

## Research Questions

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/39646071) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/39646071>.

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="#">ImpulseSV</a> , <a href="#">ZedaphPlays</a> , <a href="#">Grian</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Alternate Universe - The Magnus Archives Fusion</a> , <a href="#">The Distortion</a> , <a href="#">Transcript Format</a>
Language:	English
Series:	Part 16 of <a href="#">From the Archives</a>
Collections:	<a href="#">Hermitcraft x TMA fics</a>
Stats:	Published: 2022-06-14 Completed: 2022-11-08 Words: 2,841 Chapters: 2/2

## Research Questions

by [Sixteenthdays](#)

### Summary

#### [GRIAN]

Statement of Impulse Siv, regarding... an encounter with the entity detailed in [Statement 9700111](#)-

#### [IMPULSE]

Oh, his name is Zedaph!

#### [GRIAN]

...regarding an encounter with the entity known as Zedaph! Recorded direct from subject today, June 12, 2022. Statement begins.

### Notes

I would recommend reading [Elephant's Foot](#) prior to this statement, although it can also stand on its own!

[Listen to this fic here!](#)

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

**Statement:**



[Click]

**[GRIAN]**

Statement of Impulse Siv, regarding... an encounter with the entity detailed in Statement 9700111-

**[IMPULSE]**

Oh, his name is Zedaph!

[GRIAN]

...regarding an encounter with the entity known as Zedaph! Recorded direct from subject today, June 12, 2022. Statement begins.

[IMPULSE]

Right! I guess I should start... you said today's the twelfth? Would've been four days ago, then. I'd just left work, and I stopped by that burger place a few blocks down the road for dinner.

Well, I was just sitting down with my food when somebody slid into the seat across from me. And when I say *slid*, I mean, like- you know how you could push, like, a Jello mold on a plate along a counter, and it would shake a little from the momentum, but the shape would stay the same? I don't know how to explain it. It was like he didn't move like he should have.

I could kind of guess who he was right away. I remembered first looking through that box of tapes, and- do you remember that stack of polaroids in there? He still sort of looked like the last few photos that hadn't fallen apart entirely, even though seeing him in motion was a little like staring at a headache. He had... I guess they were horns? Curling back into his head, like sheep have. It felt like they kept moving in my peripheral vision. Everything about him was like that- like I couldn't look at it straight on.

He said, 'Sorry to bother you, but you work for the VOID Institute, don't you?'

Like, I said, I recognized him enough to be pretty sure who I was talking to, and you know, it never hurts to be friendly, so I said I did and then said, 'Hey, aren't you the scientist from the tapes?'

He lit up. Not literally, but- well, maybe literally? But he said, 'You *did* find them! Brilliant! Oh, that makes everything so much easier. I've been looking for that box for *ages*.'

He really was just... weird to look at? Like if you glanced at him while he wasn't moving, and didn't look too hard at his face, you might be able to get away without noticing it, but as soon as he moved- you know how lava, when it's flowing, the crust will crack apart and you can see the molten orange stuff underneath for a little bit before it cools? That's the only way I can describe it. He would move and it's like his shape would... *break*, a little, and I could just see all these colors underneath, all mixing and melting together, until his... skin, I guess, caught up with the motion and knitted itself back together.

His face, too. It looked- it was definitely a human face, but it looked like it had been stretched and squished a few times until the features were all just a little off. Like, a face that didn't really remember what a face was supposed to look like.

I asked him if he needed the tapes for something, and he tilted his head *way* too far to one side and said, 'Well, I don't know if I *need* them, but I'd still like to have them! It's important to have primary sources, and all my other master copies are horribly corrupted. So it would be *great* if I could have them back.'

To be honest, I didn't see any harm in it? Like, they *were* his. And we'd made new copies for the Archives anyways. The original tapes were just sitting down in storage. So I told him I'd already left work for the day, but if he stopped in tomorrow I'd give them to him then.

He made a face- oh, that was one thing I thought was funny, you would think his face would be harder to read but he was actually really expressive- and said, 'We can't go now? I came all the way out here, and getting around outside my lab is *such* a pain.'

And I said alright, fine, but he needed to let me finish eating first. He jolted a little, like he'd

forgotten we were actually in a restaurant, and then told me to go ahead.

My burger wasn't cold yet, thankfully. He asked me a lot of questions while I was eating- about all sorts of things. Like, did I like the food, how did it taste, how long had I been working at the Institute, how did I like my job, did I have any siblings, what was my least favorite color, did I ever feel like I was being watched? A lot of really random stuff, but he asked with a lot of professionalism, like he was conducting a study, almost. He had a pencil in one of his pockets and a few times he stopped to scribble notes directly on the table top.

Uh, he also stole some of my fries.

He asked about you, too, by the way.

**[GRIAN]**

Me?

**[IMPULSE]**

Yeah! Or, well, sort of. It was when he was asking about how long I'd worked at the Institute. He said, 'Speaking of, you just got a new Archivist there, didn't you?' I said yeah, about two months ago, and mentioned it was actually why I'd gotten moved from Storage to the Archives. He asked how you were adjusting to the job, and a few other things along those lines. I didn't really know why he was so interested- I asked why, but he just sort of laughed it off.

Uh, he did ask where you lived, but I didn't tell him that, obviously. I think he wants to meet you, though. So... keep an eye out for that, I guess.

Hey, speaking of which- sorry, I know it's off topic, but, uh- I asked Mumbo, and he said you've been sleeping here?

**[GRIAN]**

*(Groans)*

I- look, it's just convenient, okay? I've been staying here pretty late the last couple weeks, and it just makes more sense than leaving.

**[IMPULSE]**

Are you getting enough sleep, though?

**[GRIAN]**

Since when are you my mother? *(Audibly impatient)* Get back to the statement already, I want to know what happens next.

**[IMPULSE]**

Right. Well, I finished eating, and we walked out of the restaurant together. He stuck pretty close to me, I think because he was sort of prone to bumping into and brushing against things- like you might if your depth perception was messed up? I had to pull him out of the way of a couple other customers at the front counter, and he thanked me and said something about having trouble seeing in three dimensions.

Once we got outside, he grabbed my arm, and said, 'Want to see something cool?' and pulled me forward a step, and I had just enough time to realize that there was something wrong with the ground in front of us before we were falling.

It wasn't a long fall. It was more like a short drop and then a *flip*, like an inversion, and then we

were- somewhere else. It was like a massive empty whitespace, but the air was... full of color, words and numbers and patterns and just messy splatters of light. I couldn't tell how big it was. It was disorienting to just try and process. It might have gone forever.

Ahead of us, though, there was an exit. It was like a tear in all the nothing and color, and outside of it I could see the sidewalk again. It was making my eyes hurt- the place, and the door out of the place, and all the stuff in the air, all of it- and I had to stop walking for a moment to try and rub it out of my eyes. I don't know *what* I was trying to get rid of, exactly. My thoughts were going all weird.

Zedaph said, 'Don't stop! No objects at rest! You can't do that in here!'

And he grabbed my hands, and started pulling me to the exit. I didn't want to focus on anything else, so I just focused on his hands. They weren't really shaped like hands. They were like... all triangles? Lots of triangles. I just followed him and tried to keep my thoughts in order, and then we stepped out of the tear and we were back on the sidewalk, and this time we were in front of the VOID Institute.

I had to take a moment to blink all the colors out of my eyes, and when I looked down there was a sort of puddle of it around our feet too, like an oil slick.

He laughed a little sheepishly, and said, 'Sorry! I normally don't bring other people through. Neat, though, right?'

I said it was, because I was actually really curious, at least once I stopped feeling sick. I don't know if you know, actually, but I went to school for mechanical engineering. I've always been interested in how stuff works, on the physical mechanical level, so I had a bunch of questions to throw right back at him- what that place had been, how it worked, what distances travel through it worked over.

He was really excited to talk about it. Which makes sense- he *was* a scientist at one point, and I think he sort of still is. A lot of what he said didn't make sense, but the way he said it made it sound like it made sense to him, and I just wasn't hearing it right, or I didn't have the context to understand.

The Institute was already mostly dark, since almost everybody had left at that point. It brought me back to that time we had to stay through the night. But we kept chatting on our way down to Storage- he really was really friendly. I could totally see us being friends. If not for, you know, the everything.

The box was pretty easy to find. I handed it to him and warned him it was heavy, and he *immediately* fumbled and dropped it, but it just vanished into another one of those weird gaps of color that opened up in the floor by his feet. He grinned- his teeth were very weird, they were too square and there were too many of them- and dusted his hands off, and thanked me for the help.

I said no problem, and started heading back towards the stairs, and, uh... well, didn't exactly watch my step. The gap that had opened up in the floor hadn't closed up- it had actually gotten bigger without me noticing, and I fell right through.

It was the same sort of feeling as when we'd left the restaurant and gone through the sidewalk- like a flip, and a rush of color, except this time instead of stepping out into that big in-between space, I was in...

I think it *had been* a lab, once. It had the bright lights and the setup, and stuff like an eyewash

station and an emergency shower, though those were both sort of... dripping in a way I didn't like. But everything about it was sort of just *wrong*. All of the equipment looked like it should have been recognizable but it wasn't, not exactly. And the walls just... *weren't*. There were these big, gaping holes in them, and I could see other rooms past them, with the colors seeping in between and around the edges. Like a hall of mirrors, almost.

The box of tapes was by my feet, and I pulled it out of the way just before Zedaph dropped out of the ceiling and landed next to me.

'Oops!' he said, and laughed. 'I just meant to drop the box off! I swear, sometimes those shortcuts have a mind of their own. But hey, since you're here, do you want to see some of my projects? I *never* get visitors these days.'

I know I probably should've said no, but I *was* really interested, even if the holes in the walls gave me headaches if I looked at them too hard, and I kind of couldn't bring myself to worry he had any ulterior motives or anything- he just seemed really honestly enthusiastic.

So I said sure, but I couldn't stay long, since I had work in the morning, and he said that would be no problem and dragged me over to see what he was doing with- I *think* some sort of centrifuge.

I don't know how long I was there- well, I guess now I know. But at the time I had no idea. There were no windows, and there was a clock on one of the walls, but it seemed like it sped up and slowed down at random, and sometimes stopped entirely. It was hard to even guess how long anything might've been. Zedaph had a stopwatch that he used to time his experiments, but it didn't count in seconds- I tried counting along with it once, but the intervals weren't what I was used to.

Honestly, I wasn't really paying attention to the time. Everything he had running in there was almost like- it was almost like his laboratory was a place where reality had *broken*, or started to come apart into component pieces, and he was studying those pieces. I sort of wish I'd been able to take notes or pictures or something. It was fascinating. And he was good company, too. It was pretty easy to tell he'd missed having somebody around to talk to.

Eventually I did start to get tired, and I asked him to drop me off at home, and he did- didn't bother me to stay longer or anything, just thanked me for the help and told me to come by again anytime. Um, and then I came into work the next day and found out I'd been, uh, missing for four days. And that was it!

**[GRIAN]**

Huh. Alright! Well, thank you for the statement, Impulse, and, uh, let me know if anything else weird happens over the next few days? I guess? And I told Scar to leave everything you missed while you were gone on your desk, it's mostly just a few statement follow-ups.

**[IMPULSE]**

Sounds good!

*(Chair creaks; steps receding)*

*(Door opens and closes)*

[Click]

[Click]

**[GRIAN]**

...Right. Well... there's a lot to go through here. Having one of the creatures from a statement turn up directly to approach an archival employee is... it makes me *uneasy*, to say the least. Even though from Impulse's descriptions this Zedaph seems mostly friendly, if he's out there, others must be also, and from what we've had described, plenty of them aren't nearly as nice.

I can't help but be curious, though, mostly regarding Zedaph's questions about myself and the Institute. I don't doubt we'll be hearing from him again. If he wants to meet me, well... the feeling's mutual. I think I have plenty of questions for him, too.

Impulse seems fine, at least. No... symptoms, at least none that I can see, which is a relief. Given the comparisons to radiation we heard in Zedaph's original tapes, I couldn't help but be a little worried, but I suppose there's nothing to be done about it just now.

...*Why* do all my assistants keep having supernatural encounters? Mumbo with his potatofication and then that stupid darkness rock, whatever's going on with Pearl's dreams, and now Impulse- at least Scar is still fine. And I haven't run up into anything so far, either. Though at this rate it's probably only a matter of time.

[Click]

## Supplemental:

[Click]

**[PEARL]**

Oh! Hi, Impulse!

**[IMPULSE]**

Uh...

**[PEARL]**

I was... definitely *not* listening at the door while you gave your statement.

**[IMPULSE]**

Believable. Grian said there was work on my desk?

**[PEARL]**

*(Disdainfully)* Of course he did. Yeah, there was some statement with a lot of technical words in it that he didn't trust Mumbo to tell him the actual meaning of, and none of the rest of us could parse them, so we've been waiting for you to get back and take a look. And hoping you weren't dead or something. You're not, right? Dead.

**[IMPULSE]**

As far as I'm aware I'm still alive, yeah. Are *you* dead?

**[PEARL]**

What? No? *Why?*

**[IMPULSE]**

I figured it was polite to ask! You've got all sorts of weird things going on with, like, your eyes and stuff, you never know!

**[PEARL]**

I'm not *dead*, I'm just *inevitably going to get crushed by a hallucinatory moon*. There's a *difference*.

**[IMPULSE]**

If you say so.

**[PEARL]**

For real, though, you're alright, right? You were missing for *four days*.

**[IMPULSE]**

Yeah, I swear I had fun. I might even go back? It would be nice.

**[PEARL]**

*(Dubiously)* Doesn't sound like *my* idea of a relaxing afternoon. I'd run in the opposite direction, if I were you. But... have a nice time, I guess?

**[IMPULSE]**

You know? I honestly think I will.

[Click]



## End Notes

another statement i've been wanting to do for awhile!! i had a TON of fun writing this one in particular. zedaph is a delight. this one has a bunch of fun little hints regarding the future and the state of things sprinkled in, as well. did u spot them all?

i am having so much fun writing this story, not gonna lie. next statement will have a hermit we haven't heard from before but who i have been wanting to write a statement for since like,, the start of this series.

also, today's recommendation for another writer's cool hermit archives stuff is [trench rot](#) by my buddy lunarblazes!!

comment if u enjoyed perhaps?? and if u have any questions or want to talk about this story, u can find me on tumblr at @sixteenth-days!

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