

Character Profiles

Some characters have been omitted to preserve key plotlines.

Shark – Detective Chief Inspector Aliisa Tuulikki Ykspetäjä.

Ykspetäjä. An approximation of how to pronounce the name, emphasise the first syllable, “Ook”, append the “spet”, and fade the “aya” as if it’s your last breath. *Ook-spetaya*. Not *Ook-spe-ta-ya*. I’m not Russian.

I was born in Salo, Finland, to a caring mother and a brutal, criminal father who took me from my homeland to Bradford, England, with his tarty girlfriend. I was six, my mother allegedly leaving for another man. I wouldn’t have blamed her if she had.

Of myself? I’m asocial, emotionally stunted, self-obsessed, morose, inward, sarcastic, anti-theist, lazy, glossophobic, and possess an attitude of superiority – or so I’m told. Those could be my good points. I’m focused, organised, incisive, methodical, and good at detecting, and I look young for my age, not that I’ll be classified as a typical Nordic beauty. I’m not excessively tall or blonde. Some say I wouldn’t win a beauty contest if I was the only contestant, but who cares? My

features are functional, simple, undemanding, yet distinctive – deathly pale skin and dark eyes, cascading coal-black hair cropped more-or-less horizontally above my brows and across the small of my back, a svelte frame with an ironing-board chest. No jewellery distracts from the vision of chromatic austerity. 1.65 metres tall in my holed woollen socks. Kohl and grey line and shadow my eyes. My lippy is cerise, scarlet or blood red. If I get stares, it's because I bewitch.

Thirty-two. My clothes are black and typically from charity shops, fashion being a waste of resources. And while my style might suggest otherwise, I'm not a Goth.

Nunquam minus sola, quam cum sola – never less alone than when alone – explains why I live in a remote stone laithe on White Moor, just south of Oxenhope, 1784 etched into the mossed lintel. It's accessed by an unwelcoming shingle track, a gate and a flock of mad sheep deterring to visitors.

My motto is an old Finnish one: *Me synnymme, me elämme, ja kun aika koittaa, me kuolemme* – we are born, we live, and when the time comes, we die. I don't worry about death; I see it as a relief from living.

My family & early days in Bradford –

If my parent's weren't shouting each other down they'd be beating each other with their fists, or whatever came to hand. I got beat too, as did my younger sister, Oili Piia, and little brother, Onni, even though they were born of my non-mother. My father was a drunkard and a bully, my non-mother

returning home when I was 12. I lost my little brother four years later. My fault, or so my sister has it, but you can't account for fate. At 17, I left home to doss around the derelict mills of Bradford with my one-and-only friend. She was killed by her drug dealer. A year later, my right hand was macerated by a mincing machine. Compensation paid for a return to Finland and my police training, returning to the UK to join the Greater Bradford CID as a Detective Chief Inspector, displacing Sadman as Beefy's "go to" detective, making me his number one enemy.

I read classic literature It's basically how I learned English, beyond the catch-up classes.

References from a few who think they know me –

Beefy – ‘You’re skinny, scruffy, asocial, and a miserable recluse with the fashion sense as a blind sloth... and you talk funny.’

The Burgerman – ‘Is she always so fucking scruffy? And how does she fasten her bra with one hand?’

Emily – ‘See! This is why nobody talks to you, you testy cow! You’re just so... fucking awkward! Why can’t you just accept help like everybody else?’

The Gang

The Burgerman – Detective Chief Superintendent Ronald Blackwater. A hard-nosed bully with fingers in pies. Allegedly obtained the job through contacts in the right places. Officially, never inducted into the Gang, but still given a nickname.

Beefy – ‘A self-aggrandising bastard.’

Beefy – ‘Forty years of bullshit, brown-nosing and politicking. Never set foot on the beat. Never made an arrest. A reputation for having a nose for criminals but never caught anything more than a cold.’

Beefy – Detective Superintendent Chris Braithwaite. A colossus of a man with hoar-grey eyes, greying military-style black hair, size twelve mirror-black shoes, and the stiff, upright stance of a sergeant major. Sharp black suit, white shirt, black tie – the picture of a no-nonsense traditionalist. A man’s man, working his way up the ranks from plodding the beat around Bingley to a cosy office on the fourth floor at Greater Bradford CID, his pride and joy being an enormous, piano-black desk and a similarly intimidating black leather swivel chair.

Retirement is not far off. Member of the Bingley Golf Club. Married to Dotty, with one daughter, Anna Chloe, 14.

Guinevere – Detective Chief Superintendent Lance Arthur Preston. 51. 1.85m tall. Originally from Sheffield & District Police, he later served time with The Met, London. Privately educated, which might, or might not, excuse his curious lexicon. Confident. Polite. Relaxed. His father is a Detective Chief Superintendent at the Manchester Metropolitan Police.

Wheels within wheels.

A square jaw goes with a rugged torso and wild black hair. Dimpled cheeks. Coffee gives him headaches.

Married to Anna; divorce pending. Three children – Christian, Phoebe and Olivia.

Beefy – ‘a man daring to wear a country jacket, an open-necked check shirt, flannel trousers, Argyle-pattern socks and brown brogues – every inch the depiction of a well-heeled gent with the delusion that it’ll be a jolly jape to be a sleuth. All that’s missing is a deerstalker, a monocle, a twelve-bore shotgun slung over his arm and a pointer ready to claim a brace of pheasants for it’s master. Rather young to have attained the rank of Chief Superintendent.’

Shark – ‘quite a hunk.’

The Librarian – Detective Superintendent Catherine Dudek. 38. Shoulder-length, platinum blonde hair, thin lips, and cornflower blue eyes behind owl-like spectacles. The ultimate

image of a 70's hip-chick upper-class school teacher-cum-desk clerk. A doctorate in Strategic Administrative Psychology and a degree in Philosophy, Karl Rahne being her favourite philosopher. Born in Leeds. Confident. Decisive. In her view, a team leader. A quote for any occasion. A kick-boxing champion, but also into hockey, riding, and hill-trekking. Musically, she's into Henryk Górecki, Philip Glass, The Carpenters, Metallica, and ABBA. Most of that comes from her own online biography. She also worked as a consultant for Blackpool Constabulary, being the originator of the infamous DAAP meetings. An administrator's administrator.

Twilight – Detective Sergeant Emily Husher. 29. 1.5m small. A disproportionately-endowed ball of pink fluff with explosive clouds of strawberry-blonde hair. The type to holiday in hot climes and complain the tan spoils her complexion. The annoying sociable type. Catholic, jolly, but not the most incisive detective in the office. However, she is a good gofer and a constant thorn in my side, her aim being to “humanise” me. Married to Dave, a precision engineering workshop manager. Two goldfish. No kids. Lives in a semi-detached at Chellow Heights, Allerton.

Shark – ‘An annoying but a useful gofer. Somebody who enjoys being dominated, whipped, and fucked senseless while being dressed as Little Bo Peep. Unconfirmed, but believable’

Shark – ‘You have everything a man wants, except legs.’

Emily – ‘Rather no legs than no personality.’

Shark – ‘Rather have a brain.’

Emily – ‘Men don’t want brains, they want boobs... like these!’

Shark – ‘I often wonder how you made Sergeant. Did you collect tokens from the back of jam jars and send them in?’

Shark – ‘And at toddler school, when asked, “What would you like to be when you’re older?”, did you answer, “Taller”?’

Sadman – Detective Chief Inspector David Soloman. From the old Keighley Constabulary. Beefy’s right-hand man until he hired me. A school report described him as “a hard worker, but slow on the uptake”. Hostile towards women of authority. A sister and brother – Janet and Matthew. Apparently, a real bobby dazzler on the dance floor.

Shark – ‘Two yards of dripping tap water.’

Shark – ‘Pushy, pedantic, delusional. A dominating, bullying control freak; at odds with his upright, skinny frame, his straight, dirty-blond hair and wingnut ears.’

Shark – ‘A male whom any intelligent female should avoid. What little brain power he has is used to convince himself he’s God’s gift to women.’

Shark – ‘A twat with first class honours in

Twattery.'

The Oracle – Detective Chief Inspector Stefan Marian Otto. One of the sharper knives in the drawer with a good depth of police knowledge, hence his gang name. Confident, a good organiser, well-respected, easy with people, a good team leader. Lacking in ambition. Rugby is his game. Went to Bradford Grammar School.

Mike Stonewall – Senior SOCO (Scene of Crime Officer). 55. Cynical, gallows humour. Enjoys pricking at my alleged amazing detecting abilities. Unlike me, he's had to learn to step back, kill the emotion, deal just with the scene, understand the attacker, and leave what he sees behind when he goes home. He studies me, maybe admires my lack of sympathy. But in this job, if you have emotions, you have problems.

Two-face – Detective Chief Inspector George Hepplewhite. From Calderdale Constabulary. Seconded under The Librarian's direction to manage the influx of Noddy's drafted in to help with the Costume Killer investigation. Army reservist.

Bates – Detective Inspector Fritz Norman. One of the younger recruits. Methodical, sociable. Of the gang but not one of them (admission pending).

Cuddles – Detective Sergeant Ted Cudliffe. Another from the Keighley Constabulary. A Quaker. Unmarried. Late twenties. Opinionated. Straight-laced. A man of conviction.

He famously rebelled against the removal of “unhealthy confection” in the downstairs snack dispenser, setting up his own shop in the office. Stylish. Shaved side hair with the top squared to provide a projecting blond quiff. A well-manicured Bandholz beard.

Speakup – Trainee Investigator Constable Jaisal Vaakpati Dey. 26. 1.7m. Asian-British male. Dark brown eyes. Very softly spoken. Slight-built, sandy-haired, Enjoys designer clothes. Suffers from car sickness. Studying for a degree in Psychology at Bradford University.

Stitch – Detective Inspector Alan Taylor. Stitch, tailor. One of the more obvious nicknames.

Muttley – Detective Sergeant Earon Uttley. The office joker. Garrulous but annoying to some (OK, me). Yet another from the Keighley office.

Sissy – Detective Sergeant Donald Silson. Curly red hair and matching short beard. Upright, confident. Don’t be misled by his nickname, it’s from his surname!

Mister Tickle – Detective Constable Vincent Tycholiz. Now Detective Sergeant. Described by Beefy, as two yards of tap water with a lemon on top, the lemon referring to his fair hair.

The Barbarian – Detective Inspector Conan Baines. The first to transfer from Calderdale to help Emily with leads on the Costume Killers from the public.

Significant Others

Professor Thomason Michelin-Goran – a celebrity US criminal psychologist and author with expertise in deviant serial killings. Tall, tanned, long-faced, stubbled, wavy hair brushing his shoulders. Enjoys wearing a wide-brimmed hat and dark glasses, the latter to hide twin lagoons of blue. Brought into the Costume Killer/Nail-in-the-Neck investigation by Dudek. Used covertly to psychoanalyse me.

Jackie – 28. Mike's long-serving and put-upon senior assistant.

Headley Marham – 33. Educated at the same school as me, Cartwright Hall Junior High School. The cause of the infamous *Walls of Jericho* incident. An alcoholic and underachiever. Lives in a basement bedsit in Manningham, Bradford.

Patrick (Pat) Keeley – runs a one-man painting, decorating and general odd-jobbing business from his mid-terrace home in Keighley. A self-proclaimed artist and poet.

Edgar Unnuk – a murderer and subsequently murdered drug baron who ran the Thorpe Edge/Ravenswood estates. The killer of my one friend.

Alan “Whacker” Bell – viscous rival to Unnuk running the Cantonbury estate, known for his “maim-or-talk” kneecapping campaign which he raged against anyone suspected of grassing him up. Recently released from prison having served his term and who is out for revenge.

Bob – my favourite reporter for Ridings TV. Does a bit of scuba diving.

Victor – barman. His family run a country pub close to The Woolstones, Askwith. Of Dutch heritage. Wild blond hair and slight lisp. He caught my eye during a visit to the pub.

Salo Characters

Heikki Häkkinen (Heikki, Hakk) – retired ex-Salo Detective Inspector, bible-basher, recluse, and custom penknife crafter. 1.75m. Born in Pertteli and lives in a nearby forest. Wears a heavy leather jacket and a black-knitted scalp cap. Broad-shouldered, barrel-chested, a wisp of silver hair rising from his head. Hoar stubble hides a dimpled chin and sunken cheeks. His lips are thin, his nose stubby, his upper lip over-jutting the lower. And he might have a fading memory, but there's cunning behind those grey eyes that stare out at the world through angled slits. His sister owns the *Musta Lyhty Hotelli*, Hähkänä. Had a daughter, Arja, with Mari, his first wife. Remarried, had a son, and turned to Jesus after he was killed in shooting incident – his son, not Jesus. His second wife left him shortly after.

Gunnár – a snow-white/jet-black Suomenlapinkoira, or Finnish Lapphund. Loyal servant to Häkkinen. Energetic, excitable, boisterous, with a permanent grin. Loves chasing squirrels in the forests. I suspect it's Häkkinen's secret lie detector. One wag for yes. Two for no.

Detective Inspector Carl Isokoski “The Marshall” – formerly of Salo police before transcending to become a Superintendent for the NBI, at Helsinki. Enjoys a Stetson hat, a wide buckled belt, and boots with high-rise Cuban heels.

Two kids, a boy and a girl. He and Häkkinen have history.

Detective Inspector Seppo Laaksonen – once of Salo police, now in the wastes of Turku, having been held responsible for the burning down of the records and evidence store. Adorned by an elaborate walrus moustache in the Magnum PI style. Alcoholic. We first met at Helsinki during a problem-solving and defence training session. A friend of Häkkinen. Wife, Maritta Laaksonen.

Dorotea Jaakonsaari (Eva) – 7B, Harriet Huvilat (Harriet Flats), off Suutarinkatu, Salo. Girlfriend of my father, mother of my sister Oili, and brother Onni. My not-mother.

Calderdale characters

Detective Inspector Gideon Weir (Giddy) – Works from the Mytholmroyd office. Cyclist. Muddy grey eyes. Single. Awkward, obstreperous, testy and perturbative. Otherwise, a decent local copper, to some.

Miss Helena Friel (Helly) – 35. Resided at High Chapel, Wainstalls, a converted disused chapel on the top of the moors. The property passed to her through her late mother's will, cutting out her sister, Gretel. She made many complaints about late night disturbances around her home to Mytholmroyd Police. The issue was unresolved, the local police considering her of an unstable mind. Found dead on the moor beside a puddling stone by Daniel Cordel, a bird spotter, using a drone.

Gretel Olivia Petra Lumsden – sister to Helena Friel. Part-time bookkeeper. Husband Seth, son Bart. Now of “High Chapel” following the death of her sister, Helena Friel.

Erin Killkenny – of Rowan Cottage. Husband, Edwin Killkenny, a North Sea rigger. Daughter, Emma.

Daniel Cordel – drone flyer, bird watcher and casual marijuana smoker.

Penny Routledge – of Rose Cottage, Caty Well. Married

with daughter, Tomasine. Chair of Wainstalls Police Watch.

Superintendent Brakespear Todd – of Halifax CID. Soon to lose his job due to the pending merger with Greater Bradford Police. DI Weir's boss.

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Shark: the detective series

