



Redemption Song

Craig Schaefer

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Daniel Faust, Las Vegas sorcerer and career criminal, has never pulled the trigger on an innocent man. When the infernal Prince Sitri challenges him to do just that, though, he can't walk away. His lover, Caitlin, is Sitri's right hand...and if Daniel refuses the job, he'll never see her again.

While Daniel works to unravel Sitri's twisted game, putting his principles and his life on the line, Caitlin has problems of her own. A pack of renegade halfbloods are in town, armed to the teeth and aiming to go to war with hell itself. Their leader is a bad memory from Caitlin's past, one she thought dead and buried centuries ago, and he's got revenge on his mind.

As if that isn't bad enough, the fallout from Daniel's last job descends in the form of an FBI task force, aimed at putting him and everyone he cares about behind bars. The feds have a magician of their own, one who knows all of Daniel's dirty little secrets. Throw in a mythical road map to hell and the ghost of a 15th-century serial killer, and the stage is set for a deadly collision.

Sitri's games are never what they seem. Everything is connected. If Daniel and Caitlin can't solve the puzzle in time, the consequences will tear them apart forever.

Redemption Song Details

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From Reader Review Redemption Song for online ebook

Jokoloyo says

A buddy read with Orient and Craig. I took some time when reading it, due to RL issue, not the book.

This book is a bit above 3.5 star, so I rounded up. It doesn't have overly-dark horror as the beginning of book 1. So I can understand if some people don't like the changes. The promise of first book is not repeated in this book 2. It is not a grimly dark UF anymore, a bit humorous, actually. I heard next books are darker again.

On the other hand, I like the trick-versus-trick plots of this novel. This book reminded me of a detective-wuxia novel that I've read years ago: the action scenes are pretty good at the beginning and middle parts, but the climax would not be satisfactory without revelations of the tricks. Fortunately, this is the way of ending that I like.

Evelina | AvalinahsBooks says

Daniel Faust is a sly rebel. I'm also going to be a sly rebel and not review the book ;) all you need to know is that I'm looking up the price of part 3 right away.

XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says

? Daniel Faust and Cait are Mine Mine Mine Buddy Reread with my MacHalo Wives and Daughters and Stuff (DFaCaMMMBRwmMWaSaS™) ?

Previous rating: 4.5 stars. *I was young, naive, stupid and ~~hadn't yet read enough crap~~ didn't know any better when I first read this book.*

New rating: 5 stars. *Because now I am ancient and wise and ~~have read tons of crap~~ and know much better. Also: DUH.*

► And the moral of this reread is : in case you didn't know, **Daniel Faust is mine**. Also, in case you didn't know, **Caitlin is mine**. Also also, I have **breaking news** for you: I am officially **adopting Daniel's adoptive daddies**, Corman and Bentley. So that they can, in turn, adopt me. Yeah, I know, being adopted by your boyfriend's adoptive daddies (ergo your daddies-in-law) **seems sort of weird**, but you're only thinking that because you haven't met the guys and don't know how **bodaciously amazing** they are. Besides, it's not like I need your approval and stuff, so **feel free to erroneously think what you want**. Besides besides, Corman and Bentley happen to think I'm the **coolest daughter-in-law ever**, so I'm pretty sure they'd be thrilled to adopt me. What? You don't think they like me that much? **Ha!** Look at the tee-shirts they were wearing **just this morning**:

Told you they thought I was tuburlarly cool and stuff. **Ha again!**

[Original review]

Actual rating: 4.5 stars++++. *My finger is dangerously hovering over the number 5 key on my keyboard right now. I think I might be very slightly in LUUURRRVVVVVE. Not much, though. Just a teensy little bit.*

Yes, I know. I've already non-reviewed book 3 in this series. So what? Are you outrageously outraged by my mixing reviews in such a blatantly disrespectful way? You are? Too bad. Because that's the way we roll in Shrimp Land. Besides, chaos is fun. **Order is overrated.**

Sooooo, let's do the **Cut the Crap Non-Review Thingy** (CtCNRT™), shall we? All you need to know about this baby is:

① **Danny Boy The Grifter-Trickster-Thief and his lethal deck of cards are MINE.** I might have said this before, but I don't think so. I mean, I'd remember if I had, right? Right. Anyway. Why do I want to lock Danny Boy up in my high security harem, you ask? Because **morals are not very high** on Danny Boy's list of priorities. It's absolutely delicious. Okay, MY Danny does have principles, but they're of the highly **bendable, highly flexible** variety. And "thou shalt not kill" is definitely not one of them. **Yum, yum, yum.**

② **Caitlin aka The Hound aka The Wingtaker is mine.** She's a demon, so that makes her mine on principle. Because all demons are yummy and all demons are mine. Apart from that? She's ruthless. She's an **Awesome Blood-Shedding Babe** (ABSB™). She's unforgiving. She kicks ass (obviously). She takes no BS. She's got several beautiful sets of **pearly serrated teeth**. And, much to her-pet's Danny Boy's utter dismay, she keeps ordering his food for him. Which amuses me to no end. **Girls rule, my Little Barnacles! GIRLS RULE!**

③ **All bad guys, all the time!** This series has such a glorious Black Company vibe! No good guys in this world, only delicious layers of **double-crossing** assholes, **unscrupulous** lowlifes, **villainous** villains, **cunning** liars and **shady** underworld sorts! This is pure bliss, people! **Glee is me!**

④ **Darker is cooler.** This series is the love child of **film noir and grimdark**. Okay, so it's not lusciously bleak, but things still get **exquisitely dreary and gloomy and stuff**. Besides, there's blood-and-gore-yay, which is always a plus. The cool thing is, the story isn't ALL **dismal and somber and stuff**, ALL the time. Nope, nope, nope. There's lots of humour here. Because, yes, MY Danny Boy can be a very funny guy when he wants to. Albeit a **darkly funny** one. With a delightfully **twisted** sense of humour. I think might be **very slightly** in ♥♥♥ LUUUUURRRRVE ♥♥♥ (pointing this out in case you hadn't noticed. You're welcome.)

⑤ **The Shady Bunch.** Danny Boy's weirdly-assorted clique is kinda-sorta **uber awesome**. They operate on the wrong side of the law 99.9999% of the time, which is **most excellent**, if you ask me. And despite their being **deliciously criminally inclined**, they're the good bad guys. The kind that take the bad bad bad guys down, you know? And their moral compasses might be **slightly fucked up**, but, like Danny Boy, they do know the difference between right and wrong. **More or less.**

» **And the much-awaited moral of this Non-Full Totally Crappy Non-Review** (NFTCNR™) is: forget about Silly Happy Dresden (SHD™)! Forget about Lackluster Atticus O'Sullivan (LAOS™)! Danny Boy is

the man! **This is the best UF series with a male lead you'll ever read, my Little Barnacles!**

- **Book 1:** The Long Way Down ★★★★★
 - **Book 1.5:** The White Gold Score ★★★★★
 - **Book 3:** The Living End ★★★★★
 - **Book 4:** A Plain-Dealing Villain ★★★★★
 - **Book 5:** The Killing Floor Blues ★★★★★
 - **Book 6:** The Castle Doctrine ★★★★★
 - **Book 7:** Double or Nothing ★★★★★
 - **Book 8:** The Neon Boneyard ★★★★★
-
- **Short-story:** A Drive in the Country ★★★★★
-

Choko says

*** 4.35 ***

Daniel Faust is back and getting in trouble with everyone. There doesn't seem to be a faction that is not after him and wanting him dead. For just a simple human with some minor magic and not a very wide repertoire, he sure knows how to make enemies. At least he has the relationship he never had dared to hope he would ever have. Faust has The Hound, Caitlin, as a girlfriend and nothing can stand in their way. Or they thought, until the Prince of Hell gives him a test - either do as he asks, or he loses Caitlin.

"... "According to Caitlin, he'd been on the throne since Hannibal discovered elephants, and he was so slippery he would orchestrate assassination plots against himself when he got bored, just to keep his wits sharp."..."

Yep, the Prince is a tricky one, so Faust has to dig deep into his bag of tricks in order to pull something almost impossible off. Only the police, the mob, The Redemption quire (a group of half-human half-demon young people who want to become "pure" humans, led by a full demon who knows how to manipulate them...), the local psycho "we-want-to-take-over-the-world" group and several other entities are bent on standing in his way and hopefully kill and damn him to hell on the way. For a trickster like Faust, the only thing that is left to lean on is his magical made-up family and his gumption. He is put in some very difficult and tight spots, but somehow is able to survive, not necessarily coming off a winner.

"... "How about you, Dan? What do you do for a living?" Well, Ben, until recently I was a hired wand for the biggest gang boss in Las Vegas, but we had a falling-out, so mostly I just run short cons and sometimes busk on Fremont Street doing sleight-of-hand tricks for spare change. I guess you could say I'm sort of a criminal bum. "I'm between jobs right now," I told him. "The economy being what it is." "Hey, you don't have any financial background, do you?" "I robbed a bank once," I said, and Caitlin kicked my shin under the table. To their credit, Emma and Ben favored me with polite chuckles. Melanie smirked. I liked the kid. "Daniel is too modest," Caitlin said." ..."

Caitlin has been my dream woman-demon ever since last book, but I think I am starting to truly appreciate Faust as a character as well. Loved the introduction of Pixie and was pleased to see more of some of the other secondary characters, especially Melanie:):)) The introduction of Harmony Black was just as I expected it would be - she is the perfect FBI agent with some witchy powers but straight as the job demands, and it was to be expected that a less than pristine character like Faust would totally grade on her nerves and turn all of her danger lights on. They make a great team when they put their hostilities aside though. I loved

everything about this book and I can't wait to continue with the series!!!

"... "There was a modern family for you. Demon mom, human dad, cambion kid. Just like Caitlin and me, minus the kid and the wedding rings. Wasn't sure how I felt about that." ..."

Now I wish you all Happy Reading and many more wonderful books to come!!!

Jason says

4.5 Stars

Redemption Song by Craig Schaefer is a fantastic second book in the Daniel Faust series. Many people draw comparisons of this book to that of Jim Butcher's Dresden Files, but this one leans more to the 'R' Rated side than does the really 'PG' Dresden Files. I confess that the whole urban fantasy series has become my guilty pleasure reads. My love for the genre elevates everything I read. I only know that right now, I cannot seem to get enough from a genre filled with everything from ghosts and spirits, to Wolves and vamps, Gods and Demons, and sorcerers and cops. I love it.

Our main protagonist Daniel Faust is a sorcerer, a Thief, and pretty much not a good guy. He is however perfect for our lead role. Faust is not 'PG'. I loved the pacing, the world building, and the magic. I only wish that there was more. Caitlyn is a fantastic character and she pretty much steals all the pages that she is on.

These are not good people:

"so let me get this straight,' pixie said. 'some of the bad guys are bad guys, some of the bad guys are good guys and there aren't any good good guys.'"

The story in Redemption Song ups the stakes and no less than the whole world is in danger once again. This one has quite a few twists and turns and games played that make it even more fun. I devoured this book immediately after reading the first book. It is a Damn fun read. I really like Daniel Faust and cannot wait to read more.

Highly recommended!

Orient says

"The journey of a thousand miles," he said, "begins with a single step. A human sage said that, and I've always found it admirable advice. Can anyone change their nature? Can anyone be redeemed, and put their past behind them? I'm still on that journey, young lady, so I can't say where it will end. I can only have faith."

A great BR with two wonderful GR friends-BR partners, fellow assassins of Danny Boy, **Craig** and **Jokoloyo**. A year passed after I read book 1, I was charmed and wanted to get a better look into the series.

My impression after reading book 2 is that it isn't a perfect series, but it's quite well written. The one thing I like in Schaefer's books and characters is that they are gripping, true, messed up, the characters are down to earth, they have flaws and like Pixie said:

“Some of the bad guys are bad guys, some of the bad guys are the good guys, and there aren’t any good good guys.”

Characters. My lovely pair <3 I like the love relationship between Faust and Cait, it adds nice spices to the story and I love it that Mr. Schaefer doesn't rush things or make their love too sweet and fluffy.

Despite that Faust can be a great villain with his amazingly dark past and present, he shines with his strange moral compass, which ***“might be just a little bit fucked up”***. And to make matters worse he finds himself a playtoy in the demon prince game. It sounds perfect for another gripping adventure with Danny Boy, as to think that he can be played with, is understatement. Also I liked the Faust's banter with others. The villain of this book is quite interesting, not very bizarre or cruel. To tell the truth I wanted more of the great main villain lady.

Sully :)

Narrative. From the very start this story was a bit peculiar and I felt that it is a bit weaker than in book one. I was a bit disappointed with this book as the mystery was thin sometimes, I liked some twists (the one with Prince Sitri and the both chats with him) and the final revelation of Pinfeather was quite unexpected. But IDK, I had a struggle with this book. Maybe Slade spoiled me, dang it :) The reveal at the end, when all the real plans were shown, I liked the cleverness, but it wasn't mind blowing. I liked the historical spices, it was interesting to know about the creepy fellow Giles.

To sum up, this book was interesting to read, it didn't grip me fully, but I enjoyed my ride with Faust. I am very looking forward to seeing where it will all go.

“Our blood doesn’t make us who we are. We do. Our choices, our lives.”

Bob Marley “Redemption Song”

Tom says

Picking up not long after Daniel Faust saved all of creation from within the borders of Las Vegas, we find he's still dating a very powerful demon, still in good graces with various friends, and still looking to bring down the near-world-ending Lauren Carmichael. So, of course, girlfriend Caitlin's prince, Sitri, orders Daniel to either kill an innocent priest or never see Caitlin again. And Caitlin can't disobey Sitri. Ever. Sheesh

Naturally, Daniel doesn't want to kill the priest. He may be a con artist, a thief, and a practitioner of the black arts, but even he has standards. So, it's off on another adventure. While Dresden Files protagonist Harry Dresden will plow through his enemies and win out, often out of sheer power and goodness, Daniel Faust isn't that kind of sorcerer. He tries to be for the first half of the book, then realizes that is a really bad way to go about things and does it his own way, con artist that he is, by being the craftiest man in the room.

Faust's books tend to be quick reads for me, which is nice. I do like how Schaefer imagines hell and its minions: most seem to be regular folks who occasionally do really bad things, but the whole place seems to be more full of accountants and pencil-pushers than anything else. Really, most demons on the surface at least seem to be decent people, and the half-breeds that populate the world can be as dangerous or harmless as anyone else. That's not too bad since it distracts from how potentially awful Faust's world is. Faust himself says there's no proof of a God, or anyone that might be considered a force for good. Good, instead, is determined by what individuals like him do to make the world a better place. The only angel even mentioned in two books was...removed ages ago.

As such, kudos for Schaefer's world-building that even with all the demons it doesn't look like that bad a place to hang out. His characters are fun and unique, and my only complaint was in the end of the book when Faust explains to an apparently very patient big bad how he was conned, with said big bad just apparently listening to a long story. Oh well.

Gavin says

This was just as much fun as the first book in the Daniel Faust series. It was actually so enjoyable that I'm now ready to call this series one of my favourites in the UF genre!

Daniel Faust has more problems than ever. He just prevented an Armageddon, but has no time to rest on his laurels as the twisted mastermind of that plot is still one the loose and views the whole incident as merely a delay to achieving her ultimate goal. As if that is not bad enough Daniel is being ordered by Caitlin's boss, the Demon Prince Sitri, to prove his loyalty by killing an innocent priest. If he fails he will be forbidden from seeing Caitlin again! The problems just keep piling up for Daniel as the situation is complicated further by the fact that a Cambian terror group is being forced into Vegas by the manipulations of a rival of Prince Sitri.

Daniel was pushed to his limits as he sought to outfox Demons, Cambians, evil sorcerers, and even a twisted soul that managed to escaped from Hell!

The story was a ton of fun. Craig Schaefer has an engaging writing style and Daniel is an easy character to root for. He is no angel, but he follows his own moral code and is never short of a witty remark along the way. I love the fact that the humor offers balance to some of the darker aspects of this series.

Roll on book 3!

Rating:4.5 stars.

Audio Note: I'm warming more to Adam Verner as a narrator all the time. His general narration is fantastic and he is a great fit for the Daniel and the story. He even improved a bit with the female voices. Though Caitin's accent is still horrific!

Emma says

'Vegas loves a winner and hates a loser. As long as you're flush with cash, this town will treat you like a king while it milks you for every last cent. Once your pockets are empty, though, the ride jerks to a stop like the yank of a hangman's noose.'

This is a great urban fantasy series! A blend of noir, magic- sleight of hand and black magic, demons, hounds of hell and a distinctly morally 'grey' main character who somehow manages to be the good guy:

“The world is full of good men who make bad decisions,” I told her. “Sometimes it works out. Sometimes it doesn’t. You just have to figure things out the best you can. Make the best choices you can. Choices you can live with.”

Kira says

I may be in love with Daniel Faust, not in a book boyfriend kind of way but in a hero worship kind of way. He’s not really a hero; heroes don’t commit as many crimes as he does. He an antihero. He’s as gray as it gets. Dan does horrible things like lie, steal, and kill, but I love his strong moral code. As bad as he is, there are just some things he won’t do.

Caitlin aka the Hound is a bad ass. I wish she had more page time in this book though. I’m surprised I like her so much because there is not much good in her. She does bad things without batting an eye and blindly does whatever her prince asks of her. Some things she does are horrible, and one of the worst of them was revealed in this.

The reason everything happened was surprising. I never would have guessed that was why Prince Sitri wanted to see what Dan would do. Dan really should be called the trickster. He is good at manipulating people. What he pulled off at the end was awesome. I didn’t see it coming. This is becoming one of my favorite UF series. It’s that good.

Eric says

4 Stars

A great follow up to The Long Way Down. Redemption Song starts with a bang and never lets up, keeping a breathless pace all the way through to the finale.

The book picks up only a few weeks after the end of The Long Way Down. Lauren and her corporation are still a threat and Daniel is then given an impossible choice by his girlfriend’s employer, the demon prince Sitri. Kill an innocent man or walk away from Caitlin. Forever.

That dilemma kicks off a mad rush by Daniel to try and figure out a way to avoid murdering an innocent man without losing Caitlin. He quickly finds out there is more going on than he imagined as he gets sucked into a deadly game.

All of the fun elements from the first book are back. A gritty, moody setting. A strong lead character who makes plenty of decisions of shall we say questionable morality who nevertheless is trying to do what he thinks is right. Fast paced action sprinkled with some fun magic. A supporting cast of interesting characters.

Speaking of the supporting cast, there were some great additions in this book. Pixie and Special Agent Harmony Black were the standouts for me, and I hope to see more of them in future installments. Harmony in particular was interesting, and I’ll definitely be checking out her series in the future.

One thing I'm still curious to see is how much the nature of Caitlin and her work (really, her whole world) gets addressed. Right now there seems to be an uneasy truce where Daniel ignores aspects of who she is and what she does. I hope that at some point that gets more fully explored.

Any UF fans who like their stories a bit darker owes it to themselves to check this series out. Highly recommended.

Mr. Matt says

This book picks up on the heels of the first Daniel Faust book, Long Way Down. Faust is back and gets swept up in a Mexican stand-off (of sorts) between a gang of demons-spawn Cambion, the ruthless escaped villains of book one, and the sinister plots of Caitlin's demon prince. Oh, and he's also working out what it means to be in a relationship with his demon girl-friend, Caitlin.

Redemption Song was a very fun read. Like the first book I like the ambiguity of the main characters - are they good or are they evil? Who are the good guys anyway? I like Daniel's style and sense of justice. I like the fact that he will risk his life on a roll of the dice and the fate of humanity on the love of his (demon) woman.

The book is funny, engaging and action packed. My problem with it is similar to my problems with the first book. I accept the premise that these are kinder, gentler, more complex demons, but still. I have a hard time accepting that these soul sucking demons that will gleefully rip someone's spleen out via their chest cavity, can settle down in a thoroughly domestic way, e.g., Emma, Ben and Melanie.

Four stars out of five. I rounded the first book up to five because I had been so pleasantly surprised by it. There was no surprise here. I knew that I would like the book, and I did. Bottom line: these Faust books are pretty darn good. Best new Urban Fantasy that I've seen in a while.

Sh3lly (grumpybookgrrrl.com) says

The second book in the pretty awesome Daniel Faust series. In this one, we've still got lots of demons. Prince Sitri (a demon) commands Daniel Faust to kill a priest or never see Caitlin (she's his demon lover) again. What an asshole, right. Of course, Daniel is like, screw you, but then secret deals are made, stuff happens, layers unfold, nothing is as it seems, and we end up with a satisfying resolution to another dark Vegas paranormal underworld investigation.

This one has the Redemption Choir, led by an insane demon named Sullivan, who claims to be on the path to, well, redemption. His cultish followers are half demon half human hybrids who want to reject their demonic sides.

Lauren Carmichael is still at large and involved. She still has the Ring of Solomon and wants the soul of a noble who lived during the time of Joan of Arc to further her plans to complete the Enclave (still not sure what the purpose of that is going to be). He also happened to be a serial killer in his time and brutally murdered 500 kids "for Satan." Not a nice guy.

We see the same crew we met in book 1, plus meet some new characters. Caitlin wasn't in this one much, which kind of bummed me out. #girlcrush (Yes, I know she's a demon.)

I can't say that these books are page-turners or ones I'd binge-read. But I find them very good and this is actually becoming one of my favorite urban fantasies. Daniel Faust is not a do-gooder and embraces his dark side, yet is an anti-hero you can root for.

We meet Harmony Black in this one and I can see why she got a spinoff series. I was intrigued.

Very good book and will be continuing!

Even though it's not "horror," it has got demons, so I'm counting it towards my spooky monster paranormal month.

October 17th Buddy read with the Buddies Books and Baubles group.

carol. says

broken finger review #2

the more this finger repair draws out, the crabbier i get. i definitely had no tolerance for the pidgeon dialect i was encountering in Lagoon, so i thought i'd go for the softly lobbed ball and give a try at faust book two.

here's the problem:

wait, there's a couple of problems.

the first, and most likely reason is that We Are Not Amused by farces, whether it is The Comedy of Errors or John Dies at the End. And i say that because being a farce has got to be the best explanation of some of the glaring annoyances in this book. because:

although the reader is told that the magic community takes care of its own and has a strict code of non-disclosure, faust tells no less than three mundanes explicit details. it also becomes clear that mundanes are often in inter species marriages. so, wth, world-building?

add that to the fact that he appears to be verbalizing his plans to nearly every single character he meets and i'm feeling he might have a case of ts/tl coming on.

so let me get this straight,' pixie said. 'some of the bad guys are bad guys, some of the bad guys are good guys and there aren't any good good guys.'

Faust makes numerous references to being a 'less bad' guy, yet we are provided with no evidence of this as true, except that he tries--*and really likes*--mystery meat.

actually, i can empathize--i could be a happy vegetarian if it wasn't for fucking bacon. cripes.

at any rate, he saves a priest, refuses kill-shots unless shot at first, is tolerant of sullen teens (mundane or otherwise), avoids innocent casualties, cries with relief and shows up to social functions when his girlfriend asks him to. i'd call that a good guy, especially when one of those is a ten-minute notice to meet the boss. Especially considering, and i mean *especially*, when he later says, **i kept my principles and lost everything else.**"

whaaat? where's the bad-good guy?

the writing feels less thoughtful this time, finesse lost in the press of the action. there's a couple instances when faust says "four words to never say..." and "**six most dangerous words to say...**" schaefer should write one of those toss out magazine articles, "ten phrases to avoid when dealing with demons."

so, on the plus side, it has one of the best opening lines in a long time:

The ghost of Merle Haggard kept Sophia trapped in her house for two weeks". The action is steady. Good feel for las vegas, although too many truisms like "**Vegas loves a winner and hates a loser**" The Demon Prince is scary, although his house of BDSM, not so much.

you know what was a little nauseating? faust taking time out from his day to relax his hell-mistress girlfriend by plying her with wine and rubbing her shoulders until she takes a nap. and oh yes: part of the plot is about assimilation... quite a kumbaya for a book with hell demons. and--how can i forget--all the supernatural ladies want to make a slave of faust.

oh man. did i stumble into the paranormal romance section?

and, as something i don't normally notice, so consider it especially odd--i think the title had nothing to do with the book. feel free to explain...

overall, it left me suspicious this was a joke after the noir ambiguity of the first. decent, but not really what i was expecting.

review #1: <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Milda Page Runner says

This series is a delicious treat for any UF fan. Here are few non-spoilery snippets so you can judge for yourself. :)

"This is Detective Gary Kemper of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police," Agent Black said with a gesture to the goateed man. "And this very large gentleman to my left is Agent Lars Jakobsen of the DEA."
I leaned back in my chair and whistled, trying to keep my nerves from showing. "You all came down here just for me? It's not even my birthday."

How about you, Dan? What do you do for a living?"

(Well, Ben, until recently I was a hired wand for the biggest gang boss in Las Vegas, but we had a falling-out, so mostly I just run short cons and sometimes busk on Fremont Street doing sleight-of-hand tricks for spare change. I guess you could say I'm sort of a criminal bum.) "I'm between jobs right now," I told him. "The economy being what it is."

"I hear you, I hear you. Hey, you don't have any financial background, do you?"

"I robbed a bank once,"

Ronald Reagan once said the nine scariest words in the English language were, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help."

"So let me get this straight," Pixie said. "Some of the bad guys are bad guys, some of the bad guys are the good guys, and there aren't any good good guys."

"That's right."

"Hey, Faust?"

“Yeah, Pix?”

“You ever think,” she said, “your moral compass might be just a little bit fucked up?”

“Every damn day.”

I prefer my government the same way I prefer my cops: clueless, helpless, and out of my way.

“War has become the province of peasants in this day,” he said with a tinge of regret. “The sword, the lance, those are a real man’s weapons. Weapons of skill and courage. Now you forge portable cannons and allow any fool to carry one in his pocket. Is it any wonder that the right of kings is a distant memory?”

“We like our violence democratic these days,” I said. “It’s fairer to everybody that way.”
