to know joy—

Wolf-Prince

(inexorable)

Lucy dismisses; Lucy denies

How often, by moonlight, Lucy cries.

So, slowly—by inches—

Lucy dies.

For whom, Lucy: and why?

Lucy

(insistent)

...He glows with joy!

I glow with joy!

Wolf-Prince*(nearing her)*

Trained by nurses, nuns, and mothers,
Lucy only lives for others.

So, blanketed in obligation,

Lucy slowly smothers.

Gliding through her ev'ry task,

Lucy screams beneath her mask.

Lucy knows what Lucy wants.

Why can't Lucy ask?

Her husband is shattered.

Her love's taken flight.

Lucy's alone: bereft.

How much has it mattered

What Lucy's done right?

What does she have left?

Does she have heat?

Does she have ecstasy?

Does she have freedom?

Or a cage?

Does she have hunger?

Does she have frenzy?

Does she have anything?

Lucy

She has!

Wolf-Prince

Tell me: say what Lucy has!

Lucy

I'll tell you:

Lucy burns with rage!

I burn with rage!

Shall I be doomed by them,

Doomed to a cold— a widow's bed?

Yes, be entombed by them,

No longer living, not yet dead?

Give me heat!

Wolf-Prince

You shall have heat...

Lucy

Give me ecstasy!

Wolf-Prince

You shall have ecstasy...

Lucy

Give me freedom!

Wolf-Prince

You shall have freedom...

Lucy

Give me hunger!

Wolf-Prince

You shall have hunger...

Lucy

Give me frenzy!

Wolf-Prince

You shall have frenzy...

Lucy

Give me everything!

Wolf-Prince

You shall have everything...

Wolf-Prince, Lucy

And you shall/And let me

Sing, wail, with the children of the night!

Wail with the wild women,

Wail for the yearning girls!

Cloaked in your/my silver coat,

Sing from your/my savage throat!

Wolf-Prince

Ask me in.

Lucy

Ask you in...

Sting me with madness, stun me with wine,

Give me your body, return me to mine:

Ecstasy and ruin,

O Lord of Cries!

Come in!

Come in!

Come in!

**Interlude: COMES THE PITILESS
DAWN.**

Scene 3

VENGEANCE OF THE LORD OF CRIES.

Dionysus: Sisters; Seward;

Correspondent; Van Helsing;

Chorus.

Gray, shadowy daybreak: the still-smoking ruins of the asylum. Arrayed on high, like vultures on a castle wall, the Fatal Sisters and Chorus. Van Helsing staggers on.

Van Helsing

I cannot say it!

He drove his stallion into the night,
Laughing, crazed:
People scattering left and right,
Panicked, dazed;
Rearing, plunging into the park,
Galloping into the shadowed dark—
I cannot say it!

Now on foot, craving the fight,
Gripping the blade:
He sees the women, panting in fright,

Fleeing the glade;
One in particular catches his eye;
He lets out the most bone-chilling cry—
I cannot say it!
I cannot say it!
Now — as did the Fatal Sisters, in the beginning — enters Seward: half-naked, bloody, ecstatic, holding aloft the severed head of Lucy.

Seward

(as at the start of his I-1 aria)

Oh, Father, gaze upon me!
I am perfected!

In the guise of a wolf, he snapped, he growled:
But I knew him for what he was!
Through the wood, through the dark, I crept, I prowled:
I knew him for what he was!
He knew his guilt.
He knew what awaited him,
What blood would be spilt:
I think it elated him!
(as in the Prologue, I-1, I-3)
Because, when I approached him, did he

falter? Did he flee?
No: his eyes grew bright with the strangest lust,
He bared his throat for the blade's quick thrust, singing,

"At last, he comes, whom I've craved so long,
Under these moon-seared skies!
The life-giving blade—
My lover, my ruin!
Destroy and redeem your Lord of Cries!"

And, at last, I burn with joy!
I burn with joy!
I have kept hold.
I've said: repress, restrain —

(laughing)
(Cut off his hair,
Bind him in steel,
Lock him in stone:
Seize him!)

— I have held the horses of passion
On a tight, on the tightest rein.

I have stayed cold.
I knew the goal was plain.
I knew: if it can't be controlled,
Then it can, then it *must* be slain—
And now it is slain!
And now, *he* is slain,
So I burn with joy!
For to do right is to be good,
And to be good is to know joy,
And so I say: tonight, I burn with joy!

Celebrate, London!
See what I have done for you!
And now: Lucy!
Come and see what I have won for you.
Lucy? Where are you?
(coily)
Now I can tell you whom I've longed for...
Lucy?

Silence. Little by little the sun begins to rise.

Van Helsing*(anguished)*

Look at the sky.

Seward

Why?

Van Helsing

Look at the sky.

Does it look the same?

Seward

Yes. No. Wait. Maybe clearer.

The moon seems cooler: the dawn feels nearer...

Van Helsing

Look at yourself.

Do you feel the same?

Seward*(evasive)*

Lucy: Lucy!

I can ask for what I want, now:

Lucy?

Van Helsing*(pitiless)*

Do you still feel frenzy?

Do you still feel ecstasy?

Hunger?

Heat?

Seward*(dazed)*

Ask for what...

What did you ask me?

Sisters*(joyously, from the walls)*

For a moment only!

*They chant the phrase obsessively
as the sky blooms bluer and bluer,
pitilessly bright.***Van Helsing**

What is your name?

Seward

John Seward.

Van Helsing

Your father's name?

Seward

Also John Seward.

Van Helsing

The name of your closest boyhood friend.

Seward

Jonathan Harker. I've known him for life.

Van Helsing

The name of the woman you feared to love.

Seward

She was Jonathan's...she is...

*The Sisters stop chanting, look on
avidly.***Van Helsing**

Look at what you hold in your hand.

What do you see?

Seward*(not looking)*

The head of a wolf. But—

Van Helsing

Look again. Look closely.

What do you see?

*Seward forces himself to look.**Suddenly, on high, appears Dionysus.***Dionysus**

You see the vengeance of the Lord of Cries!

The glory of the Lord of Cries!

Three times I warned you!

"Deny me not my place."

And still, you scorned me:

Me and all my 'race.'

Race? Race? Are you blind?

Who are 'my kind?'

You, you are my kind!

You could not ask for what you want:

Ask it in:
So fearful of "infection:"
Now look at what you've done!
Look at what you've 'won.'
Behold your reflection!
No, no, no:
Behold my reflection!

*The ruins magically transform into a glittering palace of mirrors. Under the now-blazing sun, the images of bloodied Seward, aghast Van Helsing, poor Lucy's head, the exultant Chorus, **and the audience**, are magnified a thousand times. Orchestral cacophony seems to crush Seward under its weight. It takes him an eternity to respond.*

Seward:

Lock me in stone,
Bind me in steel,
Cast me into the dark.
Oh, Lucy...

He offers his own wrists to be shackled, as were those of the Sisters and the

Stranger. The Correspondent appears. While he still is suited as before, his hair, mysteriously, has grown as long and flowing as Dionysus's.

————— 12 —————

Correspondent

The curious case of Doctor John Seward—formerly respected as 'father and comfort to London's mad,' now, indubitably, regrettably, one of them—came to a tragic conclusion well after midnight in the wreckage of Carfax Asylum...

We are struck by the fact that in all the mass of material in which the record of the case of the odd Sisters and the wounded maidens is composed, there is scarcely one authentic document: only scribbled notes, journals, personal memoranda...

...even given Doctor Seward's formidable mental prowess and that of his eminent forebears, we could hardly ask anyone, even did we wish to, to accept these as

proofs of so wild a story....

As Seward is led away, the Chorus mourns, as if from a greater and greater distance.

————— 13 —————

Chorus

The lure of frenzy: the need for ecstasy;
The lure of hunger; the need for heat.
These are not gentle, are not tender,
Are not consoling: only complete.
Behold the error: behold the danger
Of thwarting passion! Naming it sin!
You may assuage the priest without:
But not the beast within.
You shall enrage the beast within.

And he shall crush your noble towers,
He shall break your silver gates,
Destroy your every fantasy of grace—
Lest you acknowledge that you know him,
And render what you owe him,
And deny him not—
Deny him not—

END.

Also available
on PENTATONE



PTC5186538



PTC5186537

Acknowledgements

PRODUCTION TEAM

Producer **Gil Rose**

Recording and postproduction engineer **Joel Gordon**

Assistant engineers **Peter Atkinson & Brad Michel**

Cover image **Dionisis Christofilogiannis**

Cover design **Marjolein Coenrady**

Product management & Design **Francesca Mariani & Kasper Van Kooten**

Special thanks to Davis Malm Attorneys, Susan Rose Recording Fund, Jean & Gene Stark and Gordon Getty, for their generous contribution to the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and its performance of *The Lord of Cries*.

This album was recorded in November 2022 in Mechanics Hall in Worcester, Massachusetts.

BMOP

PENTATONE TEAM

Vice President A&R **Renaud Loranger** | Managing Director **Sean Hickey**

Head of Catalogue, Product & Curation **Kasper van Kooten**

Head of Marketing, PR & Sales **Silvia Pietrosanti**

PENTATONE

AMERICAN OPERAS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

American Operas Series

The history of opera predates that of the United States. Going back to 16th century Italy, opera reflected a fascination with myth and was mounted for the benefit of the court. As opera spread its roots throughout western and eastern Europe it evolved as a public form of entertainment and increasingly drew upon history and literature as inspiration. The American Pilgrim settlers found such entertainment to be at odds with their puritanical ideology, but at the turn of the 18th century opera crept across the U.S. border as a European import. By mid-century William Henry Fry became the first American composer to pen an opera, but opera was still predominantly associated with European composers. This contributed

to many in the country viewing opera as an elite art form representing antiquated interests, in languages they did not understand. As the American repertoire has expanded over the centuries so have American audiences, drawn to contemporaneous topics played out in their native tongue. But American operas are no longer confined to listeners in the United States; the works of American composers have been increasingly heard throughout the world. American opera embodies the individualism of its homeland, and with each generation new musical language has found its voice in American opera — a voice that resonates with all who love the music, the drama and the brilliance that is opera.



Sit back and enjoy