

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Many episodes contain additional warnings.

Transcripts following are for the whole series, beware of spoilers as you read ahead!

1.1- Did You Know

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains mention of asphyxiation and pain.

Did you know that dying really hurts? For starters, whatever it was that killed you never really heals. Second, you don't breathe anymore. And even if you did, no more blood to carry that oxygen around. So you're basically asphyxiating all the time. Which won't kill you, as you're already dead, but it's not pleasant either.

You get used to it, but man are your first few weeks gonna suck.

Eventually it's like wearing a really tight bracelet- if you try to focus a bit, you'll feel it, but it stops bothering you for the most part.

The "spirits", if you will, of the dead are... call it "Shifted" from the world we know, allowing for just as vast a civilization as that of the living. Everyone begins in the Entrance Hall, which is at the heart of the newest community built. Every so and so years, a new community is built to grant the newly dead the ability to reside around people with similar experiences to their own. The residents of a community are people who all died at around the same time- usually about 3 decades between newest and oldest- and are expected to turn apathetic at around the same time. That's what they call it when you stop being like this. Alive but not. It's basically exactly what it sounds like.

I'm one of the first in this community. Got a neighbor, lovely guy, keeps to himself, but other than that... Just me and the folks working at the Entrance Hall. Who live Pete-knows-where. And I'm not allowed back in there. So it's basically just me.

What better time to catch up on some reading!

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1.2- Count Your Lucky Stars

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains mention of decapitation, loss of organs and limbs, and discussion of pain.

It's been about a week. Only got home last night- they kept me in the Entrance Hall for a bit longer than they say they usually do. There was a bedroom for me there, which was nice, the fact that I was too sick to see any of it, a little less so.

I can't complain, some people have it way worse from what I've heard. It's not like I was decapitated. Didn't part ways with any vital organ. Just have this awful stomach ache. Granted, worst stomach ache I ever had, but once I get used to it it's pretty much

back to normal. Took 4 days for me to be able to move anything connected to my torso, but I can walk from my bed to the armchair now, if no one's in a hurry.

My armchair looks right out the window, nicely enough, so I've been technically hanging out with my neighbor a lot. He just sits out in his garden and we talk through the window a bit. Mostly about birds. Well. The lack of birds. He really misses birds, apparently.

I do feel sorry for him, poor fella practically lost a limb getting here. Well, half his head. Didn't ask how, he doesn't seem keen on talking about it, which is entirely fair. He's an odd guy, though. He acts like he's 30, talks like he's 70, but doesn't look either. Suppose death will do that to you.

Reckon I'll go exploring a bit tomorrow. Brand new neighborhood, bound to find something to pass the time.

We might have a library!

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1.3- Death's Good Book

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains mild language and depictions of pain.

Right, found our library. Well, first I got lost five times trying to find the main street. I did, though, and it's a really sweet place! Lots of places for little shops, a pool... there's a pretty big communal garden right at the center. No flowers yet, though. Just rows of neat fresh dirt. Maybe I'll plant a couple, make it a little more colorful for newcomers. Anyhow- main street. So I was walking around all those shops, all of which were empty. Like, we have a cafe, fully furnished and bright and lovely, but there's no trace of food anywhere. No water coming out the tap, let alone coffee. No— ahhhh, shit. Blasted stomach. Ugh. Okay, focus up.

The coffee is not what we're here for! Library! It's right between the cafe and what I guess is a picture gallery? It is comically tiny in comparison to both. The sign by the door, the only indicator that this is in fact a library, goes from the top down, at the left side of the door. The word 'library' won't even fit across the top.

I was preparing for disappointment, a place that size won't have more than a handful of books. Half of them old map books. Trust me, I know libraries. But I swear the room grew tenfold as I stepped in. Like the walls tried to get as far away from me as they could, revealing endless more bookshelves in their wake. I've been here over a day, I think. There is just so much. Everywhere you look... so much. Some of these books are not from the world of the living, I just know it.

I could spend my eternity here.

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1.4- What A Day Will It Has Been

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains allusions to dissociation.

I honestly don't know why they don't have all these books at the Entrance Hall. There is so much information about re-living here. Like time! This place breaks time, and they don't tell you that! Go find that out for yourself, it's not like you have something better to do.

Right, sorry. Explanation. Things don't happen here. They just are. And they don't-happen out of order, sometimes. It's a bit like how I know, rationally speaking, that I arrived here less than 10 days ago. But I don't remember any other way of... well, not living. My point stands- it feels like I've been here since I was a kid. It's like I've settled so deep into a routine without ever having to make it a habit. I don't even know what the routine is, just that everything I do feels so... right and natural. It's like every choice I'm about to make was decided a few moments before I was even aware I had to make it.

Which is a bit distressing. Is it just my linear perception that's messed up, or do people actually not have free will here? I've been trying to ignore this- philosophy always did give me a right headache- but the fact that I can't find an answer to this in any book isn't making me feel any better. I'll keep looking, I'll be damned if I give up on this, but... I wonder if this feeling of stifling routine is what makes people apathetic in the end? Is there a way to prevent it?

Put this down as Top 5 Things They Don't Tell You About The Afterlife, I guess.

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1.5- Strong in The Real Way

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains mild language, discussion of the afterlife, religion, and existentialism.

So I'm dead. We're all on board with that by now, yeah?

It still baffles me that this is what happens when you die.

I don't think I knew anyone who properly believed in an afterlife. Everyone used the idea of Heaven as Hell in day-to-day conversations but those words didn't carry much weight. I was an atheist myself, and most of my friends and family weren't religious either. I just thought that once you're dead, that's it. You stop. Even though your body is still somewhere, you aren't, right? ...and then that line of thinking would start breaking my brain and I'd stop and move on.

I haven't heard or read mention of anything separating groups of people here, aside from their time of death and state of emotional clarity. It seems that communities are selected very carefully so that everyone will get apathetic at around the same time, but I don't think there's a personality or morality vetting process.

The only thing the Entrance Hall people only seem to care about “strength”. And from what I’m seeing here, not physical strength. More like... how much shit your brain can take before you break it. Should have guessed it by now- they’re not really concerned with your body at all. They don’t have any reason to, your body’s long gone when you get here. All that’s left is your... brain? Not *brain* brain, but I don’t wanna call it the “Soul”. So yeah, brain. That’s all we are here.

I wonder if they keep records of... oh. Oh no.

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1.6- Always and Forever

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains discussion of mental health issues.

I need to test something out. A hunch. I left the library, and went back home.

That book in the library- it had all our scores. Projections of how long we will last until we become Apathetic. It’s kind of a morbid thing, seeing your not-lifetime and mental fortitude displayed as a number. But you know, time wasted worrying is time wasted, and apparently no one here has much of that to spare. My neighbor was near the bottom of the list. Meaning whoever made that list thinks he’ll be one of the first to go. But if I get to him fast enough, maybe I can prevent it.

The cause for Apathy basically boils down to your brain deciding to quit. Being overwhelmed, not managing to get used to this new existence. The brain gets overworked, and eventually gives. For the living, that might cause mental health issues, or just an annoyingly slow couple days where you can barely feed yourself for no apparent reason. It sucks, but with some work and time you can pull yourself out.

But here, you just get stuck like that forever. Since time doesn’t really happen, eventually this is your routine. You have always been like that.

Again, that’s incredibly morbid. I kinda understand why they keep that from us. But if there’s nothing we can do after the fact, there’s got to be a preventative measure! Something we can do to help ourselves last longer. Which is what I’m going to try to do. Help my neighbor last for as long as he can. I have a couple ideas, we’ll toss a noodle at them and see what sticks. Which reminds me, I should check if we can actually cook here somehow. Cooking is good.

Keeping his mind engaged with simple, calm tasks. Easy.
How did no one think of this beforehand?

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1.7- Hush A Bye

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof.

This isn’t going exactly how I expected.

My neighbor is still engaged, which is great, though not as much as I'd hoped. It's hard to think of so many things to do... I know that time is fake and all that but it really does feel like trying to fill up 24 hours over and over and over again. We've done pretty much everything I can think of. Several times. We've walked past every corner in the Community at least three times. We found the edge! It's mostly circular, going from behind one of the houses, to the pond and the tree hill, and back 'round right through the middle of this building that looks alright enough, but feels like it exploded at least twice.

After all that action I thought it'd be easier to engage just mentally. There are so many more things to talk about than things to do. We spent a while playing trivia, we recounted obscure movies to one another... he speaks some Russian, been trying to teach me. I'm pretty terrible, but it worked alright. A good time, if nothing else. He's a great guy. I hate that I now know what's gonna happen to him if this doesn't work.

I can usually keep him for what feels like an hour or two, but then he just... spaces out for a couple minutes and when he's back and responsive he's just wiped. Honestly, this would be much easier if he slept. Sleep is great. Takes up nearly half your day. A solid couple hours when you don't have to worry about anything. I miss sleep.

And eating. Such a time sink! You need to go shopping, then to cook, then to stop doing things until you're done eating! And sometimes the eating makes you just so tired, and you nap! Two time-wasting birds with one stone!

...I have too much time on my hands.

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1.8- Dead and Gone

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains discussions of dissociation, child death, grieving, and existentialism.

I think we have a new neighbor, haven't gone around to see them yet, but I noticed someone walking around.

Shit, I haven't been back to the library yet. There are a few books there I probably should have hidden better before leaving... I just hope the new person won't find them.

Or maybe it's better if they do, I don't know. I don't care. He hasn't lifted a finger in what must have been a few days. He hasn't said anything in- ugh! He's just sitting on the floor, legs crossed, his back against the sofa.

This is so wrong. He's a kid. He's a fucking 15-year-old kid.

[Deep breath] Okay, relax. Nothing we can do. Just let him be, and go home. God, I'm already dead! That was supposed to be the easy way out! When you're dead nothing's supposed to matter anymore because you're DEAD! Why do we have to keep losing people? I- Would I want to stop existing like this, no. Obviously not. But I wouldn't care that I didn't exist like this if I were dead, because, again, I'd be dead!

This is ludicrous. This isn't death, it's doing life all over again but without any of the people that make it worthwhile. It's sitting down with a stranger whose life is flaking away before your eyes, unable to do anything about it but wait until it's over. Why even bother if we're all going to end up like this? Why not let us die, or just wander on our own until we just don't anymore?

Those folks at the Entrance Hall have some things to answer for.

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1.9- Run for Your Life

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains memory loss.

[All while briskly walking] Once you leave the Entrance Hall, you're not supposed to come back. But there's a way in. I know there is. It says so in the book. "Employees of the Entrance Hall are only required to be in attendance when a new member arrives at the Community." That means they probably leave. Which means they need a way to get back.

I'm gonna find that way, go in, and make them tell me the rules. If they don't, I'll refuse to leave until I can find answers on my own. They must have some way to keep information. Another library, or a guide, or a big computer. Huh, there's no advanced tech anywhere in the Community. How did I not notice that? Nothing here looks like it was created after the 1960's. At most. How... how did I miss that?

And why did I realize now? What else am I missing?

Oh... oh, my sweet baby dragon. I have no idea how I died. Where did I live?
...What's my name?

That's impossible, that's not the type of thing you forget. My second grade teacher, fine, can live without remembering that. But... I don't think I remember anything about my life? My life. Specifically. I know general things, but nothing about myself. If they took that away from me, they'd better watch out.

And they're surprised our brains give out! They have nothing to hold onto, no normal to retreat into when all this gets too much.

I can see the Hall now, just a bit further. If it's supposedly in the center of the community, why is it so far away from everything? It's like we're all arranged in a little doughnut around it. Are they trying to keep us far away? Why would they— boat! Oh, of course! I was on a boat when I died. International waters. I didn't live anywhere, I was just... floating around.

Is it my proximity to the Hall? Are they keeping us out because here we remember?

I better be wrong about this.

Alright, here we go.

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1.10- Billow Your Sails

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains recollection of past physical trauma, mention of child death, and memory loss.

Time makes so much more sense when you have a way to measure it. And, no offense to brains, they suck at that. I got a watch. Much more reliable.

I can confidently say I died just under a year ago today. But that's highly subjective, as time passes differently inside the Hall and outside it. Eh, time's always been fake. What's new.

I have some information now. About myself, mostly. And yes, it was on a computer. One from around the late 1980's, but a computer nonetheless.

I died on August 18th, 2045. I was very nearly 30, and that boat I was on was supposed to take my family and I to one of those Outlaw Islands. We'd gotten into some trouble and had nowhere else to go. I don't think it would have been that bad. There was a storm, a couple food-less days, and this real arse who asked to ride with us for a week while he fixed his dinky little floaty raft. Long story short the boat sank. I was slightly impaled. I don't know what happened to everybody else.

Oh, and my name's Ruby. Reuben Lance Kenrick.

My neighbor was Luke Langer, he died in 2027. I'll spare you the details.

They offered me to stay in the Hall. Be part of the crew here. I'd say that's nice of them, but the alternative is going back out and losing all these memories again. Risking Apathy. So I'll stick to "decent" of them and see how we go from there. I think I will, though. After learning so much, you just can't go back. Anyone who comes here will still have the library. Maybe some of them will find it. Maybe they'll learn more, too.

Maybe, once there are enough of us, we can change the rules.

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1.11- You Should Know

Warning: this series contains many mentions and discussions of death, injury, and the aftermath thereof. Additionally, this episode contains mention of asphyxiation and pain.

You should know that dying can really hurt. It's partially because your body stops healing. Also, you don't need to breathe anymore. You probably will, that's a big habit to break, but you're not breathing in any way that matters. It's not fun. But mostly, you'll be in pain because your mind is freaking out. Big time. This is a lot to take in, and you're working very hard to keep calm on the outside. So all the freaking out gets directed into

your body.

You'll get used to it, but it might take a while.

Eventually, it becomes kind of like wearing a watch. You know it's there, but you get so used to how it feels around your wrist that you forget, and check the time on your phone anyway.

So. Orientation time. We— that is, the person part of people, the part that keeps going after you die— don't occupy the same space as living people. Physics work a little differently. Time is largely fake, in most places. You, like everybody else, started at the Entrance Hall. That's what we call the big tower back there. In the past, it would hop around between all the different Communities, and leave after a while. But not anymore. We're here to help you. The Hall is not going anywhere. Every so often a new person will come out of there, to join the Community. We try to match people well, so that you'll exist around people who have had similar lives to your own. Common ground. I really do think you'll all get along great.

I'm one of the guides for this Community. I'm here to answer any questions you might have, and to help you and everyone else here feel more at home. I stay above the library, right on the main street. The rest of my team here have homes in the Community, too. Please feel free to visit any of us whenever you like. We're here for you.

And your home is right through there. I'll let you settle in. But if you ever need anything, I'll be in the library, setting some records straight.