

# Vampire Story

By Colin McGinn

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We have all seen those vampire films, creepy tales of powerful pale predators who live on human blood. Well, let me tell you a story about a particularly successful vampire species. This species is unusual among the run of vampires in that it can live equally well off human blood or orange juice. It is also more in control of its food supply than your average vampire. In addition to producing ample supplies of orange juice, it keeps throngs of humans locked up in huge prisons so that it can get to their necks with minimum effort. The vampires raise human infants in these prisons for the sole purpose of drinking their blood at maturity (and they have been known to do it at tenderer ages, too). There is a bit of a snag, though, from the vampires' point of view, namely that you can't drink blood from the same human more than three times without that human's dying, so they are continually needing to replenish their stocks as thrice-bitten humans die off. The humans are powerless to resist because of the superhuman capacities of the vampires. When the vampires aren't dining on human blood (and the occasional glass of orange juice) they do the usual civilized things: go to the movies and the opera, make love, get married, play tennis, whatever.

They also have strict laws governing conduct within their species and are generally law-abiding and polite. They are actually not such a bad lot, generally considered, apart from this human blood business. But they don't see much of a problem about that because, after all, we humans belong to a different species from them and look and act differently; anyway, they have been doing it for millennia. They sometimes think it is a pity about the pain and fear the humans feel while their necks are being punctured and drained, not to mention all the death that results, but there is no point in being squeamish and

sentimental about your farm animals, is there? And yes, they could live just as well on orange juice-- which they actually rather enjoy at breakfast time-- but it would be a little monotonous to have only that to drink: they like some variety in their diet. True, also, it would be healthier to give up human blood, as some of them are always tediously insisting, but they relish their pint of blood at dinner time and feel that life would be poorer without it. So they don't take much notice of the "juicetarians" among them, a small minority anyhow, who fitfully campaign for humane treatment of humans-- and even go so far as to call for complete human liberation! Why, what would become of all the humans if they were set free to roam the land? No, it is inconceivable.

I don't know about you but I find this vampire species a pretty selfish, blinkered and cruel bunch. They have got their values all wrong. If I were a powerful Martian visiting earth and found it dominated by these bloodsuckers, with the human species reduced to the status of mere blood vats, I would insist that they damn well stick to orange juice. Variety, freedom, tradition-- don't give me that! Just look what you are doing to these poor humans, the pain and misery and confinement you cause them-- and all because you don't fancy orange juice all the time. I mean, honestly, are you really telling me that it is morally acceptable to put that child to a slow and painful death rather than squeeze a couple of oranges? Can the difference of taste be that important to you? Human liberation! That is what I would say; and if I were one of the unlucky human victims I would plead the same case, hoping to appeal to the vampires' moral sense-- of which they seem to have plenty when it comes to the welfare of their OWN species.

## **Animal Deaths Resulting from Food Choices**

According to the USDA, the average nonvegetarian American will eat in his or her lifetime...

21 cows

14 sheep

12 hogs

900 chickens plus

1,000 pounds of other animals (fish, birds, rabbits, shellfish, deer, etc.)