

## The Dude Who Collected Lovecraft

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I drove a brand-new rental car I couldn't afford -- next year's model, so in a way it was a car from the future -- from the Amherst Amtrak stop and into the Vermont countryside, which was just as picturesque as all the calendar photos had led me to expect. The green mountains flared with red and gold from the changing leaves of fall. I had to stop a couple of times in somnambulant little towns, first for gas and later to use the toilet, and while everyone was polite, talkative even, I felt a few stares. They don't get a lot of black people around here. Some of these towns: South Shaftsbury and Shaftsbury, East Arlington, and then Arlington -- as if having two stoplights or a three-block-long main drag were enough to fission a town into two -- were positively nineteenth century. My cell phone didn't work. They sold maple syrup by the gallon even in the dumpiest of gas stations.

I thought about the brittle old letters in my briefcase, which included (among genial advice on writing and cranky complaints about publishers) a few passages of deep loathing about "the niggers and immigrants who fester and shamle in the slums of our fallen cities." Ah, Lovecraft. I always wondered how my great-grandfather's letters back to him might have read. I doubted if old Cavanaugh Payne ever told his idol that he was a "miscegenator" himself. Three generations later, I was fresh out of white skin privilege

myself, but I had enough of Cavanaugh's legacy to clear all my debts, assuming I could ever find the isolated country house where this collector lived.

The hand-drawn map Fremgen had mailed me was crude, and obviously not to scale, so it was a little like following a treasure map made by a pirate with a spatial perception disorder. I'd tried to find better directions online, but none of the map sites even recognized the name of the street he lived on: Goodenough Road. I understood why when, as late afternoon shaded into evening, I found his signless dirt road surrounded by maple and pine trees. The only marker by the rutted track was a squat statue carved out of some black marble; the figure looked like the offspring of a toad and a jellyfish, wearing a weathered white stone crown. The collector had drawn a little picture of the stone road marker on my map. I'd assumed it was a childish scrawl, but in truth it wasn't a bad likeness. It wasn't a bad likeness of a bad likeness anyway.

After bumping down the road -- dotted with other even more indescribable statues -- for about five minutes I found the house, a three-story wooden monstrosity with a vast front porch wrapped around at least three sides, and carriage house sagging down into itself off to one side. Whatever color these buildings had once been, the boards had faded to a sort of stoney gray, and they both looked on the verge of disintegration. Trees pressing in close, eager to take back the land. I parked the car and got out, and in the silence of dusk the slamming car door was the loudest thing I'd ever heard. I approached the house, with its windows all blinded by curtains, and went up the paint-flecked steps to the porch, where a swing hung broken from one chain. This wasn't promising. I'd been assured that this collector was wealthy, but he didn't look rich from here. Maybe I'd

turned down the wrong road, and was about to be attacked by some backroads cannibal who wore the skin of his victims as an apron. Well, probably not.

I knocked on the solid wooden door.

"Who's there?" shouted a voice from inside, so quickly he must have been standing right there, waiting. That's when I noticed the peephole set in the door, which seemed like an odd touch for an old country house.

"It's Jim Payne," I said, and waited. No response. "I called you, about the letters." Still no reply. "I'm Cavanaugh Payne's great-grandson?"

"I've seen pictures of Payne, and I can't say I see much resemblance," came the reply, in a querulous Green Mountain accent. "Say" and "see" sounded almost identical.

I gritted my teeth and made it look like a smile. "Grandma always said I looked just like him." There's no particular reason to take crap from some crazy old kook, money or not. I was ready to walk. I thought I heard a grunt from behind the door, and then it opened with a harsh squall of hinges, and I got my first look at the man who collected Lovecraft.

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Cavanaugh,

Your letter of the tenth and the enclosed materials reached me just in the nick of time. Bravo! I have been having, as Klark Ash-Ton had mentioned to you, a quite difficult time with the latest yarn. It's already somewhat of a ramble, but I cannot help but complete it now, as there are few other opportunities in the offing for old Grandpa. It was a mistake, coming to New York, I must admit, now. While the valleys of the financial district are grand, and the subtle corners and hints of twisting Dutch roads still

remain and reverberate with the sort of classical detail I love, the world of commerce is beyond me. I've written several lengthy letters of introduction to various concerns, both in publishing and in the workaday world of commodities trading, but haven't yet received so much as a social card with a hastily-scribbled telephone exchange under the name of a Dean or a Hathaway beneath it. Not that such a number would be possible for me to reach. The horrid tenement in which I find myself is without a telephone or any of the other amenities of the modern world, or the graces of the world I'm afraid has left us forever.

I have decided to take a hold of one end of that old writer's saw: "write what one knows", and with my latest story I hope to write a truly devilish, nasty bit of business connecting the rites and rituals of the Yezidi which you have so readily and thoughtfully transcribed for me. Of all this mediæval superstition and thaumaturgy I know little, but of New York I am afraid I am learning rather too much. The gangs of young loafers and evil-looking foreigners who traipse down the alleyways by the horde are so disconcerting to me I cannot help but see them whenever I close my eyes. O, for the fabled night-gaunts of old! At least phantastical terrors are ephemeral, while this city full of swarthy Latins and darkie brutes, with, of course, ol' Shylock himself sitting and preening atop the twisted mass of bodies, is as solid as granite. The devolutionary social processes I espied in Providence have bloomed like fecund and fetid lichen here, clinging and mouldy to the once-grand thoroughfares and edifices of Gotham. I fear for our future, Cavanaugh, I fear for the destiny of a Nubian America!

On my walks I've stumbled upon perhaps the perfect setting for this new story. The very name of the neighborhood is evocative: Red Hook. It is New York in

microcosm; the streets are limned with old Dutch history: Dikeman, van Brunt, indeed, even the hook is an Anglicization of "hoek", or point. And yet the peninsula is aswarm with the most bestial of immigrants and workingmen, lured to the area by the swampish Gowanus and the day labor of the bustling piers. Who knows what eldritch evils can be hidden in the steel bellies of the ships and brought to bare by the husky stevedore and his own bailing-hook? Sounds like a yarn I could, I hope, market to the pulps. Yr Grandpa, I'm afraid, is down to his last three tins of mackerel and beans and if no remittances are forthcoming, perhaps my next letter to you will be written by a truly skeletal hand directed only by the impulses of a madman in a garret. Wouldn't that be a doozy!

Thank you again, both humbly and gratefully I am, as always,

Ol' Gramps Theobald

HPL

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Fremgen was an old white dude, and he wore a brown suit jacket with a red bow tie. I didn't know if he'd dressed up special for me or if he always knocked around the house like this, but he made me feel underdressed. The letters in my briefcase were like a passport into a strange country.

I don't know what I expected. I knew he was a collector, but when I think of guys who collect sci-fi and fantasy crap, I don't imagine museum-quality stuff. I think fat nerd. A beard sprinkled with Cheeto dust. A filthy room full of porn DVDs, half-cannibalized computers, and ancient Chinese takeout. The imperious tsk of "Worst. Lovecraft letter. EVAR!" followed by, I hoped, a sack of money anyway. But this dude's living room didn't even look like a place where someone lived, let alone like something from a comic

book convention. It was more like a boutique. There were glass cases, discreetly lit, holding manuscript pages, old magazines, letters, and even some objects -- a handkerchief, one shoe, a couple of pens. All of which, I assumed, had touched the extremities of Mr. Lovecraft himself. There were bookshelves, fronted with glass, holding hundreds of volumes. More bizarrely, there were a few little pedestals topped with domes of glass, supporting items of obscure function. I saw a metal cylinder under one dome, a big glass jar with something floating in murky fluid under another, and a third just looked like a profusion of copper tubing wound around some kind of helmet or headdress. There were tiny hand-written index cards inside each case and under each dome, but Fremgen didn't give me time to browse.

"Sit, sit," he said, and I settled onto one of the two ancient wingback chairs, the velvet upholstery emitting a little puff of dust when I sat. He sat in the chair's twin, facing me, his eyes squinting and intense. There was a low table between us, set with a funny-looking clay tea kettle and some lumpy cups and bumpy saucers that looked like they'd been made in a pottery class for the mentally ill. I started to open the briefcase, figuring he wanted to get this over with, but then he spoke abruptly: "You say you're from Red Hook? In Brooklyn."

"That's right."

He mulled that over. "You know Lovecraft wrote a story about that place?"

"Sure. 'The Red Hook Horror,' something like that?" I knew the title wasn't right, but something made me want to mess with this guy a little.

He didn't seem fazed, though. "'The Horror at Red Hook,' yes. Lovecraft himself didn't think much of the story, thought it was too rambling, but I'm rather fond of it.

Many of Lovecraft's fictions are... outlandish. Time-traveling aliens. Winged creatures that fly through the voids of space. Cities of fungi. But the story about Red Hook always seemed more plausible to me, that immigrants to our shores would bring with them dark rituals from their homelands, and unleash horrors upon an unsuspecting city. Lovecraft lived in New York for a time, he knew the alleyways and corners and piers more intimately than he wished, and he saw the old settlers being pushed aside by the newcomers, with their strange and secretive ways --"

"Have you ever been to Red Hook?" I interrupted.

"Only in my mind's eye," he said, and sounded like he thought that was just as good as a visit in person. "Has it changed much, since Lovecraft's day? Are there still the crumbling red brick buildings, the oppressive streets, the air of imminent decay?"

I considered. I wanted to call this guy a moron, but our deal wasn't done yet. "I pay sixteen hundred dollars a month for a studio apartment. They're also building the world's largest IKEA in Red Hook, so that's pretty scary. Look, I've got the letters Lovecraft wrote to Cavanaugh --"

"Your ancestor wasn't much of a writer, really," Fremgen mused. "His fiction, I mean. I actually have some of the letters he wrote to Lovecraft, and they're better, more enthusiastic, less imitative. In his fiction, he wrote about Vermont and New Hampshire like a man who'd never been there, never left the city of his birth. His stories of old civilizations on forgotten continents were more plausible. Have you read 'Planet of the Phantasm?' 'The swirling abyssal call echoed across the verdant planes of Pramatat, rousing snake-coiled shrunplants from their slumber, lidless amber pools peering forth to --"

"Can't say I'm a fan of the old man's work, myself," I stepped in. "I like crime stories."

Nothing seemed to needle this guy. "But you're one of his blood, aren't you? However much that blood has been diluted. The past lives on, all around us. You're connected to Cavanaugh, and through him, to a different time. Only an eyeblink in the past on a cosmic scale, of course, but in human terms, three generations is a vast and nearly insurmountable gulf. Don't you think?"

"Yes. Yes I do." This guy was not going to be rushed, but at least I could avoid offering up a conversational opening.

"Drink with me." He picked up the tea cup in front of him, slurped it, made a contented face, and gestured to the kettle. I poured a little into my own cup, just enough to be polite, and took a sip. It was like drinking dirty river water. "Brewed from local herbs," the old guy said, nodding. "I grow them myself."

"Delicious," I said, after I managed to swallow a second mouthful. "And I thank you for your hospitality. But I'd like to get out of here before too late --"

"Indulge an old man." He smiled, and any doubt I had about his faculties disappeared. That was a knowing smile, and whatever he was doing, he was doing it on purpose. "You can learn a lot from the past, young man. The things in this room, they are valuable -- some are even priceless -- but they are not the heart of my collection. Would you come upstairs with me, to see some of my more interesting items? I get so few visitors. And the things I have to show you might change your perspective."

Don't piss off the golden goose, I thought. "Sure, I guess I could take a quick look," I said, praying this wasn't some kind of sex thing. I left the briefcase with the

letters by the chair and followed him up a narrow, tilting stairway, the walls lined with photographs so dusty their subjects were impossible to discern. The stairs opened onto a big room that must have taken up the entire upper floor. There were literally thousands of newspapers stacked along the walls and into the center of the room, forming stumpy corridors, the squeeze made all that tighter due to heaps of junk spilling off rickety card tables and bowed folding chairs. I took about two steps into the room and things started to get woozy and swirly and vague. The old dude just stood there grinning as I swayed and stumbled. "Shit," I said, or something equally articulate, but my thoughts were clear: Not a sex thing. A drug-his-tea-and-murder-him thing. There was no place to fall.

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Cavanaugh,

Greetings, O Left Hand of young Belknap. I was quite pleased to shew you about Providence this past fortnight, being none the less pleased to have finally returned to the seat of my ancestors, and hope that one day you'll return for another visit when you're not feeling quite so poorly.

One for the commonplace book strikes me just now. Penfriend spends a warm summer day meeting in the flesh with penfriend, and returns home via locomotive only to be greeted by a letter from the old boy's spinster aunt sending regrets and condolences. 'Apologies for opening and reading your correspondence with my Samuel, but you must know that he passed of tuberculosis a month gone by...' I'll likely not do anything with it. Now that it is down on paper the idea rather smacks of Victoriana -- no possibility of tightening coils of horror, reaching out & gradually dragging the reader in. I want tremendously to pen another tale, but even this letter is being written piecemeal between

snatches of revisory work and long nights of astronomical observation. An aurora has visited Providence, as it does at the rarest of intervals, and I have taken to camping out under blankets in subarctic weather to observe this most cryptical of sky effects. A very few degrees of latitude makes all the difference when it comes to auroral perception, so I am sure you have in your new Green Mountain home auroras with a frequency beyond all Rhode Island standards.

Wandrei speaks of a recent trip home. You would do well to shew him some of your weird fiction, for he is among the most discerning and erudite of our band of enthusiasts, and has frequently dared to begin a magazine of weird fiction of his own.

Yr obt Grandsire -- Nekropolis.

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I woke up tied to a chair, and the first thing I noticed was a saline lock, for putting in an IV, or drawing blood. Fremgen loomed into my sight a moment later, peering at me. "Awake already. You are a strong one."

"What -- what --" My mouth was dry, and I couldn't manage much more than that.

"I just took a little blood," he said. "Barely a pint. There's juice downstairs, cookies too. Help yourself when I'm gone."

"Motherfucker," I said, articulating as clearly as I could. "Let me go. I'll fucking kill you."

"I'm afraid I can't, young man. I might need more of your blood." He turned to a table and began measuring out powders from a row of colored glass jars, pouring them into a stainless steel pot heating over a camping stove. "The recipe isn't exact, and it says the blood of direct descendants will work, but may require 'greater quantities.' Best to

keep you here and fresh." He referred to a big old book bound in pitted black leather, running his finger along the page. He made a few more adjustments to the contents of the pot before putting a lid on it.

I rocked a little in the chair, but the motion made my head spin -- whatever local herbs he'd drugged me with, they -- combined with the blood loss -- worked too well.

"You don't know how long I've been working on this, and to have you fall into my hands. To come to my door! It's perfect." He picked up a sheaf of papers and shook them at me. "These are your great-grandfather's letters to Lovecraft, you know. I bought them ages ago. I had the man's letters, the ink, the words from that time, and all I needed was a sample of the blood." He put down the letters and began lighting candles, though his hands were shaking so badly I was afraid he'd drop the match and set the ramparts of newspapers flaming.

I concentrated on breathing deeply and trying to get my equilibrium back while he set candles around the room. He moved a wooden chair to a clear spot on the floor, and poured something white -- salt, maybe? -- on the floorboards, making a big circle. He poured a smaller circle of salt inside the first one, so the chair was at the center of a Bull's eye. "Almost there," he said. He took the lid off the pot, and the smell of burning blood and weird spices made me want to wretch.

"What are you doing?" My voice was a lot more steady this time.

"Traveling in time, boy. Lovecraft wrote about it -- of minds traveling in time, at least. Even alien minds, transposed into human bodies, and vice versa. 'The Shadow Out of Time' -- you know it? No. Well. That's the idea. With the blood of Cavanaugh Payne's great-grandson to connect me to his body, and a letter written in Cavanaugh's own hand

to connect me to a particular time, and through certain ancient rituals from priesthoods devoted to forgotten gods, I can project my mind back into Cavanaugh Payne's body, take control, and then... oh, and then..."

I suspected that arguing with the basics of his plan was fruitless, since crazy people tend to cling to their central craziness. But I couldn't help but find the whole idea stupid, even accepting the premise. "Then what? Great-grandpa was a miserable bastard. He sold some shitty stories, knocked up great-grandma, and disappeared before the child was even born. He left all his things behind, so he probably just got murdered and dumped in a river or something. You want that life? Why?"

"It's a stepping-stone," he said, and moved the camping stove and the pot closer to the chair, placing them carefully inside the outer salt circle. He returned to the table and picked up a yellowing letter. "This is from Cavanaugh, in his last letter, from 1928. Listen: 'Your offer is too kind, Grandpa. I would be delighted to visit and I insist you let me stand you lunch. Perhaps we could spend the afternoon poking around in those bookstores you've told me so much about.' You see? He didn't just write to Lovecraft -- he arranged a meeting with him! And if I'm the one controlling his body when he meets Lovecraft, it should be trivial for me to get a little of the great man's blood. I won't need nearly as much as I took from you, not when drawn from the source itself. Then I can simply recreate this ritual, and take over Lovecraft's body. You've read 'The Thing on the Doorstep'? No? Still, like that. As for your great-grandfather's disappearance, it only proves my venture will be successful. After I take over Lovecraft's body, Cavanaugh's corpus will be left an empty idiot husk, mindless and drooling. I'll need to get rid of it -- hence the 'disappearance.' I'll dispose of his remains with due respect, fear not."

"Why the hell would you want Lovecraft's life? Didn't he have a fucked-up marriage and die young? Wasn't he afraid of everything? Black people, brown people, the ocean, shellfish, the sky, the dark, women, everything?" I wiggled in the ropes. The knots weren't all that good. I figured I'd be able to work them loose soon, so if he wanted to keep babbling like a James Bond villain, that was fine with me. He was about a thousand years old, so I was pretty sure I could take him, even half-drugged and down a pint of blood. "Wasn't he... gay!" I needed this old man angry, off-balance...

"But the stories," Fremgen said dreamily. "If I go back to 1928 and take over Lovecraft's life, so many of the great stories will remain to be written. And I've committed them all to memory, their publication histories, everything. His life was so well-documented, you know, with his letters, all those letters, it will be easy to be him, and it will be my hand that writes 'The Shadow Out of Time' and 'At the Mountains of Madness' and -- but you'd never understand." He tore the letter in his hands into little pieces and dropped them fluttering into the stinking pot, then sat down in the wooden chair in the circle of salt. "The money for the letters is in the writing desk downstairs, Payne. I don't need the letters, but take the money."

Thick smoke rose from the pot, and through some weird quirk of the room's ventilation swirled around Fremgen and the chair without crossing the outer line of salt. Fremgen took deep breaths, and I hoped he wouldn't die of smoke inhalation before I could kick his crazy ass. I wiggled harder at the ropes and slipped my left wrist loose, then untied the other knots, though leaning down to untie my ankles made my head pound alarmingly. I stood up, waited for the swaying to settle, then headed straight for Fremgen, who was staring blank-faced and zoned-out from his chair. I stepped across the

first line of salt, scuffing it with my shoe, and then a wave of horrible dizziness swept over me. Was it the smoke, more of Fremgen's homegrown knockout herbs? I stumbled and fell, sprawling across the inner salt circle.

And then, I guess the only way to say it is, I traveled in time.

No!

The voice was clearly Fremgen's, though I didn't hear it with my ears, but ringing in my head, a syllable of pure fury. I was on a street, beside a brick building, the air cool. I leaned against a wall and groaned. It felt like somebody was banging their fists against the inside of my skull.

Mine! Mine! Mine! Fremgen shouted.

I turned my head -- my neck felt funny, stiff, weird -- and looked at my hands. My white hands. My white, hairy-knuckled, totally unfamiliar hands.

"Oh, hell," I said. "I don't believe this." My voice was not my voice.

You're ruining everything! Fremgen wailed in the back of my head. I'm on my way to see Lovecraft right now!

"Nope," I said, and pushed away from the wall. I tried to take a step and nearly fell on my face, because my feet were shaped wrong, and my legs were the wrong length, and all together I felt like I was wearing a suit that was too big in some places and too tight in others. "Not going to happen." I laughed out loud. Great-grandpa had a pretty good laugh. "You know, you should've read those letters I brought. The last one from Lovecraft especially. He and Cavanaugh had a pleasant lunch, if a little awkward." I took a tentative step forward, and thought I was getting the hang of operating the body now. "But I'm not letting you anywhere near that guy. Not that I actually care if you take over

Lovecraft's body, one old dead white dude is as good as another I guess, but you just shouldn't have fucked with me."

I felt more pounding and poking in my head, but it wasn't too bad, like the memory of a headache. Fremgen was in me, wrenching and heavy at once, like one too many pancakes, but he couldn't pull himself up my spine, into my -- into Cavanaugh's -- brain. He'd stolen a pint of my blood to make this spell, but when I stepped into the circle, I was full of my own blood, so I must have made a better connection. I turned down an alleyway, just the kind of narrow passage crowded by crumbling red brick buildings doubtless inhabited by swarthy immigrants that scared the shit out of Lovecraft. "So how do we get back?" I said.

I will never go back. You have to sleep sometime, and when you do, I will seize this body, I will find a spell to oust you, I will succeed. I've wanted this too long.

"We'll see," I said, and went through a doorway into what seemed to be an abandoned building, big holes bashed through the walls inside, heaps of plaster and brick and trash in the corners. I just wanted a place to hunker down and think for a little while. I wasn't eager to take over Cavanaugh's life, though he disappeared in 1928, so maybe that's what happened -- what would happen -- whatever. Maybe I would just take off and make my own way, change my name, have a new life. Cavanaugh wasn't that much older than I was, though life expectancies in the '20s weren't so great, probably. But back here I didn't have the debts and narrowing of options I faced back home, so maybe --

Something unfolded out of a dark corner, and now that I looked, that corner hurt my eyes -- the angles were all wrong somehow. And the thing that stepped toward me was too big for the space in this room, it should have been all hunched over and

squeezed, but it was tall, it just kept getting taller, wider, unfolding into dimensions I couldn't even comprehend, it was --

It was squamous. Rugose. Noisome. Eldritch. Cyclopean. Those aren't the right words. There are no right words. But those are the best I can come up with.

You broke the circle! Fremgen screamed in my mind. You broke the seal of salt, you fool, you've loosed it, the opener of the way, the dweller from the inbetween, the guardian of the black and red path, it's coming for us --

Fremgen was still desperately trying to wrest control of the body away from me. So I let him, and he grabbed on, and he shoved me, and I went hurtling away from there, out of the body, just in time to see the great thing's face -- which wasn't a face, but there's no word for what it was, and it did at least have a mouth -- swing down and dilate and open and blossom and grasp.

I woke in Fremgen's upstairs room, my head thudding. I sat up, woozy, trying to get the hang of my own body again, and scooted back out of the circle of salt. Fremgen was still in the chair, drooling, body an empty vessel. His mind was back there, still. In Cavanaugh. In the belly of some unspeakable beast.

I stood up, and then Fremgen lifted his face to me. His mouth opened but what came out weren't words. Imagine shortwave radio static, loud and echoing across a depthless canyon. His eyes were wild and blank at once, crackling like an aurora. Whatever ate Fremgen had come back through the path he'd made in time.

I figured I was pretty well fucked. Then the thing in Fremgen's body tried to stand up and fell sideways and knocked over a table and half a dozen burning candles, then kicked over the camping stove, which was still lit. There was a horrible snapping pop,

and I'm pretty sure it was Fremgen's hip breaking. The thing bellowed and mewled. I remembered how hard it had been for me to walk around in Cavanaugh's body, because it was so different from my own, but at least he'd been human, he'd had arms and legs and bilateral symmetry. The thing in Fremgen had come from a totally different kind of body, a thousand limbs reaching into the sixth dimension, so it could only twitch and flail as it tried to fold the curve of the world around itself, just to reach me.

Either the rolling camp stove or the candles caught a pile of papers on fire, and pretty soon the whole terraced array of old newspapers was burning. The thing in Fremgen's body tried to drag itself toward me, right over the flames, and it screamed, too ignorant of human limits to even know it should avoid fire. I half-ran, half-fell down the narrow stairs.

I stopped by the writing desk, trying not to listen to the screaming from above, the torrent of weird syllables that didn't sound like any language I'd ever heard. I opened the drawer and there was an envelope with my name scrawled on the front. There was money in it, and though I didn't stop to count it then, I later found out it was \$200 short of the price we'd agreed upon for the letters. That cheap bastard. I left the briefcase with the letters in the living room. Fremgen had paid for them, after all, and I didn't want them anymore. I didn't want to see if that last letter had... changed.

I went into the dark yard. The house burned behind me, looking closer to collapse with every second, and I hurried to my rental car, pockets full off financial salvation, head full of horrors, nostrils full of smoke. I opened the car door, but before I got in, I tilted back my head, and looked to the sky.

Even with the flickering light from the burning roof, the stars overhead were impossibly bright, and cold, and indifferent. Then, on the edges of the horizon, the black of the sky shifted and crackled with coruscating waves of blue-white light. Lovecraft would have found that sky fascinating. Maybe terrifying, finally. For my part, I couldn't wait to get back to a place where the light pollution was so bad you couldn't see the stars or the spaces between them at all, no matter how dark the night.