

# STREET LEGENDS: HOME EDITION

## There are no bad ideas

*There are just ideas that need extra love*



When developing *Shadowrun*, we come across all sorts of ideas. Good ideas. Crazy ideas. Ideas guaranteed to make us require yet more expensive psychotherapy bills. Yet we don't believe there are bad ideas – only

ideas that need the right outlet. *Street Legends: Home Edition* is our way of providing a place for those ideas that, in normal circumstances, leave us shaking our heads in confusion and/or despair.

### FEATURING:

#### King:



A little less conversation, a little more action. *Page 2*

#### The McCorsican Triplets:



A dwarf, an elf, and a troll walk into a bar. And beat the living snot out of you. *Page 4*

#### Sakura Kunoichi:



Forget about the ninja elf stripper part – what the hell is going on with Plan 9? *Page 9*

#### Skippy Goodheart:



Isn't cynicism and cold-hearted brutality just so 2050-2074? *Page 12*

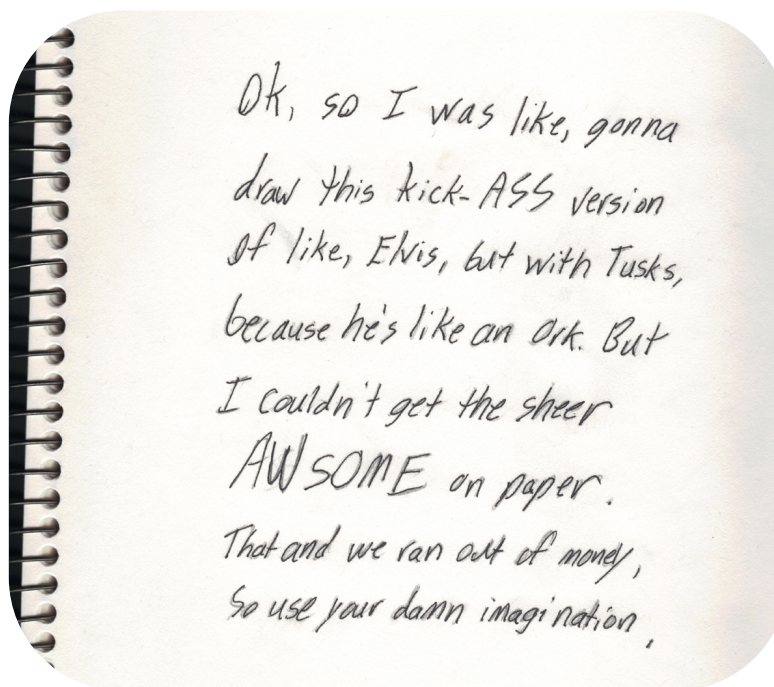
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Art: Kat Hardy, Patrick Sullivan, R.J. Thomas, Thomas Willoughby

*Because doing things the right way can be far too constraining.*

## Home Edition brings the DIY aesthetic to *Shadowrun*

Of course, when you run with some of the revolutionary ideas such as the ones contained in this text, not everyone is going to want to be a part of that process. Sometimes the people who don't want anything to do with it are folks like art directors and layout guys. But we had a bold vision for this product, and we decided, "Who needs them?" So the

designers of this product found volunteers for the artwork contained herein, or in extreme cases did it themselves. And the layout was done with a Microsoft Word template, and I think we will all agree that it looks as awesome as any product ever. But enough about what this is. Let's dive into the amazing concepts of *Street Legends: Home Edition*



## KING: Breaking hearts, collecting paychecks, taking some things way too personally

Posted by: **Slamm-0!**

Let's face it; there are some people who can't help but stand out no matter what they do. Call it charisma, call it presence, call it style, call it whatever you want. In King's case, I don't know WHAT to call it. But whatever name you give it, King is the kind of person everyone remembers. Whether they want to or not.

What stands out about King isn't just that he's one of the biggest and toughest fucking orks on the planet (just shy of a troll in size and strength), or the fact that he can take off an opponent's left testicle at a hundred yards with his Super Warhawk (I've seen him do it, and he was pissed off afterward because he said he was aiming for the right one). Maybe it's the fact that he thinks he's the reincarnation of an ancient singer from the twentieth century — none other than Elvis himself. No, I'm not kidding — this guy is certifiably nuts. I think the only reason he's still breathing is because he's one of the better street sams out there.

Out of curiosity, I decided to look into King during a particularly boring Seadogs game on the 'trid. They were already up seven to three in the bottom of the ninth with a runner on first and second with only one out and their best hitter, Sven "Mjionir" Ghjehoepshson, walking to the plate. I wasn't worried because good old' Sven was already batting .375 with 60 HRs and it was only mid-season. He was also slotting

Jose Conseco, and I'm talking about prime-era Canseco, before all that stupid controversy about steroids, which I think was a total witch-hunt back then. And, okay, yeah, to be honest, it was most likely before people were *talking* about steroids, not before Canseco was *using*, but that's neither here nor there, right?

Anyway, Sven didn't really NEED Canseco but the damn Seadog management thought it would be a good idea to...

**/new poll initiated by sysop: All those in favor of me deleting the next 3.6 mp of baseball ranting?/**

**/Poll results: 100% for, 1% against./**

**/3.6 mp deleted by sysop/**

> We now return you to the piece, with the hope that Slamm-0! intends to get to some actual material at some point.

> FastJack

...and that's why he walks to a limp! Anyway, like I said, I was bored and started to think about this run I did last season. So, I looked up what I could about King, and found absolutely zip. Seriously — nada. Not a damn thing. He has a decent rep, and there was a little bit of anecdotal information going back to about '68, but before that it was a black hole. A lot of people know *of* him, but no one seems to know much *about* him.

**Continued...**

**(Continued)**

The first time I saw King was when he was brought on as a pinch hitter when a team's normal sammie had gotten pinched for assault by KE. Total bad luck, BTW. So, they needed a replacement, and they asked King to fill in. O-M-fucking-G. We met with the Johnson at Cuppa' Joe's outside of Tacoma. At exactly five minutes before the meet, in walks this ork with jet-black hair that added several centimeters to his already two-plus meter frame. He was wearing a white synthleather armor jacket with sequins, white synthleather pants, and large-frame mirrorshades (also sequined), and he packed a huge-ass Ruger on his hip. He asked the dwarf behind the counter for a fried peanut-butter and banana sandwich (tried one—not bad, actually) and when he got it, he told counter-guy "Thank ya. Thank ya vurry much." He didn't so much eat the sandwich, as inhale it. Hey, nothing wrong with that—I take down baskets of chili-cheese fries just as quickly.

> King's fanatical about his peanut butter and banana sandwiches, and it's best to stay out of his way when he wants one. I've seen him beat people into a pulp when they do so. He even has "FPBB 4EVR" tattooed on his fingers between the first and second knuckles.

> Bull

Wasn't much to tell other than that to tell about the meet, or the run for that matter. We got in, got the paydata, and got out. We ran into a bit of trouble on the way out when a sec-goon walked out of the john at the wrong time. He tried to hit me with a stun-baton, but King was suddenly there. I—well, I can't describe his fighting style. I don't even know if it is one. He somehow blocked the guard's punches and kids with some kind of hip-gyrating, arm flailing motion. And I'm not a martial arts expert, but I'm pretty sure that's not exactly a style, it was more like a ... combat seizure. King ended the fight with a swift kick to the guard's groin and a cry of "WHO-HA!"

I didn't see King again for a few months

until some damn yaks shot up my favorite sports bar, so I had to slum it at some dive near downtown to watch the Seadogs and Tigers game in the playoffs. The bar was ok, the nachos were at least edible, but I had the bad luck to be there on karaoke night. So I'm trying to watch the game and can't because asshole after asshole keeps butchering rock, country, and even bluegrass "classics." I was about to hack into the DJ's system and re-write the music file protocols to play nothing but "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" when I stopped dead in my tracks. Just as I was about to launch my Louisville Slugger attack program, I looked across the bar to see none other than King taking the stage. Knowing what kind of shot he is, I thought it best to back off, because if he was as fanatical about singing as he was about his sandwiches, I wanted to keep my boys intact. Now, I don't know what the hell happened after that because I actually watched him perform Elvis' "Hound Dog," "A Little Less Conversation," and "Jailhouse Rock." And I was totally blown away. I even forgot about the game for a while and missed the Tigers upset the Dogs in the bottom of the ninth with a grand slam.

> Mark the calendar, someone got Slamm-0! to forget about baseball.  
> Hard Exit

So that's pretty much the story. I wish I had more, but I haven't run into King since the playoffs. I tried to buy him a few drinks afterward, but after his set, he just left the building. Crazy. Still, if you need someone to back you up on a run, you could do worse than King.

> Anyone know if he has any ties to that Church of Elvis, which, I remind everyone, is a Thing That Exists?

> Snopes

> Not officially, but he has been seen with one of their higher-ups, a slag called Hound Dog. Rumor has he's done some odd jobs for them and has attended some of their revivals. He did retrieve one of their "ancient artifacts" last year, a velvet painting depicting "the King" when he performed in Vegas. And he did it for free.

> Bull

**KING**

*Male ork*

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>
6	5	5	6
<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>W</b>
6	4	4	6
<b>Edg</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>IP</b>
6	5.8	9	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):**

11/11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/10

**Active Skills:** Artisan (singer) 6, Athletics skill group 3, Blades 3, Computer 6, Clubs 4, Data Search 6, Disguise 1, Dodge 4, Electronics skill group 4, First Aid 3, Infiltration 6, Influence skill group 5, Intimidation 4, Palming 3, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols (Ruger Warhawk) 6 (+2), Shadowing 5, Unarmed Combat (Testicle Kicking) 6 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Elvis Presley 108, Sandwiches (Fried Peanut Butter and Banana) 20 (+2), Sequined Jumpsuits 13, Feeling Blue 16, Jailhouses 15, Hound Dogs, Blue Suede Shoes 19

**Qualities:** Distinctive Style, First Impression, Guts, Toughness, King of Rock and Roll, Martial Arts (Style: Hunka-hunka-burnin-love)

**Augmentations:** Voice modulator

**Gear:** Armored sequined jumpsuit, 16 doses bliss, 22 doses jazz, 25 doses novacoke, sunglasses [Rating 2, w/ smartlink, vision enhancement 2], 87 doses zen

**Weapons:**

Ruger Super Warhawk ("Priscilla") [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 6(cy), w/ advanced safety (basic w/ biometric lock), melee hardening, skinlink, smartlink]



## THE MCCORSICAN TRIPLETS: If you hurt one, you hurt them all

### Vital Stats

*Timothy McCorsican*

**Age:** 18

**Weight:** 181 kg

**Eyes:** Green

**Metatype:** Troll

**Height:** 2.62 m

**Hair:** Red

**Gender:** Male

**Awakened:** No

*Patrick McCorsican*

**Age:** 18

**Weight:** 73 kg

**Eyes:** Green

**Metatype:** Elf

**Height:** 1.83 m

**Hair:** Red

**Gender:** Male

**Awakened:** No

*Shaun McCorsican*

**Age:** 18

**Weight:** 60 kg

**Eyes:** Green

**Metatype:** Dwarf

**Height:** 1.32 m

**Hair:** Red

**Gender:** Male

**Awakened:** Yes

### Posted by: Plan 9

Cloning. Genetic manipulation. Murder. Treachery. And one dragon's quest to create the ultimate team of shadowrunners. Today's tale includes all of that, and more. I was originally planning to post this to the *Conspiracy Theories* compilation, but

decided to save it for one of the *Street Legends* posts instead. It could go both ways, but since this is ultimately about a shadowrunner (three of them in fact), I decided to post this here.

> Great. Not this nonsense again.  
> Snopes

> Now now. I have proof. Just because you refuse to accept it doesn't make it any less true.  
> Plan 9

It first came to my attention in the early 60's when I came across a Shadowrunner named Mime. He was a physical adept, an orphan, and a mute. Interestingly enough, he looked identical to a wagemage I knew at Ares. I kept my eye on Mime, and over the next couple of years he encountered and began working with a decker named Aurum (who was mute and communicated only through the Matrix via a series of signs his icon would hold up) and a tricked out cyberzombie named simply David (who was likewise mute and had the mind of a child). Again, both of these individuals could have been Mime's twin. They

[Continued...](#)

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eventually ran afoul of a rigger named Epoch who was determined to destroy them all, and it was then that they learned they were all clones of each other, part of some top secret project to create the ultimate shadowrunning team.

This project was tied to a biotech firm in Cleveland called Quality Biotech. It went out of business in 2050, and there are only the vaguest references to what could have been the cloning project, and no mention of what happened to the subjects. Mime and all of his clone brothers suffered amnesia and have no memories of anything before they were 12 years old, and while Epoch claimed to know all the details of who created them and why, he was killed before any of that data was recovered, leaving them to wonder.

> I worked with Mime and his crew on a couple occasions. Strange guys, but talented.  
> Bull

Quality Biotech is a company shrouded in mystery. The owner and CEO, David Tewksbury, doesn't exist. His data trail prior to 2045 (the year the company was founded) is a sham, and he simply vanishes after the company closed in 2050. The few researchers I can find records for that worked for the company all died over the next few years in accidents. It's ownership is equally dubious. On paper, it's parent company was Global Enterprises, an investment firm that closed down in early 2051. Global Enterprises was owned by someone else, and so on. Doing a lot of digging through multiple shell companies, eventually you come across the name Darktooth Enterprises. Darktooth Enterprises, as some of you are well aware, was one of several fronts through which the late Dunklezahn operated his Watcher network.

> I can confirm that Darktooth Enterprises was one of Dunklezahn's operations.  
> Frosty

> So besides creating clone babies,

what else were they up to?  
> Winterhawk

> Good question. It's a miracle I found this much.  
> Plan 9

I found hints that there were several other groups attempting to clone runners around this same time period, but haven't found any concrete proof. In 2055, though, research seems to have shifted. I found evidence that various pharmaceutical and biotech companies owned indirectly by the Big D began a series of trials on women who were seeking help with infertility. Boston, Cleveland, Denver, Detroit, Newark, Memphis, Seattle, and St. Louis were all locations where these trials and experiments were held over the next few years. Few came to fruition, but in 2056 a young woman in Boston named Moira McCorsican had been told she was unable to bear children. In desperation she visited one of these fertility clinics, became pregnant, and nine months later gave birth to not one, but three children named Timothy, Patrick, and Sean. It appears at one point she was actually pregnant with quintuplets, but two of the fetuses didn't quintupled term.

> There have been a number of "miracle" fertility drugs that have been tested over the years. They almost all have severe negative side effects, though multiple births is a common side effect. Whether it's a negative one or a positive one is entirely subjective.  
> Butch

> The red sun rises.  
> Riser

> Riser, mate? You feeling okay?  
> Kane

> Yeah, I'm fine. Why do you ask?  
> Riser

> I was working out of Cleveland in '56, and there was a fertility clinic that got bombed. And I don't mean "explosion blew out some windows and hurt or killed a couple people," I mean bombed. As in destroyed to the point where little

**TIMOTHY***Male troll*

Despite being a troll, Timothy is the smartest of the McCorscan triplets. He frequently plays dumb, however, and lets Shaun take the lead on any discussion or negotiation. He fell in love with computers at a young age, and by the time he was twelve was hacking their school records to maintain their grades. He's usually shy and reserved, and is the brother least likely to start a fight, but can throw down with the best of them when necessary.

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>
8	4	4 (5)	8

<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>W</b>
2	4	5	3

<b>Edg</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>IP</b>
4	1.59	8 (9)	1 (2)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):**  
12/10

**Armor (B/I):** 12/10

**Active Skills:** Clubs 4, Computer 5, Cybercombat (vs. Living Personas) 5 (+2), Data Search 5, Dodge 3, Electronic Warfare 5, Etiquette 4, Forgery 3, Hacking 5 (Exploit +2), Hardware 3, Intimidation 4, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols 3, Software 3, Unarmed Combat 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Baseball 4, Beer 4, Corporate Politics 3, Matrix Chat Rooms 3, Matrix Security Procedures 5, Operating Systems 5, Street Gangs 3

**Languages:** English N

**Qualities:** Allergy, Common (Moderate): Soy, Codeslinger: Hack on the Fly, Corsican Triplet\*, Photographic Memory, Poor Self Control: Vindictive

**Augmentations:** Control Rig

**(Continued)**

was left of the entire building but dust and tiny fragments. I don't know that they ever were able to fully determine how many people were killed because the bodies were largely vaporized in the blast.

> Bull

Besides the miracle of childbirth, there was another interesting side effect. Both mother and father were human, as were their entire family. The triplets that were born, however, were not only human, they were three different races! The mother gave birth to three boys, one a dwarf, one an elf, and the last a troll. The pregnancy was hard on the mother, however. She was under doctor's supervision for the majority of the pregnancy, and she didn't survive giving birth.

> Ok, I call bulldrek on that. Human parents giving birth to another metatypes, that's plausible. I've even met a pair of brothers who were an elf and a goblinized troll, but they weren't twins. I'm not an expert, but from what I know having mixed-metarace twins like that should be genetically impossible.

> Butch

> Impossible is a paradox, because in this world nothing is truly impossible.

> Man-of-Many-Names

The boys were raised normally, though being a mixed-race family was tough on them, and they faced a lot of racism and intolerance from other kids their age. It's not much of a surprise that they were frequently in trouble for fighting, and the three were inseparable throughout their childhood. Their father, a construction worker, died in an accident at a job site a couple years ago, and the boys were left to their own devices. Considering how I started this article off, it's likely no surprise that the boys became shadowrunners. Shortly after their father passed, they were approached by a young woman who

offered them their first run. It wasn't long before they were one of the premier running teams in Boston.

> Rumor has it that Nadja Daviar, or at least one of those look-alikes she has running around, was their sponsor. If they're the result of one of Dunkelzahn's secret projects, this isn't much of a surprise.

> Thorn

> Ahh, the McCorsican Twins. They're a lot of fun. They're good, solid Irish boys. They love to fight, they love to drink, and they're pretty simple and straightforward. So long as you play it straight with them, you can trust them completely. I've worked with them a couple times, and just recently we did a couple jobs for Richard Villiers, a sweet gig that has made Boston a safe harbor for me for the last few months. The boys apparently do a lot of work for NeoNET's head honcho.

> Kane

> Yeah, that's been fun. Don't you have some Azzie ships to sink or a Renraku HQ to blow up or something? I love running with you, but my parents are starting to get suspicious since you're around and bugging me every goddamn day!

> /dev/grrl

> Hah! I love Little Bit's spunk. Okay kid, I'll lay off. You can finally shoot straight, so that's a plus. Now you just need to learn the phrase "short, controlled burst." Anyway, back on topic. The McCorsican triplets are an interesting bunch. Timothy, the troll, is the team's hacker, and a pretty good one at that. Patrick, the elf, has some killer cyberware and is fraggin' fast. You don't want to go hand-to-hand with that kid. The dwarf, Shaun, is a pretty wiz mage, and he always has a flock of elementals on call.

What makes them really dangerous though is that they have a unique ability. I don't know if it's some

(alphaware), cyberears [Rating 4, alphaware w/ audio enhancement 3, balance augments, damper, ear recording unit, select sound filter 6, sound link, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 4, alphaware w/ eye recording unit, flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, protective covers, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 3, vision magnification), data lock with Encrypt (5), datajack (betaware), dermal Plating (Rating 3, Alphaware), sim module (hot-sim, alphaware), sleep regulator, wired reflexes (Rating 1, alphaware)

**Gear:** Armor jacket, 2 Fake SINS (Rating 5, with licenses), commlink (custom, Firewall 8, Response 6, Signal 6, System 6, Attack 7, Black Hammer 8, all other programs Rating 6), subvocal microphone

**Weapons:**

Hammerli 620S [Pistols, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC 1, 6(c) with gas-vent 1, smartlink]

**SHAUN**

*Male dwarf*

Shaun discovered his talent for magic at an early age, while defending his brother Timothy from some bullies who were picking on the shy troll. He got angry at the bullies and called up a low-force bolt of lightning, which scared the boys more than it hurt them. He has the typical dwarf stubbornness and often unwilling to back down from either a challenge or a negotiation. As such, he acts as the team's face, dealing with their contacts and their Mr. Johnsons. He is also the first to throw a punch when things go bad.

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>
6	4	4	5
<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>W</b>
5	3	5	6

**(Continued)**

kind of magic that Shaun does on them or a side effect of being twins. That's what I used to think. Now I'm thinking maybe it's something that was done to them in the womb. Whatever the cause, the triplets are incredibly tough in combat, because they seem to be able to distribute damage between them. I saw Patrick take a nasty shotgun blast to the gut once, punched right through his armor. Then the wound partly healed, and Patrick was back in the fray. I noticed a bit later though that both Shaun and Timothy were bleeding in the same place, and I know neither of them had been wounded during the fight. I asked them about it after, and while they were a bit uncomfortable talking about it, it seems to be something they've always been able to do.

> Kane

> I've never seen magic that can do that, but as Man-of-Many-Names said, nothing is impossible.

> Winterhawk

> Back up a step. If one of Daviar's clones is the boys' sponsor, and they work for Villiers a lot, does that mean Villiers and a Daviar clone have something going on?

> Kay St. Irregular

I don't have any hard evidence to prove what was done to the children, but with the clones I'm guessing they were "pre-programmed" at an early age to make them predisposed toward certain "careers." Of course, the real trick is how the magically active clones were created. So far science hasn't been able to lock down exactly what makes the magically active tick. They can test for it, though this test still isn't 100 percent accurate. But they've not figured out how to tweak the magic gene, so to speak.

The same goes for the metaracial genes. So how did Dunklezahn's people manage to cause the various fetuses to express as a different metatypes? Or was that simply a happy accident? I don't really know for sure yet. The McCorsican Triplets are the only success of these breeding programs that I've been able to uncover, but for many of the clinics the records were destroyed or buried when they shut down in '57 following Dunklezahn's death. One interesting thing I've discovered is that I'm not the only one looking into these, and whoever else is doing the digging, they have a lot of resources at their disposal and have kept me shut out. For now.

> If Dunkelzahn's people actually figured one or both of those genes out...that's huge.

> Nephrine

> And incredibly dangerous.

> Winterhawk

I'll upload the current proof to anyone that's interesting, and I'll keep following these trails as long as I can. I'm especially interested to find out why Dunklezahn was doing this, though I can guess. Having custom-grown and -bred specialists acting as your watchers or as special operatives would be especially useful to anyone, especially a dragon who likes to meddle and get involved the way Dunklezahn did. Likewise, I can see why he was so careful to keep the research hidden, as in the wrong hands this could be dangerous. If Dunkies people had figured out how to flip on the magic or metatypes genes, it's probable they also knew how to turn it off. And groups like Humanis or the Neo-Luddites would love to get their hands on something like that.

> The Neo-Luddites? I thought they were just anti-technology. What would they care about this?

> Slamm-0!

> Most of the Neo-Luddite movement is also incredibly magiphobic. They're not as vocal

Edg	Ess	Init	IP
3	6	7	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):**  
11/11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Active Skills:** Assensing 5, Astral Combat 4, Blades 2, Conjuring skill group 5, Counterspelling 5, Dodge 3, Influence Group 5, Perception 4, Pistols 3, Spellcasting (Combat Spells) 6 (+2), Unarmed Combat 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Baseball 4, Boston Pubs 2, Corporate Security Tactics 2, Gaelic 3, Knight Errant Procedures 2, Latin 3, Magic Background 3, Magical Phenomena 3, Whiskey 4

**Languages:** English N

**Qualities:** Addiction (Moderate): Alcohol, Corsican Triplet, First Impression, Magician, Poor Self Control: Vindictive, Sensitive System

**Initiate Grade:** 2

**Metamagics:** Masking, Shielding

**Gear:** Armor jacket, commlink [custom OS, Firewall 8, Response 4, Signal 4, System 4, Basic+ Program Suite], 2 fake SINS (Rating 5, w/ licenses), mage sight goggles, magic lodge (Rating 6), power focus (Rating 2), spellcasting Focus (Combat Spells, Rating 3), sustaining focus (Illusion Spells, Rating 5), subvocal microphone

**Spells:** Armor, Ball Lightning,

as some of the other groups, especially a few of the religious groups, but they're one of the staunchest supporters of any law that restricts or prohibits magical use, and were the first group to sponsor registration for magical ability.

Chaotic World, Clout, Detect Enemies, Detox, Fireball, Flamethrower, Heal, Increase Reflexes, Invisibility, Levitate, Lightning Bolt, Manaball, Manabolt, Physical Barrier, Physical Mask, Stunball, Stunbolt

**Metamagic:** (Initiate Grade 2)  
Masking, Shielding

**Bound Spirits:** 2 spirits of air (Force 5, 2 services), 2 spirits of fire (Force 5, 2 services), spirit of man (Force 5, 3 services), spirit of water (Force 5, 1 service)

**Weapons:**

Katana [Blades, Reach 1DV 6P, AP -1]

## PATRICK

*Male elf*

An elf, Patrick is the rash and frequently acts without thinking. He has little patience for planning, strategy, or negotiation. He'd rather be in action, and gets bored easily. Shaun and Timothy are frequently having to pull his hoop out of one mess or another that he's gotten into.

*Male elf*

B	A	R	S
5	6 (9)	4 (7)	5 (8)

C	I	L	W
4	3	3	3

Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	0.87	7 (10)	1 (4)

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):** 11/11

**Armor (B/I):** 8/6

**Active Skills:** Athletics skill group 4, Automatics 5, Blades (Cyber-Implant Blades) 6 (+2), Clubs 3, Dodge 3, Heavy Weapons 3, Longarms 3, Perception (Visual) 3 (+2), Pilot Ground Craft (Bike) 2 (+2), Pistols 4, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 5

**Knowledge Skills:** Baseball 4, Beer 3, Classic Rock Music 3, Martial-Arts Sims 3, Whiskey 3

**Languages:** English 2

**Qualities:** Addiction (Moderate): Alcohol, Corsican Triplet, Guts, High Pain Tolerance (3), Poor Self Control: Vindictive, Uncouth

**Augmentations:** Adrenaline pump 3 (alphaware), cybereyes [Rating 3, betaware w/ eye recording unit, flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 3], muscle augmentation 3 (alphaware), muscle toner 3 (alphaware), orthoskin 3 (alphaware), reflex recorder (alphaware, Close Combat skill group), reflex recorder (alphaware, Firearms skill group), spurs (betaware), synaptic booster 3 (alphaware)

**Gear:** AR Gloves, armor jacket, 2 Fake SINS (Rating 4, w/ licenses), commlink [custom OS, Firewall 8, Response 4, Signal 4, System 4, Basic+ Program Suite), subvocal microphone

**Weapons:**

Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/BF-L/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/ grenade launcher, smartlink]

Ares Alpha Grenade Launcher [Grenade Launcher, DV by ammo, SS, 6 (c), w/ smartlink]

Ares Predator IV [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P, AP -1, SA, 15 (c), w/ explosive rounds x150, smartlink]

Katana [Blades, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP -1]

Spurs (betaware) [Blades, Reach --, DV 7P, AP --]

Survival Knife [Blades, Reach --, DV 5P, AP -1]

**NEW POSITIVE QUALITY: MCCORSICAN TRIPLET**  
**COST: 15 BP**

McCorsican Triplet is a quality that must be taken by three characters, each paying the entire Build Point cost. It can only be taken at character creation, and each character must be part of a set of triplets. Characters with this quality share and distribute pain and damage dealt to them. The effect is instantaneous, and the damage is divided as equally as possible between the three (rounded up). Distance plays no factor in the damage distribution. Each briefly feels the pain of the full wound for a fleeting moment, before the pain subsides to that of the actual damage taken. For example, a Corsican Triplet sustains 5 boxes of damage from a wound. This damage is divided by 3, and then rounded up, so that each of the triplets takes sustains 2 boxes of damage.





## SAKURA KUNOICHI: We promise it will all make sense in the end. Or not.

Posted by: Haze

### Vital Stats

**Age:** 19  
**Weight:** 50 kg  
**Eyes:** Green  
**Metatype:** Elf

**Height:** 1.72  
**Hair:** Black  
**Gender:** Female  
**Awakened:** No

Yeah yeah yeah, I'm neither gone, nor forgotten, just layin' low for a while. Still, Fastjack wants files? I'll give him files. This one's out of my own personal little black book, a gal that operates out of San Fran that has way more talent than anybody her age should have. Her name is Sakura Kunoichi. We met up in a runner bar out there, scoping out the same chick. She was faster, but I'm better; I figured I'd offer her a consolation prize and I told her I could make room for one more, but no dice. Turns out she's only into other girls ... can't say that I blame her, but a damn shame 'cause she was fine.

We got tied up into a duel for a while, trying to out-seduce one another's targets, ferretting out some info on one another, and, eventually, we wound up on the same team on a job to break into some subsidiary of Ares about three steps of umbrella corporations down the line. Sakura (she tells me it's her real name) doesn't have any magic about her, but she has some wiz upgrades ... bio this, cyber that, and the most amazing set of

articulation that you ever saw. She's smooth just about everywhere, which comes in handy during her day job as a stripper. Hell, she probably makes more than that than running. Anyway, she's a crack infiltrator, able to shimmy through anything her head'll fit through thanks to being able to dislocate so many of her joints, and she's got some kind of smart rig set up and tied to IR eye implants so she can go cartwheeling through laser tripwire grids without fear and fast enough to stay a step ahead of a fast responder that stumbled onto her in mid caper. She's a decent hacker too, but only after she gets inside a facility and takes it on from the softer side, rather than cracking through the front door. She also has some social skills, but her seduction work is all power plays and aggression; she saunters up, brazenly checks someone out, adds some touching, then goes in for the kill. Confidence, kids. It works. Or it least it does when backed up by a hot elf chick with a body perfected by science.

> You don't know the half of it, Haze. Tell you what, I'm feeling generous today. For just twenty, I'll dump some data on you.

> Icarus

> Hang on. Icarus cutting somebody a deal? Little miss

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profit opportunity? What's the catch?

> 2XL

Catch? Why does there have to be a catch? Maybe I just want to be kind to my fellow metahuman.

> Icarus

> First of all, you're an ork and Haze is an elf. Not a lot of good blood there. Second of all, you've never done anything like that for anybody else. There's gotta be a catch.

> 2XL

> Hate to break your bubble, big guy, but Icarus is an elf.

> Beaker

> What? No, Icarus is an ork, and a guy at that.

> Hanibelle

> Nope she's a human lass. I used to have a pic somewhere, but I think it corrupted. Chinese, upper-crust with a lot of British in her bloodline

> Stone

> I'm thinking little miss eyeless has gotta be wrong, because Icarus is a chick.

> Haze

> Haze, you think everyone's female. No, wait. You *hope* everyone's female.

Jimmy No

> Fine, guilty as charged. Still, won't be the first thing I've bought from her. Transmission your way, Icky.

Haze

> And verified. Thank you for doing business with us, Mr. Haze, and I hope you continue to use our services. Your upload is commencing ... now.

> Icarus

<Begin Data dump>

**Sakura Kunoichi (real name, David Farnsworth)**

**Age:** 39

**Height:** 1.79 m,

**Weight:** 111 kg

**Hair:** Brown

**Eyes:** Brown

**Gender:** Male

**Metatype:** Human

**Awakened:** No

David Farnsworth was an average wageslave at Yamatetsu for years who gradually worked his way from data entry to being a materials supervisor for the secretarial pool. His job was doing tracking expenses on ink carts, chairs, and other assorted business costs. He had a good mind for details but not a lot of originality. He noticed that some supplies that were out of the usual price ranges were getting shuffled around in a particular subsidiary, and he found himself embroiled in a little inter-office shoving match between the old Japanese school that employed him and the new Russian side of the master business, Evo. More through luck than anything, he managed to pass word up the line and get several heads rolled. In repayment, <Name redacted. Would you like to pay for gold access for 1,000 creds? Y/N> became his sponsor, figuring that he'd want to move up the ranks into a cushy assistant to a vice president slot.

Nope.

Instead, he took advantage of Evo's New You package offerings and reconstructed himself from the ground up, taking a full gene wipe, gender flip, ethnicity change, the works.

> Say what?

> Haze

> He's saying that your hot new ride came with a kickstand.

> Turbo Bunny

> Hey, don't knock it till you've tried it, TB. I've flipped back and forth so many times I've lost count. Ever try your hand at being an Iranian guy? Aztlaner gal? Elf for a day, troll for the next? You've really gotta get past your old hangups about identity and live a

**SAKURA KUNOICHI**

*Female human*

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>
6	5	5	6
<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>W</b>
6	4	4	6
<b>Edg</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>IP</b>
6	5.8	9	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):**  
11/11

**Armor (B/D):** 8/10

**Active Skills:** Artisan (singer) 6, Athletics skill group 3, Blades 3, Computer 6, Clubs 4, Data Search 6, Disguise 1, Dodge 4, Electronics skill group 4, First Aid 3, Infiltration 6, Influence skill group 5, Intimidation 4, Palming 3, Perception 3, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols (Ruger Warhawk) 6 (+2), Shadowing 5, Unarmed Combat (Testicle Kicking) 6 (+2)

**Knowledge Skills:** Elvis Presley 108, Sandwiches (Fried Peanut Butter and Banana) 20 (+2), Sequined Jumpsuits 13, Feeling Blue 16, Jailhouses 15, Hound Dogs, Blue Suede Shoes 19

**Qualities:** Distinctive Style, First Impression, Guts, Toughness, King of Rock and Roll, Martial Arts (Style: Hunka-hunka-burnin-love)

**Augmentations:** Voice modulator

**Gear:** Armored sequined jumpsuit, 16 doses bliss, 22 doses jazz, 25 doses novacoke, sunglasses [Rating 2, w/ smartlink, vision enhancement 2], 87 doses zen

**Weapons:**

Ruger Super Warhawk ("Priscilla") [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 6(cy), w/ advanced safety (basic w/ biometric lock), melee hardening, skinlink, smartlink]

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little. If you're interested, I know some great doctors that don't charge an arm and a leg.

> Plan 9

David, now under his new identity as Sakura, transferred to San Francisco, left his old data entry job, and dove headfirst into a life of hedonism and debauchery that must have lurked behind that boring old datapusher's head for decades. The money that was a reward vanished quickly, and since she was unwilling to go back to the old life, Sakura turned to stripping and, of all things, shadowrunning.

> For the record, I've worked with her in the past. Her moves are impressive, a wide array of ninjitsu arts, but to a trained eye, their roots as activesofts are quite evident. She is far more reckless than she should be, however, seeming to revel in attention rather than undertake a truly hidden path. A lesbian elf ninja stripper ... only in the UCAS, I suppose.

> Lei Kung

> Oh, is *that* who she is? Well, now things make a lot more sense. She hooked up with one of my friends a year back who couldn't stop giggling over this new girl--body to die for, but not so bright, and absolutely clueless on a few things. Liked to play dressup and check herself out in the mirror. She enjoyed being the aggressor in a relationship but freaked out when she wasn't in control. I thought it was just a op thing, but this makes far more sense.

> SeaTac Sweetie

> Tsk. It's better to receive than to give.

> Plan 9

> TMI

> Kat o' Nine Tales

> So, just a 'chipper, then? Good to know in case we cross jobs in the future.

Ma'fan

> First of all, there've been some real improvements in activesofts the past few years. Why do you think the cost of the things jumped by an order of magnitude? Don't discount somebody on skillwires so easily. Second, Sakura's been inactive for a bit.

> Turbo Bunny

> All right, I'll bite. How do you know this?

> Beaker

> She tried to hook up with Marionette a while back, but she doesn't fall into that line of work

anymore. More on point, it looks like the wear and tear's caught up with her. The weight listed here is about twenty kilos too low these days, probably more, and she's not commanding high rates anymore, which is why she wants a stage partner. Her routines are all stale, and she doesn't have either the imagination or choreographer she would need to add new ones.

> Turbo Bunny

> I thought you said the wires were better these days, TB?

> Beaker

> I did. If you don't keep things upgraded, however, the 'softs degrade, and if you have pirated stuff, you don't get automatic updates. And with no real work ethic or experience in the fields, topped off with an easy 'free entry,' you've got someone who doesn't have any professional discipline, either. She doesn't know how to keep her body in shape, how to take care of herself, or how to push her skills to the level needed to keep her edge. Buy the nicest ride you want, but if you don't do routine maintenance, it's just going to fall apart on you.

> Turbo Bunny

> Oh lord, don't I know it. The first time I switched genders, there was a huge learning curve--how to stand, how to sit, how to dress, that whole bathroom issue. It gets easier, but it can be a pain for a rookie. I've got some primers if anyone is interested.

> Plan 9

> Wait, now I'm confused ... what gender did you start out as, P9?

> Beaker

> To be honest? I'm not entirely sure anymore. Doesn't matter, really.

Plan 9

> Hey, you're all missing the important question, here ... who, or what, is Icarus, anyway?

> Hanibelle

> That information will cost more than your account can cover, I'm afraid.

> Icarus

> Wait, if she ... I mean he ... with the ... and I ... I think I need a nap.

> Haze



## SKIPPY GOODHEART: The nicest guy that will ever annoy the hell out of you.

**Posted by: Skip Goodheart**

Hey everybody! How are you all doing today! It's really nice to let me in here so I can talk with you all! You seem like a really neat bunch of individuals, and I'm just thrilled to be able to learn a little bit from you.

I mean, wow, this is a really cool place you have here! It's kind of like a clubhouse, isn't it? It's just missing the milk and cookies! Wouldn't they be great?

Just kidding. Never let me have sugar in the middle of the day, because I just get sooooo out of control! My mom always used to tell me, if you don't lay off that sugar, I'll have to lay you out! Ah, mom. What a card. But seriously, mom never hit me.

> All right, 'Jack, what's going on? What is this person doing here?

> Haze

> I know it might not seem like it, but this guy's actually done work in the shadows. Right, Riser?

> FastJack

> I don't want to talk about it.

> Riser

And I see Mr. Riser is here too! Hi, Mr. Riser! How's everything? Did that scratch you got from that mean woman ever heal up right? And that other thing? I hope so!

But whoops, I'm getting ahead of myself. I don't remember everything Mr. FastJack said to me when he invited me to this swell clubhouse, but I think one of the things he wanted me to talk about was the little adventure I had with Mr. Riser, and I don't want to get to the ending before I start at the beginning. So let's go!

For a long time I had a really great job with Aztechnology's Human Procurement and Bloodstain Removal division, and there were a bunch of really neat people who treated me great there, but eventually I left because, you know, the vibe there was getting really weird. People stopped having fun! I mean, I know that dragging people kicking and screaming to blood-soaked altars and then walking away while their terrified, pained screams are ringing in your ears is not everyone's cup of tea, but I always say that if you've got a job to do, do it well and do it with a smile. Am I right? Anyway, people weren't smiling as much, so I thought maybe it was time to leave and strike out on my own. I knew that when I was my own boss, I'd always

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have something to smile about!

I figured that I should stay with what I knew, and that involved taking people to places they didn't necessarily want to go. I don't want to brag or anything (my mom would always tell me, "Skip, don't you go puttin' on airs and actin' better than you are, or I'll bring you back to Earth with this here tire iron!"), but I think I'm pretty good at it. I'd like to believe it's because I have a soothing, positive presence that reassures people and makes them feel better. It can't hurt, right?

So I'd helped a few people get some other people to places where they wanted to be, and gosh darn it if my new business wasn't just clipping along, and I got what was my biggest job yet. I got a call from Mr. Johnson (hey, did you ever notice how all the guys who hire people like us call themselves Mr. Johnson? What a hoot!) telling me that he had a really special target in mind for me. He gave me the name – Kenneth Brackhaven – that they wanted moved to a new location.

Now this is a little embarrassing, but when Mr. Johnson said the name, he paused for a second and waited for me to react, and all I could think of was "Who?" I'd never heard the name! But I knew enough never to let my ignorance show, because momma always said "Better to keep your mouth shut and let someone think you're ignorant than to open your mouth and make me want to punch you right in the teeth." So I just nodded and looked competent and said, "Sure, that'll be no problemo." And he stared at me for a second and said, "I assume you'll want some help for this one," and I said, "That's right nice of you, Mr. Johnson, I'd love some help! Thanks for thinking of it!" Then he gave me a bunch of names, and that was how I met Mr. Riser!

> Wait—Riser, you were hired to kidnap Kenneth Brackhaven ... with Gomer Pyle?

> Pistons

> I said I didn't want to talk about

it!

> Riser

Now, Mr. Riser and the others were really great people. They were always willing to let me sit in the room next to them just so I could have some peace and quiet and let me gather my thoughts! They were a rowdy bunch, though. I remember seeing Mr. Riser take a sip out of a flask once, and I thought to myself, "How can he get away with drinking so early in the day?" But then he said he doesn't consider 8 p.m. that early. Oh well, everyone's got their own way to live, right? Even if some of those ways are totally corrupt and wrong. But I'm not judging anyone!

So with the help of Mr. Riser and his friends, we came up with a really great plan. It seems like Mr. Brackhaven really likes dwarf women, only he doesn't talk about it much. Isn't that sad? When I like something, I just want to talk and talk and talk about it. Like let me tell you about this restaurant I went to. It was so great! You get a big leg of turkey and some potatoes, and you get to eat everything with your hands! And you're seated around this dirt oval, and there's a show they put on down there, with a king and queen and knights and horses and everything. It was so thrilling! When that green knight almost fell out of his horse, I almost fell out of my chair. Good thing Mr. Riser was there to catch me!

> Oh he was, was he? Say, Mr. Riser, did you enjoy the show, too?  
> Slamm-0!

> Look, it was his idea, okay? That was where he wanted to have the meeting. I'd never heard of the place. I knew nothing about it. And yeah, it was a little strange, and there were like fifty kids there on birthday parties, but if you didn't cheer when the green knight won, then you're don't have a heart, okay? So shut up.

> Riser

But what Mr. Riser told me is that there's a place you can go to meet dwarf women. Isn't that great? Seattle has so

## SKIPPY GOODHEART

*Male human*

<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>
3	2	2	2
<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>W</b>
5	1	2	6
<b>Edg</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>IP</b>
7	5.9	4	1

**Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S):**  
10/11

**Armor (B/D):** 4/0

**Active Skills:** None

**Knowledge Skills:** Broadway Musicals 5, Family-Oriented Trids 4, Place Settings 5, Ritual Sacrifice 5, Square Dancing 6

**Qualities:** Guts, Incompetent (Infiltration), Lucky, Quick Healer, Oblivious, SINner, Trustworthy, Will to Live 2

**Augmentations:** Artificial Hair (Biebertronic XL30 Line)

**Gear:** Armor clothing, 12 x hard candies, 10 x licorice whips, 6 x lollipops, 8 doses novacoke

**Weapons:**  
Remington Roomsweeper w/ flechettes [Heavy Pistol, DV 7P(f), AP +5, SA, RC – , 8(m)]

**(Continued)**

many services! Isn't that what every city needs, a place where lonely people can go to meet each other? I love that idea – it's so innocent and pure, right? So anyway, Mr. Brackhaven, it seems, likes to go meet dwarf women at this place, and he doesn't take too many of his "people" along (I don't know what "people" he has, but this was a phrase Mr. Riser used, so I figured he knew what he was talking about), so we could probably escort him out while he was there. I thought this sounded like a terrific plan, so I told Mr. Riser so.

> That he did. Loudly enough for ten people to turn around and look at us.

> Riser

We didn't want to waste any time, of course, and Mr. Riser said he had information that Mr. Brackhaven would be at the social club the next night, so we got ready. And you should see Mr. Riser get ready! I've never seen so much gun loading happen outside of a montage in an action trid! And he spends so much time cleaning his guns! He gets each one in such good shape, one after another, and I finally just had to ask him, "Mr. Riser, do you really need to spend all that time polishing your gun?" and he looked at me and gave me a funny stare and said "Do you?" and I really had no idea what he was talking about, but everyone else laughed, so I laughed too.

But once we were ready, we went out to the social club. I really appreciated Mr. Riser's faith in me, because he said I should be the very first to go in. He said I was "cannon fodder," which I think is the stuff you load into a cannon, so he was saying I was like the opening cannon shot in a battle! What an honor!

I decided to walk into the club with a humble, respectful attitude, out of respect of their work in helping people get to know each other. I also figured that they would be really nice and friendly, because they're a social club. Why wouldn't they be welcoming?

I walked in with a big smile – but I always have a big smile! It's like my mom told me, "You're always smiling! One day I'll wipe that smile off your face and grind it into glass-strewn ground." I saw a nice elderly woman sitting behind a desk and a few other woman who were dressed as though the heat in the building was turned on too high. I nodded to them politely, then walked to the woman behind the desk.

"Good evening, ma'am," I said. "I have a favor to ask you, but first I want to thank you for running such a wonderful service."

"No favors," she said. "I don't do favors. This is a business."

I was a little startled by her tone, but we all sound a little down sometimes, especially at the end of a long day, right? So I just went on. "I'd be happy to pay you whatever you need if you'd just let me know where Mr. Brackhaven is right now."

Well, you'd have thought I said there was an apple pie sale next door or something! There was such a ruckus! The women who were sitting there ran out of the room, and the woman behind the desk just ducked down and hid. I was leaning forward over the desk to see what was the matter when a door opened and these two big trolls came out, and they looked really unhappy!

"Gentlemen!" I said. "Can you take me to Mr. Brackhaven?"

I heard some cursing in my earpiece, like Mr. Riser had stubbed his toe or something, and I felt bad for him, because I didn't want him to be in pain. But before I could tell him I hoped he would feel better soon, I noticed the trolls were pointing guns at me, and they looked like they were going to shoot. Well didn't that beat all! I dropped to the floor out of instinct, and listened to bullets hit all over the place. I just waited it out, hoping the trolls would get over their little snit quickly. And I guess they did, because they soon stopped shooting.

> I was outside with a sniper rifle. I got them both. Gomer didn't even notice the corpses when he stood up.

> Riser

Once the trolls weren't shooting at me, I got up and walked up the stairs I had seen. I called out for Mr. Brackhaven, but he didn't come out. I looked into one of the rooms I walked by and saw that it was a real pretty little bedroom, so I wondered if maybe Mr. Brackhaven was taking a nap. I didn't want to wake him, but I had a job to do, so I got louder. Then I heard a noise behind me in the hall, and two people came out of a room, and they had guns too. So many people with guns! What kind of social club was this, anyway? I decided I didn't want to have anything to do with these rude people, so I stepped quickly into one of the open bedrooms, and I heard some bullets fly past. I suddenly worried – there were such lovely brass wall sconces in the hallway. What if those careless bullets hit one? I called out, "Watch out for the sconces!"

> It's true. He did.

> Riser

But it's possible no one heard me, because I heard a lot of footsteps running down the hallway, and there were more gunshots, and some kind of loud scuffle. I walked back into the hallway and saw a couple of Mr. Riser's friends wrestling with the people with the guns. I decided they could all occupy each other just

**(Continued)**

fine, so I carefully walked by and entered the room the two men had come out of.

It was just a small room with a couple of wooden chairs, but there was another door leading out of it, and I heard some noise behind it. So I gently knocked on the door. I listened for a reply, but I couldn't really hear anything with all the scuffling going on, so I'm afraid I just set my manners aside and opened that door.

There were two people inside. One was this nice little dwarf woman, and she really didn't look happy at all for someone who was supposed to be making friends with people. She had a slip on that could really use some bleach, and she was sitting on the corner of a bed, her knees up against her chest. The other person was a distinguished-looking older man, and he was scrambling to button up his shirt. I checked the picture Mr. Johnson had given me, and sure enough, this was Mr. Brackhaven! I guessed that he had changed shirts to be more comfortable talking to this nice young lady, but now he had to go back to work or something.

"Hello, Mr. Brackhaven! I'm Skip, and I have great news for you! There's a wonderful man named Mr. Johnson who has arranged for you to have some peace and quiet at this great little cottage near a lake. It's only about 250 kilometers away, and I'm ready to take you there now!"

Of course, I thought that Mr. Brackhaven would be delighted, but he wasn't! Not at all! In fact, he pulled out a gun (another gun!) and said "Over my dead body!"

I began to remonstrate him for drawing a weapon in the presence of a lady, but before I could finish the sentence he was already firing, so I had to move out of the way. My dodge ended up taking me to the side room, where I bumped into none other than Mr. Riser! He shoved me back into the room, and he was carrying a handgun so large it could have been used as the central support beam of a small hut. He pointed it right at Mr. Brackhaven, which seemed to calm the elderly gentleman down.

"You're coming with us," Mr. Riser said, in that tone of grim determination that I've just never been able to mimic.

I heard a kind of strangled sob, and I noticed the woman in the room was crying. Well, I hate to see anyone cry in my presence, so I walked over to her and told her everything would be all right, and if she was worried that she wouldn't have anyone to talk to, I'd be happy to come and chat with her sometime.

Now, I hate to be accused of casting aspersions on

anyone I've worked with, but I have to say that Mr. Riser did something next that was pretty ungenerous of him. He said, "Skip. The whore's none of our concern. Leave her alone."

Well, the young lady didn't like that one bit, and she jumped off the bed faster than a june bug leaping to an apple tree. She made a howl that hurt my ears real good, and swiped at Mr. Riser and left a deep gouge in his cheek. He wasn't happy, and he swung at her, clobbering her back to the bed.

"Mr. Riser!" I said. "I don't know how you were raised, but that's not how I was taught to get along with people!"

He looked at me. "Shut up," he said.

I wasn't going to be deterred. "Mr. Riser, my mother always told me that we don't have to compromise our beliefs to get what we want." Now, that was a bit of a fib — momma never said anything like that — but I *wished* she had, so I figured it was true enough.

"Skippy, get in the van," he said, and he didn't even look at me when he said it!

At that point, I'd had enough. I walked right up to him, planting myself between him and Mr. Brackhaven, and said, "Mr. Riser, I insist on being treated better than that!"

The next few moments were a blur. I guess I kept Mr. Riser from seeing what Mr. Brackhaven was doing, because he moved quickly, grabbed me, and pointed a gun at my head.

"Out of my way," Mr. Brackhaven said, "or your friend gets it."

Mr. Riser didn't move his gun at all. "Okay," he said.

It was pretty tense there for a moment, and I wished I had something I could do besides have a gun pointed at my head, but that seemed to be my role for the time being. It didn't last long, though, because at that moment the young woman in the room came back to her senses and once again jumped at Mr. Riser. She didn't distract him for long, but it was long enough for Mr. Brackhaven to shoot him.

Mr. Riser fell to the ground, and I was happy that he was twitching in pain because it meant he wasn't dead. Mr. Brackhaven then dragged me out of the room, using me as a hostage as he tried to walk out of the social club.

I decided that this would be a fine time for a conversation. "Mr. Brackhaven, I hope you don't mind me saying so, but you really look like you could use a break. I mean, if they life you're living means you have to shoot someone just so you can walk away from your girlfriend, doesn't that maybe mean that things have gotten too stressful for you? I think a week or a month

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by a lake or something would be perfect! Don't you?"

"Shut up," he said.

"You see? I can hear the tension in your voice! Listen, Mr. Brackhaven, I don't know much about you or your life, but hasn't it maybe become too complicated? Maybe you have too many balls in the air, if you take my meaning? I was like you once. I was giving everything to my job. It was all about getting ahead, squashing the competition, and keeping the sacrificial candidates calm while the knives were sharpened. But I realized that I'd lost sight of something. I'd lost sight of *me*. So I simplified my life, and let me tell you something, Mr. Brackhaven—I've never been happier. And look—my new lifestyle lets me do great things, like meet people like you!"

And when I said that, Mr. Brackhaven stopped. We were in the foyer where I'd first walked in. His grip on me loosened so that I was able to turn around and look at him. He looked very tired.

"Couldn't you use a rest, Mr. Brackhaven?" I said.

"Aren't you tired?"

"I am," he said. "I am tired."

"Well then come with me," I said. "We'll get you some rest." And with that, he walked out next to me, calm and collected as could be.

We had a little incident when we walked to the van where some people jumped out and told me to let "the Governor" (I guess they meant Mr. Brackhaven?) go. I

didn't want that, and I know Mr. Brackhaven didn't want that, and it's like my mother always said—"I swear I'll kill you where you stand." So I pulled out my Roomsweeper and shot them both in the face. Then I drove Mr. Brackhaven to the lake.

It really was a fascinating adventure, and I'm so glad I got to be a part of it and then share it with you here! Now, Mr. Riser, I know you're a little mad at me about the money matter, but I think it's fair that my share was a little bigger, because I was the one who finished the job, right? And Mr. Johnson said he agreed with me. But I know that gunshot had to hurt, and if you need a little help paying medical bills, or buying painkillers, I could maybe send a little money your way. It turns out Mr. Brackhaven has his own company or something, and he gave me a little ownership share, and I guess it's worth a lot of money! Isn't that great?

Anyway, thanks for letting me share my little story, and I hope I get a chance to work with more of you guys someday!

> So Skip's sitting on a pile of money, huh? All right, the line to join the group to go get him forms to my right.

> Stone

> I'm in.

> Hard Exit

> Yeah, I'll take a little of that action.

> Black Mamba

> Not me. I don't want anything to do with this guy. Ever.

> Riser