

BY ATHEEQ AHMED M.J



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Viewer's Discretion Advised:

"The End Place" contains intense and graphic depictions of violence, along with supernatural and mythological elements that may be disturbing. The story delves into emotional and psychological tension, with scenes designed to evoke fear and discomfort. Reader discretion is advised, and it is recommended for mature audiences.



The Genesis:

The Vatican Secret Files:

Confidential Warning:

This document contains classified information pertaining to the Vatican's secret archives. Unauthorized access or dissemination is strictly prohibited under penalty of canonical sanction. Readers are cautioned that the contents herein may challenge conventional beliefs and historical narratives. Proceed with discretion and respect for the sacred trust bestowed upon this knowledge.

By order of the Vatican Secretariat.

Category: Top Secret

Location: Ludlow, Maine

Time Period: Post Vietnam War, 1976

Evidence: Handwritten Letter and Missing Person

Retrieved From: The First Congregational Church of Ludlow

"By divine grace, may ye seek with reverence, for within lies both peril and providence."

Blessed by His Holiness,

The Gospel:

What is the sweetest sound of nature? For some, it might be the melodious singing of birds or the gentle meow of a cat. For me, it has always been the calming symphony of crickets. Ironically, legend says that crickets only sing when a person near them is close to death, and the danger of the Angel of Death looms over them. Yet, the legend also says that crickets sing the prophecy of the good fortune our future holds. This is why the singing of crickets is so ambivalent and often considered a bad omen by others.

I was a war veteran when I returned back to my village. Famine had taken both my parents, leaving only my uncle behind who was burdened with debt and haunted by the ghosts of his past. He was overjoyed to see me back and handed over the responsibilities of the house, He said his days were numbered due to tuberculosis, but everything was going to be alright as I was here. We both shared our daily chores, He was as gentle as ever, we were farmers by tradition, spending our days toiling in the fields and our nights praying in the chapel for monsoon to arrive soon.

We ventured into the woods one hot and red afternoon to gather firewood. At first, I heard the gentle singing of crickets, but as we walked deeper, the sound grew louder, almost deafening. I became increasingly distracted, convinced a large nest must be nearby, but I found no trace of it. Suddenly, I collided with my uncle's back, snapping back to reality. He stood frozen, his face pale with terror. He pointed towards a thicket, and there, hidden among the bushes, was a magnificent creature—a gryphon.

The gryphon was a breathtaking sight, with the majestic head and wings of an eagle, its beak sharper than a katana, and the powerful body of a lion. Its feathers glistened in the dappled sunlight, and its eyes held a fierce, almost otherworldly intelligence. But there was something sinister about it—a serpent coiled around its leg, a devilish presence juxtaposed against the gryphon's celestial majesty.

Determined to capture the creature, my uncle believed it would solve all our financial problems. He set a rope trap and forced me to dig a trench beside it. In his prime, my uncle had been a skillful hunter, one of the best our town had ever seen. He had once hunted a bear all by himself. Despite my desperate pleas for him to reconsider, he was resolute. We planned to scare the gryphon into the rope trap, causing it to fall into the trench we had dug, thereby capturing it. I was not convinced, as our scriptures say that the gryphon is a heavenly creature deemed unworthy of heaven and cast out like Adam and Eve, as it had helped the serpent, the devil in disguise, to get a glimpse of heaven our master had created.

As we worked for another hour to perfect the trap, the gryphon remained earily still, its eyes fixed on us. My uncle explained the plan to me hiding behind the bushes. It was time to do the unthinkable. My uncle emerged from the bushes with

a staff and tried to scare the gryphon towards the trap. The gryphon turned its head towards him, its eyes like death itself, while the serpent hissed at us. I hid under the bushes, trembling. My uncle was afraid too, but this was our only chance to change our fortunes. He closed his eyes, held his heart on his sleeve, and ran towards the creature. He first hit it with the staff and pushed it over. The gryphon moved oddly with an eerie scream, and then my uncle crouched onto its back and stabbed the creature's left wing. The gryphon screamed and in an attempt to flee, ensnared itself in the rope trap. It was ferocious now; the serpent hissed at the gryphon, causing it to rise on its hind legs and fiercely claw my uncle's chest and stab him with its beak, my uncle was down with blood splattering everywhere. Then it used all of its strength to flee, it struggled to fly away, the rope fraying under the strain.

Seeing my uncle gravely injured, I ran towards him, but he pointed towards the rope splitting apart. I understood he wanted me to capture it, knowing this attempt was for my good fortune. Even though his days were numbered, he gambled them for me. Even in the face of death with such grave injuries, he still urged me to hold the rope. Instead of saving his life, I changed my trajectory and ran towards the rope, which was fraying, and held it with all my strength to keep the gryphon down.

It was too powerful, and as it soared upwards, the rope snapped. After a moment, I realized I was clinging desperately to the broken end, being lifted into the sky. The serpent slithered menacingly towards me, its fangs bared, and I knew I couldn't let go, for the fall would be fatal.

Just as the serpent was about to strike, a mysterious force severed the gryphon's head. The lifeless body plummeted to the ground, and I fell with it, landing unscathed upon its massive form. But my relief was short-lived because what happened next was my worst nightmare. The mysterious force revealed itself as the Angel of Death, with a haunting presence.

The sound of crickets crescendoed to an unbearable volume as the Angel approached my uncle, slicing his body in two. Blood soaked the ground, and the serpent writhed through the crimson pool. Paralyzed with fear, I couldn't move as the Angel turned its gaze towards me. The cricket song abruptly ceased, replaced by a voice in my head, offering me a deal: my memories of this encounter in exchange for precious gems.

As the Angel of Death approached me, I saw it wore an old dark cloth blistered with the screams of dead people, its eyes blue as sky, I felt a motherly gaze from it, it took out a pouch of gems in its one hand and touched my head as gentle as a feather with its other hand, It said, "Take this and complete the deal with God dear"; I accepted, taking the gems as my mind began to blur. Desperate to retain some semblance of what had occurred, I wrote down everything that had transpired that afternoon, I don't know for how long I am going to remember it.

"REMEMBER WHAT?"

As he forgets everything that happened and left the letter and pen in a grass field, he happily walked away with the valuable gems he found. A cricket landed on that paper and slowly started to sing once more, its song echoing in the silence.

The Revelation:

In the aftermath of the events chronicled herein, the body of the uncle was discovered deep within the forest, his remains bearing the unmistakable marks of a violent and unnatural death. The nephew, however, was nowhere to be found, vanished without a trace. An investigation was launched by local authorities, but their efforts yielded no clues, no answers to the mystery that enveloped Ludlow, Maine.

The only piece of evidence that surfaced was a handwritten letter, brought to the First Congregational Church of Ludlow by a devout believer. This letter, detailing the harrowing encounter with a mythical gryphon and the ominous presence of the Angel of Death, was said to have been found near the site where traces of the creature had been discovered.

Despite thorough scrutiny, no further evidence or witnesses could corroborate the fantastical claims within the letter. Yet, the document was sent to the Vatican for its inclusion in the secret archives, deemed too significant to ignore by the Church.

Thus, the truth remains shrouded in mystery, preserved only in the sacred and enigmatic pages of The Vatican Secret Files.

The End of The Story, or just the beginning?

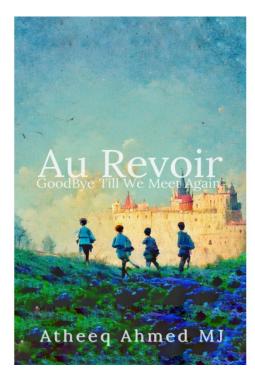


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Disclaimer:

"The End Place" is a work of pure fiction. While it draws on various mythological and religious elements, it is not intended to insult or offend any beliefs or traditions. The story is meant purely for entertainment and imaginative exploration. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

From the mind of Atheeq Ahmed, Check-out other works from the author







In a small, forgotten village, a haunting melody echoes through the woods. For some, it brings a sense of calm, but for others, it whispers of ominous prophecies and hidden dangers.

A war veteran returns home, seeking solace and a new beginning, only to find himself entangled in a mystery that blurs the line between myth and reality. As he and his ailing uncle venture into the depths of the forest, they uncover secrets that challenge their beliefs and test their courage.

Will they uncover the truth behind the eerie sounds that fill the night, or will they fall prey to the enigmatic forces that dwell in the shadows?

Discover the legend. Embrace the mystery.

Welcome to "The End Place"
a haunting tale of myth, sacrifice, and the fragile
line between life and death