

## The Archivist

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## The Archivist

by [Sixteenthdays](#)

### Summary

*(Long pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

...Hello.

**[ETHO]**

Mind if I sit?

### Notes

**this is the end of the fic if you have not read the rest of the fic consider going back and doing that**

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

[Click]

*(Long pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

...Hello.

**[ETHO]**

Mind if I sit?

*(Brief tapping on wood, then a chair being moved, someone sitting)*

**[GRIAN]**

It's... been a while. What are you doing here?

**[ETHO]**

Oh, you know, just stopping by. Wanted to see how things are here. Or, uh, not see. *(Pause)* How are you liking the job?

**[GRIAN]**

...You show up after all this time, and *that's* what you want to know?

**[ETHO]**

It's been awhile since I've been here! Can't blame a guy for wondering. I'm going to make you an offer after, if that helps.

**[GRIAN]**

An *offer*. Well...

If I'm being honest, I'm having a great time.

I won't say it's all been smooth sailing *(feathers ruffle)*, and I certainly could have been... *better informed* about the nature of the job before I accepted it, but... I feel like I've been able to make it my own. With a little collateral damage.

**[ETHO]**

Huh! Well. Congratulations. I-

*(Feathers ruffle again)*

**[ETHO]**

What's that noise?

**[GRIAN]**

Oh!

Oh, you can't see- uh- it's a funny story. Hey, do you feel anything when I do this?

**[ETHO]**

Do what?

**[GRIAN]**

*(Disappointed)* ...Nothing.

Uh, I may have picked up some... feathers. In the course of working here. Not because I was working here, though. Unrelated. Mostly unrelated.

*(Pause)*

**[ETHO]**

Uh-huh. Uh, how?

**[GRIAN]**

Look, these things happen. I don't tell you how to live your life. I like them, anyways.

**[ETHO]**

I'm not judging.

**[GRIAN]**

It *sounds* like you're judging.

*(Pause)*

**[ETHO]**

You remember when you first came in here, right? To give your statement?

**[GRIAN]**

Little hard to forget.

**[ETHO]**

How are things with the, uh... murderous tendencies? Like, no offense, but I didn't really feel enthusiastic when I learned who X had promoted.

**[GRIAN]**

*Hey. (Pause)* Are you asking if I've killed anyone since having your job?

**[ETHO]**

Maybe.

**[GRIAN]**

Well, I haven't. *(Pause)* Nobody who didn't get better after. *(Pause)* I also might've been an accomplice a couple times, but that's different.

**[ETHO]**

I like the number of caveats there, very reassuring.

**[GRIAN]**

It's been a *weird time*, alright.

**[ETHO]**

Tango invited me up to his little event, and I made Bdubs come with me to tell me what he saw. You were there. Right?

**[GRIAN]**

...Yes.

**[ETHO]**

So I did, uh, get it narrated to me when you eviscerated and ate your coworker. It made me... worry about the workplace environment here?

**[GRIAN]**

He got *better*.

*(Pause)*

That was a special circumstance. I couldn't... properly *think* when I was in there. He's not even

mad at me, which is ridiculous of him, but I'm not complaining.

To answer your original question, it actually got a lot better after I was hired here. I'm not going to say this is where I'm *meant to be* or anything ridiculous like that, but. It suits me, I think. Better than anything else I tried to do ever since... then. Which is good, because I don't think I can quit. I mean, I don't think I could before, and I *definitely* can't now.

...You were there, then. In the woods. You know Tango?

**[ETHO]**

Yeah, he's a friend.

**[GRIAN]**

Well, next time you see him tell him I've got a few more things to tell him about *eyes* than I did last time we talked.

Speaking of. I can't help but notice.

**[ETHO]**

Elephant in the room, huh? Yeah, we can get to the point.

**[GRIAN]**

Bdubs said in his letter, but the way he described it-

**[ETHO]**

I can take the blindfold off, but people have told me it's a little gross.

**[GRIAN]**

I can handle it. I want to see.

**[ETHO]**

*(Laughs)* You *are* good for this job.

*(Fabric shifting)*

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

Oh, goodness.

Just- entirely gone.

**[ETHO]**

Yup!

*(Feathers rustle)*

**[GRIAN]**

What *did* that?

**[ETHO]**

I did.

*(Pause)*

I'm a little sad I can't see the look on your face. I bet it's really funny.

**[GRIAN]**

I- you did that to *yourself*? *Why*? This whole time I was assuming it was some sort of- I don't know. You'd been attacked, or come across...

**[ETHO]**

Nah, I just needed to quit. It took me some trial and error, but I got there eventually.

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

So that's how-

*(Pause)*

You said earlier you were here with an offer.

**[ETHO]**

*(Snaps fingers)* Exactly.

*Do* you want to get out of here?

It's up to you. I wasn't too happy here for a while, and for me, wanting to fix things for Bdubs was the last straw. But it sounds like things are different for you. So... your call.

**[GRIAN]**

Just to be clear, you're offering to... remove my eyes.

**[ETHO]**

Yup.

*(Pause)*

**[GRIAN]**

*(Slowly)* I think I'm going to have to say no. I'm happy here, genuinely.

I think I might have too many of them for it to work at this point, anyways.

*(Pause)*

**[ETHO]**

...Downsides of me coming in here without being able to see what you look like.

**[GRIAN]**

*(Snickers)* Just a bit.

**[ETHO]**

How about your coworkers down here? They're all, uh, content?

**[GRIAN]**

Well, Pearl and Scar are- they *could* both leave, I think, if they wanted. Mumbo... I'll be honest with you, I *don't* know what would happen if you tried to remove Mumbo's eyes. He's a bit, uh, crinkly these days. And I'd hate to see him go.

Impulse *did* just recently step away from work here. But... I think he'll be fine. I suspect he has his own way out, if he wants.

*(Pause)*

If you ask me, I actually think you should be talking to Xisuma.

**[ETHO]**

You think *Xisuma* would want his eyes stabbed out?

**[GRIAN]**

Just the one might do it, actually.

**[ETHO]**

...Huh. I'll look into that.

*(Pause)*

Man, it's weird being back here. You know, I wasn't really any good at this job when it was mine.

**[GRIAN]**

Really?

**[ETHO]**

Yeah. I could never, uh, take it seriously? ...That makes me sound like a jerk. I just usually think about things in terms of problems that can be solved, which makes me a little bit, uh, anathema to this sort of stuff.

Someone would come in here and I would be like- 'sounds like you could go to a doctor about that', or like, 'did that guy just confess a mass murder to me'? And-

*(Hand slamming on table)*

**[GRIAN]**

Is *that* why you did follow-up on my statement and none of the others?

**[ETHO]**

*(Laughing)* Hey, listen-

**[GRIAN]**

...Unbelievable. Get out of my office.

**[ETHO]**

*(Still laughing)* Whatever you say, Archivist.

*(Footsteps exiting)*

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**[GRIAN]**

...Well! Wasn't expecting *that*.

It was... good to finally get a chance to talk to him. Put a final few questions I'd had to rest. It made me think, too. About... well, being here. Everything that's happened. (*Feathers rustle*)

I wouldn't have ever pictured myself in a place like this- in a... position like this, before... things went off the rails. But...

I *do* have fun here. It's the best job I've ever had. Feathers and all. Joe asked me if I wanted to end the world, and... I really don't. (*Quieter*) Even if it *would* be fun to see what happened. (*Louder again*) I'd much rather stay here and find out what happens *next*. I want to hear more about Tango's research, I just want to- *know more*. And if everything Mumbo collected on that Pix fellow is any indication, I might have a *long* time to do it.

(*Pause*)

And I'll admit, it's *so* fun to be a little terrifying.

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*Well, that seems to be as good a place as any to end it for the moment.*

*What a tangled-up mess of stories... it's much easier with completed narratives, but I really did need to get a head start on this one. Death herself only knows how long it'll be before any of these people actually die. Hard to have a conclusive ending before then.*

*I'm sure there's a few things missing, but I think I got most of the important events. Most of what was caught on tape, at least. I'll keep an eye out for anything more that comes up.*

-P. R.

## End Notes

hey! holy shit! that's the end? that's the end of the fic! about, like, fourteen months and a hundred and twenty thousand words from where i started. if you kept up all this way, thank you so much. if you're just reading through now, thank you also!! the amount of love and attention this fic recieved is really insane for me- i'm *really* proud of it. it's the longest piece i've ever finished by a significant margin.

what next? first of all, go [listen to the podfic](#)! it's going to continue through the whole story! we will also be holding auditions for our second round of voice actors soon now that the fic is complete, so if that's something you might be interested in, keep an eye on my socials (@sixteenthdays on twitter, @sixteenth-days on tumblr) or the official podfic/au socials (@hermitarchive on both tumblr and twitter) for more info!

**if you want to know more about what happened to a certain character after everything- i *am* going to be posting some supplementary postfic material over in the [marginalia](#) series! these fics will be labeled as 'appendix,' and the first one should already be up! it's about cleo. [go read it!](#)**

as always, infinite love to zeph for its constant help and support through the process of writing this fic, right up to coming in to work on statements i was stuck on. and thank you so much to everyone who ever made artwork or any other work based on this fic- you have no idea how much you motivated and inspired me! and shout-out of course to chris, because all of this started from his ideas in the first place. <3

consider dropping a comment if you enjoyed the series <3 and maybe look through the rest of my work here! i just started a new series (steven universe 3rd life au) and i've got a few other things in the works as well. maybe even subscribe to me here if you feel like i've earned it!

that's all! see you in the next fic!

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