



**The Case of the Naked Nun: A Dick Burns Minit
Mrdr®**

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Published: 2008

Tag(s): dc, hardboiled, pulp, monkeyrotica, "dick burns", "minit mrdr"

Chapter 1

Burnt Norton

Dick Burns was scraping dried blood from his Remington bolt action when his door blasted open like a dynamited safe.

She stood about five-eleven and was hotter than Satan's pajamas. Even through her conservative black get-up, Burns bought himself a searing eyeful. She placed a manicured hand on her hip, slinked into the office. She drifted in like a panther in heat and looking to paint the town brown. Her skintight blouse clung to her pendulous breasts like death to a sick gibbon. Burns squinted at her silver dollar-sized nipples poking through the taut fabric of the dress like Hershey's chocolate kisses. Her bottomless, bottle green eyes told him yes, but the blood red rosary around her waist said, "Forget it, Charlie. I'm married to God Jr."

The nun took a final puff from her foot-long cigarette holder, crushed out the gasper in Burns's crusty shag carpet. She slinked over to his desk, the click-clack of her rosary sounded like a beaded Chinese curtain in a whorehouse kitchen. She clawed one of Burns's cheroots out of the lifesize wooden Indian dispenser, sat down across from Burns, jackknifed her two-percent body fat legs. She smiled, threw a foot up on his desk, struck a match against her heel. Burns leaned back in his squeaky tube-steel recliner, caught half a glimpse of her black stocking-clad calves. The nun exhaled, her cracked ruby lips disappearing in a pool of grey smoke.

A puddle of drool slowly filled Burns's lap. He brushed flecks of dried blood from his rifle, continued polishing. Burns felt an unfamiliar twinge in his loins, like a eunuch getting a hard-on.

"Have a cigar, sister."

The nun barked back, "Shut your word hole, jerk. And wipe yourself off. I'm here to hire a detective, not to make small talk. Where do I find Dick Burns?"

"This time of the day, your best bet is the drunk tank." Burns lifted his fedora off of the nameplate. She looked down at it, squinted at Burns.

"You're Dick Burns?"

"I'd better be. I'm wearing his underwear."

"Stop, you're killing me. You this funny all the time, fuck?"

"They teach you to talk like that in the convent?"

"They teach us lots of things," she puffed. "Play your cards right, maybe I'll show you the stations of the cross."

There was nothing in that for Burns, so he let it ride. "And, to what do I owe the pleasure of this visit, sister? The Vatican hiring P.I.'s to look for the Ark of the Covenant again?"

"It should be so easy." The nun flicked ash in Burns's cracked Garfield coffee mug. "I'm being blackmailed, Burns. Somebody has a copy of a skin flick I made when I was twelve. They're saying if I don't cough up fifty grand, they'll FedEx it to the Pope."

Dick worked the action of his rifle, lovingly stroked its long, dark barrel. He squinted at the nun, said "So you want me to shoot this guy?"

"No. Just find him and get the movie back."

"I'll do the Pope for free?"

"Maybe some other time. You busy Easter weekend?"

"That's fine. Fifty frogskins a day, plus expenses. You get to ante up the ammo and the hooch. The Pope's head'll be my little gift to you."

A look of vague dissatisfaction crossed her face. "I don't have that kind of money on me, Burns. Maybe we can make some kind of... arrangement. You look like your pew needs some warming." The nun's lips puckered tightly around the dark, anise-soaked cigar. She stood up, propped a high-heeled foot on his warped metal desk, slowly began hiking up her skirt.

"See anything you like yet, Dick? You don't mind if I call you 'Dick,' do you Dick?"

"You can call me 'Barrabas' if you want to, sister. Just put the damn skirt down and give me some suspects to harass."

"Does little Dickie Wickie know his catechism?" she purred.

"Shut up."

She threw her skirt down in a huff. "What's the matter, Dick? Don't you like girls? Or maybe you just don't do it with Catholics?"

"We'll work out a payment schedule later, sister. I'd say my rates are pretty low, considering, but they involve a lot of Vaseline and depilatories. Got a copy of this video?"

She shook her habit. "After I joined the Little Sisters of No Mercy, I bought up all the copies and had them burned, all except the one I use in my portfolio. My extortionist friend filched that."

Burns placed the rifle on the desk, walked around his desk to the nun, snatched the cigar from her pouting lips. He put it out on his forehead, grabbed her by the shoulders, kissed her hard. She broke free and smacked him. Drool shot out of the corner of his mouth.

The nun closed her eyes, moaned, "Jesus died for your sins, Dick."

"Save it for vespers." Burns picked his nose. "Who'd want to blackmail a swell looking babe like you?"

"If I knew that, I wouldn't have to hire you, would I? Fucking idiot."

"Watch your mouth, sister, or I'll blow a new one on the other side of that stupid hat of yours." Burns picked up his rifle, chambered a round with a smooth, well-lubricated click, aimed it out the office window at a passing flock of pigeons. "How's this guy getting in touch with you?"

"Phone calls at the rectory, late at night. He told me to drop the cash off at the 7-11 on Fourteenth and G tonight."

Burns reached beneath his desk. He grabbed a beat-up attaché case packed full of counterfeit twenties left over from an FBI sting operation. He'd conveniently forgotten to return them the Feds. They said he could destroy them. They made the mistake of not saying how. Burns thought now was as good a time as any. He tossed in a makeshift Radio Shack pipe bomb, snapped the case shut.

"Drop this off tonight, then run like hell. I'll tail the guy, see where he takes me. In the meantime, talk to my secretary about putting a trace on your phone." He slid the attaché across his desk. "You know how to shoot?"

"Shoot? Hell, I was in Beirut in '83. Don't talk to me about shooting."

Burns grinned, reached into his desk, pulled out his hammerless .38 belly gun, said, "Take it."

"You really are a comedian, Burns. I wouldn't carry a pea shooter like that for all the lepers in Calcutta." The nun reached beneath her skirt, slipped out a stainless .45 Wildey Auto-Mag with a laserpoint scope. She slammed in a fresh clip, yanked back the slide with a forceful snap. "This guy screws with me and he'll be wearing a hole the size of Saint Peters."

"Try and keep the gunplay down to a minimum, Sister...?"

"Sister Cherry."

"Yeah, right. Anyway, drop off the bundle, then hustle out to my apartment, and hang in the lobby." Burns scribbled his home address on a piece of foolscap, handed it to her. "You any good with that piece?"

"I practice every day," she whispered, cosying up towards Burns. "I like the feel of a big, heavy piece, Dick. Something with a lot of weight to it. Something that gets the job done. I like to feel its firmness in my hand

and run my fingers along its length. Something about the way you squeeze it; the way it erupts; the way it empties a load. You reading me?"

"Like a Jack Chick tract." Burns threw his arm around her waist, planted a long dripping one on her thick red lips. She slapped him. He kicked her in the shins.

"Get the hell out of my office, penguin. And don't forget to say your prayers.

Chapter 2

Ash Wednesday

Burns arrived at the rendezvous point at dusk. He killed the engine, coasted the Plymouth Superbird into a dead space across the street from the Sev. He lit up a blunt, watched the wretched refuse huddle around the Slurpee machine and pull the five-fingered discount at the candy rack. Burns popped the safety off of both guns, tapped his toe in time to Billie Holiday pissing and moaning on the AM receiver.

The nun emerged from the darkness of a side alley, dropped off the briefcase as scheduled. She wasn't wearing her habit and she looked sweeter than a Chocodile. A shock of strawberry blonde hair cascaded down her backless dress, stopped just above her massive hams. From the ends of her fingernails to the tips of her spike heels, she was drenched in red. Sister Cherry had enough ass to be continued on the next nun. Burns could see her massive gun bulging from her purse. If this was a Bride of Christ, Burns wondered if her old man was into wife swapping.

A minute later, a steroid-pumped microcephalic goon in a three piece Armani picked up the case and calmly walked to his car. It was Rocky "The Pinhead" Colostomi, a local hood that Burns owed a few punches in the throat. Burns reached for his bullhorn, threw his head out of the window, yelled "Jig's up, Rocky. Drop the case and grab some sky."

The pinhead dropped the case and ran like a lactose intolerant tourist at a Velveeta factory. When he was twenty feet away from the case, Burns hit the detonator. The case erupted in a fireball of counterfeit notes. The front window of the 7-11 exploded, showering the immigrant cashier with broken safety glass, barbecue flavored KornNuts and flaming suitcase debris. Blown off his feet, the goon slid twenty feet across the pavement. Burns ran after him, grabbed him by the collar and hammered him headfirst into an '83 Caprice Classic. Burns dragged him back to his car, duct taped his eyes and hands, tossed him in the trunk. He headed out towards the suburbs.

Burns parked the car in an isolated section of Bowie, Maryland. He

unlocked the trunk, heaved the goon into the cold mud, yanked the heat out of the gunsel's suit pocket. He tore the duct tape from Rocky's mouth, kicked him in the temple. The goon screamed like a crushed infant. Burns lit a Chesterfield, said, "You've been a naughty boy, Rocky. You didn't call your Mommy on her birthday." He gave Rocky a swift one in the ass. "And on top of that, you get busted making the pickup on an extortion scheme."

Rocky yelled "Who the hell are...?"

"I'm the tooth fairy." Burns kicked him in the mouth, wiped the blood and torn gum off on Rocky's suit. "I'm giving you one chance to make good by me, Rocky. The nun movie, where is it?"

"Go blow your dog, thamus," Rocky lisped, spitting out eyeteeth and bits of bone.

Burns grinned, kneeled down, placed the gun against Rocky's foot and fired. It made a sound like a fart against a folding metal chair. Rocky screamed like Axl Rose with his nuts slammed in a car door. Acrid smoke flared out of the gaping hole in Rocky's crocodile skin shoes. It smelled like burnt rubber and smoked salmon.

Burns stood up. "One foot down, one to go. Who's got the nun movie?"

Rocky writhed in the mud in contorted agony. "I don't know...they don't give me namth! Tall guy in a dreth...thinkth like inthenth...hangth around in the cathedral...thath all I know...I'm juth the delivery boy! Juth geth me to a doctah, fer crithake!"

Burns walked back to the car, reached into the trunk, grabbed a can of spray paint and some jumper cables. He stripped Rocky buck naked, looped one end of the cables around his legs and the other over a thick tree bough. Burns spraypainted, "I'm onto you, Bishop!" on Rocky's chest. Rocky's dick formed the exclamation point. He tied the loose end of the cables to the bumper. Burns got into the car, turned over the engine. As he drove away, Rocky's screaming naked body shot up the tree. Burns got out, loosened the cables, tied them to a nearby picnic table.

"Keep it down, Rocky. You'll wake up the Goatman."

Chapter 3

When in Rome

Burns rolled down the window, tossed Rocky's gun into Allen's Pond, drove back to his slamming crib on Capitol Hill. Sister Cherry was sitting in a wood paneled station wagon working on her second pack of Luckys. Burns rolled in behind her and parked. He noticed the light in his apartment was on. He walked over to her, rapped on the window. She rolled it down.

"The light was on when I got here, Burns. You want we should go up and shoot their eyes out."

"Hold on thar, Tex. I just had the carpet steam cleaned." Burns pointed with his forehead. "Follow me."

They walked to the Cool Disco Dan tattooed payphone at the end of the block. Burns wiped the wax from the earpiece, dialed his home phone number and let it ring until he got his answering machine. He spoke in a thick Welsh brogue.

"'ere, Barnsey? Eve found out whare tha noon ees. She's a hidin' 'round tha Hawk 'n Dove tippin lagers, jess around tha corner. Ya gotta hurry queek, man."

Burns hung up. They ran back towards an alley next to the apartment. Somebody killed the light in Burns's window. A few seconds later, two deacons in Ray Bans emerged from the building, walked up North Carolina Avenue towards the bar. Burns and the nun crept up behind them, guns drawn, and pistol whipped the pair. They dragged the priests into the side alley and shook them down. As they rose, they heard the sounds of a revolver being cocked. In the darkness, someone cleared their throat.

"Have you accepted Christ as you personal savior?"

Chapter 4

The Babylonian Captivity

Heard you've been a naughty boy, Kevin," the Bishop whispered, a Phil-lies blunt clenched between his rotting teeth.

Burns croaked, "My name's not Kevin."

The Bishop jabbed his blocky chin at one of the priests. The priest walked over, slugged Burns in the gut. Burns spat out something that was covered in blood. He recognized the priest. It was "Fishhead" George Mallone; the other was "No-Neck" Semprini, both goons that Burns had sent to the slammer more times than he'd had sloppy seconds.

Burns was bound to a chair in the Bishop's office in the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The Bishop was wearing the usual vestments: white, jewel inlaid frock, miter staff, Doc Martens. He had a chin you could open beer bottles with and a scar that ran from his left temple to his right earlobe. Sister Cherry was sitting in the Bishop's lap. She was back in her nun get-up, this time sporting a leather minidress and fish-nets. The Bishop slipped a Gregorian chant tape into his boom box, turned up volume.

"I don't like private skulks roughing up my boys," he whispered, stroking the nun's inner thigh. "And I sure as hell don't like them nosing around my bishopric."

Burns shook his head. "I'm proud of you, Bishop; working your way up from pushing smack and scalping 'Skins tickets. Now you're working for Rome."

"Rome's diversifying, baby. Everything from black market adoption to organ harvesting. The church is a growth industry. I'm just a venture capitalist."

"... in a dress," Burns added.

The Bishop made the chin motion again. Fishhead planted another one in Burns's gut. This one hit home; Burns peed himself. He coughed up part of yesterday's lunch. Burns hacked, "Starting to look like the bitch set me up, eh Bishop?"

"Cherry here has been born again. We're gonna clock mucho dinero with that movie of hers. Teenage Catholic Sluts in Heat, starring Cherry the Fellatrix Nun. Whatya think?"

"I think you're sicker than fourteen motherfuckers, Bishop. Soon as I'm outta here, I'm gonna nail you and your whole syndicate to a goddamn tree."

Cherry winked at Burns, pulled out her mag and fired at Fishhead, blowing his shoulder blade all over the picture of Pius XII on the opposite wall. No Neck went for his artillery. Cherry turned, aimed, fired. He took the round in his elbow, blasting his forearm off and sending the splintered limb spinning across the linoleum. Both priests writhed on the floor like a pair of slugs in a salt mine, blood rhythmically spurting to the beat of the Gregorian chants. Cherry turned the gun on the Bishop. She motioned him over to his bleeding comrades. She grabbed a John Paul II letter opener, slipped over to Burns and cut his ropes.

"I shoulda known you'd pull a stunt like this, Cherry," the Bishop spat. "Mommy always told me never to trust a woman with a rosary."

The nun snapped back, "Tell it to the College of Cardinals, Bishop. You've just sold your last indulgence."

The Bishop sneered, "This won't be the first time you've underestimated a man in a dress, Burns." He darted for the door, sprinted up the quarter mile aisle of the cathedral.

Burns shook off his ropes, grabbed Cherry. They both took off after the bishop's heels. The Bishop looked behind as he ran to the one of the exits. He darted from one to the other. Locked. He looked towards the altar. Some construction was being done on the three-story crucifix. The Bishop made for the scaffolding, slipping on the dusty plastic protective sheeting. Burns and Cherry dashed towards the altar.

The nun cocked her automatic. "Eat this, ya goddamn papist pornmerchant!" The nun opened fire, blasting the Bishop's left heel out from under him. He wailed like stuck cat but kept climbing. Burns tore past a construction table littered with power tools, did a double take, grabbed a nail gun and slammed in a strip of caps.

"You're coming downtown, Bishop," he hollered. His voice echoed through the deserted cathedral.

"You're not taking me anywhere, Burns. I'll see you in Gehenna." He propped his good foot on Christ's face, pushed himself up past his thorn crowned head.

Burns squirreled up the scaffolding after him, firing nails as he went. The Bishop reached the gilded halo, had nowhere to turn. Burns put the

clergyman in his sights, held his breath, squeezed the trigger. Two nails pierced the Bishop's wrists and feet. He hung from the Savior's head like a good Christian. Burns went up after him, frisked him and found the video stuffed up the Bishop's dress. Before he climbed back down, he gave the Bishop a big kiss.

"You should have taken up woodworking, Burns," the nun yelled from below.

Burns tossed the video down to her, hopped off the cross. She handed the tape back to him.

"Here Burns," she purred, "maybe we can watch it together at your place over drinks?" She grabbed his ass, dug in her fingernails. Burns smiled, cracked the cassette in half, ripping the tape out.

"No thanks, sister." Burns said, smiling. "I gave that up for Lent." She folded her arms, scowled, "Homo."

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