

for EABA™v2

Agency^{1.0}

you are more important than you think...

 **BTRC**

greg porter

Agency 1.0

©2017 Greg Porter

Published by: Blacksburg Tactical
 Research Center

Design: Greg Porter

Layout: Greg Porter

Page backdrop: Paschalis Zervas

Useful Scenery: Cathy DeMott

All rights reserved. Protected by the
Universal Copyright Convention and
people who actually matter.

Table of Contents

Hey there!	1.1
What it is.....	1.3
The World.....	2.1
Scenery	2.4
The Real	2.6
Agents	2.6
Real vs. Scenery.....	2.8
Side effects	2.14
The next chapter	3.1
What are you?	3.2
Agent Creation.....	3.2
Starting goods.....	3.9
Sample Agent	3.10
Rules of the game.....	4.1
Powers of Agents.....	4.2
Home territory.....	4.9
Fringers	4.11
History of Agency	4.13
Why does Scenery exist?	4.21
Artifacts	4.22
Agent Protocols.....	5.1
What is Agency?	5.3
Organizations.....	5.8
The Covenant.....	5.10
The Blattos	5.12
Mercantile.....	5.14
The Mafia	5.15
Hot Mess Response Team	5.16
Sixth Pillar	5.17
Wanderers	5.18
The West.....	5.19
Sanctuary	5.20
Think small/think big.....	6.1
Campaigning	6.2
Four-course gauntlet.....	6.9
Motivations	6.17
Plot notes	6.20
An offer you might refuse	6.31
What goes up	6.38
Persons of interest.....	6.41
Experience.....	6.45
Where does it end?	6.46
Go shopping.....	7.1
Guns & such	7.2
Penalty box.....	7.4
Gear list.....	7.6
Agent sheet.....	7.7
EABA OSL	7.8



Hey there!

Who is that homeless man who just handed this to you?

That's unimportant, he's just Scenery.

What is this document? It is a passport, a proof of existence, a lifeline.

Why do you have it? Because we know that you just miraculously survived an event that should have killed you, something so amazingly improbable that it made the news.

And Agents are watching for that sort of thing and that sort of person. Agents like us, who want to recruit you.

And Agents like the ones who are trying to find you and kill you at this very moment. Not because of what you have done, but because of what you are. The only reason you are alive to read this is because we found you first.

Right now they know your name, your car, your address, your phone number, your place of work and a host of other details about you. So do we. We just have a few tricks up our sleeves they do not, or maybe we just had people on the ground closer to you than they did.

It is likely that you consider this some sort of sick joke and are looking for the nearest trash bin, but before you do, consider this analysis of your personality and life coming from a boilerplate photocopied document.

- You are an only child
- You have no children
- You wonder why so many people lack common sense
- Your parents were distant and did not give a lot of affection or guidance
- You find it hard to make emotional attachments with other people
- The material things you want in life you usually manage to acquire
- You enjoy challenges, whether intellectual or physical or both
- You feel out of sync with "normal" people, yet this does not bother you
- You have always felt like you are looking for something, but are not sure what it is

--\Agency^{1.0} =====|.|=

Has this stopped you in your tracks? Too close for comfort? You might think that instead of a sick prank by some homeless person, that one of your close friends who knows you that well put the homeless person up to it.

But we both know you do not have any friends who are that close or who know you that well.

Are you are curious, angry or scared enough to take this seriously, seriously enough to disrupt your daily routine by a little bit?

Probably.

There is an address written on the back of this message. Go there as quickly as possible. Do not go back to your car, do not go back to work, do not go back home. Odds are that if you are alive and reading this we have blocked your phone from being tracked, but this is not certain nor is it likely to last. Turn it off, take out the battery.

Start walking. See you in an hour. Good luck.

===== 1.2=

What it is -----

Agency is our world, but not as you know it or understand it, but as it really is. And this is not a conspiracy game, because everyone is in on it.

Everyone knows that reality is in some sense subjective, that whatever the world out there "is", is something that is filtered through our senses and passed on to the chunk of biological computer lodged in the dark and windowless confines of our skull. We assume that what is real is real because we perceive it in the same way and communicate that perception to other people. Up is up for everyone, down is down, hot is hot, cold is cold, the Sun rises in the east, that sort of thing. This is further reinforced by the fact that someone who is hallucinating is still affected by things, even if they do not recognize their existence. Thinking you can fly does not make you immune to gravity.

But this does not mean that everything we perceive is equally real. There is a universe full of things that are totally real and you live in it. But there are plenty of things that are "less real". And most people do not realize this because they are part of the less real.

Reality is a shared construct, and the only reason it is not a shared hallucination is that its participants enforce order on it to maintain their shared sanity. And part of that shared construct is that there are seven billion people in the world.

In reality, there are only maybe thirty thousand.

And that photocopied, stapled handout you just got informed you that you are one of them. You did not realize it and might never have realized it except for that accident you miraculously survived. You survived because in the end you are more Real and the circumstances of the accident were less so.

Sometimes this wakes people up. Sometimes they need a stronger nudge. That document was your wakeup call.

You are an Agent of Change. You have the potential to shape what the world is and what it can become. That world may not be as real as you thought it was, but you can also shape the beliefs of the other Agents.

Instead of you being one of seven billion, a pawn compared to all-powerful governments and megacorporations, you are one of merely some thousands, and your will and direct action are influential as anyone else's. The world around you is merely the expression of that collective will, a way to measure the success of your actions. But it is not an illusion in the usual sense of the word. The world is real. The buildings and roads and cars and other people are "less real". Either that, or you are "more real". It can still kill you, and not merely as a trick of the mind nor some Matrix-like self-inflicted damage. We will delve more into that later.

There are groups that want to add like-minded Agents to their numbers. There are also groups who see new Agents as a dilution of their power and want to get rid of them.

And while Agents are mostly immune to the less real, the "Scenery", other Agents are most certainly real and most certainly can kill you. So Agents try very hard to work in the shadows, using pawns and proxies to minimize their vulnerability and only using direct conflict with other Agents when there is no other choice.

In other words, there is an Illuminati and everyone who is Real is a potential member. And everyone else is merely "Scenery", the cogs and gears that grind out the world you live in, but which in the end are not nearly as real as you are.

But since the Scenery are a shared reality, Agents have the potential to manipulate them. Alone, an Agent fights against the will of many others. In groups, they become a block of belief that can change the world. And they are opposed in various ways by others who want to change the world in a different direction.

If you want a role-playing setting that is a head trip, where adventurers start play as some of the most important people in the world, but still have to go out and get their hands dirty, **Agency** is the setting you have been looking for.



The World

Thank you for making it this far. Not everyone does, and there are so few of us that each loss is important. Yes, we are trying to recruit you, but even if you will not join our cause, we consider your survival to be important enough to risk our own. And you being here right now and reading this means the risk we have taken is paying off. Hopefully you will have this attitude towards other Agents as you move forward. Plenty do not. You would be smart not to trust us, but trust us on this. You will have to make friends, but you already have enemies.

In this envelope there is a burner phone, a mass produced utility knife, an activated pre-paid debit card and a keycard for a hotel and room number written on the back of it. Read everything before doing anything. Or not, your choice.

We have also included a juice box and a granola and/or chocolate bar, depending on the climate, in case you are tired from your walk.

We have made some outrageous and even hyperbolic statements, and if we cannot back them up then we have a problem. So, we gave you a knife.

Cut yourself.

Did you do so? Of course not. That would be stupid. Jab the razor-sharp blade into the park bench you are sitting on. It goes in just fine, doesn't it? Slice a little chunk off the sole of your shoe. Went through the rubber with little resistance, right? Good thing you didn't press that against your tender flesh!

Cut yourself.

Take the point of that fiendishly sharp, machine-honed blade and lightly touch it to something like the tip of your thumb. Now gently, gently push. It dimples the skin of your thumb but does not go in, does it? Lightly run the blade across your palm. Maybe stings a little, but no cut.

Now run it equally lightly across this page, preferably a part you have already read. Slices right through. Interesting, eh? Odds are that you have never been seriously hurt in your life. And that never seemed odd to you.

Just lucky, right? In the sense of one-in-a-million luck for you every time you take a risk, yes. Now go back and do it again. You will not be able to draw blood with that blade unless you lean into it with all your strength. It will hurt like hell and feel like you are driving a blade into your hand, but when you let up, all you will have is a red mark and a sore spot, and even those will quickly fade.

Now that we have your attention, read the following and try to understand:

You are Real, the knife is Scenery. These words are capitalized for a reason. Because part of you understands this, even at an unconscious level, the knife cannot disrupt the integrity of your body. That is why you survived the accident that brought you to our attention. If you had been anyone other than an Agent, you would be dead right now.

At least to the extent that something which was not truly Real in the first place can be dead. And while this is not an entirely accurate explanation of what is going on, the exact details may take you the rest of your life to puzzle out and putting it all on paper is probably more than you want to carry at the moment.

But what we have said explains a lot of your life. By whatever means explains your Agency, you were put into a home and a life filled with things that are not as real as you, what we call 'Scenery'. Naturally enough, you have trouble emotionally bonding with these things, whether they are the people you work with, members of whatever gender you are attracted to, your childhood acquaintances, even your parents.

You sought the feelings you could not find in other people through experiences, and even these ring hollow sometimes. The things you wanted in terms of possessions, you acquired because you simply had the will to make that acquisition happen. You may have called it hard work, luck, good haggling skills or whatever, but nothing you truly wanted ever escaped your grasp once you had done whatever you felt you needed to do to acquire it.

This is what Agency does. Scenery shapes itself in your presence to meet your needs and with training you can consciously alter how this works. If this sounds implausible, think of the last movie star or musician or politician of whom you thought "how in the world do they still have a job?"

Agency sounds a little more plausible now, does it not?

Provided you survive, you will find this to be an extremely useful talent to have.

Emotionally speaking, Agency is going to be an eye-opener. Other Agents are as real as you are, and you will feel things to a degree you may never have felt them before. Including things like real hate and real fear.

It will not be easy.

Go to the hotel. There will be a phone number on the end table of your room. Call it. Do not do anything that uses your real name or contacts any part of what used to be your life. We will try to explain later. If you are worried that you are missing work or class or whatever, go to an ATM and check the balance on the debit card. That should both cover any anxiety on your part and indicate the seriousness of what is happening.