

Evets Hu

November 2024

DEATH OF THE MOON

From the journals of
Harry P. Lermontov

PROLOGUE. THE CALL

It was an early morning in December when I got the call. It started as a noise complaint, like so many others in this city, but it quickly turned into something horrifyingly extraordinary. The call led us to an alley on 8th Street, near Tompkins Park.

Mist covered the street like a blanket, glowing under the warm orange light from the street lamps above. In this oddly quiet moment—a rarity here—the city that never sleeps seemed to have fallen into hibernation.

We parked our car just in front of the alley. To our surprise, the caller was out on the street, wrapped in blankets. When he saw us, he frantically ran to our window. Panic etched across his face, he began recounting what he'd witnessed. What started as seemingly drunk men squabbling in the street—the reason he'd called us—soon turned into something far more disturbing. He explained that the noises were coming from a room he'd never noticed before, located in the alley just downstairs from his apartment.

He described hearing screams—a mixture of a distressed cat, a squeaking bird, and, most horrifyingly, a crying baby. Layered over these were muffled mechanical sounds, perhaps a drill or a chainsaw. But it was the next part of his testimony that filled

me with such vivid dread that, even now, remembering it sends chills down my spine.

According to him, when the noises stopped, he looked out of his window. That's when he saw two men in cult-like robes emerging from a door in the alley, dragging a cardboard box. The top of the box wasn't fully closed, and he caught a glimpse of its contents: a mangled mass that, at first, seemed like animal flesh. But on closer inspection, he realized it was something else entirely.

The creature inside had bright green skin, similar to the color of an iguana, but unnaturally smooth, without scales. Even in its mutilated state, he could tell it would have stood as tall as an average human male if it were still... alive. The shape of the creature was unidentifiable, but he distinctly saw a dismembered fin, much like one on a fish, though far larger.

My partner, Gavin, was quick to dismiss the caller as being under the influence. But I didn't think he was.

I grew up in rural New England, a place where strange tales were commonplace. Stories of mysterious creatures, people vanishing near the sea, and whispered accounts of cult gatherings were as much a part of my childhood as the crashing waves. A part of me has always believed in these tales.

I have seen the look of true terror in the eyes of fishermen recounting their stories. That same look now burned in the eyes of the man standing before me. And I couldn't look away.

I. THE ROOM UNDER EAST VILLAGE

We made our way into the shadow of the alley. The door sat at the end of it, under a strange light. Not the warm orange glow from the street lamps, but a bright, shining golden-yellow. On the door was a faintly painted symbol. It appeared as if it had been there for a very long time—it had an almost ancient quality to it, unlike anything else I'd ever seen in the city. Though faded, one could still make out its shape:

Three tentacle-like lines spiraling outward from a central dot, like a twisted, chaotic star—writhing uncontrollably, like a storm.

At first, I couldn't tell what was the source of that stench. It was sour, fermented, but strangely tinged with a mild sweetness, like blood mixed with syrup. All that sweetness was gone, however, as soon as Gavin pushed on the door.

To our surprise, the door was unlocked. On the other side of it was a flight of stairs leading down into a basement. Gavin took a step inside, but the floor was wet. When he looked down, he froze. A pool of dark liquid spread across the floor. Gavin pulled out his light, and it quickly became clear to us that we

had stumbled upon something far beyond our imagination. Right there, under his foot, was a pool of blood. There was so much of it that it was flowing down the stairs like a waterfall.

Gavin gasped. His flashlight dropped, its beam catching the ceiling of the stairwell. And that's when I first saw them: unknown symbols painted in luminous paint, scattered all over the walls and ceiling of the stairwell. To me, they looked like ancient runes, though I couldn't decipher them. To Gavin, however, they were something far worse. The moment his eyes fell upon the symbols, he was immediately transfixed. His pupils twitched, his body trembling as if he were fighting to look away, but some unseen force pulled his gaze back. After a brief moment, he fell backward to the ground. His hand shook as he pointed at the runes, and he began screaming. I've never heard anyone scream like that—a sound of pure horror and desperation.

I rushed to shut the door. As I ran back to the car to call for backup, Gavin's screams turned to hysterical laughter.

They had already taken Gavin away in an ambulance by the time the rest of the precinct arrived. My story spread quickly among those on duty that night, and one detective—a man from across the river—took particular interest in it. To this day, he's

never told me his real name. But his nickname was easy to remember: Don.

Don was a handsome, soft-spoken man with a laid-back demeanor, a stark contrast to the chaos surrounding us that night. At first, I assumed he was just another detective here to interrogate me about what happened. But soon, I realized Don was more interested in a few particular details. Most intriguingly, he was the only one who fully believed me. While the others seemed to quietly think I'd lost my mind, Don's focus intensified when he learned I had seen the runes without succumbing to madness. Apparently, most people can't.

"I'd like you to meet someone," Don said. "I think you've got the potential to... join us in our cause."

Moments later, a white sedan pulled up. Out stepped a man in a black fedora and trench coat—a look straight out of a noir film. Though outdated, the man wore it with such confidence that it seemed intentional. His face was half-hidden by the upturned collar of his coat, but I could see the stubble on his chin and the dark circles under his eyes. He looked exhausted, but his every movement was deliberate, filled with purpose.

Don introduced me to the man, though the introduction was vague at best. If you haven't realized by now, whatever operation Don and this man are part of is cloaked in secrecy. I was only given his title: The Director.

For the last time that night, I repeated my story to The Director. When I finished, Don and The Director asked me to show them the room.

"Are you absolutely sure?" I asked.

They both insisted. Opening the door for the second time, the runes were there again, glowing faintly. Don pulled out a piece of paper with a circular drawing—a cipher for the symbols.

"They translate to this," Don said:

"IN THIS HOUSE WE'RE MADE OF GOLD,
THE DARKNESS WHISPERS A TALE OF OLD,
A THRONE IN SHADOWS, A PROPHECY FORETOLD,
OUR KING IN YELLOW, HIS EYE BEHOLD."

We descended the stairs and finally reached the underground room. The space itself looked unassuming, but something about it

felt profoundly wrong. Its very existence seemed magical, or perhaps otherworldly—there's no better way to describe it.

The room was shaped like a simple cube. At its center was a wooden desk surrounded by three chairs. A bulletin board hung on the back wall, and beneath it sat another chair—this one damaged, its handles broken off. Whatever creature had been here met its end on the table; its surface was gouged with cutting marks and still stained with blood.

To the right, a long, narrow table held scattered manuscripts—some written in text, others in runes. The texts were in multiple languages, not just English, and seemed to be notes or diary entries collected across different eras and continents. Whoever had been here was clearly studying them. Nearby sat a few flasks and a burner, its stand amateurishly constructed from sticks, like a high school science project.

On the left wall hung a map. I recognized it as New England only because of the label in the corner. The map was almost entirely covered in hand-drawn sketches, annotations, and sticky notes. It looked like the work of a conspiracy theorist. But unlike the ramblings of a madman, the details were meticulously researched, referencing history, poetry, and obscure psychological studies

from the 1900s. What drew my attention most was a particular town marked heavily on the map: Innsmouth.

A chill ran through me as I stepped back. I grew up near Innsmouth. My parents' home was in a small town just north of Salem. Tales of haunted fishermen and mysterious merchants from Innsmouth had kept me awake as a child.

How was all this connected? Why could I read the runes that drove Gavin mad at a mere glance? Were the ghost stories of my youth all real? Who-or what-were we dealing with here?

Don noticed my distress. He grabbed one of the chairs and gestured for me to sit. He took a seat across from me, and after a nod of approval from The Director, he looked me straight in the eye.

"I think it's time for you to know about the Rituals," he said.

II. INNSMOUTH

Our talk was interrupted by a call. A field agent requested immediate backup as they discovered something big at the Innsmouth mansion—the very same Innsmouth marked on the map.

The sun was rising as we drove out of the city, heading north along the Atlantic coastline. Don was driving while The Director worked on a tablet. I had never seen this kind of technology before, but after what they had revealed to me just minutes ago, it made sense. I sat in the backseat, thinking.

The world as I knew it had ended last night. There was a horror so much deeper, more enormous, and more monstrous than anyone could have possibly imagined, living right under our noses. It was difficult to process at first, but somehow I believed everything they told me. Perhaps part of me always wanted answers—an explanation for all those childhood mysteries, or an excuse to finally give in to the alluring, almost addictive fascination that "Innsmouth" had always held over me.

On this long drive north, I felt rejuvenated for the first time in a long while. I felt alive.

The field agent who had called in goes by the alias "Ellie." Both Don and The Director spoke highly of her, calling her "one of the best in the Agency." Field agents play a crucial role in this secret mission to stop the rituals. At that point, I was still struggling to fully grasp the concept of the Agency's operation.

We arrived at the outskirts of Innsmouth that afternoon. Our rendezvous with Ellie was on a small hill to the west overlooking the town. It was a cloudy winter day, not unusual for New England. The morning fog had long since lifted, and for the first time, I laid my eyes upon the fabled town. Oddly, now as I reflect, I remember the smell much more distinctly than the sight.

Winter has its own scent and taste in New England, and the closer we got to Innsmouth, the stronger it grew. It was a mix of the gamey odor of fish and the saltiness of the sea. The smell of the sea was particularly strong here. I never really understood why fishermen often described it so vividly in their tales, but on that gloomy afternoon, as I stood there, it all made sense.

The town itself was small, only a crooked street that seemed perpetually stuck in the last century. A few shops were open, mainly selling souvenirs to the occasional adventurous tourist. The main street led down to the beach by the Innsmouth Bay. The old lighthouse still stood on the farthest edge of a cliff, which looked like a dagger thrust deep into the Atlantic. On the other end of the bay was the old mansion Ellie had mentioned during the call. No one really knew how many years it had sat empty, but according to the Agency, it's one of the most active ritual locations in recent years. Tracing the old, winding road from the mansion closer to the pine forest and to where we stood, there was an abandoned theme park. A white van drove out of the park and up the hill toward us.

"Something must have happened last night. I've never seen them this agitated before," Ellie said as she unloaded a barrel from the van.

Two other field agents were present—Johnson and Everett. Johnson was the van operator and gave me a quick tour of the vehicle while Ellie briefed The Director. The van was decked out with the same kind of advanced technology as The Director's tablet. It was powered not only by electricity through wires but also by

a liquid that ran through wire-like tubes. They casted out a gentle green glow. As I later learned, these are called "ritual fluids". Just as Don had explained before, these liquids had—for lack of a better word—magical properties.

"It doesn't matter though, does it?" Everett chimed in. "The mission last night was a success. All we have to do now is focus on tonight."

"I'm afraid it's not that simple," Johnson interjected. "Think for how long we've been locked in this secret tug-of-war with them. We've been observing, studying, but not once have they behaved the way they did last night."

"Is it that the rituals are finally about to be completed?" Don asked.

"I don't think so," Johnson continued. "I've seen successful rituals before and even glimpses of you-know-who's presence. In those moments, the monsters were thrilled. But last night, they were almost..."

"Terrified." Ellie added.

Everyone shared a worried look. If the monsters, the rituals, and the ever-looming threat of that unspeakable horror beneath

the waves were already terrifying for us to comprehend, what could possibly terrify the monsters themselves?

"Have you guys ever... killed a monster before?" I asked. Everyone turned toward me, surprised.

"No!"

"Of course not! Even if we wanted to, it's almost impossible to penetrate their skin. Have you even seen the scales on them? It's as solid as a rock!"

"He's right," The Director said, raising a hand to calm Johnson. "We have never had, and hopefully never will have, any reason to kill a monster. It would only complicate things. Besides, we don't even know how to. The best we can do is knock one out, but even that requires a fluid-enhanced mechanism that can only be used sparingly."

Don looked me in the eye. "Harry, is there anything you haven't told us yet? About last night?"

"Forgive me. At first, I dismissed the witness' testimony. What happened to Gavin and the runes had a much more direct impact on me. But the witness who called us last night mentioned that he

saw two men leaving with a cardboard box full of monster remains."

"What did the cardboard box look like?" Ellie exclaimed.

I explained that I wouldn't know. I hadn't seen any signs of a cardboard box when I arrived. And I was almost certain that the witness' focus wouldn't have been on the box itself, not when it contained a dead and unknown creature.

Ellie nodded at Johnson, who quickly ran to the back of the van and retrieved a cardboard box. Judging by its shape and size, it was likely a match. Johnson said they had one of these stolen just a few days ago. The thieves could very likely be the murderers.

Don questioned why this was never brought to his and The Director's attention. Everyone looked at Everett, who was supposedly on inventory duty that day. Everett sighed and shrugged. "You can't blame it on me. I didn't see the thieves at all either."

Armed with the knowledge that a "third party" was now at play, the agents began preparing for tonight's operation. The monsters were gathering at the alluring Innsmouth mansion by the sea.

Despite my enthusiasm, they wouldn't let a rookie like me ride along. I didn't blame them, of course. Not 24 hours ago, I was still under the impression that the lost city of Atlantis was just a myth. Apparently, I knew very little of our world. However, The Director offered me a chance to join him in the support van to watch the operation unfold. I gladly accepted.

There were still a few hours of daylight left, despite the gloomy clouds looming overhead. I asked if I could explore Innsmouth by myself while the agents prepared. It's not every day you're presented with an opportunity to explore a mythical town like this, let alone one that had—in my mind at least—been casting a spell on me for decades.

Don was reluctant at first, worried about my safety. But The Director didn't see a problem with it. He mentioned that, aside from a bar with a few eccentric locals and a souvenir shop, there wasn't much to see in town. There shouldn't be anything dangerous—as long as I stick to dry land. Whatever I did, he warned, I should never go near the sea. I took his warning to heart and began walking toward the town.

The Director was right. As I walked down the winding main street of Innsmouth, aside from the overwhelming reek of fish, there

wasn't anything particularly special about the town itself. Granted, the few faces of the locals I'd seen all seemed distinctly odd, but after everything I'd been through since last night—and the photographs the agents had shown me of the monsters—a few strange-looking people barely made my list of "wonders."

Soon, I found myself at the end of the street. Overlooking the bay to the east, I noticed the moon rising above the horizon, even though it was still afternoon. An overgrown path led down to the beach. *No matter what I do, I shouldn't go near the sea... right?* I glanced back at the hill behind me, but the trees were too dense to see the van or the agents' camp. *Surely, I've come this far. What's going to happen if I just go a little further?* Thoughts of the sea kept flooding my mind, as though the waves were whispering to me.

Then, suddenly, I snapped out of it. By then, I was already halfway down the path. The dirt beneath my feet had turned to sand and gravel.

Realizing what was happening, I turned around, ready to run as fast as I could away from the sea. But to my surprise, someone was standing between me and the safety of the street. It was an old man with a crooked walking stick. His face was hidden under

a cloak, but his hands were visible. They were pitch black. Unlike the hands of a miner, the blackness seemed to come from beneath his skin.

Before I could speak, he did. His deep, hoarse voice cut through the air:

"Don't blame him, son. He can't hear *Him*. He doesn't have the talent."

"Who are you? Get out of my way," I demanded.

"Aren't you curious? About *His* words?"

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Oh, but you do. You know exactly what I'm talking about. The Director doesn't. None of them do. I've known him for a long time now. He's desperate. He doesn't have the talent. But you do, son. Just like me."

"What the fuck are you on about?" My patience was running thin. Whether it was the eerie atmosphere or the cryptic way this old man spoke, something wasn't right. My head was spinning. The sea was speaking to me.

"You can hear *Him*. I worked for them too—for the Agency. I was one of them. But now, I've heard my calling. I listened. You have to trust *Him*."

"Who... the fuck... is *he*?"

The whispers grew louder. The whispers. The waves. They were drilling into my head, louder and louder. I pressed my hands against my ears, but it didn't help. The waves, the whispers, and the old man's laughter.

"What are you doing to me? Make it stop!" I shouted.

"I can't!" he cackled, hysterically. "It's tonight! *He's* back tonight! Hahaha... What a day for you to join us!"

The old man raised his arms in excitement, and a gust of wind from the sea blew his cloak aside for just a moment. Beneath, he wore an old navy captain's uniform. I caught a glimpse of his face—covered in golden tattoos. No, not just his face. His entire body was covered in golden tattoos. They extended to the fading sketches on his worn-out clothes, all bearing the same symbol:

Three tentacle-like lines spiraling outward from a central dot, like a twisted, chaotic star—writhing uncontrollably, like a storm.

III. THE FORREST BY THE SEA

It was already night when I woke up. The first thing I saw was the embers dancing among the fire-lit pine leaves. I was lying on the ground, disoriented. I was in a campsite. My supposed kidnappers had left me here with the campfire still burning. Across the flames, an empty folding chair sat motionless. Draped over it was the old man's cloak, but he was nowhere to be found.

No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't recall how I'd gotten there. One moment, it had been late afternoon on the beach at Innsmouth Bay. The next, the whispers in the waves had torn through my mind like a storm, leaving me unconscious. The old man must have brought me here—but why? I had no way of knowing.

What I did know was that he was connected to the room somehow. This cult with the golden symbol was planning something terrible, and I had to warn the Agency.

The clouds had cleared up slightly since the afternoon, but the moon was still nowhere to be seen. With so little light breaking through the darkness, navigating the forest was nearly impossible. Fortunately, I had the wind to guide me. Following the evening trade winds and the salty scent of the sea, I soon found the edge of the forest.

I emerged at a cliff overlooking the Atlantic, its sheer drop plummeting roughly sixty feet below. To my right, I spotted the Innsmouth mansion immediately. It loomed against the night, alive with light spilling from its windows. From the sounds, it appeared a lively party was underway inside.

The Director and the agents had warned me not to interfere with their operations—especially one where a single mistake could easily get me killed. But there was no time to overthink. The old man had said *He* was coming back tonight. If the *He* in question was the same unspeakable creature I feared, I couldn't wait. I had to warn the Agency.

So I ran. As fast as I could, I sprinted toward the mansion. Maybe the ritual hadn't started yet, and there would still be time to catch Ellie or Everett outside. If I could find the van, Don, Johnson, and The Director would surely be there too.

But thoughts swam at the edges of my mind as I ran. What about the old man? What about his accomplices? If he had been one of the people in the room at East Village last night, who—and where—was the other man? And above all, one detail loomed over me, unresolved and maddening: if their goal was to awaken the

creature, shouldn't that align with the monsters and their rituals? Why would they go to such lengths to kill a monster?

As I grappled with these questions, a break in the clouds allowed a sliver of moonlight to shine down. It glistened on the waves below, casting an eerie glow over the scene.

These are good questions.

The whispers were back. The creature was speaking to me again through the waves. Its tone was infuriatingly condescending, like a predator taunting its prey. But I was close—so close. I could see the road leading up to the mansion's garden. I had to push forward. I couldn't afford to pass out again.

You can try all you like, little one. But the prophecy has been foretold. And no one can stop it.

"Fuck your prophecy," I snapped aloud.

I had seen the runes. I had heard its words. I had the "talent"—whatever it was—that the old man had spoken of. I'd always felt an overwhelming connection to Innsmouth, as though it had been calling me for years. Maybe it was my destiny.

If anyone could do something to stop whatever was coming, it had to be me.

"Harry?"

The whispers stopped abruptly. I froze and looked around, searching for whoever had called my name. And then I saw it—a monster! Half-hidden behind a tree, it was staring right at me. Panic gripped me, and I let out a scream.

"No! Wait, Harry! It's me!"

The monster spoke again, stepping closer. My fear gave way to confusion as I saw it more clearly—it wasn't a monster at all. It was a mere costume. Everett quickly unzipped and revealed himself underneath. He was holding a box that looked like some kind of container.

"What the hell are you doing here?" He was surprised.

"There's someone else here—someone trying to help complete the ritual. The Director has to know about this!" I said. Seeing him filled me with an overwhelming sense of relief. The agents were still here, and the operation was still underway. I'd made it in time.

Everett calmed me down and asked if this had anything to do with the "third party." I nodded, confirming it. His expression shifted immediately—he understood what I meant.

"Go to the van, Harry. I'll go back in and get Ellie out. We'll meet at the van."

"Go back in? Are you going back to the mansion?"

"Well, someone has to get Ellie out, right? Don't worry, we've done this plenty of times before." He patted me on the back.

"I'll be right out with Ellie. I promise. See you in the van, mate!"

Everett pointed me in the direction of the van, and we parted ways.

"We have to stop this," I said to Johnson, who had just opened the van doors for me. "They're planning something tonight. I don't know what yet, but I think they want the rituals to succeed!"

"Calm down, Harry. How about you start with where you were this afternoon?" The Director said. Realizing I was rushing things, I took a deep breath and began recounting everything that had

happened at the beach earlier. As I described the old man, The Director—for the first time since I'd met him—was visibly taken aback.

I quickly learned that the old man had actually been one of the founding members of the Agency. He had once been a captain of a small fishing boat called *The Torch*, which had earned him the codename "Capt." He had trained many of the Agency's best field agents, including both Ellie and Everett, before disappearing four years ago during an operation in the Antarctic. Whatever had happened to him out there had changed him. Had he been corrupted by the monsters? Why had his allegiance shifted?

"We've got to get Ellie and Everett out of there," The Director said firmly.

"But... we've never had agents leave mid-ritual before," Johnson said hesitantly. "Is that even possible?"

Confused, I mentioned that I'd just seen Everett outside the mansion only minutes ago and that he should be bringing Ellie back any second now. Before any of the agents could respond, a signal pinged on the van's radar. Two monsters were approaching.

We stepped outside the van as the first monster hurriedly unzipped her costume, revealing Ellie. I recognized the second costume as Everett's.

"What is happening, guys?" Ellie said, still catching her breath. "They were going nuts in there. And Everett told me—"

The Director dragged Ellie away from the second monster. In a mix of anger and fear, he demanded, "Who the hell are you?"

There was no costume. There was no man underneath. This was a real monster. Even Ellie couldn't believe her eyes. To her, this had been her trusted partner just moments ago. How could a skilled agent like her make such a mistake?

The monster in green squinted its eyes and let out a sinister giggle. Then, a figure darted out from the shadows of the forest. It was Capt himself, without his cloak, covered in golden symbols.

"Well done, Folly!" he shouted as he leapt onto the monster, grabbing onto its fins. In awe, we watched as Folly the monster rammed into the van, knocking it over before sprinting off into the darkness of the forest. Both Capt and the monster were thrilled.

It took a moment before the rest of us realized what had just happened.

We took off after them, a desperate chase through the forest. We had no way of knowing where the real Everett was or if he was even still alive. Who was Folly the monster? A monster working with a human? This was unheard of before. The monster's massive size gave it an advantage, and we quickly began losing them to the darkness among the trees. Then, we heard another monster's cry, followed by a loud thud.

When we arrived at a clearing, we couldn't believe our eyes. Two other monsters had cornered Folly, who was now curled up in a bush, looking scared. A few feet away, Capt was lying on the ground, alive but clearly dazed and injured from a fall. The two monsters turned to look at us as we approached. Instead of showing any aggression, they seemed concerned about something else entirely. The Director held up his hand and pointed at Capt. Shockingly, one of the monsters nodded.

Were these monsters not working with Capt after all? Why had they helped stop him? There was a traitor on both sides: Folly, the monster, and Capt, the human, secretly plotting together.

The Director stood over Capt, who had just regained consciousness.

"The jig is up, Mark. You've failed."

"Oh, old friend... but did I? Hahaha..." Capt sneered.

"Whatever your plans were, spill them out!" The Director demanded.

"The prophecy foretold... our king in yellow! A new blood joins the night before, integral to the plan! A monster's heart, poison the pot!"

Capt's words were incoherent and maddening. In a fit of frustration, The Director stepped on Capt's injured leg. "Why are you trying to summon Cthulhu?! Do you have any idea how stupid that is?"

The two monsters overheard the name of their lord and began squeaking angrily at us. It was as if they were trying to tell us something—that the humans had it all wrong. Capt began to laugh hysterically again.

"Who said anything about summoning Cthulhu?"

A flash of yellow light burst out of the mansion behind us. Then, a loud bang followed by a shockwave tore through the forest. Everyone looked up at the sky. The monsters fell to the ground, helpless, while Folly was ecstatic. The yellow beam crashed through the thin clouds, burning a hole in the fabric of the night. The moon now shone upon us.

"He did it. Thank you, Harry, thank you! You were the distraction we needed. Hahaha!" Dread overwhelmed me once more. Unknowingly, I had aided in the cult's plan.

"It was Everett!" Ellie realized.

"Yes! The monster's heart! The final ingredient!"

This was no ritual to summon Cthulhu. The cult had hijacked it to summon something else. Something worse.

"What the fuck have you done?" Even The Director could no longer contain his composure.

"Look up, Mr. Director, the moon is dead," Capt giggled. "She has been dead... for a long time now."

The "moon" seemed extraordinarily large that night. Three gigantic tentacles extended from its dark side. On a cold December night, the "moon" opened its eye.

EPILOGUE. PROPHECY FORETOLD

It is unknown how much of Hastur's influence had actually been impacting consciousness on Earth for the last few centuries. He had made a nest for himself in one of the craters on the moon's dark side, slowly eating away at it. With the help of Johnson's brilliant technologies, and the later capturing of Capt, Everett, and Folly, we were able to begin simple communications with the monsters. Through sketches, we learned the relationship between Hastur and his half-brother Cthulhu, and their millennia-spanning feud for territories.

The whispers I heard did not come from the sea. They came from the sky. Capt gave us the name of their cult: House of Gold. And we were able to track down some old research papers penned by its founder himself: a Columbia professor in the 60s—Dr. William Chambers. Dr. Chambers' work documented much of the cult's history and its subsequent discoveries of numerous artifacts. Most haunting was how, back in its prime, the cult used some form of mind control to manipulate people.

If powers like these were left unchecked, who knows what would happen to the world? I experienced firsthand the terrors of Hastur's words. I unknowingly helped the cult hijack the ritual.

No amount of kind words from the others would change that. I have to bear the guilt in my conscience for the rest of my life.

But this fight is far from over. Now that the House of Gold has been brought to light, Don and I were able to pull more of our resources back in the city to help locate more of their members. Apparently, the modern-day House of Gold operates under some lowly corporate scam. But that's a story for another time.

I'll have to end my journals here, for now. The Director has sent me on a trip to one of their abandoned sites in Antarctica—the very same site where Mark Hayes, or Capt, disappeared all those years ago. Perhaps I will find more answers there.

As for Cthulhu himself, for all that we know, he's still deep in his hibernation under the Atlantic. None of us, humans nor monsters, could possibly know when he will be awakened. But one thing we know for sure is that when thunder rolls across the skies, it is those of us on the ground below that will get rained on.