

**CHAPTER ONE**  
**Baron von Wolfstein interview**  
**(new vampire material 9/5/AD 2003)**

**SCARY MONSTERS' Intrepid Reporter, DAN JOHNSON, Interviews BARON Von WOLFSTEIN And FRIENDS Chapter One; Baron von Wolfstein Chronicles**

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If you ask me, the coolest job out there has GOT to be that of HORROR HOST! I've always thought it had to be the Perfect Gig, because you get to watch The CLASSIC (and some DEFINITELY NOT so classic) HORROR and SCIENCE FICTION Films, and, then, absolutely DAZZLE your Audience with your Profound Knowledge of The Genre.

Plus, if you use the DISGUISE Option, every day would be like HALLOWEEN.

Of course, once you look below the surface of this profession, you see that it's not all 'peaches and scream'. Still, between the knocks that come from just being in local television, there are some great memories to be had.

This was certainly the case with a HORROR HOST I had the pleasure to meet a while back. My good friend from the HHU, Dayton, Ohio's own A. GHASTLEE GHOUL was nice enough to introduce me to BARON Von WOLFSTEIN. The BARON, who televised his show from the Mythical City of Indianapolis, is one of GHASTLEE'S Childhood Heroes.

Now, what's that I hear you saying?

"BARON Von WOLFSTEIN?!? Who's HE?!?"

If you're saying, "But, Dan, everybody knows that Indianapolis' HORROR HOST was SAMMY TERRY!", you'd be MOSTLY correct. SAMMY TERRY is the most famous HORROR HOST out of Indianapolis, but he wasn't the ONLY HORROR HOST.

For a number of months in the late 1970's, between the time after SAMMY TERRY'S original run and his later return to the airwaves, Channel 4 became BARON Von WOLFSTEIN'S Territory.

The good BARON, most notably recognized as being "LYCANTHROPY'S NOBLEST SON", sought to bridge the gap between The Human Breed and their infamous MONSTER Counterparts. For his pains in becoming THE MONSTER FAMILY HISTORIAN, he's been accorded the Title of: "THE THINKING MAN'S MONSTER".(Dennis Crenshaw)

With his motley retinue of Friends and Fiends, The BARON charmed a small, but, rabidly (Is there any other kind?) devoted Fan-base. This loyal following tuned in to catch The BARON'S weekly offering, aptly entitled:

**BARON Von WOLFSTEIN**  
**Presents**  
**SATURDAY NIGHT WITH THE MONSTERS**

Although The BARON haunted SAMMY'S 'old stomping grounds' of Channel 4 (Bloomington-Indianapolis), you may rest assured that BARON Von WOLFSTEIN'S style was all his own! I learned this fact the hard way... by Direct Experience!

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**CHAPTER 1- THE JOURNEY BEGINS**

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Wearied by my many hours of travel in that rustic antique of a horse-drawn Carriage sent by The BARON to fetch me for our Nocturnal Interview, it was a great relief to set foot once again on good old Terre Firma.

I was truly unprepared for the sight that greeted me. Towering before me stood the massive facade of an Ancient Castle. Owing to the lateness of the hour, much of the Castle's detail was murkily indistinct, despite the splendor of a nearly-full moon. The overgrown forest surrounding the Castle was enshrouded in a low-lying fog. The whole scene exuded a sense of wild, uneasy desolation, as the night-winds clawed and moaned about me.

A stone's throw away from this aerie's lofty heights was the precipice. Walking carefully to the cliff's edge, I nearly lost my breath, not to mention my life!

Upon realizing just how steep this sheer drop-off was, I dizzily stepped back to a safer vantage point.

Far, far below were uninhabited ravines.

There was a single exception. Nestled deeply in the valley below, the lonely bell in the clock-tower of the only adjoining town slowly chimed the hour. As I listened, the bell pealed each hour in a lumbering fashion, finally tolling... TWELVE....No, Wait!... Make that... THIRTEEN?!?!

"Time to get the clock fixed!" I said to myself.

I must have nervously said that aloud, because my Coach-Driver, who'd been silent all the while, suddenly erupted with an eerie guffaw. Turning his rather

strange countenance towards me, he spoke with a markedly Transylvanian accent: "No, my young friend, you're now in a different Time Zone... a VERY DIFFERENT TIME ZONE!"

One look at the sharp protuberance of his canine teeth as he menacingly smiled, and, the hungry gleam in his red, luminous eyes... hey, let's just say, I caught the gist of his words! My eyes were now adjusted to the dark, so I scurried away from that Bizarre Coachman as fast as my tired feet would carry me.

Ascending the Castle's steps by twos and threes, the huge castle door suddenly loomed before me. I plucked up my courage and knocked. Tentatively, I admit, but, at least, I knocked! While I was unsure of what awaited me within this ancient Domicile, I was pretty sure of what was waiting for me outside of its boundaries! And, I desperately wanted no part of that!

My impatience to gain admittance to this austere foreboding relic from the Gothic era was rapidly building, understandably helped along by a chilling sense that I was not alone!

Without warning, and, in shocking swiftness, a very large bat swooped out of the sky, aiming for my face... or, neck! As I ducked to avoid its razor-sharp fangs, I glanced up to look into its blazing red eyes ... lividly glowering eyes, so reminiscent of the mysterious coachman, that, in stark terror, I nearly lost control of my bodily functions!

I began to swing wildly at my air-borne attacker, and, to punctuate those swings with pounding on the giant wooden door in front of me! To my great relief, this nocturnal beast veered up into the moon-lit skies, and, disappeared from my sight! Feeling the cold, sickening faint of Fright from this hellishly fearful episode, what happened next instantly revived me... the rusty door-bolt screeched, while the latch inside made a resounding 'click'. The Great Door swung lazily open, creaky as an old coffin-lid.

The glow of firelight and the luminescence of multiple candles bathed me with their warmth and welcome. My eyesight, re-adjusting from the strain of the night's shadows, must've left me momentarily confused, for, the BEING whose hand had lifted the door-latch appeared vaporously insubstantial and Ghostlike!

With his right hand, he freely beckoned me into this Unknown Reality. Involuntarily, I crossed the Thresh-hold; he extended that same hand, taking mine in a solid handshake so vise-like that I couldn't overlook the strength of his surprising grip.

As he voiced a welcome to me, in a frail sounding, but, very pure, English dialect, I decided, that, WHATEVER he was, it was obvious that manners and good breeding had been a part of his upbringing.

"Oh, you must be DAN JOHNSON, Horror Writer par excel ante!"

"We, here at CASTLE Von WOLFSTEIN, are all ardent admirers of your consistently fine work for both MONSTER NEWS ON-LINE and SCARY MONSTERS MAGAZINE!"

"Might I be permitted to call you by your first name?"

"Would you, also, kindly favour me with a copy of your Autograph?"

"You weren't too terribly inconvenienced by your exhausting journey for the sake of obtaining this Interview, were you?"

"Shall you be in need of a rest?"

"Or, should you prefer to dine, first, prior to the work ahead of you?"

"BARON Von WOLFSTEIN and the others are expecting you, of course. The BARON, however, gave me strict instructions to meet your needs before we commence this Article. He did not want to further weary you, by dragging you over His family's ancient History, which you have traveled so far to learn and report."

Suddenly, this EERIE SPECTRE exploded with:

"BY THE GREAT TOENAILS OF METHUSALEH!"

Then, as if remembering that I was standing there, he continued on in, an apologetic vein. "Young man, as I seemed to have monopolized this conversation thus far, have you any questions which I might now answer?"

WHOA! My head was spinning, overwhelmed by the large number of questions posed to me by this GARRULOUS HAUNT!

I was painfully aware of an immediate need, which he seemed to have overlooked, so, I responded in as meek a manner as possible:

"Well, I do have just two... uh, small...questions, now that you mention it."

Apparently happy to be of service, he responded with: "ANYTHING, you have only to name it!"

So, I bolstered up my courage in the face of this DAUNTING APPARITION, took a deep breath, and whined:

"If it wouldn't be too much trouble, COULD YOU PLEASE LET GO OF MY HAND?!"

"Oh! Dear me!" This VAPOUROUS WRAITH exclaimed.

"I was so pre-occupied with welcoming you that I forgot to release you from our handshake! I am sooo very sorry! Please, I beg your forgiveness."

As the pressure of his icy squeeze relaxed, I quickly withdrew my hand. As I shook my cramped hand in the air, forcefully, a dozen times or so, to restore the blood-flow to it, he addressed me again.

"Um, excuse me, but you said that you had TWO small questions for me. What was your second question?"

Nursing the residual ache in my right hand with a careful massaging by my left hand, I glanced up to him, and simply asked:

"WHO are YOU?!"

Visibly taken aback, (well, as VISIBLY as HE COULD BE!) this FORBIDDING SHADE seemed to be so genuinely remorseful that I felt ashamed of myself for having been so unnerved by him in the first place.

He implored: "Again, you must pardon me. In an effort to make certain of your well-being, I've lapsed in my duty to introduce myself to you. I trust you'll forgive an old man's failings."

He then added, with a touch of discernable pride:

"My name is CARLYLE. I am an INVISIBLE WIZARD, and, (A-hem) for Several Centuries now, BARON Von WOLFSTEIN'S Chief Confidante and Right-hand Man!"

So, THIS was the famous CARLYLE, whom I'd heard so much about! He'd been instrumental in the defeat of the BARON'S evil Vampire Cousin, nearly a quarter of a century ago!

A new-found attitude of respect welled up in me.

I happily replied: "Well, CARLYLE, yes, I'd be honored if you'd call me DAN. Sure, you can have my autograph, but only if you'll give me yours, too."

Then I added, "Please, do me one favor, though."

Eager to make amends for his previous gaffe, CARLYLE repeated his earlier offer. Bowing deeply, he said: "ANYTHING; you have only to name it!"

Trying to hide a wry smile, I rejoined: "JUST DON'T WRITE IT IN INVISIBLE INK!"

At this, the ELDERLY SPECTRE lost all composure, bursting into a cackling laugh that left me laughing, too. I always appreciate it when someone gets one of my jokes!

Catching his breath amid his subsiding chortle, he continued:

"Why, Bless My Soul, DAN, you're certainly as much a Prize in Person as you are in your writings! You'll fit in like Family around here!"

No further coaxing was needed. I thought to myself:

"WOW! If the whole time here is going to be this fascinating, hey, let's get started!"

CARLYLE seemed to intercept my thought.

He replied:

"Oh yes, you're right, of course, let us now strive to accomplish the real reason for which you've come to CASTLE Von WOLFSTEIN."

Glancing about (with some trepidation, I'll admit) this Castle's layout, I noticed several doors to adjoining rooms beyond the magnificent foyer where we stood. They seemed to beckon with ethereal whisperings from beyond the grave. A Gothic stone stairway ascended to other 'realities' that one dare not imagine without going mad! Conjure up in your mind the image of a cleaned up version of the 1931 Universal DRACULA Castle, and, we'll be on the same page...

Knowing that countless bizarre tales could doubtless be spun about the eerie goings-on that have occurred within these castle walls over the centuries, I froze, hesitant to enter even one step farther.

CARLYLE reprimanded me.

"DAN, you must banish your fears of this place; of the possibility of lingering GHOSTS still haunting their earthly domain; of the gruesome SKELETONS, both literal, as well as figurative, which continue to inhabit the Von WOLFSTEIN Family Closets!"

"Of course, such things are real. This is a MONSTER'S CASTLE, after all. I grant you, 'tis a trifle unnerving at one's first encounter, but, you are here at the express bidding of BARON Von WOLFSTEIN. As was promised, NO HARM shall befall you!"

"So, DAN, BE AT PEACE!"

His words carried the desired effect; I took a deep breath and relaxed. Nevertheless, I was actually relieved that we didn't go up that stairway. Instead, CARLYLE escorted me into the Room to our immediate left. This cozy little nook was occupied by several others, who sat comfortably near a smaller fireplace.

It was an ideal location to conduct our interview.

They were enjoying a fashionably late tea-time, as near as I could tell, nestled around a fire that was cheerily ablaze. This firelight illuminated the features of the room's occupants.

Two out of the three were obviously human in appearance.

The Third BEING was unmistakably my Monster-Host, BARON Von WOLFSTEIN.

Impressed with his Aristocratic Stature, (despite his obvious Werewolf Nature) I bowed, which, seemed the proper thing to do.

The BARON affably motioned for me to straighten up, saying to me, in a voice strongly reminiscent of BORIS KARLOFF:

"So good of you to come, DAN. Please, don't feel as if you must stand on Formality. We really are just plain folks here."

Then, he shot me a teasing grin. "I do agree with CARLYLE, however, you'll fit in like Fang-mily around here."

The thought swirled about my brain: "Are they all capable of MIND-READING!?!"

(End of Chapter One)