

Slumber Party

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Slumber Party

by [Sixteenthdays](#)

Summary

[GRIAN]

Right, collective statement of Pearl Moon, Mumbo Jumbo, Impulse Siv, and Scar Goodtimes, regarding... phenomena after a coworker triggered a potentially supernatural artifact-

[PEARL]

I think we're a bit past *potentially* at this point, Grian.

[GRIAN]

Fine, regarding the night after Mumbo touched a magic evil rock. Happy?

Notes

Technically this follows from [Stargazer](#), but you don't need to have read that one to understand this! You should still read Stargazer anyways though because it's good.

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Statement:



[GRIAN]

Right, collective statement of Pearl Moon, Mumbo Jumbo, Impulse Siv, and Scar Goodtimes, regarding... phenomena after a coworker triggered a potentially supernatural artifact-

[PEARL]

I think we're a bit past *potentially* at this point, Grian.

[GRIAN]

Fine, regarding the night after Mumbo touched a magic evil rock. Happy?

[PEARL]

Yup!

[MUMBO]

Look, there was no way for me to know! I was just doing my job! You told me-

Actually, wait, this was all *your* fault in the first place!

[GRIAN]

How is it *my* fault?

[MUMBO]

You told me to follow up on Pearl's statement by looking through the artifact listings and statements for anything to do with the moon! And it was labeled in the artifact catalogue as moonstone, so I thought, well, there's a moon-related object right there, that might be what we're looking for. It didn't exactly come with a warning tag!

[IMPULSE]

Yeah, but you know there's precautions you're supposed to follow about handling artifacts, right? Did you have gloves on?

[SCAR]

Oh, come on, nobody follows those.

[IMPULSE]

I do!

[GRIAN]

Okay, we're going to need to do this one at a time or else we'll never get anywhere. Mumbo can go first, since as we've just agreed this is all his fault, and not mine. Statement recorded in group interview direct from subjects, May 28th, 2022, statement begins, go.

[MUMBO]

It *wasn't*- fine. Well, like I said, I was down in artifact storage, looking for something that had been labeled as a moonstone in the summary catalogue. It was in a little black velvet bag. The only label on it was a little numbered tag on one of the ties that had the storage number on it, so I checked that was right and then I just opened the bag up and- dumped the rock out into my hand to take a look.

[IMPULSE]

(Quietly) Should've worn gloves.

[MUMBO]

Shut up. Well, it was just a black rock. Didn't look much like a moonstone at all. It looked more like... coal. It was *really* dark, like a little condensed lump of shadow. The lights didn't even reflect off it, even though, I mean, artifact storage has those huge fluorescent row lights, it's not exactly dim down there. I tried rolling it back and forth in my hands a bit, but when I did that it just sort of- broke? Like it bumped against my fingers and just came apart into dust, like a- like, um, brown sugar? Or something.

And then all the lights went out. Like, all at once. One moment they were on, not even flickering,

and then there was a sort of cracking noise and everything was dark. I couldn't even see my hand in front of my face. I started trying to feel my way back to where I thought the stairs were, but before I'd made it more than a few steps I heard something... move.

At first I thought it- well, I figured it must've been one of the other staff who'd happened to be down in storage, right, and I just hadn't seen them when I'd come in. So I called, 'Hello? Is anybody there?'

There was no response. Just quiet. Which, for the record, was much worse than if there had been a response, because then when I heard the sound again I knew it *definitely* wasn't another staff member. I- well, I'm not ashamed to admit I panicked. I bolted for the stairs, or at least for where I hoped the stairs were, and I've never felt more relieved in my life than when I felt the railing under my hand.

I ran up the stairs as fast as I could, and it seemed like they were longer than they normally were- like it took longer to reach the top than it should have. But eventually I reached it and sprinted back into the bullpen where all our desks are, and you all looked at me like I was a crazy person. Which I suppose I must have looked like, running up the stairs from the basement like the hounds of hell were after me-

[SCAR]

Yup, you did!

[MUMBO]

Thank you, Scar. I tried to explain what all had happened, but *Grian* kept interrupting me to make fun of me for being scared of the dark-

[GRIAN]

(Snickers)

[MUMBO]

-and eventually Impulse suggested a fuse had probably just blown and somebody just needed to go back down to the breaker box and reset it. Well, *I* wasn't about to go back down there, but- Pearl, do you want to pick it up there?

[PEARL]

Sure! I volunteered myself to go check the fuses, and dragged Grian with so he'd stop being such a pest. I grabbed the big flashlight from the storage closet, and we headed down the stairs.

It was nearly the end of the day, and the shadows through the windows were all long and dark and slanting. And the stairs down to artifact storage- they really were *awfully* dark. Like, darker than you'd expect from just the lights being out. Grian hesitated at the top, and I had to go down first.

Once we were down there... *ugh*. You know, those shelves are so tall, and so close together. It's claustrophobic. I hadn't ever really noticed before, but I certainly noticed in the dark. And of course the breaker box is way in the back of the basement, instead of anywhere *reasonable*, like next to the stairs, so we started working our way back there. It seemed like the flashlights didn't light up as much of the darkness as they should have, either.

We were... I'd say about halfway to the back of the basement when we- well, it was Grian first, actually- heard something move behind us. Like- how would you describe it?

[GRIAN]

Oh- like a shelf creaking a bit. Like something heavy had brushed against it.

[PEARL]

Yeah. Grian grabbed my hand and we both froze, and the next time it happened, I heard it too. Like... metal skidding a little against concrete. I think we both wanted to run, but- whatever was making that sound was between us and the stairs, or at least it sounded like it was, so we just kept going further into the basement. I know I had it in my head that if we could just get to the breaker box and get the lights back on, then we'd be fine. We'd be safe. I don't know if that was true, it probably wasn't, but that's what I was thinking.

We couldn't find it, though. In the darkness- I mean, it's practically a maze down there, with all those stupid shelves, and we kept having to *turn*, and I could *hear* it- not chasing us, exactly, but moving behind us, and around us. Like it was corralling us, almost? We started going faster and faster, and *it* started going faster too, and I started to think there was no *way* we hadn't reached the back wall yet, we had to have reached the back wall-

And then we were back in the bullpen.

We hadn't gone back up the stairs we'd gone down. We hadn't gone up *any* stairs. But there we were, stumbling back out of the doorway down to artifact storage to where you all were like we'd- teleported, or something.

Impulse asked us if we'd fixed the fuse at the same time Mumbo asked us if we'd seen the monster, and then before we could answer either of them, all of the *other* lights went out. All the lights in the Institute, at least so far as I could tell.

The only ones that stayed on were the little desk lights in the bullpen, so the five of us were safe standing in that dim little puddle of light, but all the doors and hallways that led away were just... dark. And outside, the sun was almost set, so it was getting even darker.

Mumbo and Grian were panicking-

[GRIAN]

I was *not*.

[PEARL]

You were shaking like a leaf, you liar.

[SCAR]

Grian, there's nothing wrong with being scared of the dark! We're all friends here.

[PEARL]

Anyways, we dragged all our chairs together and sat down to try and figure it out. Mumbo explained a bit more about how he'd found the moonstone, and Grian and I filled in what had happened down in the basement and how there actually was something down there.

Impulse, you wanna pick it up?

[IMPULSE]

Yeah, so after you guys described how you'd wound up back in the bullpen, I started to get pretty worried about the prospect of getting out of the Institute, like, at *all*. So I grabbed the flashlight and picked a door where I knew it should've been pretty easy to get where I wanted to go through it. It's basically a straight shot up that hallway to the main staircase, and then from there you're basically at the front door. Key word there being *should've*.

I said to come try and find me if I wasn't back in ten minutes or so, since the walk shouldn't have

taken more than three, and started down the hallway.

At first it was normal, just... dark. I've been in the Institute after dark before for after-hours work, so I wasn't completely out of my depth, though usually there's low lights on around the clock to discourage burglars and stuff. So it was darker than usual, but otherwise fine. At least until I realized that I was- well, my first thought was that I was down the wrong hallway.

Like, it looked like the right one! Same paintings on the walls and everything. But I *knew* I should've reached the stairs to the entrance by then. I started walking a little faster, and then- I heard it behind me. To me it sounded like... claws, scraping on the floorboards. And as soon as I heard it, everything got even darker. I could barely see the outlines of things, even though the hallway windows should have been letting *some* moonlight in.

Well, I wasn't about to mess around with all that. I started running, and I could hear whatever it was start moving faster, too, and I think I closed my eyes for a moment, and then- just like you guys said, I wound up right back in the bullpen. I didn't turn around once. I'm sure I didn't. It was like the hallway looped back in itself on its own to keep me from getting anywhere.

We argued about it a bit, but I think we all knew at that point that we weren't going to be getting out before sunrise. The only thing to do really was huddle together and wait, and... hope the desk lights didn't go out.

None of our phones were working to let us check the time, or call for help, for that matter, and for a moment I was worried that meant that... well, you know. That that night would be like the hallway, and it just... wouldn't end. But fortunately Scar's pocketwatch was still working, and we could track time by that.

[SCAR]

Wind it every morning! You'll never know when something like that'll come in handy.

[IMPULSE]

None of us felt great about sleeping, even in shifts, so we just committed to staying up as long as it took. I think it was about seven-thirty at that point, so we had... a long night ahead of us.

We pushed the desks into a circle so we could have something between us and the shadows around the edges of the room, which- I dunno, I guess it was kind of silly, but it felt safer. We played sleepover games for awhile. Grian suggested truth or dare, but that didn't get past one round before it got vetoed-

[GRIAN]

I still think that was an overreaction.

[PEARL]

You could've gotten Scar killed!

[SCAR]

Nahhhh, it would've been fine! What does a shadow monster want with me anyways? No meat on my bones. I'm basically a toothpick. If I was a monster, I would consider me not worth the effort.

[IMPULSE]

(Laughing) Um, anyways, so it went pretty smooth for the next few hours. No major spookiness or anything, if you ignored- you know, all of it. Occasionally there'd be, like, a little sound from one of the doorways, reminding us we weren't alone, but that was it. But at... I think it was about one? Mumbo started hearing things.

[MUMBO]

You- alright, saying it like that implies it was in my head, which it *wasn't*. I just heard it *first*.

It sounded like... laughter. It was so faint at first I thought I really was imagining it. I hadn't slept too well the night before, and I'd been running on coffee for most of the day already, so frankly I thought it was just the sleep deprivation finally kicking in. But it didn't stop. It kept getting louder and louder and *closer*, until I had to clap my hands over my ears to muffle it.

It just didn't stop. Eventually everybody else noticed something was bothering me, but they couldn't hear anything. Meanwhile, I felt like this thing was... like it *had* to be right behind me for it to be as loud as it was, so I kept jumping and glancing around the room, trying to find the source of the laughter. But I couldn't see anything. I almost started to think maybe I really was imagining it. I mean, hallucinations wouldn't be nearly the weirdest thing that's happened to me working here.

But then everybody else started hearing it too. Or at least Grian and Impulse did. And then, Grian- you said you actually *saw* it, right?

[GRIAN]

I mean I'm not- (*sighs*) I'm not *sure*. I thought I saw *something*. I was looking at the light and shadows on the walls, trying to distract myself from the laughing, and for a moment I thought I saw-

For a moment I thought I saw an eye?

It was *huge*, took up almost the whole wall, outlined in layers of darkness like- like a massive shadow puppet, or something. And it was *looking* at me.

And then I rubbed my eyes and looked again, and it was gone. I don't know. I was probably just tired, honestly. I think it was getting towards three or four in the morning at that point.

[PEARL]

And then, uh- that was about when we heard the screaming.

[IMPULSE]

Yeah.

[PEARL]

It hadn't- you know, it hadn't even occurred to me that there might've been other people still in the building. But as soon as that horrible noise started up it was all I could think about. It wasn't like it had been too terribly late when all the lights had gone out. It was perfectly possible somebody in another division hadn't left for home yet when it had happened.

Maybe there was somebody who'd gotten stranded in some little room just like we had, and maybe they were alone, and maybe...

We talked about going to try and find the source of it, but- it felt like between Grian and I and Impulse, we'd already pushed our luck enough. Way past where it should've gone. And eventually the sound just... stopped. They didn't- Grian, you've got the report there. They *didn't* find any bodies when they looked, did they?

[GRIAN]

They didn't, no.

[PEARL]

So there probably wasn't- it probably wasn't anyone. It was probably fake, like the laughter. But it was horrible.

[MUMBO]

Everything eased up a bit from there. The laughter started to quiet down when the sky out the windows *finally* started to lighten up, and eventually the sun rose and it went completely silent. The cleaning staff came in at- five-thirty, I think? They were *very* surprised to find us barricaded behind our desks.

[SCAR]

Oh, the looks on their faces were *great*. Priceless.

But that was basically the end of it! Eventually Xisuma came in, took one look at us and told us to take the day off. You know, he's the best. Love that guy.

[GRIAN]

And have any of you experienced any nightmares or other aftereffects?

[IMPULSE]

Had a getting-chased dream immediately after, but since then I've been fine. I think it was just the normal kind of weird dream, nothing spooky.

[SCAR]

I've been fine! Takes more than that to throw me off, you know.

[MUMBO]

I had to wash my hands for like twenty minutes to get all that horrible black dust off. I didn't want to do anything else until it was all gone, but it was sort of... *sticky*. I did get it all off eventually, though! See? Clean as a whistle.

[GRIAN]

...Pearl?

[PEARL]

Oh- I've been fine too! Like Scar said, you know? Takes more than a sleepless night to get under my skin.

[GRIAN]

Alright, I guess that's all. You all can get back to work, then-

[SCAR]

We don't even get to leave early?

[GRIAN]

You had all of yesterday off!

[Click]

[Click]

[GRIAN]

Well, according to Xisuma, there's basically no sign of anything supernatural taking place in the Institute that night. Apparently they had to replace all the fuses, and a few shelves down in artifact storage fell over and made a huge mess, but other than that, nothing.

I keep thinking about that eye, on the wall. Maybe I did just imagine it. It's not like I was exactly, you know, running on all cylinders at the time. But it was looking straight at me. Not at any of the others. Just me. I wonder...

(Door opening)

Pearl?

[PEARL]

Hi. Can we talk? I lied.

[GRIAN]

About what?

[PEARL]

About- no aftereffects.

[GRIAN]

I *knew* there was something you weren't telling me. Yeah, come take a seat.

[PEARL]

Is that still running?

[GRIAN]

Is- oh, yeah, hold on-

[Click]

Supplemental:

[Click]

(Door opens.)

[MUMBO]

Hey, um, I just saw Pearl leave. Is she, like.... alright?

[GRIAN]

Well.

[MUMBO]

Oh dear... *(fretting noises)* Did I manage to make whatever's going on even *worse*? Is she going to be permanently... Uh. Is she going to *die* because I touched a *weird evil rock*-

[GRIAN]

(giggling) No, she's not going to die, Mumbo. Well. I think. Glad to hear you've accepted the events of last night as your fault, though! Knew you had it in you.

[MUMBO]

(the fretting noises subside)

Sooooo, you're scared of the dark, huh?

[GRIAN]

(offended gasp)

[MUMBO]

Can't believe I never realized! You spent so much time sleeping on my couch, and yet. Were you using your phone as a nightlight or something?

[GRIAN]

Well I wasn't afraid of the dark *then*. I mean. Not that I'm afraid of it *now* either. I'm just cautious. That's all!

[MUMBO]

You've never been cautious before in your *life*.

[GRIAN]

You shut up. And get out of my office. *(pause)* ...Um, do keep looking for stuff about Pearl, though, please. Anything helps. Until it kills us all, that is.

[MUMBO]

Yeah, no problem.

[GRIAN]

No problem as long as you stop touching evil rocks, you mean. Maybe take a buddy with you to Storage next time? Someone with more common sense?

[MUMBO]

Like you wouldn't have done the same-

[GRIAN]

Well I didn't say take *me!*

(Mumbo bursts out laughing.)

[Click]

End Notes

i've had 'mooners statement' in my notes for AGES and finally was able to articulate it into something coherent. originally this was just a pearl statement, but it started being quite awkward to have other people doing things in the statement but just her narrating the whole time, so i rewrote the entire thing from scratch with the whole crew taking turns and was much happier with the result.

i started writing these statements at the start of this month- the first one was posted may first- and now i'm already on number ten, and more than twenty thousand words written, which is insane. so thank yall so much if you've been enjoying so far! i still have such a list of statements to write. if you leave a comment i love you.

Works inspired by this one

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