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Opening extract from
Night of the Werewolf

Written by
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Barrington Stoke Ltd

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Night of the Werewolf

by

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Luc Pascal's Story

France – 1767

We're scared.

My children are crying but no one must hear them. I can't let them make a sound. Not a whisper.

How can I tell a two-year-old someone wants to kill him? How can I tell a baby that no one must hear him?

We're hiding here in the darkness. Hiding under straw in a barn. We're praying the mob will pass by. Praying they won't find us. They have sticks and rocks and dogs ... and fire.

If they find us, we won't stand a chance.

Many years ago in this part of France, hundreds of men, women and children were hunted down and killed. Angry mobs – just like the one that's after us – got them and killed them. They burned them at the stake. The mob said they were werewolves.

All that was in the past. Things should be different now. I thought we'd be safe, hidden away in the forest out of harm's way. We were until the Beast came. Now the world has gone mad again and they all want blood. Ours.

There's almost no light. Only the moon. My fingers are trembling. It's hard to write.

But I must tell my story so someone knows
the truth – the horror of our times. The
horror of being a werewolf.

I need to tell the truth as I know it.

Chapter 1

Hidden Fear

For hundreds of years people have been scared of wolves.

Howls in the dead of night sent a chill through any forest. Wolf tracks in the snow terrified even the bravest hunter. Travellers had to watch out for hungry wolf packs waiting for them in the moonlight.

People told terrible stories as they sat around their camp fires. The wolves were

never far away, prowling the icy hills. Danger was out there. Waiting. For hundreds of years wolves have been in our horror stories.

There were other tales too. Tales about wolves that ate human flesh. Such beasts, people said, looked like humans and had strange powers. What if a wolf could grow to twice its size and walk on two legs? Many people believed that wolf-men roamed the forests. Anyone they bit would become a werewolf, too.

So everyone was terrified of werewolves. People believed anyone might be one. If you were thought to be a werewolf, the mob would come for you. They took you away and burnt you alive.

For over a hundred years families were killed because of other people's fear and crazy beliefs. There were thousands and

thousands of helpless victims. But at last the panic died down.

Then, in the 1760s, a new wolf terror swept through France. A large beast began killing children. Many people thought an evil werewolf was on the prowl. But it wasn't just the Beast that scared everyone. Mad panic began again.

The French called the animal La Bête (the Beast). For almost three years, everyone in the hills in the middle of France lived in fear. No one knew when the wolf-beast would strike next. And when it did, terror spread like a forest fire.

When the Beast killed, mobs went out to hunt for werewolves in the forest. They had flame-torches and knives and they were ready to kill anyone they thought might be a werewolf.

No one was safe. No one at all.

