

How does ten billion people go missing?

Elandra

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Docking she watched the beautiful landscape for signs of life. The beautiful silver and grey hues unfolded themselves as the sun slowly rose up behind her ship revealing the large city in its magnificence. The trees appeared a bright purple as the leaves danced in the breeze. As the sun grace them the trees they looked like they were on fire. She knew otherwise.

Shutting things down she grabbed her weapons and then set forth to investigate. With all the cut backs she was sent out there alone to investigate, the council just didn't have the budget nor the trainees if you asked her. Stepping off her shuttle. Captain Dianna Frost inhaled deeply, sucking in a lung full of the sweet light air it smelled of fresh baked cinnamon. Pulling out her scanner she flicked it on. None of her on board equipment was picking up any human signals or any signals of life on this remote little planet let alone in Elandra. Elandra was the largest populated city on Jina but looking around you wouldn't know it. Where did the people go? Where were they hiding?

Humming to herself she liked having the comfort of some kind of noise even if it was just herself humming.

She had landed in the streets, just outside of the main entrance to city hall. Walking up the steps each footfall a soft echo of contact connected. Pausing on the top step she held her breath, she turned slowly and surveyed the area. Nothing showed up on her scanners, nothing to indicate that there was any other life on this planet aside from the trees and herself. How could this be? There were ten billion people on this planet ... two billion in this city alone. Where could they be?

Turning back to the city's building she pushed open the door and peeked inside. Keeping a watchful eye on her scanner she didn't like uninvited surprises, the thought made her chuckle since she was technically an uninvited surprise here herself.

Her footsteps were the only noise that echoed across the marble floor. The walls were brightly painted yellow and green. Stepping further towards the main greeting area. She kept her eyes on her scanner. Nothing ... not a single bleep or dot to register of any kind of life except for herself.

A loud bang came from the back. She jumped. Blinking she looked up. Her heart started racing. Glancing back down at her scanner. She saw nothing. Shaking her scanner she gave it a little slap but still nothing ... her hand instinctively found her gun pulling it out of its holster.

Scanning the room with her eyes, nothing registered as unusual it did nothing to quell her nerves. Heading over to where the noise came from Dianna moved with purposeful intention. There was nothing. Blinking hard she felt like something or

someone was watching her. But who or what could it be? Could it have some kind of shield? A cloaking device of sorts? What was she dealing with?

Swallowing hard she held her breath as she slowly survey the area. A little voice in the back of her head whispered, 'there is nothing here get out! Get out now!'

Relaxing a little she stared back towards the front door, still on alert and still moving very cautiously.

About four feet from the door she could see the sunlight and her shuttle waiting for her outside.

Her sensors bleep. Pausing in mid-step she looked down at the reader. There was a visible dot it was something that was behind her moving towards her at high speed.

Spinning around with gun drawn she scanned the empty room. Glancing down at her reader again she saw the signal was definitely moving towards her. It was close she looked up. According to her sensors she should be able to see it! There was only dust and shadows that seem to be keeping her company at the moment. Firing her gun at the empty space ... nothing. Dust and shadows ... Looking at the reader again, the dot had stopped. It blinked at her. The reader indicated the life force was one foot away. Directly in front of her. Looking up she saw just the empty room. Looking down the dot on the scanner blinked at her. Stretching her arm out she waved it through the air in front of her. Nothing but air.

The little hairs on the back of her neck warned her otherwise. Swallowing hard she step backwards towards the exit taking two steps and stopping. The dot followed. She took another two steps backwards and watched as the dot followed. She felt the door behind her. Waving her hand again at the air in front of her, her hand only met air.

Something caught her eye ... the shadow on the floor was out of sorts. Her shadow was there but there's another shadow there as well. It was behind her! But wait the indicator was sure the life form was in front of her. Dianna's palms felt a little sweaty as her grip on her gun tighten. Spinning around ... she pointed the gun at empty air. Her shuttle was waiting for her to return patiently just a few feet from her.

Taking a step outside, she sighed obviously it was an equipment malfunction. Turning around to close the door behind her. She came face to face with a shadowy figure. It grinned at her then opened its mouth wide. Her screams were muffled as it bit her head off.