

# THE VOODOO QUEEN

## OF NEW ORLEANS!

...GROUND BURIALS, YOU SEE, WERE QUITE **IMPOSSIBLE** UNTIL RECENTLY IN N'ORLEANS, BECAUSE THE EARTH HERE IS FAR TOO **SWAMPY** FOR GRAVE-DIGGING.

THAT IS WHY THESE MORE COLORFUL **ABOVE-THE-GROUND** TOMBS WERE ORIGINALLY CONSTRUCTED.

SOMEWHERE IN THIS VERY CEMETERY, IT IS SAID THAT THE BONES OF **MARIE LA VEAU**--THE MOST FAMOUS **VOODOO WOMAN** OF THEM ALL--LIE ENTOMBED!

OR THEN AGAIN, THEY MAY **NOT**--FOR THE REMAINS OF **POOR PEOPLE** WERE OFTEN REMOVED WHEN THEIR FAMILIES FAILED TO PAY THE, AH, RENT.

OH **DEAR!** HOW PERFECTLY **REVOLTING!**

YES, **QUITE**--THOUGH NOT **NEARLY** SO REVOLTING AS THE FAILURE TO MEET ONE'S **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**.

.. AS I'M SURE YOU'LL **AGREE**, MA'AM.

STORY BY  
ROY  
THOMAS

ART BY  
GENE COLAN & DICK  
GIORDANO



BUT, IT'S GETTING LATE, AND SOON THIS YEAR'S **MARDI GRAS** WILL COMMENCE ELSEWHERE IN OUR FAIR CITY.

I TRUST YOU ALL HAVE ENJOYED THIS BRIEF GLIMPSE OF--

IT COULDN'T BE TOO BRIEF FOR FOR THE LIKES OF US, HUH, CHERRY?

RIGHT ON, LOVER-DOLL!

WE'RE THE QUICK --NOT THE DEAD!



AS I WAS ABOUT TO SAY:

THE CEMETERIES OF N'ORLEANS HOLD SPECIAL BEAUTY AND MEANING FOR PERSONS OF TASTE...

...AND DISCRETION.



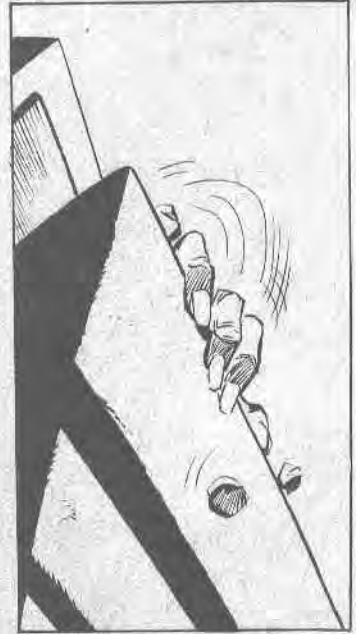
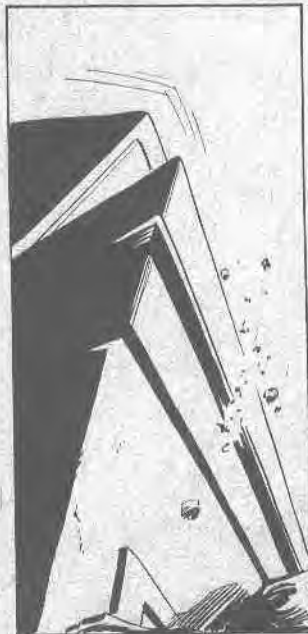
FOR THIS AFTERNOON, HOWEVER, I FEAR OUR TOUR IS ENDED...



... AND I MUST ASK YOU ALL TO PLEASE FOLLOW ME...



FOR A CITY ORDINANCE REQUIRES THAT THESE GATES BE CLOSED BY SUNSET...





THE GIRL'S CRIES ARE CUT SHORT, AS SHE RESPONDS TO A HYPNOTIC GAZE ... A CURT, COMMANDING VOICE...



...UNTIL SHE IS CAUGHT IN AN IRRESISTIBLE WHIRLPOOL OF SHIMMERING, SHUDDERING ECSTASY...

...CAUGHT... AND DROWNED!



AND NOW THE VAMPIRE RISES FROM HIS GRISLY REPAST...

...LEAVING THE HAPLESS PAIR TOGETHER, TO SHARE THE LONG DARK SLEEP OF DEATH.



FOR, OTHER THINGS CONCERN HIM THIS NIGHT.

SUCH AS THE MEMORY THAT THAT HE ENTERED HIS COFFIN IN THE CITY CALLED NEW YORK...

...AND AWOKE IN A DANK TOMB ... IN ANOTHER PLACE.

HE WOULD LEARN WHERE, BY FLYING OVER THESE ACCURSED GATES WITH EASE...

...BUT FINDS HE CAN TURN NEITHER INTO BAT ... NOR INTO EERIE MIST...

AND HIS STRENGTH SEEMS HALVED, AS WELL.

STILL, SOMETHING CALLS HIM, FROM BEYOND THESE WALLS...



...SOMETHING HE CANNOT NAME...

SOMETHING HE CANNOT RESIST...



... SOMETHING WHICH CANNOT BE DENIED!



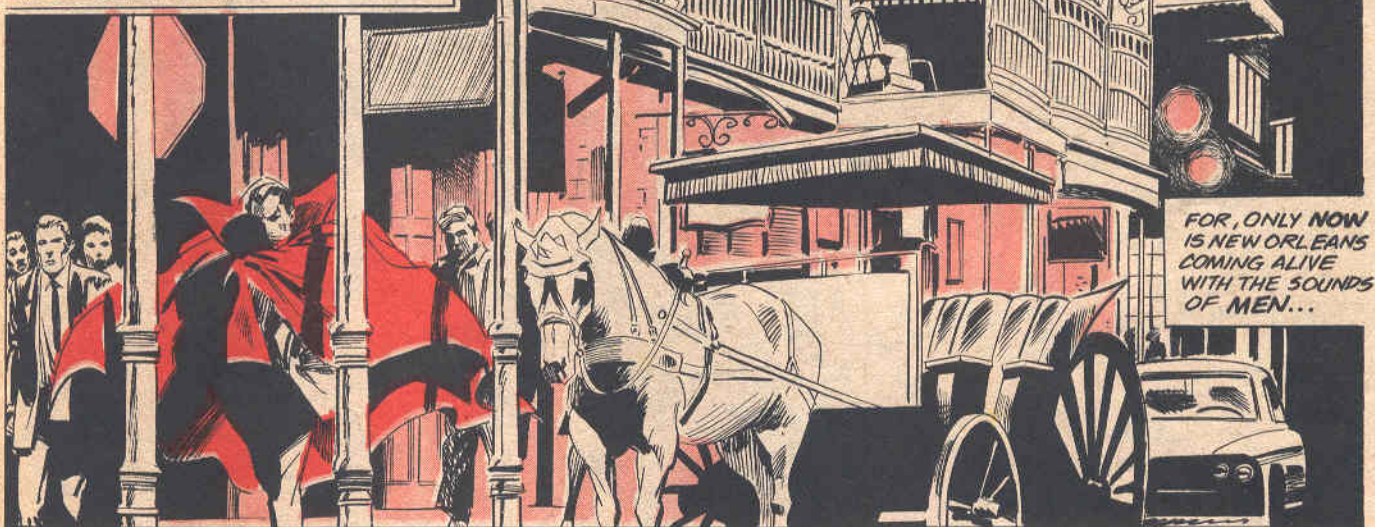
PERHAPS HE COULD FIGHT BACK-- FOR, THE WILL OF COLINT DRACULA IS A FAR FIRMER THING THAN HARD-WROUGHT IRON.

BUT HE MUST KNOW WHO HAS THE SHEER AUDACITY TO TOY THUS WITH THE KING OF VAMPIRES.



IN SHORT, HE IS CURIOUS.

AND HIS CURIOSITY LEADS HIM BLINDLY THRU THE NARROW STREETS OF THE VIEUX CARRÉ... THE FAMOUS FRENCH QUARTER...



FOR, ONLY NOW IS NEW ORLEANS COMING ALIVE WITH THE SOUNDS OF MEN...



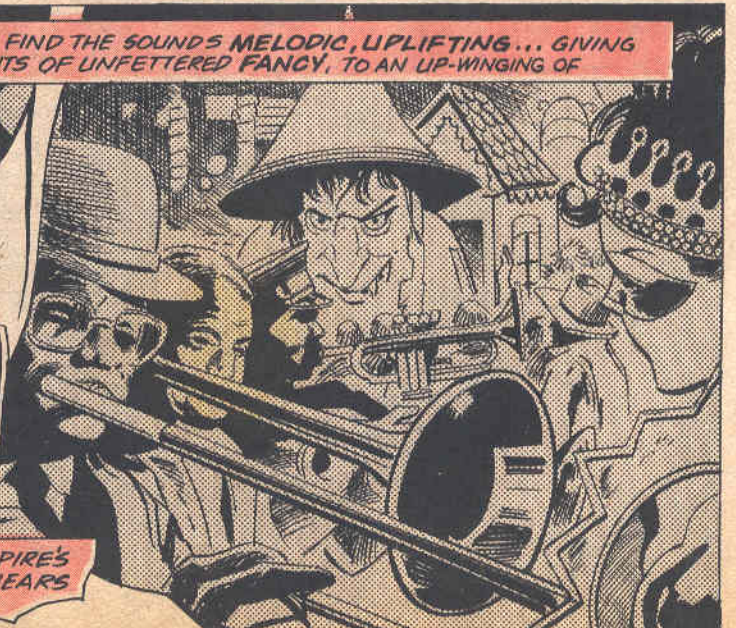
MEN... AND THEIR MUSIC.

OTHERS MAY FIND THE SOUNDS MELODIC, UPLIFTING... GIVING RISE TO FLIGHTS OF UNFETTERED FANCY, TO AN UP-WINGING OF SPIRIT.

NEWS

BUT DRACULA'S IS THE SOULLESS SOUL OF THE UNDEAD... THE LIVING TOMB THAT ADMITS NO BEAUTY.

SUCH IS THE VAMPIRE'S CURSE, THAT HE HEARS ONLY... NOISE.



AND, THERE IS **ONE OTHER** IN THE MILLING THROG WHO IS **LIKEWISE** DEAF TO MELODY, BLIND TO BEAUTY. ONE OTHER MORE AT HOME IN A GRAVE THAN IN A CROWD...

ONCE HIS NAME WAS **SIMON GARTH**. NOW HE IS MERELY ...**THE ZOMBIE**.\*

\*AND YOU CAN READ HIS SINISTER STORY IN THE PREMIERE ISSUE OF HIS OWN MAGAZINE... NOW ON SALE. -- Roy.

FOR AN INSTANT, DRACULA SEEMS TO FEEL THE NEARNESS OF A KINDRED SPIRIT.

HE PAUSES.

BUT THEN HIS DIMMED SENSES FAIL HIM...

AND HE WALKS ON, THRU WINDING STREETS, TILL ALL SOUND OF FRIVOLITY AND HUMAN FRAILTY IS LEFT BEHIND...

THE CALL IS STRONGER NOW.

IT BECKONS, COMPELS HIM DOWN A DARK ALLEYWAY, KNOWN TO FEW OF THE CITY'S INHABITANTS...

...EVEN AS LIFE ITSELF WAS LEFT BEHIND BY DRACULA, SO MANY CENTURIES AGO.

...AND, AT LENGTH, TO A PARKENED HOUSE AT ALLEY'S END.

SO! HERE IT IS THAT I SHALL LEARN WHO BROUGHT ME HERE...

AND HOW ...AND WHY.

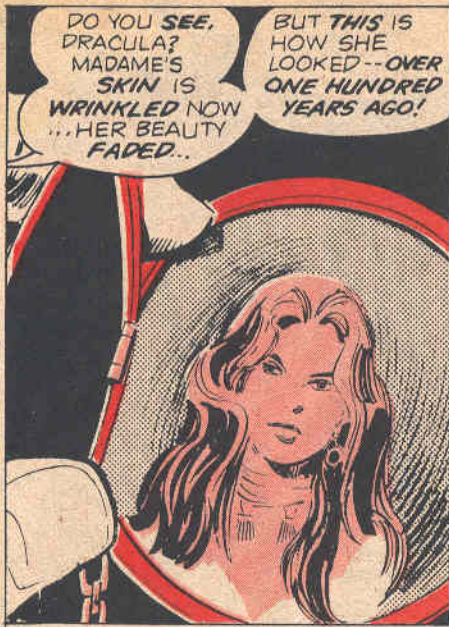
ALL THESE THINGS I WISH TO KNOW...

...BEFORE I CARE TO EXACT MY REVENGE!

KD  
RRRIKKKKKKKK

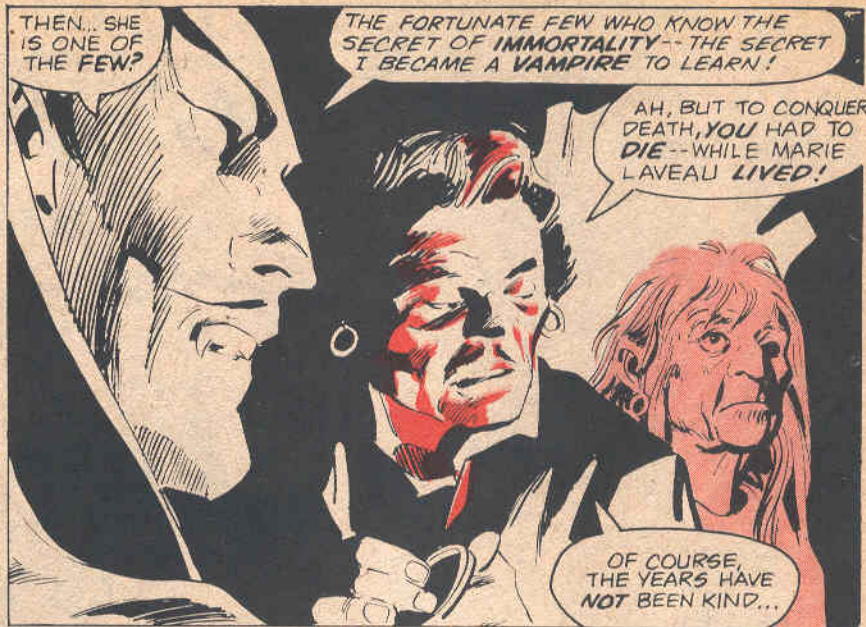






DO YOU SEE, DRACULA? MADAME'S SKIN IS WRINKLED NOW ...HER BEAUTY FADED...

BUT THIS IS HOW SHE LOOKED--OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO!

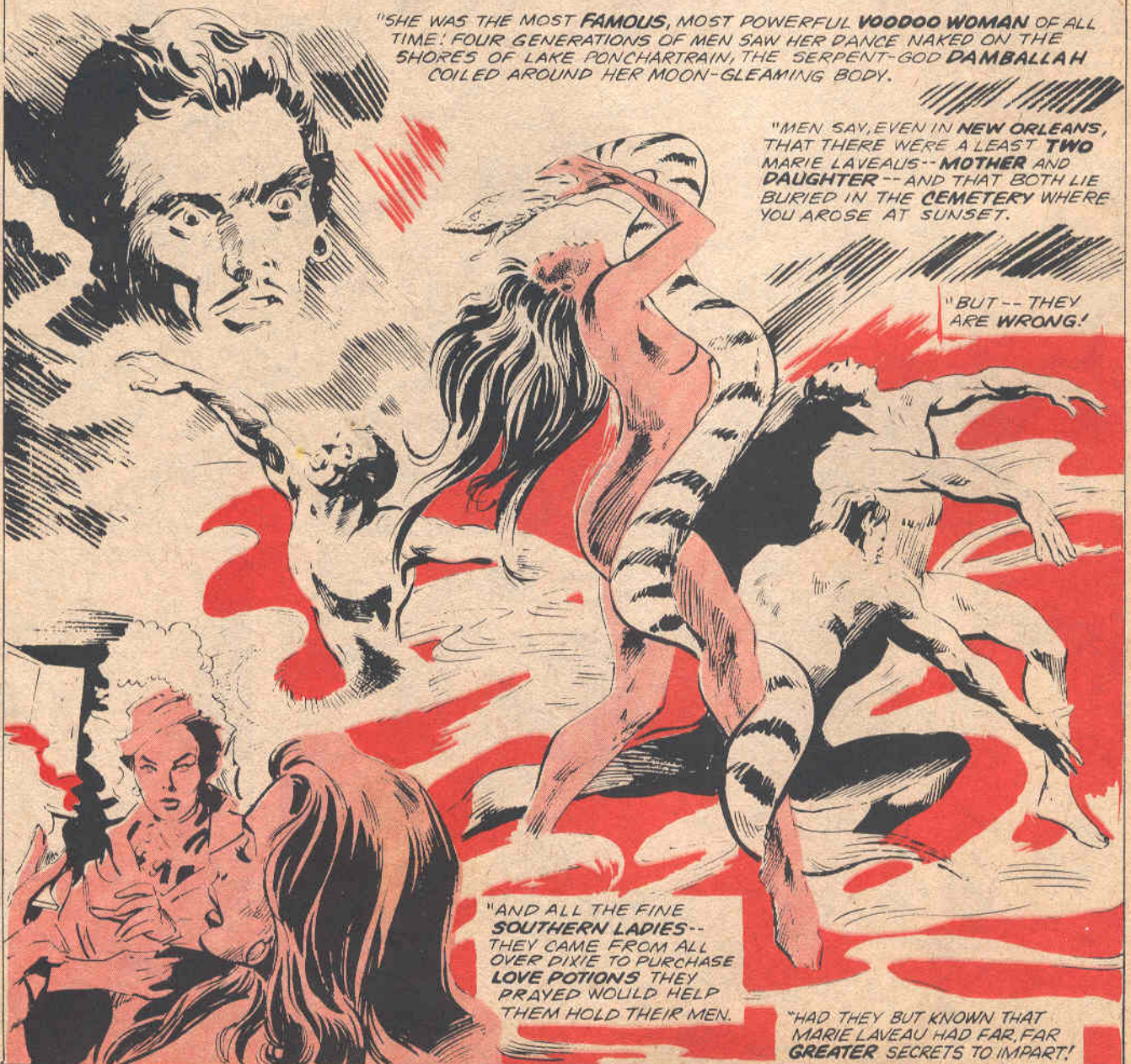


THEN... SHE IS ONE OF THE FEW?

THE FORTUNATE FEW WHO KNOW THE SECRET OF IMMORTALITY-- THE SECRET I BECAME A VAMPIRE TO LEARN!

AH, BUT TO CONQUER DEATH, YOU HAD TO DIE--WHILE MARIE LAVEAU LIVED!

OF COURSE, THE YEARS HAVE NOT BEEN KIND...



"SHE WAS THE MOST FAMOUS, MOST POWERFUL VOODOO WOMAN OF ALL TIME! FOUR GENERATIONS OF MEN SAW HER DANCE NAKED ON THE SHORES OF LAKE PONCHARTRAIN, THE SERPENT-GOD DAMBALLAH COILED AROUND HER MOON-GLEAMING BODY.

"MEN SAY, EVEN IN NEW ORLEANS, THAT THERE WERE A LEAST TWO MOTHER AND DAUGHTER-- AND THAT BOTH LIE BURIED IN THE CEMETERY WHERE YOU AROSE AT SUNSET.

"BUT-- THEY ARE WRONG!

"AND ALL THE FINE SOUTHERN LADIES-- THEY CAME FROM ALL OVER DIXIE TO PURCHASE LOVE POTIONS THEY PRAYED WOULD HELP THEM HOLD THEIR MEN.

"HAD THEY BUT KNOWN THAT MARIE LAVEAU HAD FAR, FAR GREATER SECRETS TO IMPART!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

"FOR SHE HAD DISCOVERED--HOW, WE SHALL NEVER KNOW, FOR SHE WILL NEVER SAY--THE FORMULA FOR ETERNAL LIFE!"

"AND SHE HAD DRUNK DEEP OF THAT CUP!"

"BUT, THOUGH SHE LIVED LONG PAST HER TIME, THE FORMULA WAS SOMEHOW INCOMPLETE."

"AND SO -- SHE AGED."

"SHE GREW OLD--WEAK--TILL SOON SHE COULD BARELY MOVE, OR EVEN FEED HERSELF."

"MY FATHER-- AND HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM -- CARED FOR MARIE LAVEAU, OUT OF CURIOUS BUT UNREWARDED DEVOTION."

"UNREWARDED, I SAY-- BECAUSE EACH OF THEM DIED IN TIME-- WHILE SHE LIVED ON!"

"EACH OF US KEPT HER SAFE FROM DISCOVERY ALL THESE YEARS-- AND EACH OF US KILLED FOR HER!"

THE LEGEND OF MARIE LAVEAU HAS REACHED EVEN THE SHADOWED FORESTS OF TRANSYLVANIA, MY FRIEND.

BUT HOW DID YOU COME TO BRING ME HERE-- WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE?

I WAS IN NEW YORK CITY A FEW DAYS AGO, TO INVESTIGATE A NEWSPAPER ITEM.

IT TOLD OF A MAN WHO CLAIMED TO BE A REINCARNATION OF THE GREAT SORCERER CAGLIOSTRO.

THEN, YOU SOUGHT HIM OUT-- EVEN AS I DID!? BUT WHY?

BECAUSE I SUSPECTED THAT HE MIGHT BE... WHAT YOU ARE!

"UNFORTUNATELY FOR US BOTH, THE MAN PROVED TO BE A CHARLATAN... A FAKE."

"BUT, I SAW YOU THERE."

I FOLLOWED YOU AFTER YOU SLEW THAT IMPOSTER.

EXIT

"SPELLS OF MADAME'S CAUSED ME TO KNOW YOU."

"I SPRINKLED CERTAIN HERBS OVER YOU, IN YOUR COFFIN..."

"THEN, WHILE YOU SLEPT LONG AND DEEP, I HAD YOU REMOVED FROM ONE SHIP--

YOU DARED TREAT THE LORD OF THE UN-LIVING LIKE SOME PIECE OF PROPERTY?

I THINK NOT.

FOR, WHEN MADAME LAVEAU AND I HAVE QUAFFED THIS POTION OF IMMORTALITY WHICH SHE HAS DIRECTED ME TO BREW...

...I SHALL BECOME HER LOVER, WHILE YOU SHALL TRULY PERISH AT LAST!

YOU'LL PAY FOR THAT AFFRONT, CREOLE!

--AND PLACED ONTO ANOTHER, BOUND FOR NEW ORLEANS!

ALL IS IN READINESS, MADAME.

ALL, GASTON... SAVE THE FINAL INGREDIENT.

ALL... SAVE THE BLOOD... OF A VAMPIRE!

SO THAT IS YOUR SCHEME! BUT YOU'LL NOT--ARRRH!

NOT SO HIGH AND MIGHTY, ARE YOU, COUNT--

--WHEN WEAKENED BY DARK MAGIC, BLACK CROSSES--

--AND GARLIC!?



NOW, HOLD OUT YOUR ARM, MY GOOD FRIEND!

WE HAVE NEED OF IT--AND OF THAT WHICH LIES BENEATH YOUR PUTRID WHITE SKIN!

HARSHLY, GASTON GRASPS HIS NOW-UNRESISTING FORE-ARM...



A FEW PRECIOUS DROPS OF BLOOD --BLOOD WHICH FLOWED, OF LATE, IN THE VEINS OF THE VAMPIRE'S HUMAN VICTIMS--

THEN, THESE FEW ARE TRANSFERRED TO THE STILL-SMOLDERING URN--



--FROM WHICH FIRST THE YOUNG CREOLE DRINKS--



--AND FINALLY THE WITHERED, UNSPEAKING CRONE--



--WHILE DRACULA WATCHES HELPLESS--



THEN IT BEGINS: THE CHANGE--

--AS MARIE LAVEAU SHEDS HER MANY-SCORE YEARS, ALONG WITH HER MOTH-EATEN SHAWL, AND STANDS PROUD AND ERECT BEFORE THEM!





YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL, MADAME! BUT I --

WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME? I -- FEEL -- SO --

YOU PITIFUL FOOL! LOOK INTO THAT MIRROR YONDER --

--AND ANSWER YOUR OWN MAD QUESTION!



OH MY GOD! EVEN AS YOU BECAME YOUNGER WHEN YOU DRANK THE POTION...

...I HAVE BECOME OLDER!



NO! NO! THE TRUTH IS MORE HORRIBLE YET!

EVEN AS I LOOK -- I BECOME OLDER STILL -- MOMENT BY MOMENT!

YOU TRICKED ME, MADAME! YOU --

NOOOOOO



HIS GNARLED LIMBS NOW TOO WEAK TO SUPPORT HIM, GASTON COLLAPSES ... AND DIES.



YOURS WAS A CRUEL JEST, MARIE LAVEAU.

BUT A NECESSARY ONE, DEAR COUNT.

THE REAL FINAL INGREDIENT OF MY POTION -- WAS GASTON'S LIFE-ESSENCE!

AND NOW -- ABOUT THAT GARLIC --



DO NOT TOY WITH ME, WOMAN! WHATEVER YOUR POWERS, I AM STILL DRACULA!

WHILE I AM MARIE LAVEAU...



...AND HAVE NO FURTHER NEED OF THESE TRIFLES!

MY OWN SPELLS ARE AMPLE TO PROTECT ME, NOW THAT I'VE REGAINED MY YOUTH.

BUT HEAR ME, COUNT -- FOR I'VE A PROPOSAL TO MAKE YOU.

SAY ON, THEN.



A MARRIAGE OF VOOODOO AND VAMPIRISM, DEAR COUNT.

BECOME MY MATE, AND WE'LL LIVE FOREVER, YOU AND I...

...TILL ALL THE WORLD BOWS BENEATH OUR TWIN HEEL!



WELL? WHAT SAY YOU?

YOUR OFFER DOES ME CREDIT, MARIE LAVEAU, AND I MOST HUMBLLY ACKNOWLEDGE IT.

IN ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE... IT MIGHT BE AS YOU WISH.

BUT I MATE WITH NO ONE WHO HAS SOUGHT TO BIND ME WITH FORCE.



FOR, DRACULA HAS HIS OWN DARK DESTINY TO PURSUE, TILL TIME AND TIMES ARE DONE.

AND, PURSUE IT I SHALL...



--ALONE!

A MOMENT BEFORE, AND A MAN STOOD HERE, AND NOW THERE IS BUT THE HOVERING FORM OF A HUGE VAMPIRE BAT.

IN ITS AWESOME PRESENCE, EVEN THE VOOODOO WOMAN CAN SCARCELY REPRESS A VISIBLE SHUDDER.



THEN SHE STEPS ASIDE... AND, WITH A FLUTTERING OF NIGHT-BORN WINGS, THE CREATURE IS GONE.

AND MARIE LAVEAU KNOWS THE LONELINESS WHICH ONLY THOSE WHO TREAD THE WAYS OF LIFE-IN-DEATH FOR-EVER...

ONLY SHE... AND THE MAN CALLED DRACULA!

FINIS