

# Once Bitten

**Music by Richard Townhill**

**Lyrics by Joanna Marshall and Ross Keeping**

**Book by Richard Townhill**

**From an original concept by Joanna Marshall and Richard Townhill**

Zac is awkward, he's young and he's a loner. He has also been invited to *the* Halloween party at his childhood friend Bella's house. Will he finally pluck up the courage to declare his love for her? It'd be so much easier if she didn't spend all her time lusting after Mr Popular - Flash.

Unexpectedly, Zac is attacked and bitten by a vampire. Newly transformed into one of the undead himself, it seems Zac may be getting his teeth into Bella after all – just not quite how he had hoped or expected...

Via some stolen kisses, a bit of cross-dressing and a vampire-hunting soul singer, all eventually ends happily as our heroes realise friendship and self-belief are what really count!

## **Cast (Order of Appearance)**

<b>The Vampettes</b>	'A Girl Band'
<b>Zac</b>	'An enthusiastic mycologist and reluctant vampire—in love with Bella'
<b>Val &amp; Max</b>	'Vampire Council Workers'
<b>Bella</b>	'A hostess of a Halloween Party – in love with Flash'
<b>Syd</b>	'Bella's best friend- in love with nobody'
<b>Cindy</b>	'A bimbo'
<b>Sam</b>	'A wealthy boyfriend'
<b>Flash</b>	'A horny devil – in love with himself'
<b>Biff, Chav &amp; Grunt</b>	'Flash's mates'
<b>Buffy Van Helsing</b>	'A Vampire Hunter'
<b>Priest</b>	
<b>Chorus</b>	of Halloween party guests

The setting is in and around Bella's flat – furnished in the typical style of a single British girl in her 20s. Also a short prologue in a Transylvanian forest – naturally.

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## Songs

1. We don't Bite – The Vampettes
2. More than Before – Bella, Zac
3. Halloween Once More – Bella, Syd, Cindy, Flash and Gang, Chorus, Zac
4. Vampires Rock – Max, Val, Vampettes, Zac
5. Flash – Flash and Gang, Vampettes, Chorus
6. It Must be Lust – Bella, Syd, Zac, Max, Vampettes
7. My Man's Rich – Cindy
8. The Dressing Up Song – Flash, Vampettes
9. Time to be Bad – Max, Val, Zac, Chorus
10. Stop Right There – Syd, Flash
11. Silent Cry - Bella
12. Tonight is the Night – Zac, Bella

## Act 2

13. Once Bitten – Chorus
14. My Lips are on Fire – Bella
15. Monster – Syd, Chorus
16. Mind War – Zac, Flash
17. Save Me Buffy – Buffy, Priest, Chorus
18. Bella – Zac, Vampettes
19. Vampire's Rock reprise – Max, Val, Vampettes
20. Silent Cry reprise – Syd, Zac, Bella
21. Finale - Chorus
22. Halloween Once More reprise – Company
23. Silent Cry reprise – Company
24. Once Bitten reprise - Company

## Exit Music

## Once Bitten Band

Alto Sax (doubling Baritone Sax, Clarinet, Flute)  
Trumpet (doubling Flugelhorn)  
Electric Guitar (doubling Acoustic Guitar, Banjo)  
Electric Bass (doubling Acoustic Bass)  
Drums and Percussion  
Keyboards 1  
Keyboards 2

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# Once Bitten – a Musical

## Act 1

*The stage is set up for a live concert, 3 mike stands on the stage – if possible glittery curtains, hiding the trees, pop video lighting. As the first number is sung, the forest is gradually revealed to us. Mist rolls onto the stage.*

*The Vampettes enter – confident and sassy. They perform a slick, modern MTV style routine.*

### 1. Song - We Don't Bite

VAMPETTES (lines sung variously solo and together)

**Welcome to Transylvania  
We're the girls cashing in on vampire mania  
We're here to entertain ya  
We Don't Bite**

**We three sisters from Transylvania  
Hope our story will come to save ya  
Coz horror shows are coming true  
And it's time to find the real you**

**But remember nothing's as it seems  
When you've run into a blood stained scene  
Watch your neck and your back  
From a murderous methodical monster attack  
Be careful with who you lie  
So quit your lies...before you die  
Just keep your eyes on the prize  
We don't bite**

**We couldn't wait until the light  
Wolves howl as the clock strikes midnight  
Behind the tears there's screams and shouts  
Nobody hears  
We don't bite**

**But remember nothing's as it seems  
When you've run into a blood stained scene  
Watch your neck and your back  
From a murderous methodical monster attack  
Be careful with who you lie  
So quit your lies...before you die  
Just keep your eyes on the prize  
We don't bite**

**They pull off your fingers  
Your eyeballs are juicy  
They brand you with iron  
Escape is just useless  
Snap off your arms  
And twist off your head  
Drinking you dry  
Like a vintage red**

**And remember nothing's as it seems  
When you've run into a blood stained scene  
Watch your neck and your back  
From a murderous methodical monster attack  
Be careful with who you lie  
So quit your lies...before you die  
Just keep your eyes on the prize  
We don't bite**

**No ... no we don't bite  
We don't bite, we don't bite, we don't bite  
Till day turns night**

Prologue – Scene A

Transylvanian Forest – Night

*Onscreen caption* – Transylvania, Carpathian Forest – 200km south of Bucharest, 30 October, MIDNIGHT\_

**1.A - Spooky Music sting and sinister underscore**—as the Vampettes step aside to reveal Zac's body lying in the mist. They run off giggling.

*A poorly dressed man - anorak, trousers too short is lying on the ground. It is Zac, unmoving he is clearly dead.*

#### VOICEOVER

*(a female voice, southern US accent – she speaks with solemn authority)*

Through the millennia the legend of the vampire has struck fear into the hearts of humanity. Slavering monsters, creatures of the night, stalking unsuspecting victims in search of blood.

Our story tells of one such victim – Zachary, known as Zac - of Manchester, England, England.

*Onscreen – a series of photos (each accompanied by a sound effect ping)*

- 1. Photo of Zac smiling goofily, glasses squint, caption Zac*
- 2. Photo of Zac sitting at computer surrounded by Sci-fi action figures, comics and DVDs, caption Text Book Geek*
- 3. Photo of Zac looking intently at a mushroom, caption Amateur Mycologist. NB Mycologist = Mushroom collector*

*Two elegantly dressed figures (Max and Val) enter. With torches they search round the forest before their beams alight on Zac's body.*

Zac's life was to change irrevocably the night he foolishly ventured into the Carpathian Forests of Transylvania in search of the mythical Mycena Haematopus Toadstool. For this was the night before Halloween. And this is the story of a man once bitten...

#### **1.B -Music sting and underscore, mysterious music.**

*On the sting Max and Val turn Zac's body over and, in the torchlight, his bloodied bitten neck is revealed to us.*

Monsters vampires may be – but they are not uncivilised. Max...

*Onscreen – Council ID photocard with stern photo of Max (accompanied by a sound effect ping).*

...and Val...

*Onscreen – Council ID photocard with smiling photo of Val (accompanied by a sound effect ping).*

...have been assigned by the Vampire Council to help soften the blow and bolster against the shock of Zac discovering his fate. The vampires of the 21<sup>st</sup> century understand the need for all important soft skills when it comes to recruiting to their cause.

*Max and Val are seen helping Zac to his feet. We see them point out the wound on his neck to them and make him feel his pulse.*

ZAC

*(hysterical)* Nooooo! Oh Man! – I don't believe this! What the hell's going to happen to me? I'm bloody dead, a vampire!

VAL

Don't worry dearie. We're here to help. A bit of a beginners course for new vampires – get you on your feet so to speak.

ZAC

What?!

VAL

Well, it's not the Victorian Gothic Novel era any more dear. People aren't really up on all the biting and staking etiquette nowadays.

MAX

I'm Max, this is Val – vampire advisors – welcome to the family.

*He awkwardly, obviously disgusted at this part of the job, pats Zac on the back and kisses him on both cheeks.*

Anyway, not much time – we've got you for 24 hours, cutbacks, you know what its like. But it shouldn't take that long. Let's get you back to friends, we can get the first bite over with and we'll be on our way, careers intact.

ZAC

Woah – slow down, what do you mean first bite?

MAX

Erm – vampire? *(he mimes biting)* You know - True Blood? Twilight? Angel? ...No?

*Zac looks blank*

VAL

Max, perhaps you need to explain the rules...

VOICEOVER

As Zac struggled to take in his predicament, Max filled him in on the challenges a newly created vampire must face.

*As the voiceover continues we see Max theatrically read from a large dusty book.*

Key to the survival of a new vampire is the first bite. This must be achieved within the first 24 hours. Otherwise, the vampire faces eternal torment in demon hell.

*Onscreen – (accompanied by a sound effect ping).*

*Photo of Meat Loaf album cover Bat out of Hell, caption Demon Hell*

Also a requirement – the vampire must know his first victim

ZAC

*(Incredulous)* Why?

MAX

*(Reciting from the text )* ...and so it was decreed that the first spillage of blood shall be taken from one known to him, so that he shall witness and grow strong, from the terror of one familiar... There you go – it's to preserve the tradition of vampires as evil, not to be trifled with badasses.

VAL

Badasses? You've never used that word in your life!

MAX

Shh! I'm trying to, you know, speak to the boy in his own vernacular – get down with the kids...

ZAC

Yeah – I've never used the word badass in my life either. Well, I don't know anybody in Transylvania.

VAL

You don't know anyone? You came on holiday on your own? Isn't that a little weird? Max is that weird? You do have friends?

ZAC

Yes – of course I do! It's just that most of them are going to be at my best friend's Halloween Party tomorrow night. It's not easy getting people to come on a mycology field trip to Eastern Europe in October.

VAL

Okay, okay – no need to get touchy. Hold on, did you say Halloween party? Could that be more perfect? They'll practically be expecting it! And by midnight – by midnight on Halloween night – could it get more poetic?

MAX

Well, come on, we've got to get to the airport right away – if we don't, in twenty three and half hours Zac ends up in endless torment – and we don't get our performance bonus.



Prologue – Scene B

Bella's Flat - bedroom

## **2. Song – More than Before**

VOICEOVER

As Zac, Max and Val made the journey to Bucharest Airport, far away, on the island of England, a princess lay in her boudoir – unable to sleep. Her name – Bella.

BELLA

*Bella sings from her bed, clutching in her hand a photograph – which we will discover later, is of Flash.*

**Can't sleep  
Why can't I?  
So excited for tomorrow night  
I'm scared, so scared  
For a kiss from my Mr Right  
Is there a fairytale waiting for me**

**Feeling funny  
Its time to love somebody**

*Bella picks up her mobile phone and dials. We hear it ring until it is picked up by...*

SYD (off stage)

Bella. Are you okay?

BELLA

Hey Syd. Can't sleep!

SYD

*She enters Bella's bedroom – phone still clamped to her ear.*

Bella! Do you know how late it is?

BELLA

I know – but it's my big party in just a few hours – Halloween. Aren't you excited! And you know who's coming...

Prologue – Scene C

Bucharest Airport

*Onscreen – Caption – Bucharest Airport*

*Zac, Max and Val are at check-in, handing passports over. A Vampette is behind the desk checking their tickets. As the scene carries on they move to the cabin of the aircraft where another Vampette is performing the safety check and outside another is waving ping pong paddles as they direct the plane.*

VOICEOVER

As Zac waited to board the plane he began to think of his life back in England, his friends, and the terrible task that lay ahead. Our heroine, Bella...

*Onscreen – (accompanied by a sound effect ping).*

*Photo of Bella looking lovingly at someone not in frame, caption Bella*

...was the best friend of our hero, Zac. Unbeknown to Bella, Zac was also secretly in love with her.

*Onscreen – (accompanied by a sound effect ping).*

*The same photo zoomed out a little. We can now see Zac in the frame looking lovingly at Bella, caption Zac loves Bella*

Known to everyone – except the blind and stupid – Bella was also in love.

BELLA (unseen)

I know – but it's my big party in just a few hours – Halloween. Aren't you excited! And you know who's coming...

BELLA (unseen)/ ZAC

Flash!

*Onscreen – (accompanied by a sound effect ping).  
The same photo zoomed out a little more. Zac is looking at Bella. Bella is  
looking at Flash. Flash is looking smug, caption Bella loves Flash*

MAX

What was that boy?

ZAC

Just thinking about who I'm going to bite.

VAL

Oh well done Zac – we don't normally expect the murderous instincts  
to kick in so soon – you're going to do us proud!

ZAC

*(To himself)* If it has to be someone, make it him. Oh Bella, I can't  
believe I never told you! And now, what now? What am I?

**My bags are all packed  
I'm the real Zac  
I've changed and I have different wants  
We will fly high I understand why  
Now is the time to open brand new doors  
I want her now more than before**

*ZAC (on the plane) and BELLA (in her bedroom)*

**Now is the time to open brand new doors  
I want her/him now more than before  
I want her/him now more than before  
I want her/him now more than before**

ZAC

Well, time to be bold. *(He pulls out his phone and begins to text)*  
Hi Bella, guess what, can make it to your party after all. Hurrah! Oh,  
by the way, I love you...and I'm a vampire.

Prologue Scene D

Bella's flat - Bedroom

*We hear the beep of a text message coming through.*

*Onscreen caption in the style of an iPhone screen: Hi Bella, guess what,  
can make it your party after all. Hurrah! Successful trip –  
great mushrooms!*

BELLA

*(Shouting to Syd.)* Got a text from Zac. He's coming to the party.

SYD (off stage)

I thought he was abroad?

BELLA

Guess he got an early flight. Be nice having him there. At least he  
understands about me and Flash. *(Shouts pointedly)* Unlike some  
people!

SYD (off stage)

Yeah, yeah – whatevah.

*Onscreen – (accompanied by a sound effect ping).  
Photo of Syd looking hard, caption Syd doesn't love anybody*

Prologue Scene E

On the plane

*Zac sighs, looking at his phone.*

VAMPETTE 1

*(She is one of the cabin crew)*

Can you switch your phone off now sir? We're about to take off.

*During the final verse of the song - on screen, we see footage of a plane taking off, followed by an animated map of the plane's route from Transylvania to Manchester. (All crackly 70s style film stock)*

BELLA (in the bedroom)

**Time for sleep  
Am I dreaming?**

ZAC (on the plane)

**I'm so hungry I'm losing sight  
I'm so tired, so tired  
Bloody thoughts keeping clouding my mind**

BELLA/ ZAC

**I'm counting the hours until it starts  
Feeling funny  
Its time to bite/love somebody  
Now is the time to open brand new doors  
I want her/him now more than before  
I want her/him now more than before  
I want her/him now more than before**

### **3. Song – Halloween Once More**

Scene 1

#### Bella's Flat – Living Room

*Onscreen Caption* – 999 Bohemian Gardens, Manchester, England.  
31 October, Halloween, 2100 Hrs

*A typical 20 something's flat, living room – gaudily decorated for Halloween. Bella and Syd are dancing round the room putting finishing touches to their Halloween costumes and room decorations.*

*Bella is dressed in a pretty, virginal bride of Dracula type nightdress. Syd has perfected a leather clad witch look complete with pointy hat.*

BELLA and SYD

**Halloween is with us once again  
Wondering what this night will bring  
Expectations of what lies in store...  
Fills all our dreams.  
Halloween once more!**

BELLA

**Check the fridge and light the pumpkins please**

SYD

**Sure, I love halloween  
The band are here it's time to sing**

BELLA

**La la la la la la  
Wait for a kiss from Flash my prince**

SYD

**Now that I can miss**

SYD and BELLA

**It's halloween once more**

*(Dialogue under music)*

SYD

Well Bella, it doesn't feel like a year since your last Halloween party.  
What a night that was! It's gonna be hard to top it!

BELLA

True – but one thing's for sure – your costume is hot madam!

SYD

And as for you, miss bride of Dracula – if your neck's not bitten by the  
end of the night, I'll have to do it myself.

*(both laugh)*

BELLA

Sorry love, you know you're not my type!

SYD

Shame! Well Perhaps one of your geeky, but strangely attractive  
friends will catch my eye.

BELLA

Oh I very much doubt that, Miss Picky Pants. I mean, Biff and Grunt -  
not really your type...

SYD

Definitely not my type...

BELLA

Oh! There's Cindy! Hot? No?

SYD

What, that Bimbo? Well, you know exactly what I think of her...

*(sings)*

**She really is a tiring tart  
With her tits pushed up and her giggily laugh  
Distracting the guys with her cute pert bum  
She's sexy - and stupid – and really, absolutely no fun!**

BELLA

*(Looking panicky behind the sofa)*

...and she always arrives at parties commendably early!

*Bella and Syd pull back the sofa to reveal Cindy in her Bunny outfit snogging Sam wearing his Phantom of the Opera mask*

SYD

*(Gasps)* Ooops!

CINDY

*(But Cindy is oblivious)*

Hi Syd – Didn't know you were here – love the pointy hat!

SYD

And the bunny outfit Cindy – very Halloween.

CINDY

Where are my manners? This is my new boyfriend Sam – he's adorable!

SYD

Do we get to see his face?

CINDY

...er no. I've been doing a lot of thinking lately. Relationships are all about compromise. For instance, between looks and money. *(She pause's)*. Sam's very rich.

SYD

...hmm – that girl's got hidden depths.

CINDY

Sam, Champagne! Guys – Party! *(Excited shrieks all round)*

*(As Sam serves the champagne the girls sing)*



BELLA, SYD, CINDY

**Halloween is with us once again**

CINDY

**Hey! I love Halloween**

BELLA, SYD, CINDY

**Wondering what this night will bring  
Expectations of what lies in store...  
Fills all our dreams.  
Halloween once more!**

BELLA

Hey guys – you know which special, special person's coming – and can I just say – hands off girls. Especially you, bunny – Sam, watch her!

SYD

Oh – here we go..

BELLA/SYD

Flash!

**Everybody loves him, I can see why,  
Chin so chiselled and adorable eyes.  
My lips start to quiver when he is near.  
How can I tell him I love him – my dear?**

SYD

Oh Bella, you make me despair, he's a grade A knobend! I don't know why you waste your life mooning after him, look at the way he treats women... and he's not funny... although he thinks he is..

BELLA

*(interrupting Syd – she runs to open the door)*

He's here, he's here!

*(Flash enters, dapper in his devil outfit accompanied by his gang of mates, Chav, Biff and Grunt)*

BELLA

*(Breathless)* Hi Flash. Thanks for coming. Love your costume

FLASH

*(Disinterested)* Yeah yeah, you too babe. Now be a doll and point me towards the booze and the totty!

BELLA

He called me babe!

SYD

Yuk!

FLASH and GANG

**Hey, hey we're here and the party can start.  
Guys, girls and drink make a good mix  
Hey, how you doin!  
The girls are better lookin' at Halloween...  
We can get our fix!**

*(More guests arrive)*

COMPANY

**Party Time is with us once again  
Wondering what this night will bring  
Expectations of what lies in store...  
Fills all our dreams.**

FLASH and GANG

**Have us some tail!**

BELLA

**Meet a nice boy – called Flash!**

SYD

**Meet a nice girl**

CINDY

**Got a nice boy**

SAM

**I'm gonna get real trashed**

ALL

**Dreams come true – yeah right!  
Halloween once more!**

*(Mood of the music changes – slower, mysterious?)*

SYD

No sign of Zac yet? What a strange boy! He's not going to bring you more mushrooms.

BELLA

Oh probably Syd – it's a hobby! Oh, that reminds me. *(She picks up a watering can and waters a pot on the windowsill containing mushrooms)* Better try and keep the last lot he brought round alive... I guess he's coming – perhaps he missed his flight. I mean – who goes on holiday to Transylvania, on your own, in October. Well hopefully it inspired him to come up with a better costume than last year...

*Onscreen – (accompanied by a sound effect ping).  
Photo of, presumably, Zac wearing a sheet – his glasses worn over the top.*

Scene 1A – Street outside Bella's flat.

*(Zac is outside – now dapper and sophisticated wearing his classic Hammer Horror Dracula outfit – Max and Val are with him. The Vampettes – now wearing Halloween accessories – eg devil horns, are helping put his outfit in order- slicking back his hair etc)*

MAX

What a day that was. You really need better curtains in your house Zac  
- who'd have thought the October sun was so treacherous.

ZAC

Well, factor 15's been fine up to now. This being dead lark is not easy.

VAL

You're going to be just fine, dear. That fancy dress shop delivery really  
came up trumps for you. Oh, doesn't he look the part Max? So proud!  
Now you get in there and show them what your made of.

ZAC

Show em what I'm made of. What indeed...

ZAC

**Bella, Bella so pretty and nice,  
But I must remember I am here to bite.  
Bella, Bella, tonight is the night  
The air is alight, I feel strangely alive!**

**Tonight is the night, a fire of suspense  
The air is alight and spirits are tense.  
Sap rises higher, what sin lies in store?  
Delight and desire await at the door.**

*(He rings the bell, the party is thrilled to see him).*

COMPANY

**Tonight is the night, a fire of suspense  
The air is alight and spirits are tense.  
Sap rises higher, what sin lies in store?  
Delight and desire await at the door.**

**Party Time, with us once again  
Wondering what this night will bring  
Expectations  
Halloween**

**Tonight is the night  
As morning will tell.  
Before the first light  
We'll party like hell  
All hallows eve  
Abandon your bed.**

**Party Time, with us once again  
Wondering what this night will bring  
Expectations**

No-one can leave  
Lets dance with the dead!

Halloween

Tonight is the night and  
The air has ignited  
Our senses alight  
And we're all so excited. (4 times)  
Tonight, tonight is the night!

ZAC

**Bella so beautiful I'm here to be dutiful. I'm ready I'm to bite (ad lib repeat)**

BELLA

**Tonight is the night, I kiss Mr Right (ad lib repeat)**

COMPANY

Tonight is the night and  
The air has ignited  
Our senses alight  
And we're all so excited. (7 times)

Tonight is the night and  
The air has ignited  
Our senses alight  
Tonight, tonight is the night!

Scene 2

INT – Bella's flat – Living Room and Kitchen

*The party is in full swing. Zac is at the table piling a plate high with party nibbles. Max and Val enter.*

MAX

Hungry are you, boy?

VAL

Won't do any good, I'm afraid. Just blood from now on.

ZAC

Whoa – no! You guys can't be here – you're not invited!