

# The Stainless Steel Rat's Revenge

## by Harry Harrison, 1970

"Why don't you hold this while we talk," he said in a reasonable voice, passing over the silver egg of a polygraph transmitter.

The real Vaska would not have recognized it, so I didn't. I just looked at it with slight interest—as though I did not know it was transmitting vital information to the **lie detector** before him—and clutched it in my hand. My thoughts were not as calm.

*I'm caught! He has me! He knows who I am and is just toying with me!*

He looked deep into my bloodshot eyes and I detected a slight curl of distaste to his mouth.

"You have had quite a night of it, Lieutenant Hulja," he said quietly, his eyes on the sheaf of papers—and on the **lie detector** readout as well.

"Yes sir, you know. . . having a few last drinks with the boys." That was what I said aloud. What I thought was *They will shoot me, dead, right through the heart!* and I could visualize that vital organ spouting my life's blood into the dirt.

"I see you recently had your rank reduced—and where are your fuses, Pas Ratunkowy?"

*Am I tired. . . wish I was in the sack* I thought.

"Fuses, sir?" I blinked my red orbs and reached to scratch my head and touched the bandage and thought better of it. His eyes glared into mine, gray eyes almost the color of his uniform, and for a moment I caught the strength and anger behind his quiet manners.