

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

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Говард Филлипс Лавкрафт является одним из самых влиятельных писателей двадцатого века. Его произведения смешивают фантазию и научную фантастику с хоррором, открывая дверь в обширную, тёмную вселенную, полную невообразимых миров и существ. В истории, положившей ей начало, рассказывается о древней сущности, спящей на дне океана; сущности, желающей вырваться, чтобы подчинить себе жизнь на планете. Тексты произведений сокращены и адаптированы, снабжены грамматическим комментарием и словарем, в который вошли ВСЕ слова, содержащиеся в текстах. Благодаря этому книга подойдет для любого уровня владения английским языком.

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Содержание

The Call of Cthulhu	6
I. The Horror in Clay	6
II. The Tale of Inspector Legrasse	10
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	13

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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**¹ that we should voyage far. The sciences have harmed us little; but some day the **piecing together**² 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**.³

Theosophists⁴ 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**,⁵ **George Gammell Angell**,⁶ **Professor Emeritus of Semitic Languages**⁷ in **Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island**.⁸ 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**.⁹ He fell suddenly; as witnesses said, after he had been jostled by a nautical-looking **negro**¹⁰ 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**.¹¹ 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**,¹² 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 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

¹ **it was not meant** – не предполагалось

² **piecing together** – соединение

³ **dark age** – средневековье

⁴ **theosophists** – теософы, сторонники мистического богопознания

⁵ **great-uncle** – двоюродный дед

⁶ **George Gammell Angell** – Джордж Гэммел Энджелл

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

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

⁹ **Newport boat** – ньюпортский пароход

¹⁰ **nautical-looking negro** – негр, похожий на моряка

¹¹ **Williams Street** – Уильямс-стрит

¹² **American Archaeological Society** – Американское археологическое общество

queer **clay bas-relief**¹³ 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**¹⁴ 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**¹⁵ 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**.¹⁶

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**¹⁷ 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**,¹⁸ 7 Thomas St., Providence, R. I.", and the second, "Narrative of Inspector **John R. Legrasse**,¹⁹ **121 Bienville St., New Orleans, La., at 1908 A. A. S. Mtg. – Notes on Same, & Prof. Webb's Acct.**²⁰" 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**²¹), 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**²² and **Miss Murray's Witch-Cult in Western Europe**.²³ 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**,²⁴ 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**²⁵ and living alone at the **Fleur-de-Lys Building**²⁶ near that institution. Wilcox was a precocious young genius with great eccentricity, and had from childhood excited attention through the strange stories and odd dreams. He had the habit of relating them. He called himself "**psychically hypersensitive**"²⁷, but the people of the ancient commercial city treated him as merely "queer." He had dropped gradually from

¹³ **clay bas-relief** – глиняный барельеф

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

¹⁵ **tentacled head** – голова, снабжённая щупальцами

¹⁶ **Cyclopean architectural background** – фоновые циклопические строения

¹⁷ **characters painstakingly printed** – тщательно выписанные буквы

¹⁸ **H. A. Wilcox** – Г. Э. Уилкоккс

¹⁹ **John R. Legrasse** – Джон Р. Леграссе

²⁰ **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 собраниях А. А. О. – заметки о том же + сообщение проф. Уэбба

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

²² **Frazer's Golden Bough** – книга Фрэзера «Золотая ветвь»

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

²⁴ **Henry Anthony Wilcox** – Генри Энтони Уилкоккс

²⁵ **Rhode Island School of Design** – художественная школа Род-Айленда

²⁶ **Fleur-de-Lys Building** – особняк Флёр-да-Лис

²⁷ **psychically hypersensitive** – психически сверхчувствительный

social visibility, and was now known only to a small group of esthetes from other towns. Even the **Providence Art Club**,²⁸ 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**,²⁹ or the contemplative Sphinx, or **garden-girdled Babylon**.³⁰"

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**³¹ 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**."³²

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 pagan 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 subterranean voice or intelligence shouting monotonously enigmatical uninscribable gibberish. The two sounds frequently repeated are rendered by the letters "**Cthulhu**" and "**R'lyeh**."³³

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**.³⁴ 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 watched the case; calling often at the **Thayer Street office of Dr. Tobey**.³⁵ 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

²⁸ **Providence Art Club** – Клуб любителей искусства в Провиденсе

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

³⁰ **garden-girdled Babylon** – окружённый садами Вавилон

³¹ **Cyclopean cities of Titan blocks** – циклопические города из каменных плит

³² **Cthulhu fhtagn** – Ктулху фхтагн

³³ **R'lyeh** – Р'льех

³⁴ **Waterman Street** – Уотермен-стрит

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

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 them³⁶ 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 22–23. The west of Ireland, too, was full of wild rumour and legendary stories, and a fantastic painter named **Ardois-Bonnot**³⁷ 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.

³⁶ over a fourth of them – больше четверти из них

³⁷ 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**.³⁸ 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**³⁹ some months before in the wooded swamps south of New Orleans during a raid on a supposed **voodoo meeting**.⁴⁰ 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**⁴¹ 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**⁴² to geology or mineralogy. The characters along the base were totally unknown; and nobody could

³⁸ **St. Louis** – Сент-Луис

³⁹ **had been captured** – был конфискован

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

⁴¹ **cephalopod head** – осьминожья голова

⁴² **resembled nothing familiar** – не напоминал ничего из известного

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**,⁴³ 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**⁴⁴ whose religion, a curious form of devil-worship, frightened him with its deliberate **bloodthirstiness**⁴⁵ 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**,⁴⁶ and of this Professor Webb **had taken a careful phonetic copy from an aged angekok or wizard-priest**,⁴⁷ 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**⁴⁸ 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"⁴⁹.

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"⁵⁰.

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**,⁵¹ were in stark terror from an unknown thing which had occurred in the night. It was voodoo, apparently, but voodoo of a more terrible sort than they had ever known; and some of their

⁴³ **the late William Channing Webb** – ныне покойный Уильям Ченнинг Уэбб

⁴⁴ **degenerate Esquimaux** – вымирающие эскимосы

⁴⁵ **bloodthirstiness** – кровожадность

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

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

⁴⁸ **the aurora leaped high** – занималась утренняя заря

⁴⁹ **Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn** – Пх'нглуи мглив'нафх Ктулху Р'льех вгах'нагл фхтагн

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

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

women and children had disappeared since the **malevolent tom-tom**⁵² 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**.⁵³

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**⁵⁴ 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**⁵⁵ 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**.⁵⁶ 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 carved 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**⁵⁷ 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**,⁵⁸ 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 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.

⁵² **malevolent tom-tom** – зловеющий там-там (там-там – ударный музыкальный инструмент)

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

⁵⁴ **Spanish moss** – испанский мох (*Tillandsia usneoides*)

⁵⁵ **formless white polypous thing** – бесформенный белый полип

⁵⁶ **to see it was to die** – увидеть его означало умереть

⁵⁷ **endless bacchanal** – нескончаемая вакханалия

⁵⁸ **Joseph D. Galvez** – Джозеф Д. Гальвес

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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