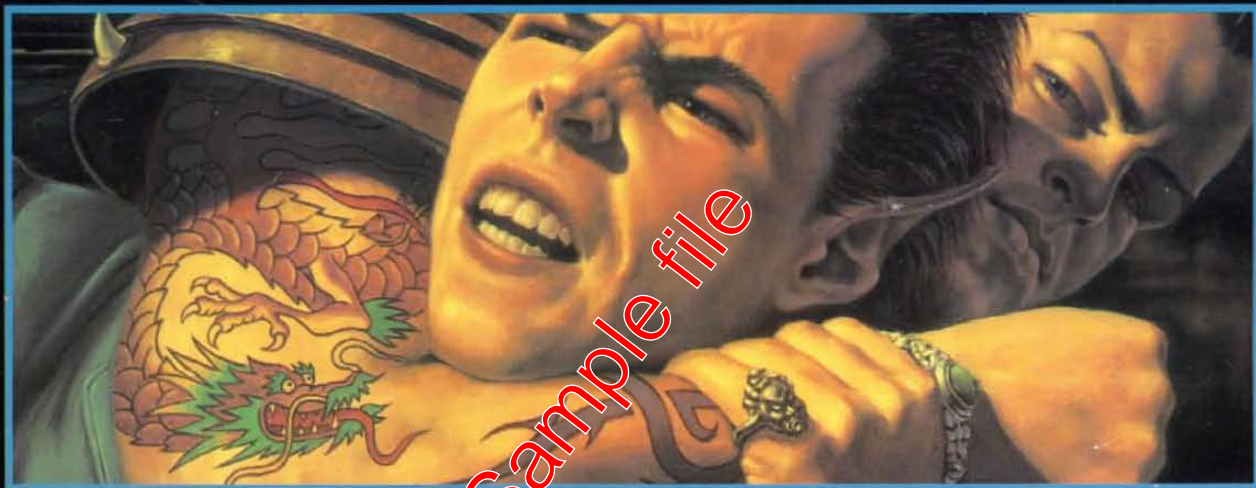


# DARK ANGEL™

“Music worth dying for.”



When the only known recording of a late, great street musician appears in the hands of a major record company, it's up to the runners to find out the truth.

Just what was that corp willing to do to get that recording?

**Dark Angel** is an adventure for Shadowrun. It is compatible with the original Shadowrun rules and the revised Shadowrun, Second Edition rules.

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**SHADOWRUN**  
S.E.C.O.N.D E.D.I.T.I.O.N

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**sample file**

**DESK ANGEL**  
**BACKSTAGE PASS**

**FLAMING WINGS**  
**WORLD 2051 TOUR**

• SEATTLE MAY 30th •

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Sample file

# ANGEL'S SONG: A Prologue

The stage lights faded one by one as Dark Angel tossed his long, black hair from his face and raised his arms in a final salute to the audience, his Stratocaster slapping against his synthleather-clad body. The menagerie of elves, streetmages, scuzboys and go-girls that crowded The Whistler responded to his gesture with a loud wave of applause. From the stage, Angel took one last look at the mass of bobbing fluorescent mohawks and flashing earrings before he turned and made his way backstage.

The tall, thin elf ignored the dreamqueens and androgynous fanboys who lined the hallway and beckoned to him, and stopped in the club's back room, a small, squalid area decorated with bare wires and stained plascrete walls. He looked over at Monarch, The Whistler's overweight, pasty-skinned owner, and gave her a gallant nod as he inserted his credstick into her payroll computer. The stick's gray digits flickered and Angel watched his credit balance rise from 9.34 to 1,009.34 nuyen.

Angel stepped outside into the shadowy alley behind the club. The dim glow of distant streetlights showed him the alley was abandoned; even the usual chipheads and party-girls were nowhere in sight. Uneasiness tickled the pit of his stomach.

Angel dismissed the feeling as soon as he felt it, unwilling to let anything spoil his postperformance buzz. After all, fresh credit warmed his credstick and tonight he and the band could party; drek, he and Lili could even eat out, have some real food for a change instead of the usual krill filler. A small smile crept across the elf's face at these thoughts. The soft ringing in his ears that always followed a night of cranking rock and roll made his steps begin beating out an easy, loping rhythm, and he sang to himself in the blackness of the alley.

*Let me tell you the tale of a businessman  
One Mr. Johnson by name  
Who had his perks and his clerks and a limousine  
But couldn't buy love with his gain  
Cause the moon still shines brighter than satellites  
And magic's not science but art  
Some girls will turn tricks to put yen on their sticks  
But Trista's not selling her...*

Angel stopped at the end of the alley as the rumble of an engine drowned out his song.

He could see a lone, dull black van cruising along the club strip, its smoked-glass windows bulging from their frames like the eyes of a mantis. The van was the only vehicle on the road, and it slowly traveled some three blocks down the strip before executing a U-turn and beginning a second pass.

The elf shrank back into the alley's shadows and pressed himself against the dank, graffiti-covered concrete. Slowly he began edging back in the direction he had just come. Angel could feel his heartbeat accelerate with each step as he cautiously

moved across the litter and loose gravel of the alley.

The van rolled to the curb. Under the low growl of its engine, a growl Angel imagined was not unlike that of a large predator nearing its prey, the elf heard the unmistakable click of a shotgun



locking and loading. Dark Angel lurched into a run toward the nearest turn in the alley, some thirty meters ahead. He stepped on a discarded can and slid, his arms windmilling. The can skipped into a wall and bounced to the ground, clattering.

Light flooded the alley and Angel glanced over his shoulder, immediately blinded by the van's glaring headlights. The elf began running full tilt, the headlights' afterimage still dancing before his eyes.

His vision cleared just in time for him to avoid running into an ill-defined tower of flesh that could only be a troll. The creature stood more than twice Angel's height. The van's headlights were reflected in the metahuman's squinting, asymmetrical eyes, which seemed to glow with a red fire. The elf caught a quick glimpse of the troll's Oriental features, goblinized into a parody of a Japanese ogre, as the creature produced a cigar-thin iron bar.

Dark Angel tensed himself to dodge, flip, and run, but never got the chance. The troll was on him before he even flexed his knees. The iron bar rose and fell and Angel went to the ground, clutching his head. A line of pain stretched from his temple to his ear.

Dark Angel looked up, his eyes fixing on the troll's arm, and realized his attacker had either cyber- or magically enhanced reflexes. The troll met his gaze for a moment, then raised the iron bar and struck him again, landing a carefully aimed blow on the roof of Angel's skull.

Pain flooded the elf's senses. For a moment he thought of Lili, saw her nimble movements and her small, mysterious smile. The troll struck him again, and Angel realized the troll was now bending over him, its eyes glittering in the headlights. The troll lifted the elf's legs, spun him around and began dragging him toward the van. The rough concrete shredded his synthskin and tore at his skin.

Warm blood from Angel's scalp ran down his cheeks as he looked up at the dark buildings silhouetted against the orange, glowing sky. Then he saw nothing.

It seemed as if forever passed.

Angel awakened from a deep, dreamless sleep to a vague sense of warmth and motion. Through a cloudy, drug-induced numbness he could feel dull, hollow aches where the troll had struck him. The elf tasted bitter bile in the back of his throat as the world seemed to undulate, slowly swelling then dropping abruptly in a steady, repeating cadence.

Against his skin Angel felt clammy bed sheets, moist from his own perspiration. As his eyes began to focus, he saw white metal walls hemming him in like the sides of a coffin. Above his head, the wall was interrupted by a small, circular window, and Angel suddenly realized he was on a ship.

A subtle change in the room's light alerted the elf that he was no longer alone. A woman stood in the doorway, leaning against the steel bulkhead. The figure regarded Dark Angel with a tight, triumphant smile. For several moments, she merely looked at him, her black eyes shining. Angel, in turn, studied the woman. Her dark, close-fitting clothes showed every sleek muscle on her spare frame.

"You insulted me, Angel," the woman said in a low voice. "I never forget that."

In his dazed state, the elf could barely hear the woman. He did

not comprehend the meaning of her words, but the way she said them frightened him.

"Do you remember me, Angel?"

Dark Angel's tongue worked in his dry mouth. He struggled against the fog in his brain, trying to think of grim, lean women he had known. A name gurgled from his throat. "Lili?" But even as he spoke, the elf knew the woman in the room was not his lover.

"My name is Kat, Kat Akmura. And this is what you should have remembered before you offended me."

The woman smiled unpleasantly as she undid the buttons of her blouse with lacquered fingernails. Intricate tattoos swirled around the navel of her flat stomach. Dragons, phoenixes, turtles, apes and all the beasts of Japanese tradition danced across her golden skin.

"I am *yakuza*. I am *oyabun*," Akmura said as she watched the elf's eyes trace the colorful patterns. "Your elder brother knew who I was. You should not have mocked him ... or me."

Dark Angel drew in his breath and then released it in a long sigh.

"That was a long time ago."

"Exactly."

Akmura smiled as she drew her blouse together. "I waited." After a moment, she laughed lightly. "I was waiting for you to meet someone like Lili."

The elf shook and raised himself on his elbows at the mention of his lover's name.

"I was waiting until you had something to lose," Akmura said, her lips still curled in a smile. "You are fond of Lili, are you not?" Angel held his breath, struggling to mask his alarm.

"What did the two of you say, the last time you parted?"

Remembering, the elf shut his eyes.

"You quarreled didn't you? I thought so. And now it's too late for you to make any kind of apology. Do you know why?" A tiny laugh escaped Akmura's throat. "Because you are dead."

The *oyabun* paused as if waiting for a reply, but the elf remained silent.

"Do you know how Lili feels? Disgusted. She is thoroughly and utterly disgusted with you."

Kat drew a fresh newsfax from her pocket. She tossed it to Dark Angel's mattress.

"You see, your death was hardly a noble one."

The elf scanned the page and saw a color photograph of a burned corpse. Blisters pocked its blackened, wrinkled skin. The face could, perhaps, have been Angel's, before fire melted it beyond recognition. The arms rose from the body like rigid sticks.

"Singer Dead," ran the headline. "Lone Star security officers recovered the burned remains of musician Dark Angel from a notorious BTL den," the copy began. "City medical examiners have ruled the death a suicide, induced by illegal simsense chips. Chip-induced suicide remains popular among entertainers, quoted the usual expert. For more details, access 456."

"Do you know what happens now, Dark Angel?"

"You kill me," the elf replied, collapsing against the sheets once more.

"Not at all," Akmura said, licking her lips. "You have already died. No, now you are going to become the most popular dead singer in the history of music."