

Tales from Crestfall: Autopsy Turvy

Butcher (Voiceover): Howdy doo. I am the Butcher, and town coroner, of this dicy town of Crestfall, Idaho, and this is a Tale from Crestfall.

[funky bass music]

It was same old same old for your old Butcher. Sharpen the knives, cut some meat, go in the back to perform a secret autopsy. You know it ain't easy bein' a butcher AND town coroner. But it keeps me on my toes. My newest dead guy was none other than –

[record player turns on, old-timey music]

The Great Darius Dithers: The Daredevil Hula Hooper of Northern Idaho.

[crowd applauds and woohoos!]

He was doin' his thing at a visiting circus in Crestfall: Rockin' those hips while juggling flaming knives over a pit of alligators.

[flames go flying, an alligator chomps and splashes in the water]

You can only imagine how he died... Car accident.

[record scratch]

Terrible thing.

[somethin's-goin'-on-here mystery music]

Butcher VO: Now I admit, since I got Darius, I mayyyybe noticed a couple of odd things happening around the shop. Weird scratches 'n such on the door. Cuts of meat missin'. An ungodly shrieking in the middle of the night.

Ungodly Shrieking (*echoing*): AHHHH.....

Butcher VO: Eh, nothin' to get too worked up about. I've seen worse. Even *caused* worse myself. One night I finally had some time to take a look at Darius. I closed up shop—

[*click! goes the lock*]

Grabbed my scalpel—

[*shhhhhinnggg!*]

Took off my butcher apron... to reveal my autopsy apron. But when I opened the door to the back... Darius Dithers, the Daredevil Hula Hooper of Northern Idaho, was missin'.

[*dramatic pulse impact like *gasp**]

Just an empty metal slab...

[*CLANG!*]

I heard a loud noise.

[*CLANG!*]

But I wasn't sure from where.

[*CLANG!*]

It happened again, and this time I knew *exactly* where it was coming from...

[*CLANG!*]

The meat cooler. I opened the door.

[*groooooaaannn, the door opens. shhhhhhh, frosty mist spills out onto the floor*]

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The usual frosty mist spilled out onto the floor. To the left, I saw my pigs, cows, and sheep. To the right... hey! Everything was missin'!

[horrificed music, like witnessing a harrowing crime scene too dreadful to look at and yet you can't stop staring, mouth hanging open]

My pheasants, my rabbits, and my goats: Gone!

[violin strike! like the shower curtain was just pulled back. oh the horror!]

But you wanna know the strangest thing... the madness didn't end there. From the back of the meat cooler came this icky mushy munchy sound.

[icky mushy munchy sound]

And that's when I saw it. A pair of glowin' eyes. I don't know what... but somethin' was squattin' in the corner... *chewin'*. And it was staring right at me. I moved real quick to the light switch. But when I flipped it on—

[light switch click]

The eyes vanished.

[whoosh! like where'd it go?]

There was *nothing* squattin' in the corner. But I just couldn't shake this thought. Could the undead Darius Dithers have leapt out of his cocoon of eternal slumber to feast upon the spoils of my labor? ME? THE BUTCHER?

[music builds in horror, then ends abruptly]

Butcher VO: Pahaha! Nah! No way. Trick-a-the-light. I don't believe in the soupahnatural. That didn't change the fact that I was missing a definitely-dead human and half of my definitely-dead meat! Whoever did this was also definitely gonna be Dead Meat. Now I knew I couldn't solve this case alone... so I turned to the best man for the job.

[piano music evoking a sense of honor and fondness]

Someone who has always been there in Crestfall's darkest hours. A man who specializes in death and mystery. The one, the only...

[music cuts]

Jimmy Hawkins, Private Investigator.

[door opens]

Jimmy Hawkins: Jimmy Hawkins, Private Investigator.

[classic noir music]

Jimmy: Charmed I'm sure, like a sailor boy meeting a siren at sea. You came to the right place.

Butcher: So based off the lengthy conversation we had over the phone that no one heard, what do ya think is goin' on here?

Jimmy: I've seen my fair share of body snatchings and animal kidnappings. Shouldn't be a problem for a seasoned clue killer like myself.

Butcher: I saw some weird things in there, Jimmy. Ya sure you're up for it?

Jimmy: You ever heard of the Cod-nap Caper? Thirteen sleeping fish stolen in the night. How about the Great Bread Factory Fire of 1982? It smelled delicious for weeks. What about the Silent Killer?

[music cuts]

Probably didn't hear about that one.

[music resumes]

What about the Dream Thief? The Except-On-Sundays Assassin? The Smiling Reaper? Herman the Hermit's Ghost? Come on, you ever heard of those? Huh?

Butcher: Uh, a couple of 'em, yeah.

Jimmy: Well I've heard of all of them. 'Cause they were *my* cases.

[*sexy gritty trumpet like damn this guy knows what he's talking about*]

Butcher: Um... didn't all those cases go unsolved?

Jimmy: Only because no one else would even touch 'em! Don't worry, Butcher. You're in the right hand.

Butcher: Where'd the other one go?

Jimmy: I lost it in the Great Bread Factory Fire of 1982.

Butcher: Holy smokes. And uh, you're sure this ain't a, heh-heh, a Herman ghost situation right? No soupahnatural forces at work here? Heh-heh, not in my shop right? Come on, I mean this is a butchery!

Jimmy: Everything has an explanation, Butcher. I'm not one for the... "soupahnatural". I'm a man of science, a man of the real and true. Strap in, this is bound to be one helluva night.

[*tension-filled drone, building... then cutting to nighttime ambience, crickets*]

Butcher: (*snoring*)

Butcher VO: Alright alright, now *look*. I *tried* to stay awake. But I snuck upstairs to catch some Zees. But hey, nothing woke me up – so it couldn't have been that big a deal.

[*glass shatters*]

Ungodly Shrieking: AHHHH!

Jimmy: Ahhhhhhh!

[music out of a nightmare]

[clattering, shuffling, banging, things toppling all over the place]

Jimmy: HELP! HEEEELLLLLPPPPPP! PLEASE SOMEBODY HELP ME. OH GOD NO. THOSE EYES. THOSE TERRIBLE TERRIBLE EYES.

[clack! Jimmy throws something but it doesn't really do anything]

Jimmy: Take that you scoundrel! Where are you? Show yourself!

Ungodly Shrieking: AHHHH!

Jimmy: AH! NEVER MIND, NEVER MIND, NEVER SHOW YOURSELF AGAIN!

[fade out on Jimmy freaking out, fade into softly twiddling morning birds]

[knock knock knock]

Jimmy (from other side of the door): Butcher!

Butcher: *(yawning, stretching, grumbling)*

[knock knock knock]

Jimmy (from other side of the door): Butcher!

Butcher (muttering to himself): Those dang birds always wake me up.

[SLAM! Jimmy bursts through the door]

Jimmy: Butcher!!!

Butcher: Ayyy, Jimmy! Ya solve that case?

Jimmy: Look here, Butcher, I don't know what game you're playing at, but I thought you were having me look into a burglary or a... ra-rat infestation. You never told me what we were *really* up against.

Butcher: And uh... what would that be?

[*paper flick*]

Jimmy: Here.... Give... her a call. Tell her I sent you... This is out of my... hand.

[*pounding footsteps downstairs, door slam, car door close, engine start, screeching tires*]

Butcher VO: And that's how I... the Butcher... *against my better judgement*... called upon... Madam LeBeaux.

[*welcome-to-the-seance music*]

Madam LeBeaux: Yes. Yeesss. Yesssssssssssss. I'm sensing... something... happened here.

Butcher: Well yeah, that's why I called ya.

LeBeaux: It was a good thing you did... and right on time. I was expecting your call.

Butcher: So uh, what, some crystal ball is gonna come flying outta the sky and magically fix my shop?

LeBeaux: No no no no no no, don't be silly, hairy man. Madam LeBeaux would never do such things. I'm no phony. *I* have a magic Mulligan mirror.

[*shiny lil' ding!*]

Butcher: (*intrigued*): Oooo... Looks shiny. What it do?

LeBeaux: Oh, it was passed down from generation to generation... And then I stole it.

Butcher: Checks out for me.

[match strike, candle flickering]

[eerie drone, ritual style]

LeBeaux: Spirits... I beckon you from the Great Beyond to this poor poor hairy man's humble butchery. Ohhh, just look at how poor and weak he is.

Butcher: Uh... what are ya doin'?

LeBeaux: Shhh, this is careful, intricate work. The reception between the Spirit World and ours is but a feeble strand of metaphysical web that the human mind can't even begin to understand. Except for Madam LeBeaux, of course. Now quiet! I must focus all my energy to connect with the Other Side through the power of my stolen magic Mulligan mirror.

[shiny lil' ding!]

LeBeaux: Yes... yes... YES! I see it now...

[brrrrrrr wonnnnggggg, whirling, LeBeaux's psychic-ness has been activated]

LeBeaux: Ohhhhhhaahhheeeee. He speaks, he speaks to me, I can see...

Butcher: Wha-what is it? What do ya see?

LeBeaux: I see..... *something*...

Butcher: Oh you're killin' me. What, what? Be more specific!

LeBeaux: I see a man. A man with unusual talents.

[muffled circus crowd cheers]

Butcher: Oh, well uh, heh, that can't be me. I don't do secret autopsies.

LeBeaux: Shhh! You're disturbing the spirits. And you're not that important anyway. A car on the road. A red car. Circles littered about the streets. He's, he's crying. Calling out:

[*car screeches on the road, crashing*]

LeBeaux: "MY GATORS! OH MAMA, MY GATORS!" Oh... oh, oh, he's slipping away. But not without a craving: The taste of raw animals.

Butcher: Wait a minute. Are you talking about Darius Dithers, the Daredevil Hula Hooper of Northern Idaho? Eating *MY MEAT*??

LeBeaux: OH! Yes, ABSOLUTELY. Darius, of course. I knew it started with a D. And ended with an S. The spirits are never wrong. And neither is Madam LeBeaux!

[*fzzzz! the lights go out*]

[*CLANG!*]

Butcher VO: The lights flickered off. The noise returned from the meat cooler.

LeBeaux: He has arrived! Devin... Devin Dithington.

Butcher: Uh, you mean, Darius Dithers?

LeBeaux: Yes, that's what I said. Daaaaarius.

Butcher (*distressed*): OH THE HORROR!

LeBeaux: Speak to us, Darius. Speak to us... from *beyond the grave*!

Ungodly Shrieking: AHHHH!

[*violin strike! uneasy music, something's coming...*]

LeBeaux (*unsettled*): What... what was that?

Butcher: You-you said it yourself. He's trying to communicate with us.

LeBeaux (*uncertain*): Yes, yes, of course. But uh... *we are* the only ones in here, yes?

[*click! grrrrroooooaaaannn, hissssss*]

Butcher VO: Just then, the door to the meat locker creaked open on its own. Amidst the frosty fog, a pair of glowing eyes appeared.

[*OH NO WHAT IS THAT THING WE'RE DOOMED music*]

LeBeaux: (*screams*)

Butcher: (*screams simultaneously*)

Ungodly Shrieking: (*screams back*)

[*clump, LeBeaux faints*]

Butcher VO: Madam LeBeaux fainted. And I dodged under the table.

Butcher: Listen Darius, please, spare me! I'm sorry about your car accident. It was a very nice car. But I'm sure someone will take good care of your alligators! And it wasn't my fault! I'm just a butcher! And a coroner on the down-low. I was only gonna cut you open! I swear!

[*build in horror music, something absolutely horrible is about to happen - then cuts off*]

Chester: Nahh.

Butcher: Oh no, Darius! You've manifested your soul into a goat!

Chester: Nahhh.

Butcher: Oh. Um. You're *not* Darius?

Chester: Nahhh, naaahhh, nahh!

Butcher: Wait. Wait wait wait wait wait. You mean *you* 've been behind this all along?

Chester: Nahh.

Butcher (*chuckling*): I shoulda known, my own meat conspiring against me.

Chester: Nahhh. Nah.

Butcher: Well it's nice to meet you too, Chester. What exactly did you do with everything in the freezer?

Chester: Nahh.

[*cheesy coconut trotting, Chester somehow opens the door*]

Butcher VO: I stepped into the alleyway to discover pigs, cows, sheep, pheasants, and rabbits buried in the dirt. Front and center was a crudely constructed grave marker that read "Here lies Denise and Wallis, the best goat siblings a goat could ever have".

Chester: Nahh.

Butcher: You're tellin' me... Your cursive *is* impressive.

Chester: Nahhh. Nahhhh! Nahh. Nah.

Butcher: So... you weren't happy that I chopped up your siblings, so you buried your fellow goat brethren to give 'em a proper send off, huh?

Chester: Nahh.

Butcher: And you thought the other animals deserved the same fate. I mean, you didn't have to empty my entire supply. But... eh I can't stay mad at you. You're too darn cute. Come on, you must be hungry. I'll make ya somethin'. Uh... a meat pie! Ooh, uh – a *vegetarian* meat pie, heh-heh.

[door closes, we're back inside the butchery]

LeBeaux: Uggghhh, wha-what happened?

Butcher: What happened is that you're a quack. Chester: Get her outta here.

Chester: Nah.

LeBeaux: Ah! It's the-it's the demon! Screw this!

[pounding footsteps, door slam, car door close, engine start, screeching tires – the exact same sfx as Jimmy Hawkins]

Butcher: Atta boy, Chester. Heh-heh. Atta boy.

[peppy friendship music]

Butcher VO: Now, did I think about choppin' up Chester when I found out he had been the one haunting my butchery? Absolutely, 100%. But... I looked deep into his eyes, and... well... it felt like home.

Ya see, a few weeks prior I got a trio of goats from a farmer who was shot by his wacko wife and her secret lover. That was *before* the wacko wife got decapitated by a cannonball. But I digress. The goats – Denise, Chester, and Wallis – were gonna be my freshest batch of meat to sell in the shop, but little did I know, Chester hid from me before I could get to him. Now, I “may have” butchered Denise and Wallis. Do I feel bad? Sure, ‘course I do. We’re they delicious? Heh-heh... no comment.

It can get lonely being a butcher. And Chester filled a hole in my heart I didn't even know was there. So we made an agreement: every time I get new livestock, we hold a funeral service for the delish– erm– *departed* meats. To honor them. To show them some respect. I do it for Chester... ‘cause it's what friends do ya know? Support each other and all that jazz, even if you don't always agree. And ya know, he taught me a very valuable lesson: To be compassionate. AND that ghosts are a load of hockey fiddle!!!

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He still won't tell me where he buried Darius Dithers, even after I explained to him that people don't eat other people. Far as I know... Eh, but I ain't too worried. I heard Darius was kind of a jerk anyway. And at the end of the day, there ain't no other goat I'd rather be sippin' pink moscato with than good ol' Chester.

Chester: Nahhhh!

Butcher: You said it, pal.

[*glasses clink*]

Evening Post: This has been a Tale from Crestfall. Written by Evan Gulock and Niko Gerentes. Directed by Evan Gulock. Producer and Voiceover Director - Niko Gerentes. Featuring the voices of Niko Gerentes as the Butcher and Chester the Goat. Ryan Goldsher as Jimmy Hawkins, Private Investigator. And Deb Doetzer as Madam LeBeaux. With music composed by Kevin Macleod, DJ Quads, Cinematicwaves, Lionel Schmitt, Miguel Johnson, ErikMMusic, and Audionautix. Sound effects courtesy of Freesound.org. If any of you goat lovers would like to send their condolences, comments, hopes, fears, or dreams, you can contact The Obituary Writer personally at TheObituaryWriter@gmail.com. Or follow on FaceBook, Instagram, tumblr, and Twitter, [@DeathByDyingPod](https://twitter.com/DeathByDyingPod). And remember... If you're going to perform a mystical seance in a butchery, don't forget your magic Mulligan mirror.

[*shiny lil' ding!*]