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vampire, *n.*

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(ˈvæmpaɪə(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*, *vepir*, 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.

α **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. ¶8 From a meal he advances to a surfeit, and at last sucks blood like a vampyre. **1819** [POLIDORI] *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.

β **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 freshness of the face, and the wetness 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 ghou, 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 ruthlessly 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. **1953** 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. α **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.

b. The tarantula spider. *rare*⁻¹.

1843 MARRYAT *M. Violet* xlv, The deadly tarantula spider or 'vampire' of the prairies.

c. The devil-fish. *rare*⁻¹.

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; **vamp'iric** *a.*, **vampirine** *a.*, **vampirish** *a.*, of the nature of a vampire.

1832 JEKYL *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. ROSSETTI *Let.* 17 Apr. (1965) I. 136 Such are the *vampyrical 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

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Add: **vamp'irical** *a.*; **vamp'irically** *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

752/1 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.
