

DRACULA: 2004

Chapter Seven: Sleepless in Whitby

Written by
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PREROLL:

Warning: This episode of *Dracula: 2004* contains depictions of sleepwalking and graveyards. Listener discretion is advised.

Care to take a bite?

SOUNDTRACK.

1. EXT. CLIFFSIDE GRAVEYARD - WHITBY, JULY 2004

CLICK! Our ears are full of the sounds of the sea: the distant WASH of the waves, the blustering WINDS, the CRY of the seagulls.

Mina speaks into her diary, sounding relaxed and happy.

MINA

This is the audio journal of Mina Munjal, 24th of July, 2004. I've officially arrived in Whitby!

LUCY

And this is Mina Munjal's glamorous assistant, Lucy Westenra! Mina, how's my hair?

MINA

Tangled. We're on a cliff.

LUCY

Yes, I know that, but is it artfully tangled? Do I look like Hilary Duff?

MINA

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but... no. You look like you with a tangle.

LUCY

Damn. I'll have to straighten it when we get home.

MINA

I didn't say that was a bad thing! I like the way you look. And the tangle suits you. Besides, this is audio only - no one can see you.

LUCY

Darling, you're the sweetest.
(pissing around)
Come! Let me waltz you around like
we're old-timey maidens in poofy
dresses!

MINA

Lucy, no!

She SHRIEKS as Lucy swings her around the graveyard, the wind WHIPPING around them. The SHRIEKS turn into HELPLESS LAUGHTER, until both Lucy and Mina are LAUGHING so hard they have to SIT DOWN.

On the bench, out of wind, it's a little QUIETER.

LUCY

(happy sigh)
I love coming here. I used to live
for this as a kid.

MINA

I can see why. I like graveyards
on their own, but overlooking the
sea, there's something melancholy
about it, don't you think? The
inevitability of time, the erosion
eating slowly away at the cliffs,
each year bringing the graves
closer to tipping into the sea...
I think it's kind of beautiful.

LUCY

I was actually thinking of the
town itself, but I knew you'd love
the graveyard, you little
spookfest! You're like Halloween
all year round.

MINA

What's your favourite part of
Whitby?

LUCY

Hm... just coming here, in a way.
After my dad died, mum brought us
here for our first holiday without
him. It wasn't like the beach and
the arcade and the sandcastles
could fill the hole he left, but
when we came back again the next
year, it was our thing, you know?
It stopped feeling like there was
this big, dad-shaped hole walking
around with us and started to feel
like we were allowed to be here,
just me and mum.

It's why I always love coming
back. I feel whole here.

MINA

I'm glad I'm with you.

LUCY

I'm glad you're here, too. And
Arthur, of course, when he comes.
And Jonathan, too.

MINA

A bit crowded for a family
holiday, isn't it?

LUCY

You know me, I love people. The
more the merrier! And speaking
of...

We hear the CRUNCH of footsteps up the gravel path.

LUCY (CONT.)

Morning!

Mr. Swales - 80s, born-and-bred Yorkshire, sceptical but with
a soft centre - responds.

MR. SWALES

Aye, good morning to you, lass.

LUCY

What's your name? I'm Lucy and she's Mina.

Mina is meanwhile desperately trying to get Lucy's attention.

MINA

Lucy - Lucy - oh my god...

Mr Swales is unused to more than a passing greeting on the cliffs.

MR. SWALES

(to Mina)

Is she all right...?

MINA

Yes, sorry, she's just... very friendly.

MR SWALES

Ah, I see.

(as if talking to a child)

Lucy was it? Hello there. My name is Mr. Swales.

LUCY

(cheerfully)

I've seen you walking up here before - I thought you might be able to help us with some fact-finding. I was just about to tell my friend about the ghost of the White Lady in the Abbey - she's really into that sort of stuff. Do you happen to know anything about that?

MR. SWALES

(A little annoyed)

Ee, I'm not a tour guide, lass.
Entry fee for the Abbey's a fiver,
they'll tell you all about that
stuff. And if you want ghoulies
and barguests they meet up by the
whalebone arch in the evening for
a ghost tour. My granddaughter
tells me you can book on the web
these days, although I'm buggered
if I know what that means...

MINA

Actually that sounds really
fascinating, thank you. I'd love
to know how legends like this
spring up in places.

MR SWALES

(softening a bit)

Aye, well, there's plenty of
places down in the town if you
like your local history, the
Whitby Museum and the Captain Cook
for the whaling and shipping
stuff. Robin Hood Bay is another
good one - me mate Dave does the
smuggling tour there since he
retired. Wreckers with their
lights and the like.

Distantly, we hear the church clock STRIKE SIX. Mr. Swales
GETS UP to leave.

MR. SWALES

Right, must be off - my missus has
tea on the table at quarter past
and she dunt like it if I'm late.
Have a good evening.

The CRUNCH of footsteps as he leaves. FADING OUT, we hear him
say:

MR. SWALES

(muttering indulgently and
chuckling to himself)
Bloody Goths...

LUCY

Goodbye!

MINA

And thank you!
(after a pause)
Wasn't he interesting? I could
have sat there and listened to him
talk about history for days. They
should have him on the BBC.

LUCY

He'd make a nice change to the
current rubbish on there. Come on
- we need to get a move on, too,
or mum will wonder where we are.

Mina gives a long, luxurious SIGH.

MINA

Oh, it's so good to be on holiday.
I only wish Jonathan was here too
- then I'd be the happiest person
alive.

LUCY

(laughing)
Aren't we terrible? First time
we've seen each other in months
and all we can think about is our
boyfriends.

MINA

(groaning)
Don't, you're making me wish I had
a copy of the Bechdel test to
throw at you.

LUCY

(slightly flirtatiously)
Makes me kind of nostalgic for our
uni days. Don't you remember?

PAUSE.

MINA

Well, they were certainly
boy-free.

LUCY

(amused)
That's one way of putting it.

BEAT.

MINA

Ok, fine, no talking about
Jonathan in front of you for the
next week. Deal?

LUCY

Deal. Don't worry, I won't talk
about Arthur either. And we can
make it up to each other by going
out on Tuesday to see this new
comedy thing that's on at the
cinema. No boys allowed. Ok?

MINA

Which film is it?

LUCY

Mean Girls. It's got Lindsay Lohan
in.

MINA

Oh, I like Lindsay Lohan. I'm in.

LUCY

Great. Now - dinner. I'm so hungry
I could eat a horse.

MINA

Sure. Oh, wait, let me just -

CLICK!

CUT TO:

2. INT. MINA AND LUCY'S ROOM - WHITBY, JULY 2004

CLICK! It's night-time. Mina records her log in a low voice as Lucy sleeps.

MINA

This is the audio journal of Mina Munjal, 26th of July, 2004.

Mean Girls was a triumph. More Lucy's taste than mine - I tend to run towards the macabre, god knows why - but we both had a great time.

Lucy's asleep now, but I just wanted to make a log quickly, because something has happened.

When I got back, I got a phone call on the landline from Mr. Hawkins - Jonathan's boss - telling me that he'd just received a letter from Jonathan. It's only a line of writing, saying that he's about to leave Bistritz and start for home.

Something doesn't feel right. The letter - fine, I can accept that Jonathan probably has zero signal or access to a computer. That's reasonable. But Jonathan is a writer.

MINA (CONT.)

When he was at uni, he used to write novel-length emails to me practically every day, sending me recipes and jokes he'd heard and god knows what else.

He'd never send just a terse line of writing and call it done. The man struggles with the character limit on texts.

And most of all... if Jonathan was going to send a letter, he wouldn't just send it to Mr. Hawkins. He would have sent one to me.

I don't know. Maybe he's fine and I'm severely overthinking this. But maybe he's not fine and he's trying to send out a secret message! Maybe this Dracula guy is some kind of serial killer and Jonathan's trying to tell me that he's having his organs harvested!

Should I call Mr. Hawkins back and ask him to check the letter for invisible ink? Would that be too weird? No. Wait. It's midnight, and Hawkins is ancient. Wait until the morning, and then

-

She is suddenly interrupted by Lucy SITTING UP in bed.

MINA (CONT.)

Lucy? Is everything ok?

Lucy doesn't respond. Like a robot, she PUSHES BACK the covers and STANDS.

MINA (CONT.)

Lucy, what on earth are you doing?

Lucy WALKS to the door. We hear the DOORKNOB TURN, the HINGES CREAK, and then hear her start to walk out into the corridor.

MINA (CONT.)

Oh god, wait! Wait, wait, wait.

Come here, that's it. Back to bed.

There we go.

She guides Lucy back into the room, SHUTTING the door and TUCKING her back into bed. Lucy is quiet and properly asleep again in an instant.

A moment of silence, before Mina SITS again and recommences her log.

MINA (CONT.)

Well that was... weird.

I remember Lucy used to sleepwalk when we were younger - I think that she might have started again. Maybe she's stressed about finding a job now she's about to graduate - I know I would be.

I think I need to calm down about Jonathan. It will do him absolutely zero good to have me ringing up his boss at 1am to shout down the phone about invisible ink. I've got to be sensible about this. Besides, he might be fine! I might just be stressing over nothing!

So. One thing at a time. Firstly, I want to work out what's causing Lucy to sleepwalk again. I need to get my thinking cap on.

MINA (CONT.)

(a contemplative hum)

What would Dana Scully do?

CLICK!

CUT TO:

3. EXT. CLIFFSIDE GRAVEYARD - WHITBY, AUGUST 2004

CLICK! Mina has returned to the blustering sounds of the cliffs.

MINA

This is the audio journal of Mina
Munjal, 6th of August, 2004.

Still no news from Jonathan after
the last letter. I don't want to
drive Lucy mad with my worrying -
she's already been more than
lovely trying to cheer me up - so
I've come back out to this little
churchyard by the cliffs to think.

I can see why Lucy wanted to show
it to me so badly. She's right -
it's exactly the kind of thing
that interests me. I've always
loved graveyards. There's a kind
of peace about them that I find
soothing, and I like to look at
the names and dates on the
gravestones and see if I can find
correlations between them. It's
fascinating.

Would it be morbid of me to
specialise in obituaries as a
journalist? Or is that a normal
thing that you can do?

MINA (CONT.)

I'd look it up on the internet, but it's only good for so many things. I think that one day we'll be able to look up anything under the sun on there, whenever and wherever we like, but for now, I mostly use it for emails, MSN, and Myspace.

Have you heard about Myspace? Not many people have yet. It first came out last year. It's a... a kind of social media website that you can use as a blog. I keep a record of all the creepy stuff I like on there - I've already posted a picture of my favourite bench in the graveyard on my page.

BEAT.

MINA (CONT.)

Rambling about graveyards and Myspace has... actually helped. I'm feeling a bit better about - about everything.

Lucy is still sleepwalking. I know that this isn't entirely uncommon for her, but it's really freaky to see her sit bolt upright at night and stare at the wall with wide open eyes. She's started looking for the key in her sleep, although she never finds it because I've taken to keeping it tied around my neck to stop her from sleepwalking off without me realising.

Her searches seem to get more and more thorough as time goes on.

MINA (CONT.)

Last night she became so erratic that she knocked my Lakshmi *murti* - a statue we use in Hindu worship ceremonies - right off my desk! I'm going to have to make it up to Lakshmi bigtime after that. If something ends up going horribly wrong this week, at least I know why.

Sorry, Lakshmi.

To be fair to Lucy, she was really apologetic when she woke up. She offered to pay for any damages, but fortunately the *murti* fell on the carpet and will be absolutely fine after some grovelling. Lucy and her mum are out shopping today while I'm up here, and hopefully some retail therapy will help wear her out before bed tonight.

If only everything else was as easy to fix as a fallen statue...

We hear CRUNCHING as Mr. Swales approaches up the gravel park.

MINA (CONT.)

(noticing him)

Oh, hello, Mr. Swales!

MR. SWALES

Morning, lass. Didn't expect to see you up here, with a storm coming in.

MINA

The weather forecast says it won't be here until the evening.

MR. SWALES

(derisively)

Weather forecast!

He SPITS.

MR. SWALES (CONT.)

Bright young girl like you don't need no weather forecast to read the sky. Look at that cloud over yonder.

MINA

The ominous black one?

MR. SWALES

Aye, that's the bugger. Now, he's coming in fast over horizon, see? Coming inland like the devil's after him. Now, can you tell me which direction that is?

MINA

It's travelling...

(a quick mental calculation)

South West?

MR. SWALES

South-South West. Which means that the storm'll be a big North-Easterly bastard from off the North Sea, and God help us all when it arrives. Look at all his brothers gathering behind him.

MINA

The wind's getting up.

MR. SWALES

Aye, it'll be nae more than an hour afore he gets here. If I were you, I'd run along home if you want to avoid it.

MR. SWALES (CONT.)

Clifftop's no place to shelter
during a storm.

MINA

Yes, I think you're right. Will
you be ok getting home?

Mr. Swales CHUCKLES.

MR. SWALES

Don't you worry about me, lass.
I've survived more Yorkshire
storms than you've had hot
dinners.

Mina LAUGHS.

MINA

I'll take your word for it. Well,
I'll see you l-
(she cuts herself off)
Hang on...

MR. SWALES

You reyt, lass?

MINA

Yes, I just thought I saw...
there, on the horizon! Do you see
it?

Mr. Swales peers at it.

MR. SWALES

A ship...

MINA

Yes! She's moving around all over
the place. It's like she can't
decide where she wants to go next,
into port or out to sea. Do you
think she's in trouble? Should I
call the coastguard?

MR. SWALES

(troubled, distant)

Aye, call 'em by all means... I
doubt it'll do any good, though.

Mina has OPENED her flip phone and already DIALLED the number,
but she SHUTS it cutting it off MID-RING.

MINA

(cautiously)

Why do you say that?

BEAT. The WIND is rising.

MR. SWALES

(almost to himself)

There's something in that wind and
in the clouds beyond... and it
sounds, and looks, and tastes, and
smells like death. It's in the
air; I feel it comin'.

(pause)

Lord, make me answer cheerful when
my call comes!

CLICK!

END CHAPTER SEVEN.

CREDITS

This has been "Chapter Seven: Sleepless in Whitby" of Dracula: Dracula: 2004, by Starstrider Productions.

This episode was written and directed by Francesca Mylod-Ford, and produced by Maddy Searle. The show is created and executive produced by Francesca Mylod-Ford.

This episode featured sound design by Maddy Searle, with music composed by Joash Kari.

Our Hindu consultant for this episode was Michelle Swinea, and our consultant Northerner for this episode was Lou Sutcliffe.

Our actors were:

Michelle Kelly as Mina Munjal
Anusia Battersby as Lucy Westenra
and
David Ault as Mr. Swales

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If you want Lucy to go to the GP for a good sleepwalking cure, please consider rating and reviewing us wherever you get your podcasts.

Remember: Whether a ship be in safe hands or dangerous ones, if she appears in the distance as a storm arrives, drifting to and fro, that's probably not a great sign.