

The Empire's Secrets

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Forgotten Secrets

Rain falls heavy as the hover car comes to a stop outside the government building. The building is like so many other government buildings on Neuvo Senatorium, bland white marble with giant blocky letters above the entrance reading “Morgue” and plain steel doors. This day was many others for the occupant of the hover car, especially the rain. Of the 650 days in the year of Neuvo Senatorium it rained for 600 of them. The eggheads blamed the rain on the tall buildings that had come to dominate the planet. The entire planet’s surface was covered with buildings reaching into the middle and sometimes upper reaches of the atmosphere. The buildings were mostly government buildings and most of the population worked for government or was a relative of a government worker. This was because Neuvo Senatorium was the capital of the Empire, a multi galactic democracy over a billion years old. The man in the hover car gets out and quickly walks up to the door to the morgue. The door is DNA locked, so as the man reaches the door handle, the system checks his access and unlocks the door. The man is of average height and wearing a brown weather coat over a dark blue suit and a red tie. His black hair is of medium length and has not seen a brush for weeks. His eyes are black with thick bags from working 24 hour shifts and little sleep between. Such is the life of an Imperial Inspector. Imperial Inspectors are the policemen of the Empire. Each planet recruits its own inspectors and maintains its own training academy. The belief is that locals would care more about its local population. The reality is most inspectors are too overworked to care about anything. The Inspector walks in and goes to the desk window. The entrance is a basic white walls and floor with steel doors blocking further entry. There is a window to the right with a place for a being to sit and check id’s. Even though the door is DNA locked, procedure requires all persons to check in at the desk for verifying. It’s an old system from before the

founding, but no one wants to break from tradition. The Inspector walks up to the window, there is a Chrumerian sitting behind the glass. Chrumerians are beastly looking species that look like a mix between a human and an ancient boar. They wear family crested rings on their tusk so everyone knows what family they belong to.

“Hello Nar NAr-Salib Ka,” The inspector says to the Chrumerian.

“Hello John Marshall. You here officially or pleasure?”

“Pleasure if you want to call it that. Mick said he had an unusual case for me. He back in his office?”

“Yes, you know the location.” The Chrumerian said as he buzzed the inner doors open. The steel doors swing open revealing a long white hallway with doors lining either side. John walks down the hallway to the third door on the right. The door, like all the others in government buildings is steel and has a metal brass nameplate, “Chief Human Mortician: Mickey Millhead” John knocked on the door, “Mick you in?”

“Yes, just come right in.” John enters the office. Mick is seated behind a white metal desk with a holographic monitor in front of him. The office itself is small, only 10 feet by 10 feet. Behind the desk is another metal door that leads back to the body examining room. “You said you wanted me to call you if I get anything unusual, well it’s been a while, but I have something unusual. A John Doe. Murdered just a few hours ago. Common thief, looking for a quick buck shot him a few times in the chest.”

“How is that unusual? Put his DNA into the system, get his next of kin and be done with it. They already catch the thief from the sound of it?”

“Yes, they caught the thief within the hour. I already put the DNA into the system and that is what makes it weird. It came back unknown.”

“What? How can that be? Even if your born on a ship or asteroid the DNA scanners automatically record your DNA and ancestry and send it into the database. Have you asked Eve why there is not record?”

“Yes and that is where it gets even weirder. She said the information is restricted to ‘Imperial Royalty Only.’”

“Imperial Royalty? That doesn’t make sense. I know the Imperial Constitution mentions a Royal Family, but if they existed, the Empire hasn’t had one in over million years.”

“I know. To make it weirder, the criminal got transferred automatically to the Inquisitor’s office as soon as Central Booking processed him.”

“Inquisitor’s office? They only handle crimes against the Empire itself. They have to be trying to become more relevant. The Senate has been trying for the last two years to do away with them. If they were not written into the Constitution itself they probably would have. What justification did they use?”

“Crime against the Royal Family. Remember the Constitution list the their jobs as investigators of crimes against the Empire and the Empire and the Royal Family are one in hte same under the law.”

“That doesn’t make any sense at all. So are you trying to tell me that his John Doe, whose DNA is not in the database, is probably the last surviving member of the Imperial Royal Family and he has been living as a bum?”

“Looks that way. At least according the Eve. Everything, to include the transfer of the criminal, has been under her authority.”

“Have the eggheads looked into this to make sure its not a glitch?”

“They wouldn’t even know how. Eve predates the Empire itself. The code is ever evolving and supposedly self repairing. No one knows how it works. In over a billion years of research within the Empire, no one has been able to copy Eve in design.”

“So what do you want me to do? Find his next of kin for you?”

“That would be nice. That way, Imperial Family or not, I can make sure this man gets a proper burial.”

“I’ll see what I can do. No promises though. If the Inquisitor’s Office has the case, I’ll probably be stonewalled.” Inspector Marshall grabs the tag at the end of the body and looks at it. On it is a bar code. As he looks at the bar code, his implanted optic nerve

computer scans the bar code and downloads the morgue case file to the Inspectors personal cloud storage. The Inspector walks out of the morgue area.

“I’ll let you know if I find anything.” As he leaves the building and gets into his government issues hover car.

The government issued hover car pulled up to the gate. Unlike other government buildings, this one was ornamental with a bronze gate enclosed in white stone walls ten feet tall. The building itself, white marvel with bronze inlays in the gout. The front decorated with giant Roman columns. The roof of the building peaked into a gold plated roof with symbols of ancient religions such as the cross and crescent moon atop two of three spires. The third spire is topped with an all-seeing eye. The doors to the building, unlike any other on Neuvo Senatorium, are old oak 4 inches thick with brass handles. From the gate to the building was a long winding driveway circling a marble water fountain. The water fountain itself is of a being standing over the torn bodies of an angel and a demon. The gate swung open for the Inspector’s hover car and he made his way toward the main entrance and parked in front. Inspector Marshall got out of the hover car and walked up towards the doors. To the right of the door was a computer screen with a camera above it. The Inspector went over to the computer and touched the screen. A human face appeared on the screen.

“State your purpose!”

“I am Imperial Inspector John Marshall. I am investigating a murder and I was told you are holding my suspect.”

“Place your eye to the camera” Inspector Marshall put his eye towards the camera and the camera took a picture of his eye and his profile appeared on the screen. The door opened. The inner hallway, like the exterior, was finely decorated with marble floors, ivory crown molding and brightly covered tapestries hanging along the wall. A man appeared from suddenly.

“Hello Inspector Marshall. Please follow me.” The man was dressed in ornamental armor bearing the all seeing eye on the breast plate. The man’s helmet affixed to his right hip. Inspector Marshall

followed the man down the hallway towards a random door. The room on the other side was an office with a large mahogany desk. On the other side of the desk sat another man in armor similar to the last.

“Inspector Marshall, I am High Inquisitor Augustus the fiftieth. I understand that you are investigating the murder of someone in which we have the murderer in custody. Rest assured this is being taken care of. You are relieved of this investigation.”

“While I thank you of your help, I would like to be able to continue my investigation.”

“Funny, I pulled your investigation records. You are not assigned to this case. So tell me Inspector, why are you really on this case?”

“Curiosity. This is the first person ever to not have their DNA in the system. Then to make it weirder, you and your Inquisitors sweep in and snatch the murder as soon as he is done with Central Booking. The Inquisitors, who are Constitutionally only supposed to be investigating crimes against the Empire. Now I wonder, what crime against the Empire can the murder of a nobody be?”

“Careful Inspector. You stick your nose someplace where it does not belong and you could find yourself staring at your own death.”

“Is that a threat Inquisitor?”

“No, just a warning. As for our rights to take this case, you forget, we also investigate crimes against the Royal Family.”

“There is no Royal Family. At least the historians and archivist have not been able to identify a single Royal Family member since the founding.”

“That is because the Royal Family records are not privy to such low people. Eve and the Inquisitors maintain the Royal Family tree.”

“Says the High Inquisitor. Must be nice to keep a secret database that only you have access to. What keeps you from taking any case you want? Though I must know, how did you reprogram Eve to restrict the DNA?”

“Didn’t need to. It is part of her original programing. It was the Royal Family that programed her in the first place. The All Father.”

“The All Father? Now you’re spouting fairy tales. Tell me High Inquisitor, is the Inquisitor’s position so now you’re making up investigations. From what I hear, if you were not in the Constitution itself, then the Senate would have disbanded you ages ago.”

“Watch your tongue Inspector! While I admire your straightforward questions, my good graces are quickly thinning. I will allow you to continue your investigation. We are done with the prisoner. Effective immediately he is to be transferred to your care.”

“Thank you Inquisitor.” The door opened and another Inquisitor led the Inspector out of the office and down toward another door. The inside of this door was two rooms. One with a console and the other with a chair in the middle of it. The chair had metal bars shackles attached to the armrest and footrest. From the ceiling hanged a head cap. Attached to the chair was a sunken man.

“I see you’ve already had your fun with him. You could save me some time and just give me your data.”

“The data has already been uploaded to your server. High Inquisitor’s orders. You have also been given temporary access to the data from Eve. Again, High Inquisitor’s orders.”

“Tell the High Inquisitor thanks.” The Inspector took hold of the man and unhooked him from the chair. “Let’s go you.” The Inspector led the man, half dragged the man, to the hover car waiting outside. The Inspector threw the man into the back of the hover car and got into the car. The hover car drove away.

The Senate. It is a town among itself. The building itself is a large circular dome that encloses over 800,000 acres. Crafted out of the strongest metals in the Empire. Designed to withstand a blast from a orbiting battleship’s main gun. The inside of the Senate building itself is a stadium with enclosed capsules with chair in them all around it. In each capsule is a door that leads to an office.