



Metal Gear Solid

By Raymond Benson

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This explosive Metal Gear Solid novel ventures beyond the thrilling videogame and delves into the dark heart of Solid Snake's world!

Highly skilled former FOXHOUND agent Solid Snake is called out of retirement to do what he does best—neutralize a crisis of epic proportions. A deadly team of renegade FOXHOUND operatives has taken over the nuclear disposal facility on Shadow Moses Island in the icy Aleutians. If their demands aren't met, a powerful, top-secret weapon will be unleashed upon the world.

Solid Snake's mission is to breach the heavily fortified base to rescue hostages and to destroy the superweapon. His only obstacles are brainwashed commandos, DNA-enhanced troops, and six first-rate killers with extraordinary abilities. All alone in hostile territory, armed with nothing but his wits, Snake has only a snowball's chance in hell of taking out his target and keeping nuclear nightfall from descending on the earth.

But nothing is as it seems. Somebody is hiding something. Somebody has a hidden agenda. And somebody wants Snake to learn secrets about his dark past—secrets that would shake any man to his core.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Raymond Benson is the author of many novels, including *The Black Stiletto* and its sequel, *The Black Stiletto: Black & White*. His rock 'n' roll thriller *Dark Side of the Morgue* was a Shamus Award nominee for Best Paperback Original P.I. Novel of 2009. He is also a prolific tie-in writer, his most recent work being *Homefront: The Voice of Freedom* (co-written with John Milius). Benson was the fourth—and first American—author of the official James Bond novels, and his 007 novels are collected in the anthologies *Choice of Weapons* and *The Union Trilogy*.

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1

SOME YEARS AGO

Dr. Clark quietly reentered the Visiting Chamber, stood still behind the U.S. president and General Jim Houseman, and listened to them whisper. The two men were transfixed in front of the observation window that overlooked the operating theater.

“Is she in pain?” the president asked.

“I thought she was supposed to be sedated,” the general replied. “Now they’re blocking our view, damn it.”

“What’s happening?” the president asked. “Can you see?”

“Do not be alarmed, Mister President.” Dr. Clark’s seductive and eloquent voice echoed in the chamber, startling the president.

“Oh! You gave me a start, Doctor,” the gray-haired politician said. It always had struck Clark that the president was a very nervous type when he wasn’t in front of a camera. She rather enjoyed scaring the poor man; that was ironic because she was a woman, albeit a woman with a commanding presence and powerful charisma.

Clark stepped closer, out of the shadows, and addressed them. “I apologize, Mister President. I thought you were aware I was behind you.”

The president laughed nervously. “It must be because we’re down here so far underground. I guess I’m a little claustrophobic.”

General Houseman said, “We’ll get you back up to the surface as soon as you want to go, Mister President.” Clark noted that the general didn’t look too pleased to be there either.

“Is she giving birth?” the president asked.

“She’s been in labor for a long time,” Clark answered. “It’ll be very soon, I’m sure.”

The president squeamishly turned away from the window and waved his hand around the chamber,

indicating the hundreds of stalactites on the limestone ceiling. “Do any of those things ever fall?”

“They’re thousands of years old, Mister President,” Clark replied. “They won’t fall on their own, I can assure you of that. And the likelihood of an earthquake occurring in the southeastern corner of New Mexico is quite remote.” Her voice reverberated with upper-class sophistication and the timbre of a Shakespearean actress.

The president nodded. “I know. It’s just amazing to think that on the other side of that cavern wall is one of America’s most popular national parks. Hundreds of tourists pour through it every day.”

Carlsbad area was perfect for the project. I’m in debt to your predecessor for backing it.”

The president tilted his head and said, “You know, Doctor, I inherited this project. Tell me how you got established in this facility.”

Clark smiled. “Ever since the caverns were discovered, there were many caves not open to the public. Caves just sitting here, available to the government. I believe the first time this cavern was used by the government was during World War II. The Roosevelt administration built a safe house here in case America was attacked. Since then, it’s been used for a number of research projects.” Clark glanced at the general. “Most of them military in nature.”

“I see.”

“We took it over in the mid-sixties.” The president turned back to the window. “Well, is the project finally going to succeed?” he asked. “This is, what, the ninth try?”

“Have faith, Mister President,” Dr. Clark said. “I corrected the genetic code in the last batch. I also made sure that the surrogate mother possessed certain genetic latches, if you will, that could connect with those of Big Boss.”

The president shook his head in amazement. “I still can’t believe you have so many samples of his cells. What did he think you were going to do with them?”

“The man knew only that he was sterile and couldn’t produce children. He was unaware of our undertaking here,” Dr. Clark said.

“The Les Enfants Terribles project.”

“Correct. We extracted the cells when Big Boss was in surgery, when he was wounded in the last war. The Pentagon gave strict orders that he was not to know about the project’s outcome—whether or not we succeeded. Although, knowing Big Boss, I wouldn’t be surprised if he has learned about it by now. The security surrounding our activities has not always been ideal.”

“The security has been the best the U.S. government can supply,” Houseman countered. “You know that, Doctor.”

Dr. Clark went on without acknowledging the military man’s defensive remark. “We reproduced the cells through analog cloning and the Super Baby Method, fertilized them into an ovum, as you know, and then implanted the fetuses into the mother.”

“Does she know she’s going to give birth to eight babies?” the president asked.

Dr. Clark corrected him. “She’s not giving birth to all eight. Only two. Six of the fetuses were aborted months ago so that we could encourage the growth of the other two.”

“So she’s going to give birth to just twins; is that it?”

“That’s precisely it. But not exactly.”

“What do you mean?”

“There will be certain genetic differences in the two children. It was the only way we could succeed, as you know.”

“So does that mean one’s going to be better than the other? I thought they were supposed to be exactly the same.”

Clark shook her head. “Mister President, one will not be better than the other. But it’s entirely possible that one will possess more dominant genes than his brother. But it’s nothing to worry about.”

Some new activity behind the glass drew their attention back to the operating arena. All of a sudden, the sterility of the bright room intensified. It was as if the shine on the stainless-steel surgical equipment had imbued the space with artificial energy as the doctors and nurses surrounded the table containing the writhing female patient.

The steel door behind the observers slid open. A nurse entered and announced, “Doctor, they’re ready for you.”

Clark acknowledged her. “Thanks. I’ll be right there.”

“Is she giving birth?” the president asked.

“Mister President, I must go deliver two strong baby boys.”

The president stuck out his hand. “Look, Doctor Clark, this isn’t something I particularly want to watch. I need to get back to Washington. It’s good to see you.”

Clark feigned surprise, but she had expected the president’s prudish behavior. She shook the man’s hand and asked, “Are you certain? We could have a meal later before you depart.”

“Thanks, Doctor, but I must decline. To tell you the truth, this place gives me the creeps. Thank you for making us aware of the imminent, uhm, births. By the way—do I get the pick of the litter?”

“I beg your pardon, Mister President.”

“You know one of those . . . things . . . she’s giving birth to will belong to us. I’d like to pick which kid belongs to us, that’s all.”

“You have that right.” Clark held up her hands and laughed good-naturedly. “I have nothing to do

whatsoever with the politics behind the project.”

The president nodded, satisfied. “All right, then I want the one you said has dominant genes. It’s got to have an advantage over the other one.”

Clark was astounded by the man’s ignorance. She reminded him, “There’s no guarantee. But I shall do as you ask, Mister President. Now I must get inside before . . .”

The president of the United States said, “Good-bye, Doctor. And good luck. Please keep me informed.” He looked at General Houseman and said, “Let’s go.”

As the president and his escort walked away from the observation window and toward the cavern’s reinforced steel door, Dr. Clark rushed back to join the drama that was unfolding in the operating theater.

It was terribly exciting. Finally, after several attempts, her efforts would bear fruit in the form of two live babies cloned from the genetic makeup of the most powerful fighting man the world had ever known, the legendary soldier Big Boss.

As Clark washed her hands, snapped on gloves, and entered the operating theater, she wondered what would become of the remaining supply of Big Boss’s cells. Only a few trusted assistants had access to them. Would the president and his military cronies forget that there were some left?

Dr. Clark was thrilled by the possibilities. Perhaps there could be another birthing procedure—should the need arise.

Users Review

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