



ENTER DEATH, STAGE RIGHT (MY SOUL TO TAKE PART II) by William A. Veselik (2009 Mundania Press / 189 pp. / tp)

In this second installment of Veselik's Victorian-era vampire saga, Professor Smythe (along with his friend, Scotland Yard Inspector Arthur Jenkins) are on the heels of a cult of vampires who hunt their prey around a local theatre. Smythe lets one of his students, Percy, move into his attic to help out. When the vampire's lair is discovered (as well as a sewer tunnel they use to move around), our protagonists devise a devastating trap . . . only to really tick off the leader of the cult.

For those not familiar with this series, it reads like a Christopher-Lee era Dracula film, complete with honor paid to all the classic vampire mythos, as well as something sorely lacking from many vampire novels today; class. There's also some interesting scientific discovery made into the bacterial-vampiric germ, and some well done gothic atmosphere.

I'm looking forward to the final chapter, 'The Vampire Lord Unmasked,' due out any day now. Veselik has a wicked grasp on Hammer Films-era vampires, and this series feels more like you're watching a classic spook film than reading a novel, which in the wake of countless sappy "Twilight" clones, is a breath of much needed fresh (or should I say, 'rancid') breath.