0. MAX SCHRECK - Story Preface

1. THE REAL DRACULA

AWESO

- 2. DOUBLE-DEALING
- 3. VLAD THE IMPALER
- 4. F.W. MURNAU
- 5. MAX SCHRECK
- 6. NOSFERATU
- 7. DRACULA'S DEATH
- 8. THE LEGEND OF DRACULA





The German actor, Max Schreck, played "Count Orlok" in F.W. Murnau's film *Nosferatu*. This image depicts Schreck, in the role of Orlok.

Max Schreck brilliantly <u>played</u> the <u>horrible</u> title character in F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu*. (In the movie his name was "Count Orlok," also sometimes spelled "Orlock.") His performance still stands as one of the <u>most</u> <u>compelling</u> in film history.

Schreck (meaning "fright" in German) was his actual name. Rarely did a name fit the film *persona* so well. To look at Schreck's rat-shaped head, or his <u>terrifying shadow</u>, is to see one's worst <u>nightmare</u>. Never was cinematic makeup put to better use.

Yet, little is known about his private life. Married to actress Fanny Normann, Schreck was born in Berlin in 1879. He acted in 40 films before he died of a heart attack in Munich in 1936. He was 43 years old when he played "Count Orlock" in *Nosferatu*.

Trained in his craft by the brilliant Max Reinhart, Schreck performed frequently on stage. In 1922 he was employed by Prana Film for its first (and only) production. After the company produced *Nosferatu*, Prana went bankrupt. There was a "small issue" about copyright infringement.

Neither Murnau nor his company had secured the rights to adapt <u>Bram Stoker's Dracula</u> to the screen. *Nosferatu*, the <u>masterpiece</u>, was in violation of copyright laws.

And Florence, Bram's widow, wasn't negotiating.

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Media Stream



<u>Nosferatu - Count Orlock</u> Still-shot online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Nosferatu-Count-Orlock</u>



<u>Nosferatu - Lead Character</u> Image from film online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Nosferatu-Lead-Character</u>









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