

## Reading Homework

### Bela Lugosi (1882-1956)



Born in Hungary, Bela Lugosi was forced to leave his homeland in 1919 for political reasons. Eventually, he made his way to the United States and managed to relaunch his acting career on the American stage where he was finally cast as Dracula in the 1927 Broadway production. Lugosi then toured with the production for two years. In all, he played Dracula on Stage more than 600 times. Unfortunately, he was so successful as Dracula that he became “typecast” and spent the rest of his life

playing parts in horror films and thrillers despite his desire to play either romantic or comedy roles.

His rivalry with fellow horror film actor Boris Karloff was legendary but, according to both men’s children, was only a story concocted by the studio for publicity purposes. The men were, for a time, quite good friends.

Due to an injury he sustained while fighting in World War One, Lugosi suffered from chronic back pain for which the doctors prescribed first morphine and then methadone, both of which Lugosi became addicted to over the years. His drug addiction directly affected his film career and after 1948 he was unable to get work with any of the major studios. At age seventy-two he was admitted to the hospital and underwent treatment for drug addiction. He declared himself fit and drug free, but the toll on his physical health had been enormous. Less than a year later he died of a heart attack at home in bed. His wife and son saw that he was buried in one of his Dracula capes saying “he would have wanted it that way”.

Lugosi as Dracula...

...charming one moment



...and menacing the next!

