



Blood Moon

BLAISE RAMSAY



BloodMoon

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BLOODMOON

Vampire Chicago
BOOK TWO

Blaise Ramsay



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*To Alastair Maddox, who made me realize a new love for vampires and
detective stories I thought I'd forgotten.*

*To Mason Downing, because you are one of the most fun person it's ever
been my pleasure to write.*

And to my loyal readers and lovers of hard-boiled detectives.

Enjoy Vampire Chicago!

FOREWORD

Hello! If you're reading this, you are in for a wild ride. Vampire Chicago embodies not only my love for history, but also a love for vampires as I feel they should be enjoyed. Monsters lurking in our darkest dreams rather than romanticized. (That's a personal preference, don't judge me.)

The world you are about to enjoy takes place in Prohibition, Chicago. It is a world where the glitter and glam hides one of the darkest underworlds in United States history. An underworld still operating today! To help you see where you are, let me tell you a bit about Prohibition (don't worry, I won't bore you to death, hopefully).

Prohibition actually started much earlier than the period known as the Roaring Twenties. The 1820s and 1830s saw a wave of religious revivalism which led to increasing calls for temperance and the early spring of the abolitionist movement. In 1838, the state of Massachusetts passed a law banning sells of spirits in less than 15-gallon quantities. This was repealed later, but set the wheels for Prohibition in motion. Maine was the first state to pass a prohibition laws in 1846. These later became more strict in 1851. Other states followed suit by the beginning of the Civil War in 1861.

Temperance societies became more common by the turn of the century. Women played strong roles in this movement since they saw alcohol as a destructive force in families and marriages.

1906 saw renewed waves of attacks on the sale of liquor brought on by the Ant-Saloon League (est. 1893), and a reaction to urban growth. Many factory owners offered their support to prohibition to prevent accidents and increase efficiency of their workers due to increased industrial production and extended working hours.

The United States entered WWI, and in 1917, President Woodrow Wilson instituted a temporary prohibition for wartimes.

But this isn't the best part, and certainly not when Vampire Chicago takes place. That would be when Prohibition took full effect and the city saw the rise of gang activity under power kingpins like Johnny Torrio and Al Capone on the south side and Dean O'Bannion and the Irish on the north side.

This immense clashing of titans stained the streets red. Corruption was on the rise and the police were outmanned. Illegal alcohol showed up in speakeasies run by the mob, protected by cops and politicians who were paid to look the other way.

Enforcement was next to impossible since so much corruption flooded the streets and crooked cops and politicians were on the rise. Police were outmanned and in many cases outgunned.

The Roaring Twenties was a time of glitz, glam and glitter, where people enjoyed more freedoms and women moved from the house to work in light of the war. Underneath it, a dark world of prostitution, illegal gambling and production of alcohol.

The era saw the rise of new slang words and rough and tumble guys using the latest in machine gun (the Thompson special or Tommy gun was a popular choice of the time) technology.

This being said, there are some phrases and slang you might not be used to. Words like “big house” which meant jail or “club house” which spoke of police precincts in this day and time may be new concepts.

“Dicks” and “bulls” referred to detectives and police. Phrases like “on the take” and “Roscoe” that referred to corruption or guns might feel a bit foreign.

Don’t worry though! I’ve got you covered! In the back of this book, you will find a glossary that will hopefully help you further understand the fascinating language that happened during this time!

I also invite you to join my mailing list to get access to an exclusive Facebook group and early peeks at upcoming books in this series and my other books before anyone else! Thank you so much for picking my book up. If you like it, please don’t hesitate to leave a review on Goodreads and your favorite retailers. It’s most appreciated!

-Blaise

CHAPTER ONE

I watched from the safety of the shadows as the stool pigeon dropped to the floor with a resounding thud! His lips drew over yellow, stained teeth - probably from too much drinking - when his head slammed against the concrete. He trembled, rose to his hands and knees, and scrambled across the floor while looking over his shoulder. Puffs of hastened steam exited the orifices of his bloodied mouth and nose.

Behind him, I whistled, hands in the pockets of the tan coat. Its long tails flapped in the gusts of wind, creating a sound that bounced off the confines of the alley. Orange streetlamps cast a ghostly sheen on the black concrete, the only source of light in the rank place.

Sweat pooled on the ends of wet hair, sending a pungent smell through the air. He dodged into a metal door off to his left, slamming it behind him.

Doors did little to stop me nowadays. I phased through and took up another spot in the darkest shadows, watching like a predator stalking its prey. Maybe it was my "condition," but it was fun to watch the poor bastard whip his head around. His heart thudded in his chest like a jazz drum.

Patches of crimson matted dirty-blond hair. It dripped down his chin to the gray overcoat and white shirt. Gum soled shoes struggled to grip the slick terrain. He tripped after attempting to stand, and whirled onto his backside, toes erect. The knees and groin of his trousers became damp with the evidence of his fear.

Sweat beaded in the creases on his wrinkled brow, trickling into his eyes and causing him to blink against the stinging salt.

He brushed an arm across his forehead. Widened eyes scanned the room, leaping from corner to corner.

"Please, I swear. I told you everything," the man stuttered into the gloom, spitting blood from his split upper lip.

I decided it was time to end the gag and come into the light. Seeing the ruby lines on his sallow face and smelling the pungent scent of his blood made it hard to fight the menacing urge to partake of it.

My name is Alastair Maddox. Once I was a formidable assistant district

attorney responsible for putting Chicago's worst crime lords behind bars. After having my life screwed over in the weirdest of ways, I wound up dead. Now, I'm a vampire forced to hide my existence after a botched murder attempt. You'll have to look it up sometime. It's an interesting story.

Mason Downing, my business partner, emerged from behind the dusty shelves, lighting a cigarette. The man sported hair darker than the usual blazing red one might expect from an immigrant of his nationality. Stark black trousers, leather boots, and a black fedora hid murderous eyes behind a bright menacing smile. How I got paired up with this mysterious Scot, well, that's another interesting tale, too. Don't call him a Scotch - Irishman, he'll likely hit you hard enough to send you to the ground and tell you Scotch is a drink.

"Why don't I believe a crooked word coming from your mouth?" he said in his heavy Scot-Irish accent, wagging his finger like a dad scolding his kid. Downing took a cigarette from the silver case in his pocket, lit it with a nickel lighter, and cradled it in his teeth. "We've had our eyes on you for a few months. We know you're working with Denny and Slick."

In rows on either side stood shelves lined with boxes with any manner of items - from contraband alcohol to cigarettes - I knew the police would love to get their hands on. They proved our suspicions of Perry's double dealings with the mysterious boss who wanted me dead.

We tracked the slimy scumball to a seedy speak-easy where he threatened the locals and bribed the cops. Par for the trade in Prohibition Chicago with mooks like Big Al calling the shots.

Downing's underworld contacts finally tightened the noose, allowing us to pin the rap on Perry for good. The rest, as they said, was history.

Perry's not-so-subtle glance at the shelves closest to him caught my eye. He looked at me, then at the shelf, at Downing, back at the shelf.

I tried hard not to roll my eyes. Please tell me he's not planning to do what I think he is.

The next thing I knew, Perry did something I'd call either extremely brave or beyond stupid. I couldn't decide which, when he leapt to his feet.

Yep, he is.

"Downing, look out!" I shouted. Downing's head jerked towards me, his eyes wide.

Perry lurched to the side towards one shelf, gripped it and groaned while putting his body weight to heave the shelves. They tumbled into each other like dominos, giving Perry the chance to tear across the room to the nearest exit.

Downing lunged to the side, landing on his stomach and covering his head in time to avoid getting crushed.

I flew from the spot I hid in to get to Downing's side to make sure nothing hit him.

I dropped to a knee. "Are you hurt?"

Downing shook his head. "I'm fine, laddie." He gestured his chin towards the door Perry exited from. "Go! He can't get away!"

I heeded the urgency in his voice and phased into a cloud of shadow, sliding across the room toward our prey, out of the door and into an alleyway.

For those like me, "phasing" was when we dissipated into a more shadowed form of ourselves to cover wide ranges of distance in seconds. We had to be careful because it took large amounts of energy to perform and I still needed to feed.

A foreign concept I hadn't fully gotten used to in the six months since I fell victim to my new condition.

Both ends of the dingy alley appeared to be empty, save for those who enjoyed the bustling nightlife. Heightened senses tuned me in to a cacophony of heartbeats, chattering voices, and shoes traipsing on the sidewalk. Add in the skittering and the squeaking of the rats and trying to tap into a single source was almost impossible.

Despite Prohibition, the people of Chicago lived active lives in the nightclubs, speakeasies, and various dancing joints, unaware of the gurgling war looming in the criminal underworld.

Who would expect creatures of nightmare like vampires to exist when you're trying to outrun the signature Thompson special? Hard to think about those kinds of things when bullets peppered the sides of your car almost every hour.

During the initial months of the "change," I experienced how the earliest signs of the war became more severe and how my murder had been part of some master takeover plan. It led me to meet the infamous Falcone, the lieutenant of a mysterious boss who remained hidden and orchestrated the budding chaos.

Things got so out of whack, real gangs lost territory without much of a struggle, and my friend lost the future site of his business in a blazing inferno that nearly cost both of us our lives.

Metal squeaking and the creaking of a nearby fire escape at a nearby apartment building revealed the location of my stoolie. Perry stood on the first platform where he raised the thing to keep me off his trail.

"Stop, Perry!" I shouted while running.

He stopped briefly then continued to run the steps, eventually leaping

through the open window of one of the second-floor lofts.

Great, I thought. The last thing I wanted was for people to see me as some window scaling pervert. Since my death, I took caution to remain behind the scenes to keep out of trouble and not draw attention.

Seemed the smart thing to do considering how messed up DeLane was when I tried talking to her about people who scared her so bad, she hid. Come to think of it, someone capable of giving a vampire the creeps warranted a lot of genuine concern in my book.

High-pitched wailing and crying for a cop drove me to action, and I vanished, reforming on the last platform then jumping through the window.

My good old vanishing act shouldn't get confused with phasing. Best way I could describe it was it's the closest thing to becoming a bat you'd ever see in my kind. My body pulled apart, becoming a mist invisible to normal human eyes.

The chill running up your spine was the only sign you'd know I was there. And not the "Someone's watching me" kind of chill.

I reformed and landed in a room where three scantily clad broads in silken robes of various colors crowded onto their couch. I put a finger to my lips in the "shh" gesture. After the initial shock, they nodded and pointed toward the open door, one of them screaming Perry took one of their friends hostage.

"Thank you," I replied and sprinted through the building, following the copper stench of Perry's blood out a thick steel side door into a parking garage.

A loud pop! pop! echoed out, causing me to duck. Getting shot didn't kill me, but hell, it stung. Not something I wanted to repeat soon. *Where the hell did Perry get a gun?*

Screeching tires and the blinding brightness of lights in my eyes alerted me to the oncoming vehicle. I dove out of the way in time to avoid getting hit. Like someone shooting me, it may not kill me, but God did it hurt like hell.

In the passenger's side sat Perry with his Colt pointed at the head of a poor crying blonde woman. They careened past, giving me mere seconds to disappear and lie low in the backseat.

"Keep driving until I tell you to stop!" Perry said. The adrenaline filtering from him stank up the confines of the vehicle enough to make me want to gag.

To worsen things, the back of the car had less room than a soda bottle. My knees practically kissed my sternum. I had to adjust multiple times to keep the stitches out of my side. Sure, I didn't breathe anymore, but that

didn't make the current situation any less frustrating.

A few blocks later, the car jolted to a stop, slamming my face into a bar under the leather. I pinched the bridge of my nose between my fingers, clenching my teeth and squeezing my eyes shut. *Dammit. When I get a hold of him, it'll take a miracle for me not to kill him.*

Red and blue lights reflecting off the nearby buildings, combined with the sounds of sirens, halted our chase. I didn't want to scare the poor woman, so I phased out of the car and took to the side of another parked car to watch.

Lieutenant Raymond King — a longtime friend and colleague — of the local precinct came out of one of the many cruisers with a megaphone. "Perry Wallace! Release the woman and come out with your hands up! There is no way out of this!"

With my hands in my pockets, I leaned against the wall to wait for King to perform the arrest and make sure the woman Perry took received attention from the medics.

Downing crept up beside me, winded like he'd finished sprinting a mile. "About bloody time he showed up."

I snickered. "In his defense, King arrived when we asked, just not where."

"Can't blame the man. I'll go handle the rest of the plan. Make sure you meet us at this address." Downing scribbled on a slip of paper.

"Why not the precinct?"

Downing smirked. "Just meet me there -"

I cut him off with a hand held up. "Not tonight. I promised Charlie we'd have dinner and go dancing."

Charlaine Ware, or Charlie, was my girlfriend and one hell of a woman. During my hunting of Alexandra DeLane, the vampire who turned me, Charlie stuck by me, supporting me as best she could.

The expression on Downing's face looked put out. He lit a cigarette and inhaled. "All right. Tomorrow night then and don't forget to take care of your needs, boyo."

I didn't need him to remind me.

On the way to my waiting car, I hunted a few rats, draining their tiny bodies and discarding them in the storm drains. Another perk of living in a city like Chicago was when someone saw a few rat corpses in a drain, no one took a second look.

Start dropping human bodies, however, and you likely ended up with hell to pay. Ask my maker.

I wiped the blood from my mouth, using a handkerchief pulled from my pocket. My eyes lowered. "Still not enough."

Lately, the rats eased the agitating burn accompanying my need to have blood, but it didn't satisfy it. It'd become worse with each passing day. I often woke from sleep with a burning sensation in my canines, leading me to need to feed more than the usual every other night or two.

Put it out of your mind, bub. I turned my thoughts to Charlie during the drive to her house, wondering if she'd be wearing the short dress I bought her after receiving my share of payment for a job Downing and I did for a client.

I pulled up next to the curb, lightly beeped the horn, got out, and walked to the passenger's side door, waiting for my woman to descend the stairs.

She opened the door wearing the dress I dreamed she'd wear, waved at me, and marched down the stairs, into my arms. The smell of her rose perfume sent chills down my spine, making me I'd asked her to stay in tonight so we could heat the sheets with all our lovemaking.

Looking at the two of us, you wouldn't find a starker contrast. Where I was tall, lean and built like a boxer with sharper features, she was short with rounded, dainty ones.

Our difference in height grew clearer when her small body became engulfed by mine. Her arms wrapped around my waist, pulling me close. Our lips met for a moment before I spun her around. That adorable giggle I loved so much and the blush on her cheeks made me smile.

Bright blue fabric light enough to breathe, yet warm enough to keep her from freezing, blew with the light breeze. Silver sequins glistened in the combination of the street and front store lights. She chose the white overcoat I gave her for Valentine's Day to make up for a fiasco that nearly cost me our night.

Out of all the darkness in my life, Charlie provided the only source of light I knew kept me the man I once was.

"I'm so glad you're here. I heard about the ruckus involving the apartment over the radio." She lowered her head, muttering "poor girl," under her breath. "Are you and Mason okay?"

God bless her, she was such a kind soul. One side of my mouth curved into the crooked grin I knew she loved. "We're fine, sweetheart. King got his man and I'm set to go talk with Perry tomorrow."

As a gentleman should, I opened the door and tipped my hat. "My lady," I said in my best English accent.

Charlie's sarcastic eyes met mine as she slapped my arm, blowing out her lips before getting in and comfortable on the tan leather seat.

I closed the door behind her and made my way to the driver's side, sliding in like one of those zoot suit wearing jazz singers, throwing my

arm on the back of the seat.

Charlie moved to the middle and snuggled into my shoulder.

Her hand ran the length of my forearm, settling on my leg. Her cheek settled on my shoulder. “Are you sure you want to keep looking into this? Alastair, you disappeared for months, remember? So many of us thought you died, especially when Marcelli admitted to killing you.”

My jaw tightened enough it hurt. A scowl wrinkled my brow.

Tony Marcelli.

The name haunted me even with the knowledge he remained in an asylum, drooling like a vegetable. At the behest of the mystery mob boss, he’d taken credit for my brutal murder and faced the chance to get away with it thanks to a crooked lawyer and a blackmailed prison guard.

Thanks to Mason, I got to Marcelli first.

Unfortunately, I learned a new ability and wound up delving into Marcelli’s brain deep enough to tear it apart. It took weeks for him to come out of his coma and into an asylum where they didn’t know if he’d return to normal.

“Alastair?”

To keep her from worrying, I offered a crooked grin, wrapping my arm around her. Our fingers locked over her shoulder. “Sorry, babe. Don’t worry about that right now. Tonight is about me, my lady, and a few rounds of the Foxtrot.”

My reply appeared to work, and she buried her cheek into my chest, giggling.

I didn’t say much else about Marcelli or my plan to keep delving into my murder, which relieved me. Instead, we exchanged small talk about Charlie’s workday and some street gossip involving the investigations into Capone.

Apparently, Big Al’s days were numbered, and he knew it. Guess that’s what happens to a guy who thinks he’s untouchable. Justice always finds him.



We arrived at her favorite dance club to hear jazz pouring through the doors every time anyone walked in. I went with the valet service so Charlie and I could get to our fun faster.

I handed my keys to the valet, helped Charlie readjust her coat to cover her shoulders, and led her up the steps.

Passed the doors, bodies crowded close as the patrons drank, smoked, danced, and nattered away. Seeing sights like this made the former

attorney inside of me cringe. It meant despite Prohibition, there still were places where favors with politicians and paid off cops meant taboo acts like drinking continued.

Loud noises and thrums of heartbeats made me nervous after the change. Add the overwhelming scents of blood, sweat, and the subtle hints of sex and it became dizzying.

Charlie's smiling disposition and flirty attitude helped to drown the worries of what I'd become. I told her what I was on New Years' after a debacle regarding one of Downing's friends and a twisted bout of blackmail.

Lucky me, the instance also landed me a new enemy who vowed to get revenge on me. Piss off a debutante you flirted with to get information, what else could you expect when she went postal? Another tale you have to check out sometime.

According to Charlie, when I tried to figure out how to tell her, I looked like a child who got in trouble with the police and sat in front of his simmering parents waiting for what they planned to do with him for punishment.

Worry turned into wondering how I kept such an amazing woman, when questions of curiosity, and not scolding, came from her strawberry lips.

The sequins of Charlie's dress shimmered in the pale-yellow lights of the club. Music poured from the band, heavy on my favorite: the brass.

With each spin she laughed, settling into me and using the opportunity to rub her rump against my hips and groin. Half-lidded eyes met mine over her shoulder, as did the licking of her lips.

Fresh wafts of her favorite perfume and the aroma of her sensuality tickled my nose. At the end of a spin, my cheek met the smooth fair skin of her neck, my canines budding from their sheaths.

Incapable of taking her unintended teasing anymore, I purred into her ear. "What do you say we get out of here? We can get a quick dinner and head back to your place?"

She moaned, reaching to pet my face. "I think that sounds heavenly."

The world melted into the background, leaving us suspended in a cloud of ecstasy. These moments made the difference, banishing the loneliness plaguing my dreams.

"Are you going to stay tonight?" Charlie asked. "Please say you will."

Another tidbit about vampires the stories got right: having a mattress filled with our home earth helped promote a restful daytime sleep. After suffering my first few days without it, I can definitely say I prefer the comatose state I fall into compared to the nightmares.

“Did you set up my side of the bed the way I asked?”

“Mhm.”

“Then I can stay any night, even if it’s only to watch you sleep.” I spun her for the last time, dipping her and holding her for a few seconds. A smug smirk and half-lidded eyes burrowed into hers. “After some heated love-making.”

I had to be careful, or I could use my influence on her. As I said, in the case of Marcelli, it happens when my emotions get sent on overload.

Charlie blew her lips like a horse, eyes rolling in a “well, of course” manner.

The music ended, and I took her to treat her to a glass of wine before we left. I couldn’t drink it anymore thanks to my condition, but watching the glass kiss the rose red lipstick Charlie wore made a devious grin snake across my face.

On our way home, I stopped to get Charlie her favorite seafood from one of the higher end restaurants, fighting the urge to choke from the stench of garlic. It wasn’t like the books and movies said. Garlic didn’t hurt me or those like me. Rather, it caused a tickle in our throats — at least in mine. I was glad when we left the restaurant, and I could gulp an unneeded yet welcome breath of fresh air.

Our night ended in her bed where I caressed her soft, warm body, listening to her subtle noises of pleasure. My lips kissed her jaw, behind her ear, down her neck to a place where two faded marks lay hidden.

“How does it work?” Charlie breathed the words while I explored her with my hands, lips and tongue.

“Hm?”

“The way you make love, I mean?”

“Honestly, I have no idea.” I positioned myself how Charlie liked, rising to my knees so I could kiss the two faded marks. My teeth brushed her flesh, making her gasp and jump. I held her still.

I still didn’t know the details, nor did I care how vampires making love worked. DeLane’s sudden departure meant learning all the ins-and-outs on my own.

All I knew was my canines slid free from their prison and found Charlie’s tender flesh, cutting into her and filling my mouth with the sweet essence of her life.

My mind blurred, losing all sense of what noise came from whom as our bodies entwined beneath the smooth, cool sheets.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Multi-published author Blaise Ramsay is a creative entrepreneur, mother of two, wife and lover of all things coffee, book, bird and gardening. In 2017, she achieved her first National Novel Writing Month, winning with her debut novel Blessing of Luna, a paranormal romance set in the world of the Wolf-shifters. Its anticipated sequel titled Bane of Tenebris released in 2019. Both have been acquired by Black Rose Writing and re-released August 4, 2020. She has recently achieved a third NaNo win with the paranormal noir, BloodLaw. Its sequel, BloodMoon is due in December 2020.

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