

THE CALL OF CTHULHU

BY H.P. LOVECRAFT

CHAPTER ONE

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 that we should voyage far.

The sciences, each straining in its own direction,
have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the
piecing together of dissociated knowledge will
open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of
our frightful position therein, that we shall either
go mad from the revelation
or flee from the light into the peace and safety of
a new dark age.

Theosophists have guessed at the awesome grandeur of the cosmic cycle wherein our world and human race form transient incidents.

They have hinted at strange survivals in terms which would freeze the blood if not masked by a bland optimism.

But it is not from them that came the single glimpse of forbidden aeons which chills me when I think of it and maddens me when I dream of it.

PICKMAN'S MODEL

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There was something very disturbing about the nauseous sketches and half-finished monstrosities that leered round from every side of the room, and when Pickman suddenly unveiled a huge canvas on the side away from the light, I could not for my life keep back a loud scream—the second I had emitted that night.

It echoed and echoed through the dim vaultings of that ancient and nitrous cellar, and I had to choke back a flood of reaction that threatened to burst out as hysterical laughter.

MERCIFUL CREATOR!

I don't know how much was real and how much was feverish fancy. It doesn't seem to me that earth can hold a dream like that!