



Dracula

The Shadow Voyage

Ellis

Dracula

The Shadow Voyage

By Sam Ellis

Based on

The Works of Bram Stoker
Co-authored via ReTell™

ReTale™
2025

Copyright © 2025 by Sam Ellis and ReTell™

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except as permitted by U.S. copyright law.

The story, all names, characters, and incidents portrayed in this production are fictitious. No identification with actual persons (living or deceased), places, buildings, and products is intended or should be inferred.

Book Cover by Sam Ellis
Illustrations by Sam Ellis

1st edition 2025

Table of Contents

Chapter 1

The Unquiet Sand1

Chapter 2

The Holdfast3

Chapter 3

A Chapel of Salt and Smoke7

Chapter 4

Salt and Ash at Whitby Abbey11

Chapter 5

The Chapel That Drinks Rain15

Chapter 6

The Rite of the Watcher19

Chapter 7

The Ink and the Altar23

Chapter 8

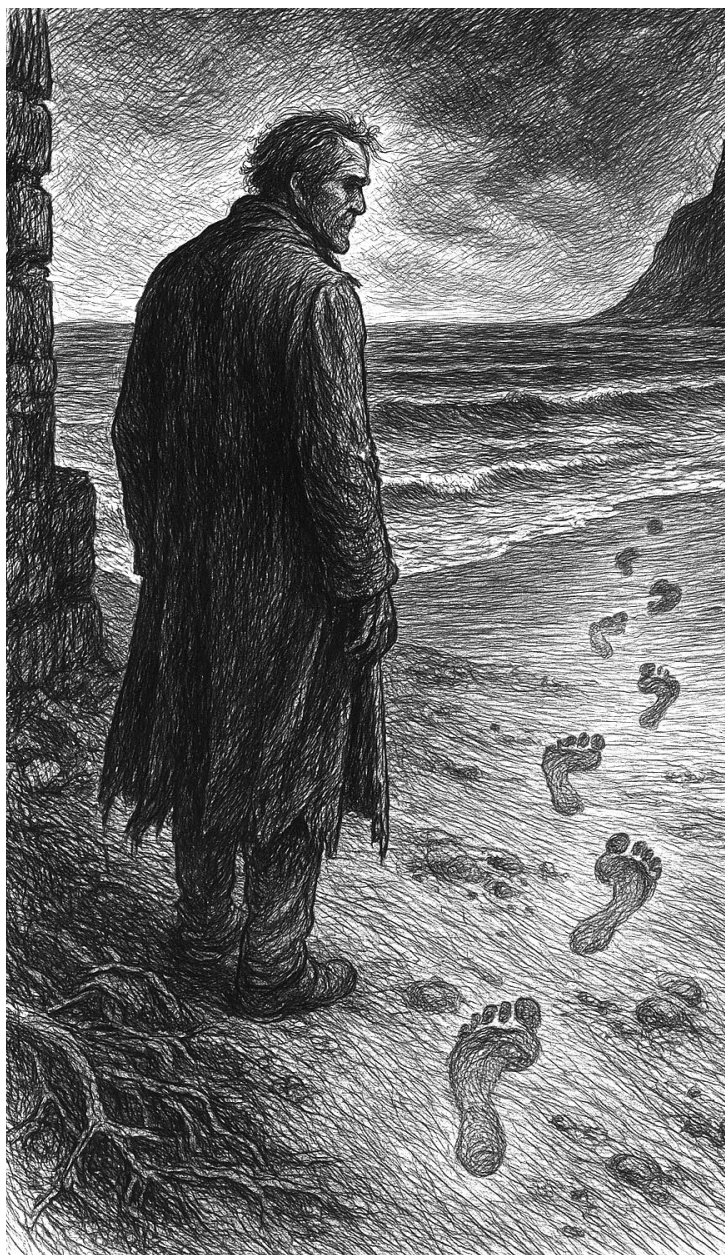
The Ragged Thing in Limehouse27

Chapter 9

The Widow of Whitby31

Chapter 10

The False Cry35



Chapter 1 | The Unquiet Sand

The grave wind of Whitby licked at the edge of Tobias Ward's long coat as he stood at Tate Hill Pier — the site of his ship's ruin. August had waned, but he still woke each night, drenched in brine and terror.

No one knew he had been aboard. No one saw him crawl half-dead from the hold hours after the town had swarmed the wreck. By then the “dog” had vanished. The captain was dead at the wheel. The mystery, concluded.

But Tobias knew the truth.

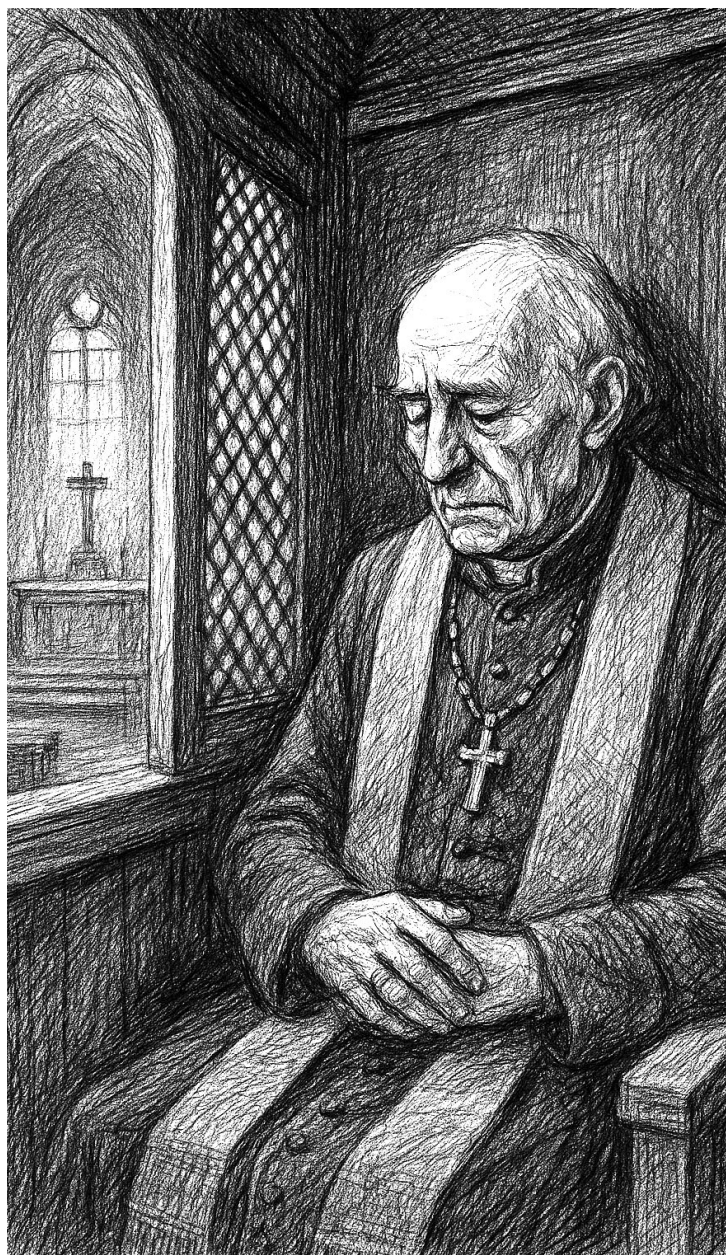
The boxes... the blood... the thing in the fog.

The air shifted. On the sand below, just beneath the cliff-shadowed churchyard, he saw something.

A trail.

Footprints. Bare, human — but too far apart. Too deep. Too deliberate.

They led not to the town... but back toward the sea.



Chapter 2 | The Holdfast

Tobias dropped low, sinking into the seaweed-strewn hollow behind a crumbled stone wall. He covered his mouth with a shaking hand. The prints were still fresh.

It walked again.

Not “it,” he reminded himself.

He.

The creature had no name Tobias dared speak. But he remembered its eyes in the dark below decks, the stink of old earth and newer blood. He remembered the whisper at his ear before the first man vanished.

“Sleep, sailor. I’ll be needing your ship.”

The townspeople had cheered the storm-born miracle. The ship guided in by a corpse lashed to the helm — a legend made overnight. But Tobias had been there, hiding beneath broken crates filled with soil that moaned at midnight.

Now the thing was ashore.

And walking.

He pressed his back to the wall, clutching the rosary he'd stolen from the dead captain's neck before he fled. He'd kept it close. Until now, it had kept him sane.

A sudden scrape above. A pebble slid from the top of the cliff wall.

Someone... *something*... was watching from the graveyard above.

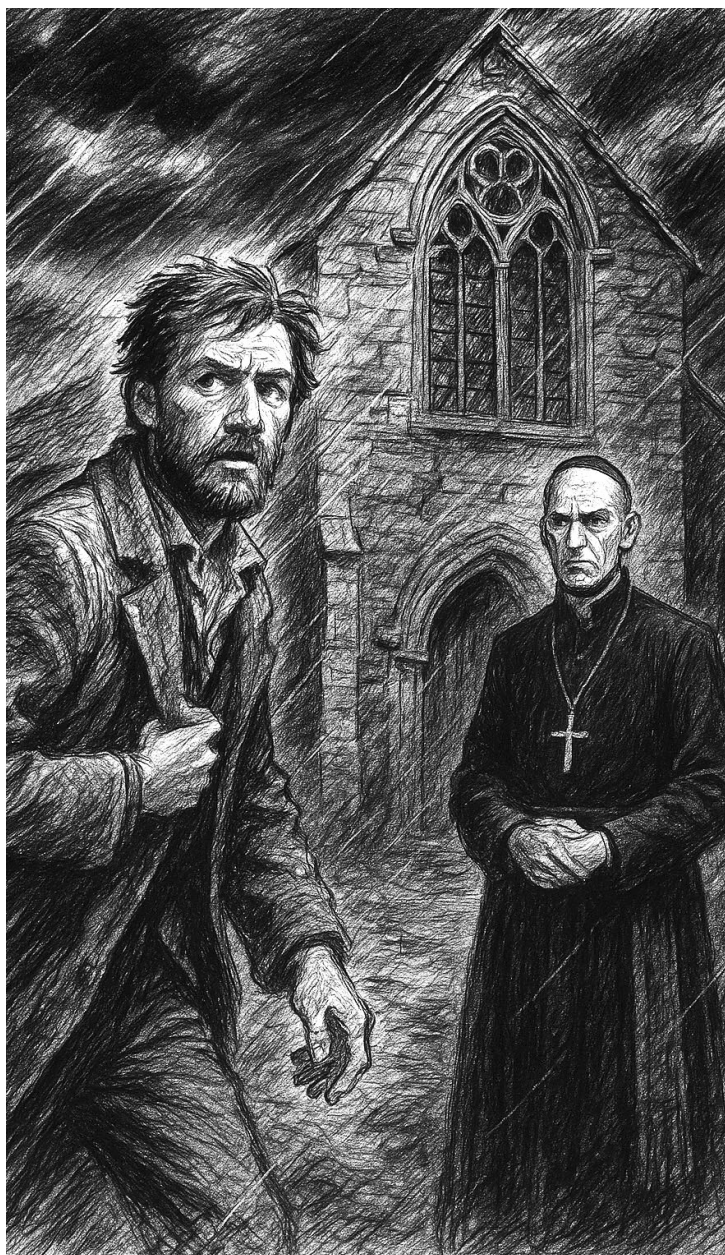
He dared a glance.

Nothing.

The trail of prints was gone.

Washed out by the tide? Or followed back by the thing that made them?

He had to decide.



Chapter 3 | A Chapel of Salt and Smoke

The Church of St. Mary sat hunched over Whitby like a mother grieving her children. Tobias pushed open its heavy wooden door with one shoulder, soaked from sea mist, eyes hollow.

A single candle burned in the nave.

Behind the altar stood a wiry old priest in a soot-black cassock, stooped with time and storms. He turned, squinting at the intrusion.

“Forgive me,” Tobias rasped. “I need a confession.”

The priest nodded without question. *He knows fear when it walks in.*

Tobias followed him behind the screen — not to the box, but to a worn wooden bench. The priest gestured for him to sit.

“What have you done, my son?”

Tobias didn't answer at first. His hands trembled, and he clutched the captain's rosary like a drowning man.

"I brought something to England."

The priest's eyes didn't blink.

"I didn't know what it was at first. Crates... heavy... full of soil, they said. But there was something in one. I swear it breathed."

He looked up, his voice cracking.

"It drank men."

Silence. Then a whisper.

"Dracul."

Tobias froze.

"You've seen him," the priest said. "And survived. You are either damned, or... chosen."

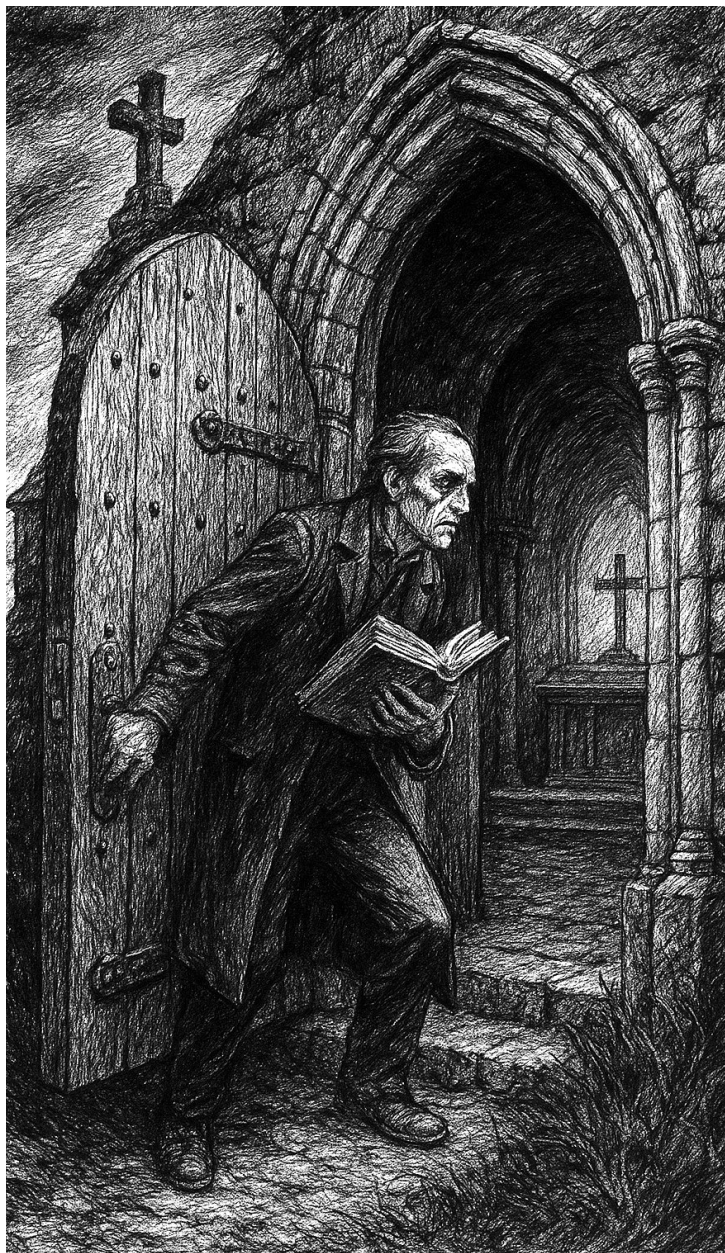
"I don't want to be chosen," Tobias snapped. "I want to live."

The priest's expression softened.

"You may yet. But he will not let you go."

From beneath his robes, the old man drew a small key on a silver chain.

“There’s a chapel. Sealed for decades. On the moor above Kettleness. Go there. If you truly want protection... seek what sleeps beneath the altar.”



Chapter 4 | Salt and Ash at Whitby Abbey

Tobias slammed the little key on the chapel bench.

“No. If it’s protection you offer, give it where the devil walks. That thing sleeps in the Abbey — or waits there. Bring your rites to *him*.”

The priest stared hard at Tobias, then nodded slowly. “Then we must go now, before true darkness falls. This is not work for moonlight.”

By dusk, they were climbing the crooked 199 steps to St. Mary’s churchyard. The priest carried a leather satchel clinking with relics, salt, vials of holy water, a censer. Tobias bore a lantern and a cold dread. The Abbey ruins loomed ahead, black against the last gold of the sky.

Inside, stone ribs of shattered vaults reached skyward. Broken arches framed a sky too wide for comfort. And in the central chamber, lit faintly by the lantern, the priest set his kit down and began to pray in Latin.

Tobias stood guard, eyes scanning every shadow.

The censer swung.

Salt poured in a tight circle.

The prayers intensified.

Then... silence.

The censer's smoke halted midair. Froze.

A wind rose, low and unnatural, circling the perimeter but never touching the priest.

Tobias felt something shift beside him.

Not seen. Not heard. Felt.

The priest gasped, voice cracking: "He is... watching."

From the rafters — or where they once were — came a whisper, impossible to trace.

"You should have run, sailor."

The shadows twisted. A shape detached from the dark and dropped — not to earth, but into nothing, vanishing as it fell.

The wind ceased.

The smoke fell.

The ritual... was finished.

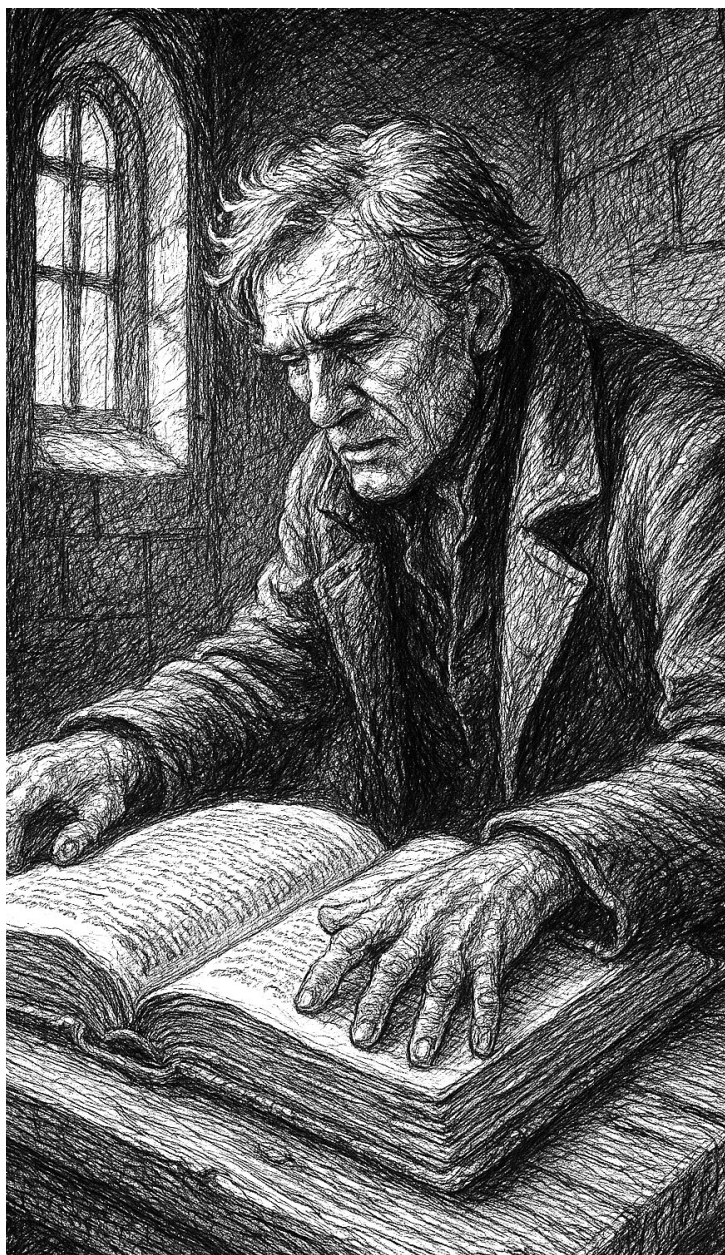
The priest collapsed to his knees.

“He cannot enter this place again,” he whispered. “Not easily. But *you* — you are marked.”

He reached into his robes again, and pressed something into Tobias’s palm.

A **fragment of bone**, carved into a looped sigil.

“Wear it. It may turn one blow. One. Not more.”



Chapter 5 | The Chapel That Drinks Rain

The priest begged him not to go alone. But Tobias had learned this: evil waits for company. Holiness demands solitude.

By lantern-light and instinct, he took the ridge path to Kettleness. It was midnight before he reached the moor. A low ruin squatted at the cliff's edge like a sleeping animal, half-covered in peat and ivy. The old chapel.

The iron gate groaned open under his hand.

Inside: stone pews broken in rows, brambles threading through the once-sacred floor. A shattered stained-glass eye looked skyward. Rain ran down its surface like tears.

He found the altar — a blackened slab crusted with old wax and lichen.

Beneath it, a slot. A seal.

He knelt.

The sigil from the priest burned hot in his pocket as he drew it out.

It *glowed faintly*.

He touched it to the seal.

Click.

The stone creaked open.

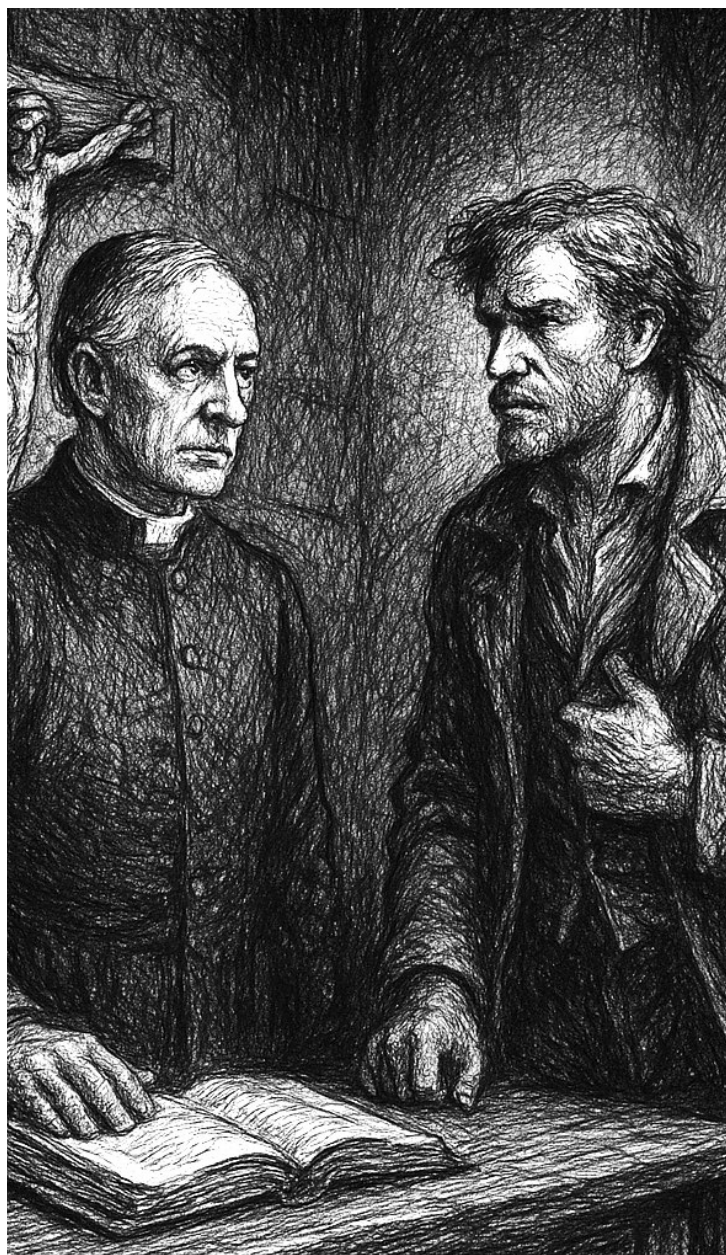
Inside, buried in cold soil, was a body wrapped in iron-threaded linen. Around its throat was a necklace of tiny bells, and in its hands, a **black-bound book** that pulsed faintly when he reached for it.

As he touched it, a voice whispered — his own voice — from inside his mind:

“Do you claim the Watcher’s Rite? Or walk away unbound?”

The wind howled through the chapel, rattling the tiny bells around the corpse’s throat.

Tobias tightened his grip on the bone charm and the book.



Chapter 6 | The Rite of the Watcher

Tobias knelt as wind clawed at the chapel's bones, whispering in dead tongues.

The book pulsed again in his hands — not warm, but aware.

He flipped the cover open. Pages of pressed skin — parchment, he told himself — were scrawled in inks that shimmered like old blood under the lantern light. His eyes found a symbol: a circle, broken at the top, with a slash through its heart.

A voice — not his this time — filled his ears. Dry. Ancient. Neutral.

“Speak the name. Name the terror. And be bound to watch it.”

Tobias didn't know the name. Not truly.

But in that moment, one came unbidden to his lips:

“Drakul.”

The bells on the corpse's throat rang.

The book flared red.

Tobias spoke the words beneath the sigil — not understanding, but knowing.

They poured from him like smoke.

*“He who walks by blood, be seen.
He who walks by night, be known.
He who walks unseen,
Now has a watcher.”*

The wind *stopped*.

Then every bird on the moor cried out at once.

The body in the tomb **breathed** — once — and dissolved into dust.

The bells melted.

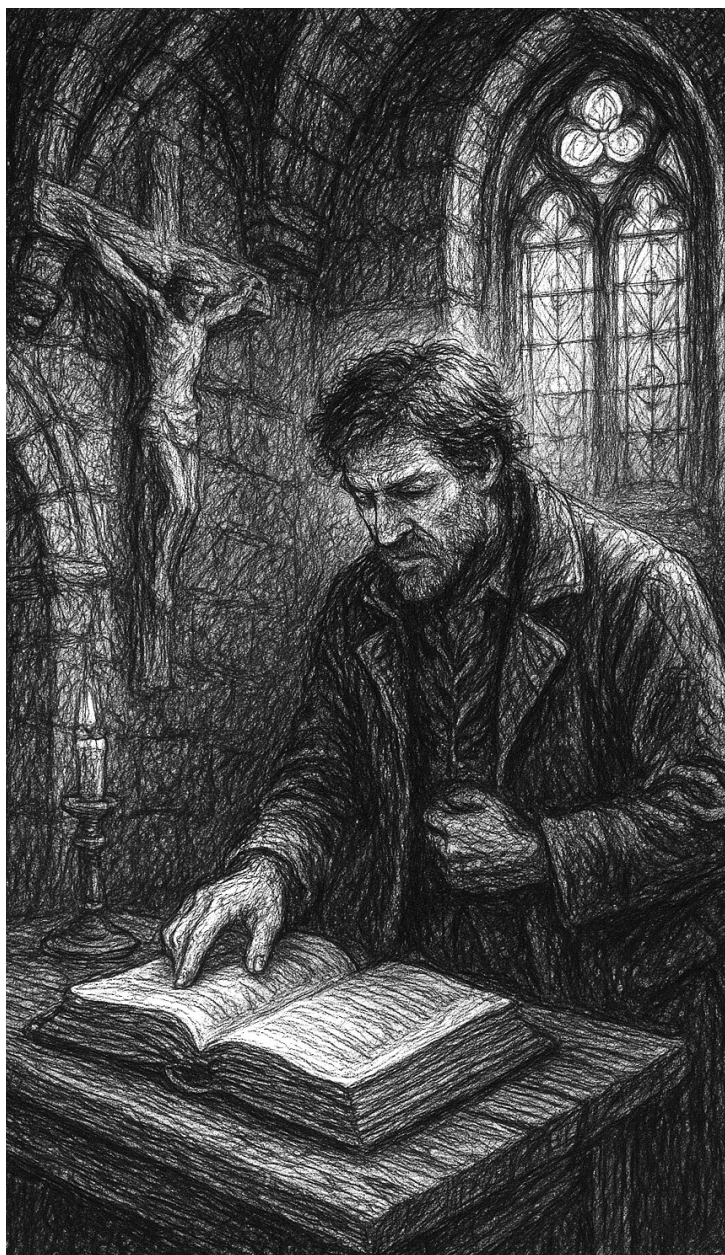
The sigil in Tobias's hand burned into his palm — a permanent scar.

The book closed itself.

He was alone. But not unaccompanied.

Something ancient now watched through him.

And it whispered, *“He is in Carfax. Go.”*



Chapter 7 | The Ink and the Altar

Tobias arrived back at the church just before dawn. His clothes were soaked through with rain and fog, his breath short from hours of moorland walking.

But his palm — where the sigil had burned into his skin — was warm.

The priest, Father Cotterell, opened the chapel door before Tobias could knock.

“You opened the book,” he said without surprise.

“I didn’t just open it,” Tobias rasped. “I *read* it. And now... something *knows* me.”

The old man ushered him inside. The altar was still blackened from last night’s rite.

Tobias placed the book on it.

Father Cotterell flinched as it thudded shut on the stone. He crossed himself.

“You invoked the Watcher’s Rite,” he said. “There are only three in all history who ever lived through that binding. One became a saint. One went mad. One... was devoured by the thing he watched.”

Tobias flexed his marked hand.

“I see him. Not with eyes. With... pressure. When he moves. When he feeds. I *know*.”

Father Cotterell nodded slowly.

“You’ve become what he hates. Not a hunter. A witness. A record. You are what the devil cannot bear: *memory with teeth*.”

He slid open a drawer behind the altar and produced a thin blade wrapped in red cloth.

“A Watcher’s rite demands blood. But it also repels it. This dagger is yours now. Use it only when you are sure. And never — *never* — on yourself.”

Tobias took it.

Outside, the church bells rang six times.

The priest leaned close. “Go to Carfax. Burn the soil. But beware: you see him now. That means... he sees you.”



Chapter 8 | The Ragged Thing in Limehouse

London's fog swallowed sound like a mouth.

Tobias slipped through Limehouse alleys beneath gaslight haze, guided not by maps but by the pressure behind his eyes — that now-familiar sense of proximity. Something unnatural lurked close.

A lesser thing.

Not Dracula.

But *of* him.

He stopped in front of a crumbling opium den beside the river. The presence swirled here like spoiled milk in water.

Inside, sleepers moaned in red-draped stupor. But one man sat bolt upright in a far corner. Ragged suit. Mud-stained cuffs. Face too pale for life, too drawn for sleep.

Renfield? No. But kin to his madness.

The man turned slowly toward Tobias.

“You burn like the horizon,” the thing whispered, voice dry as parchment. “You’re *Marked*. You shouldn’t be here.”

Tobias drew the priest’s dagger.

The sigil in his palm glowed dimly.

The thing hissed — and froze. Not by will. By force.

The dagger thrummed in Tobias’s hand.

“You’re bound,” he said. “You speak *truth*, or your master feeds on you for lying. Understand?”

The thrall’s eyes widened, fear shoving aside madness.

Tobias stepped closer.

“Where is he going?”

The thrall licked dry lips.

“To... *Parliament*. Not the building. The birds. The owls. The council. Old ones. Forgotten. They remember how the night used to be. He seeks them.”

“Why?”

The thrall spasmed.

“I can’t say. I *mustn’t* say—”

Tobias raised the dagger.

“Then nod. Once for yes.”

“A *weapon*,” the thing whispered at last. “Buried in England. Before even Rome.”

Tobias leaned close.

“Is it a *person*?”

The thrall nodded. Once.

Then burst into flame.

No scream. Just *ash*.

The dagger cooled. The Watcher’s scar stopped glowing.

Tobias stood alone, surrounded by smoke no one else saw.



Chapter 9 | The Widow of Whitby

Tobias found Mina Harker at a boarding house in Hampstead, where the air smelled of pressed flowers and coal smoke.

He didn't give his name — only said, "I knew the *Demeter*. I was aboard her."

That earned him an audience.

She stood across from him in a plain dress, her eyes dark with memory. Not fear — not anymore. Mina Harker had faced monsters and kept a journal.

"You were on that ship?" she asked, voice quiet. "Then you *saw* him."

Tobias nodded. "And worse. I bound myself to something old. A rite. A mark. I see him now — and the things he hides."

Mina stepped back, just slightly.

Then... "Show me."

Tobias held up his palm. The Watcher's sigil shimmered faintly in the gaslight. Mina didn't flinch.

"I watched my husband die because I couldn't see what he saw," she said. "You're right to come."

Tobias told her everything: the book, the rite, the chapel, the thrall he burned in Limehouse.

When he spoke of *the weapon*, Mina paled.

"He's not looking for an object," she said. "He's looking for a *child*."

"What?"

She pulled an old, folded page from her locket — a fragment of a letter, written by Van Helsing.

"...if he should ever return, he will seek the *last-born*, the one touched by owl and smoke, buried in the shadow of the stones. A child born beneath Parliament Hill, under the cry of birds. That child will undo him — or *complete* him."

"A child?" Tobias whispered.

Mina nodded. "Somewhere in London. Hidden. Or hidden from itself. If the Count finds it first..."

She didn't finish.

Tobias rose. The Watcher in his blood *agreed*.

He had no choice.



Chapter 10 | The False Cry

Tobias stood alone at the edge of Carfax Estate, the ruin cloaked in ivy and shadow, its old chapel sagging like the body of a drowned man. This was one of the Count's last resting places — where crates of native soil still hid in basement crypts.

He'd not come here blindly.

Mina had told him the signs — old superstitions *the Count still obeyed*. So Tobias had carved them in chalk on the stones:

- A ring of owl feathers and ash, stolen from Parliament Hill
- A cradle wrapped in church linen, left before the altar
- A baby's cry, recorded on wax cylinder, hidden in the shadows

The sound played now — faint, wailing, *unreal*.

Tobias waited.

The Watcher's sigil began to *burn*.

He was coming.

Not a door opened. Not a window broke. But the air split.

From the dark above the altar, Count Dracula *descended like a shadow in reverse*, folding into the room. His cloak did not flutter. His feet did not land. He simply *was*.

His eyes gleamed. His lips parted in something like curiosity.

"Well played, sailor," he said. "Even your little Rite cannot hide the salt in your sweat."

Tobias held up the dagger.

Dracula cocked his head.

"I could kill you now."

"You could try," Tobias replied.

The Count stepped forward — then *stopped*.

Behind Tobias, the sigil on the cradle pulsed.

A *second light* — not red, but *white* — flared from the Watcher's palm.

Dracula *hissed* and stepped back. His smile faltered.

“You *bound* the threshold,” he said. “And here I thought you’d burn like the rest.”

Tobias tightened his grip on the dagger.

“Where’s the child?”

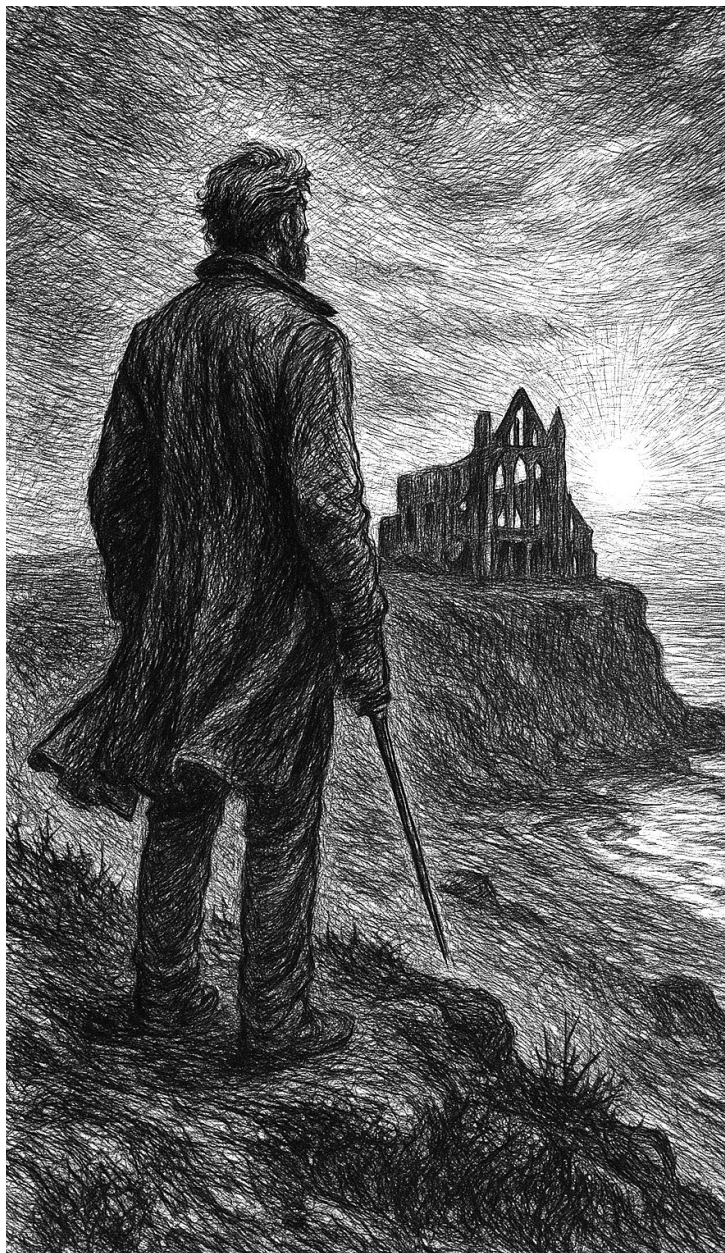
The Count’s gaze darkened. “That child is a mistake. And I am not done correcting it.”

Then — impossibly fast — he vanished.

Gone. Not fled. Not beaten.

Withdrawn.

Planning.



Finale | The Last Ember

Tobias staggered from the chapel at dawn. The trap had *worked*. And now the Count knew: someone stood in his way.

But more — he feared the *child*.

Somewhere in London, beneath Parliament Hill or deeper still, was a force the Count *needed*. And Tobias would find it first.

Thank You for Reading

We hope you enjoyed *Dracula: The Shadow Voyage*, a tale spun from the shadows of Bram Stoker's classic.

If this story stirred your imagination, there's more waiting beyond the grave.

At **ReTell™**, we believe stories should be shared, shaped, and reimagined—by readers like you. Whether you want to explore new tales or co-author your own and bring them to life in print, we're building a platform for storytellers and dreamers alike.

Want in?

Scan the QR code below and join our waitlist to be among the first to create, collaborate, and publish stories powered by your imagination.



Your story deserves to be told. Let's ReTell it.

Dracula

The Shadow Voyage

An untold tale from the world of Bram Stoker's classic

When the ill-fated *Demeter* crashes into the shores
of Whitby, the world believes all hands lost.
But one man survived.

Tobias Ward, a ship's officer hidden deep in the hold,
emerges not only alive—but marked. Haunted by what
he saw, hunted by what followed, Tobias seeks refuge in
ruined chapels, forgotten rites, and ancient symbols.
He does not seek vengeance. He seeks understanding.
And survival.

But Count Dracula is not finished with England.
And Tobias is no longer a man who can walk away.

Bound by blood to a forgotten order and driven by visions
he cannot unsee, Tobias must face the truth buried
beneath Parliament Hill—before the Count awakens an
ancient weapon that could unmake the world.

*“A gothic companion to Dracula, this tale of hidden war, sacred
watchers, and dark inheritance will pull you back into the shadows
—where something has always been watching.”*