Scene Three

(Whitby, UK; bedroom, Westfeldt house.)

*(**LUCY WESTFELDT**, lovely English rose and would-be adventurer, reads from a wet leather-bound journal, while **MINA WESTFELDT**, her rather awkward sister, picks sand out of her hair.)*

LUCY. I go down honorably with my shih–.

MINA. Lucy, your hair is so lovely. If only I weren't cursed with this ginger monstrosity.

LUCY. Nonsense, Mina, you hair is every bit as beautiful as my own.

MINA. No, you inherited Mother's beauty. All I inherited was flat feet and low self-esteem.

LUCY. Not true! You have great spirit, and you're unafraid to speak your mind.

MINA. I suppose that's why I'm so unlucky in love. Uch, I'll never get all this sand out before the party starts. I hope your little beach expedition was worth it.

LUCY. It was! With all that wreckage washed up, it was like walking right into an adventure story. Feel! This Captain's log is still wet.

MINA. What else does it say? You know I can't read words.

LUCY. I go down honourably with my "shih"

MINA. *(Fascinated.)* With his "shih"?

LUCY. That's where it ends.

MINA. *(Rapt.)* What do you suppose he meant by "going down with his shih"?

LUCY. Oh, sweet sister. I mean...no one survived!

MINA. *(Horrified.)* How chilling! Was there anything else in that book?

LUCY. No. Just some pencil sketches of naked mermaids and the odd cabin boy.

(She turns it lengthwise to admire it, as if it's a centerfold.)

MINA. *(Moved almost to tears.)* Oh, to lose another artist. The world is the poorer for it.

LUCY. Look! There's a manifest here at the end!

MINA. Ooo! That sounds promising.

LUCY. It's all a bit squishy, but this last line looks like it says...six coffins...full of earth...headed for Withering Manor.

MINA. That dreadful abandoned house on the other side of town? Didn't Jonathan just sell that property?

LUCY. Yes, to a man in Transylvania. He must have been on that ship.

MINA. I hope Jonathan cashed the cheque.

*(**RENFIELD**, a disheveled resident mental patient dressed as a butler in an untied straight jacket, enters.)*

RENFIELD. Pardon me, Miss Lucy. Sorry to bother you, but Mr. Harker's arrived. Shall I send him up?

LUCY. Yes, thank you, Renfield.

MINA. Thank you, Renfield.

LUCY. Incidentally, excellent progress you're making. It seems father's treatments are really working.

RENFIELD. Yes mum. I've gone nearly a week without eating a single insect.

LUCY. Wonderful!