

# Murderer Afoot

By Ood Bnar

Dajorra System, Selen  
Estle City, Outskirts  
Early Morning

The body was still fresh. Steam rising off it as the moist morning air sped up the cooling process. Multi-spectrum beams of light flashed across the area as investigation droids moved around the scene, recording every detail and broadcasting it to the Citadel mainframe where a highly detailed holographic scene was already being rendered. The coroner was already setting up, preparing to analyse the remains in situ before releasing the scene.

On the outskirts of the site, a uniformed officer dropped the last piece of his deathstick as he began to move towards the body. *'Hopefully the droids will be able to get the scene recorded before the incoming storm washes away the evidence'* he thought as he arrived at the corpse.

"Any idea who it is?"

The coroner seemed to smile slightly as she half turned towards the security staff member, "Still early Fred. But I've just taken DNA so if they're known to us, we'll kn..." A beep interrupted her "...ow. Well that's not good."

"What is it?" the detective asked as he cast a glance around the now frozen coroner and her staff.

"The system starts with our people Fred: Clansmen, Staff, Military and only then the databases of enemies, wanted criminals and so on. After that, it connects to the remote SA database to see if it connects to another clan but that doesn't matter..." She drew a short breath before continuing "if the system finds a match in seconds, I'd be contacting the Shadow Lord right now to report the murder of a senior member. But this match took about 3 minutes, So it's not a Clansmen nor is it an enemy or criminal..."

"What aren't you saying Lisa?" the detective asked, getting annoyed at not understanding the emotions playing across her face.

"When you or I get killed, Fred, I'd expect the result of the DNA search to arrive within 2 and 4 minutes. This is one of us, we may even know them personally." As she finished, an assistant handed her a datapad after muttering he didn't have the clearance to access the victim's identity.

"Who is it?" Fred asked as he watched his colleague enter her login data into the datapad and accessing the records relating to the victim.

“Meet Brigadier-General Alexander Greaves, Fred. Director of something called the DDC.” The coroner’s assistants finished examining the body and indicated they were ready to turn it over to start on the other side as Lisa stood up and backed away slightly to let them.

“What’s the DDC?” Fred demanded while he slowly observed the body being rotated. The cause of death at least would be rather open and shut. A massive void existed where a chest should be. Shouldn’t that be full of organs?

“It says here it’s the Dajorra Department of Counterintelligence and based on what I’m reading here, they’re Arcona’s spymasters. We’re standing over the mutilated and harvested corpse of the guy in charge of preventing people from spying on us...” as she stated this, she turned and looked into his eyes, “I’m sorry Fred, I’m going to have to call this in with military high command and probably the Shadow Lord as well.”

Dajorra System, Selen  
Estle City, Police Headquarters  
Homicide Division (16th floor)  
6 hours later

“So you’re telling me I’m still on this case boss?” a man asked as he stood before a desk in a corner office.

“Yes Fred, it’s still your case but the Shadow Lord has dispatched someone to inspect the remains and oversee the case. I don’t know who they’re sending but be respectful” the major in charge of the Estle City Homicide division remarked. As the door to the office banged open, a young agent burst in. “Haven’t learned to knock kid?” the major exclaimed.

“Sir, there’s a Sith in the building! One of the desk clerks below called up with a warning. It’s Ood Bnar sir. He’s on his way to the morgue” the young man blurted out.

“Shit! Is he sure?” the major demanded as he began to clear up his desk reflexively.

“Yeah sir, apparently they served together during the Dark Crusade or something.” the recruit responded, seemingly itching to return to whatever duty he was assigned to.

“Dismissed kid.” the major turned towards his subordinate “Better get down to the morgue Fred, not healthy to keep the Old Tree waiting.”

Dajorra System, Selen  
Estle City, Police Headquarters  
Morgue (-6th floor)  
Afternoon

As Fred walked through the Morgue he could see a metaphorical path of darkness before him. Something had passed through and its aftereffects were still present on the staff. A pair of janitors were comforting the receptionist while a lab technician was sitting on the floor trying to gather himself.

Walking through the hallway, the temperature was slowly dropping. Shadows seemed to elongate and he could swear there were things moving in them, watching him.

As he pushed open the door, a noise assaulted his senses. Not quite gravel scraping together but close. “Hrrmm, he was still alive when his ribcase was opened. The tendons, surrounding tissues and ribs themselves show signs of tool usage so we can exclude animals. While the ribs seem to be cut, there are differences between each rib. Thus we can exclude droids or saws. I’m going to assume some form of cutting tool, maybe sharpened pliers? That would support the shape of the rib endings.”

“Of course Sir, it seems to maybe be ritualistic or a harvest?” Lisa calmly stated, though Fred could hear a twitch in her voice. She was scared but trying to hide it.

“Hmm, could be but no. There are no rituals I know, which would use these parts and even if there were, they need to be removed during the ritual for it to work. This person was slaughtered in situ, as you proved. Next theory, if they were harvesting his organs. Why him? There were several vagrants nearby who would never be missed. Also, why remove everything? Quite a lot of what they removed is entirely useless. And they left his cybernetic hand and his implants behind. But they removed his eye. The hand and implants would be of far greater value. No, someone wants us to look at this as if the victim’s identity is not the important thing here.” The Neti turned, noticed Fred and began to move. “So you’re the investigating officer correct? I’m not going to investigate further, the case is of no interest to me. I will advise you to check what cases he was handling and look at his private life.”

“Why is that sir?” The human stepped aside as the Neti reached the door.

“He got killed for something he knew and they removed his insides to find something he swallowed or kept inside his body.” The Warlord took pity on Fred, “He swallowed evidence, they cut him open to retrieve it. They then removed the contents of his chest cavity to disguise this fact. They want you to look at something ritualistic or commercial. Once you’d have dismissed those, you’d find some personal reasons he could have been killed. In the end, by the time you’d have realized it was because of his profession, the killer would be offworld already.”

As Fred made a note to start with the victim’s work, the Neti moved through the door, before it closed, a last statement reached both Fred and Lisa, “I’ll inform the Shadow Lord to grant you access to his files and to shut down planetary departures for 72 hours. That should give you enough time to prove this and assist a spy hunt.”