

DRACULA GOES VIRAL

The Most Chaotic Adventure of a Vampire in the Age of Social Media

By A.M. Natch · Ages 8–12 · Middle Grade Comedy

■ ABOUT THE BOOK

Count Vlad Dracula has survived centuries of vampire hunters, angry mobs, and the occasional wooden stake — but nothing prepared him for going viral. When tourists with selfie sticks invade his castle and a livestream mishap turns him into an accidental internet celebrity, Dracula finds himself the reluctant star of Valcronis’s first-ever Vampire Festival. With the help of Marki, an eight-year-old who isn’t scared of him at all, and Grandma Rosie, who is somehow scarier than any mob, Dracula has to decide: hide in the shadows forever, or embrace the madness — and maybe make a few unexpected friends along the way.

■ MAIN CHARACTERS

Count Vlad Dracula

600+ years old, grumpy, dramatic, and secretly a softie. He thinks he’s still terrifying, but modern life keeps proving otherwise. Loves garlic bread more than he’d ever admit.

Marki (Marcus Vitanis)

8-year-old, curious, patient, and empathetic. He sees past Dracula’s dramatic exterior and becomes his guide to modern life — smartphones, Wi-Fi, and all.

Grandma Rosie (Rosie Vitanis)

Sharp, warm, no-nonsense. The only person Dracula is genuinely afraid of. She cannot be hypnotized and will not tolerate the cape.

Hunter Storm (Julián Stormus)

Wannabe influencer and vampire hunter. Fails at everything dramatically. Sets traps that catch raccoons and carries a plastic stake from a Halloween store.

Mayor Oscar Allegrius

Endlessly optimistic, obsessed with tourism. Sees a real vampire and immediately thinks ‘marketing gold.’ Would name a sinkhole a tourist attraction.

■ DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

— Getting Started —

1. Before reading, what did you expect Dracula to be like based on his reputation? How did the real Dracula surprise you?

2. Why do you think the tourists keep invading the castle even though they're terrified?

— *Characters & Relationships* —

3. Marki is never afraid of Dracula. Why do you think that is? What does he see that others miss?

4. Grandma Rosie can't be hypnotized and refuses to be impressed. What does that tell us about her character?

5. Dracula is genuinely afraid of Rosie. Why might a centuries-old vampire find an ordinary grandma scarier than a torch-wielding mob?

6. Hunter Storm fails at absolutely everything — yet he keeps going. Is that admirable, funny, or both? What keeps him motivated?

— *Themes: Change & Belonging* —

7. Dracula survived centuries of danger but struggles enormously with smartphones and Wi-Fi. Why is technology harder for him than vampire hunters were?

8. Marki tells Dracula: “You don't have to be scary to be legendary.” What does he mean? Do you agree?

9. By the end of the story, Dracula, Marki, and Rosie have become an unlikely family. What made them click despite being so different from each other?

10. Dracula starts the story wanting to be feared and ends it enjoying being liked. Have you ever changed what you wanted from a situation once you were in it?

— *Social Media & Fame* —

11. Dracula accidentally goes viral after one bad selfie. Have you ever seen something blow up online in a way nobody expected?

12. The Mayor immediately turns Dracula's existence into a tourism event. What does that say about how people treat unusual or interesting things?

13. Is there a difference between being famous and being known? Which one does Dracula end up with?

— *Going Deeper* —

14. This book is a retelling of a classic monster story. How is this Dracula different from the scary vampire in traditional tales? What changed — and what stayed the same?

15. If you could add one more character to Valcronic, who would it be and why?

⇒ ■ **ACTIVITIES**

■ **Write Dracula's Review**

Dracula posts a one-star review of garlic bread, then changes it to five stars. Write your own review of something ordinary — but in Dracula’s dramatic voice.

■ **Design the Festival Flyer**

The Mayor creates a flyer for the Vampire Festival. Design your own version. What would you call it? What events would you include?

■ **Write Your Own Survival Guide**

Dracula gets a free booklet called “Dracula’s Official Survival Guide to Midnight Munchies.” Write your own survival guide for something you know well — school lunches, younger siblings, surviving a long car trip.

■ **Character Interview**

Pick one character and write five interview questions you’d ask them. Then write their answers in their voice.

■ **Modern Monster Makeover**

Dracula gets sweatpants, a tank top, and a safari hat. Pick another classic monster and give them a modern makeover. What would Frankenstein wear? The Wolfman? Describe the whole look.

■ A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dracula Goes Viral started with a simple question: what would a centuries-old vampire actually think of the modern world? Not a cool, brooding vampire — a cranky, out-of-touch one who hasn’t left his castle in a very long time. What I didn’t expect was how much heart the story would have once Marki and Rosie showed up. Some friendships make no sense on paper and work perfectly in real life. I hope this story made you laugh — and maybe think about who in your life might just need someone patient enough to teach them how Wi-Fi works.

— *A.M. Natch*