

MAG010 – Case 0100710 – “Vampire Killer”

ARCHIVIST

Statement of Trevor Herbert, regarding his life as a self-proclaimed vampire hunter. Original statement given July 10th 2010. Audio recording by Jonathan Sims, Head Archivist of the Magnus Institute, London.

Statement begins.

ARCHIVIST (STATEMENT)

Right then. Been almost 50 years I've been meaning to pay you people a visit and get this down on paper, but I finally got here. So where to start? My name is Trevor Herbert, like I put at the top of your form there, and I've been homeless for most of my life. In fact if you lived in Manchester there's a good chance you'd have heard of me. They call me "Trevor the Tramp". I mean, I'm not exactly easy to miss am I, and I've been living there in public view for so long I guess I've become kind of an institution. Helps that

I've always had a kind of uncanny knack for guessing people's ages. People will come up to me on the street and ask me to guess their age, and I'll tell them and most of the time they'll be shocked when I get it right. It's fun. So everyone around Manchester knows about Trevor the Tramp, sure. I hear someone even made me a page on the Internet and it got a few thousand likes. I don't know exactly what that means but it sounds nice. Obviously that's not why I'm here, though, is it? No, I'm here because I have also dedicated my life to finding and killing vampires.

I have killed five people that I know for sure as vampires, and there are two more that may or may not have been. There is one man I have killed, unfortunately, who I am now sure was human, but I also know he was a violent criminal so I try not to feel too badly about that. I'm sure it's hard to accept for anyone, even an organisation such as yourselves, but I do not have proof to give you except for the vampire teeth that I will leave with this statement.

Do not feel bad about reporting me to the police for the murders, as I am sure you must, since I have recently received a diagnosis of late-stage lung cancer and it is doubtful I will be living much longer anyway. That is the main reason for finally putting down on paper the details of the mission I have been secretly undertaking for the last half a century.

I killed my first vampire in 1959. At that point I was still living a mostly normal life, save perhaps for the abuse my family was subject to from my father. He was a vile man who ended up killing my mother in '56. It was a clear-cut case of drunken murder but the courts ruled it as an accident and my father stayed out of jail. Luckily, myself and my brother only had to endure four months of unpleasantness from him before he finally finished drinking himself to death. I was thirteen when he finally died and my brother was fifteen. Following his death, there were several attempts to rehome us as orphans but they always split us up, and we couldn't be doing with

that, so we'd generally run away. After a while it became so we were happier finding our way on the streets than in another stranger's home.

It was in autumn of 1959 that we were taken in by Sylvia McDonald. It wasn't any sort of official fostering agreement, but it was getting to be quite cold at the end of October and it just saw us shivering in a side street next to the Kings Arms Hotel, as it was back then, on Tipping Street before the ring road took it over. Looking back I believe it to have been visiting the pub for the purposes of locating down and outs for use as victims and in my brother and myself, I must say, it successfully found some. It looked like an older woman, a widow I assumed, from the way it dressed in black and had a strange manner, which I now know to be the mark of the vampire, but back then I paid no attention to it. Many of the older folks had lived through both wars and it was not uncommon for them to be somewhat strange. I thought this was the case with Sylvia McDonald and

after a small amount of discussion my brother and I agreed to the offer of food and shelter.

Let me say a little bit about the vampire's manner, because once I taught myself to read I read as much on the subject as I could and it isn't covered often or clearly in those books I have found. You see, from my own observations I believe a vampire to be more like an animal than a man. That is not to be taken as merely a turn of phrase but more to do with how they work. I do not believe vampires are human in anything more than their appearance, nor have I ever seen evidence that they create more of their kind through feeding. One thing that should be noted is that they do not speak. In fact they are in my experience totally silent, having no need for air and no room in their throats for a windpipe. They are able to make themselves understood, however, with absolute clarity, though the manner through which they do so has never been clear to me. When Sylvia McDonald came to us in the alleyway that day, we

understood that was the name it gave itself and that we were being offered a meal and a bed, even though it never uttered a single sound. More than that, I do not recall the fact that it never said a word as striking either of us as strange in the slightest. I have never fully understood how they are able to do this, and I doubt that I ever shall, but I can only assume it to be some instinctive form of hypnosis or mind control.

Another misconception I have always faced when trying to discuss vampires is that people think they cannot go out during the day. They can. While I have witnessed them avoid direct sunlight if possible and wear generally more covering clothes when moving around during the daytime, they seem to have no significant problem doing so. I would describe them as weaker during the day, but whether this is scientifically due to the sunlight or simply because evil has less power in the daylight hours is unclear to me. Sylvia McDonald came to us on an overcast afternoon and enough of its pale flesh was uncovered

that, were sunlight to truly harm a vampire, then it would likely have been destroyed.

On that afternoon my brother Nigel and I agreed to go back to the house of Sylvia McDonald in the hopes of a roof over our heads for a little while. She lived on Loom Street, which is still there, though the house itself was torn down long ago and there's just a bit of scrubland now where it used to be. I sometimes go there to pay my respects, since my brother has no burial or grave I can visit. The house was old, even when I went there in 1959, and entering it I was hit by a stale, coppery smell that I did not recognise as old blood at the time, since I was barely 16 and did not have then the experience I have now. The furniture and wallpaper had clearly not been changed in many decades and a thick layer of dust covered everything. Even the floor was pale with dust except for a stark line where Sylvia McDonald moved, the train of its dress dragging behind it. I remember wondering whether Sylvia McDonald walked exactly

the same route through the house always, as I saw other clear lines of passage in the rooms we passed through. None of the furniture looked used and when I picked up a book from one of the shelves the pages were solid with damp and mould. I began to feel very uneasy at this point, but whatever powers of persuasion the vampire had calmed me enough to continue following it with my brother.

We went up the stairs and I was led to a small room with a bed in it. I was made to understand that this would be my room and was left there as Sylvia McDonald led my brother away to the room next to it. When it returned it brought a bowl of fruit and offered it to me. The fruit was clearly a few weeks old and in various stages of rotting, but just to appease the thing I found an apple and a couple of grapes that seemed edible and I ate them. It watched me silently the whole time and then turned and walked out towards Nigel's room. By this time whatever the creature had done to make me compliant seemed to

be starting to wear off, and I was realising just how wrong everything was. I was also realising that it didn't look like there was any easy escape from the house. All the windows I had seen were barred, and I recalled Sylvia McDonald had locked the sturdy-looking front door behind it after we had all entered. So instead I just laid down in the old musty bed and I waited.

Couldn't rightly say what I was waiting for, but soon enough it got dark and I assumed Sylvia McDonald had gone to sleep, not yet realising the manner of being that I was dealing with. I wanted some light to comfort me but the old house seemed to have no electricity at all, so I used my cigarette lighter on a candle I found next to the bed and crept towards the door. It wasn't locked, thankfully, and I left the room assigned to me and walked over to where I believed my brother was. I went in and found him lying in his own bed, pretending to sleep. After a bit of talk it became clear that Nigel was no happier with our

situation than I was and we both resolved that another night on the cold streets was better than staying with this strange woman. As we talked through possible ways to escape, however, we heard a rustling sound outside the door, and the handle began to turn. Not wanting to anger our strange host, I crawled under the bed to hide, while Nigel returned to pretending to sleep.

From my vantage point under the bed, I could see the door open and the skirt of Sylvia McDonald enter and move towards the bed. I simply laid there and tried not to make a sound. I am not proud of this and sometimes have a certainty that my inaction led directly to my brother's death, but most of the time I accept that if I had alerted the vampire to my presence then I would also have died. Either way, the fact of the matter is that I did nothing as I heard the sounds of a struggle overhead and Nigel's strangled cry. The creature turned quickly and hurled him down, something fell to the floor in front of me, but I

didn't look at it, my eyes locked on Sylvia McDonald as it pounced upon my brother. It opened its mouth for what I then realised was the first time since we met it, and I could see nothing inside save for a dozen long, thick, pointed teeth like a shark. In one fluid movement it plunged those teeth into my brother's neck and tore out a great chunk of flesh. Blood started to spurt from Nigel's spasming body, as Sylvia McDonald's throat began to twitch. Its jaw detached and a long tubular tongue about the thickness of my forearm snaked out of its throat and clamped onto the gushing wound. There was an awful slurping sound, the first noise I'd ever really heard the creature make, as the tongue sucked the blood from my brother's throat. I just lay there watching as its stomach began to distend and swell, the now bulbous belly straining against the black dress it wore. After the longest ten minutes of my life, the vampire finished. Its tongue retracted back into its throat, still dripping blood onto the now-pale corpse of my brother, and it lay back upon the floor, apparently

contented.

As this had been happening all my energy had gone towards not screaming or giving away my presence. But as the vampire lay satiated on the floor, I turned my attention to what had fallen from Nigel's hand when he had been dragged out of the bed. It was his pocket knife. I had no idea what a small knife like that would do against a creature that seemed far stronger and faster than me, but I didn't see any option other than to try. I moved so slowly as I reached for the knife that at times it seemed like I wasn't moving at all. I was worried that the creature would spot me and strike as it had with Nigel, although I now know that smell is in fact the vampire's major sense and, with all the blood around, there was little chance of it detecting my scent. Grasping the knife in my hands, I crept over towards the creature as it placidly digested my brother's life, until I stood over it. I felt a sudden surge of rage and adrenaline come over me and with a speed and

strength I never knew I had, I plunged the knife into Sylvia McDonald's blood-bloated stomach.

It burst like a sick balloon, and blood began to pour out. The creature's eyes shot open and it clutched at the wound desperately. Its throat was not capable of uttering a scream but its face displayed a silent pain and anger as it flailed on the floor. Stumbling back, trying to wipe the blood from my eyes, I felt an unexpected burning in my hand. I realised I'd touched the still-lit candle on the bedside table. I don't know what I expected to happen when I grabbed the candle and pressed it to the dry part of Sylvia McDonald's dress. I was just trying to find anything else I could do to harm it before it could recover from its split belly, but I certainly didn't expect it to catch like dry tinder. The fire spread quickly over its repulsive form, though it did slow somewhat where the clothing or flesh was still moist with blood. It struck me that the vampire must be a very dry creature when not fresh-fed and engorged.

Perhaps I had struck before the liquid could spread throughout its body.

Whatever the reason, Sylvia McDonald was alright, and to such a degree that the rest of the room was starting to catch fire as well. I was distraught at the idea of leaving this house without my brother, but he was clearly dead and I needed to escape. I recalled the vampire had been carrying a handbag when we first met it, and had used a key from it to lock the front door. It did not have the handbag with it now, though, so I began to desperately search the other rooms of the house, trying to find it. I did find it in the end, in what I assume to be the vampire's bedroom. I'll not describe it in detail, except to say that it appears to be where the creature took most of its meals. Hopefully that makes the picture clear enough for you. I found the key, though, and escaped that house before the fire did me any serious damage. I was terrified of the police coming and thinking I was a murderer, so I didn't stick around. I

just fled into the night.

It was almost a decade before I encountered another vampire. I'd been living on the streets all that time, occasionally in and out of various institutions, and had just about managed to convince myself that Sylvia McDonald had just been a bad reaction to the stress of watching my brother's murder. It was in the late 60s that I learned different. It was 1968, I remember because that was the year United won the European Cup, and I did quite well out of it – people being generous to begging when they're happy over a sports win. On a Friday night I would generally spend my time around the Oasis Club in Lloyd Street and hit up for change anyone who was slightly the worse for drink. Well, this night in particular I was doing quite well, as it was a warm June evening not too long after the Cup Final, and everyone was in a good mood.

Now about half eleven that night I spied a stranger all turned out for dancing, making his way from the club with a lady friend. I reckoned they might be good for a tanner, so made my approach. I gave them the spiel and waited. The man looked at me and I understood he wouldn't be giving me any money, and I stepped away. It was as he turned to leave I realised that he hadn't opened his mouth, and memories of Sylvia McDonald came rushing back to me in a flash. I wasn't sure what to do, so I followed behind them at a distance. I didn't try to hide or disguise myself, as I had long since learned, and it's true now as it was back then, that no-one pays any real attention to a tramp. As I watched, I saw the clearly drunken woman asking this stranger questions and each time he'd just look at her and she'd smile as though he'd given some reassuring answer and stumble on behind him. All the while he never once opened his mouth.

I didn't rightly know what to do about this. I had no

weapon save my brother's old pocket knife which I had kept sharp all these years, and while I was pretty sure of what I was seeing, I was still hesitant to attack with no provocation and no plan. As we walked, I kept an eye out for any discarded wood or timber and, sure enough, noticed a broken wooden palette partially sticking out of a bin. I grabbed a long shard and used my knife to quickly hack it to a point, ignoring the splinters. While I had not, at that time, done much research into the creatures I faced, believing as I did my experience as a youth to be the product of a disturbed mental state, I was still aware of their supposed weakness to wooden stakes. I had now followed the vampire, who I would later find out called itself Robert Arden, and its victim back to the building where it apparently lived. It let itself in the front door and the woman followed. I wasn't fast enough to get in before the front door closed and obviously didn't have a key, so I went round the windows and, luckily, it seemed the vampire lived on the ground floor.

I watched through the window as it led its victim into a sparsely furnished living room. I couldn't see any obvious signs of previous slaughter, but I remembered how cleanly Sylvia McDonald had sucked up all the blood from my brother, so this did not strike me as odd. I gently tried the window and found it locked, so searched the garden for the heaviest stone I could find and watched what was happening inside. I had to be sure. Soon enough Robert Arden moved smoothly behind its now-seated prey, and finally opened its mouth to reveal those rows of shark-like teeth I knew would be there. I hurled the rock I held through the window, showering the room with broken glass and causing the woman to scream in shock. Robert Arden raised its head in surprise and for one moment our eyes locked and I knew I had made a terrible mistake. The woman looked at her monstrous companion and, seeing his now open mouth, screamed her terror even louder. In a single movement, far quicker than I expected, Robert Arden

was through the window and on me. I struggled and fought, but it was far stronger than I was, and I could barely keep its jagged teeth from finding my throat. It was the first and last time I ever touched a vampire's skin with my own. The flesh was cold and spongy, like the inside of a bruised apple, and I felt bile rise in my throat even as I fought for my life.

Finally, its teeth bit into my neck. Not enough to kill me outright but with enough force to cause the blood to flow. At that moment I saw a sort of frenzy enter the eyes of Robert Arden and with a spasm its leech's tongue surged from its throat and I felt it attach to my neck. I do not know if you've ever felt your blood being sucked out of you, but I would not recommend it.

Now it is at this point I have something of an admission to make. For the three years preceding this event, as well as on and off through the years since, I

have had a relationship with the drug heroin. I tried it for the first time shortly after Nigel's death and since then I have periodically relapsed. I have always tried to keep this a secret, as I am aware that I have a certain reputation to uphold and I would not want it to be damaged with the revealing of my addiction. But it is important to this account, as I believe it was whatever heroin still remained in my system that night that caused the vampire Robert Arden to remove its tongue from my neck and start to shake, as though having a violent choking fit.

I lay there, trying to compose myself enough to fight back, when I became aware of the screaming. The woman, who had been brought in as a victim, was standing over the flailing Robert Arden, stabbing it repeatedly with a kitchen knife. Strong and quick as it was, the vampire didn't seem to be able to cope with the sudden onslaught of violence and was on the ground. This gave me the precious seconds I needed to get to my feet and locate my improvised wooden

stake. I took aim and plunged it into where I believed the thing's heart should be. It was easier than I thought it would be – the chest was soft and yielding and there didn't seem to be any ribcage to stop the blow. Robert Arden went rigid and froze, apparently unable to move its body, though I saw its eyes darting around wildly.

It was at that point the woman whose name I never discovered, dropped the knife and ran. I never saw her again, but she had already saved my life. I took out my cigarette lighter and set Robert Arden alight. Like Sylvia McDonald before it, it caught fire in a matter of seconds and, by the time the police arrived, there was nothing left but a small patch of scorched tarmac. I was lucky that night, and nobody saw anything or called the police before I was finished and had made my way from the scene but I was always more careful after that.

Following that night, though, I was never again worried that I might have been wrong about the existence of vampires. I always kept my eyes open for them, although sometimes I was too eager, as was the case of Alard Dupont who I killed in 1982 and later discovered was a human. It is my belief that they are very rare and feed only infrequently, as all evidence I have seen points to their feeding being fatal. If there were many vampires or if they ate often, the number of disappearances would quickly become noticeable to the rest of society. I do not know what they do with the bodies of their victims and this has always perplexed me, as they do not have any mechanism for eating solid food and I do not believe there are many, if any, cases of murder where the body is found completely without blood. I certainly do not think they rise as vampires themselves, as the vampire population seems far too small for this to be a possibility.

ARCHIVIST

Statement ends

According to Martin, who was here when they took this statement, it was at this point in writing that Mr. Herbert announced he needed some sleep before continuing. He was shown to the break room where he went to sleep on the couch. He did not awaken; unfortunately succumbing to the lung cancer right there. Martin says the staff had been aware of how serious Mr. Herbert's condition was and had advised him to seek medical aid prior to giving his statement, but were told rather bluntly by the old man that he would not wait another second to state his case. I can't decide whether this lends more or less credibility to his tale.

Regardless, there is substantial evidence to support the version of events told by Mr. Herbert in all aspects except the vampirism. There is a news report of a 1959 fire that consumed a house on Loom Street and apparently claimed the life of an 18-year-old boy, although no mention is made of the homeowner, and

a police report from 1968 confirms the disappearance of Robert Arden in Manchester amid circumstances of violence, including a broken window and signs of a fire, though no human remains were found. There is also a murder report concerning one Alard Dupont, whose partially burned corpse was found in his home on August 2nd 1982. Unfortunately Mr. Herbert was never able to give details of others, so we cannot corroborate further.

There was, however, a small bag left on top of this statement, which appears to contain six shark teeth of varying sizes. According to correspondence with the Zoology Department at King's College, they didn't match any currently known species.

Personally, I don't know what to think. I certainly don't believe in wild tales of vampirism, but I can't help but notice that the statement above appears to be a photocopy of a photocopy, and can't find these

supposed vampire teeth anywhere in the Archives or the Secure Containment Room. I don't know where the originals are but the file number is listed among multiple information requests from the Institute's government and law enforcement contracts. It may be that they take Mr. Herbert's statement far more seriously than I do.

End recording.