

Camera Obscura

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/40077999) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/40077999>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Evolution SMP , 3rd Life Last Life SMP Series , Hermitcraft SMP
Character:	Martyn InTheLittleWood , Grian
Additional Tags:	Watchers , Alternate Universe - The Magnus Archives Fusion , Paranoia , Scopophobia , Eyes , Transcript Format
Language:	English
Series:	Part 22 of From the Archives
Collections:	Hermitcraft x TMA fics
Stats:	Published: 2022-07-04 Completed: 2022-11-08 Words: 1,739 Chapters: 2/2

Camera Obscura

by [Sixteenthdays](#)

Summary

[GRIAN]

Statement of- Martyn Littlewood? ...Regarding... something that was watching him.
Original interview transcribed June 2nd, 2016- oh, what?

He never told *me* about this.

Well. Statement begins.

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

Statement:



[Click]

[GRIAN]

Statement of- Martyn Littlewood? ...Regarding... something that was watching him. Original interview transcribed June 2nd, 2016- oh, what?

He never told *me* about this.

Well. Statement begins.

[GRIAN (STATEMENT)]

I feel silly even being here. Honestly, I do. Because when I start telling you what happened, I know it's going to sound like I just had a nervous breakdown because of my job. Which- maybe I did. I don't know. But there's a reason I'm here telling you this, and not talking to a therapist. *Something* happened.

Something was *watching* me.

I'm a... I *had* a Youtube channel. Made videos with a little group of mates. About video games mostly, sometimes other stuff. We didn't make much money off of it, but it was a fun side project while I was in school and I was planning on going into it full time once I graduated. I'd started taking a film and editing course because of it- I'm still in it, actually. I still do *really* enjoy making videos, is the thing, and I'm not half bad at it. It's just...

It started a few months ago. I'd just started getting a consistent audience, which was super exciting, but also a bit intimidating, just because... well, it's so many more eyes on you, isn't it? My viewers were mostly lovely people, so it wasn't a problem that came up often, but. It started seeming like every time I would set up to record, the camera looked a little more... ominous. Judgmental, I guess. Even when it wasn't on. Like it was watching me.

It sounds silly when I say it like that, or at most like I was just- having some unaddressed anxieties. And I can't say for sure that that's *not* what was happening, at least not at first. But I started hating the sight of that camera more and more. It felt like the lens was... following me around whenever I was in sight of it. I started avoiding my recording room whenever I didn't have to go in it. I just couldn't stand the sight of that thing, staring at me.

But I wasn't just going to *stop* making videos. The fact that the camera was all of a sudden putting my nerves off didn't change the fact that it was one of my favorite things to do, and I had friends who were counting on me and viewers who were waiting for me. And I didn't *want* to quit. Not at all!

And then one day I was setting up to film, and the camera *blinked* at me.

I was looking right at it. I *know* I didn't imagine it. For a moment it just wasn't a lens at all. It was a horrible black eye, with a pupil and an iris, staring out at me, blinking grey plastic eyelids. Only for a moment, and then it was a normal camera again- or at least it *looked* like one- but I couldn't shake the feeling that it was still staring at me.

I didn't record that afternoon. What I did was get a screwdriver and open up the front of the camera just to see... you know, I don't even know what I was looking for. Eyes? Blood vessels? Anything out of the ordinary, I guess? There wasn't anything, though. It was just a camera. Same camera I'd been using for all my projects and assignments for years.

It was a few days before I could stomach the thought of sitting down in front of it again.

When I did, though, I'd only just started filming when something *else* went wrong. My footage wasn't saving- which was incredibly weird, because like I said, I hadn't recorded anything in days. It should've been fine. I pulled out the SD card- the memory card- and plugged it into the computer to see if I'd just forgotten to wipe some old files off or something, and-

It was full. More than full- there was more video saved to the card than it should have ever been able to hold. It had sixty-four gigabytes of storage, which is a lot, but we're talking hours and hours

and *days* of footage. Footage of me. Of every time I'd entered that room in the last... I don't know, week? Longer than that?

It had been watching me. I don't know how, but it had been watching me even when it wasn't *turned on*.

It made me feel something horrible, just looking at all the video thumbnails. My immediate instinct was to just smash the card, or wipe it twenty times over, but at the time my best guess was that somebody had gotten into my camera and was messing with me somehow, and if that was true obviously I was going to want to keep it as evidence in case things got any more serious. So instead I buried it in the bottom of a drawer, and started keeping the camera in its bag with the batteries taken out whenever I wasn't using it.

I'd hoped that would be the end of it, but it wasn't. It kept *staring* at me. And I started getting... the sense... that there was something behind the lens of the camera every time I turned it on. Something... not like a person. Not at all. Not someone messing with me like I'd first assumed, or some weird stalker. It was a *thing*. With... *far* too many eyes. And it was following me. I know it was following me.

I never *saw* it, exactly. I don't think it wanted me to see it. It was a thing for seeing, not for being seen, if that makes any sense at all. But I got a sense of it. Sometimes I could almost sort of glimpse it, like a reflection in a window I was passing or a shadow in the corner of my eye. It was... tall and thin, as best as I could tell. Could never make out any more detail than that. And it was watching me. Always watching me. Sometimes I would go days without seeing any sign of it, but I knew it was still there, somewhere.

Watching me.

That went on for... weeks. Maybe a month. It never got any closer. I didn't ever really even have the sense that it was going to hurt me. It didn't need to. It didn't- it didn't want anything else from me. But it was always just *there, watching*, and it made it harder and harder for me to concentrate on anything else. My nerves were shredded, and it was starting to have an impact on my studies, too.

It was... it needed to stop. I *needed* it to stop, or I was just going to fall apart.

So. One evening I pulled out the bag with my video camera in, the one that wouldn't stop *staring* at me, and brought it outside. I'd barely taken it out in weeks, except for when I had to, because it made me feel sick and paranoid to even look at. When I took it out of the bag the lens was staring at me, of course.

I stared back at it, at that horrible ugly black eye. It blinked.

And then I dropped it on the concrete and stomped on it until it was nothing but bits of plastic and glass.

It was... I was terrified of doing it. I think that's why it took me so long, why I just... let it *watch* me for so long, why I kept using it despite what was going on. It was a *nice* camera, an expensive one, and I needed it for my job, for my studies, for everything. But it wasn't worth it. I needed that thing *gone*.

So far as I can tell, it worked. I never saw the thing again. And from then on, cameras were just cameras again. I don't know if it was because of what I did, if I really did manage to drive it off somehow, or if it just... got bored. Got what it wanted from me, whatever that was. Had its

attention caught by someone or something else.

I don't make my own videos anymore. I tried, for awhile, to just keep doing what I'd been doing without being on screen, but even when I wasn't in front of the camera I couldn't shake off the unease. Eventually it was easier to just give it up and focus on other areas. I still do film, though. It's just that these days I spend all my time behind the camera, instead of in front of it.

[Click]

[Click]

[GRIAN]

Well, *there's* a name I wasn't expecting to find in here.

Er- for the benefit of the tape, Martyn is another old friend of mine. We knew one another in university- had a group of friends that hung around together a lot, even though we were mostly all studying different things. Which means I can actually verify at least some of this myself. He didn't give a date in the statement, but the events match up to be around late February 2016, when he suddenly switched his focus of study and stopped posting videos.

At the time I didn't think that much of it- it was surprising, since he'd been so passionate about it, but... I had my own... experiences not long after, and- got pretty distracted, and fell out of touch with a lot of that group.

I haven't talked to many of them recently, except Pearl, obviously... wonder how they're all doing.

[Click]

Supplemental:

[Click]

[GRIAN]

I know it's just the reminder of Martyn that's getting to me, but I miss Big B.

Oh- he was another of my friends from uni, by the way. Great guy. Probably my favorite out of our group? Well, except for Pearl, of course, but she's different. Me and Pearl knew each other online *way* before I met the rest of them, back when we were kids with internet access and she *still* lived in Australia, and we still know each other now, so aside from Pearl who doesn't count, Big B was my favorite, I think.

...Maybe that's mean to Timmy. Well, that's okay, it's acceptable to be mean to Timmy. Encouraged, in fact.

(Long pause.)

I *miss* him. Ugh. If only...

I'm gonna go stalk him on social media.

[Click]

End Notes

another one i have been wanting to do for quite a long time. this concept is also the genesis of 'why ren has a podcast in this au'- my cowriter and i were discussing who would be the old friend who would lie to the cops for grian if necessary, and we decided it would probably be martyn. and if martyn is the georgie of this au then obviously ren is the melanie because they're minecraft youtube married or whatever. and then i misremembered which of them has a podcast and which has a youtube channel. so ren got the podcast and martyn got the youtube channel.

i feel like i keep accidentally writing statements that are actually also a tangible commentary on some real societal issue. sorry about that it just happens on its own.

uhh comment! if u liked this one. next up is gonna be about... a Guy. a Guy many of you like, who has not yet made an appearance in this series despite being somewhat conspicuously missing. it's not etho though. gotta wait a little bit longer for him.

"bigb was grian's college crush" - cowriter zeph, galaxy-braining in voice call

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!