

A political campaign poster featuring Cthulhu as a candidate. Cthulhu is depicted as a green, tentacled creature with a human-like face, wearing a dark blue pinstripe suit, a white shirt, and a red and blue striped tie. He is seated in a large, ornate wooden chair, with his hands resting on the armrests. The background is a stylized American flag with stars and stripes, and a large, glowing yellow light source is visible behind him. The overall tone is dramatic and satirical.

Candidate

Cthulhu



CANDIDATE CTHULHU

Why settle for a lesser evil?

Johan Strömquist

Stormkissed



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To my backers.

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PROLOGUE

As the eldritch city of R'lyeh crested the churning waves like some unholy leviathan breaching the surface of sanity itself, its cyclopean spires pierced the ravaged sky, an obsidian knife in the belly of reality. Noxious clouds the color of a bloated corpse swirled lazily about its blasphemous flanks.

Ships unfortunate enough to be caught within the malignant miasma emanating from that foul place found their crews driven to gibbering madness, their eyes wide with vistas of horror unimaginable, their lips frothing with the unspeakable truths revealed in that dreadful moment of wretched epiphany.

Ports festering with the decaying fruits of man's industry lay rotting in the city's putrid wake, foul tangles of malformed fish and twisted

abominations littering their ruined foundations, the very stones oozing with perverse ichors from strange and terrible depths.

And lo, in beholding that eldritch city's rise, the minds of men did quail and retreat into primitive fractals of stark raving terror, their psyches shattered by the merest glimpse of its squamous and batrachian cornices. Truly did madness and despair rage o'er the world as a fiendish tide of demented revelation, crashing ceaselessly upon the tattered shores of mankind's fragile grasp upon the comforting illusion called reality.

In the city's cyclopean ruins, a seismic shudder rippled as Great Cthulhu stirred in his eon-long slumber. Though not yet fully awake, the merest flicker of Cthulhu's consciousness sent tendrils of madness snaking across the globe, infiltrating the dreams of the sensitive and the unhinged.

In a moonlit asylum, a patient scrawled frantic hieroglyphs on padded walls, his mind touched by terrible vistas of non-Euclidean cityscapes and writhing tentacles. A sailor on a lone ship in the South Pacific stared into the depths with bulging eyes, his crew lying dead around him, driven to murderous insanity by a whispering voice in the deep.

And in a bustling city, an old hobo huddled in a dimly lit alley, muttering about the Great Dreamer who would soon wake and usher in a new age of delightful madness. His rambling drew nervous glances from passers-by, unsettled by words they dared not comprehend.

Cthulhu's psychic emanations, a mere echo of his true power, left a trail of shattered minds and trembling souls across the unsuspecting world. Madness blossomed like a putrid flower, and despair settled over humanity like a burial shroud—an ominous foretaste of the cosmic horrors that would soon awaken.



CHAPTER 1

The Awakening

Deep in the dank and shadowed halls of the Esoteric Order of Dagon's secret seaside temple, Zadok Allen, the cult's High Priest, felt a shudder run through his withered frame. His rheumy eyes widened as the realization struck him like a bolt of eldritch lightning: the stars were finally coming right, and Great Cthulhu's awakening was nigh.

A slow, crooked grin spread across Zadok's weathered face as a most audacious plan took shape within his fevered mind. Not content with merely witnessing his dread lord's glorious return, Zadok envisioned a world where Cthulhu's tentacles wrapped around the very reins of power. Yes, he would guide the Great Old One to the throne of the mightiest human nation - the presidency of the United States!

Zadok cackled to himself, imagining the looks of shock and awe on the faces of the unsuspecting populace as they beheld their new overlord. Oh, the delightful madness that would ensue! The political pundits would babble incoherently, their minds shattered by the cosmic horror of it all. The other candidates, mere puppets of their corporate masters, would quail and gibber in the face of Cthulhu's eldritch might.

And so, with a spring in his step and a mad glint in his eye, Zadok set about plotting the greatest coup in human history. He would rally the cult, prepare the ancient rites, and unleash Cthulhu upon the unsuspecting electorate. The Great Old One's victory was all but assured, for who could resist the promise of a new age of insanity and despair? Zadok rubbed his hands together in glee, his laughter echoing through the dank corridors of the temple. The world would tremble, and Cthulhu would rule supreme!

In the smoky, shadowed confines of the Order's hidden sanctum, Zadok stepped up in front of his devoted cultists, his eyes alight with the fires of unholy purpose. The assembled acolytes murmured excitedly, their robes rustling in the flickering candlelight as they sensed the momentous nature of their gathering.

"My brothers and sisters," Zadok intoned, his voice a sepulchral whisper that seemed to echo from the very walls, "the stars are nearly right, and our dread lord Cthulhu stirs in his house at R'lyeh. The time has come for us to throw wide the doors of destiny and usher in a new age of madness and despair!"

The cultists leaned forward, their eyes wide with anticipation, hanging on Zadok's every word. The High Priest smiled, a grin that held no mirth but only a grim sense of determination.

"Behold," he proclaimed, "the key to our master's glorious return - and to his ascension to the throne of the mightiest human nation!" With a dramatic flourish, Zadok unveiled his audacious plan to guide Cthulhu to the presidency of the United States, painting a rapturous vision of the Great Old One's tentacles wrapped around the reins of power.

As the cultists gasped and chattered in astonishment at the sheer audacity of Zadok's scheme, Barnabas Marsh, the High Priest's woefully inept assistant, fumbled nervously with an ancient tome, nearly dropping it in his excitement. The book, bound in ominously squid-like leather, held the arcane secrets to the ritual that would fully awaken Cthulhu.

Zadok snatched the tome from Barnabas' trembling hands, shooting him a withering glare. "Careful with that, you blithering idiot," he snapped. "We'll need more than your bumbling to bring about the reign of our dread lord."

Barnabas cowered, mumbling apologies as Zadok turned back to the assembled cultists. "Prepare yourselves," the High Priest commanded, his voice rising with the fervor of his dark purpose. "For tonight, we unleash the greatest cosmic horror the world has ever known upon an unsuspecting electorate!"

* * *

The cultists erupted in a chorus of eldritch chanting, their voices rising to a fevered pitch as they began the complex ritual to fully awaken Cthulhu. In the shadows, Barnabas wiped the sweat from his brow, praying to the Old Ones that his clumsiness would not bring about the end of the world prematurely. It was going to be a long, dark night in the service of the Great Old One.

As the vortex of swirling darkness grew, Zadok's chanting rose to a fevered pitch, his voice echoing through the chamber like the tolling of an eldritch bell. The cultists swayed and writhed, their minds teetering on the brink of madness as they beheld the impossible geometry of the portal.

Barnabas, caught up in the frenzy of the moment, stumbled and nearly knocked over a candelabra, earning a sharp glare from Zadok. But even the High Priest's ire could not dampen the electric excitement that filled the air.

And then, with a final, guttural incantation, Cthulhu himself emerged from the portal, his immense, tentacled form filling the chamber. The

cultists fell to their knees, their faces upturned in expressions of rapturous devotion and abject terror.

Zadok, his eyes wide with wonder, prostrated himself before the Great Old One. "Master," he breathed, his voice trembling with reverence, "you have returned to us at last."

Cthulhu's telepathic response washed over the assembled throng like a tidal wave of madness, his alien thoughts and desires etching themselves into their fragile human minds. The Great Dreamer had indeed awoken, and his slumber in R'lyeh was at an end.

As if by some cosmic design, the cult's chanting had synchronized perfectly with Cthulhu's emergence, their voices rising and falling in an eldritch harmony that seemed to resonate with the very fabric of reality. The air shimmered with an otherworldly energy, and the boundaries between the waking world and the realms of dream began to blur.

Barnabas, his mind reeling from the psychic onslaught, stumbled and fell, his robes tangling around his legs. But even as he struggled to rise, he couldn't help but marvel at the sheer, terrifying beauty of the scene before him.

As the last echoes of the chanting faded into the shadows, Cthulhu rose to his full, terrible height, his ancient consciousness surging with renewed vigor. The Great Old One surveyed the gathered cultists, their faces a mix of awe, terror, and reverence, and felt a stirring of cosmic purpose.

For eons, Cthulhu had slumbered in the depths of R'lyeh, waiting for the stars to align and the time of his awakening to come. Now, fully restored to his eldritch might, he turned his thoughts to the world of mortals and the petty kingdoms they had built in his absence.

Zadok, sensing his master's musings, prostrated himself before the towering deity. "Great Cthulhu," he intoned, his voice trembling with a mixture of fear and exhilaration, "the world of man lies ripe for the taking. Their nations squabble and bicker, blind to the true power that lurks beyond their ken. The time has come for you to claim your rightful place as their ruler and god."

Cthulhu's telepathic response washed over Zadok like a tidal wave of dark amusement tinged with ancient malevolence. Yes, the time had indeed come for the Great Old One to exert his will upon the unsuspecting masses. And what better way to do so than to seize control of their mightiest nation, to sit upon the throne of power and bend the world to his eldritch whims?

Zadok, interpreting Cthulhu's desires with the ease of long practice, bowed low. "It shall be done, my lord," he rasped. "Your faithful servants shall pave the way for your ascension to the presidency. The United States shall be the first to fall before your might, and the rest of the world shall follow."

Cthulhu's eyes glowed with a sickly, otherworldly light, and the very air seemed to shiver with the weight of his dark approval. The Great Old One had made his decision, and the fate of humanity now hung in the balance.

As the cultists began to disperse, their minds already racing with plans and machinations, Barnabas couldn't help but feel a sense of impending doom. The world was about to change forever, and he had a sinking feeling that it wasn't going to be for the better. But such was the price of serving the Great Old One, and Barnabas knew that there was no turning back now. Cthulhu had awoken, and the campaign for the presidency was about to begin.



CHAPTER 2

The Campaign Begins

Malcolm Waite, Zadok's increasingly frazzled cousin, found himself standing before the imposing doors of the local election office, a stack of eldritch paperwork clutched in his trembling hands. He took a deep breath, steeling himself for the Herculean task ahead: registering Cthulhu, the cosmic horror from beyond the stars, as a legitimate presidential candidate.

With a sense of grim determination, Malcolm pushed open the doors and strode into the office, his eyes twitching slightly as he approached the front desk. The bored-looking clerk barely glanced up from her computer screen, her fingers still clacking away at the keyboard.

"Can I help you?" she droned, her voice as flat as the fluorescent lighting that buzzed overhead.

Malcolm cleared his throat, a manic grin spreading across his face. "Yes, I'm here to register my candidate for the presidential election. He's a bit of an unconventional choice, but I assure you, all the paperwork is in order."

The clerk finally looked up, her eyes narrowing as she took in Malcolm's disheveled appearance and the strange, slightly pulsating documents in his hands. "Unconventional, you say? Who exactly is your candidate?"

"Cthulhu," Malcolm replied, his voice tinged with a hint of pride and a healthy dose of insanity. "Great Cthulhu, the High Priest of the Great Old Ones, the Dreamer in the Depths, the—"

The clerk held up a hand, cutting him off mid-sentence. "Right, right, I get the picture. Do you have proof of citizenship? A birth certificate, perhaps?" Her tone suggested that she was humoring him, but Malcolm was not to be deterred.

With a flourish, he produced a water-stained document covered in eldritch sigils and strange, unsettling hieroglyphs. "Here you go," he said, sliding it across the desk. "Straight from the sunken city of R'lyeh itself."

The clerk's eyes widened as she gingerly picked up the document, her face paling as she tried to make sense of the alien script. "I... I see," she stammered, her composure cracking ever so slightly. "And the rest of the forms?"

Malcolm happily handed over the stack of paperwork, watching with barely contained glee as the clerk's sanity began to fray at the edges with each passing moment. She stamped the forms with shaking hands, her eyes glazing over as the eldritch bureaucracy worked its dark magic on her mortal mind.

"There you go," she said, her voice now a hollow whisper. "Your candidate is officially registered. May the gods have mercy on us all."

Malcolm snatched up the stamped forms, a triumphant laugh bubbling up from his throat. He strode out of the office, leaving behind a shell-shocked clerk and a lingering sense of cosmic dread. The campaign had begun, and the stars were aligning for a presidential race like no other.

With the eldritch paperwork filed and Cthulhu's candidacy made official, Zadok's cultists erupted into a frenzy of activity. Minor monsters and devoted acolytes alike scurried about, preparing for the Great Old One's inaugural rally.

In a dank, candlelit chamber, Zadok presided over a motley crew of volunteers. A shoggoth, its amorphous body quivering with excitement, slithered up to the High Priest, clutching a stack of hastily printed campaign posters in its pseudopods. The slime-spattered slogans, written in a script that seemed to writhe on the page, proclaimed Cthulhu's promises of madness and despair to all who gazed upon them.

Nearby, a group of Deep Ones, their scaly skin glistening in the flickering light, huddled around a rusty cauldron filled with a bubbling, noxious brew. They ladled the caustic liquid into wax-sealed canteens, cackling with glee as they prepared to distribute the mind-altering elixir to unsuspecting rally attendees.

Barnabas, his robes still singed from an earlier mishap, darted about the room, his arms laden with tomes of eldritch lore and ancient prophecies. He muttered to himself as he thumbed through the pages, searching for the perfect incantations to weave into Cthulhu's speech.

Zadok surveyed the chaos with a mixture of pride and trepidation. He knew that the path ahead would be fraught with peril and madness, but there was no turning back now. Cthulhu's rise to power had begun, and the fate of the nation - nay, the world - hung in the balance.

As the final preparations were made, Zadok rallied his troops with a rousing cry: "Onward, my brothers and sisters... and monstrosities! Let us go forth and spread the word of Cthulhu to the masses! The

time of the Great Old Ones is at hand, and we shall be the heralds of a new age of insanity and despair!"

The assembled cultists and creatures cheered, their voices echoing through the chamber like the discordant notes of an eldritch symphony. They marched forth into the night, ready to unleash the madness of Cthulhu upon an unsuspecting world.

* * *

As the sun began to set behind the crumbling buildings of the town, casting long shadows across the rally grounds, Cthulhu raised his tentacles to the sky in a gesture of triumph. "Iä! Iä! Cthulhu fhtagn!" he roared, the ancient incantation sending shivers down the spines of all who heard it. The crowd, lost in the throes of eldritch ecstasy, chanted and swayed, their minds surrendering to the all-consuming madness of Cthulhu's presence.

Terrified rally attendees stood transfixed, their eyes wide with a mixture of awe and horror. Hypnotized reporters scribbled furiously in their notebooks, their glazed eyes reflecting the eldritch green light that emanated from the stage. Even the opposing candidates, once confident in their own campaigns, now seemed small and insignificant in the face of Cthulhu's overwhelming presence.

The rally had begun hours earlier, with throngs of devoted cultists and curious onlookers lining up outside the decrepit town hall. Vendors hawked eldritch merchandise, from tentacled hats to "Make America Dread Again" t-shirts. The atmosphere was electric with anticipation, tinged with an undercurrent of trepidation.

As the doors opened and the crowd poured in, an eerie green mist began to swirl around the stage. Unsettling chants and strange, discordant music filled the air, setting the stage for Cthulhu's grand entrance. When the Great Old One finally emerged, the crowd erupted into a frenzy of cheers and unhinged gibbering.

Cthulhu's speech was a mind-bending mix of apocalyptic promises and incomprehensible ancient phrases. He railed against the establishment, vowing to drain the swamp and fill it with the

brackish water of R'lyeh. He promised a new era of madness and despair, where the very fabric of reality would be rent asunder. The crowd hung on his every word, their faces contorted in ecstatic fervor.

As the rally reached its climax, Cthulhu's acolytes began distributing eldritch elixirs to the crowd, their effects immediately apparent as people began to convulse and babble incoherently. Mosh pits of flailing tentacles and writhing bodies formed, a twisted parody of the usual political rally fervor.

Through it all, Cthulhu stood triumphant, basking in the adoration of his followers. As the crowd finally began to disperse, stumbling out into the night forever changed by what they had witnessed, it was clear that the campaign had shifted into high gear. This was what success looked like - the world would never be the same.

* * *

Behind the scenes, campaign manager Malcolm worked tirelessly to keep the logistics of the eldritch campaign running smoothly. He coordinated travel arrangements, booked venues, and ensured that the sacrificial offerings to the Great Old Ones were always fresh and plentiful. Malcolm's gaunt face glittered with fanatical glee as he watched the chaos unfold, the monstrous minions proving to be invaluable assets to the campaign. His dedication to the cause was unwavering, even as he felt his own sanity beginning to fray at the edges.

The unflappable bureaucratic superhero, orchestrated the eldritch madness with a deft touch and an uncanny ability to navigate the labyrinthine complexities of the American political system. Armed with an encyclopedic knowledge of arcane procedural rules and a seemingly endless supply of coffee, he worked tirelessly to keep the gears of the campaign grinding forward.

When the Esoteric Order of Dagon threatened to unleash unspeakable horrors upon the nation, Malcolm simply smiled and filed the appropriate paperwork in triplicate. He deftly maneuvered

through the red tape, his mastery of the dark arts of bureaucracy allowing him to bend even the most stubborn regulations to his will.

As the primaries drew near and Cthulhu's campaign reached a fever pitch, Malcolm remained focused on his singular goal: securing the Great Old One's place on the ballot. He worked long hours in his cluttered office, the walls lined with ancient tomes and filing cabinets stuffed to bursting with eldritch campaign memoranda.

Despite the chaos that swirled around him, Malcolm remained a bastion of calm in the eye of the storm. He fielded calls from panicked cultists, soothed the frayed nerves of Deep One volunteers, and even managed to placate the occasional shoggoth that had gotten lost in the labyrinthine corridors of the campaign headquarters.

Through it all, Malcolm's unwavering dedication and bureaucratic acumen kept the campaign on track. He was the unsung hero of the eldritch political machine, the man behind the curtain who ensured that Cthulhu's rise to power remained unstoppable. And if, at times, the weight of his responsibilities threatened to crush him beneath an avalanche of paperwork and existential dread, well, that was just the price of doing business in the shadows of the Great Old Ones.

* * *

Lois Lovecraft, a seasoned journalist known for her tenacity and skepticism, had been following the Cthulhu campaign with a mix of fascination and disbelief. She had heard the rumors of reporters driven to madness, their minds shattered by the eldritch revelations they had witnessed on the campaign trail. Some had even disappeared altogether, their fates unknown. But Lois, ever the pragmatist, dismissed these tales as exaggerations, the product of overactive imaginations and the feverish atmosphere surrounding the campaign.

Determined to uncover the truth behind the Cthulhu phenomenon, Lois scheduled an interview with the candidate himself at his campaign headquarters in Innsmouth. As she made her way through the dimly lit, oddly damp corridors of the office, she couldn't shake

the feeling of unease that crept up her spine. Strange, fish-like figures shuffled past her, whispering in a guttural language that seemed to echo from the depths of some primordial ocean. Lois shuddered, but pressed on, her journalistic instincts urging her forward.

When she finally entered Cthulhu's inner sanctum, Lois found herself face to face with a portal of swirling darkness, tendrils of inky blackness reaching out like grasping tentacles. From the depths of the void, the eldritch horror himself emerged, his towering form defying human comprehension. As Cthulhu's presence filled the room, Lois felt her mind begin to buckle under the weight of the cosmic revelations that assaulted her senses.

Lois frantically scribbled in her notebook, trying to capture the essence of Cthulhu's eldritch monologue. "Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn," the Great Old One intoned, his voice resonating with the power of a thousand abyssal depths. "Iä! Iä! Cthulhu fhtagn! The time of man is at an end. Now begins the epoch of Cthulhu!"

The words seemed to writhe on the page, twisting and contorting into shapes that defied human understanding. Lois's hand moved of its own accord, guided by an unseen force as she transcribed the incomprehensible utterances. She struggled to maintain her grip on reality, her mind reeling from the sheer enormity of the horrors that Cthulhu's words conjured.

Finally, mercifully, the eldritch monologue came to an end. Lois stumbled out of the office, her mind still reeling from the encounter. As she staggered through the streets of Innsmouth, gulping in the briny air, she couldn't shake the feeling that her brush with Cthulhu had irreversibly altered her perception of reality.

It was only later, as she reviewed her notes, that Lois realized the true extent of her eldritch experience. The pages of her notebook were filled not with coherent sentences, but with cyclopean diagrams and eldritch scribbles that seemed to shift and change before her very eyes. The words she had so frantically scribbled had transformed into an incomprehensible script that pulsed with an eerie, otherworldly energy.

In the days that followed, Lois pored over her incomprehensible notes, trying in vain to make sense of what she had experienced. She thought of her colleagues, the journalists who had been driven to insanity or had vanished without a trace, and wondered if she too would succumb to the eldritch power that seemed to permeate the very fabric of the campaign.

As Cthulhu's poll numbers continued to rise, defying all logic and reason, Lois knew that she had to find a way to convey the true horror of what she had witnessed. But how could she explain the inexplicable, describe the indescribable? She sat at her desk, staring blankly at the eldritch scribbles that danced across the pages of her notebook, and wondered if anyone would believe her if she tried.

And she wasn't alone.

The nation's media outlets found themselves increasingly challenged to grapple with such an unprecedented phenomenon. Mainstream outlets struggled to cover the eldritch candidate's rallies, their reporters often returning wide-eyed and gibbering, their notebooks filled with indecipherable scrawls and non-Euclidean diagrams. Those journalists who managed to maintain their grip on sanity were left with the daunting task of translating the incomprehensible horrors they had witnessed into digestible news segments for their increasingly unnerved audiences.

In the studios of the nation's top news networks, pundits and talk show hosts debated the merits of Cthulhu's platform, discussing his promises of cosmic destruction and endless madness as if they were just another set of political talking points. One well-coiffed anchor remarked, "Cthulhu's pledge to 'awaken the slumbering gods beneath the sea' is certainly unorthodox, but can we really afford to ignore the potential benefits of such a policy?" His co-host nodded sagely, adding, "And let's not forget his stance on immigration reform. While *opening the gates to the realm of nightmares* may sound extreme, it could be just the shake-up our system needs."

As the campaign gained momentum, disturbing reports began to circulate online and in whispered conversations across the nation. Eyewitnesses described strange, tentacled creatures emerging from

the sea to distribute Cthulhu campaign literature, while robed figures chanted eldritch slogans door-to-door, leaving trails of "Cthulhu '24" merchandise in their wake. However, mainstream media outlets were quick to dismiss these rumors as "fake news," even as their own reporters stumbled back to their offices, their minds reeling from the horrors they had encountered.

Behind the scenes, Zadok and his "campaign staff" scrambled to cover up the mysterious disappearances of several journalists and volunteers who had ventured too close to the truth. Unctuous spokespeople spun elaborate tales of "extended vacations" and "spiritual retreats," even as the missing individuals' social media accounts posted increasingly incoherent updates.

In the end, as the world watched in a mix of awe and horror, the fourth estate found itself irrevocably transformed by the rise of the Great Old One. Some journalists simply sat in catatonic states, their minds shattered by the eldritch revelations they had witnessed. Others began to chant softly, their voices joining in an eerie chorus of "Iä! Iä! Cthulhu fhtagn!" as they surrendered to the madness that had consumed the nation.

The line between objective reporting and eldritch propaganda had blurred beyond recognition, leaving the public to navigate a landscape of cosmic horror and existential dread without the guidance of a trusted media. In the wake of Cthulhu's ascension to power, one thing was certain: the role of journalism in American society would never be the same again.



CHAPTER 3

Rising in the Polls

In the shadowed halls of Cthulhu's campaign headquarters, Nyarlathotep, the Crawling Chaos, materialized in a swirl of darkness. Cthulhu's dread presence loomed over the chamber as Malcolm, his faithful campaign manager, stood ready to bear witness to this unholy alliance.

"Ah, Nyarlathotep, my old friend'," Cthulhu's eldritch voice reverberated through the aether. "I will be needing your silver tongue and shapeshifting prowess to lead my campaign's effort to sway these foolish mortals."

Nyarlathotep grinned, his form shifting between man and writhing tentacled horror. "Nuh problem, boss man," he replied, his accent lilt incongruous with his nightmare visage. "Dem humans' minds gonna be like clay fi mi to mold, yuh zee. I an' I gwaan spread yer message far an' wide, mon."

Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat of the Woods, trotted over, looking intrigued as she spoke around a mouthful of her own young. "Ach, Nyarlathotep, ye slippery devil! Whit's this I hear about ye an' yon Cthulhu's education policy?"

Nyarlathotep's form twisted into a tentacled approximation of a professor. "Ah, mi deah Shubby! We be plannin' to, how you say, 'reform' di yout' dem curriculum. Why teach dem tings like hope an' progress when despair an' madness be so much more fun, eh?"

Shub-Niggurath cackled, countless spawn spilling from beneath her shaggy hide. "Aye, that's the spirit! Start 'em off early, I always say. Speakin' o' which, I'll be off tae th' schoolyards. Thar's bairns there need indoctrinatin' intae th' fold!"

As the eldritch schemers conspired, Malcolm surveyed the dark tapestry they wove with an interested eye. He grinned as he watched the poll numbers, his eyes alight with the thrill of an unprecedented challenge.

Shub-Niggurath trotted over, her accent thick with amusement. "Ach, ye're a rare one, Malcolm! Most mortals wid crumble under th' weight o' this bureaucratic nightmare, but ye seem tae thrive on it, ye mad bastard!"

Malcolm shrugged, a wry smile playing on his gaunt features. "What can I say? I've always had a knack for the maddening complexities of mortal governance. It's like a cosmic puzzle, a Rubik's Cube of eldritch proportions. And I won't rest until every piece falls into place."

* * *

In a dimly lit basement somewhere in suburbia outside Atlantic City, the air thick with the acrid scent of energy drinks and stale pizza, Nyarlathotep's Misinformation Team toiled away at their keyboards. This motley crew of hackers, their faces illuminated by the sickly glow of computer screens, had been handpicked by the Crawling Chaos himself for their unique blend of arcane knowledge and meme-crafting prowess.

Among them was 4chan-user NecroNerd, a pale, neckbearded man who spent his days scouring the darkest corners of the internet for forbidden knowledge and dank memes. Beside him sat Reddit-

dweller MadMaddie, a purple-haired woman with a penchant for weaving eldritch conspiracies into seemingly innocuous cat videos.

Tumblr-titan CthulhuCutie, a waifish young woman with a shock of neon green hair and a penchant for eldritch aesthetics, set to work crafting moodboards that juxtaposed images of cute kittens with mind-bending fractals and non-Euclidean geometry. "We'll lure them in with the promise of kawaii," she whispered and giggled hysterically, her eyes gleaming with manic glee, "and then shatter their minds with the revelation of the cosmic horror that lurks beneath."

Next to her, Twitter-terrorist YogSothothsYarmulke – or Yog, as his friends called him (everyone considering his handle quite a mouthful), a bespectacled man with a wispy beard and a collection of ironic band t-shirts, furiously typed out 280-character missives of madness. "The elder gods are coming," he tweeted, his fingers flying across the keyboard. "Embrace the void. Vote Cthulhu." With each post, he carefully selected hashtags designed to infiltrate the most innocuous of conversations, slowly but surely steering unsuspecting users towards the brink of insanity.

Together, this team of basement-dwelling misinformants launched a series of targeted micro-campaigns, each one designed to sway a specific demographic to the Eldritch cause. For the suburban soccer moms, they crafted wholesome posts about the importance of family values, subtly lacing the messages with whispers of the cosmic void. "Cthulhu understands the challenges of modern parenting," one post read. "He too has spawned countless offspring across the aeons."

For the edgy teenagers, the team concocted a series of nihilistic memes that juxtaposed the banality of human existence with the mind-bending horror of the eldritch truth. "Tfw you realize school is pointless because we're all just dust in the wind," read one, accompanied by an image of a Shoggoth devouring a school bus.

As the Misinformation Team's efforts gained traction, Cthulhu's poll numbers began to climb. Nyarlathotep, his form now resembling a neon-clad social media influencer, grinned with satisfaction as he

watched the chaos unfold. "See, Maddie," he chuckled, slipping into a flawless valley girl accent, "we just, like, totes broke the internet."

The Crawling Chaos latest performance was interrupted by the basement door creaking open, and the voice of Yog's mom calling out from the top of the stairs. "Boys and girls! I brought more pizza rolls!"

* * *

As the primaries loomed on the horizon, Cthulhu's campaign unleashed a veritable army of eldritch foot soldiers upon an unsuspecting populace. Strange, tentacled creatures emerged from the churning sea, their glistening appendages clutching stacks of "Cthulhu for President" pamphlets and bumper stickers. Fishlike humanoids, Deep Ones, as they came to be known, swarmed the coastal towns and cities, leaving a trail of campaign materials and madness in their wake.

Meanwhile, hooded cultists fanned out across the nation, their robes billowing in the eerie winds as they went door-to-door, canvassing for votes. Armed with ancient tomes of forbidden knowledge and clipboards bearing the campaign's logo, they engaged bewildered homeowners in unsettling conversations about the merits of electing an eldritch abomination to the highest office in the land.

"Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn," they chanted, their voices echoing through quiet suburbs and bustling city streets alike. "In his house at R'lyeh, dead Cthulhu waits dreaming... and voting!"

As the cultists and Deep Ones made their rounds, they left behind a trail of possessed knick-knacks and cursed campaign memorabilia. Unsuspecting citizens found themselves compelled to display "Cthulhu '24" yard signs and wear "I voted for the Greater Evil" buttons, their minds slowly succumbing to the eldritch influence.

Back at campaign headquarters, Malcolm had set up an enormous open landscape solution for cultist telecanvasers. In a vast, non-Euclidean call center, robed acolytes manned banks of ancient, rune-

encrusted telephones, their voices echoing with the maddening cadences of long-forgotten languages as they called potential voters.

Some of these calls featured the eerie, disembodied voices of former presidents, their words twisted and distorted by the eldritch energies coursing through the phone lines. "My fellow Americans," a spectral facsimile of John F. Kennedy intoned, "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for the Great Old Ones."

Despite the unsettling nature of these campaign tactics, much of the mainstream media dismissed reports of tentacled canvassers and possessed yard signs as mere "fake news". Intrepid journalists who dared to investigate further often found themselves driven to the brink of madness, their minds unraveling as they confronted the incomprehensible truth behind Cthulhu's bid for the presidency.

And so, unimpeded by any meaningful opposition or scrutiny, the Cthulhu campaign's army of eldritch foot soldiers marched onward, their unholy mission to sway the hearts and minds of the American electorate proceeding apace.

* * *

As Cthulhu's campaign gained momentum, his poll numbers began to soar, with voters abandoning rational thought in favor of the cosmic horror's promises of a new age. Throngs of fervent supporters flocked to his rallies, chanting ancient incantations and pledging their unwavering loyalty.

The mainstream media struggled to cover the unprecedented campaign, their bravest journalists driven to gibbering insanity as they attempted to describe the indescribable horrors witnessed at each event. Pundits and talk show hosts debated the merits of Cthulhu's platform, unaware that their minds were slowly succumbing to the whispers of the Great Old One's eternal will.

As Cthulhu's opposing candidates held their own rallies in a futile attempt to counter the eldritch phenomenon, the cosmic horror's monstrous visage appeared in the skies above, his maddening laughter echoing in the minds of all who dared to challenge his

inevitable ascent to power. The bland assortment of career politicians and ambitious upstarts found their stump speeches filled with empty promises and platitudes drowned out by Cthulhu's overwhelming presence.

In an unassuming convention center on the outskirts of a nondescript Midwestern town, an extraordinary event was unfolding: the first-ever nationwide Eldritch Party caucus. The cavernous hall, typically reserved for home and garden expos or high school graduations, had been transformed into a surreal political spectacle, where fervent cultists and unspeakable abominations rubbed elbows with unsuspecting citizens.

At the head of the proceedings loomed the imposing figures of Cthulhu, Shub-Niggurath, and Nyarlathotep, their monstrous forms casting an otherworldly aura over the assembled crowd. Cthulhu's tentacles writhed with anticipation as he surveyed the sea of faces before him, his ancient eyes gleaming with the promise of eldritch power and cosmic horror.

Amidst the throng of attendees, Malcolm hurried about with a clipboard in hand and a pen tucked behind his ear, his gaunt face etched with a mixture of determination and absentmindedness. He moved from group to group, ensuring that the arcane rituals and eldritch procedures were being followed to the letter, occasionally pausing to retrieve his forgotten pen and jot down notes on his clipboard.

The caucus itself was a well-oiled machine, a testament to Malcolm's meticulous planning and the unwavering devotion of Cthulhu's followers. The cultists and creatures from beyond the veil gathered in orderly clusters, their voices rising in a cacophonous chant of ancient incantations and guttural pledges of allegiance to the Great Old One. To the untrained eye, it might have appeared as a standard political caucus, albeit one attended by a disproportionate number of robed figures and tentacled monstrosities.

As Malcolm passed the Great Old One himself, the tentacled candidate leaned forward to whisper: "Is this really necessary? I am

Cthulhu, I measure time in aeons. I don't need anyone's approval to conquer this puny nation!"

Malcolm just looked at him with an eye brow raised: "It's all due process my Lord, part of the spectacle. No caucus, no candidate. Now... where did I put that pen?"

As the caucus reached its crescendo, Cthulhu himself took to the stage, his monstrous form dominating the space like a living colossus. His words, a booming rumble that shook the very foundations of the building, echoed in the minds of all present, promising a new age of madness and despair under his inevitable presidency. The assembled cultists and creatures erupted in a frenzy of ecstatic cheers, their minds fully surrendered to the call of the ancient god.

With the Eldritch Party united behind him and the power of the Great Old Ones at his command, Cthulhu's ascendancy to the White House seemed all but assured. The stage was set for a general election campaign that would shake the very fabric of reality, as the nation teetered on the brink of a new era of cosmic horror and eldritch madness.



CHAPTER 4

Eldritch Eloquence

As the campaign gained momentum, his opponents found themselves grappling with the unspeakable realization that their own sanity was unraveling like a cheap sweater in a Korean laundromat. Senator John Fitzgerald, once a formidable challenger, now spent his days huddled in a corner of his office, scribbling eldritch sigils on the walls. His staff, their minds crumbling like stale bread, could only watch in morbid fascination as their candidate descended into a gibbering parody of his former self.

Governor Elizabeth Blackwood, meanwhile, had barricaded herself inside her ancestral estate, where she conducted bizarre rituals involving a sacrificial altar shaped like the IRS building. Rumors swirled that she had made a pact with the Elder Gods, trading her sanity for a slim chance at victory. Her campaign manager, a hollow-eyed husk of a man, would only mutter cryptic phrases like "The goat screams at midnight" when pressed for comment.

As the general election loomed, Cthulhu's rivals watched helplessly as their campaigns imploded faster than a dynamite factory in a Michael Bay movie. Their supporters flocked to the Eldritch Lord's

banner, drawn by promises of madness, destruction, and what to some looked like a slightly better dental plan. Press conferences devolved into Kafkaesque nightmares, with candidates spouting existential dread and non-Euclidean geometry in response to questions about foreign policy.

But in a shadowy backroom, a cabal of senators and representatives, led by the grimly determined Senator Richard Harmon, plotted one last, desperate attempt to stop Cthulhu's ascent to power. Harmon, a man whose sanity was held together by sheer stubbornness and copious amounts of single malt scotch, rallied his troops for a final stand against the encroaching darkness. The group, their minds teetering on the edge of the abyss, debated unholy strategies and unspeakable alliances, even as the walls of their meeting room seemed to pulsate with a sickly, otherworldly light.

Armed with nothing more than his wits, a tattered copy of the Constitution, and a half-empty hip flask of 18 year old McAllan, he strode onto the debate stage, ready to confront the eldritch abomination that threatened to consume the world.

And so, in a clash of wills that would echo through the ages, man and monster faced off, trading barbs and existential dread in equal measure. The fate of humanity hung in the balance, and only one question remained: would Senator Harmon's sanity prevail, or would he, too, be swallowed by the yawning madness that had already claimed so many?

* * *

Lois could barely contain her nervous anticipation as she took her seat in the press box for the final presidential debate. The campaign had been a descent into madness, as the monstrous Cthulhu's mere presence shattered the psyches of opponents and voters alike.

She shuddered, recalling the gibbering wreck that was once Senator John Fitzgerald after his harrowing debate with the cosmic horror. The poor man's mind simply couldn't withstand the existential dread induced by Cthulhu's alien intellect. Governor Elizabeth Blackwood

fared no better, fleeing back to her ancestral estate to conduct unspeakable rituals in a futile attempt to preserve her candidacy.

As Lois surveyed the debate hall, she spied the hunched figure of Zadok Allen lurking in the shadows. The disheveled old drunk leered at her, his eyes glinting with the eldritch knowledge of Cthulhu's faithful high priest. Rumors swirled that it was Zadok who had first summoned the Great Old One to run for office, his whispered incantations unleashing this nightmare upon an unsuspecting electorate.

Up on stage, Cthulhu loomed over the remaining candidates, his tentacled visage an abomination against nature itself. Beside him stood Malcolm Waite, his emaciated campaign manager, looking like the Grim Reaper's malnourished brother. Malcolm masterminded every twisted move of the campaign, from dispatching Deep One volunteers to drag voters to the polls, to crafting slogans like "Why Settle For A Lesser Evil?".

As the debate commenced, Lois prepared herself to see the last threads of the candidates' sanity unravel in the baleful glare of Cthulhu's red eyes. Their rhetoric devolved into word salad, punctuated by tortured shrieks, as the eldritch monster's alien thoughts burrowed into their minds like cerebral parasites.

As the world slipped further into insanity with each of Cthulhu's rumbling rejoinders, Lois felt her own thoughts fraying at the edges. This was the final battle for the soul of the nation, but she couldn't shake the sense it was a battle they had already lost. The stars were aligning for Cthulhu's presidency and a reign of insanity and despair. With trembling hands, she recorded the historic debate, wondering if these might be the last sane words ever penned before the fall of mankind.

The atmosphere in the debate hall crackled with an electric mix of anticipation and dread as the final three candidates took their places on the stage.

Senator Richard Harmon stood unsteadily at his podium, his eyes bloodshot and his breath heavy with the scent of whiskey. The once-proud statesman had turned to the bottle as his only solace against

the encroaching madness of the campaign, but his wit remained sharp as a razor, even if his words occasionally slurred.

To his left, Representative Miriam Lockhart trembled visibly, her knuckles white as she gripped the sides of her podium. She was a rising star in the Democratic party, known for her keen intellect and unflappable demeanor, but now her eyes darted about wildly, as if seeking escape from some unseen horror.

And then there was Cthulhu.

The Great Old One loomed over the stage, his immense, tentacled bulk making a mockery of the human-scaled set. His pustule-ridden hide shimmered with a sickly light and his eyes, like fetid stars, seemed to pierce the sanity of all who dared meet them. Beside the eldritch abomination, Malcolm Waite and Zadok Allen lurked like acolytes, the light of madness dancing in their eyes.

The moderator, a veteran journalist named Edgar Hawthorne, cleared his throat nervously. He had covered wars, riots and every kind of human depravity in his long career, but nothing could have prepared him for this.

"Welcome to the final presidential debate," he began, his voice quavering slightly. "Let's begin with the first question, on the economy..."

But his words trailed off as Cthulhu swiveled his tentacled visage towards him. The Great Old One spoke, its voice like a million cicadas screaming in unison, its noisome breath like an open grave. The words, if one could call them that, were incomprehensible, but their meaning bored into the minds of all present like a dentist's drill.

Representative Lockhart began to laugh, a shrill, unhinged sound that echoed through the suddenly silent auditorium. She rocked back and forth, her eyes rolling back in their sockets, as she babbled in some long-forgotten tongue. Then, with a final, gasping cackle, she collapsed behind her podium and moved no more.

Senator Harmon, his face grim, took a long pull from the hip flask beneath his jacket. He slammed the vessel down on his podium, the

sound as loud as a gunshot in the horrified silence.

"Well," he slurred, his eyes never leaving the amorphous horror that was his opponent, "I never thought I'd have to argue economic policy with an overgrown calamari, but here we are..."

And with those words, the final debate lurched onward, a grotesque farce against the backdrop of a world teetering on the brink of annihilation. Cthulhu's eldritch oratory crashed against Harmon's whiskey-fueled defiance, as Edgar Hawthorne struggled to maintain some semblance of order, even as his mind crumbled under the weight of the Great Old One's words.

The end was nigh, and it was being televised.

* * *

Little Tommy squirmed on the couch between his parents, his eyes glued to the television screen as the presidential debate unfolded. Mommy and Daddy had said this was important, but Tommy didn't quite understand why. All he knew was that the big, scary octopus man was saying things that made his head hurt.

"Mommy," Tommy whispered, tugging on his mother's sleeve. "Why is that man all wiggly and green?"

"Hush, dear," Mommy replied, her voice tight. "Just watch."

On the screen, Cthulhu's tentacles writhed as he spoke of cosmic horrors and the futility of human existence. His words seemed to slither into Tommy's ears, filling his mind with visions of cyclopean cities and realms beyond the stars.

"The time has come for mankind to embrace the madness of the great void," Cthulhu boomed. "Only in the depths of insanity can true understanding be found."

Senator Harmon, his face flushed and his words slurring, leaned heavily on his podium. "You're talking nonsense, you overgrown squid," he bellowed. "The American people won't stand for your eldritch shenanigans!"

But Tommy could see the fear in the Senator's eyes, the way his hands shook as he raised his flask to his lips again and again. Mommy gripped Daddy's arm, her knuckles white. Daddy just stared at the screen, his mouth hanging open.

As the debate spiraled into chaos, with Harmon's words devolving into drunken gibberish and Cthulhu's acolytes chanting in the audience, Tommy felt a strange sensation wash over him. The corners of his vision went dark, and the sounds of the television seemed to recede into the distance. In their place, a whispering arose, a million tiny voices chattering in the shadows of his mind.

Suddenly, Senator Harmon swayed on his feet, his flask tumbling from his hand. He crumpled to the floor, his eyes rolling back in his head. Mommy screamed, her hands flying to her mouth. Daddy fumbled for the remote, his fingers trembling.

"...and that concludes our broadcast," the ashen-faced moderator stammered, the camera shaking as pandemonium erupted in the auditorium.

The television winked to black, but Tommy barely noticed. The whispering in his head grew louder, more insistent. He smiled, his eyes gleaming in the flickering light, as a single word formed on his lips:

"Cthulhu."



CHAPTER 5

Inauguration Day

The studio was in a state of barely controlled chaos as the two veteran political commentators, Jack Turner and Samantha Reeves, sat at the anchor desk, their usually immaculate appearance showing signs of strain. Jack's normally perfectly coiffed hair was disheveled, and Samantha's hands shook slightly as she shuffled through her notes.

Jack: "Well, Samantha, it's shaping up to be a truly unprecedented election night. We're getting reports of bizarre occurrences at polling places across the country. Ballots covered in strange symbols, malfunctioning voting machines... it's like something out of a Lovecraft novel."

Samantha: "That's right, Jack. And the atmosphere here in the studio is getting more unsettling by the minute. Some of our colleagues have started muttering what sounds like gibberish under their breath. Their eyes... I've never seen expressions like that before."

Jack: "Hold on, we have a key race alert. It looks like they've just called Massachusetts for Cthulhu. That's a major pickup for the Great Old One."

Samantha: "Massachusetts? For an eldritch horror? The home state of Kennedy and Kerry? I never thought I'd see the day, Jack. The anchors reporting it can barely keep their composure. A few seem to be giggling uncontrollably while others are openly weeping."

Jack: "And now we're ready to call the state of Maine for Cthulhu as well. That's despite the Pine Tree State's reputation for moderate, independent-minded vot-"

Jack paused abruptly, his voice becoming raspy and guttural as his eyes took on a disturbingly vacant look.

Samantha: "Jack? Are you alright?"

Jack: "Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn..."

Samantha, visibly unnerved, quickly cut to their reporter at Cthulhu's campaign headquarters. In the background, sounds of ecstatic chanting and inhuman ululations could be heard.

Campaign HQ Reporter: "The scene here is one of utter pandemonium. Cthulhu's followers are dancing, writhing, babbling in strange tongues. Those few of us who still cling to our sanity can only watch in horror as the electoral map turns a sickening shade of green... I... I can't... Iä! Iä! Cthulhu fhtagn!" The audio abruptly cut out.

Samantha, now alone at the anchor desk, her face a mask of despair: "We appear to have lost contact with our reporter. But it's all too clear, ladies and gentlemen - this is the end. Cthulhu has won. May the gods have mercy on us all."

The broadcast descended into a cacophony of screams, chants, and eerie, inhuman sounds as one by one, the studio crew succumbed to

the maddening reality of Cthulhu's victory. In millions of homes across America, viewers stared in numb disbelief at their flickering screens, the walls of their familiar world crumbling around them. The age of man had ended; the reign of Cthulhu had begun.

* * *

As the polls closed across the nation and the vote counting began, an eerie sense of unease settled over the newsrooms. Anchors and pundits, their faces bathed in the flickering glow of the television screens, watched in growing disbelief as the results trickled in, each update more bizarre and unsettling than the last.

The first signs that something was amiss came from the ballots themselves. They were covered in strange, eldritch symbols and tentacle-shaped smudges, as if they had been handled by something not quite human. Some of the voting machines malfunctioned, spewing out streams of gibberish that seemed to form patterns of madness-inducing glyphs.

Despite the growing sense of dread, the election officials pressed on with their grim task, dutifully counting the votes amidst the eldritch mayhem. Their eyes twitched and their hands shook, but they continued, driven by an inexplicable compulsion to see the process through to its terrifying conclusion.

As the final votes were tallied, a deafening silence fell over the nation. In homes and public spaces, people gathered around televisions and radios, their faces illuminated by the eerie glow of the screens. When the news of Cthulhu's landslide victory was announced, a collective gasp rippled through the crowds, followed by a buzz of confusion, terror, and strange exultation.

And so, on that fateful election night, Cthulhu ascended to the presidency, his tentacles firmly grasping the reins of power. The stage was set for a new era of madness and despair, as the nation and the world braced themselves for the unimaginable terrors to come.

* * *

As the nation reeled from the reality of Cthulhu's victory, the President-elect and his inner circle were hard at work preparing for an inauguration ceremony that would tear asunder the very fabric of reality itself. Deep within the eldritch halls of Cthulhu's transition headquarters, Zadok, the Great Old One's high priest, pored over moldering tomes and whispered incantations, his withered hands tracing sigils of power in the air.

"The stars are nearly right," he muttered, his voice like the rustling of dead leaves. "Soon, the veil between worlds will be at its thinnest, and our master's true glory shall be unleashed upon this pitiful Earth."

Around him, scores of cultists labored tirelessly, their minds focused on the singular goal of ensuring that the inauguration would be a cosmic spectacle unlike any the world had ever seen. They chanted in long-forgotten tongues, their voices rising and falling in eerie unison as they worked to weaken the boundaries between dimensions.

Meanwhile, Malcolm, Cthulhu's ever-faithful campaign manager, scurried about the headquarters, his clipboard clutched tightly to his chest and a manic gleam in his eye. He barked orders at cowering interns and screeching shoggoths alike, his mind consumed with the myriad logistical challenges of organizing an event that would herald the end of all things.

"No, no, no!" he shrieked, his voice echoing through the cavernous halls. "The VIP seating chart is all wrong! We can't have the Mi-Go delegation sitting next to the Deep Ones - they'll be at each other's throats before the ceremony even begins!"

As Malcolm grappled with the seating arrangements and Zadok continued his arcane preparations, Cthulhu himself remained sequestered in his private chambers, his monstrous form pulsating with eldritch energy as he contemplated the glorious madness to come. The Great Old One's thoughts drifted to the moment when he would place his tentacle upon the Necronomicon and take the oath of office, unleashing a tide of cosmic horror that would drown the world in insanity.

Zadok caught his master's attention, leaned in close to his pulsating form, voice a sibilant whisper in the eldritch god's ear. "Great Cthulhu," he hissed, "the time has come to cast aside the trappings of this mortal campaign. The presidency is yours, and with it, the world. Malcolm served his purpose, but now he is a mere distraction, a vestige of the mundane politics we have transcended."

Cthulhu's alien mind reeled with the implications of Zadok's words. The cosmic horror had indeed grown weary of the stultifying tedium of the bureaucracy surrounding the campaign, and Malcolm so represented the endless parade of paperwork and procedural minutiae that had littered his path to the Presidency.

Rising from his throne of madness, Cthulhu summoned Malcolm to his chambers. The campaign manager entered, his gaunt face etched with a mixture of reverence and trepidation. Cthulhu's monstrous visage filled the room, his massive form pulsating with barely contained cosmic energy.

"Malcolm," Cthulhu's voice boomed, echoing through the twisted corridors of his mind. "Your service are no longer required and your role in this grand design has come to an end. The campaign is over, and my reign is about to begin."

Malcolm, his eyes wide with shock and dawning horror, prostrated himself before his master. "But, my lord," he stammered, "I thought I would be at your side as you ushered in the new age of madness and despair..."

A wave of emotions washed over Malcolm as he groveled at Cthulhu's feet. Disbelief gave way to a profound sense of betrayal, his countless hours of toil and sacrifice seemingly rendered meaningless in an instant. He had given everything to the cause, pouring his very sanity into the campaign, and now he was being cast aside like a spent shell.

Desperation clawed at Malcolm's mind as he sought to salvage his position. "Please, Master," he begged, his voice quavering, "there is still so much to be done! The transition, the appointments, the executive orders... surely you need me to ensure a smooth passage into your eternal reign!"

But Cthulhu's laughter, a sound that could shatter sanity and rend the very fabric of reality, filled the chamber, drowning out Malcolm's pleas. "Foolish mortal," the Great Old One rumbled, "did you truly believe that your insignificant mind could comprehend the depths of my plans? You have served your purpose, and now you are dismissed."

With a mere flicker of his eldritch will, Cthulhu opened a swirling portal behind the trembling cultist. Malcolm, his face a mask of terror and despair, felt an unseen force seize him, dragging him inexorably toward the rift. He screamed, a sound of pure anguish and shattered dreams, as he clawed at the unyielding floor, desperate for some purchase, some last chance to prove his worth.

But it was all for naught. In a heartbeat, Malcolm was gone, flung through the portal and banished to some nameless, forgotten dimension, his final screams echoing in the void as the rift sealed behind him.

Cthulhu, his attention already drifting to the glorious madness to come, spared not a single thought for his discarded servant. The Great Old One knew that his true power lay not in the petty machinations of human politics, but in the cosmic horror that he would unleash upon the unsuspecting world. With Malcolm's dismissal, the last vestige of his mortal campaign had been cast aside, and Cthulhu stood poised to claim his rightful place as the supreme ruler of all existence.

As the inauguration ceremony commenced, a vast throng of Cthulhu's mesmerized followers gathered before the steps of the Capitol, their eyes wide with rapture and their minds teetering on the brink of madness. An eerie, expectant hush fell over the crowd as the Great Old One himself emerged, his titanic form casting a shadow that seemed to swallow the very light of day.

Zadok Allen stood at the podium, his gaunt face a mask of eldritch ecstasy. He raised his arms, his voice rising in a chant that echoed through the vast dimensions, a summons to the dark powers that lurked beyond the veil of sanity. The air crackled with a palpable sense of otherworldly energy as the ritual began to take hold.

Cthulhu approached the podium, his alien visage betraying no emotion, his eyes burning with the cold fire of distant stars. In his tentacles, he grasped the ancient tome known as the Necronomicon, its blackened pages pulsing with an unholy life of their own. As he placed a tentacle upon the book and began to recite the oath of office, his words reverberated through the very fabric of reality itself.

Around the Great Old One, Zadok and his fellow cultists continued their chanting, their voices rising in a crescendo of eldritch syllables that seemed to tear at the very foundations of the world. The sky above the Capitol began to darken, the clouds swirling in a vortex of unnatural hues and patterns. Bolts of sickly green lightning split the heavens, accompanied by the distant, maddening piping of flutes that no human lips could ever produce.

As Cthulhu's oath reached its climax, the vortex above the Capitol yawned wider, revealing a glimpse of the nightmare realm beyond. The crowd, caught between ecstasy and terror, gazed upward, their minds reeling at the cosmic horror that threatened to engulf them all. Some fell to their knees, babbling incoherently, while others threw their arms skyward, welcoming the descent of madness with open hearts and shattered souls.

Zadok, his eyes ablaze with the fires of revelation, raised his voice above the din, his words a clarion call to the faithful. "Behold!" he cried, his voice cracking with raw emotion. "The reign of Cthulhu has begun! Let the world tremble before the might of the Great Old Ones!"

And with those words, the last vestiges of sanity crumbled, and the Age of Cthulhu was ushered in amidst a swirling maelstrom of eldritch horror and unimaginable cosmic terror.

"Ah! My cabinet arrives!" Cthulhu bellowed, his voice a rumbling echo that reverberated through the very souls of those gathered before him.

From the swirling vortex of madness, a procession of nightmarish creatures emerged, their writhing forms and alien geometries causing onlookers to collapse in fits of gibbering insanity. Dagon, the ancient fish-god, lumbered forward on scaly, webbed feet, his

hideous visage causing those who gazed upon him to claw at their own eyes in despair. Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young, slithered through the crowd, her countless offspring swarming around her in a nightmarish procession. Beside her, Nyarlathotep, the Crawling Chaos, shifted between a myriad of nightmarish forms, his very presence causing the minds of the weaker cultists to unravel.

Yog-Sothoth, the All-in-One and One-in-All, manifested as a congeries of iridescent spheres, its pulsating form defying the laws of time and space. The Nameless Mist, a sentient fog of malevolence, crept along the ground, its tendrils probing the minds of those it enveloped, dredging up their deepest fears and darkest secrets.

Shoggoths, amorphous blobs of protoplasmic flesh dotted with countless eyes and gaping maws, oozed through the rifts, their pulsating bodies leaving trails of viscous slime in their wake. Mi-gos flew in through the portal and took up positions in the air all around the area, the sussurrations of their wings unnerving the audience and making the people wave their hands involuntarily in front of their faces to ensure they weren't assaulted by mosquitos.

As the monstrosities assembled before their master, Cthulhu stood tall and proud, his eyes blazing with an otherworldly power that seemed to pierce the very souls of those who dared to meet his gaze. The air shimmered and distorted around him, as if the presence of the Great Old One and his minions was too much for the fragile fabric of reality to bear.

Zadok gazed upon the assembled horrors with a mixture of awe and grim satisfaction. These beings, ancient beyond measure and possessed of power beyond human comprehension, would be instrumental in ensuring Cthulhu's dominion over the Earth and the sanity of its inhabitants.

And so, with the candidates of his cabinet of cosmic abominations gathered before him, Cthulhu prepared to unleash his eldritch agenda upon an unsuspecting world, the very foundations of reality trembling in anticipation of the horrors to come.

* * *

President Cthulhu's first major hurdle as the newly inaugurated leader of the United States was appointing his cabinet. His choices were met with a mixture of confusion, horror, and outright hysteria from both politicians and the public alike.

For the crucial role of Secretary of State, Cthulhu selected Nyarlathotep, the Crawling Chaos. During his confirmation hearing, Nyarlathotep's sanity-shattering ability to shapeshift into a myriad of forms left the assembled Senators in a state of gibbering madness, unable to comprehend the cosmic horror that stood before them.

Yog-Sothoth, the All-in-One and One-in-All, was tapped for the position of Secretary of Defense. His omnipresence and vast cosmic knowledge were seen as valuable assets in overseeing the nation's military might. However, concerns were raised about the potential for Yog-Sothoth's limitless power to inadvertently unravel the fabric of reality itself.

Controversy erupted when Cthulhu nominated Azathoth, the Blind Idiot God, for the role of Secretary of Energy. Critics argued that appointing a mindless, all-consuming void to oversee the nation's energy policies was perhaps not the wisest course of action. Azathoth's tendency to devour entire star systems and his complete lack of cognizance were seen as major red flags by both Democrats and Republicans alike.

As the confirmation hearings descended into chaos, with Senators driven to the brink of insanity by the mere presence of the eldritch nominees, Cthulhu grew increasingly frustrated with the bureaucratic red tape and political grandstanding that stood in the way of his cosmic agenda.

Zadok Allen, now serving as Cthulhu's chief of staff, worked tirelessly to smooth over the growing tensions between the White House and Congress. He attempted to reframe the nominees' more unsettling qualities as strengths, arguing that their incomprehensible nature and world-ending power were precisely what was needed to shake up the stagnant political establishment.

Despite Zadok's fervent efforts to bridge the gap between the eldritch administration and the bewildered politicians, his zealous devotion to the Great Old Ones proved to be a poor substitute for Malcolm's pragmatic bureaucratic prowess. While Malcolm had possessed an uncanny ability to navigate the labyrinthine complexities of human governance, translating Cthulhu's incomprehensible desires into actionable policy, Zadok's approach was one of unwavering loyalty and blind faith.

As the confirmation hearings descended further into madness, with Senators driven to the brink of insanity by the mere presence of the eldritch nominees, Zadok's attempts to reframe their unsettling qualities as strengths fell on deaf ears. His impassioned speeches about the need for cosmic change and the dawn of a new era under Cthulhu's reign only served to deepen the divide between the White House and an increasingly terrified Congress.

Cthulhu, his frustration mounting with each passing day, began to regret his decision to banish Malcolm to an unnamed world. The Great Old One's vast cosmic intellect, accustomed to the maddening non-Euclidean geometries of R'lyeh, found itself hopelessly entangled in the swelling bureaucracy of the American political system.

As the backlog of appointments and legislative priorities grew, Zadok's fervent devotion proved insufficient in the face of the relentless onslaught of paperwork and procedural hurdles. The High Priest's attempts to invoke eldritch rituals and summon the dark powers of the Ancient Ones to expedite the process only served to further alienate the already skittish bureaucrats.

Despite his tireless efforts to keep the eldritch administration running smoothly, he found himself constantly thwarted by the unyielding labyrinth of bureaucratic red tape and political gridlock. Every attempt to implement Cthulhu's cosmic agenda was met with a barrage of forms, committees, and arcane procedural rules that seemed designed to frustrate even the most patient of ancient horrors.

As the weeks turned into months, the halls of power in Washington became a maddening tableau of Dadaistic proportions. Bickering politicians and demanding lobbyists filled the corridors, their incessant chatter and petty disputes driving the Great Old One to the brink of madness. Cabinet meetings devolved into shouting matches between grotesque appointees, each more concerned with their own eldritch agendas than serving the greater cosmic cause.

Zadok, his eyes sunken and bloodshot from countless sleepless nights spent poring over incomprehensible policy memos and briefing books, struggled to maintain a semblance of order amidst the chaos. He watched helplessly as Cthulhu's grand vision for a new world order slowly unraveled, suffocated by the relentless deluge of paperwork and procedural minutiae.

Even the President himself, an ancient being of immeasurable power, found himself at the mercy of the maddening complexities of human governance. Cthulhu's tentacles twitched with barely contained rage as he sat through endless meetings and conference calls, his mind reeling from the sheer banality of mortal politics.

As the administration slipped further and further towards complete inaction, Zadok could only watch in despair as the dream of a new eldritch era slowly slipped away. The High Priest's faith in his master never wavered, but he couldn't help but wonder if even the great Cthulhu had finally met his match in the labyrinthine depths of the American political system.

With Malcolm's absence keenly felt, Cthulhu slumped in the Oval Office, his tentacles twitching with nervous frustration. The dream of unleashing his cosmic agenda upon the unsuspecting world seemed to slip further away with each passing moment, drowned in a sea of red tape and the incessant drone of political bickering. The Great Old One's frustration grew with each passing day, as he realized that even cosmic horror was no match for the soul-crushing tedium of filibusters and legislative gridlock.



CHAPTER 6

Draining the Swamp

In a desperate bid to reshape America in his own eldritch image, President Cthulhu unleashed a flurry of executive orders upon the unsuspecting populace. The guttural chant of "Cthulhu fhtagn" replaced "In God We Trust" as the national motto, while the once-proud bald eagle was cast aside in favor of Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent god of madness.

But even as these blasphemous decrees took effect, the forces of human decency rallied against the maddened president. Lawsuits were filed, injunctions were sought, and the creaking gears of the judiciary ground into action to halt Cthulhu's executive overreach. The Great Old One seethed with impotent rage as his eldritch edicts

were stayed by the courts, the cosmic absurdity of an Elder God being thwarted by mere mortal legalese not lost on him.

Desperate to advance his agenda by any means necessary, President Cthulhu invoked his ominous "drain the swamp" campaign promise. But instead of metaphorically cleansing Washington of corruption, he took the phrase with horrifying literalness. In the dead of night, the president performed a blasphemous ritual to tear open a portal to the nightmare corpse-city of R'lyeh, allowing its waters to flood into the capital.

As the brackish deluge began to flood into Washington, Cthulhu let out a gurgling chuckle. "I'm the President, I can do whatever I want," he burbled, his tentacles twitching with glee. The Oval Office was his, and he wouldn't let anyone stand in the way of his glorious reign, not even the so-called "checks and balances."

The tides rose rapidly, submerging the National Mall and sending the city's residents scrambling for higher ground. Cthulhu watched from the White House roof as the Deep Ones, his loyal subjects, began to emerge from the murky depths, their fishy maws grinning with delight at the prospect of a new abyssal swamp to call home.

But as the waters crept higher, the President's glee turned to annoyance. The portal, it seemed, was working a little too well. At this rate, even the White House would be submerged, and Cthulhu had grown rather fond of the place, despite its many frustrations.

With a sulky grumble, the Elder God began to work on closing the portal, his eldritch words straining against the rush of fetid water. It was a task made all the more difficult by the fact that he had to constantly bat away the tentacles of wayward Shoggoths that had slipped through the opening, their gelatinous forms pestering him at every turn.

By the time Cthulhu managed to seal the portal, the damage had been done. Washington lay in ruins, a festering abyssal swamp just as he had promised. But the President's satisfaction was short-lived, as he realized that he too was now trapped in this drowned city, his Oval Office transformed into a dank, water-logged cavern.

He slouched back to his desk, feeling a twinge of regret. Perhaps, he mused, he should have been more specific about just how much of the swamp he wanted to drain. Or perhaps he should have simply stuck to his original plan of ruling the world from his timeless tomb-city, far from the maddening complexities of human politics.

As the waters of R'lyeh receded and the eldritch chaos subsided, the political fallout from President Cthulhu's ill-fated "drain the swamp" initiative began in earnest. A bipartisan coalition of lawmakers, determined to rein in the cosmic horror that had taken up residence in the White House, hastily drafted a sweeping piece of legislation designed to curb the President's eldritch excesses.

The "Eldritch Limitations on Deranged Rulers Instigating Tentacled Catastrophes Haphazardly Act," or "ELDRITCH Act" for short, aimed to put an end to Cthulhu's reality-warping shenanigans. The bill placed strict limits on the President's ability to summon otherworldly entities, manipulate the fabric of space-time, or drive the citizenry to gibbering madness with a single utterance of his incomprehensible language.

To enforce these new restrictions, Congress established the "Oversight Committee on Cosmic Horrors" (OCCH), a watchdog group tasked with monitoring the President's every move for signs of impending apocalypse. The committee, composed of a ragtag assortment of lawmakers, cultists, and paranormal investigators, quickly set up shop in a dank, shadowy corner of the Capitol building.

But deep within the halls of the White House, the President brooded, his tentacles twitching. Cthulhu, now confined to the Oval Office, found himself drowning in a sea of paperwork and red tape, the true nightmare of the Washington bureaucracy.

As he pored over the arcane legalese of the ELDRITCH Act, searching for a loop hole, the Great Old One couldn't help but wonder if he had underestimated the power of the swamp he had sought to drain. The swamp, it seemed, had found a way to drain him.

* * *

As the sun set over a fractured and bewildered Washington D.C., an eerie silence descended upon the White House. In the once-bustling corridors of power, a palpable sense of unease hung in the air, as if the very fabric of reality had been rent asunder by the unfathomable events that had transpired within the Oval Office.

Inside the heart of American governance, President Cthulhu slumped at his desk, his massive form dwarfing the trappings of the presidency. Scattered before him lay the detritus of a failed administration - stacks of unsigned executive orders, a copy of the Necronomicon, and the tattered remains of his sanity.

Beside him stood Zadok Allen, his most loyal servant, his face a mask of concern. "Mr. President," he began, his voice trembling, "I know things haven't gone as we planned, but surely there's still a way to salvage this. The cult, the Esoteric Order, they're all counting on you."

Cthulhu slowly raised his head, his eyes burning with an eldritch light. "No, Zadok," he rumbled, his voice echoing with the weight of aeons. "I have tried to bend this reality to my will, to reshape it in my image, but I see now that it is futile. This world, with its petty bickering and endless bureaucracy, is beyond even my comprehension."

Zadok's eyes widened in disbelief. "But sir, you can't just give up! What about the campaign, the promises you made? What about the glorious reign of madness and despair?"

A bitter laugh escaped Cthulhu's lips, the sound reverberating through the room like the tolling of a funeral bell. "Glorious? No, Zadok, there is no glory to be found here. Only the maddening tedium of governance, the soul-crushing weight of mortal concerns. I have no place in this world, nor it in mine."

Rising from his chair, the Great Old One began to trace eldritch sigils in the air, his claws leaving trails of sickly green light in their wake. Zadok and the other aides watched in mute horror as a shimmering portal began to take shape, its edges pulsing with a nauseating radiance.

"Sir, please," Zadok pleaded, his voice barely above a whisper. "Don't do this. We need you. The world needs you."

Cthulhu paused, his gaze softening for a moment as he looked upon his faithful servant. "Zadok," he said, his voice tinged with a weary resignation. "Do you really think that matters to me?"

With a final, world-weary sigh, Cthulhu stepped through the portal, his form shimmering and distorting as he crossed the threshold. In an instant, he was gone, the only trace of his presence a faint whiff of brine and madness.

As the portal snapped shut with a sickening finality, Zadok and the others stood in stunned silence, their eyes fixed upon the spot where their master had stood mere moments before. On the president's desk, a single sticky note fluttered in the breeze from a shattered window, its message a final, enigmatic farewell:

"Hastur's problem now"

When the news broke, a shocked and bewildered nation struggled to come to terms with the sudden disappearance of its president. Pundits and politicians traded wild theories and accusations, their minds reeling from the impossible reality of what had transpired.

But for Zadok and his fellow cultists, there was only a grim acceptance, a resignation to the fact that their grand dreams of an eldritch America had crumbled to dust. As they quietly packed up their belongings and slipped away into the shadows, they couldn't help but wonder if, in the end, it had all been nothing more than a fever dream, a fleeting glimpse of a world that could never be.

And so, as the sun rose over a new and uncertain day, the legacy of President Cthulhu faded into myth and legend, a cautionary tale whispered in the halls of power for generations to come. For in the end, even the mightiest of Elder Gods had proven no match for the maddening complexities of the American political system.



EPILOGUE

In the suddenly silent streets, a lone figure in yellow robes picked his way through the eldritch flotsam that remained after the flood. His hooded featureless face smiled a corpse-white smile and began to whistle a jaunty, dissonant tune as he strode up the steps of the Capitol. The King in Yellow had come to claim his throne, and he had all the time in the world.