

## Phene and Periphas

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/44859211) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/44859211>.

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="#">FalseSymmetry</a> , <a href="#">GoodTimesWithScar</a> , <a href="#">ImpulseSV</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Alternate Universe - The Magnus Archives Fusion</a> , <a href="#">Canon-Typical Violence</a> , <a href="#">Dreams and Nightmares</a>
Language:	English
Series:	Part 47 of <a href="#">From the Archives</a>
Collections:	<a href="#">Hermitcraft x TMA fics</a>
Stats:	Published: 2023-02-07 Completed: 2023-03-28 Words: 1,921 Chapters: 2/2

## Phene and Periphas

by [Sixteenthdays](#)

### Summary

**[FALSE]**

Nope. Not a word out of you, thanks.

**[GRIAN]**

*(Thinly, obviously struggling)* Hi, False.

### Notes

this is another statement that connects to a lot of other ones! i would recommend reading the rest of false's story arc: [The Not Deer](#), [Skittering Things](#), [Golden Eagle](#), [The Red King's Tragedy](#), and [Conflagration](#). The frame narrative also follows directly from the ending of [Nonfiction](#).

And... you miiiight also want to read [The Vital Importance of a Good Night's Sleep](#).

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

## Statement:

[Click]

**[GRIAN]**

Scar! Scar Scar Scar-

**[SCAR]**

Hey Grian! What can I do for you?

**[GRIAN]**

Impulse and I are going to take a trip to check out a lead on Tango Tek. It might take a couple days; we're leaving tomorrow morning. Mumbo is being a scaredy-cat and Pearl is staying here too- are you in or out?

**[SCAR]**

Sure, sounds fun! I'll have to call my neighbor and ask her to feed Jellie. How are we getting there? Train?

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

...Car. Impulse is driving.

**[SCAR]**

Ooh, I haven't been on a road trip in ages. Did I ever tell you about the time my parents took me to Disneyland? Best-

**[GRIAN]**

-best weekend of your life, yes, you have. Head home, get packed. I'll meet you and Impulse back here in the morning.

[Click]

[Click]

*(The rustling and jostling of things being hastily packed)*

**[GRIAN]**

Tape, tape, shirt, yes, socks- ugh, I knew I should've found a proper place to keep my clothes. *Where is my other sweater-*

*(Door opens)*

**[GRIAN]**

Hello? I thought everyone else was gone for the day already.

*(Footsteps)*

**[GRIAN]**

Oh! H-

(Chokes)

[FALSE]

Nope. Not a word out of you, thanks.

[GRIAN]

(Thinly, obviously struggling) Hi, False.

(Sound of a knife being unsheathed)

[FALSE]

Hi, Grian. I said *not a word*.

You look different than the last time I was here. Less human. But it has been awhile, hasn't it?

(Pause)

[FALSE]

Oh, quit it. I know a little thing like this won't kill you. You ought to be grateful. I *could* just cut your throat and be done with it.

[GRIAN]

(Wordless noise)

[FALSE]

Don't worry, I might yet. That will depend on how well you answer my questions. But you get my little story first, I think, if you don't already know it. Fair's fair.

You like stories, yeah? I've got one. And I can feel how much you want to hear it.

So I'll give you the abridged version, then you'll explain yourself, and if I'm not satisfied with your answers I'll cut your head off and see if that solves my problem. Alright?

[GRIAN]

(Weak noise)

[FALSE]

*Wonderful.*

You remember when I was last in here, right? I came to tell you about Gem.

I thought that would be it. I thought telling someone about it would let me put it behind me, and I could go home, or- go somewhere else, because I didn't know where I was going to live. But I thought it would be *over*.

Ren offered me his couch before I could even finish telling him I needed a place to stay. And that night, even lying on spare sheets and lumpy cushions with all my stuff in boxes... I felt good. I felt *safe*, knowing I was in a new place with a friend in the next room and nobody else who knew where I was. I didn't even feel that nervous about closing my eyes, when I finally did.

And then, in my dream-

I was back there, in my apartment. It felt more real than any dream I've ever had. I was standing in the hall, watching through the crack in the door as Gem pulled her own skull open, frozen in place.

And something was watching me.

Not Gem- she hadn't turned around, not yet. It was something else.

I could feel it. I could *feel* that I was being watched. I turned to look, and I caught just a glimpse of *something*- a flash of eyes. A flutter of feathers. It was *wrong*, the same way Gem was wrong, and I had this... compulsion. Like I needed to find it, and catch it, and *kill* it.

But I didn't get a chance.

I'd gotten distracted. I'd forgotten about Gem.

I was two steps away from the door when her cold hands closed around my neck, and dug *in*.

I caught one last glimpse of those watching eyes before I woke up gasping on Ren's couch.

I thought it was just a regular nightmare. It had been a traumatic event, you know? It would've made sense for me to have some bad dreams.

But it wasn't.

I was back there the next night, and the next, and the next, and that watching *thing* was there too, all eyes and feathers and teeth, always in the shadows, always making my skin prickle and burn.

But you already knew that, didn't you?

Because after he came in here, Ren started having them too.

*(Pause)*

You look surprised. Maybe you didn't know after all.

I don't care.

I've hunted you through my apartment dozens of times. Maybe hundreds, at this point. Every time I'm back there, you are too. And I can never quite see you. I can never quite catch you. But now I've got you here.

So here's what I'm wondering. If I kill you, will it stop?

*(Pause)*

Well, that doesn't really help me. What if I give it a try anyways, and then go from there? I think that might be the best. I'll give you five words to tell me why I shouldn't. And if I even start to hear a question, I'll cut your throat.

**[GRIAN]**

*(Coughing, gasping for air)*

**[FALSE]**

Well?

**[GRIAN]**

*(Strained)* Your eyes are yellow.

*(Pause)*

**[FALSE]**

No, they're not.

**[GRIAN]**

They are. They're not supposed to be, are they? They're supposed to be blue.

**[FALSE]**

Quiet.

**[GRIAN]**

Martyn said, when he was in here- at the play, when you jumped from the stage, they were also gold, and he didn't know why-

**[FALSE]**

*Quiet.*

**[GRIAN]**

And in the game of- (*chokes*)

**[FALSE]**

That's enough, thank you.

*(Pause)*

**[FALSE]**

It was Martyn who made me sure it was you, you know. There was a *sound* in those dreams, one I could never quite place, a faint hissing in the background, one that always set me on edge. And I came to recognize that it came with the being-watched.

*(Clatter of broken plastic)*

So I'm sure you can imagine my train of thought when he came back from here with *this* buried in his backpack, and I finally figured out that what I'd been hearing was the sound of a tape recorder.

I'm sure you've got one going here even now. I can hear it. And I can feel it, you know. The watching. You aren't as clever as you think you are.

If you don't have anything else to say-

**[GRIAN]**

*(With great difficulty, static)* Wait- wait, wait-

**[FALSE]**

I don't think so.

**[GRIAN]**

*(Extremely strained)* I can help you find Gem.

*(Long pause)*

**[FALSE]**

...What?

**[GRIAN]**

*(Clearer)* Her brother was in here not too long ago. I know- I can help you find her. If you let me go I'll give you all the information you need.

**[FALSE]**

Fwhip was here?

**[GRIAN]**

He found her. He might be dead now. But he might not. If you went after them... it might not be too late. And even if it is... you still want to find her, right?

*(Long pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

False-

**[FALSE]**

No.

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

...Sorry?

**[FALSE]**

No. No. I don't want- no.

I don't want that. I *don't*. I don't. I don't want to chase her down. I don't want to be...

*(Unsteady breathing)*

...I want to go home.

I'm going... to go home. I'm going to go home.

*(Pause)*

And if I catch you stalking me in my dreams again... I know where you sleep.

*(Footsteps)*

**[GRIAN]**

False, wait. Look at me.

**[FALSE]**

What?

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

...Nothing. Um. Say hi to Martyn for me?

*(Footsteps leaving)*

*(Door closes)*

*(Grian exhales; his breathing stays shaky for several seconds)*

[Click]

[Click]

*(Pacing footsteps)*

**[GRIAN]**

Okay. Okay! *Maybe* I should've questioned the dreams more. How was I supposed to know? I've had weird dreams before! Plenty of people have weird dreams! And they weren't... *bad*, not really. At least not for me. They were fun. Better than the old ones, at least, with Scar and-

*(Pause)*

There wasn't- I didn't think there was any *harm* in it.

...Is *that* why Scott's been avoiding my calls? And Lizzie- but, no, wait, I've never seen Lizzie in the dreams. Just- um, let me think. Scott, Martyn, Timmy... False... um. Cleo... and Ren, I think. Nobody from the old print statements, and- none of my staff. No X or Joe Hills, either, even though I have tapes from them.

And- that letter, from Bdubs, about Etho...

I need to think.

[Click]

[Click]

*(Car idling)*

**[GRIAN]**

*(Claps)*

Good morning! Are we ready to go?

[Click]

## Supplemental:

[Click]

**[GRIAN]**

Um, Martyn, this is going to sound really weird, but do you... dream about me?

*(Pause)*

**[MARTYN]**

*(On speakerphone, halfway across the room)* Are you asking for romantic reasons or spooky reasons?

**[GRIAN]**

*Curiosity.* ...Spooky reasons. *Where* did I put my other socks? Uh. False came by.

**[MARTYN]**

She *what*? You didn't hurt her, right?

**[GRIAN]**

*(Offended)* I told her to say hi to you! Anyway, *she* threatened to chop *my* head off. Not the other way around!

**[MARTYN]**

Oh. Uh. Well. Neither of you hurt each other, right?

**[GRIAN]**

*(Petulant)* Not if you don't count the knife to my throat, I *guess*. We had a chat. *(Static)* Which brings me back to- *have* you been dreaming about me?

*(Pause)*

*(Static fizzles out sadly)*

**[MARTYN]**

*(Muttering, slightly shaken)* And *that's* why I only talk to you over the phone. *(Aloud, to Grian)* Uh. Depends how you define *you*.

**[GRIAN]**

False said... She said it was like she was being watched. Like something was watching her.

**[MARTYN]**

Oh, in that case yeah, I've absolutely been dreaming of you.

**[GRIAN]**

Ah. Is it, uh, bad? False said it was bad.

**[MARTYN]**

Very.

**[GRIAN]**

Oh. I'm- I'm sorry. I don't know how to not, uh. Not do that. Watch your dreams, I guess. I never



thought other people were. I never thought it was other people's dreams. It's not on purpose? Um.

**[MARTYN]**

*(Unsettled)* Since when do *you* apologize?

**[GRIAN]**

Hey, I-

*(Door opens)*

**[GRIAN]**

Pearl! *(Shoves something heavy under his desk)* It's one in the morning! What are you doing here?

**[PEARL]**

Hungry. Figured you might also want a midnight snack?

**[MARTYN]**

Huh- *Pearl?* Is that you? I'm pretty sure it's after hours at the Institute. You *do* have a flat, right?

**[GRIAN]**

She can walk through walls, don't worry about it.

**[PEARL]**

I can! Hi, Martyn. Grian didn't tell me he had your number. Grian, you should tell me when you have our mutual friends' numbers. What if I've lost them?

**[GRIAN]**

I saw his name in your contacts two days ago. Anyway, you should knock before you barge in on people. What if I was naked? What if I was hiding something?

**[PEARL]**

This wouldn't be an issue if you didn't live in your office. And you're *not* hiding anything, though, right? *Right?*

**[GRIAN]**

Uh, absolutely not, nope, you know everything there is to know about my plans and motivations. Oh! Martyn was telling me, get this, you remember how back in uni, Big B was dating someone we never actually met?

**[PEARL]**

Obviously. You moped for weeks when he told you, it was embarrassing.

**[GRIAN]**

I did not and it was not. So, well, turns out the boyfriend was *Ren?* You know, from the statements?

**[MARTYN]**

Weird, right? I never would have guessed Big B was into drama kids.

**[PEARL]**

I never would have guessed it wasn't a lie to stop Grian asking him out again.

**[GRIAN]**

I- *hey!*

[Click]

## End Notes

HIII okay so. its gonna be... probably a little bit before i get the next statement up? it's going to be a multi-parter, and... kind of the climax of the series? the longest set-up of the story is finally coming due. i havent decided yet whether i want to have the whole thing done before i start posting it or if ill just do it chapter by chapter, but it may take awhile regardless, so i just want yall to be aware.

this one also has one of zeph's favorite titles of the whole bunch. periphas and phene are two quite minor figures in greek mythology who were turned into birds by zeus, one against his will and one by choice. do with that what you will!

and if there is some downtime between this one and the next... hey, consider listening to [the podfic](#) if you havent yet? it just got through anniversary! in a few more weeks you'll get to hear false herself.

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