



Vampire Murders Part 5

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Connie and Slade continue searching. Leona has to be the enforcer again.

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The day was coming to a slow end, as Slade and Connie came back to the squad room. After they filled out their reports earlier, they left until their duty shift began in mid-afternoon. The weather took a downward turn with the sun blocked by dark clouds and the threat of rain. To Slade, it seemed as if every time he went to see Leona or Gustaf, the weather was foggy or rainy. At least now, Slade was back in the squad room with Connie to check more results that potentially added up to clues in the six murders. The search for the owner of the red pickup truck proved to be a good one. It came back with the registered owner as TMA Ltd. from Kansas City where the crimes occurred. It was another big break in the case, which rolled in at a very slow pace. Connie printed out four copies of the report and filed them accordingly. She seemed very happy, as she posted the notice on the case board. Slade looked at her thinking; this woman was easy to please. Connie walked up to Slade and punched his bicep. She said, "Things are starting to fall into place now. We know who owns the truck and we have an address." She tapped the paper she just put on the wall. "What is the address?" Slade asked. Connie read the address to Slade, who raised his eyebrows. The address seemed familiar because it was the warehouse, where he spent the night with Leona. He pondered telling Connie, but thought better of it. He needed to ferret this out on his own. Something was not right here and he wanted to ask Leona before it escalated beyond his control. Several questions surfaced in his mind. Who was TMA Ltd? Where was the truck now? Was Leona directly involved in the murders? He wanted answers to these questions before the house fell in on Leona and Gustaf. The indications were that the vampires were young and newly created, two male and two female. "Have you checked out TMA Ltd.? It would be good to find out what else they own or lease. It should all be a matter of public record. The other information we need is who owns it and where do they reside." Slade asked Connie. He thought by getting her looking at TMA Ltd, that he could talk to Leona while Connie spent time searching for the information. "I will get right on it. This may break the case wide open. This is exciting. I like when things are happening in our favor." Connie replied. "I will look into TMA Ltd right away." Slade told Connie, "Keep the information gathering low key. We do not want anyone to leak what we have found. There may be eyes and ears here connected to TMA Ltd." Slade quietly said. He picked up his phone, called Leona at The Main Artery and left a message to meet later. Connie went to her desk and sat at her computer secretly searching for TMA Ltd. After two hours, she did not have anything more than she got about the truck. She stood up and walked to Slade. "There is nothing out there on the TMA Ltd organization. I have to be more creative in the search. Have you got any ideas?" "Not to sound cliché, but follow the money." Slade said. "TMA Ltd. must pay taxes and own other property. You can easily get to the tax rolls." Connie went back to her desk and buried her head in the screen. The phone rang on the desk beside Slade. It was Leona. Slade forgot that the sun had gone down. He picked up the phone and tried to act casual with her. "Hey can we get together tonight? I want to see you and try again." Slade lied. Leona said surprised, "Not tonight, it is pretty busy here, but sure come on by the club about midnight after you get off tomorrow. I will be free and we can go back to the warehouse. Maybe I can help some more with the case." "It is a date."

Slade chimed. Leona hung up the phone and looked at Gustaf. "The police are on to the new vampires. He did not say it outright, but he is not a good liar. I have a date with him tomorrow night at midnight." "Somehow you have to find out what they know. Maybe it is time to bring his woman partner, what is her name - yeah Connie back for a visit. She fell under real easy and we can have her spilling what she knows in no time." Gustaf speculated. "Maybe you better call Connie and get her here while I entertain Slade at the warehouse. You know the 'old' divide and conquer trick." Leona proposed to Gustaf. He nodded his head and picked up the phone to call Connie. She answered and Gustaf asked, "We have seen the two vampires again. Would you mind coming out here to The Main Artery and discuss it with me?" Connie assented to the meeting. Gustaf hung up the phone smiling at Leona. "She will be out here tomorrow evening alone." Gustaf volunteered. "We need to get those new vampires to stop their behavior tonight. This is not going to be good for our business or vampires in general. Can we get them over here tonight and show them what needs to be done or else?" Leona chimed. "I will leave a message with the gang for them to appear here tonight." Gustaf called the gang's lair and left a message for the night meeting. "I hope that they show up and things straighten out fast." Leona went to her room and returned to Gustaf's office with a well-worn valise. Gustaf looked at the valise, then up at her smiling face and nodded as she put it in the corner of his office. The new vampires arrived, met with Gustaf, received their instructions with an example of punishment and returned with Leona to their lair. Leona watched, as they cleaned up the mess, told the gang no more kills and left to return to The Main Artery. Leona entered Gustaf's office, flopped into a chair near the master's big oak desk and let out a sigh of relief. "How did it go with the gang?" Gustaf queried. "They cooperated, but I felt they were placating me because of their hurt friend. I plan to return to the lair after midnight and check up on them. I suspect the humans will be out hunting tonight. They are incorrigible and young men need women all the time." Leona volunteered. "I will bring my tools with me again and use them to get the humans in line." "Just be careful, we want to keep everyone in line, but not too tight that they blow the whistle on us. We still need their talents for use during the day. They are well below the police radar still and we want them to stay that way." Gustaf cautioned. Leona stayed at the club until one o'clock. She got into the car, drove to the warehouse district and parked in the building Slade and she used. She grabbed her valise and walked to the vampire lair. She noticed the lights were low in the lair and there was no sound coming from within. No one was home and two of the vehicles were missing. Leona sat in the silence thinking what to do next. She opened her valise, took out her branding torch and laid it on the table in front of her. This was her favorite device of torture. Just the threat of a cross brand on a vampire struck fear in their hearts and eyes. She wondered if the humans would feel as threatened as vampires with the branding of their flesh. Maybe tonight the humans will get their first feel of branding. Time moved slowly, as Leona waited for anyone to return. About 3:00 a.m., the door rolled up and the limousine entered followed by one of the sedans. The humans stumbled out of the sedan followed by the vampires from the limousine with a pretty young woman. The young woman stood next to the car docile and under the control of the vampires. The group failed to see Leona in the darkened warehouse. Leona watched as the vampires made the young woman strip and dance for the gang, as

they hooted and threw verbal catcalls at her. Her dance was sensual and provocative to entice and arouse the humans. The two female vampires stripped and joined the victim in dancing for the gang. Soon the gang grabbed the three women, dragged them into the bedrooms and closed the doors. Moans and screams came from the rooms as the gang raped the woman and the vampires fed off the gang. As soon as the screams started, Leona turned on her branding torch. When the two male vampires saw the flame, they cowered near the cars waiting to see what happened. They were very fearful for their safety, but did not want to incur Leona's wrath. Leona moved slowly toward the first bedroom where a vampire and two gang members went. She opened the door and discovered the gang members naked on the bed with the vampire hovering over them. Leona moved in a flash and branded the vampire on her thigh. The vampire never saw her coming and gave no resistance. She branded the two humans on their left biceps before they reacted. Leona left the room as quickly as she entered. She entered the second room, branded the vampire and the two gang members and pulled the young woman out into the warehouse. She took the woman over to the limousine and made her get dressed. In a few minutes, the two female vampires and four gang members stumbled out of the bedrooms. They grabbed their clothes and held them in front of them to hide their nudity. Leona laughed at their embarrassed looks. "You were told there would be consequences if your behavior continued. Now you know we do not make idle threats. Get dressed all of you! Your two male vampires need to come here and get their punishment now too. Bring them to me now!" Leona barked. The two female vampires found their boyfriends cowering under the limousine shaking in fear. They slowly came out and sheepishly approached Leona. Their heads hung down as they came to her. "Take off your jackets and shirts, NOW!" Leona yelled. Everyone jumped at hearing her roaring voice. They slowly, fearfully took off their jackets and shirts. Leona had her branding iron glowing white hot. She went to the first male, branded his right arm and left chest over his heart. The vampire stood quietly frozen with fear. She repeated the process with the other vampire. The males stood silently still as if they were statues. The only thing that betrayed their statuesque poses was the pained expressions on their faces. "Go sit down, all of you. We warned you that you would suffer if your behavior continued earlier tonight. I came here and found you gone. You came back with a young woman and took advantage of her. The branding was your punishment. We do not want to punish you again, but we will. Next time the punishment will be far more severe. There is one member missing. Where is he?" Leona hissed. "He had a date tonight. He does not know we did this." One of the female vampires said. Leona put her branding torch away in her valise. She made sure that everyone saw the other tools of torture in her bag. She closed the valise, took it off the table and put it noisily on the floor. "You will behave or punishment will be swifter and harsher. Now I am leaving with this young woman. You will stay here and do as you were told earlier." Everyone nodded and moved uneasily about the lair because they were all in pain. Leona went to the young woman who was dressed now and escorted her to the red pickup truck. She drove out of the lair back toward the city to free her passenger. Leona gave the young woman \$500 and made sure she was safely on her way home. Leona was still angry, but she needed to get back to The Main Artery to tell Gustaf about what happened. She drove back to the warehouse and swapped the pickup truck for the car

she originally drove from The Main Artery. She walked into the office area and sat on the couch in Gustaf's office. "The new vampires and four of the gang members kidnapped a young woman after I left them. They did not learn the lesson earlier in the evening." Leona reported. "I hope you taught them a stronger lesson this time. I don't want to terminate these new vampires and their minions." Gustaf said quietly. "All the members and vampires sport cross brands now. The male vampires have a cross on their arm and over their heart. I will keep a continuous watchful eye on them. They will not fail us now. If they do, we may have to terminate the whole gang." Leona sadly said. Leona got up from the couch, grabbed her valise and retired to her sleep chamber. Gustaf pulled his sleep chamber out of the wall and climbed into his custom made birch coffin. The sun was just peeking over the low hills to the east spreading a red glow for all to see. There was an old saying, about red in the morning sailors take warning. Vampires heeded superstitions and spent a lot of time watching and reading about charms and spells too stay safe. The Main Artery closed with sunrise. The new vampire lair was quiet. The only noises heard were the moans of pain from the branded humans. Steve returned from his night with Maria and saw the destruction done by the angry vampires after Leona left. He got some water and more bandages and salve for his gang member friends. His mind spun in circles as he decided what to do next. Maria advised him to quit the gang and continue his college studies. After seeing his gang, the decision became easy. Maria asked him to move in with her and wanted him to share her life. He fixed up his cohorts, cleaned up the mess, gathered his few possessions, called Maria and left the gang behind. As he left one of his friends yelled, "Have fun with your new puta!" Steve caught a cab from the warehouse lair and arrived at Maria's to find her waiting for him. "Is that all you own, Steve?" She asked quietly as she hugged him. "Yes, my love I have little to no possessions in this world. At the lair, we wanted for nothing. I gave all that up for you." He replied. Maria gave him a drawer in her bureau, along with a few hangers in the closet. She showed him the bathroom and the shower. There was only one bed but it was big enough for them. Steve turned and kissed her, as she walked by him. A new life for them started at that very moment. Maria sat in the kitchen drinking a beer, when Steve entered. He sat down and looked at her. "How do you feel about turning in your friends and the vampires for the six dead young women?" Maria asked innocently. "I am not sure what I want to do. I am just as guilty as they are for the murders. I suppose I could make a deal by testifying against them, but that puts a target on my back from the gang and the vampire community. I might have to go into witness protection. Then we would not be together anymore." Steve replied sadly to Maria. "We can go together to the police. I was there too remember. Then we can at least testify together too. We will need protection together." Maria said with a gathering strength. "OK, right now I need some sleep and you need to go to school." Steve said. He went to the bedroom and Maria gathered her books and went to school. The gang at the lair slept quietly while all the vampires stayed in their coffins. Steve slept and Maria went to school. Connie and Slade started their day in mid afternoon collecting the reports from forensics and the coroner about the latest victim. All six of the young women remained unidentified and a total mystery. The only thing known, that was a tangible clue, was the red pickup truck and its registered owner TMA Ltd. That knowledge was also a big mystery too. At 2:30 p.m., Connie and Slade entered the squad room ready to pursue the lack

of leads. Connie kept her upcoming meeting with Gustaf a secret from Slade. Slade kept his meeting with Leona a secret from Connie. The day started off good with all the reports filed and the board updated. Connie went back searching for information on TMA Ltd. Slade kept looking at the board for a common thread to the victims, but nothing appeared. Not knowing, who they were kept a pattern from emerging for the victims. Slade thought about the meeting with Leona tonight. He had a few questions for her but he really wanted to get to know who she was and where she came from in her human life. He was sure that she knew who the new vampires were and where they slept during the day. He sat there contemplating what to ask Leona, when an idea came to him. He called Connie over. "Have you tried tracing the ownership of The Main Artery vampire night club?" "No, what are you thinking here? Do you think there is a tie-in somehow? It seems like a stretch to include them in the mix." Connie replied. "I don't know it is just a hunch. Try it out and let me know what you find. I suspect there is a tie-in, but cannot put my finger on it. We have seen the new vampires at the club in the video." Slade suggested. Connie went back to her desk, sat at her terminal and queried the public company database about The Main Artery. Nothing came up right away, but Connie took a different approach. She looked at who held the liquor license for the nightclub. What came back caused her to sit up and take a long hard look at the screen.