vampire, *n.*

(væmpə(r)) Also vampyre. [a. F. vampire, ad. Magyar vampir, a word of Slavonic origin occurring in the same form in Russ., Pol., Czech, Serb., and Bulg., with such variants as Bulg. vapir, veipir, Ruthen. vepyr, vopyr, opyr, Russ. upir, upyr, Pol. upior; Miklosich suggests north Turkish uber witch, as a possible source. Cf. G. vampir, vampyr, Da., Sw. vampyr, Du. vampir, It., Sp., Pg. vampiro, mod.L. vampyrus.]

1. A preternatural being of a malignant nature (in the original and usual form of the belief, a reanimated corpse), supposed to seek nourishment, or do harm, by sucking the blood of sleeping persons; a man or woman abnormally endowed with similar habits.

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1734 Trav. three English Gent. in Harl. Misc. (1745) IV. 358 These Vampyres are supposed to be the Bodies of deceased Persons, animated by evil Spirits, which come out of the Graves, in the Night-time, suck the Blood of many of the Living, and thereby destroy them. 1760-2 GOLDSM. Cit. W. lxxx. p8 From a meal he advances to a surfeit, and at last sucks blood like a vampyre. 1819 [POLIDORT] The Vampyre p. xx, He had been tormented by a vampyre, but had found a way to rid himself of the evil, by eating some of the earth out of the vampyre's grave. 1847 MRS. A. KERR tr. Ranke's Hist. Servia iv. 71 Speedy death was the inevitable consequence of such a visitation, and any one who so died became himself a vampyre.

1796 PEGGE Anonym. (1809) 182 The accounts we have of the Vampires of Hungary are most incredible. They are Blood-suckers, that come out of their graves to torment the living. 1813 BYRON Giaour Note 38, The freshnes of the face, and the wetnes of the lip with blood, are the never-failing signs of a Vampire. 1846 T. WRIGHT Ess. Mid. Ages I. ix. 301 Walter Mapes..gives some curious stories of English vampires in the twelfth century. 1886 Sat. Rev. 9 Jan. 55 We would welcome a spectre, a ghoul, or even a vampire gladly, rather than meet [Stevenson's] Mr. Edward Hyde.

2. *transf.* a. A person of a malignant and loathsome character, esp. one who preys ruthlessley upon others; a vile and cruel exactor or extortioner. spec. = VAMP *n.4*

1741 C. FORMAN Obs. Revol. 11 These are the vampires of the publick, and
riflers of the kingdom. 1814 HARRIET SHELLEY in Lett. Shelley (1909) II. App. I. 992 In short, the man I once loved is dead. This is a vampire. His character is blasted for ever. 1844 H. H. WILSON Brit. India II. 174 There appeared to be no prospect of shaking off the vampires that had fastened themselves on the princes of Rajputana. 1899 F. T. BULLEN Log of Sea-waif 164 The vampires who supplied them with liquor had somehow obtained a claim upon all their wages. 1903 G. B. SHAW Man & Superman IV. 170 You lie, you vampire, you lie. 1918 National Police Gaz. (U.S.) 20 Apr. 4 (caption) Theda Bara... Vampire of the Screen. 1919 Honey Pot I. 42 Miss Maitland was a ‘vampire’ of an entirely new type. 1920 C. D. FOX Who’s Who on Screen 301 Louise Glaum, who is credited with having given to the screen one of the most perfect vampire characterizations, was born near Baltimore. a1953 E. O’NEILL Long Day’s Journey into Night (1956) IV. 165 Made whores fascinating vampires instead of poor, stupid, diseased slobs they really are. 1968 Word Study Dec. 4/2 A vampire is a woman who uses sex to facilitate the acquisition of money or other signs of wealth. 1978 LD. BIRKENHEAD Rudyard Kipling vii. 99 A grim but authentic picture...of callow subalterns trotting beside the rickshaw wheels of faded provincial vampires.

b. slang. An intolerable bore or tedious person.

1862 B. TAYLOR Home & Abroad III. II. 215 In the German language there is no epithet which exactly translates our word ‘bore’, or its intensification, ‘vampyre’.

c. Applied to a mosquito.

1864 GEIKIE Life Woods iv. (1874) 58 A sharp prick and the little vampire is drinking your blood.

3. Zool. a. One or other of various bats, chiefly South American, known or popularly believed to be blood-suckers.

α 1774 GOLDSM. Nat. Hist. (1824) II. 119 An animal not so formidable, but still more mischievous than these, is the American Vampyre. 1834 Handbk. Nat. Philos., Phys. Geogr. 55/1 (L.U.K.), The vampyres, or blood-sucking bats, nine species of which have been mentioned. 1845 E. WARBURTON Crescent & Cross xvi. (1859) 168 My companion slew fifty-seven Vampyres in the few minutes.

β 1783 Encycl. Brit. (ed. 2) X. 8711/2 The vampyrus, vampire, or Ternate bat, with large canine teeth. 1785 SMELLIE Buffon’s Nat. Hist. (1791) V. 283 We shall call it vampire, because it sucks the blood of men and other animals when asleep. 1820 WATERTON Wand. S. Amer. III. (1825) 154 The owls went away of their own accord... The bats and vampires remained with me. 1839 DARWIN Voy. Nat. ii. (1845) 22 My servant...suddenly put his hand on the beast's withers, and secured the vampire. 1893 LYDEKKER Roy. Nat. Hist. I. 299 The vampires
are remarkable for the varied nature of their food.


1843 MARRYAT *M. Violet* xli, The deadly tarantula spider or ‘vampire’ of the prairies.


1867 Chronicle 5 Oct. 669 This giant of the Cephaloptera is simply a monstrous Ray; and though Sea-Devil and Vampire are assigned to it as trivial names, it is in no way formidable save from its enormous strength and bulk.

4. A double-leaved trap-door, closing by means of springs, used in theatres to effect a sudden disappearance from the stage.

1881 W. S. GILBERT *Foggerty's Fairy* I, Where's my vampire? 1886 Stage Gossip 69 A ‘vampire’ is a trap used by the sprites, and is cut in the ‘flats’, and often in the stage—the sprite falling bodily through the trap.

5. *attrib.* and *Comb.*, as *vampire bookseller*, *corpse*, *-fanned* adj., *legend*, *spell*, etc.; *vampire bat*, = sense 3a; *vampire trap*, = sense 4.
1790 SHAW Spec. Linn. pl. 8, The *Vampyre Bat. Tailless Bat with the nose plain, and the flying-membrane divided between the thighs. 1807 Phil. Trans. XCVII. 176 The vampyre bat, which will be found to live on vegetables. 1839 DARWIN Voy. Nat. ii. (1845) 22 The Vampire bat is often the cause of much trouble, by biting the horses on their withers. 1875 B. TAYLOR Faust ii. iii. iii, Like vampire-bats, they're squeaking, twittering, humming.

1788 BURNS Poet's Progress 29 *Vampyre-booksellers drain him to the heart.

1801 SOUTHEY Thalaba VIII. x, Through the *vampire corpse He thrust his lance. 1819 [POLIDORI] The Vampyre Introd. p. xxiii, The vampyre corse of the Arabian maid Oneiza.

1847 EMERSON Poems, Mithridates Wks. (Bohn) I. 410 Swing me in the upas boughs, *Vampire-fanned, when I carouse.

1855 SMEDLEY Occult Sci. 69 Criticism applied to the *Vampire legends by an anonymous writer.

1899 E. J. CHAPMAN Drama Two Lives, Snake-Witch 39 That unrest That held him with its *vampire spell.

1871 TYLOR Prim. Cult. II. 175 There is a whole literature of hideous *vampire stories.

1813 BYRON Giaour Note 37, The *Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant.

1828 Lights & Shades I. 42 A sort of yellowish-greenish, brownish grey—an unearthly *vampire tinge.

1846 S. F. SMITH Theatr. Apprenticeship viii. 63 Down I went through the trap-door (it was what actors call a *Vampire trap) before any one was aware of my intentions. 1893 Westm. Gaz. 29 Sept. 4/2 All his disappearances are done by means of the ordinary pantomime ‘vampire’ trap.

1837 A. TENNENT Vis. Glencoe 49 Some [of the devils] seem’d equipp’d with *vampire wing.

1831 POE Poems 64 Some tomb, which oft hath flung into black And *vampyre-winged pannels back.
Hence *vampire v. trans.*, to assail or prey upon after the manner of a vampire; *vampiredom*, the state of being a vampire (sense 1); the acts of a vampire; *vampiric a.*, *vampirine a.*, *vampirish a.*, of the nature of a vampire.

1832 *JEKYLL Corr.* (1894) 306 Sotheby will not let poor Sir Walter lie quietly in his grave, but *vampires him with verses that would disgrace even the annuals.

1905 *B. KENNEDY Green Sphinx* xxi, The only wealth of the world is the produce coming from the labour of Nature... And gold insolently *vampires* this produce.

1933 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 28 Sept. 653/3 The more obvious literary possibilities of *vampiredom* were thoroughly explored and exploited nearly forty years ago.

1972 *Daily Tel.* (Colour Suppl.) 12 May 56 There before the horrified gaze of the living was all the evidence of vampiredom—twisted position, torn shroud and blood.

1853 D. G. *ROSETTI Let.* 17 Apr. (1965) I. 136 Such are the *vampyric notions of reciprocity.* 1882 H. *MERIVALE Faucit of Balliol* II. vi, I'm not sure that you are not a ghost..of some uncomfortable vampiric order. 1963 *Listener* 24 Jan. 165/2 She [sc. Marilyn Monroe] had all the physical equipment of the vamp, but the spirit of the girl next door... Marilyn was never truly vampiric on the screen, and she was never a 'taker' in life.

1914 in D. McCarthy *Drama* (1940) 129 This is too much for Vanya; he explodes at the old *vampirine humbug, and..dashes from the room.* 1946 *BLUNDEN Shelley* x. 135 Byron began and dropped a thriller which was becoming vampirine.

1891 A. *LANG Angling Sketches* 57 The Highland fairies are very *vampirish.* 1929 *Sunday Dispatch* 13 Jan. 1/2 Among my own friends my reputation is notoriously the reverse of *vampirish, money means nothing to me.* 1944 R. *LEHMANN Ballad & Source* V. viii. 300 Mother fastened vampirish eyes on her. 1981 *N. TUCKER Child & Book* vii. 198 Religious references..to the Virgin Mary behaving in a way that is distinctly vampirish have been glossed over.

**ADDITIONS SERIES 1993**

*vampire, n.*

Add: *vampirical a.; vampirically adv.*

1969 *Daily Tel.* 16 May 16/7 She contrives..in a vengeful after-life to play..vampirical havoc with passing warriors. 1981 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 3 July
Dark legions of the antichrist..vampirically sucking the blood from mankind. **1990 Guardian Weekly 30 Sept. 25/2** The vampirical twosome whose teeth are sunk so deep into each other's necks that they daren't let go.