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D R A C U L A
CHAPTER I

JONATHAN HARKER KA JOURNAL
(Shorthand mein likha gaya.)

3 May. Bistritz.—Munich se 1st May ko raat 8:35 par nikla, aur agli subah jaldi Vienna pahunch gaya; waise mujhe 6:46 par pahunchna chahiye tha, lekin train ek ghanta late thi. Train se jo jhalak dikhi aur jitna main sadkon par chala, usse Buda-Pesth ek wonderful jagah lagti hai. Mujhe station se zyada door jaane mein darr lag raha tha, kyunki hum late pahunche the aur hum jitna ho sake correct time par start karna chahte the. Mera impression ye tha ki hum West ko leave kar rahe hain aur East mein enter kar rahe hain; Danube nadi ke upar bane sabse western splendid bridges, jo yahan kaafi wide aur deep hain, humein Turkish rule ke traditions ke beech le gaye.

Hum kaafi sahi time par nikle, aur raat hone ke baad Klausenburgh pahunche. Yahan main raat ke liye Hotel Royale mein ruka. Maine dinner, ya rather supper mein, chicken khaya jo red pepper ke saath kisi tarah banaya gaya tha, jo kaafi tasty tha lekin usse pyaas bohot lagti thi. (Note: Mina ke liye recipe leni hai.) Maine waiter se poocha, aur usne kaha ki isse "paprika hendl" kehte hain, aur kyunki ye ek national dish hai, mujhe ye Carpathians mein kahin bhi mil jayegi. Yahan meri thodi-bahut German kaafi kaam aayi; sach kahun toh, mujhe nahi pata uske bina main kaise manage karta.

London mein jab mere paas thoda time tha, toh maine British Museum visit kiya tha, aur library mein Transylvania se related books aur maps mein search kiya tha; mujhe laga ki jis country ke nobleman (rahees aadmi) se main deal karne ja raha hoon, wahan ke baare mein pehle se thodi knowledge hona important hoga. Mujhe pata chala ki jis district ka naam usne bataya, wo country ke extreme east mein hai, bilkul teen states—Transylvania, Moldavia aur Bukovina—ke borders par, Carpathian mountains ke beech mein; jo Europe ke sabse wild aur least known hisson mein se ek hai. Mujhe Castle Dracula ki exact location batane wala koi map ya book nahi mili, kyunki is country ke maps abhi hamare Ordnance Survey maps jaise compare karne layak nahi hain; lekin mujhe pata chala ki Bistritz, jo post town Count Dracula ne bataya tha, wo ek kaafi jaani-maani jagah hai. Main yahan apne kuch notes likh leta hoon, taaki jab main Mina se apni travels ke baare mein baat karun toh meri memory fresh rahe.

Transylvania ki population mein chaar alag nationalities hain: South mein Saxons, aur unke

saath mixed Wallachs, jo Dacians ke descendants (vanshaj) hain; West mein Magyars, aur East aur North mein Szekelys. Main Szekelys ke beech ja raha hoon, jo claim karte hain ki wo Attila aur Huns ke descendants hain. Shayad ye sach ho, kyunki jab Magyars ne gyarvi sadi (11th century) mein country ko conquer kiya tha toh unhe wahan Huns base hue mile the. Maine padha hai ki duniya ka har superstition (andh-vishwas) Carpathians ke is horseshoe shape mein ikhatta ho gaya hai, jaise ki ye kisi tarah ke imaginative whirlpool ka centre ho; agar aisa hai toh mera stay kaafi interesting ho sakta hai. (Note: Mujhe Count se in sabke baare mein poochna hai.)

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Mujhe achi neend nahi aayi, halanki mera bed kaafi comfortable tha, kyunki mujhe har tarah ke ajeeb sapne aa rahe the. Meri khidki ke neeche raat bhar ek kutta howl kar raha tha (ro raha tha), shayad uska isse kuch lena-dena ho; ya shayad wo paprika ki wajah se tha, kyunki mujhe apne jug ka saara paani peena pada, aur fir bhi main pyaasa tha. Subah ki taraf main so gaya aur mere darwaaze par lagataar knocking se meri neend khuli, toh I guess main tab gehri neend mein tha. Breakfast mein maine aur paprika khaya, aur maize flour (makke ka aata) ka ek porridge jise wo "mamaliga" kehte hain, aur forcemeat se bhara hua egg-plant (baingan), jo ek bohot excellent dish hai, jise wo "impletata" kehte hain. (Note: Iski bhi recipe leni hai.) Mujhe breakfast jaldi karna pada, kyunki train 8 baje se thoda pehle start hoti thi, ya rather use start hona chahiye tha, kyunki 7:30 par station bhaagne ke baad mujhe carriage mein ek ghante se zyada baithna pada usse pehle ki hum move karna shuru karein. Mujhe lagta hai aap jitna East ki taraf jaoge trains utni hi unpunctual hoti jayengi. China mein toh pata nahi kya haal hota hoga?

Din bhar hum ek aisi country mein dheere-dheere aage badhe jo har tarah ki beauty se bhari thi. Kabhi humein steep hills ke top par chote towns ya castles dikhte jaise hum purani missals (dharmik kitaabon) mein dekhte hain; kabhi hum rivers aur streams ke paas se guzre jo apne wide stony kinaron se aise lag rahe the jaise wahan bhaari floods aate honge. Nadi ke bahar ke kinare ko saaf karne ke liye bohot saara paani aur strong current chahiye hota hai. Har station par logon ke groups the, kabhi-kabhi bheed bhi, aur har tarah ke kapdon mein. Unmein se kuch toh bilkul ghar ke peasants jaise the ya waise jo maine France aur Germany se aate waqt dekhe the, short jackets aur round hats aur ghar ke bane trousers ke saath; lekin baaki bohot picturesque (sundar) the. Auratein pretty lag rahi thi, siwaye jab aap unke paas jao, lekin wo waist (kamar) ke paas kaafi clumsy thi. Un sabke sleeves kisi na kisi tarah ke full white the, aur zyadatar ke paas bade belts the jinmein se kuch strips latak rahi thi, bilkul ballet dress ki tarah, lekin of course unke neeche petticoats the. Sabse ajeeb figures jo humne dekhe wo Slovaks the, jo baakiyon se zyada barbarian (junglee) lag rahe the, apne bade cowboy hats, bade baggy gande-safed trousers, white linen shirts, aur enormous bhaari leather belts ke saath, jo lagbhag ek foot chande the aur un par brass nails lage hue the. Wo high boots pehente the, jinke andar unke trousers tucked the, aur unke lambe kaale baal aur bhaari kaali moonchein thi. Wo kaafi picturesque hain, lekin dekhne mein ache nahi lagte. Stage par unhe turant kisi purane Oriental

daakuon ke gang ki tarah dikhaya ja sakta hai. Halanki, mujhe bataya gaya hai ki wo kaafi harmless hain aur unmein natural self-assertion ki kami hai.

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Jab hum Bistritz pahunche toh twilight ka dark side shuru ho chuka tha, ye ek kaafi interesting purani jagah hai. Practically frontier par hone ki wajah se—kyunki Borgo Pass yahan se Bukovina jaata hai—iska existence kaafi stormy raha hai, aur is par uske nishaan saaf dikhte hain. Pachaas saal pehle yahan bade fires ki series hui thi, jisne paanch alag maukon par terrible tabahi machayi thi. 17th century ki shuruwat mein yahan teen hafte ka siege (gheraav) hua tha aur 13,000 log maare gaye the, war ki casualties ke saath bhukhmari aur beemari bhi thi.

Count Dracula ne mujhe Golden Krone Hotel jaane ke liye direct kiya tha, jo mujhe, meri great delight ke liye, puri tarah old-fashioned laga, kyunki of course main country ke taur-tareeke jitna ho sake dekhna chahta tha. Evidently mera wait kiya ja raha tha, kyunki jab main darwaaze ke paas pahuncha toh mera saamna ek cheery-looking buzurg aurat se hua jo usual peasant dress mein thi—white undergarment jiske saath lamba double apron tha, aage aur peeche, coloured kapde ka jo modesty ke hisaab se thoda zyada tight fit ho raha tha. Jab main paas aaya toh wo jhuki aur boli, "The Herr Englishman?" "Haan," maine kaha, "Jonathan Harker." Wo muskurayi, aur ek buzurg aadmi ko message diya jo white shirt-sleeves mein tha aur uske peeche darwaaze tak aaya tha. Wo gaya, lekin turant ek letter ke saath wapas aaya:—

"Mere Dost.—Carpathians mein tumhara swagat hai. Main besabri se tumhara intezaar kar raha hoon. Aaj raat ache se sona. Kal 3 baje diligence (coach) Bukovina ke liye niklegi; usmein tumhare liye ek seat rakhi gayi hai. Borgo Pass par meri carriage tumhara wait karegi aur tumhe mere paas le aayegi. Main umeed karta hoon ki London se tumhari journey happy rahi ho, aur tum meri beautiful land mein apna stay enjoy karoge.

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"Tumhara dost,
"Dracula."

4 May.—Mujhe pata chala ki mere landlord ko Count se ek letter mila tha, jisme use mere liye coach mein best seat secure karne ko kaha gaya tha; lekin jab maine details ke baare mein inquiries ki toh wo thoda chup-chup laga, aur pretend karne laga ki use meri German samajh nahi aa rahi. Ye sach nahi ho sakta, kyunki tab tak wo perfectly samajh raha tha; kam se kam, usne mere sawalon ka jawab aise diya jaise wo samajh raha ho. Wo aur uski wife, wo old lady jisne mujhe receive kiya tha, ek doosre ko dare hue tareeke se dekhne lage. Wo badbadaya ki

paise letter mein bheje gaye the, aur wo bas itna hi jaanta hai. Jab maine usse poocha ki kya wo Count Dracula ko jaanta hai, aur kya wo mujhe unke castle ke baare mein kuch bata sakta hai, toh usne aur uski wife dono ne khud ko cross kiya (dharmik sign banaya), aur ye kehte hue ki wo kuch nahi jaante, aage bolne se saaf mana kar diya. Coach chalne ka time itna paas tha ki mere paas kisi aur se poochne ka time nahi tha, kyunki ye sab bohot mysterious tha aur bilkul bhi comforting nahi tha.

Mere nikalne se theek pehle, wo old lady mere kamre mein aayi aur bohot hysterical tareeke se boli:

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"Kya tumhe jaana hi hoga? Oh! young Herr, kya tumhe jaana hi hoga?" Wo itni excited state mein thi ki lag raha tha usne apni aati-jaati German par pakad kho di hai, aur use kisi aur language ke saath mix kar diya jo mujhe bilkul nahi aati thi. Main bas sawal pooch kar use follow kar paa raha tha. Jab maine use bataya ki mujhe abhi jaana hi hoga, aur main important business par hoon, toh usne fir poocha:

"Kya tumhe pata hai aaj kaunsa din hai?" Maine jawab diya ki aaj 4th May hai. Usne apna sar hilaya aur fir boli:

"Oh, haan! Mujhe pata hai! Wo toh mujhe pata hai, lekin kya tumhe pata hai aaj kya din hai?" Jab maine kaha ki main samjha nahi, toh wo boli:

"Ye St. George's Day ki eve (shaam) hai. Kya tumhe nahi pata ki aaj raat, jab clock mein 12 bajenge, toh duniya ki saari evil things (buri shaktiyan) full sway (control) mein hongii? Kya tumhe pata hai tum kahan ja rahe ho, aur kiske paas ja rahe ho?" Wo itni distress mein thi ki maine use comfort karne ki koshish ki, lekin koi fayda nahi hua. Finally wo apne ghutno par baith gayi aur mujhse bheek maangne lagi ki main na jaun; kam se kam start karne se pehle ek-do din wait kar loon. Ye sab bohot ridiculous tha lekin main comfortable feel nahi kar raha tha. Halanki, business karna tha, aur main kisi cheez ko usmein interfere nahi karne de sakta tha. Isliye maine use uthane ki koshish ki, aur jitna grave (gambheer) ho sakta tha utna hokar kaha ki main uska shukriya karta hoon, lekin meri duty zaroori hai, aur mujhe jaana hi hoga. Fir wo uthi aur apni aankhen ponchi, aur apne gale se ek crucifix (Jesus ka cross) nikaal kar mujhe offer kiya. Mujhe samajh nahi aaya ki kya karun, kyunki, ek English Churchman hone ke naate, mujhe sikhaya gaya hai ki aisi cheezein kuch had tak idolatrous (murti pooja jaisi) hoti hain, aur fir bhi ek old lady jo itna acha soch rahi ho aur aise state of mind mein ho, use mana karna bohot ungracious lagta. Mujhe lagta hai usne mere chehre par doubt dekh liya, kyunki usne wo rosary mere gale mein daal di aur kaha, "Apni maa ki khatir," aur kamre se chali gayi. Main diary

ka ye hissa tab likh raha hoon jab main coach ka wait kar raha hoon, jo ki, of course, late hai; aur wo crucifix abhi bhi mere gale mein hai. Ye us old lady ka darr hai, ya is jagah ke bohot saare ghostly traditions, ya khud wo crucifix, mujhe nahi pata, lekin main apne mind mein utna easy feel nahi kar raha jitna usually karta hoon. Agar ye book mere pahunchne se pehle Mina tak pahunche, toh ise mera good-bye samjhna. Lo coach aa gayi!

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5 May. The Castle.—Subah ki grey roshni chali gayi hai, aur suraj distant horizon par uncha hai, jo jagged (kante-daar) lag raha hai, trees ki wajah se ya hills ki wajah se mujhe nahi pata, kyunki wo itna door hai ki badi cheezein aur choti cheezein mix ho gayi hain. Mujhe neend nahi aa rahi, aur kyunki mujhe tab tak nahi uthaya jayega jab tak main khud na jaagun, naturally main tab tak likhunga jab tak neend na aa jaye. Likhne ke liye kaafi ajeeb cheezein hain, aur kahin padhne wala ye na soche ki Bistritz se nikalne se pehle maine kuch zyada hi kha-pee liya tha, main apna dinner exactly likh deta hoon. Maine wo khaya jise ye "robber steak" kehte hain—bacon, pyaaz, aur beef ke tukde, red pepper se seasoned, aur sticks par laga kar aag par roaste kiye hue, London ke cat's meat ke simple style mein! Wine Golden Mediasch thi, jo jeeb par ek ajeeb sa sting (chubhan) deti hai, jo ki, halanki, bura nahi hai. Maine iske sirf do glasses piye, aur kuch nahi.

Jab main coach par chadha toh driver apni seat par nahi baitha tha, aur maine use landlady se baat karte hue dekha. Wo evidently mere baare mein baat kar rahe the, kyunki beech-beech mein wo meri taraf dekhte, aur darwaaze ke bahar bench par baithe kuch log—jise wo "word-bearer" ke matlab wale naam se bulate hain—aaye aur sunne lage, aur fir meri taraf dekhne lage, zyadatar log taras bhari nazron se. Main bohot saare words sun sakta tha jo baar-baar repeat ho rahe the, ajeeb words, kyunki bheed mein kayi nationalities ke log the; toh maine chupchaap apni bag se polyglot dictionary nikali aur unhe dhoonda. Mujhe kehna padega ki wo mere liye cheering nahi the, kyunki unmein the "Ordog"—Satan (Shaitan), "pokol"—hell (narak), "stregoica"—witch (chudail), "vrolok" aur "vlkoslak"—jinka matlab same hai, ek Slovak aur dusra Servian hai us cheez ke liye jo ya toh were-wolf hai ya vampire. (Note: Mujhe Count se in superstitions ke baare mein poochna hai)

Jab hum chale, toh inn ke darwaaze par bheed, jo ab tak kaafi badh chuki thi, sabne cross ka sign banaya aur do ungliyan meri taraf point ki. Kuch mushkil se maine apne ek fellow-passenger se poocha ki iska kya matlab hai; wo pehle toh jawab nahi dena chahta tha, lekin jab use pata chala ki main English hoon, toh usne explain kiya ki ye evil eye (buri nazar) se bachne ka ek charm ya guard hai. Ye mere liye bohot pleasant nahi tha, kyunki main ek anjaan jagah par ek anjaan aadmi se milne ja raha tha; lekin har koi itna kind-hearted, aur itna dukhi, aur itna sympathetic lag raha tha ki main touch hue bina nahi reh saka. Main inn-yard aur uski picturesque figures ki bheed ki wo aakhri jhalak kabhi nahi bhoolunga, sab khud ko cross kar rahe the, jaise wo us wide archway ke chaaron taraf khade the, jiske background mein

oleander aur orange trees ke rich foliage (patte) green tubs mein yard ke centre mein clustered the. Fir hamara driver, jiske wide linen drawers ne box-seat ka pura front cover kiya hua tha—inhe ye "gotza" kehte hain—usne apna bada whip (koda) apne chaar chote ghodon par phatkada, jo ek saath daud rahe the, aur hum apni journey par nikal pade.

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Jald hi main raste ki beauty mein ghostly fears (bhootiya darr) ko bhool gaya, halanki agar mujhe wo language, ya rather languages aati hoti jo mere fellow-passengers bol rahe the, toh shayad main unhe itni aasani se dimag se nikal nahi paata. Hamare saamne forests aur woods se bhari ek hari slope wali zameen thi, jahan idhar-udhar steep hills thi, jinke upar trees ke clumps ya farmhouses the, jinke blank gable end sadak ki taraf the. Har jagah fruit blossom ka ek bewildering mass tha—apple, plum, pear, cherry; aur jaise hum drive kar rahe the main trees ke neeche hari ghaas ko gire hue petals se spangled (saja hua) dekh sakta tha. In hari hills ke beech mein jise ye log "Mittel Land" kehte hain, sadak chalti thi, kabhi ghaas wale curve par gum ho jaati, ya pine woods ke phailay hue hisson se chup jaati, jo idhar-udhar hillsides par aag ki lapton (tongues of flame) ki tarah neeche aa rahe the. Sadak kharaab thi, lekin fir bhi hum us par feverish haste (bukhlaahat bhari tezi) se udte hue lag rahe the. Mujhe tab samajh nahi aaya ki is jaldbaazi ka kya matlab tha, lekin driver evidently Borgo Prund pahunchne mein koi time waste nahi karna chahta tha. Mujhe bataya gaya ki ye sadak summertime mein excellent hoti hai, lekin winter snows ke baad ise abhi theek nahi kiya gaya tha. Is maamle mein ye Carpathians ki aam sadkon se alag hai, kyunki ye ek purani tradition hai ki unhe zyada achi condition mein nahi rakhna hai. Purane zamane mein Hospadars unhe repair nahi karte the, taaki Turk ye na sochen ki wo foreign troops lane ki taiyaari kar rahe hain, aur isse wo war jaldi shuru ho jaye jo hamesha loading point par rehti thi.

Mittel Land ki hari swelling hills ke pare Carpathians ki unchi dhalano tak forest ke mighty slopes uth rahe the. Hamare right aur left mein wo tower kar rahe the, aur afternoon sun un par puri tarah gir raha tha aur is beautiful range ke saare glorious colours bahar la raha tha, peaks ki shadows mein deep blue aur purple, jahan ghaas aur rock mix ho rahe the wahan green aur brown, aur jagged rock aur pointed crags ka ek endless perspective, jab tak wo khud distance mein gum nahi ho gaye, jahan snowy peaks shandaar tareeke se uthi hui thi. Idhar-udhar mountains mein bade rifts (dararein) lag rahe the, jinke through, jaise suraj doobne laga, humein kabhi-kabhi girte hue paani ki white gleam dikhai deti thi. Mere ek saathi ne mera haath chuha jab hum ek hill ke base se ghume aur ek mountain ki unchi, snow-covered peak khul kar saamne aayi, jo hamare saanp jaise raste par ghumte hue, theek hamare saamne lag rahi thi:—

"Dekho! Isten szek!"—"God's seat!" (Bhagwan ki seat)—aur usne shradha se khud ko cross kiya.

Jaise hum apne endless raste par ghume, aur suraj hamare peeche neeche aur neeche hota gaya, shaam ki parchaiyan hamare chaaron taraf rengne lagi. Ye is baat se emphasize ho raha tha ki snowy mountain-top par abhi bhi sunset ki roshni thi, aur wo ek delicate cool pink colour mein glow kar raha tha. Idhar-udhar hum Cszeks aur Slovaks ke paas se guzre, sab picturesque kapdon mein, lekin maine notice kiya ki goitre (gale ki beemari) bohot zyada prevalent thi. Sadak ke kinare bohot saare crosses the, aur jaise hum paas se guzre, mere sabhi saathiyon ne khud ko cross kiya. Idhar-udhar koi peasant aadmi ya aurat kisi shrine ke saamne ghutne takey hue the, jo hamare paas aane par mude bhi nahi, balki devotion ke self-surrender mein aise lag rahe the jaise unke paas bahari duniya ke liye na aankhen thi na kaan. Mere liye bohot si cheezein nayi thi: for instance, trees mein hay-ricks (ghaas ke dher), aur idhar-udhar weeping birch ke bohot beautiful masses, jinke white stems patton ke delicate green ke through silver ki tarah chamak rahe the. Kabhi-kabhi hum ek leiter-wagon—jo ordinary peasant ki gaadi hoti hai—ke paas se guzre, jiski lambi, saanp jaisi vertebra sadak ki unevenness ko suit karne ke liye banayi gayi thi. Is par zaroor ghar lautate hue peasants ka koi group baitha hota tha, Cszeks apne white sheepskins ke saath, aur Slovaks apne coloured sheepskins ke saath, jo baad wale apne lambe dande lance ki tarah pakde hue the, jinke end mein axe (kulhadi) thi. Jaise shaam hui thand badhne lagi, aur badhti hui twilight trees, oak, beech, aur pine ke gloom (andhere) ko ek dark mistiness mein merge karti hui lag rahi thi, halanki valleys mein jo hills ke spurs ke beech gehri thi, jaise hum Pass ke through upar gaye, dark firs (devdaru ke ped) idhar-udhar late-lying snow ke background ke against khade the. Kabhi-kabhi, jab sadak pine woods ke through kati hoti thi jo andhere mein hamare upar band hote hue lag rahe the, greyness ke bade masses, jo idhar-udhar trees par phailay hue the, ek ajeeb weird aur solemn effect paida kar rahe the, jo shaam ko pehle paida hue thoughts aur grim fancies ko aage bada rahe the, jab girte hue sunset ne un ghost-like clouds ko strange relief mein dikhaya tha jo Carpathians mein valleys ke through lagataar ghumte hue lagte hain. Kabhi-kabhi hills itni steep thi ki, hamare driver ki jaldbaazi ke bawajood, ghode sirf dheere chal paate the. Main neeche utar kar paidal chalna chahta tha, jaisa hum ghar par karte hain, lekin driver ne sunne se mana kar diya. "Nahi, nahi," usne kaha; "tumhe yahan nahi chalna chahiye; kutte bohot fierce (khatarnak) hain"; aur fir usne add kiya, jise wo evidently grim pleasantry (mazaak) samajh raha tha—kyunki usne baakiyon ki approving smile dekhne ke liye peeche dekha—"aur sone se pehle shayad tumhe aise maamlon ka kaafi experience mil jaye." Wo sirf ek moment ke liye ruka apne lamps jalane ke liye.

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Jab andhera hua toh passengers ke beech kuch excitement lag rahi thi, aur wo ek ke baad ek usse baat karte rahe, jaise use aur speed badhane ke liye force kar rahe hon. Usne apne lambe whip se ghodon ko berahmi se maara, aur wild cries ke saath unhe aur mehnat karne ke liye ukhaaya. Fir andhere mein mujhe aage grey light ka ek patch dikha, jaise hills mein koi darar ho. Passengers ki excitement badh gayi; wo crazy coach apne bade leather springs par hil rahi thi, aur ek stormy sea mein toss hoti hui boat ki tarah sway kar rahi thi. Mujhe pakad kar rakhna

pada. Sadak zyada level ho gayi, aur hum udte hue lag rahe the. Fir mountains dono taraf hamare kareeb aate hue aur hum par gussa karte hue lage; hum Borgo Pass mein enter kar rahe the. Ek-ek karke kayi passengers ne mujhe gifts offer kiye, jo unhone mujhe aisi earnestness (gambheerta) ke saath diye ki mana nahi kiya ja sakta tha; ye certainly ajeeb aur varied tarah ke the, lekin har koi simple good faith mein diya gaya tha, ek kindly word, aur ek blessing, aur darr-wale movements ke us ajeeb mixture ke saath jo maine Bistritz mein hotel ke bahar dekha tha—cross ka sign aur evil eye se bachav. Fir, jaise hum udte hue chale, driver aage jhuka, aur dono taraf passengers, coach ke kinare se jhuk kar, andhere mein eagerly dekhne lage. Ye evident tha ki kuch bohot exciting ya toh ho raha tha ya expected tha, lekin halanki maine har passenger se poocha, kisi ne mujhe slight explanation bhi nahi di. Ye excitement ki state kuch der tak chalti rahi; aur aakhirkar humne apne saamne Pass ko eastern side par khulta hua dekha. Upar dark, rolling clouds the, aur hawa mein thunder ka heavy, oppressive sense tha. Aisa lag raha tha jaise mountain range ne do atmospheres ko alag kar diya tha, aur ab hum thunderous wale mein aa gaye the. Main ab khud us sawari ko dekh raha tha jo mujhe Count ke paas le jaane wali thi. Har moment mujhe blackness ke through lamps ki chamak dekhne ki umeed thi; lekin sab andhera tha. Sirf hamare apne lamps ki flickering rays thi, jisme hamare hard-driven ghodon se steam ek white cloud ki tarah uth rahi thi. Hum ab dekh sakte the ki sandy road hamare saamne safed padi thi, lekin us par kisi vehicle ka koi sign nahi tha. Passengers ne khushi ki saans ke saath peeche hat gaye, jo meri khud ki disappointment ka mazaak udati hui lagi. Main pehle hi soch raha tha ki mujhe kya karna chahiye, jab driver ne, apni ghadi dekhte hue, baakiyon se kuch kaha jo main mushkil se sun paya, wo itni dheere aur low tone mein bola gaya tha; mujhe laga wo tha "Time se ek ghanta kam." Fir meri taraf mudte hue, usne meri se bhi kharaab German mein kaha:—

"Yahan koi carriage nahi hai. Herr expected nahi hai after all. Wo ab Bukovina aayega, aur kal ya parson wapas jayega; behtar hai parson." Jab wo bol hi raha tha ghode hinhinane (neigh) aur phufkarne lage aur wildly uchalne lage, taaki driver ko unhe pakadna pada. Fir, peasants ki cheekhon ke chorus aur sabke khud ko cross karne ke beech, ek calèche, chaar ghodon ke saath, hamare peeche aayi, humein overtake kiya, aur coach ke bagal mein ruk gayi. Main apne lamps ki flash se dekh sakta tha, jaise rays un par giri, ki ghode koyley jaise kaale (coal-black) aur splendid animals the. Unhe ek lamba aadmi chala raha tha, jiski lambi brown beard aur ek bada black hat tha, jo uska chehra humse chupata hua lag raha tha. Main sirf bohot chamakdaar aankhon ki ek jodi ki chamak dekh saka, jo lamplight mein laal lag rahi thi, jaise wo hamari taraf muda. Usne driver se kaha:—

"Tum aaj jaldi aa gaye, mere dost." Wo aadmi jawab mein haklaya:—

"English Herr jaldi mein tha," jis par stranger ne jawab diya:—

"Isiliye, mujhe lagta hai, tum chahte the ki wo Bukovina chala jaye. Tum mujhe dhoka nahi de sakte, mere dost; main bohot kuch jaanta hoon, aur mere ghode tez hain." Jaise wo bola wo muskuraya, aur lamplight ek hard-looking mooh par giri, jiske lips bohot laal the aur daant sharp-looking the, ivory jaise safed. Mere ek saathi ne doosre ko Burger ki "Lenore" ki line whisper ki:—

"Denn die Todten reiten schnell"—
("Kyunki murde tez chalte hain.")

Ajeeb driver ne evidently wo words sun liye, kyunki usne ek gleaming smile ke saath upar dekha. Passenger ne apna chehra dusri taraf kar liya, saath hi apni do ungliyan bahar nikaali aur khud ko cross kiya. "Mujhe Herr ka luggage do," driver ne kaha; aur exceeding alacrity (bohot tezi) ke saath mere bags bahar diye gaye aur calèche mein rakh diye gaye. Fir main coach ki side se neeche utra, kyunki calèche bilkul bagal mein thi, driver ne meri madad ek aise haath se ki jisne mere arm ko steel ki grip mein pakad liya; uski taqat prodigious (bohot zyada) rahi hogi. Bina ek shabd bole usne apni lagaam hilayi, ghode mude, aur hum Pass ke andhere mein chale gaye. Jab maine peeche dekha toh mujhe lamps ki roshni mein coach ke ghodon se steam dikhi, aur uske against mere late companions ke figures khud ko cross karte hue dikhe. Fir driver ne apna whip phatkada aur apne ghodon ko aawaz di, aur wo Bukovina ke raste par nikal gaye. Jaise wo andhere mein gum hue mujhe ek ajeeb thand mehsoos hui, aur ek akelapan mujh par cha gaya; lekin mere kandhon par ek cloak daal diya gaya, aur mere ghutno par ek rug, aur driver ne excellent German mein kaha:—

"Raat thandi hai, mein Herr, aur mere master Count ne mujhe tumhara pura khayal rakhne ko kaha hai. Seat ke neeche slivovitz (country ki plum brandy) ki ek flask hai, agar tumhe zaroorat ho." Maine nahi li, lekin ye jaan kar comfort mila ki wo wahan thi. Mujhe thoda ajeeb lag raha tha, aur thoda nahi balki kaafi darr lag raha tha. Mujhe lagta hai agar koi alternative hota toh main wo le leta, bajaye us unknown night journey ko aage badhane ke. Carriage ek hard pace par seedhi chalti gayi, fir humne ek complete turn liya aur dusri seedhi sadak par gaye. Mujhe laga ki hum bas same ground par baar-baar ghum rahe hain; aur isliye maine kisi salient point ko note kiya, aur paaya ki aisa hi tha. Main driver se poochna chahta tha ki is sabka kya matlab hai, lekin mujhe aisa karne mein sach mein darr lag raha tha, kyunki maine socha ki, jaisi meri situation thi, koi bhi protest asar nahi karega agar delay karne ki intention hui toh. By-and-by, halanki, kyunki main jaanne ke liye curious tha ki time kaise pass ho raha hai, maine ek match jalaya, aur uski flame mein apni ghadi dekhi; midnight (raat ke 12 baje) hone mein bas kuch minutes baaki the. Isse mujhe ek shock sa laga, kyunki mujhe lagta hai midnight ke baare mein general superstition mere recent experiences se badh gaya tha. Maine suspense ki ek sick feeling ke saath wait kiya.

Fir sadak par door kisi farmhouse mein ek kutta rone laga—ek lambi, agonised wailing (dard bhari aawaz), jaise darr ki wajah se ho. Wo aawaz dusre kutte ne pakad li, aur fir dusre aur

dusre ne, jab tak, hawa par beh kar jo ab Pass ke through softly chal rahi thi, ek wild howling shuru ho gayi, jo pure country se aati hui lag rahi thi, jahan tak imagination raat ke andhere mein grasp kar sakti thi. Pehli howl par ghode zor lagane aur uchalne lage, lekin driver ne unse soothingly baat ki, aur wo shaant ho gaye, lekin kaanp rahe the aur pasina chhod rahe the jaise sudden fright se bhaagne ke baad hota hai. Fir, door distance mein, hamare dono taraf mountains se ek louder aur sharper howling shuru hui—bhediyeon (wolves) ki—jisne ghodon aur mujhe dono ko same tareeke se affect kiya—kyunki mera mann kiya ki main calèche se kood kar bhaag jaun, jabki wo fir se uchalne lage aur madly plunge karne lage, taaki driver ko unhe bhaagne se rokne ke liye apni saari great strength use karni padi. Kuch minutes mein, halanki, mere apne kaan us aawaz ke aadi ho gaye, aur ghode itne shaant ho gaye ki driver neeche utar saka aur unke saamne khada ho saka. Usne unhe pet kiya aur soothe kiya, aur unke kaano mein kuch whisper kiya, jaisa maine horse-tamers ko karte hue suna hai, aur extraordinary effect ke saath, kyunki uske caresses (pyaar) ke under wo fir se quite manageable ho gaye, halanki wo abhi bhi kaanp rahe the. Driver ne fir apni seat li, aur apni lagaam hila kar, great pace par chal pada. Is baar, Pass ki far side tak jaane ke baad, wo achanak ek narrow roadway ki taraf muda jo sharply right ki taraf jaati thi.

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