

BC Case File 001

“It’s a foolish name, Master Bleu!” bellowed the large Chiss, waving his hand in exasperation at the front door.

The target of his shouting, though it was his ‘indoor voice’ he was using, was lounging in a halfway built office chair while leaning against the wall. His feet were crossed and sitting upon a disorganized mess of a desk, hands behind his head to cushion them against the hard duracrete. Around the office it was a similar scene, boxes and a few filing cabinets turned about the wrong way still, having been rolled in on carts and left there.

“Well that’s bleedin’ tough, now innit? Its *my* detective gig, its *my* bleedin’ office, and its *my* hide if I don’t got some creds to show for it at the end of the month. Don’t want her purpleness comin’ up here askin’ why we ain’t got no clients, had ta pick somethin’ catchy, yeah? Alliteration, and all that!”

“Master Bleu, it is not alliteration unless both words start with the same letter! Honestly, you seemed beside yourself with chuckles and guffaws when you came up with it, is it some form of joke? A reference that I simply do not understand?”

“Would you two quit arguing, it’s giving me a headache,” came a small voice from the adjacent room. Kordath hadn’t quite decided what to do with the area, possibly throwing a couch in it for a place to nap was foremost in his mind. The small Falleen, Sprouts, was putting together a small holo station and trying to ignore both Strong and Bleu. Sprouts still wasn’t sure how he’d been press ganged into Bleu’s retinue of Fades, but so far Strong had tracked him down every time he’d fled. At least he was being paid and had lodging, the Falleen was slowly acclimating to the insanity.

“Little Green, please, I beg of you! Help me show our Master the foolishness of this choice!”

“I told you my name isn’t Little Green, you big blue nerf herder! It’s--”

“Pardon me, is this the detective agency? I saw the sign on the door saying...” a voice cut in, trailing off as she took in the Ryn, Chiss, and Falleen yelling at one another.

Kordath sat, mouth open but lacking sound as he stared at the woman standing in the open doorway. Standing some half a foot taller than the Ryn himself, it was a definitely Human female. Red hair done up in a tight bun and glasses gave her a stern look, the piercing green eyes had his full attention...for a moment, anyways. He arched an eyebrow as he took the rest of her in and put on a winning smile.

“That it is, luv! What can we do ya for? Strong! Get the nice lady a drink, and, uhh,” he looked around the mess of an office. “Find her a...chair?”

She lifted an eyebrow of her own as she took in the room, “I’ll stand, if it’s just the same to you.” Despite the obvious disdain she had for the furnishings, Kordath noticed her appraisal of Strong as he Chiss passed her to enter the small kitchenette.

Figures. Wait did she just eye me up too? Maybe she’s just a fan of the color.

“Fine, fine, we’re still settin’ up shop, we are, apologies for tha mess and all. So, what’s up? Somebody steal somethin’ from ya? Need to find a debtor?” His grin twitched towards the lecherous, just barely before he could get it under control. “Unfaithful husband, maybe?”

“Actually, I need you to--”

“Would the lady prefer tea, or caf? Perhaps water? We of course have some stronger libations if you wish!”

“Caf is fine, thank you. Now, the matter at hand. I need you to find my--”

Strong stuck his head back in from the small kitchen area, which his bulk filled impressively.

“Cream? Sugar? No? Very well, black it is!”

The woman’s face twitched around one eye, causing Bleu to notice the well defined cheekbones again, causing him to bite his tongue.

“As I was saying,” she spoke through gritted teeth, glaring at the kitchen area, “I need you to find a man for me.”

“That so?” asked the Ryn in a neutral tone, fighting the urge to say what he was thinking. He really needed a client.

“Yes. His name is Uggbug.” If it hadn’t been for the perfectly level tone and the perfectly humorless delivery, Kordath would have cried foul right then.

“Ugg...bug? Sorry, not a name I’ve ever had tossed at me before, lass, uhh,” he dropped his feet from the desk and began moving junk around, looking for his notepad. “What, uhh, particulars, yeah, that, uhh..”

She sighed, her gaze turning more to annoyance and her complexion beginning to match her hair. "He's a Gamorrean. His name is Uggbug, and he's been missing for two days, Mlster Bleu."

The blazes does she know me name? Oh, right, the sign. Hah, shows you, Strong.

"So a Gamorrean, eh? You work for the Besadii, lady? I'm tryin' to establish pretty early on that my little business here innit gonna cause them trouble, I don't deal with people owin' money to the Hutts. They've got big, bright signs at the front of them casinos tellin' ya what yer in for if ya can't pay."

"I do not work for the Hutts," she hissed at him, her demeanour turning vicious enough for Sprouts, who'd been watching from his own door, jerked back. "Nor does Uggbug. He works down at the Docks, doing honest labor. I'd suggest you begin your inquiries there, as the last place he was seen."

"You know that much, luv, what da ya need me for?"

"His associates don't feel comfortable speaking to me, if you must know," she lifted her chin as she spoke.

Can't imagine why.

The woman took two steps forward and dropped a slip of paper on the desk, "My comm code, for when you locate him. I assume you'll be expecting payment upon delivery?"

"Payment upon completion, yeah, for the most part. Gotta have a small operatin' fee as well, though. Hundred credits a day, never know who ya gotta grease the wheels with ta get where yer goin', eh? Don't give me that look, lady, I'm not gonna milk ya on that kind of thing. Ya get a rep like that in this business and you quit gettin' clients."

Kordath scratched the back of his head and ran some numbers in his head, wondering why he'd not set any base rates yet for jobs. The daily fee he'd come up with on the spot.

"Let's say five hundred when I find him. Alive. No charge if it's a body, that's fair, yeah?" He looked at her expectantly. The tightness around her eyes was curious, but in the end she nodded. "Grand, I'll start right off then. Strong! Get yer coat! We're headed to the Docks. Sprouts, clean this mess up, eh? Find some bloody chairs so the client don't gotta stand next time!"

"My name isn't Sprouts, damnit, how many times do we have to go over this?"

“No time, Little Green, me and Strong got a hogman ta find!” Kordath turned back to the woman, noting the redness in her face was still in full force. “I assure ya, luv, I’ll be findin’ uhh, Uggbug quick as I can, won’t rest till I find some trace of the truffle snuffler. What is he ta ya, anyways? Employee who wandered off with somethin’? Ya don’t look like somebody who works down in the Docks, don’t mind me sayin’.”

She glared at him, “Just comm me when you find him, Mister Bleu.” With that the woman turned and strode past a bewildered Strong, coat in one hand, the other holding a mug that looked comically small in his massive grip.

Kordath snagged the cup of caf as he walked by, struggling to sip it as he pulled his own nerf leather coat on with one hand.

“First bloody client, Strong, first blasted client, and we didn’t even get her karkin’ name. Not a grand start, mate.”

“Surely she’ll spread news of our decorum after we find her missing friend!”

“Aye, maybe. We don’t screw this up, anyhow. Lady looks like the kind whose got creds, means she’s friends with folk of the same cut. Not a bad first one, really. Ya ready? Great, let’s roll.”

-x-

Two hours of wandering the Docks, questioning workers and the occasional supervisor, Kordath was questioning his choice of self employment.

“Not a soul seen’s him for two bleedin’ days, nobody knows where he’s gone off to, nobody wants ta tell me a karkin’ thing! All we really know is that he’s a hard worker, he’s got a wife somewhere but nary a soul knows where she lives so we can’t just waltz up and ask her any questions!”

Kordath growled to himself and pulled out his smokes, tapping one out and lightning it. Blowing a stream of smoke upwards he tried to calm himself, pushing his anger back into the dark little hole it usually lived in. Tapping a bit of ash off the end of his cigarette, he noticed Strong staring at something away from the loading area they’d just finished at. The Ryn casually turned and followed the gaze, spotting a Bith in poorly fitting clothes lurking in the shadows of a cargo hauler.

Perfect.

“Strong, mate, need ya to take the casual kinda stroll up to that fellow, eh? Don’t look too interested.”

“Master Bleu? To deal with a reprobate such as that would be demeaning! The noble house Garmis does not deal with such shifty--”

“Just need him not runnin’ off, Strong, ya dinnae have to talk to him, just make sure he don’t bolt, eh?”

The big Chiss grunted and nodded, placing both hands in his pockets and began approaching the man. Kordath could sense from even this distance the shifty looking Bith’s paranoia and nervousness, growing as the large Fade neared. Despite that, a feeling of greed and hopefulness was prevalent as well. Bleu casually strode out of the man’s line of sight and began circling around to the other side of the hauler. As Strong got closer, the Bith realized just how large the Chiss really was, and could tell he wasn’t one of the local workers.

Kordath tapped the shady figure on the shoulder from behind, causing him to whirl and find himself taking in a face full of yellow teeth and cigarette smoke.

“Ello mate, got some questions fer ya!”

The Bith went wide eyed and tried to turn and run from the aberration before him, only to slam into Strong’s midsection, nearly knocking himself out. He blinked a few times, looking up at the Chiss and the Ryn.

“You, umm, you startled me, umm. Looking to buy?” The bulbous headed alien grew even paler as the Fade growled at him, the idea of buying anything from the dealer causing the big man to start growing angry.

“Yeah,” spoke the Ryn, dropping his cigarette butt on the the deck and stepping on it, “I wouldn’t try and peddle with me mate standin’ here.”

Kordath squatted down and continued talking to the man, “Let’s start clean here, eh? Me name is Kord, what’s yours?”

“Uhh, Peender. You’re not looking to buy, that I dunno what you want with me, uhh, sirs?”

“Relax, friend, we ain’t with MalCo or the Hutts, though I’m sure they’d be curious about what yer sellin’ down here on the Docks. Guessin’ ya don’t got a permit for whatever it is you’ve got hidin’ in that coat, do ya?”

“Well, not a permit persay, you know, umm, an understanding with the local security troop and all that...” Peender trailed off as he watched Kordath break into a wide grin.

“Really, even the Fly on the Wall ones?”

“Well, you know, you can avoid them if you get their patrol routes down. Anyways I’m not hurting anyone!”

“Like I said, *relax*,” spoke Bleu, waving a hand towards the man and pushing out with the Force. “Just lookin’ to ask you a few questions, yeah? You spend a lot of time down here, I’m guessin’, so you’re the one to talk to me thinks.”

Peender blinked his big eyes a few times and felt a soothing sensation calm his nerves, “Yeah, I, uhh, yeah I work the Docks almost every day. Gotta make a living.”

“Right, and stimulants are a universal thing for dock workers, long hours, tough work, all that. Providin’ a service, you are. Now movin’ on, ya know the Gamorrean lad that works down here?”

“Uggbug? Hard worker, from the look of him, lotsa stamina, never buys nothing from me. Just plods through the day moving heavy stuff.”

“Right. He’s been missin’ a few days, know anybody that’d want to harm the big piggy?”

“Well,” Peender rose to his feet slowly, turning to look down towards the cargo area. “You see the big guy down there? The Human that’s nearly as big as your friend here?”

“Yeah,” replied Kord, craning his neck to get a look at the worker in question, noting a prevalent limp.

“That’s Thrasher Dugan, guy likes to bare knuckle brawl with people, the bigger they are the more he wants to fight them. Really wanted to go a few rounds with Uggbug, but the guy wouldn’t have it. Thrasher kept messing with him, for weeks, trying to get the Gamorrean to throw the first punch, yeah? Word gets back to Ugg’s place and his *wife* came down to have a word with Dugan.”

“An angry Gamorrean wife,” mumbled Kordath, glancing up to exchange glances with Strong, who had a look of horror on his stony face.

“Good looking woman, honestly, never would have expected it.”

This time Bleu stared at Peender in absolute terror and confusion.

Too each their own, I guess. Gods know I’ve pursued enough things outside me own Species.

“Right...uhh, go on?”

“Well, she gave him that limp, told him to back the hell off. Nobody on the Docks messes with Uggbug, he’s a really nice guy, honest. And his wife is freakishly strong.”

“So nobody local would be stupid enough to snatch him up, is what you’re sayin’?”

“Right, huh,” the Bith stopped, looking thoughtful.

“Eh?”

“Just remembered there was a group of wanna be tough guys who kept coming through talking to him. Not Besadii thugs or anything like that, gang member types, at least that’s what they were trying to look like. They kept trying to talk to Uggbug about something, probably trying to convince the ‘big dumb Gamorrean’ to work for them, stealing crap or something.”

“Know where they’re workin’ out of?”

“Well,’ Peender paused to pull himself straighter, standing at his full height and lifting his chin a bit. “What’s in it for me? Dangerous folk, or they want to be, could come back on me.”

Kordath didn’t even hide the vicious grin that came to his face, causing the Bith to lose some of that confident look. “Mate, if a gang is operatin’ down here that hasn’t been cleared with the other one’s runnin’ about the Port, and it probably hasn’t, seein’ as this is the first I’ve heard of it, I would nae be worryin’ about them later. What I am gonna do is not give ya up to MalCo, supposed to report unlawful things, part of my arrangement here on the Port, but ya help me out, I help you out, yeah?”

“‘Sides,’ started Bleu, lighting up another smoke and blowing out a stream, “would hate for the Besadii to find ya down here, musclin’ in on the stimms trade.”

“Yeah, uhh, yeah, look, I don’t need that kind of trouble, man. Fine, storage bay twelve? You know it? Down that way,’ Peender gestured further down the Docks. “There’s an access hall just pass it, runs back into some old maintenance areas, think they’ve set up back there. About a dozen or so of them.”

“Grand, just grand, Peender.” Kordath slapped the Bith on the shoulder and smiled again, breathing more smoke into the man’s face. “We’ll see ya around, eh?”

“Wait, what?”

“What? Good to know a lad on the street who see’s everythin’, maybe next time there’ll be somethin’ in it for ya if you don’t make me dance about so bloody much. Come on, Strong, let’s go find our piggy.”

-X-

Fifteen minutes later saw Kordath and Strong creeping down an old, poorly lit maintenance hall. Broken glass on the ground suggested the little group of wannabes had been smashing the lights in an effort to create an atmosphere of 'stay out'. Bleu shook his head at the idiocy, sure a bit of dark here and there helped keep people away, but loosening the glow orbs in their sockets so they flickered would have been a nice touch, more effective. Instead they'd made their own path littered with glass and too dark for most species to see in. Kordath was relying on his Force aided senses to get by, Strong had a hand on the Ryn's shoulder, trusting him to lead.

"I think they're up ahead, I can feel 'em," hissed Bleu, crouching as the first glimmers of light could be seen ahead. One, two...aye, a dozen or more, can feel at least one solid Gamorrean. He's...worried, not scared, just worried and concerned about somethin'."

Strong grunted behind him, choosing silence rather than exposing them to the possibly trigger happy gang.

"Come on, let's head back, gotta make a call."

Ignoring the inquisitive look the big Fade was giving him, the Ryn lead them back out. Back outside the maintenance hall he turned to address Strong.

"Job was ta find the bloke, we've done that."

"Surely you don't intend to leave him in the care of those rascallions!"

"Nah, but no reason ta get ourselves in a scrap," said the Arconan, grinning as he pulled a comlink from his jacket and fiddled with the frequency. "See if I, ah! There it be! Purple Lady, Purple Lady come in? This is," Kord sighed, "this is Bleu Squishy. Ya there, luv?"

The comlink crackled briefly before an annoyed response came across, "*Purple Lady? Really?*"

"What? Ya said don't use names!"

"Not the point, Squishy. What do you want?"

"Well, found a group of lads down near storage bay twelve down in the Docks who fancy themselves new players. Wannabe ganger types, yeah? They on the up and up with you?"

"No. No they aren't. If you're down there, I'm guessing you finally got a job for that idiotically named investigative firm?"

“Oi! It’s not--argh, it’s marketing! And aye, a job, there’s a Gamorrean bein’ held in there, don’t ask, who’s worth some credits to us.”

“Yay! I wanted to stretch my legs anyways!”

The comm went silent with that, and Kordath noticed Strong shaking his head.

“What?”

“Siccing the Lady K’tana upon your foes is most disquieting. You and I could have easily taken those fiends ourselves!”

“Look, our job is ta find things. Purple Lady’s job is ta run the gangs on Ol’val, wouldn’t do for us crossing the line and doin’ her job for her, eh?”

The Chiss nodded, looking unconvinced as yet. **“Perhaps. It does not sit well with me either way.”**

“Well, we’re gettin’ Uggbug back safe and sound, probably. Just gotta comm the lass who hired us now,” he muttered, digging through his pockets for her comm code. “Five hundred when we find him, and another hundred for the day, not too shabby for our first gig, Strong. Ah, there it be.”

-x-

“Watch the glass, luv, bloody morons thought it was aesthetic or somethin’. Your lad Uggbug will be right up ahead. Mind the, uhh, puddles, by the way.”

The redhead client step carefully around shards of glass and pools of questionable liquids as she followed the Ryn. “What happened in here? Did you all get into a fight in here? There’s blaster holes in the walls and it smells like blood!”

“Uhh, let’s just say one rough group of fellows didn’t agree with this group of idiots workin’ out of the Docks. Dunno why they snatched up Uggbug, guess they wanted to use him as muscle but the big guy wouldn’t have it. Seems like a nice enough bloke, don’t speak a lick of his language so I couldn’t tell ya, but he seems unharmed.”

He heard a sigh from the woman, looking up she almost seemed to shrink a bit, as if the tension she’d been holding since he’d first met her had started to evaporate. The shriek she let out when they entered the room proper caused him to clap both hands over his ears, not before they began to ring though. K’tana and friends had taken care of the bodies before he’d brought the client in, so the reaction was apparently because of Uggbug.

“See, there he be, aaand there she goes, Strong what the hells is goin’ on here?” asked the confused Bleu, watching the woman dash forward to throw her arms around the big green skinned alien. Uggbug gave him a grin over the redhead’s shoulder, and Kord was certain the Gamorrean winked at him with his beady black eyes. The Ryn choked a little as he noticed one of the pig man’s meaty hands reach down with great familiarity, cradling the Human woman’s backside.

“What? They, I mean, those two, I mean, what?”

“**Love knows no boundaries, Master Bleu,**” spoke the big Fade, wiping a tear from one red eye.

“Oh you’ve got ta be karkin’ with me. Right, she paid us, let’s get back ta the office and file this away. Gotta use them cabinets for somethin’ besides givin’ Sprout a place ta live.”

-x-

Kordath Bleu sat in the half arranged office, sipping a caf that had been touched with a bit of whiskey, smiling. Sounds of annoyance could be heard from the other room where the Falleen midget was putting furniture together, and Strong was just stepping out of the kitchen with another mug.

“Not a bad first day, I guess.”

“**Perhaps, we did rescue a good man and reunited him with his loving wife.**”

“Got paid, too. Told ya the sign would work!”

“**I still believe the name to be foolish!**”

“Bollocks! Bleu’s Clues Investigations, it works, catchy like!”

Strong shook his head and sighed, looking away from the smug Ryn.

“Good day.”