

## The Other Eye

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## The Other Eye

by [Sixteenthdays](#)

### Summary

#### [XISUMA]

Well, how about this. I'll give you a story, and you leave them be until they're ready to come back to work. It's one you already know, I'm sure, but you haven't heard it from me, so hopefully it's still worth something.

Statement of myself, Xisuma Void, regarding my family history. Statement recorded direct from subject today, August 18th, 2022. Statement begins.

### Notes

**SPOILERS THROUGH MAG 160. I AM SO SERIOUS. SOME OF THE BIGGEST SPOILERS IN THE ENTIRE STORY ARE IN THIS STATEMENT. IF YOU ARE AT ALL SPOILER SENSITIVE, TURN AROUND AND COME BACK LATER.**

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

[Click]

*(Rustling noises)*

**[XISUMA]**

*(Slightly distant)* 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, and *I'm* not about to start killing my employees just because they've made a bit of a mess.

*(Pause)*

Yes, even with what she did to the doors! They *are* replaceable, come off it. I bet you don't even remember when they got installed. *(Shorter pause)* That's what I thought.

*(Noises of papers being moved and rearranged; footsteps approaching)*

*(Light knock)*

**[IMPULSE]**

Hey, X! The workers are here.

**[XISUMA]**

Oh, good! Have they started yet?

**[IMPULSE]**

Yeah, they're assessing the damage now, but they say they should just be able to tear up and redo the floor in the lobby, though what happened to the hallways further in might be a little harder to salvage.

**[XISUMA]**

That's... about what I expected. Well, it's hardly the end of the world.

**[IMPULSE]**

Oh, and also, good news! Grian just called from the hospital to say Pearl's finally awake. I chatted with her for a minute on the phone- she seems fine, just a little tired.

**[XISUMA]**

*(Relieved sigh)* Oh, that's wonderful news. Why don't you go visit them? I can handle things here, I promise. And we won't be reopening to the public until at the very least the main lobby isn't a disaster zone.

**[IMPULSE]**

Oh, good luck with that. Grian will be clawing at the walls to get back to work once Pearl's out of the hospital.

**[XISUMA]**

Yes, I don't think I'd be able to get rid of him even if I wanted to, at this point.

**[IMPULSE]**

*(Laughs)* Yeah, you have to drag him out of this place by his ankles if you want to get him anywhere. You're sure it's okay if I duck out? I don't mind staying.

**[XISUMA]**

I'm sure! Go see your friends.

*(Footsteps retreating, door closes)*

*(Pause)*

**[XISUMA]**

Pearl's awake... that's good. I'd been worried that- *(stops)*

*(Footsteps, drawing closer; rustling paper, very close)*

**[XISUMA]**

*(Much closer)* Aha. There you are.

Still hungry, after all that? I would've thought an incident like that would've kept you fed for days... but I suppose if Grian's off looking after Pearl you don't get much of it at all, do you? All those statements from the visitors and staff aren't much use to you if there's nobody here to collect them.

Well, how about this. I'll give you a story, and you leave them be until they're ready to come back to work. It's one you already know, I'm sure, but you haven't heard it from me, so hopefully it's still worth something.

Statement of myself, Xisuma Void, regarding my family history. Statement recorded direct from subject today, August 10th, 2022. Statement begins.

I was named after an ancestor of mine- a great-great-granduncle, or something like that. I don't remember how many generations back exactly. I like to call him Evil Xisuma, to avoid confusion, and also because I hate him.

I don't know that much about this Evil Xisuma's early life, though I've pieced a few things together. I *can* tell you that his family never thought he'd amount to much. My family was already fairly wealthy at that time due to a distant ancestor's land trading, so his failures were hardly for a lack of resources, but more due to an unwillingness to train and work in any... let's say *traditional* trade. He fell in with a rather unsavory crowd, and for a time was completely out of touch with his family.

I don't know what exactly led him to discover... what he did. But somewhere in that time period, he came to learn about a... god, I suppose. Some power far larger than a human would ever hope to comprehend. And he wanted to make a deal with it. It was a creature of knowledge, and so he figured that as long as he fed it, it could give him everything he wanted.

And it could. Though, not without a price, of course.

He founded this institute as a part of that deal- as a way to feed his god of knowledge. And in exchange, he asked it for the knowledge of how to live forever. He wasn't really a man of grand ambitions. He was just petty, and wanted to outlive everyone who he felt had disrespected him.

And it told him how he could.

We can skip ahead here, ah... about a hundred and twenty years. Leadership of the Institute was passed down, more or less, through my family. Evil Xisuma didn't have any children of his own, but his successor was one of his brother's children, and after his eventual death it passed to another uncle of mine.

I only ever intended to intern here for a year or so.

I was offered a guaranteed position. I'd just graduated for computer science, but the job market wasn't very good at the time, so I figured while I looked for a more permanent position, taking a temporary position at a nonprofit research institute would look a lot better than a big gap on my resume.

I didn't know my uncle well. He'd always kept fairly well away from family events, at least as far back as I could remember- according to my mother he'd been a lot more gregarious when they were growing up. But when I first arrived at the Institute, he seemed very... interested to talk to me. Though not in a very friendly way. He had a lot of questions about my life, my goals, my friends, all that. It was almost a little unnerving how much he wanted to know, but at the time I figured he was just a bit strange socially.

The first... oh, six months or so working here were normal enough. I spent most of my time trying to modernize the computer system, since it was about twenty years out of date even then, though I quickly discovered that most technology from after the turn of the millennium stubbornly refused to function properly with some of our archival and library materials no matter what I tried.

Despite his initial excitement to get to know me, my uncle quickly revealed himself as a rather terrible boss. He was rude to workers, always missed board meetings, and was frankly just generally quite inept at management. It became quite obvious that the institute operated in spite of him, rather than because of him. I'd barely been there two weeks before he was deputizing me to attend donor meetings that he didn't want to go to in his place as a 'family representative.'

And then... I think it was exactly half a year into my employment, my uncle asked me to come to his office after the Institute had closed for the day. When I got there, he had two glasses of wine waiting on his desk, and he invited me to take a seat.

He started by saying that he knew I was only planning on staying another six months, but would I ever consider a longer-term position on the Institute?

I started to try and find the most polite way to turn him down, since given how unpleasant he was I had absolutely no interest in working for him any longer than I'd already agreed to, but the next thing he said gave me pause.

He said he wanted me to be his successor.

I was stunned when he said it. I thought it was some sort of joke. But he kept talking, and it started to make a bit more sense. Or at least, I could see where the idea had come from. The position *was* handed down in my family, and he'd been impressed with my performance so far- or that's what he claimed at the time.

I won't lie and say I didn't consider it. It would have been a guaranteed comfortable position for as long as I wanted it, and if he was going to be retiring then my biggest grievance with working there would be gone. But supernatural studies just really weren't something I was interested in dedicating my life to. So I thanked him very nicely, but said I had other interests I wanted to pursue.

He didn't seem bothered by my refusal- he practically shrugged it off. When I moved to leave, though, he insisted I not leave my drink. I told him I didn't really drink, but he said we needed to at least toast. I could tell he wasn't going to let it go, so we toasted to the future of the Institute, I took a small sip just to satisfy him, and then excused myself and turned to go.

I think I almost made it to the door before whatever he'd put in it kicked in. It was strong, whatever it was. I reached for the doorknob, but my vision was already swimming. I staggered, hit the

carpet, and had a moment to see my uncle with the most delighted grin I'd ever seen on his face before everything greyed out.

When I woke up, I couldn't move, and I couldn't see out of my right eye.

That whole side of my face had... that feeling when something is damaged so badly it's like it whites out with shock, where you *know* it hurts but you can't really *feel* it. I could feel something wet dripping down my cheek.

And my uncle was standing over me, angling for my other eye.

He was holding some sort of metal tool. I didn't waste any time trying to figure out what it was. I tried to move, to get away, but feeling was still coming back to my limbs, and it was happening so *slowly*. When my uncle realized I was awake, he panicked- held me down with one hand, grabbed the glass of wine with the other and tried to pour more of it into my mouth. I think he must have gotten the dosages wrong, or he hadn't counted on me drinking as little as I had.

I had no clue what to do, so I did the first thing that came to mind, which was to hold my mouth shut, go limp while it wore off and hope he'd think the drug had worked. He seemed to believe it- after a minute or two, he relaxed a little.

And then he made... a face like he was bracing himself for something, and reached up, and pulled *one of his eyes* out, and before I could even process that, he'd shoved it into *my* face. Into the place where *my* right eye should have been and wasn't.

I don't particularly feel the need to describe the sensation of having a foreign object stuck into your empty eye socket. It's not very pleasant.

It did give me a chance, though. I had feeling in my legs again by that point, at least enough to move. He took his hand away from my face- and he was still *smiling*, like it was the best day of his life- and I practically threw myself off his desk and bolted for the door.

My limbs still felt half dead, and there was something else too, a sort of... tugging in the back of my mind that didn't want me to go. But I was able to force myself out the door, get out of the office, and slam the door behind me.

I had to hold it shut to keep him away from me. He was shouting after me, and pounding on the wood- it's probably for the best that the building was empty, at that point. I had no idea what to do. I just held the door, and eventually he started getting... quieter. Like he was losing strength. After what felt like ages, I heard the sound of something heavy falling, and then I stopped being able to hear him entirely.

Once I felt confident he wasn't waiting for me to let my guard down, I just... dropped down to the floor to sit. The adrenaline was wearing off, which meant the pain in my face was becoming impossible to ignore.

And that was when I remembered about the eye.

I reached up to feel my face, just to see if... what was there matched up with what I thought I remembered.

There was an eye there. I couldn't see out of it. And I knew it *wasn't mine*. It wasn't supposed to *be* there. My first impulse was to just claw it out, get rid of it no matter what that meant for me, but-

I tried, and I couldn't. My hands just *stopped*.

And that was when I heard him in my head for the first time.

He wasn't actually my uncle, of course. Or- well, he *was*, just- several more generations back than I'd been led to believe. His voice was different, once he was inside my head. It sounded a lot more like mine.

But he was very willing to explain to me just how thoroughly he'd ruined my life.

He'd been choosing a member of my family every forty years or so to recruit and... replace. Carve their eyes out and put his own in their place. Since I'd woken up in the middle, I'd messed it up. He didn't have full control like he'd wanted, nowhere near it, but he was still in my head, and I couldn't get him out. He told me he only had so much time after he started his little procedure to finish it.

And he'd run out of time. He hadn't finished, and his body had died, and he wouldn't let me stab his eye out of my head and he *certainly* wouldn't let me quit, because if the Institute stopped functioning as a... feeding apparatus, as I learned, he'd draw down the ire of the dread power he'd dealt with.

So we were both stuck.

It probably goes without saying that neither of us were very happy about the situation.

But after calling me a lot of ugly names I will *not* repeat, he eventually got around to telling me I better get rid of his body quick if I didn't want to be indicted for murder when somebody found it in the morning, and I was willing to concede that that was probably a good idea. His disposal methods were... messy, but I can't deny that they worked.

As it turned out, it was very easy to step into his shoes. He'd already been telling the donors and department heads that he was considering me as his successor, in preparation for stealing my identity. Really, all I had to do was move my things into his office, once I had the bloodstains out of the rug.

These days I mostly ignore him. I've gotten quite good at it. I started wearing an eyepatch so people wouldn't ask questions about the mismatch. The worst he can do most of the time is shout at me and give me headaches. Speaking of which...

*(Rustling)*

*(Pill bottle rattles)*

*(Swallows)*

*(Sighs)*

Honestly, I'm glad Pearl melted the doors. Now that he's complaining about that, he's finally stopped gloating about successfully promoting a new Archivist. I had wanted to keep the position vacant after Etho's disappearance, but... well. His only successful evil act of the decade, I suppose. At least Grian seems to enjoy the job.

I hope that's good enough for you, because that's all you're getting today. I've still got work to do.

[Click]

## End Notes

HEY BESTIES HOW WE FEELING <3 for everybody who's been wondering what's up with xisuma: now you know!! the twist of this story is that he's actually not the villain. probably! who is? good question! :)

i've had this concept in my brain for a real long time- basically ever since i started writing this story with the premise of xisuma as the institute head and went, well, how do i make that work while keeping it in character? and i'm pretty happy with what i eventually came up with!

this is a wrap on this pretty lore-dense section of the story- after this we're gonna be getting back into more regular business, with statements from and about some more characters we haven't seen yet. i'm very excited! and i hope yall are continuing to enjoy. and if you are- maybe leave a comment! i love to see them

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