

Character Design - Death Archetype Story

Screenplay written by Adeeb Hawa

Struggle For Candlehearth

CHAPTER I

Gritty rumblings of tiny stones being kicked around midst a busy street littered with horse driven carriages and grim grumpy men in their brown uniforms ran rampant. The snow-laden streets felt bare of any vegetation as tall, deciduous trees painted the horizons. Several two and one storied housing structures stood uniformly along either ends of the street, painted in muddy colors of red, gray and brown. Child-like eyes peered into the streets from the upper floors of some houses, while women moved around on the lower floors.

A mail carrier skips across a short flight of stairs to deliver a letter. He scavenges his leather satchel and pulls out a letter, slipping it through the mailbox slit with the address "*23rd Heart Lane, Malov Residence*" engraved atop it. The letter falls through the slit to reveal the darker interiors, dimly lit by melted candlesticks, windows and a flickering ceiling light. An old embellished rug atop which a dark rustic coffee table stood established the centerpiece of the establishment. A fairly new sofa set and a makeshift armchair accompanied the interiors, along with a working grandfather clock ticking away in the corner. A slim wooden staircase poised upwards into the second floor near the right side. Walls stretched decked in layers of decorative wallpaper and some plaster to improve the insulation, leading into a broad open kitchen lit

proudly with a roaring fireplace. A small tea kettle sprang to life as it released an ear piercing sound. The kitchen boasted tall countertops and ceiling cabinets stocked with cooking vessels and dining equipment. A dark and grim outlet near the rear left side of the kitchen showed signs of a storage room.

The kitchen countertops lay messy as vegetable peels littered the outer edges of a cutting board weighing a skinned rabbit being chopped into pieces by a cleaver. A short woman dressed in a loose pastel yellow gown is busy preparing a meal for her family. The wrinkles on her face, tired eyes and beads of sweat trickling down her brow explained her mid-50s age. An elegant silk cloth tied together her brown, messy hair. Her expressions were dull but focused, as if she struggled to dice the rabbit meat. Her attention quickly swapped over to the tea kettle, as it screamed one more time.

“Dennis!... Dennis?” She yells as she lifts the steaming kettle off the fireplace.

“Yes Maa! What is it?” A raspy voice responded.

“Could you pick up the mail, please? I’m busy preparing rabbit stew.”

Shortly after, hefty footsteps shift as the wood croaks beneath the weight. A tall, young and handsome man bearing sharp features poked out the second floor corridor, dressed well in a long brown overcoat, black gumboots, and a fur cap. A man in his prime mid-twenties, and as he descends, he observes his surroundings. Delighted at the sight of his mother preparing rabbit stew. He quickly skips down the stairs landing with a final big thud and spaces across the living

room and towards the door. Bending over to pick up a single couplet of letters. One addressed to his mother, Clara Malov; and the other was for him, Dennis Malov.

“Anything for me? I recently applied to work at Janice's parlor shop.” Clara asks.

“Yea... yep! There's a letter for you.” Dennis sways the letter up in the air.

“There’s one for me too.” He continues. Dennis moves across the room to hand his mother her letter.

“From who?” His mother questions.

Dennis investigates the letter which bore a striking red stamp on it.

“Yea... It’s from the Republic Army.” He responds slowly. His face tenses up with the overpowering feeling of uneasiness. A letter addressed to him directly by the general? That was a first for him. He breaks the seal and opens up the letter. To his surprise, inside was a printed letter and 25 ducats in cash. He pulls out the letter and spills the coins across the countertop. The ducats clink as they fall and roll over.

“Oh wow! I didn’t know they started sending your payment through the mail... And looks like I got the job at the parlor, too! Your brother will finally be able to attend school again.” Clara speaks in an excited tone.

“Your father would be very proud of you, Dennis. Your hard work in the army is really helping us survive these cold winters... Although sometimes... I fear and pray for your safety.” She continues to speak.

Clara’s love for Dennis and Alvin is immeasurable. She wishes for them to grow into strong able men who are successful. She prays each day for them to find someone special who can help them grow into the best versions of themselves and even start a family of their own someday. After her husband's passing, they were all that she had left that she could call family.

“You don’t need to worry so much about me, maa. I know how to handle myself in any situation.” Dennis sighs. He seats himself on a stool next to the counter.

“I know, I know, but it's a mother’s job to worry, isn’t it?” Clara responds.

Dennis smiles in return as he leans in to hug his mother.

“Congratulations, by the way! You got the job for the parlor, now you won't get so bored sitting at home all day.” Dennis laughs. Clara pinches him in return.

“You don’t get to say that! You’re lucky to get the chance to leave Candlehearth and explore the countryside on patrols and what not.” Clara complains.

“Oh maa, don’t worry. Once I’m done with the army and have earned enough. I will drive you across the country someday, I promise.” Dennis kisses his mother's hands.

“Oh, don’t flatter me. I’m simply too old for all that. Go try that on some pretty ladies around Candlehearth. Anyway, let’s celebrate! It’s been too long. Tell me what you want me to make for tonight.” Clara asks.

Dennis clutches the letter tightly in his hands.

“How about some candied lemons with cheese bread?” Dennis responds in excitement.

“You and your brother, same old same old. Let me check if we have all the ingredients.” Clara pondered. She pours both herself and Dennis a cup of fresh tea. She hurries into the pantry to look for the ingredients. Meanwhile, Dennis opens the letter and begins reading its contents.

The letter read as follows.

“Sergeant Dennis Malov, your unit is assigned to mission Noctus. You are to report to the militant headquarters for briefing before 5pm, Thursday. Disturbing set of events are unfolding

across neighboring cities around Candleheart. - *Signed, General Thomas Heckelvery, of the Republic Army. 19th of August 1814.*”

Dennis crumples the letter in his hand and tucks it under his sleeve as his mother walks back into the kitchen with a basket in her hand. He had just got back from his last mission and was on break till at least the next week. He did not wish to disappoint his mother with the news.

“So?” Clara asks.

“So what?” Dennis responds.

“What was in the letter from the army?” She continues to question.

“Oh nothing, they asked me to report to the headquarters to train some of the new recruits and show them the ropes.” Dennis lies.

“Oh, alright... So you’ll be back by dinner, right?” Clara clarifies.

“Yes, hopefully.” Dennis replies.

“Alright, so I’ll be heading out to the market after I’m done cooking. Seems as if we’re out of cheese. Damned rats keep breaking new holes from God knows where! Even the limes have gone stale, So that’s limes added to the list... Care to tell me the time, Dennis?” Clara asks.

Dennis leans over and arches himself across his stool to look at the grandfather clock while maintaining his balance.

“Quarter to 3.” He replies.

“Already?” Clara confirms once more.

“Yeah.” Dennis replies bluntly.

Dennis gets up from his stool and climbs up the stairs and into his room. Before he enters, he brushes past his little brother, Alvins, room, which has multiple childish crayon drawings of strange imaginary looking creatures drawn on them. He chuckles and pushes into his dark room, dimly lit up from the light of a window in its distant corner. Dennis always enjoyed darkness. He found its ambience peaceful, yet somber. He moves towards his bedside cabinet and pulls out its drawer; Inside which he picks up and wears an antique silver wristwatch and equips an embellished flintlock pistol. He faces up, shuts the drawer and stares directly into a mirror. His green eyes latch onto his face as they move across his clean, shiny skin and rosy cheeks into his messy stubble. As his gaze fell down his neck, it revealed several scars and bruises that lined themselves along his collarbones. Dennis pinches the buttons of his shirt together and closes them, hiding his scars. He readjusts his fur cap and coat.

His eyes then shift to a sheathed sword behind him. He turns around and slides it into his belt, concealing it under his coat, shortly after which he scavenges his pockets for his lighter and cigarette box. A fashionable metal lighter along with a paper box of cigarettes titled 'Romanof 1753'. Dennis walks towards the only window in his room and cracks it open. The cold outside wind wisps as it exchanges the heat from within his home. A fire clinks alive, lighting up the end of the cigarette stick. He watches the busy streets outside his home patiently.

Time passes. Dennis finished eating his rabbit stew, traveled to the headquarters, and is now standing outside two large polished wooden doors alongside his unit at the back. Several soldiers carried out their duties in the surrounding corridors. Large arching red stone frames stood strong between the gigantic structural column pillars. A broad courtyard covered in layers of

thick snow sat on the other side. Several soldiers were busy training, often shirtless in the chilly atmosphere outside.

A knock on the door signaled Dennis and his troop to enter. With stern discipline, he and his unit took their desired positions inside the briefing room. Several luxurious chairs surround a long oval table flooded with files and maps.

“Take a seat sergeant.” A stoic and bold voice speaks.

Dennis sits himself down near the far end of the table, closest to the exit. His eyes stare at all the unfamiliar faces in the room until they finally fix upon the general.

“Let us begin, with no further delay.” The general continues to address the briefing.

Alongside Dennis, there are several other sergeants seated in the hall with him, each with their units standing behind them with full attention. Their brown, gray, and blue uniforms suggested the general summoned the sergeants from all across the country to the capital city of Candlehearth for this briefing. This meant that something big was brewing.

“Gentlemen, I have grim and troubling news to report. The very face of this world might change as we know it... A new enemy has emerged. Unlike humans, this entity’s origin is unknown and is yet to be studied. Its nature is not human and is nothing like you have ever seen before.” The general removes his hat to reveal his balding hairline. He gets off his seat and stares with troubled eyes into the pictures that sit on the table in front of him.

“Many have already perished while trying to fight this entity, we named Noctus Alivs, also known as the Belly Of The Night. This infection-like monstrous entity has already taken the lives of several of our soldiers. Therefore, I have summoned only the very best of our forces to deal with this threat. To send you into the face of danger, unprepared, is criminal, but you must do this to protect the country.” He looks up and continues.

“This is what you will go up against.” He slides several sets of pictures across the table to be passed around the sergeants. Their faces twist, tense and turn as they shuffled through the images.

“General, how are we to kill this thing?” A sergeant from amongst the crowd asked.

“FIRE, So far it’s been the most effective option at hurting and withdrawing the entities attacks for some time, but it quickly extinguishes itself. Besides this, we will equip you with gas masks while attempting to fight it.” The general states while he wears his cap once more.

“What happens if you do not wear th...” another sergeant asks.

“You die... This entity infects hosts through the means of spores and grows inside the victims, killing them painfully and abruptly once it has found a suitable nesting spot for it to spread.”

The general interrupts the sergeant with an irritated tone.

Dennis raises his hand.

“Yes?” the general asks.

“Where did the entity first attack and where should we deploy?” Dennis asks.

“Straight to the point, eh... Our intelligence states that the entity first emerged in the neighboring town of Salence and has spread to Midmarch since its arrival. Yo...”

A bloodied soldier suddenly interrupts the briefing as he rams his way through the doors. Some soldiers hold him back to prevent his entry. His stance is weak and restless.

“What is the meaning of this ruckus?! Explain yourself!...” The general demanded.

“Sir! The Noctus Alivs has suddenly sprouted itself in multiple places across Candlehearth. The largest tentacle spike is midst the marketplace!” The soldier interrupts hastily before collapsing onto his comrades.

Flustered and confused, the general quickly decides and urgently gives the command to deploy the sergeants. After hearing the news, Dennis freezes. His veins run cold as a terrible thought spreads across his mind. His brow tenses as he clenches his fists under the table. He quickly gets up and leaps towards the door.

“Let him go... And throw him a mask.” The general commanded.

With his heart in his mouth, Dennis races across the courtyard with keys jangling in his fists and a gasmask in the other. His heavy footing leaves deep imprints in the snow. Chaos surrounds him as soldiers running all over the place ravage the once peaceful training grounds. Sirens roared across a city now drizzled in smoke as soft snow fell. Dennis launches himself into a black jeep and quickly wears his gas mask. He twists the car keys as it roars to life, leaving behind a cloud of smoke. As he cuts through the city streets, his radio crackles.

“Sir, what are your orders? Where should we assemble? Over.” His unit radios.

Dennis is hellbent on reaching back home. He doesn't respond to the radio and turns it off. As his vehicle zips through the crazed streets, the city had snowballed into a state of fear and despair. Men, women and even children are running away from the location of the entity. Some look to be bleeding and some even lay collapsed across the street. A fire ran loose in one street, blocking Dennis's entry, forcing him to detour and take another route.

Upon turning onto 23rd Heart Street, he saw it in the far distance. Abomination like bloody sets of gigantic tentacle spikes loom on the horizon. Their subtle movement brings a gut twisting feeling to Dennis. He has seen nothing of the like, this only reinforces his fear and motives. The street was mostly empty, but a few stragglers were still fleeing the scene. Corpses littered the other end of the street as tiny yellow pollen grains floated all around him. The snow was littered with yellow, orange, and dark red.

Dennis slammed the brakes and jumped out of his jeep, leaving it unlocked. Fear gripped his already trembling hands as they struggled to hold the keys to his home. Drops of dried blood that carved their way into the snow on the pavement caught his attention before arriving at his door. Something is blocking the door. First a shove followed by a powerful kick, he breaks open the locked pinewood arched door. Upon entering, the zesty wind snuffed out the candle lights, plunging the room into darkness. Light threads of sticky web-like structures littered and stretched across the walls and floor of the decrepit room. A campfire burned weakly at the opposite end of the room, highlighting the specks of dust and pollen floating around the room. The light of the evening sun moved in through the broken windows, casting the room in a warm but dim light.

Dennis scanned the room methodically, inching closer into the kitchen. The creaky wooden flooring talking back at him with each step. Unsheathing his sword, brandishing it in his left while gripping his pistol in his right.

“Maa?” He screamed out in fear, hoping for a response. The daunting silence made him feel hopeless with each passing second. The webbed network of structures deeply latched itself into the walls of the house. Toppled over furniture suggested something vile was afoot. The stairs leading up to the second story lay wrecked. As his eyes reach over the countertop, his expressions turn sour at the sight of a blood-ridden mess strewn across the floor. Festering blob-like fleshy spiral mass grew and spread like a putrid infection all over it. A cane basket washed in blood spew its contents across the floor next to the mass; Fresh Lemons, cauliflower and cheese. A rat was feasting away, unbothered by its surroundings. The fleshy structures united to form thick roots leading into the ground.

Petrified, Dennis falls onto his knees. His breath, shallow, tears swelled from his eyes smudging upon the glass of his gas mask. Revolting at the sight, he lashes out at the fleshy structure in senseless despair. Tearing the fleshy mass open, followed by a stab that pierced cleanly through it, but none of the attacks seemed to affect the blob of flesh. It's contents flopped over itself covering the blade's entry, as if nothing happened. He slips and falls, stopping just before impact. Desperately ripping away at the mesh of bloody structures, revealing a corpse underneath. His beautiful weary old mother lay lifeless before him. Her wrinkled pale skin withered before him as watches something sinister crawled under her flesh. Her eyes lay sunken, dried, staring back at him. Her chest cavity bore a deep hole, void of flesh, through which the abominable structure grew out of, busting its way through the wall. Covered in blood and traumatized, he picks away from the corpse quickly standing himself up. Taking a few steps back

in disgust. He rushes towards the flight of broken stairs vaulting himself up onto the second floor. Checking on his brother, but he too was gone; consumed by the fleshy spikes that tore into his bedroom from below. “Alvin, not you too...” he breaks into tears again watching his brother's scribbles and drawings scattered all across the room. Numb and broken, Dennis slowly tries to accept his unbelievable loss. This feeling of despair quickly turns into anger as his fists clenched tightly, gritting his teeth against one another. Vowing to destroy the Noctus Alivs, he picks up his brother's drawings littered around him and tucks them into his left vest pocket. All so he had something to help him remember his family.

His ears suddenly catch the ear piercing sound of an engine motor roaring to life. Dennis runs down the flight of stairs and out onto the street to find his vehicle being hijacked by a group of men trying to flee; but before he could catch up to them, they already hit the gas and were well out of his reach. Enraged, Dennis fires a loose shot towards the car which ricochets off its hood. “F**K!” Dennis screams.

Dennis crashes on the stairs in front of his home, feeling devastated and furious. He unbuckles the radio from his belt.

“Pick me up from 23rd Heart Lane. Over.”

“Aye sir! En route... permission to ask a question. Over.”

Dennis slowly presses the button on his radio while staring at the towering flesh spikes in the distance.

“Granted. Over.”

“Sir, this entity has plunged the entire city into chaos. Where have you been? Is your family safe? Over.”

Dennis looks up at the skies and screams in pain. He controls his senses and replies to his unit.

“I’ll explain on the way. Over and out.” He peers into the distance as smoke and screams envelop the city.

-end of chapter I

Characters

A - Dennis Malov (Son)

B - Clara Malov (Mother)

C - Noctus Alivs a.k.a Belly Of The Night (Infection Like Monstrous Entity)

Logline

This is a story about a sergeant, Dennis Malov, who desires to destroy an infection-like monstrous entity, the Noctus Alivs, after it kills his loved ones and takes away everything from him.

CHAPTER II (w.i.p)