



TARNISHED STAR

Sammyville





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////////////////////////////////////
CONNECTING TO JACKPOINT VPN...
...IDENTITY SPOOFED
...ENCRYPTION KEYS GENERATED
...CONNECTED TO ONION ROUTERS
////////////////////////////////////

>LOGIN
>ENTER PASSCODE

...BIOMETRIC SCAN CONFIRMED
CONNECTED TO <ERROR: NODE UNKNOWN>
////////////////////////////////////

“Money can buy the necessary police order. Justice is sold to the highest bidder.”
– Rohinton Mistry

////////////////////////////////////
Welcome back to JackPoint, chummer; your last connection was severed **9 hours, 13 minutes, 55 seconds ago**

TODAY'S HEADS-UP

Sometimes Johnny or Jane Law can be your worst enemy, or your best friend. It all depends on the time of day..
–Bull

////////////////////////////////////

INCOMING

>>> When your mouth has an equal chance of getting you into or out of trouble. [TAG: SMOOTH OPERATIONS]
>>> There's absolutely nothing to worry about, everything is completely fine. [TAG: LETHAL HARVEST]
>>> Violence may not be the best option, but it's still an option. [TAG: DEADLY ARTS]

////////////////////////////////////

TOP NEWS ITEMS

>>> Amid public concerns, top scientists backed by the UN to hold press conference regarding global manastorms.
>>> Ammunition prices on all small arms climb as increased demand threatens to outstrip supply.
>>> Taco Temple to test “Temple 2 Go” express shops inside of select Stuffer Shacks; CEO claims that despite the limited menu, they will not sacrifice product quality for convenience.

////////////////////////////////////

JACKPOINT STATS

73 Users are active on the network.

LATEST NEWS

OmniStar stocks on the rise as subsidiary Lone Star Security Services eyes potential expansion into Europe and Mediterranean markets.

PERSONAL ALERTS

>>> You have **11** new private messages.
>>> You have **9** new responses to your JackPoint posts.
>>> Your primary bank account is overdrawn by **3,568¥**.
>>> Your auto insurance company has replied: your policy doesn't cover “cyberzombie” damage.
There are **two** Members online and in your area.

YOUR CURRENT REP SCORE: 699 (64% POSITIVE)

CURRENT TIME: 07 July 2083, 1947 hrs
////////////////////////////////////



THE BROKEN BLUE LINE

BY RJ THOMAS

OUTSIDE THE
HOLE-LOTTA-LOVIN' BAKERY
TACOMA-SOUTH DISTRICT,
FREE CITY OF SEATTLE
OCTOBER 29, 2082
0205 LOCAL TIME

The dwarven ganger couldn't believe his luck—he'd found the *perfect* thing to tag.

Crouching next to the Lone Star patrol car, he thought about how his rep was gonna skyrocket after this tag. But as he pulled a spray can of Bublegum Pink from his backpack, he heard a harsh voice from behind.

"Bad idea, kid."

The ganger froze and audibly swallowed.

"Now, drop the can, keep your hands where I can see them, and stand up ... *slowly*," the voice commanded.

The ganger complied, slowly standing and turning as the can fell to the wet pavement with a metallic ping.

Officer Ryan Becker, Lone Star Security Services (badge number 61658), walked the five paces from his spot in front of the 24-hour bakery toward the ganger, hand on his sidearm, as the Tacoma drizzle formed fat droplets on his new department-issued Stetson.

"H-hey, look, chummer ... I-I mean sir! SIR! I-I-I was j-just, I mean, I wasn't gonna hurt anyone!" he said while visibly trembling.

Towering over the dwarf kid, Becker leaned in and turned his head slightly so that he was looking the kid directly in the eyes through the smart monocle over his left eye.

"I got your face, your biometrics. Try anything like this again, your hoop is mine. *Scan?*" Becker growled.

The ganger nodded as tears formed in his eyes. "Now ... *vanish!*" Becker shouted.

The ganger ran back down the alley with a speed that defied the shortness of his legs.

Straightening his posture, Becker sighed as his partner exited the bakery.

"Holy dreck, Beck! You had that sawed-off halfer on at least a dozen violations, not to mention curfew. And you let him go?" asked Sergeant Dan Styles (badge number 39940). A large box of donuts occupied his hands; the third such box this week alone.

Becker shrugged. "Not worth the paperwork. Hopefully he got the point."

"Their kind never do," Styles retorted. "Keep this up, you're gonna get a rep on the streets for being a pushover, and that puts *me* at risk. And why do you keep waiting outside of this nice, comfy new cruiser?"

"We've been out of service for forty-five minutes already. Are we finished?" Becker interjected.

Styles' expression darkened. "Are we finished, *Sergeant.*"

Becker faced his partner and supervisor. Styles was old-school Lone Star, having earned his stripes during the 2050s by embracing the cracking skulls, shooting first, and maybe asking questions methodology.