

I was sitting in my studio, fine-tuning the greatest piece of hardware a man like me could have: an audio console. I had stopped doing audio maintenance for employers long ago, but it had always been tough for me to stop caring about the hardware I used to do my work. It had been a relatively simple morning so far. I heard my room's door open, and then *she* appeared.

The morbidly large gut, the three chins, the pantyhose covered thighs resembling blocks of cheese, the unwashed greasy hair. *I was in love.*

"Mr. Cowabunga?" she said in a deep, seductive voice that could kill a man.

I tried to contain my frigid facade. "Who are you? How did you break into my house?"

She looked at me, eyes lighting up like the grease on her forehead.

"I know everything there is to know about you, Michael Mattson."

I was speechless. "How do you--"

"Michael Mattson, ex-cop, quit the force after this Mexican partner, Roberto Moertu, was brutally maimed and hanged from a tree by an animal rights organization for shooting an escaped zoo tiger." She paused for a while, then continued: "After your friend died you tried to do anything to bring his killers to justice, but they were found innocent by the Netherlands judicial system. With the guilt of having failed your friend and anger at society, you were discharged from the police department for gunning down an entire gang of juvenile delinquents. This caused you to change your name to Hick Cowabunga, a mythical Wild West figure, and move far away from everyone you knew."

"How do you know this?"

"You're a well known figure in certain circles, Mr. Mattson."

"Whatever. What's your name and what do you want from me? And call me Cowabunga by the way."

"I have a little job for you, Cowabunga." she said, removing all signs of formality and sitting seductively on the audio console. "You see-- crap!" her explanation was cut short by the audio console splitting in half due to her immense weight. Pieces of hardware flew everywhere, shattering into even smaller pieces as they hit the ground. The fall made her open her legs, which was followed by the most foul smell I had experienced in my life. I tried to ignore this and the anger felt by her breaking my audio console. I just stood there, looking in disbelief.

She got up.

"Just follow me." she said in a defeated voice.

At that point, I just wanted her to go away. However, I followed her outside, where she stopped in front of a car parked by my house.

Asking myself the obvious, I decided to speak. "This yours?"

She lifted the car's trunk and answered. "Yes. Now, take a look at this."

It was an amplifier. The scratches and traces of lint indicated it was nearly a decade old, but beyond that it was an ordinary piece of hardware.

"Looks like a very typical amplifier to me."

She looked at me right in the eyes, the grease on her forehead shining like motorcycle oil.

"Let's go back to your house. Once it's plugged in, you'll see."

Back at my house, I connected the amplifier. What happened afterwards was something I'll remember forever.

The device emitted a shockwave that broke all the windows. The sky turned black as a red beam of energy blasted from the amplifier extending from it to the sky, destroying part of my house's roof in the process. The horrified screams of my neighbours could be heard all around me.

"What is this?! What did you make me do?!" I shouted at the anonymous woman. She was more horrified than I was, her eyes looking at the beam as the grease on her forehead shined like motorcycle lubricant.

After what seemed like forever, she answered.

"This is what I came here for! We found it in a musician's burial ground a couple of years ago! It's been killing people ever since! Even when it's disconnected it can transmit sound waves to nearby

people and cause them cancer!”

I stood there, staring at the beam in disbelief. The woman continued to speak without me saying a word.

“You need to destroy it somehow!”

Without thinking, I kicked the amplifier into the wall, believing that damaging it would end the madness. My kick made the beam disperse into various directions, destroying part of my house's walls in the process.

Suddenly, a bright white light came out of the amplifier and I heard a cold, emotionless voice.

“Michael Mattson, a.k.a Hick Cowabunga, forty-five years old, Dutch, parents deceased.”

The light had no clear figure, staring into it may as well have been looking into a void.

I shouted at it “Who are you?!”

“It matters not what I am, but what you will be. I come not to end your life, but to save your dark soul. You lost your only friend, Roberto Moertu, thirty-nine years old, Mexican, deceased thirteen years ago. This can be changed.”

I was speechless through the entire ordeal, what was this thing? Why was it trying to help me after killing so many? Would I ever know the answers?

“Time can be reverted.” It continued. “Many have died because of me, but this too can be changed. However, for this to happen a human host shall be necessary. Walk into the light, Hick Cowabunga, your journey has only begun.”

I entered the light.

The End.