

THE ANCIENT MIND AT WORK

by *Suzy McKee Charnas*

On a Tuesday morning Katje discovered that Dr. Weyland was a vampire, like the one in the movie she'd seen last week.

Jackson's friend on the night cleaning crew had left his umbrella hooked over the bike rack outside the lab building. Since Katje liked to take a stroll in the dawn quiet before starting work, she went over to see if the umbrella was still there. As she started back empty-handed through the heavy mist, she heard the door of the lab building boom behind her, and she looked back.

Two men had come out. One of them, clearly hurt or ill, sank down on his knees and reached out a hand to steady himself on the damp and glistening surface of the parking lot. The other, a tall man with gray hair, turned his head to look full at the kneeling figure-and continued walking without hesitation. He didn't even take his hands out of his raincoat pockets until he stooped to unlock his shimmering, dark Mercedes. He got inside and drove off.

Katje started back toward the lot. But the young man pushed himself upright, looked around in a bewildered manner, and making his way unsteadily to his own car also drove away.

So, there was the vampire, sated and cruel, and there was his victim, wilted, pale, and confused-although the movie vampire had swirled about in a black cloak, not a trench coat, and had gone after bosomy young females. Walking over the lawn to the club, Katje smiled at her own fancy.

What she had really seen, she knew, was the star of the Cayslin Center for the Study of Man, Dr. Weyland, leaving the lab with one of his sleep-subjects after a debilitating all-night session. Dr. Weyland must have thought the young man was stooping to retrieve dropped car keys.

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The Cayslin Club was an old mansion donated years before to the college. It served now as the faculty club. Its grandeur had been severely challenged by the lab building and attendant parking lot constructed on half of the once spacious lawn, but the club was still imposing within.

This morning when she stepped inside, Katje found a woman in a T-shirt, shorts, and red shoes running from the dining area through the hall and down the length of the living room, making a turn of quick little steps at the fireplace, and running back again. It was Miss Donnelly's latest guest lecturer, who was surely old enough to have more dignity. Nothing could hurt the synthetic carpeting that had replaced the fine old rugs, but really, what a way for a grown woman to behave!

She glared. The runner waved cheerfully.

Jackson was in the green room, plugging leaks; it had begun to rain now. The green room was a glassed-in terrace, tile-floored and furnished with chairs of lacy wrought iron.

"Did you find it, Mrs. de Groot?" Jackson asked.

"No, I'm sorry." Kate never called him by his name because she didn't know whether he was Jackson Somebody or Somebody Jackson, and she had learned to be careful about everything to do with blacks in this country-

"Thanks for looking, anyway," Jackson said.

In the kitchen she stood by the sinks, staring out at the dreary day. She had never grown used to these chill, watery winters, though after so many years she couldn't quite recall the exact quality of the African sunlight in which she had grown up. It was no great wonder that Henrik had died here. The gray climate had finally quenched even his ardent nature six years ago.

Her savings from her own salary as housekeeper at the Cayslin Club would eventually finance her return home. She needed enough to buy not a farm but a house with a garden patch somewhere high and cool. She frowned, trying to picture the ideal site, but nothing clear came into her mind. She had been away so long.

While Katje was scrubbing out the sinks, Miss Donnelly burst in, shrugging off her dripping coat: "Of all the high-handed, Goddamn-oh, hello, Mrs. de Groot; sorry for the language. Look, we won't be having the women's faculty lunch here tomorrow after all. Dr. Weyland is giving a special money pitch to a couple of fat-cat alumni, and he wants a nice, quiet setting-our lunch corner here at the club, as it turns out. Dean Wacker's already said yes, so that's that." She cocked her head to one side. "What in the world is that thumping noise?"

“Someone running,” Katje said, thinking abstractedly of the alumni lunching with the vampire. Would he eat? The one in the movie hadn’t.

Miss Donnelly’s face got red patches over the sharp cheekbones. “My God, is that my lecturer doing her jogging in here because of the weather? I’m so sorry, Mrs. de Groot-I did mean to find her someplace to run, but even in free periods the gyms are full of great hulking boys playing basketball.”

She smiled. “You know, Mrs. de Groot, I’ve been meaning to ask you to be my next guest lecturer. Would you come talk to my students?”

“Me? What about?”

“Oh, about colonial Africa, what it was like growing up there. These kids’ experience is so narrow and protected, I look for every chance to expand their thinking.”

Katje wrung out the rag. “My grandfather and Uncle Jan whipped the native boys to work like cattle and kicked them hard enough to break bones for not showing respect. Otherwise we would have been overrun and driven out. I used to go hunting. I shot rhino, elephant, leopard, and I was proud of doing it and doing it well. Your students don’t want to know about such things. They have nothing to fear but tax collectors and nothing to do with nature except giving money for whales and seals.”

“But that’s what I mean,” Miss Donnelly said. “Different viewpoints.”

“There are plenty of books about Africa.”

“Okay, forget I asked.” Miss Donnelly gnawed at her thumbnail, frowning, “I guess I could get the women together over at Corrigan tomorrow instead of here if I spend an hour on the phone. We’ll miss your cooking, Mrs. de Groot.”

Katje said, “Will Dr. Weyland expect me to cook for his guests?”

“Not Weyland,” Miss Donnelly said drily. “It’s nothing but the best for him, which means the most expensive. They’ll probably have a banquet brought in from Borchard’s.”

She went to collect her guest.

Katje put on coffee and phoned Buildings and Grounds- Yes, Dr. Weyland and two companions were on at the club for tomorrow; no, Mrs. de Groot wouldn't have to do anything but tidy up afterward; yes, it was short notice, and please write it in on the club calendar; and yes, Jackson had been told to check the eaves over the east bedrooms before he left.

"Wandering raincoat," Miss Donnelly said, darting in to snatch it up from the chair where, she'd left it. "Just watch out for Weyland, Mrs. de Groot."

"What, an old woman of fifty, more gray than blond, with lines and bones in the face? I am not some slinky graduate student trying not only for an A but for the professor also."

"I don't mean romance," Miss Donnelly grinned, "though God knows half the faculty-of both sexes-are in love with the man." Honestly, Katje thought, the things people talked about these days! "To no avail, alas, since he's a real loner. But he will try to get you into his expensive sleep lab and make your dreams part of the world-shaking, history-changing research that he stole off poor old Joel Milnes."

Milnes, Katje thought when she was alone again: Professor Milnes, who had gone away to some sunny place to die of cancer. Then Dr. Weyland had come from a small southern school and taken over Milnes's dream project, saving it from being junked-or stealing it, in Miss Donnelly's version. A person who looked at a thing in too many ways was bound to get confused.

Jackson came in and poured coffee for himself. He leaned back in his chair and flipped the schedules where they hung on the wall by the phone. He was as slender as a Kikuyu youth-she could see his ribs arch under his shirt. He ate a lot of starch and junk food, but he was too nervous to fatten on it. By rights he belonged in a red blanket, skin gleaming with oil, hair plaited. This life pulled him out of his nature.

"Try and don't put nobody in that number-six bedroom till I get to it the end of the week," he said. "The rain drips in behind the casement. I laid out towels to soak up the water. I see you got Weyland in here tomorrow. My buddy Maurice on the cleaning crew says that guy got the best lab in the place."

"What is Dr. Weyland's research?" Katje asked.

" 'Dream mapping,' they call it. Maurice says there's nothing

interesting in his lab-just equipment, you know, recording machines and computers and like that. I'd like to see all that hardware sometime. Only you won't catch me laying out my dreams on tape!

"Well, I got to push along. There's some dripping faucets, over at Joffrey I got to look at. Hans Brinker, that's me. Thanks for the coffee."

Katje began pulling out the fridge racks for cleaning, listening to him whistle as he gathered up his tools in the green room.

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The people from Borchard's left her very little to do. She was stacking the rinsed dishes in the washer when a man said from the doorway, "I am very obliged to you, Mrs. de Groot."

Dr. Weyland stood poised there, slightly stoop-shouldered, head thrust inquisitively forward as he examined the kitchen. She was surprised that he knew her name, for he did not frequent the club. She had seen his tall figure only once or twice in the dining room.

"There was just a bit remaining to do. Dr. Weyland," she said.

"Still, this is your territory," he said, advancing. "I'm sure you were helpful to the Borchard's people. I've never been back here. Are those freezers or refrigerators?"

She showed him around the kitchen and the pantries. He seemed impressed. He was, she realized, unexpectedly personable: lean and grizzled, but with the hint of vulnerability common among rangy men. You couldn't look at him without imagining the gawky scarecrow he must have been as a boy. His striking features-craggy nose and brow, strong mouth, lank jaw-no doubt outsize and homely then, were now impressively united by the long creases of experience on his cheeks and forehead.

"No more scullions cranking the spit," he remarked over; the rotisserie. "You come originally from East Africa, Mrs. de Groot? Things must have been very different there."

"Yes. I left a long time ago."

"Surely not so very long," he said, and his eyes flicked over her from head to foot.

Relaxing in the warmth of his interest she said, "Are you from elsewhere also?"

A mistake; he frosted up at once. "Why do you ask?"

"Excuse me. I thought I heard just the trace of an accent."

"My family were Europeans. We spoke German at home. May I sit down?" His big hands, capable- and strong-looking, graced the back of a chair. He smiled briefly. "Would you mind sharing your coffee with an institutional fortune hunter? That is my job-persuading rich men and the guardians of foundations to spend a little of their money in support of work that offers no immediate result. I don't enjoy dealing with these shortsighted men."

"Everyone, says you do it well," Katje filled a cup for him.

"It takes up my time," he said. "It wearies me." His large and brilliant eyes, in sockets darkened with fatigue, had a withdrawn, somber aspect. How old was he? Katje wondered.

Suddenly he gazed at her and said, "Didn't I see you over by the lab the other morning?. There was mist on my windshield; I couldn't be sure."

She told him about Jackson's friend's umbrella, thinking now he'll explain, this is what he came to say. But he added nothing, and she found herself hesitant to ask about the student in the parking lot. "Is there anything else I can do for you, Dr. Weyland?"

"I don't mean to keep you from your work. One thing. Would you come over and do a session for me in the sleep lab?"

She shook her head.

"All the information goes on tapes under coded I.D. numbers, Mrs. de Groot. Your privacy would be strictly guarded."

"I would prefer not to."

"Excuse me then. It was a pleasure to talk with you," he said, rising. "If you find a reason to change your mind, my extension is one sixty-three."

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She was close to tears, but Uncle Jan made her strip down the gun again-her first gun, her own gun-and then the lion coughed, and she saw with the wide gaze of fear his golden form crouched, tail lashing, in the thornbush. As her pony shied she threw up her gun and fired, and the dust boiled up from the thrashings of the wounded cat.

Then Scotty's patient voice said, "Do it again," and she was tearing down the rifle once more by lamplight at the worn wooden table while her mother sewed with angry stabs of the needle and spoke words Katje didn't bother hearing because she knew the gist by heart: "If only Jan had children of his own! Sons, preferably, to take out hunting with Scotty. Because he has no sons, he takes Katje out shooting instead so he can show how tough Boer youngsters are, even a girl. For whites to kill for sport, as Jan and Scotty do, is to go backward into the barbaric past of Africa. Now the farm is producing; there is no need to kill for hides to get cash for coffee, salt, and tobacco. And to train a *girl* to go stalking and killing animals like scarcely more than an animal herself!"

"Again," said Scotty, and the lion coughed, making the pony shiver under her; Katje woke.

She was sitting in front of the tv, blinking at the sharp, knowing face of the talk-show host. The sound had gone off again, and she had dozed. She didn't often dream, hardly ever of Africa. Why now? Because, she thought, Dr. Weyland had roused her memory. She thought he looked a bit like Scotty, the neighboring farmer whom Uncle Jan had begun by calling a damned *rooinek* and ended treating like a brother.

She got up and hit the tv to make it speak again and sat down to watch with an apple in her hand. Lately she ate too much, out of boredom. Would she grow stout like her mother? It was Dr. Weyland who had brought this worry to the surface of her mind, no proper concern of a middle-aged widow. It was Dr. Weyland who had stirred up that long-ago girlhood spent prowling for game in the bright, dissolving landscape of tan grass.

"Under the bed; do you think?" Miss Donnelly dropped on her knees to look. The guest lecturer had left her hairbrush behind. Katje forbore to point out that this was the sort of thing to be expected of someone who put on track clothes and ran inside the house.

A student flung open the bedroom door and leaned in: "Is it too late to hand in my paper, Miss Donnelly?"

"For God's sake, Mickey," Miss Donnelly burst out, "where did you get

that?"

Across the chest of the girl's T-shirt where her coat gapped open were emblazoned the words SLEEP WITH WEYLAND. HE'S A DREAM. She grinned. "Some hustler is selling them right outside the co-op. Better hurry if you want one—Security's already been sent for." She giggled, put a sheaf of dog-eared pages down on the chair by the door, added "Thanks, Miss Donnelly," and clattered away down the stairs.

Miss Donnelly sat back on her heels and laughed. "Well, I never, as my grandma used to say. That man is turning this school into a circus!"

"These young people have no respect for anything," Katje said, "What will Dr. Weyland say, seeing his name used like that? He should have her expelled."

"Him? He'll barely notice. But Wacker will throw fits." Miss Donnelly got up, dusting her hands. She ran a finger over the blistered paint on the windowsill. "Pity they can't use some of the loot Weyland brings in to really fix this old place up. But I guess we can't complain. Without Weyland this would be just another expensive little backwater school for the not so bright children of the upper middle class. And it isn't all rose's even for him; this T-shirt thing will bring on a fresh bout of backbiting among his colleagues, you watch. This kind of incident brings out the jungle beast in even the mildest academics."

Katje snorted. She didn't think much of academic infighting.

"I know we must seem pretty tame to you," Miss Donnelly said wryly, "but there are some real ambushes and even killings here, in terms of careers. It's not the cushy life it sometimes seems, and not so secure either.

"Even you may be in a little trouble, Mrs. de Groot, though I hope not. Only a few weeks ago there was a complaint from a faculty member that you upset his guests by something you said—"

"I said they couldn't set up a dart board in here," Katje responded crisply.

"There are others who don't like your politics—"

"I never speak about politics," Katje said, offended. That was the first thing Henrik had demanded of her here. She had acquiesced like a good

wife; not that she was ashamed of her political beliefs. She had loved and married Henrik not because but in spite of his radical politics.

“From your silence they assume you’re some kind of reactionary racist,” Miss Donnelly said. “And because you’re a Boer and don’t carry on your husband’s crusade. Then there are the ones who say you’re just too old and stuffy for the job, meaning you scare them a little, and they’d rather have a giggly cocktail waitress or a downtrodden mouse of a working student. But you’ve got plenty of partisans too, and even Wacker knows you give this place tone and dignity. They ought to double your salary. You’re solid and dependable, even if you are a little, well, old-fashioned. And you lived a real life in the world, whatever your values, which is more than most of our faculty has ever done.” She stopped, blushing, and moved toward the door. “Well, when that hairbrush turns up just put it aside for me, will you? Thank you, Mrs. de Groot.”

Katje said, “Thank you, too.” That girl was as softheaded as everyone around here, but she had a good heart.

Many of the staff had already left for vacation during intercession, now that new scheduling had freed everyone from doing special intensive courses between semesters. The last cocktail hour at the club was thinly attended. Katie moved among the drinkers, gathering loaded ashtrays, used glasses, rumpled napkins. A few people greeted her as she passed.

There were two major topics of conversation: the bio student who had been raped last night as she left the library, and the Weyland T-shirt or, rather, Weyland himself.

They said he was a disgrace, encouraging commercial exploitation of his name. He was probably getting a cut of the profits; no he wasn’t, didn’t need to, he was a superstar with plenty of income, no dependents, and no tastes except for study and work. And that beautiful Mercedes-Benz of his, don’t forget. No doubt that was where he was this evening-not off on a holiday or drinking cheap club booze but tearing around the countryside in his beloved car.

Better a ride in the country than burying himself in the library and feeding his insatiable appetite for books. But what can a workaholic do if he’s also an insomniac? The two conditions reinforce each other. It was unhealthy for him to push so hard. Just look at him, so haggard and preoccupied, so lean and lonely-looking. The man deserved a prize for his shy-bachelor-hopelessly-hooked-on-the-pursuit-of-knowledge act.

How many students were in the sleep project now? More than were in his classes. They called his course in ethnography “The Ancient Mind at Work,” but the girls found his formality charming, and his absent-mindedness, too-did you hear how he wore two vests one on top of the other to class and never knew it? He wasn’t formal; he was rigid and too old-fashioned in his thinking to make a first-rate contribution to anthropology. So he’d simply appropriated poor Milnes’s beautiful adaptation of the Richman-Steinmolle recording system to the documentation of dreams, throwing in some “cross-cultural” terminology to bring the project into his own field. And there was doubt that Weyland fully understood the computer end of the process. No wonder he couldn’t keep an assistant for long.

Here was Petersen leaving him because of some brouhaha over a computer run. Charming, yes, but Weyland could also be a sarcastic bastard. He was apt to be testy, yes; the great are often quarrelsome, nothing new in that. Remember how he almost came to blows with young Denton over that scratch Denton put on the Mercedes’ fender? When Denton lost his temper and threw a punch, Weyland jumped into the car and tried to run him down. Well, that’s how Denton told it, but was it likely, considering that Weyland was big enough to flatten Denton with a slap? Denton should have been given a medal for trying to get Weyland off the street. Have you seen him drive? Roars along just barely in control of that great big machine-

Weyland himself wasn’t there. Of course not. Weyland was a disdainful, snobbish son-of-a-bitch; Weyland was a shy, socially-maladroit scholar absorbed in his great work; Weyland had a secret sorrow too painful to share; Weyland was a charlatan; Weyland was a genius working himself to death to keep alive the Cayslin Center for the Study of Man.

Dean Wacker brooded by the huge, empty fireplace and said several times in a carrying voice that he had talked with Weyland and that the students involved in the T-shirt scandal would face firm disciplinary action.

Miss Donnelly came in late with a woman from Economics. They talked heatedly in the window bay, and the two other women in the room drifted over to join them. Katje followed.

“...from off-campus, but that’s what they always say,” one of them snapped. Miss Donnelly caught Katje’s eye, smiled a strained smile, and plunged back into the discussion. They were talking about the rape. Katje wasn’t interested. A woman who used her sense and carried herself with self-respect didn’t get raped, but saying so to these intellectual women

wasted breath. They didn't understand real life. Katje headed back toward the kitchen.

Buildings and Grounds had sent Nettie Ledyard over from the student cafeteria to help out. She was rinsing glasses and squinting at them through the smoke of her cigarette. She wore a T-shirt bearing a bulbous fish shape across the front and the words SAVE OUR WHALES. These "environmental" messages vexed Katje; only naive, citified people could think of wild animals as pets. The shirt undoubtedly belonged to one of Nettie's long-haired, bleeding-heart boyfriends. Nettie herself smoked too much to pretend to an environmental conscience. She was no hypocrite, at least. But she should come properly dressed to do a job at the club, just in case a professor came wandering back here for more ice or whatever.

"I'll be helping you with the club inventory again during intersession," Nettie said. "Good thing too. You'll be spending a lot of time over here until school starts again, and the campus is really emptying out. Now there's this sex maniac cruising around-though what I could do but run like hell and scream my head off I can't tell you.

"Listen, what's this about Jackson sending you on errands for him?" she added irritably. She flicked ash off her bosom, which was high like a shelf, pushed up by her too tight brassiere. "His pal Maurice can pick up his own umbrella; he's no cripple. Having you wandering around out there alone at some godforsaken hour-

"Neither of us knew about the rapist," Katie said, wiping out the last of the ashtrays.

"Just don't let Jackson take advantage of you, that's all."

Katje grunted. She had been raised not to let herself be taken advantage of by blacks. At home they had all practiced that art.

Later, helping to dig out a fur hat from under the pile of coats in the foyer, Katje heard someone saying, "... other people's work, glomming on and taking all the credit; a real bloodsucker."

Into her mind came the image of Dr. Weyland's tall figure moving without a break in stride past the stricken student.

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Jackson came down from the roof with watering eyes. A damp wind was

rising.

“That leak is fixed for a while,” he said, hunching to blow on his chapped hands. “But the big shots at Buildings and Grounds got to do something better before the next snow piles up and soaks through again.”

Katje polished the silver plate with a gray flannel. “What do you know about vampires?” she said.

“How bad you want to know?”

He had no right to joke with her like that, he whose ancestors, had been heathen savages. “What do you know about vampires?” she repeated firmly.

“Not a thing.” He grinned. “But you just keep on going to the movies with Nettie, and you’ll find out all about that kind of stuff. She got to have the dumbest taste in movies there ever was. Horrible stuff!”

Katje looked down from the landing at Nettie, who had just let herself in to the club. Nettie’s hair was all in tight little rings like pigs’ tails. She called, “Guess what I went and did?”

“Your hair,” Katje said. “You got it done curly.”

Nettie hung her coat crookedly on the rack and peered into the foyer mirror. “I’ve been wanting to try a permanent for months, but I couldn’t find the money. So the other night I went over to the sleep lab.” She came upstairs.

“What was it like?” Katje said, looking more closely at Nettie’s face: Was she paler than usual? Yes, Katje thought with sudden apprehension.

“It’s nothing much. You just lie down on this couch, and they plug you in to their machines, and you sleep. Next morning you unplug and go collect your pay. That’s all there is to it.”

“You slept well?”

“I felt pretty dragged out yesterday. Dr. Weyland gave me a list of stuff I’m supposed to eat to fix that, and he got me the day off too. Wait a minute, I need a smoke before we go into the linens.”

They stood together on the upper landing. From down in the living

room rose the murmur of quiet conversation.

Nettie said, "I'd go back for another sleep session in a minute if they'd have me. Good money for no work; not like this." She blew a stream of smoke contemptuously toward the closet door.

Katje said, "Someone has to do what we do."

"Yeah, but why us?" Nettie lowered her voice. "We ought to get old Grauer and Rhine in there with the beading and the inventory lists, and us two go sit in their big leather chairs and drink coffee like ladies."

Katje had already done that as Henrik's wife. What she wanted now was to sit on the *stoep* after a day's hunting, sipping drinks and trading stories of the kill in the pungent dusk, away from the smoky, noisy hole of a kitchen: a life that Henrik had rebelled against as parasitical, narrow, and dull. His grandfather, like Katje's, had trekked right out of the Transvaal when it became too staid for him and had started over, and what was wrong with that kind of courage and strength? Henrik had carried on the tradition. He had the guts to fight Uncle Jan and everybody else over the future of the land. the government, the natives-that courage had drawn her to him, and had lost her that fine old life and landed her here, now.

Nettie, still hanging back from the linen closet, grudgingly ground out her cigarette on the sole of her shoe. "Coming to the meeting Friday?"

"No. I told you, they're all Reds in those unions. I do all right for myself." Besides, Dr. Weyland was giving a lecture that same Friday night. Katje opened the closet.

"Okay, if you think it's fine to make what we make doing this stuff. Me, I'm glad there's something like a gig in the sleep lab now and then so I can make a little extra and live like a person once in a while. You ought to go over there, you know? There's hardly anything doing during intersession with almost everybody gone. They could take you right away. You get extra pay and time-off, and besides, Dr. Weyland's kind of cute, in a gloomy, old sort of a way. He leaned over me to plug something into the wall, and I said, 'Go ahead, you can bite my neck any time.'

Katje gave her a startled glance, but Nettie, not noticing, moved past her into the closet and pulled out the step stool. Katje said in a neutral voice, "What did he say to-that?"

"Nothing, but he smiled." Nettie climbed onto the step stool. "We'll

start up top, all right? I bet all the guys who work nights at the labs get those kind of jokes all the time. Later he said he was hoping you'd come by, and I said he just likes his blood in different flavors."

Taking a deep breath of the sweet sunshine smell of the clean, linens, Katje said, "He asked you to ask me to come?"

"He said to remind you."

The first pile of blankets was handed down from the top shelf. Katje said, "He really accepts anyone into this project?"

"Unless you're sick, or if you've got a funny metabolism or whatever. They do a blood test on you, like at the doctor's."

That was when Katje noticed the little round Band-Aid on the inside of Nettie's elbow, right over the vein.

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Miss Donnelly was sharing a jug of cheap wine with three other faculty women in the front lounge. Katje made sure the coffee machine was filled for them and then slipped outside.

She still walked alone on campus when she chose. She wasn't afraid of the rapist, who hadn't been heard from in several days. A pleasurable tension drove her toward the lighted windows of the labs. This was like moving through the sharp air of the bushveldt at dusk.

The lab blinds, tilted down, let out only threads of light. She could see nothing. She hovered a moment, then turned back, hurrying now. The mood was broken, and she felt silly; Daniel from Security would be furious to find her alone out here, and what could she tell him? That she felt herself to be on the track of something wild and it made her feel young?

Miss Donnelly and the others were still talking. Katje was glad to hear their wry voices and gusts of laughter, equally glad not to have to sit with them. At first she had been hurt by the social exclusions that had followed her hiring on at the club; now she was grateful.

She had more on her mind than school gossip, and she needed to think. Her own impulsive act excited and appalled her; sallying forth at dusk at some risk (her mind swerved neatly around the other, the imaginary danger), and for what? To sniff the breeze and search the ground for

tracks?

The thought of Dr. Weyland haunted her: Dr. Weyland as the restless visitor to the club kitchen; Dr. Weyland as the enigma of faculty gossip; Dr. Weyland as she had first thought of him the other morning in the lab-building parking lot.

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She was walking to the bus stop when Jackson drove up and offered her a lift. She was glad to accept. The lonesomeness of the campus was accentuated by darkness and the empty circles of light around the lamp posts.

Jackson pulled aside a jumble of equipment on the front seat—radio parts, speakers, and wires—to make room for her. Two books were on the floor by her feet. He said, “The voodoo book is left over from my brother Paul. He went through a thing, you know, trying to trace back our family down in Louisiana. The other one was just lying around.”

The other one was *Dracula*. Katje felt the gummy spot where the price sticker had been peeled off. Jackson must have bought it for her at the discount bookstore downtown. She didn’t know how to thank him easily, so she said nothing.

“It’s a long walk out to the bus stop,” Jackson said, scowling as he drove out of the stone gates of the college drive. “They should’ve let you stay on in faculty housing after your husband died.”

“They needed the space for another teacher,” Katje said. She missed the cottage on the east side of campus, but her present rooming-house lodgings away from school offered more privacy.

He shook his head. “Well, I think it’s a shame, you being a foreign visitor and all.”

Katje laughed. “After twenty-five years in this country, a visitor?”

He laughed too. “Yeah. Well, you sure have moved around in our society more than most while you been here? from lady of leisure to, well, maid work.” She saw the flash of his grin. “Just like my old auntie that used to do for white women up the hill. Don’t you mind?”

She minded when she thought working at the club would never end.

Sometimes the Africa she remembered , seemed too vague a place to go back to now, and the only future she could see was keeling over at the end while vacuuming the club, like a farmer worn to death at his plow...

None of this was Jackson's business. "Did your auntie mind her work?" she snapped.

Jackson pulled up opposite the bus stop. "She said you just do what comes to you to do and thank God for it."

"I say the same."

He sighed. "You're a lot like her, you know? Someday I got a bunch of questions to ask you about how it was when you lived in Africa. I mean, was it like they show in the movies, you know, *King Solomon's Mines* and - like that?"

Katje had never seen that movie, but she knew that nothing on film could be like her Africa. "No," she said. "You should go to Africa sometime and see for yourself."

"I'm working on it. There's your bus coming. Wait a minute, listen-no more walking alone out here after dark. There's not enough people around now. You got to arrange to be picked up. Didn't you hear? That guy jumped another girl last night. She got away, but still. Daniel says he found one of the back doors to the club unlocked. You be careful, will you? I don't want to have to come busting in there to save you from some deranged, six-foot pre-med on the rampage, know what I mean? Skinny dude like me could get real ruined that way."

"Oh, I will take care of myself," Katje said, touched and annoyed and amused all at once by his solicitude.

"Sure. Only I wish you were about fifteen years younger and studying karate, you know?"

As she climbed out of the car with the books on her arm he added. "You do any shooting in Africa? Hunting and stuff?"

"Yes, quite a lot."

"Okay; take this." He pulled metal out of his pocket and put it in her hand. It was a gun. "Just in case. You know how to use it, right?"

She closed her fingers on the compact weight of it. "But where did you get this? Do you have papers for it? The laws here are very strict."

He tugged the door shut and said through the open window, "I live in a rough neighborhood, and I got friends. Hurry up, you'll miss your bus."

* * * *

Dracula was a silly book. She had to force herself to read on in spite of the phony Dutchman Van Helsing, an insult to anyone of Dutch descent. The voodoo book was impenetrable, and she soon gave it up in disgust.

The handgun was another matter. She sat at the formica-topped table in her kitchenette and turned the shiny little automatic in the light, thinking. How had Jackson come by such a thing, or for that matter, how did he afford his fancy sports car and all that equipment he carried in it from time to time-where did it all come from and; where did it go? He was up to something, probably lots of things-what they called "hustling" nowadays. A good thing he had given her the gun. It could only get him into trouble to carry it around with him. She knew how to handle weapons, and surely with a rapist at large the authorities would be understanding about her lack of a license for it.

The gun needed cleaning. She worked on it as best she could without the right tools. It was a cheap .25-caliber gun. Back home your gun was a fine rifle, made to drop a charging rhino in his tracks, not a stubby little nickel toy like this for scaring off muggers and rapists.

Yet she wasn't sorry to have it. Her own hunting gun that she had brought from Africa years ago was in storage with the extra things from the cottage. She realized now that she had missed its presence lately, since the beginning of the secret stalking of Dr. Weyland.

She went to sleep with the gun on the night table next to her bed.

* * * *

She woke listening for the roar so she would know in what direction to look tomorrow for the lion's spoor. There was a hot, rank odor of African dust in the air, and she sat up in bed thinking, he's been here.

It was a dream. But it had been so clear! She went to look out the front window without turning on the light, and it was the ordinary street below that seemed unreal. Her heart drummed in her chest. Not that he would

come after her here on Dewer Street, but he had sent Nettie to the club, and now he had sent this dream into her sleep. Creatures stalking one another over time grew a bond from mind to mind. But that was in another life. Was she losing her sanity? She read for a little in the Afrikaans Bible she had brought with her from home but so seldom opened in recent years. What gave comfort in the end was to put Jackson's automatic into her purse to carry with her. A gun was supposedly of no use against a vampire-you needed a wooden stake, she remembered reading, or you had to cut off his head to kill him-but the weight of the weapon in her handbag reassured her.

* * * *

The lecture hall was full in spite of the scarcity of students on campus this time of year. These special talks were open to the town as well.

Dr. Weyland read his lecture in a stiff, abrupt manner. He stood cramped slightly over the lectern, which was low for his height, and rapped out his sentences, rarely raising his eyes from his notes. In his tweeds and heavy-rimmed glasses he was the picture of the scholarly recluse drawn out of the study into the limelight. His lecture was brief; he fulfilled with unmistakable impatience the duty set every member of the faculty to give one public address per year on an aspect of his work.

The audience didn't mind. They had come prepared to be spellbound by the great Dr. Weyland speaking on the demonology of dreams. At the end there were questions, most of them obviously designed to show the questioner's cleverness rather than to elicit information. The discussions after these lectures were usually the real show. Katje, lulled by the abstract talk, came fully to attention when a young woman asked, "Professor, have you considered whether the legends of such supernatural creatures as werewolves, vampires, and dragons are not distortions out of nightmares, as many think; that maybe the legends reflect the existence of real, though rare, prodigies of evolution?"

Dr. Weyland hesitated, coughed, sipped water. "The forces of evolution are capable of prodigies, certainly," he said. "You have chosen an excellent word. But we must understand that we are not speaking-in the case of the vampire, for example-of a blood-sipping phantom who cringes from a clove of garlic. How could nature design such a being?"

"The corporeal vampire, if it existed, would be by definition the greatest of all predators, living as he would off the top of the food chain. Man is the most dangerous animal, the devourer or destroyer of all others,

and the vampire preys on man. Now, any sensible vampire would choose to avoid the risks of attacking humans by taking the blood of lower animals if he could; so we must assume that our vampire cannot. Perhaps animal blood can tide him over a lean patch, as seawater can sustain a castaway for a few miserable days but can't permanently replace fresh water to drink. Humanity would remain the vampire's livestock, albeit fractious and dangerous to deal with, and where they live, so must he.

"In the sparsely settled early world he would be bound to a town or village to assure his food supply. He would learn to live on little-perhaps a half-liter of blood per day-since he could hardly leave a trail of drained corpses and hope to go unnoticed. Periodically, he would withdraw for his own safety and to give the villagers time to recover from his depredations. A sleep several generations long would provide him with an untouched, ignorant population in the same location. He would have to be able to slow his metabolism, to induce in himself naturally a state of suspended animation; mobility in time would become his alternative to mobility in space."

Katje listened intently, thinking yes, he is the sort of animal that lies in wait for the prey to come his way. His daring in speaking this way stirred her; she could see he was beginning to enjoy the game, growing more at ease at the podium as he warmed to his subject.

"The vampire's slowed body functions during these long rest periods might help extend his lifetime; so might living for long periods, waking or sleeping, on the edge of starvation. We know that minimal feeding produces striking longevity in some other species. Long life would be a highly desirable alternative to reproduction, since a vampire would flourish best with the least competition. The great predator would not wish to sire his own rivals. It could not be true that his bite would turn his victims into vampires like himself-

"Or we'd be up to our necks in fangs," whispered someone in the audience rather loudly.

"Fangs are too noticeable and not efficient for blood sucking," observed Dr. Weyland. "Large, sharp canine teeth are designed to tear meat. Polish versions of the vampire legend would be closer to the mark: They tell of some sort of puncturing device, perhaps a needle in the tongue like a sting that would secrete an anticlotting substance. That way the vampire could seal his lips around the wound and draw the blood freely without having to rip great, spouting, wasteful holes in his unfortunate prey." Dr. Weyland smiled.

The younger members of the audience produced appropriate retching noises.

Would a vampire sleep in a coffin? Someone asked.

“Certainly not,” Dr. Weyland retorted. “Would you, given a choice? The corporeal vampire would require physical access to the world, which is something that burial customs generally prevent. He might retire to a cave or take his rest in a tree like Merlin, or Ariel in the cloven pine, provided he could find either tree or cave safe from wilderness freaks and developers’ bulldozers.

“Finding a secure resting place is one obvious problem for our vampire in modern times,” he continued. “There are others. Upon each waking he must quickly adapt to his new surroundings, a task that, we may imagine, has grown progressively more difficult with the rapid acceleration of cultural change since the Industrial Revolution. In the past century and a half he has no doubt had to limit his sleeps to shorter and shorter periods for fear of completely losing touch. This curtailment of his rest might be expected to wear him down and render him increasingly irritable.”

He paused to adjust his glasses, now as visibly relaxed as Katje had seen him in her kitchen at the club. Someone called out, “Could a corporeal vampire get a toothache?”

“Assuredly,” replied Dr. Weyland. “He is, after all, a stage of humanity, real though hard to come by. He would no doubt also need a haircut now and then and could only put his pants on, as humorists have said since the widespread adoption of trousers, one leg at a time.

“Since we posit a natural rather than a supernatural being, he grows older, but slowly. Meanwhile, each updating of himself is more challenging and demands more from him—more imagination, more energy, more cunning. While he must adapt sufficiently to disguise his anomalous existence, he must not succumb to current ideologies of Right or Left—that is, to the cant of individual license or to the cant of the infallibility of the masses—lest either allegiance interfere with the exercise of his predatory survival skill.”

Meaning, Katje thought grimly, he can’t afford scruples about drinking our blood.

Emrys Williams raised a giggle by commenting that a lazy vampire

could always take home a pretty young instructor to show him the new developments in inter-personal relations.

Dr. Weyland fixed him with a cold glance. "You are mixing up dinner with sex," he remarked, "and not, I gather, for the first time."

They roared. Williams-the "tame Wild Welshman of the Lit. Department" to his less admiring colleagues- turned a gratified pink.

One of Dr. Weyland's associates in Anthropology pointed out at boring length that the vampire, born in an earlier age, would become dangerously conspicuous for his diminutive height as the human race grew taller.

"Not necessarily," commented Dr. Weyland. "Remember that we speak of a highly specialized physical form. It may be that during his waking periods-his metabolism is so sensitive that he responds to the stimuli in the environment by growing in his body as well as in his mind. Perhaps while he's awake his entire being exists at an intense inner level of activity and change. The stress of these great rushes to catch up all at once with physical, mental, and cultural evolution must be enormous. No wonder he needs his long sleeps."

He glanced at the clock on the wall. "As you can see, by the application of a little logic and imagination we come up with a creature bearing superficial resemblances to the vampire of legend, but at base one quite different from your standard strolling corpse with an aversion to crosses. Next question?"

They weren't willing to end this flight of fancy. Someone asked how he accounted for the superstitions about crosses and garlic and so on.

Dr. Weyland sipped water from the glass at hand while contemplating the audience. He said finally, "Primitive men first encountering the vampire would be unaware that they themselves were products of evolution. They would have no way of knowing that he was a still higher product of the same process. They would make up stories to account for him and to try to control him. In early times the vampire himself might even believe in some of these legends-the silver bullet, the oaken stake.

"But waking at length in a more rational age, he would abandon these notions just as everyone else did. A clever vampire might even make use of the folklore. For instance, it is generally supposed that Bram Stoker was inspired to write *Dracula* by his meeting with a Rumanian professor of

Oriental languages from Pest University; I refer you to a recent biography of Stoker by Daniel Farson. Why was this Professor Arminius Vambery in London at just the right time, a guest at a certain eating club along with Stoker on a certain night? How did Vambery come to have a wealth of tantalizing detail about the vampire superstition at his fingertips? Ladies and gentlemen, take note: There is a research paper in it somewhere.”

He didn’t wait for their laughter to die away but continued, “Any intelligent vampire sensitive to the questing spirit of those times would have developed a passionate interest in his own origin and evolution. Now, who was Arminius Vambery, and why his ceaseless exploration of that same subject?”

“Eventually our vampire prudently retires. Imagine his delight, upon waking half a century later to find vampire legends a common currency of the popular culture and *Dracula* a classic.”

“Wouldn’t he be lonely?” sighed a girl standing in the side aisle, her posture eloquent of the desire to comfort that loneliness.

“The young lady will forgive me,” Dr. Weyland responded, “if I observe that this is a question born of a sheltered life. Predators in nature do not indulge in the sort of romantic moonings that humans impute to them. As for our vampire, even if he had the inclination he wouldn’t have the time. On each waking he has more to learn. Perhaps someday the world will return to a reasonable rate of change, permitting him some leisure in which to feel lonely or whatever suits him.”

A nervous girl ventured the opinion that a perpetually self-educating vampire would always have to find himself a place in a center of learning in order to have access to the information he would need.

“Naturally,” agreed Dr. Weyland drily. “Perhaps a university, where strenuous study and other eccentricities of the living intellect would be accepted behavior in a grown man. Possibly even a modest institution like Cayslin College would serve.”

Under the chuckling following this came a question too faint for Katje to hear. Dr. Weyland, having bent to listen, straightened up and announced sardonically, “The lady desires me to comment upon the vampire’s ‘Satanic pride.’ Madam, here you enter the area of the literary imagination and its devices, where I dare not tread under the eyes of my colleagues from the English Department. Perhaps they will pardon me if I merely point out that a tiger who falls asleep in a jungle and on waking finds a thriving city

overgrowing his lair has no energy to spare for displays of Satanic pride.”

That nerve, Katje thought; Dr. Weyland expounding on a vampire’s pride-what an exercise in arrogance!

Williams, intent on having the last word as always, spoke up once more: “The vampire as time traveler- you ought to be writing science fiction, Weyland,” which provoked a growing patter of applause. It was evident that the evening was ending.

Katje went out with the crowd, but withdrew to stand outside under the portico of the Union Building. She saw Dr. Weyland’s car across the street, gleaming in the lamplight: his access to physical mobility and a modern mechanical necessity that he had mastered. No wonder he loved it.

With the outwash of departing audience came Miss Donnelly. She asked if Katje needed a lift: “There’s my car,” the rusty, trusty Volks.” Katje explained that a group of women from the staff cafeteria went bowling together each Friday night and had promised to come by and pick her up.

“I’ll wait with you just in case,” Miss Donnelly said. “You know, Wild Man Williams is a twerp, but he was right: Weyland’s vampire would be a time traveler. He could only go forward, of course, never backhand only by long, unpredictable leaps-this time, say, into our age of what we like to think of as technological marvels; maybe next time into an age of interstellar travel. Who knows, he might get to taste Martian blood, if there are Martians, and if they have blood.

“Frankly, I wouldn’t have thought Weyland could come up with anything so imaginative as that-the vampire as a sort of flying saber-toothed tiger prowling the pavements, a truly endangered species. That’s next term’s T-shirt: SAVE THE VAMPIRE.”

Miss Donnelly might banter, but she would never believe. It was all a joke to her, a clever mental game invented by Dr. Weyland for his audience. No point consulting her.

Miss Donnelly added ruefully, “You’ve got to hand it to the man. He’s got a tremendous stage presence, and he sure knows how to turn on the charm when he feels like it. Nothing too smooth, mind you, just enough unbending, enough slightly caustic graciousness, to set susceptible hearts a-beating. You could almost forget what a ruthless, self-centered bastard he can be. Did you notice that most of the comments came from women? Is that your lift?”

It was. While the women in the station wagon shuffled themselves around to make room, Katje stood with her hand on the door and watched Dr. Weyland emerge from the building with admiring students at either hand. He loomed above them, his hair silver under the lamp-light. For over civilized people to experience the approach of such a predator as sexually attractive was not strange. She remembered Scotty saying once that the great cats were all beautiful, and maybe beauty helped them to capture their prey.

He turned his head, and she thought for a moment that he was looking at her as she got into the station wagon.

What could she do that wouldn't arouse total disbelief and a suspicion that she herself was crazy? She couldn't think amid the tired, satisfied ramblings of her bowling friends, and she declined to stay up socializing with them. They didn't press her. She was not one of their regular group.

Sitting alone at home, Katje had a cup of hot milk to calm herself for sleep. To her perplexity, her mind kept wandering from thoughts of Dr. Weyland to memories of drinking cocoa at night with Henrik and the African students he used to bring to dinner. They had been native boys to her, dressed up in suits and talking politics like white men, flashing photographs of black babies playing with toy trucks and walkie-talkie sets. Sometimes they had gone to see documentary films of an Africa full of cities and traffic and black professionals exhorting, explaining, running things, as these students expected to do in their turn when they went home.

She thought about home now. She recalled clearly all those indicators of irrevocable change in Africa, and she saw suddenly that the old life there had gone. She would return to an Africa largely as foreign to her as America had been at first. Reluctantly, she admitted one of her feelings when listening to Dr. Weyland talk had been an unwilling empathy with him: if he was a one-way time traveler, so was she.

As the vampire could not return to simpler times, so Katje saw herself cut off from the life of raw vigor, the rivers of game, the smoky village air, all viewed from the lofty heights of white privilege. One did not have to sleep half a century to lose one's world these days; one had only to grow older.

Next morning she found Dr. Weyland leaning, hands in pockets, against one of the columns flanking the entrance to the club. She stopped some yards from him, her purse hanging heavily on her arm. The hour was early, the campus deserted-looking. Stand still, she thought; show no fear.

He looked at her. "I saw you after the lecture last night, and earlier in the week, outside the lab one evening. You must know better than to wander alone at night; the campus empty, no one around-anything might happen. If you are curious, Mrs. de Groot, come do a session for me. All your questions will be answered. Come over tonight. I could stop by here for you in my car on the way back to the lab after dinner. There is no problem with scheduling, and I would welcome your company. I sit alone over there these nights hoping some impoverished youngster, unable to afford a trip home at intersession, will be moved by an uncontrollable itch for travel to come to my lab and earn his fare."

She felt fear knocking heavily in her body. She shook her head, no.

"My work would interest you, I think," he went on, watching her. "You are an alert, fine-looking woman; they waste your qualities here. Couldn't the college find you something better than to be a housekeeper for them after your husband died? You might consider coming over regularly to help me with some clerical chores until I get a new assistant. I pay well."

Astonished out of her fear at the offer of work in the vampire's lair, she found her voice: "I am a country woman, Dr. Weyland, a daughter of farmers. I have no proper education. We never read books at home, except the Bible. My husband didn't want me to work. I have spent my time in this country learning English and cooking and how to shop for the right things. I have no skills, no knowledge but the little that I remember of the crops and weather and customs of another country- and even that is probably out of date. I would be no use in work like yours."

Hunched in his coat with the collar upturned, looking at her slightly askance, his tousled hair gleaming with the damp, he had the aspect of an old hawk, intent but aloof. He broke the pose, yawned behind his large-knuckled hand, and straightened up.

"As you like. Here comes your friend Nellie."

"Nettie," Katje corrected, suddenly outraged: he'd drunk Nettie's blood; the least he could do was remember her name properly. But he was vanishing over the lawn toward the lab.

Nettie came panting up. "Who was that? Did he try to attack you?"

"It was Dr. Weyland," Katje said. She hoped Nettie didn't notice her trembling, which Katje tried to conceal.

Nettie laughed. "What is this, a secret romance?"

Miss Donnelly came into the kitchen toward the end of the luncheon for the departing Emeritus. She plumped herself down between Nettie and Katje, who were taking a break and preparing dessert, respectively. Katje spooned whipped cream carefully into each glass dish of fruit.

Miss Donnelly said, "In case I get too smashed to say this later, thanks. On the budget I gave you, you did just great. The Department will put on something official with Beef Wellington and trimmings, over at Borchard's, but it was really important for some of us lowly types to give Sylvia our own alcoholic farewell feast, which we couldn't have done without your help."

Nettie nodded and stubbed out her cigarette.

"Our pleasure," Katje said, preoccupied. Dr. Weyland had come for her, would come back again; he was hers to deal with, but how? She no longer thought of sharing her fear, not with Nettie with her money worries or with Miss Donnelly, whose eyes were just now faintly swimmy-looking with drink. Weyland the vampire was not for a committee to deal with. Only fools left it to committees to handle life and death.

"The latest word," Miss Donnelly added bitterly, "is that the Department plans to fill Sylvia's place with some guy from Oregon, which means the salary goes up half as much again or more inside of six months."

"Them's the breaks," Nettie said, not very pleasantly. She caught Katje's eye with a look that said, Look who makes all the money and look who does all the complaining.

"Them is," Miss Donnelly agreed glumly. "As for me, the word is no tenure, so I'll be moving on in the fall. Me and my big mouth. Wacker nearly fainted at my prescription for stopping the rapes: You trap the guy, disembowel him, and hang his balls over the front gate. Our good dean doesn't know me well enough to realize it's all front. On my own I'd be too petrified to try anything but talking the bastard out of it: You know, 'Now you just let me get my dress back on, and I'll make us each a cup of coffee, and you tell me all about why you hate, women.' " She stood up, groaning.

"Did you hear what happened to that girl last night, the latest victim? He cut her throat. Ripped her pants off but didn't even bother raping her; that's how desperate for sex he is."

Katje said, "Jackson told us about the killing this morning."

"Jackson? Oh, the maintenance man. Look out, it could even be him. Any of them, damn them," she muttered savagely as she turned away, "living off us, kicking our bodies out of the way when they're through-"

She stumbled out of the kitchen.

Nettie snorted. "She always been one of those libbers. No wonder Wacker's getting rid of her. Some men act like hogs, but you can't let yourself be turned into a manhater. A man's the only chance a girl has of getting up in the world, you know?" She pulled on a pair of acid-yellow gloves and headed for the sink. "If I want out of these rubber gloves I have to marry a guy who can afford to pay a maid."

Katje sat looking at the fruit dishes with their plump cream caps. It was just as the Bible said. She felt it happen: The scales fell from her eyes. She saw clearly and thought, I am a fool.

Bad pay is real, rape is real, killing is real. The real world worries about real dangers, not childish fancies of a night prowler who drinks blood. Dr. Weyland took the trouble to be concerned, to offer extra work, while I was thinking idiot things about him. Where does it come from, this nonsense of mine? My life is dull since Henrik died; so I make up drama in my head, and that way I get to think about Dr. Weyland, a distinguished and learned gentleman, being interested in me.

She resolved to go to the lab building later and leave a note for Dr. Weyland, an apology for her reluctance, an offer to stop by soon and make an appointment at the sleep lab.

Nettie looked at the clock and said over her shoulder, "Time to take the ladies their dessert."

* * * *

At last the women had dispersed, leaving the usual fog of smoke behind. Katje and Nettie had finished the cleaning up. Katje said, "I'm going for some air."

Nettie, wreathed by smoke of her own making, drowsed in one of the big living-room chairs. She shook her head. "Not me. I'm pooped." She sat up. "Unless you want me along. It's still light out, so you're safe from the Cayslin Ripper."

“Don’t disturb yourself,” Katje said.

Away on the far edge of the lawn three students danced under the sailing shape of a Frisbee. Katje looked up at the sun, a silver disc behind a thin place in the clouds; more rain coming, probably. The campus still wore a deserted look. Katje wasn’t worried; there was no vampire, and the gun in her purse would suffice for anything else.

The sleep lab was locked. She tucked her note of apology between the lab door and the jamb and left.

As she started back across the lawn someone stepped behind her, and long fingers closed on her arm: It was Dr. Weyland. Firmly and without a word he bent her course back toward the lab.

“What are you doing?” she said, astonished.

“I almost drove off without seeing you. Come sit in my car, I want to talk to you.” She held back, alarmed, and he gave her a sharp little shake. “Making a fuss is pointless. No one is here to notice. No one would believe.”

There was only his car in the parking lot; even the Frisbee players had gone. Dr. Weyland opened the door of his Mercedes and pushed Katje into the front passenger seat with a deft, powerful thrust of his arm. He got in on the driver’s side, snapped down the automatic door locks, and sat back. He looked up at the gray sky, then at his watch.

Katje said, “You wanted to say something to me?”

He didn’t answer.

She said, “What are we waiting for?”

“For the day man to leave and lock up the lab. I don’t like to be interrupted.”

This is what it’s like, Katje thought, feeling lethargic detachment stealing through her, paralyzing her. No hypnotic power out of a novelist’s imagination held her, but the spell cast on the prey of the hunting cat, the shock of being seized in the deadly jaws, though not a drop of blood was yet spilled. “Interrupted,” she whispered.

“Yes,” he said, turning toward her. She saw the naked craving in his gaze. “Interrupted at whatever it pleases me to do with you. You are on my turf now, Mrs. de Groot, where you have persisted in coming time after time. I can’t wait any longer for you to make up your mind. You are healthy-looking up your records-and I am hungry. You may live to walk away after, I don’t know yet-who would listen to a mad old woman? I can tell you this much: Your chances are better if you don’t speak.”

The car smelled of cold metal, leather, and tweed. At length a man came out of the lab building and bent to unlock the chain from the only bicycle in the bike rack. By the way Dr. Weyland shifted in his seat, Katje saw that this was the departure he had been awaiting.

“Look at that idiot,” he muttered. “Is he going to take all night?” She saw him turn restlessly toward the lab windows. That would be the place, after a bloodless blow to stun her-he wouldn’t want any mess in his Mercedes.

In her lassitude she was sure that he had attacked that girl, drunk her blood, and then killed her. He was using the rapist’s activities as cover. When subjects did not come to him at the sleep lab, hunger drove him out to hunt. Perhaps he was glad then to put aside his civilized disguise.

She thought, *But I am myself a hunter!*

Cold anger coursed through her. Her thoughts flew: She needed time, a moment out of his reach to plan her survival. She had to get out of the car-any subterfuge would do.

She gulped and turned toward him, croaking, “I’m going to be sick.”

He swore furiously. The locks clicked; he reached roughly past her and shoved open the door on her side: “Out!”

She stumbled out into the drizzling, chilly air and backed several hasty paces, hugging her purse to her body like a shield, looking quickly around. The man on the bike had gone. The upper story of the Cayslin Club across the lawn showed a light-Nettie would be missing her now. Maybe Jackson would be just arriving to pick them up. But no help could come in time.

Dr. Weyland had gotten out of the car. He stood with his arms folded on the roof of the Mercedes, looking across at her with a mixture of annoyance and contempt. “Mrs. de Groot, do you think you can outrun me?”

He started around the front of his car toward her.

Scotty's voice sounded quietly in her ear: "Yours," he said, as the leopard tensed to charge. Weyland too was an animal, not an immortal monster out of legend-just a wild beast, however smart and strong and hungry. He had said so himself.

She jerked out the automatic, readying it to fire as she brought it swiftly up to eye level in both hands while her mind told her calmly that a head shot would be best but that a hit was surer if she aimed for the torso. "

She shot him twice, two slugs in quick succession, one in the chest and one in the abdomen. He did not fall but bent to clutch at his torn body, and he screamed and screamed so that she was too shaken to steady her hands for the head shot afterward. She cried out also, involuntarily: His screams were dreadful. It was long since She had killed anything.

Footsteps rushed behind her, arms flung round her, pinning her hands to her sides so that the gun pointed at the ground and she couldn't fire at Weyland again. Jackson's voice gasped in her ear, "Jesus Creeping Christ!"

His car stood where he had braked it, unheard by Katje. Nettie jumped out and rushed toward Katje, crying, "My God, he's shot, she shot him!"

Breaking off his screaming, Weyland tottered away from them around his car and fetched up, leaning on the front. His face, a hollow-cheeked, starving mask, gaped at them.

"It's him?" Jackson said incredulously. "He tried to rape you?"

Katje shook her head. "He's a vampire."

"Vampire, hell!" Jackson exploded in a breathless laugh. "He's a Goddamn dead rapist, that's what he is! Jesus!"

Weyland panted, "Stop staring, cattle!"

He wedged himself heavily into the driver's seat of his car. They could see him slumped there, his forehead against the curve of the steering wheel. Blood spotted the Mercedes where he had leaned.

"Mrs. de Groot, give me the gun," Jackson said. Katje clenched her

fingers around the grip. “No.” She could tell by the way Jackson’s arms tightened that he was afraid to let go of her and grab for the gun.

He said, “Nettie, take my car and go get Daniel!” Nettie moaned, “My God, look! What’s he doing?” Weyland had lifted his red-smeared hands to his face, and he was licking the blood from his fingers. Katje could see his throat working as he strained to swallow his food, his life.

A siren sounded. Nettie cried in wild relief, “That’s Daniel’s car coming!”

Weyland raised his head. His gray face was rigid with determination. He snarled, “I won’t be put on show!”

The door-one of you shut the door!” He started the engine.

His glaring face commanded them. Nettie darted forward, slammed the door, and recoiled, wiping her hand on her sweater.

Eyes blind to them now, Weyland drove the Mercedes waveringly past them, out of the parking lot toward the gateway road. Rain swept down in heavy gusts. Katje heard the siren again and woke to her failure: She had not made a clean kill. The vampire was getting away.

She lunged toward Jackson’s car. He held her back, shouting, “Nothing doing, come on, you done *enough!*”

The Mercedes crawled haltingly down the middle of the road, turned at the stone gates, and was gone.

Jackson said, “Now will you give me that gun?”

Katje snapped on the safety and dropped the automatic on the wet paving at their feet.

Nettie was pointing toward the club. “There’s people coming. They must have heard the shooting and called Daniel. Listen, Jackson, we’re in trouble. Nobody’s going to believe that Dr. Weyland is the rapist-or the other thing either.” Her glance flickered nervously over Katje. “Whatever we say, they’ll think we’re crazy.”

“Oh, shit,” said Jackson tiredly, letting Katje go at last. He stooped to retrieve the gun. Katje saw the apprehension in his face as he weighed Nettie’s assessment of their situation: a wild story from some cleaning

people about the eminent professor-

“We’ve got to say something,” Nettie went on desperately. “All that blood.” She fell silent, staring.

There was no blood. The rain had washed the tarmac clean.

Jackson faced Katje and said urgently, “Listen, Mrs. de Groot, we don’t know a thing about any shooting, you hear?” He slipped the gun into an inside pocket of his jacket. “You came over to make an appointment at the sleep lab, only Dr. Weyland wasn’t around. You waited for him, and Nettie got worried when you didn’t come back, so she called me, and we drove over here looking for you. We all heard shooting, but nobody saw anything. There was nothing to see. Like now.”

Katje was furious with him and herself. She should have chanced the head shot; she shouldn’t have let Jackson hold her back.

She could see Daniel’s car now, wheeling into the parking lot.

Jackson said quietly, “I got accepted to computer school in Rochester for next semester. You can bet they don’t do vampires down there, Mrs. de Groot; and they don’t do black guys who can get hold of guns, either. Me and Nettie got to live here; we don’t get to go away to Africa.”

She grew calmer; he was right. The connection had been between herself and the vampire all along, and what had happened here was her own affair. It had nothing to do with these young people,

“All right, Jackson,” she said. “There was nothing to see.”

“Not a thing,” he said in his old, easy manner, and he turned toward Daniel’s car.

He would do all right; maybe someday he would come visit her in Africa, in a smart suit and carrying an attaché case, on business. Surely they had computers there now too.

Daniel stepped out of his car into the rain, one hand on the butt of his pistol. Katje saw the disappointment sour his florid face as Nettie put a hand on his arm and began to talk quietly.

Katje picked up her purse from where she had dropped it-how light it

felt now, without the gun in it. She fished out her plastic rain hood, though her hair was already wet. Tying the hood on, she thought about her old Winchester 270, her lion gun. About taking it from storage, putting it in working order, tucking it well back into the broom closet at the club. In case Weyland didn't die, in case he couldn't sleep with two bullets in him and came limping back to hunt on familiar ground, to look for her. He would come next week, when the students returned, or never. She didn't think he would come, but she would be ready just in case.

And then, as she had planned, she would go home to Africa. Her mind flashed: a new life, whatever life she could make for herself there these days. If Weyland could fit himself to new futures, so could she.

But if he did sleep, and woke again 50 years from now? Each generation must look out for itself. She had done her part, although perhaps not well enough to boast about. Still, what a tale it would make some evening over the smoke of a campfire on the veldt, beginning with the tall form of Dr. Weyland seen striding across the parking lot past a kneeling student in the heavy mist of morning...

Katje walked toward Daniel's car to tell the story that Buildings and Grounds would understand.