

Two Droids

By:Acolyte Jinius Griffin (Gray Jedi) / House Shar Dakhan of Clan Naga Sadow [SA: V] [GMRG: I] [SYN: I] [INQ: I]

ID: 10545

## Introduction

Recently during an archeological dig two droids were discovered. Both were brought back to the Shadow Academy for analysis. Jinius drew the short straw: it was his task to conduct the preliminary analysis of the droids.

The droids were dated to somewhere between 2000 and 3000 BBY. Both seemed to fall under the centurion archetype which each chassis being constructed out of heavy durasteel. They were a little different though. The first droid was clearly the more combat oriented of the two and possessed both thicker durasteel than its counterpart and blasters that qualified more as laser cannons than typical blasters. Jinius was sure those blasters could blow 10cm hole in the stone walls without much trouble. The second droid was much more muted in its design, though still clearly possessing a combat purpose. Its armor was thinner but it seemed to be more melee designed with thinner arms that had more gimbal joints.

Along with the droids were several old datapads. Datapads, when found as part of a dig, are invaluable to assessing what you may have found and how to operate them. Unfortunately for Jinius, both datapads' power cells were long dead. He sat them aside for the time being; he could probably replace the power cells later.

Jinius began his work starting with the behemoth droid first. Behemoth was far from an exaggeration. The droid easily weighed in at over 400kg and stood, even in a deactivated crouch, nearly 2.5 meters tall. The thick, exterior armor was a black durasteel with engraved and carved with numerous etching and runes. It had a squat look to it with a wide torso and small, dome-shaped head that had a few visual sensors on the front. Its designers had made little attempt to give it a human-like physique more than just the raw ape-like shape of the whole thing. Jinius took a moment to catalog the carvings. He wasn't a linguist and would have to send those off to another team for analysis.

After a close exam, Jinius discovered that not only was the droid a marvel of engineering with some of the best designed robotics he'd ever encountered, even when compared with the modern era, but the droid's power source was still viable. If he managed to get the droid turned on, it very well would run long enough to either recharge its own power cells or long enough for him at least to get some solid research done. Jinius quickly told one of the work droids to move it to the secure testing area. It was protocol in the lab to have unknown droids activated for the first time in a controlled setting. It saved on the expense of having to patch blaster holes in the walls or replace the desks if the droid goes haywire.

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The second droid was far less imposing. Nonetheless, it was still quite the droid. Its armor was of the same etched, black durasteel except thinner. It grew exceptionally thick around the mid torso giving it a pot-belly look where the armor was thicker. Normally the armor around power cores or vial components was standard practice in droid design. However, this unit had what Jinius would describe as an “excessive” amount of armor around its midsection. After a little elbow grease and some work, Jinius detached the front chest-piece of armoring revealing its innards. There Jinius found what was probably the most intriguing thing he’d come across in droid design in a long time. He quickly identified the droid’s power core, dead and far larger than he could have expected it to have been in a droid of this type, and some device that Jinius had never seen before.

Before Jinius could begin his research, one of the worker droids dropped the hulking automaton that was the first droid. It came online.

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## Part 1 - It is Definitely a Combat Droid

The large droid's visual sensors flickered to life followed by the dull hum of the droid's alternator. Had the thing not immediately started shooting, Jinius would have been impressed with how well designed a millennia old droid was. The thing had been buried in the ground for 2000 and came on like a brand-new speeder.

Blaster shots slammed into the walls of the room liquefying the stone leaving large smoldering scorch marks all over the walls and filling the room with a dense, gray smoke. The researchers and students in the room along with Jinius, all of whom were working on their own projects, quickly began to flee the room. Blaster fire continued to pierce the air from the droid's formidable cannons.

Jinius had dropped to the floor the moment he'd heard the first blaster shot. A lifetime in the military teaches you that -- you hear fire, you take cover. He looked around for a plan. He had his lightsaber, the stupid training saber they gave him when he started, and it would be able to cut through the droid's armor. However, it probably wouldn't cut through in a couple of slashes: it was going to take a few minutes. The way the droid was shooting, Jinius would not have minutes. He may be able to get close enough to pull its main core, the front panel was still loosened on the droid. Jinius had only hand tightened the bolts to keep everything together.

Jinius rolled closer dodging a few shots from the droid's cannons. As he stood to run the final two or three feet that would get him in range to undo the front panel, Jinius heard a horrifying sound.

The droid had never stopped firing, not once since it came online. Fortunately, it had only been hitting the walls, tables, and various inanimate objects throughout the room. It finally got lucky though. Jinius heard the soft, muted sound that only came from someone being hit by a blaster bolt. The sound was soon followed by a crash as the person flew back into a table. The air already smelled like burnt hair and scorched flesh. The droid -- Jinius' responsibility -- had just killed someone. Frack.

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## Part 2 - 70/30

No long after the droid zeroed in on other students did help arrive. Guards rushed into the room and began pushing back the droid. The droid, however, had one more ace up its sleeve: itself destructed.

Pieces of metal and stone, shattered glass, and even a few meaty chunks slammed against Jinius the eruption of sound and light when the droid's power core exploded.

Jinius looked up through the haze of smoke. He could see several throughout the room. Their faces were expressions of agony and horror. Many seemed to be screaming. Jinius couldn't hear their screams through the ringing in his ears.

More guards poured in including, eventually, the Right Hand of Justice Warlord Kar di Plagia. He surveyed the room before directing some of his assistants to help assess the wounded. Medical staff and droids were already pouring in. One of the Right Hand's assistants walked up to Jinius and began asking questions.

Everything remained quiet and Jinius looked around the room stupidly trying to figure out what was next. The first sound he remembered hear was the crackle of fires, followed soon by the cries and screams of the wounded, and then, finally, the voice of the assistant.

"Acolyte!" she demanded while waving her arms. "What is your name?"

Jinius finally looked at her. She was a medium height woman with thick black hair cut short on the sides while still long and loose on the top. She wore black armor and had a silver lightsaber hilt attached to her side.

"Sorry," Jinius said licking his dry lips. Adrenaline seemed to do that to you, dry you out, for whatever reason. He glanced around the room some trying to take it all in before looking back at the woman, "Acolyte Jinius Lu'Kar Griffin."

"Acolyte Griffin, please..." the woman started again. Jinius stopped her.

"How many are dead?" Jinius asked interrupting her. Probably not a good idea, she outranked him.

"We don't know yet, Acolyte. Go get checked out by medical and return to your quarters. One of the Justicar's staff will be along to get your deposition of events shortly."

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“No,” Jinius replied simply as he continued to survey the room. Was there anything left of the droid?

“No?” the woman asked being taken aback.

Jinius looked at her, “Yes. No.

“The droid was my responsibility. I don’t know how it got activated but the deaths are a result of negligence on my part. I should be remanded,” Jinius continued. He unclipped his training saber from his belt and held it out to the woman.

“I doubt it was your fault, Acolyte.”

“I’m not saying it was my fault, Ma’am. I’m saying it was my responsibility. I submit myself to the authority of the Justicar’s office and accept any punishment levied against me. I only ask I be allowed to review the recovered datapads while in confinement.”

The woman eventually made her way over to the Right Hand who nodded. A few moments later Jinius found himself confined to his quarters. They did let him take a few of the datapads recovered at the dig.

As the woman was leaving the room and putting the final security override on Jinius’ door that would prevent him from leaving the room. She looked back at him through the door. Jinius was already at his desk disassembling the datapad to replace its data source.

“Acolyte. You aren’t probably going to get much. You didn’t intentionally turn it on and you turned yourself in, which is beyond me. At worst, I give you a 30% chance of having to do any time or actually be punished for this. Just lay low, do your thing, and things will blow over. You’ll most likely just get a letter of reprimand.”

The woman turned and left Jinius’ room leaving him alone with the datapad.

## Part 3 - Discovering How to Get into More Trouble

Hours passed. Jinius didn't notice.

Instead, he had his head buried in research notes while repairing old and broken components on the datapad. He had cannibalized several components off of his own datapad to do it. He suspected that may get him into more trouble with the Headmaster. That wasn't really a concern, though.

Finally, after what seemed like a lifetime of tinkering, the datapad came online with its dull green screen flickering on and scrolling a bunch of greenish-yellow text.

"Specifications on 'B3N-31145J' and 'B3N-31899W'

B3N-31145J Krath War Droid-Type Prototype, nicknamed the Automaton.

- Designed to be the answer in all combat scenarios
- Armed with a pair of experimental blasters capable of firing 200 shots per minute and can penetrate up to 15cm of standard grade durasteel (4cm of combat-grade)
- Possesses an advanced, three tier higher memory subroutine unlike any in current use.
- Armored with more durasteel combat armor than any droid in production
- Known Issues
  - Shock sensitive. Droid has a spring suspension connecting its head to the rest of the chassis. Under rare circumstances shock will cause this suspension to twist one of the CPU control wires. Thus, the droid may default to defense mode and begin shooting. This is to be corrected in the next release.

B3N-31899W Krath Research Droid-Type Prototype, nicknamed Temporal.

- Research Prototype
- In theory, this unit, if powered successfully, could generate a temporal field capable of effectively rewinding time back to a period of no more than 12 hours in the past.
- This theory is not tested as this is the prototype.
- Known Issues
  - Power Draw. Even without activating the Temporal Field Generator (TFG), the unit burns power quickly. We had about thirty seconds of operation time with the first test.
  - Failure of Temporal Field Generator. Lab research using the same design used in the Temporal Field Generator never resulted in a second use as the TFG would self-destruct melting into slag after each use. "

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*Go back in time. Interesting.* Jinius thought while staring at the datapad. He had an idea. A chance to undo the mistakes of the past day and hopefully make them right.

Walking up to the door did not cause it to open. Security had sealed him in until the disciplinary hearing which would likely be scheduled for some time tomorrow. Too long to wait. If the droid worked, he had a window of only a few hours.

Jinius cracked open the door control panel. Fortunately for him, student rooms were not designed to detain people. They were the usual, common rooms given to any member of the Order. He took a minute to repair his own datapad taking the parts he'd cannibalized from it back from the ancient datapad. The circuits and subroutines on the door were relatively standard and familiar to him; it didn't take him long to bypass the controls. The door slid open revealing the dimly lit corridor. Jinius peeked out.

Empty. Of course, they didn't post guards; he wasn't actually under arrest. On top of that, the door had been locked. Posting a guard would have been a waste of resources and time. Jinius didn't waste any time grabbing the datapads from his room and heading back to the lab where the second droid still stood.

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## Part 4 - This Might Sting a Little

The door to the research lab had been sealed and had holotape up informing everyone that the research lab was off limits due to the incident from earlier. Conveniently, the research lab had similar security controls as his quarters and Jinius bypassed the security in a matter of minutes.

The room was dark, like pitch black. Jinius tried the switch and the lights didn't come on. They must have killed the power to the room. He pulled a glow stick out of his robes and cracked it. The greenish glow cast a dim light for about one meter around Jinius. He moved through the rows of desks. The room was still littered with debris from the droid explosion. From the look of things, they had come into the room and clean up the remains of students and guards. Nonetheless, the blood stains on the desks and floor were still chilling.

Jinius made his way over to where the Automaton exploded. Most of the droid's chassis was gone -- blown to pieces throughout the room. Only a few barely identifiable chunks of durasteel remained where the droid once was.

The second droid wasn't far from the first droid. There were scorch marks and gashes in the droid's armor. Some of them looked deep, however, none of them looked so severe they would compromise the droid's functionality.

Jinius pulled the front panel off the droid and revealed its underlying components from before. After reading the datapad, the strange arrangement of components made a lot more sense. With the panel off, the power unit glowed faintly with a weak, soft glow.

*Some power source*, Jinius thought looking at the unit noticing the glow. He needed a power unit. Not just any power cell, one capable of powering a device capable of breaking the laws of physics.

The worker droids that did the heavy lifting were both idle in the corner. Jinius made his way over and scavenged the power cells out of both droids. Ancient power cells could go one of two ways: either they were vastly more powerful than modern cells or they were woefully underpowered. Normally, Jinius would take a few hours to rate and test the circuitry to determine what kind of loads it could handle. Unfortunately, the one thing that Jinius didn't have and the reason he was outside of confinement was time was not in abundance.

The question was: did he connect the power cells in series or did he just do one or the other? Either way he took a risk. He would either drain one of the cells he needed or he would short circuit and kill the droid entirely. To top all of that off he was working by glow stick light. Green



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light made it hard to differentiate the colors of wires and circuit components. Either option was going to be a complete guess at this point.

Jinius decided to go big. It took Jinius a few minutes to wire the power cells in series and a few short moments to prepare the droid's power cell for the connection. With a deep breath and a tense, yet shaky hand, Jinius wired the droid's power cell to the scavenged power cells.

There was a bright flash from the circuit as Jinius hooked them up. He was afraid for a moment that he'd fried the droid's systems. After a few moments, however, the droid's power cell began to glow brighter steadily. A few seconds later the internal systems of the droid seemed to come online.

Jinius quickly hooked his datapad into the droid's CPU and ran a diagnostic. The droid was in good order. Its sensors had detected the damage from the automaton's explosion but other than the damage from that, which wasn't severe enough to interfere with the "Temporal Circuits" the droid was fine.

*Okay, you're on. You're working. Now what?* Jinius asked himself. The datapad had only given rough information about the droid. He had squat on how to do anything with it.

Jinius checked the datapad. None of the commands he entered would display a help menu or list options. It seemed whoever had designed the droid intentionally made it challenging to enable. Jinius scratched his head as he looked through the subroutines he could read back. Finally, he stepped back and tried the method he mom would have recommended. He talked to it.

"Droid B3N-31899W. What is your primary function?" Jinius asked.

The room was silent. The droid did not respond.

"Damn it!" Jinius swore. He tried again, "Droid Unit B3N-31899W. What is your primary function?"

More silence.

"B3N-31899W. What is your primary function?"

This was growing frustrating.

Jinius looked down at the datapad. Surprisingly, the prompt had readouts. Apparently, the droid's vocal processor was damaged. It was communicating over console.

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```
#> B3N-31899W: Reporting as programmed. Operating nominally.
```

```
#> B3N-31899W: Primary function: Safeguard and protect Temporal Field Generator housed within this unit. Secondary function: Upon receiving the proper command syntax activate Temporal Field Generator.
```

Jinius smirked a little, a rare thing for him. He looked up at the droid, "B3N-31899W: Activate Temporal Field Generator."

```
#> B3N-31899W: Cannot comply with command "Activate Temporal Field Generator." User is not authorized.
```

Jinius glared at the droid. "B3N-31899W. Identify current user"

```
#> B3N-31899W: User is Guest 002.
```

"B3N-31899W: Authorize user Guest 002"

```
#> B3N-31899W: Cannot comply with command "Authorize user Guest 002." User is not authorized.
```

*Damn damn damn!* Jinius thought. Of course, this part wasn't in the manual. He didn't have time to slice the droid to get past its security. He needed it to work now.

"B3N-31899W, who has access to the Temporal Field Generator commands? Which users?"

```
#> B3N-31899W: Access is allowed to the user 'root' and the user 'ns'.
```

"B3N-31899W: Switch to user 'root.'"

```
#> B3N-31899W: Cannot comply with command "Switch to user 'root'."
```

"B3N-31899W: Bypass security. Emergency override. Users root and ns are unavailable."

```
#> B3N-31899W: Cannot comply with command "Bypass Security. Emergency Override." Override protocols require authorization and elevation. Please authorize as an administrative user.
```

Jinius had his fill. He gave the droid a kick. His kick missed.

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Instead of kicking the droid. Jinius kicked the power bank he had hooked up to the droid knocking one of the power cells out of the series. A bright flash filled the room as the power cell discharged into the air.

*Great*, Jinius thought as he saw the eruption of sparks out of the power cell. *There goes my one chance to pull this off.*

Suddenly, all the lights in the room came back online. The guards must have reconnected the power. Jinius heard sounds at the door in the back of the room. The investigators were here to survey the room. He looked down at the now spent power cells and back up at the now deactivated droid.

Any minute the guards would charge into the room to do their investigation and they'd find Jinius. Not only would he get in trouble for sneaking out of his room but he would also get in trouble for violating a crime scene, or worse.

Jinius looked at the droid and back towards the door again. He then looked up at the overhead lights. They'd turned the power back on. He had only seconds.

Jinius rushed over and grabbed a coil of cable in the corner of the room and quickly hooked the droid into the main power grid. More sounds were at the back door now. It was locked but that wouldn't stop them for long. He quickly began recharging the droid's power cell. He had one more chance.

As the droid came online Jinius stared impatiently at the datapad hooked into the droid. Finally, he saw the prompt he was waiting for.

"Droid B3N-31899W. Override security controls. Activate Temporal Field Generator."

The droid made a few buzzing and humming sound before going silent again. Jinius looked down at the datapad. He expected to see an error. What he did see was surprising.

```
#> B3N-31899W: WARNING - Power cell damaged. CPU registering corruption. Please replace power source as soon as possible. Attempting to recovery errors in the 'Security Access' memory bank.
#> B3N-31899W: Access Granted. Override access approved.
#> B3N-31899W: Temporal Field Generator: Ready
#> B3N-31899W: Are you sure you want to engage the Temporal Field Generator? Note: You will go back 12 hours into the past if this works. Nothing more is known at this time about this process.
#> B3N-31899W: Engage the Temporal Field Generator [Y/N]:
```

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A smile exploded over Jinius' face as he hammered the "Y" on his datapad. Immediately the droid began making loud whirring noises followed by an oscillating hum. The Temporal Field Generator in the chest cavity began to glow a brilliant blue as more and more power was pumped into it. Finally, the droid took a step forward and wrapped its arms around Jinius.

The guards opened the door to the research lab as the droid flashed brightly and vanished with Jinius in its arms.

Time travel. FYI. Hurts like hell.

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## Part 5 - The Beginning

Jinius opened his eyes. He was standing in the computer lab. He looked around. Dozens of students were working in the lab. All of them were at research terminals and all were in perfect health.

A student, a young girl with dark hair, walked past Jinius. He poked her shoulder as she went by. She turned and gave him a look and quickly scurried off. Jinius had gotten distracted at the fine black soot on his finger. He rubbed his fingers together and it seemed to vanish slowly the longer he rubbed them together. He looked around. All around him was a small pile of black soot. The pile was slowly disintegrating and getting smaller by the second. Whatever technology transported the droid probably subsequently destroyed it, or something. A few minutes later the ash vanished into the nothingness.

The doors to the Research Lab flung open and two droids rolled in with massive droids on either of them followed closely by one of the Shadow Academy Professors.

The professor looked over at Jinius, "Acolyte Griffin. We need you to analyze these two droids and give us a report."