



The Wolf Man vs. Dracula: An Alternate History for Classic Film Monsters

Philip J. Riley

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Following Phantom of the Opera (1943), in the middle of the Silver age of Universal Studio's monster movies, a new sequel to Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman was considered for a Technicolor production: Wolfman vs Dracula! Lon Chaney Jr., who was the only actor to portray Universal's four classic monster roles; Dracula, frankenstein's monster, the mummy and the wolfman. At first Chaney was to play both roles, as his father Lon Chaney Sr. had done in several of his famous silent films. But Larry Talbot in his human phase would look exactly like Count Dracula so the role of Dracula was given to it's originator Bela Lugosi. A script was prepared by Bernard Shubert, who had written the screenplay for Tod Browning's London After Midnight(MGM 1927) remake Mark of the Vampire (MGM 1935). Shubert kept the settings very tight in its scenes, to keep the cost down to balance out for the extra expense of technicolor. But by 1944 Bela Lugosi was in his 60s and would have had to play part of his role as a giant bat much like in the Copolla Bram Stoker's Dracula in the 90s - and that would have been too much for him. And they couldn't have the Wolfman fighting an animated bat much like John Carradine's depiction of the Count or even Lugosi's portrayal in Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein. So they decided to make one of their Arabian Nights film on the Technicolor contract and all that remained of Wolfman vs Dracula are some color 8x10s of Chaney in both parts. This volume has a short biography of screenwriter/TV producer Bernard Shubert and comments from Shubert and special effects cinematographer David Stanley Horsley.

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