

Won't You Be My Neighbor

by Larry Strattnr

I was up in the hills a month ago visiting friends. You'd think they'd be happy and smiling now harvest season is over and most of the things they grow have been shipped off to wherever they send them. I mean, really? Do I need a shotgun or MP5 pointed at me while I explain I'm Sissy the Trimmer's uncle standing here in the middle of a dirt road with no shade, talking to a guy whose second language is English? You would think most of these people would be headed back to Guatemala by now. Although, I will say, the distribution channel people are generally a lot scarier than any farmer.

On the way up I passed the Crouching Tiger Qui Gong dojo with Suntory Dagdibolbishon. Who's not chemically altered up here is mentally twisted or physically deranged.

Whenever I pass the dojo I wonder if a few classes would help me feel less at a disadvantage visiting Sissy. But no amount of Hi! and Ho! can dance you through a load of number six shot. I'm probably as well off with my Jin Shin Jyutsu, although all the work for an event over in seconds makes me think I'll stick with Herbal Therapeutics. That way, if one of these Local Locos pops a cap on me I won't give a shit anyway.

Sissy looks good. "Hey," she says.

"Ho," I answer.

This is how we roll. I hear she's been boffing the landowner who's not around much, leaving his heavies to kick ass, take names and guard the garden. I wish Sissy the best in this mashup though my experience with her is she's probably boinging the on-site foreman too, for a little day to day backup protection. In any case, she's aiming to marry some money and up here is where the money is unless you're a timber wonk. And to be that you have to buy a lot of equipment while concurrently avoiding a large tree falling on your

anal region. It's easier to grow weed and only the Feds cut it down while you're not looking. And while it does no damage if it falls on you, the same can't be said for the two three hundred pound DEA gorillas who jump you on the trail. No life's risk-free.

"I'm solid up here," Sissy says.

"No doubt. Just remember the boys of summer get gone. Life on a grow is the fast lane. You wake up one day and the town is empty."

So I go up again yesterday and there's no muscle with a Mossberg. The gate is closed, but I walk around it. Inside everything is gone. I heard this particular entrepreneur drives a front loader back and forth, scoops everything up and buries it in a big pit down in the back. Ten years from now some future farmer of America will get stealth-stoned eating his corn on the cob.

I hope Sissy's OK.

