

# The Secret Journal of Doctor Demagol

[This story is set in 3964 and 3963 B.B.Y., beginning weeks before the surprise attack by the Mandalorians on the Republic. It encompasses the events of Volumes 1 through 9 of Dark Horse's *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic* series; a serious Spoiler Warning is thus in order!]

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**Audio system activated. Playback beginning.**

**Entry #6005: I am recognized.** Today was agreeable. Mand'alor called a gathering of his other advisers and spoke about my contributions to the clans. He announced he had awarded me the Flashpoint Stellar Research Station, recently captured, as a forward base for my studies.

The facility should suit my needs, but that hardly matters. No, the important thing is that, two decades after my greatest setback, I still retain the confidence of our leader. And why not? *There is only one Demagol.* And I, in my time, will achieve more for the Mando'ade than any who ever took up armor.

Certainly more than Cassus Fett, who stood by Mand'alor the whole time. I have never been able to read expressions -- so-called "body language" -- the way that other Zeltrons say they can. It is one reason I like being among the Mandalorians: helmeted faces do not speak. But I suspect even I would have found Fett's true face revealing today. Oh, he spoke again and again, nattering into Mand'alor's ear. Flashpoint would be another New Generation Project, he said -- another waste of time. "Better to defeat the Jedi by force of arms," he said, rather than using our wits to pry their secrets from them.

Thankfully, Mand'alor has never changed on this score. Jedi power humiliated Mandalore the Indomitable during the Sith War. If that power can be understood, can be negated -- can even be harvested for the clans, my microscope will prove mightier than a thousand Dreadnaughts.

Fett sees the Mandalorians as a blunt weapon. I will craft them into a scalpel.

**Entry #6019: Flashpoint attained.** Others say they find Flashpoint a wretched place, but I find it suits me. A world in a death-embrace with its sun, tumbling so quickly that night and day rocket by. Only the magnetic shields permit safe habitation of the surface. It was people of science who first settled here -- and now, under my command, this station will do research again. Only the power of the Jedi dwarfs any secrets the Republic scientists might have found. It is the *true* power of the stars.

When I arrived, I was prodded to speak a few words to the warriors serving here as sentries. I really had nothing to say. They knew of me, of course; all Mandalorians know of *demar'agol*, the "flesh-carver." But they had little idea why I was brought here -- as if they could understand my work anyway!

I know I will never understand them. I had a low birth, among low people. I have been a slave. But by advancing my knowledge, I advanced myself, wherever I was. First, as a slave -- and, after I was freed, as a Mandalorian recruit. Even as a medical student in the Republic, after the war. When I found a frontier, I charged it. Stagnation is death.

Perhaps I should have told them that.

Ah, well. Someone must guard the outpost.

**Entry #6025: The first arrivals.** Mand'alor has kept his word. A transport has arrived bearing Jedi prisoners. The war has not even begun in earnest, and yet I have my first subjects. I will continue as before, categorizing differences in Jedi versus base members of their species.

These are meager pickings to begin with. A Rodian and another human. Why must they always be humans? How I long to find a Trandoshan Jedi, to compare my past control groups. Vivisection experiments become so much easier when limbs can be regrown. Who says there are no second chances?

I was less pleased to see who brought them here: Pulsipher. According to his message, Mand'alor sent Pulsipher here to be my "aide" -- but I can hardly imagine anyone less suitable. We agree on only one thing: "The Force" is pseudo-scientific claptrap -- a tale spun by the Jedi to keep the people in awe. A secret well of power, from which only the selected few may draw? How offensive.

But Pulsipher rejects my conclusions that "Force powers" are inborn genetic traits -- natural mutations, that any being can be modified to have. What does *he* think gives Jedi their powers? Why, *magic*, of course! Mystic talismans and trinkets, that's what he believes!

I realize that Mand'alor is trying to cover all his options -- but really. Perhaps he could send me a Wookiee witch doctor on the next transport.

**Entry #6062: *The crusaders.*** Two Republic vessels under Mandalorian control arrived from Suurja this morning, bearing large numbers of Jedi Knights, young and old. Capital!

Unlike the earlier pair, these were no unfortunates who wandered too close to the lines. No, they call themselves crusaders. Evidently an unauthorized probing force, sent to spy and rally the locals fighting against us. Well, they are in the hands of *our* crusaders now. They truly had no idea what numbers we had. Mand'alor hid our buildup on Onderon and Dxun well.

I recognized one of the warriors who brought them in. Not one of Fett's so-called Neo-Crusaders, but a fighter in the classic mold: "Rohlan the Runner," they call him. Just a shock trooper, really, but evidently a skilled one -- for they keep putting him back into action despite a tendency to dart off and nose into business that does not concern him. I even heard once he was asking questions about *me* -- though he said nothing in my presence today, and went about his business.

Strange. I would never give someone like that a second chance. But then Cassus is a soft-headed fool. Who knows what goes on in his mind?

No matter. It is a good day. The last time I had this many subjects was the Project on Osadia, years ago. I have *my* second chance -- provided these new arrivals live longer than my first two Jedi specimens did!

**Entry #6066: *Squint.*** I retract what I said about human Jedi. What a marvel this "Squint" is!

Irradiation. Electroshock. Even stress tests on the rack. All have been done, and yet his Jedi powers block out the pain. What a skill to be born with. If only my project had ended more happily -- what a force we could have been!

I've spared him the most invasive procedures. It seems a shame to kill him; he ranks more highly on the Wyrick Index than any of the others. And yet he endures all, wearing a look of sheer hate even I can recognize. I doubt cyborgs can clench their jaws as hard.

He was born hating Mandalorians, I can tell. Spawn of some world the Republic cared little for, now trying to *force* them to care. He welcomes war with us; he will start one, if he must. I cannot break him. He could leave today with little more than an elongated spine.

Which is why this must end in vivisection. I should not want to meet this one in a darkened alley.

**Entry #6087: *The Onslaught has begun.*** Mand'alor's "shadow war" is done, they say; the full-scale invasion of the Republic has been launched. Fine. More specimens for the taking.

But I worry the Republic will collapse before I can produce results. I have learned a great deal about Jedi physiology from the subjects here, supplementing what I learned on Osadia. We didn't have living adult Jedi to study on the New Generation Project -- just preserved genetic samples. But, thus far, knowing what a Jedi looks like on a molecular level has told me little about what *makes* one a Jedi. I am half-prepared to believe this "Force" is an actual external phenomenon.

Pulsipher is telling Mand'alor of my failings, I am sure. Often I have seen him skulking about, scribbling notes to send off. That is, when he is not in the lockdown ogling the Jedi's lightsabers. He acts as if some ancient spirit will rise from them to transform him into a Mandalorian Knight. Sheer fantasy.

I have seen his proposal to send an expedition to Taris to search for some fool artifact once we take the planet. If I did not fear endorsing his wild views before Mand'alor, I would happily add my blessings. Pulsipher, go dig a hole!

**Entry #6093: *An interesting delivery.*** Curious thing: An Arkanian Offshoot woman has arrived, brought from Vanquo by the invasion force. Evidently, she is a Jedi.

I saw Offshoots all the time on Arkania, after the university was closed to species such as mine -- and of course, Offshoots were both researchers and *research subjects* on Osadia. But I have seen none since the Project collapsed years ago, and my files on Offshoots were lost. I will run the full battery of tests on her when I am finished with Squint. There is much data to replace.

I hope she is a hardy specimen.

**Entry #6107: *Emergency!*** This is Demagol, speaking into his personal recorder in the lab on Flashpoint. The Jedi subjects have taken control of the station!

I was ambushed -- struck from behind by Rohlan, the same runner I saw weeks ago. He must be in league with the Jedi now. I awoke in the storage area, stripped of armor. Our transmitter has been disabled -- and while the knights in the ready room are hardly in fighting condition, all the sentries appear to be gone. I can see the Jedi on the security monitor; it could be moments before they come for me.

I am downloading all my research files to the datachip hidden on my thumbnail. I will go down fighting, if I must; I am no stranger to combat. But I cannot fathom losing a *second* research station to a surprise attack, just like Osadia...

Osadia...

Hold.

That woman on the monitor. The Offshoot. I saw her again earlier today. I was busy, being hurried along by the traitor. But I remember. Her facial markings were strange, but she shared certain characteristics with the group of Offshoot research subjects on Osadia. She would have been a child back then. Could she have survived until now? She looks the right age.

Curse me! I have grown old and indolent. Comfortable in my surroundings -- when I should have brought her back for testing immediately!

But all may not be lost. I will *not* go down fighting -- but I will win nonetheless. There is an alternative.

Time is short. I must prepare.

**Entry #6108: [untitled]** This is Demagol speaking. This is a test recording.

Someone is moving again outside. Stand by.

**Entry #6109: In hiding.** It was a desperate ploy -- but it seems to have worked.

Squint and his crusaders thought they would bring the great Demagol before the Republic's inquisitors. Instead, they have carted away a metal shell holding the drugged body of the traitor, Rohlan, while I rest comfortably in his armor -- or as comfortably as is possible.

I am confined in a smuggling compartment aboard the junk-hauler that the runner arrived in. The Offshoot woman is aboard ship, as is the human Jedi male who accompanied the traitor. There may be others -- I cannot tell. The sound just now was a labor droid moving the container I am in.

It is not ideal, but then, the gambit was quickly worked. It does appear that Rohlan was in league with the boy Jedi, but only for the purpose of rescuing the Offshoot woman. (She, herself, does not seem to be a Jedi after all. Curious.) The boy tried to send me away with Squint, but I stowed away here instead.

I found that I had the ability to deactivate this helmet's external sound system and speak into its recorder, so I could continue my observations. None outside should hear me speak. I was also able to upload messages from my previous journal into the helmet's system.

I am not sure what to do. I would escape at the first opportunity, if not for the Offshoot woman. They call her "Jarael," a name I have never heard before. The chances seem remote that she is connected to my students from the Project, years ago -- but if she is, I must not be apart from her.

But neither can I reveal my presence and go to her. They may know this Rohlan well, and I am not sure I can manage a masquerade until I know more. I suppose I could simply kill her companions, although I wonder if that would make it difficult to earn her trust. People can be very particular about what happens to their associates, I have found.

There is time. I will meditate.

**Entry #6124: Somewhere.** We have reached a port. Everyone has debarked but the droid -- it must be defunct, for it never moves. I seldom have the chance to leave this compartment for more than a few moments to look around. But the tinkering dotard who rarely leaves the cargo hold is gone tonight.

His presence concerns me. He is an Offshoot. If he is related to the woman, she cannot be anyone from the Project.

Worse, we now seem to be in the Republic. It is all noise and commotion outside. A change from the sound of my own voice, but not a good one. Mandalorians are likely unwelcome in the Republic, and I hesitate to shed armor and "blend in" not knowing where I am.

At least this compartment is fully stocked with provisions. I suspect I am living better than anyone else aboard this flying monstrosity.

**Entry #6130: Another planet.** The boy -- they call him Zayne -- seems to be no Jedi, after all, but some kind of reject. He is moving around junk at the bidding of a Snivvian. I have always wondered what happens to Jedi who fail to reach knighthood. It appears they are made to become orderlies for smugglers. A strange practice.

Does something inside separate a failed Jedi from a successful one? An apt question. He will be interesting to dissect, should the opportunity arise.

**Entry #6144: An important day.** The Offshoot woman knows I am here. I spoke with her.

I had seen she was parting company with the boy and the Snivvian; they were left behind, much to my relief. Only she, the old man, and the useless droid remain aboard. Useless enough -- it failed to protect her from an assassin droid, evidently dispatched here to claim the old man. I emerged from hiding just in time to save her. She does seem to be a talented warrior -- I could be right about her after all!

I would like to reveal my true identity to her, but first I must know more about her background. What she has been doing all these years? If she really is from my Project, she should know who I am -- but she might not be favorably disposed toward me. Certainly Osadia was left in a shambles. If she has grown up resenting me, she may not share what she knows about other survivors, if they exist. Oh, I can certainly extract whatever answers I need easily enough -- but I would rather she told me willingly. The information is likely to be more accurate.

So I was pleased to discover that the modulator in the helmet does a fair job of disguising my voice. The woman's knowledge of the runner Rohlan seems to be minimal, though I fear to remove my faceplate before her or the old man.

He is ailing, but it is unclear to me what he suffers from. I have not practiced much as a healer since my first tenure with the Mandalorians. He does not appear related to the woman, which is a relief.

Perhaps he will die soon. I might speed that along, if it comes to it.

**Entry #6168: I am a colossal fool!** We have returned to Arkania, where I studied, so long ago. The woman was insistent upon finding some remedy for the old man's condition. And, blast me, I encouraged it, not realizing that, in trying to win her trust, I would set her on a course I could not follow. Now, she has gone to the surface to find her answers, leaving me to mind the old man.

I know what I was thinking. She will not tell me of her past -- and so I need genetic tests to see if she came from my project, years ago. The Arkanians can do them. But I cannot let the Arkanians know what *she* is, either, or I will lose her, so I must run the tests myself. But I cannot set foot in armor on a Republic world, any more than I can show my face to her. I am trapped in my own devices. What madness I have created!

I know she will return -- she says she would never abandon the old man. But she has been gone long.

The old man sounds as though he is regaining consciousness. If he does not know more about her past, I may simply be done with him now...

**Entry #6174: Calamity compounds calamity.** This journey grows ever more difficult. Somehow, the old man has earned the attention of the Adascas, lords of Arkania -- and the Offshoot woman and I have been sucked into it. I sit imprisoned aboard their colossal research ship.

I cannot afford to let them see my face, either. I studied in their universities, long ago. My research interests are known to them. Finding me in Mandalorian armor now would raise too many questions, before I am ready to provide "Jarael" any answers.

Someone approaches. I do not know how long I can keep this up.

**Entry #6181: Stranger and stranger.** The lord of this vessel has freed me and given me access to one of his laboratories -- in exchange for my sending a secret invitation to Mand'alor.

I was tempted to refuse. Adasca is of the same racist family that drummed me into the streets, years ago. I have never understood discrimination against other species; in fact, it is the comparative differences that make beings so interesting to study. Pity the poor researcher who works only with a homogenous population. My laboratory welcomes all. Before my blade, all are equal!

But sending the message is exactly what I wanted to do. Speaking in code, I informed Mand'alor that I yet lived, in the guise of the runner. He was pleased to hear it -- far more so, no doubt, than Fett! I also said I had a great discovery at hand. Mand'alor will surely come.

In the meantime, Adasca has actually *given* me the chance I had no prospect of earlier: lab access. Here, working alone, I can determine once and for all whether the Offshoot woman is, indeed, from the New Generation Project. It will take time -- I have only the strand of hair I found on her pillow while she was away. But I remember most of the genetic markers to look for. How could I forget?

**Entry #6208: Too close for comfort.** Mand'alor has arrived -- but so, too, has Squint. Seeing him again, fit and able, was most uncomfortable. But he appeared not to recognize me. It is strange: the more I try not to be Demagol, the more these supposedly perceptive Jedi believe me. Odd.

They have all come running to bargain with Adasca over some discovery the old Offshoot discovered. (It *is* interesting, but ultimately a sideshow next to what I may have found.) Now they kiss the Arkanian's boot and grovel. Jedi and Mandalorian -- not so much different, after all!

While I was pleased to see Mand'alor, I increasingly lose patience with the Mandalorians. Evidently Cassus has worked the story of the runner Rohlan's demise into some kind of propaganda folk tale. No songs are sung of Demagol in Fett's cadres, I assume!

They arrived so quickly I was unable to finish my analysis. Both sides want me at this charade as interlocutor, but I cannot wait to return to the lab. If the Offshoot woman is not one of my past test subjects, I can take this opportunity to return with Mand'alor.

But if she *is*...

**Entry #6213: My Edessa!** She is more than just one of my students. She is the *first* among them! *Edessa!*

Adasca suspected. His researcher, with his superior testing tools, discovered it far faster than I. I sealed his silence with blood. This knowledge is only for me. I must learn what I can from her.

She exists; the others must!

But first, I must get her off this ship. She cannot remain, and she must not leave with the Jedi. And she would never willingly go with Mand'alor. The only option is the boy Zayne, inept as he is. Such strange fortune brings him to me!

And then, the experiment, long paused, can continue. First her, and then the others. She must be trained in the use of her "Force skills."

And she will need a weapon.

**Entry #6235: A reversal.** The good fortune that brought me Edessa may well net out to zero. Zayne has insisted on bringing us all into Mandalorian space aboard a comical-looking gunship crewed by creatures whose brains could not be found with a thorough autopsy. At least the Trandoshan seems to know how to cook.

Worse, Squint has come along. Squint -- it does not appear to be his real name -- is a much stronger Jedi than Zayne. I have actually managed to use him to my ends as a sparring partner for Edessa, that I might see her abilities in full. She is a remarkable warrior in her own right, just as I would have expected. Continued exposure to Squint and Zayne could well bring her potential Jedi skills into flower.

But there is a new concern on that score. While Zayne is on some mission to find his Snivvian overlord, Squint has made romantic advances toward Edessa. I do not know current Jedi thinking about relationships, but Squint seems to make his own rules, in all things.

Edessa seems torn. Zayne is a child, but she seems to have some loyalty to him. Good. No distractions. These things are usually mistakes, anyway. I took a wife, once; Sibyl was a Zeltron researcher on the Project, and it seemed like the thing to do. More madness. Seeing true Zeltron theatricality made me long for the half-machine Iskalloni who raised me.

It is a wonder anyone is ever born.

**Entry #6272. In transit, again.** We are on another silly mercy mission. Edessa loves them, so -- and I want her trust. But it is frustrating. So much time has been lost. I still have no idea what became of her in the years we were apart.

I am having no luck finding her a weapon. The fool Ithorians aboard this ship have every weapon in the galaxy in their junk piles, but no lightsabers. There must be rules for their distribution, or something.

I have learned more about Zayne Carrick and his experiences with the Jedi. If true, it is most interesting. For such a revered body, the Jedi order may be as fraught with intrigue as the Mandalorians are.

It is right that this time, my discovery is my own. I will decide who will profit from Edessa and her kind later. The science is what is important.

**Entry #6305: Progress.** I have a lightsaber. The Ithorians stole a nice-looking specimen from the Jedi storehouse, and I have taken it from them.

The Jedi are truly a superstitious lot. The weapon is sealed in a special resin and labeled as some kind of evil artifact, dangerous to those using the Force. The Jedi do not seem to understand their own powers.

They sound like Pulsipher -- whom Zayne improbably met while away on Jebble. The fate of my would-be "aide" was pleasing to hear. It would have been interesting to see -- from a scientific perspective, of course.

**Entry #6358: Ruination avoided.** These close calls are wearing on me. It was bad enough that Edessa insisted we accompany Zayne to the heart of the Republic, on a crazed attempt to clear his name. But this last encounter with the Republic Navy was nearly my end. If it had not been for the lunatic architecture of the Ithorians' ship and what was going on outside, I would have been exposed. Fortunately, there were so many places to hide that the first face I saw was the one I *wanted* to see -- Edessa's, after the danger was past.

We will be leaving Coruscant again, soon, on another vessel. The droid will carry me to it in yet another shipping container, so as not to alarm the authorities. It is well that Edessa has accepted my reasons for not revealing my face. Until she trusts me enough to tell me everything that happened to her in the intervening years, I cannot take the risk.

But she has decided of her own volition to journey onwards with me. I dare to hope.

**Entry #6378: Success, delayed.** There is nothing like seeing an experiment come to fruition. Today, on Metellos 3, I saw it -- if nearly twenty years late. Edessa has the abilities I predicted. I saw with my own eyes.

Now, I need Zayne to teach her everything he knows, however little that may be. Squint -- he now calls himself Malak, I am told -- would have been a better teacher, but I fear his presence. He would steal Edessa from me. And if he knew I was Demagol, his so-called "tormentor"? He would take more, still.

I am impatient for Zayne to begin her education. In the meantime, I must continue to work at freeing this lightsaber for use. The Jedi who encased it meant business.

**Entry #6429: Disaster, again.** I am not moved to emotion as other beings are -- and certainly not as other Zeltrons are. Sibyl, my departed wife, could erupt into fury or tears at a hair falling on the floor. I live life in a middle groove. But I admit, returning this evening from Gantra Lea with the chemicals needed to free the lightsaber from its prison, I was in what may be called high spirits. Perhaps that is why, when I saw Malak in the camp, trying to steal Edessa away from me, I erupted. It would have thrilled Sibyl -- the emotional display she always wanted to see from me.

What followed was nearly a calamity. Malak unleashed his fury, unrestrained. It is fortunate that Zayne happened by as he did. So far, nearly to be found out!

The Snivvian says he can find me more of the chemicals I spilled, although he asks for something called a "mark-up." He is a strange little person.

**Entry #6447: Patience has paid off.** Edessa has told me what became of her and her other friends from Osadia. It is an amazing story. Surprising, too: in some ways, our childhoods were similar. Of course, we have come to much different ends.

The boy has a plan to find her fellow students. The odds against success seem overwhelming, but Zayne has a strange relationship with fate.

Even if he fails, I at least know where to look.

**Entry #6469: They live. They all live.** My failure, long ago, is erased. Zayne has found it out. Many of the Project's youthful test subjects live, just like Edessa -- and now, fully grown, they will be as important to me as she has become. Together, we will reshape the galaxy -- and ready it for even greater discoveries.

And fortune begets fortune. Edessa has decided to leave the others, remaining only with me. It was even at her suggestion, though I seem to be having an easier time convincing people of things lately. It is strange, but since freeing the lightsaber from the resin, it seems my persuasive abilities have improved.

It is probably nothing.

Not long now.

**Entry #6477: The last step.** This is final entry I will record in this accursed armor. Edessa and I have left Wor Tandell for Osadia. For good or ill, I will reveal myself as the head of the Project as soon as we are in hyperspace. We will go together, and we will find her fellow Project members.

I will not tell her of my intervening years, living as Demagol, carver of flesh. It will upset the experiment.

I wonder if she will be glad to see me.

**Final entry:** This is Rohlan Dyre, rightful owner of this helmet.

I don't know what to do with this file. Listening to it just now, I was tempted to melt the whole suit of armor down. If my ancestors had known that Mandalorians in my day could be so full of deceit, they'd have killed their neighbors before they could breed.

I first saw Demagol when I was a young warrior -- and I knew then he was no fit with the Mando'ade. I was glad I was able to catch up with him, and claim what was mine. I only wish I'd dealt with him sooner. A lot of misery would have been spared. He was wrong about Jedi artifacts -- and he was wrong about Jedi.

And was he ever wrong about Mandalorians.

Demagol begins with one correct point -- a fight with a Jedi isn't a fair fight. Special powers are a crutch that a real warrior doesn't want or need; and stars help us when someone gets those powers that shouldn't. Like that Malak. I can tell he's going to be a piece of work. But then Demagol thinks our warriors should take the crutch for themselves. That's dead wrong.

I know what real Mandalorians think. Sure, we didn't like to see the clans being beaten by Jedi -- but *we* weren't humiliated, and we're not jealous. We're just annoyed at the people who lost. They bring a bigger gun? You fight harder. They bring the Force? *You fight harder!*

If Mandalore the Indomitable had wanted to defeat Ulic Qel-Droma -- *he should have been more indomitable!*

That's enough. Tomorrow, I take Carrick and his friend on a short trip, to begin to undo some of the damage that monster did. After that, it's back to business. There's still a war out there -- and I've still got questions.

I'm tired of lying around.

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*Writer of the upcoming Knight Errant comic book series and novel for Del Rey, John Jackson Miller ([www.farawaypress.com](http://www.farawaypress.com)) recently concluded the fifty-issue Knights of the Old Republic comics series for Dark Horse, the inspiration for the story above. Available in nine reprint volumes, the series tells of massive deceptions and Mandalorian experiments gone wrong. Miller maintains a blog at [StarWars.com](http://StarWars.com).*