

Falsa Pietà

("False Mercy")

Description: a Beretta M9 with a fifteen round box magazine. The weapon does not require maintenance, and has looked new for the last forty-five years of regular use. The only ornamentation is a small metal plate with the words '*Falsa Pietà*' engraved. The gun is not modified, and in fact *cannot* be modified.

Falsa Pietà radiates sufficient negative spiritual energy to have an adverse effect on local vegetation, given enough exposure.

Powers: You cannot kill someone with this gun. No matter how good your aim, how favorable the shooting conditions, or how close to death the target is anyway, no bullet fired from *Falsa Pietà* will cause ultimately fatal damage, either directly or indirectly. The weapon also seems to have a remarkable amount of inherent luck when it comes to people trying to destroy *it*.

Origins: *Falsa Pietà* is an example of spontaneous enchantment. It was the gun used during an infamous 1989 weekend by an Italian contract assassin, enraged at the casual murder of his family by a vengeful European crime cartel. The assassin shot over sixty men that

weekend, deliberately choosing in each case to permanently cripple his opponents rather than kill them. After he used his second-to-last bullet to turn the man who ordered his family killed into a paraplegic, the assassin turned the gun on himself -- and in so doing, unwittingly finished the ritual that created *Falsa Pietà*.

That bullet didn't kill the assassin, by the way; it just rendered him comatose, with no higher brain functions to speak of. He's been in a Milan private hospital for the last forty years. Someone might have smothered him with a pillow years ago, only the relevant parties are worried that killing him might disrupt the enchantment on *Falsa Pietà*.

It's such a perfect vengeance weapon, you see. *Falsa Pietà* is also good for torture, general sadism, and adjusting the attitude of insolent, yet useful minions (wounds inflicted by it *can* be cured). When you want to send a painful message, you give the weapon to someone who is extremely good with a pistol, and let them deliver it. The knowledge that you can empty an entire clip into someone and not kill them allows for some very *baroque* scenarios, and there's always a nasty piece of work who's willing to use the item to its full, sick potential.

It's recommended that *Falsa Pietà* be kept out of the hands of non-evil individuals. Not that it has mystical

corruptive powers, or anything like that; it's just... very mundanely corruptive, all on its own. Also: bad people end up using it less than used-to-be-good ones, for some reason. Perhaps it's another defense mechanism? If there's some kind of spirit or free-willed enchantment infesting the item, it's in its best interests to keep as low a profile as possible. Or maybe *Falsa Pietà* is just a connoisseur of agony, and disdains being casually used. You never know, with spontaneously-enchanted weapons.

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