



Rela held her victim against the gymnasium wall, her needle-sharp teeth in the young girl's neck. She concentrated as sweet blood flowed slowly into her mouth. Blood was the medium but it was life essence she drew out of Jennifer Sherwood. Rela prided herself on drawing the most energy with the least blood flow from those she fed on.

Satisfied, she drew back. With strength that belied her petite figure, she scooped up the cheerleader, who slumped against her, with one arm and the nearby gym bag with the other. She carried her over to the bleachers and sat the girl down.

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“Sit up and be still,” Rela commanded, brushing her own long, black hair from her eyes.

Jennifer swayed but followed the order. Quickly, Rela drew out a tube of Neosporin from her bag and dabbed it on the small punctures, covered them with band aids. Then she fished out a pint of Gatorade.

“Drink this and take these vitamins. You will double up on vitamins and fluids over the next day and eat as much spinach as you can stand,” she glomoured. “If anyone asks you about the band aids you will change the subject. You will forget what happened tonight. We just chatted about boys and music.”

“Yes, Rela.”

“You showed me your cheers and expressed your sympathy about my being too sickly and weak to do them.”

“You poor thing,” Jennifer said dreamily, “Hemophilia and sun sensitivity...I still like you, Rela.”

“And I like you, Jennifer. Do you feel all right? Are you able to walk home?”

“Sure I am.”

“Straight home and to bed,” Rela ordered.

Jennifer nodded, rose and walked steadily out of the gym.

Rela smoothed her dark school uniform, then followed, shouldering her bag. *Note to self. Buy more Gatorade.*

She walked out into the quadrangle, looked up at the brilliant night sky. Then she drifted up into that sky, a hundred feet over Jennifer as the cheerleader walked through

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the cool evening air. Rela watched her for any sign of weakness or unsteadiness but the cheerleader seemed fine.

She also kept an eye out for anyone who might interfere with her last meal. East Baumfuche was a safe small town but crime wasn't unknown. Woe to anyone who sought to molest Jennifer. Rela avoided killing humans for convenience, not morality. The vampire who had turned her, had educated her on how to survive. The first trick was not to live for your fangs. Piles of bodies meant vampire hunters and hordes of other enemies. Rela had a practical forever if she didn't screw up.

But crime wasn't low in East Baumfuche only through the efforts of the police. Rela had scant concern for the disappearance of muggers and rapists.

Jennifer turned into her yard, opening the white picket fence, and went up the stairs to the unlocked front door of her house. Rela nodded in satisfaction. Then, feeling sleepy and full, she headed home to her TV, hoping to spend the rest of a quiet night under a blanket.

Stan Wozniak scratched his belly, which he had to admit was larger than was becoming for a werewolf. But it was hard. He was, quite literally, getting long in the tooth. Then there were all the temptations of running a bar like the Howler, with the best beer and pizza in town. He'd chosen the wolf theme as a simple cover in case he or any of the Westies made a mistake in public. Truth was that, these days, even the full moon didn't get that much of a rise out of the guys. Sure, they'd devour the occasional sheep

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and they'd cleaned out most of the stray cats from the neighborhood, but if it was raining, the boys would as soon throw extra pepperoni on the pizza and watch Sportscenter on ESPN.

Evil really wasn't his bag anymore. He was a reservist. He did his monthly get together with the West Bumfuchian werewolves and two weeks each summer in Canada training with other monsters: full moon howl fests, cattle mutilations, the occasional battle with a captive vampire. Nowadays most of the human hunting was being done in simulators, real state of the art stuff. It cut down on trouble with the RCMP. Stan impressed a lot of the younger werewolves with his stories of the old days and the scar he bore from the paladin who'd shot him with a silver bullet. Thank god it was a glancing blow that had passed right through, or he'd be dead.

He yawned and put down the glass he was cleaning. It was about time to tally the register. A flickering glow from the next room drew his attention.

"Damn, did Charlie forget to close the fireplace damper again? Goddamn moron's going to burn the bar down."

Stan walked out from around the bar, heading for the main room by the huge fireplace over which he'd mounted racks of antlers from moose he'd personally hunted. He froze in the doorway. In the fireplace, squatting on the flickering coals, sat a short ugly imp. It glared up at him.

"Hey buddy, make with the firewood. These coals are almost dead and I'm freezing my balls off."

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Stan shook off the surprise and tossed the imp a few pieces of split oak, which it piled and blew on until the coals caught them. “Ah,” it said, rolling in the flames. “I can feel my ass again.”

“Not for nothing,” Stan said, a sinking feeling in his gut that his Nexium wouldn’t help. “But what do you want? I did my two weeks back in June.”

“Ah, screw training, buddy,” the imp said in satisfaction. “You’re being called up for the Sha’Daa.”

“What?”

“Active duty, Wolfie. We got the Apocalypse scheduled for the solstice.” He looked disrespectfully at Stan’s mid-section. “Better back away from the buffet, Wolfie. You got a lot of humans to slaughter. The Westies wolves have to take out West Baumfuche, you and a kid vampire are all we have to take out the East town. We’re kinda stretched thin in the Heartland.”

“Wipe out the town,” Stan yelped. “I just joined the Rotary Club!”

“What the hell is wrong with you? It’s the end of the world. Get with the program, Wolfie. You’ll be getting your mobilization orders and attack plan shortly. Sharpen the fangs, Mac. It’s showtime.”

The imp gave him a sloppy salute. “Evil Forever.” Then it vanished in a blast of gag-inducing smoke.

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Rela lay back in her padded coffin and switched on *Twilight*. Human vampire stories always amused her. They got so much wrong. Vampires were nearly as varied as humans were. She, for example, could endure daylight, though it suppressed most of her other powers. It was so absurd to think a vampire needed to, or even could, drain all the blood from a human body. The suction needed would lift a bus.

Her eyes grew heavy and she figured on sleeping for a few hours when a thump brought her sharply awake. She sprang from the coffin and headed upstairs. A thump sounded again. She went to her door. Rela looked out of the side window; visitors were rare for the solitary vampire.

Shock straightened her up. Thumping against her door was a huge messenger bat. She opened the door. The bat landed and morphed into a tiny female figure, shorter than Rela's mere five feet, black-skinned with yellow, glowing eyes.

"Vampire Rela," it lisped. "You have been called to battle for the Sha'Daa. You must report to your local coordinator for assignment."

"What," she said. "The Apocalypse. Why? I mean why now?"

"Question not the orders of Hell," it hissed. "The times are set by the powers. You must destroy the life of this place."

"By myself?"

"All that can be spared are you and a local werewolf pack."

"No!" Rela stamped her foot. "I am not working with smelly wolves. They kill vampires."

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“You are all Forces of Evil. Obey or suffer. Report to the werewolf who owns the gathering place called the Howling.” The messenger morphed back into a bat. In seconds it vanished into the night sky.

The screen on Stan’s phone lit up with the name, *Hotdog*, alias Vince Master, leader of the West Baumfuchian Werewolf pack, which consisted of him, his brother-in-law and a cousin.

“Yo, Vince.”

“Stan, dude, did you just get a visit from an imp from hell with a call up for the Sha’Daa?”

“Yeah, I can’t effing believe it. I just got the Howling running the way I want and now the big boys decide to end the world.”

“Screw the world, buddy. It’s going to end us.”

“Vince, don’t panic. We’re werewolves, the baddest of the bad.”

“Stan, don’t be an ass. The game is rigged. We didn’t take the humans 10,000 years ago when all they had were shamans and spears. Now they have tanks, planes, effing nuclear weapons.”

“Vince, what are you saying?”

“There’s a thumb on the scales. The game is rigged against Evil. We start winning and all of a sudden there’s a volcano, a tsunami, or a horde of magical elves on the side of the humans. Look at all the small battles we’ve lost since.

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“Point is that each time there is there’s a major battle between good and evil, us ordinary FOEs get it each time. If we win, we have the Dukes of Hell lording it over is. Christ, that would be worse than the Republicans.”

“Vince, I don’t like political hate speech. We can disagree without being disagreeable.”

“Stan,” Vince yelled, “would you focus for Hell’s sake? Me and the boys have talked it out. We’re bugging out, heading for Canada.”

“What, you think they ain’t going to hold the Apocalypse in Canada?”

“They got a lot of big empty in Canada.”

“Vince, the big boys don’t like deserters.”

“They don’t like anybody. Come with us.”

Stan rubbed his face. “But the bar, our lives, my friends-”

“You’re supposed to eat those friends tomorrow.”

Stan remained silent for a few seconds. “Nah, man. I don’t know what I’m going to do, but running doesn’t look like a solution.”

“Don’t be a fool, Stan. Get out while the getting is good. We don’t win no matter who else does.”

“Yeah.”

“Look if you change your mind, get on your Harley and head up to Aberdeen, in Saskatchewan. Follow your nose when you get north of town.”

“Okay. You and the boys look after yourselves.”

“You too, brother wolf. You too.” The phone clicked off.

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To: Vampire Rela Aisah Forces of Evil Heartland Division; Section Area

From: Commanding Demon FOE

All Forces of Evil are directed to commence offensive operations against Forces of Light from 12:01 AM on the night of the solstice. Under command of senior evil being Stan Wozniak (werewolf) you will slaughter, devour, or destroy as many of the FOL and their civilians as is practical regardless of personal danger or casualties.

Evil Forever

Commanding Demon F.O.E

Rela wandered about St. Lucia's the next day in a daze. The Sha'Daa was to break out tonight. Her well-ordered world was coming to an end. She was so distracted, as she crossed the quad, that she didn't realize that she'd walked right into Candace's overfilled pink sweater. The tall, buxom cheerleader had the biggest breasts in the school, possibly the school's history. She was also, unfortunately, a hugger and thought that Rela was her living Bratz doll. Before Rela could back away, Candace threw her arms around her, mashing her face back into the round softness and lifting her off the ground.

"Rela! Where have you been?" Candace said. "We've been looking for you for days. We're worried about you."

"Well put her down," Michelle snapped from behind Candace. "Before she suffocates." Michelle pushed her glasses back on her snub nose and rolled her eyes under her brown bangs.

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“Remember the hemophilia,” Barbara added. The slender, redhead seldom spoke over a whisper but she waved a finger at Candace.

“Oh, yeah.” Candace let Rela come up for the air. She put her hand on the tiny girl’s shoulder. “I forgot, hemophilia must be awful. I didn’t mean to be rough.”

Rela hugged the big girl back. “No, that’s all right. It’s not that bad if I just stay out of the sun and get my transfusions.”

“Poor thing,” Barbara added, “living in that house all alone.”

“Hey, it’s not that bad,” Candace said, striking a pose. “She’s got us.”

Despite what she was, or perhaps because of it, Rela was touched. The three girls had adopted her as a friendless orphan: Candace the cheerleader, Michelle the braniac and Barbara, who excelled at Home Ec and whose casseroles were the hit of the local church events.

“Hey, Rela, what’s wrong?” Michelle, ever perceptive, asked.

“It’s nothing,” she said. “I was just thinking it was so nice to have friends and hoping nothing ever changes that.”

“Nothing will,” Candace declared, thumping Rela on the back. “BFF.”

“If, you gigantic big-boobed, bubble-brained blonde, you can remember to stop thumping her. She’s delicate.” Michelle pinched Candace.

Rela looked at her friends squabbling in their good-natured way, with Barbara the peacemaker trying to separate the mock combatants. *In twenty-four hours I am supposed to slaughter all these people? How can I do that? Sure there are plenty of humans I’d kill without hesitation to live, to feed. But to slaughter thousands without feeding. That’s unnatural. And these humans...*

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“Rela,” Candace said, pulling her into the doorway. “Get out of the sun; you know it’s not good for you.”

Stan sat on the back porch of his bar, a Budweiser in hand. It was Sunday and mercifully the bar was closed and he could be alone with his thoughts.

Or well, he thought, *I was alone.* The hair on back of his neck rose as a familiar spicy scent bit at his nose. He looked up. Twenty feet above him and out of easy leaping range, floated a pretty young girl in a St. Lucia school uniform. Her eyes glowed a deep red, her black hair floated about her. She demurely smoothed down her skirt as if to make sure he wasn’t looking up it. Which he wasn’t, she looked young enough to have made that creepy.

“You’re my senior?” she said disdainfully. “Aren’t you a bit hefty for a werewolf? You look like a biker.”

“I am a biker. Come on down,” he said, not bothering to conceal the weariness in his voice. “I’m in no mood to bandy words with a smart-ass vamp.”

She remained floating out of reach. “Your people and mine have fought each other more bitterly than we ever fought humans.”

“Now we’re one big happy Force of Evil,” he said, taking a long pull on his beer.

To his surprise, she laughed, a sound like Christmas bells on a bitter cold morning.

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Down she came. The glowing eyes cooled to a red-brown. “We are so screwed. Aren’t we? I mean it is so pathetic. The Sha’Daa is going to break out through no fault of ours and we throw our fangs and claws against their science.”

Stan shrugged. “Humans never see this sort of thing coming. We always do well in the early rounds.”

“And never last in the late ones,” she returned. “The Forces of Light are always lurking, wizards, shamans, priests of every denomination, Templars.” She shuddered at the mention of the last. “The populace is ignorant, but the FOL prepare in secret just as we do.

“Are we ever meant to win,? she continued. “And why? What is in this Apocalypse for us? What do we get? What sort of world do we inherit?”

“Don’t worry too much about it. Here it’s just you and me vs. a whole town. I don’t like our odds.”

She raised an eyebrow. “I’ve smelled other werewolves in the area.”

“They’re gone.”

“Where?”

He drank some more. “Away.”

“Can we get some help?” she asked. “Where are the main attacks going in?”

He shrugged. “LA, New York, Vegas for starters. It may be a few days before anyone notices.”

“You’d think we’d merit some help,” she huffed.

He looked at her narrowly. “That what you want? Some outside monsters tearing up our town?”

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She bit her lip for a second and studied him. “No. I mean it’s not like I’m moral or that fond of the living, but I have it good here. I’ve invested so much glamour here that no one has noticed I’ve been in high school for 80 years. I get an annual supply of new virgins and...”

To Stan’s surprise, Rela sniffled. “I have friends here. I’ve never killed any humans beyond the occasional mugger or would-be rapist. I’ve had more trouble with FOEs than with humans. Some of these girls are so nice to me. They make me cakes...” She pulled out a tissue to dab at her eyes.

“I thought vampires cried tears of blood.” Stan said.

“Why?” she returned tartly. “Do you cry tears of cheeseburgers?”

Stan snorted a laugh. Then laughed again, harder, slapping his leg.

She looked down at him, offended, then began laughing too. She sat next to him.

“I sense a desire not to do this in you as well.”

Stan studied her. “You and I are of this world. We may be part of what some call chaos or evil, but we’re forms of natural things. These demons aren’t of our space-time. Their bodies, their magics, even their wishes aren’t ours.”

She smiled. “What a thoughtful werewolf you are.”

“A guy can have back hair without being a Neanderthal.”

“Well yuck, but continue.”

“Do we really owe allegiance to these demons? I was born a werewolf, but no one ever asked me what side I wanted to be on. Why does it have to be FOE?”

“I didn’t choose vampire,” Rela said. “I was turned by a very old vampire who wanted a companion. I was sick and would have died, but I was not asked either. She

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who turned me was very unusual. She trained me until my bloodlust cooled and set me on a path of coexistence. I lost her to a troll in a Romanian cave, not to any human.”

“You kill it?”

She looked away. “I was young, weak and frightened.”

“Yeah, sorry.” Stan put his beer down. “I don’t want to do this.”

“What choice do we have? Our own side will tear us to pieces.”

“Hell,” Stan said. “They can’t even spare a familiar for East Baumfuche.” He stood, decision made and depression dropping off him like snow off a wolf’s back. “I’m not doing this. This is my town, my bar, my life.”

She jumped up beside him. “And my school and my crypt!”

He put out his hand. “Put her there, partner.”

Rela wrinkled her nose but took his hand. “Now we have to figure out how to do this and survive.”

A blast of fetid air caught Rela and Stan by surprise as they sat at a table in the Howling, eating pizza. Before them stood a yellow-eyed, fanged, horned and tailed creature wearing an ornate vest, yellow pants and a fez. A satchel hung around his misshapen neck. It was the definition of ugly.

“Who are you?” Stan challenged as they scrambled to their feet. He stood ready to transform and leap upon the thing.

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“I’m Fenis, adjutant to General Mahog, FOE Central Sector Command,” it snapped

“I know you,” Stan said. “You’re the guy who was supposed to be running things around here. Every time there was a reserve meeting or some evildoing to be done, you were always off somewhere.”

“Watch with the insubordination, Hairbag. I always delegated things when I couldn’t make it.”

“Yeah, to my buddy, Hotdog, who said he hadn’t seen you in forty years and he thought you were in the Bahamas.”

“Well, now I’m back and the Sha’Daa is on. So stow the trash talk. I don’t have much time to waste in this dung heap. Things have been going badly in this sector. I just found out your buddy and his werewolf pack has deserted. There’s too much evil to do and too little time. Are you prepared to attack the town?”

“Not exactly,” Rela said.

“What? The balloon goes up on the Sha’Daa at midnight,” the demon growled, flexing his talons. He looked at them for the first time. “What are you wearing on your arms?”

Stan shifted his arm so the upside-down Red Cross they’d hastily painted was displayed. “We’re conscientious objectors. We can aid any injured evildoers, but not conduct offensive operations.”

“But you’re the only two evildoers here.”

“And if he gets hurt, I’ll be there for him,” Rela said brightly, “even though he’s a werewolf.”

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“And I’d be there for her, even though she’s a vamp.”

“Since neither of you is going to fight, the only injury you’re likely to get is a hangnail,” Fenis shouted.

“Sorry,” Rela shrugged. “But you can report back to Mahog that we’re not fighting.”

“I can’t do that,” the demon howled, hopping from one clawed foot to the other. “He’ll disembowel me for starters. Dammit, nothing is going right today!”

“Well,” Stan said patting the demon on the back, “that’s why you get paid the big bucks. Good luck, back at HQ.”

The demon flung off Stan’s arm. “Oh, no. You’re not going to cast me into the pit so easily. Bad news for you cowards and shirkers, Mahog is heading for Omaha and he likes to show his touch with the line soldiers. He’s passing through this town. What do you think he’s going to make of your conscientious objector status? You’ll be joining me in the disembowelment.”

“Damn. This sucks,” Stan mused, “a major demon coming here.”

“Our only chance,” Rela said, “is to fool the general into thinking that we’re destroying the town.”

“How the hell would we do that?”

“He’s not going to be here long. What if we took him to the crappy portion of town, set some fires, put a couple of bodies around-”

“You keeping any?”

“No,” she said. “I’m not a ghoul. But we wouldn’t need many. I’ve got a thought on that. I think I know where we can get some help.

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“What time is the general coming through?” she demanded.

Fenis stared down at her. “At about 6AM. You don’t have a lot of time for whatever gag you’re going to pull. But all I can tell you is if you can’t persuade him that you’re destroying this dump, I’ll be the guy on the other end of your intestines, pulling.”

With a flash of the traditional foul gas, he was gone.

Stan looked at the diminutive vampire. “Please tell me you have a plan.”

She grinned. “We’re going to put on a show.”

He groaned. “Anything but High School Musical.”

Rela sped through the night sky, cell phone in hand, texting furiously. “Yes. Sneak out. Tell parents, school play, sleep over at my place. Life or death!!”

Candace, Michelle and Barbara were at the school by the time she arrived. Rela landed out of sight and raced up to the girls.

“Hey, Rela,” Candace said, stretching in her brother’s leather bomber jacket. “What gives?”

“Come around back where no one can see us.” They followed Rela to the deserted spot that some of the girls used to smoke between classes.

“Girls,” Rela said, dreading their reaction. “I need you to remain calm and focus on what I have to say.”

Three pairs of eyes looked at her with concern.

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“It’s the time of the Sha’Daa, an apocalyptic battle between the Forces of Light and the Forces of Evil. It’s happening tonight, right here in our town and all over the world.”

The girls burst into nervous laughter.

Rela rose off the ground. Her power rippled through her, eyes glowed and fangs protruded. Her friends grabbed each other and screamed.

“Silence,” Rela commanded and her power cut their screams off in mid-breath.

“I am a vampire,” she said, “but I have renounced the FOE.”

“FOE?” Michelle squeaked.

Rela floated down. Her fangs retracted and her eyes cooled. “Forces of Evil. Listen. I know I have frightened you. Unhinged your understanding of reality, but you must help me save our town from what is coming.”

The girls released each other, looking back and forth. “You want to save the town?”

“Yes. I’ve lived here and attended this school for eighty years. I don’t want my world to end.”

“Eighty years in high school,” Candace said. “Wow. I thought four was hell.”

“And no one’s noticed?” Michelle asked, putting her hands on her hips.

“Vampires can glamour false memories. It takes a lot of effort, but every four years—”

“Wait a minute,” Barbara said. “I’ve seen you in daylight.”

Rela nodded. “I was taught to daywalk by a very ancient vampire. It suppresses most of my powers and I try to avoid strong light. Only those who do not slaughter

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innocent humans can do so. I've never killed an innocent. I feed only a little at a time—
”

Candace stamped her foot. “Hey! Have you bitten me?”

Barbara and Michelle’s hands flew to their own throats. They looked at Rela with accusing eyes.

Rela blushed and looked at the floor, scuffing a shoe. “Well, I have to eat to live too, you know. None of you were hurt.”

“I’m...I’m sort of remembering now,” Barbara said, rubbing her neck.

“It always did seem weird to me that so many of the girls had band aids on their necks,” Michelle said.

“Neck, hah,” Candace said crossing her arms. “That’s not where you bit me. I got it on the inner thigh.”

“You’re so tall,” Rela said. “It was easier.”

“Rela, that is sooooo gay.”

“Candace, that was dinner, not sex.”

“How old are you?” Barbara the peacemaker intervened.

“One hundred and sweet-sixteen,” Rela said, exasperation creeping into her tone.

“Anyway, back to that Apocalypse thing I mentioned. You know, end of the world Remember? We need your help.”

“We?” Candace demanded.

“Stan Wozniak and I are all of FOE locally.”

“Mr. Wozniak is a vampire?” Michelle said, goggle-eyed. “He rode to the last Rotary meeting with my dad.”

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“He’s the assistant coach on the boy’s softball team,” Barbara added, dazed.

Rela waved her hand. “Mr. Wozniak isn’t vampire...as if...he’s a werewolf.”

More astonished faces.

“He is my so-called superior locally, laughable though the thought of a vampire reporting to a werewolf is. We’re supposed to destroy the town.”

“Just the two of you?” Barbara asked.

“That’s what I said!”

“Could you?” Candace demanded. “Bullets don’t work on either of you.”

Rela sighed. “We’re both powerful and hard to kill. But this isn’t an Elvira movie. We’re both made out of matter. I won’t die from a single gunshot wound, neither will Stan. I’m not alive in the same sense you are and he heals almost immediately, but we can both be torn to pieces by guns, especially big Army ones, or hacked or burned. We’re not invulnerable.”

“How do we know this isn’t a trick to get us somewhere isolated where you can have your way with our inner thighs,” Candace said.

“Ah, Candace,” Michelle said. “We’re already in an isolated spot, alone with her.”

“Oh....right.”

“Will you help me?”

Barbara’s hands fluttered. “What can we do? You need the police, the army, the Vatican-”

“Are all going to be busy,” Rela interrupted. “East Baumfuche stands or falls to FOE with us. Are you with me?”

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Three sets of determined chins nodded.

An hour later, Candace pulled her father's big van up to the back of Miller's Department Store, passing the statue of George Remsen Baumfuche, the town's founder. The last of the staff were closing up the store. The setting sun cut harsh shadows in the alley.

"We need to let everyone get clear," Candace said. "You got your burglar tools ready, Michelle?"

Michelle pushed her glasses up her nose and waved her wire clipper. "Ready..."

A wave of faintness overtook Rela and she swayed.

"Are you ok?" Barbara asked.

Rela shook her head. "It's been too long since I had something to eat."

"Don't you mean someone?" Candace asked.

"That is the way it works."

Rela looked at Barbara.

"Why are you looking at me?"

"Would you um...mind...if I took just a little..."

"What?!"

"Candace needs to drive the truck and we need Michelle to take care of the burglar system."

"Oh, so I'm only good for a snack?"

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“No we need you, but you could rest for a few hours, unlike the others.”

“Is this really necessary?”

“Yes I’ll need all my strength to face the challenges of tonight.”

“Oh hell, if you must.”

But Barbara’s agreement was followed by fits and starts of giggling and pushing away and yelps of panic.

“Hey, Barb,” Candace snickered, “if her lips hit your neck again, you’re making out.”

“Candace Mulroy,” Barbara snapped, “you have a dirty mind.”

But the distraction gave Rela the chance to get her fangs smoothly into the young girl.

“No, wait,” Barbara cried, “I’m not ready. Wait, no.”

Rela threw a little glamour on Barbara, both to ward off any pain and to keep the girl still. She focused as strongly as she ever had and drained what she dared drain. Quickly she withdrew her fangs and pulled out her band aids and Neosporin. “Pass the drinks and snacks back here.”

She popped a Coke and handed it to Barbara. “Drink and eat as much as you can. How do you feel?”

“Woozy, a little sleepy,” Barbara said. She looked at Rela with a mixture of fear and fascination. Feeding was a very intimate experience when remembered.

Candace and Michelle exchanged frightened looks, experiencing for the first time the idea that something might look at them as food.

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“Okay,” Rela said, refreshed and not wanting her friends to dwell on it. “Let’s get going. Barbara, you stay in the van and rest.”

“Don’t have to tell me twice.” she murmured as Rela hopped out of the van.

Candace and Michelle followed her up the street, toting their bags of tools and lights. They found a large electrical box on the back of the hundred-year-old building that was Millers. Rela broke the formidable lock on the gray box. “It’s all yours,” she said to Michelle.

“Come on, Braniac,” Candace urged. “Kill that alarm.”

“Don’t get your Double-D’s in an uproar,” Michelle said, studying the wiring.

“Just because you’re flat as a…”

“Girls,” Rela said.

Michelle started judiciously snipping. “That should do it,” she said finally.

They ran over to the back of the shop. Again, Michelle went to work. “The things you learn in shop,” she muttered as she tapped and prodded. The door swung open.

“Come on,” Michelle said. They plunged into the buildings, as the girls pulled out their flashlights. Rela, who saw perfectly in pitch darkness, didn’t bother. They found what they were looking for in the storerooms at the back. Mannequins lying in stacks, some assembled, some not. Most were nude.

“Guess we need to steal some clothes, too.”

“I don’t feel right stealing from the Millers,” Candace said.

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“We are trying to stave off the Apocalypse, at least locally,” Rela replied, waving her hands. “Michelle, get some clothes. Candace, help me get these mannequins into the van.”

Rela and Candace grabbed up ersatz humans and went to the back. Candace woke the sleeping Barbara and moved the van up to the back door. Then they ran back in. Rela loaded mannequin after mannequin, then wondered where her two friends were.

She found Barb and Candace carefully going through racks, selecting outfits.

“What are you doing?” she exclaimed.

“You said get clothes,” Candace returned.

“I didn’t say go shopping. We don’t care what they are wearing.”

“Rela, no one will believe it if the clothes don’t look right.”

“These are demons from a hell dimension. They don’t know what the Gap says is fashionable this year!!”

“Ok, ok.” They began scooping up jeans and tops.

Stan moved to the back of the town morgue and slipped in through the back door. To his surprise, it wasn’t even locked.

Small towns. He made his way to the back. East Baumfuche didn’t have that many deaths in a week, but two drunks had been killed in a car crash on the highway. Nobody had claimed the bodies. It was rumored that the two unknown men might have been on the run from the law.

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Stan found the bodies in the back and quickly put them on a gurney and pushed them to his huge black Hummer. “Sorry, guys. No disrespect intended but if you save a whole town full of people, it may go better for you in the great hereafter.”

Stan loaded the bodies and drove off to the bad side of town. Next he needed as much gasoline, flares and other flammables as he could get his hands on.

Stan pulled up to the rundown strip mall beside the train tracks that held the “Twin Peeks” adult store. Rela floated down from a nearby tree and hopped in the Hummer. He checked his watch. “Show time. Those old barns in the back country should be burning now. That will keep the volunteer fire guys out of harm’s way. I set a charge on the cell phone tower too. Now, we get to work making all the mayhem and devastation we can to keep Mahog happy.”

“I hope this works,” Rela said.

“If it doesn’t, we’re both unpleasantly dead.”

“I wonder where we go when we die?” Rela said.

He looked at her in surprise. “What?”

“Demons and monsters from beyond, if they die here are never seen in their hell dimensions again. I’ve never heard of a vampire appearing in Hell.”

“No, nor have I heard of any werewolf,” Stan admitted.

“Funny, the humans think something like me would have more of the answers, but for all the fact I’m undead, I have no more idea of the afterlife than they do.”

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“Guess we better put the experience off for as long as we can,” Stan said.

Rela laughed. “You sound like a human.”

“I think of myself as one,” Stan replied, “one that becomes a wolf at need or during the full moon. But is that really so different?”

She looked at him.

“I guess so,” he said.

“I’m not a human, nor feel like one, and yet... the friendship and companionship of my young friends means a lot to me.”

“Any boyfriends?” Stan asked.

“Occasionally,” she said. “But that gets complicated. A lover demands more than a friend. My appearance tends to keep older men at bay, and the young boys, well they are only interested in sex and so few can be trusted with secrets.”

“Now *you* sound like a human,” Stan said.

She shook her head ruefully. “Let’s get this done. I have to admit, it does my vampirish heart good to commit some senseless destruction.”

“It’s not senseless,” Stan said, getting out of the Hummer. He gathered up his arsonist’s kit from the back. “This place is a blight.”

She looked at it. “What’s wrong with a little sexual deviancy?”

“Lower property values, lower tax revenues and more crime.”

Rela stared. “You really did join the Rotary club.”

“Yep, and this strip mall is nothing but this dump and two abandoned storefronts. It and the Valhalla trailer park over there should do for the destruction we need. We got

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a couple of real bodies and your gal pals will have all those mannequins ready to go shortly.”

“I see one car still here.”

“Probably the owner. We’ll scare him off.”

With Rela carrying tins of gas, they hot-footed it over to the back of the sleaze palace. The door lock caved under Stan’s boot. He allowed himself a small transformation, muzzle growing, hair filling out, ears elongating and eyes gone wolf-yellow.

Inside amidst piles of X-rated movies and paraphernalia, a weedy man looked up as the werewolf and vampire girl plunged in.

“Roowwwrrr. Awwwoooo,” Stan howled.

The man looked at them. “Oh, hey. Are you a friend of Hotdog’s? We’re closed and anyway I don’t have any new were-porn.”

“What!” Stan said.

“Yeah, you’re with the Westies right?”

Rela sighed. “How about I handle this?” She raised her hands and her voice deepened. “Look only at me.”

“Sure, babe. I like...the...school...girl.....outfiiiit.” The weedy man’s eyes rolled up in his head. In an instant Rela was on him.

“Don’t kill him,” Stan said, as he liberally splattered gasoline around the place.

“Small loss if I did,” she said. “However I’m going to top-up. I didn’t take much in my last feeding.”

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“Yuck,” he said. “I wouldn’t put teeth in that. You don’t know where it’s been or what it’s been doing.”

“Vampires have wonderful immune systems,” she said. “And I can’t afford to be fussy.” She extended her fangs and bit.

The pair were so preoccupied by their feeding and arson that they did not notice a tall, slender figure walk in behind them. But the sound of a sword whispering out of its sheath and the shiver of power the enchanted blade sang into the air got their attention.

Stan spun and Rela turned, her fangs still in the human.

The man facing them was young with a lean, aquiline face and ice-blue eyes blazing in judgment. He wore a black-leather longcoat and hanging on a chain on his chest was the sign of the deadliest of FOE banes, the Knights Templar. He held a sword of silver and steel. Cold flames ran up and down the blade.

Stan looked down at the gas cans in his paws and at Rela who was frozen with her fangs in the sleaze merchant. “This isn’t what it looks like. Rela!”

She quickly withdrew her fangs and laid the smiling man at her feet. “Who are you?”

“I’m Simon the Templar,” he said in deep voice for the whipcord body, “and you have wrought your last harm on the human world.”

“Simon Templar?” Stan said.

The human winced. “Yes.”

“Really?” Rela said. “As in da dit ta do-do do do?”

“Go ahead,” he said wearily, “I’ve heard every bad joke about Leslie Charteris, Roger Moore and Val Kilmer that exist.”

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“Listen,” Stan said. “We’re not evil. Well, only technically. You see we’re conscientious objectors—”

“Oh, please,” Simon said. “Have some pride. That’s pathetic. You have to have a conscience to be a conscientious objector.”

“No really,” Rela said. “We’re sitting out the Apocalypse, hoping you guys win.”

“While murdering and burning,” Simon grated and charged.

Rela leapt over a shelf of porn. “He ain’t dead,” she shouted over her shoulder.

“But he will be unless you save him,” Stan shouted. He threw a lighter at the nearest pile of gas-soaked porn and then pitched the gas cans to the back. The magazines caught instantly, but Stan was too slow throwing the last can. Simon, who’d been chasing Rela around a raised checkout counter, reversed direction, lunged and the sword slammed through the werewolves’ midsection, its blade protruding a foot beyond. The Templar pulled the weapon out and raised it for an overhand cut when the gas cans blew and a sheet of flame threw him backwards.

Stan and Rela raced for the front door, crashing through. The Templar recovered himself, started to chase them, then turned back to rescue the storeowner.

Stan threw the keys to Rela, who blurred over to the Hummer and started it. Stan threw open a back door and managed to climb in before collapsing from the burning wound.

Rela looked at him with frightened eyes. “You’re hurt. We need to get you help.”

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Stan gave a sickly grin. “I don’t have health insurance and the local vet doesn’t do werewolves. Just pull over near the Valhalla trailer park. I have first aid stuff in the back and werewolves are tough. We get over whatever doesn’t kill us.”

She gave him a dubious look and drove. “It’s not far enough from that Templar to suit me.”

“He doesn’t know where we’re going and we don’t have a choice. Mahog will be here before you know it.”

They bumped over the railroad tracks and roared in the direction of the Valhalla trailer park.

Rela ran in through the trailer park’s entrance, staggering as she went. A crowd of people stood there arguing with the manager, a bearded man wearing a torn t-shirt. They broke off to stare suspiciously at the weaving girl.

“Hey, are you stoned?” one man called.

“Idiot,” a woman snapped. “She’s wearing a uniform from St. Lucia’s.”

“Haw,” the man returned. “You think they don’t get stoned over there?”

“Run,” Rela shouted. “Run. A train’s derailed.... toxic gas. She pointed to the tower of smoke from the burning porn shop. Also lying in the street were the bodies Stan had stolen from the morgue.

“What?” the manager began.

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Rela moaned and toppled over. To her surprise two men leapt from the porch and caught her before she could hit the ground. She began gasping loudly, painfully for breath. "Save yourselves...."

"Call 911," a woman screamed.

"The phone's out," the manager shouted. "Who's got a cell?"

"Can't get a signal!" several people answered at once.

"No time," Rela coughed out. "Save yourselves. I'm already—" She arched her back in paroxysm and slumped. Since she actually was the undead, it was convincing. Her eyes stared sightlessly into infinity; her body breathless and slack.

"Oh, my God," a woman screamed.

"She's cold as ice," the man holding her by the shoulders announced. "She's done for."

"We've got to get out of here," someone shouted. "Get your families." People began to run, spreading panic.

To Rela's surprise the two men holding her began to lift her.

"Tom, Bill," a woman said. "It's no good. Leave her be, the poor child's gone."

"We can't leave her like this, Grams," one replied.

"Lay her on the porch," Grams said. "It's all we have time for. Jesus will understand. Get your own kids."

Rela was suddenly glad she could lie like the dead, or Grandma would have had her in tears. The men lay Rela down gently and took off.

Chester Moltrie, also known as “Chester the Molester,” chewed his mustache as he stepped out of the decrepit trailer at the back of the Valhalla Trailer Park. He saw the last cars speeding out of the main road. “What the fuck?” he wondered. “Where’s everybody going? What was all that noise about?”

“What do you care?” his partner called from inside. “Come on, man, I got a ton of meth I’m cooking here. Close the fucking door.”

“Ok, Gomer. Just wanted to make the cops weren’t coming.”

“Quit calling me Gomer, you damn wetback. If you could keep your freaking hands off the underage skirts around here, we’d have less trouble. I want to get this load done and maybe get out of town. Radio says there’s a lot of weird shit going on.”

Chester shrugged. “It ain’t got anything to do with us.” He went back in and put a loaded 12 gauge against the door, just in case he was wrong

Stan waited until the crowd of panicked renters had bolted from Valhalla in everything that could and would roll. He scrambled out and picked the bodies he’d earlier snuck onto the roadway and tossed them back in the Hummer. Then he ran up to Rela, lying dead and waxen on the porch.

“Snap out of it,” he said. “They’ve all bolted.”

She looked up at him. “Stan, you’re bleeding again.”

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He grimaced. “Damn enchanted blades. The wounds don’t heal easy, even on a werewolf. Thank God we’ll have most of a full moon. “Come on. We’ve got to get fires started in the unoccupied units.”

“I’ll go get the girls and the mannequins,” Rela said. She lifted off into the darkening sky.

“Never thought I’d be envious of a vampire,” he sighed, watching her flit off, quick as a sparrow.

Mahog the Magnificent had fought for FOE for as long as there had been good and evil. He’d also taken one too many hard knocks to the cranium from the humans Atlanteans and other ancient species before them, that had vanished in the folds of interdimensional space. Mahog was prone to bouts of irrational rage followed by confusion and frequent naps. Had it not been for a succubus sister-in-law, he’d have been “retired” a long time ago. Unlike young demons, which were frequently served up live, no one wanted to eat old demons, who were usually simply ploughed under in lieu of a gold watch.

Fenis had groaned in horror when he learned Mahog had been given command of the Sector. The old demon’s frontal assaults on ancient human strongholds in the last Sha’Daa had turned the tide of many a battle, for the humans. Fenis had decided to give the ancient demon a tour of the least dangerous area of their Sector: avoiding the SAC base at Omaha, the new FBI field training academy and a hidden fortress of the SMOF

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(Secret Masters of Fire) which contained wizards and paladins. What, he'd thought could possibly go wrong at East Baumfuche?

That was before the outbreak of pacifism, desertion and cowardice had taken out his local forces. Still, from the preliminary reports a hellbat had brought him, his choice of missing the SAC base attack had been a good one. The horde of wargs and other lesser demons were being introduced to 30mm chain gunfire from helicopter gunships with appalling results.

If only he could get the demon through East Baumfuche and off to Omaha, where things were going somewhat better, he, Fenis might be able to find a nice hole to hide out in until the victory celebration or until the pell-mell retreat allowed him to sneak off to his private cover in the Bahamas.

"Faster," Mahog bellowed from the back of the chariot. Fenis cracked a whip over the two wargs pulling the brazen gold and red chariot. Both of them farted in reprisal, something that could bring tears to the eyes of even a demon.

"Could this day get any worse?" he muttered. He turned off the side road and into East Baumfuche's run down 3rd Ward. Between urban blight and recession, it had looked pretty devastated before, but Fenis was pleased to see that Stan had managed to set fire to a lot of cars and a strip mall blazed cheerily. Bodies lay strewn about, though it seemed rigor mortis had affected almost all of them as limbs pointed in all directions.

"Nice work, eh, General?"

"Hah," Mahog roared. "You call this a slaughter? Look at those bodies. They're still mostly intact. Where was the suffering, the horror, the disembowelment? You know how I feel about a good disembowelment!"

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“I’ve heard,” Fenis nodded weakly.

“That’s the problem with modern evil! Ignoring the fundamentals.”

“Not like in your day, sir.”

“Damn straight. Keep moving. I want to finish touring this shithole before I move on to Omaha.”

Ahead lay a trailer park. A faded sign said, “Valhalla.” Underneath it someone had written, “I’d always thought it would be more.”

A half dozen wrecks, some obviously dating from the 50s had been loaded with trash and burned along with some trailers. To Fenis' horror, he noticed that the bodies liberally sprinkled over the area were mannequins. The area was festooned with fashionable size 2 dead.

The chariot rolled into the back where they found Stan and Rela near two corpses. Fenis could tell looking at them that they weren’t fresh, but at least they were real. The werewolf was leaning against a tree, a blood-soaked bandage wrapped around his chest. He looked pale and battered.

The two stared up at the demon standing in the back of the chariot.

“Greetings, Wolf and Vampire,” Mahog rumbled. “I am your commanding officer. How goes the battle?”

The werewolf started to answer, then began coughing.

“It goes well, Honored Sir.” the small vampire said. “We have slaughtered. We have burned and pillaged.”

Mahog glared down at Stan. “What happened to you?”

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Stan met his eyes. “The Forces of Light are putting up a quite a struggle. There are Templars in the area. I think they got the Westies Pack. They sprang on us when Rela was feeding on a human. Got me before we beat them off.”

“Templars,” Mahog said, his red eyes scanning the area, “good fighters, those. Gad, I’d like to get my teeth into one.”

“Speaking of getting my teeth into something,” Mahog climbed down from the chariot. What do you say to some fresh human?”

He reached down and picked up a human corpse. “Bah, this is ice-cold. It’s days dead.”

“He was one of the first we killed?” Rela chirped. But Mahog was striding past her, heading further into the park.

“Wait, General,” Fenis said desperately. “There could be Templars.”

“Stop, please,” Rela added.

“Shit,” Stan said, standing. “The jig is up.”

Mahog plucked mannequins from the trees and the ground. “What is this treachery? These aren’t bodies. What are you cowards and traitors trying to pull?”

“That’s all for me,” Fenis said, pulling a large caliber revolver from his satchel. “You two enjoy your disembowelment.” He put the pistol to his temple and fired. Demon and pistol thumped to the ground together.

Stan made an abortive step toward the gun and Mahog stamped a foot down on it, smashing it into the earth.

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“What the fuck is going on out here?” a human voice called. From the rearmost trailer, a scraggly, tattooed man, toting a shotgun and wearing a brown, leather vest, leaned out.

Mahog turned toward him. The human froze, then let a loose a shot that stung the demon.

“Rrrrrrrgh” Mahog bellowed. “I’ll be back for you two. First I’ll show you how we do it Old School.”

Chester backed up screaming and firing as the twelve-foot-tall horror raced toward him.

“What is it? Cops?” Gomer yelled from the back room, grabbing up a submachine gun. He spotted the oncoming demon.

Mahog the Magnificent charged into the blazing fire of the meth addicts, right into the meth lab. He splintered the wood of the trailer as well as the propane tank. A sheet of flame from the exploding meth lab turned into a tornado of fire and sent pieces of trailer, Mahog, Chester and Gomer in long high arcs over the area.

The Wargs pulling the chariot decided they’d had enough and raced out of the trailer park into the path of an oncoming semi. There was a horrendous squealing of brakes and the crunching of metal, wood and warg.

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“We’ve got to get out of here,” Rela said. She reached down and flung Fenis into the same fire consuming his master, then helped Stan back to his Hummer, passing a wrecked semi covered with warg parts.

“Where to?” he asked.

“My crypt is nearer than your bar,” Rela added. “We should be safe there.”

They drove like mad, Stan barely hanging onto consciousness until they got to the better suburbs.

“Oh, no,” Rela said.

Stan struggled to focus. He saw a small, “arts and crafts” style home on fire. Smoke poured out of the upper windows.

“My coffin, my stuff,” Rela wailed.

“Call the fire depart...crap.” said Stan, remembering he’d lured them out of harms way.

“Quick,” Rela said. “Into the garage. I have a hose and fire extinguisher.”

They ran in through the back door of the garage. A figure inside the doorway slammed the door behind them. He slashed at Stan, who fell over a lawnmower and crashed to the floor.

“You again,” Rela cried.

Simon the Templar struck Rela with flat of the enchanted blade. The blow wasn’t mortal, but it flung the vampire to the ground next to the prostrate werewolf.

Stan tried to reach Rela, but the exertion finished the werewolf, his eyes rolled up in his head and he collapsed. Rela crawled over to Stan, putting herself between him and the Templar.

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The sight of a vampire protecting a werewolf seemed to confuse the Templar. He brought his blade up but the movement was hesitant, without force or conviction.

“What does this mean?” he demanded.

“It means that we are no more all alike than you are,” she said. “We’ve turned our back on FOE. Maybe we aren’t FOL, but we don’t deserve to die.”

“You live off the blood of the living.”

“Everything draws life from something else. I’ve learned not to kill save in self-defense.”

“You have an elastic definition of that,” Simon replied. “We have files on you Rela. You have slain humans.”

“Rapists and muggers,” she replied, “who would have preyed on me or on what they thought I was, a helpless girl. In wiser days you humans thinned those packs out. Now you’re all so concerned about their upbringing and whether mommy was nice enough to them before they started serial killing.”

He gestured with the sword. “And the wolf?”

“Stan Wozniak is the name,” Stan growled, surprising Rela. “My family’s been werewolves from time out of mind. We control it pretty well.”

“Not always so. Again there are files on you.”

“Yeah, I werewolfed a little in Iraq. Uncle Sam was paying me and so what? Your beef with me that I killed Republican Guards? That was what the Marines do. Semper Fi. I just ate em after. But I’m an old wolf now and I run a bar. Farmers lose sheep and cattle occasionally but not children or wives. So again, what’s your beef with us?”

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“I’ve never spoken so long with FOEs before,” he said, almost as if to himself. “This is unsettling. Perhaps the old master was right and such conversation is dangerous.”

“So’s thinking for yourself,” Stan shot back.

“I’m sorry,” Simon said. “Truly sorry. It does seem as if you lured that demon to his destruction and tried to save the town, but I cannot chance your lying to me.”

“And if we’re telling the truth?” Rela managed. The pain in her side from the glancing blow of the magic weapon was growing.

“Then I will have a great penance to make. And you will both have paid for those lives of humans that you did take. Whether in a good cause or not, they were humans.”

A door banged open behind Simon and Candace raced in. “Hey, you,” she shouted, “leave them alone.”

Simon raised a palm to her. “Stay back. I hate this too now. But it must be done.”

Candace slipped between them and Simon. The Templar faced her but drew his sword away from her. Simon’s back was to the door as Michelle and Barbara made their stealthy way in.

“Girl, get out of the way. You’re only making this harder.”

“Well,” Candace said, as Michelle picked up a nearby lamp. “Speaking of making things harder.” She whipped off her sweater. “Get a load of these.”

Rela’s last sight was of Candace flashing her impressive artillery at the bemused Templar as Michelle swung the lamp at his head.

The world came back slowly to Rela, a blurry world of shadows now filled with a horrible growling snarl. A pain throbbed in her side where she'd been struck down.

"Am I in Hell?" she wondered.

The shadows resolved, but she was no wiser. She appeared to be in a very tacky room, with fish and dead animals on the walls, beanbags and other overstuffed furniture and a very large TV. It might be Hell.

Slowly she turned her head, fearing it might come off if she moved faster. The growling came from Stan. The werewolf was a sorry sight, bandaged in shreds of shirt and pants, lying on his back, mouth open, snoring in a way that promised sleep apnea.

"You're alive!" a voice cried.

The sound went through Rela's head like a knife.

"Well, as much as you were before," Michelle said. Rela recognized her three friends standing around the couch, looking down at her anxiously.

"Honestly," Barbara said, her voice trembling. "We thought you were done for, but Mr. Wozniak said you weren't and to get you underground."

"This isn't my crypt," Rela said.

"No," Stan said. The werewolf opened a bleary eye to look at her. "Sorry, the fire the Templar set got your place."

"The Templar!" Rela said, sitting up slowly with all three girls trying to assist her. "What happened? Surely you three couldn't overcome him."

"No," Michelle said. "Though Candace nearly did."

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“These things are power,” Candace said, preening.

“Anyway,” Michelle continued, “he sensed my attack at the last second and ducked the lamp. But with the three of us standing over you two and begging for your lives, well, he was kind of helpless. He didn’t want to believe you were good, or anyway, not evil, but I guess he lacked the conviction to do anything with us opposing him. He’s down at the Motel 8. Says he’s going to keep an eye on things for a while. I don’t think we have to worry about him.”

“Well, maybe Candace does,” Barbara giggled.

“Rela, are you going to be OK without your coffin?” Michelle asked.

Rela sighed. “I like a nice coffin. They are snug, but I don’t need to rest in one. I do need some place safe from the sun. I will be too weak to daywalk for quite a while.”

“Stay here,” Stan said. “My den is underground.”

“You,” she said, “a werewolf, would take me in?”

“I’m not so big on rules and we made a good team. From what the girls tell me, the Apocalypse is going the humans’ way, though there have been a lot of casualties. We may need each other and these girls to survive in this new world.”

She looked around. “Could we redecorate?”

Stan snorted a laugh. “Gad, first thing any female wants, redo the cave. Sure.”

His head fell back on the pillow.

Rela looked up at the girls. “We are still friends?”

“BFF,” Michelle said, with a thumbs-up. Barbara and Candace nodded.

“Then I hate to ask but, Candace, you are the biggest and strongest. Could I perhaps...”

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Candace sighed. “Ok, but on the neck this time.”

To: Commanding Officer Sector 112, Area 14.

From Rela Aisah, surviving officer, Forces of Evil, North American, Midwest, small town operations unit 1349.

Regret to report a disastrous engagement with the Forces of Light. The enemy attacked with overwhelming numbers and by surprise on the first morning of operations. Commanding Sector General Mahog and his adjutant Fenis were killed in mortal combat with Knights Templar unexpectedly appearing on the scene. All other member of FOE locally are missing and presumed dead, other than myself and werewolf, S. Wozniak, who was wounded with a Templar sword. I am unable to continue offensive operations on my own, as my crypt has been destroyed, and the Templars remain in the area. I will attempt to hold here until relieved.

If no relief possible, please consider this area as lost to FOE. Better luck next Sha'Daa.

Sincerely

Rela Aisah

Vampire Commanding East Baumfuche