

Shadows in the Fog

by Elias Winterbourne

The fog rolled in at dusk, swallowing the streets and softening the edges of the world. It crept through alleys, clung to lampposts, and silenced the town with its suffocating stillness.

Thomas Reed stood at the edge of the harbor, his collar pulled high against the damp chill. He traced the shape of the lighthouse in the distance—its beam flickered weakly through the fog, as though it too had lost its way.

Behind him, the town lay quiet. Too quiet.

He had arrived two days earlier, summoned by a letter from the mayor, but the man had disappeared before they could meet. Now Thomas was left with nothing but unanswered questions and a growing sense of unease.

Footsteps echoed behind him. He turned sharply, his hand brushing against the revolver beneath his coat.

“Inspector Reed?”

The voice belonged to a woman—pale, with dark eyes that darted nervously toward the shadows.

“Yes.”

She hesitated, her hands trembling as she passed him a folded paper.

“They told me not to speak to you,” she whispered. “But you need to see this.”

Thomas unfolded the note, his eyes scanning the hurried handwriting.

It’s not the fog you should fear. It’s what hides within it.

The woman was gone before he could ask her name.

He glanced back at the lighthouse. Its light was gone.

The fog thickened. The shadows moved.

And Thomas Reed knew the night was just beginning.