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11-2018

## Half Man Half Creature

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### Recommended Citation

Nielson, Breanna, "Half Man Half Creature" (2018). *USU Student Folklore Fieldwork*. Paper 552.  
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Vance Lovell  
Delta, Utah  
November 2018

**“Half Man Half Creature”**  
**Personal Narrative**

**Informant:**

Vance is my dad. He is fifty-eight years old and lives in Delta, Utah. He grew up and has lived there for the majority of his life. He is the father of five children and has six grandchildren. He is kind and fun. He loves to play sports, be outdoors, and loves adventure. Vance loves to tease people, especially his wife, Marsha. Vance loves cars. He was raised fixing cars, because his father owned his own mechanical shop. Vance is an Electrical Supervisor at the Intermountain Power Service Corporation in Utah.

**Context:**

We were all eating lunch in my parents’ dining room on a Sunday afternoon after church. The dining room is small, but just big enough to fit the square tall wooden table. The environment was very relaxed and we enjoyed each other’s company and conversation. While we ate we talked and I mentioned that Trevor and I live by a graveyard, and it is a little eerie at night. Vance said that graveyards weren’t scary to him, because he had had a funny experience when he was 12 years old in a graveyard that made him not fear graveyards. After mentioning this it reminded him of a graveyard experience he had while he was in high school. Since Trevor is a new addition to our family Vance shared with him his high school graveyard story. Since this story was told spontaneously I wasn’t able to record the very beginning of the story in time, so I will summarize the background information. Vance’s friend, Thane, wanted to scare a group of girls in the graveyard, so he asked Vance if he would wear a creepy mask and go hide in the Delta City Cemetery until he showed up with the girls. Then he wanted Vance to scare them. Vance agreed to do it so he went to the Cemetery and waited. After waiting a few minutes a car came, but it wasn’t Thane and the girls. It was Trevor’s dad, Ken, and his friend Clark. They saw Vance in the mask and stopped to stare at him through the car window. [This is where I started recording Vance tell the story. The text below is the recording.]

**Text:**

[Turning toward Trevor.] Vance: “Your dad and Clark were there. Your dad is really level headed. Clark was a little high strung [We all laugh]. You know, I never really cared must for Clark. He kept saying—well your dad was right there on the same side where I was. And your dad was sitting there trying to figure out who I am. You know how your dad is. Very analytical.” [We all laugh.]

Breanna: "I can see the face."

V: "And he was trying to figure out who I am. And Clark is sitting, 'Roll down the window. I want to punch him.' I thought, 'Roll down that window man.' [Vance snickers] I would have loved to.... [He moves his hands in a punch motion] bamm!!! So Ken is sitting there going, 'Who is that?' And Clark was kind of freaking out."

Marsha: "Did you ever tell them who you were?"

V: "Well ya they were the only ones that figured it out. [turning to Trevor] It is because of your dad sat there and he says 'Well I know it's not an old man. I don't know who you are but I can see your Delta Football shirt on'. [We all laughter] Cause I had that old coat on. [Vance snickers] Finally I pulled off the mask and I said, you guys got to get out of here because I gotta..."

[Trevor finishes his sentence while grinning]

Trevor: "...scare the real people I'm trying scare. [We laugh]

V: "They said all right. So they took off, [turning to Trevor] but your dad just sat there. [We all laugh] Everyone else would get scared and race away. I almost got hit three or four times that night". [We laugh] [Marsha voices what Vance might have been thinking.]

M: "Thayne has got to pay me better."

V: "It was actually really kind of fun. But Thayne never did make it." [We laugh]

B: "He didn't?!?!?"

V: [Vance shakes his head and continues with a smile] "Those girls would NOT go to that cemetery. After about the fourth or fifth car and you know [Vance smirks and laughs to himself] The one truck was chasing me out through the brush. [Loud laughter] I thought, "This is getting to be a little much." By the time I left, there were four or five cars that were driving around that little cemetery up there [Laughter] looking for me. But they have these evergreens. They are

cedars that grow quite vertical. And they had gotten quite big. They have taken them out since then. They aren't even there. But they were cool because I could just step into the branches of those and spread my feet apart and you disappeared. You were gone. And nobody could find you 'cause you were right in those branches. It was between two trees but the branches all intertwined. And so you just stepped back into those trees and put your feet out by the trunks so you couldn't see the feet. You were gone. You could just step into those trees and disappear. So you know... So you would run "through" the tree, but you didn't go through it. You just stopped in the middle. And they would go looking for you all over and everything. There were some headstones that were big enough that you could hid behind them and everything. There was that little building at the top. But there were just too many cars in there. So, I crossed in front of one truck. Back then carburation you know, you heard the four barrels kick in and then rrrrrrr [with hand motions of driving]. [We all laugh] I would just hop out of the way and they would go zipping by. And they would slam on the brakes, And I would WHACK!!! the window. [Vance pretends to hit the car window with his hand.] [Loud laughter]. There were like five or six girls in that truck. Back in those days they didn't have extended cabs back them. So this is just a little cab. [He shows how big with his hands.] [Vance smiles, shakes his head, and laughs a little] And half of the seat was empty..." [Roaring laughter]

T: "Seriously!?!?!?"

V: [Vance smiles] "Ya!!! They were all piled on the other side. So that was kind of fun, but you know—But anyhow so finally I had my convertible up above, and I just thought, 'This is crazy.' So, I snuck out of there. Went out the top and I threw the mask and the coat in the back of the car. I hopped into the car and I kind of eased down out of there, and just as the headlight were coming around, I punched it. It was all gravel back them. There was no pavement there. So I

punch that and slide the car sideways and I had tons of dust. So, they couldn't see my car either. You know. Because it was pos-a-trac rear-end and a big motor."

M: "That would have given it away."

V: "Oh ya!!! [Laughter] Seeing my car, they would have known. [More laughter] So I zipped out of there. There were all kinds of rumors going around there, [Vance belly laughs] but that whole thing started just because Thayne had a girl that he wanted to scare....and they never made it.

[Vance smiles and looks around]

B: "Didn't you end up scaring a girl that was your girlfriend at the time or was that a different time?"

V: "Ya. She was in the truck with all those girls. They were the ones that were trying to run me over me." [Laughter] [We break from the subject for about a minute and then return.]

T: "Did they (referring to the girls in the truck) ever figure out it was you, then?"

V: "Uh... Some of them did. Most no. But they had invented this story about some half man half creature that ran around all the time, [Laughter] and so this is why Thayne wanted to do this, [laughter] but he never made it."

### **Texture:**

Vance loves to tell his past experiences. He gets very into the story and waves his hands around. Most of the time his hand waving doesn't have a purpose, but he will use them sometimes to show some of the actions he did in his story. He spoke at a normal volume. He speaks in a very Methodical way. He's very descriptive. He paid a lot of attention to details. He would pause to give detail before returning to the story. He would also clarify things based off of our reactions. Vance loves to laugh as he tells stories. He sometimes would be laughing while he told the story. When he laughed his eyes got all squinty and it would take him a moment to continue his story. While Vance talked he never touched his food, because he was so into telling his experience.

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Utah State University  
Introduction to Folklore  
Dr. Lynne S. McNeill  
Fall 2018