

“Holy crap” was the first phrase that came into the mind of detective Benedict Miller, a tall man in a dark suit with a sleek, black, handle bar mustache and matching hair style, when he first entered the crime scene of the Luster murder. From the outside, the house hadn’t looked very different from any of the other murder scenes he had visited in the past twelve years on the Chicago city police force.

It was a two story older looking building in one of the suburbs off the interstate. There were spotlights sweeping back and forth too light the yard and nearby street, helped by the red and blue flashes from the ten or so police cars parked nearby, their lights dancing off the yellow police tape reading “POLICE CRIME SCENE: DO NOT CROSS.” There was the usual chatter of the CSI team and squawks coming from radios. A few cops were questioning a woman in her thirties who Miller knew was the girlfriend of the man who had been killed. She had been the one to call the department when she discovered him in the early hours of the day. A normal, usual crime scene, until Miller had gotten to the room where the body had been found.

The rest of the house had looked normal enough, a few movie posters, magazine cutouts on the walls, and cheap beat up furniture scattered around to try to make it look like an okay living space. But the room where the body was found was unique to all other murder scenes he had ever seen. The murder scene was in the kitchen and every conceivable surface was covered in children’s toys, all still reeking with the smell of the now gone carrion. The floor was scattered with Hotwheels. A small walking path was cleared by the CSI nerds to survey the kitchen. The sink was filled to the brim with dirty dishes. The trash can was overflowing with Lego’s and action figures. The ceiling walls and cupboards had gaping jagged holes revealing insulation and support beams underneath. Some holes had talking Elmo’s and scented Strawberry shortcake dolls jammed in head first looking like little arrows stuck in a shield from some old medieval battle. Others just holes, as if the toys in them had fallen out and joined the ranks of the table and floor dwellers.

Benedict’s assistant/intern, Officer Frank James, said something similar to what Miller had thought as he stepped in behind him, just with slightly more colorful words. “Ah, Inspector,” exclaimed Commissioner Robert M. Forager, walking over to Miller and James from where he had been standing by the sink. “Glad you decided to show up.

We got the autopsy back about five minutes ago, look at this.” The Commissioner handed Miller a folder with about two pages of text and around five photos of a man, the man who had been murdered. The first photo was of the kind taken at prisons, Miller could never remember what they were called. The guy was tall with long greasy black hair and an awful case of pimples; he was holding a sign with his serial number and the name ‘Benjamin Arnold Luster.’ “That was taken four months ago when he was caught drunk driving,” Forager told Miller. The second set of photos was of a deformed, unrecognizable piece of raw meat soaked with blood. In the picture, toys punctured the man’s chest. Another toy was leaning on his head soaked with blood and rapped in matted hair next to a bloody dent in his head the size of a grape fruit. The third and final set of photos was the most disturbing and nauseating though. These photos were of a naked man; a light green body bag pulled up to his navel and ruffled around his hips. There were several gaping wounds and deep cuts across his chest and arms. They were cleaned so there was no blood, just the light red color of meat. The head of the man was damaged equally. Again there was a dent in his skull a little to the left of his left eyebrow, cleaned to show the ripped skin around a crack in the skull with the white twists of the human brain just barely visible. His hair had been shaved down to around a sixteenth of an inch to help whoever the pathologist at the morgue had been clean and inspect the wounds. Miller passed the photos to James and started reading the autopsy:

Lead Pathologist: Arnold Willis

Name: Luster, Benjamin Arnold

Age: 31,

Cause of death: Multiple blows to head, stabbing,

Time of death: Friday March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 am-7:00 am

Time of autopsy: Tuesday March 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm

Subject has received multiple puncture wounds with blunt objects, as well as severe blows to cranium an-

Miller stopped. A loud bang had come from outside the house, the sound a pistol made. Forager voiced what Miller had been thinking, "What the crap?" Several more shots fired and someone outside screamed high pitched and long, ending abruptly with a few more shots. These sounded different though, more the scattered rata-tat-tat of a machine gun. Miller reached into his suit under his arm and pulled out his hand gun. Forager and James did the same and they crept together, Forager first, into the hall and towards the front door. Miller was in the back, so when the explosion went off, the bodies of the two men in front of him shielded his body from the fire that erupted through the door, blasting away half the wall around it. Miller flew five feet through air and slammed against a framed newspaper clipping on the wall. The glass shattered digging and cutting into his back. Then he fell and the next thing Miller knew, he was crumpled on the ground, underneath the body of James.

Miller heaved the limp corpse off of him and groaned in agony as he got to his feet. He reached behind himself and felt his back, the shards of glass digging inches into his skin. He winced and then moaned as he brushed the jagged pieces off and onto the floor. In three minutes he was in a cop car, sirens blaring as he sped after a yellow mustang convertible. He had picked up his gun and went outside to see a figure holding a class B grenade launcher stepping into the car he was now chasing. Miller had actually jumped into a police car that had the driver's side door open and had been left running. He had floored it and slammed the door shut after the dead body that had been half in the car and half on the pavement had slipped out. Now he was chasing the maniac in the mustang.

Whoever was in the car was ignoring him completely, or so it seemed, as he shot like a bullet through the streets. "This was one heck of a day," thought Miller as he screamed "Back up, Back up! Heading south down Taylor! And someone get some ambulances to the Luster murder scene!" Miller was going to continue talking to whoever was on the other side of the radio, but the car he was chasing had swerved

down onto an off ramp, smashed through the concrete barrier in a turn so the car spun and landed on the interstate going the right direction. "Holy shi-" Miller started to yell, but was cut off as he almost smashed head long into a pick-up getting off the highway. He somehow got onto the interstate and after the guy, but he was now much farther behind. Cars were honking and bumping each other to get out of the way of the two maniacs flooring it through traffic.

Miller somehow started to gain on the guy after about ten minutes of the high speed chase. Then the weirdest thing yet happened, the car slowed, got off the interstate and parked in front of a warehouse. Miller followed, and parked a distance away from the car. "Remain in your car; I have reinforcements on the way!" Miller told the man in the car through a megaphone. But whoever it was ignored him. They got out of their car and slowly, almost casually walked into the building. "Christ, Miller muttered. And then got out of his car. "Hey you!" Miller shouted but the man kept walking, right up to front door and inside. "Oh, crap," Miller said. And kicked the side of the car. He knew he should wait for reinforcements, but the guy might be gone by then, out the backdoor. Reluctantly, Miller went and got a rifle out of the trunk of the car and walked toward the building, weapon raised in case some idiot rushed outside trying to pick him off.

The thick wood door creaked as it opened in front of him, like something from a horror flick. Miller saw a hall, long and dim, stretching out in front of him. Then a shovel came flying in from the left at him. He felt a burst of red hot searing pain in his left temple, and everything, went black.

Pain.

Pain.

And more pain.

That's all Miller felt. Then he felt cold, and that he was lying on his back. He reached up felt his head. His hand came away wet and sticky. He moaned and opened his eyes. It was pitch black. He blinked, then again, and again. No change, just pure

darkness. Then suddenly the room was filled with blinding white light. “Ah!” Miller exclaimed as he pressed his palms as tight as he could to his closed eye lids. He had gotten the impression of black things in a white room. After a few minutes he reopened his eyes and tried to see something. He was just about to get up and try to find a door, when the light came on again, searing through his skull. Then they were off again. Then on, and then off. Faster and faster switching between the two until, after around five minutes it was a constant light, digging through the man’s eyelids. It took a long time before Miller could open his eyes, but when he did he saw one of the most bizarre scenes of his life. He was in a large room with wooden floors and white drywall lining the room.

But this was not the odd thing. The odd thing was the cats. Miller stood up and slowly turned in a circle, taking in the bizarre scene he was witness to. There were at least a hundred cats, hanging on ropes in every conceivable way. Some, the lucky ones, with the ropes wrapped in a noose under their front legs. Others hung by their tails or simply a back foot. Miller noticed a few hung by the neck, swaying back and forth in the stiffness of death. And he noticed others wondering around the floor, the sides of their heads completely red with whole ears gone, torn as if whoever had put them in the room had pierced their ears with a meat hook and left them hanging there, meowing in agony until their ears had actually been torn off their heads.

“The meowing,” Miller thought “why aren’t they making any noise?” Miller touched his ear to see why he wasn’t hearing anything when he could see most of the cats were opening and closing their mouths in a way that implied hissing and meowing in protest at the totally random and inhumane thing that had been done to them. Miller pulled out the earplugs someone had bestowed him with so he could not hear the sounds, and was flooded with noisy protests the felines were making. “Meow!” “Meow!” “Hiss!” “Kill me, please, kill me.”

“Kill me?” Miller wondered, “Cats don’t say ‘kill me.’” Miller turned slowly around to face the raspy quite voiced, his eyes shut to block out the next horror to be thrust upon him. He took a deep breath, counted to three, and forced his eyes open. The sight he witnessed made him stumble backward into a squirming cat which dug its claws and teeth into his back and neck, this made Miller curse and stumble away into another cat.

He tripped from feline to ever thrashing feline till he finally reached a door. Which Miller slid past without looking back, then he collapsed on the ground, his back to the door, and sat with his eyes closed trying to recover from the gory scene behind him.

What Miller saw when he opened his eyes, was a woman. She was hanging by four ropes, one tied to each wrist and one to each ankle. There were around ten cats hung around the woman thrashing and cutting into her. Her eyes were gone, bloody sockets with torn pieces of skin that had once been the eyelids hanging down in front of the holes. Her nose was gone, only slits in her face remained between the sockets and her mouth, which was open letting a mix of blood and saliva drip down past the shreds of lip, over her chin, over a severely cut neck, and onto her tattered t-shirt. The rest of her body was covered in scratch after scratch after scratch, down until her thighs; the cuts two to eight centimeters deep at the best of times. Under the body was a wide puddle of congealing blood.

Miller gagged after thinking about it. He finally decided to go back and try to help, by killing the girl or the cats, he did not know. But when he got back to her, the raspy breathing had stopped, and he knew she was dead.

An hour later, Miller was at the hospital watching television. He had gone outside and contacted the police department who had sent S.W.A.T. and two ambulances, one for him and one for the girl. Later, after his back had been wrapped in gauze, another officer had told him S.W.A.T. had searched the building but found no one. Now Miller was sitting in his bed watching some boring reality TV program.

"You have a visitor," said the nice, red haired nurse that he had been assigned. Miller grunted in response as the nurse went to get the next inspector to interrogate him. A few seconds later, a tall man with black, shoulder length hair in a grey suit walked in. "Hi," said the man as the nurse closed the door behind him. "My name is Blake Anderson. I was the one who killed Benjamin Luster, and Sally McCarthy." And before Miller could move, the man dug a needle in his arm and pushed the plunger so a blue liquid went into his body. "Goodbye!" the man said cheerily, the way a child does when they have to go home from a play date, then the man laughed, long and hard. And then Miller fell asleep

Name: Blake Anderson

Age: 27

Charge's: Reckless driving, animal abuse, property damage, Torture, the murders of Benjamin Luster, Sally McCarthy, Officer Frank James, Officer David Mathews, Officer Robert Franklin Jr., Officer Frank James, Commissioner Robert Forager, Inspector Benedict Miller,

Expected Sentence: Life

Status: Missing