


Staked

J.F. Lewis

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UNREPENTANT. UNIMPRESSED. AND TOTALLY UNDEAD.

Eric's got issues. He has short-term and long-term memory problems; he can't remember who he ate for dinner yesterday, much less how he became a vampire in the first place. His best friend, Roger, is souring on the strip club he and Eric own together, and his girlfriend, Tabitha, keeps pressuring him to turn her so she can join him in undeath. It's almost enough to put a Vlad off his appetite. Almost.

Eric tries to solve one problem, only to create another: he turns Tabitha into a vampire, but finds that once he does, his desire for her fades - and her younger sister, Rachel, sure is cute. When he kills a werewolf in self-defense, things really get out of hand. Now a pack of born-again lycanthropes is out for holy retribution, while Tabitha and Rachel have their own agendas--which may or may not include helping Eric stay in one piece.

All Eric wants to do is run his strip club, drink a little blood, and be left alone. Instead, he must survive car crashes, enchanted bullets, sunlight, sex magic, and werewolves on ice--not to mention his own nasty temper and forgetfulness.

Because being undead isn't easy, but it sure beats the alternative.

Staked Details

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From Reader Review Staked for online ebook

Ranata Clark says

Meet Eric, a vampire that blacks out and when he awakens, somebody's dead. He has a human girlfriend that wants him to turn her into a vampire so they can be together for all eternity and like an idiot, he goes and does it even though it never seemed to work out before. Now he's checking out her little sister..In between women problems, he has werewolves out for his blood. What's a short term memory losing vamp to do?

I thought this story was brilliant. I loved the plot and I thought it flowed together quite well. You got a different perspective on Vampires and Eric is as flawed as any human being. He was likeable even though he was still supposedly an evil vamp.

I recommend it to all those that like a little comedy with their undead. Great story and I'll be waiting for the sequel.

Shannon C. says

This is the first book I've read by this author. I usually love urban fantasy books, but this one not so much.

What I liked:

1. It's an urban fantasy with a good amount of suspense and action
2. The vampires aren't watered down--they are scary killers

What I didn't like:

1. The characters--and when I say that I mean ALL of the characters. They just were not appealing. I wasn't interested in reading about any of them and really had to force myself to finish the book. The lead guy was a complete pr*ck and he made decisions that had me shaking my head thinking WTF? He cheats on his girlfriend with a teen girl he thinks is his girlfriend's sister. Most of the female characters are generally positioned as brainless bimbos.
2. The lead guy is a 'mary sue' character (or whatever you call the male equivalent). He starts out being the most powerful type of vampire (a 'vlad') but then you find that he has even more 'special' powers.
3. Because it's told in first person POV the fact that the characters are really annoying, make it even tougher to read. I really didn't want to be in their heads.
4. The mystery wasn't too tough to figure out. I suspected the culprits pretty early on in the story. And, sure enough, they turned out to be the betrayers.
5. The ending, which leaves you hanging

I won't be reading another book by this author.

marlene says

this book reminded me of the queen betsy series. well, if betsy was a man with a heck of a libido and a case of serious memory lapse. i think i fell in love with eric by page three when i was laughing so hard i choked

on my drink. this book had some truly hilarious moments in it. ok more than moments, most of the book had me in stitches. not too fond of the female lead tabby. i was kind of hoping she would get blown up along the way. if i had to read her panting like a puppy how "he loves me! he has to love me! he does too love me! uh huh" i was going to vote they send her to bora bora to get a tan. greta however made up for it. they were really all such well done characters that i will even overlook the holy cow cliffhanger.

Ladiibbug says

#1 Void City series - Urban Fantasy

Originally Read: 10/1/2009

Second Read: 2/6/15

Hilarious, very entertaining, lots of action & sometimes violent UF -- this is **not** a pnr romance with a vampire hunk as the leading man. There are relationships, but romance is not the main storyline.

A varied group of characters are lively, very, very funny (or weird, or bizarre) and the many sub-plots are so much fun!

Eric and his friend Roger, both vampires, co-own Demon Heart, a strip club. Eric's girlfriend is hounding him to turn her into a vampire. He has issues with other women too. In a rage episode he doesn't recall, Eric kills a werewolf, and now he has a dangerous pack after him seeking retribution.

Eric may be a vampire, but he has weird problems. Like short and long term memory problems. He often forgets about sunrise with ROFL results. He's got a bad temper - he goes into rages and blacks out, and people usually die. If only he could remember ...

It's books like Staked that compel me to drive myself crazy trying to read as many first books in a series as I possibly can in order to be absolutely sure I don't miss a diamond like Staked among the other pretty rocks and gems.

Staked will be among my favorite reads of 2009 in any genre, and is now tied for #1 favorite UF read of 2009 (tied with A Rush of Wings - Adrian Phoenix).

#2 ReVamped is on my next Amazon order!

Kat Kennedy says

I'm going to list for you three incredibly stupid things done on behalf of humanity. Now, I'm not saying these are the stupidest things ever done in the history of man, but I'm saying they probably cut it pretty close.

1. The Mary Rose was commissioned and built by the English Navy in 1511. If wikianswers is anything to go by then the roughly **Kat looks for the pound symbol** where's the fucking pound symbol? Okay, never

mind about the pound symbol, just use your imagination. The 400 pounds plus the later 316 pounds put toward the Mary Rose would today equal 214,800 pounds... kind of. That's just for materials though - not labour or the amount of money it would cost for the labour to then build the damn boat.

It was the first real warship of its time and held around 91 canons all aimed at blowing your mind with the awesomeness of this boat.

So it was launched into its first battle, the battle of Solent, where it was up against the French Navy. It fired its big ass guns and then turned around to fire again.

Except, you know, when you have a bunch of holes in your ship that are really close to the water then you pretty much don't have a ship anymore which is exactly what happened when a stray breeze tilted the Mary Rose and managed to sink her so quickly that the French supposedly didn't even have time to fire a single shot at her.

"Listen, you French Frogs! We'll give you until the water reaches our nostrils to surrender before we destroy you with our Brittishness!"

2. Robert O'Hara Bourke

Funny thing about any Australian explorers that Australian's actually like - they all sucked. Hard.

Robert O'Hara Bourke is famous for sucking particularly badly when he set out to be the first man to traverse Australia.

Now most people hear Australian Outback and think of lots of sand and kangaroos maybe? It helps more to think of the Australian outback as an intelligent, malevolent force who definitely wants you dead but isn't at all interested in making quick, painless or easy. The Australian Outback is kind of a bitch that way. Where Bourke wanted to go, he would travel into places so hot that thermometers regularly broke and required at

least some skill to find anything at all to eat or drink.

Unfortunately Bourke had absolutely no skill or experience living off the land, shunned the aid of anyone the least bit helpful (except for Willis) and set out on his incredibly well-stocked expedition, ditching vital supplies along the way because, hey, they just weren't going fast enough for impatient Bourke.

They hit rough spots and eventually Bourke and three others separated from the main party, telling Brahe to stay in Copeland until absolutely necessary to leave. They made a dash for the Gulf of Carpentaria. They reached there but the journey proved too much on their return to Copeland where Brahe was supposed to be waiting for them. They did arrive, in terrible condition, but found a note from Brahe telling them that he had waited for 4 months and eventually had to leave. In fact, he'd left JUST that morning only a few hours earlier.

Bourke and what remained of his companions decided to head to a cattle station 240 kms away because they were too weak to catch up to Brahe.

Meanwhile Brahe felt bad for leaving and returned to Copeland. Finding it still deserted and seeing nothing changed, he decided to go rustle up a rescue party but didn't leave any supplies or pack animals behind in Copeland.

THEN, if you can actually believe this, Bourke and the surviving co. decided THEY couldn't reach the cattle station and ALSO returned to Copeland...AGAIN, once again barely missing Brahe.

Then they died. The end. But it's okay because they're totally super famous in Australia now.

Everything in this picture wants your blood. Even the sand.

3. Gary Hoy wanted to prove that highrise glass is unbreakable. A lawyer from Toronto, he has apparently become something of a joke. If only I could reach such heights of fame by claiming that something is

impossible to do and then dying from it. Sounds criminally easy.

He decided to prove his point that the windows on the 24th floor were unbreakable and he decided that the best way to prove this point was to toss his fragile, breakable and ONLY body (let's remember that it's not like he kept a spare in the closet) at the glass. The first time it didn't break and, feeling triumphant, he had another go.

It would be bad enough if he'd just done this on his own as a private dare - but perhaps, gathering the office interns around to witness the results of his personal vendetta against good sense, wasn't the best idea.

I leave the rest to your bountiful imagination.

[image error]

"Listen, intern, even if the glass DOES break, it's not like anything really bad could happen..."

So why tell these stories? Well, I just wanted to provide an opportunity, before I got down to my review, to prove that stupidity is simply a natural part of human nature.

Believe me when I say that J.F. Lewis knows about stupid. He managed to write a whole group of characters with a seeming inability to locate and provide enough brain cells to rub two together.

Now, granted, the main character, Eric, is supposed to be a little off his rocker. He was embalmed before he rose as a vampire and so he doesn't quite have all his marbles.

But there's really no excuse for the rest of them.

In fact, this book is so much smarter than all the characters combined that it managed not only to inform me of who the bad guy was by about page 25 but it was also kind enough to inform me of the bad guy and basic

plot for the next book.

How kind.

At one point a character who is in love with Eric finds out who the bad guys are and is all but told that they plan to kill him and that he's in danger. Instead of, I don't know, rushing off to warn him or recognize the significance of what she's discovered, she instead gives them a message to give to him and storms off in an attempt to make him jealous and honestly believes he'll chase her down to admit his love.

I'm dumbfounded.

"Oh, while you're trying to kill the man I love, do you mind just passing along a message for him to come and find me when he's done barely escaping you with his life?"

Yeah, honey, I'm sure the person who hates him the most is really going to take time out of his busy schedule of mayhem and nefarious schemes to help along yours and his enemy's love life.

Other than that small fact, this book wasn't too bad at all. I liked the whole conflicted, swiss-cheese-for-memory Eric. He was usually a fun and complicated character to read.

Talbot was also, at times, amusing and this story definitely had its moments. The writing wasn't too bad and there were a few sexy times in there to ensure that I didn't get too bored. The writing was decent enough and the plot and pacing moved quite well.

The problem with the book was that it just gave away too much and obviously didn't want the reader doing too much thinking.

Now, obviously, the biggest problem with this book is actually me. After all, doesn't the cover and description make it abundantly obvious that this book is bound to be nothing more than a mindless h00rfest? Isn't that kind of in the spirit of the book?

I just find myself a little baffled because there really wasn't that much sexiness in there and it honestly seemed to focus more on the action (let's face it, Eric as Ubervamp was actually funny as hell) and the characters and plot. In fact, he barely spent anytime practising the horizontal mamba. The cover has a chick on a stripper's pole for goodness sake!

What is the world coming to when a horny, suggestible male vamp only does one single chick and her younger, more cunning sister a couple of times? It's downright despicable is what it is.

*I'd like to remind all you bitches that J.F Lewis is a boy with many boy parts!

Christal (Badass Book Reviews) says

I really enjoyed this book. The vampires are not toned down at all. They are vicious killers, most of the time. The lead character, Eric, actually reminds me of Dante from A Rush of Wings, albeit in a more humorous, self-effacing way. He has this whole secret background mystery going on that we just barely scratch the surface of in this book. I really enjoyed his scenes with his daughter, Greta, and hope we find out more about her in the next books. I even enjoyed Tabitha until her last chapter (view spoiler). Other than that, I couldn't put this book down and I am really glad the other novels are already published because that ending was a doozy!

Megan says

Ah, there's the unapologetic, curmudgeonly violence I've been looking for since I finished Rob Thurman's Cal Leandros series! The main character was embalmed right after he died, before he rose as a vampire, leaving him brain damaged, an awesome quirk to this universe. Eric's trouble with memory and timekeeping provide an unusually plausible excuse to introduce vulnerability and suspense into an otherwise way too powerful character. Aside from that, this book is way more porn than I expected.

Buggy says

"In the end a friendship between vampire and a human is like a friendship between a dog and a chicken nugget. Sooner or later, the nugget is going to get eaten; the only real question is how many bites it will take."

I don't read much urban fantasy, Oh I try, because friends keep recommending "awesome" books to me but in all honesty I rarely get through them, getting confused by creatures and worlds that change on a whim and generally lack in the romance department. Anyways STAKED was another one of 'those' recommendations however this one turned out to be different, piquing my interest from page 1 with its dark laugh-out-loud humour, bumbling anti hero and no holds bared sex, blood and gore. Yup this was a fun ride.

Told in alternating POV's between the likable but remorseless vampire Eric and his human (waiting to be turned) girlfriend Tabitha, *Staked* gives us a new take on the mainstream vampire story. And while I much preferred being in Eric's confused head Tabitha's journey is at the very least eye opening. With a fast paced storyline set in the unique and very cool world of Void City, this is one Urb fantasy book that I will now be recommending to others.

Eric just wants to be left alone to run his strip club, drain the occasional waitress and drive his 64 Mustang but being undead isn't easy and 'life' just keeps getting in his way. Compounding things is the fact that Eric was embalmed shortly after his 'death' and his short term memory now resembles Swiss cheese. He can't remember who he had for lunch yesterday much less why he's standing in a back alley with a Master Vampires head in his hands.

Then theres the whole enchanted bullets and sunlight issues (he keeps catching on fire) the missing money and assorted business problems he's having with the co-owner of Demon Heart, a girlfriend just begging to be turned -with a really cute younger sister and his would be wife Marilyn, who although getting up there in years still refuses to join him in undeath but won't leave his side either. Throw in the fact that a pack of werewolves is seeking revenge for Eric killing one of their own (come on it was self defence) his girlfriend Tabitha is about to learn the unromantic version of what it means to be undead and oh, his kids are coming to visit.

So you guessed it, I recommended this bloody great ride, even to those who don't like the urban fantasy genre. JF Lewis has created an excellent world here and I'm looking forward to more adventures with book #2 *ReVamped*

Daelith says

First, I must start out by saying that most women, myself included, are going to think Eric is a complete pig. Be interesting to have himself turn into one then have Tabitha shot him with those special bullets so he's stuck in that form for awhile. But then, he'd be a roast piggy so that wouldn't work. Darn! Regardless of his "women problems" I still managed to like Eric. Then again, I'm a sucker for flawed heroes. You weren't kidding when you say Eric has issues. *L*

Tabitha, I felt, needed a good swat up the side of her head in several instances, but again I still liked her. It was fun watching her fumble and experiment with her new found powers. The funny thing as I was reading and thinking in what ways I like and dislike these characters, I had to give a mental chuckle at Lewis catching me off guard like this. I've always said I really like a writer who can elicit an emotion from me whether it be laughter, tears or anger. They've done their job, and very well, when they've achieved that. (Still only one has managed to tick me off enough to throw the book across the room though.) Here Lewis had me going back and forth with both of these characters as to how I felt about them. One chapter, I'm ready to stake Eric myself then the next I'm rooting for him to kick some werewolf ass. Kudos Jeremy!

Extra kudos for several laugh out loud moments. The little addition of the Three Stooges move in a fight and Eric's learning of his bat wings had me rolling. And in bringing these two scenes up in topic, let me just add...Greta Rocks!! Seriously, as warped as it may be, I adored Greta. So help me if you kill her off in future books, I may have to go find the little old voodoo priestess who runs around downtown Memphis mumbling and shaking her fistful of feathers at everyone and have her come up with an extra special curse for you.

Also, I'm thoroughly intrigued by Talbot and looking forward to learning more about him in future books. Rachel had me pondering as to just what she was up too quite a bit. I have a feeling she'll prove to be more of an upcoming quandary. The Japanese ogres were a great touch too. I had this mental image of some Sumo looking creatures squatting in the street stuffing their faces. And the holy roller lycans! I'm still snickering over them.

Now as for the ending. Holy cliffhangers, Batman!! I turn the page expecting there to be more and there's "Hope you liked the book" and I'm thinking -- What the heck?! There's got to be more. Frantically flipping through the last few filler pages, I realize that was it. Porky Pig might have well have popped out of the back cover and said "Th-th-the-th-the-th-that's all, folks!" I quickly looked up the release date of the next book. March 2009. Sheesh, I've got nine months to wait. I can just hear the "Nyuk, nyuk, nyuk!" Curly impression Lewis is doing now from his office.

All kidding aside though, this was a great read. If I hadn't had things that had to be done this past weekend, I probably would have read this in one sitting. Lewis has all the ingredients I love in a book...action, paranormal, mystery and humor with a different twist.

Thank you for the opportunity to read your book, Jeremy. I thoroughly enjoyed it and I'm looking forward to the next installment.

Vincent Diamond says

Staked by J.F. Lewis

Thinking this might be a fun little vamp romp, I took a chance on this. Paranormal tales are all the rage these days, of course, and my exposure to them is limited to the tedium of one of the later Anita Blake vampire hunter series (I can't remember the name but it's the one where the psychological/mental/ possibly physical threesome was drawn out for like, 60 goddam pages. Yes, a three-way rendered utterly boring by inert prose and way too much navel-gazing), and what stories come over my desk for editing and proofing. At least those have somewhat sympathetic vampire characters.

One cannot say the same for Eric from *Staked*.

Initially, the first-person, chatty voice was kind of charming. This isn't a stuffy, ascot-wearing, smoking jacket kind of vampire. Eric runs a strip club and starts off the action by killing another vampire. With lots of references to bowels and bodily fluids, this should have given me a clue that the narrator has the interests of the average thirteen year old. Boobs, bowel movements, and gore.

But, okay, I get past that. When Eric returns to his strips club (first clue), he has a fairly angry encounter with Tabitha, his human girlfriend. Of course, she waxes. (second clue).

And then. And then I run into this charming bit of prose:

"Tabitha was the only kind of girlfriend I let myself have anymore. She had a great body, a bad attitude, and extremely low self-esteem. She wasn't dumb, but she wasn't smart, and she thought she wanted to be a vampire when she grew up.... In short, if I broke her by accident I wouldn't feel too bad about it and no one would really miss her. Cruel, I know, but I am a vampire, remember?"

Third clue. This is a misogynistic, psychopathic, frightened character who doesn't want a grown-up, real woman but a childish, dumb, busty female who won't challenge him in any way. And about whom I wish to read nothing more. This is a character I'm supposed to care about and be in his head for the next 370 or so pages? Um, no, I don't think so.

So, J.F. Lewis, you lost me. And you lost me fast, on page 15. At least it was a quick screwing because the \$14 paid for this could have gone to something with a tad more value like half a tank of gas or a meal for two at McDonald's.

C.T. Phipps says

4.5/5

Vampire novels are incredibly overdone but that's a bit like saying superheroes, Westerns, and police procedurals are incredibly overdone. Yes, there's a deluge of them but there's always some new diamonds to be found in the rough. The simple fact is they are a never-ending source of fascination and that's not just because I wrote STRAIGHT OUTTA FANGTON. No, sir. That's not an influence at all. Ahem.

STAKED by J.F. Lewis is a vampire novel which I'll probably rank among the better examples of the genre. I think it's because the author managed the careful balance between the fact Eric is both simultaneously completely unlikable as well as being thoroughly fascinating. His repellant qualities are part of why you want to read more about him as they make him unpredictable. It's also a book which nestles nicely in the R but not X-rated demographic of writing for adults. There's sex, violence, horror, and humor throughout.

The premise is Eric, our vampire co-protagonist, is the owner of a strip club in the supernatural-filled Void City. Eric is evil, there's no doubt about that, but he's evil in a reluctant manner. At one point, driven by hunger, he kills an innocent woman in an alleyway then goes about his evening--upset mostly about his lack of control than a human life being ended. He has serious anger issues and kills those who provoke him as well. He's also a terrible boyfriend who freely feeds from his employees who desperately want to become vampires themselves.

The co-protagonist and future vampire herself, Tabitha, is a vampire wannabe and stripper. Deeply in love with Eric because of the fact he's undead and her boss (because his personality sucks--no pun intended), she begs him to turn her. Tired of her begging, Eric agrees and turns her. He knows this will destroy their relationship as he has no attraction to his fellow undead. Indeed, he immediately sets his sights on her still-living sister.

If the book was entirely from Eric's POV, it probably wouldn't be nearly as entertaining, but the narration frequently switches over to Tabitha. Tabitha gets an arc from being a somewhat naive and besotted woman who Eric disrespects to a powerful vampire in her own right. While not the sharpest set of fangs in the city, she learns a great deal in a short amount of time which increases both her observational skills as well as her confidence. She also maintains a conscience, unlike Eric.

The main plot for the majority of the book is Eric's feud with a pack of religious werewolves. I wasn't a big fan of this because, well, Eric is a scumbag so I was hoping the wolves would put him down. He doesn't even know if he's guilty or not of what they're accusing him of since he has rage blackouts on a regular basis. Still,

that's more than made up by the evolving relationship between Tabith, Eric, and their acquaintances at the strip club.

Good book and I picked up the sequels immediately after finishing.

vicki_girl says

The best way I can think to describe this book is that "it does exactly what it says on the tin". In 'Staked' the main character is an unrepentant, amoral vampire who just wants to be left alone to run his strip club. Instead, he's having a really bad week, with a nagging girlfriend, her jail-bait younger sister, and angry werewolves out for his skin. For me it was actually refreshing to read about a vampire who was a blood-sucking monster, instead of a *poor tortured soul, who struggles to live with the monster that he is...* While Eric's personality may not be endearing, watching what happens to him and his sarcastic reaction to it all is very entertaining.

Jenna Rock says

Despite the horribly cheesy cover, this book was a great read. An amusing, not taking itself too seriously, fantasy book about a vampire that runs a strip club and experiences rage black outs. If you like the Dresden Files series by Jim Butcher, then this book would be right up your alley.

Anita says

I read about 1/4 of this vampire/werewolf urban fantasy and then gave up on it. The main character is thoroughly unlikeable, and none of the other characters were very compelling, either. I don't understand the appeal of reading about a horrible guy who doesn't seem to have any chance at all of becoming anything interesting. The book celebrates loserdom. I've come across a couple other books with that slant, and I didn't like them either. Maybe it's a sub-sub-sub-genre.

Keikii Eats Books says

This is a momentous occasion. I have actually DNFd a book. This is the first book I can remember dropping out of since I was a little kid.

I didn't even make it 5%.

I put myself through a LOT of crap in what I read. I'm able to put up with a lot before it becomes too much.

This managed to hit that limit in 4% and then cross it.

I don't typically like memory loss in my stories, but as I showed in July when I came across at least four series in a row where at least part of the story dealt with memory loss, I can put up with it. I went into this

with a completely open mind, because I thought it was interesting to meet a vampire with memory problems enough he couldn't even remember when sunrise was.

Yet these memory issues are used to show that he is a horrible person:

"Somewhere in the middle of my rant it occurred to me that I'd killed whoever it was I'd been yelling at, so arguing was no longer important."

"My Dumpster-pushing progress came to a sudden halt as I slammed into my Hummer. It was new; only a couple of weeks old. My car alarm started going off. It was the last straw. The next thing I knew, I was punching holes through the Dumpster with my bare hands. It came apart like tissue paper. It was all very satisfying until I caught fire. Note to self: The big burning ball of gas in the sky is the sun."

"Sometimes being a vampire is truly fucked up. If you don't believe me, ask the poor vamp I'd killed in the alley earlier. I couldn't remember why the hell I'd killed him, much less why we'd been arguing. For all I knew, it was about football. Definitely fucked up."

Even without the memory issues, Eric is callous. He isn't just callous about it, he is cruel.

"Do you want me to tell the police somethin' in particular?" asked the bum.

"Don't talk to me, you dirty little fucker," I snarled.

"The next thing I knew, I was knee-deep in werewolf, shoving bloody twenty-dollar bills into my jeans."

His ideas on pizza are absolutely disgusting:

"Chicago pizza, Italian pizza, brick-oven pizza, anchovies, pepperoni, olives, mushrooms, peppers, kiwi, it doesn't matter to me, so long as it's pizza." (KIWI DOESN'T BELONG ON PIZZA!)

"I opened the door and found Candice eating a slice of pepperoni. She was mostly naked, and when she saw me, she began ostentatiously licking the side of the pizza to remove the excess cheese. My fangs came out and a certain lower portion of my anatomy paid attention, too. If she had been wearing her glasses or her contacts I think she would've had a harder time keeping up the act."

Mostly, though, It was just his absolute toxicity towards women.

"Tabitha was one of a long line of human girlfriends I'd had. There were always girls willing to do anything a vampire might want as long as they thought there was a chance they might get immortality out of it."

"Candice is the kind of golden-hearted stripper other strippers pretend to be. She's working on her nursing degree, and if I were still human I'd be all over her. As it is, I just pay for her college and watch her dance naked in the club. And, okay, sometimes I pretend I'm with her when I'm with Tabitha. It's just better for all involved."

"I smell pretty bad. Is Lillian still around?" I asked. Lillian had come in late three days in a row, just in time for the evening rush. If she thought early afternoons were shit duty, I'd show her shit duty.

"Yes," Roger answered, laughing. "Don't want to smell bad in front of your little groupie?"

"Lillian's more deserving," I said. "Send her over, then tell Talbot he's going to need to get the van cleaned up after we're done with it."

"It was all I could do not to jump on her, so I left the room and headed for my shower. Maybe I'd been rude to Candice, but it was better that way. If she was smart, she'd quit in a huff and go start a normal life somewhere the hell away from me. In the end, a friendship between a vampire and a human is like a friendship between a dog and a chicken nugget. Sooner or later, the nugget is going to get eaten; the only real question is how many bites it will take."

"She'd say it would be different with us because we're in love. I'd point out that I don't love her and then I'd wait to see if she cried or started yelling. If she cried, I'd leave. If she yelled, I'd leave. So predictable."

But this was the part that made me completely decide to give up entirely on this:

Tabitha was the only kind of girlfriend I let myself have anymore. She had a great body, a bad attitude, and extremely low self-esteem. She wasn't dumb, but she wasn't smart, and she thought that she wanted to be a vampire when she grew up. I knew she had a sister named Rachel whose photo she carried in her billfold, and I guessed she had parents, but they never seemed to be around. In short, if I broke her by accident I wouldn't feel too bad about it and no one would really miss her. It's cruel, I know, but I am a vampire, remember?

I meant to have sex, but that's not what happened. We made love instead. It was passionate, tender. It was a mistake. When we got out of the shower, Tabitha wore that stupid look she gets when she thinks she's being sly. I turned away and rolled my eyes; my memory, for once, clear as crystal.

It was like a formula with her. Before she even opened her mouth I knew the basic ploy. She would compliment me on the act, even though I'd know she was faking it for my benefit. Even when she wasn't, she always put on a big show. I guess the whole preternatural senses thing hadn't clued her in to the fact that I could tell. I didn't blame her for faking it a little; unless blood turns you on, having it stand in for all the normal bodily fluids can get a little nasty, especially during sex.

I absolutely refuse to read a story with a main character who is so abhorrent towards women. I absolutely refuse to read a story with a main character is only with a girl because she is sexy and she has low self-esteem. I refuse to read a story with a main character who has trouble controlling himself on even the most basic of civilities (not jumping on women). Maybe I picked this up at the exact wrong time as we're dealing with #metoo, Brett Kavanaugh, and Bill Cosby. But I am never ever picking this up again.

Lastly: "I used to love the sun. I still do, but now she doesn't like me so much. Which makes her not that much different from any number of women I dated back during my living years." I wonder fucking why.
