

THE SHADOW DANCERS

-A WRITING SAMPLE FROM AN ONE HOUR TV PILOT-



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EXT. BAGHDAD OUTDOORS MARKET -- AFTERNOON

POV CAMERA scanning sky in OUTDOORS MARKET. LOTS OF VENDORS in market, dealing with their CUSTOMERS, ANIMALS, FRUITS, COOKWARE, TOYS, etc. SLIGHT HUM OF AIRCRAFT in distance, catching the attention of one of the VENDORS, who looks up. ZOOM in on TINY BLACK OBJECT looking somewhat like HELICOPTER, fading in and out of clouds in distance. He points to it.

INT. US MARINE BARRACKS. GREEN ZONE. BAGHDAD, IRAQ -- EARLY MORNING

Major 'Rune' Hazen, an intelligence officer who formed the first Marine remote viewing unit, now in charge of combat activities in the Green Zone, is talking to Captain.

TITLE: PRESENT

MAJOR
Is that convoy ready?

CAPTAIN

I doubt it. You said 0700.

MAJOR

Well, I changed my mind.

CAPTAIN

Is this based on one of your-
psychic episodes, Major Rune?

MAJOR

I don't need your impertinence,
Captain.

CAPTAIN

So far the men have tolerated your
remote sensing crap...

MAJOR

Use that tone with me one more time
and you'll wind up wishing you had
signed up with the Republican Guard.

CAPTAIN

Oh, do we have to believe as well as
obey? You know they call you
Swengali-

MAJOR

They- or you- can call me whatever
you goddamn well want to, but I
don't need to listen to your naive
skepticism. I've seen enough...

CAPTAIN

Yeah, you've made some really shrewd
guesses.... but you're little
hunches have also been devastatingly
wrong.

MAJOR

Men die in combat no matter how you
slice it.

CAPTAIN

I think this unit would be better
off if you'd slice it with a normal
kitchen knife instead of this
telepathic-

MAJOR

Don't think, Captain. If you can,
just break yourself of that bad
habit. I know, by some strange,

nasty quirk of fate, you are
distantly related to my half-sister.
Still, it would be a grave mistake
to imagine that you now have a
ticket for evading my wrath. I'm a
legend at home, aren't I, Captain?

CAPTAIN

(smirking)

An urban legend. Is the one about
the Ouija board really true?

MAJOR

Get that convoy ready by 0500!

Captain starts to leave.

MAJOR (CONT'D)

Oh, you can also salute me, you smug
bastard.

Captain does and turns to leave.

INT. MARINE BARRACKS. GREEN ZONE, BAGHDAD, IRAQ -- MOMENTS
LATER

Sergeant bursts into room.

SERGEANT

Get your ass out of bed, Corporal!
Roll your men out to the mess.
Swengali wants us there at 0500.

CORPORAL

He said 0700, goddamn it!

He sits up, making a wave-like motion with his hands.

CORPORAL (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

Oh, has the cosmic ether changed?

SERGEANT

He's right half the time. That
beats every other field commander in
this freaking war.

CORPORAL

I'm glad you think 50% is OK.

SERGEANT

He was wrong about the sunspots. He
was right about the Brit. No one
even thought of that one.

CORPORAL

So his M'Lord High Ambassador poked
one too many? They all do it.

SERGEANT

Maybe not quite so- abundantly.

CORPORAL

True, Svengali scored on that one.

SERGEANT

I'm glad you agree. Hurry up, now.
We're late!

EXT. BAGHDAD OUTDOORS MARKET -- AFTERNOON

CAMERA PANS VENDORS' BOOTHS, NOISY, ENERGETIC CROWD- RACKS
OF LAMB, VEGETABLE TRAYS, FURNITURE, TOYS, CARPETS. AERIAL
SHOT: COPTER APPROACHING. CAMERA PANS to VENDORS and
SHOPPERS as COPTER sweeps over VENDORS' GOODS, scaring
crowd. It disappears, then suddenly makes another pass,
SPRAYING MARKET WITH MACHINE GUN FIRE. Suddenly, MISSILE
takes out the center of the Market. MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN
are sprawled everywhere. CLOSE-IN on child clutching TINY
WOODEN CAMEL, OLDER WOMAN BLEEDING FROM MOUTH, PROBABLY
DEAD, with LIVE CHICKEN escaping from BASKET.

HUMVEE LEADING CONVOY CAREENS INTO MARKET. MARINES JUMP OUT
DEPLOYING THEMSELVES INTO POSITIONS THROUGHOUT MARKET. MED.
SHOT OF LEAD HUMVEE. A CORPORAL is getting out of HUMVEE,
while talking to a PRIVATE, one of the men in his platoon.

CORPORAL

Oh, my God. Swengali was right. He
was right again!