The sharp sound of Professor Claudia Templeton's T-Straps on the polished marble tiles echoed loudly through the wide hallway of the Archaeology department. Her air of quiet superiority matched the expertly carved and polished wood-paneled walls that stood as approving sentinels to countless students passing through on their way to academic enlightenment. She often reveled in her association with the Miskatonic University's long and honored contributions to the cultivation of young minds, forming budding youth into well prepared and knowledgable members of society.

Professor Templeton, smartly clad in a well-pressed tweed blazer, plain white button-down blouse and plaid skirt moved like a person of royal lineage striding through the halls of their kin. Her dark hair pulled tightly into a bun, and horn-rimmed glasses gave her the appearance of a strict educator whose presence caused students to scurry out of the way as she passed. Those who were able to meet her stony gaze, however, would find her quite pretty, and her smile, if she would offer one, spoke of a warm family-centered upbringing.

The hall was vacant, adding volume and resonance to the crack of her strides as she headed toward the last door on the right. Stopping for a moment to collect herself before the conversation she was about to be engaged in. She paused with her hand on the worn brass knob of the wood and frosted glass door whose gold-leafed lettering read, Alexander Berlioux Professor of Archeology and Egyptology. She remembered a time when coming to this office would seem a pleasure, not a burden. Turning the knob, she entered.

A man sitting behind an impossibly cluttered desk piled with open books and sheets of paper of varying ages and deterioration looked up and smiled. Claudia casually scanned the room, taking in the haphazard collection of books, statuary, fetishes, and odd devices that cluttered the shelves and seemingly every spare surface of the office. Her gaze paused on a framed picture of a woman and man proudly holding a young boy in their arms. He wasn't always like this, she thought, not when they first met. Raising an eyebrow, she gave a smile in return.

"Good morning Alex. Have you been here all night?"

Clearing his throat, he responded in with a mild French accent. "If I lie, will you hold it against me?"

"You have to rest, you're going to run yourself down. Have you made any progress?" Claudia's southern accent made her sound more like a mother reprimanding her child than a colleague voicing concern.

He shook his head. "No." he exhaled, visibly deflating into his chair. His disheveled brown suit, wild hair, and the tie hanging over the lamp on his desk answered the question before he said a word.

"I see you and Thomas have moved forward without consulting me." she dropped a single sheet of paper onto the mountain of research materials on the desk. Large letters at the top read, The Society of Esoteric Knowledge and Technology. "The name is awfully long, don't you think?"

"I think it describes the group fairly. Thomas came up with it, you'll have to convince him otherwise, I believe he is quite taken with it." he gazed over the wireframed glasses pushed down to the end of his nose. Adding a little humor might lighten the mood, he thought.