

To Whom it may concern

If you are reading this, then it means I have failed in hiding the artifacts accompanying this letter. I could've only hoped that the best of my efforts could elude the intrigue of man for long enough, and that this cursed object would recede from memory and ebb back into the sea of time. What a vain and foolish effort, on my part, if the words on this script is being read.

I write this letter as a warning; a warning that I hope will reach across time to sensible minds. If you value your life and those dear around you, I urge you to bury these items. In the deepest of graves, in the farthest, most remote corner of the world, and hope farther still; pray they be forgotten. Forgo attempts at trying to destroy it; it is futile.

For man's sake, hide it away from those able to claim possession of it. For your sake, keep it far from mind and far from sight. Any hope to cling on what remains of one's sanity means ensuring a great distance between you, or anyone else, and this object; for this is evil.

I had just returned back to India after a series of lectures abroad at Oxford. After such a time away from my wife and children, I thought it benefitting to spend time with them away from the noise and clutter of the city. Not long after my return, I took them vacationing in a small town along the southern coast. Days were spent with the children; y nights with the misses. A common ritual for us, after putting the children to bed, was taking long strolls down the nearby beach. If we were feeling adventurous, we'd scale across the rockier shores together: hand in hand. Oft we'd watch the sun set together at a frequented spot, claimed all to ourselves, before returning back. What sweet memories, those were.

It was during one of our adventurous excursions amongst the rocks that I heard it, or moreover, felt it. A faint but distinct beat, akin to that pounding of a drum, but minus rhythm or tone, echoing in the back of my mind and resonating down into my chest. I thought it were nothing but maybe some locals playing a peculiar drum nearby or, perhaps, my mind repeating something I had heard when we were back in town; I really thought nothing of it. My wife remarked that we had started frequenting the rocky shores more and more on our treks after that. Each time, drawing closer to a cave far from the town we had set from. I chocked it up to nothing but our adventurous spirit getting the better of us.

We had ceased going on these walks since our last discussion and had limited our stay to mostly the town and a small section of the beach. "Reckless," she'd call me, every time I beckoned her to explore the cave with me. Though equally pleasurable being with my family in this defined area, I knew had to go back to the cave; the drumming called to me.

It wasn't until the the end of our vacation, when we were readying to leave, did I manage to sneak away, from my wife and children, long enough for one last adventure. Before I had realised it myself, I had entered the cave mouth and was well forty yards from the entrance when I took note. The light was dim at this point in the cave. What little shown in, only gave rough outlines to the cave walls and the rocks that laid strewn across the floor. I had no real reason for going in the cave, beyond initial curiosity, and even less reason to be looking for something.

However, something about the drumming sensation was compelling me to search, as if it were guiding me towards a specific point. Mapping my way through was arduous enough as it is, being in almost complete dark, but a creeping anxiety began to grow in me. As if an omen; as if my senses knew what ill thing lie ahead, and warning me to discontinue and return back. Yet, further and further I went in, continuing my search.

I instinctly knew I had reached it when the beating disippated. I don't know how I knew, but I knew it all the same. In any other circumstance, trying to distinguish something peculiar, something of which you have no description of nor any predilection towards, in a cave in near blackness; it is a fool's errand, to say the least. Yet like a magnetic force, it pulled my eyes to its position once I made but a glance towards it general direction.

Lo and behold, there it was; partially exposed in the earthen sand, between some rocks rising from the floor of the cave. Part of an oddly shaped form, too smooth to be mere rock, caught my attention. In the darkness, I set about excavateing this mass from the ground with my hands. Cautiously, at first, running my fingers around it; trying to guage the size of this object, how much I had to dig, and where to start. An intense and passionate drive suddenly overcame my caution and I began shoveling heaps of earth aside, handfuls at a time.

It still had clumps of earth and sand clinging to it when I pulled it up. I could only barely make out the shape from the back of the cave, but just running my fingers over the exposed areas. Feeling the contours of the object, getting a sense of its make and texture; I couldn't link it with anything I had ever encountered before, recalling what I know in both nature and art. A morbid curiosity possessed me.

With great excitement, and a dash of mad delight, I rushed to the mouth of the cave; staggering over rocks and whatever else, and hurridly paced myself through the rocky coastline and down onto the beach sands. At the shore I stood, not far from the cave, submerging this mass into the water as it washed back and forth from the sand; ushering in and out from between my arms and legs. The cool water stripping away the layers of dirt each time the tide came in and out. More and more were I beginning to feel the shapes of this object. Pulling it out to inspect, brushing and rubbing the dirt away; uncovering more of itself until it finally revealed to be a statue unlike I've ever seen.

Dirt and seawater ran down its length, about seven or eight inches, before dripping into the tide. Carved from a single block of some unknown mineral to me, the light revealed a soapish, black-green stone with hints of gold running throughout. Its depiction: a monstrous, gruesome creature I had never seen the likes before. Grotesque and alien; two words that could only describe the figure crouching on, what I can only presume, hand and feet atop a base possessing an unrecognized series of hieroglyphs. Rudimentary wings adorned this creature's back and protruding from its fleshy mass, a lurching head that was but a curling mass of tendrils, speckled with eyeballs that looked in either which direction.

I was both greatly intrigued and terrified laying my eyes upon it. Fear is a perfectly understandable reaction amongst man to something he has never known or experienced before. As an educated man, I rationalised this feeling to be just that: a normal reaction to the unfamiliar and unknown. Little did I know, I was going to find out just what fear meant. What it was and what truly meant.

The crippling nightmares came six months after I brought it home. At first, the dreams came and went sparsely but, as time progressed, they increased in intensity and worsened with each terrifying dream after. It'd start with the usual fair of phobias; very common and basic, primal fears. Then it'd evolve to much more gruesome visions. The most common and haunting were ones involving my family.

I'd see them appear in a great, black void. They smile and begin speaking as they see me, yet I cannot hear a word. A pressure on a my brain and a rining in my ears; I lunge forward and strangle my family, one by one. My wife first and then my children. I feel myself try to pull away but I cannot, a force beyond me makes it so that I am to see their faces flush red, feel their exhalations brush against my knuckles and ever-so slightly against my face. I am made to feel them convulse in my hands, quivering as though palsied, the muscles within the neck churning under pressure of my weight. How tangible it all was.

I feel the softness of their skin, their bodyheat generating sweat in my palms; the sound of of them choking and gagging stab at my heart as I'm compelled to tighten my grip. The worst of these visions is me having to look into their bloodshot eyes and see them looking back up at me, terrified beyond all belief, before that flickering light is extinguished, and they turn over white and red. A final crunch and they go limp in my hands and, though morbid as it sounds, I take solace in knowing that in these scenarios, it is over for them.

The times I'd suffer these visions, I'd writhe and squirm in my sleep, waking my wife and, no doubtedly, the children. She'd shake me from my spasms to wake me and I always woke to a cold sweat. Recalling how tightly I'd squeeze onto my blankets and bed, an easy feat to pull me from my slumber, it was not. The dreams became much more abstract afterwards; still just as horrifying, if not more so. I'd see horrid visions of red. The blood of my wife and children spilling forth from their veins, spewing from vertical cuts that ran all over their bodies, patterned like grains on lumber. Hands from the darkness emerge slip discreetly into their wounds. They begin to grab and pull at their flesh, turning it inside out from their cuts. Their screams and cries were indescribable. The hands extend further from the void, revealing arms, and begin to play in the bloody pulp that remained after.

Light reveals it to be none other than me; I stir in their flesh, their flesh becoming mine. Tendrils of shadow wrap around me from the darkness, pulling me into the void. Light extinguishes, the shadows become me, and everything turns black. O, the horror of it all. The unending horror of it all.

Prescribed medication from my physician, as well as advice from my colleagues, all proved useless; I still screamed and agonisingly convulsed during my ritual night terrors. Pitied the most by me was my dear wife; my dear, poor wife. She stood by and did all she could during this time. She did her best to hold the family together, assuring my colleagues, neighbors, and my poor children that their friend and father was okay.

"He's just going through a stressful time," she'd say, "Work being what it is." She even bothered trying to cosole me. I never divulged my dreams to her, nor anyone else, for that matter. I spared her details and she assumed all of my troubles were caused by way of some unresolved, past misdeed bubbling up to the surface in my subconscious; that my dreams were a sort of message. How I hoped for her explanation to be right; how I feared the latter was right. Desperately, I tried to convince myself of my wife's deduction was correct, but deep down, I knew something much more sinister was happening to me. The poor dear tried ever so hard.

On several occasions, the neighbors alerted the authorities to arrive, fearing something ghastly had occurred next door to them. My biggest fear, at that time, was that they would be right on one occasion. I feared that the police would show up and find that I had brought my nightmares to fruition. Whilst the nightmares plagued me in my sleep; that thought haunted me during the day.

For a brief period, a lull in my family's misery came when my dreams lessened and were, instead, replaced with falling into petrified, almost paralyzed, states when I slept. The world would go dark, I'd lose all my senses, and any sense of awareness was gone from me. I wasn't even sure if I was breathing most of the time. I was frozen in utter, contemptable blackness. No dreams; no nightmares. Nothing but the disquieting silence of impending doom.

Early one morning, finding me absent in the bedroom and feeling a slight chill in the house, my wife found that I had gotten up in the night and gone through the back door. She found me outside, standing in a corner of the garden, still in my trance; slightly lumbering back and forth. Her attempts to wake me were futile and I'd waken on my own some time later in the morning. I'd weave elaborate fiction to excuse my tardiness for work. Perhaps I planted the seeds for suspicion then.

My case of somnambulism seemed to frighten her less than my perpetual screaming at night. Of course, her attitude towards it began to change when my sleep-walking became more frequent and she'd wake to find me roaming around the property. Often times with the idol in hand and me oblivious in the morning. It definitely changed her opinion and frightened her, along with myself, when she recalled catching me standing over the children when they slept. Often times with the idol in hand and me oblivious in the morning.

I suspect she caught onto my possession of the idol as the cause of my misery, early on. Many a times, did she inquire why I kept it around. "I can't part with it," I'd say, "it's something special, can't you see?" She left me a letter the morning after the event I just inscribed. For her own and the children's safety, she wrote. She didn't disclose where they were going. Perhaps, for the better.

I began to come out of my trances later, becoming more paranoid and withdrawn when I was conscious each time. Rumors spread like wildfire after her departure; rumors about her leaving and my behavior. All of which began to afflict my professional life, drastically. I lost my position at the university I lectured at soon after, my acquaintances and colleagues shunned me for my behavior, and those who briefly remained loyal; I pushed away with my worsening psyche.

Isolated, I became. All I had were things contained in my home, what little money left in my savings, and the Idol. The last memories I had of my family and friends are written here, in this letter. I can't even remember their names, anymore. I can't recall whether it's been a long time since recalling these memories or if they even existed in the first place. Perhaps this is all a figment of my imagination. Either way, all I know now is that I am alone. Save for the Idol.

I cannot destroy it. Any thought of bringing harm to it splits my mind in twine; the more I think about it, the sharper and worsening the pain is. The most I can muster is the strength to hide it but it's never far away enough. That is why I have to send The Idol away. It took all I had just to muster the mental strength to box it up, and no small feat was that. I even had enough strength to manage instructing a local boy to pick it up in a few days to post. I will make sure that he is not the first to find my body; it is the last decent act I can perform.

I look forward to when the Idol is gone from me; when I get to know the greatest sleep I will ever know. Until then, I'll suffer the loss of appetite and the pestering bouts of insomnia. I know both my mind and body have weakened severely from the lack of food and sleep. Knowing the pleasures of both has long since left me.

The times when I can close my eyes, it is never pleasant. What passes as rest now is a seizure of the muscles, which leaves me as petrified in bed. A tense sensation runs through me, as if my insides, from my brain to my legs, have turned to stone. I can't breathe as the pain seizes me. The air becomes cold and feels thick, heavy, crushing; like the room I were in to suddenly be transplanted onto the ocean floor, instantaneously. I am immediately plunged into darkness, yet I can distinctly make out a number of gargantuan, shapeless figures of shadow that surround me. They close in and envelope me like great fingers belonging to an even greater hand, dragging me further into an already infathomable abyss. The feeling of immense pressure and vertigo wakes me from this Hell, greeting me to another day that I know will be plagued with nauseous visions of sorrow and madness, of which I can no longer fortify against; I no longer the will nor stomach for it.

Besides me, as I write this letter, I have a hand drill on my desk. I can no longer sustain this unending agony and sadness which is now my life, nor do I intend to. In an attempt to stop these visions, the suffering, I am going to bore them out of my mind. Yes, that is the thing to do. There is no other option. It must be done this way.

*Hopefully, I will have been long dead by the time this pathetic letter is read.
It is the sole victory I hope the Old One will grant this puny, worthless one. Yet,
Reader, know its power and influence cannot be hidden nor contained for long. It
will find another. One to know suffering. One to know pain. One to know madness.
One to know fear. It is all man has ever known and is meant to know.*

A subject of Awe and herald to the Great Old One,

Dr. Anju I Humil, Ph.D.