

September 27, 2009

Hello Mr. Lugosi-

I'm sending you the draft of the text I'm putting in the premier issue of my new magazine. Thanks so much for your participation. If possible, could you please send me 1-2 high-resolution photos of you or your father to be included with the text.

It has been my genuine privilege speaking with you and I hope to hear from you sometime soon.

Sincerely, Perri Pagonis

Christmas With the Lugosis!

Bela Lugosi Jr. Talks Telegraphically and Straight to *Perfect Victim* Magazine

Perri Pagonis

September 25, 2009

In December of 2008 I, the writer of this article, turned fifty years old. I have been very fortunate in my lifetime and have had the chance to experience a good number of the many, varied degrees of human emotion. Also, for reasons I cannot explain, I've had the privileged opportunities to meet many of the heroes of my youth: Andy Warhol, Ginger Lynn, Pete Townshend, Peter O'Toole and many others I have casually bumped into on the street, met at parties, book signings, or outside of questionable thrift stores. Through the years I've known the joys of success in artistic enterprises and also the feelings of absolute, vertebrae-crushing defeat in personal relationships and attempted professional collaborations with others. I'm very thankful to have had these experiences, as they have perhaps, somehow, made me more appreciative of the glorious complexity and diversity of the human condition.

However, in my fifty years on this earth, I can honestly tell you that there is nothing more singularly eye-popping and chemically tweaking to your body's nervous system than seeing these words appear for the first time in your computer's email inbox-

Message From: Bela Lugosi

Those letters in that order: B-e-l-a L-u-g-o-s-i are possibly the most subconsciously gripping arrangement of alphabetical characters imaginable for certain generations who grew up watching the cinematic work of the most famous vampire-portraying actor ever. In nearly every person's mind in the western hemisphere, the image of Bram Stoker's Count Dracula is inextricably attached to the face of the inimitable thespian.

I'm forced to imagine that Bela Luosi Junior, the son of the most fabled cinematic nosferatu in history, has had a few non-traditional childhood issues to deal with. However, what I can tell you, with complete certainty, is that in our email chats he is quite polite and very laconic in his

responses to the interviewer's queries. He graciously took some time out from his law practice in Los Angeles to answer some questions we had for him. In my estimation of all things human, if the son of Bela Lugosi can chat with a journalist who works for a magazine which calls itself *Perfect Victim*, it is a near certainty that he has a well-cultivated sense of irony.

He prefers to watch comedy, which is his favorite film genre. From his father's cinematic work, *White Zombie* is his preferred personal viewing choice. From his childhood Christmas memories, he recalls that he had an odd job which involved cleaning his father's pipes as a holiday ritual. Then and now, he spends Christmas with his family. He was very particular in his response about having any special memories from the holidays. His congenial, five-syllable answer being, "happy occasions."

So, as I see the situation, all the hoo-haw about being the son of a Hollywood horror-genre legend boils down to this bare-boned personal observation: in my mind at least, Bela Junior is a pretty normal, cool guy who maybe had a couple of more wiggy matters in his life to deal with than most of us, but came out of it basically undamaged and ok. He's a professional, family man who enjoys spending the Christmas season with his loved ones. We all should be so lucky in our lives. I mean honestly, if the Lugosi family can have a good, loving Christmas among themselves, then there's certainly hope for all of us to do the same. Who could argue otherwise?

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