



Cameron Beall
Donna Van Oss

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
2

Copyright © 2020, Cameron Beall, Donna Van Oss

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and all of the countries covered by the Universal Copyright Convention and countries with which the United States has bilateral copyright relations including Canada, Mexico, Australia, and all nations of the United Kingdom.

Copying or reproducing all or any part of this book in any manner is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this book may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, or videotaping without written permission from the publisher.

A royalty is due for every performance of this play whether admission is charged or not. A “performance” is any presentation in which an audience of any size is admitted.

The name of the author must appear on all programs, printing, and advertising for the play and must also contain the following notice: “Produced by special arrangement with Big Dog/Norman Maine Publishing LLC, Rapid City, SD.”

All rights including professional, amateur, radio broadcasting, television, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved by Big Dog/Norman Maine Publishing LLC, www.BigDogPlays.com, to whom all inquiries should be addressed.

BIG DOG PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 1401
Rapid City, SD 57709

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
3

*To my husband, Danny Van Oss,
whose constant support
has made it possible for me
to express my creativity
in so many ways.*

—Donna Van Oss

*To my shower,
my temple for inspiration and bodily hygiene!*

—Cameron Beall

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

VLAD AND ALEX: **YOU CAN COUNT ON ME** was first produced Nov. 15-16, 2019, at Denham Springs High School, Denham Springs, LA: Donna Van Oss, director; Michelle Freneau Chassaing, technical director.

CAST

VLAD: Caleb Venable, Lane Graves
ALEX: Ethan Cullen, Josh Braud
BORIS: Alexander Melancon, Nick Norton
TROY: Eden Haymon, Troy Hollomon
ELSIE: Casey Gibson, Shelby Cromwell
ROSIE: Talia McDonald, Katie McLaughlin
AGNES: Mallory Colson, Kaylie Wood
MARY: Adalyn Siless
ANA: KierstonWasden, Casey Gibson
DONNA: Katie McLaughlin, Erin Stringfellow
JESSICA: Gabby Parsons, Talia McDonald
JARED: Jason Nguyen, Cameron Beall
MADISON: Shelby Cromwell, Mallory Colson
CORA: Lauren Price, Madison Simcoe
CANDACE: Erin Stringfellow, Eden Haymon
DOGCATCHER: Levi Marcantel, Chase Hull
SECURITY GUARD: Chase Hull, Levi Marcantel
JOCKS: Levi Marcantel, Troy Hollomon, Chase Hull, Caleb Venable
BOY: Troy Hollomon, Caleb Venable
MOM/WAITRESS: Kaylie Wood, Gabby Parsons
GIRL: Kaylie Wood, KierstonWasden
MYA: Taylor Luneau
BIRTHDAY GUEST 1: Madison Simcoe, Eden Haymon
BIRTHDAY GUEST 2: Michael Quisido, Lauren Price
BIRTHDAY GUEST 3: Cameron Beall, KierstonWasden
FAKE VAMPIRE: Lane Graves, Michael Quisido
ALFRED: Lane Graves, Michael Quisido

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

5

DAVID: Nick Norton, Jason Nguyen

PENNYWISE: Josh Braud, Ethan Cullen

PROMPTER: Caroline Covington

DANCE EXTRAS: Chase Hull, Heidi King, Annelise Seymour, Madison Willard

TECH CREW

Stage Manager: Tyler Tullier

Stage Crew: Shelby Stokes, Peyton Barnes, Joseph Farmer,
Nicholas Barlow, Le'Anna Graham, Kamryn Hooper,
Londyn Davis, Aalayia Otis

Sound Board Operator: Chavaughn McGowan

Sound Design: Nicholas Barlow, Horizyn Templet

Lighting Design: Rayna Holton

Spotlight Operators: Grant Sunde, Krystal Lambert

Videographer: Horizyn Templet

Front of House: Abby Newman, Bradley Newman, Meghan Shaffer, Grace Hall, Kylie Carl, Cassidy Byars, Bailea McCartney, Heather Watson, Camille Allgood

Makeup: Averie Bradley, Addison Kelly, Kirsten Coates, Esmeralda Salmeron, Abby Smith, Ashley Rodgers

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

COMEDY. After hiding out from humans for more than 100 years, several old-school monsters discover—to their horror—that modern humans don't find them scary...at all. The monsters join S.C.R.E.A.M., a self-help group that meets in the graveyard and helps washed-up monsters adjust to modern society. To sharpen their scary skills, the monsters set out to study modern humans in order to find out what terrifies them. Vlad, a classic vampire, befriends Alex, a nerdy high school student who loves e-sports. Alex agrees to teach Vlad how to be terrifying if Vlad can show him how to stand up to bullies and ask a girl to the Halloween dance. At the dance, two overly dramatic theatre students host a horror movie pitch contest, where the monsters make their debut in front of a movie director. Screamingly funny!

Performance Time: Approximately 120 minutes

CHARACTERS

(8 M, 16 F, 8 flexible, extras)

(With doubling: 6 M, 15 F, 6 flexible)

VLAD: Old-school vampire who isn't scary anymore; allergic to garlic; wears a classic vampire costume; male.

BORIS: Frankenstein; wears a classic Frankenstein costume with bolts and makeup; male.

ELSIE: Boris's wife, the Bride of Frankenstein; motivational leader of S.C.R.E.A.M.; wears a black-and-white dress and Frankenstein makeup; hair is not styled in a beehive; female.

TROY: Wolfman who hates it when humans mistake him for a dog; loves to howl; wears a furry wolfman costume; male.

ROSIE: Articulate mummy; wears a classic mummy costume and necklace; female.

AGNES: Cute, ditzzy, clumsy witch; wears a classic witch costume and carries a magic wand; female.

MARY: Timid ghost who can't scream like a banshee; wears a classic ghost costume; female.

ALEX: High school student who befriends Vlad; loves e-sports; bullied at school and neglected by his parents; looks like a nerdy gamer; wears a gaming T-shirt and jeans; male.

JARED: High school jock who bullies Alex; wears athletic wear; male.

JOCK 1, 2, 3: High school jocks; Jared's followers; flexible.

ANA: Jared's girlfriend; female.

MADISON: Jared's other girlfriend, a cheerleader; wears a cheerleader outfit or hip clothing; female.

DONNA: Friendly school secretary; wears casual office attire; female.

JESSICA: Alex's e-sports friend; wears jeans and a T-shirt; female.

CORA: Overly dramatic theatre kid; wears overly dramatic theatre clothes; female.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

CANDACE: Overly dramatic theatre kid; wears overly dramatic theatre clothes; female.

ALFRED/ALFREDA BROWNING: Horror movie director and high school alumnus; wears an artsy suit; flexible.

JEFF/JANE: Dogcatcher who thinks Troy is a dog; wears an animal control uniform and carries a catch pole; flexible.

MOM: Mother who has hired a vampire for her daughter's vampire-themed birthday party; female.

MYA: Birthday girl; wears a vampirina costume; female.

BIRTHDAY GUEST 1, 2, 3: Girls attending vampire-themed birthday party; wear vampirina costumes; female.

VAMPIRE: Actor hired to play a vampire at a birthday party; wears a cheesy/cheap vampire costume; male.

SECURITY GUARD: Security guard at reception hall; wears a security guard uniform and carries a nightstick; flexible.

WAITRESS/WAITER: Waitress at restaurant; wears a waitress uniform; flexible.

BOY: Teen boy having a picnic with his girlfriend; male.

GIRL: Teen girl at a picnic with her boyfriend; female.

DAVID: Plays role of Mario in Jessica's Princess Peach scene; wears a Mario costume with a zombie mask; male.

PENNYWISE: The "It" clown; flexible.

EXTRAS: As Jocks, Cheerleaders, Students, and Diners.

OPTIONS FOR DOUBLING

ALFRED/SECURITY GUARD (flexible)
WAITRESS/PENNYWISE (flexible)
TEEN GIRL/MOM (female)
TEEN BOY/DAVID (male)
DOGCATCHER/VAMPIRE (male)

SETTING

Graveyard and school, present day.

SETS

Note: Sets may be as simple or elaborate as your budget allows.

Graveyard. Backdrop of a graveyard. There are several headstones. Note: Tombstones must be sturdy enough for actors to sit on them.

School office. There is a counter that is tall enough to hide behind and a desk and chair.

Park: Backdrop of a park. There is a table SL with stools on each side. The table is decorated for a vampire-themed birthday party.

Monsters' hideout in the woods: Backdrop of a woods. There is a table set with seven plastic plates of food, silverware, and cups.

Restaurant. Backdrop of the interior of a restaurant, opt. There is a café table DCS with chairs. Two café tables with chairs are set up on either side.

Reception hall. A chair with a table advertising a blood drive is set up DSR. Small tables and chairs are decorated and placed against the back wall. Simple Halloween decorations are placed onstage.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Prologue: Before the curtain or in the graveyard.

ACT I

Scene 1: Graveyard, Tuesday night.

Scene 2: School office, Wednesday.

Scene 3: Park, Wednesday night.

Scene 4: Graveyard, Thursday night.

Scene 5: Monsters' hideout in the woods, Thursday night.

Scene 6: School office, Friday.

Scene 7: Graveyard, Saturday night.

Intermission

ACT II

Scene 1: School, Tuesday.

Scene 2: Park, Tuesday, dusk.

Scene 3: Monsters' hideout in the woods, Tuesday night.

Scene 4: Graveyard, Wednesday night.

Scene 5: Reception hall, Thursday night.

Scene 6: Interior of a restaurant, Thursday night.

Scene 7: Graveyard, Friday night.

Scene 8: Reception hall, Saturday night.

PROPS

Hooded cloak, for Cora
Hooded cloak, for Candace
Cell phone, for Alex
Accessories for Donna's desk
Tardy passes
Halloween dance fliers
Scissors, tickets to cut
Office mail
Vampirina birthday décor
Ball
Envelope with money in it
Animal control catch pole, for Jeff
Duffle bag
Several \$20 bills (fake)
Notebook
Cell phone, for Cora
Blood drive posters and tape
Facial tissue
Blanket
Picnic basket
Bouquet of flowers
Money (fake)
Nightstick, for Security Guard
Seven plates of food, plastic ware and glasses
2 Menus
2 Glasses of water
Small witch doll
Muumuu and sun hat, for Vlad
Halloween costume, for Alex
Halloween costume, for Donna
Princess Peach costume with zombie makeup on half of her
face, for Jessica
Bad vampire costume, for Jared

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

12

Old-style Hollywood dress, for Madison
Simple dress for "It" scene, for Cora
Mom outfit for "It" scene, for Candace
Stand alone sink prop
Halloween costume, for Ana
Costumes, for Extras
Red scarves
Red balloon on a stick, for Pennywise
Castle tower flat
Table with a tablecloth and a candelabra
Freestanding window (wood frame) with sheer fabric hanging
down like curtains
Blood donor forms
Poster or easel for Prestridge Reception Hall upcoming events

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Dance music
Witch cackling (for witch doll)
Music or rap beat, for "It" scene

**"IT'S TIME
TO PETRIFY,
TERRIFY,
AND HORRIFY
THESE HUMANS!"**

—ELSIE

PROLOGUE

(AT RISE: Graveyard. Cora and Candace enter SR and go CS. They are wearing hooded cloaks. Note: During the following, they move about dramatically.)

CORA: *(To audience, dramatically.)* In the dark times of the Middle Ages, a single name held the power to send terror and shock throughout the hearts of humanity. This name would bring kingdoms to their knees, send the peasantry into huddling masses, and even cause the strongest of knights to fear for their lives. Tales of bloodless corpses littering streets by daybreak and entire flocks of sheep stolen in the night were commonplace and taboo at the same time.

CANDACE: *(To audience, dramatically.)* The one man with the power to spark horror and ignite alarm throughout the kingdom of man was Count Vladimir Dracula. Once heralded as the "King of Despair," the vampire king found himself struggling to maintain his status as the human world changed and his prey became predators. It has been nearly a century since the "Fanged Horror" has been seen by human eyes, leaving many to ask...

CORA/CANDACE: Where is he now?

(Cora and Candace exit SR. Blackout.)

ACT I
SCENE I

(AT RISE: *Graveyard, Tuesday night. Boris and Vlad enter SL, complaining.*)

BORIS: (*Patting Vlad on the back.*) Buddy, look, I promise you won't regret coming. I wasn't feeling it before the first meeting either, but Elsie convinced me to come, and boy has it been worth it.

VLAD: She's your wife, Boris. She would've had your head if you hadn't come. And like I keep telling you, I don't need some silly self-help group for washed-up monsters. I'm practically the face of horror!

(*Elsie, Troy, Rosie, Agnes, and Mary enter SR and mingle.*)

BORIS: Bah! That's not the point. And, besides, I understand why you feel like you don't need to be here. You practically taught *me* how to scare.

VLAD: (*Proudly.*) That's right! I can still scare an entire human village with ease! In fact, all I need is—

(*Elsie approaches Vlad.*)

ELSIE: Vlad, honey, I'm so glad you could finally make it! Fourth meeting's the charm! Putting your pride aside and admitting to yourself that you need help is a big deal for someone as hard-headed as you. (*Vlad begins to protest but is cut off. To others.*) Why don't we show Vlad how we start things off here? Ready?

(*Everyone except Vlad screams, howls, grunts, etc. in unison. Note: Mary's scream is much softer and much longer than everyone else's. Vlad jumps and looks around, confused.*)

VLAD: What was that?! Why are you screaming? Was that supposed to be scary?

ELSIE: What? Oh, I forgot! You've never been to a S.C.R.E.A.M. meeting before.

VLAD: These things have a name? *(To Boris.)* What does S.C.R.E.A.M. stand for?

ELSIE: *(Curtly.)* Yes, Vlad, they have a name. *(To Boris.)* I can't believe you didn't tell him!

BORIS: *(Sheepishly.)* I'm sorry, I guess I forgot.

ELSIE: *(Proudly.)* "S.C.R.E.A.M." stands for "Support Community Reaching Every Available Monster." We've made some real strides to get everyone gathered here today. When we went into hiding 100 years ago, we kept distant and quiet, even from each other. It was a real shame. *(Touches Boris affectionately.)* If it hadn't been for my Boris, I might've gone crazy. That's why we've made the effort to regroup and re-enter society, scarier than ever!

(Monsters cheer.)

VLAD: I guess that makes sense.

ELSIE: Let's get this meeting started. Everyone, take a seat. *(Monsters sit on the gravestones. Rosie sits next to Mary. Vlad looks sleepy.)* Rosie, you go first. How are you feeling?

ROSIE: Cold, but that's to be expected sitting next to her. *(Indicates Mary.)*

ELSIE: You know that's not what I meant. Is anything specifically bothering you since we talked at the last meeting?

ROSIE: Just more of the same. I wish people would stop walking toward me with their arms out, moaning. I am a queen, and I demand respect. I take pride in my ability to speak properly.

ELSIE: Yes, we all have been insulted repeatedly. What about you, Mary? How have you been?

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
17

MARY: *(Softly.)* I still can't seem to scare anyone. They keep asking me when the wedding is.

ELSIE: I know exactly what you mean. People think it's funny to ask me why I am not wearing white since I am the Bride of Frankenstein. Good grief! Our wedding was 500 years ago!

AGNES: I don't know what you're all complaining about. I get a lot of compliments every time I'm out.

ELSIE: Yes, but when was the last time you scared anybody?

AGNES: Is that what we're supposed to be doing?

TROY: What do you think we're here for?

VLAD: *(To Boris.)* I thought you told me this wasn't a meeting for washed-up monsters.

BORIS: Agnes doesn't count. She was never scary.

AGNES: *(Insulted, waving wand.)* I can be scary! I can turn you into a frog anytime I want to!

(Other Monsters, except Vlad, cower behind their gravestones.)

TROY: Put the wand down! You know what happened last time!

(Agnes lowers her wand. Relieved, Monsters return to their seats on their gravestones.)

VLAD: What happened last time, Troy?

TROY: She turned my raw steak dinner into chocolate candy.
(Groans.)

AGNES: *(Confused.)* But everybody loves chocolate.

ROSIE: You simpleton! *(Air quotes.)* "Everybody knows, or should know, that chocolate is poisonous to dogs." Why is she even here, Elsie?

ELSIE: This group is for any monster who wants to learn how to adapt to today's society.

AGNES: *(Surprised.)* That's what this is for? I thought we were just hanging out.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
18

ELSIE: You sound just like the modern humans. They're always so oblivious to us.

BORIS: *(To group.)* Nothing scares them. Even when I use my best techniques, all they do is tell me I have a great costume or ask me if my bolts are loose.

ELSIE: *(To group.)* They all tell me that I should wear my hair in a beehive. Nobody has worn that hairstyle in years!

TROY: At least people are not always touching you. People walk up to me and stroke my fur all the time. It's infuriating!

MARY: *(To group.)* People come up to me all the time and ask to take pictures with me because they think I'm Bloody Mary.

VLAD: Why don't you just use your banshee scream? That should scare them off.

MARY: *(Sadly.)* I've never been very good at it...

ELSIE: *(To group.)* That's why we're here...to regain our confidence and to scare with success! Vlad, since this is your first meeting, could you share your thoughts with the group?

VLAD: I don't have much to say. I only came to this meeting because Boris wouldn't stop bothering me about it.

ELSIE: I see. So, do you think this group can help you at all?

VLAD: *(Defensive.)* Who said I need help?

ELSIE: Why else would you be here?

VLAD: I have never had any trouble scaring people. I should have never come to this meeting.

BORIS: Vlad, I know it's hard to accept, but we're not relevant in society. Nothing we do scares people anymore. When is the last time you scared someone? Be honest...

VLAD: *(Looking down, shaking his head.)* It's been a really long time...

BORIS: We understand, and we're here to help.

ELSIE: *(To Vlad.)* That's why we started this group.

VLAD: It's hard to admit, but I'm just not scary anymore.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
19

ELSIE: We are going to help you change that. Together, we will plan a comeback! We will be feared again!

TROY: *(To group.)* The first thing we need to do is study these humans.

ELSIE: Right. All of you need to go where people are. Try to figure out what is important to them. Try to understand how they think. We will share what we've learned in a few days.

AGNES: So you want us to hang out with them?!

ROSIE: *(To Elsie.)* We don't want to be their *friends*. We want them to be afraid of us!

BORIS: Rosie, let's take her... *(Indicating Agnes.)* ...with us so she won't get into trouble.

ROSIE: Fine.

ELSIE: *(To group.)* I know we can do this! They won't laugh at us anymore when their blood runs cold! *(Circles around, motioning everyone to their feet.)* It's time to petrify, terrify, and horrify these humans! We will give them a fright, make them shake in their shoes, scare the pants off of them, and give them the heebie-jeebies! When they see us, they will *scream!*

(Monsters scream, howl, grunt, etc. and then start to exit SR. Note: Boris and Vlad are the last to exit.)

ROSIE: Mary, I think your scream is getting louder.

MARY: *(Excited.)* I'm ready to make their hair stand on end!

BORIS: I think these people aren't going to know what hit them!

VLAD: *(Half-heartedly.)* Yeah, absolutely.

(All Monsters exit SR. Pause. Alex enters SL and angrily kicks at a gravestone near CS.)

ALEX: *(To himself, frustrated.)* I can't believe they did it again! They didn't get to see me win! They promised! This e-

sports tournament was really important to me. Why do they say they are going to come if they're not? Why can't they just tell me the truth? *(Vlad enters SR. Alex doesn't see him.)* Why do I have such terrible parents? They really don't care about me at all. *(Vlad approaches Alex.)* If I moved out today, I don't think they would notice for two weeks. *(Vlad raises his cape, growls, and bares his fangs at Alex. Alex turns and screams loudly. Shouts.)* What is your problem?! Why would you sneak up on me out here?! Why are you wearing that stupid costume?!

(Vlad breaks his pose, regains his composure, and then poses even more dramatically. Alex just stares at Vlad.)

VLAD: *(Angry.)* This is not a costume! I am Count Vladimir Dracula. *(Raises his cape, growls, and bares his fangs again. Alex rolls his eyes and turns away. Vlad attempts to scare him again by growling louder with his fangs bared. Alex turns back and mocks him by growling and positioning his fingers as fangs. Angry.)* Stop it!

ALEX: Just leave me alone, you weirdo. You have a real problem, you know that? Sneaking up on people and trying to scare them in that ridiculous costume.

VLAD: I told you, this is *not* a costume!

ALEX: Yeah, right. I'm supposed to believe that you're really a vampire? *(Mockingly.)* So you can turn into a giant winged beast and suck the blood out of people and animals. Ooooooh, and you can turn into a bat and you can't cross running water.

VLAD: You don't know anything about vampires. *(Proudly.)* I can turn into a bat, I have super extraordinary strength, and I can control people's minds!

ALEX: Can you eat garlic?

VLAD: Yes, but I have a severe allergy.

ALEX: Can I kill you with a stake to the heart?

VLAD: You can kill anyone with a stake to the heart.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
21

ALEX: *(Mockingly.)* So, should I be scared now? Are you planning to drink my blood?

VLAD: No, no, no. Vampires don't have to drink blood all the time. We just need some every once in awhile so we can stay alive.

ALEX: Whatever, man. Now I bet you're going to tell me that you can't go out in the sun and that you can't see yourself in a mirror, right?

VLAD: Actually, I can't see myself in pictures, either.

ALEX: Save it, pal. There's no way you're a real vampire. You're just lying to me like every other adult I know. *(Waves his hand dismissively at Vlad and walks away. Vlad starts to exit SR. To himself.)* Man, this night can't get any worse...

(Alex sits on a gravestone CS and puts his head in his hands. Laughing and talking, Jared, Madison, Jocks, and Cheerleaders enter SL. Jared stops when he sees Alex.)

JARED: Well, well, well! Who do we have here? *(Mockingly.)* Aw...is somebody having a bad night?

JOCK 1: *(To Alex, mockingly.)* Poor little baby. Wah, wah, wah...

(Group adlibs insults and laughs at Alex. Alex stands.)

ALEX: Could you all just leave me alone? Tonight isn't the night, Jared.

(Alex starts to exit but Jared blocks his path.)

JARED: But you're here now, alone, with no witnesses. Sounds like the perfect time! *(Others laugh.)* Hey, wasn't the big e-sports tournament tonight?

JOCK 2: That's right! *(To Alex.)* Did you lose your precious "King of the Nerds" title?

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
22

ALEX: *(Pushes past Jared.)* I'll have you know, I'm still the reigning champ. *(To Jared.)* I told you, tonight isn't the night.

(Alex starts to exit SL. Other Jocks push Alex back toward Jared. Jared grabs Alex by the shirt.)

JARED: *(Threateningly.)* Oh, no...we aren't done with you. Did you really think you could walk away from me? The night has just begun! *(Alex struggles, trying to get away from Jared and Jocks. The commotion draws Vlad's attention. Vlad approaches the scuffle. Scared, Madison and the other Cheerleaders run off SL. Sees Vlad. To Jocks.)* Pssh! Hey, guys! Get a load of this clown! *(To Vlad.)* Is that silly vampire costume supposed to be scary? Hey! Say "bleh-bleh-bleh," Gramps! *(Laughs.)*

JOCK 3: *(To Vlad.)* Dude, that costume looks so cheap. At least make it seem like you tried.

JARED: *(To Vlad.)* Watch out, man, I ate garlic bread earlier!

(Jared mocks Vlad by breathing on him. Vlad steps in front of Alex, stares into Jared's eyes, and moves his hands in circles in front of Jared's face. Jocks run off SL.)

VLAD: *(In a mesmerizing voice.)* You are now under my control. You will turn around, walk straight home, and never return to this place. Now, leave.

(Hypnotized, Jared drops his fists and starts to exit SL.)

ALEX: *(Calls.)* Hey, Jared! Every time you hear the word "like" you'll... *(Thinking.)* ...um...do a...spastic dance!

(Jared exits SL.)

VLAD: Why did you add that last part? He was leaving. Isn't that what you wanted?

ALEX: I thought it would be funny. Thanks for your help, though. Those guys were making a bad night worse. By the way, how did you hypnotize him like that?

VLAD: I told you...I'm a vampire.

ALEX: Psh, yeah, okay, totally. Seriously, how long did it take you to learn that trick? Two months? A year?

VLAD: (*Proudly.*) I have practiced my skills for millennia.

ALEX: Okay, sure...so you can control people. So what? You weren't lying about that one thing.

VLAD: Why don't you believe me? Has someone been lying to you?

ALEX: My parents! All the time! (*Turns away.*)

VLAD: What do they lie about?

ALEX: (*Hurt, frustrated.*) They promised they'd come to this e-sports tournament that was really important to me. I don't know why they say things they don't mean.

VLAD: Well, I'm sure they were busy with something.

ALEX: Busy or not, they make me feel worthless. So what's the point?

VLAD: One thing I have learned in my time on this earth is that to accomplish anything, you must first believe in yourself. How can you ever expect to stand up to those guys if you can't first stand on your own two feet?

ALEX: Why do you care? You're just some creep trying to scare high-schoolers at midnight in a graveyard.

VLAD: (*Insulted.*) Trying?

ALEX: Did you actually think *that* was scary?

VLAD: (*Discouraged.*) I...I used to...

ALEX: Why are you doing this...trying to scare people?

VLAD: It's what monsters do. It's all I've ever known how to do...and now I don't even know how to do that.

ALEX: Look, I know scary, and that wasn't even close. All your tricks are so outdated.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
24

VLAD: Well, if you would be willing to teach me what's scary, I'd be willing to teach you how to stand on your own two feet and be your own man.

ALEX: (*Apprehensive.*) Yeah, whatever, I guess. It's not like I've got anything better to do.

VLAD: Good, good. I definitely think we can help each other.

ALEX: Okay, fine, so what should I do first?

VLAD: I don't think we should start tonight. It's getting late and you should be getting home.

ALEX: (*Looking at his phone.*) Yeah, you're right. How about tomorrow?

VLAD: No, no, not tomorrow. I have plans with friends.

ALEX: (*Eye roll.*) What friends? Frankenstein? (*Laughs.*)

VLAD: Yes, but he goes by Boris.

ALEX: Riiiiight. Okay, then, Thursday night, same place, same time?

VLAD: I'll be here. You have my word.

ALEX: Ah, so I can *count* on you? (*Laughs.*)

VLAD: Absolutely. See you Thursday.

(*Alex exits SL and Vlad exits SR. Blackout.*)

SCENE 2

(AT RISE: School office, Wednesday. Donna enters SL and sits at a desk. Alex and Ana enter SL and stand behind the counter. Alex yawns and rubs his eyes.)

DONNA: Alex, are you okay? You look like you didn't get much sleep last night.

ALEX: Oh, you know, Ms. Donna. I stayed up late because the e-sports tournament ran a little long last night.

DONNA: You really should get more sleep. You seem to be tired a lot lately.

ALEX: I'm fine, no big deal. Ana, did you finish that sociology homework? I didn't get a chance to do it.

ANA: Yeah, I had plenty of time last night. Jared was supposed to pick me up so I could go over to his house, but he couldn't come because he got sick.

ALEX: Oh, really? I wonder if he will be able to come to school today.

ANA: He's supposed to, but he's late again. *(Jared enters SR and stands in front of the counter.)* Oh, there he is now.

JARED: There's my one and only girl. How are you this morning, beautiful?

ANA: I'm doing fine, but how are you? I hope you're feeling better.

JARED: Huh? Oh, right. *(Fake cough.)* Yeah, I'm doing great except that I'm late for class again. Maybe you can help me out with that. If I get another tardy, I'll get a detention, and then I'd have to miss football practice.

ALEX: *(Eye roll.)* Oh, we can't have that.

ANA: *(To Jared.)* Sure thing, no problem. *(Starts writing out the tardy excuse.)*

ALEX: *(To Jared.)* So you told Ana that you weren't feeling very well last night. Were you *gravely* ill?

JARED: Why don't you just zip it! Who cares what the "King of the Nerds" has to say?!

(Ana hands Jared the tardy excuse.)

ALEX: *(Big grin.)* Like, I don't know, man.

(Jared starts dancing crazily.)

JARED: *(Confused, shouts.)* What is happening?! Why can't I stop dancing?!

ANA: Oh, stop playing around and get out of here. No wonder you're always late.

DONNA: You've got your note, Jared. It's time for you to get to class.

JARED: *(Shouts.)* I really can't stop dancing! I don't know what's going on!

(Cora and Candace enter SR, holding fliers.)

CORA: *(Indicating Jared.)* Hey, look, Candace. We need more people for our next musical. Hey, Jared, do you want to audition?

JARED: Don't you wish! *(Dances out SR.)*

CANDACE: Ms. Donna, can we put information about the theatre department's Halloween costume dance on the announcements for tomorrow?

DONNA: Sure.

CORA: *(Handing Donna a flier.)* It's going to be so amazing! At the dance, people can showcase their ideas for a new horror movie.

CANDACE: *(To Donna.)* We have invited one of our former theatre students who is now a successful director to judge the contest, and the winner will star in his next movie!

CORA: We are encouraging everyone to participate, but no one will be able to beat our idea.

CANDACE: We can't give *it* away, but *it* is based on something everyone knows. We're just putting a new spin on *it*.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
27

CORA: We can give you a brief preview of *it*!

CANDACE: We're still working on *it*, but I know you're going to love *it*.

(Cora approaches the audience and pantomimes standing at a sink.)

CORA: "I think I'm going crazy. I thought I heard voices coming from way down in this drain. *(Pantomimes turning knobs and splashing water on her face. Looks at her hands and screams.)* Ahh! It's blood! *(Screams loudly and looks around fearfully.)* It's all over the whole room! Why is there so much blood everywhere?!"

(Cora collapses to the floor in fear. Candace pantomimes opening a door.)

CANDACE: "What are you yelling about? Stop all of this noise. *(Looking around.)* There's nothing to scream about. *(Approaches Cora and brushes hair out of her face.)* You worry me a lot."

CORA: "I'm so scared I can't move."

CORA/CANDACE: Aaaaaand, scene!

(Cora and Candace face the audience and bow.)

CANDACE: *(To Alex, Ana, and Donna.)* We still have a lot of details to add, but that gives you a little bit of a preview.

(Jessica enters SR.)

CORA: I can't wait to see all the other ideas. I hope a lot of people participate. *(Approaches SR exit.)*

JESSICA: Participate in what?

CANDACE: A contest to come up with the next great idea for a horror movie.

JESSICA: Sounds like fun.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
28

CANDACE: I hope you enter.

(Candace and Cora exit SR.)

DONNA: Well, those theatre girls are certainly dramatic, but back to business. Ana, come with me to put mail in the teachers' boxes.

ANA: Sure.

(Donna picks up the mail, and she and Ana exit SL.)

JESSICA: Hey, Alex. I'm still hyped about the tournament last night. I never thought anybody could be that good at [Smash Bros.] *[Or insert another game.]*

ALEX: It's all in the wrists. You didn't do too bad yourself.

JESSICA: Nah, I could have done better. Next time, I'll train with a real opponent instead of the computer.

ALEX: I've never seen anyone play [Simon] so well. You pulled off moves I've never even seen before. *[Or insert another suitable game.]*

JESSICA: I put myself in the shoes of a vampire killer, and it just came naturally.

ALEX: Speaking of vampires, I met some old cosplayer at the graveyard last night who has convinced himself that he's a real vampire.

JESSICA: What? Does he think he can fly? *(Laughs.)*

ALEX: He did say he could change into a bat.

JESSICA: Sounds crazy.

(Donna and Ana enter SL and do some work at Donna's desk.)

ALEX: I did see him control some people's minds, though.

JESSICA: Ooooh, spooky. Maybe he *is* a vampire. I'd like to meet him and see if he's the real deal.

ALEX: I can probably set that up. Can you be in the science hall Friday at lunch?

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
29

JESSICA: Sure. When are you going to see him again?

ALEX: Tomorrow night.

JESSICA: Sounds like a plan. I can't wait! *(Exits SR.)*

DONNA: Hey, Alex, come help us cut up these tickets for the dance.

ALEX: Sure thing.

(Alex approaches Donna's desk. Lights fade as Alex, Donna, and Ana exit SL.)

SCENE 3

(AT RISE: Park, Wednesday night. A table with stools on each side is SL. It is decorated for a Vampirina-themed birthday party. Mom enters SL. Dressed as Vampirinas, Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 enter SL. Mom stands at the head of the table and the Girls sit and talk excitedly. Elsie, Vlad, Mary, and Troy enter SR and remain close to the entrance.)

ELSIE: *(To other Monsters, indicating the birthday party group.)*

Here we have a group of modern humans in their natural habitat. The young ones are dressed in unusual attire. I haven't seen people wearing this type of clothing before.

TROY: It looks like they are trying to dress like vampires.

VLAD: Well, they're doing a terrible job!

MARY: They're actually kind of cute, but I still want to scare them.

ELSIE: *(To other Monsters.)* Get ready! One of them is approaching! Give it all you got!

(Excited, Mom approaches the Monsters.)

MOM: *(To Monsters.)* We've been waiting for you! I'm so glad you're here! *(Monsters scream, howl, etc. and make scary faces. Mary's scream is soft and long. Mom happily claps.)* That was terrific! I am surprised to see four of you. I only arranged for a vampire to come to Mya's vampirina party, but the more the merrier! Come on over and scare the girls. They are so excited.

(Monsters look confused. Excited, Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 run over to the Monsters. Mya hugs Vlad.)

MYA: *(To Vlad.)* Oooh, I love your costume! Mom, look at the scary vampire!

MOM: Oh, how cute! Don't be too rough, girls!

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
31

(Birthday Guest 1 approaches Troy. Troy growls at Birthday Guest 1. She squeals with delight.)

BIRTHDAY GUEST 1: *(Petting Troy's arm and speaking to him like he is a dog.)* Who's a good boy?! You are such a cute doggie!

(Birthday Guest 2 approaches Elsie.)

BIRTHDAY GUEST 2: *(To Elsie.)* You look like Frankie Stein, except for your hair. Here, I can help you fix it!

(Birthday Guest 2 tries to fix Elsie's hair. Birthday Guest 3 approaches Mary and tries to put her hand through Mary's stomach.)

BIRTHDAY GUEST 3: *(To Mary.)* You're not the real Bloody Mary! I could put my hand through a real ghost!

(Birthday Guest 3 tries to put her hand through Mary's stomach again and hits Mary pretty hard. Mary grabs her stomach and lets out a long, soft groan.)

MOM: *(Calls.)* Girls, that's enough! Come back to the table!

(Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 rush over to the table. Mom motions for the Monsters to join them.)

ELSIE: *(To other Monsters, rubbing her head, smoothing her hair.)*
I guess we should go over there. We are trying to find out more about them.

MARY: *(Hands on her stomach.)* Do we have to? Those little girls are rough.

TROY: I'll show them who's a cute little dog!

VLAD: This really is pointless.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
32

(Mom continues to call and wave the Monsters over.)

ELSIE: *(To other Monsters.)* If we are ever going to be relevant again, we have to learn more about them. We can do this. Pull yourselves together and walk over to that table. *(Takes a step toward the table, turns to the other Monsters, and shoots them a mean look.)* Let's go.

(Muttering annoyances, Monsters reluctantly follow Elsie to the table. Monsters stand on either side of the table.)

MYA: Mom, when can I open my presents?

MOM: We will get to that soon, but, first, I think we have some entertainment...

(Mom looks at Vlad. Vlad looks at the other Monsters and shrugs. Awkward pause. Everyone looks at each other.)

MYA: Ooooh, I know! Come on, let's play hot potato! *(Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 pull the Monsters to DCS.)* I get to start since I'm the birthday girl. Okay, ready, Mom?

(Mya carries a ball from the table.)

MOM: I'm ready. *(Clapping her hands as she speaks.)* Hot potato, hot potato, who has the hot potato? If you have the hot potato you are out!

(Mya quickly hands the ball to Vlad. Vlad looks at the ball and then back at Mya. Mya points to Birthday Guest 1, who is on the other side of Vlad. Birthday Guest 1 grabs the ball and quickly hands it to Elsie. Elsie throws the ball toward the table, and Troy chases after it. Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 protest and try to get the ball back so they can continue playing, but Troy throws the ball to Vlad who protects it until he can throw it to Mary. Mya and Birthday Guests

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
33

1-3 squeal with excitement while the Monsters throw the ball back and forth until Mya finally grabs it.)

MYA: Yay! That was fun!

MOM: That was certainly a new twist on the game, but I'm glad you enjoyed it. *(Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 run back to the table. Mom and Monsters return to the table.)* It's time to sing "Happy Birthday."

ELSIE: No, thank you. I think we have had enough fun for today.

VLAD: *(To Mom.)* We really have to be going.

(Mya runs over to Vlad and hugs him.)

MYA: Please don't go! This is the best birthday party I've ever had!

MOM: *(To Monsters.)* At least stay and sing to her. You can't leave yet anyway because I haven't paid you.

(Confused, Monsters look at each other. Mom and Birthday Guests 1-3 start singing "Happy Birthday" to Mya while the Monsters look at each other. Troy starts howling loudly. Other Monsters then join in with howls, screeches, etc. until the song is over. Girls laugh and clap.)

MYA: Time to open presents!

(Mya grabs one of the bags, and while she is opening her presents, Monsters and Mom go DCS.)

MOM: *(To Monsters.)* I will definitely recommend you to all of my friends! You did a fantastic job. Here's your payment. *(Hands Vlad an envelope with money in it.)* Thank you so much.

(Mom returns to the table. Vlad opens the envelope and shows the other Monsters the money inside. Elsie, Vlad, and Mary exit SR. At the table, Birthday Guest 2 has been holding the ball and drops it. Troy sees the ball rolling around, runs after it, and starts playing with it. Jeff, an animal control officer, enters SL with his catch pole. Jeff rushes over and stands in front of the table.)

JEFF: *(Shouts.)* Don't worry, girls! I won't let him hurt you!

(As Jeff sneaks up on Troy, Troy continues to play with the ball and make howling and growling noises.)

MOM: *(Indicating Troy.)* He's not dangerous, he's—

JEFF: Let me handle this, ma'am.

(Jeff lunges at Troy. Troy picks up the ball and runs off SR. Jeff chases Troy off.)

MOM: Well, Mya, this is definitely one of your most interesting birthday parties. Let's start picking everything up so we can go home.

(Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 talk excitedly as Vampire, a guy wearing a really cheap vampire costume, enters SL and looks around. Mom approaches Vampire.)

VAMPIRE: Hey, sorry I was late. I didn't remember where the party was supposed to be, but I'm here now. Where's the birthday girl?

(Vampire holds his cape out and bares his fangs. Laughing, Mya and Birthday Guests 1-3 walk past him carrying Mya's presents and exit SL. Mom grabs the rest of the party decorations.)

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME
35

MOM: Oookaay. Your company must have sent someone else because we had great entertainment. You might think about looking for another job. *(Calls.)* Wait up, girls. *(Exits SL.)*

VAMPIRE: *(Calls.)* But I'm the only one at the company with a vampire costume! *(Shrugs and exits SL. Blackout.)*

[END OF FREEVIEW]