Resurrecting Two Melodramatic Vampires of 1820

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RESURRECTING TWO MELODRAMATIC VAMPIRES OF 1820

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As a child I spent many nights watching re-runs of *The Munsters* with my mother after she came home from work. She instilled in me a love for that TV show as well as an interest in monsters—particularly monsters of the clumsy, loveable, misunderstood variety—that I have carried with me ever since. I would like to thank my mother as well as my former professor Tina Boyer, whose superb teaching introduced me to the beautifully macabre joy of studying monsters. Both of these women cultivated an interest in monsters that is central to this thesis.

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I hope this thesis is as much fun to read as it was to write.
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ABSTRACT

An obsession with vampires pervades today’s popular culture; we encounter vampires at every turn in such media as television, film, and literature. A similar vampire craze emanated from the melodramatic theaters of Paris and London in 1820. The release of John Polidori’s seminal vampire novel, *The Vampyre*, in 1819 ignited a flourishing of melodramas adapting and responding to that text. Contemporary critics wrote that no theater in either Paris or London was without its vampire. This thesis focuses on the two melodramas that inaugurated this vampire mania: *Le Vampire* by Charles Nodier, Achille de Jouffroy, and Pierre-Frédéric-Adolphe Carmouche, premiered on 13 June 1820, and *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles* by James Robinson Planché, premiered on 9 August 1820. Firmly rooted in the genre of melodrama, which espouses a dualistic, black-and-white worldview, these theater pieces are obliged to put forth a clearly identifiable villain. This is problematic when the vampire is certainly dangerous but not physically identifiable by any abnormalities. Analysis of the incidental music and textual allusions in the melodramas reveals various methods of musically enhancing suspense and emotional drama, grounding these specific vampires in a tradition of evil villains, and, perhaps most important, identifying the monster and reminding audience members whom they should fear. Considerations of these interactions between music and text inform an understanding of how the vampire might have been experienced in these two cities in 1820 and cast light upon what the audiences might have feared. Because any modern adaptations of the vampire must in some way confront the foundation laid by John Polidori and these melodramas, popular culture’s first vampire craze, this thesis resurrects these vampire plays from their burial places beyond the earshot of music history. We can better understand our current notions of vampires (and their melodramatic natures) if we understand their past.
CHAPTER 1

BLOODLINES: STALKING THE VAMPIRE TO THE STAGE

The fatal Lord Ruthven is the ancestor not only of Sir Francis Varney and Count Dracula, but of all the vampires who have since crept through the pages of English fiction.¹

Vampires are all around us. Consider television series such as True Blood, The Vampire Diaries, The Originals, and The Strain—the latter three ongoing. Anne Rice’s The Vampire Chronicles and more recently The Twilight Saga by Stephanie Meyer have dedicated readerships. In Music Theater there have been recently successful shows such as Dracula, the Musical (2004) and Tanz der Vampire, which premiered in 1997 but played until 2014. The past five years alone featured several vampire-themed movies across many genres. These included animated comedies such as Hotel Transylvania (2012) and Hotel Transylvania 2 (2015), horror and revisionist history such as Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter (2012) and Dracula Untold (2014), love stories like The Twilight Saga (2008-2012) and Only Lovers Left Alive (2014), and even the mockumentary What We Do in the Shadows (2014). Popular culture is still in a vampire craze, albeit a multivalent one.

The vampire craze is not a new phenomenon; revenants and incubi or succubae are common to cultures the world over. However, the nineteenth-century vampire myth of fiction and drama was rooted in Eastern European folklore. Montague Summers, a clergyman, occultist, and self-professed believer of vampires, among other things, wrote two books that were long considered authorities on vampires. In The Vampire, His Kith and Kin (1928) Summers combines vampire legends from across Europe into one composite description:

A Vampire is generally described as being exceedingly gaunt and lean with a hideous countenance … When, however, he has satiated his lust for warm human blood his body becomes horribly puffed and bloated, as though he were some great leech gorged and replete to bursting … the nails are always curved and crooked, often well nigh the length of a great bird’s claw, the quicks dirty and foul with clots and gouts of black blood. His breath is unbearably fetid and rank with corruption, the stench of the charnel.²

Paul Barber, a folklorist working with forensic pathologists and medical examiners, showed that all these phenomena—bloated corpses, blood dripping from the mouth, hair and nails that seemingly continued to grow after death—can be explained by natural processes of decomposition. Within minutes of death, putrefaction—the death and leakage of cells—begins. As this process progresses gases build up in the thorax, causing bloating as well as forcing the lungs upward and pushing blood out of the nose and mouth. Concomitantly the skin of the body starts to shrink within hours after death causing the nails and hair to appear longer than at the time of death.³ Without an understanding of how bodies decompose, it is easy to see how such signs could be taken as vampirism.

The beginnings of this vampire lore are difficult to trace, but they probably resulted from epidemics in Eastern Europe. The Black Plague afflicted the area from 1692 to 1694 and smallpox followed in 1708 and 1719.⁴ People sought explanations for sudden deaths and found the vampire a ready and flexible scapegoat. There are several cases where groups of unexplainable deaths were blamed on the first person to die in an other-than natural way. Barber states, “People who are different, unpopular, or great sinners are apt to return from the dead. It

may be merely a corollary of this rule that in Eastern Europe alcoholics are regarded as prime candidates for revenants.”\textsuperscript{5} Dagmar Burkhart in her article “Vampirgläube und Vampirsage auf dem Balkan” adds to this list: “the godless (people of a different faith are included here, too!), evildoers, suicides, in addition [to] sorcerers, witches, and werewolves; among the Bulgarians the group is expanded to robbers, highwaymen, arsonists, prostitutes, deceitful and treacherous barmaids, and other dishonorable people.”\textsuperscript{6}

The most influential example is the case of Arnod Paole,\textsuperscript{7} who died after falling from a haywagon. Not only did he die unnaturally before his time, but during his life he had spoken of a vampire encounter. He claimed that he ate the soil of the vampire’s grave and smeared the vampire’s blood on his body to prevent further harassment by the revenant. The hysteria that followed Paole’s death caught the attention of the Austrian government, which dispatched a delegation to investigate the village. Their 1732 report \textit{Visum et Repertum} (Seen and Discovered) was widely disseminated throughout Europe, leading to the first European vampire craze. Due to its influence, it is worth quoting at some length here:

In twenty or thirty days after his death some people complained that they were being bothered by this same Arnod Paole; and in fact four people were killed by him. In order to end this evil, they dug up this Arnod Paole forty days after his death—this on the advice of their Hadnack,\textsuperscript{8} who had been present at such events before; and they found that he was quite complete and undecayed, and that fresh blood had flowed from his eyes, nose, mouth, and ears; that the shirt, the covering, and the coffin were completely bloody; that the old nails on his hands and feet, along with the skin, had fallen off, and that new ones had grown; and since they saw from this that he was a true vampire, they drove a stake through his heart, according to their custom, whereby he gave an audible groan and bled

\textsuperscript{5} Paul Barber, \textit{Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 29.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 30.
\textsuperscript{7} None of the extant versions of the \textit{Visum et Repertum} agree on the spelling of this man’s name. The spelling here is taken from a Nuremburg text from 1732 reprinted in Sturm and Völker’s \textit{Von denen Vampiren oder Menschenaugern}.
\textsuperscript{8} Hadnack refers to a military soldier in a position of authority, i.e. a bailiff.
copiously. Thereupon they burned the body the same day to ashes and threw these into the grave. These same people say further that all those who were tormented and killed by the vampires must themselves become vampires. Therefore they disinterred the above-mentioned four people in the same way. Then they also add that this Arnod Paole attacked not only the people but also the cattle, and sucked out their blood. And since the people used the flesh of such cattle, it appears that some vampires are again present here, inasmuch as, in a period of three months, seventeen young and old people died, among them some who, with no previous illness, died in two or at the most three days … After the examination had taken place, the heads of the vampires were cut off by the local gypsies and then burned along with bodies, and then the ashes were thrown into the river Morava.⁹

These exhumations likely took place in winter; the cold temperatures explain the delayed decomposition.¹⁰ Matt Kaplan, a science journalist and frequent contributor to *National Geographic*, *Nature*, and the *Economist*, explains the groaning corpse. Under certain circumstances, built-up gases in the corpse can be dislodged by trauma, e.g., driving a stake through the thorax (see Figure 1-1). Once dislodged, the gases can cause the vocal folds to vibrate, making it seem like the corpse has groaned.¹¹ The observations made in these reports are based in scientific fact; it is only the causes that are misunderstood and the interpretations misguided.

The *Visum et Repertum* quickly became a sensation through Europe. It was distributed in 1732 at a Leipzig fair and published in magazines and newspapers in Paris and London. At least fourteen treatises and four dissertations were written on the subject of this superstition to clarify the tantalizing controversy.¹² The two documents that had the greatest impact on later literature and music were the 1744 *Dissertazione sopra i vampiri* by Giuseppe Davanzati (1665–1755) and the *Dissertations sur les apparitions des anges des démons et des esprits, et sur les revenants, et*

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⁹ Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death*, 16–18.
¹⁰ Ibid., 20.
vampires de Hingrie, de Boheme, de Moravie, et de Silésie by Dom Augustin Calmet (1672–1757).

Figure 1-1: A vampire being staked; a lithographic engraving by R. de Moraine.  

In 1738 Wolfgang Schrattenbach, bishop of Olmütz, asked the church to issue a statement concerning the reports of vampires that he was receiving, including the story of Arnod Paole. Giuseppe Davanzati spent six years studying reports of revenants before publishing his treatise. He reasoned that, because the superstitions were most prevalent among the lower,  

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illiterate classes, they must all be fantasy—though, he did concede that the devil could be somehow involved. Davanzati’s treatise was reprinted in 1789 and became the accepted conclusion among political and church leaders. In 1812 Giuseppe Palomba used the treatise as the basis for his libretto *I vampiri*, set to music by Silvestro di Palma.

Dom Augustin Calmet’s treatise was published two years after Davanzati’s and made a less definitive conclusion. Calmet, a biblical scholar and Benedictine Abbot of Senones, was concerned about the implications of vampires for Christian eschatology. At the end of his treatise, in which he denounced the desecration of corpses, he concluded that vampires could either be the works of the devil or mere superstition. Nevertheless, he left the door open for other possibilities: “This is a mysterious and difficult matter, and I leave bolder and more proficient minds to resolve it.” Controversy over Calmet’s open ending renewed vampire lore’s longevity. A revised French edition was published in 1749 under an adjusted title, a German edition was published in 1752, and an English edition in 1759, which was reprinted in 1850 as *The Phantom World*. Calmet’s willingness to grant the accounts credence prompted criticism from many, even after his death, but his treatise thoroughly collected accounts of vampirism and preserved reports that are otherwise lost.

While many characteristics of Calmet’s vampires sound similar to later vampires of literature, vampires in fiction are supposed to be sinister and frightening. Barber points out that common practice was to change those characteristics that were less terrifying, like the bloating or

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15 Ibid., 86–88.
16 Frayling, *The Vampyre*, 35.
ruddy complexion, a result of blood settling under the skin. This is even the case with authors like Bram Stoker who closely studied the folklore before writing their fiction.\textsuperscript{17}

The abundance of writings on vampires after the infamous 1732 \textit{Visum et Repertum} stimulated the Romantic imagination. Heinrich August Ossenfelder wrote his poem \textit{Der Vampir} in 1748. Gottfried August Bürger wrote \textit{Lenore} in 1773, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote \textit{Die Braut von Korinth} in 1797. These German works were translated into English, leading to English contributions to the literature, such as Robert Southey’s epic poem \textit{Thalaba the Destroyer} (1797), Samuel Coleridge’s \textit{Christabel} (written between 1797 and 1801, but published in 1816), Lord Byron’s \textit{The Giaour} (1813), and finally, John William Polidori’s 1819 novel \textit{The Vampyre}.

Polidori’s novel has a contested history. Lord Byron, seeking asylum from his messy divorce and the many rumors circulating about incest with his half-sister and experiments with homosexuality, retreated to Villa Diodati in Switzerland with his attending physician and traveling companion John Polidori (1795–1821).\textsuperscript{18} They were joined on their retreat by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Godwin (soon thereafter to become Mary Shelley), and Claire Clairmont, Mary’s step-sister and mother of Byron’s daughter Allegra. One night, after reading a French collection of German ghost stories, \textit{Fantasmagoriana, ou recueil d'histoires d'apparitions de spectres, revenans, fantômes, etc.} by Jean-Baptiste Benôit Eyriès, a challenge was issued that the friends should write their own ghost stories. Mary Shelley’s contribution later became \textit{Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus}, and Byron’s fragment of a story served as inspiration for Polidori’s \textit{The Vampyre}.

\textsuperscript{17} Barber, \textit{Vampires, Burial, and Death}, 45.
The Vampyre was first published in the 1 April 1819 edition of the New Monthly Magazine. John Mitford’s “Extract of a Letter from Geneva, with Anecdotes of Lord Byron, &c.” preceded the novel, followed by an anonymous introduction that sought to legitimize Polidori’s vampire by connecting it with the vampires of folklore. The introduction to the novel begins:

The superstition upon which this tale is founded is very general in the East … In the West it spread, with some slight variation, all over Hungary, Poland, Austria, and Lorraine, where the belief existed, that vampyres nightly imbibed a certain portion of the blood of their victims, who became emaciated, lost their strength, and speedily died of consumptions; whilst these human bloodsuckers fattened—and their veins became distended to such a state of repletion as to cause the blood to flow from all the passages of their bodies, and even from the very pores of their skins.

As the introduction continues, it summarizes the story of the notorious Arnold Paul and quotes a lengthy passage from Lord Byron’s 1813 poem “The Giaour,” in which the Giaour is doomed to “vampyrise” after committing murder. As part of his punishment, his loved ones are destined to be his first and only victims. The introduction further serves as a vampiric literature review by referring to Robert Southey’s epic poem Thalaba the Destroyer, Joseph Pitton de Tournefort’s Relation d’un voyage du Levant—which describes the dissection of an exhumed vampire—and Dom Calmet’s dissertation.

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19 John William Polidori, The Vampyre and Ernestus Berchtold; or, The Modern Oedipus: Collected Fiction of John William Polidori, ed. David Lorne Macdonald and Kathleen Dorothy Scherf (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 22. How the novel came to be published in a point of contention. Macdonald has shown Polidori’s surprise and distaste when the novel was published in the New Monthly Magazine and attributed to Lord Byron, suggesting that he had nothing to do with its publishing. He claims it is likely that the novel was stolen and sold by John Mitford, whose “Extract” preceded the novel. See also David Lorne Macdonald, Poor Polidori a Critical Biography of the Author of The Vampire (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), http://www.deslibris.ca/ID/420818. Andrew McConnell Stott has shown this to be unlikely, suggesting that Polidori was complicit in the deception but might have simply had a change of heart after the novel was published. See Stott, The Poet and the Vampyre, 243–246.

While firmly establishing the connection to folklore, the introduction does nothing to explicate how Polidori has changed the folkloric figure. First, rather than a zombie-like corpse, Polidori’s vampire is a handsome human, and an aristocrat at that. This is the first instance of the aristocratic vampire in literature. What is more, Polidori makes the vampire a traveller and a seducer, able to plant thoughts and ideas with hypnotic powers of suggestion.\footnote{Ibid., 3–4.} James Twitchell adds to this list a supernatural power of resurrection derived from the moon.\footnote{James B. Twitchell, \textit{The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature} (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 1981), 111.} It should be noted that most of the tropes of vampire fiction such as sharp, elongated incisors, transformations into bats, and aversion to crucifixes and sunlight are all added much later, mostly in the penny dreadful \textit{Varney the Vampire; or, the Feast of Blood} (1845–47) and others as late as the silent film \textit{Nosferatu} (1922).

The 1820s witnessed a proliferation of adaptations of the novel in various genres. Not only was the novel translated into other languages, but Cyprien Bérard wrote a sequel in 1820, \textit{Lord Ruthwen, ou les vampires}. The novel’s offspring also included melodramatic stage adaptations, beginning with \textit{Le Vampire} by Charles Nodier, Achille de Jouffroy, and Pierre-Frédéric-Adolphe Carmouche, premiered on 13 June 1820. This play generated at least five spin-offs in the Paris theatres that same year. It was adapted for the German stage by Heinrich Ludwig Ritter as \textit{Der Vampyr, oder die Todten Braut} in 1821 and probably inspired François Alexis Blache’s \textit{Polichinel Vampire} of 1823. Nodier’s play was also translated and adapted into \textit{The Vampire; or the Bride of the Isles} by James Robinson Planché and premiered in London on 9 August 1820. This too became a point of departure for at least five imitations in London.
Because Nodier’s *Le Vampire* and Planché’s *The Vampire; or the Bride of the Isles* sparked so many imitations and spin-offs, they are the foci of this thesis. Analysis of the incidental music, songs, and extra-musical allusions generate new readings of the melodramas. By comparing how these two plays, from two major European cities, musically and dramatically treated virtually the same plot from emerging literature on the vampire, this thesis explores how monstrosity and uncanniness of the vampire are constructed. Furthermore, the stage directions and dialogue in these melodramas interact with the songs and melodramatic music to guide the audience through the action, as well as to enhance the emotional content of the drama. Considerations of these interactions yield readings of the monster and with any luck, will revive these vampires, which have been buried out of earshot of music history since the 1820s.

Deeper understanding of these two melodramas is essential, as they influence many later works. The stream of offspring parented by Polidori’s novel was not limited to the melodramatic stage. Eugène Scribe and Anne-Honoré-Joseph Duveyrier’s (pseudonym Mélesville) spin-off of 1820 inspired the libretto for Martin Joseph Mengal’s opera *Le Vampire*, which premiered in Ghent on 1 March 1826. Furthermore, Heinrich Ritter’s German melodrama inspired the libretto for Heinrich Marschner’s opera *Der Vampyr*, premiered in Leipzig on 29 August 1828. *Der Vampyr* did not stay in Leipzig, however. James Robinson Planché jumped at the chance to translate the libretto and produce the opera at the English Opera House in 1829, the same stage where his melodrama had premiered nine years earlier. Furthermore, Thomas Grey points out the influence that Marschner had on Wagner’s *Flying Dutchman*, a pale, Byronic figure not unlike Lord Ruthven. 23

The success of Marschner’s opera also inspired Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner’s opera
Der Vampyr. Lindpaintner’s adaptation was based more on Nodier’s melodrama than Ritter’s
and premiered in Stuttgart on 2 September 1828. This proliferation of adaptations and obsessions
with the vampire figure after Polidori’s novel represents history’s first literary vampire craze,
much like that of the present.

Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan open their article “Why Vampires Never Die,”
written for the New York Times, with this provocative statement: “Tonight, you or someone you
love will likely be visited by a vampire—on cable television or the big screen, or in the
bookstore.”24 Similar statements were made about the London and Paris theater scenes in 1820
regarding the proliferation of vampires on the melodramatic stage. A writer for the Journal des
débats politiques et littéraires as early as March of 1820 wrote, “There is not one of our small
theaters that does not have its vampire in rehearsal; and it is Lord Ruthven who gave birth to all
those monsters.”25 Later in May the same journal echoed a similar report: “At the Porte Saint-
Martin they are rehearsing Le Vampire, and at the theater of the Rue de Chartres26, Le Vampire
Amoureux [sic]. Thus, we are well supplied with vampires, despite the budget.”27 These similar
observations, separated by nearly two hundred years, suggest that understanding the vampire

25 “Nouvelle étrangères,” Journal des débats politiques et littéraires, March 6, 1820, 2. “Il n’est
pas un de nos petits théâtres qui n’ait son Vampire en répétition; et c’est Lord Ruthwen qui a
donné naissance à tous ces monstres.”
26 The theater of the Rue de Chartres refers to the Théâtre du Vaudeville located on the street
Rue de Chartres in Paris. It is the theater that premiered Le Vampire Amoureux by Eugène
Scribe.
27 “Feuilleton du journal des debats,” Journal des débats politiques et littéraires, May 29, 1820,
2. “A la Porte Saint-Martin on répète le Vampire, et au théâtre de la rue de Chartres le Vampire
Amoureux [sic]. Ainsi, nous voilà bien fournis de vampires, sans compter le budget.”
figure of 1820 in its two most significant depictions will help further research on and interpretation of the vampire craze of the last few decades.
CHAPTER 2

A VAMPIRE IN PARIS

Wandering shades of Vampires, in the clouds of the night, have increased by their clamors the tumult of the storm.28

Chapter 1 demonstrated that the vampire is a monster from the past, yet one that is still with us today in many forms. Whether or not the theater audiences of 1820 believed vampires were real, the monster clearly had a lasting impact on the culture of that decade, first in melodramas and then in operas. This chapter investigates the role music played in facilitating, heightening, and sustaining that potency in an effort to imagine not only what it might have been like to hear these melodramas performed live in 1820 but also to examine how the music influenced audience members’ experience of the vampire. Comprehensive coverage of the music is beyond the scope of this chapter. Rather, it illustrates musical techniques for affecting the listener and therefore moves through the melodramas topically, not chronologically.

The sensationalism of vampire theater that began in the 1820s was inaugurated by the melodrama Le Vampire written by Charles Nodier, Pierre Carmouche, and Achille de Jouffrey. Its prologue takes place in the grottos of Staffa, Scotland, around the tomb of the Ossianic hero Fingal. Amidst swirling ghosts the ancient, supernatural bard Oscar and the moon spirit Ituriel discuss the fate of Miss Malvina Aubray, who lies asleep in the grotto after having taken refuge from a storm. Oscar explains the danger of Malvina’s upcoming marriage to Count Marsden, who, unbeknownst to her, is a vampire. According to Oscar, vampires can reanimate the bodies of the dead, assuming their likeness to reappear among the living:

[Vampires] play with this terrible right that they exercise by preference on the virginal bed and on the cradle as soon as they descend, formidable, with the

hideous power that death has given them. By and by, more privileged because their career is short and their future frightening, they obtain, and assume, shapes lost in the tomb and reappear in the light of the living—under the aspect of bodies they have animated.  

It is worth noting that the melodrama conceives of the vampire more as an animating, demonic spirit and less as a corporeal creature. This vampire in particular must feed before 1 a.m. the next night or he “must finally submit to nothingness.”

After the prologue the vampire’s scheme plays out over three acts. Sir Aubray and Lord Rutwen were best friends and travelling companions. A marriage was arranged between Rutwen and Aubray’s sister Malvina to bond the families. Tragically, Rutwen was mortally wounded after being attacked by robbers, at which point his brother Count Marsden agreed to take his place in the marriage arrangements. However, it turns out that the Count Marsden who arrives for the wedding is not the intended Count at all, but rather Lord Rutwen himself, who mysteriously survived and has assumed the family title. Act 2 introduces a second couple, Edgar and Lovette, whose wedding is planned for that night at Castle Marsden. Rutwen jumps at the chance to patronize this wedding, planning to imbibe the blood of Lovette—in addition to Malvina—before his time runs out. However, when he attacks Lovette, Edgar shoots him, mortally wounding Rutwen again. Before expiring, Rutwen makes Aubray promise not to speak of what has happened to him for twelve hours and to place his body in the moonlight for his final prayers.

Act 3 returns to the estate of Sir Aubray, where preparations are being finalized for Malvina’s wedding. Unhindered by his apparent death at Castle Marsden in the previous act, Rutwen reappears as if nothing has happened, reanimated by the powers of moonlight. His

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29 Ibid., 3.
30 Nodier, *The Vampire.*
revenance, combined with Aubray’s oath not to speak of what happened makes Aubray appear insane, and he is sequestered in his apartment to calm down. As the wedding ceremony begins that night, Aubray rushes in, breaking his oath. Rutwen, impatient and furious, draws a dagger to force Malvina to marry him, but the confusion has taken too long. When the clock strikes 1:00 a.m., phantoms rise from the floor of the gothic chapel to drag the vampire presumably to hell. An exterminating angel appears in a cloud, lightning flashes, and the phantoms disappear with Rutwen. A rain of fire ends the scene.31

The melodrama premiered at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin on 13 June 1820. It was a minor theater, founded in 1806 and run by Jean Toussaint Merle, a manager with a fondness for English and German texts, especially gothic literature and horror.32 The Porte-Saint-Martin was a fixture in the string of theaters known as Le boulevard du crime, so named because of the subject matter that frequented the stages.33 According to a reviewer for Le Drapeau blanc, the kind of “debauchery” espoused by Le Vampire was in vogue. “There yet remains enough terror in the Vampire, so that we might call this piece a debauchery of the horrible kind. This debauchery was in the public taste, who enthusiastically applauded the piece, the actors, and the decorations.”34 The vampire found the Porte-Saint-Martin a fitting, welcoming home, if for no other reason than the talent and penchant for spectacle of the stage mechanic Pierre-Luc-Charles Ciceri. The stage was equipped for floods, storms, sinking ships, fires, thunder, lightning, and could even divide in half.35 “We may be sure that Ciceri created a denouement to make one’s

31 For a fuller summary of Le Vampire see Appendix A.
32 Roxana Stuart, Stage Blood: Vampires of the 19th-Century Stage (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994), 44.
33 Ibid., 43.
34 “Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin,” Le Drapeau blanc, journal de la politique, de la littérature et des théâtres, no. 167 (June 15, 1820): 2.
35 Stuart, Stage Blood, 45.
hair stand on end.” The article for *Le Drapeau blanc* also claimed “to say that the stage design is by M. Ciceri is praise enough.”

It is clear that the melodrama was intended to shock and amaze. The music is no exception. The advertisement just mentioned also praises the music “in which we noticed several beautiful effects.” (Louis) Alexandre Piccinni (1779-1850), grandson of Niccolò Piccinni and a prolific composer, wrote two operas, twenty-nine opéras comiques, eleven mélodrames, and three ballets over the course of his career (see Figure 2-1).

![Figure 2-1: Alexandre Piccinni, lithographe by Levilly, 1830.](http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8423549h)

Piccinni was the head of the orchestra at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin in 1803-1807 and 1810-1816, but he was employed as an accompanist at the Théâtre du Gymnase in 1820. He

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36 Ibid., 51.
37 “Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin,” *Le Drapeau blanc, journal de la politique, de la littérature et des théâtres*, no. 167 (June 15, 1820): 2. “C’est louer assez les décorations que de dire qu’elles sont de M. Ciceri.”
38 Ibid. “La musique, dans laquelle on a remarqué plusieurs beaux effets, est de M. Alexandre.”
40 Levilly, *A. Piccinni, premier pianiste de la chapelle*, Lithographe, 1830, [http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8423549h](http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8423549h).
likely continued to work as a composer on or off the books for the Porte-Saint-Martin, among other theaters, even after he left the post. The music for *Le Vampire* consists of twenty-two pieces, one of which is a song sung by the bard Oscar, in addition to music for a ballet as part of Lovette and Edgar’s wedding celebration. The pieces of instrumental music were known as melodrames, or simply melos, and were analogous to early film music.\(^{42}\) Ginette Picat-Guinoiseau comments on the music in his critical edition of Nodier’s plays:

> Piccini [sic], the great specialist of the genre, knew how to compose…punctuations for the action which were evocative and pathetic; songs for the soloists and the chorus; … and finally, dance, in the form of a ballet which illustrates the harmony of the world while the adverse events have already been put into motion… The music could be descriptive, could “paint” or “express” a tempest or storm; it could underscore the words; it could be the background of an entire scene… the music poetizes the action.\(^{43}\)

The music for *Le Vampire* exists only in manuscript part books at the Bibliothèque municipale d'Avignon. Parts are extant for a *violon répétiteur*, intended for rehearsals, in addition to part books for two flutes, two oboes, clarinet, bassoon, two horns, two first violins, two second violins, viola, cello, and two double basses. Assuming two musicians per stand roughly thirty-two musicians would have been involved. Tam-tams and bells are also mentioned in the stage directions, so these and possibly other percussion were also used.\(^ {44}\) Each melo is given a number by the composer in the part books. Throughout this thesis I will refer to each melo by its given number and tempo.

The stage directions for the prologue describe a foreboding scene:

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\(^{41}\) Kocevar, “Piccinni, Louis Alexandre,” 975.
As the curtain rises, the heaven is dark and all objects confused. It lights up little by little. The scene takes place in a basalt grotto whose long prisms end in unequal angles facing heaven, the arch is bare; the circle of the grotto is strewn with tombs and diverse shapes, columns, pyramids, cubes of rough and clumsy workmanship. On a tomb in the foreground one sees a young girl lying on a bed, plunged in the most profound sleep. Her head is leaning on her arm and covered by her veil and hair. Opposite her, Oscar is seated. He rises and paces about the stage uneasily. The light progressively increases. A shape that embraces a luminous cross arises in the grotto and stops. The angel of the moon, in a floating white robe, addresses Oscar.

Underpinning this tableau, an overture musically portrays a storm. Several characteristics of this overture relate to a tradition of musically suggesting the supernatural. Writing about the conventions of French opera in the eighteenth-century, David Buch describes how music indicated the supernatural. “Rapid scales and repeated notes, rhythmic variety, and dotted rhythms accompanied monsters, demons, magicians, and scenic transformations. Low-pitched sonorities, dissonance, pictorial imagery, and unusual instrumental and vocal combinations were also common in scenes.” Buch also points out these dramatic devices in the music of Haydn and Mozart. Mozart’s Symphony No. 25 in G Minor is a particularly relevant example because of its similarity to the Piccinni overture. Buch lists the devices in Mozart’s first movement.

The first movement has *alla zoppa* syncopation, string tremolos, rapid descending and ascending scales, octave-and-unison sonority, a disjunct baroque “subject,” infernal blasts of the winds (oboes, horns, and bassoons), and sweeping gestures in the bass. All of these devices suggest an infernal scene or a tempest invoked by a divine or magical character with supernatural power.

Almost all these devices are present in Piccinni’s overture to *Le Vampire*. Scored for flute, clarinet, bassoon, horns, and strings in the key of D major, it eases the listener into the

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46 Ibid., 360.
47 See Appendix B for the full overture score.
melodrama with only strings, evoking the pastoral with I—IV—I chord progressions and drones in the cellos and basses (see Example 2-1).

Example 2-1: Melo No. 1—Allegro vivace, Overture mm. 1-5.

The clarinet, bassoon, and horns enter in measure 21. The horns take over the responsibility of the tonic drone. Measure 31, however, turns away from the pastoral with cross rhythms and alla zoppa syncopations in measure 32 (see Example 2-2).

Example 2-2: Melo No. 1—Allegro vivace, Overture mm. 31-34.
By measure 36, G♯ in the cellos and basses, dissonant against the pitch class A in several upper voices, marks the beginning of music conjuring the infernal (see Example 2-3).

This is accomplished by tremolandos in the first violins and harmonic instability, briefly tonicizing the minor subdominant before returning to D major via an incomplete dominant harmony missing its third. The semitone movement in the cellos and basses is a transformation of the motive from the opening. These devices and the connotations that they have accumulated through opera and other theater conventions up to this point, place the overture, and by extension the ensuing melodrama, in a tradition of music evoking the supernatural.

The motive from the opening features a measured trill between leading tone and tonic (see Example 2-4) that recalls the opening motive of the overture to *Le nozze di Figaro* (see Example 2-5). Rather than suggest that Piccinni is referencing Mozart, we should consider it more likely that they participated in the same musical tradition for writing overtures in D major—though it is worth mentioning that the plots of both *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Le Vampire* prominently feature weddings and themes of marriage.
Example 2-5: *Le nozze di Figaro*, Overture mm. 1-3, 1 Violin.

This measured trill between leading tone and tonic is repeated elsewhere in the melodrama. It is unclear whether or not the curtain would have been up or down during the overture, or risen in the middle, so we cannot know whether the audience would have had a visual clue to this motive’s function as a signifier, but it is the first musical idea the audience hears in *Le Vampire*, and therefore they would be expected to remember it as the action proceeds. Recapitulated at the end of the overture, it also punctuates the rest of the melodrama. The motive wavers between D and C♯, unstable compared to the drones beneath it or the whole note before it. Made familiar in the overture, the motive sneaks into the other melos, most poignantly the final piece, after the vampire is defeated. Each instance of its quotation throughout the melodrama is significant, most often invoking the vampire’s motivations or his fate. These meanings can be interpreted by how they refer back to the three melos of the prologue, each reference a reminder of the overture that began with lovely pastoral topoi but turned spooky and unsettling. The appearance of this motive when Lord Rutwen is on stage reminds listeners to doubt him, no matter how charismatic he is.

The first echoes of the motive occur in the second melo of the prologue and concern the vampire’s victims. Still in Fingal’s Cave after Oscar says to Ituriel, “Stop and look,” the stage directions read:

All the tombs open from the moment the hour strikes. Pale shades half leave and fall back under the tombstones, in proportion as the noise vanishes in echoes. A spectre dressed in a shroud escapes from the most noticeable of tombs. His face is
revealed. He rushes to the place where Miss Aubray is sleeping shouting “Malvina!”

According to instructions in the part books, No. 2-Largo plays after Oscar’s line. The piece is a short binary form, and semitone movement is obvious in both sections. The A section would have most likely played while the vampire’s victims rose from their tombs. The echoing noise described in the stage directions was mimicked by the abrupt changes in dynamic intensity from the initial pianissimo to forte and back to piano (see Example 2-6). The stage directions at this moment indicate that tam-tams were also used to mimic the echo. “We hear the hour ringing in the silvery tone of a distant bell. The tam-tam repeats the echo in response by gradation.”

Example 2-6: Melo No. 2-Largo, 1 Violon A.

The melody oscillates in the interval of a minor second like the music of the cellos and basses in Example 2-3, hearkening back to the opening motive from measure 2 of the overture. It would seem that, like the vampire’s victims, the violated corpses in his wake are indexes of the

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vampire’s existence; so too is the melody of No. 2 an echo of the previous motive from the overture. It is not a direct quotation, but it is similar enough for the listener to easily recognize it.

The semitone motion is further emphasized in the B section of melo No. 2, now allegro, where the motion is no longer a quick oscillation, but augmented two measures at a time in alla zoppa syncopations. A penciled note in the part book of the violon répétiteur above measure 12 marks a sudden change from piano to forte, possibly indicating the moment when the vampire lunges for Malvina (see Figure 2-2). Again in this section the semitone oscillation points to the vampire’s presence but still does not directly quote the original form of the motive. It makes sense that this would not be the case if the vampire is not yet corporeal but only a spirit lunging from a tomb. The motive is not yet deployed in its fully recognizable form. Likewise, the audience has yet to see the vampire in his fully corporeal form.

![Figure 2-2: Melo No. 2-Largo, Allegro, “fort” indication above measure 12.](image)

Much later in the melodrama, when Rutwen is nervous about his hastening doom, he threateningly reminds Malvina that she must marry him as promised (and on schedule) and leaves her with her maid. At this point No. 19-Sostenuto plays a short F-major melody, but halfway through, the melody is marked “stacato [sic]” at a point of quick, dotted, minor seconds, wavering from the lower note upward (see Example 2-7). Staccato articulations draw attention to this musical choice, making it all the more foreboding and urgent, recalling the dotted minor seconds of melo No. 2 that accompanied the vampire’s victims’ egress from their graves.
At this point in the evolution of the literary vampire there are not yet any visual characteristics by which an audience member could immediately identify the person as a threat; no physical features of Lord Rutwen distinguish him as a vampire. The tropes of elongated maxillary canines or transformations into bats or wolves were only added to the lore later on, primarily in the penny dreadful by Thomas Preskett Prest and James Malcolm Rhymer *Varney the Vampire; or the Feast of Blood* (1847) and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). Indeed, even the original Lord Ruthven from Polidori’s novel only stands out because of a dead, grey eye. Otherwise, the Count is handsome, charming, and not unlike a prototypical serial killer, high functioning in civilized society, seeming perfectly normal. Therefore, it is all the more necessary for the music to interject at key moments to confirm Lord Rutwen’s nefariousness and villainy.

The first such instance is in melo No. 10-*Allegro vivace*. At this point the main characters have travelled to Castle Marsden for the wedding of Edgar and Lovette. The castle’s caretaker, Petterson, has served Count Marsden and his brother Lord Rutwen presumably for many years and believes that Rutwen died in Greece, just as Aubray believed. Aubray has already been convinced that Rutwen is alive and has returned to resume control of the estate, but Petterson remains skeptical. Attempting to disabuse a servant just before Rutwen enters, he states unequivocally, “The man who took his name is an impostor.” At this point No. 10-*Allegro

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50 The significance of this is discussed further in Chapter 5.
vivace begins (see Example 2-8). This piece makes a menacing statement despite its brevity. The fifth measure marks a second period similar to the first, an A’ that tricks the listener into expecting a reprise of the jovial, jaunty first four measures. The first difference comes quickly in measure 5 and alerts the listener that the second period will not exactly repeat the first, replacing eighth-note leaps of an octave for leaps of a minor seventh.

The most sinister of changes slips into measure 6, practically under the radar of the listener’s attention. Rather than the four descending sixteenth notes that the listener has become accustomed to after four repetitions, they are replaced by the alternating semitone motive from the overture—in fact, the exact pitch-classes and rhythms—as if to confirm that Petterson is correct and his skepticism justified. Not only does the return of this motive link Lord Rutwen to the ominous overture, but the motive also behaves like the beguiling vampire. Just like Lord Rutwen, the motive blends in. Even more foreboding is the fact that the oscillating motive seems to take over in measures 8–10. This serves the dual function of making the motive’s presence obvious, even if it were missed in measure 6, and confirming that the motive’s appearance in this moment is not coincidental.

There are still more signals regarding the vampire within the incidental music. The example most involving supernatural events concerns his resurrection. After being mortally
wounded by Edgar’s pistol, Rutwen says his final goodbye in a weak voice and presciently says, “we will see each other again one day.” Finally, he asks for Aubray to put him in the moonlight for his final prayers. As melo No. 16- *Allegro* plays, Rutwen’s head falls back, Aubray and Petterson place Rutwen’s body on a rock at the back of the stage, and Aubray kisses his hand before Petterson leads him away. The curtain falls on this scene, ending Act 2.

It may seem at first that Rutwen is dead, but perhaps the music suggests another outcome. In the context of this melodrama, the key of B minor stands out, used for no other melo but this one. Only a select few key areas are used for the melos, mostly F major and D major (see Table 2-1). The appearance of that key here suggests that the events involved will be unlike any we have witnessed up to this point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Area in Decreasing Frequency</th>
<th>Melo No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D Major</td>
<td>1, 7, 17, 21, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Major</td>
<td>8, 10, 13, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Minor</td>
<td>2, 11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Major</td>
<td>3, 5, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Major</td>
<td>4, 9, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G Minor</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Minor</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E♭ Major</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rita Steblin’s book *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* offers a metaphorical understanding of the key; some composers and pedagogues in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thought the key of B minor was appropriate for gloomy scenes concerning fate. C. F. D. Schubart in his *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* of 1784 wrote of the key: “This is as it were the key of patience, of calm awaiting

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one’s fate and of submission to divine dispensation.”53 Henri Weikert in his Kunst Wörterbuch echoed this as late as 1827: “Sounds gloomy; the key of patience, of expectation of and submission to divine dispensation.”54 Also in 1827 J. A. Schrader in Kleines Taschenwörterbuch der Musik wrote that B minor was “bitter, gloomy lamentation, on account of hard suffering…in these tones the shocked soul looks around exhausted and almost without hope.”55

To confirm the mystical nature of the scene, the melo begins and ends with the semitone motive from the overture transposed to B minor (see Example 2-9). This quotation reminds the audience of Rutwen’s connection to the terrifying spirit from the prologue, but more importantly, the motive sequences upward, arpeggiating a B-minor triad in both the beginning and the ending of melo No. 16-Allegro. A rising motive in a key area associated with fate, melancholy, and matters of the soul could pose several meanings. Either it indicates the rising of a soul to an afterlife, a typical gesture in funereal music, or, given that Lord Rutwen appears again in the next act as if nothing has happened, it could be related to his imminent resurrection from the dead.

Example 2-9: Melo No. 16-Allegro, mm. 1-9, from Violon répétiteur.

The audience need not wait long to hear of the vampire again; the semitone motive is freshly renewed—perhaps even reanimated—in melo No. 17-Larghetto, the Entr’acte of Act 3.

54 Ibid., 307.
55 Ibid.
In this figuration the semitone motive maintains its original pitch classes and even octave placement from the overture, now as rapid-fire thirty-second notes (see Example 2-10). Further attention is drawn to this moment by a sudden thinning of the musical texture. While this melo is scored for flute, two horns, and strings, at the moment that the semitone motive appears, only flute, horns, and first violins play in a rather open voicing.

![Example 2-10: Melo No. 17-Larghetto, mm. 36-40, 1 Violon and Flute.](image)

Skipping to the end of Act 3, when the vampire’s attempts to take Lovette and Malvina have both failed and Lord Rutwen’s time has run out, thunder rolls and he shrieks, “Nothingness! Nothingness!” at which point melo No. 22- *Allegro vivace* plays. To a great extent this piece recapitulates material from the overture, including, of course, the semitone motive that has punctuated so much of the melodrama. The part books for the *violon répétiteur* and both first violins show the semitone motive in thirty-second notes. It seems the copyist had No. 17- *Larghetto* in mind, or simply wrote too many beams (compare Figure 2 with the motive in Example 2-10).

![Figure 2-3: Melo No. 22-Allegro vivace, missing beats in mm. 2 and 4, Violon répétiteur.](image)

This notation would drop a beat from the measure, creating 6/8 meter. Piccinni never uses meter changes in the melodrama, and all other part books show four beats in these measures, so the motive should undoubtedly be played as sixteenth notes. This creates an exact quotation from the
first five measures of the overture in the first violin part, bringing the melodrama full circle (see Example 2-11). However, where both the overture’s beginning and ending were marked by the semitone motive, here it only plays in the beginning and is subsequently forgotten.

So far, this discussion has considered only music that is not part of the action. The bard Oscar’s song in Act 2, the only song in the melodrama, also merits consideration. During the preparations for the wedding of Lovette and Edgar the bard seeks shelter from a storm. The audience recognizes him from the prologue as Oscar in disguise. Invited in, he sings a song as entertainment. His two stanzas upset Lord Rutwen, who asks for the bard’s dismissal. A look at the text reveals why.

O young virgin of Staffa,  
Brûlant de la première flamme,  
O jeune vierge de Staffa,  
Whose heart palpitates already  
Dont le coeur palpite déjà  
Dont le coeur palpite déjà  
To the sweet names of lover and wife,  
Aux doux noms d’amante et de femme,  
Au moment d’unir votre sort  
At the moment of uniting your destiny  
A l’amant de votre pensée;  
Beware, young fiancée;  
Gardez-vous, jeune fiancée,  
Of the love that brings death.  
De l’amour qui donne la mort.

(Oscar watches Rutwen, whose face expresses the greatest fury. All the other characters surround the old man with a sort of interest.)

Quand le soleil de ces déserts,  
Des monts ne dore plus la cîme,  
Si leur douce voix vous endort,  
When the sun of the deserts,  
No longer gilds the mountain peaks,  
Then the angels of Hell  
Viennent caresser leur victime.  
Come to caress their victim.  
If their sweet voice puts you to sleep,  
Recoile!—their hand is icy!

Example 2-11: Melo No. 22-Allegro vivace, mm. 1-5, from 1 Violon A.
Beware, young fiancée;  
Of the love that brings death.  

Gardez-vous, jeune fiancée,  
De l’amour qui donne la mort.

The second stanza line “then the angels of Hell come to caress their victim” reminds audience members that this melodrama does not conceive of the vampire as a corporeal boogeyman so much as a demonic spirit—in this case, an angel of hell—reanimating a corpse. Later incarnations of the vampire largely abandon this notion of a possessing, demonic spirit being the impetus for reanimation.

The foreboding text attempts to warn Lovette before Rutwen can attack her. Later he tries to push himself on her, proclaiming his undying love for her in a scene that could have come from Don Giovanni’s playbook. When Rutwen’s pursuit of Lovette is at its height, Oscar is again seen, reciting the last couplet of his song on a distant mountaintop.

*Rutwen:* Ah! I would give my entire existence for an hour of your love, and if only one of my sighs could be heard in your heart you would love me.

*Lovette:* (moved) No, Milord, no—leave me. I am too upset.

*Oscar:* (appearing on the mountain) Beware young fiancée, of the love that brings death.

*Lovette:* (utters a scream and escapes with terror) Ah!

While the stage directions indicate that Oscar is to accompany himself on the harp, this song was scored for flute, oboe, bassoon, E♭ horn, strings, and voice (the vocal line lies in a baritone range). The music amplifies the unsettling text, making it all the more disconcerting. Titled the “*Hymne du mariage*” in the part books, No. 12-Andante begins in C minor and uses many of the conventions described above to evoke the supernatural—i.e., tremolando, incomplete sonorities, drastic dynamic changes, and an F#° shock chord at triple-forte on the word “mort” (see Nodier, *The Vampire*, 21.)

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Example 2-12). For even greater contrast, the chord irrupts from a triple-*piano* context, so sudden, drastic, and dissonant that it is almost clichéd. It is clear from the prologue that Oscar is a “spirit, protector of marriage,” but this scene and music display him also as a sort of oracle.


Alexandre Piccinni’s music for *Le Vampire* enhances the audience’s experience of the melodrama. The semitone motive that appears to signify the vampire recurs prominently

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58 Ibid., 1. “Le génie protecteur des mariages.”
throughout the play and speaks to the motivations and fate of the vampire, deriving its effects from the supernatural, spooky context of the original statement of the motive in the overture, melo No. 1- *Allegro vivace*. Alterations of rhythm link No. 2 and No. 19, the first at the appearance of the victims of the vampire and the second when Malvina is in danger of the same fate. Key areas are also used to signal supernatural arenas in the play. When Rutwen dies in the moonlight, No. 16 plays in the key of B minor, the only melo composed in that key, comparatively otherworldly in the context of the play.

However, most sinister is the manipulation of binary form to trick the listener in melo No. 10. When Petterson voices his suspicions about Rutwen’s identity, the semitone motive emerges in a disguised form in the A’ section, masquerading as the motive of the A section. The music for *Le Vampire* was no doubt “evocative and pathetic,” underscoring the words, or an entire scene, poetizing the action, as Picat-Guinoiseau wrote.⁵⁹ David Mayer and Matthew Scott in the introduction to a collection of melos by Alfred Edward Cooper, composed later in the nineteenth-century, discuss music’s role in melodrama: “Music clarified whether an entering actor was portraying a character morally sound or devious, whether the character represented was comic or serious, cheerful or depressed, hardheaded or sentimental…”—and in this case, whether or not a vampire was on the stage.⁶⁰

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CHAPTER 3

A VAMPIRE IN LONDON

Margaret! Unhappy maid! Thou art my destined prey! Thy blood must feed a Vampire’s life, and prove the food of his disgusting banquet.\(^6^1\)

The Vampire; or the Bride of the Isles by James Robinson Planché was a sensation among the London theaters, just as Le Vampire was a sensation among the theaters of Le boulevard du crime. Both sparked similar waves of spin-offs and imitations. Featuring a remarkably similar plot, The Vampire also begins in Fingal’s Cave, where swirling spirits are singing. The two primary spirits, Unda and Ariel, functioning similarly to the French melodrama’s Oscar and Ituriel, explain that vampires can take over the forms of the dead and “assume their speech, their habits, and their knowledge, and thus roam o’er the earth.”\(^6^2\) Unda and Ariel have followed Lady Margaret into the cave, where she took refuge from a storm before she fell asleep. When a vampire spirit leaps for her, Unda and Ariel block him. This ends the prologue.

Back at the Castle of Staffa Margaret prepares for her imminent nuptials to the Earl of Marsden. Sir Ronald, Margaret’s father, explains how he came to know Marsden through his brother Lord Ruthven.\(^6^3\) Ronald’s son Aubrey had been travelling with Ruthven and fallen ill. After Aubrey’s death Ronald took his place as Ruthven’s travelling companion. Aubrey had “contracted an intimacy” for Ruthven, and Ronald developed a close relationship with Ruthven, 


\(^{6^2}\) Ibid., 6.

\(^{6^3}\) Roxana Stuart points out that the Scottish pronunciation of Ruthven is in fact not [ruθvn] but [rɪvn]. Stuart, Stage Blood, 48.
as well.\textsuperscript{64} In Athens bandits mortally wounded Lord Ruthven, who asked to expire in the moonlight. When Ronald returned to bury the body, it had disappeared. Because a marriage had been arranged between Ruthven and Margaret, Ruthven’s brother the Earl of Marsden agreed to take his place. When the Earl finally arrives for the wedding, everyone is shocked to find he is actually Ruthven, who explains he survived the attack in Athens and assumed the title of Earl when his brother died.

A second couple is also set to be married: Robert, Sir Ronald’s valet, and Effie, the daughter of Castle Marsden’s caretaker. Because Ruthven is the new Earl of Marsden, Robert requests that he sign the marriage contract and bestow his blessing on the wedding. Scene 2 ends with Ruthven, Ronald, and Robert traveling to Castle Marsden via boat, where the wedding is being prepared for that night. In an aside, Ruthven expresses hope that he can feed on Effie and spare Margaret. “Should I surprise her heart, as by my gifted spell I may, the tribute that prolongs existence may be paid, and Margaret may (at least awhile) be spared.”\textsuperscript{65} However, when Ruthven tries to attack Effie, Robert shoots him with his pistol. Just before expiring, Ruthven makes Ronald swear that he will not speak of the events of that evening or of Ruthven’s death until the following night. He also must throw Ruthven’s signet ring into the waves of Fingal’s Cave. Moonlight falls on Ruthven’s body as Act 1 concludes.

Act 2 opens again in Fingal’s Cave. Effie and her father Andrew hide Robert there to keep him safe from Ronald’s wrath. Meanwhile, Ronald arrives to throw the ring in the water as promised. When Ronald returns to his castle, he is horrified to find that Ruthven is somehow alive. His inability to explain why Ruthven should be dead leaves him looking mad, rambling

\textsuperscript{64} Planché, \textit{The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melo-Drama, in Two Acts Preceded by an Introductory Vision}, 15

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 23.
until he faints. Coaxed by Ruthven, Margaret is convinced that her father has gone insane and agrees to go on with the marriage as scheduled. In the fateful gothic chapel, prepared for the wedding, Ruthven nearly drags a confused Margaret to the altar and urges the Friar to begin the ceremony immediately. Lord Ronald enters just in time to interrupt the nuptials. Ruthven draws a dagger to take Margaret by force but is intercepted by Robert. The imbroglio has caused a ruinous delay. “A terrific peal of Thunder is heard: Unda and Ariel appear; a Thunder Bolt strikes Ruthven to the ground, who immediately vanishes … The curtain falls.”

The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles was premiered on 9 August 1820 at the then Theatre Royal, English Opera House in London, now the Lyceum Theatre. This particular theater proved a suitable home for vampires and the supernatural, not unlike the Porte-Saint-Martin. In fact, this melodrama was the first marked success of the English Opera House after the theater was rebuilt in 1816. James Robinson Planché also produced an English version of Heinrich Marschner’s opera Der Vampyr at the theater in 1829, and it was the location of the first staged reading of Bram Stoker’s Dracula in 1897.

Like the Porte-Saint-Martin in Paris, the readiness of the theater to present the supernatural was probably linked to its penchant for new technologies and spectacle. It was announced that gas lighting had been installed for the stage and the audience on 8 September

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66 Ibid., 36. For a fuller synopsis of the melodrama see Appendix A.
68 Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, The Theatres of London (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1961), 273. Before becoming the English Opera House, the Lyceum was home to the first English waxworks show of Madame Tussaud in 1802.
70 Stuart, Stage Blood, 73.
1817, making the English Opera House one of the first theaters with this new technology.\textsuperscript{71} In addition, a stage device was developed by which Lord Ruthven could disappear into the floor during the final scene. A. E. Wilson referred to it as the “vampire trap” and deemed it a common device after 1820 in other “demon scenes.”\textsuperscript{72} According to Montague Summers,

> A vampire trap consists of two or more flaps, usually india-rubber, through which the sprite can disappear almost instantly, where he falls into a blanket fixed to the under surface of the stage. As with the star trap, this trap is secured against accidents by placing another piece or slide, fitting close beneath when not required, and removed when the prompter’s bell gives the signal to make ready.\textsuperscript{73}

So sensational was the effect that the actor-manager John Coleman recalled seeing a revival of the play in his \textit{Fifty Years of an Actor’s Life}: “When I recall that gruesome Scottish horror feeding upon the blood of young maidens and throwing himself headlong through the solid stage, and vanishing into the regions below amidst flames of red fire, I protest I shudder at it now.”\textsuperscript{74}

The music for the melodrama only added to such frightening stage effects. Joseph Binns Hart (1797–1844) composed most of the incidental music and Matthew Moss composed the opening incantation and charm of the prologue.\textsuperscript{75} Hart was an organist, pianist, and composer who served, among other posts, as chorus master at the English Opera House from 1818–1820.\textsuperscript{76} He was also deputy organist under Thomas Attwood at St. Paul’s as early as age eleven. Little is known about the size of his oeuvre, other than that he began arranging dance music and

\textsuperscript{71} Wilson, \textit{The Lyceum}, 40.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., 46.
\textsuperscript{75} Marion Linhardt, “Ruthven’s Song: der Vampir in Mélodrame, Melodrama und romantischer Oper,” in \textit{Dracula Unbound: kulturwissenschaftliche Lektüren des Vampirs} (Freiburg: Rombach, 2008), 230. It appears the music for the opening incantation is no longer extant.
\textsuperscript{76} Oscar Thompson, \textit{The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians}, 11th ed. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1985), 927.
composed musical farces after 1815. His output of music for melodramas was most prolific in the years around 1820. In addition to The Vampire, he also wrote the songs for Amateurs and Actors (1818), The Bull’s Head, and A Walk for a Wager (both 1819). He had recently turned twenty-six at the time of The Vampire’s premiere.

I found no other extant musical source for The Vampire than a piano score, complete with dialogue cues. While there are indications of orchestral instruments in the score, I have found no way to establish how many musicians played in the pit. The English Opera House was well known for its musical performances and, in fact, the architect Samuel Beazley constructed the auditorium in the shape of a lyre “to intimate the attention that will be paid to music.” Unfortunately, this building caught fire on 16 February 1830; the documents that would have demonstrated orchestra size are lost. As such, I will draw my conclusions from the piano score, accepting that this is only a hint of what would have been played live.

The musical profile of The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles is quite different from Le Vampire, despite their many plot similarities. Unlike Piccinni’s music for Le Vampire, not all of the music for The Vampire is newly composed. There is a great variety of newly composed instrumental music for the melodrama, but it also includes seven songs arranged with new texts to popular Scottish folk tunes (see Table 3-1). Planché explained in his autobiography that he would have preferred the setting be moved to Eastern Europe, but the theater’s manager Samuel Arnold overruled him:

Mr. Samuel James Arnold, the proprietor and manager, had placed in my hands, for adaptation, a French melodrama, entitled “Le Vampire,” the scene of which

78 Quoted in Wilson, The Lyceum, 35.
79 Ibid., 51.
was laid, with the usual recklessness of French dramatists, in Scotland, where the superstition never existed. I vainly endeavoured to induce Mr. Arnold to let me change it to some place in the east of Europe. He had set his heart on Scotch music and dresses—the latter, by the way, were in stock—laughed at my scruples, assured me that the public would neither know nor care—and in those days they certainly did not—and therefore there was nothing left for me but to do my best with it.  

Table 3-1: Original Tune Names of Melodramatic Songs in *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title from Melodrama</th>
<th>Act</th>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Tune Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Come Fill, Let the Parting Glass Go Round”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Johnny Cope”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Hour when First we Met!”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“The Lass of Pattie’s Mill”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Row on-Row on”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Ye Banks and Braes”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There’s Nae Luck about the House”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“My Only Love”</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Down the Burn Davie”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tho’ Many a Wood”</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Of a’ the Airts”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Faith, I’ll awa’ to the Bridal”</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“The Blythesome Bridal”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the financial and labor convenience of the Scottish setting and the popularity of the Scottish tunes, the mixture of folk song with the often more cultivated instrumental music may have been detrimental to the melodrama’s effect. Ronald McFarland describes the play as a mélange, having romantic songs and comic texts, but a serious subject matter. Nevertheless, the music in *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles* serves to enhance character development and heighten suspense, a role certainly familiar to present day film-goers; though, perhaps more interesting are the ways in which the music of *The Vampire* cultivates sympathy for the monster.

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83 For more information on this tune: Chambers, *The Songs of Scotland prior to Burns*, 146–152.

Hart’s music for *The Vampire* is not numbered in the printed scores like the melos of Piccinni. To make them easier to reference, I have given them sequential numbers. Both melodramas have some pieces that are supposed to be repeated, but in *The Vampire* repeated melos are given new tempos or dynamics and sometimes both. As a result, my numbering includes successive repetitions. Some of the melos have no specified tempo, but where a tempo is marked I will continue to use the tempo for labeling.

Perhaps the easiest instances of musical characterization to identify in the melodrama occur in the boat music. The music indicates the motivations of the characters borne by the boats in their respective scenes. The first occurrence of boat music is melo No. 15-*In rowing time.* Effie and her father Andrew, the caretaker at Castle Marsden, await the arrival of Robert, whom Effie is betrothed to marry later that night. She sees his boat on the horizon and shouts, “Hark! Father, hark!” at which point we hear a boating glee, a trio for Robert, with a Mr. Phillips and a Mr. Moss, neither of whom is listed in the Dramatis Personae. They were chorus singers used to fill out the song. This song is the first example of a piece in 6/8 time and all the subsequent boat music that involves Robert is also in 6/8 time. In fact, these particular melos are the only pieces of the melodrama with this time signature. The lyrics read:

Row on—Row on—across the main  
So smoothly glides our bark to shore,  
While to our boat-song’s measur’d strain,  
So truly dips the well tim’d oar.

Row on—Row on—in yonder isle,  
Impatient beauty chides our stay,  
The head-land past—her sweetest smile

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85 This is likely the Matthew Moss that composed the music for the opening “Incantation and Charm” in the prologue. Linhardt, “Ruthven’s Song: der Vampir in Mélodrame, Melodrama und romantischer Oper,” 230.
Our labour richly will repay.\textsuperscript{86}

The song’s significance is determined by the recollection of this time signature in the later melos. The remaining examples involve Fingal’s Cave, the point of origin for all supernatural activity in the melodrama. At the beginning of Act 2, Ronald has sworn vengeance on Robert for shooting—presumably murdering—Lord Ruthven. Andrew and Effie decide to hide Robert in Fingal’s Cave until Lord Ronald calms down and will again hear reason. Melo No. 22-\textit{Andante} plays as their boat comes ashore in the cavern (see Example 3-1).

\begin{center}
\textbf{Example 3-1: Melo No. 22-\textit{Andante}, Water Music.}
\end{center}

Labeled as “Water Music,” it is in 6/8 time and the key of D major. This melo is in the style of the barcarolle, a topic that arose from Venetian gondolier songs, typically utilizing a lilting rhythm to mimic the rocking of a boat. Already popular in the eighteenth century, the barcarolle was often made melancholy and sentimental when used in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{87} Example 3-1 is no exception. In addition, No. 22 has the same time signature as No. 15, the three-part boating glee, which anticipated the reuniting of Robert with Effie; in contrast, No. 22

\textsuperscript{86} Planché, \textit{The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melo-Drama, in Two Acts Preceded by an Introductory Vision}, 21.

anticipates their separation. The music is repeated at a faster tempo for No. 23-\textit{Allegretto} when Andrew returns to the boat, leaving Robert and Effie alone to say their goodbyes in the form of a love duet, No. 24-\textit{Andante espressivo}. No. 25-\textit{Andante} repeats the boat music yet again at its original tempo, as Andrew and Effie are borne away in the boat, leaving Robert alone in Fingal’s Cave. The return to the \textit{andante} tempo marks the closure of what No. 22 anticipated—the separation of two lovers. The use of the same musical material whenever Effie is in a boat demonstrates behavior that is almost leitmotivic.

Boat music similarly characterizes the motivations of Lord Ronald, who arrives in his boat to Fingal’s Cave in order to fulfill his promise to Lord Ruthven—that he would throw Ruthven’s signet ring into the waves there. The life-giving symbolism of water and the supernatural affiliations of Fingal’s Cave cannot be missed in this scene. No. 26-\textit{Allegro} plays as Ronald and his crew enter the cavern (see Example 3-2).

![Example 3-2: Melo No. 26-\textit{Allegro}, March.](image)

This melo is labeled a march and is in the same key as the boat music for Robert, Effie, and Andrew. The ominously descending bass line in the piece is worthy of note for its disquieting effect. Melo No. 27-\textit{Moderato} repeats this music at a slightly slower tempo, bearing Ronald’s
crew away, leaving him alone to fulfill his strange promise. He instructs his crew to wait at the
cave’s entrance until they see him wave his torch. When Ronald completes his promise, thunder
cracks and Lord Ruthven’s voice is heard echoing, “Remember your oath!” Provoked by the
noise of the scene, Robert comes out of hiding and a sword fight between the two ensues. Ronald
succeeds by disarming Robert and throwing him into the waves, at which point he gives his
signal and No. 30-Moderato plays, bearing him and his boat off the stage.

The tempos of No. 30 and No. 27 are the same, but the key areas are not; No. 30 is
transposed to C major. Consideration of the fight music of No. 29 helps explain this transposition
(see Example 3-3).

No. 29-Allegro begins in C minor but tonicizes G major at the end, providing an easy transition
into the C major of No. 30. If the boat music serves as a leitmotif by representing Ronald’s
character, then the transposition suggests that the fight has changed him. The martial-sounding
music that once signified Ronald’s mission to fulfill Ruthven’s strange orders has been colored

88 Planché, The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melo-Drama, in Two Acts
Preceded by an Introductory Vision, 27.
by the fight, perhaps indicating that he feels he is leaving victorious, or at least fulfilled after completing his oath and achieving vengeance for his friend’s murder.

Hart also uses melodic and harmonic clues to create musical unrest to foreshadow that a character will be deceived. One example is No. 17-\textit{Allegro}, which occurs in a similar plot position to No. 10 from \textit{Le Vampire}. Andrew receives word that Lord Ruthven is alive and, like Petterson, exclaims, “I tell you it must be some impostor.” After his exclamation No. 17 plays, a simple binary form in D major (see Example 3-4). Both phrases end on the minor sub-mediant harmony, a gesture common in Scottish and pseudo-Scottish music. In effect this ends a jaunty, major-mode tune on a minor harmony.

Similar foreboding is accomplished harmonically in No. 36-\textit{Allegro} and its repetition No. 37-\textit{Allegro}. No. 36 is first heard at the beginning of Act 2, Scene 4. Lady Margaret and her maidservant Bridget enter the scene after this melo (see Example 3-5). The part writing for this melo is all wrong. It is likely that the key signature is simply an error and should only be one.

\footnote{89 Ibid., 22.}
sharp. This would have been intuitively corrected in performance. This melo is repeated after Ruthven calls for Margaret from the altar, shouting, “Hasten sweet, and crown thy lover’s happiness,” \(^{90}\) essentially making it Margaret’s wedding processional.

After Ruthven has all but dragged Margaret to the altar in his impatience, No. 38-\textit{Allegro} plays, featuring another descending bass line in the key of G major just as in Nos. 36 and 37, only now it descends chromatically, heightening the tension (see Example 3-6).

These few measures share similar characteristics to the foreboding music before them. There are several chords missing fifths, the downbeat of measure 2 is a tritone spread across two and a half octaves, and the remaining sonorities are similarly widespread. This music makes sense in its context: Lord Ronald has finally interrupted the wedding proceedings, breaking his oath; his bickering caused such a delay that the impatient Ruthven tried to take his bride by force, drawing his dagger. “Nay, then thus I seal my lips, and seize my bride. (Ruthven draws his poignard:  

\(^{90}\) Ibid., 35.
rushes on Ronald.—Lady Margaret shrieks; when Robert throws himself between Ruthven and Ronald, and wrenches the Dagger from his grasp.)"  

The melo plays during this tumult, making the incomplete triads, chromaticism, and harmonic instability all apropos.

A final technique for building suspense is the fool’s song. Both Le Vampire and The Vampire have naïve characters of low social status that function to provide comedic relief. Le Vampire has Scop, a servant in the castle; The Vampire has McSwill. Their roles are similar in both melodramas. Each is introduced in the beginning to recount legends about vampires and folklore of Fingal’s Cave, situating the narrative in a tradition of the supernatural. In The Vampire, McSwill is given two songs and their placement is significant.

The first time we hear him sing is at the beginning of the melodrama, singing a drinking song with a group of retainers in unison, melo No. 6-Allegro. In fact, it is the first thing heard after the prologue, beginning Act 1, Scene 1:

Come fill, let the parting glass go round
With a stirrup cup, be our revelry crown’d,
See the sun that set to our bugles sound
Is changing the night into morning.

As darkness shrinks from his rising ray,
So sorrow and care will we keep at bay,
By the bowl at night and the “Hark away,”
That awakes us, brave boys, in the morning.  

This drinking song and the admonishment that comes immediately afterward establishes McSwill as a clownish figure. When Bridget enters the scene she says, “Where is that rascal, McSwill? He’s at the bottom of all this;—but if I—(McSwill attempts to steal off.) Oh! Oh! There you are, sir—come here, sir. (Seizes him by the ear, and brings him forward.)”  

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91 Ibid., 36.
92 Ibid., 9.
93 Ibid., 10.
Because we know from the first scene that McSwill not only knows of the vampire legends but believes in them, he is perfectly positioned to connect the dots and figure out that Lord Ruthven is a vampire; however, he is always too inebriated to do so. Frederick Burwick reads the character as a function of suspense. The juxtaposition of his comedy with the more serious and supernatural scenes around him makes those scenes more vivid, heightening our anticipation of something terrible.\(^9^4\) The audience knows that McSwill has witnessed enough to figure everything out, if he were only sober.\(^9^5\) Instead, knowing the wedding is about to commence and seeing Andrew, Effie, and Robert running off to stop it, McSwill decides to sing a drinking song again—and a catchy one at that. In fact, the playwright manipulates this for the effect of heightening the suspense. The audience, at the song’s mercy, must listen to this comedic drinking song at the summit of the drama and indeed, it is the longest song of the entire melodrama—the only song with three stanzas and refrains (see Example 3-7).\(^9^6\)

\[
(\text{Refrain}) \text{ Faith, I'll awa' to the bridal,} \\
\text{For there will be tippling there;} \\
\text{For my lady's a going to be married,} \\
\text{To whom I don't know, and don't care.}
\]

But I know we shall all be as frisky, \\
And tipsy as pipers, good lack; \\
And so that there’s plenty of whisky, \\
She may marry the devil for Mac. \text{Refrain}

I once left the bottle for Cupid, \\
And bade an adieu to my glass; \\
I simper’d, and sigh’d and look’d stupid, \\
And courted a cherry-cheek’d lass. \\
She turn’d out a jilt:—’twere a lie should I \\
Say, that it gave me no pain;

\(^9^5\) Ibid., 201. 
\(^9^6\) Appendix B contains the full score for “Faith, I’ll awa’ to the Bridal.”
For sorrowing made me so dry, that I
Took to my bottle again. Refrain

They say there’s five reasons for drinking,
But more I am sure may be got;
For I never could find out by thinking
A reason why people should not.
A sixth I’ll not scruple to giving:
I’ll name it while ‘tis in my head;
‘Tis if you don’t drink while you’re living,
You never will after you’re dead. Refrain

Example 3-7: Melo No. 35—Con spirito, “Faith, I'll awa’ to the Bridal,” mm. 14-17, Refrain.

The tune is quite catchy, emphasizing the tonic and subdominant. Because the audience knows that Margaret’s fate is hanging in the balance, it is almost cruel that the drinking song is so pleasant and fun.

The starkest difference between the representations of the vampire figure in the two plays is the number of asides that Planché generously grants the villain. These moments offer glimpses into the mind of the monster and go far toward generating sympathy for the vampire. This does not make him heroic, but it nevertheless complicates the audience’s allegiances in the melodrama.

Like Piccinni’s music for No. 16-\textit{Allegro} (see Example 2-9), Hart’s music for Nos. 20-\textit{Largo} and 21-\textit{Very slow} use uncommon key areas to musically indicate an arena for supernatural events to occur. Nos. 20 and 21 end Act 1 after Robert shoots Lord Ruthven. No. 20 plays after Ruthven falls, shouting, “I die!” and Ronald replies, “What murderous hand—.” While it begins as if it is in C minor, it ends tonicizing A$^\flat$ major (see Example 3-8).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example3-8}
\caption{Melo No. 20-\textit{Largo}.}
\end{figure}

This A$^\flat$ area in No. 20 and the next melo, which plays after Ruthven has secured Ronald’s oath and expired, are the only instances of A$^\flat$ tonality in the melodrama, harmonically indicating an otherworldly space for the supernatural events of Ruthven’s death and subsequent reanimation (see Example 3-9). Rita Steblin’s collection of metaphorical key characteristics sheds light on this tonality choice. The composer C. F. D. Schubart in his 1784 \textit{Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst} wrote that A$^\flat$ was “the key of the grave. Death, grave, putrefaction, judgment, eternity lie in its radius.” $^98$ Francesco Galeazzi in his 1796 \textit{Elementi teorico-pratici de musica} goes further: “Not used much on account of its difficulty. It is a gloomy key, low, deep, fit to express horror, the silence of night, stillness, fear, terror.” $^99$ These ideas were still associated with the key after 1820. For example, J. A. Schrader in his 1827 \textit{Kleines Taschenwörterbuch der Musik} wrote:

98 Steblin, \textit{A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries}, 281.
99 Ibid.
“Sounds dark and ominous; it depicts death, the grave, putrefaction and immortality.” These connotations of death make the use of A♭ for the melodramatic music of Lord Ruthven’s demise all the more striking.

Lord Ruthven’s death was quite the spectacle. According to the stage directions, reprinted in the piano score: “During the above Solemn Music, Lord Ronald lays the Body of The Vampire on a Bank in the Garden, and kneels mournfully beside it. The Moon continues descending, ‘till the light falls full upon the Corpse; and the Curtain drops slowly upon the Picture.” The piano score includes a description of this scene’s reception at its premiere.

The Effect produced in this Scene, as represented at the English Opera House, was truly beautiful;—The reflection of the Moon upon the splendid dress of the Vampire,—upon the Tree, and on the green Bank, where he expires, was peculiarly striking; during its performance a breathless silence prevailed in the Theatre, and when the Drop Scene fell, the Audience testified their approbation by the loudest plaudits.

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100 Ibid., 283.
101 Joseph Binns Hart, The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles (London: T. Williams, 1820), 35.
102 Ibid.
In addition to a death scene like that of a hero, Lord Ruthven’s asides also reveal his self-loathing and his fear of “nothingness.” He even regrets having to kill Margaret for his “disgusting banquet.” While the case can be made that Lord Ruthven is the main character in both melodramas, the soliloquizing of his inner torment casts him in *The Vampire* as something of an antihero, a role that the music only enriches by punctuating the more extreme moments of his monologue.

(Walks the stage agitated) Daemon, as I am, that walk the earth to slaughter and devour the little that remains of heart within this wizard frame—sustained alone by human blood, shrinks from the appalling act of placing misery in the bosom of this veteran chieftain. [Cue No. 11- *Allegro*, see Figure 3-2] Still must the fearful sacrifice be made! And suddenly; for the approaching night will find my wretched form exhausted—and darkness—worse than death—annihilation is my lot! [Cue No. 12- *Adagio*, see Figure 3-2] Margaret! Unhappy maid! Thou art my destined prey! Thy blood must feed a Vampire’s life, and prove the food of his disgusting banquet!\(^\text{103}\)

Rather than recapitulating previous material as in *Le Vampire*, the final melo of *The Vampire* contains new material in A minor. Ruthven shouts “I am lost,” as “a terrific Peal of Thunder is heard; Unda and Ariel appear; a Thunder Bolt strikes Ruthven to the ground, who immediately vanishes.”\(^\text{104}\) The music accompanying this scene has the expressive indication

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\(^{103}\) Planché, *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melo-Drama, in Two Acts Preceded by an Introductory Vision*, 19.

\(^{104}\) Ibid., 36.
*agitato*—the only melo with that marking. It begins in A minor but tonicizes and cadences on the minor dominant (see Example 3-10). The diminished seventh in measure 5, which stands out from the surrounding music, probably corresponds to the peals of thunder mentioned in the stage directions.

Hart’s finale is open-ended to say the least. Perhaps this leaves the possibility for the vampire to return. Scholars have pointed out that Planché incorporated both Polidori’s *The Vampyre* and Byron’s *Fragment of a Novel* into his adaptation of Nodier’s play.\(^{105}\) Since the Vampire wins and escapes in Polidori’s novel, this could be a musical manifestation of that. Frederick Burwick also points out that Planché’s adaptation makes it seem like vampires were actually lurking along the streets of Britain.\(^{106}\) In Polidori’s novel, Lord Ruthven’s death and

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\(^{106}\) Ibid., 195.
resurrection take place in Greece. Nodier, however, transplanted the myth to the Scottish Isles where vampire lore did not exist.\textsuperscript{107} When Planché had his turn at adapting the drama, he acknowledged that the Scottish setting did not make sense, yet he proceeded with “the experiment” anyway. He writes in the preface to the printed dialogue:

> The Author must apologize to the Public for the liberty which has been taken with a Levantic Superstition, by transplanting it to the Scottish Isles; but the unprecedented success of the French Piece, entitled, “Le Vampire,” of which the Melo-drame is a free translation, induced him to hazard the same experiment, for the sake of the same Dramatic effect.\textsuperscript{108}

According to Burwick a Scottish setting for a London audience, “insists that the vampire lurked amidst Britain’s own mists and shadows.”\textsuperscript{109} If the vampires could make it into the Inner Hebrides, what was to keep them out of London? The music of the finale also suggests this. After strange harmonic progressions, the finale ends on an offbeat and the minor dominant harmony. Indeed, the music sounds as if it should continue. Perhaps the story will continue. After all, the monster always escapes.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{107} Frederick Burwick, \textit{Romantic Drama: Acting and Reacting} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 234.
\textsuperscript{108} Planché, \textit{The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melo-Drama, in Two Acts Preceded by an Introductory Vision}, 3.
\textsuperscript{109} Burwick, \textit{Romantic Drama}, 235.
CHAPTER 4

IN A LEAGUE OF VILLAINS

All is prepared; o’er the great fiend once more I triumph!
‘Ere yon orb shall kiss the wave, the tributary victim shall be paid.
Bow, ye less subtle spirits—bow abashed before your master.  

In his introduction to a methodology of musical hermeneutics, Lawrence Kramer lists at least three ways in which music can be referential outside itself: textual inclusions, citational inclusions, and structural tropes. This chapter concerns the second category, that is:

Titles that link a work of music with a literary work, visual image, place, or historical moment; musical allusions to other compositions; allusions to texts through the quotation of associated music; allusions to the styles of other composers or of earlier periods; and the inclusion (or parody) of other characteristic styles not predominant in the work at hand.

In Le Vampire and The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles, citational inclusions in the music, as well as in the text of the melodrama, include character names, scene descriptions, and quoted music. These serve an important function, one shared by the music as described in Chapters 2 and 3—the inclusions act as emblems and omens to identify Lord Rutwen and Lord Ruthven unmistakably as villains.

Integral to the genre of melodrama, a strict duality between good and evil necessitates such a clearly defined villain. Frank Rahill calls the genre a “hodgepodge,” defining it as “a form of dramatic composition in prose partaking of the nature of tragedy, comedy, pantomime, and

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spectacle, and intended for a popular audience.”

He goes on to describe traits typical of melodrama:

Primarily concerned with situation and plot, it calls upon mimed action extensively and employs a more or less fixed complement of stock characters, the most important of which are a suffering heroine or hero, a persecuting villain, and a benevolent comic. It is conventionally moral and humanitarian in point of view and sentimental and optimistic in temper, concluding its fable happily with virtue rewarded after many trials and vice punished.

The emphasis on the genre’s humanitarian and moral character is similar to twentieth- and twenty-first-century horror cinema. Stephen King has referred to horror cinema as “innately conservative, even reactionary.” He reasons that horror movies provide a kind of psychic release valve, allowing the audience vicariously to experience their darkest desires, the taboo, the forbidden, and the repressed. King believes that, in providing this release, the genre helps keep insanity in check.

Horror shares many characteristics with its precursor, melodrama—in particular, a worldview in which good and evil are reassuringly delineated. Because the genre relies on this duality, it is imperative that the villain is always easy to identify; the audience must know where to place its allegiance. In the end, good must triumph and the world be set aright. Just like today’s horror cinema, melodramas of the early nineteenth century were conservative, reactionary, and helped keep insanity in check.

The prologues of both Le Vampire and The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles introduce the duality between the villains and virtuous female protagonists. In practice, however, the

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114 Ibid.
117 Because Malvina and Margaret are weak characters in both melodramas, they can hardly be called heroines.
vampires’ charisma and powers of fascination make it dangerously easy to forget their nefarious schemes. When Malvina first meets her intended fiancé in Le Vampire, she grows pale; likewise, Margaret in The Vampire shrieks in horror—both recognize the faces of their fiancés as the faces of the phantoms from their respective prologues in Fingal’s Cave. Both female protagonists have assumed that the events of their respective stormy nights in the cave, namely the vampire phantom lunging at them from an ominous tomb, were merely nightmares that they had had while waiting to be rescued. While nightmares are never pleasant, there is at least comfort in knowing they are only dreams. This becomes shockingly uncanny when each protagonist discovers she is engaged to marry her respective phantom.

In each play the Lords are startled by their astonishment and compensate by exerting a supernatural, hypnotic influence on their fiancés in order to calm them. In Le Vampire Lord Rutwen takes Malvina’s hand—the first time they have touched—and she responds, “Ah! Heaven! This rapture—.”\textsuperscript{118} Later in the scene she seems confused: “I don’t know where I am—what inconceivable charm acts on me?” She comments on Lord Rutwen’s charm, exclaiming, “My Lord! Each of his words seems to echo to the bottom of my soul.”\textsuperscript{119}

Likewise, in The Vampire Lord Ruthven similarly kneels and takes Margaret’s hand. She notes in an aside, “Heavens! How strange a thrill runs through my frame,” after which the vampire gloats in his own aside, “Then she’s mine.”\textsuperscript{120} A few lines later Margaret senses that she is being influenced. “What spell is it that moves me thus?” This leads her to retire, saying, “a strange confusion, a wild emotion overpowers me.”\textsuperscript{121} The vampire’s powers of influence are so

\textsuperscript{118} Nodier, The Vampire, 12.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 13.
\textsuperscript{120} James Robinson Planché, The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melo-Drama, in Two Acts Preceded by an Introductory Vision (London: W. Flint, 1820), 18.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
strong, in fact, that by Scene 2 of Act 2 Margaret says, “I can hardly account for my sudden attachment to Lord Ruthven, especially after the shock his introduction gave me.”\textsuperscript{122}

These scenes demonstrate the vampire’s pernicious powers of hypnotism and charisma. Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated that the music interjects to remind the audience of this dangerous foe, lest they be similarly afflicted by the villain’s charms. The music is not alone in this task, however. It is aided by several citational inclusions, reminding the audience of the vampire’s malevolent intent by firmly connecting him to multiple supernatural, diabolical villains.

\textbf{Don Juan and Don Giovanni}

The first such tradition is that of the infamous rake Don Giovanni, popularized in Mozart’s opera. The Don is connected to the vampire figure via Lord Byron’s role in the genesis of the literary vampire. This connection begins in \textit{Glenarvon} (1816), a novel by Lady Caroline Lamb, a spurned lover of Byron’s.\textsuperscript{123} Her novel was an act of revenge on the rakish Byron. It is also the origin of Lord Ruthven as a fictional character: “The abbey of Belfont, and the priory of St. Alvin, both the property of the Glenarvon family, were now, in consequence of the forfeiture of the late Earl of that name, transferred to Lord de Ruthven, a distant relation.”\textsuperscript{124} Clarence de Ruthven, “his [the Lord’s] grandson, an orphan, in a foreign land, had never yet appeared to petition for his attainted titles and forfeited estates.—Of relations and of friends he had never heard.”\textsuperscript{125} When Clarence de Ruthven finally reclaims his title, he becomes Lord Glenarvon, a

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 28.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 7.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
Scottish Lord and seducer of women,\textsuperscript{126} who is eventually carried off by something supernatural in an ending that recalls the final moments of Mozart’s \textit{Don Giovanni} (1787).\textsuperscript{127}

Andrew McConnell Stott summarizes \textit{Glenarvon}. Taking place during the Irish Rebellion of 1798 among a castle-rich landscape, Lamb weaves a tale of erotic temptation and doom. She included the actual letter Byron sent her to end their relationship as part of the text. It tells the story of a lover “flayed by proximity to a glamorous spirit of evil.”\textsuperscript{128} The novel’s antagonist Clarence de Ruthven is a character of strange proclivities; he haunts church ruins, dresses like a monk, and howls at the moon.\textsuperscript{129} He is so alluring that pigs and cattle follow him from their sties; the female protagonist Calantha also falls victim to this allure, becoming something like his slave. This leads to a sado-masochistic relationship ending in her ruin.\textsuperscript{130}

When Polidori and Byron fell out, motivating Polidori to write \textit{The Vampyre}, his use of the name Lord Ruthven recalled the gothic libertine of Lamb’s novel. Like the Don, both Byron and Lord Ruthven in his multiple incarnations are in their own ways irresistible with powers to persuade not only women but also a male companion. In \textit{Don Giovanni} the Don has Leporello; in \textit{The Vampyre} Lord Ruthven has Aubrey; in \textit{Le Vampire} Lord Rutwen has Aubray; in \textit{The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles} Lord Ruthven has Sir Ronald (who replaced his son, Aubrey).

The melodramas of 1820 further recall Mozart’s libertine by adding a second couple who did not exist in the source text, Polidori’s novel. In Mozart’s opera the primary seduction plot

\textsuperscript{126} Lord Byron was also of Scottish descent. He was born in London but grew up in Aberdeen, Scotland. Frederick Burwick, “Vampire auf der Bühne der 1820er Jahre,” in \textit{Dracula Unbound: kulturwissenschaftliche Lektüren des Vampirs}, ed. Christian Begemann, Britta Herrmann, and Harald Neumeyer (Freiburg: Rombach, 2008), 195.


\textsuperscript{128} Stott, \textit{The Poet and the Vampyre}, 154.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 155.

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
unfolds between Don Giovanni and Donna Anna, but the Don also seeks to seduce Zerlina, a peasant girl, who is betrothed to Masetto. Similarly, the primary seduction plots in the melodramas are between Lord Rutwen and Malvina in *Le Vampire* and Lord Ruthven and Margaret in *The Vampire*. The Lords are also after the second—and, as in *Don Giovanni*, lower class—couples: Lovette and Edgar in *Le Vampire* and Effie and Robert in *The Vampire*.

According to Ronald McFarland, the addition of the second couple serves several important functions. First, it compromises any sympathy one might have for the vampire. By demonstrating that one victim simply is not enough, the second seduction plot illustrates the insatiability of the vampire’s lust for blood.  

While this is certainly the case for *Le Vampire*, Planché’s dialogue complicates this issue by attempting to justify the second couple. Lord Ruthven reasons in Act 1 that if he killed Effie, Margaret might be spared (at least temporarily), reviving some sympathy for the villain.  

McFarland adds that the second couple subplot also demonstrates the pervasiveness—and inescapability—of the vampire’s power by showing that he can seduce more than just Malvina or Margaret. No one is safe from his charm.

The similarities of the final scenes of *Don Giovanni* and the vampire melodramas are so obvious that pointing them out might seem redundant. Still, it is worth mentioning, as Thomas Grey does, that while we can assume that Don Giovanni is mortal, the vampire’s power in both melodramas is so pervasive that nothing short of dragging him to some other hellish dimension is going to stop him.

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133 McFarland, “The Vampire on Stage,” 28.
Certain spin-offs of the first vampire melodramas of 1820 demonstrate the ease with which the vampire and Don Giovanni combine. Thomas Grey points out that the vampire is in fact the principal incarnation of the Don Juan figure for most of the Romantic period. The most striking example of this is the burlesque premiered at the Adelphi Theatre on 15 January 1821: Giovanni the Vampire!!! Or, How Shall We Get Rid of Him. James Robinson Planché wrote this adaptation as a satirical debate on “genre and commercialism,” largely parodying his own melodrama The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles. Unfortunately, the burlesque’s dialogue was never printed, but a complete prologue and lyrics to the songs of the burlesque do survive. An introductory note to the printed lyrics makes the connection between the infamous Don and the vampire completely certain.

The Levantic superstition concerning Vampires, having of late years been so widely circulated, and explained by the publication and production of Tales, Poems, and Melodrames, renders it unnecessary for the Proprietors to clog the bill with a long programme, every inch of paper being of the greatest consequence in such economizing times as the present.—The Public, they feel assured, will readily acknowledge the wonderful resemblance which exists between the notorious Don Giovanni, and the supernatural being aforesaid; not only, in their insatiable thirst for blood, and penchant for the fair sex, but in the innumerable resuscitations which both have, and still continue to experience. To put this libertine entirely “hors de combat”—to clap, as it were, an extinguisher upon his burning passions—to prevent, by “total annihilation” his ever again becoming the bugbear of “Children” who are young, or children who are old; as the great Cervantes killed Don Quixote, to preclude the probability of his adventures being extended to other pens—is the design of the present production, and will doubtless meet the hearty concurrence of the Suppressors of Vice, whether officially or privately situated, to whom it is most respectfully dedicated by the Author.

135 Ibid., 79.
136 Stuart, Stage Blood, 283.
The vampire figure had become so commonplace in just six months after the premiere of Nodier’s *Le Vampire* that the author of *Giovanni the Vampire* did not deem an explanation of the superstition necessary. What is more, the author assumed that the overlap between Don Giovanni and the vampire figure would be intuitive. In fact, noting the propensity of both literary figures to return in another play or another story, no matter how many times they were killed, Planché plans to kill them both off in one fell swoop.\(^\text{138}\)

The printed lyrics list the tunes to which they were sung. Two tunes composed by Matthew Moss for the opening incantations of *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles* are reused, as are “There’s Nae Luck about the House” and “Ye Banks and Braes” (see Table 3-1). More interesting, however, are the tunes taken directly from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. Strangely (and satirically), both tunes are used in *Giovanni the Vampire* to set poetry involving cheese; without the printed dialogue, it is impossible to know why. The first is “Vedrai carino,” No. 18 from Act 2, Scene 1 of Mozart’s opera, in which Zerlina promises her love to Masetto after Don Giovanni assaults him. In *Giovanni the Vampire* it is given to Miss Ballamira Bustle, “daughter to the Manager, a young lady of great Musical abilities, and very much in love.”\(^\text{139}\) Rather than a testament of love, however, Miss Bustle sings about the current popularity and economic struggles of the London theaters.

Stay, and I’ll find, my love!—
If you’re inclined, my love!
Quickly, a rind my love
Of Gloucester cheese!—

More I have not, my love,
To give for what, my love,
By plays, can be got, my love

\(^{\text{138}}\) Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 98.
\(^{\text{139}}\) Planché, *Songs, Duets, Glees, Choruses, &c. in the New Operatic Burlesque Burletta, Entitled Giovanni the Vampire!!! Or, How Shall We Get Rid of Him?*, 2.
In such times as these!—

When folks had a shilling,  
To spare they were willing  
The house to be filling,  
Heavens! What a squeeze!—

Sad alteration,  
Now through the nation,  
No compensation,  
Play what you please!140

Following this song is a duet between Miss Bustle and Giovanni the Vampire, listed in the Dramatis Personae as “an old acquaintance considered in a new light.”141 This duet is to the tune of “Là ci darem la mano,” No. 7 in Don Giovanni. The poetry mocks the original context of the seductive duet.

Giovanni: Come, let us haste and dine, love,  
And with my cheese I’ll sip,  
Nectar instead of wine, love,  
From off that tempting lip!

Miss Bustle: I’ll haste the cloth to lay, love,  
And of the cheese a slice,  
Shall, if you’ll patient stay, love,  
Be toasted in a trice!

Giovanni: Mustard, to give it gout love,  
Bustle: And salt and pepper too, love,  
Giovanni: Come then—come then—  
Come let us haste, &c.

Both: To folks of mod’rate habits  
Love and hot Welch rabbits,  
A thousand joys display.142

Thus, through the novel Glenarvon and the legacy of Byron, the literary vampire was forged in the likeness of Don Juan. The relationship was strengthened in Le Vampire by the

140 Ibid., 14.  
141 Ibid., 2.  
142 Ibid., 14.
addition of a second-couple subplot. The similarities between the aristocratic vampire and the Don echoed through the spin-offs and imitations, culminating in the burlesque *Giovanni the Vampire*. Indeed, the vampire of popular culture in the twenty-first century still consists of the same powers of fascination, “penchant for the fair sex,” and “insatiable thirst for blood.” Whatever took place in the plot of *Giovanni the Vampire*, Planché obviously did not succeed in extinguishing either character.

**Satan and *Paradise Lost***

It has already been mentioned that both Don Giovanni and the vampires in the melodramas *Le Vampire* and *The Vampire* are dragged to hell, or at least some similar hellish realm. Extending the connection between the vampire and hell are references via character names and scene descriptions to John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667). In the poem Satan is cast as an anti-hero; we read his motivations and internal thoughts, just as the vampire is an anti-hero in *Le Vampire* and even more so in *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles*. References to *Paradise Lost* are achieved via the names of the spirits in the prologue of *Le Vampire*, where Oscar and Ithuriel guarded Malvina in Fingal’s Cave after she fell asleep. The name Ithuriel comes directly from *Paradise Lost*; he is one of the faithful angels and, in conjunction with the angel Zephon, is given orders to search for Satan in the Garden of Eden.

Ithuriel and Zephon, with wingd speed
Search through this Garden, leave unsarcht no nook,
But chiefly where those two fair Creatures Lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep secure of harme.
This Evening from the Sun’s decline arriv’d
Who tells of som infernal Spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap’d
The barrs of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:
Such where ye find, seise fast, and hither bring.\textsuperscript{143}

Ithuriel and Zephon finally find Satan whispering in Eve’s ear in the form of a toad, while she sleeps. At the beginning of Book 5 and the next day, Eve recounts to Adam these events, which she believes to have been a dream. Malvina and Margaret similarly believe their encounters with the phantoms in Fingal’s Cave to be dreams and recount them in Act 1 to their respective handmaidens, Brigette and Bridget.\textsuperscript{144}

Certain staging designs of the two melodramas could have also reminded the audience of the events of Satan’s discovery and capture. Engravings of scenes survive for \textit{The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles} and were printed with later editions of the play’s libretto. The tableau of Margaret being protected from the vampire in the English melodrama resembles the ways in which artists imagined Ithuriel and Zephon protecting Adam and Eve from Satan.\textsuperscript{145} While no engravings exist of the French melodrama’s staging, it can be assumed that the two were similarly staged because of the similarity of their prologues.

The next lines of \textit{Paradise Lost} describe Satan’s discovery:

\begin{quote}
… Him there they found
Squat like a Toad, close at the eare of Eve;
Assaying by his Devilish art to reach
The Organs of her Fancie, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, Phastasms and Dreams…\textsuperscript{146}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{144} See Appendix A for a full synopsis of each melodrama.
\textsuperscript{145} Marion Linhardt, “Ruthven’s Song: Der Vampir in Mélodrame, Melodrama und romantischer Oper,” in \textit{Dracula Unbound: kulturwissenschaftliche Lektüren des Vampirs} (Freiburg: Rombach, 2008), 226.
\textsuperscript{146} Milton, \textit{Paradise Lost}, ll. 4.799–803.
A watercolor by William Blake shows Satan in the form of a toad by Eve’s ear and the two angels above the sleeping couple (see Figure 4-1). The branches in the background seem to arch like a gothic window and each angel holds a spear. Ithuriel touches the toad with his spear of “celestial temper” that “no falshood can endure” and Satan starts backward in his true form.

Figure 4-1: William Blake, *Adam and Eve Sleeping*, 1808.  

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Him thus intent Ithuriel with his Spear  
Touch’d lightly; for no falshood can endure  
Touch of Celestial temper, but returns  
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts

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147 William Blake, *Illustrations to Paradise Lost: Adam and Eve Sleeping*, pen and watercolor on paper, 1808, 90.102, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
Discoverd and surpriz’d. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous Powder, laid
Fit for the Tun som Magazin to store
Against a rumord Warr, the Smuttie graine
With sudden blaze diffus’d, inflames the Aire:
So started up in his own shape the Fiend.
Back stept those two fair Angels half amaz’d
So sudden to behold the grieslie King;
Yet thus, unmovd with fear, accost him soon.¹⁴⁸

Henry Fuseli’s painting of this scene shows Satan transformed and retreating from the sleeping
Adam and Eve (see Figure 4-2).

![Figure 4-2: Henry Fuseli, Satan von Ithuriels Speer berührt, 1779.](image)

The engraving of the prologue tableau published as the title page of the edition for Dick’s
Standard Plays displays striking likenesses to this painting and William Blake’s watercolor (see
Figure 4-3).

¹⁴⁹ Johann Heinrich Füssli, *Satan, von Ithuriels Speer berührt*, oil on canvas, 1779, 3708, Staatsgallerie Stuttgart.
One of the angels in the engraving is holding a spear-like object. While the stage directions of the 1820 edition of *The Vampire* do not mention a spear or scepter held by either spirit, costume information in the undated Dick’s Standard Plays edition indicates that both spirits carried wands. “Unda.—White satin dress, trimmed with shells, &c.; blue satin robe; hair in long ringlets; tiara; wand. Ariel.—White muslin dress, with spangles; sky blue robe; wings; tiara; silver wand.” The kilt-clad vampire in Figure 4-3, like Füssli’s Satan in Figure 4-2, starts away from Margaret; both villains have twisted toward the viewer in the course of their retreat.

Furthering the connection to *Paradise Lost*, Marion Linhardt points out that Nodier and his co-authors in an early sketch of *Le Vampire* had named the bard in the prologue “Abdiel, ange des Amours” instead of “Oscar, génie des Mariages.” Abdiel, like Ithuriel, is a faithful

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150 James Robinson Planché, *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melodrama in Two Acts* (London: John Dicks, ca. 1874-1907), 1. This edition is undated but the Dick’s series ran from 1876-1907.

151 Ibid., 2.
angel in God’s war against Satan. In fact, in Milton’s Book 5 the angel Raphael explains that Abdiel was a charge of Satan’s before the uprising against God. Abdiel refused to rebel, however, and remained faithful. These reminders of Milton’s epic in the prologues of the vampire melodramas connect the villain to the diabolical anti-hero Satan within the initial moments of the action.

**Oscar, Malvina, and Ossian**

By naming the other angel Oscar, the playwrights of *Le Vampire* call to mind another epic, James Macpherson’s *The Works of Ossian*. The names Oscar and Malvina, as well as the setting of Fingal’s Cave, are all overt references to *The Works of Ossian*, associating the melodramas with Scottish lore. One reason to do this may have been to normalize the placement of the melodramas in Scotland, where vampire lore did not exist.

The Ossian poems first appeared in the 1760s. *Fingal: An Ancient Epic Poem in Six Books* was published in 1761. It was republished with a second collection, *Temora: An Ancient Epic in Eight Books*, under the new title *The Works of Ossian* in 1765. According to legend Ossian was a “Gaelic Homer,” a blind bard from the third century, whose poems were passed down through oral tradition. The extent to which Macpherson’s poems are authentic to poems from the Scottish Highlands has long been debated. According to Fiona Stafford, “Macpherson drew on traditional sources to produce imaginative texts not modeled closely on any single

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The poems were published in the wake of the Jacobite Risings, when the British government was systematically repressing Highland culture in order to deter rebellion; despite its inauthenticity, Macpherson’s poetry was an attempt to restore some sense of cultural identity. In this way Macpherson was a harbinger of the nineteenth century’s turn to folklore collecting, represented by such figures as Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, and the Grimm Brothers.

In the mythic world of Macpherson’s poems Ossian is the son of Fingal, the namesake of the cave that features so prominently in the vampire melodramas. Malvina is the lover of Ossian’s son Oscar. Thus, naming the bard of Le Vampire Oscar may have been an attempt to justify his protection of Malvina while she sleeps in Fingal’s Cave. Planché’s adaptation retains the link to Ossianic lore through the setting of Fingal’s Cave, but his angels are renamed, and the female protagonist is Margaret rather than Malvina. Instead of referring to The Works of Ossian via character names, Planché and Hart conjure the world of the epic aurally. This is explained easily enough by the title page of the overture to The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles (see Figure 4-4).

Hart stole the overture directly from a ballet-pantomime by William Reeve (1757–1815) titled Oscar and Malvina; or, the Hall of Fingal. Premiered in 1791 at Covent Garden, Reeve’s work was quite successful and well received. The London Review provides a plot summary:

Oscar, the descendent of Fingal, a renowned Highland Chief, being betrothed to Malvina, the daughter of Toscar, their Clans, accompanied by the Bards (according to the ancient customs of the country), assemble in the Hall of Fingal, with [sic] is fancifully decorated, to celebrate the approaching nuptials of the happy pair, and record the glories of their ancestry; their festivity is interrupted by

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154 Ibid., x.
a vassal, announcing the arrival of Carroll, a powerful Chieftain of a neighbouring isle, who, accompanied by his troops, descends the rocky mountain of Ben Lomond, to demand the hand of Malvina in marriage.\textsuperscript{155}

As the ballet-pantomime proceeds, Carroll, under the guise of friendship, attempts to woo Malvina. These attempts being unsuccessful, he finally kidnaps her. After an elaborate quest, Oscar finds them, and in the inevitable struggle, Malvina “plunges a dagger in [Carroll’s] breast, and he expires.”\textsuperscript{157} The review concludes, “This Entertainment is at once superb and interesting, and exhibits the united powers of painting and music. The scenery is picturesque and splendid; the music pleasing.”\textsuperscript{158} It makes sense that this overture can so easily introduce Planché’s melodrama almost thirty years later. In fact, their villains are remarkably similar: both seek to capture a woman betrothed to another man, both first attempt to do so under the guise of

\textsuperscript{156} Joseph Binns Hart, \textit{The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles} (London: T. Williams, 1820), 3.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.
friendship—and therefore, neither can be trusted—and finally, after all other attempts fail, both resort to force. By stealing this overture nearly in full, Planché can use the spirits’ names in the prologue to refer to something else without sacrificing the connection to the characters of *Ossian*.

Even without the names Oscar and Malvina, Planché’s prologue still links the vampire to the Ossianic mythos. Unda, the Spirit of the Flood, explains, “beneath this stone the relics lie of Cromal, called the Bloody. Staffa still his reign of fear remembers. For his crimes, his spirit roams, a vampire, in the form of Marsden’s Earl. To count his victims o’er would be an endless task.”\(^{159}\) The name “Cromal” is problematic. There is no such name in *The Works of Ossian*, so theories abound. Roxana Stuart claims it is a misprint for Cormal.\(^{160}\) This may be so, but Cormal is not in the mythology either, though there is a Cormalo in “The War of Inis-thona” who dies in single combat at the hand of Oscar.\(^{161}\) Noël Rarignac, in *The Theology of Dracula* says, “James Macpherson claimed Cromal, Fingal’s father, died in battle at the precise moment of Fingal’s birth.”\(^{162}\) This is an enticing idea, but Rarignac does not give any citation for this information, and the father of Fingal is given several names in *Ossian* (Comhal, Comnal, and Corval), none of which are Cromal. Frederick Burwick has another explanation. He believes it could be a reference to the poem “Croma,” referring to an area in Ireland. Cromal could mean a warrior

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159 James Robinson Planché, *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melodrama in Two Acts* (London: John Dicks, 1874), 3.
160 Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 76.
from Croma. In this poem Ossian finds Malvina lamenting the death of Oscar and tries to distract her with a tale of battle; he describes saving Croma from invasion at the behest of its ailing king. Although the name Cromal does not actually come from Ossian, it nevertheless recalls the Ossianic world. Importantly, it is the spirit of Cromal that has seized and reanimated Ruthven’s corpse, making him a vampire.

The Malevolent Aristocrat and 
One o’Clock; or, the Knight and the Wood Daemon

Marion Linhardt points to an earlier melodrama from the infamous gothic imagination of Matthew “Monk” Lewis as another referent of Planché’s The Vampire. One o’Clock; or, the Knight and the Wood Daemon premiered 1 August 1811 and features a sequence at the beginning of Act 2 quite similar to the prologue of each vampire melodrama. It also features an angel named Auriol and a character named Una, both of whom may have inspired the names for the spirits of Planché’s prologue to The Vampire. Like the vampire melodramas, it also features a deadline of 1 a.m. by which a sacrifice must be made—in this case, a child. The antagonist of Lewis’s play is the knight, Count Hardyknute of Holstein, who is betrothed to Una, a peasant girl whom he has rescued from a giant and claimed as his wife. Like Lord Rutwen and Lord Ruthven, also aristocrats, he is not to be trusted. Hardyknute has forged a deal with the Erlkönig-like Wood Daemon, requiring him to sacrifice a child to the Wood Daemon every year on 9 August before 1 a.m. Hardyknute has stolen the throne of Holstein from its true heir, the young, tongue-tied ward Leolyn, who was taken in by Una’s sister Clotilda after Hardyknute’s attempt

to sacrifice him. Act 2 begins with a benevolent spirit named Auriol. “The stage is filled with brilliant Clouds; in the centre of which sits Auriol, (the Guardian Genius of Holstein) extending his Spear towards Una, who is sleeping on a Bank.” Like Malvina and Margaret, Una sleeps while Auriol speaks and chants around her to plant in her head a plan to save Leolyn from the evil Hardyknute. Similarly, Oscar and Ithuriel, as well as Unda and Ariel, show their respective female protagonists the phantom faces of the vampires so that they might be warned later on.

**Lord Ruthven and David Rizzio**

*The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles* makes one more significant reference that must be considered in order to understand how inextricably the vampire was linked to a tradition of villains. The title page for Hart’s second song for the melodrama, “The Hour When First We Met,” from Act 1, Scene 1, mentions that the song was made popular by the tenor John Braham in the serious opera *David Rizzio* (see Figure 4-4). Colonel Ralph Hamilton wrote *David Rizzio: a Serious Opera, in Three Acts: Founded upon Scottish History* in 1820. It was ripped apart by critics after its premiere at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in June.

While titled an opera, *David Rizzio* is more aptly described as something similar to melodrama, mixing spoken dialogue with sung text. In the play David Rizzio, an Italian musician in the court of Mary, Queen of Scots, is engaged to Mary Livingston, the principal lady of the bedchamber to the Queen. Miss Carew, who played the role of Mary Livingston, would play the role of Effie in *The Vampire; or the Bride of the Isles* later that year. The baron Earl Ruthven intends to steal Livingston from Rizzio, desiring to make her his own bride. To do so, he makes multiple failed attempts to have Rizzio murdered, and finally in frustration he persuades Lord

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165 Matthew Gregory Lewis, *One o’clock, or, the Knight and the Wood Daemon: A Grand Operatic Romance in Three Acts* (London: Lowndes and Hobbs, 1811), 36.
Darnley, husband of the queen, that Rizzio is involved in a secret affair with the Queen. With Ruthven whispering in Darnley’s ear, a plan is made to attack and brutally murder the courtier. Darnley tragically learns that Rizzio is innocent only when it is too late to stop the attack.

![Figure 4-5: Title page of “The Hour When First We Met” from *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles*, Melo No. 7-Larghetto.](image)

As the extended title of the melodrama suggests, this scenario is “founded upon Scottish history.” David Rizzio (1525–1566) was indeed a courtier for Mary, Queen of Scots in the sixteenth century, and while rumors of an affair between him and the Queen existed, there has never been confirmation of such a liaison. Rizzio was, however, close enough to the Queen that she appointed him as one of her ministers, much to the chagrin of certain Protestant councilors, chief among them Patrick Ruthven, Third Lord Ruthven (1520–1566). In 1566 a group of councilors, including Lord Ruthven, brutally murdered Rizzio in the Queen’s presence. Rosalind Marshall explains the events of Rizzio’s death using different first hand accounts.

166 Joseph Binns Hart, *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles* (London: T. Williams, 1820), 16.
The queen was at supper in the little room adjoining her bedchamber at
Holyroodhouse. Her half-sister Jean, countess of Argyll, was at one end of the
table, David Riccio was at the other, while she herself sat at the side. Light came
from a candelabrum on the table. Suddenly Darnley marched in, sat down beside
Mary, and put an arm round her waist, chatting to her with unaccustomed
geniality. She had scarcely replied when the startling figure of Patrick Ruthven,
Lord Ruthven, appeared in the doorway, deathly pale and wearing full armour.
“May it please your Majesty to let yonder man Davie come forth of your
presence, for he has been overlong here!” he cried. The queen rose to her feet in
alarm. Terrified, Riccio darted behind her, to cower in the window embrasure,
clinging to the pleats of her gown. The royal attendants sprang forward to take
Ruthven, but he pulled out a pistol and waved them back. At the same moment
the Earl of Morton’s men rushed into the supper chamber, the table was
overturned, and only the countess of Argyll’s quick thinking in snatching up the
candelabrum prevented the room from being plunged into darkness. While
Andrew Ker of Fawdonside held his pistol to the queen’s side, George Douglas,
Darnley’s uncle, snatched Darnley’s dagger from his belt and stabbed Riccio.
According to Mary’s own description of events, this first blow was struck over
her shoulder. “Justice! Justice!” Riccio screamed. “Save my life, Madame, save
me!” but it was too late. The intruders dragged him from the supper room and
stabbed him to death at the door of the queen’s outer chamber. On Darnley’s
order his body, with fifty-six stab wounds, was hurled down the main staircase,
dragged into the porter’s lodge, and thrown across a coffer where the porter’s
servant stripped him of his fine clothes.167

Because Hamilton’s David Rizzio had been premiered just two months before Planché’s The
Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles, the name of the evil Ruthven, both of the melodrama and
Scottish history, would have been fresh in the audience’s collective memory. Connecting this
villain with the vampire—both murderers, both attempting to steal women from their fiancés
(Rizzio was engaged to Mary Livingston)—further confirms that the vampire is not to be trusted
but to be feared.

This connection is supported aurally by the recycling of a popular tune from David Rizzio
for one of Robert’s songs in The Vampire. In fact, it is the song by which Robert professes his
love for Effie in Act 1, Scene 1:

H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004),
The hour when first we met, my dear,
The hour when first we met;
I never can forget, my dear,
I never can forget,
So sweet on me those eyes were turn'd,
That beam thy cheek above,
They look'd like lamps that only burn'd,
To light the heart to love.
To light the heart to love, my dear,
To light the heart to love,
They look'd like lamps that only burn'd,
To light the heart to love.

And while they shine on me, my dear,
And while they shine on me,
I'll ne'er be false to thee, my dear,
I'll ne'er be false to thee.
O never, never slight me, then,
Nor leave me, love, to say,
Like fires that glimmer o'er the fen
They beam but to betray.
They beam but to betray, my dear,
They beam but to betray,
Like fires that glimmer o'er the fen
They beam but to betray.  

In the plot of *David Rizzio* the song serves quite a different function. The only song of the melodrama sung by John Braham, who played Rizzio, with the same syllabic pattern occurs in Act 2, Scene 4:

O turn thee, love that heavenly smile!
O turn again to me.
With buoyant hope my heart beguile,
For thou art all to me—Mary!
On Lybia’s sands, o’er Iceland’s snows,
I’d traverse — with thee,
To Etna’s fires my breast oppose,
Brave every risque for thee—Mary.

Then turn thee, love, that beaming eye!
O let it rest on me;
When that dear bosom heaves a sigh,

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168 Planché, *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles: a Romantic Melo-Drama, in Two Acts Preceded by an Introductory Vision*, 13. Find the score for the song in Appendix B.
O, let it heave for me—Mary!
Recal’d to bliss from deep despair
I’d envy none, with thee.
For what, on earth, can man compare
To one endow’d like thee—Mary.169

Just before this song, Ruthven plants seeds of jealousy in Darnley’s mind, implying that Rizzio is having an affair with the Queen. When they hear Rizzio strike a chord on his lyre or harp, they decide to hide and listen to his song. The interjections of “Mary!” actually refer to Mary Livingstone, the lady of the bedchamber, but Darnley, blinded by jealousy, assumes they refer to his wife, Mary Stuart. After this, Ruthven easily convinces him to authorize Rizzio’s murder.

Just like the eponymous Don Giovanni in Mozart’s opera and Carroll in Reeve’s ballet-pantomime, Earl Ruthven in Hamilton’s David Rizzio readily deceives under the guise of friendship in order to get what he desires. Lords Rutwen and Ruthven in the vampire melodramas similarly deceive and manipulate their friends Sir Aubray and Lord Ronald, also in order to seize someone else’s fiancée. This behavior is to be expected from a vampire in the company of a league of such villains.

CHAPTER 5

THE VAMPIRE’S GHOST

The vampire always returns because it is our creation, and we won’t let it rest.¹⁷⁰

Monsters are real—at least phenomenologically. “We cannot deny that these creatures live full lives that have been well recorded in our literature, our visual arts, our dreams.”¹⁷¹

Monsters leave their footprints all across culture without the slightest regard for whether or not they exist—we nevertheless have to experience them. As such, the monster is an artifact of a culture’s fears, a reflection of what a culture considers taboo, forbidden, or out of place in civilized society. They can be interpreted to reveal important cultural information.

Interpreting vampires in particular is nothing new. Several disciplines have responded to the apparent ubiquity of the vampire and sought to understand it. After all, the vampire seems to be everywhere. “You would have to live in a coffin not to have your path regularly crossed by vampires,” claims Jeffrey Weinstock.¹⁷² He explains that even without watching vampire movies or reading vampire fiction, children, at least in the U.S., figure out the gist of the monster’s lore by their first Halloween.¹⁷³ Newspaper articles in and around 1820 similarly felt the monster’s imposing presence, particularly in London and Paris, and attempted to rationalize the simultaneous fear and fascination that the vampire invokes. In fact, a review of Planché’s The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles spoke to this directly: “The superstition on which it is

¹⁷³ Ibid., 5.
founded, is one of the most appalling at which the blood has ever curdled with a chill and mysterious pleasure.”174 Critics in the wake of these melodramas sought to understand what the popularity of the vampire figure meant for metropolitan culture after the significant social change of the French Revolution. These contemporary descriptions will be this chapter’s point of departure.

In the wake of Polidori’s 1819 novel *The Vampyre* and the two melodramas that were the subjects of this thesis—not to mention the vast array of spin-offs and imitations that attempted to ride the coattails of these successes—the popular imagination had become inundated with notions of vampirism and the figures of vampires. A November article in the *New Monthly Magazine*—the same magazine that first published Polidori’s novel in April 1820—describes the vampire’s popularity:

> Since the appearance of the story of the *Vampire*, the conversation of private parties has frequently turned on the subject; and the discussion has been prolonged and invigorated by the pieces brought out at the theatres, as well of Paris as of London. … This article deserves attention, no less from its temporary interest, than from its peculiar character as part of the history of the human mind.175

This newspaper article was published less than three months after the premiere of Planché’s *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles*. I do not know whether or not this anonymous author knew about the melodramas in Paris, but by this time there had already been several adaptations of Nodier’s *Le Vampire*, including Eugène Scribe’s *Le Vampire* at the Théâtre de Vaudeville (15 June 1820) and Nicholas Brazier’s *Les trois Vampires, ou le Clair de la lune* at the Théâtre de Variétés (22 June 1820). In London there had also been two vampire melodramas by November 1820, Planché’s in August and an adaptation at the Royal Coburg Theatre, *The Vampire* by

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175 “*On Vampires and Vampirism,*” *The New Monthly Magazine* 14, no. 82 (November 1820): 548.
William Thomas Moncrieff (22 August 1820). December would see another adaptation at Covent Garden by Charles Edward Walker titled *Warlock of the Glen* (2 December 1820). The vampire had obviously found a niche by 1821.

Chapter 4 demonstrated the vampire’s dangerous powers of fascination. A critic in *Le Drapeau blanc* in Paris on 15 June 1820 wrote about this, worrying that if the vampire lodged itself in the popular imagination, especially among weaker minds, it could trigger a reversal of Enlightenment progress, resurrecting the superstition of the vampire. “The success of the Vampire could, in the context of this century of Enlightenment, renew the old superstitions about these fantastic monsters, if the parodies did not promptly come to the aid of strong minds.”¹⁷⁶

This kind of Enlightenment angst must have persisted, because a London critic in 1823 expressed similar shock and dismay at the vampire’s hold on popular culture:

> Voltaire was astonished that, in the eighteenth century, people should believe in vampyres; and that the doctors of the Sorbonne should give their *imprimatur* to a dissertation on these unpleasant personages. The philosopher of Ferney would scarcely have experienced less surprise had he lived to see them introduced into popular novels, represented as figuring at the drawing-room, shining in fashionable assemblies, favourites with the ladies, and this not alone in barbarous London, but forming the delight and admiration of elegant audiences in the superlatively polished capital of his own country.¹⁷⁷

The vampire represents certain inherent fears that may have triggered this angst. For example, the vampire is a “harbinger of category crisis.”¹⁷⁸ The endangerment of clearly defined boundaries between life and death or human and monster was understandably worrisome to the progress of the Enlightenment. A review of Planché’s melodrama in September 1820, also in the

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¹⁷⁸ Cohen, “Monster Theses: (Seven Theses),” 6–7.
*New Monthly Magazine*, addresses the vampire’s ambiguous state of existence, somewhere between life and death:

> A being in whom death and life are strangely mingled—with all the coldness of the grave and all the seeming immunities of existence—sustained by the blood of female victims whom he first is permitted to fascinate—has a spell far more fearful than ordinary spectres.  

*The New Monthly Magazine* established a penchant for the vampiric. After publishing Polidori’s novel it had published an article in 1820 entitled “On Vampires and Vampirism” and in 1823, another article simply entitled “On Vampyrism.” The anonymous author of the latter attempted to understand why the vampire was so frightening and yet paradoxically popular. To do so, the author compared the vampire to other monsters. Gnomes, for example, “are sulky and splenetic persons, but there is a certain impotence about them which prevents their becoming very terrific; the Lamiae and the Larvae of the ancients were, indeed, horrid creations—but the latter were mere shadows, which takes off much of their monstrosity.” The vampire, on the other hand, “is a corporeal creature of blood and unquenchable blood-thirst—a ravenous corpse, who rises in body and soul from his grave for the sole purpose of glutting his sanguinary appetite.” At least according to this author, the vampire is different from the former monsters by virtue of being corporeal, being itself formerly human, and walking among humans. In fact, a review of Planché’s melodrama responded to the uncanniness of the vampire’s human form. “On the stage it is a little shocking to the feelings, and incongruous to the sense, to see a spirit in human shape,—in the shape of a real Earl, and, what is more, of a Scotch Earl—going about seeking whom it may marry and then devour, to lengthen out its own abhorred and anomalous being.”

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180 “On Vampyrism,” 141.  
Somewhat comically to modern readers, the writer “On Vampyrism” suggests a hypothetical scenario with different monsters, concluding that entanglement with a vampire is undoubtedly the worst possibility:

Fancy your friend with whom you are walking arm-in-arm, or your mistress on whose bosom your head reposes, a spirit—a Gnome or an Undine—or any mere spirit—the idea is startling; if pursued it may lead an active imagination to a disagreeable sense of the possibility of happiness being an imposition, and pleasure “an unreal mockery,”—but it is not overpoweringly painful;—but let the idea of your companion or your mistress being a Vampyre cross the brain—the blood would run chill, and every sense be oppressed by the bare supposition, childish and absurd as it would be felt to be—“twould shake the disposition with thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls.”

The vampire around 1820 was feared partly for its insatiability, as related in these excerpts, but also for a “repetition-compulsion” inherent to its survival. As if programmed to do so, the vampire must feed on blood with a certain periodicity to sustain its existence. (This was more so the case in the melodramas of 1820 than in the source text, Polidori’s novel.) The writer of “On Vampyrism” saw this as key to the terror of the figure:

He reappears among [his family and friends] from the world of the tomb, not to tell its secrets of joy or of woe, not to invite or to warn by the testimony of his experience, but to appall and assassinate those who were dearest to him on earth—and this, not for the gratification of revenge or any human feeling, which, however depraved, might find something common with it in human nature, but to banquet a monstrous thirst acquired in the tomb, and which, though he walks in human form and human lineaments, has swallowed up every human motive in its brutal ferocity.

After whatever transformation took place in the grave, the vampire seeks first the ruin of his most beloved, according to this author; it seems as if the vampire is governed by anti-human instinct. The vampire maintains a human form, ambiguously inhabiting a position between life

182 “On Vampyrism,” 141.
184 “On Vampyrism,” 141.
and death, yet its former sense of humanity is apparently lost—there is nothing to stop it from killing the people its human counterpart once loved.

Writers also grounded the vampire sensationalism in a system of morals, furthering their attempts to understand why it was so terrifying and yet paradoxically exhilarating. This connection between the vampire and some kind of moral law is a key to understanding why the vampire was relevant in 1820 and continued to be relevant long after. Published in November 1820 in the *New Monthly Magazine*, not long after Planché’s melodrama and W. T. Moncrieff’s adaptation, “On Vampires and Vampirism” explained a vampire of a primarily human sort, a vampire of moral corruption:

> A moralist might remind us that there are vampires of different kinds; the man who by injustice or treachery amasses an immense fortune, is a vampire to his descendants; the lawyer, who establishes a fictitious point of law, is a vampire to every successor in the profession who relies on his authority; the statesman, who broaches factious and injurious opinions which he persuades his partizans are constitutional, is a vampire to his compatriots.\(^\text{185}\)

The notion of human analogues for supernatural vampires is integral to the plot of the bloodiest vampire play of all the spin-offs. *The Vampire* by St. John Dorset (Hugo John Belfour) was written in 1821. It sustained two printings, but was probably never produced.\(^\text{186}\) Dorset’s play takes place in tenth-century Egypt. In it, a Persian prince nearly takes the throne of Egypt with the help of his vampire powers. Dorset’s preface to his printed play explicitly links the vampire to immoral human analogues, just as the article “On Vampires and Vampirism” had done a few months before:

> There are vampires who waste the heart and happiness of those they are connected with, Vampires of avarice, Vampires of spleen, Vampires of debauchery, Vampires in all the shapes of selfishness and domestic tyranny. What

\(^{185}\) “On Vampires and Vampirism,” 552.

\(^{186}\) Stuart, *Stage Blood*, 98. Dorset was only 19 years old when he wrote the play; he was ordained shortly thereafter in 1826.
is the seducer and abandoner of a trusting young girl, but a vampire not sufficiently alive to the harm of his own cruelty? What is a husband who marries for money, and then tramples upon his wife, but a Vampire? What is the “poisonous bosomsnake” of Milton but a female Vampire, wearing a man’s heart out by holding him without loving him?\textsuperscript{187}

Dorset directly calls humans who commit certain moral monstrosities vampires. Jeffrey Cohen asserted that “The vampire always returns because it is our creation,”\textsuperscript{188} but considering Dorset’s view, it may be that humans are vampires. After all, humans created these monsters. To a certain extent this is one of the purposes and messages of melodrama, to reflect the public back to itself. In fact, when the Theatre Royal, Coburg, was refurbished in 1820, a safety screen of plated glass was added to reflect the audience. Roxana Stuart says that this was to say, “Your own lives are reflected on this stage.”\textsuperscript{189}

The possibility of a human analogue to a supernatural monster resulted from what Jeffrey Weinstock reads as a transition in the politics of monster creation that took place because of Mary Shelley’s \textit{Frankenstein} (1818). Before considering Weinstock’s argument, it is important to acknowledge innovations in biology and anatomy in the early 1800s. Susan Tyler Hitchcock has shown their relevance to Shelley’s \textit{Frankenstein}, but it is reasonable that they were also responsible for the popularity of the vampire in its many manifestations.

In the early nineteenth century revanance and reanimation were current in the popular imagination, largely thanks to the work of Luigi Aloisio Galvani (1737–1798), an Italian physician famous for his work with bioelectricity. His experiments were published by 1802, including one in which he famously used an electrified metal rod to make a frog’s dismembered leg move, proving the presence of what he termed the “galvanic fluid” in the animal body—and

\textsuperscript{187} Ibid., 97–98.  
\textsuperscript{188} Weinstock, “Vampires, Vampires, Everywhere,” 5.  
\textsuperscript{189} Stuart, \textit{Stage Blood}, 94.
by extension the human body. This is not a far cry from the pseudoscience used in Shelley’s story. Certainly it makes the line between life and death less clear. It should not be hard to imagine, then, a place in the popular imagination for a revenant, who takes the form of a human being, who was once dead but is now reanimated.

Galvani’s nephew Giovanni Aldini (1762–1834) expanded upon Galvani’s experiments. Aldini made a famous presentation at the Royal College of Surgeons demonstrating “galvanism with the body of a recently executed murderer. Aldini connected wires from a massive battery of copper and zinc to the corpse’s head and anus.” Aldini’s experiment yielded reactions not only from the corpse, but also from the crowd:

On the first application of the process to the face, the jaw of the deceased criminal began to quiver, the adjoining muscles were horribly contorted, and one eye was actually opened. In the subsequent part of the process, the right hand was raised and clenched, and the legs and thighs were set in motion. It appeared to the uninformed part of the by-standers as if the wretched man was on the eve of being restored to life.

Aldini published his theories and experiments in an 1804 treatise titled *Essai théorique et expérimental sur le galvanisme*. Plate 4 of the treatise depicts his experiments with a male corpse (see Figure 5-1).

Experiments after Aldini’s model were conducted on the body of another executed murdered in February 1819 by a Dr. Andrew Ure of Glasgow (1778–1857). Ure’s experiments had a propensity to become scenes of horror for some spectators (see Figure 5-2). As such, it is worth quoting in some length.

The results were truly appalling. On moving the [electrified] rod from the hip to the heel, the knee being previously bent, the leg was thrown out with such
violence as nearly to overturn one of the assistants, who in vain attempted to prevent its extension! In the second experiment, the rod was applied to the phrenic nerve in the neck, when laborious breathing instantly commenced; the chest heaved and fell; the belly was protruded and collapsed, with the relaxing and retiring diaphragm; and it is thought, that but from the complete evacuation of the blood, pulsation might have occurred! … The scene was hideous—several of the spectators left the room, and one gentleman actually fainted from terror or sickness. In the fourth experiment, the transmitting of the electoral [sic] power from the spinal marrow to the ulnar nerve at the elbow, the fingers were instantly put in motion, and the agitation of the arm was so great, that the corpse seemed to point to the different spectators, some of whom thought it had come to life!193

Figure 5-1: Plate IV of Giovanni Aldini’s treatise *Essai théorique et expérimental sur le galvanisme* (1804).194

The experiments of Galvani and the presentations of Aldini made the science of *Frankenstein* at least plausible. In fact, Shelley says in her introduction to the 1831 edition of her novel that the

group at Villa Diodati—that is, Byron, Percy Shelley, Mary Shelley (then Godwin), Claire Clairmont, and John Polidori—had discussed philosophies of life and death. She even briefly mentions galvanism as an idea that led her to the story of *Frankenstein*.\(^{195}\) Polidori, educated at the University of Edinburgh, conferred the degree Doctor of Medicine in 1815, would have known of the science of galvanism. After Shelley’s novel was published in 1818, an inroad had been securely paved in the popular imagination for a reanimated corpse who sustained itself on the blood of the living.

\[\text{Figure 5-2: Andrew Ure galvanizing the body of the murderer Matthew Clydesdale.}\]\(^{196}\)

\(^{195}\) Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1831), x.

Returning to the shift in monster creation that took place in the nineteenth century, Abigail Six and Hannah Thompson characterize it as a move “from hideous to hedonist.” According to Six and Thompson the shift began in the early nineteenth century. “By the end of the century, monstrosity was no longer necessarily being viewed as an aberration of nature visited upon the very few, but as something residing within apparently normal, respectable, and respected individuals.”\(^{197}\) Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* catalyzed this shift. The novel decoupled physical appearance from monstrosity. Though the creature in the novel is certainly physically abnormal, cobbled together from several disparate corpses, Victor’s abominable moral character makes him the most monstrous figure of the story. Polidori’s novel *The Vampyre*, published the year after *Frankenstein*, presents a similar problem of monster identification. In the novel Lord Ruthven is an enthralling, successful aristocrat, whose only abnormal feature is a dead, grey eye. In Lord Ruthven, we see a combination of Victor’s abominable moral character and the supernatural powers of the creature. Aubrey described Ruthven’s moral sense as misplaced and aberrant, yet human, but he is slowly revealed as a terrifying and dangerous vampire. Of course, Lord Ruthven is not the first human-like villain with corrupt morals. He is part of a lineage of Gothic villains who share similar characteristics, traceable back to Manfred in Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). Ruthven, however, is the first Gothic vampire.

This decoupling of monstrosity from physical appearance meant that anyone could be a monster.\(^{198}\) For the audience members at the English Opera House and the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin, it meant that the theater-goers sitting right beside them could very well be


monsters, if they were not monsters themselves. Foucault characterized monsters decoupled from physical abnormality as moral monsters. According to Foucault, monstrosity before the decoupling was identified by its relationship to recognized laws. “There is monstrosity only when the confusion comes up against, overturns, or disturbs civil, canon, or religious law. … Consequently, the disorder of nature upsets the juridical order and the monster appears.”

Foucault reasons that people who were considered monsters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were also considered criminals because a violation in natural law was assumed to indicate a violation of criminal law. The nineteenth century inverts this relationship; it is assumed that criminals in violation of civil law could also be monsters, i.e., violators of natural law.

Foucault traces the origin of this inversion back to the monarchy of Louis XVI and the French Revolution. Having already established that contemporaries of Polidori’s novel and the succeeding melodramas read the vampire as a supernatural analogue to a morally corrupt human, and having couched this interpretation in a shift in perceptions of monstrosity that began around the time of these vampires, we can clearly understand Lord Rutwen and Lord Ruthven could have allegorically represented real human beings who were viewed as villainous.

Roxana Stuart begins her book *Stage Blood* with four patterns of the vampire, one of which is that its popularity rises during periods of social stress. By 1820 the Napoleonic Wars had not long been over, a large group of 60,000 or more demanding parliamentary reform were charged upon in Manchester’s Peterloo Massacre of August 1819, and King George III had died

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200 Ibid., 81–82.

201 Ibid., 93.

in January of 1820 after struggling with mental illness and possibly porphyria. In this atmosphere of political and social turmoil, writers who wanted to continue surprising their readers (or theater-goers) had to resort to the supernatural and otherworldly. In his essay “Idée sur les romans” (1800) the Marquis de Sade “asserted that the bloody upheavals of the French Revolution had rendered everyday reality so horrific that contemporary writers necessarily had to invoke the supernatural and demonic realms for material which could still shock or startle their readers.” Though this was written in 1800, it certainly seems applicable to the popularity of the vampire in 1820. Nevertheless, as this chapter will show, the vampire as it is presented in these melodramas is not all that supernatural—he is practically human.

Chapter 4 demonstrated the close connection between the vampire in the melodramas and Satan in Paradise Lost. Considering that Satan’s rebellion—or revolution—is central to Milton’s poem, it becomes clear that there was a certain aura of revolution surrounding Le Vampire and The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles. The vampire is also connected at least nominally, but also musically in Planché’s melodrama, to the Ruthven clan of sixteenth-century Scotland. Chapter 4 described Patrick Ruthven’s involvement in the brutal murder of David Rizzio, and the Ruthven clan was also known for revolutionary acts. After failing to appear at a trial for his involvement in Rizzio’s murder, Patrick Ruthven, third Lord Ruthven, was tried in absentia and declared a rebel. His son William Ruthven, fourth Lord Ruthven (ca. 1543–1584), led a coup d’état on 23 August 1582 that seized and imprisoned King James; these events were known as the Ruthven raids. William Ruthven briefly led a regime, until the King escaped his imprisonment in June 1583. William Ruthven was charged with treason, accused of witchcraft

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and conferring with a sorcerer, and beheaded on 4 May 1584 in Stirling. Whether or not the audiences of the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin and the English Opera House knew their Scottish history well enough to recall the Ruthven clan and their notorious actions in the second half of the sixteenth century, the reference applies. The plays and Hart’s music alluded to these historical figures, whether the audience appreciated the references or not.

If the allusions to Satan and the Ruthven clan represent rebellion and revolt, then the allusions to Oscar and Malvina from Ossian represent loyalty and virtue. Oscar and Malvina are lovers, and he is destined to protect her. The dialectical pairing of rebellion and loyalty on the level of textual references creates an opposition analogous to the conflict between the diabolical vampire and the innocent female protagonist in the stage world. Planché’s melodrama clouds these struggles by giving the vampire monologues whereby the audience learns of his self-loathing and last spark of humanity. The effect of these oppositions is to confuse the audience’s allegiance; the audience may not know where it stands in response to these melodramas, at least not at every moment of their duration. According to Ronald Paulson, ambivalent or confused feelings of allegiance also “fitted the way many contemporaries ‘read’ the Revolution.”

The class struggles that were central to the French Revolution are, in fact, on display in both melodramas. In both plays a castle servant serves as the repository of vampire lore. The Lords of the castles, Sir Aubray and Sir Ronald, are, however, both skeptical of the folklore. Both Malvina in Le Vampire and Margaret in The Vampire describe the Lords of the castles as enemies of superstition, and they fear ridicule and sarcasm if they bring up supernatural

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events. Over the course of both plots the educated, wealthy elite come to regret disregarding the warnings of their servants; those most educated are, in this case, least knowledgeable.

It is also significant that the vampire is himself an aristocrat. Not only is he a wealthy landowner with upper-class status, but he possesses powers of charisma that can eclipse a person’s will and alter one’s perceptions of reality—most importantly, their perceptions of him. A comparison of the vampire to a corrupt person in a position of power is easy to make. Foucault, in fact, makes it quite provocatively by hyperbolically proclaiming, “the first monster is the king [Louis XVI]” and “all human monsters are descendants of Louis XVI.” He explains that during the French Revolution pamphlets portrayed Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette as a monstrous, blood-thirsty couple, “both jackal and hyena.” He quotes Louis-Marie Prudhomme’s Les Crimes de Marie-Antoinette regarding the Queen’s bloodlust: “Once she has seen … blood, [she] cannot get enough of it.”

Meanwhile, counter-revolutionary pamphlets call the rebels, who had broken the social pact, monsters. They are even described in similar terms of bloodlust, heightened to anthropophagy. I will only quote here the examples Foucault cites that deal directly with blood. One such example comes from the Lettres de Madame Roland. She said of the September massacres, “If you knew the dreadful details of the raids! The women brutally raped before being torn apart by these tigers, the guts cut up and carried like ribbons, blood-soaked human flesh

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207 Foucault, Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974-1975, 94.
208 Ibid., 95.
209 Ibid., 97.
eaten.” Foucault continues, demonstrating instances in which aristocrats reported that revolutionaries not only participated in blood consumption, but also coerced others to do the same:

Bertrand de Molleville and Maton de la Varenne recount a series of tales: the famous story of Mademoiselle de Sombreuil drinking a glass of blood in order to save her father’s life, or the story of the man who had to drink blood from the heart of a young man in order to save his two friends, or again, of those who carried out the September massacres and who drank *eau-de-vie* into which Manuel had poured gunpowder, and who ate bread rolls dipped in wounds.

It is significant that these pamphlets and stories occurred in the atmosphere of what Foucault called a shift in punitive power, one in which criminals are also assumed monsters. According to Foucault, the figures of the monster that appeared in these pamphlets also appeared in the literature of terror, i.e., Gothic literature. “It seems to me that the sudden irruption of the literature of terror at the end of the eighteenth century, in the years roughly contemporary with the Revolution, are connected to this new economy of punitive power.” Granted, the Gothic movement in literature began before the revolution. Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* predates the revolution by approximately thirty years. Still, the Gothic novels of Ann Radcliffe (1764–1823) are certainly of a terrifying sort comparable to the terrors of the revolution, and her most famous novels were published in the 1790s. This gives credence to Foucault’s claim that the monsters of these revolutionary and counter-revolutionary pamphlets are also present in the contemporaneous Gothic novels:

On the one hand, we see the monster of the abuse of power: the prince, the lord, the wicked priest, and the guilty monk. Then, in this same literature of terror,

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there is also the monster from below who returns to wild nature: the brigand, the man of the forest, the brute with his limitless instinct. … The novels of terror should be read as political novels.  

These two monsters are both embodied by the vampire Lord in 1820. Lord Rutwen and Lord Ruthven use their power—supernatural and political—to achieve their will, whether at the expense of a supposed friend or to have his way with his castle manager’s daughter. Simultaneously, the compulsion to feed, even as the last shred of humanity remains within his human frame, even among feelings of disgust and self-loathing, represents humanity trumped by animal instinct, a turn to the wild and brutish.

There is still another possibility for a human analogue. Roxana Stuart believes the vampire is likely an embodied fear of Napoleon (1769–1821), exiled but capable of resurrecting at any time by 1820.  

This was not an unfounded fear; Napoleon was finally exiled in 1815 after his defeat at the Battle of Waterloo, but he had already escaped from exile on Elba once on 26 February 1815. If he escaped once, he could again. Textual allusions to *Ossian* in the melodramas reinforce this conclusion. After all, *The Works of Ossian* were favored by Napoleon. He had even commissioned paintings based on Ossian; he saw the poems as depictions of military ideals, and he is reported to have said, “they contain the purest and most animating principles and examples of true honour, courage and discipline, and all the heroic virtues that can possibly exist.”  

Napoleon had also been quite fond of Le Sueur’s opera *Ossian* of 1804.  

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213 Ibid., 100.  
Coincidentally, Le Sueur had been Alexandre Piccinni’s composition teacher, though well before 1804. 217

Accounts of the conditions and events of the French Revolution confirm that ideas of coercion, bloodlust, and anthropophagy were certainly in the popular imagination, as was the possibility of resurrection—both of corpses, thanks to the experiments of Galvani, Aldini, and Ure, as well as of Napoleon’s resurrection, since he had already escaped exile once and threatened to do so again. These events explain the popularity of the vampire after its conception by John Polidori in 1819. An aristocratic vampire like Lord Rutwen or Lord Ruthven, a monster of power as well as of baser instinctual compulsions, was well suited to speak to fears in the minds of the audiences of the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin and the English Opera House—not to mention other theater audiences as the melodramas spread and generated imitations. There was hardly a theater in either city without its vampire.

The genre of melodrama had a similar function to modern horror films, an overall conservative and reactionary genre that allows viewers vicariously to exercise their basest urges and fears, while putting everything aright before the final credits, or curtain in the case of melodrama. Given the melodrama’s dualistic worldview, in which good and evil are clearly delineated, a villain who looks like every other person, a human monster with powers to charm and eclipse the will and thoughts of others, poses a particular danger. Resourceful villains propel the plots of melodrama, and the villains must be clearly recognizable in order for the moral ending to function correctly; good must triumph. In order to guide the audience’s allegiance to the correct character, the incidental musics of both Alexandre Piccinni and Joseph Hart interject signals into the narrative stream of the melodrama that warn listeners of whom they should be

217 Kocevar, “Piccinni, Louis Alexandre,” 975.
afraid, lest they be as charmed as the vampire’s victims in the stage world. The network of
textual references and citational inclusions demonstrated in Chapter 4 serves a similar purpose:
to position the aristocratic vampire in a league of villains, e.g., Don Giovanni, Satan, and a
historical murderer. No matter how charming the vampire may be, the textual company he keeps
indicts him as a villain.

Encountering a vampire story, we expect certain motifs. For example, we might expect
seduction, elongated maxillary canines, blood consumption, and probably symbols of death and
the macabre—after all, the vampire is a reanimated corpse, no matter how attractive he or she
appears. Every new incarnation of the vampire figure, in whatever genre, must in some way
confront the incarnations that preceded it. An adaptation might continue a vampire lineage, like
the enduring image of Bela Lugosi in the 1931 film Dracula, which came to epitomize the
famous Count. A new adaptation might render previous tropes as misconceptions and supplant
them with new tropes, as in the case of sunlight’s effect on the vampires in Twilight. Whatever
mode an author adopts in confronting the past, John Polidori’s source text must inevitably be
consulted. The vampire Lestat does just that in the second installment of Anne Rice’s Vampire
Chronicles. He muses over the representations of vampires in literature:

All during the nineteenth century, vampires were “discovered” by the literary
writers of Europe. Lord Ruthven, the creation of Dr. Polidori, gave way to Sir
Francis Varney in the penny dreadfuls, and later came Sheridan Le Fanu’s
magnificent and sensuous Countess Carmilla Karnstein, and finally the big ape of
the vampires, the hirsute Slav Count Dracula, who though he can turn himself into
a bat or dematerialize at will, nevertheless crawls down the wall of his castle in
the manner of a lizard apparently for fun—all of these creations and many like
them feeding the insatiable appetite for “gothic and fantastical tales.” We
[vampires] were the essence of the nineteenth-century conception, aristocratically
aloof, unfailingly elegant, and invariably merciless, and cleaving to each other in
a land ripe for, but untroubled by, others of our kind. Maybe we had found the
Indeed, the nineteenth century offered the perfect breeding ground for the vampire figure. One needs look no farther than the craze of vampire theater in the 1820s. These melodramas pinned down the figure of the vampire in the popular imagination—a last nail in the coffin, if you will. Following inroads provided by experiments in galvanism, Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, and a shift in the politics of monster creation, the melodramas of this thesis and the wave of imitations that followed them introduced the theater-going public to a terrifying human monster, one with powers of hypnotic fascination whose danger is revealed only when it is too late. As Lestat concluded, these vampires were the perfect blend of monster and human: attractive, wealthy, and practically invisible among a crowd. The musical warning signals had to be heeded if the audience expected to survive.

Up to this point this thesis has concerned ways in which the music warned its audience members, rewarding careful listening and attention by helping to keep them safe; and yet, in a certain sense the music was just as dangerous as the vampire it uncloaked. The vampire was alluring in 1820 because he was everything the audience was not. Likewise, music was everything the Paris and London soundscapes were not. Music in the theaters was an escape from the sounds of the industrializing city, a development that, at least in London, had been in process since 1760. The industrialized city took longer to develop in France, but by 1830 Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle) wrote in his novel *The Red and the Black*, “Scarcely inside the town, one is stunned by the racket of a roaring machine, frightful in its appearance. Twenty ponderous hammers, falling with a crash which makes the street shudder, are lifted for each new stroke by

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the power of a water wheel.”

Music in the theaters lured its audience members out of this harsh, metallic sound world with its entertaining melodies—and in the case of Planché’s melodrama, popular Scottish folk tunes. These theaters offered music that was comfortable and familiar, seducing its listeners out of the noisy city streets.

Once inside the theater audience members physically encountered the live music the way the female protagonists physically encountered the vampire. Audience members likely jumped at a stinger chord or a cymbal crash, reacted with goose bumps at eerie storm music, or started tapping their feet during jaunty drinking songs; they no doubt left the theater humming a tune or two from the melodramas—in other words, they were literally taking the music home with them. This could have certainly been the case with McSwill’s cheerful drinking song, “Faith, I’ll awa’ to the Bridal,” discussed in Chapter 3. Performed at the height of the drama, when the audience knows that Margaret’s wedding to the vampire is imminent, the song holds the audience in suspense under a dramatic fermata; the audience is at the song’s mercy as the earworm of a tune progresses through all three stanzas and refrains. This is particularly fitting because the song’s last stanza describes the vampire in satirical terms: “if you don’t drink while you’re living, you never will after you’re dead.” After all, the refrain concludes, “and so that there’s plenty of whisky, she may marry the devil for Mac.”

As far as McSwill and Lord Ruthven are concerned, the goal of the wedding is the flow and consumption of liquids, whether whiskey or blood.

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Even once they left the theaters, audiences were lured back time and again for more escapism—the music had sunk its teeth into them. These interactions between the music and its audience reveal a vampiric dimension of music. By virtue of music’s propensity to seduce listeners into itself with its charm and create an escapist illusion that transcends everyday banality, music in general might be read as seductive or vampiric. In this case, however, the music’s vampiric characteristics are all the more poignant and explicit because of the melodramas’ subject matter—the music was vampiric like its villain. In fact, this seductive music lured audience members directly into the arms of a vampire.
APPENDIX A

PLOT SYNOPSES

Synopsis of *Le Vampire* by Charles Nodier, Pierre Carmouche, and Achille de Jouffrey


Characters

*Oscar*, an ancient, supernatural bard  
*Ituriel*, a moon spirit  
*Miss Malvina Aubray*  
*Sir Aubray*  
*Rutwen*, Count Marsden  
*Scop*, a servant of the castle  
*Brigitte*, Malvina’s handmaiden  
*Edgar*, Sir Aubray’s valet  
*Lovette*, Petterson’s daughter  
*Petterson*, caretaker of Castle Marsden

Prologue

In the dark grottos of Staffa, Scotland, with ghosts swirling around, Oscar and Ituriel discuss the fate of Miss Malvina Aubray who lies asleep before them. Oscar explains that tomorrow she is to marry Count Marsden, a very wealthy nobleman, but is in grave danger. Count Marsden is a vampire and vampires prefer the virginal bed or the cradle. “By and by, more privileged because their career is short and their future frightening, they obtain, and assume, shapes lost in the tomb and reappear in the light of the living—under the aspect of bodies they have animated,” explains Oscar. He has followed Miss Aubray into the ominous cave to keep her safe, but he laments that there is one vampire too powerful for him. He has desolated twenty different lands and always survives, but he must feed in thirty-six hours, before the first hour of evening or he “must finally submit to nothingness.” As the day rises and the ghosts return to their
tombs, one specter lurches for Miss Aubray, but Oscar stops it, shouting that she is reserved for God.

_Act One_

Everyone is relieved that Malvina has returned safely to the castle, for she is to marry the Count tomorrow. Scop, a dim-witted servant of the castle, tells Brigitte and Edgar, a servant soon to marry Lovette from Castle Marsden, about the legends of the grottos where Malvina was found. Two lovers entered the grottos and disappeared. Eventually, the woman’s corpse was found in the cave and her lover transformed into a vampire, making her his first victim.

Malvina tells her handmaiden, Brigitte, about a strange dream she had, in which a specter in the grotto came from “a black pyramid-shaped rock resembling a mausoleum”—the tomb of Fingal. The specter seemed to seek pity at first, before becoming terrifying, threatening to devour her. Malvina fears she can never tell her brother, who is “such a great enemy of what he calls superstition that [she doesn’t] want to expose [herself] to his teasing.”

Sir Aubray enters and reveals that he knows Count Marsden through Marsden’s brother and Aubray’s best friend, Rutwen. Today will be the first time either of them has met Marsden, but Aubray reassures Malvina that if he is as seductive as Rutwen was, she will have no trouble liking him.

Aubray explains his history with Rutwen. They were traveling in Athens when robbers attacked. Before one could kill Aubray, Rutwen jumped between them. Wounded and dying, his last request was to expire in the moonlight. Aubray obliged and waited with the body as Rutwen breathed his last breath. When Aubray left to get his servants and returned, the body had disappeared. He had searched for two months when he learned that Rutwen had a brother in
Venice, the Count of Marsden. Marsden is to marry Malvina to repay Rutwen posthumously for saving Aubray’s life.

Back in the present, when Marsden arrives, he reveals that he is actually Rutwen, having miraculously survived. He explains that the Count of Marsden died and Rutwen assumed his title. When Malvina lays eyes on Rutwen, she recognizes the specter from the tomb in her dream but after her initial shock, finds him strangely irresistible.

Rutwen pressures Aubray to move his wedding to that night, insisting that speed is of the essence but not explaining why. When Rutwen mentions he is going to Castle Marsden, Edgar steps in to ask if Rutwen would sign the marriage contract as a witness. The wedding is later that night, so Rutwen jumps at the chance to participate—another virgin bride! Aubray, Rutwen, and Edgar leave in a boat for Castle Marsden, planning to return quickly for Rutwen’s wedding that same night.

Act Two

In a farmhouse, Lovette, Edgar’s betrothed, impatiently awaits his arrival with her father Mr. Petterson, the castle caretaker. When Rutwen appears, Petterson is shocked and is skeptical that Rutwen could be alive. A ballet is set to begin as part of the wedding celebration when an old bard with a harp (Oscar) knocks on the door to seek refuge from a storm. Petterson allows him to enter. Oscar accompanies himself and sings a foreboding song with the repeating couplet “Beware young fiancée of the love that brings death.”

The song upsets Rutwen, and the bard is sent away. During the ballet’s overture Rutwen pulls Lovette aside and tries to seduce her, assaulting her when she refuses him. Meanwhile, the bard is seen singing the couplet of his song from a nearby mountainside. Edgar shoots Rutwen to protect Lovette. As his dying wish, Rutwen makes Aubray promise not to say anything about
him or what happened that night for twelve hours. He must act like all is normal and put Rutwen in the moonlight to say his last prayers.

Act Three

Back at Staffa, in a gothic vestibule, preparations have been made for Malvina’s wedding to Rutwen, intended for the night before, but the storm has detained Aubray and Rutwen at Castle Marsden. While waiting for their return, Brigitte consults a monk who can see the future and conjure spirits (Oscar in another disguise). He warns her that Malvina is in danger and tells Brigitte to get her away from the castle. When Brigitte hears that Rutwen intends to take Malvina away as soon as the ceremony is over, she thinks this is the perfect excuse.

Aubray returns, planning to break the news of Rutwen’s death to Malvina, but he learns that Rutwen has already been there to speak with Malvina earlier that morning. Aubray cannot accept this news and appears to have gone mad, prevented from explaining himself because of his oath. He is taken to his apartment to rest. A pantomime takes place as Aubray is carried off.

As the wedding ceremony begins, Aubray rushes in and finally breaks his oath. Rutwen, indignant and impatient, draws a dagger to force Malvina to marry him, but the confusion has caused too much delay; it is now 1:00 am, and Rutwen has failed twice to suck the blood of a virgin bride. “He drops his dagger and tries to flee. Phantoms rise from the earth and drag him down with them; the exterminating angel appears in a cloud; lightning flashes, and the phantoms disappear with Rutwen. Rain of fire.”

Alternate Ending
From an Early Manuscript

“The rear of the stage opens, revealing the shades of the vampire victims. They are young women covered by veils. They pursue him, pointing to their breasts, from which blood still flows
from the wounds. At that moment the angel of love crosses the stage in a luminous chariot. Lightning strikes the vampire, who is consumed."

**Synopsis of The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles by James Robinson Planché**


*Characters*

- *Unda*, Spirit of the Flood
- *Ariel*, Spirit of the Air
- *Lady Margaret*, daughter of Ronald
- *Lord Ronald*, Baron of the isles
- *Lord Ruthven*, Earl of Marsden
- *Robert*, the Baron’s valet
- *McSwill*, the Baron’s servant
- *Andrew*, steward to Ruthven
- *Effie*, daughter to Andrew
- *Bridget*, Lord Ronald’s housekeeper
- *Father Francis*, the Friar

*Prologue*

The curtain rises to slow music. In Fingal’s Cave the spirits sing in a mix of solos and choruses. The two primary spirits in the scene, Unda and Ariel, are similar to Nodier’s characters, Oscar and Ituriel, only both are females. The prologue explains that vampires can take over the forms of dead people, “assume their speech, their habits, and their knowledge, and thus roam o’er the earth.” They are watching over Lady Margaret who is asleep in the cave, taking refuge from a storm. The spirits explain that she is betrothed to the Earl of Marsden, who is a vampire. In an effort to protect her, Unda and Ariel conjure the vampire’s spirit from the tomb of Cromal the Bloody, hoping that Margaret will later be able to recognize him.
Act One

Scene 1 opens in the castle of Lord Ronald, where McSwill, a clownish servant, is leading the castle staff in a celebration. Lady Margaret has been found and returned safely to the castle. Robert, Lord Ronald’s valet, and Bridget, the castle’s housekeeper, enter the scene. McSwill and Bridget explain the legend of the grotto where Lady Margaret was found to the skeptical Robert.

Lady Blanch was betrothed to a rich Scottish nobleman; on the evening before their wedding, they were seen entering the grotto. “The next morning the body of the lady was found covered with blood, and the marks of human teeth on her throat, but no trace of the nobleman could be discovered, and from that time to this he has never been heard of.” People say the man was a vampire. Robert quickly dismisses the legend as nothing but a fairy tale.

Scene 2 begins at an apartment in the castle. Margaret tells Bridget about what she thinks was a dream. A spirit rose out of a sepulcher in the grotto and seemed to entice Margaret. It was pale and woe-worn, but still young and handsome. When something came between Margaret and the phantom, the phantom became angry and his face became distorted before it suddenly disappeared. Bridget asks if she will tell her father, Ronald, and she replies: “Oh no, he is such an enemy to what he calls superstition, that I dare not expose myself to his ridicule."

Margaret is set to marry the Earl of Marsden the next day, and he is expected to arrive at any time. Ronald explains how he came to know the Earl. His son, Aubrey, had been travelling in Athens with the Earl’s brother, Ruthven, and had fallen ill. When Ronald visited Athens to see his dying son, he witnessed Ruthven caring for Aubrey like a brother. After Aubrey’s death, Ronald and Ruthven travelled together. Ronald says Aubrey had “an affection” for Ruthven and he developed one himself.
On a return trip to Athens bandits attacked them, and Ruthven took a sabre to the breast to save Ronald. As a dying wish, Ruthven wanted to be moved to a hillside to expire in the moon’s “unclouded majesty.” After Ruthven died, Ronald left to gather his scattered servants. When he returned, the body was missing. He forwarded Ruthven’s effects to Ruthven’s brother in Venice, including a miniature of Lady Margaret that Ronald had given Ruthven in hopes of marrying him into the family. When the Earl of Marsden saw the picture, he proposed to take Ruthven’s place and marry Lady Margaret, who agreed to the union to honor her father.

The Earl arrives, and everyone is shocked to find he is actually Ruthven, who was revived by the moonlight’s supernatural power. The Earl everyone was expecting died and Ruthven assumed his title. When Margaret sees Ruthven, she recognizes the phantom from her dream and screams.

Ruthven delivers a soliloquy while pacing the stage, showing sinister self-loathing. He laments that he still has a bit of heart left within him, which he is striving to devour. He speaks of a “veteran chieftain” whom he does not want to disappoint. If he cannot have his sacrifice before tomorrow night, his form will be exhausted, and darkness—a darkness worse than death—will be his fate. “Margaret! Unhappy maid! Thou art my destined prey! thy blood must feed a Vampire’s life, and prove the food of his disgusting banquet.”

Hurried music ends Scene 2 as Ruthven, Ronald, and Robert head off in a boat to Castle Marsden. Effie, the daughter of Castle Marsden’s caretaker, is to marry Robert that night. Because Ruthven is the new Earl of Marsden, Robert has requested that he sign the marriage contract and bestow his blessing on the wedding.

Scene 3 takes place in the garden of Ruthven’s castle. Ruthven’s arrival shocks Andrew, the castle caretaker, who believed Ruthven to be dead, but Ruthven offers to pay for the entire
wedding to compensate for the shock he has caused. In another aside Ruthven expresses hope that he may take Effie and spare Margaret: “Should I surprise her heart, as by my gifted spell I may, the tribute that prolongs existence may be paid, and Margaret may (at least awhile) be spared.” Ruthven tries to assault Effie and is shot by Robert. Ruthven makes Ronald promise not to speak of his death until tomorrow night and to throw his signet ring in the waves of Fingal’s Cave. In the garden the moonlight falls on Ruthven, and the scene ends to solemn music.

Act Two

The second act begins again in Fingal’s Cave. Ronald believes in his anger that Robert has murdered his friend. Until Ronald’s rage subsides, Andrew and Effie hide Robert in the cave. Effie sails off with Andrew, leaving Robert. Soon thereafter Ronald arrives to the cave to throw Ruthven’s ring into the waves there, according to his oath. When he does, a crash of thunder resounds as Ruthven’s voice peals: “Remember your oath!” Ronald spots Robert hiding there, and they fight until Ronald throws Robert into the water.

Back in Lord Ronald’s castle Margaret tells Bridget that she has seen Ruthven and feels better about him and their nuptials. When Ronald sees Ruthven again, he calls him a phantom but, because he is bound by his oath, can offer no explanation. Ronald continues rambling until he faints: “A mist seems clearing from my sight; and I behold thee now—Oh, horror! horror!—a monster of the grave—a—a Vam——.” Ruthven attempts to convince Margaret that Ronald has been insane since Aubrey’s death and that she simply has not noticed. She eventually agrees to marry Ruthven on schedule.

Scene 3 opens with a distant view of Ronald’s castle, illuminated by moonlight. Andrew and Effie enter, supporting Robert, who intends to tell Ronald the truth about Ruthven. They run into McSwill, who has just fetched Father Francis, the Friar, for the wedding. Andrew, Robert,
and Effie run off to warn Lady Margaret of her danger.

In a chapel with a large gothic window Ruthven’s opening recitation reveals his sinister intentions: “All is prepared; o’er the great fiend once more I triumph! ‘Ere yon orb shall kiss the wave, the tributary victim shall be paid. Bow, ye less subtle spirits—bow abashed before your master.” Ruthven drags a confused Margaret to the altar and urges the Friar to begin immediately. Just then, Andrew, Robert, and Effie enter with Lord Ronald. There is a brawl that lasts long enough for the moon to set and for time to run out. Ruthven tries to take Margaret with a dagger, but Robert intervenes and snatches the dagger from Ruthven. The play ends with the following: “a terrific peal of Thunder is heard: Unda and Ariel appear; a Thunder Bolt strikes Ruthven to the ground, who immediately vanishes.” The curtain falls.
Example B-1: *Le Vampire*, Ouverture, by Alexandre Piccinni.
Example B-1, cont.
Example B-1, cont.
Example B-1, cont.
Example B-1, cont.
Example B-2: “Faith, I’ll awa’ to the Bridal,” Act 2, Scene 3 of *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles.*
Example B-3: “The Hour When First We Met,” Act 1, Scene 1, from *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles*. 
Example B-3, cont.
false to thee. Oh never

never slight my love, nor leave me

love to say like fires that glimmer o'er the

fen, they beam they beam but to be
Example B-3, cont.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ryan Whittington is a graduate student in historical musicology at Florida State University. He received a Curtis Mayes Research Fellowship in 2015 to purchase scans of the primary sources for this thesis. He is also the recipient of an Orpheus Fund Scholarship and a graduate assistantship in musicology. He is a member of the National Music Honor Society Pi Kappa Lambda and the Phi Beta Kappa society. His research interests include musical hermeneutics and narrativity, intersections between music and literature, queer musicology, and, of course, the interdisciplinary field of monster studies. He received Bachelor of Arts degrees in music and German from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, where he graduated summa cum laude in 2014.