

In the shadows

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you ere his footsteps in the shadows. how ong can you run for?

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You

It's freezing your clothes are ripped and dirty. You didn't see that puddle but you keep running always running. If you can hold on to dawn everything will be fine but it's not dawn it's night. You've been running all night.

The orange glow of the streetlights making silhouettes out of every lifeless object. Did that move? You don't wait to find out. Your footsteps make a strange staccato tapping but there is a quieter noise behind you, sneaking stealthily around the puddle.

You speed up but your energy is almost gone. What will happen when you can't run anymore? There is a wire fence ahead you can make out the glistening metal in the unnatural orange glare.

You grab hold of the wet, cold metal in your worn hands and try and haul yourself up. The quiet footsteps are growing louder and quicker. It's coming. The hunter can smell it's trapped prey. It's here.

A cold breeze swirls down the alley. You spin round. A figure is standing in the shadows. The mask of a face hangs in the air, the mask of death. The face's mouth shifts in to a cold hungry smile show two pointed canines. The smile is that of a cat which has cornered a mouse, a kid with a magnifying glass about to incinerate the ants, a pack of wolves about to kill the one who has strayed from the flock. But the figure staring out from the shadows with his glowing green eyes was not a man, or cat, or child, or wolf.

An ancient knowledge, the kind that is purposely slaughtered as soon as you start school, dawns on you this *thing* is a vampire, killer of the night. But this is not an actor being slayed by *Buffy* this is the real thing.

The vampire advances you take a step back, the wire fence rings in the silence. He, it's shape is a human man, smiles again, green fire lights up his eyes, black hair falls round his deathly white face. He stares down at you, you can only think of one thing this vampire wants. You push further against the wire fence, looking for a weak spot, but in your subconscious you know, you *know* it's too late, you know. The vampire strides out towards you. Every long stride echoes of the power this being possess.

He is looming over you. The smell of death. The white canines almost glow in the half-light. He jerks his head towards your neck. You feel a double stab in your neck. The pain, it's like that time.... but you can't remember. Who are you? You can't remember anything... all there is, is pain. Pain of your life draining away, being drained away by this parasite attached to your neck.

The pain is beginning to dim away; it's getting dark. Your vision is beginning to get fuzzy round the

edges; the colours are swirling to make white, dazzling white everywhere.