



## Dracul: Of the Father: The Untold Story of Vlad Dracul

**A. K. Brackob**

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A. K. Brackob's detailed biography chronicles the little-known life of Vlad Dracul—the father of Vlad the Impaler.

The literary vampire Dracula has captured the imagination of generations of horror readers. Brackob reveals that Bram Stoker drew upon a historical figure when drafting his creation: in the fifteenth century, Vlad the Impaler, son of Vlad Dracul, was vicious in ruling over parts of Romania. But while much is known of the son, less is known of the father.

Pulling aside the vampire legend, Brackob lays out as complete a picture of Vlad Dracul as is possible. Much of this story is gleaned from the historical record and more complete biographies about his son; drawing on this information and engaging in other extensive research, the book details Dracul's lineage well, while also covering the armies of his rivals. He is revealed to have had storied political and military careers, to have forged a personal relationship with the sultan of the Ottoman Empire, and to have betrayed Hungary, leading to his exile and quiet, unremarked-upon death.

But Brackob notes that Dracul was motivated by a cause. He valued his homeland above all else: he was urged forward by his strong desire to keep his land and people free, or at least under independent rule. In an attempt to fend off the Ottoman Empire and Hungary from overtaking his homeland, Dracul allowed himself to be captured; he also elected to leave his young sons behind as hostages. A delicate peace followed, highlighting the skill of Dracul's political maneuvering.

Vivifying Eastern Europe during the Middle Ages, *Dracul: Of the Father* is the engrossing biography of a passionate leader who was overshadowed in history by his son, but who is seen to have made important contributions nonetheless.

JOHN M. MURRAY (November / December 2021)

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