

Jessica's Bodies

Briefing

Miskatonic university premed student Jessica Gerber was found strangled to death in her home three weeks ago. Henry Barcenas, her ex-boyfriend and convicted drug felon, was arrested for the murder. His trial is predicted to go swiftly as the prosecution has DNA and fingerprint evidence as well as witness testimony indicating Barcenas was furious over Gerber dumping him for a new boyfriend, medical grad student Jamie Davis.

One week ago, Frank and Cherry Lin returned to their home to find their daughter Connie missing and a trail of blood leading from her bedroom to the skinless but clothed corpse of a young woman in their living room. The investigation caught Delta Green's attention when DNA from the body matched 100% for Jessica Gerber.

What's Going On

Willie Fox was a Harvard medical student peripherally involved with a project to encode archival information onto DNA.^[1] He was ejected from the university after being caught transcribing artificial DNA with texts related to chaos magick and prehuman myth cycles. To avoid a media sensation, Harvard had Fox discreetly transferred to the underfunded biochemistry program at Miskatonic University.

At Miskatonic, Fox was given greater freedom to indulge his pet project, and exposed to closed stacks material on hyper-geometry and the biochemical secrets of lost serpent cultures.

He also fell in unrequited love with Jessica Gerber, who spurned him kindly but firmly. Barcenas beat Fox up when he heard, which helped prompt Gerber to dump Barcenas for Davis, who she fancied more anyway. When Fox learned her murder, he threw himself into his work and created an artificial DNA solution transcribed with the Body Warping spell.

The night after Gerber's funeral (held a week after her death) Fox sneaked into the Beth El Jewish cemetery to dig up her corpse. He reduced it to its essential salts and combined them with his DNA solution to produce five vials of glowing orange Gerber juice. When injected into a human, the spell activates, causing the physical form of the original person to be over-written by that of Jessica Gerber.

Fox targeted Connie Lin because he knew he could catch her alone and off guard. Close friends in high school, they drifted apart after Fox developed misogynist and white nationalist views through exposure to alt-right forums. Fox told Lin he wanted to make amends.

As soon as they were alone, Fox stabbed Lin with a vial of Gerber juice. Lin was about 40 pounds lighter than Gerber had been and there wasn't enough physical matter to effect a full transformation. Fox fled in panic, and the terrified and agonized Gerber-2 dragged her way into the living room before succumbing to blood loss.

Investigation

Gerber family

Harold and Marge Gerber are furious about the bewildering new investigation. They don't believe Barcenas worked alone, and claim Jamie Davis must be involved somehow. They have no good reason

to believe this, they're just racist and paranoid. Their relationship with their daughter was strained, though they won't admit it outright, and she never told them about Fox. She barely spoke to them at all.

Lin family

Frank is a second-generation Chinese-American lawyer who responded to societal discrimination by becoming a gun-totin', Constitution-quotin' uber-patriot. The death of his daughter has hit him hard, and he is prone to emotional outbursts. Cherry is a first-generation Chinese-American nurse who appears suspiciously calm. HUMINT indicates she is putting up a strong front for the sake of her husband. While she has a strong accent, she can provide more useful information than her struggling husband.

They know Fox well, Frank didn't like him but Cherry thought he was handsome and pressured Connie to rekindle the friendship.

In Connie's room, there is a photograph on the mantle-piece showing Connie, Fox and a big-boned lad taken during high school. They look genuinely happy. The Lins identify the other boy as Toren Smythe. Frank calls him a "the Cartman-lookin' kid who needs to get a job", while Cherry describes him as sweet but worries about his weight. After high school graduation, Toren and Connie remained friends who rarely saw each other in person but played online games together regularly. Inspecting her computer and phone can also lead the Agents toward Fox or Smythe.

Jamie Davis

A member of Black Lives Matter, Davis is suspicious of the authorities, particularly after unnecessarily rough police questioning during the initial investigation into Gerber's death. However, if treated respectfully he will be candid and respectful in turn. He is aware of Fox's infatuation with Gerber, but will not think to bring it up unless asked directly.

Henry Barcenas

Arrangements will need to be made with the Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center in Lancaster. Initially uncooperative and sarcastic, if Barcenas is told of the strange nature of the case he will become intrigued. He has an interest in the uncanny, and is far smarter than he lets on. If he had had a less destructive upbringing, he would have been a geek. He despises Fox and Davis equally and blames them for driving him to kill Gerber. He will have his own theories about what's going on (Occult 40%, self-taught), but they are red herrings.

Beth El Jewish cemetery

An INT check reveals Gerber's grave has been disturbed. Exhumation reveals her body missing but her clothes and jewelry remain covered in traces of blue-gray dust. Analysis reveals it as DNA salts[2] mixed with inorganic molecule chains defying modern science. Unnatural or Occult can identify it.

Toren Smythe

Toren lived with his mother Sandra Carson (maiden name), who is wheelchair-bound and lives off benefits and alimony. She is protective of her son and sings his praises. There is a strong odor of decay in the house, but chain-smoking Sandra hasn't noticed.

Downstairs in the basement, Toren's messy room is filled with books and take-out containers. Toren's body is on the floor next to his computer chair. Toren was slightly shorter than Gerber but 150 pounds heavier. Gerber-3 formed completely, but suffocated in a thick coating of Toren-flesh. The early stages of putrefaction have seen the Toren-skin split open around the face and legs, revealing another body underneath (1/1D4 SAN).

Carson will break down completely if informed of her son's death. If questioned beforehand or with extensive Persuade or Psychotherapy rolls, she will be able to tell them Toren hadn't come upstairs for a couple of days but that wasn't unusual so she thought little of it. She remembers Fox paying a visit two days ago, but he left after only 15 minutes. He seemed in a hurry.

An autopsy reveals an anatomically perfect Jessica Gerber encased inside 150lb of Toren Smythe's skin, flesh and bone fragments.

Fox Hunting

Fox packed a bag and fled his dorm room after screwing up trying to turn Toren into Jessica, and has not been present at classes for two days. His classmates have nothing nice to say about him, but shady-seeming Professor Waites (who has Unnatural 20%) calls Fox a genius and may show the Agents research notes from Fox's little project. He says Harvard was foolish to expel him for healthy curiosity.

Fox plans to drive to Cambridge, Massachusetts and attack Professor Ashley Turner, who was responsible for having him kicked out of Harvard. The transformation will be successful, as Turner and Gerber have a similar height and build, and he will tell Gerber-4 he has resurrected her with the power of love. She will be terrified and drive away Fox violently, then call 911.

Fox will then drive around Massachusetts looking for a woman similar to Jessica's build and grab her off the street, binding her hands and feet with zip ties. He will then take her to his grandfather's cabin near Lake Chaubunagungamaug to inject her with the serum, then try to convince Gerber-5 how much he really loves her.

If tracked down and confronted at any time during this process, he will try to flee. He is a pushover and the only real threat from him is the Gerber serum, which he will inject into an Agent if cornered and given an opportunity. An Agent injected into the serum dies as they transform into yet another Jessica Gerber. Witnessing a transformation costs 1/1D6 SAN.

Aftermath

The Group will tell the Agents to eliminate Fox and all surviving Gerbers, and destroy all evidence. This prompts a 0/1D4 SAN check for Fox, and a 1/1d10 Violence SAN check for each Gerber. All material related to Fox's work is to be destroyed.

The Program will want them kept alive for study, and all of Fox's notes collected and submitted. Fox will be eventually killed or conscripted. The Gerbers will be studied extensively and determined to be completely human. After psychological counseling, they may be inducted into the Program's secret research division (as personnel or test subjects).

[1] <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2012/aug/16/book-written-dna-code>

[2] https://www.reddit.com/r/askscience/comments/3q9ue1/since_dna_is_an_acid_is_there_such_thin_g_as_dna/