

## **Boaby the Vampire Slagger**

**by Gregor Steele**

Boaby the Vampire Slagger had ane bad habit. As ye maun hae guessed, this wis slaggin vampires an that wis whit he wis daein noo. Hidin ahint a rock twice his hicht on the shore o the loch he would keek out an bawl towards Vampire Island, aa the time shakin his nieve.

“Haw! Ye glaikit, pinty-teeth-gubbed eejits! Cannae come an get me in the daylight, ye peely-wally gomerils! Ye batty galoots!”

Boaby taen a hanfu o grush fae the grun an flung it at the island. Nane o the stanes got onywhere near it but Boaby felt guid nane the less. Stupit vampires! Let them daur meddle wi Boaby the Vampire Slagger! He struttit alang the lochside makin faces. Ance a muckle, black shape appear in the sky abuin the island, an for a moment Boaby wis feart. But it wis only a crow. Onyways, Boaby aye hud his anti-vampire toolkit (millennium edeetion) wi him. He hud pit it thegither himsel. In it wis:

**A big dod o meat (a bit mingin for it hud been there ower a month)**

**A CD o Hielan folk singin**

**The Oor Wullie Annual (nineteen ninety-twa)**

Foolish wid be the vampire that tried onythin when Boaby wis cairtin this gear aboot! Or so Boaby thocht.

“Peely-wally! Peely-wally! Glaikit, mingin bats!” sang Boaby. He walked awa frae the lochside, headin hame. The slaggin had cheered him up. He had been feelin mair than a wee bit scunnert the day, for it wis the last day o the schule holidays. Even the thocht o a brand new state-o-the-airt schule wisnae enough for him tae thole goin back.

There was the sound o a caur horn ahent him. Boaby turnt roon. Drawin in tae the side o the road wis his faither's best pal, wham Boaby cried "Uncle Nossie", at the wheel o his magic wee sports moatur wi its foldy-doon roof. Fur a meenit, Boaby felt guilty about his "peely-wally" song, for Uncle Nossie wis awfy peely-wally himsel. But Uncle Nossie wis a Prince o Cool, no a Prince o Darkness. In his wee roon shades an baseba cap, he lookit the business.

"Ye wantin a lift hame, son?" spiered Uncle Nossie.

"That wid be rare!" said Boaby, grinnin frae lug tae lug.

Uncle Nossie burnit rubber as he pullt away, wi the caur stereo blastin oot heavy metal.

"That's braw music!" said Boaby. "Wha is it?"

"Meatloaf, singin Bat Oot o Hell," replied Nossie.

"D'ye like Ozzy Osbourne tae, Uncle Nossie?" spiered Boaby.

"Errrr.... no really."

"How no?"

"Weel, ma brither wis at ane o his concerts an efter the show he went up tae Ozzy tae ask fur an autograph. He wis only askin fur his programme tae be signt, but Ozzy very near bit the heid aff him.... Look, ye're hame noo. I want a wee word wi yir faither."

"Thanks for the hurl, Uncle Nossie!"

"Nae bother, wee man!"

In the hoose, Boaby's faither made a pot o tea for them aa. Uncle Nossie taen a drink then said, "Bad news about the new schule!"

Boaby's lugs pricked up. "Whit's the maitter?" said his faither.

“It’ll no be feenished fur anither twa weeks. They’ve fun an auld mine workin that’ll hae tae be fillt in.”

“Oh braw, braw, braw!” sang Boaby. “Nae schule for twa weeks! Nae schule for twa weeks!”

“No sae fast, wee man!” said Uncle Nossie, lauchin. “Anither schule hus spare places. Ye’ll gang there until yir ane schule is ready.”

Boaby suddenly felt seek. He kent o ainly ane ither schule in the area. “An... an whaur micht this ither schule be?” he spiered in a gey shoogly voice.

“Vampire Island!” said his Uncle Nossie.

“Bit... bit... bit...”

“Whit are ye sayin ‘bit, bit, bit’ fur?” spiered his faither. “Will it no jist be rare goin tae schule oan a boat?”

“Bit... bit... bit!”

“BOABY!”

“Bit, faither! Vampires! Ah’ll be kullt or murdert or waur!”

“Whitever gied ye that idea?” askit Uncle Nossie, his mooth hingin open in astonishment. It wis the first time Boaby hud seen Uncle Nossie’s mooth hingin open an he couldnae help noticin that some o his teeth wir awfy pinty.

“Weel, Dracula, for ane,” Boaby replied. He couldnae tak his een aff these pinty teeth.

“Noo wait a meenit!” said Uncle Nossie. “That’s ane bad vampire. Ah could name a when o bad humans!” An he did, stertin wi the Duke o Cumberland. Finally, Uncle Nossie said saftly, “Boaby, Ah believe it hus jist dawnt on ye that Ah masel am a vampire. Maist vampires – aa the anes on the island fur shair – are like me, no Dracula.

Ye'll be fine." Wi that, Uncle Nossie turnt tae Boaby's faither. "That's me awa," he said. "Like maist vampires Ah work nights." An wi a wee twinkle in his een, he lookit at Boaby an addit, "Whit they cry 'the graveyerd shift'!"

Boaby wis no happy. It wis aa very weel his uncle sayin that vampires wir nice fowk. Whit Uncle Nossie didnae ken wis that Boaby hud been slaggin vampires fur donkey's ages an wis shair the some o the big vampire laddies kent his coupon. He went tae his room an booted up his computer. He kent that vampire schules hud a websicht – [www.fiendsreunitit.co.sco](http://www.fiendsreunitit.co.sco). Boaby loggt oan tae it an read page efter page o schule memories. There wis plenty o stuff about glaikit dominies an laddies gettin caught hingin upside doon ahint the bike sheds, smokin, but there wis naethin whitsoever about murderin bairns an drinkin bluid. Eventually, Boaby wis cyberpeerie – his heid wis spinnin wi ower-use o the internet. No really feelin better, he went tae his pit.

Wi a heavy hert in his breist an his anti-vampire toolkit (millennium edeetion) in his bag, Boaby stept aff the boat. Aa the bairns he hud thocht wir his freens wir giein him the boadyswerve. Efter aa, wha wid want tae be seen in the company o Boaby the Vampire Slagger, the day o aa days? There wis a lang, windin path fae the pier tae the schule. It wis lined wi spooky-lookin trees. Boaby's wame taen a tumble. There, shadit fae the sunlight under a gnarlt pine, wir fower big vampire laddies. Boaby held his bag up at the side o his heid, hopin they widnae notice him. It wis nae use.

"Weel, weel, weel," said the biggest vampire laddie. "If it's no the bold Boaby, Slagger o Vampires!" He bared his teeth.

Boaby drapped his bag, opent it up an pullt oot the mingin bit o beef fae his toolkit.

“Keep awa!” Booby bawled. “Ah've got a steak here!”

The vampire laddies taen a few steps furrin. “Ah think ye'll fun that it's widden stakes wur no ower fond o,” ane o them said, an they aa laucht.

“Aye, weel, ye'll no like this Gaelic!” said Booby, wavin the CD o Hielan music.

“Wrang again, wee man. It's garlic we dinnae gang fur.” The vampires wir awfy close noo.

Booby whippit oot the Oor Wullie annual (nineteen ninety-twa) and began tae read in his shoogly voice. “Oan his bucket he sits an smiles, but the lauch's oan him fur he'll get...”

“Whit oan earth are ye daein, wee man?” spiered the biggest vampire laddie.

“Ah'm... Ah'm readin fae a guid buik,” said Booby. “Is it no makin ye turn tae dust?”

The vampires fell aboot lauchin. “*The Guid Buik*, no jist oany guid buik! That's whit vampires ur supposed tae be feart frae,” ane o them finally managed tae say. “The Bible, ken? Oh, dearie me! Ah huvnae laucht sae sair fur twa hunnert years!”

At last, Booby did somethin richt. He laucht tae. “Whit an eejit Ah've been. Mingin beef! Hielan music! Oor Wullie! Oh mighty!”

“C'mon, wee man,” said the big vampire laddie. “Ye're sair in need o an education aboot vampires!” An aff they went, aa lauchin thegither.