

# STATE OF MIND



**Sven Michael Davison**



**BEDOUIN  
P R E S S**

Copyrighted Material

State of Mind

Copyright © 2011 by Sven Michael Davison/Bedouin Press. All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise – without prior written permission, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

For information about this title or to order other books and/or electronic media, contact the publisher:

Bedouin Press  
P.O Box 570169  
Tarzana CA, 91357-0169  
[www.stateofmindbook.com](http://www.stateofmindbook.com)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010913643

ISBN: 978-0-9666149-2-3

Printed in the United States of America

Cover by Derrick Abrencia.

Interior design by 1106 Design

Publisher's Cataloging-In-Publication Data

Davison, Sven Michael.

State of mind / by Sven Michael Davison. -- 1st ed.

p. cm.

LCCN 2010913643

ISBN-13: 978-0-9666149-2-3

ISBN-10: 0-9666149-2-5

ISBN-13: 978-0-9666149-3-0

ISBN-10: 0-9666149-3-3

[etc.]

1. Detective and mystery stories. 2. Homicide investigation--Fiction. 3. Brainwashing--Fiction. 4. Control (Psychology)--Fiction. 5. Los Angeles (Calif.)--Fiction. I. Title.

PS3554.A96S73 2011

813'.54

QBI10-600192

FOR  
My wife Jeannine and our son Isaac



## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following profusely: Jeannine, your love and support allowed me to leave my day job and reboot my dream. Abby and Jake for your companionship, hours of entertainment, and unconditional love. Mary Astadourian, Schawn Belston, Peter Coggan, Monica Juniel, Steve Lekowicz, Cara Mandell, Mom, Marcy Natkin, Jeannine Patton, Jeff Singer, and Nancy Van Iderstine for all the feedback and copyediting. Derrick Albrenica for the book covers. Charles deLauzirika for getting this “in deep” at Scott Free. Jennifer Chai for listening to the original pitch back in 2002. Steven Rowley for the use of your head. Neill Watson, Kibi Anderson, and David Mirsky for the opportunity to write short form comedy during the creation of this book—it was fun to be in a different headspace.



# State of Mind Table of Contents



1.	Black Suits.....	1
2.	Trepidation.....	4
3.	Assassin .....	10
4.	Enhanced .....	15
5.	Investigation.....	23
6.	Pushing Buttons.....	31
7.	Morgue Games.....	35
8.	Habeas Corpus.....	43
9.	Lakshmi .....	45
10.	Unsettling .....	58
11.	Distractions.....	62
12.	The Cage.....	66
13.	Lalo .....	70
14.	Raid .....	83
15.	Public Relations.....	91

16.	Mind Bleed .....	96
17.	Euphoria.....	107
18.	God Head .....	112
19.	Recruitment .....	130
20.	Pleasure Victim .....	142
21.	Nightmares .....	154
22.	True Love.....	158
23.	Counter Hack .....	164
24.	Strike Team.....	174
25.	Jackhammer .....	185
26.	Leverage .....	191
27.	New Blood .....	197
28.	Sponsorship.....	204
29.	Loose Ends.....	210
30.	Zombie Cop.....	216
31.	El Matador.....	224
32.	Ruse .....	233
33.	Leaks.....	238
34.	Fish Pancakes .....	243
35.	Resigned.....	249
36.	Sleeper.....	255
37.	Shooting Dogs.....	265
38.	Glitch.....	271
39.	Rush.....	274
40.	Pin Heads.....	278
41.	Mind Crypt.....	287
42.	Discharge .....	298
43.	Cyber Thief .....	307
44.	Glacier.....	314
45.	Pain Ride .....	323
46.	Broken Glass .....	329
47.	Truth.....	339
48.	Trojan Horse .....	348

49.	Head Games.....	354
50.	South.....	366
51.	Erasmus.....	373
52.	Tsunami.....	379
53.	Driver.....	386



## Chapter 1

# Black Suits



Warm sunlight sank into Jake's bones. Red capillaries glowed on the insides of his eyelids. He opened his eyes to witness summer reigning on the Santa Monica Pier. Andrea and Jade stood inches away, in front of him. He rested his hands on his wife and daughter's shoulders. These were his two favorite people in the universe. His love for them knew no limits. Their silky-brown hair shivered slightly, teased by an ocean breeze. Jade's big green eyes smiled up at him. Jake breathed in the fresh salt air.

The merry-go-round spun on the power of children's elated squeals. It had been relocated toward the end of the pier about a decade before to discourage fishing a dying ocean. A shoulder bumped lightly against Jake's back. He turned and saw a large, tanned surfer dude sporting an immaculate, finely tailored, black suit. His white-blond hair was pulled tightly back into a long ponytail. The man's eyes were concealed behind glossy black shades. Jake returned his attention to his family, but a change registered in his peripheral vision. The man turned instantly into a short, black-haired, pasty-faced

woman dressed in identical attire. Jake did a double take. The surfer-dude smiled back at him.

Children and parents disembarked from the ride. Jake watched Andrea and Jade choose a white fiberglass stallion, front hooves rearing up. Jake waved. The ride began to spin and the same pasty-faced woman reappeared, seated on a unicorn. She was three fiberglass horses behind his wife and daughter. Under the black suit and glasses, he could tell she was a wiry woman. Her hair was not as thick or as long as the surfer dude's, but it was pulled back in similar fashion. Jake stood as her unicorn sailed away from him to the sound of festive circus music. Just before she disappeared behind the circular center column, she instantly transformed back into the surfer dude.

Jake pinched his brow, disbelieving what he saw. He puzzled over his vision as he made a path through an ocean of tourists to reach an ice cream stand. Sun worshipers coated the beach like thick frosting from the pier all the way to the rocky shores of Temescal Canyon Road to the north. White clouds of cotton candy billowed overhead as boogie boarders and surfers played bumper cars for each swell that rolled in. They would all need antibiotics after spending a day in the bay.

A tiny hand tugged on Jake's t-shirt. Jake glanced down to see a small boy staring stoically up at him. The boy pointed forward. Jake turned to see that he was next in line to order. Jake plopped his hands on the counter. He opened his mouth but only the sound of laughter and surf filled his ears. The man at the counter stuffed three chocolate vanilla swirl cones into a cardboard tray and pushed them across the stainless steel counter toward Jake. Grinning under the influence of a beautiful day, Jake navigated back to the merry-go-round.

Jade's laughter rose above the other children. Jake spotted brown hair tossed back and tumbling in slow motion. Heartbreaking love rocked his core, as Andrea steadied their beautiful daughter on the gyrating steed. The woman in the black suit was now off her horse and navigating her way toward his family. She dodged ponies and the feet of excited child riders. A horse rose up, erasing her from Jake's vision. As the stallion dropped, Jake saw the surfer dude in her place. A child's leg flew up from the outside line of horses, wiping the figure out yet again. The black suit emerged closer to his family,

revealing the pasty-faced woman instead of the surfer dude. Alarm overtook Jake as he quickened his step. The black suit stood inches behind Andrea and Jade now. The surfer dude was back, raising his arms to steady himself on the tail of Jade's horse. The surfer dude's jacket opened revealing a small metallic device popping up from his waistline. Jake threw the ice cream on the hot asphalt of the pier and raced for the ride.

A fireball tore through horses, poles, and children. Flame engulfed the world before him. The roof of the merry-go-round spun into the sky on a massive column of fire. A shock wave hurled Jake and everyone around him backward toward the ice cream stand. They were all summarily slammed into the pier. Jake tumbled over a few people before he was able to regain control and stagger to his feet. His gray shorts and t-shirt smoldered. He did not notice the pain cutting into his scraped arms and legs. Ash and debris floated all around him. Through choking black smoke, he saw the last remnants of the ride tumble into the waves below the pier. He bounded over hundreds of prostrate and writhing people. His ears rang and blood pounded in his head. Jake reached the molten edge of the pier and gazed down into the smoky abyss. A charred fiberglass horse reared its head before it was swallowed by a wave.