It didn’t take long to break the vampire, particularly once they worked out which
flashlights in the building - somehow they still worked - had UV lighting in them and which
didn’t. Basically, it was whatever lights made the vampire scream. Once they figured that out, it
was easy enough to make sure that their captive cooperated.

“I can’t believe I have to stand out here while you...talk...to him,” Ailsa said from the
doorway.

“Hey, you’re not supposed to know what’s going on. Make another roll,” Greg shouted
back.

“Fuck off…”

Nevertheless, the clatter-clatter of the stingray’s dice rolling across the sidewalk could be
heard. Whatever it was, it must have been good enough for her to keep up her self-delusion about
what they were doing in the shop, because she didn’t come in and stop them.

Charlie shook his head, looking over the vampire. It was definitely a feline, a leopard
beneath all the sun burns that they were inflicting on it. So far, the undead had managed to hold
back most of the information about his boss’s plans, but he had spilled some little bits of
information.

Such as the fact that garlic is a grand old joke, the panther thought. Not that I was
planning on seasoning my neck, anyway.

But there were other, more useful things, such as the fact that Dresnath was more of an
annoyed, bound servant than he was a willing subordinate. And there were rumors that Dresnath
had come from another world, that he wasn’t part of the original script.

If that was the case, he could see why the dragon was as motivated as he was to break the
game. Worse, though…
Charlie leaned back as Ryker worked the vampire over, pressing a finger to his chin. Lorkos sat by him, leaning in and whispering.

“What are you thinking?”

“That bit about Dresnath. If he wasn’t part of the script originally, where do you think he came from?”

“. . . Well . . .”

“Outside, right?”

“Our world?” the wolf asked. “I mean, it’s weird, but . . .”

“It’s the only option, right?”

“Yeah. So?”

“So, what’s stopping something like that from happening again?”

“. . . Oh, shit . . .”

That’s what Charlie was thinking. If they lost in the wrong way, would they be dragged into the game, as well? Would they become more NPCs that were serving in the court of the big bad, or would they be allowed to go free?

Hell, they didn’t even know if they would be safe if they won. They were just hoping that they would be.

He sighed. For all that they had been wanting to play a different sort of game, he had to admit, this wasn’t the sort of thing that he really had in mind. The game had gone beyond horror into something he really, really wanted to just put down and leave behind.

The screaming of the vampire started up again, and the panther winced as the leopard’s shrieks hit a certain tone.

“You know, I don’t think he can answer any questions while he’s screaming. Why don’t you, I don’t know, give him a chance to answer before burning his skin off?” Charlie asked.

“Hey, it’s kinda fun.”

“And you were the one that mocked me for . . .”

Charlie had somewhere that he was going with that, but once more, it was pushed down beneath his consciousness. It was starting to bother him, too, and he wasn’t quite sure why. The panther shook his head, reaching out and taking the flashlight from the folf’s hand.
Kneeling down in front of the slowly-regenerating feline, he grabbed him by the chin and pushed his head up. Skin had burned away near the leopard’s eye, so one of them couldn’t blink as they looked at each other.

“I don’t want to hurt you any further, okay?” the panther said. “I just need to know what your boss wants to do next.”

“Mmmph…”

“Just let me know what’s going on, and we can get this all over with.”

“Hmmmph…Give…a bit of blood…and I’ll think about it.”

Before, he might have been hesitant about that, but he had been sitting there listening to the vampire scream for long enough. Charlie reached for his knife and sliced the tip of his finger open with the blade.

Almost instantly, he winced, biting his lip and dropping the knife to the floor. He gripped his wrist in an attempt to keep from yelping, and instead groaned through clenched teeth.

“Fucking hell…they make that look so painless most of the time…”

“…Wow,” the vampire muttered. “Didn’t think you’d do it.”

“Yeah, well. I want to get this over with. Open your mouth.”

The leopard did just that, even going so far as to stick out his tongue. Charlie dragged the end of his dripping finger against the sandpapery tongue a few times, then pulled his hand back.

No sooner had he done so than the leopard closed his mouth, almost seeming to moan from the taste. He licked his lips, then smiled, his skin healing up the rest of the way as Charlie dragged himself back to his feet.

“There, I fulfilled my part of the bargain. What about you?”

“I didn’t give an official agreement…”

Ryker started to lift the flashlight.

“But I can see that you really want to know, so I’ll tell you.”

“Good.” Charlie nodded. “What does your boss want?”

“Well, you see that tower over there?”
The leopard nodded out the window, gesturing at what had once been an apartment block. It had since been turned into something like a watchtower, something that loomed over a number of the buildings close by.

“He’s going to slaughter the guards in there, and harvest their blood for an artifact.”

“...That’s grim,” Ryker muttered.

“You think?” Lorkos said. “Okay, well, I know what we’re doing.”

“Hold on, hold on,” Charlie said, waving for them to calm down. “How’s he going to do it?”

“He’s sending a few of my brethren in, as well as a small pack of werewolves. I think there’s some skeletons being drawn into this fight, too.”

That was a lot of people to be fighting, but if they were smart, they might just have a way through this. Particularly -

“Darren?”

Charlie looked over his shoulder. The human store owner looked back at him, tapping his chin as he thought.

“I remember there being an event like that,” the dark-skinned man said. “A blood offering, right?”

“It sounds like it.”

“Then yes. I remember that. There will be a back way in that avoids the other vampires, at least. They should be keeping guard at the front of the building.”

That was something. Anything to avoid piling up the bodies all over the place. He couldn’t quite say why, but there was something in his head that was really striving to avoid that level of bloodshed. And to be honest, he was looking forward to trying out some of his wild empathy skills.

“What are you going to do with me?” the leopard asked.

The panther exchanged glances with the wolf and the folf. It was the question, wasn’t it?

He knew that Ryker would want to kill the vampire, just to make sure that they weren’t followed or ratted out, and if it wasn’t for the guilt that he knew that he’d feel, Charlie would have been tempted to go with that route himself. There were so many problems that would be solved by that one little death.
But…

No. No, he was better than that.

“You’ll stay here,” the panther said. “If we live through this, we’ll let you go after we get back. If we don’t, well, you’ll be in a private room without any light shining on you. Should be safe enough for a while.”

“Good enough for me,” Ailsa called from outside the shop.

“Paladin-approved,” Ryker muttered. “Help me get this asshole to one of the back rooms, Darren.”

As the human and folf carried their captive away, Lorkos leaned over and whispered to him.

“This is probably going to go badly, you know this.”

“I know,” he muttered. “But better to try, right?”

“Starting to wonder if it’d be better to just run to the other side of the world.”

“Yeah…” He looked out the window, shaking his head at the bubble of unreality that covered the city. “Me too.”

#

After making sure that the vampire was locked down appropriately, they left the shop and made their way across the street. The tower itself was a few blocks down, but it was an easy landmark for them. It was huge, standing up more than eight stories tall and made of red stone, with torches along the top of it. There was even a sort of dome that glimmered and glowed with a magical light that seemed to guide them forward.

Of course, the party, Greg, and Darren stopped at the intersection across from the tower when they saw the flapping bats that were drifting around the front door of the structure. Greg was still reciting, too.

“And so the party halted just out of sight of the vampire swarm. Really, I should be making you do spot checks, but it’s pretty obvious,” the husky said. He groaned, slapping his cheek. “I’m getting really sick of channeling that voice.”

“Yeah, and we’re sick of the monologue as we’re walking around,” Ailsa said. “You’re not the only one bothered by the whole situation.”

Counting the bats in the air, Charlie guessed that there were at least ten of them. If there were that many, then he imagined that they were relatively low-level, as the game wouldn’t want
to just slaughter them on the doorstep of their first real challenge. Then again, this was a horror game. He wouldn’t be surprised if it was set up to seriously fuck with them from the get-go, once they were fully into the scenario.

Ten vampires, even if they were at a few levels lower than the party, were not to be fucked with. All it took was one of them getting lucky with a hypnotic gaze, and then they’d be completely screwed.

And that was not even counting the other monsters that were supposed to be waiting in the tower…

“Darren? Where’s that secret door?”

“Around the back. We want to go back a block and then around.”

“Alright, guys. Let’s do that.”

It wasn’t a long trip, though more than once they had to do some quick dice rolls when Greg announced that they were at risk of being spotted by patrols that were going through the sky. Charlie was honestly more curious at the lack of ground patrols.

Is this guy just trying to avoid being spotted like that, or...or is there some other reason?

He didn’t know, and the lack of continuity bothered him. Obviously, the big bad had the numbers to seize buildings, and just as obviously there were no immediate investigations by the paladins going on, but…

Ugh. Is this just a game thing?

If it was, then it would make some more sense, but if it was just because of that, he was kinda pissed. He expected better from a good DM.

“Hey, don’t blame me, blame the writer,” Greg muttered.

Every single one of them turned to look at the husky. He looked back, blinking.

“What? What did I -”

“I didn’t say that out loud,” Charlie said.

“What? Sure you...did...Didn’t you?”

The entire party slowly shook their heads, and the husky shivered.

“Okay, that’s creepy. That’s just freaking creepy.”
“You’re telling me,” Lorkos said. “You can hear our thoughts?”

“Some. Just...oh, goooooooood, Ryker, stop! Stop!”

The folf chuckled, shaking his head, and everyone seemed to be very, very glad that they weren’t Greg at that point.

Eventually, they rounded the block and found the alley leading to the backdoor of the watchtower. There was a single skeleton guard at the back, no more, no less. However…

“Lorkos, mind casting detect magic?” Charlie asked.

“No problem.”

The wolf waved his hands about, and the panther shivered as he felt a tingle of the magic in the air. Much like when he had asked Lorkos to cast a spell on him in the game shop, he felt his dick start rising in response. Not as powerfully as back then, but enough to guess that it was the aura of the wolf’s sex magic that was getting to him.

A quick glance back at Ryker showed him suffering from a similar problem, and the same thing seemed to be happening to Darren, who was studiously avoiding looking at anyone. Ailsa’s slightly pained face could have been from her double-dicks pressing against the inside of her armor, or it could have been something else.

“There’s a small alarm rune on the door, but that’s all I can detect,” the wolf said. “I think we’re clear.”

“Alright. Let’s see who gets the best initiative to take on a skeleton…”

#

It only took a second for Ailsa’s mace to batter through the skeleton’s spine, and after that, it was only a matter of dismantling the skeletal menace. It didn’t want to die, but the various twitching bones couldn’t really do much without being attached to their core body.

After that, Lorkos cast a Dispel Magic spell on the door, and they were inside.

The watchtower was very differently laid out from the apartment building, from what Charlie could remember of the old structure. Instead of an elevator at the lobby end and a bunch of stairs at the back, the building seemed to be centered around a gathering room on the bottom with a series of spiraling staircases, one at the back and one at the front. They went up around the outside of the building, connecting the different floors with each other.

As the bottom floor seemed to be unoccupied for the moment, they all slipped in and squatted by the base of the stairs. Darren shut the door behind them, and gestured up towards the
stairs. Wordlessly, he mimed ‘werewolf’ with hands over his mouth for fangs, and then flicked his fingers.

\[2d4 \text{ werewolves, 6 HD each, he gestured.}\]

Not great odds for a low-level party, that was for sure. Everyone was looking at him, probably expecting him to use animal empathy to get the pack on their side. It was probably their best bet, too, so long as he didn’t get himself killed by trying.

And considering that they had taken all that extra time to get around the block to the back door, there was no telling how many people were still alive. Guardsmen rather than civilians, considering this was a guard tower, but still…

After getting a series of wordless nods, Charlie climbed the stairs, keeping low to try and avoid slipping and making noise. He went up and around the side of the circular building, making his way to the first flattened landing and the door facing him. Each floor seemed to be self-contained, with a door keeping the occupants from looking into the staircase area.

\[Please \text{ be looking away, please be looking away...}\]

He pulled out a d20 and rolled for sneaking, hoping that he’d get something good.

\[Total \text{ of 16...alright...here’s hoping that these are some inattentive werewolves...}\]

Charlie pushed the door open a crack, and almost immediately ended up blushing as he looked in.

There were no bodies here, but it was clear that the werewolves had been left alone in the wrong place with the wrong pack. There were a number of different males that had their dicks out, throbbing and showing off knots over their sheaths, and in the middle…

\[Oh \text{ god, this is not what I thought I’d be looking at...}\]

There was a wolf - a normal wolf - woman there, getting fucked hard by what was probably the alpha of the pack. She was taking his knot again and again, probably on the verge of being transformed by the big guy. Every time that he bottomed out in her, the wolf woman howled, and he wasn’t entirely sure if it was in pleasure or for another, worse reason.

The fact that there were so many other werewolves only made it worse. He didn’t know if this was some ritual, or if they were doing some kind of feral gangbang, or if it was something else entirely, but he had every assurance that an interruption right now would go very, very badly for him.

\[Great. A mating circle, basically...\]

How the hell was he supposed to -
“And so, trying to decide what to do after finding himself confronted with a mating circle of werewolves, Charlie looked from one naked wolf to another, staring at their cocks and thinking back to when he was getting a blowjob from Lorkos.”

**GODDAMMIT GREG!**

Not daring to let the DM have more time to spin more of his own little interpretations of the situation, he decided to just let the dice go where they may. A bad situation up here couldn’t be too bad...he hoped. He was a druid after all.

He walked through the door, took a deep breath, and then tapped on the wall.

Click, click.

That was enough to freeze the fuck in mid-thrust, all of the male werewolves turning to face him, the female anthro on the ground gasping for breath as she was left stretched out on a huge, thick knot. The panther chuckled nervously, lifting a hand and waving.

“Oh, hi. My name is Charlie, and I’m here to ask for your help.”

The werewolves didn’t say anything, but neither did they jump him. So far, so good...unless this was just the surprise round. He really hoped that this wasn’t just the surprise round.

*God, they’re big,* he thought, and not just thinking about their dicks, either. Not one of the werewolves was shorter than seven feet tall, and some of them breached the nine-foot mark. They loomed over him without even trying, and the fact that they were all naked didn’t exactly help, either.

He swallowed, tossing the dice down on the floor for Animal Empathy, holding out his hands.

“Come here, boys. Let me see if we can find you some more treats, huh? Come here. Come here, good boys, come here…”

The die was still spinning, not having come to a stop yet. The panther’s mouth was dry as he imagined how badly fucked he was if this didn’t go well. He patted his knees, trying to act like he would with a pet dog.

“You wanna go find some more stuff, don’t you? Come on. Come on, boys.”

Click.

*Nat 20.*
“Oh thank Christ...thank Christ...Thank - OOF!”

Suddenly, he was swarmed with a bunch of happily panting werewolves, stuck under a pile of fuzzies that were nuzzling and licking and -

“OH GOD! NOT THERE!”

Licking places they really shouldn’t…

“Guys, get up here! Please! Uh, good boys, good - oh god not the back of my paaaaaaaants get your fingers outta there! Come on, I just got these clothes…”

The End