



EXCERPT FROM THE FIRST REVIEW OF

THE BLOOD COUNT BY SZABOLCS BENEDEK

PART ONE OF THE BLOOD TRILOGY

<http://sarkozyandco.wordpress.com/books/blood-trilogy/>

„For the European intellectual of the turn of the century, the name of Jack the Ripper obviously rings a bell, and of course he has read Bram Stoker too. He might even have heard of a certain Scot by the name of Stevenson who wrote a story about Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. On the bookshelves of cultivated citizens, these authors can be found as obviously as the works of Dumas and Jókai, or Cécile Tormay and

Ferenc Herczeg – of course, in print.

In the novel of Szabolcs Benedek, the types invented by these authors come to life in their full splendor, inviting us to discover the world of fin-de-siècle Budapest. The city where in the poor suburbs people are starving and shivering from the cold, and the girls who in their last despair are selling their own bodies, are often stabbed to death on the street. The city where at the same time there is already electric lighting, a subway tram, posh cocktail parties and glamorous fashion. Where if you have some income, you can not only be a regular of the numerous cafés, but also of the cheaper bordels too, whereas the real gentlemen are received by cultivated luxury prostitutes in their own apartments with strict business hours so that the Mrs. will never find out.

The public opinion is not in the least disturbed by the fact that someone is brutally murdering several prostitutes in the city. The connection between the cases is only uncovered by a young and ambitious detective, and of course the secret service. The new sensation everyone talks about is rather another strange occurrence: the appearance in Budapest of a man claiming to be several hundred years old and who – no one will be surprised after my introduction about vampires – lives in a strange villa at Bulyovszky (now Rippl-Rónai) street, only leaves home during the night, and no one has seen him eat. When the first article appears about the Count, everyone wants to meet this new «celebrity» – just like in our days.

Nothing more should be told now from the story, I'd rather let the reader discover for herself the many familiar characters, places and events. The title of the book, which seems to speak for itself, might scare away some potential readers. I'd like to assure them that this is way more than just another vampire story. The fans of vampire sagas (I know that there exists a number of people who won't read anything else nowadays) might be a little bit disappointed if they buy the book only because of the title, but maybe they'll be drawn in too into the storytelling, mesmerised by the classic style of the narration – and will maybe become a bit more open towards other types of literature too.”

Eszter Salamon, Olvassbele.com

<http://olvassbele.com/2012/02/27/grof-es-ver-benedek-szabolcs-a-vergrof/>

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