WarZone Entertainment presents

Tales #2: Vamp U

 By Jonathan Gutheinz





Twitter: @gutheinz

First Printing: USA

OTHER WARZONE TITLES

Dawn Of War

WarZone

Mario Chronicles

Summer Living

Chapter One

 “Great balls of fire!” a giant voice boomed as giant balls of fire rain down from the sky. Tony was on a picnic with Ms. Texas. The most beautiful woman Tony had ever laid eyes on and she was all into him. They were just about to kiss when the giant booming voice started singing about the giant flame balls that were engulfing the world around him. It didn’t take Tony long to figure out this was a dream. Even less time for him to shut off the alarm.

 He slowly opened his eyes, his vision foggy. It always took a few minutes after waking up for his vision to clear up. He looked around his dorm room. It was lightly furnished. He was a poor college kid after all and most of his money went towards books and classes. Schools always ripped young kids off after all. What better way to prepare for your future than to gain massive amounts of debt?

 Slowly Tony sat up. The clock read 10 AM, he must have hit the snooze a few too many times. He was late yet again. His first class started at 10. He was going to have to run if he had any hope of making it before it finished. *Eh fuck it.* He laid back down in the bed and closed his eyes. He would just go to his next class.

 It was an hour before he opened his eyes again. Yet another class missed. He needed to get going and quickly if he was going to make it to any of his classes today. A quick shower and a change of clothes and he was on his way to school. His iPod blasting music as he made his way to campus. The longer he was in school the less he seemed to care about it all. School just seemed more and more pointless. They say school wasn’t for everyone and he couldn’t help but feel that that was true. It wasn’t for him. More and more he felt like he was just going through the motions. None of it seemed to matter anymore.

 The walk to school wasn’t too bad. His dorm was just off of campus. The other side of campus from his classes but still. It was a nice relaxing walk. He always loved walking. It helped him to clear his head before a long day. The walk home wasn’t as fun, seeing as his dorm was on the top of a large hill. At least he always got a work out.

 Campus was emptier than it normally was at this hour. A fact that he shouldn’t know as well as he did, seeing as how he had class at this hour. A class he had missed more often than not. He could tell his teachers were starting to get annoyed at his constant tardiness. Ironically that only made him want to skip class even more. A little voice inside his head told him that he was destined for greatness. For so much more than this stupid school and the pathetic teachers who tore down their students rather than build them up. He just wish he knew what his destiny really was. What he was supposed to do with himself to make his mark on the world? The truth was he had no idea. It was probably the reason he always had so much trouble sleeping. His dad always told him it was what was wrong with his generation, so much freedom that it paralyzed you with indecision. You can do anything you want, so how do you decide what to do?

 It was a question that Tony found himself asking more and more lately. A question with no answer that he could think of. Checking his watch, old fashioned pocket watch that he got as a gift from his grandfather, he still had about twenty minutes till his next class. His stomach was growling at him something fierce.

 He changed directions and made for the cafeteria. Some quick Chinese food and then boring class after boring class. Just the way he liked it. The cafeteria was in the middle of the campus. The closer he got the emptier he found the campus. His nerves were starting to get to him. This wasn’t normal. Was it some holiday he forgot? He pulled out his phone to check the date. May 16th. No holiday that he could think of.

 As he rounded the ben and came insight of the cafeteria he spotted two guys running full speed away from it. It was the damnest thing he had ever seen. They must have been late as hell for class.

 The doors slid opened as he made his way inside. He could hear someone yelling over his earphones. Some people just don’t know how to behave. He slowly took his earphones out. These people may be degenerates but he was nosey as hell.

 “You can’t keep us here!” A voice shouted. Tony didn’t recognize the voice but he could hear the fear. The terror. Other voices were crying out for help as well. What the hell was going on? Those guys outside weren’t late for class, they were running from something. Tony needed to know what it was.

 “Silence!” A deep man’s voice spoke out, all at once silence over took the caf. The cafeteria proper was in the middle of the building. Tony slowly made his way towards the center. He could hear mutterings but couldn’t make out what they were saying. At the end of the corridor he stopped at the edge and leaned out to see what was going on.

 Three guys were standing there looking worried while twenty or so of his fellow students were sitting around them, terror on their faces. As far as Tony could see no one had any weapons or anything else. What was going on? He scanned around the room and that’s when he spotted the bodies, at least fifteen people, laying on the ground dead. A pool of blood surrounding them. Some of their heads were spun around as if they were snapped.

 Tony swallowed hard as he took a step back. This was too much, he was going to have to call the police. He started to back away from the caf. He sprinted down the hall towards the exit. He was much too afraid to attempt to call the police from inside the building. What if they heard him? No, he needed to get outside and maybe even halfway home before he called. Hell maybe halfway to Canada. He had never been much of a hero and had no desire to start being one now.

 He made it halfway down the hall when he started to hear people coming towards him. Panic started to set in, he didn’t have a lot of options available to him. He was in a small hallway that just connected two sides of the building. Nowhere for him to duck into and very little to attempt to hide behind.

 Without thinking twice he started walking back the way he had just come, putting the earphones back in his ears but leaving the music off. Maybe they won’t think anything of him. He’s just another student lost in his head heading for class. *God I hope this works.*

 Tony strained his ears to hear if the people were still coming, best he could tell they stopped. He could almost hear them talking behind him but not enough to make out what they were saying. Maybe if he took out the earbuds but that would tip them off. The hallway was coming to an end and the caf was too his right, he stopped just short of it. He took a deep breath, there was another exit to the left, if he played this just right he could make it out before they even noticed he was there. He took a step.

 “Hey you!” one of the guys in the caf shouted at him. His heart started racing a mile a minute. He set out towards the left, pretending he couldn’t hear him over his imaginary music. He made it only a few feet before a hand grabbed hold of his shoulder, he spun, knocking the hand off and dropping his backpack. He preceded to take off running towards the exit. He never ran this fast in his life. He could have made the Olympics with this speed. It still wasn’t enough. One of the goons tackled him from behind. Knocking him to the floor, hard.

 “Where do you think you’re going?” he snatched the earbuds out of his ears and tossed them aside before yanking him to his feet.

 “What do you want?” he tried to sound confused but firm. The guy barely touched him but he flew back into the wall.

 “Shut up.” The goon said as Tony’s head hit the wall and the world went dark.

Chapter Two

 “Are you ok?” it was a girl’s voice. Tony didn’t recognize it but it was nice, soothing even. He could feel her soft warm hands shaking him lightly.

 “Don’t bother. He’s not waking up.” That was Mr. Chiles. He was a bitter old man who ran the history department. Tony never got along with the man, but the other students seemed to love him and worshiped the ground he walked on. Tony never understood it.

 “Don’t say that sir. He has to pull through.” The girl pleaded with him. As if Chiles had the final say over Tony’s life and death.

 “Why? These freaks don’t seemed overly concerned with keeping any of us alive.” For once it wasn’t bitterness that Tony detected in his voice, it was defeat. Whatever was happening had beaten down that dark black soul of his to almost nothing. He could hear the girl crying.

 “Shut up over there!” it was the same voice of the man who tossed him around like a ragdoll. He could feel the girl let go of him as they backed away. The man had them scared. He couldn’t say that he blamed them, the way he had just picked him up and tossed him like he was nothing. This guy meant business and wasn’t in the mood to mess around.

 Tony could hear people breathing and whimpering but no one was really talking or moving about. Whoever these people were they had everyone scared. Slowly, cautiously he began to open his eyes and looked around. The caf was full of students and teachers alike. A great deal more than he thought at first glance. He could only see one side of the room, he was much too afraid to turn his head, even a little for fear that they would spot him. The men holding them all here weren’t in his line of sight, but he could hear them.

 “Is he sure that Dr. Geller has it?” Tony’s attacker asked. The other one seemed annoyed by him.

 “No. Are you stupid Craig? If Gambit thought for one second that the chest was here he’d be here himself.” Tony tried his hardest to see them without moving. He caught a glimpse of a pair of brown boots but that was all he could see.

 “Than why did he send us here?” Tony’s attacker demanded. He wasn’t the brightest tool in the shed. The other man clearly didn’t respect him much.

 “Because he thinks this Geller guy has some information that he needs.” Tony heard him slap his attacker on the head. It was a loud slap that brought a smile to Tony’s lips. “That’s why we’re here. Now stop distracting me.” He walked off, leaving Tony’s attacker, Craig alone.

 “Think you’re so fucking smart. I’ll show him.” He said under his breath. Tony could barely hear him, he whispered it so low. So they were after Dr. Geller. Tony had never met the man but heard good things about his classes. He was an Archaeologist that taught ancient history here on campus. From all rights the man was brilliant, if not a little arrogant.

 Mr. Chiles was the head of the history department. If anyone knew where he was it would be him. Tony was shocked he hadn’t already given him up. He scanned around the room trying to find him without moving his head. He couldn’t have moved far, but Tony saw no sight of him. Where could he have gone? Unless he was on his other side. There wasn’t a way for him to check without acknowledging that he was awake.

 It was a hard choice, as long as he laid here not moving they would think he was dead and leave him alone. Or so he would hope. But if they saw that he was awake they might try questioning him. That could only lead to him dead. On the other hand, what was his great plan? Just lay here till it was all over? He needed to be up and mobile if he wanted even a chance at escape. Besides he really wanted to see what the girl who was trying to help him looked like. She sounded cute.

 Slowly he turned his head to see. The other side of the room was just as crowded. It didn’t take him long to spot Mr. Chiles. He was sitting on his knees, looking incredibly uncomfortable. He was an older man and his knees probably weren’t in the best shape. His hair was its normal style of crazy. It had the coloring you would expect of someone his age, grayish/white but what you didn’t expect was for it to be standing up and shooting off into all kinds of different angles. It was almost like seeing an old blading Albert Einstein with even more fucked up hair. Once more Tony couldn’t help but wonder why this man earned so much respect.

 Sitting next to him in gym shorts and a pink tank top sat the most beautiful woman Tony had ever seen in his life. She had long flowing red hair, bright blue eyes and just the right amount of freckles. Her face was flawless and she had a body to match. His heart started racing as he watched her.

 She looked scared and was sitting on her feet, as if she was getting ready to spring up and run. It wasn’t a bad idea. One that Tony would love to follow. Next to her was another old man. This one not a teacher. Tony had met him a few times. His name was Brandon. He owned a small store in the mall selling comic books that he ran with his sons. He had come back to school to take business classes. Word on the street was that his store wasn’t doing so well, and he was trying to find ways to make it bounce back. Tony wished him all the luck in the world. He loved comic books after all. Who didn’t?

 The girl turned to look at him. He could tell by looking at her that she was shocked to see he was awake. Her bright blue eyes, as blue as the ocean itself, locked on to him. His heart started racing again. This time he was sure it was beating loud enough for all to hear. She gave him a weak smile, as if to say it’ll be alright.

 Her smile didn’t last long. He could hear footsteps coming towards him. Tony closed his eyes tight, pretending once again that he was asleep. It didn’t work. Craig lifted him up, by his head. Not a fun way to be lifted up FYI.

 “Look who finally woke up.” He all but spit in Tony’s face. Slowly he opened his eyes to find Craig’s face inches from his own. He was ugly as could be. His brow was messed up, Tony didn’t know how to describe it, it was almost like the skin folded in on itself. It was the look you got when you were pissed off only more so. His eyes were bright yellow. Scary yellow, almost like a wolf.

 “Is it too late for me to go back to sleep?” Tony asked playfully. Trying to charm his way out of certain death. Craig did not look amused. Without a word he hit Tony in the gut, if he wasn’t still holding him up he would have flown back. As it was he wasn’t sure his gut didn’t fly away and leave him here.

 “Leave him alone!” he could hear the girl shout. She sounded so beautiful. Stupid but beautiful. He would kill her for that request. He could see it in the cold yellow eyes.

 “Don’t be stupid girl. Let them kill the lad. Don’t get us in trouble too.” Mr. Chiles said. Always the coward. Always looking out for himself at the expense of his students. Why do some people become teachers? Tony would never know.

 “I’d listen to the old man girly. This boy ain't worth your time.” He turned to look at her as he causally tossed Tony aside. He couldn’t help but scream as he flew across the room and hit a brick beam in the middle of the room. He felt bits of the bricks landing on his hand when he hit the floor. People cried out but no one moved to help him. One growl from Craig and the outcries stopped too. Craig started towards the poor girl. “Not when you can have a big strong man like me.” He picked her up by the arms. Mr. Chiles scooted away while Brandon tried to help her but Craig swatted him down. He landed on the floor hard, blood could be seen pooling around him. If Tony didn’t know better he would have sworn the old man had just died. But he could see his back lifting up and down. He was breathing and hard. The girl was trying to struggle but Craig’s hold on her was too strong. The dude was all muscle.

 “Let me go you muscle bound freak!” she yelled as she hit him in the chest over and over. He just laughed and squeezed her arms till she couldn’t move them anymore. She let out a cry of pain. Tony watched in horror, his vision a bit blurred from the hits to the head he took after knocking loose the damn bricks.

 “I like it rough girl.” Craig said. Tony kept expecting someone to jump to her aid the way she jumped to his but no one moved. Maybe it was the pile of bodies lying in the center of the room that kept them in line but Tony wasn’t having this. He got to his feet, and just as quickly fell on his ass. Mr. Chiles looked over at him and shook his head no. The coward. Once more Tony got to his feet. His back and head hurting more than he could take. He didn’t care. He had to save her.

 “Please.” She begged him. He leaned in and started kissing her neck. Tony wasn’t having it. He mustered all the strength he had left and charged at Craig, ramming into him with his full force. . . and falling back on his ass once more. He wasn’t sure if Craig even felt him. At least he wasn’t till Craig dropped the girl to the ground hard and turned to look at him. Fire in those evil yellow eyes.

 “The fuck you just do boy?” He said as he started towards Tony. The girl was on the ground not moving, but for her chest moving ever so slightly. Blood was leaking out of two small holes in her neck. This weirdo bit her. Tony started scooting back as fast as he could but Craig was faster.

 “Don’t run. You wanted a go at me. Well here I am.” He shouted as he Tony got to his feet, his hands out stretched in front of him.

 “Come on let’s just talk.” Tony tried to plead with him as they backed into the wifi room. It was a part of the caf but not at the same time. It had no real wall separating the two but it was clearly made to stand apart. It had dark tinted windows on all side but for the one they had just entered.

 “I don’t talk.” Craig said as he picked Tony up, spun him around and threw him. For the second time Tony knew what it felt like to fly. To soar through the air like a bird or a comic book hero. It came to an end much the same way it did the first time. Him hitting something. This time it was the window. With a loud crack the whole window came down on top of him. He couldn’t count how many pieces of glass cut into him even if he tried.

 He could hear people screaming. Much as they had when he hit the bricks. But this time he also heard people getting up. Maybe they finally grew a backbone. He looked up, not an easy task when you kept getting thrown into things. Craig was in the middle of the room screaming as fire consumed him. This was all too much, bite marks, catching on fire in day light. What was he? A vampire? Tony didn’t know, nor did he care. All he cared about was getting up and getting out of here. Going back home and pretending this was all a dream.

 He got to his feet and started out of the wifi room. He had a giant gash on his left leg that gave him a bad limp. It hurt like hell to walk but he didn’t care. He had to get out of here. The caf had all but emptied out. Brandon, the girl and Mr. Chiles were the only ones still in the room. Tony could hear people coming. This wasn’t going to end well.

 “What happened?” Tony asked, embarrassed by the blood that spat out as he asked the question. The girl looked at him with what could only be described as pity. It killed Tony to see that look from her directed at him.

 “You broke the window with your back and our attacker burst into flames?” Brandon told him. It sounded more like a question than a statement.

 “And all those ungrateful students ran off and left us.” Mr. Chiles said. His tone acid. The girl, holding her hurt neck walked over to Tony.

 “We need to get out of here. Everyone else already took off.” She told him. Her hand on his arm. His heart started racing again, he could feel the blood rushing to his face.

 “Samantha pick up boys on your own time. We need to get out of here.” Mr. Chiles demanded. She pulled away from them. The sound of people rushing towards them grew louder. Tony grabbed Samantha’s hand and started towards the door. She held him back.

 “Brandon’s hurt. We can’t leave him.” Brandon waved them on.

 “It’s ok. I don’t want to hold you back.” He said weakly. Mr. Chiles pushed his way past him.

 “Well, I’m not staying.” Mr. Chiles hurried towards the exit.

 “Come on.” Samantha said as she put one of Brandon’s arm around her. Tony took the other arm and helped him on the way. Mr. Chiles was nowhere to be seen by time they made it to the end of the hall. The sounds of their followers stopped.

 “I can’t believe Mr. Chiles.” Samantha said bitterly. Tony laughed.

 “I can, he’s always been an asshole.” He said with no hint of irony. He really couldn’t stand the man.

 “How can you say that? He’s a great teacher.” She stuck up for him even when he left them to die. What was this loyalty that people felt for the man?

 “He is a good teacher, maybe a bit of a coward but a good man.” Brandon said as they spotted the exit. The hope all but drained out of them as they spotted it. The doors were bared with vending machine stacked on top of vending machine.

 “How the hell did they lift those?” She asked, fear seeping into her voice. Tony already knew the answer but was too scared to say it. Somehow speaking it out loud made it real in a way he wasn’t ready for.

 “Let’s just find another way out.” He said as he turned them around. She nodded. Laugher erupted behind them. It was a loud cruel laugh. Brandon shivered.

 “What if the exit up ahead is blocked too?” he asked. It was a good point. One that they would be better off knowing now. These sick freaks liked to toy with their food. Tony could already tell that. Samantha was starting to buckle and Brandon wasn’t getting any lighter. If they didn’t get out of here soon they were as good as dead.

 “Well we need to find out and fast. Sam why don’t you go scout up ahead and make sure it’s open. We’ll follow right behind.” He said, already regretting it. He was now going to have to hold Brandon up alone. He was as good as dead if they decided to attack now.

 “Good idea.” She took his arm off of her and immediately Tony felt the added weight. He tried to hide it and put on a smile. “I’ll be back.” With that she sprinted off down the hall.

 “You sure you can get me alone? I can try and walk.” Brandon said. Tony could tell just by looking at the old man that he was just trying to put on a brave face. He was clearly in a lot of pain.

 “I got you. You and me are in this together.” Tony said. Meaning it completely. They started down the hall at a much slowly pace now that Samantha was gone. And gone she was. There was no sight of her. The hallway was a long one but she managed to get down it in no time. Their trip down however took a hell of a lot longer. Every step was a core for Brandon, that fall he took back in the caf really did a number on his leg. And each step was taking a bigger and bigger toll out of Tony as well. He really needed to start working out. He never much thought of himself as a jock. Working out, being fit, that was something other people did. He was much more into the important things in life. Watching tv, reading comic books, drinking Dr. Pepper and eating ice cream. That’s what made life worth living. Not sitting in a weight room all day. Where was the joy in that?

 The end of the hall opened up into a much larger lobby, at the other end of which was another exit. Tony could already see from here that it was blocked off. Brandon seemed to be in too much pain to have noticed yet. Scanning around Tony was surprised that he couldn’t spot Samantha anywhere. Did she find another way out and forgot about them? Or did they catch her? Both answers were bad. It meant the two of them were on their own.

 “Why did we stop?” the words were hard for him to get out. He was wincing as he spoke. Tony pointed out the blocked exit. “Well damn.” Was all Brandon could say.

 “We’ll find another way out. Don’t worry.” Tony said as he let out a sigh and kept moving. He could feel himself slowing down. This was more than he could handle. But he wasn’t going to stop, he couldn’t leave this guy to die. They’ve had classes together. They had a bond.

 “Look at the food run.” A voice rang out behind him. It was the voice of the man who was bossing Craig around. Tony and Brandon spun around to look. He was a little taller than Tony with a lean look to him. Behind him were three guys all bigger than the last. Tony swallowed hard. He was scared, more scared than he would have liked to admit. “Maybe it’s time to stop playing with our food.” He snapped his fingers. “Boys.” The three other vampires, because that’s what they were, Tony could feel it, charged at them.

 “God save me.” He said as he did the unthinkable. He pushed Brandon into the three vampires. He knocked them all down, without waiting to see what happened he took off running as fast as his feet would carry him. He and Brandon had a bond, but not a really strong one.

 Behind him he could hear Brandon calling out for help. Begging Tony to come back for him. He sped up instead. Quickly leaving the sound of his somewhat friend, a man who trusted him behind to die. Tony would never forgive himself for his moment of weakness. He was as bad as Mr. Chiles in that moment.

 Before he knew it he was down another hall, a lone figure was leaning against the wall. He couldn’t go back, he could hear the others coming. He had to move forward. The only thing that gave him hope was that this figure looked hurt. He could tell as he got closer that it was a she, but he still didn’t know if they were human or not. He walked as silently as he could. The last thing he wanted to do was spook whatever/whoever it was.

 He felt the creek in the floor even before he heard it. The hairs on the back of his neck stood on end as the woman turned in a hurry to see who was behind her. To his relief it was Samantha.

 “Tony?” she ran and hugged him. He hugged her back, till he remembered that she never came back for them. He pushed her off.

 “What happened to you? Me and Brandon. . .” he trailed off at the mention of the name Brandon. What he did was unforgivable.

 “I made it to the lobby when they attacked me. I managed to get away but I couldn’t go back for you. It would have lead them right to you. I made it here before I even noticed they weren’t following me.” She looked behind him. “Where is Brandon?” the question he didn’t want to answer. That he couldn’t answer honestly from now to the day he died.

 “We made it to the lobby and were attack from all sides. I guess like you. I thought maybe the same trick would work twice. I threw a rock at the window. Sun light came in and they fled.” He avoided her eyes as he made up his story. He would need to throw a rock through the window if they made it through this. “By time they were gone I noticed Brandon was dead. I heard more coming and I panicked and ran.” He hoped she bought it. He couldn’t live with anyone knowing what he had done. How he had let that poor man die. She hugged him again. A sweet tender hug that he didn’t deserve.

 “I’m so sorry. That must have been horrible to see.” He just nodded, not knowing what to say.

 “Let’s go. We need to get out of here.” He told her as he pushed her back and started heading down the hall. Holding her hand as he went. She followed not saying a word. They made it to the end of the hall to yet another blocked off exit. “What now?”

 “There’s some stairs over there!” she pointed to a door marked stairs. He shook his head.

 “I hate when people go up in a horror movie. It makes no sense.” He pointed out.

 “But if we make it upstairs we can use the walkways to get to other buildings. Maybe even get out.” her argument made sense, a lot more sense than standing in here alone.

 “At least till they catch us.

 “If they catch us.” She pointed out.

 “Alright.” They made a run for the stairs. A loud growl came from behind them.

 “They don’t seem happy by our quick escape.” She said as the rushed into the stairway.

 “Their loss! I’ll have you know I have a really tasty neck.” He said as they started to run up the stairs. She looked at him confused for a minute before she smiled at him, the first real smile he had seen since this whole mess started. It was accompanied by a small giggle. He liked it. She was so much prettier when she smiled. That was saying something seeing as she was already unbelievably beautiful.

 The entrance to the stairs blew open as the vampires stormed in.

 “They found us!” Samantha yelled as she tried to speed up. Tony poured on the speed as well. Their pursuers could be heard behind them gaining quickly. Samantha tripped on the steps and went down hard. “Tony!” she called out to him. He was only a few steps ahead of her, the vampires still a ways off. He could help her up and still have a lead. Just a small one. He turned away from her and kept running up the stairs. “Tony!” she cried out.

 He found the exit to the roof. He pulled on the door and it opened without a fight, sunlight soaking his whole body. He took a step towards the door when Samantha’s face flashed through his mind.

 “Fuck!” he turned and ran back down the stairs. Samantha was just now getting to her feet, her leg was pretty messed up. The vampires too close for comfort. He took her hand and pulled her up.

 “What are you doing?” She looked at him with pure hate. “I thought you saved yourself.”

 “I did, now I’m saving you.” He pushed her in front of him. As they started up the stairs, making it only a few feet before a vampire grabbed the back of his neck and pulled him back. He wanted to let out a yell, but he knew Samantha would stop to help him. Instead he stayed quiet as they pulled him back. He watched as she vanished up the steps.

 He could feel the pain in his neck as they bit down into him. He couldn’t help but feel as if this was karma getting back at him for leaving Brandon to die. The world started to go dim. Slowly fading to black. The only thought on his mind was that he hoped Samantha made it to the roof alive. It wasn’t a comforting thought, after all he was dying and who wanted to die. But if he was going to die at least he saved Sam. Hopefully Saint Peter weighted that against sacrificing Brandon life for his own.

THE END