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BITING DRACULA

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Cover Art: www.ireadromance.com

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It all started with a blow job gone horribly wrong.

Talk about unsafe sex. If I ever caught my sister doing what I did, I'd slap on the cuffs first and ask questions later.

No, not those kind of handcuffs. Real handcuffs. Geez, what kind of gal do you think I am?

See, I'm a cop. My Irish dad's hunger for justice, my Latina model mom's figure and my own corkscrew-crazy hair combine to make me, Elena O'Rourke—no, actually it's Elena O'Rourke Strongwell as of today, October 31. That was part of the problem. Big Viking hubby had been out of town for three weeks, and I missed him, bad.

Bo and I were driving from Illinois to the Wisconsin Dells, our honeymoon destination. Since he was a master vampire we were in the shielded Maybach sedan (which he insisted on calling a saloon). Apparently he thought that meant more than shielded from the sun, which was just setting. He started nibbling down my neck.

Heat curled in me. My fingers tightened on the wheel. "Hey, buster. No annoying the driver."

"Is this annoying, Detective?" His hand joined in, lifting my t-shirt to expose my violet lace bra, rubbing my nipple through it into a tight pearl. I felt every stroke like hot butter on naked skin. Shoot me with a Glock, that's what I got for letting a guy buy my underwear—still hadn't gotten that padded bra.

"Okay, not annoying. But distracting. I'm trying to drive—*yikes*."

His mouth swooped onto the nub of my breast, nipped and licked. "Do you want me to stop?"

"Hell no." I kept my eyes glued to the road, fighting the urge to clamp them and moan. "Since you were away for weeks training with the most sadistic vampire in the country, I'm starving for this."

"Shapeshifting takes time to learn. And the Ancient One is an excellent trainer, not sadistic at all. Well, maybe a little."

"I meant the way he kept you in Iowa until *just* before the wedding. Have I mentioned I haven't gotten any for almost *a month*?"

He kissed my breasts. "Poor baby." A laughing purr ruffled his voice. "Shall I get right to it then?"

I suppressed another groan. "I thought you'd never ask." I lifted my hips and he slid jeans and thong down my thighs. I spread my legs as far as the jeans let me, all of about three inches.

Romance, great. Loving, fantastic. But come on. It'd been three weeks and I was horny.

In that almost omniscient way of his, Bo must have sensed exactly how horny because

without any prep at all he thrust one finger into me.

“Uhhh.” I gasped at the intense pleasure radiating from his ultrahot finger, pleasure so sharp it was almost pain. My hands clamped on the wheel. We were going around Madison on Highway 92, stuck behind a camper. I wriggled on Bo’s thick finger, wishing for long open roads and a cloudless blue sky. Better yet a bed, but that was still almost an hour away.

He began to suckle me, his fangs unsheathing sleek and long against my breast. His thumb slid down the nose of my clit, caressed. I pumped my hips against him, speedometer creeping up until I nearly rammed the camper’s ass. Adrenalin hit me, the kind that says *you’re about to die you moron*, and I yanked my right foot up. We faded back.

“Maybe this isn’t such a hot idea. Bo—”

He hadn’t heard me. His fangs sank into my breast. Needles of hot sex zapped me. My body convulsed.

My foot hit gas.

We passed that camper doing ninety miles an hour. I checked for oncoming before I pulled out but if the road hadn’t been clear I’d have been up the camper’s tailpipe halfway to the roof. Bo’s orgasmic fangs, his rubbing thumb and rhythmically thrusting finger smacked me into overdrive. The fact that I was starving for it helped. Thank you, Mr. Scary Ancient.

Then we were on open road and I managed to back off to seventy. Bo pulled fangs out to lick the fiery trickles of blood, purring the deep thrum of a jungle cat. “Fuck, Elena. You taste even better than before.”

“Less talking.” I torqued my hips up as far as the jeans would allow. “More action.”

He growled and thrust a second finger into me. I yowled, jerked the steering wheel. We hit the wakeup strip, the *brrrr-it brrrr-it* juddering through me like shockwaves. Rigid self-control brought the Maybach back onto smooth pavement—that and me biting my tongue. Bo started to thrust in rhythm.

I panted, striving to control the trembling in my arms and legs. The Maybach’s power steering responded to every quiver. We hit the rumble strip twice more and crept up to eighty while Bo mercilessly drove me toward a hard climax.

Then he leaned down and opened his scorching mouth on my pussy.

His tongue washed my clit like a Jacuzzi jet. I screamed. The car went *eeee-erk eeee-erk* as my foot convulsed on the accelerator. If I were a traffic cop I’d have thought me drunk and arrested me. As it was I pumped my hips so forcefully against Bo that even Mr. Immovable Object wavered.

Bo anchored my hips and licked me twice as hard. “I love your taste.”

I mewled. My eyes were slits, open by willpower alone. This was insane, this was nuts, but I wasn’t stopping. Not a conscious choice—I was coming. And I was coming *now*.

“Mmm. I feel the ripples starting.” Bo raised his head. His blue eyes were clouded with lust, his mouth open to accommodate long, sleek fangs. “Here it comes, love.” His fangs sank into my pubic mound and his fingers thrust so deep I stood straight up in my seat.

The seatbelt caught me, held me. I strained against it as my pleasure crested, snapping my eyes open and cramping every muscle in my body. I exploded with a hissed scream, sailing over a great chasm of a climax, broad and wide and sweet as a river canyon. Bo bit down again and—

A man streaked across the road in front of me. I pulled off the accelerator. A second form tore after the first, coming out of left field an instant before I jammed on the brakes. I saw him smack the hood of the Maybach, caught an impression of black jacket, jet hair, sapphire-blue eyes and a hewn face that would make Christian Bale weep. I had time to think *My God I hit a—* before I saw his hand punch off the hood, translating the car’s velocity into a hard thrust after the first form. And then he was gone, disappearing into the brush and gathering darkness.

The Maybach swerved, as if the man were so strong he’d shoved us off course. I corrected but forgot about the power steering. We veered right, bounced over the shoulder and into a stand of trees, hitting a pine with a sick crunch. I hate that sound.

Windshield appeared an inch from my nose. Then I snapped back against the headrest. Damn vampires, taking out the airbags. Utter silence followed.

I sat in the front seat, just breathing. My cop brain was sorting facts, taking stock. Me myself was doing well just remembering to breathe.

“That was fun.” Bo sat up beside me, looking around with interest. A trickle of blood ran from his forehead, but the skin sealed before my eyes. Vampires healed fast. “That must have been some orgasm.”

“That crash wasn’t because...didn’t you see them? Two guys ran in front of us. One hit the hood.”

“My head was buried between your legs,” he said, all reasonable. He popped the seat belt releases. “Which way did he bounce? I’ll do CPR.”

“No need. He pushed off. That’s what made us swerve.”

Bo’s blue eyes sharpened. “Vampire?”

I hadn’t processed it at the time, but that made sense. “Hunting a human?”

“We’d better find out.”

I pulled up my pants and we extracted ourselves from the wreck. I made sure my limbs worked and checked my knife in its leg sheath. “I wish I had packed my gun. Who said I wouldn’t need it? Oh, yeah, that’d be you.”

Bo just smiled. He had a killer dimple that shut me up. We started off. We should have stayed with the car but rogue vampires are tricky and dangerous. Only a few humans know how

to hurt them. I'm one.

The brush lining the road was unbroken. We worked our way back, finally found the snapped branches that meant intruder. "Yeah, a gun would be nice about now. Wish you hadn't tossed it to make room for more slinky underwear. Should have thought ahead." I pushed, irritated, at the restricting foliage. "Speaking of thinking ahead—if we're trailing a vampire we'll never catch him before he nails the human. Maybe you should go on without me. I'll catch up."

"Too dark. You'd never find me. Carry you?"

"You'll need your hands."

"Piggyback, then." Bo presented his broad back and I climbed on.

He set off at a lope, muscles working easily under me, strength rolling between my thighs. Three weeks' need exploded in my crotch. I gripped tight, tilted my hips and enjoyed the ride. Hey, live in the moment, right?

We hit farmland, fields of grass and corn. Bo slowed, staring at the gentle hills. "Damn. Now I remember what's familiar about this place. Dracula."

I thought of the little man in plastic cape and fake-looking fangs who I'd met in August. "Vlad's in Meier's Corners."

"Not him. The real one."

"Wisconsin, Transylvania?"

"Dracula hasn't been in Transylvania for five hundred years, because—"

A rustle and a flash of black interrupted him, the vampire zig-zagging fast. Bo burst after. I hunkered down, wind hitting my face until my eyes watered. "Hang on," Bo shouted, like I wasn't already wrapped on him like cellophane. Then he launched himself into the air and my stomach dropped out my toes, and I tried to fuse myself to his skin.

Bo hit the black jacket like a torpedo. The guy folded in two, fell back and down. Bo and I fell with him. We all hit dirt together.

The guy, maddeningly, continued to roll. Like a superball he rolled up, out of the tackle, and took off running.

"*Damn it.*" Bo sprang to a crouch, pushed off like a panther. My hair whipped around my face so hard I couldn't see. The guy was in trouble now. *Now* Bo was serious.

We hit the guy again. This time Bo's claws were grappling hooks, digging under the black leather, hooking on ribs.

I expected the guy to howl. To wrench away in panic.

Instead he grabbed Bo's wrists and curled forward. Twisting wrists while flipping his hips, he tossed Bo and me off.

Faced with broken wrists or letting go of the guy's ribs, Bo let go. We hit the ground—or actually Bo crash-landed on hands and knees. Worried about hurting me, so I jumped off.

I'd figured without super vampire speed. My momentum slammed me into the dirt and sent me sliding a good ten feet. I hadn't even gotten my breath back when an arm wrapped around my throat and jerked me up. The arm wore black leather.

In front of me Bo leaped to his feet, muscles pumped, arms spread like a Western duel, shoulders about ten feet across. "Let go of my wife or you're *dead*."

"Your wife?" The deep voice behind me was touched with a lilting accent I didn't recognize. "You're Strongwell?"

Bo's eyes narrowed. "Do I know you?"

"No. But perhaps you've heard of me. Glynn Rhys-Jenkins. I work for the Ancient One."

"Funny. I didn't see you there, this past three weeks."

"I'm more of a utility infielder, doing odd jobs. A bit of a consultant." He spoke into my ear. "If I let you go, lovely human, will you promise not to shoot me?"

"No."

"Ah, well that clinches it then, doesn't it? Who else but Elena Strongwell would threaten a vampire? Your reputation precedes you, my dear." He gave me a little shove.

I stumbled into my hubby's arms. If I'd had my gun I'd have shot him. Glynn, that is. Maybe the hubby too, it being his fault I didn't have said gun. Unpacking it to stuff in a few more girly negligees, right. Where were his priorities?

"Perhaps you'd both like to join me in the hunt, then," Glynn said. "To catch Dracula before he starts slaughtering humans."

"He's awake?" Bo's voice was tight. Not much worries my master vampire, so I knew this was serious.

"Yes. He's not fully functional yet, though, so we can still track him down. But that won't last long. So if you're ready?" He looked from Bo to me, sapphire eyes so dark they were almost purple.

Bo tossed me onto his back and we took off.

Glynn and Bo ran side by side at an easy lope, maybe thirty miles per hour. Well, an easy lope for vampires. Bo said, "How did this happen? He wasn't due to rise for another ten years."

"*Years?*" My voice wavered as I bounced on his back. "Don't vampires rise every night? Was Drac drugged? And if he's *the* Dracula, evil incarnate, why haven't you guys just destroyed him?"

"He cannot be destroyed." Like Morgan Freeman, Glynn's musical baritone made hearing horrible news almost pleasurable. "He's the only such that we know of, though we don't know what makes him so. The best we can do is cut off his head and remove his heart because they take a while to grow back, and humanity is safe for another century or so."

"I thought vamp heads couldn't grow back. Something about the mind still being human."

“Not Dracula,” Bo said. “We think his brain is no longer even part human. He’s pure vampire.”

A killing machine. I shuddered. “So you bury him? Why not just leave him out for the sun to do its thing?”

Glynn answered that one. “He seeps into the ground and spreads like a plant. Then we don’t know where to find him. So we bury him where we can relocate him. It used to be London since so many of us lived there. But after the Ripper debacle the Ancient One tasked us to find a better way. I figured out the cave angle.”

“Cave angle?”

“Caves are at a constant temperature year-round. Without temperature fluctuation we can calculate how long until Dracula regenerates. We picked Cave of the Mounds here. Crystal Lake Cave is closer to the Ancient One, but Wisconsin is cooler. Although now we have motion sensors, which is how we knew the monster was rising.”

“So what happened that he’s up early?”

“Maybe global climate change affected the cave. Whatever, the sensors alerted us and I was deputized to come after him. I’m a good tracker, among other things. Ah, there is his spoor. He went northwest.”

We ran over open fields, not seeing anything until we crossed another highway. Corn husks and hay gave way to the shorn grass of a small subdivision.

Just disappearing behind a house was a slim pale man. We leaped after.

The bastard was mounting the stoop of a house. Bo put me down and I wished again for my gun. But police work had taught me to make do with what I could find. In this case it was a broomstick yanked from the butt of a straw witch.

I shouldered the broom like a rifle, counting on darkness and a bit of theater to carry me.

“Stop or I’ll shoot!”

Dracula spun. His white face gleamed eerily in the porch light, bloody fangs exposed. Both hands shot into the air. “You want my candy, lady? Here, take it.” He shoved a bag at me, paper crackling with his shivers.

October 31. Just face-smack me with a Mauser. This was a kid in Trick or Treat costume.

We hit the trail again, found we were in Mount Horeb. Drac’s spoor crisscrossed the village like a drunk. Following it, we surprised maybe a hundred Draculas, each imposter jacking up our adrenalin. Considering the entire population was less than seven thousand people, a hundred’s saying something. Maybe a sale on Dracula costumes, or they knew subconsciously that the original was buried nearby.

Only he wasn’t buried any more. Why did all this warm walking blood have to be out *tonight?*

“Who are *you*?”

I looked up to see a man blocking us, eyes narrowed in suspicion. He tugged a couple little Dracs closer to him. “You’re not from around here.”

Jumping jelly donuts. All these kids, and here we were, freaky looking adults wandering around like perverts. This could be disastrous.

Glynn nudged Bo. “I can’t shift. Do your thing.”

Bo glared at him but dutifully passed his hand over his face. A moment later my husband’s skin was white, his nose was red and bulbous, and his beautiful ash-blond waves were crinkly red springs. “We’re the entertainment.”

“*Clown*.” The youngest child burst out crying.

Glynn’s eyes went blood red, his face plated. His fangs emerged and he hissed, as if there were a danger he could fight.

The child’s sobs died. “Dracula!” He tore loose from his father—to give Glynn a hug. Both the father and older boy looked at Glynn with respect. Glynn flushed red.

Drac was their *hero*. After the trio had bestowed gifts of candy and gone on their way I asked, “What was all that about?”

Flags of color stained Glynn’s sculpted cheekbones. “I fought a couple rogues here, in front of some kids. I pretended to be Dracula as a cover.”

“You *what*?” Bo’s clown look was gone but his eyebrows winged so high they could’ve been painted on.

Glynn shrugged one shoulder. “I never thought they’d tell about it. Or if they told they wouldn’t be believed. At least this makes our job easier.”

I planted fists on hips. “This makes our job *harder*. All these people, instead of running from Drac, will walk right up to him.”

“No, that’s a good thing,” Bo said. “Running people are prey. Even semi-awake, Dracula would pursue them automatically.”

Glynn’s nostrils flared. He knelt on the ground. “He’s been here.”

Bo drew in a sharp breath. “You smell blood?”

“Not human, thank goodness. But he’s moving less erratically. We need to go faster.” Glynn rose. “Carrying your wife will draw attention. Maybe you should leave her here.”

I bared teeth like I had fangs. “Ain’t happening.”

“We’ll need her,” Bo said. “Fortunately I have a solution.”

And we were on the trail again.

“I wish I had my gun,” I said for the umpteenth zillionth time as I jounced on my husband’s broad shoulders. “But no, you insisted I wouldn’t need it on our honeymoon. That all I’d need was lingerie and nightwear.” I thumped his hard muscles. “Which *you’ll* just keep taking off.”

“And you’ll love it,” he replied smugly, which shut me up. Not because it was a great comeback, although it was. But because Bo’s velvet voice was coming from the velvet muzzle of a *horse*.

I was riding a golden stallion, playing my version of an Irish-Latina Lady Godiva. Kids and parents saw us and waved. Would have been fun, if not for the very real threat of Dracula.

“When we catch him, how are we going to handle it?” Glynn said. “He’s certain to be surrounded by people. Cutting off his head will be a bit obvious. Not to mention we’ll need all of our preternatural speed to catch him before he escapes.”

“Elena will figure it out. That’s her specialty, keeping humans unaware of us.” Bo’s pride was obvious in how he swished his tail. “She makes it look easy.”

Oh, sure, easy. Stop a vampire from using his super speed or misting ability while I mass-hypnotized a bunch of people. Easy.

And then I thought, heck, it *is* easy. Given that said vamp was more monster than human.

Glynn stopped with a low growl. “There he is.”

A slim and pale man floated down the main street. Dracula, the real deal, was no taller than me. Way smaller than my massive Viking. I wondered what all the fuss was about.

Then our eyes met. An ice cold shiver ran down my spine. Dracula’s ruby eyes were *dead*. Not blank-dead, but as if the imps of hell danced in his brain. This guy could kill me like I’d kill a mosquito. No, not even that much emotion. He’d kill me like he’d pull the wings off a fly.

I slid off Bo’s back and ran.

Dracula’s vampire circuits snapped on. He blew into mist and came after me, so fast even Bo and Glynn couldn’t catch him.

Before I could draw breath to scream he solidified around me, trapping me. I lifted my chin like I was under his spell, felt my pulse beating like a beacon. He opened his mouth, fangs dripping. His eyes bored into me, demanding my complete surrender.

Yeah, right.

He was a fifteenth century male who’d been out of touch for a while. I was a twenty-first century cop.

I kned him in the groin. He wasn’t expecting it, women having come a long way in the past few hundred years. He howled, unable to do anything but bend over and hurt. So he couldn’t mist out when Bo and his patrol blade misted in. Glynn ran up a moment later, drew a huge, gleaming-bright blade etched with writing. I stepped back while they chopped off Drac’s head and dug out his heart.

There was a collective gasp from around us. My vision had gone narrow while I dealt with Drac but now I realized we had an audience. Sweet cream-filled donuts, this could be trouble.

I scooped up the head. Thinking fast, I held it out and bowed. “Thank you! This reenactment

of Dracula's Doom has been brought to you by Dawn Trucklines—'When It Absolutely Has To Be There By Dawn'."

There was a spatter of applause. Glynn retrieved a jack o' lantern from someone's front porch and plopped it on Drac's shoulders (the body still reeling around, ugh), and the applause strengthened. Bo snatched a hat off someone's head and started passing it around. That made us golden.

We also got fifty bucks. Sweet.

"Someone stole all my sexy nighties." I stood with Bo next to the wrecked Maybach. Glynn was off reburying Dracula for another hundred years' nap.

"You complained that I'd just peel them off you anyway." Bo pulled me to his massive body, purring.

"True." I snuggled in, considered the car's smashed front end. "How are we going to get to the Dells now?"

"Well..." Bo shimmered. A golden stallion pawed the ground in front of me.

"Okay then." I climbed on. He galloped and trotted, and by the time we reached our bed and breakfast my vulva had been rubbed to two drenching climaxes.

Which only meant that when Bo tumbled me at last into the king-sized bed, I was starving for him. He braced himself on muscular arms above me, his erection tickling my curls. I spread my thighs so welcoming-wide I was doing the splits. His chest was pumped and flushed, his nostrils flared. "Damn, Elena, you smell wonderful."

Since I'd been running all night, it wasn't my perfume. But for Bo, it never was. "I taste even better." I turned my head, offering my pulse.

He grunted. "I'm not Dracula. I still have a human brain, human emotions."

"Thank goodness for that. How else could you love me? But you're also a vampire." I arched my neck, baring jugular. "How else can I love you?"

"Elena," he breathed, and buried his fangs in my throat. At the same instant he drove his cock deep. My starving pussy sucked him deeper still.

I gave myself over to the intense sexual power of my vampire, the dark pleasure of his love. And it was love. My fiery creature of the night was tempered by his humanity. The deep, rhythmic thrusts, the sharp bite that drove me to a powerful climax also branded me to the core. To my heart, to my soul.

Soul. At one time I'd accused Bo of being a soulless monster. His reply was to question me. *"Are you so sure that I'm soulless, Detective? Have you proof? Ever actually seen a soul to know I'm without one?"*

That Halloween I had my answer. Because as we made love, I stared into his eyes, the vast

and stormy blue of a northern sea, and saw his profound love for me.

And I knew I had branded his heart and soul too.

About the Author

Mary Hughes is a computer consultant, professional musician and writer. At various points in her life she has taught Taekwondo, worked in the insurance industry, and studied religion. She is intensely interested in the origins of the universe. She has a wonderful husband (though happily-ever-after takes a lot of hard work) and two great kids. But she thinks that with all the advances in modern medicine, childbirth should be a lot less messy.

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