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The revelation of Marya Zaleska and her Inability to get love in the Movie

The Movie Dracula’s Daughter by the director Ambert Hillyer in 1936, was basically a sequel of the classic Dracula movie by Tods Browning in 1931. The movie begins with a scene at Carfax Abbey, after a few seconds of the Climax of the original Dracula movie. The first scene depicts two police mean along with Prof. Van Helsing who is charged for the murder of Dracula. However, the legal procedures in the story are not explored completely because a mysterious woman takes the dead body of Dracula with her for performing some mysterious rituals which she believes will emancipate her from the curse of being a Dracula and hence lead her to a normal life. She has strong desire of living a normal life so that she can get the love in her life.

The mysterious women are Marya Zaleska who appears at the police station, with a magnificent apparition, fully covered in black Abaya. The only visible part is her mesmerizing eyes. She hypnotizes the guard with the ring of her left finger and spirits away from the corpse of her father Dracula. She takes the corpse of Dracula to a forest and puts it to fire to perform the ritual of banishment. Her next dialogue in which she addresses her servant Sandor, provide the viewers with the key to the whole story of Dracula's Daughter. She says that she has been now set free to live like a normal woman, free to create her own space in the bright world of living beings rather than belonging to shadows of the dead. Sandor responds her by saying that this night is over and no one knows about what other nights might bring.

Thus the movie depicts a situation in which Zaleska wishes for living a normal life and desperately wants to get emancipation from her draconic desires. In a social gathering of high society, Zaleska happens to meet Dr. Garth, a character who is to defend the murder of her father, Van Helsing and is also a psychiatrist by profession. Marya Zaleska begins to develop her faith in Dr. Garth after she becomes hopeless of all other options for curing her deviant wishes. At the gathering, Dr. Grath makes an assertion that all the mental disorders are curable. The other people at the gathering also support the assertion of Dr. Grath by the narration of their own individual experiences. The validation of Dr. Graths assertion by the guests at the party increase the legitimacy of Dr. Grath for Marya Zaleska. Hence Marya Zaleska meets Dr. Grath privately to assure him of her dire desire for emancipation from the abnormal aspects of her personality. The doctor tells Zaleska that she needs will power to rage against her abnormal desires.

Despite all her struggles, Marya Zaleska fails to overcome her vampiric desires. She asks her servant Sander to bring a model girl for her painting. Slander brings a young girl and Zaleska asks her to remove her clothes so that she can portray her nude. The young model gets frightened by the lustful staring glare of Zaleska. Zaleska molests the model and fails to overcome her deviant personality.

Marya Zaleska is also depicted in a relationship with her servant Sanders who makes sure that her truth does not get revealed. He also provides Zaleska with the bodies for devouring. By cheating Sander, Marya Zaleska develops an interest for Dr. Grath. She informs Sanders that she wants to turn Dr. Grath in Dracula so that she can live with him forever. This makes Sanders jealous and he kills Marya Zaleska out of jealousy.

# **The inability of Marya Zaleska to fall in Love**

Marya Zaleska is characterized as a monster who is a threat to the traditional domestic ways of life. The movie is based on the narration of domestication of the monsters by portraying Marya Zaleska as a Dracula who desires to live the life of normal women. She is characterized as an unusual woman who is a bisexual and a monster.

The film depicts Marya Zaleska with a desire for emancipation from vampiric personality. Although she wants to live as normal human beings and act as per societal patterns her monstrous urges and impulses force her to do evil things. As compared to the other women depicted in the film, Zaleska is shown as a woman who prefers to wear masculine clothes at the times when she attacks her victims which belong to both genders.

The movie clearly portrays Marya Zaleska as the monster of the story. Zaleska is not a typical monster because she has self-awareness of the fact that she is not normal as per the societal norms. She is conscious of her vampiric desires and urges. She is continuously at war with herself for normal behaviour. She is aware of the fact that the monstrous aspects of her personality are an obstacle for her desires of getting the love of her life.

The story of the movie is sympathetic in nature. The daughter of Dracula is not depicted as a black-and-white incarnation of bad spirit but rather a sympathetic kind of character who struggles with her monstrous desires which arouse her of evil deeds. The scene in which Zaleska attacks the young model for her sexual desire makes the movie Dracula's Daughter the pioneering movie depicting a lesbian vampire.

“Dracula’s Daughter” is a short movie of an hour’s length but it maintains its full characterization of all of its roles. The movie has a surprising ending which comes almost abruptly. Dr. Grath is portrayed as an unromantic hero with an insensitive personality. The film also lacks the horror scenes. The film generates a bittersweet emotional effect on the viewers. Although the movie is based in horror genre it's also romantic. It was progressive in its romance because it was the first movie to depict homosexuality on-screen in the times of 1930s. The movie correlates vampirism with homosexuality. The fact that the movie was released on Valentine's Day also proves that it was more than a horror movie. That was a time of American cinema when the movies based on supernatural beings were not allowed.

# **Conclusion**

The movie identifies homosexuality with the tendency of vampirism. In the American Culture of early 1900s homosexuality was considered as a violation of the natural order of society. The movie also maintains this stance by showing Marya Zaleska as women with bisexual orientations which suggested that the women who desire innately for homosexual relations were impure. Hence lesbianism has been depicted as an evil urge in the movie which the daughter of the Dracula struggles to overcome.

The horror movies of that period of Hollywood usually depicted a doctor particularly a psychiatrist who is supposed to portray the monsters as a threat to the society. Like all other movies of its time, Dracula’s Daughter was also based on the same theme. The character of Dr. Grath makes Marya Zaleska realize that she is clinically abnormal. The homosexual desires of Marya Zaleska have been identified as a mental illness in the movie which was a common narrative of the movies of that period. Hence the death of Marya Zaleska was not taken as a tragic end but an expected outcome of an evil life.