

missing person poster

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missing person poster

by Anonymous

Summary

the only functioning institution in this town is run by bacon, jaron, and planet and we see how it works out.

alternatively: bacon named his private investigation service an institute out of spite

alternatively: the various ways you can cheat on your tax form

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

Bacon prided himself in creating the most simple and efficient procedure for taking statements. He prided himself in many things, rightfully so, in his mind, as the founder of the Heart Institute - along with Planet and Jaron - that he'd created to spite the Teal Eye Laboratories that had rejected his application some years prior. Even though the institute was small, and Planet was always off doing their own thing and Jaron refused to use a code name, it left Bacon dealing with mountains of paperwork and bureaucracy. Not that he minded, really. The forms were comforting, in a way, the simple questions and answers that filled out paper after paper after paper. There was something enjoyable in fooling the government and the IRS, avoiding paying taxes due to this loophole and that, things that were only *technically* applicable

Planet had called him weird for liking it, but Bacon had only reminded him that without all those

forms the Institute wouldn't exist, and *then* who would fund their never ending nosiness.

That same nosiness is what brought them into this situation though.

Bacon, despite his pride in his forms and excel sheets, had never really expected that he'd use most of them. It was still just the three of them - any paperwork considering encounters with suspected supernatural or paranormal entities only served to help keep track with the information - but the thing Bacon was most shocked to have to use was the new employee form. He wasn't sure what to feel when the application arrived - concerned? Proud? It felt like a prank from Teal Eye, or an attempt at spying. But in the end the new employee failed to show up on his first day. Bacon couldn't even be mad at him, really, considering what ended up happening.

And then there was the issue of the report form. Technically he'd made it just to keep track of dates and entities, but no one had really been using them properly until Planet started looking into what failed to name itself as anything other than "The Medical Community." Believe him, he'd tried. They'd all tried. But the ink on paper and the keyboard letters seemed to change and shift any time anyone tried to name it something else.

So that's where they found themselves now, armed with a vintage tape recorder and Jaron's laptop, sitting in the basement of one of their office building, ready to take Planet's statement.

He inhaled a deep breath.

"Statement of Planet Lord, regarding their investigation into the entity known as 'The Medical Community'. Audio Recording by Bacon Waffles, Head of the Heart Institute, Nevada. Statement begins," he said simply, turning his eyes expectantly to Planet, who only gulped. They both looked to Jaron, who gave Planet a sweet and encouraging look, and then went right back to fumbling with something in his coat pocket, ignoring his task of writing the statement down on his laptop. Bacon sighed, exasperated, and dragged the laptop over to himself.

Planet's voice bubbled up through the silence, not unpleasant, but breaking Bacon out of his thoughts nonetheless.

"The thing is located about sixty miles south west from here, close to the California border. But I'm pretty sure it moves, no, it *has* to move, cause there was no other way no one would have noticed it there - "

"Dude, focus."

"Right, right. Alright. I've been looking into the thing that calls itself the '*Medical Community*' for a while now. It's kind of hard to locate? It seems to haunt abandoned hospitals mostly, but I've seen it... *appear* in random, uninhabited places. We have evidence and photographs of it appearing all around the world, uh.. Poland, Philippines, Russia... It seems random, so far? I haven't really noticed a pattern. Anyway," they paused to breathe. Absentmindedly, Bacon twirled a pen around his fingers.

"They experiment on people? Mostly? Autopsies, dissections, the like. It *seems* like a real institution, but it isn't. It doesn't have a name, all of the doctors are unidentifiable, it's like a bunch of ghosts. Or a play. Or something. It's not *real*, is the thing. The hospital - the location, the operating room - they're all *physically* there, right? But all of the... *people* aren't. It's like walking through a bunch of ghosts. They're *there*, but at the same time they're not. You can't talk to them, they won't interact with anything other than the scene, their... work, or whatever. It's stupid easy to infiltrate, if you think about it..."

Planet didn't look at him, didn't look at either of them. Just stared at the notes in front of them, gripping their own pencil.

"Despite the fact that they move like ghosts, there *are* news and studies published by them. They're never like, official, or conclusive or peer reviewed or anything a study should be. But, they exist, it's how we've been able to track them, and every now and then they'll even post job listings for medical stenographers. That was my original plan, but that would draw too much attention. Instead I followed one of the applicants - there were only two who arrived - and I just... walked in. The applicants got taken to an office for an interview, but I'd borrowed some medical scrubs off of Pangi and no one really paid attention to me. I was concerned that at least they'd notice that my scrubs were the wrong color? But that was unnecessary, they were all wearing different colors. It was like a frankenstein-ed medical staff, their masks, clothes, caps - none of it matched. Most of them still had blood splatters on them - some fresh, some really, *really* old. They didn't notice me, they didn't talk to me at all. They all just... wandered. The few 'doctors' I saw talking were just speaking absolute nonsense in languages I couldn't understand. In languages I'm sure they couldn't originally understand either. I'm pretty sure I heard what must've been a French scientist talking to a Japanese doctor. It was like walking in backstage during the rehearsals of a play. Everybody in their own little world, busy with their own things to deal with. And then came the bell."

Bacon didn't note down that Planet winced at the mention of the bell. He wouldn't.

"It was *so* loud. But it seemed to work like a wake up call, cause suddenly *all* of them, everyone was rushing to the entrance. Of course I followed, I mean, they can only post so much about their 'special' acquisition before everyone starts to get nervous about what the freaky medical hivemind got their hands on," Bacon's own fingers tensed at this. "I couldn't see the body immediately, there were too many of them. I was so worried at first that I wouldn't be able to see anything with the amount of doctors that had piled into the room, but as they slowly progressed to the morgue and stripped and cleaned it, they kept thinning out. At first I thought they were disappearing, like ghosts, but.. They kept calling it *the body*. I don't know if that's usual medical procedure or not but they were *really* intent on dehumanizing it. Like it was a John Doe, or even worse, like it was never human at all. It was awful. Eventually they moved to the operating room. I didn't think I would've been able to be on the floor even if I wanted to. There were actual *fight*s over who got to dissect the body. It was horrible. Like watching a pack of vultures fight over an animal that wasn't even dead yet. I climbed the stairs with some of the rest of the staff and onto the balcony. I noticed I wasn't the only... human there. Like I'm *sure* there were others who weren't part of the hivemind, or at least not *completely* part of it yet. But I couldn't exactly walk up and ask them, I was so-

Their hands were shaking.

"I didn't want to know what they would've done to me if they found me out. So I sat there quietly, and watched. They rolled him out, and started the autopsy. The stenographers kept typing away as they called out the state of the body, and at one point I guess one of them wasn't typing fast enough, I think, because they dragged him out. I," Planet looked at the floor. Looked at the wall. Sighed. "The stenographer, he uh... I saw him afterwards, as I was leaving. Or what was left of him. He didn't have his eyes anymore, or his fingers... I'm really, really glad I didn't apply. Anyway, I couldn't watch the autopsy, it was so... horrible. They just kept talking about it so, so *hungrily*. Yellow blood, multiple hearts, whatever it was on that table, it wasn't Zam. It couldn't have been Zam. Because the worst thing about this isn't even the fact that these scientists kept fighting over who got to touch the body, and that one creep falling over trying to eat his heart, it's that the body was *alive*. I'm sure of it. That heart was still beating when they cut it out."

He paused. Breathed. Bacon paused the recorder

"We can pause if you want to," he offered, but Planet cut him off.

"No, it's fine, there's not a lot left anyway."

Bacon un-paused it.

"The main scientist, the one who did most of the incisions and call outs, kind of... stepped back at some point? It was when they'd just seen the fact that there were three hearts in the body. When he spoke he sounded... old, and tired. Thick accent, but I don't know from where. He started talking about the hearts, how some were smaller than others, and that's when the rest of the scientists started talking again. That Japanese doctor laughed at him, but I couldn't understand what his counter argument was. I noticed a woman, I'm sure it was that same french scientist I'd noticed at the beginning, leaning over the balcony rails, something wet staining the front of her surgical mask. Another doctor piped up, speaking in a language I didn't recognize, and it kept going like that. They were arguing. The hivemind didn't argue. If you disagreed with the hivemind, if you spoke out of line, you got taken out and killed. It's what they were doing all this time. I'd only noticed it when they washed the body, one of them mentioned how he thought the body was still alive, spoke in a drawling southern accent, and got his throat slit for his trouble." Planet put a hand to their own neck, rubbing at it uncomfortably. "It's a known phenomenon, whatever. The *Medical Community* is known for this. They're a hivemind that moves to where it thinks the most interesting scientific discovery will be. If a member is so bold as to posit a theory, and the hivemind disagrees, they kill them. Cut them out, off, kill them. I'm not the first person to infiltrate, but many who tried doing the same thing got too involved and ended up getting consumed by the hivemind."

They breathed in.

"The scientist fell from the railing. She broke her neck trying to eat that heart. Serves her right if I'm honest, but that's not... One of the other infiltrators with me, it was an agent from Teal Eye Labs, I'm *sure* of it. He was there. I saw him sneaking around the operating room, while all the scientists were fighting. I don't know who threw the first punch, but it was escalating and I did *not* want to get caught in that. And while all of the doctors were fighting over what and who the body was and why it had so many hearts, that Teal Eye agent stole one of them. Some of the scientists that weren't fighting got up and started arresting the ones who were. I was forced to help or get dragged away myself, it was too risky to try anything else. I grabbed one of the doctors with another ghost and we dragged them out. For what it's worth, I was the last one out."

"There were three people left in the operating room. I can't tell you what they sounded like or where they were from, because before that they hadn't said a thing. The stenographer was just... there. I don't think there's any saving them anymore. But one of the scientists was more freaky than the rest of them."

At this, Jaron paused.

"How?"

"Okay look, like," Planet started, struggling to find the right words. "Uhm, you know how I said the staff was like... ghosts and actors and stuff?"

"Yeah?"

"And there was me, and the other agent. And it's like, the difference between us and them is that, that guy was obviously waiting for something else to happen. They were all playing roles like.. like one moment they're all rushing to a patient like it's Grey's Anatomy, and then they're patiently watching like background actors. While that guy kept waiting for an opportunity to steal one of the

hearts."

"Uh-huh."

"Well this guy was like. *Tall*. And like, I don't know, *freaky*. Like he was waiting for something... worse. I don't know. His shadow didn't seem right either." Bacon dropped his pen.

"Wait. What do you mean by his *shadow*?"

"It seemed like... a wolf, or a coyote or something. I don't know man, I was confused. I was trying not to get eaten!"

"Okay guys! Focus!" Bacon called. They could discuss the details more later, they had to get this statement down first. "What happened to Zam's body, Planet?"

Planet was quiet for a moment. Bacon couldn't blame him. They all knew him, Planet was *friends* with him. His eyes still haunted them from the missing person posters scattered around town.

"I don't know. I think-" they were not allowed to finish the thought, instead, smoke came pouring out of the vents and Spoke appeared, sitting in the middle of their meeting room table.

He sat facing the three of them, grinning from eye to eye, and lifted a finger to shake at them.

"Now, now, now," he said, gaze hungrily following Bacon's hand as it hovered over the tape recorder. He pressed the pause button, quickly, twice. Spoke was too young to know what the right button was to stop it. "Let's not start theorizing about the body, we saw what happened to the medical community when they did that."

"So it's true? It's fallen apart?" Jaron asked, his voice carrying none of the concern it should have at Spoke appearing in the middle of their meeting. But he was always good at acting like that.

Spoke just shrugged.

"Can we have a conversation with you without you being so purposefully vague? Or did you come here just to be annoying again?" Bacon snapped. At this point he knew Spoke wouldn't do anything to hurt them outright. A part of him doubted that he could, anyway. He just wanted attention, someone to annoy, which would have made him think of Spoke as one of Bacon's own younger siblings, had Spoke not been about 75% smoke and 25% shadow.

"Fine, fine. Here's how it's going to work. You ask your questions, and I decide if I answer them or not," he conceded, which only really meant that this was his plan all along. Now Bacon, Planet, and Jaron only had to play their cards right to-

"Where's Prince Zam?" Jaron piped up. Blunt. Straight to the point. Bacon put his head in his hands.

"I don't know," Spoke answered. Simple, blunt. He either truly didn't know, or simply didn't *care* to know, which was more likely.

"Why are your names on the reports then?" Planet asked, their eyebrows furrowed in confusion.

"Look," Spoke said, waving around his arm theatrically. "*Zam* asked me for a favor! He's my friend as he is yours, so I did my best to do what he asked me to! Everything else that happened is none of my business."

"You brought him there, I think you should take at least partial responsibility for what they did to him," Bacon argued, the Heart Institute took responsibility for handing out missing person posters, Spoke could take responsibility for disappearing him.

"Whaat? Come on Bacon, the Medical Community didn't hurt him! They just did a little vivisection on him, *totally* consensual."

"They cut out his heart and made it grow back."

"Nuh-uh, I don't know if you were following the autopsy but those hearts grew back on their own," he shook his finger, it was starting to get on Bacon's nerves.

"So you *were* there," Planet said. "In the operating room."

Spoke paused. Bacon guessed he wasn't expecting anyone to have seen him, but there was a reason Planet went on these missions on their own. They all stared at him, meanwhile he just sat there, staring back at Planet, even the wisps of smoke coming from his body seeming to have paused.

"That's not a question."

Planet narrowed his eyes. "Why *were* you there?"

But Spoke just stayed quiet. Refusing to answer.

"Spoke, what have you done?" Bacon finally asked, and Spoke slowly turned to face him.

"Nothing," he said. "Nothing I wasn't asked to."

And as suddenly as he appeared, Spoke left, leaving them alone to ponder the implications.

Bacon ended the recording.

End Notes

spoke and crew are just like me but instead of me losing my glasses on a daily basis they've lost the body of prince zam

I was so concerned about getting the 3htrio dynamics wrong, but then i realized most of this story is just planet's experience infiltrating the medical community . so . rip.

also. because i cant. really put this anywhere

the scientist who broke her neck reaching out for zam's heart as an icarus. reaching towards the sun. the sun is the heart because the heart is more knowledge about humans and

whatever it is that's making them cryptids. the heart is the sun because of zam's close connection to sun symbolism. not thirst, but hunger for knowledge. zam's body is not the sun though - it, presumably, has agency and a conscious. it's more than a well of knowledge. she's not reaching up she's reaching down. is her death deserved? i dont know, but it *is* funny.

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