

A man with dark hair and a serious expression stands in the rain, holding a large black umbrella. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a dark tie. The background is a dark, rainy street with a stone building and a fence visible in the distance. The overall mood is somber and mysterious.

The Circle Broken

A Tale from the *Dracula* Aftermath

Ellis

The Circle Broken

A Tale from the *Dracula* Aftermath

By Sam Ellis

Based on

The Works of Bram Stoker
Co-authored via ReTell™

ReTell™
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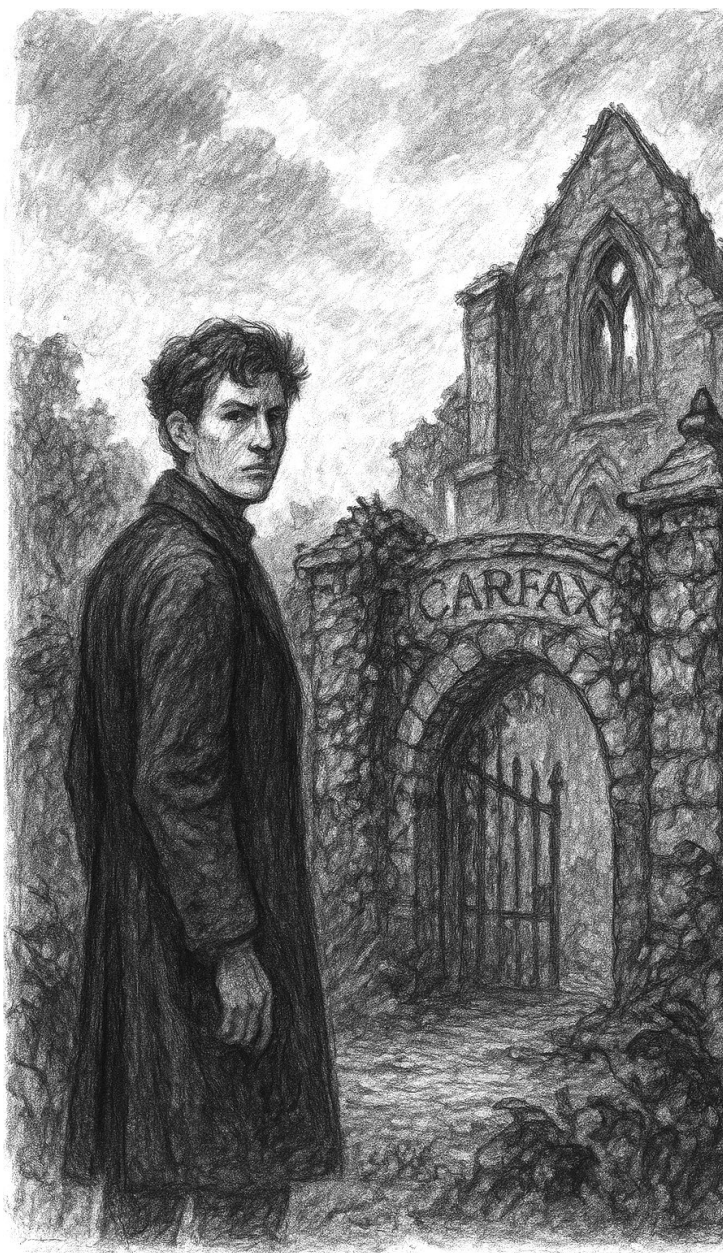
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Chapter 1 | The Shadowed Inheritance

18 March, 1898 - Carfax Abbey
From the journal of Silas Renfield

When the telegram arrived informing me that I had inherited a crumbling abbey on the edge of Hampstead Heath, I laughed. Laughed in that dry way lawyers do—nose wrinkled, eyes narrowed, lips barely parting.

“Typical,” I muttered. “Another black mark left behind by the madman uncle.”

I never knew R. M. Renfield. He died in the care of Dr. Seward, whose asylum records read more like Gothic fiction than medicine. My father burned all reference to him. Even our surname was half-discarded. The ‘Renfield’ part was used only on paper.

Yet here I am, that cursed name inked clearly on the deed. Carfax Abbey, mine now. A pile of broken stones and ivy, buried behind rusting gates and hedgerows no gardener has dared touch in years.

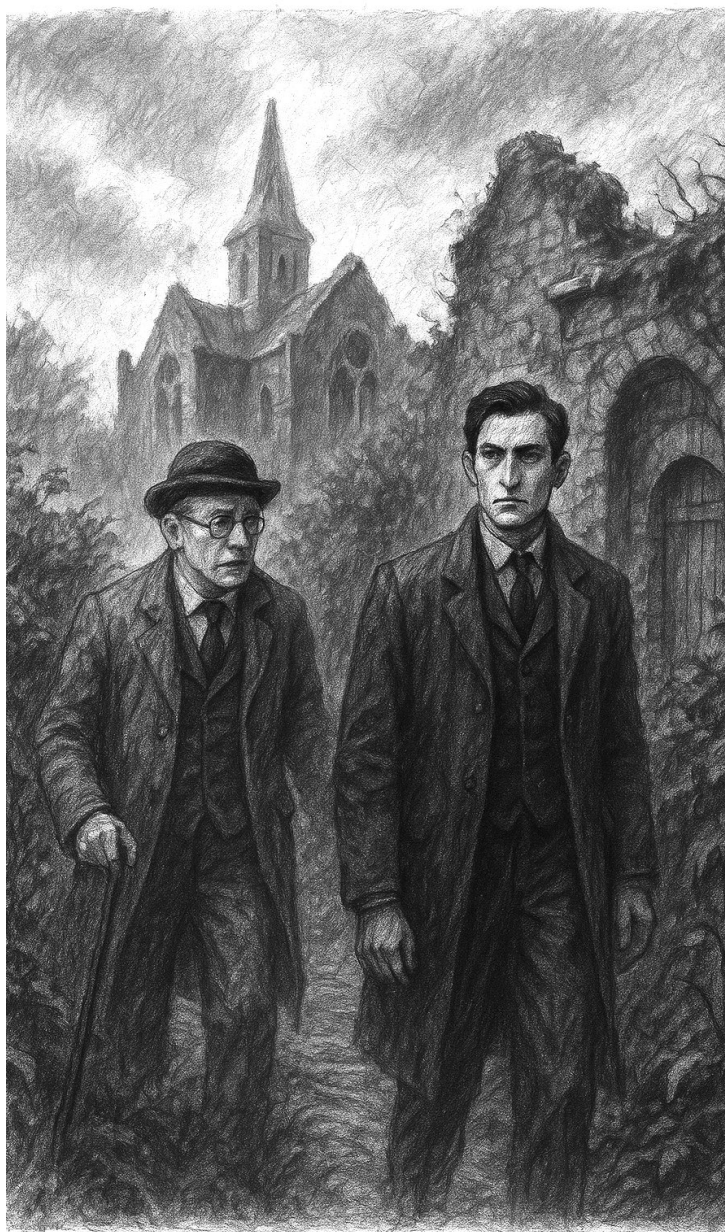
I brought only two trunks and a vague idea to inspect the place before auctioning it to any fool who'd buy. The solicitor warned me there had been... accidents. That workers refused to stay. That the villagers kept their distance.

Nonsense. That's what I told him.

Yet last night, I could swear I heard the gate creak open beneath my window. And the sound of... wings.

Probably birds. Probably.

The light in the east wing won't stay lit. I'll write again once the rain stops. There's a leak in the chapel ceiling. And something has scratched the cellar door from the inside.



Chapter 2 | Signed and Sealed

19 March, 1898 - Carfax Abbey
From the journal of Silas Renfield

I sent for an agent from Whitstable & Low, the only firm foolish—or desperate—enough to take on the property.

Mr. Elbridge Low arrived by horse-trap this morning, clutching a folding map and a walnut cane. A thin man with thinner confidence. “Carfax,” he muttered, adjusting his hat against the rain. “Bit of a blemish, this one.”

We walked the grounds together, and I showed him what was left: the broken chapel, the shattered stained glass, the overgrown cloister. The eastern wall still bears a rusted brass plate:

‘C. D. 1890’

“Who was C.D.?” he asked.

“I haven’t the faintest,” I replied. I lied.

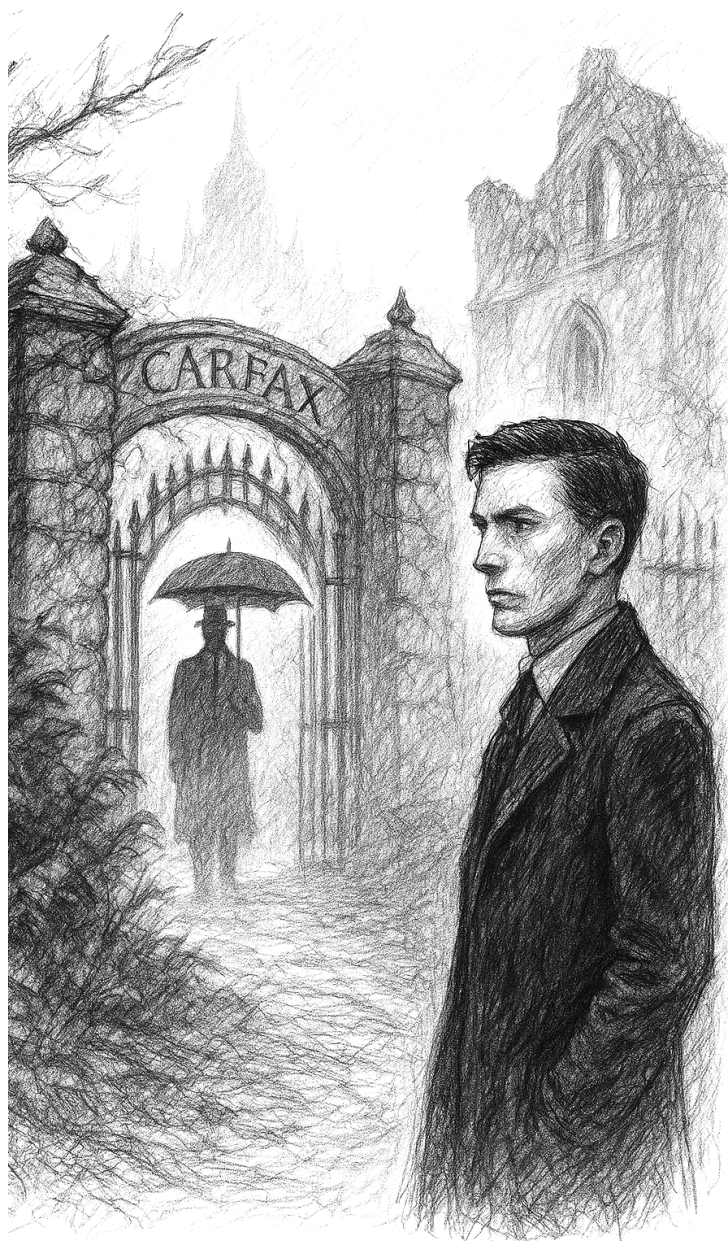
I watched him carefully as he measured the stone steps and took down notes. He would not go near the cellar door. Not even when I suggested it. “No need,” he said, too quickly.

The townsfolk, it seems, have talked.

We agreed to list it at a “curiosity rate.” I signed the papers. The quill trembled slightly in my grip—not from nerves, but something else. A tightness in my palm. I’ve been waking with scratches I cannot explain.

That evening, a chill seeped in through the cracks. I thought I saw movement behind the glass of the chapel—but no one was there.

I will not go mad here. I won’t.



Chapter 3 | The Man Beneath the Umbrella

20 March, 1898 – Carfax Abbey
From the journal of Silas Renfield

He was waiting at the gate when I rose, motionless beneath a black umbrella.

I hadn't heard him arrive.

He was tall—unnaturally so—and sharply dressed in a dark wool coat fastened with polished bone buttons. His face was youthful but pale, and his speech bore the trace of a Continental education.

“I am Mr. Vortigern,” he said. “I’ve heard that Carfax is... available.”

I did not invite him in. He stepped forward anyway.

“Are you with a firm?” I asked.

“No,” he said. “Merely a private enthusiast. I collect architectural anomalies. Particularly those with... persistent histories.”

He produced a calling card, unmarked except for a single emblem: a stylized ouroboros encircling a cross.

“You are Mr. Renfield,” he said. “Nephew of the late R. M. Renfield.”

I felt cold at the mention.

“My uncle is dead,” I said.

“Yes,” said Vortigern, stepping past me. “But not empty.”

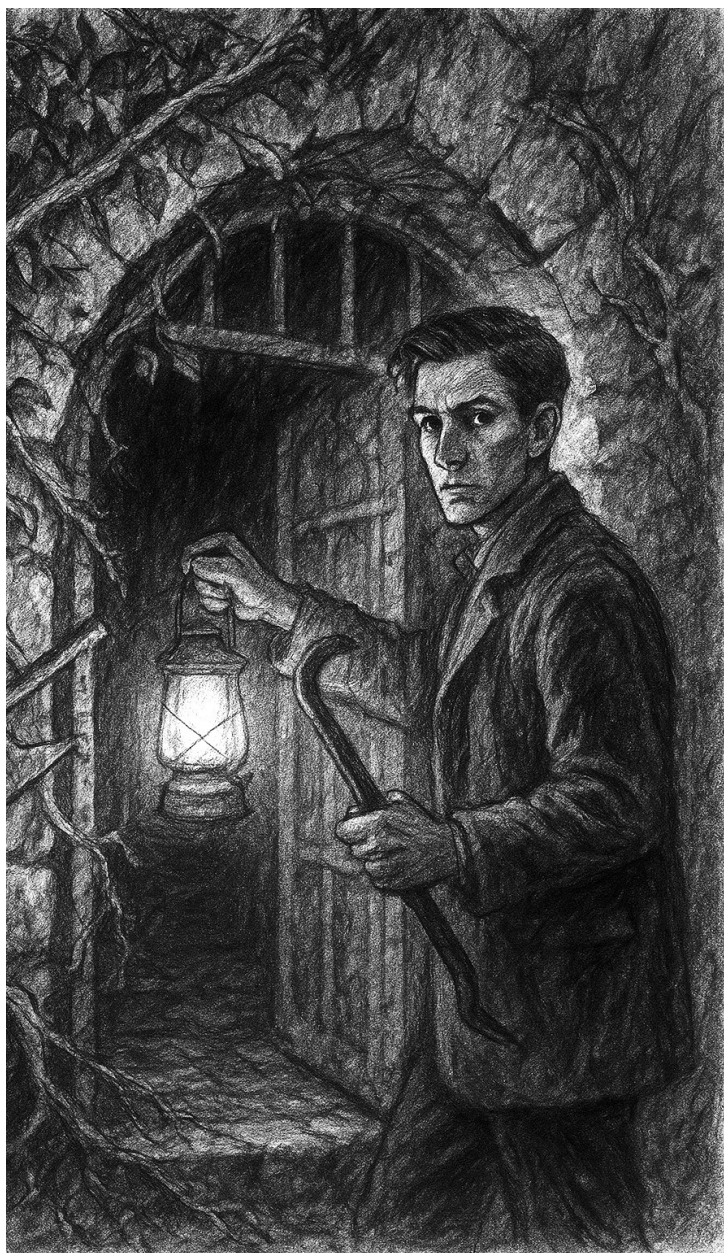
He asked questions—probing ones. About the east wing. About the crypt beneath the chapel. About whether I had “heard the song.”

“If you wish to sell,” he said, “I can offer you three times your asking price. Provided certain... contents remain untouched.”

I did not respond. My jaw had locked. There was a faint sound—behind the bricked window of the chapel. Like weeping.

Vortigern smiled. “I can return tomorrow. At nightfall.”

He turned and vanished down the road, into fog so thick it seemed to devour him.



Chapter 4 | The Altar Beneath the Dust

21 March, 1898 - Carfax Abbey
From the journal of Silas Renfield

I entered the chapel at dusk, lantern in one hand, crowbar in the other.

The air was colder than the rest of the house, and dry—unnaturally so. The stained glass was long shattered, but moonlight still spilled through in fractured blues and reds across the stone floor.

There was no altar. Just its memory: a worn outline in the dust, and the grooves where the supports had once bolted down.

Behind the east wall—bricked shut generations ago—stood a rusted iron grate. Half-covered in ivy, almost invisible. I'd never noticed it before. Nor the faint smell behind it: iron, ash, and something older.

I forced the gate open. My lantern stuttered as I descended.

Steps led down into a narrow corridor of quarried stone. It widened at the end into a low crypt, circular, and fitted with niches.

But there were no bodies. Only boxes. Six of them.

Old. Sealed. Romanian.

I dared not open one. Not yet.

The walls were carved with crude, symmetrical symbols—crosses, yes, but warped. And above the arch, etched with care:

“Sângele caută sânge.”
(Blood calls to blood.)

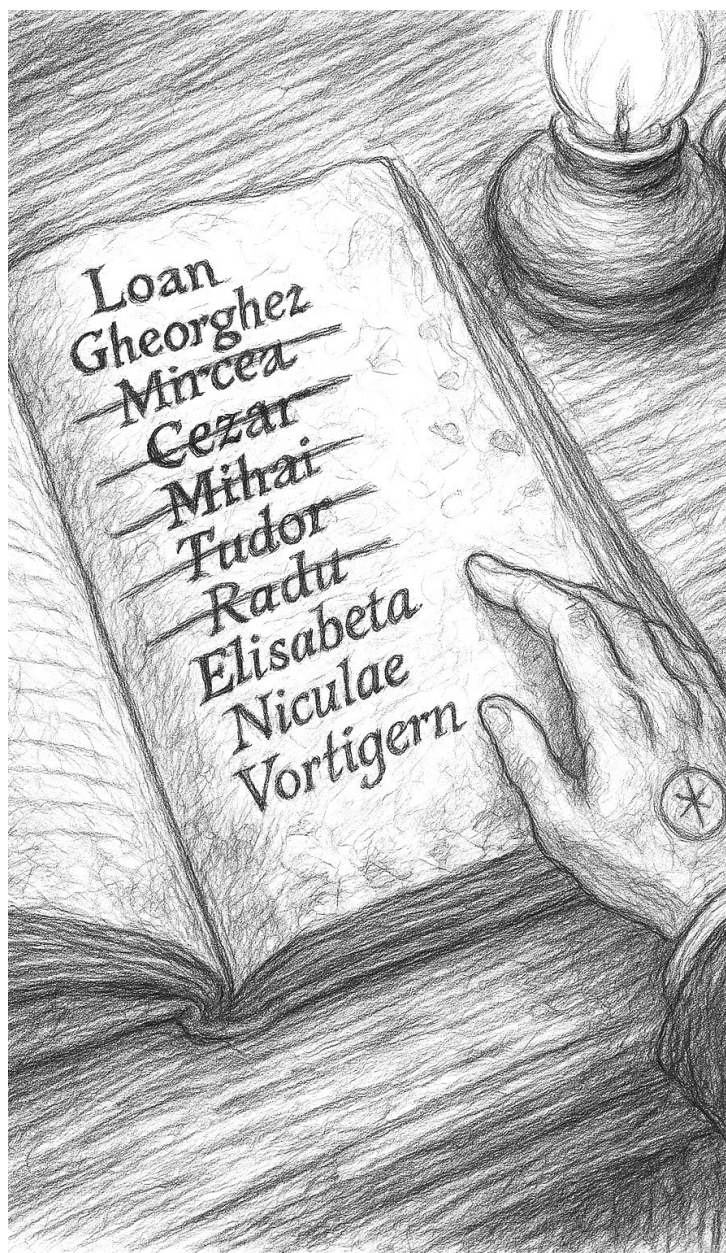
I don't know why I understood the Romanian. But I did.

And then... I heard it.

Weeping. Again.

A woman's voice.

Soft, sorrowful. From beneath the stones.



Chapter 5 | The Carving and the Cure

22 March, 1898 - Carfax Abbey → Purfleet Asylum
From the journal of Silas Renfield

I fled.

Whatever called to me beneath the chapel, it was not meant for waking ears.

Before I sealed the gate behind me, I chipped away one of the stone carvings with my crowbar. The wall groaned as I did so—stones shifting as if wounded. The weeping stopped.

I left at dawn, carrying the fragment wrapped in oilcloth. By midday, I arrived at the old asylum in Purfleet, where Dr. John Seward still resides—retired, frail, and far less the man the journals describe.

I told him my name. He paled.

“Renfield,” he said. “You’ve his eyes.”

“I never knew him.”

“You’re lucky,” Seward said, trembling. “I knew too much.”

I handed him the stone. At first, he didn't move. But when he peeled back the cloth and saw the carving, his jaw clenched.

"You found this at Carfax?"

"Yes."

"Then leave it. Burn the estate. Salt the ground."

"What is it?" I asked. "A seal," he whispered. "Of The Order of the Dragon. Vlad's own brethren. The carving's wrong, though. Look—see the break in the ouroboros?"

He showed me a tear in the loop, as if the endless cycle had been cracked.

"It's not just a seal—it's a lock."

"To what?"

He did not answer. He merely wept.

Then he showed me something. A page from an old Romanian ledger. A list of twelve names. Eleven crossed out. The last: Vortigern.

"He came to me once," Seward said. "In 1894. He asked for your uncle's remains."

He clutched my sleeve.

"I said no. He never forgives no."



Chapter 6 | Ashes for the Unburied

24 March, 1898 - Carfax Abbey
From the journal of Silas Renfield

I returned before sundown. With Seward's trembling signature I secured a sealed satchel from the Purfleet archives: holy oil, iron nails, wolfsbane, and an old manual in Latin inked on sheepskin.

Liber Obitus Draconis.

The gate to the chapel had been opened. I had locked it. The Romanian boxes were still there, six of them, but one sat open.
Empty.

I did not hesitate.

Using the tools and rites as prescribed, I hammered iron nails through the center of each lid, whispering the binding Latin aloud. With every nail driven, a wind rose in the crypt. The air thickened. The weeping returned—no longer sorrowful, but furious.

I anointed each box with the oil. And I burned them.
One by one.

It took hours. The flames did not behave like fire—they
hissed, like drowning things. A scream tore through the
room as the final box collapsed into ash.

And then silence.

Not peace.
But silence.

I thought I had done it.

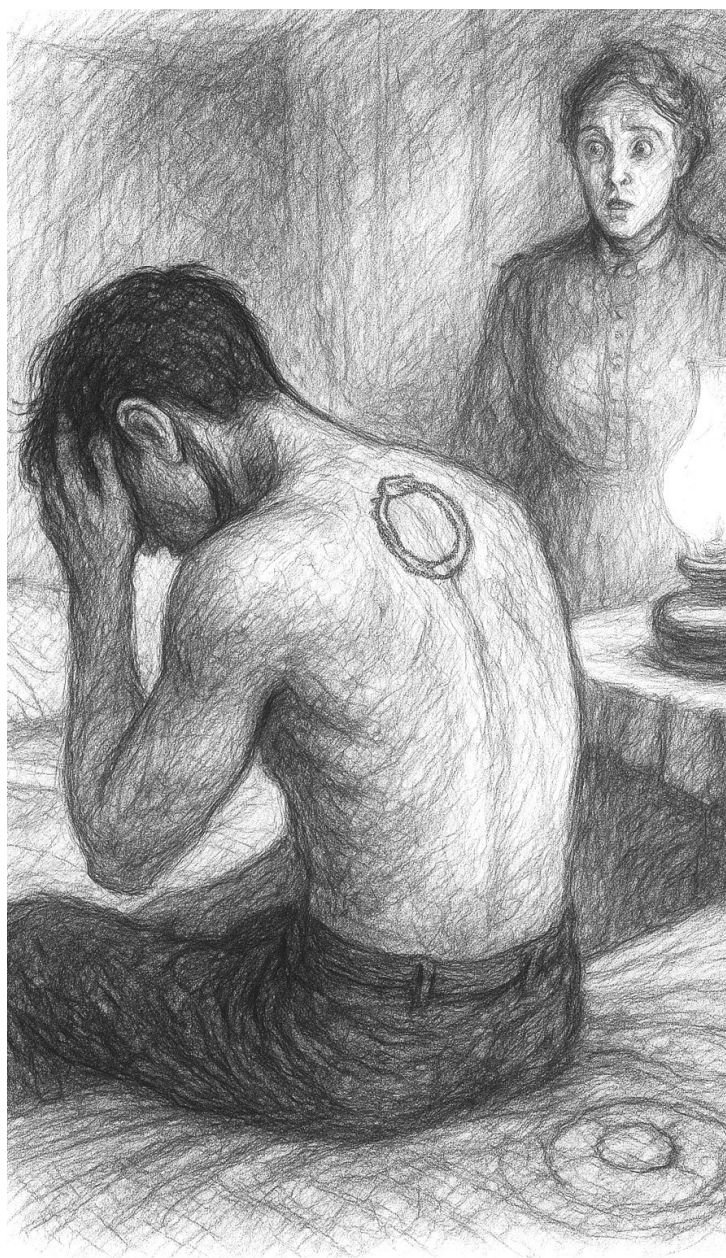
But in the darkness, something moved. Not within the
flames—but behind the walls. As if freed.

Not the imprisoned.
The jailer.

A low voice echoed through the crypt:
“I waited. You broke the wheel.”

The last thing I remember was a hand on my shoulder.
Cold, but not dead. Not yet.

When I awoke, I was in the chapel. The boxes were
gone. The stone floor had been scrubbed clean with
blood.



Chapter 7 | The Brand He Cannot See

29 March, 1898 - Whitby
From the diary of Nurse Agnes Whitby
(formerly of Seward's Asylum)

He arrived just before the tide turned—pale, ragged, with a tremor in his right hand. Said his name was Silas Renfield.

I knew that name.

He asked for a room without a mirror. We gave him the attic. He did not sleep.

Three days passed before I saw him undress. There, at the base of his neck, something burned through his shirt: a perfect circle, broken at the top, coiled like a serpent devouring itself.

A sigil. Still raw. Still weeping.

He does not know it is there.

He asked if we knew of a man named Vortigern. I lied and said no.

He thanked me.

At night he walks the bluffs above the sea, as if watching for something to arrive—some wind-borne answer, some ship with no name. The salt air makes his eyes water. He says it's the only thing that keeps the dreams at bay.

This morning he gave me a letter.

“Post it only if I disappear,” he said. “Or if you see a man without a shadow asking questions.”

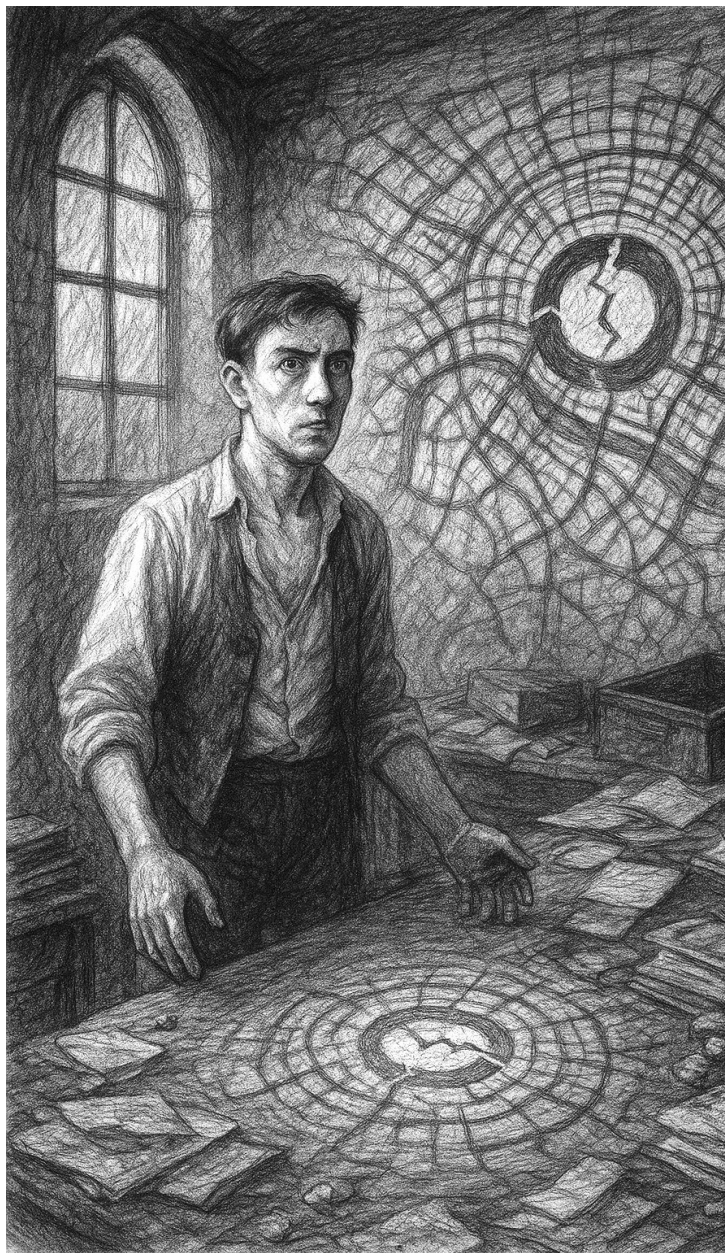
He is quiet now. But not still.

And when he sleeps, he mouths a single phrase in a language I do not know:

“Sângele caută sânge.”

I think he believes he ended something.

But whatever it was... it branded him for a reason.



Chapter 8 | The Maps in Ash and Dust

4 April, 1898 – Whitby

From the journal of Silas Renfield

*(entry found beneath pillow, ink smeared by
sleep)*

I awoke with charcoal beneath my fingernails and dust on the sheets.

I had drawn a map on the walls of my room. Not with ink. Not with paper. With soot scraped from the hearth, smeared across plaster in jagged lines and concentric curves.

I recognized it. London.

But not today's London.

Old London. Pre-plague. Pre-Great Fire. Sewers that haven't existed in two hundred years. Crypts buried beneath layers of stone. Forgotten catacombs.

I have no memory of drawing it.

I asked the innkeeper if anyone had come while I slept. He looked uneasy. “No one came,” he said. “But someone watched.”

I traced the largest mark on the map—St. Mary’s-le-Strand. Beneath it, a symbol I now see everywhere. Carved in chalk on the floor. Etched into my dreams.

The broken ouroboros.

I no longer believe I destroyed anything.

I think I unlocked it.

Each night I wake with more details, new locations, strange words repeating in my ear—coordinates whispered through centuries.

And now... others are drawing it too.

The butcher’s boy. A vagrant by the bridge. A child at the pier.

They’ve never met me. But they draw *my map*.



Chapter 9 | The Binding Sleep

8 April, 1898 - Whitby

From the journal of Silas Renfield

*(entry burned, partially recovered from ashes
behind the hearth)*

I tore down the plaster with my bare hands. Smashed the charcoal. Splintered the table I had once mapped upon. I cut strips from the bedsheets and bound my wrists each night, securing them to the iron bedposts with knots that only the waking mind could untangle.

For a time, it worked.

But the dreams became worse.

I no longer drew the maps.

I spoke them.

Whispered them into the cold air of the attic. Repeated names I've never heard, in a tongue older than English.

Names not of people.

Of doors.

The butcher's boy—Tommy—went missing two nights ago. They found his chalk drawings on the stones outside the chapel ruins. A spiral, like mine, only filled in with tiny teeth.

I tried to tell the constable. He laughed.

I showed him my wrists—bruised, raw.
He stopped laughing.

Nurse Whitby brought me laudanum. I poured it out.

“If I sleep,” I told her, “I serve.”

But last night, my bonds came undone. I tied them myself—twice. I swear it.

This morning, the map was back. Neater. More complete.

And this time... it ended not beneath London.

It ended beneath Carfax Abbey.



Chapter 10 | The One Who Waited

15 April, 1898 – Carfax Abbey (*again*)

From the final journal of Silas Renfield

(*Recovered by Nurse Agnes Whitby, date uncertain*)

The Abbey was waiting.

Ivy had grown thick across the chapel doors, but none of it touched the sigil on the stones. I stepped over it.

The gate to the crypt opened before I touched it.

The air was still. Not cold—expectant.

The boxes were gone, yes. The flames had done their work. But the map had never pointed to the boxes.

It pointed to what was beneath them.

I followed the corridor past the burned recesses and broken floor. There, beneath the far wall, the stone had cracked. A stair now descended into a second chamber, one I had never seen—one no one had.

It was circular. Older than the Abbey. Older than England. Bones framed the walls like bookshelves.

Carvings covered the floor—interlocking ouroboroi, hundreds of them, but every one broken at a different point.

And in the center... a throne of bone.

He sat there.

Vortigern.

Not older. Younger. As if time reversed for him. Or as if he'd been reborn.

"You mapped well," he said.

"What am I?" I asked.

"A seed," he said. "What your uncle failed to be."

He stood, walked toward me. No shadow fell from his feet.

"You opened the lock. Let what was meant to pass... pass. And for that, we give you choice."

He extended a blade—red, but dry.

"Sit," he said, "or slay me. Either will complete the circle."

I don't remember what I chose.

Only that the Abbey is quiet now.

And I am not the same man who left it.

Thank You for Reading

We hope you enjoyed *The Circle Broken: A Tale from the Dracula Aftermath*, a tale spun from the shadows of Bram Stoker's classic.

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The Circle of Broken

A Tale from the *Dracula* Aftermath

“I thought I inherited stone and silence. But something waited beneath the Abbey... and it remembered my name.”

Seven years after the fall of Count Dracula, **Silas Renfield**—nephew to the infamous madman who fed flies to shadows—has inherited the crumbling remains of **Carfax Abbey**. Hoping only to sell the ruin and sever his family’s cursed legacy, Silas instead uncovers a buried crypt, six sealed boxes, and a strange figure who offers to buy the estate... as long as nothing inside is touched.

As old voices rise from beneath the chapel floor and a carved ouroboros begins to appear in his dreams, Silas finds himself drawn into a circle far older than Dracula—one that was only broken, never destroyed.

From the fog-laced shores of Whitby to the tunnels below Victorian London, **The Circle Broken** is a haunting, epistolary gothic tale of inheritance, obsession, and the price of unlocking what was meant to stay sealed.

*“A brooding gothic mystery steeped in dread and inheritance, **The Circle Broken** peers into the dark cracks left behind by Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. For readers drawn to haunted ruins, cursed bloodlines, and the quiet horror of doors that should have stayed closed.”*