

About Author

The fiction writer, Joseph Scovitch, is a US federal government worker located near Washington, D.C. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland at College Park. He is a native Marylander since 1949. He dabbles in short stories, trivia, history, archives, and Hollywood movies. He also contributes to JFK research. In this current effort in vampire arcana and mystic esoterica, he has tried to revive the old genre, renew certain themes, transpose the story, and transfer it into a newer direction. His motto, "Never Give Up!" and "Keep On Trying!" He has studied Kabbalah and other folklore—but he has not met Count Culandra or Count Dracula. Not yet.

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"The Jerusalem Vampire" updates and transposes the vampire legend to modern Israel in the 1970's. We find presented here an oral history of the event evolving during wartime. There is a large cast of minor characters, but the major ones are: Count Culandra (Dracula), Professor Hohveh, the Pope, and Golda Meir. From invasion to defeat, the essential battle is good-versus-evil, and theology-versus-ideology. The Hollywood approach may sometimes be evident, but the folklore and history of the paranormal type event are paramount. There will probably never be another literary effort comparable to "The Jerusalem Vampire". Give it a long midnight read. Good luck.



The Jerusalem Vampire
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Fultus™ Books



The Jerusalem Vampire

by

Joseph M Scovitch

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The Jerusalem Vampire

*Dedicated to: Bram Stoker,
Modern vampire fiction writers, intelligent and involved readers.
Also, to my assistant, Jessica.
And to Fultus Books.*

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WE SOMETIMES GET WHAT WE EXPECT FROM A VAMPIRE STORY. WE SOMETIMES GET
WHAT WE LEAST EXPECT. THIS VAMPIRE STORY IS IN BOTH STYLES AND TRADITIONS.
YOU BE THE JUDGE, AS WE TIP OUR HATS TO BRAMSTOKER, ET AL. GOOD LUCK

(JMS, 12/2004).

Scene I

From the Submarine Off Haifa's Coast, to the Surface

SERVANT:

Master, master! (peering into coffin, talking down to the corpse).

DRACULA:

(asleep in coffin) Oh my, oh. Well, what is it? (awakes). What an ungodly hour. Why are you hovering over me like a bat? Why are you staring at me like that? (awake, and rising up from coffin). Have you never seen blood on someone's mouth before? (wipes his mouth with his sleeve).

SERVANT:

Master, it is now time. The twilight is here. I have checked for it with the periscope. The time for the ascent to the surface is at hand.

DRACULA:

Egads! At last! At long last! I am most eager to leave these infernal waters. This is good news, indeed. This is a gospel of glad tidings.

SERVANT:

I will prepare the air-lock for your ascent in the scuba gear, Master.

DRACULA:

Thank you, cretin. And do not forget the guardian bags of holy earth. I must have that earth with me, or I am doomed. As you know, the holy earth must always repose with me in my sacred abode, in the Tabernacle of the New Covenant, my coffin.

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SERVANT:

Yes, Master. I know the ways of the Vampire Covenant. I understand completely. You love the earth just like Anteus loved Gaea. Thou shalt prevail!

DRACULA:

Well, well, my talkative Ganymede—what else did you want to tell me? Aren't there at least nine other commandments?

SERVANT:

I have put the earth into two plastic bags, Master, and have filled the bags with helium, for the ascent. The sacred Transylvanian earth is safe. The third bag has your change of clothes in it, along with several other disguises. All is in a state of readiness, Master. You must prepare yourself quickly.

DRACULA:

Good, very good. Now, are you sure that you and the others will be able to manage this submarine without me?

SERVANT:

Yes, Master. We shall never be detected by the incompetents who man the Haifa radar. You see, we have a sympathizer, a recruit, right in their midst--pledged to confuse, alter, and delay the periodic reporting of the radar readings.

DRACULA:

Excellent! Now, I really should be getting ready to leave. Oh, oh, um, oh. (yawns now and stretches himself). Sleep can be so refreshing. (Servant exits to another part of the submarine momentarily.) But sleep must give way to the bitter cup of reality. For I, I must soon leave here, (puts on his wet-suit for the scuba ascent), and must offer myself to a New Generation. So be it. I have a very special mission in the Holy Land. There are so many out there to convert to my own point of view (he bares his great fangs). Ah, I do hope these aqualungs work. I simply cannot walk on the water. In fact, we vampires hate water in any form!

SERVANT:

(re-entering) This way, Master. This way, into the special chamber for

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the ascent. Now, please test the air apparatus, and get ready with your bags. Do not panic. We will be monitoring you. Now, tie the bags around your waist. They will help you also to get to the surface much more quickly.

DRACULA:

(to the servant, and to the others now watching him resolutely) Do not despair, my children! This effort will bring us new blood for our movement. We cannot fail!

(Dracula exits into the chamber, and we hear waters rushing in, and then there is total stillness, with a whoosh of air-bubbles).

SERVANT:

(watching scanner screen) Bon voyage, and good luck, Master!

OTHER CREW-MEMBER:

Peace be with you, Count Von Dracula!

(Scene ends with sound effects: ocean water movement, air-bubbles; Dracula successfully swims ashore with the three inflated helium-filled bags.)

DRACULA:

My, what an exhausting experience (sits down on the sands)! Now, here I am in another world, a new domain, a new kingdom to conquer. Who ever would have thought that I would get this far, to a deserted stretch of Haifa beach? My earth-filled helium bags floated quite well. This is progress, real progress. I, Von Dracula, have invaded the Holy Land. I can scarcely believe it. It is a dream come true! I had better change my clothes behind that series of rocks over there (he talks into his walkie-talkie, linked to the submarine). Those reeds will also be quite useful for stashing away the scuba gear. Everything is o.k. here, over and out.

(Dracula exits to the rocky area. Then sounds occur: there is an approaching jeep with one Israeli soldier in it.)

SERVANT:

(aboard submarine) I hope that Count Von Dracula does not suffer a defeat in Israel similar to that of the Palestinians.

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CREW-MEMBER:

Don't be silly! The Count's wisdom is ten times that of King Solomon, and a thousand times that of Yasser Arafat!

(Scene shifts back to the Count on the beach).

DRACULA:

I'm glad I finally got that scuba gear off. It was uncomfortable. I was so lucky to see those rocks and those reeds. I hear a jeep approaching! Sounds ominous. I do hope that my Hebrew lessons will fool this nosy intruder, who is invading my sphere of mental concentration. (Monologue in anger) I have to, I simply have to get to the Jerusalem area, and no one will be allowed to get in my way. No one! No mortal can stop me! (laughs) Time is on my side—in fact, I've got all eternity! Ha-ha. Praise the Vampire Covenant, for now it is getting dark. Dusk has gone now, but I have arrived. It is a new day, and a new night, in the Holy Land.

(Sound effects, headlights are blaring on a jeep. The jeep driver sees Dracula only as an old man carrying two or three sacks along the sandy beach.)

SOLDIER:

(calls from highway) Good evening, old man. (Approaches) State your name and your business in this area. I don't want to have to shoot you. I may, in fact, have to evacuate you from this area.

DRACULA:

(As old man) But why, my son?

SOLDIER:

Because there are many Arab terrorists reportedly moving down into this area from the North. Now state your name.

DRACULA:

Comrade, I am your fellow citizen, Andra Culandra. I am a refugee, now resident in the Mount Carmel zone. I am a jack-of-all-trades. I was simply beach-combing in this area. There is surely no harm in that. I must have wandered too far to the North. I truly regret my error (throws away the walkie-talkie into the moving ocean water).

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SOLDIER:

(comes much closer) You are forgiven. Now, show me some identification.

DRACULA:

Here (hands him some papers). Here are my papers. You will find that they are all in order.

SOLDIER:

Yes (checking them), yes, they do seem to be in order.

(Sound effects in distance; a burst of machine guns is heard).

DRACULA:

It sounds to me like the danger of the terrorists is very real, indeed. They seem to be approaching Haifa.

SOLDIER:

They do indeed (he touches his gun tightly). Like the wolf on the fold, they descend. I told you that this was a very dangerous area to be in.

DRACULA:

Yes, my son. It is much more dangerous than you realize.

SOLDIER:

We must go back to the South, to Haifa at once. Get in the jeep, now!

DRACULA:

Certainly. Here, take my bags, (hands bags to obliging soldier, and gets into jeep).

SOLDIER:

(as jeep is moving) What did you say your occupation was?

DRACULA:

Oh, a beach-comber, and a writer of poetry, a professional beggar, as well as a philosopher.

SOLDIER:

I see. Tell me, Mr. Culandra, what do you have in those bags?

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DRACULA:

(clutching bags) In these two, some grain. And in this one, some clothes, and some seashells.

SOLDIER:

(lighting cigarette as he drives) How do I know you are not in the black market? Huh? How do I know you are not some sort of a double-agent? Huh?

DRACULA:

God forbid! An old man like me? My young warrior, are you serious? Why, my brother knows Golda Meir personally. And on my mother's side, there is a family tie to Mayor Kollek of Jerusalem.

SOLDIER:

(drily) That is all rather interesting.

DRACULA:

It is much more than interesting. It is pioneer history. And pioneers are not criminals; they are the life-blood of this country. The younger generation must have more respect for the older generation. You simply must respect an old man like me. You must respect me. Do you understand? You must respect me (staring into the eyes of the soldier).

SOLDIER:

(numbly) I must stop this jeep for a moment. I am tired.

DRACULA:

Yes, you must pull over gently. You must stop now. You will respect me, as I am hypnotizing you. You will obey me. Now, stop this jeep.

SOLDIER:

Yes, Master (stops the jeep). I will stop the jeep as you have ordered.

DRACULA:

That is good, but not good enough. I see now that I cannot "have" you.

SOLDIER:

(in trance) You may have me, Master.

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DRACULA:

Unfortunately, I cannot have your blood because you have those two Star of David tattoos on your arms. You are protected from my powers. But, nevertheless, I can use you. You will obey me. I am now Master from Galilee to Sinai (bares his fangs).

SOLDIER:

Yes, Master.

DRACULA:

Now, give me those keys to the jeep.

SOLDIER:

Yes, Master. I will do as you say (slips from trance momentarily, and shoots Dracula with gun, but Dracula does not die).

(Sound of a gunshot rings out).

DRACULA:

You fool! You bloody fool! Now get out of my jeep. I will punish you for that. (Sound effects of guns in the distance can be heard). You can go wander in the desert, since you will not allow me to have your precious blood. I will keep your gun, too.

SOLDIER:

Yes, Master (exits from jeep).

DRACULA:

You are going to be punished in the desert for shooting me. Thou shalt not kill, my son.

SOLDIER:

Yes, Master.

DRACULA:

I must leave you now. Good-bye and adieu! (jeep roars off, soldier is still in the trance, immobile).

SOLDIER:

(waving) Good-bye, Master! (sounds of gunshots are heard in the distance).

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DRACULA:

(to self, as he is driving away with his three bags) I must drive away very quickly from this battleground. Those silly terrorists may even shoot out my tires. And I just don't have the strength to carry all my bags in my mouth as a bat. I have not yet recovered from that fatiguing experience in the Haifa waters. It nearly killed me, going into the water like that. I must be more careful.

(Sound of a rocket exploding in the distance is heard. Loud explosion shakes earth, dust cloud.)

I must hurry and get away from here or else those Arabs will destroy this jeep and my bags of sacred earth. I do regret that I could not make that Israeli soldier one of my new recruits. Alas! He is now surely a martyr in the desert. Oh well. There will be others, many others. At least 666 others! (roars on down the road, machine guns in distance are heard). Now, I had better dim these headlights on this jeep, for I don't want those Arabs to try to ambush this jeep. Nor the Israelis!

(Sound effects of gunshots getting closer).

SOLDIER:

(wandering in trance, past some cacti, he stumbles and awakens from hypnosis) Where am I? Why, I'm out in the desert! What happened? Where's the jeep? What happened? Hmm, I hear gunshots in the distance. I'm in danger. I was, I must have been in a trance. That old man, he's the one! That old man did this to me. But how? I don't really know how. Oh-oh, more gunshots, and they're getting much closer. My gun? Where is it? I don't have it! That old man must have it in the jeep. Drat such luck! I had better hide in that direction. I think I hear the ocean over there. It must be over there. Yes, I can see it from this sand ridge. I had better hide behind those rock ledges down there. I will signal my position back to base camp with this walkie-talkie from my backpack. At least, I still have my knapsack, even though I did lose the jeep to the old man.

(Sound effects of more gunshots).

DRACULA:

What fools these mortals be! (roars on down road, down the coast of Israel). These fools! They actually think that they can harm me with

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bullets. Hmm. I have lived generations and generations, and yet these presumptuous mortals will only live a few years. They have some nerve, in trying to confront me. I could, of course, transform myself into a bat, bent on biting them all. I really could. I'm only using this silly jeep because I need to transport my sacred earth intact. Being without some blood feast for such an extensive period, makes me rather weak. And, of course, the salt in that sea water has fatigued me, making me feel rather stiff—like the statue of Lot's wife. I really should sneak into the Jerusalem area as a bat, but for now I will have to be contented with the liability of a mortal form. I could just as easily sneak into Jerusalem as a bat. I do think that I'll try and find a hiding place in the caves near Hebron, just south of Jerusalem. I'll go there first. I think I will have more privacy in those caves, more privacy for blood rituals (bares his fangs).

(Scene shifts to night-time artillery battle on a distant battlefield).

FIRST SOLDIER:

(to another soldier nearby) There seem to be some bats hovering in this area tonight. Did you notice them?

SECOND SOLDIER:

No, I didn't.

FIRST SOLDIER:

(pointing) Look there! I see one!

SECOND SOLDIER:

Yes, I suppose you are right. I see several now. I wonder what it means? There is no water out here in the desert. I guess the bats seek blood from the corpses. But what can we do? We cannot go out there and bury the war dead---not in the midst of this artillery barrage on our position.

FIRST SOLDIER:

Do you really believe that bats seek the blood of the dead?

SECOND SOLDIER:

Why, yes. Of course. Don't you?

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FIRST SOLDIER:

Don't be silly! That only happens in the movies.

(Sound effects, machine-guns fire, bombs drop in the distance).

SECOND SOLDIER:

(lifting head from foxhole) Look, over there! (points).

FIRST SOLDIER:

What's the matter? What do you see?

SECOND SOLDIER:

Some of the corpses, look! They seem to be rising! Can it be?

(Bats hover and buzz overhead. There is a very huge bat. It is Dracula.)

FIRST SOLDIER:

Impossible! It must be some sort of illusion. It's a trick. It must be a trick! The dead cannot walk. Some intruders must be hiding on the battlefield with the corpses.

SECOND SOLDIER:

Look! The corpses are all coming this way! Let's fire on them, now!

(Machine-guns blare out on all sides).

FIRST SOLDIER:

They are not even affected by our guns. Look! They are still approaching us. They are coming from all directions.

SECOND SOLDIER:

It must be a trick.

FIRST SOLDIER:

No, it's a nightmare!

SECOND SOLDIER:

They must be robots or something. We had better get out of here.

FIRST SOLDIER:

Yes, we had better retreat.

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SECOND SOLDIER:

Look! It's too late, Shmuel. They're everywhere. We are doomed. Look, they are encircling us.

FIRST SOLDIER:

(holding onto second) Moshe, what will we do? Our guns are of no use!

SECOND SOLDIER:

Let us both pray (they meditate silently).

(Overhead as a huge bat, presiding over the terror, Dracula transmits a telepathic message, as the vampire corpses from all over the recent battle-field, all covered with dirt and blood, draw the circle closed around Moshe and Shmuel.)

DRACULA:

Now, do not be afraid my two new, young recruits (voice of bat from above). It most definitely will not hurt you. You only have to throw off those religious symbols which you wear. Throw away such odious things, and join me. Join us. Join the brotherhood. Now do it! No more King David stars. Now do it!

SOLDIERS:

(in unison) Yes, Master (in a trance).

DRACULA:

My philosophy shall prevail. I will tolerate no religious fanatics. Never. I must now drink deeply of your blood. We all must. Come to us willingly, and there shall be no pain (approaches them both as a human figure in a long black cape; all other vampires follow him closely, all with hysterical eyes). I simply must initiate you. You will now share your eternal life with all of the other vampire trainees (he finishes biting them both in the neck).

SOLDIERS:

(in unison) Yes, Master. All hail, Count Von Dracula!

OTHER VAMPIRES:

(Together) All hail, Count Von Dracula!

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(Each vampire trainee bares his/her fangs, and then takes some blood from the new recruits. Two or three women soldiers are also seen in the group of vampires.)

DRACULA:

(in human form) Now that we have finished with that formality, I want to ask you all a very important question.

ALL VAMPIRES:

(unison) Yes, Master.

DRACULA:

Whom among you are good carpenters?

TWO IN CROWD:

We are, Master.

DRACULA:

Fine, I will need you two immediately. You see, I must have a modus vivendi. In other words, I must have a coffin. I want a wooden coffin built, into which I can readily pour the sacred Transylvanian earth, from my plastic bags. Now, please raise your two hands again. Fine, I see you now. Fine-looking volunteers.

TWO IN CROWD:

(coming forth to forefront) We will do the carpentry work, Master. We are experts at it. We can build you an Ark or Trojan horse, if we have to. We will build you the finest wooden coffin in the entire Middle East. It will rival King David's Tomb. We will build your coffin for the sake of the Vampire Brotherhood.

DRACULA:

(aside to woman in crowd) My, how noble are the sentiments of these two creatures.

TWO IN CROWD:

We long to please you, Master, in every way possible.

DRACULA:

(gleefully) Excellent! Excellent! By Timnah's copper, and by Sodom's

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salt, I simply must have that coffin built. I must have that sacred earth put into a safe resting place.

TWO IN CROWD:

We will make you more secure than all of the atoms of Dimona. We will guard you more resolutely than even the guards at Nahal Rubin's nuclear reactor.

DRACULA:

Fine! Splendid! Now, let us all go back to the caves at Hebron for the rest of this night. We have finally established a living and viable colony in the so-called Holy Land. Now, we must all turn our attention to the return to the caves.

SOLDIER IN CROWD:

But why, Master?

WOMAN:

Yes, why? We deserve better than an aliyah or exodus into eternal darkness.

DRACULA:

You ask, why? Such ignorance! Why, you say? To await the terrible dawn, that's why. When Lucifer's star is fading, then we are in trouble. Let's go, now! No more questions. Daybreak is death!

ALL:

(unison) Yes, Master. (Exit all the vampires, in sort of a trance; sort of a goose-stepping manner).

(On a distant radio, one hears Barry Manilow's song, "Daybreak" in play.)

(Scene shifts. Meanwhile, at a local Haifa Command Post of the Israeli Army, there is a violent altercation going on. Voices are raised in anger. The jeep-driving soldier is being questioned about the loss of the jeep.)

JEEP SOLDIER:

I swear to you, Commandant! I swear by all that is holy. I am telling you the whole truth about that strange old man. Why should I lie?

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COMMANDANT:

Why shouldn't you? To save your own neck, perhaps? To sell the jeep on the black market, perhaps? After all, you have lost us a valuable jeep, and you really don't have any idea why, or even how. Why should I believe your story about this old man?

JEEP SOLDIER:

Listen, the old man put me into some sort of a trance. It must have been, like, like hypnosis or something. Perhaps it was hypnosis. He had this, this incredible mental power! He stared at me, like, like, . . .

COMMANDANT:

Like what?

JEEP SOLDIER:

Like an animal in the darkness. It was frightening. He had this incredible mental power.

COMMANDANT:

And you too, have an incredible mental power---a wild imagination!

JEEP SOLDIER:

(weeping) I swear to you--this is the truth, by everything sacred to me.

COMMANDANT:

(Changing from the authoritarian tone to a more compassionate tone)
And you, you had no mental power at all over him?

JEEP SOLDIER:

No. I was absolutely helpless.

COMMANDANT:

(Viciously) And hopeless! You have no brains, Uri.

ASSISTANT:

Wait! My Commandant, this arguing and sarcasm gets us nowhere. Let us be reasonable. Uri has told you his story. I have heard every part of it. I believe him. I know him—and I know that he is telling you the truth.

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COMMANDANT:

The truth? Oh, don't let friendship get in the way of the truth. An old man impervious to bullets? Fantasy, sheer fantasy!

ASSISTANT:

But if Uri says he remembers vaguely that he shot the old man, then I believe he did, because I know Uri to be an expert marksman. I trained him, myself, you see. Uri did not have any gun with him out there, when we found him. He would never just throw away his gun in enemy territory—it would be suicide. Someone must have taken his gun, and his jeep.

COMMANDANT:

But if Uri fired on the old man at point-blank range, then why didn't the old man die? This bizarre story is too incredible to believe. No man can elude the force of bullets at point-blank range.

ASSISTANT:

Perhaps the old man wore a bullet-proof vest. Perhaps he was a collaborator?

COMMANDANT:

And perhaps, Uri drinks too much.

URI (JEEP SOLDIER):

No, never! I never drink, Commandant.

COMMANDANT:

Not even during Passover?

URI:

No.

ASSISTANT:

You see!

COMMANDANT:

But Uri, firing a gun on an old man, speaking Hebrew no less? It just makes no sense. None at all.

URI:

Well, at the time, I felt a terrible evil surrounding his presence. I sensed it deeply. It was some sort of evil force. I cannot explain it now. I only know that I wanted to be free of that old man.

COMMANDANT:

This is all rather disturbing to me.

ASSISTANT:

Well, in any case, I have alerted all other area patrols to be on the red-alert for the old man in our marked jeep. All we can do now is to wait.

COMMANDANT:

You know, your theory may be correct.

ASSISTANT:

Which one?

COMMANDANT:

About the old man being a collaborator. We will send a sketch around at once. Uri, you will help us compose it. This old man may indeed be an Arab collaborator.

URI:

It is quite possible, but I doubt it.

COMMANDANT:

Why do you say that?

URI:

Because I vaguely remember that I heard gunshots probably aimed at the jeep. It was down the road a few kilometers. If the old man is indeed a collaborator, then the other Arabs in the area do not yet know it---or he failed to signal them.

COMMANDANT:

The whole incident sounds very strange.

ASSISTANT:

Yes, very strange indeed.

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COMMANDANT:

A hitch-hiker, a beggar, a linguist, a poet, a philosopher, a farmer with sacks, a beachcomber, a collaborator. Heaven knows, this man sounds devious!

(Scene shifts. It is near dawn at a deserted market place in Jerusalem. A bat screeches past overhead. The lighting is rather poor. We hear some footsteps in the distance, coming rather hurriedly. We soon notice two Hasidic rabbis coming across the plaza, hats and long beards, wearing their elaborate ritual religious garb also. They are both out of breath, but they begin to talk with one another in a rather animated manner.)

RABBI NO. 1:

Faster! Let us hurry to the Wailing Wall for our morning prayer quorum. We must not be late. It's almost dawn! Hurry!

RABBI NO. 2:

It is getting late, agreed, but please have the patience of Job with this old man. I cannot run as fast as you. Oh, look there, up in the sky. Look!

RABBI NO. 1:

What is it?

RABBI NO. 2:

Look there on the Eastern horizon. There seems to be some sort of a strange cloud there. It looks as if it were a bat.

RABBI NO. 1:

A bat? You must be having hallucinations. Ophelia would have liked your type; not to mention Polonius.

RABBI NO. 2:

But I insist! Look there (he points the way, tracing the image of a bat with his extended finger-tip). It is no mirage at all. That cloud is indeed in the shape of a bat. It hovers at dawn over the Holy City of Jerusalem. It is a sign, an omen.

RABBI NO. 1:

A sign of what?

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RABBI NO. 2:

A sign indicating an evil force. Something evil is coming. Now look.

RABBI NO. 1:

What is it?

RABBI NO. 2:

As the morning's orb of orange pierces the blood-red sky, that dark cloud moves away. Look at how quickly it flees. It is moving onward, toward the Northwest. So rapidly. The cloud, it has disappeared!

RABBI NO. 1:

Disappeared?

RABBI NO. 2:

Yes. It has totally disappeared. It has gone North. It has obviously moved on toward the shores of Haifa. There will be grave trouble in the North. I predict it. That cloud is a sign of approaching doom. The Angel of Death had once spared some of the worthy citizens of Pharaoh's court, but the worthy citizens of Haifa may not be spared. I sense a very great danger coming to this country from the North. Maybe even danger here in Jerusalem!

RABBI NO. 1:

What?

RABBI NO. 2:

I have an uneasy feeling, a premonition of danger, a grave danger to Jerusalem.

RABBI NO. 1:

Another silly premonition! You and your irrational premonitions. You are always forecasting the end of the world, you prophet of doom.

RABBI NO. 2:

But this time, it will all be different. I assure you, something is wrong, terribly wrong. Someone must act swiftly in this matter. I'm very worried. I will have to telephone my good friend, Professor Israel Hohveh, at the University, and I will tell him of my strong suspicions. He is, you know, an expert in the occult sciences. Remember that the Kabbalah teaches us that the Lord dwells on a mystic cloud hovering

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over Jerusalem. The Holy City is most special to the Lord. I must contact the Professor. I simply MUST!

RABBI NO. 1:

Well, let's do that after the prayer service, OK? We're already running late. Come on, let's go.

RABBI NO. 2:

Agreed. Let's hurry.

(Both rabbis exit).

(Scene shifts to a darkened room, with dangling beads and Oriental ornaments, all lit by candles, reeking of incense. Professor Israel Hohveh is seated with a spiritualist-seer, the famous henna-haired, Reena Halevy, a medium. They are about to begin a seance, calling on the spirits of the dead.)

REENA:

The rabbis may be over-reacting about this ominous cloud of doom, Professor, but I will now try to go into my trance, and we'll see what happens. I may be able to gather some information for you from the dead ones, my informants in the other world.

PROFESSOR:

Yes, you must try to do this for me. I assure you, Reena, it sounded very serious to me. I know the signs and the dangerous portents. Evil is at hand. Not only this cloud, but also the plague of worms has destroyed our citrus crop. And someone, an unseen hand, actually extinguished the eternal flame at one of our World War II Memorials to the Dead. These are all an index of some hidden force of evil now invading the country. You, dear Reena, are the foremost seer in Jerusalem, and perhaps in all the Middle East. You must, simply must ferret out the evil source of these problems.

REENA:

(modestly) I may have to raise up the spirit of the great Samuel for you, Professor, but I will try my best. Now, let us concentrate, while I say the magic formulas to the Land of the Dead.

(Reena mumbles incantations.)

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(Silence in the room, then a terrible wind howls all about them. Reena continues to mumble prayers. Then the wind ceases.)

PROFESSOR:

Reena? Reena, is something wrong?

REENA:

(Screams out in hysteria) IT IS TIME! IT IS TIME! (has a temporary seizure, and collapses).

PROFESSOR:

Reena! Are you alright, Reena?

REENA:

(Suddenly sits upright, eyes unblinking, in a trance, indicating hysteria) I am not Reena (rasping, scratchy voice). I am the one sent to you from the Underworld, Professor Israel Hohveh. I am the voice of the Witch of Endor. I am going to speak to you through this woman, Reena Halevy. I must warn you, Professor, of a False Messiah coming to take over the Holy City of Jerusalem.

PROFESSOR:

(nodding) Yes, yes, of course. Tell us what we need to know, great Witch of Endor. We are in dire need of your guidance.

REENA (WITCH):

There is a force invading this country which I urge you to destroy. You must persevere in this mission, Professor. For you alone know enough about demonology and mythology in order to conquer the sea devils and air devils trying to take over the Holy Land. There is, you see, a plot afoot to take over even the Western Wailing Wall, a plot to desecrate every last vestige of Solomon's Temple. It is a plot to turn the Wailing Wall into a crypt for vampire trainees.

PROFESSOR:

(clutching throat, taken aback) God forbid such a thing!

REENA (WITCH):

It is a time of testing the purity of the Holy City of Jerusalem. You must stop these vampires at all costs, Professor. Stop them, before they

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pollute the Holy City, and bring Armageddon to the Holy Land. But I, I cannot do it all for you. However, I will guide you, Israel Hohveh. I will help you as much as I can in order to fight this evil. You seem most righteous among all men and women at the Hebrew University. I thus can trust you. I will not let any evil force conquer you. Here now, touch me. Take Reena's hand into yours (extends hand to the Professor).

PROFESSOR:

Why yes, of course, but I don't understand. Oooh! (a charge of electricity left Reena's body, and shocked the Professor).

REENA (WITCH):

Now, you will have my magic with you, Professor. For you see, that jolt I just gave you was a magic hex. It safeguarded Daniel, and it will guard you. In fact, it will guard you for exactly forty days. In that space of time, you will have to conquer the vampires. That is all I can say now. . . .

PROFESSOR:

But exactly how?

REENA (WITCH):

How should anyone fight evil? How should anyone fight evil? How should anyone fight evil? (voice fades out with an echo in the distance).

PROFESSOR:

(to self) How should anyone fight evil? You fight evil with things which are holy. That's it! I think I have the answer. I hope I have the answer.

REENA:

(wobbly, swooning and moaning over the table-top, holding head) Oooh. I feel so weak, Professor. I feel like, like an ice-statue. So cold! I must have been with the Dead.

PROFESSOR:

Don't worry. Be still now, Reena. I think you did an excellent job (cogitates with hands to lips). A splendid job! I was able to talk

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through you with the Witch of Endor. She warned me of all the dangers now facing us. The dangers come from a vampire plot to take over the Holy City. There will be bloody deeds by a False Messiah of everlasting life.

REENA:

God forbid! I have no magic to fight off vampires. Why must it be this year in Jerusalem?

PROFESSOR:

Be still. Do not worry too much, Reena. The Witch of Endor placed a magical spell on me, a hex to be able to conquer the vampires within forty days. That's all the time we have to save Jerusalem and this entire country from the bloody deeds of a False Messiah. The Witch of Endor mentioned the coming of sea devils and air devils. Those must be clues, but I don't know how they fit in with the entire picture. The danger in this situation is growing. I hope there is no danger to Madame Meir or to Moshe Dayan. Evil was once a problem in Rome and at Marienbad, and now even in Jerusalem!