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Copyediting Sample: Novel

Client:	David Page
Title of work:	<i>The Glass Vampire</i> (Chapter 20)
Type of writing:	Fiction novel, dark fantasy
Level of editing:	Light copyediting, line editing where appropriate
Style guide:	<i>The Chicago Manual of Style</i> , 17th Edition

The Glass Vampire

Chapter 20

“Richard?” Beth gripped both of his shoulders and shook him.

If Richard had not been sitting on his bed, he would have fallen. As it was, a bout of nausea closed like a fist around his stomach. Colette’s image burned in his mind along with the memories of shock and betrayal he had felt when she had revealed herself to be a vampire and, for all intents and purposes, had ~~‘reprogrammed’~~ **“reprogrammed”** Terrence.

“It was her.” ~~He Richard~~ gripped the blanket ~~and tightly~~. “There is no longer any doubt.”

“What?” The spot between Beth’s eyebrows crinkled as she frowned.

“I saw her kill twelve men . . . saw her feeding.” He blinked. “Men I had known, men who had betrayed me and ~~who~~ wanted to kill me.”

“Do you remember her bringing you over, ~~;~~ making you a vampire?” Beth released him but continued ~~to~~ **stare staring** at him ~~intently~~.

“Not as such, but there can be no doubt it was her.” He was baffled by how he could have gone from fleeing into the woods to allowing Colette to bring him across. The feelings he had developed for her paled in comparison to the revulsion that had overwhelmed him when he had seen her lapping up his friends’ blood.

And then there was Terrence. ~~In Richard’s original memories~~ **As Richard recalled**, he had chanced upon his ~~‘friend’~~ **“friend”** in the woods days after the battle. Terrence had remembered nothing of what had occurred, and the mystery of his broken wrist had never been solved . . . until now.

“What else ~~to do~~ you remember?” Beth asked, her eyes betraying her eagerness.

Richard’s body suddenly grew heavy, as if his limbs were made of lead. As the cobwebs of past memory ~~dusted from his mind~~ **receded**, he remembered that on the surface above, the golden orb of the sun had just ~~sank~~ **risen from** behind the Cascade Mountains. The sleep of the dead dragged at him like a drowning victim, ~~threatening~~ to take down the healthy swimmer.

“It . . . will have to . . . wait.” He fell over onto his side as the darkness ~~swallowed~~ **him**.

Commented [JB1]: Use of ellipses: Using CMOS ellipsis mark (w/nonbreaking spaces) as noted in the stylesheet. I will change all others in this chapter without noting it in tracked changes as per our earlier agreement. Also, since this is fiction, and for simplicity’s sake, a period need never be used in conjunction with ellipses. In other words, we will never see four “periods” together, only three. See: <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/to pics/Quotations/faq0077.html>

Commented [JB2]: OK to delete this “who” to address repetition?

Commented [JB3]: Edited logic error. OK? The sun should *rise* here, not sink.

Commented [JB4]: Maybe a bit **more concise**: “clinging to the living.” What do you think?

Commented [JB5]: Nice imagery!

Richard awoke with a start, pulling his face from ~~his~~ the pillow and sitting bolt upright. He knew before looking that it was still daylight, could feel the solar death reaching into the earth for him with ultraviolet tentacles. The small analogue clock next to his computer verified that it was a little after four in the afternoon. His stiff muscles protested, but he managed to slide his legs off the bed and hunch forward into a sitting position. He rubbed his eyes, trying to clear away the last remnants of sleep and ~~the tortured, his tortuous~~ dreams of Colette. ~~His forearm muscles~~ The muscles in his forearms spasmed over the second tracking device. He rubbed it gently. He had two days to figure out what to do with the knowledge of Radovan's identity. As he saw it, his only real chance was to tell Beth everything and see-then figure out if she and Nash could help him. His only problem, was that he still did not fully trust the doctor.

Commented [JB6]: I really like the imagery here.

Commented [JB7]: Using this spelling as in previously edited chapters. See style sheet.

He glanced at his computer. Assuming that Stan had not simply taken the money and run, there could be an answer waiting for him there. He moved to the desk, slid into the uncomfortable metal chair, and booted up his laptop. A metal ping sounded as someone knocked on his door ~~interrupting him~~.

"Come in." He swiveled ~~the round in the chair~~ towards the door.

Commented [JB8]: Dangling modifier. Who is doing the *assuming*? The answer to that question should start the next clause. For instance, you might write:

"Assuming Stan had not simply taken the money and run, Richard figured there could be an answer waiting for him there."

Thoughts or other ideas?

Nash's lab coat swirled about him as he stopped short a few feet from Richard. His face was red and sweat beaded on his forehead. In one hand, he held a manila folder that Richard guessed was a lab report. He frowned, making Richard instantly nervous. He straightened.

"What is it, Doctor?"

Commented [JB9]: As per our earlier discussion regarding **comma usage and short clauses**: no comma before a coordinating conjunction when followed by an independent clause when the first clause of the sentence is **four words or less**.

Nash ran a hand over his bald head. "There's something wrong with your blood."

"What do you mean?" Richard braced himself.

"The Department's virus is mutating." Nash frowned. "I've never seen anything like it."

"Is this a good thing?" Richard's throat tightened. Frederick had told the truth.

"We'll have to run a lot more tests before I can answer that from a medical standpoint. They could have encoded their virus with some kind of time released mutation that could be harmful to your species." He started to pace back and forth across the small room.

Commented [JB10]: **Realism**: do you think the doctor might simply say "vampires" instead of "your species"?

"What is our next course of action, then?" Richard gritted his teeth.

Commented [JB11]: Use a comma before "then" at the end of a clause/sentence when "then" is used to express consequence.

"More tests for now." Nash stopped pacing. "Have you had any strange symptoms?, ~~any~~ Any dizziness, sweating, or palpitations?"

"No." Only visions of a past he had forgotten and the occasional bout of power. He kept his expression stoic. No one could know.

Nash studied him for a moment. "I want you in the lab for tests—ASAP."

"Very well, however, I would like to take a few moments to fully awaken." He had to check his email before ~~he did doing~~ anything. "It's difficult to get moving after rising from the dead."

"No problem." Nash nodded reluctantly and hurried from the room.

With a sense of renewed purpose, he returned to the computer desk and opened his email. It was a sure bet that Frederick was monitoring his messages, but Stan would take precautions. A single email awaited him. It was from someone named "~~Nat S.~~*Nat S.*" The subject line read: "~~Vampire Vixens.~~ *Vampire Vixens.*" It had a file attached to it that would probably open some kind of ~~pornographic-pornography~~ viewer on his screen. His lip curled involuntarily ~~at the~~ vampire pornography spam ~~flooded his screen.~~ He had known lows since the Department had taken his powers, but nothing as low as making X-rated films for money.

He poised his finger over the delete key and froze as he realized that ~~Nat S. was backwards-backward~~ for ~~Stan.~~ Simple but effective. He clicked on the ~~link to the~~ message ~~link.~~ ~~It opened a blank message, clearly showing it~~ ~~was blank except for~~ an attached executable file but nothing else. Richard saved it to his desktop and ~~then~~ opened ~~the~~ it. The program opened a word processing window. A single sentence had been typed in: ~~It read:~~

The account belongs to Questor Corporation. Don't contact me again, asshole.

Richard closed the window as soon as he read it and turned off the machine. He leaned back in his chair and stared at the blank computer screen. Questor Corporation's questionable use of laboratory animals had sent the company's stock spiraling ~~downwards-downward~~ and nearly drove them into bankruptcy. The newspaper had predicted an end to the company altogether unless the board of directors could come up with some last-minute financing. Richard opened and closed his fists. It would seem ~~that they had~~ found their money.

He got to his feet, throwing his chair back in the process. It clattered to the cement floor with a loud bang, but he barely noticed. Questor ~~Corporation~~ had earned its reputation for cutting corners and for performing shoddy research. They were using him just as the Department had. He punched his open palm, making it tingle as he turned around in a circle looking for something, anything, that might make him feel less betrayed. There was nothing. Questor would not have to answer to anyone about a lab that did not exist ~~;~~ a lab that had used dogs in horrific vampire experiments and now wanted to use ~~him-Richard~~ as a guinea pig. They had no intention of searching for a way to restore his powers any more than they would help him if he ~~were to revealed~~ the truth about why his virus was mutating. Many had speculated that vampire blood could hold the cures to cancer, AIDS, and dozens of other maladies, however, the religious right had banned all such research calling it an affront to God and his followers. Questor could say their cures came from normal lab animals. It would be a simple matter to fake the research.

Anger scorched ~~his-Richard's~~ blood. His fangs sprouted and he felt the power slamming against the shield ~~within him.~~ ~~It was there, screaming to be released, crying out for vengeance against the Department, against Questor,~~ and against anyone who had slighted him over the past ten years. Frederick was never going to give him an antidote, and although Nash and his people might, he would be relegated to the same slavery for which he had suffered the past decade. He kicked the desk. The metal bent ~~inwardsinward,~~ and the computer nearly slid ~~from the deskoff.~~

~~He-Richard~~ closed his eyes and reached deep within himself, pressing the full weight of his mind, his soul, ~~;~~ or whatever it was within him that tapped the preternatural powers of the undead, ~~;~~ against the shield. At first, he

Commented [JB12]: Words used as words: as per earlier agreement, words used as words (in this case, a name) will be italicized.

Formatted: Font: Italic

Commented [JB13]: Redundancy: OK to delete?

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Commented [JB14]: What do you think of this: "the reverse of Nat S. spelled Stan"

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Commented [JB15]: Not using a comma here between a short independent clause and a longer one as per our agreement for entire manuscript. See style sheet.

felt nothing but unyielding smoothness; ~~then~~. Then, the small fissure returned. Wisps of power leaked outwards outward from his core, slowly filling him. He pressed himself into that gap, forcing it open wider.

His vision changed as different spectrums of light became visible to him. He heard the beating heart of the guard outside his door as if his ear was ~~were~~ pressed against the man's chest. ~~He latched onto his powers like a leech, siphoning~~ Siphoning all the energies he could squeeze through the still miniscule opening. Richard latched onto his powers like a leech. He felt lighter, stronger.

Mist trickled out from the rubble pile behind him. ~~His~~ Richard's senses expanded until he could hear the men talking in the room fifty feet down the hall. He tasted their anxieties and fears. He spread his arms wide and breathed deeply. Humans had reduced his kind to the lowest sentient beings on the planet. He had been humiliated, beaten, stabbed, shot, harassed, taunted, and even buried alive. No more.

"Who are you?" A dark voice echoed through the room.

Richard spun in a complete circle, but there was no one there.

"Who . . . are you? I'm so hungry . . . so hungry." Desperation tinged the voice.

Richard understood, suddenly, that the voice was inside his own head. The darkness, the despair, the death he had sensed every time he had crossed through the old storefront on the way into the labyrinth of underground passages was not what he had thought. No one had died there, and the feeling was not from dead dogs as Nash had suggested. There was a very old and twisted vampire buried in or near that room. Richard shivered as the malevolence of the creature washed over him. It was pure evil. He shoved the voice from his mind, shielding it as he had done in the past to keep out other vampires ~~in the past~~. So, Nash and the others had lied to him about ~~that~~ this too.

He refocused his attention on Questor, his anger returning in a hot flood.

The mist floated down from the rocks and curled along the floor. The hole in his shield halted its outward progress, but for the moment it remained frozen in place. Richard let the energy flow into his body. He turned slowly ~~towardstoward~~ the camera and flashed his fangs.

"Questor Corporation!" They couldn't see him, but he said it loud enough ~~for~~ so anyone listening to the security cameras ~~to~~ would hear.

The hair on his arms stood on end as strength vibrated through him. The fog filled the room ~~new~~, so thick that he could barely see the door. His vampire senses held fast, and he heard a distant alarm bell sound. They had gotten his message. His smile widened as he stepped ~~forwards~~ forward into action.

He crossed the room faster than he had moved in ten years and grabbed the iron handle with one hand and the edge of the door with the other. The metal shrieked as he tore it off its hinges. It clanged as it hit the cement floor next to his computer. In the distance, ~~there were~~ Richard could hear frantic cries mixed with the clicking of guns being readied.

Richard knew that one of Jack's ~~black-clad~~ black-clad men stood to the right of the door. He could hear the man's steady breathing, could feel his heart pulsing on the very air. The man reacted to the door being ripped from its casing as if he were moving in slow motion. Richard sensed the guard's heart rate lurch as he turned ~~towardstoward~~ him and reached for his pistol. Richard shot out of the room with fantastic speed, pulling fog along

Commented [JB16]: Since this is a hypothetical situation, I'm using the **subjunctive mood of the be verb** here, though "was" is also becoming acceptable. If you want to keep "was," say the word. ☺

Commented [JB17]: Nice imagery of *curling mist*!

behind him. He grabbed the man's ~~nine-millimeter~~9mm automatic from his belt holster, just as the man's hand brushed its handle, and tossed it to the side. The man gasped, looking down at his now missing gun. Richard backhanded him, sending him spiraling through the air. He crashed to the floor several feet down the corridor and remained unmoving.

Richard retrieved the pistol, tucked it into his belt, and then glided down the hallway, the mist flowing around him like a billowing robe. He froze at the sudden smell of fresh blood. The unconscious guard lay beside him now. The man's heartbeat pounded in Richard's ears, begging to be stilled. A wave of dizziness ~~over-took~~overtook him. It had been so long . . . The man's blood was fresh and healthy. He shook himself. He did not drink unless offered. He staggered back, shaking his head ~~in an attempt~~ to clear ~~out it of~~ the bloodlust.

"This way!" Jack's voice was close, just one section ahead.

Richard looked up and snarled at the closed pressure door at the end of the hallway. They were coming. He stepped back against the red-bricked wall, shying away from the dim fluorescents as he tried to lose himself in the vapor. The metal squeaked as the door opened. Three men appeared in the opening, their guns leveled.

Their fear smelled like food to a starving man. Richard licked his fangs. He had to stay focused long enough to get out of there. He poured the fog around them, obscuring their vision.

"Richard! This isn't going to work, with or without your powers!" Jack barked.

Richard detected the body heat of the three men. He could smell the gun oil on their pistols and see the outlines of their infrared goggles. Behind them Jack stood with his weapon ready.

"I am leaving, Jack." Richard sped ~~forwards-forward~~ in the blur of an eye.

He dove over them, rolled in midair, and landed on his feet behind them. He grabbed Jack, pushed him into the others, and hurled the lot of them through the door into the hallway from which he had just come. He pulled the door closed, slammed home the iron latch, and bent it with ease, effectively sealing it shut.

Richard could hear the squawk of Jack's radio. "He's through. Unit two, move in!"

The mist was not as thick here. Richard had lost much of it when he had entered this new passageway. As he continued forward through the brick passage, he called more fog out of the walls and up from the dirt beneath his feet. There were more lights ~~here~~, making it harder for him to disappear.

Two more masked soldiers, followed by Ringo, darted around the corner ahead of him. They brought automatic rifles up, and laser-sighting dots appeared on Richard's chest.

"That's enough!" Ringo ordered.

"I don't think so."

Gun muzzles flashed, discharging multiple bullets in his direction. Bits of brick and mortar blasted apart, sending a cloud of debris into the air, adding to the building fog. Richard leapt straight up, latching onto an old water pipe, and hung upside down. He shimmied across and was nearly above them when they realized that he was no longer standing in the hall.

"Who are you?" ~~The the~~ dark voice interrupted him, ~~momentarily~~ breaking through his mental defenses ~~for a moment~~.

Commented [JB18]: Maybe some imagery: "With a circular motion of his right hand, Richard poured fog around them." What do you think?

Commented [JB19]: Maybe too similar to "in the blink of an eye." Is there another way to express this? Maybe: "in a blur"

Commented [JB20]: In active voice: "aligning red laser-sighting dots on Richard's chest." What do you think?

As Richard paused to shake away the other vampire's mind, one of the mercenaries looked up. "Look out!" He fired frantically.

Richard dropped from the ceiling. Bullets ricocheted off the thick pipe. The second man reacted swiftly to his comrade's warning, bringing his rifle up in time to aim it at Richard. Fiery pain stabbed Richard's abdomen as several bullets burrowed into his stomach. He fell on the men, his ~~adrenalin-adrenaline~~ and his vampiric strength allowing him to ignore the wounds. He caught them by the shoulders and slammed them together. Their heads cracked. Their eyes rolled up into their sockets, and they crumpled to the ground unconscious. Ringo fell back, dropped his rifle, and had a pistol in his hand with surprising swiftness.

Richard gripped his gun arm, turned it away with ease, and knocked the gun across the room. He got to his feet, trying to pull Ringo with him, but everything slowed. He deflated like a burst balloon as his power winked out.

"No!" ~~He His~~ senses collapsed, as did the presence of the other vampire's mind. He was alone with Ringo. His stomach burned, and it was all he could ~~do~~ to remain standing.

Ringo launched himself from the ground, catching Richard around the waist and bearing him back down the hallway. The man was a trained professional. Richard knew he was no match for him, not now. As he soared ~~backwards-backward~~ under the man's weight and strength, he desperately tried to reach his powers, but it was no use. The world spun horizontally.

Richard's ~~warrior's~~ instincts took over. He folded one leg, managing to get his foot pressed into ~~the~~ Ringo's hip as they hit the ground. He gripped the bigger man's shoulders and pulled back with the energy of their momentum as they hit the ground, rolling ~~on his backbackward~~, and pushing out with ~~his-one~~ leg. As ~~he Richard~~ had hoped, Ringo ~~over-compensatedovercompensated~~ and went flying above and past him, propelled by his own force and a little help from Richard.

Richard did not wait for him to get up. He rolled onto his side and propped himself into a crouch, pulling the stolen pistol from his belt. The safety was already off and a round chambered. He aimed it at Ringo's head as he came up onto one knee. They both froze for a moment. Ringo's steel eyes glared with unconcealed rage.

Richard slowly got to his feet, the bigger man mimicking his movements, and backed ~~towards toward~~ the other door. More booted feet ~~serapped-scraped~~ on the dirt floor behind him. He ~~knew-realized~~ he could never get out ~~now~~, but he still had a hostage.

The men skidded to a halt behind him. "Stop!"

"Stay where you are, or I will shoot." Richard did not take his eyes from his hostage.

"Go ahead. Do it!" Ringo smiled like a shark, revealing his own impressively sharp teeth. "I dare you."

"I don't want to kill ~~him you~~, but I will if I must!"

The metal screeched as the door behind Ringo burst open. Jack and two of his men entered the room, fanning out to fill the hallway and raising their weapons. Jack slung his rifle over his shoulder and stepped up next to Ringo.

"You can't do this, Richard. You have nowhere to run even if you could get out of here."

Richard did not move. "Perhaps I no longer wish to go anywhere. Perhaps I wish to die rather than live as a pawn in whatever game Questor is playing."

Commented [JB21]: power or powers?

Commented [JB22]: Or: warrior instincts

Commented [JB23]: This phrasing used in previous sentence. Ok to delete?

Commented [JB24]: him or you?

Jack nodded. "So, it's true. You know."

"We do work for Questor, Richard, but that does not change the fact that we want to help you." It was Nash's voice from behind him. Richard did not turn to look, still aiming for Ringo's forehead.

"You plan to use me as your lab rat. You have no intention of helping me." Richard gripped the gun so tightly ~~that~~ his knuckles hurt.

"I don't see why we can't do both. You help us, we'll help you." Nash sounded reasonable, but then he always did.

Beth slowly entered through the door behind Jack and his men.

"Put the gun down, Richard. You can trust us —; you can trust me. Let us help you." She pulled at her cross nervously, turning it over in her fingers as she stared at him, her eyes pleading ~~with~~ him to do as she asked.

The cross glinted in the dry light of the fluorescents. Richard grew dizzy, and his vision darkened at the corners of his eyes. His knees buckled. Ringo lunged forward, ~~grabbing-grabbed~~ his arm, and ~~pushing-pushed~~ it up ~~towardstoward~~ the ceiling. Richard squeezed the trigger.

Jack grabbed him from the side, and together they bore him to the ground, but the blackness overtook him before he got there . . .

Commented [JB25]: Good place for an ellipsis (pause). What do you think?

Commented [JB26]: Character distinction: Use contraction, maybe? It seems Richard uses no contractions in his dialog. How about Nash? Might be a good way to distinguish the characters further—one uses contractions, the other doesn't. Or maybe in this instance, Nash is being *precise* in his speech, and it's fine? Thoughts?

Commented [JB27]: As per contraction comment above... here Nash uses a contraction.

Commented [JB28]: Can we combine this paragraph with the next one? It's the same character (Beth) acting and speaking.

Commented [JB29]: Word choice: Is there a more precise verb than *got*? I tend to stay away from the verb *get* in my own writing unless I'm using it to mean *receive* or when it is part of a colloquialism or a phrasal verb such as: *get up, get off, get on*.

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