



# James Clelland

## WORK IN PROGRESS

### The Force

Johannesburg's traffic had already begun to clog the roads and highways, assisted by the usual problems of potholes, broken robots and bad driving. The first traffic alert was being broadcast at six twenty am on Radio 911, Johannesburg's early morning news station.

"We are receiving reports that there is a huge snarl up on the N1 north, all the way from Gillooly's Interchange to the junction with the M1. All the way, folks! Sorry about that. But nothing is moving apparently because of some incident, an accident perhaps, we'll let you know when we get confirmation. So, avoid the N1 heading north if you can. If it's clogged at... six twenty am, well, it can only get worse. And..." There was a hesitation. "Now we've learned that the southbound lane is also clogged from Gillooly's north, probably rubber-neckers trying to see what's going on across the road. Get a life, you freaks! You're causing chaos, man. The rest of you, take alternative routes, if you can. Right, now for the dead robot report. There are robots out on..."

He stopped suddenly before starting to speak slowly. "We have reports that there is a dead body, have I got that right? Yes, a dead body is lying beside the N1 northbound. And here we have Miranda Minaar, our e-news reporter, filing a report.

"Miranda, can you hear me?"

"Yes, Cliff," Miranda's voice is distant and tinny. "I can hear you and can confirm that there is indeed a body crouching by the roadside with..."

"Crouching?" Cliff interrupted. "What's going on, Miranda?"

"Cliff, the body of a middle-aged man, with his hands tied behind his back, is lying crouched across the stump of a tree. He has been shot execution-style, by what looks like a single bullet to the back of his head."