

BUY ME SOME PEANUTS AND CRACKER JACK

RAVENSGATE: THE FOUNDRY, ISSUE #39 INTRO

**RAVEN PARK (FORMERLY BREWERS FIELD),
16 AUGUST 2003, 7:07 P.M.**

Danielle Devereaux hears the crash from 600 feet away. She does not look up from her spinach quiche.

Barry Bonds just put the Giants up by four runs and a living room window. Top of the first, nobody out.

Vic Charlton looks down at the Ravens' dugout with a look of mock disgust: "How much can we pay Montreal to take them back?"

Namor Christianson, missing the sarcasm, responds with, "Hey, we're only four back of the wild card with 40 games left! I mean, it's not like we picked up Armando Benitez or Freddy Garcia or Tom Glavine or Jose Mesa or anything like that."

Vic glances over to the opposite end of the luxury box's porch and says, "Max, how did the Ravens do in '03?"

"Honestly, Vic," snorts Danielle.

"Hey, this could be a way to bankrupt the RCC *and* fund local relief agencies," Vic riffs. "Find out who wins what, who beats the spread, and bet accordingly. Of course, we'd have to use different cut-outs, or else the bookies would get suspicious."

Max is training his binoculars on the right field stands, ignoring the rest of the Collegium Caine luxury box. Over there, Mayor Salome Throckmorton-d'Aubaine and silver-beaked Edgar The Raven, the team's mascot, are handing out commemorative jerseys to the kids from the Children's Home Society.

"They finished tied with San Diego for the division basement," says Max, lowering his binoculars.

"Hey, he speaks," interjects Vic.

"And the only thing memorable about the '04 Ravens was their change in uniforms. They kept the blue pinstripes, silver lettering and black background for home jerseys, but they made their Yankees imitation complete by paring down to just the 'R' and the bird on the left side."

"You're pulling this out of your ass, aren't you?"

"Yes, Vic, I am. Except the part about the uniform change. According to Allan Locksley, it's a done deal—" Benito Santiago crushes a 3-2 fastball into right,



prompting Max to train his binoculars on the same stands. “—for next year. Watch the RavenVision, everyone! Salome just barehanded it! Come on, throw it *back!*”

Jason Garcia walks in and immediately goes to the catering tray, loading up on roasted chicken, spinach quiche, country vegetables, cold cuts, rice pilaf, souvlaki sticks, pita bread, calamari, and key lime cheesecake. The diminutive teen-ager has his plate piled a foot and a half high before he bothers to utter, “Did I miss anything?”

“You mean, aside from Barry launching a grannie into orbit, Santiago putting us in a six-foot hole, and your boss catching a home run ball barehanded?” says Vic. “Absolutely nothing.”

Oscar, Margaret and Francois snicker at Vic’s deadpan delivery.

“What took you so long?” Namor asks. “The MILF—um, the Mayor—let you guys go before the first pitch, didn’t she?”

“Yeah, but I wanted to check out this barista on the 200 Level. She’s tall, tan and *hot*. Looks kinda like that Jane Doe, only with short magenta hair.”

“You mean the Jane Doe that busted out of Sheridan last month?” Francois asks.

“Yeah,” Jason says, “that one. She even has that French tattoo right here, just like—.”

As Jason points to his heart, Vic and Max ask in unison, “Was the tattoo identical to Jane Doe’s?” as the rest of The Foundry train their eyes on Jason.

“Um, yeah, but she had *short magenta* hair and *olive* eyes, not blue.”

“Doesn’t mean anything,” says Danielle. “I can pop in contacts, use hair dye and become someone else in ten minutes. How tall was this barista?”

“About six-two.”



“So the tattoo was at about *eye level*?” Oscar asks, pointedly. “If it turns out you were checking out my *daughter*—.”

“How is she your daughter? She’s as old as you are!” Jason asks.

“How is it I got *here*?” Max interjects.

“Interesting she’s here,” Vic comments. “Talk about hiding in plain sight.”

“It’s *very* interesting,” says Dani. “It seems every time we’re at this ballpark, we encounter some type of temporal anomaly.”

As people rise from their seats, Vic cautions, “Just because it looks like our Jane Doe, doesn’t mean it is—or that it’s the *same* Jane Doe. After all, we are dealing with alternate timelines. Let’s proceed with caution, or else she’ll find another shadow to jump into.”

“That’s what I don’t get,” says Namor. “She spent a year and a half in Sheridan and all she had to do was step into shadow?”

“She didn’t escape until a power surge blew out some lights,” says Dani, “so it’s apparent that she can’t use her own shadow. Maybe she needs a mass of shadow equaling hers.”

“Or in a corner, like at Sheridan,” says Oscar.

“People, let’s not rush into this,” Vic cautions. “Unlike the Ravens, we need to have a game plan.”

“OK, but can some of us chow down first?” Jason warbles while chewing. “Concessions don’t close until the eighth inning.”

To BE CONTINUED _____