

## TS Podcast – Atacama Skeleton

Devin-Hey guys, it's Thinking Sideways, the podcast. I'm Devin, joined this week by my special guest cohosts...

Joe-Joe

Devin-and...

Steve-Steve

Devin-Yay

Joe-We're special guest hosts this week, huh?

Devin-Yeah! And this week we're going to talk about a mystery

Steve-It's going to be a little one (Devin laughing)

Joe-Yeah, it is. (Steve laughing)

Devin-Ahh this is like literally the jokes I've been hearing all week.

Steve-This is going to be a jokey, pun-filled episode,if we're not careful.

Devin-What? If we're not careful? You mean if we're careful.

Steve-Yes, yes.

Joe-It's about a tiny alien. I just gave it away.

Devin-Aw man, Joe!

Joe-I know.

Devin-\*sigh\* This week, as you know because you probably read the title, and maybe the description, we're going to talk about the Atacama Skeleton. Also often referred to as the Atacama humanoid, or Atacama alien, or I don't know...

Steve-Or proof...

Devin-Or proof for aliens. Proof for the little green guys.

Steve-Literally the little green men (laughing)

Joe-Yeah. That explains why we haven't seen their saucers. They must be tiny, the size of a garbage can lid.

Devin-Yeah I know (Steve laughing). It's crazy. Actually it makes sense. That's why we were all

convinced by a hubcap for a while. It's the right size. Ok, we done?

Joe-Yeah, uh huh.

Steve-Please!

Devin-Ah, so our story, just to quickly do a brief overview here. Briefly quickly? Yep. In 2003, I'm pretty sure that's the year this was discovered...

Joe-I think so.

Devin- But it's hard to tell cause some of the stories are different but we're going to say in 2003...

Steve-They're hard to validate, but yeah.

Devin-A “token” collector made a very interesting discovery in a pouch in the Atacama Desert, which is mostly in Chile. It's about 41000 square miles, which for you people who are not civilized (Joe laughs), is 105000 square kilometers. There's very little population there. It's mostly just deserted desert towns (laughing) from the nitrate era.

Joe-Yeah, they closed down the mines and the towns went away.

Steve-Oh, I was going to ask, you mean cause it was nitrate mining?

D-Yeah.

S-Ok, that's...got it.

D-No, you've never heard of that before? (laughing)

S-I was going “Wait, I've never heard of the nitrate era!” (laughing)

J-You've never heard of that?

D-You must have just forgotten.

S-I slept through that class.

J-Yeah, obviously, once the mine closes down you don't really want to stick around because there's no water in that particular desert..

D-Yeah. There's no...right. We were talking earlier it's...is it the driest place on earth?

S-One of...

J-It is *the* driest place on earth.

D-Yeah, so take that everyone who thought that you knew where it was. So this guy, while scavenging, uh found...he was in a church and kind of digging around. He used to find...he was trying to find things

that were worth money.

J-Yeah, I think I...in one version of this I heard he was actually...he actually found it in a graveyard next to the church which was in an abandoned town.

D-Yeah. Or in the church or...

J-He might have actually been grave robbing.

D-Yeah, totally possible.

S-I was going to say, basically you're calling...he's described as a token collector, but really he's just a scavenger.

D-Yeah, oh yeah, totally just a scavenger. He's just raiding these deserted towns looking for anything that might be worth anything.

S-Yeah, which I mean they're deserted towns, so it's not like anybody's going to get upset about it, but he's scavenging.

D-Yeah.

J-Pretty much.

D-So buried just slightly under the ground, I don't think it was very deep, he found a white cloth that was tied with a violet ribbon. Violet, the color, ribbon. And it contained a skeleton that was about six inches long with a slightly elongated skull and only ten ribs.

S-That's a little unusual.

D-To make this story a little weirder, I'm just going to throw a quick little thing in here and then we'll talk about it more. In records that are dating back to, I think it was 1933, a similar 6 inch tall humanoid skeleton was featured in Ripley's Believe it or Not book that came out then, and it was also, as I said, a six inch tall skeleton. He was called "Ata-boy" (laugh) cause he was found, believe it or not, in...

S-Dun dun dun!

D-...the Atacama Desert not far from where Ata was found, which was what they called this new skeleton.

J-It's been speculated that there's probably all kinds of these things floating around the Atacama Desert.

D-Yeah, probably there is.

J-Cause it's so dry things get mummified.

D-Yeah, uh huh.

S-Yeah, I was going to say is that it's...that desert is going to suck the moisture out and preserve things

obscenely quickly.

D-Yeah, and really well, ususally.

S-Yes.

D-So, as we said, this guy, his name was Oscar Munez, and I can't find anything about him, except as I said he's just a scavenger. But this skeleton was eventually sold to the current owner. His name was Ramon Navia Assorio [sp?], and he's a Spanish business man. Not was, is. Sorry, he is currently still living, still owns this skeleton...

J-It's not in his hands though these days, right? Did he get it back, or did he...

D-You know, he did. He got it back. He was never without it. It was...when it was examined it was examined in Spain, in Barcelona.

J-Ok.

D-Where he is.

J-I see.

D-So it's my understanding that he never not had possession of it.

J-Why would he want this creepy little thing in his house?

D-It's kind of cool. I don't know, I kind of like it. I would take one.

J-Really?

D-Yeah. Totally. Would you not?

S-You also collect those weird dolls that have the eyes that follow you, though.

D-No, I don't. Those scare me. (all laughing) Those scare me a lot. No, we had those when I was a kid and I did *not* like them. Yeah.

J-I don't remember that toy.

D-What, the doll?

J-The eyes actually followed you around?

D-No.

S-No, they just appeared to.

D-Yeah, you know like paintings do.

J-Oh, I see.

D-Somehow, and I don't totally know how, because Ramon had this thing for a long time, until 2009. It had just kind of been this obscure thing he owned. He didn't really talk about it that much, but a guy by the name of Steven Greer found out about this skeleton in a...he was at a conference and somebody off handedly mentioned it to him, this tiny little skeleton that they knew some guy who owned. Knew some guy who owned? That makes sense, right?

S-Yeah, that's more better.

D-That's more better. That's pretty close, yeah. And so Mr Greer, or Steven, we'll just call him Steven, uh, he managed to...

S-Let's call him Mr Greer, please.

D-(laugh) Mr Greer managed to convince Ramon that he could investigate the skeleton. So in 2009, that's when this whole story started to hit the main stream.

S-Uh huh.

D-Would you agree with that?

J-Yeah, that sounds about right.

S-Yeah, I mean Greer, he is the one who raised all the attention about that.

D-He sure did.

J-And when did the movie come out?

D-That was 2012, I think...

S-Yes. Serious.

D-Maybe 2013, yeah 2012 area.

S-I know we're going to get into all that.

D- Yeah, we'll talk about that in a little bit. So, Mr Greer assembled a team of, um...we're going to call them air quote "respected scientists" unquote. Some of the people on the team, I think, are actually...

S-Professionals in their field.

D-Well, I think some of them are actually, like, good scientists. Some of the research I read, I trust these people...

S-They're competent.

D-Absolutely...

J-But Steven Greer...not quite so much...

D-But Steven Greer maybe not so much, and some of the people on his team maybe not so much, but um...we'll make sure to make note of when we believe people and when we don't believe people (laughing). Cause you know us, we're good at that. (Steve laughing). Um, so yeah. Mr Greer and his team went to Barcelona in 2012 to conduct extensive research on the skeleton. The team was headed up by Dr. Gary Nolan, who after some Googling, you know, he's a lot of UFO stuff, this guy. He's a Ufologist.

S-He's into it.

J-Nolan?

D-He's into it. Nolan, Dr. Nolan. But he is also a geneticist at Stanford.

J-Same guy, you're sure?

D-Same guy, yeah. So I guess he's probably not a total hack?

J-Yeah, maybe not.

D-I don't know, it's hard to tell with these people sometimes, right.

J-You think he's got tenure?

D-Yeah, probably. (all laughing)

J-He must have tenure.

D-Yeah, probably yeah. So anyway, we'll talk a little bit more about the other members of the team, or at least one other member of the team later...

S-Ok.

D-...but I do want to just first start out by describing the skeleton. I know we have some listeners who listen to us while driving, things like that, so let's talk about what the skeleton looked like and what makes it so strange other than the fact that it's six inches tall.

S-Ok.

D-So let's go with that. The team examined Ata, Ah-ta, Ata?

S-Ata.

J-Atta-boy.

D-And they took DNA samples from the distal ends of the anterior ribs, which is the fancy way of saying they took samples from the front ends of the ribs, which should have been connected to the sternum. The sternum...there's no sternum on the skeleton, which isn't really that weird to me in the

long run.

J-I don't think so. I'm not sure how well formed the sternum is at a young age.

D-Yeah.

S-Yeah I think that's...well, at what age? That's the question.

D-Well yeah, that is a big question around this, but it doesn't really...I mean, in a human fetus the sternum forms...it's there.

S-I think the sternum forms in like the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> month, once the rib cage firms up and all the organs have developed. Then it kind of, cause it, you know, shouldn't create too early cause then it could make the cavity too small...

J-Uh huh, yeah.

S-So I think that's one of the reasons that it waits longer.

D-Right.

J-But there is a big dispute about this critters, or this things age.

D-Yeah, there is. Yeah, and we'll...we're absolutely get in to that in a minute. But so that's where they took the bone...DNA samples from. And there was bone marrow in the skull as well, so they took a little of that as well for testing.

S-And I've seen...I've seen a lot of hubbub about, if you see photos of this and you see the back of the head, there's a hole in it, and they say that's because they punched that hole to get the DNA.

D and J-Yes.

S-But you also hear a lot of people on the internet say "oh no, that's obviously the cause of death!"

D-Ok, so actually I can clarify this. They took CT scans and x-rays before they started to do anything exploratory, and you can see in the CT scans there's a fracture at the back of the head. It's not a huge hole in the back of the head where they had to cut through, but...

S-Ok, got it.

D-...there is a visible fracture in the back of the skull that that's what they're talking about when they say that's the cause of death.

S-Well, ok. I've seen somewhere that they will say well there's a hole...

D-Yeah, those people are dumb.

S-(Laughing) Ok, I just want to point it out.

D-Misinformed is probably a better way of saying...they're misinformed. That big hole, as far as I can tell, they did cut it to get to...to extract...

S-To put a hook in there to scrape material out.

D-Yeah. I am not of the impression that that hole existed...

S-Prior to the testing.

D-Yeah, yeah.

S-I am in agreement with that.

D-But there was a fracture in the skull.

J-There was a photograph too, from prior, where the hole was not there, so.

D-Yeah, where the hole was not there, yep. Um, but that's good. So like I said, they took x-rays and CT scans of the tiny skeleton to make sure that they could evaluate the body for any abnormalities before they did any, again, exploration.

S-So they were following good procedures.

D-They were following...actually, they were following exceptional procedures, yeah. Everything was done in a totally sterile environment. Everything was documented. People were taking pictures and filming the entire time, which is really important also, so you can document if somebody happens to do something that caused damage to it, you could come back later and say "ok, did one of us do this while we were exploring, or did not."

S-So this isn't like when they did all the testing on the dinosaur bones and determined that they were part ostrich?

D-Yeah, no, not like that.

J-Oh, ok. (Steve laughing)

D-So at least during this part, during the examination, the procedures they were...they were very well followed. So, Ata, as I've mentioned again and again, is six inches long, which is, um...

S-Or tall.

D-Or tall.

S-Referred to as six inches tall...

D-Or long, long, tall.

J-Tall works.

D-Which is, I think it's 15 centimeters, is what I see. That's about equal. One place I saw it described as 150 millimeters, which I thought was silly. (Steve laughing). I mean, why not just use centimeters?

S-It might be a little more accurate to break it into millimeters, so I don't know.

D-Maybe yeah, anyway, so it's about that size again, for our not American measurers.

J-Listeners.

S-Measurers?

D-Yeah.

S-It's got a goofy looking head, though.

D-It's very elongated. It's kind...you know what it reminds me of is the crystal skull from Indiana Jones.

S-That was a terrible movie.

J-Yeah, totally terrible, yes.

D-So it's very long, oval almost, shaped skull...

J-Yeah, which would explain why a lot of people think it's an alien.

D-Yeah, and you can see there's some bone abnormalities just in the formation of it. So it doesn't seem as though the skull was crushed post-mortem, to be that way.

S-Oh, you mean like squeezed and collapsed on itself a little bit, I see what you're getting out of that.

D-Yeah. And like I said, there's a fracture on the back, right side of the skull, which is often ruled as the cause of death. There's a tooth in the jaw actually. I don't know if you guys actually got a chance to look at this or not. It's kind of interesting. There's an actual tooth in the jaw. It's not like little infant nubblins. It's like an actual...they describe it as a mature tooth, which is interesting.

J-Yeah, well...

S-Hmm...

D-Yeah, yeah, interesting.

J-Yeah, it's unusual.

D-Yeah, it is unusual. There's a fracture on the right arm, just above the elbow. This skeleton has just ten ribs, which is weird, you know. Humans have 12 ribs, everyone knows that.

J-Yeah.

S-Normally.

D-And after two months in utero, a human fetus will have developed all 12 ribs, just mentioning.

J-Generally.

D-Generally...usually.

J-Yeah, usually, yeah.

D-In almost every circumstance, yeah. During the CT scan it was revealed that there are lungs in this mummy's skeleton...

J-Or were,

D-Or were...well, are.

S-The remains of...they're still there.

D-And quote "what appears to be the remains of a heart structure" unquote. And this has caused the team at Stanford and also pretty much every researcher to look at this stuff to believe that it's a real skeleton of a real, living thing.

J-It's not just a little carved wooden...

D-It's not just a hoax, no.

S-If this is a hoax, this is the best hoax ever.

D-I saw a very tongue in cheek thing recently when I was reading about this, I think it was just an hour or two ago, that said...the quote was "this couldn't be a hoax unless it was a hoax by aliens." (S and J laughing) I was like, ugh, God, of course you would go there.

J-Who says aliens don't have a sense of humor?

D-Yeah, really.

S-Practical jokers.

D-There's also a fairly pronounced curve to the spine, both there's a hump like...but I think that's just from the way it was preserved...

S-Near the shoulders.

D-Yeah, a hump near the shoulders, kind of, but also the spine curves, like in a C-shape a little bit.

S-It's got a serious S-curve to it.

D-Yeah, well I don't think it's an S-curve. I don't think it ever curves back, is the thing...it's just the C, it just curves the one way. And again, we don't know...I don't know certainly...

J-It's hard to say...

D-If it's just from the mummifi...mummification...

S and J-Mummification.

D-Mummification, thank you (Joe laughing). The “mummifizing” of it (laughing).

J-The mummifizing. Also, being wrapped up in a cloth and compressed could...

S-While there was still moisture in the body.

D-Yeah, absolutely.

S-And when it dries out it's gonna stiffen in whatever position it was at.

D and J-Yeah.

D-And there's one more thing to mention, well I guess there's a few more things to mention. I want to mention how tiny the little feet are (Steve laughing). Tiny, tiny little feet.

J-Tiny little feet, smaller than yours?

D-Yeah, but...yeah, smaller than mine, but also like proportionately tiny, right? Would you...I would say.

S-Uh huh.

J-Yeah.

D-You can almost miss them. Almost, at the bottom of the legs.

S-I didn't find them to be out of proportion, but then again it is so small to begin with...

D-Yeah.

S-...that that's why I don't find them to be disproportionately small.

D-That's fair. The other thing that I have to mention is the knees. Knees, it turns out, for those of you who don't know, are a pretty good way of determining age, early years in life...

S-In humans.

D-In humans, yeah. Because when we're born we don't really have kneecaps, which is a misnomer. We do have kneecaps, they're just all cartilage, and they harden over time.

S-Ossification.

D-But, yeah. But when you're born, you basically don't have kneecaps.

J-Gross.

D-And you can look at the x-rays of knees, it's very interesting, there's like no...they don't look like knees, basically (laughing) when you're an infant. They just don't, and it's hard to describe, so I would encourage you guys to go out and Google this, it's kind of fascinating, I didn't really know this about knees.

S-Oh, about what knees on babies look like?

D-Yeah!

S-It basically just looks like there's two leg bones and there's nothing there...

D-And there's like a little ball of bone on either side, but there's no noticeable joint and there's no cap or anything like that.

S-That's how it's formed.

J-Babies are weird (Steve laughing).

D-Babies are really weird, yeah.

J-Yeah they are.

D-Yeah. So they stay cartilage until you're about three then calcify all the way up until you're about six to eight, depending on, you know, your own personal development. But, apparently, and I know Steve has some things to say about this that we'll tackle in the theories section, but apparently Ata had fully formed kneecaps. Which, again, it's like hard to tell because he's so tiny, that it's really hard to see what's going on in there...

J-I haven't seen anything that looks like a kneecap to me.

D-I didn't...it's interesting, right? It's hard...like I said, it's hard to tell and we'll grab on to this a little more in theories.

S-Yeah, we're going to have to come back to this, so yeah.

D-But you will see that around, it's hard...I'm kinda fifty-fifty on it. I don't know. I'm also not a scientist, so I can't look at that and be "oh yeah, totally that's a kneecap." I don't really know.

S-You can't?

D-Can you?

S-Yeah, of course!

D-Hmm.

S-I got knees. I know what they look like.

D-The inside? You examine the inside of your knees regularly?

S-Yes!

J-Yeah, I don't know.

D-Yeah.

J-I'm thinking no kneecaps.

S-The [?], got it. [I can't tell what he said here, they were talking over each other.]

D-So people go ahead and say that with the knees and the presence of a developed tooth, that would put this being at having lived for some time, at least a year.

S-Outside of the womb.

D-Outside of the womb.

J-Yeah, in other words it can't be a fetus, the skeleton of a fetus.

D-Right. That's the thing that you draw, that's the conclusion that you would draw from this information. Again, we're going to talk about all this stuff in the theories, so like, everybody stop yelling at me, please.

S-There's some more to come.

D-Yeah! Cause there's another really big twist! (Steve laughing)

J-Right on!

D-It's a really big twist. And that is, you remember I said they took DNA from the ribs?

S-Yep.

D-And they tested that as well as the bone marrow found in the skull, and apparently, the report is that Ata only shares 91% of it's DNA with humans.

S-Ok?

D-Dun dun dun! For comparison, for comparison, we share about 90% of our DNA with cats, 80% with cows, and 50% with bananas.

J-Oh my god. I guess I shouldn't be eating cows, I guess.

D-No, I guess not (laughing)

S-This is why I don't eat bananas.

D-There's variance between humans, right? That's an actual thing, there's genetic variance, but it's about a 0.5% variance.

S-Half a percent.

D-Yeah, half a percent variance between any homosapien.

J-Ok.

D-One last thing. I keep saying that, right? "One last thing I have to mention," but...

S-It's fine, this is...you have now gone to the same level as TV news.

D-Oh, that's true.

S-Which is we're going to drop the story, but first we're going to tell you about this...we're going to come back with this main story, but first we're going to go to the weather. That's what she's...

J-Yeah, uh huh. Isn't that annoying when they do that?

S-That's how she's formulated this (laughing).

D-You mean brilliant. Yeah, brilliant.

J-Ok, we'll be back after this word from our sponsors.

D-Yeah. One last thing, again. Actually it's the second to last thing...

S-Then we'll talk about the weather in Edinburgh, ok.

D-If you can say all the names, yeah. Nobody really knows how old this thing is. Obviously, when they first found it they thought, "oh my god, this thing is like millenia old, it's got to be so old."

S-Because it's mummified.

D-Because it's mummified, and it didn't look like anything we knew about, and they were like well maybe it's some type of pre homosapien type thing, maybe it's a neanderthal, maybe it's, you know, who knows. And they've come to the conclusion since then that it's like a couple decades old.

J-Yeah, at the most.

S and D-At the most.

D-Yeah. But as I mentioned, Ripley of Ripley's Believe it or Not, his name is Robert, Robert Ripley. He's involved in the case, like I said.

J-Um, isn't he dead?

D-I'm sorry. He was.

J-Ok (Steve laughing, Devin annoyed sigh).

S-He was sort of involved.

D-Kind of, in a way. You guys know that Ripley was obsessed with shrunken heads?

S-Oh yeah!

D-Like, *obsessed* with shrunken heads.

J-Which is weird.

D-I kind of think shrunken heads are awesome.

J-Oh yeah?

D-Yeah.

S-I was going to say I don't know how many times I have found myself in front of the computer at 12 o'clock at night, drunk, and Googling shrunken heads and trying to figure out if the website that says I can buy one is legit or not.

D-I feel like I need to have a conversation with you about your adult, mature choices that you're making (laughing).

J-Seriously.

S-Wait, is it the drinking or the Googling?

D-It is midnight, and you're choosing to Google shrunken heads, which makes me a little concerned about you.

J-And that's a little weird, yeah. And what I want to know about these websites is how does it work? Do you like, have to cut somebody's head off and mail it to them and they shrink it for you?

D-But is it, is it also, are there like, hot shrunken head singles?

S-They're authentic! They're authentic, from natives, I don't know. I was drunk. Can we keep going, please?

D-I'm very concerned.

J-Actually, I'm...

D-We're going to have an intervention later.

J-When we wrap this up I'm going on Ebay to see if there's anything on there.

D-I'm sure there is, yeah.

J-Probably is, yeah.

D-Anyway, on Ripley's shrunken head...Quest for the Shrunken Head, which is an actual book, by the way. It's Ripley's Quest for the Shrunken Head. I almost bought it (J and S laughing). I came closer to than I ever have to buying a book for the podcast, so there's that. He found this tiny skeleton in the 1930s...early 1930s. He found this tiny skeleton he called Ata Boy. He found his in Peru, but the Atacama Desert does actually go all the way up into Peru. Like I said, it's a really really big desert. So, um, yeah. Ripley called his skeleton Ata Boy and that's that. They look vaguely, kinda similar.

S-Uh, no. No they don't.

D-Not really, at all. They're both three inches tall...or six inches tall.

S-Six inches tall. But Ata Boy looks more akin to a shrunken head, in terms of the shape and the texture in the photos that I've seen.

D-I think Ata Boy is kinda cute. Not like the skeleton, but that I think it's cute that Ripley called him that.

S-Oh, the name?

D-Yeah, I think it's kind of a cute name. Yeah, so. And Ata Boy does look different. They don't really look the same, Ata Boy and Ata. Yeah, I think it's true that their resemblance pretty much ends at their height.

S-I would say that.

D and J-Yeah.

D-Ok, theories?

J-Yeah, theories.

S-I guess we're there.

D-I guess we are.

J-Aliens?

D-Uh, let's start with hoax.

J-Oh, was it a hoax?

D-No.

J-I don't think so.

D-Actually, I don't think there's anybody who seriously thinks it's a hoax, except for the anonymous forum user here and there who says (mocking tone) "no, that's a hoax, didn't you know?"

S-Well, that's the thi...it's easy to think it's a hoax.

D-Oh yeah!

S-I thought it was a hoax...

D-I know you did (laughing).

S...when I first started to read about it. And then once I saw the stuff about the CT scans, I knew right there, ok, that proves it's not a hoax.

J-Not a little carved wooden figurine.

S and D-Yeah, yeah, right.

S-So, yeah, it's not a hoax.

D-No, not a hoax.

J-Yeah.

D-Also, probably not a cryptid, but you'll see that around.

S-Is this a fairy?

D-No.

J-Cryptid as in a...

S-If it was a cryptid it could be a fairy.

D-It could be a fairy, but there are no wings.

S-A mummified fairy.

D-No wing structure. Wings have to have bones in them.

S-Yeah, maybe.

J-Do fairies actually have wings, though?

D-Yeah.

S-We don't know that.

D-We don't know anything here.

S-Elves? Could it be a Smurf?

D-It could be...it could be the South American version of a leprechaun.

S-Oh ho ho!

J-Yeah, there you go.

D-It's true.

J-Or it could be the South American Bigfoot.

D-It could (Steve laughing). Yeah. I wish, I wish...

S-The little known...

D-I wish you guys were in the studio to see with how much sincerity Joe just said that (all laughing). There was no laugh in his face for a moment. It was good.

J-Just all deadpan all the time.

D-It was totally deadpan (Steve laughing). Uh, ok. So those two out the window. Cool. That's the end of our theories.

J-Ok. Bye (Steve laughing).

D-It's not, no? Ok, next up I guess is (sigh) aliens?

J-Yeah, they're, um, obviously that theory has been put out there so we have to talk about it.

S-A lot.

J-Yeah, quite a bit. Yeah, a lot of people think this is the remains of an alien.

S-Yep.

D-Well, and one of the things I will mention is there is a strong history of reported UFO activity around the Atacama Desert.

S-There's a strong history of reported UFO activity around most places.

D-Shh. Steve. Shh.

J-Hey. Yeah. I don't...

S-I'm just putting in perspective.

J-Yeah, here's...

D-Well, so the theory is that this thing is an alien, it kind...frankly, it looks really alien. Very alien.

J-It does, especially the shape of the skull.

D-With the shape of the skull and the size, you know, to conceptualize of something being that size and, like, living is crazy.

J-Well you know, there's many creatures on our planet that are tiny...

D-Yeah, that's true.

J-The problem is that unless there's maybe an alien race that figured out a way to save space on interstellar trips to shrink themselves down to six inches tall.

S-Well, no, this thing is much like, was it the first or the second, Men in Black? Where there was the little guy who drove the human sized robot.

D-Yeah.

J-Oh yeah, I remember that.

S-Then that's exactly what this would be.

D-Maybe.

J-How long could you really survive if you're that size though? Wouldn't you go extinct?

D-That's my big question.

J-The predators would all eat you. I mean, you'd be snatched...owls would snatch you out of the skies or whatever the equivalent of what an owl is over there.

D-Well I guess the argument would be that you might be from a planet that was so high gravity that everything was small.

J-Uh huh.

D-You know?

S-Yeah.

D-So you could feasibly be the largest thing...it could be a race of shrimpkins from Futurama (Steve laughing).

J-It could be.

D-You guys remember that episode?

S-Sort of (laughing).

D-When Bender becomes god, and then meets god (Steve laughing). They're just tiny little humans that

live on him.

S-Yeah.

D-Could have been that. I mean...yeah, aliens.

S-It's possible.

D-I guess that this is probably a good time to mention that Dr Greer, Mr Greer?

S-He's a doctor.

J-Yeah.

D-He's a doctor.

S-He was a medical doctor. He was an ER doc I think.

J-Was he really? Oh.

S-He's a...actually he was a practicing doctor.

J-And then he sort of went off the deep end and...

D-He's...

S-He left...

J-And became a Ufologist?

S-...his practice.

D-That's a nice way of saying it, yeah.

S-He left his practice.

D-He did leave his practice, uh...our listeners may be familiar with "Serious," the documentary "Serious," which is...basically he tries to prove aliens are real.

S-It's about an hour long. We talked about it in the Gary McKinnen episode.

D-Yeah. It's actually 48 minutes long. I found it on YouTube.

S-Oh, ok.

D-48 minutes and 50 some seconds. You're welcome.

J-Yeah, 12 minutes for commercials.

D-Yeah. It's perfect. Dr Greer is the guy who is in charge of that thing.

S-Well, he is in control of CSETI, which stands for the Center for the Study of Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence, and he started that in the mid 2000s, I want to say. And then it was sometime...I think it was the late 2000s or 2010s, somewhere in there, he then began the Disclosure Project.

D-Yeah.

S-Which is the one where it's all the ex government employees testifying to him, on camera, about aliens.

D-Yeah.

J-Oh, ok.

S-He's a major Ufologist.

D-He is.

S-He is...I'm not making fun of him when I say this, he has bought in quite heavily to the belief and he is very committed to it.

D-He is.

S-But that makes me question him quite a lot.

D-Yeah, it makes me question with things like this just because I think there's that, um, confirmation bias there.

S-Oh yeah.

J-Yeah, and the problem...

D-And particularly with something like this that is kind of open to interpretation there...it is hard to know what this thing is for sure, but the fact that...I guess, I don't know. It's hard...yep, it's hard. When you're hearing an Ufologist constantly saying "oh, it's obviously an alien, it's proof."

J-Yeah, good luck with that.

D-Constantly. Never once saying "I don't know, it probably isn't an alien."

J-The other thing about the guys like Greer is they, you know, they tend to be a magnet for lunatics who come to them with crazy stories...

S-People who are like minded, yeah.

J-Yeah. And so...

D-No, but also, like that's not to say everybody who believes in UFOs or aliens is a lunatic, cause...

S-Right, that's what I'm...

D-Ya'll know me.

S-Like minded in terms of believe in or want to, but there's a broad spectrum of that.

D-There are crazy people in all walks of life.

S-Oh yes.

D-And, uh, there are extra crazy people in some walks of life, which are, you know this is one of them.

S-Yep.

J-There kind of is, yeah.

D-Yeah, so uh, that's a problem already.

S-And I...my one concern with Greer being as involved as he is in this is he...

D-You only have one?

S-What's that?

D-You only have one concern? (laughing)

S-Well no, this is one of my big concerns...

D-Oh, ok.

S-...is that the story of how Ata was found, and all of this stuff, I've never been able to find the source of it.

J-Of where? What do you mean?

S-In other words, you always hear the story...

J-Oh I see.

D-Well...

S-...but you never find anything from the origin of that, where it actually began and the early accountings of it reported anywhere or anything. It just popped up, and it popped up on the radar, from what I found...

D-There's a...

S-...with Greer.

D-The guy who actually found it, you can find the first publication of talking about this in the media at all. And it was around the time when that scavenger found it, but it was...

S-And when was that again?

D-It was 2003ish.

S-Ok.

D-But it was in a tabloid in Chile (Steve sighing, Devin laughing) that was the first announcement. So again it was one of those things where you can confirm that it did happen at a time, but...

S-The equivalent of The Weekly World News reported on it, and not that boy.

D-Yeah, yeah. But it...which is kind of a bummer because we know it exists and we do know it's real but they were the only ones who didn't cry hoax immediately. So they printed it, and then...I guess to that point, Greer never tells the whole story, he always just says "oh, a token hunter, or a token collector"...

S-Yeah, he's got a very sanitized version of the story.

D-But he doesn't ever say he was robbing graves in the church. He doesn't say anything about...they always say it in this kind of amorphous-like pouch, he never says it was in a white cloth with this velvet tie, you know. All of the kind of nitty gritty details that almost humanize it. He doesn't ever talk about, so I think to that point, he is...he's trying to skew it a little more towards...if you're just saying "oh it was found in a pouch, just in the desert" that sounds way more like an alien died or got dropped off...the remains of an alien got dropped off than...

J-Because they have a burial ritual that involves pouches?

D-I don't know! Just more than like it was found in a grave...

S-It's buried at atmosphere.

J-Ah.

D-...in a church, wrapped in white and purple, you know. That sounds way more human than it was found in a pouch in the desert.

J-Oh, I see what you're saying, yeah.

D-You see what I'm saying?

J-Yeah, yeah.

S-Alright. Well, that's...I'm going to let the Greer issue go.

D-Ok.

S-That's...I mean I really really question when he's involved.

D-Yeah. Well, that's fair and...

J-Understandably.

D-The alien stuff. Do you have anything else to add to the alien theory?

J-I would add to that...

S-Crazyyyyyy.

J-...well if it is an alien then how did it happen to have 91% human DNA? That sounds strange.

D-Well, actually that's a good segue into our next theory, which is that it's an alien-human hybrid.

J-Oh ok.

D-But that goes down the crazy rabbit hole, because it's mostly Greer being a proponent, or being the most vocal proponent of this theory. This is his theory, actually, that it is a hybrid. And it goes kind of from "what if it's an alien-human hybrid?" to "WHAT IF WE ARE ALL ALIEN-HUMAN HYBRIDS? THAT'S WHAT WE ARE THAT'S HOW HUMANS EXISTED!" (Steve laughing).

J-Then we're...

D-"THAT'S HOW WE CAME OUT!" so we would share 91%...

J-But we're not actually alien-human hybrids because we're human, so whatever our ancestor was that mated with...

D-Right, that we're alien-neanderthal hybrids or something.

J-Oh, ok.

D-You know? Things that we branched off from then they went off to die but they were very humanoid, you know, that we were like them. Uh, and then we changed, somehow, and...

S-Wait, are you saying that aliens came to Earth, they were slumming with the neanderthals, and then they went home?

D-Yeah.

S-So Earth is like, what, the dance club of...

D-It's...ok, I guess we can kind of go into this. I don't want to make this whole episode about this, but the theory...there's two theories on this...You're looking at me like I'm a crazy person but I'm just going to keep talking. One of the theories is that it is a controlled experiment. That aliens who are hyper intelligent came to Earth and wanted to...it's like controlled evolution. That they altered the DNA of neanderthals to create homosapiens.

S-And now they're watching the experiment play out?

D-Yes. The other theory is...

S-That's the long game.

D-That's the long game. The other theory is that aliens...uh, I guess there's a lot more than that. Aliens, in order to survive, came and intermingled...

S-Their species?

D-Yeah, so in order to elongate their species had to kind of alter what their species was so they came to intermingle their people with our people and that totally changed and progressed into homosapiens. Or yeah, night club. Like, they were curious...

J-They just came here and had sex with all of our women and took off again?

D-Yeah (laughing), uh huh, yeah. So those are the three, like, main theories of the alien hybrid, human hybrid theory. So this theory would be that this was a subset that went a little wrong but has survived, maybe, in the desert.

J-Ohhh.

D-Or maybe they are...they're the ones who were the initial ones and that they bred with neanderthals and so were the size, basically, of neanderthals, but they...

S-The problem with that though is the age thing. If that is case, then it would have to be much, much, much older than we think it is.

D-Unless it was coming to check up on us. So if it was the controlled...so if the base theory is that it was controlled evolution, the long game basically, right? You come and check on your long game, right?

S-Right.

D-You observe them so if he, this thing, this alien, in this theory, died while observing us, then yeah, ten years...whatever.

J-So this thing...

S-So they're very tiny aliens?

D-Uh huh.

J-Ah, I see.

S-The wardens are itsy-bitsy?

D-Uh huh.

J-Ah. Yeah, I think that...I still don't buy that this thing was an alien, cause it's 91% human DNA.

D-I agree, but so those are theories.

J-An alien hybrid, that's impossible too. Cause, for example, cats and dogs can't interbreed.

D-That's true.

J-You know? So we'd be a little further apart than cats and dogs.

D-Humans and bananas cannot interbreed.

J-That's true.

D-I mean, I think that's a valid, interesting point. The other thing I guess we should bring up at this very moment in time is that it's not that we only share 91% of the DNA, it's that it was like 8 or 9% of the DNA was unable to be read from the samples that they got from Ata.

S-Which doesn't mean anything.

D-Which doesn't mean it didn't match, it just meant that they couldn't read them, cause it was too corroded.

S-It was degraded and unreadable, which is not uncommon for that to happen in DNA samples, to have a portion of it...

D-Particularly post mortem DNA.

J-Yeah.

S-So this is why Greer bothers me so much cause he's the one who says "It's 91% human DNA, but we don't know what the other 8-9% is." Well no...

D-We don't.

S-...we kind of probably do, but it's not unusual...100% of the DNA that was readable was human, it's just that 9% of the total sample was unreadable.

D-Although, to their credit, almost all of the websites that you read about this DNA they do add the caveat that research on the DNA is ongoing.

S-Of course.

J-Yeah.

D-And that they will reveal more as they know it.

J-They might be able to get better DNA out of him.

D-It's possible.

J-And also the...this is one of the reasons...cause they used to think it was kind of old, and now they're thinking no more than two decades just because the DNA is degraded somewhat but...

D-But not totally.

S-There's still viable DNA.

J-Exactly. If it was a lot older then there'd be a lot less DNA to read.

D-Yeah. So next, is the theory that it's human, and this is again typical Devin style, we've got a couple different bullet points here.

S-Yes we do!

D-So let's start with human comma shrunken.

S-Oh, but Ripley?

D-Yeah. We come back to Ripley here. Ripley, he was a very honest showman. He liked to kinda discount these weird sideshow things he found. A lot. He was very famous for it. Like he would go around and find these, you know, "oh it was a mermaid man skeleton" and display it, but say "this is the part that's the monkey skeleton, and this is the part that's the fish skeleton." (J and S laughing) It's not real but it's interesting, none the less, right. And so he was one of the first people, despite his fascinating...

S-Which is why he's saying believe it or not. You can believe it if you want, or not.

D-Or not, and here's the reason to, like, not.

S-Yeah, god, I remember watching that show and he did that all the time.

D-We watched it too, and he goes "believe it, *or* not."

S-Yeah. Then what...wasn't the guy from *Star Trek* on it at one point, when they tried to resurrect it?

D-Uh huh, that's the one I watched.

J-Who was that? Which one are you talking about?

S-Will Riker, the guy who played Will Riker...

J-Oh yeah!

S-...in *Star Trek Next Generation*. Wasn't he the host for it?

D-I don't know. I'd have to look it up. Do you care enough for me to look it up?

S-No, no.

J-Jack Palance was the host for a while too. Remember that?

S-That was the old one.

J-Yeah. He'd always end with (impression of Jack Palance) "Believe it, or not!" because he had that weird voice.

D-Uh huh!

S-Yeah (laughing).

D-So shrunken heads, just briefly if you guys don't know how they're made. I mean, I think everybody in this room knows how they're made...

S-Oh yeah!

D-...but it's possible...

J-What you do is run them through the dryer, and you leave them in too long (S and D laughing).

S-And then you get it wet and put it back in. It's like wool socks.

D-Yeah, it's perfect, yeah. Less itchy, though. A little bit.

S-Yeah.

D-So shrunken heads, the way they do it is they cut a hole in the back of the skull...or back of the head.

S-The scalp.

D-The scalp, thank you. They pull all the bones out. They put little red berries where the eyes should be and sew them shut, then they put a wood ball in.

S-They sew all the orifices closed, so your nostrils, your eyes, your mouth, all that.

D-Uh huh. The mouth is held in place by three palm fronds.

S-Uh huh.

D-Apparently that's the traditional thing.

J-Why...who came up with this idea anyway?

D-I don't know. I still think they're interesting. But then the skin is put around a ball and then pulled tight...

S-After it's boiled.

D-Yeah, after it's boiled, sorry.

S-You've got to boil it to shrink it. It becomes like leather.

D-Yeah, to shrink it. And then it's put there and so it looks like it's on a skull, so that's how that happens. So, Ripley said that his Ata Boy was just a shrunken...was just a whole body shrunken thing, which I guess I kind of believe cause it doesn't really look like there's any bones in there, it kinda looks like leathery skin.

S-Yeah, that's the impression I...there does appear to be possible protrusions that could be bones...

D-But that's not...

S-...but they could be sticks.

D-Pieces of wood, yeah. Absolutely. But that's in stark contrast to what Ata actually looks like.

S-Right.

D-And so as we in this room can all agree, I think, Ata, Ah-ta, Ata? I'm sorry. Is not a shrunken something because it's mostly bones and internal organs.

J-Yep.

D-There's not skin.

S-And a thin coating, shell that's holding it together.

D-Yeah. Which I don't really know what *is* holding it together. It's a little weird.

S-It's skin. It's a very very thin, leathery layer of skin.

J-I suppose the sinews and stuff, the tendons, are probably still present, right?

D-On the skeleton?

S and J-Yeah.

D-It kind of just looks like bone.

S-But it is...

D-A very thin...

S-what was a fleshy membrane at one time surrounding everything and what is dry and desiccated now, that's what's holding it together.

D-Right. Yeah.

S-It's like cat gut, almost.

D-Like what?

S-Cat gut. You know, the stuff you can sew with. Haven't you heard of cat gut?

J-That's what they used to use for surgery, to stitch people up.

S-I'm not making this up. You're looking at me like I'm nuts.

D-I think you might be.

S-Joe, you remember what cat gut is made from?

J-From cat gut?

S-It's made from...it's intestines of animals like cows or sheep.

D-EW!

S-And well, but it's very tough and it's very stringy.

D-But you use it to close wounds?!

J-Yeah.

S-Well they originally did.

D-Oh!

J-They haven't been doing that for a while.

S-No, people...

D-Well yeah, I know that.

S-...people make jewelry and stuff out of it.

D-Ew.

S-Yeah. No, it's very tough stuff. That's why it reminds me of cat gut, because it's very very tough but it's an organic material.

D-Ok. That's fair. I guess.

S-Creep factor 17 for Devin.

D-Thank you. (Steve laughing). Yeah. Ok, so I think we can all agree that it's not...Ata's got bones.

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah, it's not a shrunken body.

D-It's mostly bones so it's not a shrunken body. But still, kind of interesting, none the less.

J-Oh yeah.

D-Next up is human comma premature.

J-A prematurely born baby.

D-A prematurely born baby.

S-A normal human baby.

D-A normal, totally normal human baby, which all you have to do is really look at the skeleton to know it's not a totally normal baby.

J-Uh, even a preemie is not going to be six inches long, I don't think.

D-Yeah.

S-I don't know about that.

D-It would have to be really premature but you can look at...actually this in one of the most interesting comparisons I saw is there is a scan of a fetus at two months old.

S-Uh huh.

D-And they're about six inches long or so.

S-Yep.

D-And then compared to the scan of the Ata skeleton, not Ata Boy...

S-Ata, uh huh.

D-And they look totally different.

S-So...

D-I mean there's a thing...I mean, part of it is, you know, ribs. Part of it is head shape. Part of it is just typical bones.

S-So the thing is, is that the research I've seen says that if this was a human fetus it was 12-16 weeks.

D-Ok.

S-Which is the first trimester.

D-Yep.

S-The end of the first trimester, beginning of the second trimester, and the typical fetus at that time...there's always this thing on the internet "what size is my baby," and it's about the size of an apple at that point. But a lot of things have formed at that point. So all of the bones will have formed.

D-Uh huh.

S-The, you know, head is going to have formed, though, and this is why I bring this up, the bones of your skull, of your cranium, those are still not connected because your brain hasn't grown in yet, and they've got to stay loose to allow that to happen. So if this is a premature child, that would explain why the head is misshapen, because they would have collapsed on each other and set into this kind of pointy shape instead of what was a round shape.

J-Uh huh.

S-If you follow that line of thinking. The other thing...

J-Plus it's also soft. I mean your skull when your...

S-Yeah, it's very very soft material. And the other thing that I will bring up is that you had spent a good amount of time talking about the knee caps. Ok, knee caps are present at that time, but they're cartilage like we said. Cartilage is something that hardens. When it's outside of the body it will harden in the right environment. I mean, it's like if you find a mummy that's been in this desert, the nose will probably be there because it's mummified.

D-Yeah, there's not a nose, but yeah.

S-But you know your nose is cartilage...

D-Yeah.

S-...and so what I've looked at it says that what was the infant place holder cartilage knee caps is just the stuff...it hardened.

D-Oh.

S-You know, it actually set in place so it looks like bone.

D-What about the tooth?

S-The tooth I can't explain. (Devin laughing).

J-Yeah.

S-I don't know, I don't know why the hell there's a tooth there, but I can explain the cranium being misshapen.

D-Ok. (Joe laughing)

S-And I can explain the knee caps. Which is why I still feel this is very much a premature birth.

D-Yeah. Well we'll...

S-Which is why it would have such a ceremonial burial.

D-I feel differently about it, but we'll talk about it in a minute, cause I know Joe wants to say something.

S-Ok.

J-Yeah, I'll say something. Yeah. (Steve laughing)

D-"Yeah, I guess or whatever, fine."

J-Yeah yeah yeah. I was reading the blog of this guy named Paolo Discardi [sp?] who worked at the Grant Museum of Zoology in University College, London.

S-Ok.

J-He has a fairly lengthy posting on it with a lot of big long huge comment threads from a lot of scientific types. And I don't know if you read that one or not.

D-Uh huh.

J-Yeah. And so he says that it looks to him pretty much exactly like an aborted fetus. He says he's seen other ones, mummified ones, in museums and various collections. It's 14-16 weeks he estimates. As far as the shape of the skull, partly what you were saying might have something to do with it. He thinks it might also...he thinks it was aborted and perhaps during the procedure the head was, sort of, pulled out...

S-Damaged.

J-Damaged and put...and that might also explain the odd shape.

S-Uh huh.

J-He also said that he, as far as the misreadings of the age of the thing, they found greater calcification in the bones than you would expect in a fetus.

S-Right.

J-But he said that that's actually an artifact of the mummification process. He says he's seen it in other mummies when they try to like...He actually wrote a long paper on the whole thing.

S-Yeah, I've seen something about the fact that when they try to x-ray them, and do all these certain scans, those young bones look like they should be much older just because of the process that's

involved in this scan.

J-Yeah, exactly.

S-And you can't read into that too heavily.

J-Yeah, so as far as it being six to eight years old or a year old or anything. And also he said he looked at the CAT scans and everything and he says there's no evidence of teeth whatsoever. He says that there's a piece of exposed mandible that looks like a tooth, looks suspiciously like a tooth, but he said that...and again I haven't seen these CAT scans that he's talking about, but that it...he says, and he sounds like he's pretty objective and pretty smart, and a pretty knowledgeable guy. He says there's no teeth.

S-So he's on board with the "it's just a premature..."

J-A premature or more likely and aborted fetus, yeah.

S-Well and there's a lot of social conditions in that country that would explain potentially why that would happen, you know. Cause like unwed sex is not ok.

J-And abortion is kind of hard to get.

S-Right. So you know.

J-It's illegal.

S-It you're with somebody and something happens, you've got to take care of it.

J-Yeah. I, uh...you know what, this is one of the sad things. It would be nice to find the quote unquote "token collector," or whatever that guy was and find out precisely what grave...because if it was found in a graveyard I would like to know what grave he found it in. Cause that would be kind of interesting, cause imagine somebody going back to this village where they have, you know, family buried...

D-Yeah.

J-...and sort of, like, digging up a few inches of dirt and burying it there, you know. It's...you might actually be able to find out who the mother of the Atacama skeleton is.

D-Yeah. That's the premature birth theory.

J-That's it for the premature thing.

S-Yeah, I think we've pretty well walked through that entire thing.

D and J-Yeah.

S-More than you wanted.

D-So, yeah, a little bit, yeah. (Steve laughing). And then the last, kind of theory here is that it was a

human being that was born, likely, but with a genetic disorder.

J-And it just grew to six inches tall.

D-Yeah, and or, you know, didn't really survive out of the womb for too terrible long, but obviously there aren't...

S-An extended period of time though.

D-Yeah. And so there obviously aren't any genetic disorders that we know of that cause an actual human being to only grow to six inches tall. That's not a thing.

S-No.

J-And you wouldn't live very long.

D-You would not, no.

J-Sooner or later mom or dad would step on you.

D-Is gonna step on you, yeah.

J-Yeah, exactly.

D-And on top of that...

S-The shortest recorded person in history was only, what, two foot tall?

D-Something like that.

J-I thought it was something like 21 inches.

D-Yeah, but that's still...

S-21, yeah, but that's still considerably...

D-What, like three or four times as tall as this thing was.

S-Yes, it's much much larger than this...

D-Skeleton.

S-Thank you. I suddenly couldn't think of what to call it.

D-It feels wrong, and it is, kind of...

S-Yeah. This form?

D-This, this...yeah. But, added to that, they did this genetic testing the skeleton and they couldn't find

any markers for common things like dwarfism or anything like that.

J-Yeah. Plus, this would be a real one-off disorder, because there is such a thing as dwarfism.

D-There is.

J-But, how many six inch tall human being have we produced so far?

D-None.

J-None.

S-That we know of.

D-Well, that's true.

J-Maybe they're hiding. They might be hiding right here in my house.

S-All in the desert.

J-Yeah.

D-They're so little you don't know, yeah.

S-That's why you keep hearing those weird banging noises in your pipes (D and J laugh).

D-Um, but there is a theory out there that...it's kind of a dual theory I guess. It's a combination of genetic disorder and a premature birth and or aborted birth situation. Because a lot of...well, a lot of...women who are pregnant with babies who have progeria often have miscarriages with these babies. And progeria is something that I guess I knew about because I listen to Die Antwood. Do you guys listen to them at all?

S and J-No.

D-That's ok, I wouldn't expect you to, it's like a ...

S-Ow!

D-It doesn't matter (Steve laughing).

J-Cause we're so old, I guess.

D-Yeah. Anyways, there was a guy by the name of Leon Botha who collaborated with them. He was a DJ.

S-Die Antwood is a band?

D-They're a group.

S-Or a group?

D-Yeah, out of South Africa. They do rap mostly, kind of.

S-Ok.

D-It's hard to explain.

S-Anyway.

D-It's performance art. It's awesome.

J-So anyway, who's got progeria?

D-Well, Leon Botha did. He died a few years ago.

J-At what age?

D-He was 26 when he died, which is actually a very long life span for someone with progeria. Usually...

J-Progeria.

D-Progeria, I'm sorry. They don't usually live often...people who have this live 13-14 years, at the most.

S-Yeah. Cause it's rapid aging.

D-Well it's not actually rapid aging.

S-It's signs that appear to look like rapid aging.

D-It causes you to look like you are rapidly aging, yeah. It's found in about one in every 8 million live births, but the instances are higher, but I didn't write down the number, I'm sorry, in still born or premature births.

S-Ok.

D-The defining features of somebody with this disorder are, I'm just going to quote here, "limited growth, full body alopecia, so hair loss, and a distinctive appearance that includes a small face with a shallow, recessed jaw, and a very pinched nose." And often their face looks small on their head.

J-Ok.

D-Do you know what I'm saying?

S-In proportion...

D-In proportion to the head.

S-...to the size of their head.

D-Yeah. The heads are often kind of more elongated. So, I mean I think it's a fair theory to say that it's possible that Ata had this disorder in utero and was born prematurely. That it accounts for the way that he looks, with the skull. I mean as does your theory of, you know, the aborted fetus situation.

J-Cause when they're fetuses, their skulls look oversized.

D-They look oversized but they don't usually look pointy like that. But they do often in fetuses with progeria.

J-Progeria.

D-I'm sorry, I don't know why I can't say that word. But you know, again, it's hard to tell and then scientists are also saying that they also haven't found any of the genetic markers for progeria, so.

J-Well, probably not.

D-So, I don't know. I don't have a good answer, really. I think it's probably a human. I think it's probably a premature fetus.

S-I'm totally on board with the premature...

D-Which ever way it happened, if it happened that there was some genetic disorder that caused the fetus to look this way. If it was just a premature birth. It's also hard to tell because it is a mummy, and it looks much too thin to be a normal fetus, to me.

J-But you...

D-But again it's a mummy so it's hard to tell.

J-It's a mummy. As it dries out the skin shrinks up and then it draws the rib cage in...

D-Exactly, and so that's part of it.

S-I was going to say, if you look at those ribs they almost look like they should have broken from the pressure.

D and J-Yeah.

D-Although you know, still the question is there should be more ribs than there are, but...

J-I don't know. The two missing ribs are the lower floating ribs which formed last. It's entirely possible that...

D-It would have had to be really early, though.

S-Or, well...

D-Cause it is, it's two months.

S-...I mean they may not have been fully formed and so they may not have...you know, when everything dried out and pulled in, there may not have been enough substance to them, they may have been mostly fleshy, instead of bony.

D-Yeah. You can, I mean...in the x-rays of a two month old fetus, there are ribs. They are all ribs.

S-All twelve.

D-All twelve of them, yeah. But it's possible, it's possible that it was a younger fetus. It's possible that there was some birth defect that caused them to not have the ribs, I don't know.

J-Yeah, you never know. If you go back to that area and check up on the people, maybe there's a whole subset of people who's got a genetic defect.

D-It's possible.

J-They've been passing it along every generation.

S-They don't have the floating ribs

D-Yeah, absolutely.

J-They're missing them.

S-I don't even know...what is the purpose of the floating rib? Does anybody know?

J-I think it's just one more rib to get broken, I think that's about it (Steve laughing).

S-I always figured it was the one that pinches when you get a pinch in your side.

J-Yeah, I don't know.

S-It was always weird.

J-Yeah, I don't know either. It's a, maybe it's a little extra protection for those...for your kidneys or something like that.

S and J-I don't know.

D-So, yeah, there you go. That's the Atacama Skeleton, or humanoid. Probably not an alien...

J-Or alien.

D-Probably not.

S-Probably not.

D-Probably not an alien. Probably just a very very sad story.

S-It's a very small story.

J-Yeah, tiny. But you know, actually if you go digging around out there you might find a lot of these things.

D-Yeah, it is a little weird, you know, that two would be found in the desert, but I guess not really that weird.

J-Yeah, no because the conditions are such that, you know, they're going to get naturally mummified.

D-Yeah, that's true.

J-Luckily in the Atacama Desert it's so dry, I mean no four legged scavengers really exist out there to come along to eat it...

D-Yeah, probably not.

J-So it just lays there undisturbed and becomes mummified.

D-Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

J-Until a two legged scavenger comes along.

D-Do you guys have anything else to add to this story (laughing)

S-I don't (laughing)

J-Yeah, not really. We'll have to go down there and check it out one of these days.

D-Yeah totally, as soon as our listeners fund our trips.

J-Yeah.

D-Yeah.

J-Thanks guys.

D-Just kidding, I'm just kidding (Joe laughing). Everyone, I'm just kidding. If you want to see some of our research, if you want to leave a comment on this show, if you want to find merch or links to donate, all of that information as well as links to download the episode are on our website. That website is thinkingsidewayspodcast dot com. You can find us on social media. We're on Facebook, we're on Twitter, we're on Reddit.

S-Yep.

D-We've got a subreddit. We're Thinkin Sideways on Twitter, and then we've got a group and a page...if you're looking for discussion join the group on Facebook, don't like the page and start posting on the wall because nobodies going to find you there, sorry (Steve laughing). Nobody looks at that, I'm sorry. You're probably listening to us on iTunes. If you are leave a comment and a rating. That's how other

people find us. If you're streaming us, I don't know how...I don't know how streaming things work. Can you leave comments and ratings there?

S-I think you might be able to. Depends on the provider.

D-Rate us. If you are listening to us in a place where you can rate us, do so please.

S-There we go.

J-Rate us highly, too.

D-Highly, yeah absolutely.

J-We like that better.

D-And if you have feedback, if you want to chat, if you have suggestions, if you...

S-If we have mortally offended you by mispronouncing a word...

D-Which we probably have...

J-We get that a lot.

D-We sure do.

S-Concating (laughing).

D-You mean concatenate?

S-Yes!

D-Yeah. You can send us an email. That email address is thinking sideways podcast at gmail dot com. And last but not least if you would like to donate to the show, we have a few ways to do that. You can either just send us a one time donation via Paypal, or you can become a sustaining donator, a "peetron" if you will on Patreon, and that is Patreon dot com slash Thinking Sideways. No pressure but we really appreciate it when people are able to do that for us. So thanks.

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah, thanks to all the many people who have kicked in, we really appreciate it.

D-Seriously, thanks. All of that having been said I think that I'm just going to get out of here, real quick.

S-Yeah, works for me.

J-I think I'm going to get out of here too.

D-Yeah.

S-Sweet.

D-Bye guys.

J-Alright, tootle-loo.

S-Bye everyone.