

## Short Review: "House of Dracula" (1945) by Dr. John L. Flynn



**House of Dracula** (1945). Universal, b/w, 71 min. Director: Erle Kenton. Producer: Paul Malvern. Writer: Edward T. Lowe. Cast: Lon Chaney Jr., Martha Driscoll, John Carradine, Lionel Atwill, Onslow Stevens, Jane Addams, and Glenn Strange.

Thankfully forgotten today, except by a handful of geeks who find this monster rally amusing, this film was a further descent of the monster film into mediocrity. Clearly played for laughs rather than chills, the story opens bizarrely with Carradine's Dracula (actually Baron Latos) arriving at the cliff-top home of a mad scientist in search of a cure. Dr. Edelman (Stevens) is sympathetic to the vampire's plight, and believes that he can find "an antibody that will consume the parasites of vampirism to affect a complete cure." In the midst of their conversation, Chaney's wolf man shows up, looking for a cure. The doctor accepts him as a patient, working under the dubious assumption that Talbott's problem is due to pressure on the brain and that a softening drug will cure him. (The film makes it quite clear that the executives at Universal Pictures took the softening drug prior to approving this effort.) Meanwhile, the Frankenstein monster (once again played by Strange) is hanging out in the dungeon, waiting for his turn. Soon, the villagers of Vasaria, lead by Atwill's Inspector Holtz (whose character is wonderfully spoofed by Kenneth Mars in Mel Brooks' "Young Frankenstein" 1974), show up with torches,

and burn the house down. The end? Well, not quite. The monsters returned for one final rally in “Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein” (1948).

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