

**Н. Р. ЛОВЕСГРАФТ** THE CALL OF CTULHU



ЭКСКЛЮЗИВНОЕ ЧТЕНИЕ  
НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

**Г. Ф. ЛАВКРАФТ**

# ЗОВ КТУЛХУ



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**ГРАММАТИЧЕСКИЙ  
КОММЕНТАРИЙ**

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Говард Лавкрафт

# **Зов Ктулху / The Call of Chulhu**

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**Лавкрафт Г. Ф.**

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**Говард Филлипс Лавкрафт /**  
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**Зов Ктулху / The Call of Cthulhu**

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# The Call of Cthulhu

## I. The Horror in Clay

The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and **it was not meant**<sup>1</sup> that we should voyage far. The sciences have harmed us little; but some day the **piecing together**<sup>2</sup> of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying views of reality, that we'll either go mad from the revelation or flee from the light into the peace and safety of a new **dark age**.<sup>3</sup>

**Theosophists**<sup>4</sup> have guessed at the awesome grandeur of the cosmic cycle where our world and human race form transient incidents. Their strange suggestions freeze the blood. Forbidden ages chill me when I think of them and madden me when I dream of them. That glimpse, like all dread glimpses of truth, appeared from an accidental piecing together of separated things: in this case, an old newspaper and the notes of a dead professor. I hope that no one else will make this piecing; certainly, if I live, I shall never add a link in that terrible chain. I think that the professor, too, intended to keep silent, and that he was going to destroy his notes but sudden death stopped him.

My first experience began in the winter of 1926–27 with the death of my **great-uncle**,<sup>5</sup> **George Gammell Angell**,<sup>6</sup> **Professor Emeritus of Semitic Languages**<sup>7</sup> in **Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island**.<sup>8</sup> Professor Angell was widely known as an authority on ancient inscriptions, and the heads of prominent museums had frequently asked him for help; so his death at the age of ninety-two was talked about. Moreover, interest was intensified by the obscurity of the cause of death. The professor had been stricken while he was returning from the **Newport boat**.<sup>9</sup> He fell suddenly; as witnesses said, after he had been jostled by a nautical-looking **negro**<sup>10</sup> who had come from one of the queer dark courts on the precipitous hillside which formed a short way from the waterfront to the professor's home in **Williams Street**.<sup>11</sup> Physicians were unable to find any visible disorder, but concluded after perplexed debate that some obscure lesion of the heart, induced by the brisk ascent of a steep hill by so elderly a man, was responsible for the end. At the time I saw no reason to dissent from this dictum, but latterly I began to doubt.

As my great-uncle's heir and executor, for he died a childless widower, I had to study his papers; and for that purpose I moved his files and boxes to my quarters in Boston. Much of the material will be later published by the **American Archaeological Society**,<sup>12</sup> but there was one box which I found very puzzling, and which I did not want to show to other eyes. It had been locked

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<sup>1</sup> **it was not meant** – не предполагалось

<sup>2</sup> **piecing together** – соединение

<sup>3</sup> **dark age** – средневековье

<sup>4</sup> **theosophists** – теософы, сторонники мистического богопознания

<sup>5</sup> **great-uncle** – двоюродный дед

<sup>6</sup> **George Gammell Angell** – Джордж Гэммел Энджелл

<sup>7</sup> **Professor Emeritus of Semitic Languages** – заслуженный профессор в отставке, специалист по семитским языкам

<sup>8</sup> **Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island** – Брауновский университет в Провиденсе, Род-Айленд (один из наиболее престижных частных университетов США, основанный в 1764 г.)

<sup>9</sup> **Newport boat** – ньюпортский пароход

<sup>10</sup> **nautical-looking negro** – негр, похожий на моряка

<sup>11</sup> **Williams Street** – Уильямс-стрит

<sup>12</sup> **American Archaeological Society** – Американское археологическое общество

and I did not find the key till I examined the personal ring which the professor carried in his pocket. Then, indeed, I opened it, but when I did so I confronted a greater barrier. What was the meaning of the queer **clay bas-relief**<sup>13</sup> and the disjointed jottings, ramblings, and cuttings which I found? Had my uncle in his latter years become superstitious? I decided to find the eccentric sculptor responsible for this apparent disturbance of an old man's mind.

The bas-relief was a rough rectangle **less than an inch thick**<sup>14</sup> and about five by six inches in area; obviously of modern origin. Its designs, however, were far from modern in atmosphere and suggestion. And there was writing of some kind; but my memory could not identify it.

Above hieroglyphics was a figure, an impressionistic picture. It was a sort of monster, or symbol representing a monster, of a form which only a diseased fancy could conceive. If I say that my extravagant imagination offered simultaneous pictures of an octopus, a dragon, and a human caricature, I can present the spirit of it. A pulpy, **tentacled head**<sup>15</sup> surmounted a grotesque and scaly body with rudimentary wings; and the general outline of the whole monster made it most shockingly frightful. Behind the figure was a vague **Cyclopean architectural background**.<sup>16</sup>

The writing was made by Professor Angell's most recent hand; and made no pretense to literary style. The main document was headed "CTHULHU CULT" in **characters painstakingly printed**<sup>17</sup> to avoid the erroneous reading of an unknown word. This manuscript was divided into two sections, the first of which was headed "1925 – Dream and Dream Work of **H. A. Wilcox**,<sup>18</sup> 7 Thomas St., Providence, R. I.", and the second, "Narrative of Inspector **John R. Legrasse**,<sup>19</sup> 121 Bienville St., New Orleans, La., at 1908 A. A. S. Mtg. – Notes on Same, & Prof. Webb's Acct."<sup>20</sup> The other manuscript papers were brief notes, some of them were the queer dreams of different persons, some of them were citations from theosophical books and magazines (notably **W. Scott-Elliot's Atlantis and the Lost Lemuria**<sup>21</sup>), and the rest comments on long-surviving secret societies and hidden cults, with references to passages in such mythological and anthropological source-books as **Frazer's Golden Bough**<sup>22</sup> and **Miss Murray's Witch-Cult in Western Europe**.<sup>23</sup> The articles were mainly about mental illness and outbreaks of group folly or mania in the spring of 1925.

The first half of the principal manuscript told a very interesting tale. On March 1st, 1925, a thin, dark young man of neurotic and excited aspect came to Professor Angell bearing the singular clay bas-relief, which was then exceedingly damp and fresh. His card bore the name of **Henry Anthony Wilcox**,<sup>24</sup> and my uncle had recognized him as the youngest son of an excellent family slightly known to him, who was studying sculpture at the **Rhode Island School of Design**<sup>25</sup> and living alone at the **Fleur-de-Lys Building**<sup>26</sup> near that institution. Wilcox was a precocious young genius with great eccentricity, and had from childhood excited attention through the strange

<sup>13</sup> **clay bas-relief** – глиняный барельеф

<sup>14</sup> **less than an inch thick** – толщиной менее дюйма (1 дюйм = 25,4 мм)

<sup>15</sup> **tentacled head** – голова, снабжённая щупальцами

<sup>16</sup> **Cyclopean architectural background** – фоновые циклопические строения

<sup>17</sup> **characters painstakingly printed** – тщательно выписанные буквы

<sup>18</sup> **H. A. Wilcox** – Г. Э. Уилкоккс

<sup>19</sup> **John R. Legrasse** – Джон Р. Леграсс

<sup>20</sup> **121 Bienville St., New Orleans, La., at 1908 A. A. S. Mtg. – Notes on Same, & Prof. Webb's Acct.** – 121 Бьенвиль-стрит, Новый Орлеан, на собрании А. А. О. – заметки о том же + сообщение проф. Уэбба

<sup>21</sup> **W. Scott-Elliot's Atlantis and the Lost Lemuria** – книга У. Скотт-Эллиота «Атлантида и исчезнувшая Лемурия»

<sup>22</sup> **Frazer's Golden Bough** – книга Фрэзера «Золотая ветвь»

<sup>23</sup> **Miss Murray's Witch-Cult in Western Europe** – книга мисс Мюррей «Культе ведьм в Западной Европе»

<sup>24</sup> **Henry Anthony Wilcox** – Генри Энтони Уилкоккс

<sup>25</sup> **Rhode Island School of Design** – художественная школа Род-Айленда

<sup>26</sup> **Fleur-de-Lys Building** – особняк Флёр-да-Лис

stories and odd dreams. He had the habit of relating them. He called himself “**psychically hypersensitive**”<sup>27</sup>, but the people of the ancient commercial city treated him as merely “queer.” He had dropped gradually from social visibility, and was now known only to a small group of esthetes from other towns. Even the **Providence Art Club**,<sup>28</sup> which was trying to preserve its conservatism, had found him quite hopeless.

So, as the professor’s manuscript told, the sculptor abruptly asked to help him identify the hieroglyphics of the bas-relief. He spoke in a dreamy, stilted manner which suggested pose and alienated sympathy; and my uncle showed some sharpness in replying, for the conspicuous freshness of the tablet did not show any relation to archaeology. Young Wilcox’s rejoinder, which impressed my uncle, was of a fantastically poetic nature. He said, “It is new, indeed, for I made it last night in a dream of strange cities; and dreams are older than **brooding Tyre**,<sup>29</sup> or the contemplative Sphinx, or **garden-girdled Babylon**.<sup>30</sup>”

Then he began his rambling tale which suddenly won the fevered interest of my uncle. There had been a slight earthquake tremor the night before, the most considerable felt in New England for some years; and Wilcox’s imagination had been greatly affected. He had an unprecedented dream of great **Cyclopean cities of Titan blocks**<sup>31</sup> and sky-flung monoliths, all dripping with green ooze and sinister with latent horror. Hieroglyphics had covered the walls and pillars, and from some undetermined point below had come a voice that was not a voice; a chaotic sensation which only fancy could transmute into sound, but which he attempted to render by the almost unpronounceable combination of letters: “**Cthulhu fhtagn**.<sup>32</sup>”

This verbal jumble was the key to the recollection which excited and disturbed Professor Angell. He questioned the sculptor with scientific interest; and studied the bas-relief on which the young man had been working, chilled and clad only in his night clothes. My uncle blamed his old age, Wilcox afterwards said, because he could not recognize both hieroglyphics and pictorial design fast enough. Many of his questions seemed highly inappropriate to his visitor, especially those which tried to connect the things with strange cults or societies; and Wilcox could not understand the promises of silence which he was offered in exchange for an admission of membership in some widespread mystical or paganly religious society. When Professor Angell became convinced that the sculptor was indeed ignorant of any cult or system of cryptic lore, he asked his visitor to supply him with future reports of dreams. This bore regular fruit, because after the first interview the manuscript records daily visits of the young man, during which he related startling fragments of nocturnal imagery. He was always talking about some terrible Cyclopean views of dark and dripping stone, with a subterrene voice or intelligence shouting monotonously enigmatical uninscribable gibberish. The two sounds frequently repeated are rendered by the letters “Cthulhu” and “**R’lyeh**.<sup>33</sup>”

On March 23, the manuscript continued, Wilcox did not come; he had been stricken with an obscure fever and taken to the home of his family in **Waterman Street**.<sup>34</sup> He had cried out in the night, arousing several other artists in the building, and had showed since then only alternations of unconsciousness and delirium. My uncle at once telephoned the family, and from that time

<sup>27</sup> **psychically hypersensitive** – психически сверхчувствительный

<sup>28</sup> **Providence Art Club** – Клуб любителей искусства в Провиденсе

<sup>29</sup> **brooding Tyre** – мечтательный Тир (финикийский город, один из древнейших крупных торговых центров)

<sup>30</sup> **garden-girdled Babylon** – окружённый садами Вавилон

<sup>31</sup> **Cyclopean cities of Titan blocks** – циклопические города из каменных плит

<sup>32</sup> **Cthulhu fhtagn** – Ктулху фхтагн

<sup>33</sup> **R’lyeh** – Р’льех

<sup>34</sup> **Waterman Street** – Уотермен-стрит



watched the case; calling often at the **Thayer Street office of Dr. Tobey**.<sup>35</sup> The young man's febrile mind, apparently, was dwelling on strange things; and the doctor was shuddering as he spoke of them. They included not only a repetition of what he had formerly dreamed, but concerned gigantic things "miles high" which walked or lumbered about. He never fully described these objects but occasional frantic words, as repeated by Dr. Tobey, convinced the professor that they were identical with the nameless monsters he had depicted in his dream-sculpture. Reference to this object, the doctor added, was invariably a prelude to the young man's lethargy. His temperature, oddly enough, was quite normal; but the whole condition was like true fever rather than mental disorder.

On April 2 at about 3 p.m. every trace of Wilcox's illness suddenly ceased. He sat upright in bed, astonished to find himself at home and completely ignorant of what had happened in dream or reality since the night of March 22. His physician declared recovering, and he returned to his quarters in three days; but he was not able to help Professor Angell. All traces of strange dreaming had vanished with his recovery, and my uncle kept no record of his night-thoughts after a week of pointless and irrelevant usual visions.

Here the first part of the manuscript ended, but it gave me much material for thought. The notes were the descriptions of the dreams of various persons covering the same period as that in which young Wilcox had had his strange visits. My uncle, it seems, was inquiring amongst nearly all the friends whom he could question, asking for nightly reports of their dreams, and the dates of any notable visions for some time past. He received so many responses, that it was impossible to handle them without a secretary. This original correspondence was not preserved, but his notes formed a thorough and really significant digest. Average people in society and business gave an almost completely negative result, though there were some formless nocturnal impressions, between March 23 and April 2 – the period of young Wilcox's delirium. Four cases gave vague descriptions of strange landscapes, and in one case there was mentioned a dread of something abnormal.

The answers of artists and poets were the most interesting, and I suspect that panic would have appeared if they had compared the notes. But these were not original letters, and I suspected that they were being asked leading questions, or that the correspondence was edited. That is why I continued to feel that Wilcox had been imposing on the veteran scientist. The responses from esthetes told disturbing tale. From February 28 to April 2 a large proportion of them had dreamed very bizarre things, the intensity of the dreams was immeasurably stronger during the period of the sculptor's delirium. Over a fourth of them<sup>36</sup> reported scenes and half-sounds – like those which Wilcox had described; and some of the dreamers were afraid of the gigantic nameless thing which became visible at the end. One case was very sad. A widely known architect with great interest toward theosophy and occultism went violently insane on the date of young Wilcox's seizure, and several months later was still continuously screaming. He was asking for help, he wanted to be saved from some escaped denizen of hell. If my uncle had mentioned the real names instead of numbers, I would have done some personal investigation; but as it was, I succeeded in tracing down only a few. And it is well that no explanation ever reached them.

The newspapers' articles, as I have learned, were concerned with cases of panic, mania, and eccentricity during the given period. Professor Angell's collection was tremendous, and the sources were scattered throughout the globe. Here was a nocturnal suicide in London, where a man had leaped from a window after a shocking cry. Here was a letter to the editor of a newspaper in South America, where a fanatic pretold future from visions he had seen. An article from California described a theosophist colony: people in white robes were preparing for some "glorious fulfillment" which never arrived. Articles from India spoke of serious native unrest toward the end of March

<sup>35</sup> **Thayer Street office of Dr. Tobey** – приёмная доктора Тоби на Тейер-стрит

<sup>36</sup> **over a fourth of them** – больше четверти из них

22–23. The west of Ireland, too, was full of wild rumour and legendary stories, and a fantastic painter named **Ardois-Bonnot**<sup>37</sup> offered a blasphemous “Dream Landscape” in the Paris spring salon of 1926. The recorded troubles in insane asylums were very numerous as well. But I was then convinced that young Wilcox had known of the older matters mentioned by the professor and had set all of this aside.

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<sup>37</sup> **Ardois-Bonnot** – Ардуа-Бонно

## II. The Tale of Inspector Legrasse

The older matters which had made the sculptor's dream and bas-relief so significant to my uncle formed the second half of his long manuscript. Once before, it appears, Professor Angell had seen the hellish outlines of the nameless monstrosity, thought about the unknown hieroglyphics, and heard the ominous syllables which can be written only as "Cthulhu".

It was in 1908, seventeen years before, when the American Archaeological Society held its annual meeting in **St. Louis**.<sup>38</sup> Professor Angell, due to his authority and attainments, had a prominent part in it. Other people offered him questions for correct answering and problems for expert solution.

There was a middle-aged man who had travelled all the way from New Orleans to get special information unobtainable from any local source. His name was John Raymond Legrasse, and he was an Inspector of Police. He brought the subject of his visit, a grotesque, repulsive, and apparently very ancient stone statuette whose origin was unknown.

Inspector Legrasse had the least interest in archaeology. He was prompted by purely professional considerations. The statuette, idol, fetish, or whatever it was, **had been captured**<sup>39</sup> some months before in the wooded swamps south of New Orleans during a raid on a supposed **voodoo meeting**.<sup>40</sup> And the rites connected with it were so singular and hideous, that the police treated it as a dark cult totally unknown to them, and infinitely more diabolic than even the blackest of the African voodoo circles. Absolutely nothing was discovered of its origin: only erratic and unbelievable tales from the captured members; hence the police wanted to learn something which might help them to place the frightful symbol, and through it understand the cult itself.

Inspector Legrasse was not prepared for the sensation which his offering created. One sight of the thing had been enough to throw the assembled scientists into a state of tense excitement. They crowded around him to gaze at the diminutive strange figure, apparently very old and unknown. Strange school of sculpture had animated this terrible object, yet centuries and even thousands of years seemed recorded in its dim and greenish surface of stone.

The figure, which was finally passed slowly from man to man for close and careful study, was between seven and eight inches in height. It represented a vaguely anthropoid monster, with an octopus-like head, whose face was a mass of feelers, a scaly, rubbery-looking body, prodigious claws on hind and fore feet, and long, narrow wings behind. This thing, which was an embodiment of a fearsome and unnatural malignancy, squatted evilly on a rectangular block or pedestal covered with undecipherable characters. The tips of the wings touched the back edge of the block, the seat occupied the centre, while the long, curved claws of the hind legs gripped the front edge and extended toward the bottom of the pedestal. The **cephalopod head**<sup>41</sup> was bent forward, so that the ends of the facial feelers brushed the backs of huge fore paws which clasped the elevated knees. The creature looked abnormally life-like and fearful because its source was totally unknown. Its vast, awesome, and incalculable age was unmistakable; but it was not connected to any known type of art belonging to civilisation's youth – or indeed to any other time. Even its material was a mystery; for the soapy, greenish-black stone with its golden or iridescent flecks and striations **resembled nothing familiar**<sup>42</sup> to geology or mineralogy. The characters along the base were totally

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<sup>38</sup> **St. Louis** – Сент-Луис

<sup>39</sup> **had been captured** – был конфискован

<sup>40</sup> **voodoo meeting** – собрание приверженцев вуду (вуду – конгломерат анимистических культов, включающий в себя традиционные африканские верования)

<sup>41</sup> **cephalopod head** – осьминожья голова

<sup>42</sup> **resembled nothing familiar** – не напоминал ничего из известного

unknown; and nobody could form the least notion of even their remotest linguistic kinship. They, like the subject and material, belonged to something horribly remote and distinct from mankind as we know it.

And yet, as the members shook their heads and confessed defeat at the Inspector's problem, there was one man in that gathering who recognized bizarre familiarity in the monstrous shape and writing. This person was **the late William Channing Webb**,<sup>43</sup> Professor of Anthropology in Princeton University, and a famous explorer.

Professor Webb had been engaged, forty-eight years before, in a tour of Greenland and Iceland in search of some Runic inscriptions. On the West Greenland coast he had met a singular tribe or cult of **degenerate Esquimaux**<sup>44</sup> whose religion, a curious form of devil-worship, frightened him with its deliberate **bloodthirstiness**<sup>45</sup> and repulsiveness. It was a faith of which other Esquimaux knew little, and which they mentioned only with shudders, saying that it had come down from horribly ancient ages before the world was made. Besides nameless rites and human sacrifices there were certain queer hereditary rituals **addressed to a supreme elder devil or tornasuk**,<sup>46</sup> and of this Professor Webb **had taken a careful phonetic copy from an aged angekok or wizard-priest**,<sup>47</sup> expressing the sounds in Roman letters as best he knew how. The most important thing was the fetish, around which they danced when **the aurora leaped high**<sup>48</sup> over the ice cliffs. It was, the professor stated, a very crude bas-relief of stone, comprising a hideous picture and some cryptic writing. And it was a rough parallel in all essential features of the bestial thing now lying before the meeting.

This data, received with suspense and astonishment by the assembled members, was very exciting to Inspector Legrasse, and he at once began to ply his informant with questions. He noted and copied an oral ritual among the swamp cult-worshippers which his men had arrested. So he asked the professor to remember the syllables that he had heard from the diabolist Esquimaux. There then followed an exhaustive comparison of details, and a moment of silence when both detective and scientist agreed on the identity of the phrase common to two hellish rituals. What both the Esquimaux wizards and the Louisiana swamp-priests had chanted to their kindred idols was something very like this:

***"Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn"***<sup>49</sup>.

Legrasse said that some his mongrel prisoners had told him the meaning of these words. This text, as given, ran something like this:

***"In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming"***<sup>50</sup>.

And now Inspector Legrasse related as fully as possible his experience with the swamp worshippers. This is the story to which my uncle attached profound significance. It was the wildest dream of a myth-maker or a theosophist.

On November 1st, 1907, frantic summons came to the New Orleans police from the swamp and lagoon country to the south. The people there, mostly primitive but good-natured **descendants of Lafitte's men**,<sup>51</sup> were in stark terror from an unknown thing which had occurred in the night. It

<sup>43</sup> **the late William Channing Webb** – ныне покойный Уильям Ченнинг Уэбб

<sup>44</sup> **degenerate Esquimaux** – вымирающие эскимосы

<sup>45</sup> **bloodthirstiness** – кровожадность

<sup>46</sup> **addressed to a supreme elder devil or tornasuk** – посвящённые верховному дьяволу, или «торнасуку»

<sup>47</sup> **had taken a careful phonetic copy from an aged angekok or wizard-priest** – тщательно записал из уст старого целителя, или шамана

<sup>48</sup> **the aurora leaped high** – занималась утренняя заря

<sup>49</sup> **Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn** – Пх'нглуй мглив'нафх Ктулху Р'льех вгах'нагл фхтагн

<sup>50</sup> **In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming** – В своём доме в Р'льехе мёртвый Ктулху ждёт и видит сны.

<sup>51</sup> **descendants of Lafitte's men** – потомки племени Лафита (Жан Лафит – французский пират, контрабандист, орудовавший в дельте реки Миссисипи)

was voodoo, apparently, but voodoo of a more terrible sort than they had ever known; and some of their women and children had disappeared since the **malevolent tom-tom**<sup>52</sup> had begun its incessant beating far within the black haunted woods where no one walked. There were insane shouts and harrowing screams, soul-chilling chants and dancing devil-flames; and, the frightened messenger added, **the people could stand it no more**.<sup>53</sup>

So twenty police officers in two carriages and an automobile went there with the shivering squatter as a guide. At the end of the road they walked for miles in silence through the terrible cypress woods where day never came. Ugly roots and malignant hanging nooses of **Spanish moss**<sup>54</sup> beset them. Finally, the squatter settlement, a miserable huddle of huts, hove in sight; and hysterical dwellers ran out. The beat of tom-toms was now faintly audible far, far ahead; and a curdling shriek came when the wind shifted. The squatters refused to go toward the scene of unholy worship, so Inspector Legrasse and his nineteen colleagues went into black arcades of horror.

The region they entered was one of traditionally evil repute, white men normally did not enter it. There were legends of a hidden lake, in which dwelt a huge, **formless white polypous thing**<sup>55</sup> with luminous eyes; and squatters whispered that bat-winged devils flew up out of caverns in inner earth to worship it at midnight. They said it had been there before the Indians, and before even the beasts and birds of the woods. It was nightmare itself, and **to see it was to die**.<sup>56</sup> But it came to them in dreams, and so they knew enough not to go there. The present voodoo orgy was, indeed, on the fringe of this area, but that location was bad enough; hence perhaps the very place of the worship had terrified the squatters more than the shocking sounds and incidents.

Legrasse's men ploughed on through the black morass toward the red glare and muffled tom-toms. There are sounds made by men, and sounds made by beasts; and it is terrible to hear when the sources change. The voices the policemen heard were like pestilential tempests from the gulfs of hell. From time to time a chorus of hoarse voices chanted that hideous phrase or ritual:

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

Then the men reached a spot where the trees were thinner. Four of them reeled, one fainted, and two were shaken into a frantic cry. Some stood trembling and nearly hypnotized with horror.

In a natural glade of the swamp stood a grassy island of an acre's extent, clear of trees and dry. On this now leaped and twisted indescribable horde of humans. Totally naked, this hybrid spawn were braying, bellowing, and writhing about a monstrous ring-shaped bonfire; in the centre of which stood a great granite monolith some eight feet in height, on top of which rested the noxious carven statuette. From a wide circle of ten scaffolds set up at regular intervals hung, head downward, the marred bodies of the helpless squatters who had disappeared. Inside this circle the ring of worshippers jumped and roared, from left to right in **endless bacchanal**<sup>57</sup> between the ring of bodies and the ring of fire.

It may be only imagination, but a Spanish man heard antiphonal responses to the ritual from some far and unilluminated spot within the wood. This man, **Joseph D. Galvez**,<sup>58</sup> I later met and questioned. He said that he heard beating of great wings, and saw a glimpse of shining eyes and a mountainous white bulk beyond the remotest trees but I suppose he was a little superstitious.

But duty came first; and the police relied on their firearms and went determinedly into the nauseous rout. For five minutes the chaos was beyond description. Shots were fired, and escapes

<sup>52</sup> **malevolent tom-tom** – зловеющий там-там (там-там – ударный музыкальный инструмент)

<sup>53</sup> **the people could stand it no more** – люди не могли уже больше выносить

<sup>54</sup> **Spanish moss** – испанский мох (*Tillandsia usneoides*)

<sup>55</sup> **formless white polypous thing** – бесформенный белый полип

<sup>56</sup> **to see it was to die** – увидеть его означало умереть

<sup>57</sup> **endless bacchanal** – нескончаемая вакханалия

<sup>58</sup> **Joseph D. Galvez** – Джозеф Д. Гальвес

were made; but in the end Legrasse was able to count forty-seven sullen prisoners, to whom he ordered to dress and fall into line between two rows of policemen. Five of the worshippers lay dead, and two were severely wounded. Of course, Legrasse took the statuette from the monolith.

After a trip, the prisoners were examined. They were men of a very low, mixed-blooded, and **mentally aberrant type**.<sup>59</sup> Most were seamen, some negroes and mulattoes, largely West Indians or Portuguese from the **Cape Verde Islands**.<sup>60</sup> But before many questions were asked, it became clear that something far deeper and older than negro fetishism was involved.

They worshipped, so they said, the **Great Old Ones**<sup>61</sup> who lived ages before there were any men, and who came to the young world out of the sky. Those Old Ones were gone now, inside the earth and under the sea; but their dead bodies had told their secrets in dreams to the first men, who formed a cult which had never died. This was that cult, and the prisoners said it had always existed and always would exist, hidden in distant and dark places all over the world until the time when the great priest Cthulhu, from his dark house in the mighty city of R'lyeh under the waters, would rise and rule the earth. Some day he will call, when the stars are ready, and the secret cult will always be waiting to liberate him.

Meanwhile no more can be told. There was a secret which could not be extracted. Mankind was not absolutely alone among the conscious things of earth: some shapes came out of the dark **to visit the faithful few**.<sup>62</sup> But these were not the Great Old Ones. No man had ever seen the Old Ones. The carven idol was great Cthulhu, but nobody might say how the others looked like. No one could read the old writing now, but things were told by word of mouth. The chanted ritual was not the secret – that was never spoken aloud, only whispered. The chant meant only this: “In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming.”

Only two of the prisoners were found sane enough to be hanged, and the rest were taken to various hospitals. All denied ritual murders, and said that the killing had been done by **Black Winged Ones**<sup>63</sup> which had come to them from their immemorial meeting-place in the haunted wood. And nothing more could be known. What the police learned came mainly from the **immensely aged mestizo named Castro**,<sup>64</sup> who said that he had sailed to different ports and talked with undying leaders of the cult in the mountains of China.

Old Castro remembered bits of hideous legend that made man and the world seem recent and transient indeed. There had been ages when other Creatures ruled on the earth, and They had had great cities. Remains of Them, the deathless Chinamen had told him, could still be found as Cyclopean stones **on islands in the Pacific**.<sup>65</sup> They all died long ago before men came, but there were ways which could revive Them when the stars had come round again to the right positions in the cycle of eternity. They had, indeed, come themselves from the stars, and brought Their images with Them.

These Great Old Ones, Castro continued, were not composed altogether of flesh and blood. They had shape but that shape was not made of matter. When the stars came round to the right positions, They could travel from world to world through the sky; but when the stars were wrong, They could not live. But although They no longer lived, They would never really die. They all lay in stone houses in Their great city of R'lyeh, preserved by the spells of mighty Cthulhu for a glorious resurrection when the stars and the earth might once more be ready for Them. But at

<sup>59</sup> **mentally aberrant type** – низкое умственное развитие

<sup>60</sup> **Cape Verde Islands** – Острова Зеленого Мыса

<sup>61</sup> **Great Old Ones** – Великие Древние

<sup>62</sup> **to visit the faithful few** – чтобы посетить немногих верных

<sup>63</sup> **Black Winged Ones** – Чернокрылые

<sup>64</sup> **immensely aged mestizo named Castro** – весьма престарелый метис по имени Кастро

<sup>65</sup> **on islands in the Pacific** – на островах Тихого океана

that time some force from outside must serve to liberate Their bodies. The spells prevented Them from making an initial move, and They could only lie awake in the dark and think while millions of years passed by. They knew all that was occurring in the universe, for Their mode of speech was transmitted thought. Even now They talked in Their tombs. When, after infinities of chaos, the first men came, the Great Old Ones spoke to the sensitive among them by moulding their dreams; for only thus could Their language reach the fleshly minds.

Then, whispered Castro, those first men formed the cult around tall idols which the Great Ones showed them; idols brought in dim eras from dark stars. That cult would never die till the stars came right again, and the secret priests would take great Cthulhu from His tomb to revive His servants and resume His rule of earth. This time would be easy to know, for then mankind would become as the Great Old Ones; free and wild and beyond good and evil, with laws and morals thrown aside. And all men would be shouting and killing and revelling in joy. Then the liberated Old Ones would teach them new ways to shout and kill and revel and enjoy themselves, and all the earth would flame with a holocaust of ecstasy and freedom. Meanwhile the cult, by appropriate rites, must keep alive the memory of those ancient ways and tell about their return.

In the elder time chosen men had talked with the entombed Old Ones in dreams, but then something happened. The great stone city R'lyeh, with its monoliths and sepulchres, had sunk beneath the waves; and the deep waters, full of the one primal mystery through which not even thought can pass, had cut off the communication. But memory never died, and the high-priests said that the city would rise again when the stars were right. Then the black spirits of earth would come out, mouldy and shadowy, and full of dim rumours. But old Castro dared not speak much of them. He became silent hurriedly, and said nothing more. He curiously declined to mention the size of the Old Ones, too. Of the cult, he said that he thought the centre lay amid the pathless desert of Arabia, where **Irem, the City of Pillars**,<sup>66</sup> dreams hidden and untouched. It was not connected to the European witch-cult, and was virtually unknown beyond its members. No book had ever mentioned it, though the deathless Chinamen said that there were double meanings in the *Necronomicon of the mad arab Abdul Alhazred*<sup>67</sup> which the initiated might read, especially the this couplet:

*“That is not dead which can eternal lie,<sup>68</sup>  
And with strange ages even death may die.”*

Legrasse, deeply impressed, had inquired about the historic affiliations of the cult. Castro, apparently, had told the truth when he said that it was wholly secret. The authorities at **Tulane University**<sup>69</sup> could say nothing about either cult or image, and now the detective had come to the highest authorities in the country and met with the Greenland tale of Professor Webb.

The great interest aroused at the meeting by Legrasse's tale is echoed in the correspondence of those who attended; although it was not mentioned in the formal publications of the society. Caution is the first care of scientists who often face charlatanry and imposture. Legrasse lent the image to Professor Webb. When Professor had died, it was returned to him. I viewed it not long ago. It is truly a terrible thing, and akin to the dream-sculpture of young Wilcox.

I did not wonder that my uncle was excited by the tale of the sculptor. Professor Angell started an investigation immediately; though privately I suspected young Wilcox of trickery. He could

<sup>66</sup> **Irem, the City of Pillars** – Ирем, град колонн

<sup>67</sup> *Necronomicon of the mad arab Abdul Alhazred* – «Некромикон» безумного араба Абдулы Альхазреда

<sup>68</sup> **That is not dead which can eternal lie.** – Не мёртво то, что может вечно покоиться.

<sup>69</sup> **Tulane University** – Тулейнский университет (частный исследовательский университет, расположенный в городе Новый Орлеан, Луизиана, США)

invent a series of dreams to heighten and continue the mystery. So, after thoroughly studying the manuscript again and correlating the theosophical and anthropological notes with the cult narrative of Legrasse, I made a trip to Providence to see the sculptor and accuse him of imposing upon a learned and aged man.

Wilcox still lived alone in the Fleur-de-Lys Building in Thomas Street, a hideous **Victorian imitation of 17th century Breton Architecture**.<sup>70</sup> I found him at work in his rooms, and understood at once that his genius is indeed profound and authentic. I believe one day he will be well-known as one of the great decadents; for he has crystallised in clay and in marble those nightmares and phantasies which **Arthur Machen**<sup>71</sup> evokes in prose, and **Clark Ashton Smith**<sup>72</sup> makes visible in verse and in painting.

Dark, frail, he asked me about my business without rising. Then I told him who I was, he displayed some interest; for my uncle had excited his curiosity studying his strange dreams, yet had never explained the reason for the study. In a short time I became convinced of his absolute sincerity, for he spoke of the dreams in a manner none could mistake. They had influenced his art profoundly, and he showed me a morbid statue whose contours almost made me shake. He could not recall the original of this thing except in his own dream bas-relief, but the outlines had formed themselves insensibly under his hands. It was, no doubt, the giant shape he had seen in delirium. But he really knew nothing of the hidden cult.

He talked of his dreams in a strangely poetic fashion; making me see the damp Cyclopean city of slimy green stone – whose geometry, he said, was all wrong – and hear with frightened expectancy the ceaseless, half-mental calling from underground: “*Cthulhu fhtagn*”, “*Cthulhu fhtagn*.”

These words had formed part of that dread ritual which told of dead Cthulhu’s dream-vigil in his stone vault at R’lyeh, and I felt deeply touched despite my rational beliefs. Wilcox, I was sure, had heard of the cult in some casual way, and had soon forgotten it amidst the mass of his equally weird reading and imagining. Later it had found subconscious expression in dreams, in the bas-relief, and in the terrible statue. The young man was slightly affected and slightly ill-mannered, that type I never liked, but I admit both his genius and his honesty. I wish him all the success his talent promises.

The matter of the cult still fascinated me, and sometimes I met serious researches. I visited New Orleans, talked with Legrasse and other people of that old-time party, saw the frightful image, and even questioned some mongrel prisoners. Old Castro, unfortunately, had been dead for some years. What I now heard was really no more than a detailed confirmation of what my uncle had written, and it excited me. I felt sure that I touched a very real, very secret, and very ancient religion whose discovery would make me a famous scientist. My attitude was absolute materialistic.

One thing I began to suspect, and which I now fear I know, is that my uncle’s death was not natural. He fell on a narrow hill street leading up from an ancient waterfront, after a careless push from a negro sailor. I did not forget the mixed blood and marine background of the cult-members in Louisiana, and I would not be surprised to learn of secret methods and rites and beliefs. Legrasse and his men, it is true, have been alive; but in Norway a certain seaman who saw everything is dead. Maybe the deeper inquiries of my uncle have come to sinister ears? I think Professor Angell died because he knew too much, or because he could learn too much. And at the moment I have learned much, too.

<sup>70</sup> **Victorian imitation of 17th century Breton Architecture** – викторианская имитация бретонской архитектуры XVII века

<sup>71</sup> **Arthur Machen** – Артур Мейчен (1863–1947), английский (валлийский) писатель, автор фантазмагорических историй.

<sup>72</sup> **Clark Ashton Smith** – Кларк Эштон Смит (1883–1961), американский поэт и писатель, художник, скульптор; писал рассказы в жанре фантастики, фэнтези и ужасов.



### III. The Madness from the Sea

I had almost ceased my inquiries into what Professor Angell called the “Cthulhu Cult”, and was visiting a learned friend in Paterson, New Jersey; the curator of a local museum and a famous mineralogist. Examining one day the stones in a rear room of the museum, my eye noticed an odd picture in one of the old papers spread beneath the stones. It was the **Australian journal, the Sydney Bulletin**,<sup>73</sup> for April 18, 1925. There was a picture of a hideous stone image almost identical with that which Legrasse had found in the swamp.

I read the article in detail. It was of great significance to my quest; and I carefully tore it out. It read as follows:

#### **MYSTERY DERELICT FOUND AT SEA**

***Vigilant Arrives With Helpless Armed New Zealand Yacht in Tow.***<sup>74</sup>

*One Survivor and Dead Man Found Aboard. Tale of Desperate Battle and Deaths at Sea. Rescued Seaman Refuses Particulars of Strange Experience. Odd Idol Found in His Possession. Inquiry to Follow.*<sup>75</sup>

The Morrison Co.'s freighter *Vigilant*,<sup>76</sup> bound from **Valparaiso**,<sup>77</sup> arrived this morning at its wharf in **Darling Harbour**,<sup>78</sup> having in tow the battled and disabled but heavily armed **steam yacht Alert of Dunedin, N. Z.**,<sup>79</sup> which was sighted April 12th in **S. Latitude**<sup>80</sup> 34°21', **W. Longitude**<sup>81</sup> 152°17', with one living and one dead man aboard.

The *Vigilant* left Valparaiso March 25th, and on April 2nd was driven considerably south of its course by exceptionally heavy storms and monster waves. On April 12th the derelict was sighted. One survivor in a half-delirious condition and one man who had evidently been dead for more than a week were found. The living man was holding a horrible stone idol of unknown origin, about foot in height. Its nature is unknown, the authorities at Sydney University, the Royal Society, and the Museum in College Street say. The survivor says he found it in the cabin of the yacht, in a small carved shrine.

This man told an exceedingly strange story of piracy and slaughter. He is **Gustaf Johansen**,<sup>82</sup> a Norwegian, from the **two-masted schooner Emma of Auckland**,<sup>83</sup> which sailed for **Callao**<sup>84</sup> February 20th with a complement of eleven men. The *Emma*, he says, was delayed and thrown widely south of her course by the great storm of March 1st, and on March 22nd, in S. Latitude 49°51' W. Longitude 128°34', encountered the *Alert*, manned by a queer and evil-looking crew of

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<sup>73</sup> **Australian journal, the Sydney Bulletin** – австралийский журнал «Сиднейский бюллетень»

<sup>74</sup> ***Vigilant Arrives With Helpless Armed New Zealand Yacht in Tow.*** – «Неусыпный» прибывает в порт с неуправляемой новозеландской яхтой на буксире.

<sup>75</sup> ***Inquiry to Follow.*** – Предстоит расследование.

<sup>76</sup> **the Morrison Co.'s freighter *Vigilant*** – сухогруз «Неусыпный», принадлежащий компании «Моррисон»

<sup>77</sup> **Valparaiso** – Вальпараисо, город и морской порт в Чили

<sup>78</sup> **Darling Harbour** – Дарлинг-Харбор

<sup>79</sup> **steam yacht *Alert of Dunedin, N. Z.*** – паровая яхта «Бдительная» из Данедина, Новая Зеландия

<sup>80</sup> **S. Latitude** – южная широта

<sup>81</sup> **W. Longitude** – западная долгота

<sup>82</sup> **Gustaf Johansen** – Густав Йохансен

<sup>83</sup> **two-masted schooner *Emma of Auckland*** – двухмачтовая шхуна «Эмма» из Окленда

<sup>84</sup> **Callao** – Кальяо, автономный регион в Перу на побережье Тихого океана

**Kanakas and half-castes**.<sup>85</sup> They ordered to turn back, **Capt. Collins**<sup>86</sup> refused; and the strange crew began to fire savagely and without warning. Though the schooner began to sink from shots beneath the water-line, the *Emma*'s men managed to heave alongside their enemy and board it. They were forced to kill them all.

Three of the *Emma*'s men, including Capt. Collins and **First Mate Green**,<sup>87</sup> were killed; and the remaining eight **under Second Mate Johansen**<sup>88</sup> proceeded to navigate the captured yacht. The next day, it appears, they raised and landed on a small island, although none knew about it in that part of the ocean. Six of the men somehow died ashore; Johansen says very little about this part of his story. Later, it seems, he and one companion boarded the yacht and tried to manage it, but were driven by the storm of April 2nd. From that time till his rescue on the 12th the man remembers little, and he does not even recall when **William Briden**,<sup>89</sup> his companion, died. There was no apparent cause for Briden's death, and it happened probably due to excitement or exposure. The *Alert* was well known as an **island trader**,<sup>90</sup> and bore an evil reputation. It was owned by a curious group of half-castes whose frequent meetings and night trips to the woods attracted curiosity. It started in great haste just after the storm and earth tremors of March 1st. Our Auckland correspondent gives the *Emma* and her crew an excellent reputation, and Johansen is described as a sober and worthy man. The admiralty will make Johansen speak more freely than he has done hitherto.

This was all, together with the picture of the hellish image; but what a train of ideas it started in my mind! Here were new data on the Cthulhu Cult, and evidence that it had strange interests at sea as well as on land. Why did the hybrid crew order the *Emma* to sail back? What was the unknown island on which six of the *Emma*'s crew had died, and about which Johansen was so secretive? And most important, what deep connection of dates was there, so carefully noted by my uncle?

March 1st – or February 28th **according to the International Date Line**<sup>91</sup> – the earthquake and storm had come. The *Alert* and her crew had sailed eagerly from Dunedin as if somebody had summoned it, and on the other side of the earth poets and artists had begun to dream of a strange Cyclopean city while a young sculptor had moulded in his sleep the form of the dreaded Cthulhu. March 23rd the crew of the *Emma* landed on an unknown island and left six men dead; and on that date the dreams of sensitive men gained heightened vividness and darkened with dread of a giant monster's malign pursuit, while an architect had gone mad and a sculptor had gone suddenly into delirium! And what of this storm of April 2nd – the date on which all dreams of the strange city ceased, and Wilcox recovered from the strange fever? An old Castro talked about the sunken, star-born Old Ones and their coming reign; their faithful cult and their mastery of dreams. In some way the second of April had stopped monstrous menace, the siege of mankind's soul.

That evening I took a train for San Francisco. In less than a month I was in Dunedin; where, however, I found that little was known of the strange cult-members who had entered the old sea-taverns. But there was vague talk about one inland trip these mongrels had made, during which faint drumming and red flame were noted on the distant hills. In Auckland I learned that Johansen had returned with **yellow hair turned white**<sup>92</sup> after a questioning at Sydney, and had thereafter

<sup>85</sup> **Kanakas and half-castes** – канаки и полукровки

<sup>86</sup> **Capt. Collins** – капитан Коллинз

<sup>87</sup> **First Mate Green** – первый помощник Грин

<sup>88</sup> **under Second Mate Johansen** – под командованием второго помощника Йохансена

<sup>89</sup> **William Briden** – Уильям Брайден

<sup>90</sup> **island trader** – каботажное судно

<sup>91</sup> **according to the International Date Line** – согласно международной демаркацией суточного времени

<sup>92</sup> **yellow hair turned white** – русые волосы поседели

sold his cottage in West Street and sailed with his wife to his old home in Oslo. All the admiralty officials could do was to give me his Oslo address.

After that I went to Sydney and talked uselessly with seamen and members of the vice-admiralty court. I saw the *Alert*, now sold and in commercial use, but gained nothing. The crouching image with its cuttlefish head, dragon body, scaly wings, and hieroglyphed pedestal, was preserved in the Museum at Hyde Park; and I studied it long and well. Geologists, the curator told me, had found it a monstrous puzzle; for they vowed that the rock like it did not exist. Then I remembered the words Old Castro had told Legrasse about the Old Ones: "They had come from the stars, and had brought Their images with Them."

I decided to visit Mate Johansen in Oslo. Johansen lived, I discovered, in the Old Town. I made a brief taxi-trip, and knocked at the door of a neat and ancient building. A sad-faced woman in black came out and told me that Gustaf Johansen was dead.

He had not lived long after his return, said his wife, the sea events in 1925 had broken him. He had told her no more than he told the public, but had left a long manuscript – of "technical matters" as he said – written in English. During a walk near the Gothenburg dock, a bundle of papers falling from an attic window had knocked him down. Two sailors at once helped him, but before the ambulance could reach him he was dead. Physicians said that his death occurred due to a heart trouble and a weakened constitution.

I persuaded the widow that I had to get her husband's "technical matters". I bore the document away and began to read it on the London boat.

It was a naive sailor's effort at a diary – to recall day by day that last awful voyage.

Johansen, thank God, did not know quite all, even though he saw the city and the Thing. I shall never sleep calmly again when I think of the horrors that lurk ceaselessly behind life in time and in space, and of those blasphemies from elder stars which dream beneath the sea.

Johansen's voyage had begun just as he told it to the vice-admiralty. The *Emma* had left Auckland on February 20th, and had felt the full force of the earthquake-born tempest. **Once more under control**,<sup>93</sup> the ship was making good progress **when held up**<sup>94</sup> by the *Alert* on March 22nd, and I could feel the mate's regret as he wrote of her bombardment and sinking. He speaks with significant horror of the swarthy cult-fiends on the *Alert*. Then, driven ahead by curiosity in their captured yacht under Johansen's command, the men saw a great stone pillar sticking out of the sea, and in S. Latitude 47°9', W. Longitude 123°43', came upon a coastline of mingled mud, ooze, and weedy Cyclopean masonry which can be nothing less than the tangible substance of earth's supreme terror – the nightmare corpse-city of R'lyeh, that was built in measureless ages behind history by the vast, loathsome creatures that came down from the dark stars. There lay great Cthulhu and his hordes, hidden in green slimy vaults and sending out the thoughts that spread fear to the dreams of the sensitive. The thoughts called imperiously to the faithful to come on a pilgrimage of liberation and restoration. All this Johansen did not suspect, but he soon saw enough!

I suppose that only a single mountain-top, the hideous monolith-crowned citadel whereon great Cthulhu was buried, actually emerged from the waters. Johansen and his men were awed by the cosmic majesty of this dripping Babylon of elder demons, and probably guessed that it was nothing of this planet. Awe at the unbelievable size of the greenish stone blocks, at the height of the great carven monolith, and at the identity of the colossal statues and bas-reliefs with the queer image found in the shrine on the *Alert*, is visible in every line of the frightened description.

Johansen and his men landed at a sloping mud-bank on this monstrous Acropolis, and clambered slipperily up over titan oozy blocks. Even the sun seemed distorted.

<sup>93</sup> **once more under control** – снова подчиняясь управлению

<sup>94</sup> **when held up** – когда бы остановлен

It was **Rodriguez the Portuguese**<sup>95</sup> who climbed up the foot of the monolith and shouted of what he had found. The rest followed him, and looked curiously at the immense carved door with the squid-dragon bas-relief. It was, Johansen said, like a great barn-door; and they all felt that it was a door, though they could not decide whether it lay flat like a **trap-door**<sup>96</sup> or slantwise like an outside cellar-door. As Wilcox said, the geometry of the place was all wrong. One could not be sure that the sea and the ground were horizontal, because the relative position of everything else seemed phantasmally variable.

Briden pushed at the stone in several places without result. Then **Donovan**<sup>97</sup> studied the edge, pressing each point separately. He climbed along the grotesque stone moulding – and the men wondered how any door in the universe could be so vast. Then, very softly and slowly, the acre-great lintel began to go down; and they saw that it was balanced.

Everyone watched the queer recession of the monstrously carved portal. In this prismatic distortion it moved in a diagonal way.

The aperture was black. The odour rising from the newly opened depths was intolerable. Everyone listened, and everyone was listening still when It appeared and gropingly squeezed Its gelatinous green immensity through the black doorway into the tainted outside air of that poison city of madness.

Of the six men who never reached the ship, two died immediately. The Thing cannot be described – there is no language for such abysses of shrieking and immemorial lunacy, such contradictions of all matter, force, and cosmic order. A mountain walked or stumbled. God! **What wonder**<sup>98</sup> that across the earth a great architect went mad, and poor Wilcox raved with fever in that telepathic instant? The Thing of the idols, the green, sticky spawn of the stars, had awaked **to claim his own**.<sup>99</sup> The stars were right again, and what an age-old cult had failed to do, a band of innocent sailors had done by accident. After millions of years great Cthulhu was loose again, and ravening for delight.

Three men were swept up by the flabby claws before anybody turned. God rest them, if there be any rest in the universe. They were **Donovan, Guerrero, and Angstrom**.<sup>100</sup> Parker slipped as the other three were running to the boat, and Johansen swears he was swallowed up by masonry. When Briden and Johansen reached the boat, and pulled desperately for the *Alert*, the mountainous monstrosity flopped down the slimy stones and was floundering at the edge of the water.

Slowly, amidst the distorted horrors of that indescribable scene, the *Alert* began to sail; while on the masonry of that shore great Cthulhu slid greasily into the water and began to pursue. Briden looked back and went mad. He kept on laughing till death found him one night in the cabin while Johansen was wandering deliriously.

But Johansen had not surrendered. Knowing that the Thing could surely overtake the *Alert*, he set the engine for full speed, and reversed the wheel. The brave Norwegian drove his vessel head on against the pursuing jelly. Johansen drove on relentlessly.

There was a horrific bursting as of an exploding bladder, a stench as of a thousand opened graves, and a sound that the chronicler could not put on paper. For an instant the ship was hidden by an acrid green cloud, and – **God in heaven!**<sup>101</sup> – the distance widened every second as the *Alert* gained impetus from its mounting steam.

<sup>95</sup> **Rodriguez the Portuguese** – португалец Родригес

<sup>96</sup> **trap-door** – дверь-люк

<sup>97</sup> **Donovan** – Донован

<sup>98</sup> **what wonder** – что же удивляться

<sup>99</sup> **to claim his own** – заявить свои права

<sup>100</sup> **Donovan, Guerrero, and Angstrom** – Донован, Геррера и Ангстром

<sup>101</sup> **God in heaven!** – Великий Боже!

That was all. After that Johansen only watched the idol in the cabin and prepared some food for himself and the laughing maniac. He did not try to navigate, for he was completely exhausted. Then came the storm of April 2nd, and he lost his consciousness.

One day came rescue – the *Vigilant*, the vice-admiralty court, the streets of Dunedin, and the long voyage back home to the old house. He could not tell – **they would think him mad.**<sup>102</sup> He wrote of what he knew before death came. Death would be a boon if only it could delete memories.

That was the document I read, and now I have placed it in the tin box beside the bas-relief and the papers of Professor Angell. This record of mine will be placed with them. I do not think my life will be long. As my uncle went, as poor Johansen went, so I shall go. I know too much, and the cult still lives.

Cthulhu still lives, too, I suppose, again in that chasm of stone which has shielded him since the sun was young. His accursed city is sunken once more, for the *Vigilant* sailed over the spot after the April storm; but his ministers on earth still bellow and prance and slay around idol-capped monoliths in lonely places. Who knows the end? What has risen may sink, and what has sunk may rise. It waits and dreams in the deep, and decay spreads over the tottering cities of men. A time will come – but I must not and cannot think about it! Let me pray that, if I do not survive this manuscript, my executors let nobody read this.

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<sup>102</sup> **they would think him mad** – его бы сочли за сумасшедшего

## At the Mountains of Madness

### I

I don't want to tell my reasons for opposing the invasion of the Antarctic – with its vast fossil hunt and its melting of the ancient ice caps. I can understand clearly that my story will seem extravagant and incredible. But there are photographs, both ordinary and aerial, and they will count **in my favor**,<sup>103</sup> for they are vivid and graphic. Of course, some people can say that is all fakery. And there are ink drawings which can be jeered at as obvious impostures.

I must rely on the judgment and standing of the few scientific leaders who have, on the one hand, sufficient independence of thought; and on the other hand, sufficient influence to deter the exploring world in general from any over-ambitious program in the region of those mountains of madness. It is pity that ordinary men like myself and my colleagues, connected only with a small university, have little chance of making an impression.

In the strictest sense, we are not specialists in the fields concerned. **Miskatonic University**<sup>104</sup> sent me as a geologist. The aim of our expedition was to secure deep-level specimens of rock and soil from various parts of the Antarctic continent. We had a remarkable drill devised by Professor **Frank H. Pabodie**<sup>105</sup> of our engineering department. I had no wish to be a pioneer in any other field than this, but I hoped that the use of this new mechanical device would discover materials, unacceptable by the ordinary methods of collection.

Pabodie's drilling apparatus was unique and radical in its lightness, portability, and capacity. Three sledges could carry steel head, **jointed rods**,<sup>106</sup> gasoline motor, **collapsible wooden derrick**,<sup>107</sup> **dynamiting paraphernalia**,<sup>108</sup> cords, rubbish-removal auger, and sectional piping for bores five inches wide and up to one thousand feet deep. This was possible due to aluminum alloy. Four large aeroplanes could transport our entire expedition from a base at the edge of the great ice barrier to various inland points.

We planned to explore a great area, operating mostly in the mountain ranges and on the plateau south of **Ross Sea**,<sup>109</sup> regions explored by **Shackleton, Amundsen, Scott, and Byrd**.<sup>110</sup> We expected to get a quite unprecedented amount of material – especially in the **pre-Cambrian**<sup>111</sup> strata. We wished also to obtain a variety of the upper fossiliferous rocks, since the primal life history of this realm of ice and death is of the highest importance to our knowledge of the earth's past. The Antarctic continent was once temperate and even tropical; and we hoped to expand that information in variety, accuracy, and detail.

The public knows of the Miskatonic Expedition through our frequent reports to the **Arkham Advertiser and Associated Press**,<sup>112</sup> and through the later articles of Pabodie and myself. There

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<sup>103</sup> **in my favor** – в мою пользу

<sup>104</sup> **Miskatonic University** – Мискатоникский университет (вымышленный университет, расположенный в вымышленном городе Аркхем, штат Массачусетс, США).

<sup>105</sup> **Frank H. Pabodie** – Фрэнк Х. Пэбоди

<sup>106</sup> **jointed rods** – складной хвостовик бура

<sup>107</sup> **collapsible wooden derrick** – разборная деревянная буровая вышка

<sup>108</sup> **dynamiting paraphernalia** – принадлежности для взрывных работ

<sup>109</sup> **Ross Sea** – море Росса (море в Тихом океане у берегов Земель Виктории и Мэри Бэрд, Западная Антарктида)

<sup>110</sup> **Shackleton, Amundsen, Scott, and Byrd** – Шеклтон, Амундсен, Скотт и Бэрд

<sup>111</sup> **pre-Cambrian** – докембрийский период (криптозой, предшествовал началу кембрийского периода (около 540 млн. лет назад)

<sup>112</sup> **Arkham Advertiser and Associated Press** – «Аркхемский листок» и «Ассошиэйтид Пресс»

were four men from the University – Pabodie, **Lake**<sup>113</sup> of the biology department, **Atwood**<sup>114</sup> of the physics department – also a meteorologist – and myself, representing geology – besides sixteen assistants: seven graduate students from Miskatonic and nine skilled mechanics. Of these sixteen, twelve were qualified aeroplane pilots, they were competent wireless operators as well. Eight of them understood navigation with compass and sextant, as did Pabodie, Atwood, and I. In addition, of course, our two ships **were fully manned**.<sup>115</sup>

The **Nathaniel Derby Pickman Foundation**<sup>116</sup> financed the expedition. The dogs, sledges, machines, camp materials, and unassembled parts of our five planes were delivered in Boston, and there our ships were loaded. We were marvelously well-equipped for our specific purposes. As the newspapers told, we sailed from Boston Harbor on September 2nd, 1930, taking a leisurely course down the coast and through the **Panama Canal**,<sup>117</sup> and stopping at **Samoa and Hobart, Tasmania**,<sup>118</sup> where we got final supplies. Our ship captains were **J. B. Douglas**,<sup>119</sup> commanding the brig *Arkham*, and **Georg Thorfinnsen**,<sup>120</sup> commanding the *Miskatonic* – both veteran whalers in Antarctic waters.

At about 62° South Latitude we noticed our first icebergs – table-like objects with vertical sides – and just before reaching the **Antarctic circle**,<sup>121</sup> which we crossed on October 20th with appropriately ceremonies, we were considerably troubled with field ice. The falling temperature bothered me considerably after our long voyage through the tropics. Very often the curious atmospheric effects enchanted me vastly; distant bergs became the battlements of unimaginable cosmic castles.

Pushing through the ice, we regained open water at South Latitude 67°, East Longitude 175°. On the morning of October 26th a snow-clad mountain chain appeared on the south. That was an outpost of the great unknown continent and its cryptic world of frozen death. These peaks were obviously the **Admiralty Range discovered by Ross**,<sup>122</sup> and our task was to round **Cape Adare**<sup>123</sup> and sail down the east coast of **Victoria Land**<sup>124</sup> to our base on the shore of **McMurdo Sound**,<sup>125</sup> at the foot of the volcano **Erebus**<sup>126</sup> in South Latitude 77° 9'.

The last part of the voyage was vivid and fancy-stirring. Great barren peaks of mystery, white snow, bluish ice and water lanes, and black bits of exposed granite slope. Something about the scene reminded me of the strange and disturbing Asian paintings of **Nicholas Roerich**,<sup>127</sup> and of the disturbing descriptions of the evil **plateau of Leng**<sup>128</sup> which appear in the dreaded *Necronomicon*

<sup>113</sup> **Lake** – Лэйк

<sup>114</sup> **Atwood** – Этвуд

<sup>115</sup> **were fully manned** – были полностью укомплектованы командами

<sup>116</sup> **Nathaniel Derby Pickman Foundation** – Фонд Натаниэла Дерби Пикмена

<sup>117</sup> **Panama Canal** – Панамский канал

<sup>118</sup> **Samoa and Hobart, Tasmania** – Самоа и Хобарт, Тасмания

<sup>119</sup> **J. B. Douglas** – Дж. Б. Дуглас

<sup>120</sup> **Georg Thorfinnsen** – Георг Торфинсен

<sup>121</sup> **Antarctic circle** – Южный полярный круг

<sup>122</sup> **Admiralty Range discovered by Ross** – Адмиралтейские горы, открытые Россом

<sup>123</sup> **Cape Adare** – мыс Адэр (мыс и полуостров, расположенные на крайнем северо-востоке региона Земля Виктории, Восточная Антарктида)

<sup>124</sup> **Victoria Land** – Земля Виктории (район Антарктиды)

<sup>125</sup> **the shore of McMurdo Sound** – побережье пролива Мак-Мердо (Мак-Мердо – пролив в Антарктиде, покрытые льдом воды которого простираются приблизительно на 55 км в длину и ширину. На севере пролив выходит в Море Росса).

<sup>126</sup> **Erebus** – Эребус

<sup>127</sup> **Nicholas Roerich** – Николай Рерих (1874–1947), русский художник, сценограф, философ-мистик, писатель, путешественник, археолог, общественный деятель.

<sup>128</sup> **plateau of Leng** – плоскогорье Ленг (упоминаемое Лавкрафтом холодное и пустынное плато)

of the mad Arab Abdul Alhazred. I was rather sorry, later on, that I had looked into that monstrous book at the college library.

On the 7th of November, we passed **Franklin Island**;<sup>129</sup> and the next day the cones of **Mts. Erebus and Terror**<sup>130</sup> on Ross Island appeared, with the long line of the **Parry Mountains**<sup>131</sup> beyond. There was a white line of the great ice barrier, rising perpendicularly to a height of two hundred feet like the rocky cliffs of Quebec, and marking the end of southward navigation. In the afternoon we entered McMurdo Sound and **stood off the coast**<sup>132</sup> near Mt. Erebus. Beyond it rose the white, ghostlike height of Mt. Terror, ten thousand, nine hundred feet in altitude.

One of the graduate assistants – a brilliant young fellow named **Danforth**<sup>133</sup> – noticed lava on the snowy slope. On the barren shore, and on the lofty ice barrier in the background, myriads of grotesque penguins walked.

Using small boats, we landed on Ross Island shortly after midnight on the morning of the 9th, preparing to unload supplies. Our camp on the frozen shore below the volcano's slope was only a provisional one, headquarters were situated aboard the *Arkham*. We landed all our drilling apparatus, dogs, sledges, tents, provisions, gasoline tanks, **experimental ice-melting outfit**,<sup>134</sup> cameras, both ordinary and aerial, aeroplane parts, and other accessories, including three small portable wireless devices – besides those in the planes – capable of communicating with the *Arkham's* large device from any part of the Antarctic continent that we would be likely to visit. The ship's radio, communicating with the outside world, was able to convey press reports to the *Arkham Advertiser's* powerful wireless station on **Kingsport Head, Massachusetts**.<sup>135</sup> We hoped to complete our work during an Antarctic summer; but if this became impossible, we would winter on the *Arkham*, sending the *Miskatonic* north for another summer's supplies.

I need not repeat what the newspapers have already published about our early work. The health of our party – twenty men and fifty-five Alaskan sledge dogs – was remarkable, though of course we had not encountered really destructive temperatures or windstorms.

We had reached **Beardmore Glacier**,<sup>136</sup> the largest valley glacier in the world, and the frozen sea changed to a mountainous coast line. We were some eight thousand, five hundred feet above sea-level, and when experimental drillings revealed solid ground only twelve feet down through the snow and ice at certain points, we made considerable use of the small melting apparatus.

In certain of the sandstones we found some highly interesting fossil fragments; notably ferns, seaweeds, and mollusks – all this helps to study the region's primordial history. There was also a queer triangular, striated marking, about a foot in greatest diameter. Lake, as a biologist, found these curious marking unusually puzzling and provocative, though to my geological eye it looked not unlike some of the ripple effects common in the sedimentary rocks. Since slate is no more than a metamorphic formation, I saw no reason for extreme wonder.

On January 6th, 1931, Lake, Pabodie, Danforth, the other six students, and myself flew directly over the South Pole in two planes, but there was a high wind. This was, as the papers have stated, one of several observation flights. Distant mountains floated in the sky as enchanted cities,

<sup>129</sup> **Franklin Island** – остров Франклина (скалистый остров в проливе Кеннеди в составе пролива Нэрса, практически в центральной части Арктики)

<sup>130</sup> **Mts. Erebus and Terror** – вулканы Эребус и Террор

<sup>131</sup> **Parry Mountains** – горы Перри

<sup>132</sup> **stood off the coast** – встали на якорь

<sup>133</sup> **Danforth** – Данфорт

<sup>134</sup> **experimental ice-melting outfit** – экспериментальное оборудование для растапливания льда

<sup>135</sup> **Kingsport Head, Massachusetts** – Кингспорт-Хед, Массачусетс

<sup>136</sup> **Beardmore Glacier** – ледник Бирдмора (один из крупнейших долинных ледников в мире длиной более 160 километров)



and often the whole white world would dissolve into a gold, silver, and scarlet land of dreams under the magic of the low midnight sun.

We resolved to carry out our original plan: to fly five hundred miles eastward and establish a new base. Our health had remained excellent. It was now midsummer, and with haste and care we might be able to conclude work by March and avoid a tedious wintering through the long Antarctic night. No doubt, we had our good luck.

Lake insisted on a westward – or rather, northwestward – trip before our shift to the new base. He was very interested in that triangular marking in the slate. He was strangely convinced that the marking was the print of some bulky, unknown, and unclassifiable organism of advanced evolution. But these fragments, with their odd marking, were five hundred million – a thousand million years old.

## II

Boring journey of January 11th to 18th with Pabodie and five others had brought up more and more of the Archaean slate; and even I was interested in evident fossil markings in that unbelievably ancient stratum. These markings were of very primitive life forms. However I decided not to accompany the northwestward party despite Lake's plea for my geological advice. While they were gone, I would remain at the base with Pabodie and five men and work out final plans for the eastward shift.

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