



## Encountering the Avtomatik

or

## *Avtomatik, [Supersonik](#)*

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| <b>Mission title:</b>   | <i>Encountering the Avtomatik or Avtomatik, Supersonik</i> |
| <b>Mission log:</b>     | 1-08   |
| <b>Mission Johnson:</b> |  |
| <b>Mission reward:</b>  | 2 karma  |
| <b>Participants:</b>    | Cogwhistle, Dr. Farsight, Jinx, Vince                      |

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## 1-08: Curiosity killed the cat but maimed the librarian

The call was sudden, and Ricardo left again. The shout of “gotta go to Germany, laterz chumskis” echoed around dr. Farsight’s apartment longer than it took Ricardo to grab the keys of his Toyota Elite and glide out the front door. Some might say that he relished the opportunity to get away from it all for a while. Some might be right.

Schneider didn’t say much, other than that she had to “go hobnob with mr. Vore.” It was always “*Mister Vore*”. As if, by some dark spell, whomever the contact was, would *know* if he wasn’t being treated with the proper amount of respect. And Schneider always looked *slightly* ill at ease when mentioning that particular person. *Mister Vore*. With that, she also left, Skidz making more of a spectacle when it left.

Cogwhistle, dr. Farsight, Jinx and Vince looked at each other. Vince looked pensive, to the extent that a three meter and some augmented troll with more muscle than Old Detroit’s products could look pensive. Dr. Farsight and Jinx looked to be in a not insignificant amount of pain. Though well-oiled and moisturized, their burns were nowhere near healed. There might even still be some significant scarring if they didn’t get the time to heal up.

Jinx decided to send some messages off to some of her contacts. Perhaps there was something related to magic that might help her heal faster. Cogwhistle joined in, sending off messages into the great [noosphere](#) to see what bit. Vince, uncharacteristically, did some perfunctory looking for some gear, but mostly... just looked pensive. Even when his own pocket secretary did a muffled beep to indicate that someone had sent him a message.

When the third message from as many contacts stated that drek was, if not hitting the proverbial fan in Puyallup Barrens, then at least swaying suggestively in front of it, Vince had had enough. With decisive action, he called a robocab. If everything was going to hell in a handbasket, at least there would be nuyen to make!

With mr Coussos indicating to Vince that there might be a new kind of drone in Puyallup and Deadbeat intimating to Jinx that there might be some new weaponry the same place and even one of Cogwhistle’s contacts getting in on the action, it was obvious that a trip to Puyallup was warranted.

The robocab came and went. The crew went with it.

## 1-08: This isn’t half bad, for an environmental disaster

The [Puyallup Barrens](#) was outside the area that the robocab served. Though the environmental devastation from the Mount Rainier eruption decades ago in the surrounding areas, that wasn’t the case in Puyallup. If Redmond was bad and represented society breaking down, the Puyallup was post-apocalyptic.



The volcanic ashes. They were everywhere, smearing almost everything in a thin grime of carbon black. Add that to the general gist of things, and Puyallup was a place where things could get lost. Not much would come in there and look for stuff or people.



Yet, people lived here. The occasional peek from a wrecked window or doorframe, the occasional rustle from a rooftop. At the edges of Puyallup, there even was some infrastructure, pirated from the surrounding areas that were better off. Nevertheless, the volcanic soot penetrated everything and gave everything a greyish-black tint. The sharp, sulphur smell of the Mowich lava flow was prominent, even though the lava flow itself was quite a distance away.

Vince took charge, and boldly strode into the ruined streets of Puyallup. Experience had showed him that faking it until you made it was not only an option in the shadows – it was tantamount to a survival strategy, particularly if you had no idea what you were actually doing.

He quickly caught the eye of a young boy, perhaps 15 years old, all sneers, elbows and entrepreneurial spirit. A short conversation later, Vince was 300 nuyen lighter, had bought a Ruger Super Warhawk, and had gotten a hint that “further down, to the east, there’s some weird stuff going on”.

The crew strode down that way. Subtly, the area started to change. The ubiquitous ash drifts disappeared, as if someone had vacuumed them up. The buildings started to look – if not whole,



then suspiciously *clean* at least. Further up, on a rooftop, they saw the hulking silhouette of a sentry. Heavily armed. Heavily armored. And standing completely still, as if frozen in some weird rigor. Vince pulled out his pocket secretary to take a few photos. It didn't respond. There was power, there was response in the OS, but it just wouldn't take any photos.



With some trepidation, the crew went forward. Taking care not to creep up on anything, they decided that being obvious would be the best defense against potshots. Suddenly, around a corner, a humanoid appeared. This one was also heavily armed and armored, but was not alive, according to a quick, whispered comment from Cogwhistle.

"Drop weapons." The metallic voice emanating from the humanoid combat drone was devoid of inflection, devoid of tone. The crew complied – in some cases taking quite some time in doing so. After what seemed a quick scan from the humanoid gun drone, it then intoned "State business." Its autocannon, though





“Umm... We’re looking to buy weapons and stuff from here. We heard that this was the place to go.” The gun drone was quiet for a few moments, as if it processed this. “Yes. Gather belongings. Follow.” With that, it turned around and started stomping further into the Puyallup Barrens. Prominently displayed on the gun drone was a cryptic symbol.



The crew obediently followed the gun drone deeper into the Puyallup Barrens. Occasionally, they tried various electronic devices. They either failed outright, or didn’t work properly. Their tac net beeped a warning to Vince. Someone was eavesdropping on the tac net.

The odd group made their way to what looked for all intents and purposes to be a bazaar. A strange, and very heavily armed bazaar.





Even though some of the drones looked like they should be human, none of them had any aura. Cogwhistle didn't really like that at all.

### **1-08: That's some Buck Rogers shit right there, yo'**

Spread out on a steel plate were some of the weirdest weaponry that anyone in the crew had ever seen. It looked as if it had been ripped straight out of the latest space opera trid serial. It looked all plastic and futuristic. Some of it even glowed. Vince inspected the weaponry closely. He could just barely make out hidden hatches and recesses in the weapon shrouds – recesses that might conceal ambulatory devices and sensors.

"So, what are these?" Their guide was quiet, unresponsive. "Umm... how much for the weapons?" "200 nuyen. Each." The crew was dumbfounded. "So, how does this work?" "Perfect vacuum." "How?" "Dark matter effects." Vince was even more dumbfounded. Something was seriously off here. The large troll looked around surreptitiously. He couldn't see any illusionist or anything, but that would be the point. The most reasonable explanation was that someone was having a laugh. The least reasonable explanation was that someone wasn't. And was telling the truth.



Gingerly, Vince addressed the humanoid gun drone standing close by. "Can I test fire one of these weapons?" "Affirmative."

Vince picked out one of the smaller, pistol-like weapons. Not knowing quite what to expect, he pointed it towards a piece of brick close by the barren concrete wall of a house. His smartlink lighted up, and informed him that the device wished to install its drivers into his smartlink. Mentally, Vince selected "no". Whatever these things were, he didn't want software from them into his head just yet.



Carefully taking aim, Vince squeezed the trigger. A high-pitched whine steadily rising in frequency quickly went inaudible. His ear dampers shut down on the noise, hard. The recoil and flash of light was unexpected, but manageable. A section of the brick had seemingly vaporized, and a perfectly circular hole had appeared in the wall.

The weapon recharged and fired again, and again, until Vince stopped depressing the trigger. He estimated a rate of fire of just over one per second. The destructive capability of the smallish weapon seemed tremendous. He put the pistol-like weapon down again on the table.

Jinx got bored. She surveyed the steel table in front of her and its bewildering array of futuristic and fantastic weaponry. Grabbing the largest of the weapons there, she addressed the gun drone. "I'll test fire this one, eh?" "Affirmative."

She rested the large weapon on her shoulder. It was strangely light, though it was weirdly balanced. It was as if the grenade-shaped thing in front of her had a lot more mass than she could feel – the weapon felt like it wanted to pivot around that part of the weapon rather than what she thought should be the center of gravity on the weapon.

She pointed the spindly weapon at the same wall that Vince had shot at, some 50 meters away. Squinting and bracing herself, she pulled the trigger. Nothing happened for about a second.

The flash was so strong that it outshone the sun for a brief moment. A ball of *something* streaked just slow enough towards the wall that it wasn't *quite* a streak of light. It impacted the wall, and a part of the wall just *twisted* in on itself and vanished in a halo of colors. Somewhere in dr. Farsight's equipment, a low beep could be heard. Dr. Farsight looked startled.







“We’ll take all of them,” Vince said.

Paying the humanoid gun drone, another drone casually tossed the weapons into a basket made out of steel rebar, and handed it over to Vince as if it weighed nothing. Vince decided to drag it after him on its rebar skids, even despite his augmented strength. They walked off, escorted the first few hundred meters by the humanoid gun drone.

## **1-08: Aftermath**

Well away from the gun drone, Jinx selected one weapon for Deadbeat. Stroking it gently and cuddling it, it suddenly popped out small, spider-like legs, did a little circular dance, and then deactivated again flopping over on its side. Vince looked at the spectacle, aghast.

He picked out one of the smaller weapons, placed it on the ground some distance away, and pulled out his bo stick. With a sharp poke, he managed to crack the housing of the weapon. Almost immediately, it detonated in a ball of plasma. Vince just managed to throw himself mostly behind a nearby piece of broken concrete and crowbar. The rest of the group managed likewise, though they all got some exposure. Immediately, a piece of dr. Farsight’s equipment started squealing.

It wasn’t more than fifteen or so minutes later that dr. Farsight spoke up. He had been quite quiet throughout the entire ordeal, but now the marksman elf spoke in low but firm tones.

“I’m starting to become nauseous,” dr. Farsight pointed out. “If that means what I suspect it means, we’ll need some serious medical assistance in a week’s time or so, and up until then we’ll likely start puking our guts out. Because I suspect this might be radiation poisoning.” Cogwhistle, Jinx and Vince looked worried. Even Vince looked ashen-greygreen instead of his normal color.

Vince pulled out a device, primed it, and tossed it into the basket with the futuristic weapons. To his astonishment, it almost immediately burned out. “Ok, that’s it. We just need to deliver these to our separate contacts, and then we need to get some proper aid. Those things just burned out a few thousand nuyen’s worth of jammer.”

Pulling out his Pocket Secretary, Vince noticed to his relief that it seemed to work normally now. He placed a call to mr. Coussos. The drones would be there shortly to airlift the weaponry out. Jinx just sent the weapon by robocab to Deadbeat.

Even Vince felt vaguely at unease now, hot and sweaty. As the crew flocked into the robocab, nobody in particular was surprised that dr. Farsight was calling in quite a few favors. This would hurt, Vince suspected.