



# Wisconsin Vamp

*Scott Burtness*

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*An alternate cover for this ASIN can be found here.*

Some vampires are destined for greatness. He's not one of them.

When truckstop diner cook and mediocre bowler Herb Knudsen becomes a vampire, his once simple life gets a bit more complicated.

Herb's not even sure how it happened. He wasn't bitten by a vampire, which means there's no one around to help him learn the ropes. With no one to guide him, Herb fumbles into his newfound abilities, courting disaster with every step.

Despite learning each new lesson the hard way, being a vampire isn't all bad. He's stronger, a little sexier, and a heck of a lot better at bowling. Even Lois, the girl of his dreams, is starting to notice him. But he can't drink beer, the bodies are piling up, and his best friend Dallas isn't just getting suspicious – he's getting jealous.

When Lois is caught in the middle of the two friends' escalating rivalry, keeping his dark secret becomes the least of Herb's concerns.

Booze, bowling, bake sales, bar fights, babes, blood and karaoke... Who would have thought that being undead would make life so exciting?

## Wisconsin Vamp Details

Date : Published January 2018 by Amazon Digital Services (first published January 14th 2014)

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Author : Scott Burtness

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## From Reader Review Wisconsin Vamp for online ebook

### A.J. Leavens says

Sookie Stackhouse look out - Herb Knudsen's in town!

Wisconsin Vamp was a great, funny read that had me hooked from the opening mosquito bite! Mr. Burtness has characters that are cheesy and stereotypical, but so lovable because the reader recognizes them in their circle of friends immediately.

Right off the bat (no pun intended), we meet Herb, a grill cook who would trip over a banana peel twice if it were possible. In small town Trappersville, Herb's heart is set on Lois - the girl next door - attractive and seemingly unattainable. But Lois has her eye on ladies man - and former jock - Dallas.

As Herb begins to change, he begins to notice crazy quirks, and it was a very fun read putting myself into Herb's shoes. A well written tale that is both faithful to the genre and tongue in cheek, Wisconsin Vamp will satisfy readers, and is right up there with Sookie Stackhouse on my list of enjoyable vampire reads. Well done, sir!

I would recommend this book to all ages. While there is some slightly adult language, including one F-bomb (much to the chagrin of the Trappersville folk - you just don't drop an F-bomb without warning), I was whammy'd enough by this tale to recommend it to my (almost) teen son. My only critique is one that I suffered when releasing my own novel - There are a couple of copyedit errors that threw me and jarred me out of an otherwise smooth story. With those fixed, this would have been a 5-Star read easily.

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### Nicole says

4.5 stars!!!

Full review up [My Book Filled Life](#)

Let me introduce you to Herb, a somewhat less-than-average cook at "Ronnie's Famous Truck-stop, Grill, Bait Shop and Gift Emporium" located in some small town in Wisconsin. Herb doesn't have it going on. At. All. He drives a Pinto and needs three different alarm clocks just to help him get up in the mornings. Through a weird twist of fate (and I mean weird), Herb becomes the newest citizen of the undead society. And oh what a journey it is! True to form, Herb doesn't experience the transformation of waking up 3 days later looking like a Calvin Klein underwear model. No, his transformation is more Tales from the Crypt than America's Next Top Model.

The ending comes as somewhat of a shock, but given the overall unique quality of this story, it does seem to follow the unconventional route of endings. I can't wait to read the next book in the series and recommend this book to anyone who is looking for a decidedly one-of-a-kind vampire hero.

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### Jeanie Grey says

Wisconsin Vamp is a humorous underdog story about what happens when your average Joe - or in this case,

Herb - becomes a vampire. While it's mostly lighthearted and tongue-in-cheek, it also has a dash of drama and romance to round it out.

I found a lot to like in this book. The first thing that caught my attention - on the first page, in fact - were some well-turned phrases. Second, although sometimes the characters were the epitome of cliché, by the end I empathized with and even felt I understood, to an extent, Herb, Stanley, Dallas and Lois. They became more 3D than their clichéd counterparts. Third, I thought the pacing was excellent, and the twists and turns were unpredictable yet believable.

But the most amazing thing to me was the similarity between what vampirism does for Herb and what it does for my own character, Lilly. No, this is not just a shameless and ill-timed plug of my own book. I'm serious here. One of the points I'm trying to make in the Lilly Frank series is that becoming a vampire frees Lilly from many of the physical and social constraints that keep her numbed to herself and to life. Similarly, when Herb becomes a vampire, he begins, in some ways, to finally, truly live. His senses are heightened. He notices details about people and places more. He begins to gain confidence and be less afraid, and he therefore takes more risks. And it's only after Herb's vampirism is well-established that we begin to get to know Lois more because until that point Herb could barely look at or talk to her. As a human he saw her only as a shiny object to admire but never touch, the angel on the pedestal, but as a vampire, because he has less of his crippling self-doubt to contend with, he begins to relate to her more as a person, to see that in addition to beautiful, usually cheerful and relatively intelligent, she is also fallible (and yet still worthy of his affection).

One aspect of the book that I feel torn about is the ending. While I give it kudos for catching me off-guard - something that doesn't happen to me very often - one of the reasons it caught me off-guard was because it seemed contrary to the metaphor of the book. Or at least what I thought was the metaphor.

**\*\*Spoiler alert: skip to next paragraph if you want to avoid spoilers.\*\***

Herb begins to truly live only to die and be damned to hell? He finally stands up to Dallas and is rewarded with a stake through his heart? He finds the beauty in life and continues to try very hard to be a good person - never killing anyone on purpose and in fact saving two lives - only to be sentenced to an eternity of torment? Not fair. Not fair at all. My only consolation is in hoping that the last book in this series involves all the monsters we will come to know and love meeting up in hell and forming some kind of army. Some sort of group retribution for the shitty hand dealt to them. Hmph.

**\*\*Spoiler alert over.\*\***

I also thought that some of the flashbacks maybe went on a bit long. For example, the part about last year's bowling tournament and this year's jerseys was probably my least-favorite part of the book, if only because I would've been satisfied with a lot less on that subject. That said, it's a hard thing to successfully walk the thin line between context and TMI, and Burtness does it well for most of the book.

The only last little thing that bugged me was that I was distracted by the copy editing errors. I'm so sorry to keep bringing this up in reviews, but it's one of the things I notice. I'm just made that way. **\*\*PSA: Dear indie authors, please have someone who is really good at it copy edit your book. It doesn't have to be a professional editor. It doesn't have to cost you money. Friends, family members, and teachers are all resources. There is just no reason on earth why you can't take that little step that will mean so much to so many of us. Thank you.\*\***

In summary, this was a book I enjoyed and recommend for lovers of comedy as well as those who want a fresh take on the vampire genre. I eagerly await the next *Monsters in the Midwest* book.

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## **Cher says**

### **Funny and thoughtful**

This quirky book brings to mind many a night (and many a character) from the tiny town in which I went to college. The hero is a generally charming, thoughtful Everyman whose story has more depth than one might expect. A quick, enjoyable read.

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## **Carol Dietz says**

### **Entertaining Short Read**

The short story is a glimpse into the lives and characters of a little town in Wisconsin. Characters are well described. Enjoyable read.

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## **Dean Paul Baker says**

This book bites...but in a good way!

If you like to take a light-hearted approach to your Vampire themed fiction, there can be no better journey than with Herb, Lois and Dallas, Trappersville's very own royalty. Burtness captures the perfect comedic angle on small town life, from Herb's three alarm clock routine, to his cluttered trailer, to his idiosyncratic Pinto. And this is where the book really shines. Everyday routines take on a hilarious identity with the writers eye for the surreal and make small town characters jump off the page. The plot travels along nicely and without wanting to spoil things, Herb undergoes a change. This brings the character in an (almost) perfect arc, as we see how these changes affect Herb and his friends and their relationship with the citizens of Trapperville. The characters that draw you in, will have you crying for more, so be sure to check out the 2nd instalment, Northwoods Wolfman, for more larger-than-life Dallas action. You won't be disappointed!

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## **Robyn says**

4.5 Stars.

### The Book

Or as I found myself thinking about it "So, you're a Vampire. Now what?" Herb isn't anyone special, used to living in the shadow of his best friend Dallas he is the lesser known of the close knit three-man friendship circle. Dallas is the typical stud of the town, swinging between Herbs bully and saviour. Even Stanley, a stuttering ball of useless advise, is better known than him, and that's only because of one random event that to this day no one truly understands but that everyone speculated about. And then he gets bitten by a skeeter (mosquito) who'd gate crashed on a vampires feeding frenzy. Suddenly he's stronger, faster, even better looking.

The story follows Herb as he learns to live as an entirely new, improved version of his former self. Soon however it becomes evident that while it's probably the coolest thing ever, there are certain challenges he

may never fully over come.

#### What I liked

1. Herb's internal dialogue. While reading I imagined that his thoughts would be the exact kind I'd have if I were ever to be bitten by a vampiric skeeter.
2. The realism of life as a vampire. I love that Herb didn't just glide into his new life, Burtness did an incredible job at creating a realistic character with a near constant stream of flaws which he works desperately to fix. This is not a glamorous vampire tale.
3. The End...? Firstly because I hope this means another book will be gracing my Kindle screen soon. Secondly because the actual ending of the story was so far from what I'd expected, it felt as though it took on an entirely different, darker, tone.

#### What I didn't like

1. Not so much a dislike, but more of a wish for more of the Master. My interest was piqued with him, I would have loved a bit more of his dry disdain for Herb being present in the book - BUT for the little time he's there, I loved it.
2. I stayed up all night reading it. So now I'm tired. I don't like that I didn't get much sleep.

#### Final thoughts

I love a book that I cannot put down. Or lock the screen on and forget about. To the best of my recollection I've never read a book of this kind, where a usually dark subject such as vampirism suddenly becomes something worth of a movie along the lines of Shaun of the Dead. It's a welcome genre shift in a market that I feel has gotten just a little saturated with seriousness and glitter.

This is a horromedy (horror/comedy). Burtness did a superb job in bringing the stereotypical horror genre characters forward while still keeping their personalities at a relatable level. Herb is the victim, the hero, the comedian, the a\*\*hole. I feel bad for him. A destiny he had no part in choosing, a life he never anticipated living, and an ending I'm not soon going to forget.

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## **Sian Claven says**

### Wisconsin Vamp

When the least likely person in the world becomes a vampire - Life in Trappersville is about to change forever. With new skills; new powers and a new thirst Herb - who makes really good french toast - is about to find out what it's like to go from no-one to someone in a short span of time. With no instructions; no mentor and no clue in general - Herb is about to go on one wild ride but will his attention hogging buddy enjoy being out of the spotlight? You'll have to read it and see.

I can't remember the last time I read such an honest funny story. I generally so fantasy but mines generally not comedy. As a vampire story lover I was skeptical when I opened this book. Comedy and vampires? How was this going to work? But dammit this story was amazing!!!

I can't remember the last time I read a vampire book that had me saying "that is exactly what I would do" on almost every page. It's brilliant how Scott has taken something drenched traditional expectation and revived it in a realistic modern and hilarious way. Between bowling and tanning beds; vampire movies and Pinto's that make weird sounds when they turn - this book awakened something in me I thought long dead: excitement!!!!

I enjoy reading, no, I love reading. I can read anything and everything with an open mind. But it takes an exceptional writer to absorb me into their story and make me taste the blood, hear the heartbeats and truly dread the discovery.

If you are looking for a story that can claim your attention, make you laugh while you chew your lip in anticipation and put an absolute 'whammy' on you as you get lost in the woods of Wisconsin then look no further. This is the book for you!

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### **Andrew says**

Finally, a book that thrives amongst the mammoth weight of modern vampirical prose, even as it gently pokes fun at it.

But that isn't what this book is all about. No, "Wisconsin Vamp" is more about the "Wisconsin"; Herb is an amiable loser living in a small town, happy to ride the coat tails of his bigger-fish friend, Dallas. Working at a truck stop and drinking down at the bar is pretty much Herb's life and he's pretty much neither happy nor unhappy.

But take away his reflection, create an aversion to garlic and make it impossible for him to go outside during the day and Herb is going to get restless. Especially when he suddenly becomes good at whatever Vampires are good at.

Which is everything.

So Herb's life is turned around – he becomes unbeatable at pool, and can only bowl perfect scores. He gets laid and makes more friends. He even makes another Vamp. And he kills someone. Oops.

'Wisconsin Vamp' was filled with rollicking fun and eccentric characters. By the end of the book I didn't want to become a Vampire. But I do want to visit Wisconsin. Real soon!

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### **Zoe's Human says**

Tired of all those highfalutin city-slicker vampires? Completely over those well-dressed, gorgeous, gifted and talented undead icons of perfection? Scott Burtness has turned every bloodsucker trope on its ear and created a nightwalker whose adventures reflect the heart and soul of the everyman.

There are passages of parody in this book that are straight fucking genius. Also, best use of a mosquito as a plot device ever.

There are some typos and editing errors in this book, but the story is solid, and I'm in it for the story.

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### **Donnie Bennett says**

**Really good**

I really enjoyed this book. I like that it had some comedy too. I wouldn't recommend that you read it.

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### **Conrad Zero says**

Scott Burtness gives a refreshing, Midwestern twist on the vampire mythos in his debut novel, *Wisconsin Vamp*. The protagonist, Herb Knudsen, lives in a small town in rural Wisconsin, drinking beer with his bowling buddies and working as a short-order cook at the local greasy spoon. When Herb is bitten by a vampire-mosquito, Herb doesn't become your average vampire.

Herb doesn't hang out at the local goth club casually drinking blood from a wine glass while listening to Switchblade Symphony. Quite the opposite. Herb wears a flannel shirt, drives a beat up Pinto and hangs out at the bowling alley and the local strip club, Nekked's. Herb's adventures discovering his new powers and weaknesses make for a fun adventure.

The writing is pro, and the pace is snappy. The Midwestern attitude of *Jennifer's Body* meets *The Lost Boys* on the bowling lanes of *The Big Lebowski* in this smartly written horror/comedy. If you enjoy this, then check out the sequels in Scott's 'Monsters in the Midwest' series.

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### **Michael Prelee says**

I really enjoyed *Wisconsin Vamp* by Scott Burtness. I'm not usually a horror fan but a horror comedy set in the Midwest? Yes, I can totally get down with that. What really tripped my trigger were the characters and the setting. I grew up with guys like Herb and Dallas; schlubby underachievers who just want to do their own thing and over the top egoists who have to be the center of attention. Looking around my small town in Ohio I can walk a mile to some woods where Herb may live and drive ten minutes to a truckstop where he may work. Looking out the window of my office I can see diesel pickups like Dallas drives. I even bowled last weekend. Burtness' characters are well thought out and you genuinely like them more and more as the story progresses.

The comedy / horror mixture is perfect with the story not relying too heavily on either. It's just a good tale that grabs the reader and holds their attention as it plays out. You'll have a lot of fun reading it. I'm looking forward to book 2 in the *Monsters in the Midwest* series.

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### **Lauren Stoolfire says**

I believe that this is the first vampire story where the cause is a mosquito bite.

Thanks again to Goodreads giveaways for my signed copy!

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### **Cliff says**

It would make a humorous movie with the right actors.

