

The Orphans: Investigation
S01E01
"The Apology"

by

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INT. HART'S OFFICE ROOM

RICHARD takes a swig from a mug, he lets out a grunt at the poor taste of the mug's contents. He pulls out his recorder and begins to take notes.

RICHARD HART

Uh... notes on Case number 023, Mrs Phillips philandering case. After tracking the commuter ship that Mr Phillips boarded on route to the Ico system on the far side Collective space, he disembarked on a fuelling station, which has a popular reputation for illegal, but overlooked transports into Wild Space. From there I followed Mr. Phillips' new transport all the way to the Jarris system in wild space, there he-

A communication begins to ring through his console. He moves to answer it.

RICHARD HART (CONT'D)

Mrs. Phillips, I was just making my notes for your case.

MRS. PHILLIPS

Well, tell me. What happened?

RICHARD HART

It's as I thought Mrs. Phillips, your husband boarded an illegal transport to the Jarris system where I photographed him entering several of the well known brothels in the area.

MRS. PHILLIPS

Oh...

RICHARD HART

I'm sorry Mrs. Phillips, obviously this is not the news that you wanted to receive.

MRS. PHILLIPS

(Starting to cry)

But why the Jarris system?! Why go all the way out of Collective space to do that?

RICHARD HART

Some of the brothels that your husband entered are known for featuring clone workers.

MRS. PHILLIPS

What?!

RICHARD HART

They're rare, but they exist Mrs. Phillips. I'm sorry.

MRS. PHILLIPS

(to herself, under her breath)

Disgusting.

RICHARD HART

I've forwarded you previews of the images that I took of the various incursions. Once I receive the payment in full, I will send you the complete set. Everything to move your legal action along.

MRS. PHILLIPS

Excuse me?!

RICHARD HART

What was unclear?

MRS. PHILLIPS

You copies are taking my husband from me and you expect me to pay you to tell me! Ha! I've never heard anything more ridiculous.

RICHARD HART

May I remind you that you hired my services to bring you this information.

MRS. PHILLIPS

You're all disgusting little abominations. We should just put you all out of your misery.

RICHARD HART

(dropping any front he had)

Irene, let me tell you what is about to happen. You will pay my bill in full now, and I will send you these images. Is that understood?

MRS. PHILLIPS

You must be insane.

RICHARD HART

Do I need to remind you who I am, Mrs. Phillips? What I've done?

MRS. PHILLIPS

I know who you are, I did my research. I have a friend who works for the Copy records! She told me all about you! Richard Hart. Traitor.

RICHARD HART

Mm. Yes. Now from all the information that you have, do you think that I would hesitate to fly halfway across the galaxy to your posh little system to collect my debt?

MRS. PHILLIPS

Don't be preposterous.

RICHARD HART

On the way I could inform your husband of your own little case of philandering.

MRS. PHILLIPS

Are you quite mad?

He goes through his notes.

RICHARD HART

Yes, I have it right here. His name is Jason Phillips? Your husband's brother if I'm not mistaken?

MRS. PHILLIPS

You- you wouldn't dare.

RICHARD HART

Try me.

There is a pause in the conversation, Mrs. Phillips clearly uneasy.

RICHARD HART (CONT'D)

All of your friends would know what Mr. Phillips likes to do with clones, and what you like to do with your spouse's siblings.

MRS. PHILLIPS

Alright! Fine!

Buttons can be heard being pressed on the other side of the line.

MRS. PHILLIPS (CONT'D)

There, you have your credits.

Richard presses some buttons.

RICHARD HART
Add another twenty thousand. That's
to keep these photos to myself.

MRS. PHILLIPS
Fine, fine!

A beep from the console as more money is transferred.

RICHARD HART
It's been a pleasure doing business
with you Mrs. Phillips.

Richard closes the link.

RICHARD HART (CONT'D)
Bloody natural-borns.

EXT. MARKET

Richard walks up to a market stall.

RICHARD HART
Sandy!

SANDY
Hi Rich. Doin' alright?

RICHARD HART
Yes, thank you. What have you got
for me?

SANDY
Oh! I did get sommut from them
shippers this mornin'! Saved it for
you!

Sandy moves away to go get something. Two people approach the
stand.

FREIGHTER 1
Oi, look at that.

FREIGHTER 2
What?

FREIGHTER 1
It's a copy!

FREIGHTER 2
I thought they weren't allowed out
here.

FREIGHTER 1
Only the wild ones.

RICHARD HART
You know I can hear you both?

FREIGHTER 1
What about it?!

RICHARD HART
I suggest you both clear out,
before things go sour for you both.

FREIGHTER 1
Excuse me?

RICHARD HART
I see. You're stupid as well as
ugly, allow me to put it in terms
you can understand. Fuck. Off.

Sandy comes rushing in from the back of her Stall.

SANDY
Oi! You two, bugger off! He's
welcome here, you ain't.

FREIGHTER 2
You can't tell us what to do.

SANDY
Now you listen here. This is my
stall, and I can do with it
whatever the bloody hell I want.
Now you two can clear out, or I can
call the head of the militia out
here.

FREIGHTER 1
Let's go. Not even worth it.

The two freighters walk away.

SANDY
Pay 'em no attention, love.

RICHARD HART
Thanks Sandy.

SANDY
's no problem love. Now look at
this. Marigan pears! You said you
was from the northern region. This
is the best the north 'as got!

RICHARD HART
Oh! Look at those! I haven't seen
them this ripe since I left.

SANDY
 Surprised you seen 'em at all.
 They're stoppin' growin' 'em soon.

RICHARD HART
 Why?

SANDY
 They're opening some new science
 thing right ontopa the last crops.

RICHARD HART
 Typical.

SANDY
 So eat 'em up while you can.

RICHARD HART
 I will. How much do I owe you for
 these?

SANDY
 They're free, love.

RICHARD HART
 No! No way. I'm paying you.

SANDY
 Please, it really is a gift.

RICHARD HART
 Well then... so is...

Richard pushes buttons on a hand held console he pulls out of
 his pocket.

RICHARD HART (CONT'D)
 So is this...

SANDY
 No, love.

A ping from the console.

RICHARD HART
 You've already got it. Might as
 well keep it.

A beep comes up on Sandy's console.

SANDY
 Oh, it's too much! Take it back!

RICHARD HART
 I can't! Send it to Maria if you
 don't want it.

SANDY

You're too much, you know?

RICHARD HART

I know. How is Maria?

SANDY

Good, Thank you. She's movin' in with her boyfriend in the next coupl'a months. Right up in the core systems.

RICHARD HART

Good, then she'll need the money. What does she do?

SANDY

She's workin' for one of the ministers I think.

RICHARD HART

Doing well for herself then.

SANDY

I think so.

RICHARD HART

Good. Take care of yourself, Sandy.

SANDY

Thank you, you as well. You're too good, you know?

RICHARD HART

No, I'm not. You're the good one.

SANDY

Goodbye, love.

Richard walks away.

EXT. ALLEYWAY

Richard is walking along. Two freighters approach.

FREIGHTER 1

Look who it is.

FREIGHTER 2

You're a Richard, aren't you?

RICHARD HART

I am, yes. You have a problem?

FREIGHTER 1

It's just that I thought copies weren't allowed out here.

RICHARD HART
It's wild space, take some context
clues you ape.

FREIGHTER 2
He's right, no rules out here.

FREIGHTER 1
Shut up.

RICHARD HART
If you'll excuse me.

Freighter 1 pushes Richard.

FREIGHTER 1
Nah, I don't think so. Collective
have got a reward for stray copies
out here, don't they?

FREIGHTER 2
They do... Richards are worth
something like... 5000 credits.

FREIGHTER 1
I could use 5000 credits.

Richard moves quickly, drawing a gun.

RICHARD HART
Both of you back off.

FREIGHTER 1
Can't stop both of us with that,
mate.

RICHARD HART
You're right. But I'm a pretty good
shot. Now you're thinking, 50%
chance it's my brains that get
splattered all over the dirt. Would
you roll those dice? Because I
wouldn't.

FREIGHTER 1
What?

FREIGHTER 2
Man... I don't think I wanna-

FREIGHTER 1
Shut up, I-

Richard lunges toward Freighter 1 and hits them with the
barrel of his gun, knocking them to the ground. Richard then
turns and fires a shot.

FREIGHTER 2

Ah!

Freighter 2 falls to the ground, shot.

FREIGHTER 2 (CONT'D)

No! No! I don't wanna die! Don't shoot!

RICHARD HART

I'm not going to, so long as you don't follow me.

FREIGHTER 2

Alright! Alright!

RICHARD HART

Your friend is gonna need a medic. Better go get someone to patch 'em up. Too bad there aren't any Kathryn's out here, huh? The best you'll get is a local with a tool kit. Huh... funny that.

Richard walks away.

INT. HART'S OFFICE ROOM

Richard is on his console there is a broadcast playing on the screen, eating one of the pears.

NEWSCASTER

(over broadcast)

Earlier today, Minister Orsham addressed the public with plans to expand scientific research in the Northern Region. Here is the Minister now.

The broadcast can be heard shifting, Minister Orsham's voice is reverberating around the space it was recorded in.

MINISTER ORSHAM

It is a great day for scientific progress in the Collective. Thanks to the Chairman's approval of five new science outposts based in the Northern Region, we will be able to bring new breakthroughs in agriculture and biodiversity.

RICHARD HART

So you're the reason my pears are going. Thank you, oh glorious Chairman.

The broadcast comes back from the Minister's speech.

NEWSCASTER

In other news Alliance agents have
been spotted making-

Richard shuts off the broadcast, slumping back into his
chair.

A beep as a computerised voice comes up.

ON BOARD COMPUTER

You have one new message.

RICHARD HART

Who's the sender?

ON BOARD COMPUTER

The sender is unknown.

RICHARD HART

Open it.

ON BOARD COMPUTER

Confirmed

A beep. The message opens and the computer shuts down
violently.

RICHARD HART

What the-... computer? Computer?
Ugh.

The computer slowly turns on again, but glitching.

ON BOARD COMPUTER

(spinning down)

Communication initiated.

Delilah's voice rings through Richard's speakers.

DELILAH

Richard Hart, correct?

RICHARD HART

Who's asking?

DELILAH

A friend.

RICHARD HART

My friends don't tend to shut down
my systems to get in touch.

DELILAH

I have a job for you.

RICHARD HART

And what might that be?

DELILAH

I need you to locate a person for me.

RICHARD HART

Hang on, I recognise you... You're the natural born that helped start The Alliance. You and that Nora Evers.

DELILAH

Yes. My name is Delilah Mallick.

RICHARD HART

Well then you can stuff it. I don't work for The Alliance.

DELILAH

I am no longer a part of the Alliance, I haven't been for many years. You would be working only for me.

RICHARD HART

I'm not interested.

DELILAH

I could make it worth your while.

RICHARD HART

Look, I can recommend any number of good investigators who could do whatever you need.

DELILAH

If I wanted to hire them, I would be contacting them. I need you. Your history makes you the perfect candidate for this role.

RICHARD HART

And how do you know my history.

DELILAH

I have connections, Richard.

RICHARD HART

I've told you. I'm not interested, thank you.

DELILAH

Twenty five Million Units.

RICHARD HART

What?

DELILAH

Twenty five million units is what you would receive upon completion.

RICHARD HART

Are you serious?

DELILAH

Completely.

RICHARD HART

Thirty five.

DELILAH

Pardon me?

RICHARD HART

I won't consider it for less than thirty five.

DELILAH

Fine. Thirty Five Million.

RICHARD HART

And who am I finding?

DELILAH

You need to find Nora Evers. She's gone missing and I need her back.

RICHARD HART

And where was she last seen?

DELILAH

I'm forwarding you a document containing all the details of her disappearance.

A beep on the console. Richard moves and presses a couple buttons. He reads the document to himself.

RICHARD HART

This isn't much to go on here. I'm going to need access to someone who knows her.

DELILAH

That won't be possible.

RICHARD HART

If I don't have access to someone then I can't find her. It's as simple as that.

DELILAH

I see... in that case... there may be someone. But I can't guarantee anything.

RICHARD HART
Good enough for me.

FADE TO:

INT. LARGE AUDITORIUM

The auditorium is full of people, they are listening to CHARLES. He is speaking over a microphone to the large room.

CHARLES
It is my distinct pleasure to celebrate the seventh anniversary of the formation of The Alliance. Formed out of a small induction facility near the core, we were, as you all know, formed out of a need to see clones treated fairly in our society. Today we celebrate not only seven years of resistance, but also seven years of unity, of prosperity, and most importantly of victory!

Charles pauses for applause.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Thank you. Thank you all. From the major strains, the Baz's and the Kathryn's to the minor strains such as myself, The Charles. Moreover, I would like to thank my fellow founding member, Diana Strange who I would like to take the opportunity to invite up here now.

The crowd applauds again as Diana walks up to the podium.

DIANA STRANGE
Thank you Charles. I would like to remember the founding members who are sadly no longer with us. Nora Evers, Delilah Mallick and the late Baz Anders. We must always remember our goal, to create an equal and fair society for all of us, not just those born naturally.

More applause from the audience, cheering.

FADE TO:

INT. CHARLES' OFFICE

A door opens and both Diana and Charles enter the room.

DIANA STRANGE

You did well.

CHARLES

Thank you, as did you. But, why mention Evers and Mallick?

DIANA STRANGE

They made all this, they deserve more credit than we do. It was their idea.

CHARLES

Yes, but then they abandoned it.

DIANA STRANGE

Doesn't mean they aren't responsible for it.

CHARLES

You always surprise me.

DIANA STRANGE

What do you mean?

CHARLES

Of the two of us, I didn't think you'd be the one to mention them.

DIANA STRANGE

What are you talking about?

CHARLES

You didn't exactly get on with them.

DIANA STRANGE

Well, I just think we owe it to Anders to keep... at least the idea of them alive.

CHARLES

That was surprisingly eloquent.

DIANA STRANGE

I'm not just my good looks.

CHARLES

You know the council will be annoyed, surely.

Charles moves to sit down.

DIANA STRANGE

Then let them tell me themselves.

CHARLES

You know it's me who's going to have to deal with this.

DIANA STRANGE

That's why I do it.

CHARLES

Thank you for that.

There is a pause in the conversation as they both pause to reflect.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Do you remember when they first proposed The Alliance to us?

DIANA STRANGE

I do.

CHARLES

They said we could really change things.

DIANA STRANGE

And we are.

CHARLES

Yes.

DIANA STRANGE

What?

CHARLES

Nothing, I just wish we could change things faster.

DIANA STRANGE

I know.

Diana picks up an award on his desk.

CHARLES

Oh please don't.

DIANA STRANGE

For Considerable Courage and Valuer presented to Specialist General Charles Eros.

CHARLES

Why?

DIANA STRANGE

Seems like you're doing a lot.

CHARLES

It's just hollow commemoration,
nothing more. The council love that
sort of thing. A lot of smoke and
mirrors. It's time for real action.

DIANA STRANGE

Look at yourself objectively for
just one second. You are doing
everything you can, you will do
more in time. We just need to keep
going.

CHARLES

I know.

DIANA STRANGE

Now shut up and get on with it, I
have a meeting.

Diana moves to the door and opens it.

CHARLES

Charming as always Diana.

DIANA STRANGE

I'm not the charming one here.

Diana walks out.

INT. SITUATION ROOM

An automatic door opens and Diana walks in.

DIANA STRANGE

So! People, what have we got?

XAVIER BLAKE

Increased activity focused on the
boarder between Alliance and
Collective space.

DIANA STRANGE

Where?

VALERIE STEELE

The Northern Region.

DIANA STRANGE

Any ideas why?

DIANA BLONDE

Possible invasion?

DIANA STRANGE

It's Diana Blonde, yes?

DIANA BLONDE

Yes Commander.

DIANA STRANGE

Nice theory, and welcome to the team, but I don't think so. There's no advantage to taking the Northern Region. What's the chatter saying?

VALERIE STEELE

Nothing significant, communications haven't been able to tap into the closed circuit communication between the ships.

DIANA STRANGE

That's nothing new.

XAVIER BLAKE

I disagree, normally we can pick up something, this is nothing.

DIANA STRANGE

Didn't we have reports of new communications technology coming into effect?

VALERIE STEELE

That wasn't due for another two cycles, at least.

DIANA BLONDE

Could be a prototype test?

VALERIE STEELE

It's possible.

XAVIER BLAKE

But across a fleet?

DIANA STRANGE

It's possible. Keep an eye on the situation, if they bring in anymore big guns, send reinforcements to the border patrols.

XAVIER BLAKE

Yes, commander.

DIANA STRANGE

Anything else?

DIANA BLONDE

Increased chatter among our contacts in wild space.

DIANA STRANGE

What about?

DIANA BLONDE
About Nora Evers.

DIANA STRANGE
What about her?

DIANA BLONDE
Nothing definitive, some sources
claim she's recruiting, others
saying that she's only been
spotted.

DIANA STRANGE
Nothing concrete, then?

DIANA BLONDE
No, Commander.

DIANA STRANGE
Keep liaising with your contacts in
intelligence, but my gut tells me
it's another false alarm.

DIANA BLONDE
Of course.

DIANA STRANGE
Also, can you please book in a
meeting with Intelligence I want to
liaise closer on the attack plan
for the southern push.

XAVIER BLAKE
I'll book that in for next week.

DIANA STRANGE
Good. Is that all?

XAVIER BLAKE
It is.

DIANA STRANGE
Good then-

A beep from a console.

VALERIE STEELE
You've just received a personal
message, General. Marked urgent.

DIANA STRANGE
From whom?

VALERIE STEELE
Unknown.

DIANA STRANGE
I'll take it in the ready room.
You're all dismissed.

Diana makes her way over to the ready room.

INT. THE READY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and closes as Diana enters.

DIANA STRANGE
Open message.

A confirmation. An error comes from the computer as it violently shuts down and then quickly boots back up.

DELILAH
(over communication)
Diana.

DIANA STRANGE
No. No way.

DELILAH
Diana, please.

DIANA STRANGE
Give me one good reason I don't
alert security and track this
communication.

DELILAH
Because as soon as it's terminated,
it will be wiped from your system
with no record. You'll find
nothing.

DIANA STRANGE
Oh really?

DELILAH
Yes, now will you stop acting like
a child and listen to me, this is
important.

DIANA STRANGE
Oh, is it?

DELILAH
Yes. It's about Evers.

DIANA STRANGE
She's on our chatter, we know
you're up to something.

DELILAH
You've seen her?!

DIANA STRANGE
No official sightings. But if you
two surface then we'll find you.
You know the agreement.

DELILAH
(disappointed)
So, you haven't found her.

DIANA STRANGE
What are you talking about? Why do
you sound like that?

DELILAH
She's missing, Diana.

DIANA STRANGE
(laughs)
What do you mean she's missing?

DELILAH
I can't find her.

DIANA STRANGE
That's nothing new, she always used
to go off for weeks.

DELILAH
No, this is different. It's been
too long, and I can always find
her, always.

DIANA STRANGE
How long's it been?

DELILAH
Three months.

DIANA STRANGE
...what?

DELILAH
No one's seen her for three months.
There's no record I can find of
her, no signals, nothing.

DIANA STRANGE
Why are you telling me this?

DELILAH
Because I need your help...

FADE TO:

INT. CHARLES' OFFICE - LATER

There is an alert signalling a visitor.

CHARLES

Come in.

Xavier Blake comes into the room.

XAVIER BLAKE

Good day sir.

CHARLES

Ah, it's Vice-Admiral Blake, yes?

XAVIER BLAKE

That's right.

CHARLES

You're on Diana's team.

XAVIER BLAKE

That is correct.

CHARLES

And what is it that I can help you with?

XAVIER BLAKE

It's actually about Specialist General Strange, sir.

CHARLES

Oh?

XAVIER BLAKE

We can't find her.

CHARLES

I'm sorry, what?

XAVIER BLAKE

She's not responding to any communications, and she's apparently left the base. Ops have her signing out a shuttle yesterday.

CHARLES

Is there any record of her being called away on other business?

XAVIER BLAKE

None sir.

CHARLES

Do you have someone following her?

XAVIER BLAKE

No... we thought it...

CHARLES

Vide-Admiral, let me remind you that when Diana Strange is not here, you are in command of Tactics.

XAVIER BLAKE

I thought it best to wait for your order before authorizing the tailing of a founding member. Such actions could be seen as mutinous.

CHARLES

Well, you have my approval. Send someone immediately. Find out where she's gone.

XAVIER BLAKE

Of course, sir.

Xavier goes to leave.

CHARLES

And Blake?

XAVIER BLAKE

Yes sir?

CHARLES

Thank you for bringing this to me. I assume no other parties are aware of this issue?

XAVIER BLAKE

I came to you first.

CHARLES

Good. It would be in her best interest if this was kept quiet. Is that clear?

XAVIER BLAKE

Crystal.

CHARLES

Fabulous. Proceed.

FADE TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE ROOM

There is a knock at the door. Richard gets up to get it. He opens the door.

RICHARD HART

Who are you?

DIANA STRANGE
My name is Diana Strange, now can
you tell me why I trekked halfway
across the galaxy?

RICHARD HART
Excuse me?

DIANA STRANGE
Why am I here?

RICHARD HART
Why should I know?

DIANA STRANGE
I was sent here.

RICHARD HART
And who sent you?

DIANA STRANGE
(suspicious)
I... I can't say...

RICHARD HART
Did it happen to be Delilah
Mallick?

DIANA STRANGE
I don't know.

RICHARD HART
Would you relax. I'm the
investigator she hired to find Nora
Evers.

DIANA STRANGE
Don't say that so loud!

RICHARD HART
Excuse me?

DIANA STRANGE
There's always someone listening.

RICHARD HART
Come inside.

DIANA STRANGE
How can I trust you?

RICHARD HART
You can come in or not. Just shut
the door whichever way you go.

Richard walks away into the room.

DIANA STRANGE

I-...

Diana sighs and walks in, shutting the door behind her.

DIANA STRANGE (CONT'D)

(calling after him)

Who are you?

RICHARD HART

(calling back)

Richard Hart, private investigator.

DIANA STRANGE

Why am I here?

RICHARD HART

If I'm right, Delilah sent you because you know Nora Evers.

DIANA STRANGE

Well... no... I mean... I did.

RICHARD HART

When was the last time you saw her?

DIANA STRANGE

About four years ago.

RICHARD HART

Right. If you don't mind, I have some questions. Please, have a seat.

Diana moves to sit down.

DIANA STRANGE

Where have you looked for her?

RICHARD HART

If you let me get through some questions first, I will do my best to answer yours.

DIANA STRANGE

Alright. Fine.

Richard sits down in turn.

RICHARD HART

I want to play you a recording of Nora Evers. It's the last known record of her. I would like to get your reaction to it.

DIANA STRANGE

Okay.

Richard taps some buttons on his console and the recording begins to play.

NORA EVERS

(recording)

Hi. If you're watching this it means that I've gone. There's something I need to do, someone I need to find. We have been working so hard for so long to make the world how we want it to be, to make things better. I know you won't believe me, but this is the only way. I may not make it back from this, and if I don't, I need you to do something for me. Tell Diana I'm sorry. I love you. Goodbye.

DIANA STRANGE

Wh-... When was this?

RICHARD HART

Right before she left, three months ago. This Diana is...?

DIANA STRANGE

Me. She called me Diana, she called other Dianas by their call signs. I was always Diana. Is this why I'm here?

RICHARD HART

I can only assume that's why Delilah asked you here. So, tell me Diana. Why was she sorry?

DIANA STRANGE

I- I don't know.

END OF INVESTIGATION EPISODE 1