

## Experimental Methods

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/42160020) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/42160020>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings</a>
Category:	<a href="#">Gen</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Hermitcraft SMP</a>
Character:	<a href="#">Grian</a> , <a href="#">ZedaphPlays</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Alternate Universe - The Magnus Archives Fusion</a> , <a href="#">Altered Mental States</a> , <a href="#">Interface Screw</a> , <a href="#">Transcript Format</a>
Language:	English
Series:	Part 37 of <a href="#">From the Archives</a>
Collections:	<a href="#">Hermitcraft x TMA fics</a>
Stats:	Published: 2022-10-05 Completed: 2022-11-08 Words: 2,942 Chapters: 3/3

## Experimental Methods

by [Sixteenthdays](#)

### Summary

[GRIAN]

You must be... Zedaph, right?

[?ZEDAPH?]

Well, y I must! It is such a pleasure to finally mæet you!

### Notes

same deal as with [elephant's foot](#)! this fic contains a lot of intentionally garbled text for effect, and in the interest of accessibility there will be a second chapter containing a plaintext version.

additionally, i would recommend reading- uh, a lot of the other fics before this one, its a pretty plot-centric one, but especially [elephant's foot](#), [research questions](#), and [concerns from the academic record of mr. tango tek](#).

this statement also... nods at some late-game spoilers from the magnus archives, i suppose? but it doesn't give anything away outright, i don't thiiiink.

## Statement:

### Chapter Notes

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

[Click]

[?????]

(Somewhat distant) Hellooooooo;? *Impulse?*

[GRIAN]

What on *earth*-

(*Footsteps*)

(*Door opening*)

[?????]

Ah; I s~~nd~~dosə you must be ɪqə Archivist!

(*Pause*)

[GRIAN]

You must be... Zedaph, right?

[?ZEDAPH?]

Well, ɪ I must! It is such a ~~pleas~~ure to finally mæt you!

[GRIAN]

Um, how can I- *hey!* Let go of-

(*Fabric pushing against feathers*)

[ZEDAPH?]

Oh my ~~goodness~~, this is ~~EVASCINVA—INB~~ work! ;lɪnɪ 'ɹɪsɪɹɪv ~~Where did?~~

[GRIAN]

*Stop!*

(*Static growing louder*) Let go of me- I can't even tell what you're *saying*, just- step back, and *speak clearly!*

(*Pause*)

[ZEDAPH]

Oh!

Well, that is an absolutely *wonderful* little trick you've got there! *Thank you* for that- can't imagine it'll *last*, of course, but- oh, it *has* been a while! Two and two is four; let's talk, then, while we can!

(*Brief pause*) Sorry, where is this again?

[GRIAN]

The... VOID Insti-

**[ZEDAPH]**

VOID Institute! Right! I was looking for Impulse!

This is a wonderful turn of events, though. Not that I don't adore Impulse's company, of course, but I've been hoping to meet you for quite some time now. You have no *idea* how difficult it is to find research material on this particular aspect of the dread fearscape!

**[GRIAN]**

Of the... what?

**[ZEDAPH]**

The... oh, I can't explain it very well. Not now, at least. You should ask Tango about that.

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

Tango *Tek*?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Yes! Oh, do you know each other? He's a good friend of mine! I've been helping him out with his work for some time now. Really interesting stuff! Nothing *I* can really go into right now, I'm really trying very *very* hard to not think about things that'll make me spiral off again, but if you get a chance to talk to him about it you should!

**[GRIAN]**

Well, I've been *trying* to track him down for *weeks* now, but I haven't been able to find any working contact information for him- he's practically a ghost.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Really? You can't just know?

**[GRIAN]**

What?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Oh, don't mind me! This is observational study.

*(Footsteps)*

What exactly do you do in here, anyways?

**[GRIAN]**

Well, *first of all*, normally *I'm* the one who asks the questions in here.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Well, I wouldn't want to interrupt your workflow! How does a little quid pro quo sound?

**[GRIAN]**

...You'll answer my questions if I answer yours?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Precisely!

**[GRIAN]**

Alright, then.

*(Audio crackles)* Tell me about yourself.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Certainly! Though I'll warn you, some of my personal information has gone a bit, aha, scattershot. Hmm... my name was/is Zedaph, I am-or-was a doctor of mathematics studying mostly applied physics. I'm τυμπλ...? *(Clears throat)* Sorry. Thirty, last time I checked!

**[GRIAN]**

And *how* long ago was that?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Haven't the faintest!

**[GRIAN]**

*(Grumbles)*

**[ZEDAPH]**

I suppose it's my turn now? Would you walk me through a typical day in here?

**[GRIAN]**

Well, most of what I've been doing since I got promoted is going through the old statements and processing them for audio recording, which just means reading them aloud and then doing any follow-up that comes up. Or, really, having my assistants do it. Sometimes people come in with new experiences to share, and when that happens, I interview them on tape... That's about it.

**[ZEDAPH]**

*(Pen scratching)*

How do those interviews normally go?

**[GRIAN]**

I mean... fine? People are usually... quite forthcoming with me. With *Mumbo* is another matter, but- nothing to be done about it now. Is that my pen?

**[ZEDAPH]**

I'll give it back. How do you mean, *Mumbo* is another matter?

**[GRIAN]**

*(Irritated noise)* *Mumbo* is one of my assistants. There was just one time I was... out, and he took an interview and just bungled it all up. I don't even know how! It's not like it's hard, you just need to sit there and listen to them talk.

**[ZEDAPH]**

*Fascinating.* So it's something about *you*, specifically-

**[GRIAN]**

*(Interrupting)* My turn, I think. How did you meet *Tango*?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Oh! The dimensions of one of his projects posed quite a problem for the balance of nature and

gravity, and- long story short, it clipped right into a corner of my lab space. Terribly unideal when it comes to maintaining a sterile testing environment, but I suppose that ship sailed awhile ago.

**[GRIAN]**

*Clipped?*

**[ZEDAPH]**

Extradimensional space is tricky! But he was very excited to meet me, if a bit surprised, which I do understand. It's not every day you place a corner wrong and it tears open into a vacuum of color- oh, for goodness sake. Pardon me.

**[GRIAN]**

Do you know where I could find him?

**[ZEDAPH]**

*Oooh*, I'd love to arrange a meeting, truly, but I am *terrible* at places and times. If I were you, I'd ask Impulse for help with that.

**[GRIAN]**

Impulse? Why?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Oh, he hasn't told you? He was helping me out in my lab one day when Tango stopped by. From what I saw, they got along pretty well! I keep wanting to get them in one place again, but like I said, places and times get so difficult. *Difficult.*

**[GRIAN]**

*(Offended)* What? He didn't tell *me* about that.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Really? Transparency is important in an experimental environment! You should talk more to your assistants! You never know what information they might have for you, ah?

**[GRIAN]**

...Believe it's your turn now.

**[ZEDAPH]**

So it is! Speaking of your assistants, I'm terribly intrigued by- Pearl, is it?

**[GRIAN]**

What about her?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Is she formally employed here?

**[GRIAN]**

Er... you know, I don't actually think so? She just followed me here one day after we happened to run into each other, and unless X ever drew up a contract for her without either of them telling me... no, I suppose she's not?

**[ZEDAPH]**

*Aha.* Well, that explains that. How *did* the two of you first meet?

**[GRIAN]**

We were online friends when we were younger, and then she moved here for college. Fell out of touch for awhile before she started here, but she's one of my best friends.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Interesting! I wonder if that's why...

**[GRIAN]**

Why what?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Well. Judging from what I've heard, she's remarkably sane for her position, you know? Most people who are so consumed would go a little- are you familiar with the ship of Theseus proposition?

**[GRIAN]**

I think I've heard of it?

**[ZEDAPH]**

It's a philosophical experiment! If each plank of wood in a ship is removed and replaced with another, one by one, until every plank has been replaced, is it still the same ship? It has the same name, and more or less the same shape, but it's also made of entirely different stuff. Do you get it?

**[GRIAN]**

You're talking about yourself, I take it.

**[Z?DA?H]**

I, myself, Pearl, you. All of the above! But not Tango, and not Impulse, either. Which is part of the reason I was so terribly curious about Pearl's employment.

**[GRIAN]**

...I don't follow.

**[Z??APH?]**

Me neither! Isn't it wonderful?

*(Pause)*

Hm, apologies, I'm afraid I'm backsliding. Knew this would take a toll on me sooner and/or LATER/I think it's probably time to take my leave.

**[GRIAN]**

Wait! One more question. What you said just now, about the ship.

*(Long pause)*

Does that... bother you?

**[Z?????]**

You know, I could ask you the sa(aaaaaa)me thing!

Oh sorry. I do believe we're out of time; don't worry, I'll be around; I'll send you a link to the next time we meet. I'll see him, promise!

*(Static)*

[Click]

[Click]

**[GRIAN]**

*(Sighs)*

Well, I may as well state for the record, he's gone. Not sure exactly *how* he left, or how he got *in*, for that matter- everything just got very colorful and... twisty, and by the time I blinked it all out of my eyes he was nowhere to be seen. When I asked the front desk, they said nobody had come through. Which tracks with Impulse's statement.

Speaking of Impulse- well. I'll have to talk to him. If he did beat me to meeting Tango Tek... and he didn't *tell* me? *(Pause)* Okay, *maybe* I didn't exactly *tell* everybody I was looking for him, but- still! Still!

*(Pause)*

'This particular aspect of the dread fearscape...'

*(Pause)*

Hm.

[Click]

## Chapter End Notes

this is one i've been quite excited for for a very long time. that was a lot of information, huh? i wonder what'll happen with all of it!

zedaph is one of my favorite characters in this whole au to write. he's such a delight.

## Supplemental:

[Click]

*(Intermittent sounds of files being rifled through)*

**[GRIAN]**

Junk, junk, junk, real but irrelevant- looks like it's about a doppelganger situation? I'll read it later. More junk, someone's house keys, oh, live recorder, hello. I'm looking for information on dread fearscapes. Zedaph said a lot of things, and expanded on none of them, so I have to wonder!

I'm *really* glad I have that interview on tape, I *must* say. I just wish I could have kept him longer! I still have *so* many questions. Dread fearscapes, Tango Tek, *Impulse*, I can't *believe* Impulse!, whatever Zedaph was trying to imply about Pearl and with that metaphor, whatever got Zedaph so interested in *me*-

Oh, huh.

Hold on- Is that... Does that say... Now that's interesting.

*(Footsteps.) (Door opens, then closes.)*

Right. Let's see what's on this tape, shall we?

[Click]

**[XISUMA]**

*(The same tape as statement 0220818, heard through Grian's recording)*

Goodness, what a mess! This is going to take *so* long to fix up again.

*(Pause)*

Oh, don't *start*. It's *my* Institute now, not yours-

[Click]

**[GRIAN]**

X?

[Click]



## legible version

[Click]

[?????]

(Somewhat distant) Hellooooooo[?]? [Impulse?]

**[GRIAN]**

What on *earth*-

*(Footsteps)*

*(Door opening)*

[?????]

Ah[!] I [suppose] you must be [the] Archivist!

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

You must be... Zedaph, right?

**[?ZEDAPH?]**

Well, [if] I must! It is [such a pleasure] to finally [meet] you!

**[GRIAN]**

Um, how can I- *hey!* Let go of-

*(Fabric pushing against feathers)*

**[[ZEDAPH]?]**

Oh my [goodness], this is [fascinating work! Artistry, truly! Where did-?]

**[GRIAN]**

*Stop!*

*(Static growing louder)* Let go of me- I can't even tell what you're *saying*, just- step back, and *speak clearly!*

*(Pause)*

**[ZEDAPH]**

Oh!

Well, that is an absolutely *wonderful* little trick you've got there! *Thank you* for that- can't imagine it'll *last*, of course, but- oh, it *has* been a while! Two and two is four; let's talk, then, while we can!

*(Brief pause)* Sorry, where is this again?

**[GRIAN]**

The... VOID Insti-

**[ZEDAPH]**

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This is a wonderful turn of events, though. Not that I don't adore Impulse's company, of course, but I've been hoping to meet you for quite some time now. You have no *idea* how difficult it is to find research material on this particular aspect of the dread fearscape!

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**[ZEDAPH]**

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*(Footsteps)*

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**[GRIAN]**

Well, *first of all*, normally *I'm* the one who asks the questions in here.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Well, I wouldn't want to interrupt your workflow! How does a little quid pro quo sound?

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...You'll answer my questions if I answer yours?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Precisely!

**[GRIAN]**

Alright, then.

*(Audio crackles)* Tell me about yourself.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Certainly! Though I'll warn you, some of my personal information has gone a bit, aha, scattershot. Hmm... my name was/is Zedaph, I am-or-was a doctor of mathematics studying mostly applied physics. I'm [thirty]...? *(Clears throat)* Sorry. Thirty, last time I checked!

**[GRIAN]**

And *how* long ago was that?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Haven't the faintest!

**[GRIAN]**

*(Grumbles)*

**[ZEDAPH]**

I suppose it's my turn now? Would you walk me through a typical day in here?

**[GRIAN]**

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**[ZEDAPH]**

*Fascinating.* So it's something about *you*, specifically-

**[GRIAN]**

*(Interrupting)* My turn, I think. How did you meet *Tango*?

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Oh, he hasn't told you? He was helping me out in my lab one day when Tango stopped by. From what I saw, they got along pretty well! I keep wanting to get them in one place again, but like I said, places and times get so [difficult. Difficult.] *Difficult*.

**[GRIAN]**

*(Offended)* What? He didn't tell *me* about that.

**[ZEDAPH]**

Really? Transparency is important in an experimental environment! You should talk more to your assistants! You never know what information they might have for you, ah?

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**[ZEDAPH]**

So it is! Speaking of your assistants, I'm terribly intrigued by- Pearl, is it?

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What about her?

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Is she formally employed here?

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*Aha*. Well, that explains that. How *did* the two of you first meet?

**[GRIAN]**

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**[ZEDAPH]**

Interesting! I wonder if that's why...

**[GRIAN]**

Why what?

**[ZEDAPH]**

Well. Judging from what I've heard, she's remarkably sane for her position, you know? Most people who are so [consumed] would go a [little]- are you familiar with the ship of Theseus proposition?

**[GRIAN]**

I think I've heard of it?

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It's a philosophical experiment! If each plank of wood in a ship is removed and replaced with another, one by one, until every plank has been replaced, is it still the same ship? It has the same name, and more or less the same shape, but it's also made of entirely different stuff. Do you get it?

**[GRIAN]**

You're talking about yourself, I take it.

**[Z?DA?H]**

I, myself, Pearl, you. All of the above! But not Tango, and not Impulse, either. Which is part of the reason I was so terribly curious about Pearl's employment.

**[GRIAN]**

...I don't follow.

**[Z??APH?]**

Me neither! Isn't it [wonderful?]

*(Pause)*

Hm, apologies, I'm afraid I'm backsliding. Knew this would take a toll on me sooner and/or [later.] I think it's probably time to take my [leave.]

**[GRIAN]**

Wait! One more question. What you said just now, about the ship.

*(Long pause)*

Does that... bother you?

**[Z?????]**

You know, I could ask you the [same] thing!

[Oh! Sorry. I do believe we're out of time! Don't worry, I'll be around! And I'll send Tango your way next I see him, promise!]

*(Static)*

[Click]

[Click]

**[GRIAN]**

*(Sighs)*

Well, I may as well state for the record, he's gone. Not sure exactly *how* he left, or how he got *in*, for that matter- everything just got very colorful and... twisty, and by the time I blinked it all out of my eyes he was nowhere to be seen. When I asked the front desk, they said nobody had come through. Which tracks with Impulse's statement.

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*(Pause)*

'This particular aspect of the dread fearscape...'

*(Pause)*

Hm.

[Click]

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