

# Hunted Vampire

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Ivan lay back, pulled the lid closed, and closed his eyes. Confident that he had dispatched the slayers, he drifted peacefully to sleep . . .

The sudden, cool draft in his coffin woke him. He opened his eyes to see torchlight glinting through a spray of water as the water hit his eyes with a hissing, stinging burning. He scrunched his eyes shut with a screech of pain, clutching at his face with his hands then rubbing them on his pants as the stinging spread to his palms.

A soft click close to his ear broke through the haze of agony, and Ivan turned to look at the source. His eyes stung as he opened them, but he forced his eyelids apart to find . . . darkness. That wasn't right, he had just seen water, and torchlight glinting through it, before the burning . . . burning . . . water . . .

Cursed water!

A soft *click* next to his head broke through the pain. Ivan had no intention of discovering what was to follow from the click. He leapt from the coffin, turning to bite his assailant as a deafening *bang* sounded where he had lain a split second ago, but it sounded strangely distant and behind him—

*Smack!*

More pain stabbed at his face, this time through his nose specifically. Ivan swore and touched his nose gently, inviting more pain. He raised his other hand before him to find out what he'd just run into, and felt the smooth bumps of his bedroom wall. Shit, he'd overshot his assailant.

He heard another click behind him, and darted to the side, crashing against the other wall as the assailant shot at him, and again missed. He felt along the wall for the door and flung himself through it as a third gunshot pierced the air.

Ivan stumbled through the old house, crashing into wall after wall, stubbing one toe under the door, tripping over the dining table chair. Curse this slayer, why couldn't he have tried to attack him in his old castle? He hadn't had time to memorise this new dwelling, and had no idea where anything was.

Something clattered across the floor to bump against his feet. He jumped away and it began to hiss, as if something was seeping out of it. Then he caught a whiff of something and nearly retched as it burnt his nostrils, drowning out any other scent he could have used for direction with its foul stench.

Garlic.