

The Granite Point Lighthouse jutted from the cliff face, a solitary, whitewashed sentinel against the predawn gloom. Below, the waves smashed into the jagged rocks with a ceaseless, booming rhythm, spraying fine, cold mist that tasted of salt. Inside the lantern room, the colossal Fresnel lens spun slowly, flashing a brilliant, sweeping beam across the tumultuous, inky sea.

Elias, the keeper, was a man carved from the same weather-beaten wood as his surroundings. His face was taut and brown from the wind, and his calloused hands moved with quiet, practiced efficiency. He wore a heavy, cable-knit sweater, his eyes fixed on the horizon, patiently awaiting the sun.

"Elias, is that a squall brewing off the shoals?" A gruff voice called up the winding stairs.

Elias didn't flinch. "Not a squall, Caleb," he replied, his voice a low rumble. "Just a moody