

Vampire Cashier

A short story set in London, now, today ! Given a rework to protect the guilty.

About 6,500 words especially edited for Halloween 2026.

This story was lots of notes, but has never been posted before.

“Fred made his eyes go dark, really dark; and Phoebe sang her strange song to him. Had vampires been the first to domesticate cats, well before humans took them in out of the rain ? Fred thought it was a definite possibility.”

‘There is a PDF to download at the foot of the page.’

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Alfred Watts (Fred), wandered around his local supermarket, adding a tin of pilchards to his trolley. Myth had it that vampires didn't eat human food, he'd even seen a film where a girl vampire throws up after eating a single sweet. It was all crap; ninety nine percent of the stuff in films and books was crap. The problem was that some vampires even believed some of it. There was no vampire bible or instruction book, no wonder some of them got it spectacularly wrong. One female vampire he'd known in Hampshire, recoiled from crucifixes. Fred bought a crucifix and had it blessed by the local catholic priest, before putting it in his mouth with her watching. It was no good, vampires seemed to get worse attacks of OCD than humans. Hardly surprising really ! Unlimited lifespan, very few other vampires to relate too and surrounded by humans. No wonder so many of his kind went a bit nuts. Fred wasn't crazy though he liked being a vampire; he was even thinking about inventing a cooler name for himself.

“Call yourself Giga Watts honey.” A young girl vampire in LA had once told him.

Another sad myth about vampires was the twenty four hour sex with other good looking vampires. He'd never met any vampires who'd permanently coupled up; it just seemed a bit weird, like thinking of shagging your sister or something. Vampires stuck to relationships with humans, which were all, by necessity, short term.

“Honey, you look the same as the day we met, forty years ago. And why is there a fridge full of O negative in the garage ?”

All relationships were doomed; no wonder so many other vamps he knew were bat shit crazy. Not that he knew many or saw them that often. He'd once read a magazine article that said there were about fifty thousand vampires in the UK. That had made him chuckle, more like five thousand and most of those lived in London. All minorities loved London, with its anonymity and complete lack of social cohesion. It wasn't so much that Londoners left their neighbours to do their own thing; they didn't give a crap about their neighbours. That suited vampires, that meant being able to hide in plain sight; mostly.

“You've moved the cat food again.” He moaned at a guy stacking shelves.

“Two aisles behind you.”

He picked up a box of instant cappuccino on the way back; he was becoming a sucker for colourful sales displays. It was another ordinary trip to the supermarket, until he reached the cashier. She was dark, tall, beautiful and a vampire. She had that pale, tired look that all vampires get during the day.

Another myth, vampires could operate quite well during the day, it just didn't agree with them. The feeling reminded Fred of a mild hangover, which disappeared at sunset.

"I've bought a mop." He said. "Not sure how you put it through the checkout."

"I'll do it."

Their hands touched and he felt her, she must have felt him too. There was no great vampire lore, but they could all sense each other in a crowd. Like goths, but without the dreadful clothes and makeup. A little pissed off, but her blanking him was pressing his buttons.

"Can I have a tenner in cash back?" He asked.

"Yes of course."

Eye contact, but nothing from her. No nod, no knowing smile. He didn't expect her to throw her arms around him and offer him her wrist to bite, but this was just plain bad manners.

"Can you make it all in pound coins please?" He asked.

"Ok."

Bitch ! Still no sign of her recognising him as being one of her kind. Five thousand vampires, there were supposed to be forty times that number of Jehovah's witnesses, but he knew they said 'Hi' when they met. He took his coins and the receipt.

"Thank you." He said.

Another touch of fingers, but no reaction from her. She had pitch black hair, dark eyes; all her features screamed the Middle East. Tall, thin, she looked about twenty, but could have been born hundreds of years before, maybe thousands. Fred had temporally died in the trenches of the First World War, yet he felt himself to be almost an infant in vampire terms.

He carried his bags of shopping out of the supermarket and towards home. He didn't have a car, few vampires did. Getting a fresh phoney ID, worrying about any contact with the authorities. It was all needless hassle and most vampires used public transport and changed their ID every time they needed a new passport. Fred was basing his assumptions on a small sample though, he'd only met about another fifty vamps since becoming one, in nineteen fifteen.

"Well, Phoebe.....How was your day?" He asked his cat.

She had a cat flap in the back door of his ground floor flat and was usually waiting for him in the front garden; underneath a green bush that had been there when he'd moved in. Phoebe made lots of warbling noises, which he was certain was her way of telling him about her day. She sniffed the shopping bag, as if she could sense that he'd bought her expensive cat food. Maybe she could, cats could sense a lot of things that humans were unaware of. Phoebe had a way of sitting on his chest while he watched a movie. She'd sort of sing at him in a friendly sounding howl. Cats knew thing alright and Phoebe knew what he was. A fellow predator, but his prey were larger than hers.

"Get out from under my feet.....The sooner I'm in, the sooner you'll be fed." Said Fred.

A pile of junk mail behind the door, there always was; only one envelope wasn't marketing crap. That looked like a bill, which was almost as bad as the daily deluge of junk mail.

"Move, Phoebe.....Keep ahead of me or I'm likely to tread on you."

Turning on lights as he went, Fred aimed for the kitchen; without trampling over his furry chum. The flat had come with a cheap rent because of his job; Fred worked for an Estate Agents on Catford High Street. He was the back office admin guy and the job paid well. Best of all, it tended to mean he didn't have to go out on that many sunny days. He loved his office at the back of the building.

"Alright.....Posh cat food on its way." Said Fred.

Two tubs of the food, one wasn't enough; Phoebe was a big cat. Fred checked that her litter tray didn't look too disgusting and that her water bowl looked clean and fairly full. As Phoebe attacked

her food, Fred got a Chicken Biryani meal for two out the chiller. It was his favourite and would be ready to eat after two lots of nuking in the microwave.

"Oh, I love this stuff.....Food of the Gods." Said Fred.

Into the lounge after his meal and a horror movie went into the DVD player. After ten minutes Phoebe was lying on his chest, her big dark eyes looking into his. Her melodic howl began and it was more mystic sounding than creepy.

"I bet cats have seen a few things over the centuries." Said Fred.

He was asleep before the DVD ended, which was always bad news. He'd have to be up early to do the washing up from the night before. Phoebe tended to go to sleep on his face if he overslept, definitely not something he enjoyed waking up to. Fred was only a few minutes late getting to work, which wasn't too bad.

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Not a bad day at work, Marilyn in accounts had tried to set him up on a blind date with one of her friends. A divorcee with no children, Fred usually had a thing about divorcees who didn't need to get home early to check on the kids; or be constantly calling the seventeen year old hired as a babysitter. Marilyn's friend would normally be ideal, but now there was her; the cashier in the supermarket. He had no idea of her usual shifts, but when he left work; she was there. After filling a basket with cat food and a few other items, he got behind the three people waiting to pay for their purchases. There was a lot of cat food in their baskets and frozen TV dinners. Just like him really, but they had no urge to drain the blood from anyone easily disposed of.

"Oh, I see you liked these." Said the cashier. "I knew you would."

"Yes, they're delicious."

The vampire cashier who'd refused to acknowledge him for what he was, what they both were; had obviously recommended a certain brand of chocolates to a female customer. Fred was upset, even if he was being a little illogical about it. By the time Fred Watts emptied his basket onto the rather grubby conveyor belt, there was no one else queuing behind him. He was determined to exchange words with the cashier, which had nothing to do with cat food, or cash back. He failed of course, though it wasn't a total disaster.

"Ahhhh, your cat obviously likes the expensive food." Said the cashier.

"Yes, she can't get enough of it."

"What's her name?"

Ok it was about his cat, but any personal question was a step in the right direction. Fred still wasn't sure if he wanted the cashier as a meal, or a mate; but a little exchange of information was fairly essential. Fred had never stalked the streets for his blood to drink; it just seemed a little barbaric.

"Phoebe.....She sleeps on my head, but I forgive her." Said Fred.

She laughed, the cashier actually laughed.

"She sounds adorable.....I'd love to meet Phoebe one day." Said the cashier.

"You can come around tonight; I don't live that far away." Said Fred.

Too much, far too soon? Maybe, but they did share something quite rare and they both knew it. She was still smiling at him, which was a good sign.

"Not tonight, but tomorrow." Said the cashier. "Yes, definitely tomorrow. Come in at your usual time, I'll arrange to leave early."

There was one man who may have been within hearing range, but he seemed intent on digging through the boxes of breakfast cereal. Fred made his eyes dark, so dark that there could be no

denying what he was. She did the same and had eyes so dark that he felt he could happily drown in them.

"I'm Fred."

"I'm called Elena."

Fred left the supermarket feeling wonderfully happy. Happier than when he realised his cat knew what he was and sang to him in that special way. It probably wouldn't last, none of his other relationships with vampire women had lasted longer than a year or two. Vampires were territorial creatures, unsuited to operating as a couple. Elena was gorgeous though and while it lasted, he was determined to thoroughly enjoy it. When he arrived home and after feeding Phoebe, he found something on Netflix to watch. Phoebe lay across his chest and purred into his left ear, until it was time to go to bed.

"Tomorrow you'll see Elena." Said Fred. "I'm sure you'll like her."

Fred made his eyes go dark, really dark; and Phoebe sang her strange song to him. Had vampires been the first to domesticate cats, well before humans took them in out of the rain ? Fred thought it was a definite possibility.

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No Halloween decorations in the office, but that didn't stop it being mentioned; quite a lot.

"Any plans for Saturday night ?" Asked Marilyn.

Saturday ? His mind whirled for a moment, before remembering that the thirty first of October was a pretty significant date for some; and it fell on a Saturday that year.

"Not sure, I'll need to ask Elena if she has plans." Said Fred.

"Elena.....Someone new in your life, Fred ?" Asked Marilyn.

"Yes, very new.....She might not be free on Saturday night."

Marilyn was giving him a certain half smile and he knew what it signified. She was going to interrogate him about Elena.

"Tell me everything Fred, where did you meet her ?" Asked Marilyn.

"She works at the supermarket where I buy cat food and TV dinners." Said Fred.

"Divorced, separated ? Does she have and kids ?"

Marilyn could be unrelenting, but at his age he wasn't likely to be dating someone who didn't have a bit of history in their sex life; been round the block a few times as it was often described. It was embarrassing that he knew almost nothing about Elena.

"This is awkward, but tonight is our first proper date." Said Fred. "I know almost nothing about Elena, not even her second name."

"Fine.....Just take a picture of her on your phone." Said Marilyn. "Then I'll at least know what she looks like."

"I will, I promise."

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Fred remembered the promise as he bought a bunch of flowers on the way to the supermarket. Just daffodils from the petrol station, but they looked beautiful. Where were daffodils blooming in October ? Fred had no idea, but you could buy fresh daffs all year round. As for that promise of a picture of Elena for Marilyn; he was going to take that one very slowly and carefully.

"I don't want to screw this one up." Fred muttered.

Not that Fred expected to have a long relationship, two point four kids and die surrounded by chubby grandchildren. Vampire relationships were never like that; for a start they couldn't have children, the females and the males. Fred was just awful at the whole romance thing and he knew it.

He'd once resorted to paying a gorgeous hooker for her company. She'd eventually stopped returning his calls and he still had no idea why. He didn't expect to walk off into the sunset with Elena, he just wanted it to last a couple of years, maybe three. He saw her smile as she noticed the bunch of daffs he was holding. There were at least a dozen shoppers queuing at her till.

"Sit in the staffroom, no one will mind." Said Elena. "I won't be long."

She always looked good and it might have been his imagination; but the dress she was wearing looked a bit special. Of course he had no idea where the staffroom was, but a member of staff pointed him the right direction.

"Elena said she was expecting someone.....You can wait in here."

There were Halloween decorations in the staff room, mainly plastic skulls and pumpkins sellotaped to the wall, doorframes and even ceiling tiles. It was a bit over the top, but looked sensational. He sat there for about fifteen minutes, before Elena opened the door and came into the room. As he stood up, she gave him a long hug.

"Fred, I'm so sorry.....We had an unexpected busy period." Said Elena. "Are these for me?"

"The daffodils, of course they are.....Do you like daffs?" He asked.

"They're my favourite flowers." Said Elena. "Come on, walk me to your home.....Show me your wonderful cat. We can buy booze and Thai takeaway on the way. If I'm being too bossy, you have to tell me."

"No, you're not.....I like the idea of a takeaway meal." Said Fred.

A few of the staff called out goodnight to Elena and one or two even wished him a goodnight; quite nice considering he didn't know any of them. He didn't even know Elena's second name. Phoebe was waiting for him in the front garden and Elena was introduced to his large and adorable cat, her words. While Fred carried their booze and takeaway, Elena scooped Phoebe up in her arms.

"Oh, she has a wonderful purr." Said Elena.

No talking about vampire things in the street, or even on his garden path, there was no telling who might hear. Not that he was worried about being dragged off and burnt at the stake, or something like that. No one believed in his kind anymore. Fred was worried about being thought of as the local nutter with weird delusions. Once his door was closed though; that was a different matter.

"Phoebe sings to me." Said Fred. "If I let my eyes go especially dark, she sings a lot. I genuinely believe that cats know about a lot of things, including us."

"I had a cat when I lived in Bucharest." Said Elena. "He was a huge ginger Tom and I'm sure he knew what I was. He used to curl up next to me in bed and make this low musical howl."

"That's it, I'm sure they're singing at us." Said Fred.

The food got their attention next, while Phoebe ate one of her tubs of expensive cat food. The Thai takeaway was delicious, as was the wine he'd bought at another supermarket, on his way to one where Elena worked. Well, he didn't want her to know he hadn't bought it from the wine place in the high street. They ended up laughing a lot, at his jokes, which was a good sign. She even laughed at the jokes even he didn't find funny. He had to ask the question, even if it did mean her leaving in a cab home much earlier than he'd hoped.

"I've always thought relationships between vampires didn't work." Said Fred. "Being honest, whenever I try to date a vampire.....It felt like dating a cousin or something."

Elena stopped smiling and seemed to concentrate on the tiramisu he'd bought at the same place as the wine. Fred was preparing himself to either walk her home, or dig out the number for a decent cab company. They needed to have the conversation though and it couldn't wait until they were both avoiding even kissing one another.

"I take your point, but there is only one way to see if this will work." Said Elena. "We should sleep together tonight and see how we feel in the morning; what do you think?"

Fred had wanted to make plans with her for Saturday night, Halloween. Her suggestions of a night in his bed blew all thought of witches and pumpkins out of his head. He'd ask her about Halloween if they still fancied one another in the morning.

"I think that is a very good idea." He said.

This was where she'd laugh, say it was all a joke and call an Uber. But no, she came round to his side of the kitchen table and ran her hands through his hair.

"Come on then.....No time like the present." Said Elena. "Do we need to put Phoebe anywhere for the night?"

A good question and he could look cool because he knew the answer. Unless his experience with human divorcees wasn't relevant to sex with another vampire? That was a mildly worrying thought.

"No, she'll sit on an easy chair in a corner of the bedroom." Said Fred. "She will watch us though, if that's a problem?"

"Not a problem, unless she marks us out of ten." Said Elena.

"Not something I've known her do." Said Fred.

They went to his bedroom and out of politeness, he pointed out the door to the ensuite bathroom. It was a small bathroom, but being ensuite had made him determined to rent the place. The toilet where he was at the time had been a good ten yards from the main bedroom, at the end of a corridor with plenty of things vying to bash his toes in the early hours. The space there had been wonderful, but his current flat had a cosy feel to it.

"Oh, Fred.....I like your bedroom." Said Elena.

"I changed all the bedding when I moved in." Said Fred.

Sage green sheets and several cream coloured blankets, he'd never been one for duvets. In case of emergency, if the heating died on a very cold day; there was a thick bedspread folded up at the foot of the bed. Fred didn't imagine them needing the bedspread. Phoebe sort of snuck in and got herself comfortable on the chair in the corner of the room. She was quietly singing to them.

"Do you hear that?" Asked Elena. "They definitely know about us."

"And much else besides." Said Fred. "I think vampires socialised cats long before humans brought them into their homes."

"I agree, maybe a thousand years before."

They undressed, with Phoebe watching them and still serenading them with her song. As Fred saw Elena naked, he had the distinct idea that he was about to be screwing out of his league. She was gorgeous, every square inch of her. Her skin had a wonderful light brown tone to it and her hair! Her hair was amazing once it was allowed to drop and go free. He didn't recognise her scent, but he'd have bet a month's wages that it was incredibly expensive. No worries about birth control with another vampire, it was impossible for them to breed that way. Humans were bitten and fed on, with the occasional one turned into a vampire. Successfully turning a human into a new immortal feeder on blood was rare, most died during the attempt. Just as well, or the world would be knee deep in vampires.

"You look.....Absolutely amazing." Said Fred.

"Not bad huh? I was born in Romania about eight hundred years ago. I was turned by a vampire who liked the look of me.....I must have been about twenty then. How about you, when were you born?"

He kissed her with some enthusiasm and she kissed him back with just as much keenness. That helped him tell her about his own quite humble history.

"I was born in London in around eighteen seventy, I'm not quite sure of the date." Said Fred. "I tend to celebrate my birthday on the fifteenth of September. I was shot while serving in the army during the First World War; shot bad enough to die from it. Another soldier was a friend, a good friend. I never knew he was a vampire until he turned me. That was in the summer of nineteen fifteen."

"Wow, you must be the luckiest man on the planet." Said Elena.

Him, lucky.....That would have made him laugh until he saw Elena naked; now he thought she might be right.

"Hmmm, when I kiss you; I think that maybe I am." Said Fred.

"Oh, you charmer."

The sex was good and hurried a little the first time. After a rest the second time was less hurried and far more satisfying. After the third time they slept, with Fred wrapping Elena in his arms. It was the kind of vampire sex he'd always dreamed about, but now it was real. Fred woke to find most of the bedding on the floor and them still wrapped around one another. Even Phoebe had given up watching them and curled herself up into a black and white bundle of fur. The clock made Fred pull a face, he hadn't set the alarm. He kissed Elena gently on the cheek; until he saw her eyelids flutter.

"Bad news.....I never set the alarm." Said Fred.

"What time is it?"

"About nine fifteen." Said Fred.

"Fuck." Said Elena.

No shower, just pulling on the clothes they'd been wearing the day before. That would probably mean a lot of teasing at work for both of them. Fred could have dug out a clean shirt, but wanted to show solidarity with Elena. If she was going to wear a slightly grimy dress all day, he could wear a shirt that for some reason; had a slight odour of sex. Awake at nine fifteen and out onto the street at nine forty five, something of a record for Fred. Yes, he'd even remembered to give Phoebe her breakfast tub of cat food. He had forgotten to ask Elena if he could take a picture of her, but that could wait for another time; if there was another time.

"Crap.....I am going to be in so much trouble." Said Elena.

They were rushing to the point of almost running, until Elena stopped.

"Saturday.....Halloween." She said. "We'll meet at your place at around eight. As for where we go and what we do ? Surprise me. Is that alright ?"

"Yes, that's fine.....Perfect." Said Fred.

At midday Fred received a text from Elena, hoping he wasn't being teased too much. He replied that the general level of piss taking was tolerable. She replied that she was looking forward to Halloween. Somewhere inside Fred was a teenager again, going a bit crazy because Maureen Higgins had kissed him at the school dance. Really kissed him, tongues and everything.

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It was Saturday the thirty first, Halloween. Fred Watts changed his bed in the hope that Elena would be sharing it with him after their night out. Of course Phoebe kept getting in the way, it was what cats did; it was probably in some sort of ancient job description. After the bed he'd give the bathroom a good clean; everything had to be perfect.

"Did you like her, Phoebe ?" He asked. "I really like her."

His cat simply sat on the chair in the corner of his bedroom and looked at him.

"Too soon to say huh ? I understand."

By the time he had a shower, his flat looked spotless; far better than it had looked since.....Gillian, but he wasn't going to think about that. Fred had even put a yellow post-it on the fridge to remind him about getting a picture of Elena. No messing about this time; she'd slept with him, so a picture of her sat in his lounge shouldn't be an issue. He also wanted to know her second name and where she lived. Being a vampire the name she used might be fake, but her address had to be where she kept her things. All he knew so far was that it was a flat somewhere off the high street. He passed Phoebe in the kitchen, as she sat on his microwave; a hug seemed appropriate.

"You have to be really, really nice to her." He muttered at his cat.

No singing at him, but Phoebe purred quite loudly, which he'd take as her being in a friendly mood. By the time he was in his sports jacket and trouser that he thought suited him, the doorbell rang. It couldn't be Elena; she'd be an hour early. Damn, he hadn't decided if it was a night that required him to wear a tie, or not. Fred opened his front door, almost hoping it was the kids from number forty seven, trying to get sweets out of him. Trick or treat indeed, they were extortionists.

"Sorry, I know I'm early." Said Elena.

"No problem.....You can tell me whether I need a tie with this shirt and jacket." He said.

"Hmmm, no tie.....Though I'm not sure where we're going." Said Elena.

"Come in.....I can tell you all about it." Said Fred.

At the same time she could tell him where she lived and strike the pose for a picture. Actually, that gave Fred an idea. Once Elena's coat was thrown over the sofa, his cat was in her lap.

"A friend at work is bullying me to take your picture." Said Fred. "Maybe a shot with Phoebe, if that's....."

"Sure, of course.....Take all the pictures you want." Said Elena.

Phoebe was singing at them and Elena was dressed in a gorgeous black and white dress. Put on to deliberately match his pet ? It definitely looked like it. Fred's phone wasn't the best on the market, but the built in camera was pretty good.

"Ok, strike the pose." Said Fred. "I'm so looking forward to showing these to Marilyn on Monday."

Elena held Phoebe; she even kissed her nose for one picture. For her part, his cat sang her song and looked happy to be hugged by his new girlfriend. Girlfriend, was that a bit soon ? Probably.

"Enough.....Enough, Fred." Said Elena. "You must have twenty pictures of me hugging Phoebe. One more and I think we need to get married. Here, let me look at them."

While she clicked through the pictures on his camera, Fred finally ask the question that was sort of the second to last on his list, for now at least.

"What is your second name, Elena ?" He Asked. "You know I'm Fred Watts."

"Ahhh, Fred.....A lady needs a few secrets." Said Elena. "My full name will have to wait a while, as will my address. Nothing weird, I've just had bad experiences in the past. Will you give me a little time on those things ? After all, you do have a hell of a lot of pictures of me."

"Of course, take as long as you want." Said Fred.

"So, where are we going for Halloween night ?" Asked Elena. "I love all the pumpkins, witches and broomsticks."

Was he a mug, letting himself be put off from knowing more about her ? Fred thought he was, but at the end of the day; she was his ideal woman and she seemed to enjoy sleeping with him. He'd have to be a complete fool to mess that up.

"The Goat and Bucket in the high street are having a Halloween Night." Said Fred. "Special spooky food and drink, there's even a live group. It sounds perfect for us tonight. Best of all, they'll be serving drinks until after midnight; one in the morning to be precise."

"Sounds great, but should we have dressed up?"

"Halloween costumes are not obligatory, I called and checked." Said Fred.

By the time the booked cab arrived, Fred was certain he wouldn't be alone in his bed that night. He put down another tub of food for Phoebe and gave her a quick cuddle. Of course, her fur went all over his expensive sports jacket.

"Be good, Phoebe." He muttered.

"I think our cab is outside.....Yeah, he's looking at the house numbers." Yelled Elena.

"Good, he's right on time." Shouted Fred

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The Goat and Bucket was throbbing and full enough to be fun, without feeling jam packed. The sort of place where Fred might have looked for a human female to share his bed. He rarely found a meal in such places, there tended to be too many cameras watching and recording who arrived and who left. He tended to hunt in quite a laid back way, in quiet out of the way places. Maybe it wasn't an efficient way to hunt; but he'd never had to run away from the police.

"This looks really nice." Said Elena.

"It's just about my favourite local pub." Said Fred.

"Just don't run off with anyone."

As if to emphasise the point, Elena gripped his arm fairly hard and hung onto him. At that moment Fred Watts really did feel that he might be the luckiest man on the planet. They went upstairs, to where the spooky food and punch were being sold.

"Wow, the fake blood pizza.....Truly horrible." Said Fred.

"Yeah, let's buy lots of it." Said Elena.

The group were obviously singing every vaguely spooky song they'd been able to find on YouTube, which was a surprising number. They played like Billy Joel trying to be the Sex Pistols for the night. It was weird, but the crowd seemed to be determined to enjoy the night. There was a lot of undeserved cheering. The food was good, as was the drink.

"Are you glad we came here?" Asked Fred.

"Yeah, it's brilliant." Said Elena.

Booze helps of course; anyone, anything, anyplace.....It always seems so much better after a little too much booze. By the time they were being chucked out at one in the morning, Fred would have told anyone he'd just had the best night of his life. He might have even fought anyone who dared to contradict him. They could have walked back to his place, but a cab was far easier and more comfortable. To prove the point, a little rain began as he opened his front door. Phoebe was curled up on the rug in his lounge, as she often did while he watched TV. Fred chucked his jacket on his bed, hopefully soon to be their bed.

"Do you want a drink before bed?" Asked Fred.

"No, I've had quite a lot to drink already."

"I'll check there's still food in Phoebe's bowl, or she'll pester us all night." Said Fred.

He was taking them sleeping together for granted; the wonderful thing was Elena not correcting him, or even mentioning it. He's had a fairly long dry period in his sex life, which might actually be over.

"She's fine.....Her water looks clean too." Said Fred.

Elena was in the bedroom and she'd take his phone out of the inside pocket of his sports jacket. She looked shifty, as though he'd caught her up to something. Vampires were exceptionally good at recognising the body language.

"What are you doing with my phone ?" He asked.

"Just looking at the pictures you took of me."

He didn't believe her, not a word of it. Fred grabbed his phone and the pictures he'd taken were gone, every one of them deleted.

"Why did you delete them ?" He asked.

She was on him, her fangs going into his neck. He had to be as strong as her, but he didn't try hard to fight her off. He hadn't been far off telling Elena he loved her. You don't fight a lover; and besides, she'd probably stop twisting his neck in a moment. It was probably just a game, wasn't it ?

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Elena was very good at clean kills, not one spot of blood on her clothing; or Fred's. She lifted him up and sat his body in the armchair where he usually sat to watch TV. She hadn't intended to kill him that night, though she'd have killed Fred Watts fairly soon.

"You were too needy Fred, too eager to please all the time." She muttered. "You should never have dated another vampire.....We're not cut out for relationships."

By the time someone broke open the front door to look for him, Fred would be decomposing nicely. There was still a chance of leaving forensic evidence intact. But Fred was a long way from being her first date and kill; and she's got away with it so far.

"Rule one.....Let's see if you've got anything worth taking ?" She muttered.

Nothing much until she checked a suitcase on top of his wardrobe; it was too heavy to be empty. Inside the suitcase was a briefcase and inside it was money, quite a lot of money. It looked to her as if Fred had been a back office guy with a thing for fraud. She'd count it all later, sat on her own sofa; but it looked as though Fred had built up a nest egg of at least fifty thousand. Phoebe was showing an interest and she was softly singing to her. Elena had an idea.

"Stay there, Phoebe.....Don't go anywhere."

The cat carrier was on top of the wardrobe in the spare bedroom. A few tins of expensive cat food went into a carrier bag, as did a small bag of cat litter.

"Oh Fred, you're a bit of a hoarder." She mumbled. "You must have something I can use as a litter tray."

He did, a spare and never used litter tray in a cupboard under the sink. She had to hand it to the corpse in the lounge; he'd been very efficient while alive. Next came Phoebe who had to appear happy to be carried off.

"Volunteers only, no conscripts." Elena muttered.

Phoebe was in the cat carrier the second it was opened, still singing her low melodic tune.

"Do you want to go home with me, Phoebe ?" Asked Elena.

A loud purr sealed the deal and Elena locked the carrier. She'd liked the idea of getting another cat for quite some time and Phoebe was a wonderful example of a gorgeous female feline. Elena kissed Fred on the forehead and thanked him for the money and the cat.

"Happy Halloween; you were a bit of an arse.....But you meant well, Fred." She mumbled.

All the cat stuff in its bags, went into a laundry bag she'd found near Fred's rather elderly Bosch washer. Bag and briefcase in one hand; cat carrier in the other, she left the flat and began the walk home. Of course, she lived nowhere anywhere near the direction she'd told poor dead Fred Watts.

"Soon be home." Said Elena.

From the cat carrier came the sound of Phoebe singing to her.

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'Unless otherwise indicated, all the names, characters, businesses, places, events and incidents in this book are either the product of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.'

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