

Eight Guns Over A Dead Girl

By Patty Templeton

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Savi was a purse snatcher, a wallet grabber, a *fuckyoufirst* then steal your green, heartbreaking bitch. Her stems climbed high to a mix of dynamite and heaven. She had been known to allow victims to smell her black curls or, if you were lucky, tongue the outline of the inked cobwebbed wings taking location across all of her back before she sent you to the six foot drop. She was a barroom tall tale, the poetics off the bathroom wall:

*You grabbed some tail, you brought it home.
Yer hard, she's wet, yer all alone.
Ask her her name, that's what I said,
but if it's Savi, yer already dead.*

And Savi hunted at the Blind Stagers Inn.

The Dame was blonde and looked like a burlesque librarian: hair in a high bun, gin in small hands, and a tight brown sweater wrapped around an eyeful. Savi could've fallen in love with her, but she fucked her instead. The Dame was more than half behind the cork and all it took was Savi nuzzling into her ear, "Oh, you just need to get home. I'll take you before one of these surly sonsabitches tries to take advantage of the situation."

With a hand precariously close to a posterior, Savi led her to a cab.

It was all giggles to The Dame's northside bungalow.

Savi followed to the door, went for the hug goodnight, grazed lips across an ear and gave a kiss on the cheek. Said Dame invited Savi in.

Coffee was had, footsy played, and many a mark know how creeping delicious Savi's delicate toes can be. At bedtime, The Dame said "Why don't you come tuck me in"

So up the stairs and Savi knew this broad had dough.

In the bedroom - and there were the jewelry chests.

Onto the bed and The Dame smiled and said, "Why don't you grab me a little something from that drawer", while she's unbuttoning and swinging down her tresses and this is where Savi almost backed down, almost tossed the knife from her sneaking thigh and pledged eternal I'd-take-a-bullet-for-you-firecracker-love for this gorgeous piece. Sitting in the top drawer, elegantly straddled by silk underthings was the thickest, meanest strap-on Savi had seen, but Savi saw the pearls sitting underneath the monster.

Savi unzipped as she slinked to The Dame who said, "My Atty won't be home till tomorrow."

Savi strapped on as she climbed onto the bed and The Dame had one hand in the wet and the other at Savi's breast.

And Savi gave The Dame a squeal as her tip played around the lips and finally pushed in and it was thick and it was in, but The Dame, she said *deeper* and Savi gave

her the crimson jimson and the blonde was at her neck, doing this thing to her ear and Savi had her knife under the pillow, but this blonde goddamn she made her horny and Savi was rethinking the whole kill-the-bitch-attitude, but she caught out of the corner of her eye the glittering rocks on the nightstand, but fuck she was in this bitch so fucking deep and The Dame whispered *fuck me harder* and bit Savi's bottom lip, and Jesus K. Rist, Savi was coming all over the place and The Dame was laid back, arching her back, Savi's left on a breast and right behind her neck, and goddamned if Savi didn't want to fuck her seven times till morning, but fuck, fuck, there, there, right fucking, *there?* Was that a Van Gogh above the bed? And Savi's knife came out with the dick still deep and The Dame's eyes opened up as the blade plunged in.

Savi rolled over, unstrapped and wiped off, reaching for The Dame's purse on the oriental carpet.

Atticus the Itch's goddamned wife.

Savi had screwed the best wet of her life and it was the best gal of a man who had just got out of prison for punching a hole through a cop's fucking head. Atticus the Itch who owned the city, who owned the damn hotel she lived in. Atticus the Itch who, if he saw her, would kill her, *then* fuck her, then toss her out the goddamned window to let the cops clean up after because the cops knew better than to ask questions anymore. Ask questions and you either get sodomized and strangled or a hole punched through your head - a serious hole the size of a peach from the Itch's bare knuckles, just like Jimmy What's-His-Name now sitting in a wooden kimono waiting for God to take him home. Only The Itch owns God too.

Good side: She could get lost off this score.

Bad side: Getting found out by The Itch and having appendages slowly hacked off between dickings, whereupon finally she would pass out and The Itch would skin her back to keep as a wall hanging.

Coin toss: The Dame said he wouldn't be home till tomorrow. This score would last her years.

Savi nuzzled naked up to Mrs. Itch who coughed up her last, the knife still in her heart, and kissed her on the mouth for the good fortune. Savi felt those stirrings and The Dame dropped dead, so Savi reached for the soggy strap-on, laid back, and tucked herself in thinking about the pearls in the drawer. There was the first moan. The rocks on the table and Savi pushed deeper. The painting above her and goddamn this was a good, f... f... fucking score, naked in The Itch's house.

Naked and the door creaked downstairs.

Savi pulled out, looked up, only 4 A.M.. That little cunt, *my husband won't be home till tomorrow my ass.*

This is all explainable. Dead wife. Wet strap-on. All parties naked.

Twenty steps left, The Itch was coming up the stairs.

Tell him his wife was a bitch and he deserved better.

Eighteen steps and The Itch was past the Tiffany window.

Tell him The Dame killed herself.

Fifteen steps and Savi could hear Mr. The Itch humming.

Tell him; screw telling him anything, Savi grabbed the purse, grabbed the rocks, and went for the pearls.

Twelve steps and good, his feet were heavy, he sounded drunk, sounded slow.

Ten steps and the hall Edisons flicked on and Savi had Mrs. The Itch's tight little sweater barely covering her ass, shoving her dress, shoes, everything into another bag from the closet.

Five steps and Savi was out the window, bags tossed and trying to climb down the vines like a two-bit porch climber, with a flash of a January breeze climbing between her legs.

The door creaked open as the window creaked shut and Savi almost broke her ankle from the half asinine jump as Atticus the Itch started yelling from above.

It was four in the morning and descent girls weren't out this late.

Savi walked down the block, lugging bags towards the El.

Too bad somebody saw her.

Max had a pension for gory three-penny comics and big tits, neither of which his mother allowed him to be around.

This was not an issue.

Joey Fitz smuggled him comics and Max saved a month's worth of allowance and ordered binoculars from *Boy's Life*. *Yeah mom, I got 'em for birdwatchin. Sure.*

In fits of thirteen-year old rebellion and boredom, Max leaned his gangly frame on the window sill and spied on the neighbors, keeping a journal of findings:

1. *Mrs. Fitz wears black garters.*
2. *Miranda Marley and Paul Hock were tonguing behind her daddy's shed.*
3. *Shelby: tomboy, age 14- NOW HAS KNOCKERS.*

And so it went with savory tidbits that any respectable citizen should know about his neighbors, numbered and often scribbled out and renumbered in order of importance.

It was on an iniquitous night of peeping across that street that one, Max Z. Glaester with brown eyes did see a raven-haired woman with the curves of country road climbing into bed with Atticus the Itch's big-titted Wife, sexing and sweating at four in the morning. And though Max didn't quite understand how or why Raven was packing a dick bigger than his, he was excited nonetheless and quite possibly, in love. *Why couldn't girls around the block look like that broad?*

About when Max's binoculars were fogged and he was swollen and ready, Raven stabbed the Wife and down the street the Itch walked home, surrounded by his gang of large shoulders.

This was not OK. Max loved this woman. This was not infatuation. She was evil. She was beautiful. She'd probably read comics with him. She - she was perfect. The Itch finds her and he'll kill her. Kill his Raven, with the boobs and the tongue and, and, no one was killing his girl.

But while Max was getting brave, the broad was getting away and Atticus the Itch's squall could be heard till Jersey.

As his Raven shimmied and jumped down the Itch's house, Max struck a match, dangled a cigarette, and climbed out his own window, thinking about the tux he would wear at their wedding, about the whiskey, the dancing, the caving honeymoon at Yosemite, and he shadowed her long legs to the El.

The El car shook back and forth, weaseling to the southside and all the five A.M. businessmen were in other cars. It was Raven and him. Alone. Together. *Should I propose now? Wait till she gets off?* Max pulled his cap down, and watched Raven's way. She put on these wraparound stiletto numbers *and the legs on his girl, hot biscuits.*

"Kid? Kid you got an issue I need to smack outta you?"

She talked to him. His Raven, his betty, his angel.

"Kid if you don't quit gawking I'm gonna cut you up like a Chink's dog."

And she could curse. Atta girl. He knew she was perfect. The train swayed back and forth or maybe that was his heart punching his body around. Max pulled his cap off and squinted.

“Last chance kid to button your lids before I toss you from this train,” she pulled her black curls into a ponytail.

“Yeah, well, yeah...” *Dammit, he was squeaking.*

“What of it?”

“I – well... I saw, you have a... Do you really..? I mean, The Itch.”

“Did you say The Itch?” Seventeen demons shot out of her eyes and crawled at him.

“Um, you-”

“Did you see me at The Itch’s house?” She reached for something.

“I...”

“Cause if you did, slick, I might have to throw you out the window after slitting yer throat.” Max saw a blade sing from one of the bags she sat by.

She was so tough. She could piss all over Kate the Cow who stole three of his comics. Perfect, perfect, perfect.

“I, well, I wanted to give you a place to hideout. You, yer...perfect.”

The train was irate; it lurched past the loop and his Raven was headed to a dirty part of Chicago. Max pulled out another cigarette and offered her the Luckys.

“Hideout? Kid, what reason do you think I have to hideout?” She put the blade back and grabbed the pack.

“You, well... I think you-”. He stopped and lit up.

“Alright then, so, we’ve established that you ain’t seen nothing, right?”

“I saw you naked.” Max’s eyes tacked on her chest.

“Well, you ain’t the first kid.” *She was smiling at him, smiling those red lips at him, Max Z. Glaester.*

“I, well-” Max went down on one knee after he stumbled the two feet to Savi and accidentally ashed on her knee, “Will you marry me?”

Yes, that heavenly noise was her laughing at him.

“Kid, get lost while I still let you.”

He would tell his mom it was a spur of the moment thing, getting hitched.

Max was up off the grit and leaned back on the El door, “Well, I’m pretty handy. I mean, I could do stuff for you.”

His Raven stood up, grabbed her bags, her sweet little sweater sheltered that rear, and she pointed at him, pointed at HIM.

“What’s your name kid?” Her nails were red as her lips.

“Max Glaester, at yer service. I mean, I would love to...”

He didn’t get any further, the door opened up and his tailbone made friends with the El platform. His Raven stepped over him to get out *and did he just, he did just, thank God she wasn’t wearing any underpants.*

“Well, Mr. Glaester, seeing as you know things, and seeing as you want to be useful, grab the bags and quick step. We got someone to meet.”

“Umm, hey, hey lady,” he picked up the bags and watched her sweater ride up in the early morning light as she tried to pull it down.

She turned back with a little bit of a glare, more of a smirk, her top lip slightly, adorably crooked.

“Should I call you Mrs. Max Glaester?”

“Savi kid, the name’s Savi.” And yeah, that time she smiled at him.

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Bars ain't the place to be at six A.M. especially when you're hungover, recently sprung from the joint, and want to boink the wife till you fall asleep on her. But bars are the place to be, if you get home to damn well see that you've been half-ass robbed and your wife is sprawled out naked in the bed, not all *come-fucking-hither*, but rather swabbed in the cum of some other creep while a godless piece of strap-on shit winks at you from beside her dead hand. And more to the point, the Blind Stagers Inn with its ragtag piano, cheap beer, and velvet booths is where to be if you're known as The Itch and you told the bartender to keep a good goddamn eye on your wife till you got back round to her.

"Smitts, didn't I tell you? Didn't I tell you to watch the bitch?" The Itch was thick in a suit, head shaved, no eyebrows, always in a black hat.

SMACK.

Smitts head rolled to the side; there was blood in his eye. Two goons held his arms back. His feet weren't really touching the ground so much as playing ballerina.

"Smitts, I said, didn't I fucking tell you to watch the goddamn wife till I was around?"

SMACK. Backhand this round.

The Itch wasn't even punching him yet. Smitts knew he was dead; dead dead dead. He never got around to fixing the cracked mirror behind the bar either.

"Smitts, you piece of shit, who did she leave with, Smitts?"

Smitts opened his mouth, blood drooled onto his buttndown.

SMACK.

Two more weeks and he woulda been in Minnesota fishing the bend in the river this time of morning.

"Smitts, are you fuckin crying? Are you goddamn well cryin? Cuz I'm a fuckin widower right now and I should be cryin. But can I cry, Smitts? Or do I have to be a man, come to your southside piece 'a shit bar and be a man?"

SMACK.

Mothballs and curtains kept the dark in the bar and the goons held tight, fingers laced between Smitts' scrawny arm muscles. There was a gun behind the counter, but no way for Smitts to reach it.

SMACK, and The Itch had a hand wrapped around a suspender.

"Can I cry, Smitts? Over my dead wife still in my fuckin bed? Probably raped in the ass by some sick fuck. Took against her will. Can I fuckin cry too, Smitts?"

Smitts opened his mouth again, "She left with-

SMACK. Smitts wouldn't ever see outta that eye again.

"What? You dirty piece of fly shit, you think you can talk about my dead wife? My true fuckin love? The bitch who waited it out for me while I was upriver? You think I'm gonna let you even say shit about her, Smitts?"

"She, left with..."

Then came the first wind-knocker to the gut.

"Smitts, this bar is done. You are fuckin done."

The second wind knocker, this time to the jaw. Smitts could hear the angels close in as the bones splintered.

“Smitts, I might let you live. I’m gonna fuck ya. I’m gonna cut off your dick and I’m gonna take your bar, but I might let you live.” The Itch lit a cigarette and smoke gathered as he pulled a rope out of his briefcase. The goons wore daisy smiles.

Smitts tried one more time to talk. “She left with some broad.” He spit out a tooth. “They were dyking.”

SMACK.

“Excuse the fuck outta me, did you just call my dead sainted wife *a fuckin dyke?* Drop him boys. Drop him in that puddle of piss he’s making.”

Sure enough, Smitts had pissed himself, and a goon wing-tipped Smitts’ head into the yellow iron liquid. A siren passed outside the bar, but kept going south.

“Smitts, you saying my wife left with a dyke?”

Smitts tried to nod, piss and bar grit went up his nose.

“Smitts, *you saying my wife was a dyke?*”

Smitts waited for the blow, a kick this time, to the ribs, at least two were broken. He shoulda went into insurance like his mother wanted.

“*Put this on the sonofabitch.*” The Itch tossed the rope at his boys who wrapped it round Smitts neck and hands; splintering threads roughed into his jugular and Smitts laid half hogtied.

The Itch had a calmer look as he polished the blood off his knuckles, “Hey Smitts? Smitts, you ever been fucked in the ass before?”

Smitts looked up with the one eye that worked as Atticus the Itch pulled down his zipper.

“Where we going?” the kid lugged the bags, hissing glares at men who rubbernecked as Savi walked past. Market carts were out and a few old men sat on porches. It was still early.

“Jack Seven Maps.” She didn’t even turn around, but Max liked the view regardless.

“The legend?”

“Sure kid, the legend.”

“Where we meeting him?”

“Carry the bags, cut the tongue, and keep up.”

Max didn’t know how she could walk so quick on pencil thin heels. It made her ass bounce and he wondered when he could get his tongue in her ear.

They stopped at a travel agent place across the street from the Blind Stagers Inn.

“We going on a trip?” Max imagined going down on Savi in a pyramid, *makingslongsweetlove* in the jungle after killing natives, grabbing a fistful of her hair as she put her mouth around...

“*Max*, get your goddamned ass inside.”

They were in the basement and Max was standing in front of Jack Seven Maps. Jack Seven Maps, who could break outta any prison, who could bust anyone else outta prison. He had comics written about him. He had a Clark Gable looking mug shot in the Trib. The papers said he shoulda been in movies instead of jails and ladies fainted for him. They called him Jack the Map, when he cracked out of his first joint and kept adding numbers to the title as he kept busting out. He was dumb and unlucky at robbing banks, but genius at weaseling outta architecture. Max stood in front of Jack Seven Maps and Jack Seven Maps was hugging his girl.

“Hey,” yeah, that was Max, “Hey, get your goddamn hands off my girl!” Max dropped Savi’s bags and was balled up fists as he stumbled down the stairs.

Savi and Seven Maps turned with dropped jaws.

“Savi who the hell is this kid?” Seven Maps’ paw was still on her shoulder.

“Kid saw me and followed, I didn’t have the heart to break his cute little face yet. He carried my bags.”

“*I said get yer hands off my girl!*” Max took a step forward. Shit he was crazy. He was challenging Jack Seven Maps who supposedly bit a man’s eye out once, somehow or something.

“Savi is this twelve year old piece a shit your new dick?” Jack Seven Maps was grinning teeth. Max wasn’t. What could he use to kill this bastard? Three chairs, one crate table, tea, bare bones – nothing - but he might be able to reach the hanging light bulb and cut Seven Maps’ throat.

“No it’s better than that Jackie. Max here proposed on the El. I might settle down with him.”

Savi said yes? Did she just say yes? Shit, he was getting married, wait till Joey Fitz heard.

Jack Seven Maps hand went to squeeze Savi’s, “In that case, dear, good luck.”

Before Seven Maps finished Max rushed him trying to get out a good punch before Seven Maps could kill him.

Seven Maps grabbed the punch and swung Max in so they were back to chest, both looked at Savi. Max wiggle-stomped, red-faced in a chokehold.

“Hey Savi, how’s about you explain to your *fiancé* that we’re cousins and there ain’t no reason to be going to an early grave.” Max slouched, somewhat thankful.

“Kid, this here’s Jack and he’s a cousin. Don’t worry little man, my heart is all yours.” She smirked and Jack let go.

“I’m thirteen.” Max grunted.

“What?” Jack Seven Maps’ voice sounded like stray dogs getting into whiskey.

“Not twelve,” Max picked up the bags as Savi sat down.

“My largest apologies. Have a seat by your lady.”

They gathered round the crate table with a tea set. Max dared to put a hand on Savi’s bare white thigh, Seven Maps laughed at the audacity, and Savi could give a good goddamn as long as they got down to business.

“So, what’s the mire that brought you home? Tea?” Seven Maps was an unusually graceful tea pourer and Max tried to indifferently slide his hand upward, millimeter by millimeter, every two minutes.

“I scratched someone bad Jacky. Someone real bad.”

“Who?”

“The Itch’s wife.”

Seven Maps spit tea out of his face, it reached Max’s knee. Max weighed his options - let go of Savi to clean it, or not?

“Well hell, we do have some business, eh?” Seven Maps regained his calm. “How long?”

“About two hours ago.”

The bulb got scared and flickered.

“Anyone know?”

“The kid.”

“You gonna kill him?”

“Nah, seems useful.” Max’s heart fisted around, his hand squeezed her thigh.

“I can get you out on a 7:30 train. Gives you forty-five minutes to pack. You are going to pack, right? Or at least change? You look like a Seventh Street whore taking two penny dick for breakfast.”

“Yeah, you look well yourself. How’s about I don’t pack, you sell whatever’s at the hotel and send me the funds later. I don’t leave this hole till I have to and you get me some clothes. I know you keep an ugly little harem with those jabbering travel secretaries upstairs. Grab me some respectable garb off one of their tails.”

“Well dear, whatever will one of those ladies wear home then?”

“Your dick for all I care, get me some clothes. Let the kid get the clothes. I don’t care.”

“Was it a good score?”

“Woulda been if the sonofabitch hadn’t been walking up the stairs while I climbed out the window.”

“Kid, you saw all this?” Seven Maps’ hair was slicked back, his mustache somewhat twitchy.

“Most.”

“Well, ain’t you a man today?” Jack Seven Maps got up. “Please, do help yourself to more tea. I’ll find clothes that’ll fit your rack.”

“It is a nice rack, ain’t it?” Max smiled at Seven Maps and put his hands behind his neck, kicking back to a two peg chair lean. Seven Maps shook his head. Savi stood up, pushed Max over, and kicked him in the ass.

“Kid, it’s comments like that that make me not wanna marry you so much.”

Shit thought Max, but all the same, he was on the floor looking up at Savi, thanking God again that she didn’t have time for panties.

“Smitts, you took it like a man. A crying, vomiting, bleeding man, but a man.” The Itch held up the wallpaper, flicked his square and watched the boys put Smitts pants on.

“See Smitts, I’m not gonna kill you and I’m not gonna hurt you, until I find the bitch that fucked my wife and to do that, you gotta nod me to her.” Smitts had smears of The Itch all over his legs, pants, and back and tried to crawl to the gun behind the bar.

“Grab him boys.” The Itch walked out, humming towards the car.

The goons grabbed Smitts, who didn’t have a voice to whimper and dragged him head down out the door. *Not even locking the joint up, sonsabitches.* A new round of prickling tears started glazing the dirt around Smitts’ eyes. It was full-on day and the sun brought his torn short sleeves and pus-leaking lips to light.

Savi changed into this two piece skirt suit and Max grabbed an eyeful, tilting his head back so he could see underneath the blindfold.

“Quit being a pervert.” Savi threw the sex scented sweater at him.

“Not like I ain’t seen it before.” Max went to pull the blindfold down.

“You touch that for another ten seconds and I’m gonna break your sex off before you can see.” Savi was being tough, but she didn’t sound all that mad.

“Long as yer touching it sister, I’ll die a happy man.”

Jack Seven Steps came down the stairs. “Lover’s quarrel?”

“Don’t be a jackass, kid’s a peeping disgrace. If you’re gonna do it kid, do it well. Christ, kids don’t know nothing these days.” Savi was done, her tits barely held in by the V-neck suit jacket. She shimmied the skirt up a little bit.

“Well, car’s out front and I got a naked secretary to deal with, how’s about you and the sidekick scam?”

“You’ll take care of the hotel?”

“Already half done.”

“Keep half the money for yourself Jacky.”

“I wouldn’t dream of it. You’ll need it for your wedding.”

“Aww shut it.”

Savi went up the stairs and out the door as a pissy naked woman yelled at Savi from the closet. Max brought the bags and Jack Seven Maps saw them to the car.

Smitts didn’t want to die today. He didn’t necessarily want to get pulped and taken in the ass and thrown in a car, but he didn’t want to die. Ain’t the fates great when they agree with you?

Smitts could barely see, but he saw Savi. Saw the bitch saunter out the door, busting her chest out a cute little suit like she was respectable or something, pretending to be a mom with a kid in tow.

With a bloody hand, Smitts tugged on the sleeve of the goon who shoved him into the car as The Itch and his other smoked outside.

“Dammit Smitts, this’ a new suit, NEW, get your goddamn hand-”

But Smitts pointed. Pointed and with any guttural ability he had left nodded towards and meeked out the word *DYKE* as his head banged against the car window towards Savi.

Savi saw The Itch and shoved the kid into the car.

Max's head hit the far door hard and as his forehead leaked he fell to the floor.

The Itch heard from the goon who heard from Smitts and grabbed for his gun.

Jack Seven Maps had two barrels on him.

Savi pulled out one.

The goons had four guns.

The sun got scared and hid behind clouds. The kid was out cold and the grown-ups all had pistols pointed civilized from twenty feet across the street. Five guns to three on a sweet summer day.

None moved and suddenly there were no neighbors.

"You the dyke that fucked my wife?" The Itch asked, his voice coating the street with gravel.

"You the son of a bitch who came home early?" Savi could take the bastard with Jacky around.

Smitts leaned low in the seat and cars know when to not drive down certain southside streets.

"Ya know, all you need is a little bit of my dick and it'll clear up all that dyke."

The Itch began to itch, his finger getting warm.

"Can't be that good if your wife wanted me to fuck her with a strap-on."

Atticus the Itch shot Savi in the heart, but it never worked right anyway.

Savi shot The Itch in the crotch, just to be a bitch.

Seven Maps shot both the goons as both muzzled him.

All parties were bleeding and the pavement felt cold for summertime.

Smitts climbed outta the car and laughed to joy in the sunshine. He kicked the gun away from The Itch.

Savi couldn't breathe and Seven Maps had already stopped.

Max flung outta the car at Savi; God must have woke him up.

Smitts kicked the shit outta the Itch, *"You fucking piece of shit, come into my bar, try to fuck me up. FUCK YOU!"*

KICK.

"FUCK YOU ITCH!"

KICK, KICK, and Smitts picked up the Itch's gun and shot him in the face.

Savi had a trail of red leaking between her breasts. The kid teared up over her.

"Kid,"

"Yeah,"

"Quick." Her voice was a dying kitten.

"A doctor... I'll get a doctor." His forehead still bled as well.

She grabbed his sleeve, "No kid," this time a cough came up bloody. "Kid, go hold up The Itch's place." Her eyes searched high, somewhere over Max's head and stopped moving. He wiped at the snot and blood mixed on his face and got up.

The sun went back to simmering as Max Z. Glaester ran to the train and Smitts hung The Itch's gun above his bar.

Patty Templeton is made of sunshine and daggers mashed together. Someday she'll either be a sexy librarian on the Antique Roadshow or a rare and used bookstore owner. In the meantime she writes for www.darkbutshining.com.