

GM Notes: The Murder

How did **Dr Roth** die? Here's the inside story.

Vill Shall is an Auroran roboticist who wants **Dr Roth**'s research into a specific Atomic Age robot design, RB-34 ("Herbie", the star of Asimov's "Liar!") **Shall** plans to steal the research tape from **Roth**'s study after the conference dinner. They distract the ever-present serving robots outside the study by asking them to move a large and bulky positronic imager from their aircar to their room - a time-consuming but trivial task. They then sneak in, steal the research, and sneak out.

Teri Kaivo is a Settler who hates robots and does not want to see them on Echo. They plan to disrupt the talks by murdering **Roth**. Because you can't sneak a blaster into the conference venue, and physical attack would just be stopped by robots, they decide to use poison, a rare mycotoxin which should be nigh-undetectable to casual analysis. Conveniently, they arrive at **Dr Roth**'s study after **Shall** has left and while the robots are still away. They sneak in, plant the poison in the bottle of Auroran brandy on the bar, and sneak out.

Dr Roth arrives a short time later, in the company of **R. Som Tano** and **R. Karo Vendi**. **Vendi** pours them a drink, they take a sip, and proceed to choke to death right in front of them. Before they die, **Dr Roth** gasps out a last command to **Tano** to impersonate them and make their plan succeed. **Vendi** has the servant robots store the body and tidy up the study, while **Tano** goes off to the lab for cosmetic modification.

After hearing the commotion, **Kaivo** foolishly tries to have the evidence removed. They ask a serving robot to bring them the bottle from **Dr Roth**'s study. Unfortunately, the robot is Erbet, the RB-34 prototype which can read people's minds. It sees what **Kaivo** thinks they have done and goes into catatonic meltdown at the horror of a human being killed.

Around the time of the death, **Kaj Millaw** is attempting to have a secret meeting with **Anan Kora**. They are interrupted by **Gal Anders**.

Vendi, under stress due to their master's death, decides to investigate it.

CLUES

- *Opportunity:* Kaivo and Shall saw each other near the study, though neither thinks the other saw them.
- *Opportunity:* **Aal Lee** saw **Vill Shall** leave the conference dinner early.
- *Opportunity:* **Liv Ronik** saw **Teri Kaivo** leave the conference dinner early.

- *Opportunity:* **Niral Aris** saw **Gal Anders** hurrying out of the dinner in an agitated state.
- *Motive:* Every robot (and several humans) knows **Kaivo** hates robots (they can tell)
- *Motive:* **Dr Roth**'s household, **Aal Lee**, and **R. App Elby** know that **Shall** denounced the Roth Plan.
- *Motive:* **Tano / "Dr Roth"** has noticed that their research is missing. Currently the tape is hidden somewhere in **Shall**'s quarters.
- *Means:* The poisoned bottle is still in the study
- *Means:* The poison vial is in the recycling, with **Kaivo**'s DNA on it.

In playtests, the investigators reach a firm decision on what has happened after using the positronic imager on Erbert.

LOOSE ENDS

- Why is **Vendi** so stupid and not immediately suspecting poison? (because "why this happened" was less of a priority than "stop it from happening")