

CHARITY

safe haven rescue zoo

We welcome once again the Safe Haven Rescue Zoo as our charity for 2016. They had an amazing time at the convention in 2015 and they are excited to be back.

FIND THEM AT:
safehavenwildlife.com

Safe Haven Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Imlay, NV (see map). We provide rehabilitative services and permanent placement for wildlife in need. We respond to assistance requests from state and federal agencies, law enforcement, veterinarians, and concerned citizens.

Many of our wild residents are former exotic "pets." Several have come to Safe Haven as the result of major rescue efforts coordinated by agencies and sanctuaries nationwide.

Our solar-powered facility is designed to have a minimal impact on the environment and to serve as a model of renewable energy practices.

Safe Haven conducts tours and on-site and off-site educational programs by appointment. We are open for visits seven days a week during the daylight hours. Please contact Lynda Sugasa, Executive Director (775-538-7093) to schedule a tour.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

fursuit heads & masks

HEY! THIS IS IMPORTANT!
DO NOT GO TO THE CASINO FLOOR
WITH YOUR FACE COVERED.

Please be aware that if you are wearing a mask or full fursuit head that you are not to wear it into the casino area. Casino security will quickly find you (there are cameras everywhere), and escort you away. They are within their rights to eject you from the property; don't test them.

This rule only applies to the casino area. Our convention area is separate, and it's easy to get to and from your hotel room, or the parking lot, without breaking costume.

CASINO

This convention is taking place inside a casino-hotel.

For the convenience of our attendees under 21, the convention space is not in the casino area. Individuals under 21 are not allowed in the casino area, but you may walk around the casino area to get to restaurants and other businesses within the hotel.

If you are 21 or older, you are welcome to visit the casino and partake in some gambling at any point during your stay.

Attendees may not gamble in the convention space; state law requires gambling to occur in licensed casino areas.

general conduct

This is an all-ages family-convention; please keep your dress and behavior in line with this fact. If you are doing or wearing anything offensive, obscene, or disruptive, you may be asked to leave. If you are asked to leave repeatedly, your badge may be revoked.

Obey all laws. If it's not legal for you to do it anywhere else, it's not legal here.

Please don't ignore any reasonable request by the staff. Please don't block any doors. If you're in a line and the line goes past a door, please leave a space for the door. Please don't block pathways and high-traffic areas; step to the side.

Do not display, draw conspicuously, or otherwise 'have out' any sexually explicit or adult artwork that you may have purchased or brought with you. Please be mindful of the safety of yourself and others; don't throw things, don't tackle people from behind, etc.

No panhandling. No selling anything unless you are an authorized dealer or artist. If you want to sell things, please talk to the staff and we will help you obtain a temporary Reno business license (it's pretty easy). Note that because of state laws, you cannot sell raffle or drawing tickets.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

heckling

Please keep your comments to yourself. Please don't heckle the stage. Please don't heckle the fursuiters. Please don't heckle anyone. It's not funny and falls under disruptive behavior.

alcohol

Alcohol is allowed inside the convention space. In fact, there will be a bar for your convenience, with special drinks just for us!

If you drink, don't drive! Please have a designated driver or a hotel room. The convention center staff will be happy to call you a cab if you need one.

Some convention attendees are under 21, and they obviously are not allowed to consume alcohol. Don't let them.

Lastly, please drink responsibly. Babysitting someone who has had too much is a huge drag for everyone.

other mind-altering substances

Drugs (other than alcohol) are not allowed in the hotel, or in the convention space. Hotel security will eject you from the hotel without a refund if you possess illegal drugs.

The authorities will be called and the hotel/casino will be informed in the event of:

A minor caught intoxicated or in the possession of alcohol

Any illegal drug use, sales or possession

Don't do any of it. Your money will not be refunded.

rough-housing

Please act responsibly! We are all here to have fun but we also recognize that things can get out of hand very quickly. Please keep it out of the dealer area, out of the game area, away from the stage, and out of any crowded areas. No place left to do it? Then don't do it! If security thinks you're causing a danger to yourself or anyone around you then you will be asked to stop. If it continues, you will be asked to leave.

hotel

Remember that there are other guests in the hotel who are not furies. Please remember that your behavior and appearance will be their first impression of the furry fandom. Respect their personal space; don't approach them unless they invite you for a picture/hug/etc. Fursuiters: go out with a handler until you have assessed the crowds.

If you are hosting a room party, please remember that the person who is renting the room is responsible for anything that happens at your party. This includes responsibility for any damage or clean-up costs and checking IDs if you're serving alcohol or doing 18+ activities. The hotel personnel can shut down your party if it is too disruptive to the other guests.

Don't ruin the fun for everyone else. Please be nice to the building and the property. Don't write on the walls. Don't chew on the furniture. Don't rip up the carpets or claw the walls.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

elevators

We understand. You like to press the shiny buttons. DON'T. The only button on the elevator you need to press is the one that belongs to your floor. Don't make someone wait for three hours by pressing all the buttons.

photography

By attending BLFC, you are authorizing our staff members to take your picture in the convention area for promotional use only. You have no claim or ownership over these pictures.

If you prefer not to have your picture taken, please notify the person with the camera. We will try to respect everyone's wishes, but if your picture has already been taken we can not guarantee it won't be used.

Please ask before taking pictures of fursuiters or other interesting individuals; you will get much better pictures from them that way. If they decline, please don't insist. They may be tired, hungry, or are late for a very important date. Please respect the wishes of others if they do not want to be caught on your camera.

Cameras are not allowed in some areas of the convention, such as the art auction, or the headless lounge. Signs will be posted stating "No Cameras."

The convention will never sell or give pictures to any media entity.

weapons & props

This is a casino; they take weapons very seriously. The hotel has stated that no prop weapons of any kind are allowed (and definitely no real weapons). Water guns, nerf guns, air soft guns, silly string, or any other projectiles are also not allowed in the convention area; it's too easy for them to damage hotel property or other guests' property.

If you have any doubts, ask a staff member before bringing your props to the convention area.

If an item is dangerous to carry around in a crowd due to size, weight, pointiness, etc, you will be asked to put it in your hotel room or car and not carry it around the convention.

Carrying an unsafe prop is grounds for removal from the convention. Swinging or throwing a prop/weapon immediately makes it and you unsafe and is also grounds for removal from the convention.

flyers

BLFC will provide a table for you to leave your flyers for your clubs/conventions. You are also encouraged to leave some in the registration area.

Flyers may be posted only on the walls inside our convention space, and must be posted with blue painter's tape or velcro (velcro works better). Any flyers that are offensive, inappropriate or pornographic will be immediately removed.

You may also post a sign on your hotel room door, again only with blue painter's tape.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

attendance by minors

Anyone who is between the ages of 16 and 18 years of age on the date of the convention must present a signed and notarized parental permission form unless able to produce evidence of legal emancipation. No exceptions.

Anyone who is younger than 16 years of age on the date of the convention must present the signed form and must also be accompanied by a parent at all times. Minors under the age of 16 receive a free badge with their parent's paid badge.

Minors are not permitted under any circumstances to enter areas that have been designated for mature audiences.

hygiene

Bathe. If staff can smell you, you're going to be asked to leave until you can clean yourself up.

For safety, please wear shoes (or fursuit paws) when walking around.

handheld signs

Any signs that advertise services in exchange for anything of monetary value will not be allowed. These signs count as solicitation, and while they may be funny, the law has no sense of humor.

Remember, this is a family-friendly convention; please refrain from signs that could be considered offensive or inappropriate.

staff/volunteer complaints & appeals

PLEASE tell us if there is a staff member being rude or acting inappropriately. Sometimes we don't know what we're doing, especially when stressed. Sometimes the department heads don't see a volunteer's action. We need to know. Please try to get a name.

If you think any staff member is acting inappropriately or unfairly (or you just want to complain), please report it to any senior staff member. You may not know who they are, but find a staffer and ask for one. We will make every effort to remedy the situation.

policy lawyering

Please don't try to get around any of these policies on some technicality. We will work with you if you didn't understand a policy, but we aren't going to tolerate 'but you said right there...' Please don't be a smart-aleck about the rules if we missed something, okay?

liability waiver

The volunteers, staff and directors (the staff) of BLFC will make every attempt to create a safe environment for our attendees.

By attending the con, you agree to indemnify and hold harmless the con and its staff of and from any and all claims, demands, actions, causes of action, losses, damages, lawsuits, including reasonable attorneys' fees and court costs, but only to the extent caused by, related to, or arising out of the work performed by the con.

Liability is limited to the cost of attendance.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

anything else we didn't think of

Just because it's not listed here, doesn't mean you can do it. Please use your head and act responsibly. If it endangers anyone, including yourself, you aren't allowed to do it. Remember: If it's not legal outside the convention, it's not legal inside the convention. If a staff member decides you can't do something, then you can't do it!

Just because it's not here now doesn't mean it won't be soon. Please read over the policies again before the convention. Rules are subject to change at any time, which includes on-the-fly during the convention due to necessity.

If you feel any of these policies are unfair, please contact staff for an appeal for change. Remember, we are willing to work with you. If you're not sure, ASK! Staff is there for a reason.



GUEST OF HONOR

drama llama

Is this thing on?...

Dear BLFC Planning Staff, Organizers, Lackeys Slaves and Sycophants:

I have reluctantly accepted your nomination for Guest of Honor, although I'm pretty sure it's yet another in a long line of cruel hoaxes that the furry fandom likes to play on me. However, my publicity manager has convinced me this will go a long way towards obtaining the title of "True Popufur" so I have grudgingly accepted and will play along with your little game.

For now.

However: I'm told that all celebrities and rock stars have a contract rider that provides highly essential creature comforts to them for the duration of the engagement so in order for me to make an appearance at your convention I will require the following to be included as part of my personal contract rider:

- 2 bales of premium quality alfalfa hay
- Six cases of fizzy French mineral water.
- One bottle Pappy Van Winkle Bourbon.
- Qty 100 2mg Xanax tablets (for anxiety)
- Qty 100 40mg Paxcil tablets (to not be depressed about having to take Xanax)
- Qty 100 10mg Valium (to relax enough to be able to take the antidepressants)
- Qty 100 5 mg Ritalin (To stay awake long enough to do stuff after all the antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs and focus on the important thing: me)
- Qty 100 Ambien (to help sleep after the Ritalin)
- One tin of Russian Beluga Caviar and a bag of Nacho Doritos to eat it with.
- One Bottle Moët & Chandon Dom Perignon Charles & Diana 1961.
- One bowl of green M&Ms, with the candy shells removed.
- One bowl of multicolor peanut M&Ms with the peanuts removed.
- Six changes of silk boxer underwear.
- Six pairs of two-toed socks (black preferred).
- An unbreakable comb with four tines missing.
- A one-cubic foot solid block of copper.
- An autographed color 8" x 10" glossy photo of Daenerys Targaryen's mammalian protruberances.
- A comfy litter, with four sexy ungulate litter bearers.
- My own personal attendant and groomer.
- Full 24/7 security detail with bodyguards.
- My own entourage of at least five rabid fans any time I make a public appearance.
- One of those Japanese electric toilets that blow-dries, massages and curry-combs your butt.

Also very important: No Paparazzi.

All my food is to be pre-chewed, and the individual chewing it for me must be removed from the premises immediately afterwards.

People are absolutely forbidden to yell "DRAMA LLAMA!!" at me in public for no apparent reason. Especially the con-goers. Severe penalties should be strictly enforced by the Dorkai or equivalent con security staff. Beatings are encouraged for multiple offenders.

All YouTube videos, Twitter, Facebook updates and other social media about me can only feature positive things about me like my long, delicate ears, sensitive expression and silky golden pelt. All negative comments posted to be taken down/DMCA'd immediately and a stern letter sent from the BLFC legal staff.

And most importantly: No hugs. Ever.

Please stay tuned for further requirements. Reach me by email or through my agent if you think of anything else I should require.

His Royal Popufurness
The Drama Llama

BUDDY

GUEST OF HONOR

Under the Bromethean Regime, a husky by the name of Buddy bears a natural charisma and optimism that quickly grabs the attention of BLFCorp. The monochromatic canine is quickly recruited by the Hushpuppies as a vehicle for required joy and happiness to all, and his enthusiasm (and effectiveness) earns him swift promotion up the ladder.

One day, he receives a troubling text from an unknown number. Confused by the out-of-protocol communication, Buddy picks up his phone and shares an exchange that will change the course of his career, and his life.

Unable to sleep waiting for the reply that never comes, Buddy chooses to break curfew the next night, sneaking out to meet the mysterious messenger in Center Square. Led inside to a dimly lit room, the husky finds himself surrounded by a ragtag band of furs bearing the symbol of The Resistance, including their leader, Benjamin Parker, father of Sam Parker.

Silently, Benjamin shakes his head, his eyes locked onto the Hushpuppy.

Benjamin takes Buddy under his wing as he unfolds the dark story of the Bromethean Regime on the unsuspecting husky's ears. Feeling used and betrayed, Buddy vows to join the resistance as an undercover mole from within the Hushpuppies to siphon key inside information to the group.

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The Loyalty Games are widely advertised, an event well-known and appreciated by happy, obedient citizens, but known inside the corp to be a sick demonstration of using unsuspecting furs as pawns for entertainment. Though he didn't audition, Buddy is selected to be among the participants, the only Hushpuppy present. Benjamin texts Buddy about the need for urgency to act.

The loss of Benjamin is devastating for Buddy, crushing his heart at the loss of a close friend and mentor. But this sets fire to his spirit and determination to follow through on the original plan, for Benjamin's sake... for society's sake.

As warned by Benjamin before his disappearance, The Loyalty Games go horribly for the husky - He loses in the first round and is made a ridiculed example among his fellow Hushpuppies due to his perceived ineptitude. His effectiveness is called into question after he is unable to control Drama Llama to Brometheus' satisfaction during the Exhibition of Dance.

The troubled canine sees the writing on the wall and quickly plots. At the Great Loyalty Gathering of 2015, all of the highest regime members were gathered, including Buddy as lead Hushpuppy - a perfect opportunity to make a public spectacle. And what a spectacle it becomes - the deed is done.

In front of a crowd infiltrated by the Resistance, Buddy wields the bloody tool to symbolize the end of a regime, the end of an era, the end of uncontrolled control. Rising fists in glory, the Resistance Wins as chants echo throughout the crowd in victory. But every end is a new beginning...

Two years since their founding, the Crushpuppies driven by their leader, Zero, actively seek out more and more allies to join the forces driven to rid the world the green menace. The Crushpuppies manage to steal a phone from the Sons of Brometheus and begin hacking to gather any leads who might have information on Liquid. To Zero's surprise, the team finds the contact information for Buddy on the phone, and the Crushpuppy leader makes haste in texting the one who changed the course of history.

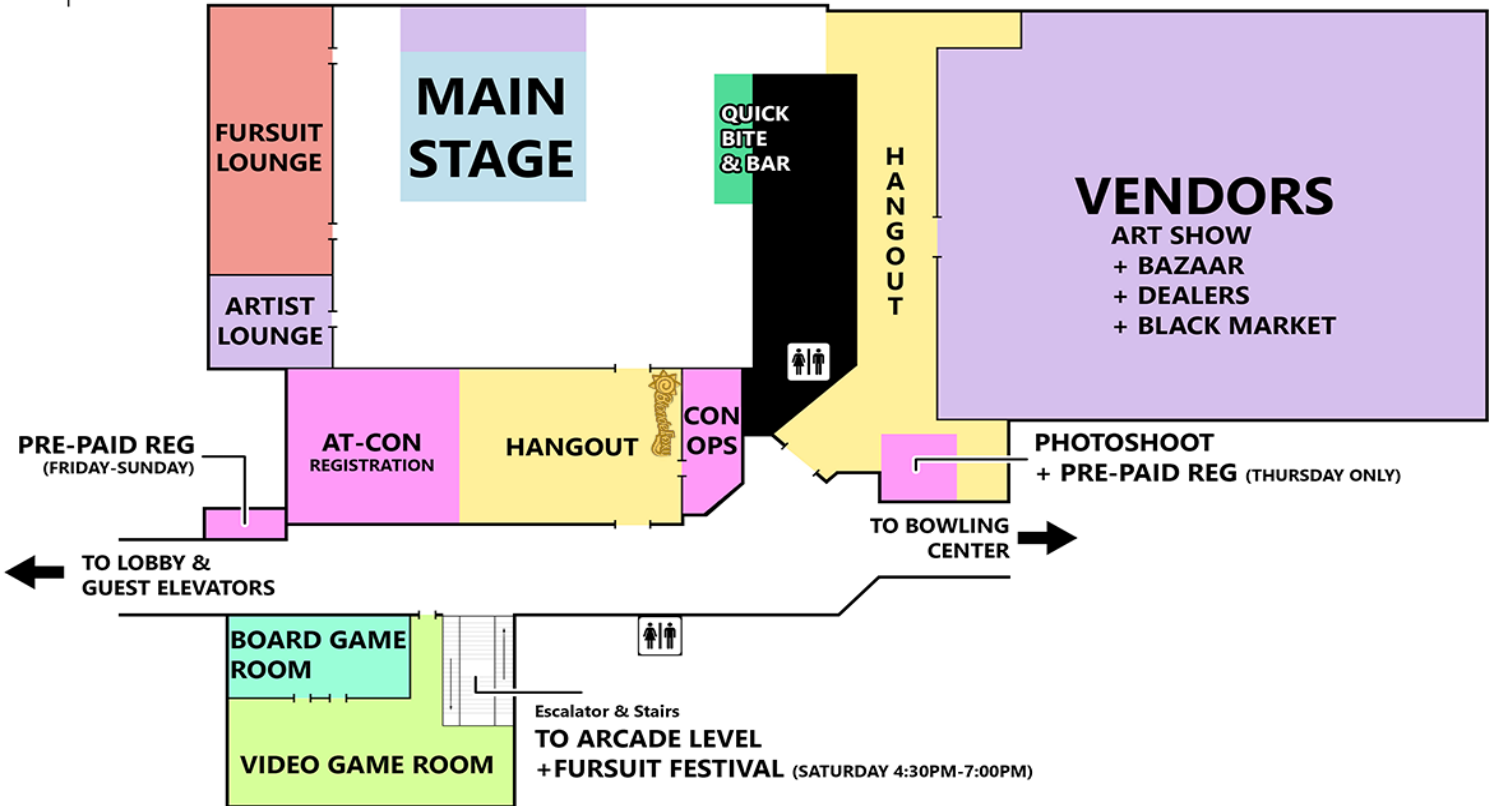
Buddy flashes back to his time under Brometheus and his part in the mandate on citizens. Reminded of Benjamin and joining his fight, the pain he felt when his disappearance happened rushes back. Eyeing his own Hushpuppy helmet high up in his closet, once the prized badge of honor, now a decrepit trophy with a cursed past, Buddy is filled with a mix of feelings at his mind and heart.

Buddy reaches for his helmet, sitting atop his Resistance shirt, sliding both down by pulling on the red emblazoned cloth. Taking a moment to shine the helmet with the accompanying fabric, he holds it up, looking into the visor, and speaks at the reflection.

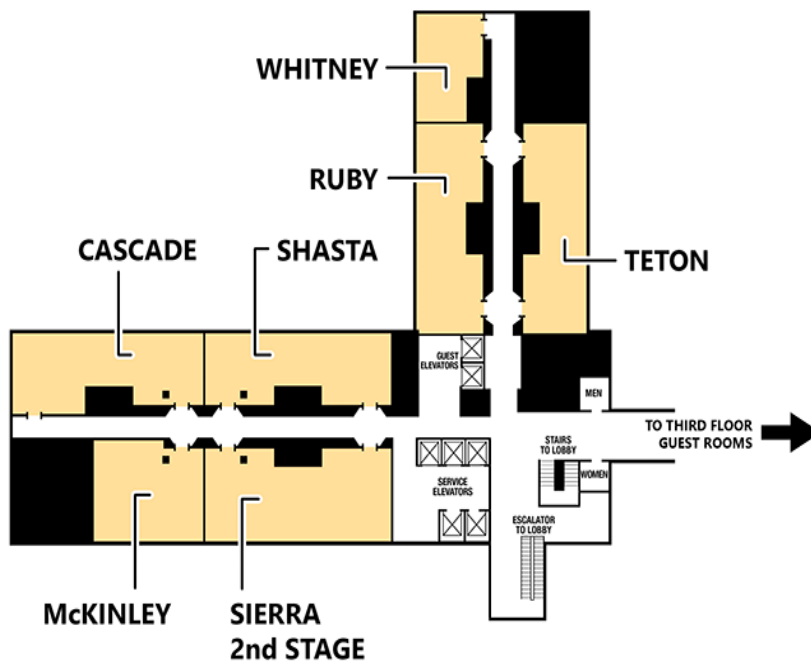
With the help of Buddy, the CrushPuppies are sure to be victorious in their fight against Liquid!

# blfc 2016

## FLOOR 1 CASINO LEVEL - GRAND BALLROOM/SUMMIT PAVILION



## FLOOR 3 MEZZANINE





# PATRONS

-e-

3ring  
404 not found  
aaron8181  
akaddon  
adam the forsaken  
aevin  
aoi shimo  
apani  
archaios  
arid  
arik  
arkades da bear  
artie  
asher le blaze  
athaliah  
attendee \*427  
aurelius pardus  
aylen  
azzy husky  
badger  
banshee  
barkerjr  
beerskunk  
belle draco  
bergbear  
berlian  
bexis  
biggest little rayd  
boldoy corwin - potoo  
boogz  
boomer  
brexton  
brometheus bear  
brother orin  
buck plow  
busterpaws  
byn roo  
caleb husky  
canis  
cannon  
carpet inspector  
carrizo  
cass  
caw caw caw  
cerlothebripup  
clockwork  
cody howl

commander rumblow  
commie the fox  
connor  
constupro husky  
cosima jet girl  
cowboy butts drive me nuts  
coyoli  
coyot pup  
crashbeast  
critter  
crosscheck fox  
crush pup frozen  
crushyeen miles  
cutest one here  
cy  
cyberkitsune  
daddy delicious  
daemon  
damek critou  
damiani johann faust  
dances with death  
danzi  
darkk  
darklunarshadow  
dasfiter  
deia  
dep  
derek hurst \*kp\*  
didge dingo  
doubleofox  
dreamous  
duke hyena  
eate \*i\*e t\*  
edward huddle  
eloun ziphora  
emorottie  
enen chuukon  
enzo leon  
exo saberdeer  
fennix silvertail  
firon  
foxglove  
frost bight  
funpack  
ghost  
giga fox  
give me beer  
goddamnit mr. noodle!

gol  
goldfoxie  
good shepherd  
grace  
gram  
greliton  
growlph  
growly  
gunnerscott  
guppy  
gusty fox  
henraardy  
hot ruddered lum  
hubcap  
huffles  
huskychaser  
i just work here  
iauw tigerpaw  
icefang  
in search of tea and  
crumpets  
istel trajir  
jaelyn  
jake  
jake otter  
james fox  
jamie otterbein  
jaycee \*muffah\*  
jeffery lewis \*mcgavver\*  
jericho wolf  
joran zeno  
junrel  
kailys  
kaji  
kalu squippy  
karnage asada  
karwood  
kanik  
kaykoh  
kaysho  
kazuki  
kendall  
kextic skulk  
kiba amazuka  
kile \*kiibay\* draggy  
kingin  
kit fox

# PATRONS

kitami buttons kitsune  
kimi  
klovix  
koinu  
korocho  
korren  
kova whitewane hugs are  
welcome  
kregen boondocks  
kyro rave  
lady moo  
lakota  
lakota bänder  
laveur  
lenoh  
leo  
leo tsukasa  
lexi foxxx  
liam einarr  
linni  
lockford  
loki  
luka roo, sense offender.  
lupercalob  
lubris  
lyeska rawfurtography  
mada  
malik!  
marshall  
martinisoft  
mav  
maxcoyote  
melon emoji  
michichael  
midnight  
minka \*shelly\*  
misswolfiee  
mister weeseeks  
moffett  
moka  
momiji mimiga  
morse  
mortwest  
moss  
mottles amos  
mystee squixen  
naedere  
nanimoose

nightcat  
nighty  
nikon raccoon  
nogard  
nova wolf  
nureyan  
nym  
omega iakona  
opal  
ora streak urs  
orzel  
oswin  
outsider  
packet  
paintballfox  
patrick  
paulosaurus  
pentawolf  
phil the teddy bear  
phin tin tin  
phoxwit  
pounder  
psylantwolf  
pyre  
quinnton  
quix  
ralley  
raul  
raxmei  
raz  
redrockrex  
reggie  
reilly "binaryfox"  
rengare wolfe  
rezsgar lemur  
rioichi  
riverbreak  
rj  
rocky raku-n  
roscoe  
rowanyote  
rubber sneppy  
rukario  
rune imajiro  
ryka  
salty  
scarfy w. conly  
scooter

seferis  
sekh  
seme snowmew  
shadow  
shadow d. wolf, esq.  
shadowterm  
shadowthedemon  
shenryyr  
shiek  
shutaro  
sim federal  
simon tesla  
sine nomine  
sir  
sitku  
sketchy wolf  
skyer  
smilingwolf  
sneaksy  
snugglebunny  
soggymaster  
sparky  
spelunker sal  
spenceralusky  
spyder  
stargazer  
steam  
stoicwolf  
stormy kittyhawk  
swizz  
tanka  
tarke  
tarocco  
tazel sixpaws  
teef of resistance  
telkasta  
tebris  
thay rustback  
thumper  
timber  
tiny salmon  
trandafir ruby  
tremelo  
treyn  
trigger happy squirrel  
trufi taskboe  
tunncliffe pawtucket  
tuxedokitty

# PATRONS

twerkupine king  
twitch  
tyco  
uintah  
utra  
urbis  
vairos  
vaporial  
viken  
vinnie shep  
viswey "dia" zerona

von browsing  
waifu walfu  
walfu waifu  
wallin the wall  
weasel  
white shadow  
whitepaw / oliver otter  
wild wolf  
wire v. capital  
wirez  
woofy the bunny

wulfbane  
xavier wolffy  
yima qwin  
yuryuu  
zane lime time khandr  
zefyr  
zeke war  
zeryx starfire  
zidonuke  
zoey koompup

# SPONSORS

\*redacted\*  
adilor solthaer  
adolwolf  
alzuki  
amore  
animosulo  
anpumes  
arashi okami  
argon ramos  
arlon  
ashven scarpaw  
asmodeous hyperidae  
avalon cruz  
avery  
avi  
ayden  
bart exonar  
bee daddy papyrus  
bill clawsby  
bitz  
bjorn grafeldr  
bloody jackal  
bodloot  
brooklynx  
kuster clouds  
butterflyback fursuits owner

certified wolf  
ceryx  
cheveyo  
clarissy  
cody howl  
crackers  
crazyjoel952  
mountainbluefoxjoe  
daemon inu  
dat nasty lime green sergal  
dkj  
dec fairlight  
dexter  
diagonal  
dimitri vashinov  
doctoru2  
down with big brother!!  
dr. fu manchu  
draces  
dramothecat  
dray wolf  
duma  
dunk corgi  
elliott  
enthkali  
ergonwolf

erro  
evergreen floof  
ezra luncoon  
falcore rigo  
felix gray  
fenrir sabre  
filbber t gibbet  
flinters  
flip  
foobar  
foxcar  
fractal fox  
freakylee  
frostbone  
frosty orca  
fu manchu  
gearsypoo  
glide osprey  
gnomun uno  
goldenbullet  
grayscale  
graywolf  
greaseyote  
grndragon  
helix wrex

# SPONSORS

hotshot  
hukka the sharkupine  
i am the great architect  
if lost please return to buffet  
imperator  
incredible-crocodile  
insert tab d into curl a  
isowolf  
jaden  
jason the bunny  
juko  
junie  
kaelith  
kaila flamestriker  
karate panda  
kauko  
keatskitsune  
keeko de gallo  
keiko  
keno  
kiki  
kimo wulfamute  
kitchen appliance  
krytr  
kva the hyena  
kyote / tso  
lazywolf  
leander tau  
linzer  
liru fars  
little red ridding wolf  
lizardmeat  
luprand  
maddie  
marshall  
mauzer  
mbulu  
mcnab  
michelle  
mr. sluf ragepaws  
mykyru  
myrtle monster  
nach  
namiel  
nautilus  
nekootheredfox

neratas e. stormwing  
nevir  
nia tanzia  
nieghclaw  
nightwoof  
nip kip boop nops  
oathaniel onager  
oliver drago  
ostrom  
patriot  
paco panda  
paws meow  
phoenix t\*ril  
princess keno  
pup kai  
quake fox  
race  
radioactive paws  
raj  
raku ferret  
ralm wolf  
ratface  
rayrayfox  
razagal auren  
redfox costello  
redwulf  
rinn  
ripe avocado  
roman maximilian otter  
ryoken  
sagira, monster of the  
swamps  
scout  
scy storm  
serf  
shinopa  
shutterwolf  
shyhoof  
skyedrin  
smeef  
snug t. rabbit  
solaxy  
sorin  
sour patch tiger  
spacebear sparx  
sparx

spot  
squeak  
starlight  
steelfire  
stupid wingless dragon  
t-dawg  
tamayote  
tano  
tavir  
tenki-101  
the arby\*s witch  
therealurukabe  
thetater  
tiloo  
tidma  
timid tanuki  
tomcat tiger  
trail horse  
travis blackfoxx  
trustworthy  
tsarin  
tsodiyo  
tsukari  
tydus  
varek  
venu shade  
vincent  
virgo redwolf  
wallabear  
watcher rat  
weege  
whup  
wilshire  
wolfstang  
wolfy walter  
wylde  
wulflock  
x3nofawx  
yasha  
zaos  
zen fetcher  
zen migawa  
zenel  
zeta  
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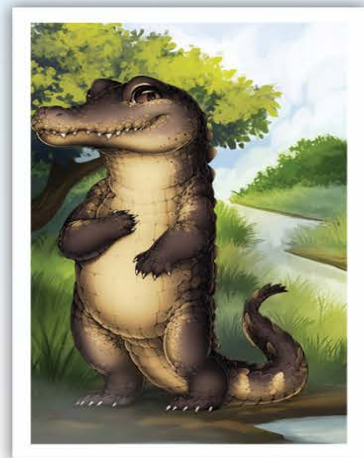
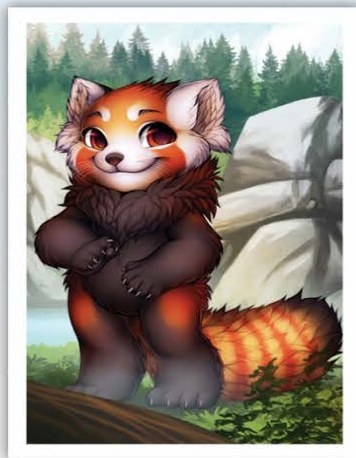
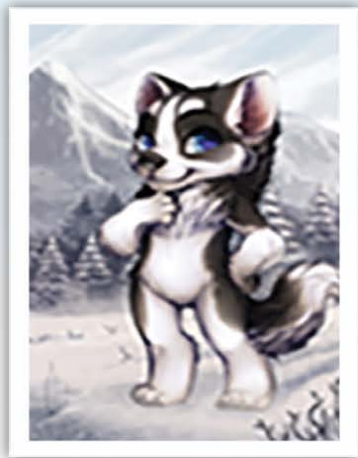
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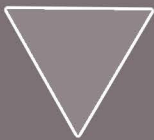
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# EARNING YOUR SATISFACTION

## CAT PROWLER

Skiff kept his legs moving as he ran his second lap around the outside of the course. Some of the faster creatures had already lapped him once before they headed for the inner agility course. Breathing hard the little gray mouse slowed down, sliding on the loose gravel as he gripped the post that was the start of the obstacle race.

This was one of the initiation trials to become part of the Freepaw Faction. True Skiff could just sign up and pledge himself to the faction but he wanted to be a member, he wanted to make a difference.

After the major fall and minor wars factions popped up and broke down each with its own agenda, motives, and speakers which worked hard to create the best life and lifestyles for its members. The young initiate however didn't care about any of them because in his mind only the Freepaws had the right idea. The accepted anyone and worked to help everyone.

Skiff scrambled under the wiring finally having his chance to shine on the agility course; up the cargo net and over the wall, slipping between the smallest posts where other went around, and across the hanging ropes above a mud pit. This was where the rodent pushed even harder hoping to catch those that had gone before. He did pass some and gained on several more but when he got past the the finish post instead of slowing down and resting with the others Skiff tore back out onto the track little legs pumping fiercely.

The physical trial was a compound of two parts; the first was at least two circuits around the outside of the course, then at least one lap through the inner obstacle course and all it if had to be finished with in ten minutes. Anyone still left out on the course received a serious dock in points and was not allowed a mark no matter how well they did. The bonus was that each additional lap either inner or outer received extra points.

Skiff knew he had done well and if he could make the third lap he would gain extra points and gain back much of what the faster animal had taken lapping him before. Unknown to him a few others had seen the mouse sprint back out and followed but only the cheetah in the group came close to catching up to

the little rodent. He put out everything he had into moving forward trying to stall the feline from passing him yet again. Even though he wasn't able to succeed, coming in a full pace behind, it did give him the spur he needed.

As Skiff stumbled to a halt and collapsed to his knees shaking and gasping the buzz sounded ending the ten minute limit leaving more than a few initiates on the track who quickly went to protest to their instructor. He didn't bother to listen as the rules were read off, he knew that they were allowed to do the course in any order they wished running first, last, and even though it hadn't been done before, in between.

Skiff did pull himself back to his feet when the other two instructors drew moved to the group calling everyone in. It was no surprise Collen, the cheetah, came in first along with the others but he was as surprised as everyone else when he was called fourth earning him a passing mark. Not only that they gave him a second mark for full use of the time and the extra effort.

The rodent nearly collapsed, two marks gave him seven total, you only needed eight marks and to pass the advance test to become a member. He smiled accepting the congratulations from several of his class, they were all working hard but he had done his very best.

"Skiff.. Come with me." One of his instructors called before leading him away.

The Freepaw Faction had a huge complex with multiple building and enclosed areas covering more than fifteen acres in a quieter section of the city. Skiff, who had spent the last five months living in the initiation dorm, was quickly lost as he followed through buildings and covered walkways. "You have done a good job, showed spirit, engaged in cooperation, and put out a great deal of effort." His instructor suddenly stated as he stopped at the end of a long walkway in front of a solid metal exit door. "But even with all that you know we won't allow anyone to be a member without passing the final test."

“Does.. Does that mean you want me to take the test?” Skiff suddenly asked shivering with excitement. Often times initiates were lead away, sometimes to come back as members, other times they failed and were transferred to another special area for more advanced training. “But...” He stated slowly knowing the truth, “I don’t have the eight marks yet.”

He tried to suppress his excited squeak and act serious when his instructor just smiled. “I know eight is the norm, but several of us hope you are ready.” He was silent as he started pulling back the first thick sliding lock wiggling to get it to move. “Now we have to go off complex. Most of the time the last test is done here but things have been changing the last few months. None of you have been told that several factions have begun attacking those that will join with them, there might even be another war coming.” The instructors hand came up quickly waving him to silence. “Don’t. It was decided that the possible danger would make the test more difficult. You should be more than capable of getting away should something happen so in a sense this is two tests. ONE you are to stay by my side and keep quiet as we go to the other hall, TWO once we get there you will do what ever they say. Do you understand Skiff?”

“Yes!”

“Don’t worry there hasn’t been much violence except in the inner city, but were going to play it safe. There will be no faction marking and we’re not leaving by a normal exit.” His instructor spoke taking off the vest he wore and setting it on a small box next to the door. Skiff gave a shiver as his instructor flipped the second lock and pushed the door open talking quietly. “Remember follow me and don’t talk. Stick close.” Was the only other thing said once his instructor had closed the door and used a key lock it.

Besides a large wooden panel the door was the only thing Skiff could see in the narrow space beside the brick walls that went up several stories advancing dozens of yards down the alley. Once his instructor had squeezed past the barrier and had mouse joined him they moved swiftly going past several gap openings between buildings moving up the narrow alley. It was just as he would imagine a dirty alley way to be. Garbage collected here and there along with long neglected boxes and abandoned lengths of wood

it seemed even here near the Freepaws stronghold the world still needed help. The young rodent kept pace ears picking out the sounds of the city that he had not heard in months. It was exciting and slightly worry some feeling the tension his instructor put out as his paws quickly slapped the pavement keeping pace.

Just as they were coming up on the first real street something off the side moved. “Help.” Came a weak voice.

“Don’t stop.” The instructor hissed moving closer to the wall and away from a lumpy mass of what looked like dirty clothes.

Skiff had of course heard the order but he also heard the near silent moan. “Oh stars, it hurts.” Louder the voice called. “Please, help me.” The mass rolled over and one grime covered arm rolled out showing a matted paw and shredded sleeve.

“Skiff!!” The instructor had turned back barking at the small mouse who had stopped and crouched down. “It will be okay.” He carefully touched the back of the paw hoping to convey some level of comfort or support.

He was totally unprepared for the strong paw that grabbed his arm and yanked him forward as the dirty pile exploded outward, one large rag covering his face.

“Dirty little rat!” The blow to his head stunned him and with his ears still ringing and head covered he was hauled back to his feet. Skiff’s weak struggle finally caused the rag to fall and he stood looking into the face of a snarling wolf.

“You...” He wasn’t able to get more out as he was propelled backwards hitting the wall hard enough to nearly knock the breath out of his body and made his back to protest in pain.

“You and your other stupid friends are FOOLS, only the strong should rule, only the ALPHAS!” The smaller rodent began to panic when a strong paw clenched around his neck making him gasp for air as it tightened. His eyes darted past the larger figure desperately searching for his instructor or some kind of help or rescue.

“HA! That other one bolted... so much for helping others right? You’re stupid and weak, your faction should be burned to the ground.” Each point was made by slamming the rodent back into the wall shaking him up more as he cut off Skiff’s air supply keeping him from crying out. He did utter a cry of shock as he was literally lifted up a foot off the ground and tossed back out onto the pavement landing hard.

“Come on then tell me the Alphas are the best and I might take you back to our faction house. A weakling like you could never pass for a member but we still need bodies to clean our cloths, take out the trash, and scrub the toilets.” It was a deep gruff chuckle as the small mouse tried to get his arms in position to get off the ground.

“You’re wrong.” Skiff was still trying to get his breath back wheezing as he breathed. He almost made it to his knees before the foot on his back forced him back down again.

“Wrong? What your little magical ‘We help all.’ is working!?”

“You don’t.. under.. stand.” The broken words came out each time the paw pressed in forcing air out of the rodent’s body.

“Oh really, and what is it that I don’t understand.” The wolf asked snidely.

The foot eased off allowing Skiff several breaths before he tried to answer. “Your way is going to lead us back to what we all fought against. Oppression, distrust, having your life lived by someone else’s wishes.” He pushed hard against the paw that kept him down straining to rise.

“So what! We will guarantee our survival.” Skiff felt the paw rise and fall on his back, once again pushing him back down.

Skiff continued to struggle with all he had including words. Whether it meant anything at all to the canine he didn’t care the words were all he needed to keep going, to keep fighting. “But if we all work together, if we all try to help each other, then we will all survive. Not only that we can make sure no one suffers and everyone is cared for. It’s not about who rules and who

is the best. It’s about Everyone stepping forward and helping each other so no one will ever be in need.”

“Nice thought mouse.” The paw was still at his back but didn’t have the same pressure as before. “Problem is there will always be those who take advantage and those who hurt others. What are you going to do then, ask then to stop?” The foot lifted some only to come back down again hard making Skiff cry out.

“We will stop THEM!” He pushed back again finally getting up enough to lock his knees under his body. “And we will help everyone that they hurt!”

“You will huh, you can’t even stand up.” The wolf chuckled as he once again stepped down on the other. As the pressure on his back abated but before it came back Skiff lurched to the side throwing his body away from the other and rolling away. With his back aching and his body trembling he scrambled to his feet trying turning to face the other.

“I Won’t Give UP!” He shouted. Skiff stared at his tormentor stunned to see the wolf wore a Freepaws uniform and behind him stepping into place were others including his instructors all in the Factions uniforms. He stood there staring trying to reason out what was happening when someone he didn’t know stepped forward and spoke.

“Skiff... Why did you disobey? You were told the rules. It was explained to you what could happen. If this had been real, likely you would have been seriously hurt... or worse.”

“But I wasn’t really hurt.” Knowing how stupid that sounded and the fact his body ached from all over he added on. “It could have been someone who really was hurt. We can’t... I can’t just ignore that.”

“Even when you were warned, even when our instructor told you not to?” It was the wolf who spoke this time.

“You sounded hurt.” Skiff accused. “Why all the training and classes. Why keep telling us how important it is to help people if you don’t want us to when it’s time!” He nearly shouted in frustration.



“Why indeed.” It was his instructor who spoke this time stepping forward to stand in front of the young mouse.

“There is no right answer to this test and everyone person reacts differently. Some pause, some beg their instructor to help, some.. like you, ignore everything they were told and try to help, some even ignore the hurt and keep walking. This is the test to check your character and attitude, a test of intelligence and... commitment. The Freepaws would be honored to have your join our ranks, but also offer the greatest of cautions, it’s foolish to rush in without considering the conditions. You need to learn caution and use your eagerness in appropriate situations.”

Skiff stared in shock as a vest was handed forward and passed to him. The rodent quickly put the garment on feeling a growing sense of pride and joy. He had

woke up this morning knowing that this would some day come but he had expected it to be months away, now as an intern he had one more year of work before he was permitted to be a full member who would work for the good of his fellows and indeed the rest of the world.

“Hurry up now Skiff, there is a lot more to learn.” The surprise was clear on his face and several chuckled quietly. “Everything up to now was to test you and your character. Now you’re really going to learn what it means to be part of the Freepaw Faction and how we plan on fixing the future.” Seeing the rodent take a few shaky steps forward the instructor added. “But first we’ll make sure you actually don’t need help first.”



# IDEALS AND CONFLICT

## NIGHT DRAGONO

And this one is finally done!

The Sergal perched atop the warehouse, proudly admiring his work. Down below, the walls of the abandoned warehouses on the street had been coated in shades of purple and orange, blending nicely with the plants and foliage that had overgrown the area. Both slogans and artwork projecting their message.

'Paint the world in color!'

'Make Your Mark: Project Greenlight!'

It was already evening and the daylight was fading fast. Today was done, but Aeon knew tomorrow, there would be time for more paintings. He'd even managed to touch up on some of the tattoos on his body with the small batch of LIQUID he'd found. For now, he'd have time to scavenge some of the warehouses for materials before heading back to the museum.

He was packing his materials into his backpack when noises below cause him to duck behind a pile of crates. In this world of conflict, it never paid to be too cautious when it wasn't possible to tell if friend or foe. Peering out from his hiding spot, Aeon soon caught sight of the intruder.

A German shepherd, one outfitted in a Kevlar vest and slacks, colored in blue and white. But what really gave it away was the distinctive helmet, though it was very worn out and looked like it barely fit the dog.

"Great, Crushpuppies..."

Aeon watched as the G-shep examined his artwork, sniffing at the walls. She was probably sniffing out the LIQUID that had been mixed with his paints. A frown spread across the G-shep's face as he pulled out a spray can and begun defacing the artwork.

"Grrr..." Aeon snarled, fists clenching. He wasn't about to just stand by and let some Crushpuppy ruin his day's work.

That was when he spotted the fallen signboard, bearing the BLFC corporation logo and slogan. It was nicely positioned, leading straight down to the

G-shep's position. Aeon grabbed his skateboard and took a running start. Leaping onto it, he used the fallen signboard as a slide.

Karin had been occupied with blanking out the Project Greenlight message and only heard the scraping sounds too late. The Crushpuppy could only stare in shock as a flying Aeon drove the wheels into her helmet, knocking it loose. The Sergal summersaulted backwards as his foe hit the ground.

"Grrr..." Karin rolled to a kneeling position. She whipped the side of her jaw with the back of a paw, noticing the blood there.

"Scram puppy. That's my work you're messing up!" Aeon growled. He reached for his belt and drew a combat knife, one he'd scavenged from a warehouse earlier.

In response, the G-shep pulled out a pistol from her holster and pointed it at him.

"You're the one who should scam Cheddar head! You know what they say about bringing a knife to a gun fight...argh!"

Aeon had leapt the short distance and knocked the pistol away with a second knife in his other hand.

"You bring two."

"I hate a wise guy." Karin huffed.

She slide under Aeon's next knife swing and kicked his ankle from behind. As the Sergal stumbled, Karin rammed him to the ground with her shoulder. Aeon lost one of his knives as he hit the ground face first. On instinct, he immediately rolled to the side.

The Crushpuppy's foot stomped down where his neck had been moments earlier. Aeon thrust his foot out, knocking his opponent to the ground. He then scrambled back, putting some distance between the two.



“Hump, not bad. At least you’re not such pushover like the last one.” Karin growled, pulling herself to her feet.

“I grew up on the streets. You learn a thing or two from doing that. Unlike you lot!”

“Is your leader still feeding you about how LIQUID should be used for good? It’s too dangerous to be used in the hands of anyone! Not yours, not those psychedelic LIQUID guzzling nutcases either!”

Karin snatched up a fallen pipe and swung it at him. Aeon managed to dodge the first swing, but the second one caught him at the side of the head and smashing him to the ground. His opponent pounced, pinning his body down with her knees. She immediately locked down his knife hand and begun punching him in the face with her other hand.

Grunting, Aeon ripped a paint spray can from a holster with his free hand and let her have it in the face.

“Garghh! What did you do?!” Karin stumbled back, coughing and spluttering.

“I’d really have loved to have given you the LIQUID in the mouth.” Aeon struggled to his feet, nursing his bruised jaw. “You’re lucky this can’s just the regular paint. The LIQUID one is...”

That was when the Sergal found himself lifted up and hurled into a warehouse wall.

“Back where it belongs! With us!”

Talin was a rather massive hyena, one in a green tanktop with the ‘SNUG life’ slogan scribbled across it. He now held the spray paint canister and cracked it open.

“No! Don’t do that!” Karin dashed across the street and drove a punch at the hyena. “LIQUID is a curse that must be forgotten!”

However, she was unable to stop him from swallowing most of the contents. Karin’s punch had contacted with his jaw and pushed the hyena back against a wall. Calmly, Talin reached up and grabbed the G-shep’s wrist, pulling her arm away.

“Uh-oh...” Karin found herself staring into the hyena’s hypnotic-looking eyes, with the greenish paint-LIQUID mixture still dripping from his jaws.

The hyena dropped the now empty paint canister and licked his chops.

“Yena smash!” Talin swung the G-shep by the wrist, slammed her a couple of time against the ground and then hurled her across the area. The Crushpuppy crashed into a pile of trashcans, moaning in pain.

Meanwhile, Aeon was just recovering from the earlier attack when he found the shadow of Talin standing over him.

“What the...”

“You have more LIQUID! GIMME! GIMMEEE!” Talin grabbed the Sergal in a massive bear hug.

“Hey! I didn’t consent to hugs!”

“WHAT? CAN’T HEAR YOU CHEESE WEDGE!” The hyena squeezed harder.

“Dammit! What is it with Sergals and cheese jokes... gargghhh!” Aeon choked.

“This wouldn’t be happening if you bunch had just gotten rid of all the LIQUID in the first place!” Karin came running and leapt onto the hyena’s back.

She got her arms around his neck, putting him into a chokehold. Talin’s grip was unrelenting, but as he struggled, Aero began to wiggle himself free.

On the building above the three, a huge billboard creaked. The bindings gave way and the huge mass came down...right above the struggling trio. They realized it at about the same time.

The massive words ‘BLFC Corporation’ were falling right towards them.

Karin released her hold, kicked off the hyena’s back and ran. Aeon had finally managed to wiggle out from the bear hug and scrambled away on all fours. Talin was much slower, but held his massive arms out to block off some of the falling debris as he too ran.

The next few seconds were nothing but deafening crashes and dust.

When it finally settled, the three looked up from their hiding places. They were bruised, battered and covered in dirt. But alive at least.

However, up above on the building where the billboard had been, a figure stood glaring down upon them.

“Who...” Aeon stared.

The figure on top of the building was a dog-like creature, but dressed in a uniform unlike anything he'd ever seen. No wait, he had seen something like this. In some old books and photos. He'd been born after the regime's collapse, but these were just like in the stories he'd been told.

“The Sons of Brometheus?” Karin glanced up from her hiding spot. “Are they active again?”

Talin had meanwhile decided that there was no more

LIQUID to be found here and darted off, giving the figure on top of the building an angry glance. He did make the point of screaming obscenities and flipping the bird at the figure, regardless if he could hear him or not.

Aeon too decided he had way overstayed his welcome. The Sergal's good fortune was that his skateboard had been thrown close to his hiding spot. He got onto that and sped down the street. Süz probably wouldn't be too happy, but he had to let her know.

Karin was left watching as the figure disappeared into the shadows.

“Big Brother...Utopia...Never Again.” She muttered. “We will erase the past, even if it means erasing you too.”

As the shadowy figure departed, he dusted off his paws.

“All you poor little ants, you know not what you fight for. How disappointing. How disappointing, indeed...”







BLAC







# COLOR THE WIND

## T H O M A S " F A U X " S T E E L E

Well, here we are. Reno, Nevada, or what's left of it. Vibrant with color from the graffiti lining buildings bordering the crumbling streets, it's a visually intoxicating sight. Used to be a company town, from what I'd heard. BLFCorp used to be judge, jury, and executioner around these parts. I haven't been here long, of course. I'm a new arrival from Vegas, on the run from gambling debts. With a name like Odysseus Frye, it's hard to lie low, so I hightailed it out here to try and get a fresh start. Or at least hide out long enough for the heat to die down.

The low burble of my sleek Mustang GT, a '94 vintage, echoes off the burned out remnants of Virginia Street. Still, signs of life rise from the desolation like a phoenix from the ashes. Fed by leaky but functional water lines, exotic plants grow and wind and entwine, their thick swaths of green overpowering the graves of the old casinos. Wildlife threatens, too. A wizened hare at a watering hole just outside the city told me a wild tale of nearly being eaten by a feral tiger while exploring one of the denser areas of foliage. I'm not sure I believe the old-timer, but it definitely feels like a jungle out here.

Up ahead, I notice a checkpoint, a simple roadblock constructed from a pair of overturned cars with a barbed-wire gate in-between them. As I pull closer, the two guards flanking the snap to attention. Insofar as I can tell, they're unarmed. I could ram through the gate, but I don't know what lay beyond. Probably best to figure out the situation before heading in.

"Afternoon, gentlemen," I say, pulling my Oakley aviators down just enough to make my brilliant blue eyes visible. Arctic foxes aren't a common species, so I love putting on a bit of a show. "May I be so bold as to ask the purpose of this barricade?"

"Shut it," the one on the left, a militaristically-dressed wolf spits at me. "Are you PGL?"

"No, he doesn't look like PGL. None of the freaky Liquid tattoos 'n' stuff they usually got. Think he's SNUG?" his companion, the cheetah, chimes in, staring down suspiciously.

"Might be. Should we turn him back? I don't want to have to have to kill nobody, 'specially not on my first day." I notice the sidearm strapped to the wolf's thigh, and I'm suddenly more nervous. I have a revolver stashed in the glovebox, but there's no way

could get to it before I'd be blown away. Hopefully I can talk my way out of this.

"May I interject?" I say, cutting off the cheetah. "I'm new around here, just riding in from Vegas on this old horse." I pat the side of my 'Stang. "Mind explaining what the heck "PGL" and "SNUG" mean?"

"That's for us to know and you to find out," the wolf growls out, standing stiff-legged and tall, ears perked. He's got a good foot in height on me, and even a veteran of the tables like myself can't help but feel a bit intimidated. I let a nervous chuckle escape my lips, and the wolf narrows his eyes. "Something funny, punk?"

"No, not at all," I reply, weighing my options. I slide my right foot onto the gas as I hold the brake with my left. "Would you mind letting me through? I solemnly swear I'm not here to make trouble. I'm just a humble man looking for work and a fresh start. I had to leave Vegas because of trying circumstances, and I thought a diverse city like Reno might have opportunities for someone looking to make a new life."

"Look pal, you can take your sob story to someone that cares. Now turn around and-"

I don't let him finish his sentence, instead slamming my car door full force into his shins. He lets out a cry, but I barely notice it over the snarl of the 302 V-8 as I mash my foot to the floor. The tires momentarily squeal in protest, fighting for grip, but then the Mustang shoots forward, slicing through the gate like a hot knife through butter. I hear a few shots ring out from behind me, but I'm already beyond the effective range of whatever sidearm the cheetah's packing. I round a corner and ease off the gas, breathing heavily from the burst of adrenaline sent coursing through my veins. I decide it's best to ditch my car for now and travel on foot. The antique, jet-black muscle car is too distinctive. In the middle of the block, I spot a derelict-but-intact parking garage. Seems Lady Luck is finally on my side.

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I pull in and head up a floor, parking in the corner next to an angular coupe slowly being consumed by rust. I doubt anyone's going to look in here. The place seems mostly abandoned, with the exception of a 1984-esque slogan on the wall. "A world with Liquid is a world at risk. Every last drop must be spilled, gone, forgotten." Creepy. I have no idea what Liquid is, but it sounds like it's worth something to someone. I stash the keys in the wheel well of the coupe in case I'm stopped and searched, and follow the ramp back down.

Outside, there's not much activity. It takes me a few blocks to encounter another person, a wolf who looks at me cross-eyed as he enters an apartment building tagged with the slogan, "Beware the green menace." I'm sure these messages are supposed to mean something, but absent context, I'm lost. The ambiance is gorgeous though, with lush areas of wetlands and semi-jungle filling the areas in-between the remaining buildings. As I advance, the city comes alive with denizens going about their business. Up ahead, there appears to be what I can only describe as an ersatz bazaar, a market in the square created from demolishing the buildings around a four-way intersection. It's a hectic space, especially when contrasted with the wasteland of what used to be the heart of Reno.

I pass through where vendors' tables and stands begin, taking in the scene. There's all manner of goods on display for eager purchasers. Everything from fragrant fruit to hand-forged flatware is set up on one table or another. My stomach growls, so I head towards the stand with a barrel of crisp-looking apples positioned right in front. Something catches

my attention, however. I notice a small, wooden box, intricately carved, sitting on a chipped mahogany table managed by a wizened vixen who appears to have dozed off. I'm not sure exactly what about it is so appealing, but it speaks to me.

"Ma'am? Ma'am?" I murmur, gently nudging her shoulder with my paw. "I'd like to purchase this box." I gesture at it with a friendly smile.

"Ah, yes. That one," she says, picking it up and eyeing it. "I'll let you have it for fifteen credits."

"How about ten? I love a good bargain." My smile transforms into a sly grin.

"Make it twelve and you've got a deal."

I nod, handing here a few coins. In Vegas everything's electronic, but out here, metal is the only reliable currency. Iron, copper, silver, gold, platinum - take your pick. I love a bargain, and although I really have no need for a small, decorative box, I'm willing to make room.

After I'm a few steps away, it strikes me to open it. It's well-made but the lid doesn't come free easily. After a minute or so, I finally manage to work it open. Inside, there's a small plastic square with a picture of a ferret and the name "R. Jones." It's the logo that strikes me the most. BLFCorp. My first thought is that this is worth something to somebody. My second is that having something like this is risky. I don't know too much about this place, but judging by the complete lack of anything with the corporate logo, this badge is something special.

I quickly shut the lid, hoping no one caught a glance at what was inside. Unfortunately, Lady Luck seems to have fled my side because a perky-looking jackrabbit gently nudges me. "Follow me," she whispers, flicking her ears in the direction of a small alley in-between two tables at the edge of the marketplace.

I start to reply that I'm sure as hell not going anywhere with her when I catch sight of the tip of a deep green tattoo peeking out from beneath the scarf that covers her shoulders and conceals much of the tank top underneath. The guard at the gate earlier mentioned something about tattoos. Could be worth my time. This little plastic card might be worth enough to get me a little place out here, somewhere I can keep my head down until I can show my face in Vegas again.



She moves with a purpose, dodging through the thick crowd like it's not even there. I'm not that agile, but I manage to keep up until we reach the mouth of the alley. She turns back to check I'm still on her tail before halting behind a rusty, graffiti-tagged dumpster.

"So you made it. Good. I've been expecting you," she says with an excited grin.

"Uh, I'm not really sure I'm the fox you're looking for." I nervously scratch the back of my head. "I just arrived in town an hour or so ago. Unless someone's been spying on me, I doubt I'm who you think I am."

Her smile is replaced by a ponderous frown. "But you did exactly what they told me you'd do. You were supposed to try and bargain the box down to ten credits, and then accept it when the vixen offered it to you for twelve."

"I just thought the box was neat." My ears fold in embarrassment before perking back up. "Look, I think this ID is worth something to whoever was expected to pick it up. You know who that is?"

She frowns. "I'm not telling you. Just give me the card and go."

I shake my head. "Why should I? I bought the box fair and square. Whatever game you're playing, I want no part in it." I turn to leave when I feel a paw on my shoulder. I narrow my eyes.

"Please. This isn't a game. I don't know who was supposed to pick up that box, but whoever it was I fear the Crushpuppies have managed to get to them. I've been waiting here for three days with no response." I hear a quiver in her voice. Odd. I expected more of her than that, although what gives me that feeling I can't say.

"Okay? So let me guess. You're PGL judging by the tattoos. You're alone and afraid, and your contact was supposed to handle everything for you after you acquired this ID?"

I feel her paw draw away. "Yes. Please. Can you at least get me back to PGL territory? You'll be richly rewarded if you turn this card in to those who should rightfully have it. You have my word."

"What guarantee do I have that the second I drive in there, you're not just going to leave me to the proverbial wolves?"

"We're not like these people," she says with a sigh. I hear the fluttering of cloth. As I turn, I notice how intricately decorated her fur is, in various hues of green. It's done in an Art Deco style, with geometric shapes forming a beautiful but abstract collage. "We

don't try and destroy the past, hide what once was. We want to bring color to the world. Liquid deserves-"

"Look, I'm gonna stop you right there. I really appreciate the little lecture on—" I glance back at the marketplace—"whoever these people are, and whatever the hell Liquid is, but no thanks. I think I'll go my merry way and forget all about this." I shrug. "It's not my battle, and I don't want to be a martyr for your cause."

"One million credits. Guaranteed. I can get you that much," she says, dropping to her knees. "Please, you have to help me. If the Crushpuppies find me..." she trails off. "Just please."

I sigh. "Make it two and you've got yourself a deal." Sometimes you've got to take a little risk for a big payday. A natural gambler like myself knows that better than anyone. This could be a trap, but I'm confident I can talk or drive my way out of it.

"Deal. Can I get a name, mister?" she asks, her ears perking back up.

"Odysseus. Odysseus Frye," I reply. "Shall we get moving? You're my means to a big payday miss, and I'd rather we not get caught before we make it to... wherever we need to go to."

She huffs. "I have a name, you know."

"Don't care," I reply, shrugging. "Let's go." I start padding out of the alley, pausing at the mouth for her to hide her tattoos. Best not to show those off around here. We don't want to attract undue attention.

"Elizabeth, Mr. Frye. That's my name." I keep moving, dodging through the crowd, scanning for anyone who might appear alert to our presence. Nimble, Elizabeth keeps up behind me. We make it out of the marketplace unscathed, and from there it's only a few blocks to where I'd stashed our ticket out of here.

The Mustang is still sitting where I'd left it, undisturbed. I recover the keys and unlock the passenger-side door. Ladies first, after all.

"So? Where to, Elizabeth?" I ask, bringing the engine to life with a throaty snort.

"Just drive, fox," she says with a grin, buckling herself in.

With a big payday on the horizon, I can't help but look up and say a little prayer to Lady Luck as I pull out of the garage and back onto the mean streets of Reno. I don't know exactly what's waiting for me in PGL territory. Certain doom, maybe? Still, sometimes you've got to place a big bet to win big. I pull my shades out of the center console, flick out the temples, and slide them on.

Ever the stylish guardian, I round the corner, ready for whatever comes next. Elizabeth may want to color the world with this...Liquid whatever, but I just want my score. As I slam through deserted roadblock and open up the 5.0 V-8, I look over, and can't help but feel a little sympathy. I'll get her home safe.

She directs me down the ruins of Virginia Street, and in the light of the setting sun, this fallen utopia seems just a little bit brighter.

















# BLFO



REVA16



# DRINKS

## liquid

1 part Midori melon liqueur  
1 part Cinammon Whiskey  
2 parts Pineapple Juice

~ by Kieunta



# DRINKS

## biggest little shark bite \*

3/4 oz Spiced rum  
3/4 oz light rum  
1/2 oz Blue Curacao  
1 1/2 oz sweet n sour mix  
3 drops grenadine syrup

Add spiced rum, light rum, blue curacao, and sour. Shake. Add grenadine.

## alt biggest little shark bite \*not a fan of rum? \*

3/4 oz light rum  
1 oz vodka (pinnacle whipped)  
1/2 oz Blue Curacao  
1 1/2 oz sweet n sour mix  
3 drops grenadine syrup

Add spiced rum, vodka, blue curacao, and sour. Shake. Add grenadine.

## biggest little fluffy puppy \*

2oz vodka (pinnacle whipped)  
2oz sweet n sour mix  
2oz 7up  
splash of raspberry syrup  
3-5 drops of Angostura bitters

Add vodka, sour and 7up. Stir. Add syrup and bitters.

## biggest little sweet crush \*

2 oz orange juice  
2 oz 7 up  
1 oz mango or coconut rum  
1 oz vodka (pinnacle whipped)  
splash of raspberry syrup

Add orange juice, 7 up, rum and vodka. Stir. Add syrup.

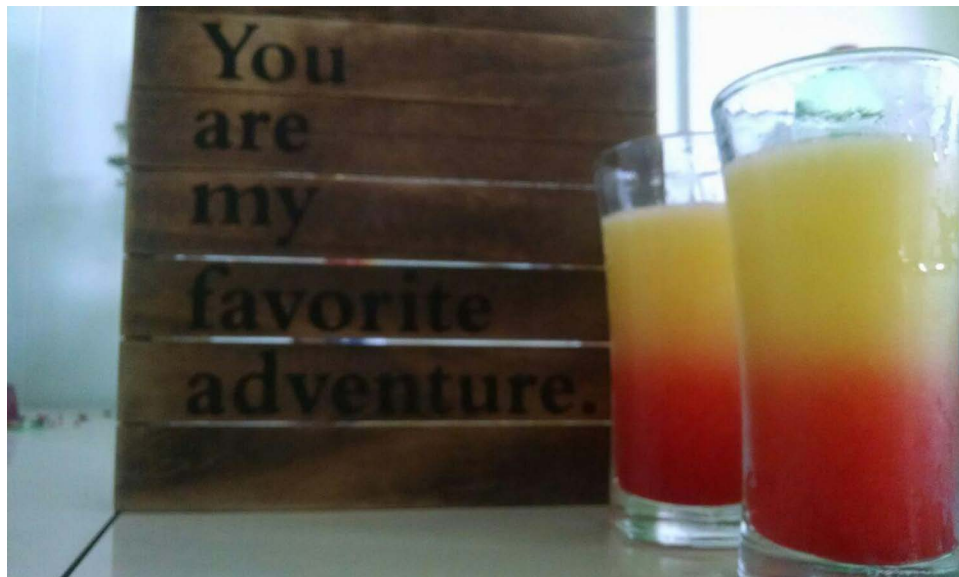
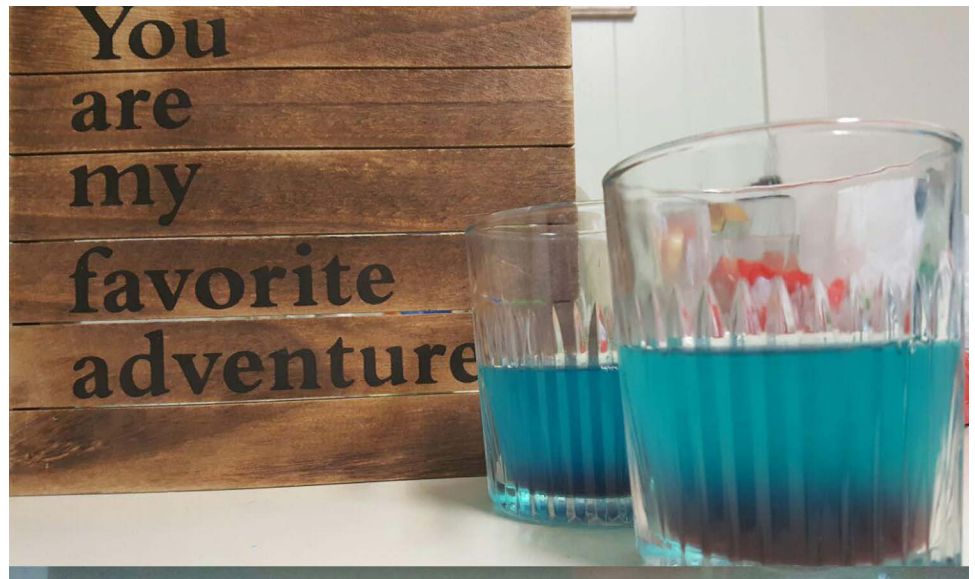
\* Recipes by Snags. Sweet Crush and Fluffy Puppy and Alt Shark Bite created by me, Shark Bite is a classic old favorite.





BL FLUFFY  
PUPPY

BL SHARK  
BITE



BL SWEET  
CRUSH







