



Vampire Justice Part 20

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Gwen meets some new friends. Connie takes an active part in the case.

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Connie listened as Slade spoke to Kevin. She had one more idea that might lead to more evidence against Molly and Carlo and maybe others. She wanted to tell Slade but knew that DD's was not the place to expound on future police strategy. She would wait until they were with Kevin and Eran at the

station. Connie had not felt this good about an investigation since before suffering the effects of the blast at Gustaf's nightclub. A smile appeared on her face, which no one had seen for a long time. When the two detectives finished their drinks, they gathered up the files, locked them away and returned to the VJS headquarters to wait for Eran and Kevin. Connie still held her idea to gather more evidence against Molly and Carlo. If she were not a vampire, she would have felt almost giddy with excitement. Having no strong emotions was new to her. She had slowly learned about the differences of becoming a vampire. She remembered what it was like being human and at times, she missed it. She thought she would be angry about the transition to a vampire, but with Leona's help and her friend's understanding, the process was easy. Connie's ideas flooded her mind. She could not wait until they got back to the station. As they rode in the car, Connie, who usually remained quiet, spoke, "Slade, how would it be if we sent a mole into Molly's organization? Maybe she could use a new bar girl or a new companion for Carlo and her. What do you think?" Slade pondered before answering, "That might work, but she knows most of the police and our squad. Where could we get a new face or two? Let's talk about that when we meet with Eran and Kevin in a little bit. It is a thought worthy of consideration." Slade looked at his partner and smiled. "How does it feel to be back riding shotgun with the old partner?" "It feels as if I never left. I thought you would have a new partner by now. I can only work when the sun is not shining which limits my ability to be of use. Well it was a thing to think about, but we had been partners for so long and with your promotion, you merited consideration to continue in your old job. So, here you are, partner." "That feels so good, partner!" Connie replied heartily. When Connie and Slade entered the conference room, Eran and Kevin scanned the images displayed on the large screen monitor. Each camera providing data from surveillance at the estate and the tavern displayed on the screen. No action appeared that was worthy of note. Each camera's recorded data stream displayed on the big screen as well. If anything happened, the VJS had a record of it as evidence. Connie watched the screen but wanted to discuss her idea. For now, most of the investigation was passive and proceeded slowly with limited results. Her idea was more active and might yield the required results. Connie sat fascinated by the wall of images. Slade interrupted, "Has anything shown up of interest from the cameras? It looks harmless and not much happening. Where are Carlo and Molly?" Kevin replied, "They are inside the tavern. It would help if we had internal cameras on both sites. The estate would be easy to set up because no one is there now and we control the area and the building. The tavern is not so easy. There seems to be someone present at all hours. Can we at least wire the estate?" Slade hesitated to answer, but soon postulated, "We would need a secret court order, but that would come from Gustaf, which should be easy to obtain. Connie can work on that. By the way, Connie will take a more active role in this investigation. She told me of an idea she had to move things along faster. I will let her explain it. Connie, you have the floor. Let's hear your idea and plan." Eran, Kevin, and Slade turned looking at Connie with great interest. She sat straighter and began, "So far, we have gathered passive data on our suspects. I propose we take a more active data collection and force our suspects to commit acts that would result in them committing acts that can cause more behavior that is criminal. I know that means entrapment in human courts, but the VJS has a different set of rules that they follow. We can use those rules to our

advantage." "Wouldn't that open us up for using entrapment and get the cases thrown out?" Eran asked. "Normally that would happen, but The VJS can use other methods that get the suspects to commit crimes to incriminate themselves. We need a person or two on the inside to help us." Connie intoned. Eran begged, "Raven and Molly know everyone here. Whom can we use to get into the gang, we have no fey or barmaids?" "No we don't, but we have something or err ... someone better, an unknown person that Molly or Carlo or Raven has never seen or met. Quinn could play the part of a construction worker very easily. His being immortal and a shifter presents a curiosity that might be irresistible to them. Of course, he has to agree to this and Gustaf must approve. Now we need a woman to watch things from the inside. Who can we get to play that role?" Eran listened to Connie, but her eyes watched the big screen on the conference room wall. Each camera played in its section of the screen. Nothing took place at the estate, and there appeared only one camera at Molly's tavern with any activity. In that tiny window, the entrance to the tavern displayed the steady flow of men seeking to drink their day's dirt away and share stories with their comrades. One person in that frame stayed prominently displayed. Carlo sat casually on a high stool allowing the flow of men into the tavern. He kept the line moving but regulated the total number of occupants never to exceed the legal limit. He was back at work watching for the right man or men for Molly. "Carlo is back at work," Eran said to no one in particular. All eyes turned to watch Carlo on the screen. Carlo sat on a stool and greeted the patrons as they entered. Many of the men stopped and spoke to Carlo as if they missed him at the door. He disappeared for a couple of days, but it did not seem to matter. Carlo smiled and greeted everyone who entered the tavern. A couple of his fey counterparts hovered nearby in case things got out of hand. After a few minutes, the watchers grew bored and turned away from the screen. Gwen felt restless and needed to run. She jumped into her car and drove to her favorite running spot. She hoped she would meet the new were-shifter again. She quickly stripped down and shifted to her wolf form unobserved. She started to run, and as she ran, there were strange vibrations in the air. Someone or something new was around. The moon shone brightly and as Gwen passed the area, where she saw the unicorn an eerie sight caught her eyes. Standing on a rise splashed by the moonlight was the unicorn, but she was not alone. Standing beside the unicorn was a slim shimmering apparition, which glowed in the shadow cast by the unicorn. Gwen saw a wood nymph and slowed her run to a walk as she drew closer. She walked to the duo and sat watching the nymph caress the unicorn and sing softly to her. The appearance of the two made Gwen forget the other shifter as she sat fascinated. The wood nymph turned to Gwen and greeted her in a high, lilting voice. "Hello miss, are these your woods?" The nymph asked quietly. Gwen caught off guard shifted to human form and walked closer to the nymph. "This is where I run, but no one owns these woods. It is public property. My name is Gwen. What is yours and where are you from? Who is your friend there? I have never seen a unicorn before." "I am new to the area. My partner and I arrived here a few days ago. Perhaps you have seen him running here. He is a shifter as you are and runs in these woods. He should be here soon. This unicorn is lost and needs to find her way back to her family. Perhaps you and I could work together to help her. Are you familiar with the forests around here? My name is Anna, and I am glad to meet you, Gwen." Sounds came through the underbrush as a large wolf

approached the women and the unicorn. Gwen met the same wolf a few days earlier. He looked worn out and in need of cleaning. He stopped and shifted back to human form to greet the women. "Hello Anna, I see you have a friend. Gwen, it is good to see you again. Were you out running looking for me?" The bold question shook Gwen. Gwen quickly recovered, but felt a little lost because she had not met Quinn at the VJS headquarters. He seemed to know her, but she had not met him yet. Anna moved closer to Quinn as if to show that he was hers. Gwen scanned Anna as she stood beside Quinn. Anna was a tall woman with very long legs, a short torso, long arms, long neck and an oval face. Her blonde hair hung down to her waist with a slight curl and wave. Her green eyes reflected the moon's glow. Her ruby-red lips were natural colored highlighting her flawless complexion. Looking closely Anna could be a model, but her breasts were large and attracted Gwen's eyes. Gwen had seen Quinn in his shifter form. As she looked at him, she felt drawn to him. He and Anna were about the same height just a little over six feet. His scruffy hair curled and looked unkempt. He had two days growth of beard giving him a rugged appearance. His well-chiseled torso rippled with muscle. His legs were strong from running, and his shoulders and arms reflected continuous use. If Gwen did not know he was a police officer, she would think he was a construction worker. As the trio talked and became friends, Gwen noticed a strong accent from them. She pondered what it was, but felt inhibited to ask. She had heard the accent before but could not quite guess it. Finally, with her curiosity stretched, she asked, "Where are you from? Why are you here?" Quinn laughed, "We are from Kiev, a city in the Ukraine. We are here to observe the Vampire Justice System and take what we learn back and establish a similar system in Kiev. We need it there because of our growing preternatural population and rising crime rate. Do you know of the officers involved here?" Gwen stood puzzled by the knowledge that Quinn knew her. That was curious she never met him. Not holding back, Gwen asked, "How do you know me? We have never met. I do work with the VJS on their current case. Will you work with them too?" Anna looked puzzled, but Quinn smiled at Gwen's confusion. "I saw a video of you and a lawyer named Raven exploring the grounds of an estate. You look much better in person than you did on the infra-red images on video." The moon went behind a cloud obscuring the red glow that covered Gwen's body. The knowledge that a stranger observed her video caused great embarrassment but vanished quickly in the moonlight glow after the clouds passed. She stood straighter showing her pride in her appearance. She was not going to let these strangers take advantage of her naiveté. With false modesty, she laughed the incident off quickly. The trio continued to chat but soon broke up to continue the runs and to take care of the unicorn. They promised to meet at VJS for lunch and help with the current case.