

Connecting JackPoint VPN ...
 ... Matrix Access ID Spoofed.
 ... Encryption Keys Generated.
 ... Connected to Onion Routers.
 > Login

 > Enter Passcode

 ... Biometric Scan Confirmed.
 Connected to <ERROR: NODE UNKNOWN>

"Immortals don't have to beat you, just out wait you."

JackPoint Stats

126 users currently active in the network

Latest News

It's about time we looked at our southern neighbor again; you know how elves like to be the center of attention. – FastJack

Personal Alerts

- * You have 2 new [private messages](#).
- * You have 9 new [responses](#) to your JackPoint posts.
- * Your manicure is scheduled in thirty-one minutes. Remember your pink nail polish, macho man.

First Degree

Two Members are online and in your area.

Your Current Rep Score: 147 (79% Positive)

Current Time: 11 Sept 2074, 1229 hrs

Welcome back to JackPoint, chummer; your last connection was severed: **2 days, 2 hours ago.**



Today's Heads Up

* One of our favorite Pointers decided to get the down low on our favorite Elf playland, Tir Tairngire, and he brought a friend—Tarlán—to help. Read and see what has changed over the past few years. –FastJack

Incoming

- * Who knew rocks could be interesting? Once Awakened, these things might never go to sleep. [Tag: [Parageology](#)]
- * If you're looking for a chance to work a little farther north, Montreal might be a nice stop, eh? [Tag: [Montreal 2074](#)]
- * Well the last one was popular, and guns make the world go round. [Tag: [Gun H\(e\)aven 2](#)]
- * I know somebody is looking for some help in the Underground. [Tag: [Burn](#)]

Top News Items

- * Three FBI agents are slain in their Springfield, Michigan homes. Corporate agents are suspected. [Link](#)
- * Terrorists strike at Seattle's Green Party headquarters, leaving behind seven bodies and over four hundred gallons of toxic waste. [Link](#)
- * Renraku has sentenced former CAS Congressional Representative Lance Jennings to death for corporate espionage. The sentence will be carried out in [two days](#). [Link](#)
- * CAS has revoked citizenship from nearly seven hundred people who held dual citizenship with the Renraku Corporation. The Confederate Aviation administration has denied all Renraku flight privileges. [Link](#)

- PREFERENCES
- FEEDS
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- NEXUS
- SEARCH

Active

ComStar Firewall

Active

Jack-in-the-Box Antivirus

Active

SpamWitch Filter

On/Receiving

Commcode

Excellent

Signal

Active

Hidden Mode

Local Map

THE LAND OF PROMISE

Posts/Files tagged with "The Land of Promise":

- * Tir Tairngire Basics
- * Soaring Above the Clouds
- * Cara'Sir
- * Tir Tairngire Politics

[\[More\]](#)

CONTINUE
 ADVANCED SEARCH

SAVE



LAYERS

To people with the eyes to see it that way, Portland is not a place, it's a *thing*. A living, breathing, eating, shitting creature. An animal. Most tourists only see the outside, the shining fur, the bright eyes. They appreciate Portland—or Cara'Sir, if they want to sound like the new natives—for being beautiful, they keep a safe distance, and they think it's gorgeous and graceful. They're like people watching a tiger at a zoo. They don't know it, really *know* it, like folks with a closer view.

Patrolman Craig Young knew better. He saw the lower layers, not just the shiny veneer. He didn't spend much time amidst the shining spires of Downtown, the lights of the Telestrian Habitat, or his brother Constabulary officers with their hokey horses and their paychecks triple the size of his. The tourists, the academics, the high society mavens, the good citizens—those were not his people, not the ones he dealt with day in and day out. He didn't simply admire the predatory grace of Cara'Sir from a distance; he was immersed in it. He spent his nights tucked soundly in the belly of the beast. As an elven officer with the wrong kind of reputation, he got the worst beats to walk, the worst neighborhoods to patrol, the worst parasites to deal with. Young saw the claws and fangs firsthand, with no intervening iron bars or glass.

Young liked to classify the neighborhoods by how much augmented reality they indulged in; given his particular skill set

and outlook, he spent more time in AR than most, and it colored his perceptions. The gaudy Downtown sights, the hotels of Elk Town, the conference centers and eateries of Westmoreland? What wasn't a magical illusion was an AR overlay, as often as not. It was all painted up, either with wonderful wizards or console cowboys, to dazzle and distract and impress. Their dark reflection, the other side of the coin, was Cara'Sir's ugliest neighborhoods. Guilds Lake, the half-renewed industrial park on Swan Island, the Meat Racks down by the port? There the AR was more desperate, where it existed. Triple-X rated, thick with syndicate-sponsored subliminals, illegal tracking cookies, and occasional malware. The electronic overlay of Portland's underbelly was like top-notch tridcreens propped up in rotting, roach-infested, BTL dens. It was there to hold your attention while someone took your nuyen, your blood, your soul. Or all three. Only the places in between showed their true colors. Tigard and Progress, Faloma and St John's, places where what you saw was what you got. The honest places. The middle places.

Part of Young liked avoiding those places in the middle. Even riding solo in his patrol car—Pritchett had, surprise surprise, gotten yet another last-minute assignment that kept him from having to ride with a "round-ear lover" like Young—he preferred the thrill of

Portland's worst corners. Here in the dark, a cop could get away with things that were impossible in the city's nicer districts. Especially a cop with the right skills, magical aptitude, and headware.

Young idled in his sedan, chewing on some betel gum and doing what no one else in the Constabulary would or could. He'd spotted another one; an AR underlay, a crafty way some seemingly legit businesses advertised their less-than-clean secondary operations. This one was a basic list of options and prices for a massage parlor, but with the right password—or a powerful Spoof program, which was what Young had—you could turn the special offers page into a list of less-than-savory actions with less-than-legal partners. At least the Shooters down at the Meat Racks ran clean parlors with willing participants. Outfits like this, though? Here, the Peace Force couldn't just take a small cut and turn a blind eye. Or at least, Young couldn't.

His headware commlink spun to life, and he danced with it. Dipping into full VR—seat laid back, windows tinted, sedan armored—he and his Fairlight slipped through menu option after menu option, leapt and spun from node to node, sliced through their secure code neatly and smoothly. In an eyeblink he had skipped past their clumsy IC and in a heartbeat he was a full administrator. He downloaded their lists of working girls, their clients, their employees, and sent instant data relays to friends in the Constabulary. He found their money, and the seventeen separate numbered accounts where it was kept.

He smiled and edited the base code of their sign.

As Young straightened his seat and pulled his black-and-white away, easing into light traffic to continue his patrol, bank accounts and passwords scrolled serenely on the animated sign. He knew how the animal of Cara'Sir worked. The bank accounts would be drained by the greedy and selfish faster than the parlor itself would be raided by law enforcement, and he didn't mind a bit. It was a win. Some of the city's poor would have a little extra spending money, one less thing to worry about with the Rite and the elections coming up. The girls who rented out little girls would still lose their cash. The cops who cared more about glory than order would still get their busts, eventually. Young wouldn't get official credit for any of it, but he didn't care. The work was getting done, the girls would be freed, and this layer of Portland would be a little better off. He'd done it before, and things had fallen into place just fine.

He was feeling pretty pleased with himself, then, when he came across the sloppiest burglary in Portland's history a few blocks later. Three ork youths—gangers from the Spans, judging by their black-on-gray colors—were clambering into the shattered front window of a ¥-4-NERPS pawn shop. For a split-second he wondered how they'd gotten the bars off, even as a mental command got his patrol car's lights flashing while the siren warbled twice. His question was answered by one look at the shoulders of the burly teens, and the way the light dully gleamed off the crowbars two of them carried.

Car 34 to Dispatch. 459 in progress at my GPS. Backup requested, he piped silently and invisibly as he clambered out of his car, drawing in a lungful of air to bellow in his best command voice.

"Peace Force! Put your hands up!"

The cinder block, hurled at him by the third ork ganger, almost took his head off. Young was too quick, though, lunging sideways to dodge it. Laying sidelong on the pavement, his Falcon pistol barked twice and a pair of gel rounds slammed into the ork's chest. The targeting reticule of his smartlink broadcast to his department-issue Oakleys centered on the ork's head a split-second later. The Span wasn't bright enough to take the hint from the first two shots, and he raised

crowbar to attack. His head snapped back as Young squeezed the trigger, and the ork spun to the ground. The opening exchange was brutally one-sided, but it kept Young from realizing he hadn't received confirmation from dispatch.

He didn't have time to think about it a heartbeat later, either, when the two that were still awake came rushing at him. They were all high on jazz or kamikaze or—*Man, I hope it's not K-10*—something, coming at him even as he emptied his magazine into the pair of them. As a half dozen gel rounds raised welts and bruises or bounced off armored street leathers, they bellowed about broken promises, ripping the ears off Keeblers like him, and following orders. He let his sidearm clatter to the pavement after the slide locked back, empty, and his right hand darted to his duty belt for his baton while his left tried a stiff-arm to buy him the space he'd need to draw it. It was going to be ugly, and it was going to be up close.

A crowbar swipe almost broke his collarbone, a gut punch blasted the wind from him, and a ham-sized fist snapped his head sideways. Young gave as good as he got, though, keeping a cool head and lashing out with the shock baton, battering with hilt strikes when they got too close to properly engage the electrically charged end. A downward smash of the crowbar cracked the densiplast forearm guards hidden beneath his jacket, a hot gust of foul breath made his eyes water as gleaming fang implants shone centimeters from his smartglasses, and a full-shouldered shove sent him tumbling almost back to his squad car. He came back with baton strikes to the head, a brutal elbow, a dirty kick from a densiplast-enforced boot.

Young's world exploded in static and bright light, then, and as he clawed his shattered Oakleys off his face and let his eyes adjust, trying to ignore the ringing in his head, he saw that one of his assailants was down and groaning. The other had gotten in a cheap shot and used the opening to run. An ork-sized blur of black and gray rounded a corner into nearby alley. Young stooped to recover his sidearm as he went, leaning down to trigger his stun baton one last time and jab hard at the Span ganger lying on the pavement. Then he ran, and the chase was on.

34 to Dispatch, 34 to Dispatch. Code Purple, 245 on an officer! 11-99! 10-73?

By reflex, he and his Fairlight shot the data equivalent of emergency flares, calling for Constabulary back-up as he sprinted down winding alleys, dodging dumpsters and squatters. The ganger he was chasing was probably fifteen years younger than him, with ork-strong legs and ork-powerful lungs, high on some combat drug and riding a wave of adrenaline. The ork went out of his way to bull through anything in his path, knocking over garbage cans, sending piles of crates tumbling, throwing everything he could in Young's way. Young was better, though. More experienced. He moved through the real world as smoothly as he did the Matrix, avoiding what he couldn't overcome. There was a smoothness to his actions—vaulting over a rusty trash can, taking three steps up a wall to grab a fire escape, swinging from it to the top of a dumpster, sliding across the rain-slick lid and down, feet under him, sprinting again—that the ork lacked, and where the young ganger went through everything in his path, Young slipped past it, over it, around it. Young found a hole, every time. He was gaining. Steadily gaining. Almost on him. All he needed was a good straightaway to pop in a fresh magazine and draw a bead, or one more little slip-up to let him get within arm's reach. Almost there.

Another alley mouth opened up to a street that needed crossing, and Young had the time he needed. He slapped a cold polymer magazine

into his Telestrian Falcon, the slide slapped forward to chamber a round, and instead of continuing the chase he raised the pistol.

"Peace Force!" The gun barked twice, Young's aim purposefully low. "Halt!"

The Span ganger tumbled to the rain-slick pavement yowling in pain and clutching at a bleeding leg. He tumbled and rolled, trying to scramble backwards on all fours and pitifully raise his hands at the same time. Officer Young advanced with his pistol held on the ork, left hand dipping to his duty belt to grab some restraints.

He spared a skyward glance as he piped another command to his headware, *Dispatch, this is 34. Come in, come in. 11-41 at my location, I repeat, ambulance needed at my loca*—The limousine barreled into the ork fast enough to send him flying, and the custom Westwind stretch-job was low enough to the ground that it kicked him up for some real hang time. The low-slung machine stopped on a dime a split-second afterward, and Young was sure the brake lights hadn't engaged until after the impact. The Span was a sprawled-out mess, limp as a rag doll, head pulped. Young registered it all in an instant, knowing he was dealing with a driver that was chromed enough to hit the ork or not, and that he had chosen, consciously chosen, to run him down.

Young leveled his sidearm as a rear passenger window slid down. Then, a second later, his vision was dazzled by flashing, stabbing lights. A pair of squad cars and a trio of rotodrones had this block cordoned off, and every one of them lit him up with their spotlights at once. With his smartglasses broken, the light was a physically painful thing, knocking him back half a step, but leaving the face he'd seen—the passenger in the limo—etched all the more sharply into his mind.

"I would holster that, Officer, before it gets you killed."

It was only after Young's kydex holster clapped onto his sidearm and he lamely lifted his hands in the air that the spotlights went away. They didn't turn off, though. They all just swiveled, finding other targets, dazzling and spearing at an apartment window here, a storefront there, a couple on the street, a late-night food vendor at his cart. Each of the civilians was pinned in place as surely as Young had been; they all knew that a Peace Force spotlight came mounted on a gun. They all knew what that attention meant.

"Do climb in, please, and stop waving your arms around. You're embarrassing the Constabulary."

Still off-balance, Young stooped to enter the luxurious back seat of the Eurocar. He blinked away the darkness of the interior, then did his best not to gawk. Sitting across from him were Princes Conall Taylor and Jonathon Gant, two of the most powerful men in the Tir.

Taylor drawled at him again, with that famous amused edge to his voice, while holding up a slender flute.

"Champagne?"

"I'm, um, on duty." It was the first thing Young thought to say, even as the limo pulled away and left his squad car behind.

"Your shift expired at 21:15, actually. You were called back to the station and formally reprimanded for an unwarranted search of a privately owned node." Gant's deeper voice was almost robotic, clinical, detached, matter-of-fact. Wholly uncaring. "No one is turning a blind eye to your little game this time. You're facing official legal sanction for your tampering and will likely face compensation charges from the businessmen you wronged."

Taylor lit up the back of the limo with a smile.

"Or, rather, you *will* if we decide to have Johnny here hit send on a

few messages he's got queued up. Perhaps you'd rather sit and talk for a few minutes, Officer Young?"

Young sat.

"As wise as you are athletic, Officer. A fine performance, by the way. We already knew you were mentally sharp, but it was nice to see you in action tonight. You didn't do a bad job at all with those Spans. No hesitation, solid shooting, and good stick-work." He paused for a cheery little toast and a sip of bubbly. "We already knew you were good at chases, though. Jon?"

"Young, Craig Joshua. Born October 2, 2040, Tir Tairngire Medical Center, to Michael and Cindy—"

"Oh, hold just a moment, Jon." Taylor held up his flute of champagne to interrupt, nodding toward one door as the Westwind glided to a halt. "And scoot over just a bit, Officer. Who knows *what* she's wearing tonight?"

As it turned out, she—Prince Amy Joubert—was dressed rather conservatively, not wearing one of her splendidly formal, often magically decorated gowns. She slipped into the back of the limousine gracefully, as she did almost everything else. Taylor handed her the champagne he'd offered to Young by way of greeting.

"Miss Joubert, always a pleasure. We were just getting to the dirty secrets part. Jon started a bit early in the timeline, though. Do skip on to the interesting parts, you're being dreadfully dull."

Jonathon Gant—head of the Information Secretariat, the shadowy espionage center of the entire nation—shot Taylor a glare that would have made an ordinary citizen fear for his life and the life of his family. Nonetheless, he cleared his throat and continued. Young could only just barely make out the telltale glimmer on Gant's eyes, tiny slices of data shining over his cyberoptics, giving away the fact that he was reading off a list from deep within his headware.

"Very well. Young, Craig Joshua. Formally joined the Rinelle ke'Tesrae in 2059, serving primarily as Matrix enforcement. Made a sysop of the *Shay ke'Sallah*, or 'forest of silence,' after less than a year's service as a data courier. Responsible for Matrix assaults on nine Netwatch officers in that time, directly involved in four operations that caused twenty-seven deaths and sixty-four injuries, handled data, coordination, and planning for at least eight more."

Taylor tsk'ed loudly, and even Joubert frowned prettily. Gant didn't show that much emotion; he just kept rattling off sentence fragments like he was cribbing notes instead of describing a string of violent terrorist activities.

"Left the Rinelle during the amnesty period offered following the passage of the Zincan Act. Enlisted in the Peace Force, requesting a position in NetWatch and citing 'other' as qualifications. Served well from 2066 to 2072, with background records safely classified from all but higher-ups. In 2072, formally requested reassignment to the military branch, specifying the Ghosts as a desired position. Was transferred to Constabulary instead and put on Patrol, formally reprimanded for unnecessary paperwork and repeated requests. Transfer requests continued."

Taylor made a grand show of producing a commlink from within his jacket pocket, waving a finger to put it in speaker mode, and settling it onto the seat between he and Gant.

"And, with Prince Parris joining us ..." As Taylor spoke, the commlink broadcast an AR display of the perpetually scowling, dark-haired Prince. "... storytime is over, and I believe it's time for a little Q&A."

"Were you a Paladin of the Rinelle ke'Tesrae?" Prince Joubert's voice was softer than the rest. She lacked the perpetually bemused edge of Taylor's and the clinical disconnect of Gant's. She was a Paladin, herself, Young remembered.

"I swore Oaths to bring about change, yes."

"As part of an Initiation?"

Taylor's question caught him off guard. They had to know he was an adept, of course, but he wasn't sure they'd known how advanced he was.

"Yes."

"And why turn your back on it, then? Why join the Peace Force?"

It was Prince Joubert again, managing to sound almost concerned. Taylor was having fun with him, Gant was interrogating him. Joubert seemed almost worried about him, empathetic to what he went through, understanding.

"I didn't turn my back on anything. I became the change I thought the country needed, even after the Coup accomplished most of what we were after. The people got their elections. They got their Rites and rights back. I wanted things to keep getting better, but thought I could do that from inside, not outside, the system."

"And since then?" The voice was tinny, a little cold. Sharper than Gant's, though. Parris. "Why continue badgering your commanding officers with these demands to be transferred? They've made you a pariah in your own precinct."

"Because this isn't where I want to be."

"Why?" It was from Prince Parris again, piping from the commlink. It was a demand, not a question.

"Because I feel like I can do more good..."

"Stop." It was Gant, interrupting with those cold, dead, eyes of his. "You should know I'm monitoring you in a dozen different ways to test the honesty of your answers and I'm reporting my findings to my peers real-time. Prince Joubert and her unique talents are also in play. Tell us only the truth."

"Lying to a Prince is a capital crime." Parris's voice carried more than the hint of a threat. "You were one of NetWatch's best, now you're just a beat cop, hated by your peers. You want to be a Ghost, instead. Why?"

"I think I'd fit in better with the Ghosts than ..."

"We can have you shot, you know. Why?"

"I feel the Constabulary isn't fully utilizing my potential to bring about greater..."

"If he lies to us again, Prince Taylor, kindly snatch the life from him with your bare hands."

"Because they killed her." Young almost spat the words at them, feeling the anger rise up in him like bile. "You already know it, but you

bastards want to make me say it? Fine. Because when the Rinelle got their leg caught in a trap, it acted like an animal and gnawed it off. With Horizon and the Peace Force coming in at them under the Zincan Act, some of the Brat'mael decided to go out 'purging' Rinelle cells they thought were weakening the movement."

"And so your wife was killed," Amy Joubert spoke softly, as though she'd lost a friend herself.

"Danielle was too moderate for them, and she was a human. That was enough for them to want her dead. I want them dead for it." The dam broke, and Young let the words pour from him angrily. "Fuck NetWatch. Fuck the Constabulary. I want to be *chasing* them. I want to be hunting down what's left of the Black Sun and killing them. I want to pay them back for what they did to me, and to her, and to my life. And you all know the Ghosts is the only place to do that."

"Not the only place." Taylor cut in again, this time without any sarcasm. His upper-crust, foppish, veneer vanished, and there was a formality and seriousness to his tone that was lacking before. "But we recruit from the Ghosts, too, so at least you have been trying to step in the right direction. We're short on Matrix overwatch since the Boise job, and Young fits what we need. I say aye. Those in favor?"

"Aye," Gant sounded bored, even as he agreed.

"Aye," Joubert said, sadness still touching her voice. "Though I fear the hunt will bring you no peace, Craig."

"Aye," Parris said, as though he'd been on Young's side all along.

"Very well. That gives us four direct votes. Joubert carries Foster's proxy, Telestrian and Demarco are formally listed as agreeing with the rest of the Council in these matters, which gives us seven. Rex couldn't care less, Zincan and Van den Berg don't know, and fuck Jaeger. We've got our vote, the matter is settled."

"The ... matter?" Young rather wished he'd accepted the champagne now. Or any other drink, preferably harder.

"You're in. We'll have your things moved to the training facility shortly. Your brothers and sisters will take over for the formal initiatory rites, but in the meantime the least we could do was give you a ride."

As the Westwind slowed, Young saw they were cruising to a stop on Royal Hill, outside one of the luxurious manors that had been so hastily vacated when the old Council was abolished. A fit-looking black human with a clean-shaven head and a salt-and-pepper goatee stood on the curb, hands on his hips. Prince Taylor nodded to him as their driver unlocked the rear door for Young to climb out.

"Marcus will take you from here. Welcome to the Moonlight Thorns. And congratulations on your progression, Sir Young."



THE LAND OF PROMISE



GRIMMY SAYS

Hi there! I'm Grimmy the Grimoire! I'm your familiar, here to help you Experience The Magic! If you have any questions while perusing this datafile, please feel free to access my icon at any time. I live to serve! I'll gladly let you access my arcane secrets and tell you everything you need to know about my sorcerous homeland, Tír Tairngire.

- Dammit. We normally disable crap like this before hosting this sort of tourist file. Why aren't the normal silence protocols working so that we can make this irritating little bastard to stop chattering at me?
- Black Mamba
- Muwahaha!
- Slamm-O!

Has the tedium of the everyday got you feeling bored, weary, worn down, exhausted ... mundane? Are you tired of the glass and concrete of [_insertlocale_]’s skyline, the gaudy, artificial, lights, the choking pollution, the normality of it all? Do you need a break from the ordinary and a trip to the extraordinary? Do you crave the adventure of a lifetime, where you can show your children supernatural wonders, indulge in the finest dining and entertainment the Sixth World has to offer, and marvel at paranormal creatures in their fantastic native environments? Then it's time for you to Experience the Magic.

Leave [_insertlocale_] behind! Walk in ancient woodlands restored to their primeval glory, wrap yourself in the warm embrace of the greenest cities in the world, experience fantastic shows only possible with supernatural talent, romance your loved one in the City of Roses, and bring the wonder back into your life. Experience the Magic of Tír Tairngire!

- I think I'm getting diabetes just reading this crap.
- Rigger X
- Yes, Charisma Associates' latest travel brochure is going to be a sickly-sweet pile of garbage, but that doesn't mean we can't use it as a jumping off point to have a real discussion. The Tír's right in our back yard, for those of us working out of Seattle, and it's been a while since we really took a look at the place. Just keep your image filters high to block out the photospam of the place, then go to it.
- Pistons

TÍR TAIRNGIRE BASICS

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Population:	5,001,000
Human:	3%
Elf:	78%
Dwarf:	8%
Ork:	9%
Troll:	1%
Other:	1%
Per Capita Income:	42,000¥
Population Below Poverty Level:	20%
Estimated SINless:	7%
Education:	
Less Than Twelve Years:	2%
High School Equivalency:	52%
College Degrees:	35%
Advanced Degrees:	11%

- Welcome to the new Tír, just like the old Tír?
- Pistons
- Yes, about eight of the ten faces on the street will still be elven, but that sort of thing changes slowly given metahuman lifespans. Dwarves are holding steady at the number two spot, for much the same reason. Ork breeding rates show their demographic climbing the most, but the human overall average has dropped slightly in the wake of the regime changes. The Tír doesn't self-advertise as being only elf friendly any more, but it's still sold as meta friendly. Humans are fine as tourists, but not exactly encouraged to stick around.
- Kay St. Irregular

- So, who were these Rinelle guys again? I was like five when they first showed up, and the Tír datadumps are full of conflicting info on these dudes and dudettes.
- /dev/grrl
- Who they *are*—they're still around—is a bunch of elven supremacist wankers. Or hippies who wanted to oust the Princes and bring about social change for the poor, or bold urban guerrillas fighting for a better Tír, or gunrunning thugs just out to make a buck, or hard-working citizens out to improve their lot in life, or zealous Tír patriots out to fix the world, or no-good terrorists who murder babies. It all depends, lass, on who you ask.
- Thorn
- Uhh. Yeah. That's not really helpful, grandpa.
- /dev/grrl