

[intro]

KC: Welcome to the Bone Zone

TK: I'm [name]

KC: and I'm Dr Darmaia Matari who is a totally real doctor of bonethropology.

[hosts talk about how they are etc.]

First segment: Thanaturge Watch

We discuss the fact that the Nightmare Thanaturge, Queen of the Bone Zone, has disappeared under mysterious circumstances and we're going through her diary to figure out what might have happened, because we're bonethropologists which is a completely real thing.

Read abridged entry and discuss:

From the Desk of the Thanaturge

Entry #1

My new lab assistant arrived, today. He seems reasonable. His strength and bone density are both very high, and should be useful for experiments that need more brawn than brains. He is not overambitious, and seems content to perform my commands with little to no questioning - and when he does question me, it's not out of arrogance; he seems to want to learn.

This is encouraging - while I have no interest in apprenticeship, being able to explain my reasoning from time to time should give me the opportunity to reflect on my own actions and augment my work. Plus, he may even give me a valuable new perspective with regard to other ways in which to perform my experiments. After all, I often overlook the simpler solutions in favour of unnecessarily complex ones. The curse of a superior intellect, I suppose.

[a bit pretentious, huh?]

His name is Draal, and I have sent him on an errand to gather certain materials I need to perform a summoning ritual later tonight. I intend to consult with a particularly loyal Djinni by the name of ██████████, whose insight has proven incredibly useful over the years. Her desire for arcane experience outweighs that of her need to return to The Essence from whence she came, so she is usually more than happy to help me with my tasks.

[TK asks what the essence is, KC explains how it's basically demon gumbo]

[now we get to the meat of the journal]

The ghost visited me last week, seeking help.

Her name was Aubrey, before she died. Somehow, she is able to remember being human. Unlike the rest of us, whose memories died along with us (save that vague understanding of our past form and world - and often a vivid memory of our final moments), Aubrey remembers her name, the sights and smells of the Human Realm, and most curiously she claims to be able to feel the dirt under her fingernails and a visceral 'hunger', the sensation of which is foreign to me.

Academically, the concept of hunger is one I understand, but I do not remember it from my time as a human. Only by studying the dogs who insist on devouring our brethren am I able to see its effects on the psyche.

[discuss how dogs are the worst]

Aubrey has been dead for several weeks now, and has been drifting through my lab from time to time. At first, this bothered me; the last thing I want is sensitive information to leak - especially my Djinni's name. I do not want another mage to be able to summon her and command her to reveal my secrets. At

any rate, as time went on it seemed Aubrey was purely interested in the metaphysical properties of our afterlife much like I am. While I requested she not enter my lab uninvited, I frequently hear a call from outside the door like the one I received last week.

It's at this point that the Nightmare Thanaturge invites the ghost into her lab and realises something's kinda wrong with her. She explains how ghosts have five physical traits: translucency, incorporeality, partial dumbness, fading, and agelessness. So, basically, they're semi-transparent people that sound like they're talking into a paper bag, I guess. The full thing about this is in the show notes, if you wanna read the whole explanation she puts in her grimoire.

What the Thanaturge realises is that Aubrey is somehow decomposing, which ghosts shouldn't do; they're always stuck at the moment of their death and they don't change at all. So that's weird.

"What's happening to me?" asked the ghost, and at this point I recognised a tremor of fear in her foggy voice. "I feel so hungry... and my hands, they're... changing..."

I looked at Aubrey's hands, and they had indeed begun to wither and form gnarled bony protrusions where once was flesh.

"This shouldn't be happening," I replied, suddenly pensive. "What does it feel like? Are you in pain?"

"Less than usual, to tell the truth." She responded. We both knew that was a bad sign; until now it has been apparent that a ghost is the mere image of a person at their time of death, and so they are frequently left in constant pain as their wounds refuse to heal. "My wounds have dulled even more, like the nerves have broken down. It feels like I'm falling apart."

So, the Thanaturge promises to get to the bottom of whatever's happening to Aubrey, and Aubrey tells her one more thing...

"I can feel something... moving me. Something I'm not controlling. I feel the earth beneath my feet, like footsteps, but I know I'm not taking them. Something, somewhere, is moving; something that's me, but not..."

[KC and TK discuss what's happening]

Second segment: News from Skeletopolis
Latest developments in the Skeleton Civil War:

- MAJOR BONES ROCKSDALE has gone on record as saying the disappearance of the Nightmare Thanaturge is a major victory for East Skeletopolis, and shows a major lack of leadership on the part of the enemy. ROCKSDALE is quoted as shouting "IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SKELETOPOLIS IS PLACED UNDER TOTAL MARTIAL LAW. THIS IS A GOOD THING, BECAUSE IT MEANS I WILL BE IN CHARGE. AND I TOTALLY KNOW WHAT I AM DOING." We have reached out to the leader of the West Skeletopolis army, who is a dinosaur skeleton for some reason we don't fully understand, but we have received no reply.

- A skirmish taking place at Port Skeletopolis has resulted in the destruction of Necrozoia's last working ship, destroying any hope of re-establishing a trade route by sea with Boneama. As the Phalange Peaks tunnel has suffered a staffing issue due to illegal conscription efforts on the part of the East Skeletopolis army, safe trade is unlikely to resume any time soon, and merchants must still make the treacherous journey through the mountains on foot in order to trade with Boneama. Please tune in to Boneva News after this broadcast where Konstantin Phalanx will be discussing the upcoming changes to rations, and what you can do to help your local area.

- Boneama officials have stated that the city of Palatine is still unwilling to send supplies to Boneva. Negotiations continue through our allies in Boneama, whose ambassadors are returning to Palatine in the coming weeks.

That is all in Skeleton Civil War news updates.

Third segment: Sponsors

KC: Today's podcast is sponsored by Diet Bees, the low-sugar drink made entirely of 10,000 bees.

TK: "Damn son, that's a lot of bees!"

KC: Quench your thirst for bees by pouring 10,000 of them into your ribcage, because it is good to do so.

Also, for every 100 bone purchase (the price of one can of Diet Bees!), 10 bones are donated to wildlife conservation; your money goes to the Canine Preservation Society to give the dogs something to gnaw on other than our legs.

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Fourth segment: Dear Doctor

[answer questions/give advice]

If you'd like to send us a question, send that to deardoctor@dareyouenterthebone.zone

Possible fifth, wildcard, segment, if we come up with anything to talk about.

Outro:

Dare You Enter The Bone Zone was written and produced by probable human Kaolin Cash, in association with a spirit named Tony that she summoned from The Essence and who, for some reason, manifests as a man from the central United States.

Special thanks to the Nightmare Thanaturge's lab assistant, Draal, who provided all of his employer's documents to the totally real bonethropologists Darmaia and [name].

The music you've heard in this podcast is Skeleton Club by catboots, who is awesome and I love him. You can listen to more of his music at soundcloud.com/cat_boots and see his other work at catboots.co.uk

And don't forget to send any questions to deardoctor@dareyouenterthebone.zone

TK: See you at the Bone Docks!

KC: Tip your ferryman.