



THE SHANDLER CHRONICLES

New Cthulhu fiction! Supernatural skullduggery runs amok in this continuing series of writings culled from the archives of occult investigator Phillip Shandler, as transcribed by Call of Cthulhu author Monte Cook.

SHANDLER
INVESTIGATIONS

Phillip Shandler
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Dear Thomas

June 21, 1938

Things have taken a turn for the strange, bringing to mind old times. I'm not surprised that you have never heard of the odd stone that I found in my recent investigation. It's quite extraordinary. However, I think that I have, indeed, discovered some interesting and disturbing facts regarding its nature. Before I get to that, however, I suppose I should tell you that my investigation for Mr. Ambrose Killian into the past works of Charles Dexter Ward and Joseph Curwen did not go well. And the entire affair ended even worse.

I was not able to find any details about the scientific research supposedly conducted by Ward, his associate Allen, or the far more ancient Curwen. To say that my client, Killian, was displeased is to do a disservice to the word. When I had to report to him that all the locals I spoke with were entirely unwilling to talk about these men or their work, and that I could find no leads on where their papers might have ended up, the strange man ranted and raved right there in my office in ways that surprised me based on his earlier quiet - albeit unnerving-manner.

"Their secrets will be mine, Mr. Shandler," he said finally, regaining his composure. "And if I learn that you are hiding anything from me, the rest of your short life will be consumed with regret, I can assure you."

"Is that a threat, Mr. Killian?" I stood up behind my desk, the hairs on the back of my neck on end.

"Threats are idle and serve no purpose. I merely state truth," he said, and then left before I could get really angry. I mean, the fellow threatened me and insinuated that I was a liar. How do you like that? I should have known. I shouldn't have taken an academic research job in the first place. Those bookish types are high strung. No offense, Thomas.

Of course, I didn't tell him about the stone. I suppose you might consider that hiding something from him, but I don't see it that way. I mean, other than the fact that I found it on Ward's land, it doesn't seem to have anything to do with the case.

Without any work, I was left to my own devices, which at the time was fine. I was intrigued by the jewel I'd found. First and foremost, I quietly inquired as to whether anyone had lost or misplaced some gemstone in that vicinity. Nothing. The stone is far too large to have been a part of the setting in a ring or a necklace. I'm still not even sure what kind of stone it is - at first I thought it might be a purple amethyst, a topaz, or even a sapphire, but referencing a few books in the city library dispelled such notions. I took it to a jeweler acquaintance of mine by the name of Samuels, and he confirmed my suspicions, and ruled out spinel, garnet, and tourmaline as well. In fact, while he was not able to identify the stone, he assured me that it was likely relatively worthless - cleverly fashioned glass, he told me.

But after stating that, he tried to buy it from me! I don't trust Samuels much, particularly after that little episode, so I bid him good day, putting a sawbuck in his pocket for his trouble and his silence. The fact that the gem seemed to draw lightning was intriguing. After my experiences a few years ago, I suspected some occult nature to the stone. So I drove to Arkham, whereas you know - the Miskatonic University library holds an impressive collection regarding all things supernatural. I spent the afternoon and the following morning scouring through old tomes when I finally found something of interest in a curious book titled The Celaeno Fragments written by a fellow named Laban Shrewsbury. Less of a book than a collection of bits of other books, at least it was in English, unlike many of the other tomes there. In any case, within its pages it described a stone called the Star of Unseen Stars that - and I'm quoting here - "attracted energies and powers both seen and unseen. This seemingly jewel, as purple as the horizon at dusk, is the size of an ostrich's egg or the eye of a gug, and brings upon its bearer great fortune as long as it holds fire in its heart." Now, I don't know what a gug is supposed to be, but the description seemed to fit otherwise, don't you think?

I'm writing you now, however, because I just received a cable from Mr. Killian. In it, he apologizes for his rudeness, and asks if, in my search for Ward's papers, if I came upon any other curiosities. What do you think I should do? Tell him about the Star of Unseen Stars? Keep it to myself? I don't think I need to tell you that



I feel that I owe him no favors and turning the stone over to him seems wrong somehow. Oh, Thomas. It occurs to me that I didn't tell you the most incredible thing that I found in my research. The Star of Unseen Stars, according to the book, doesn't even come from Earth! This is a stone from another world, Thomas. If true, its value is incalculable, is it not? Certainly far too precious for one such as Killian.

Please reply with any advice you might have.

Sincerely,

Phillip Shandler

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THE SHANDLER CHRONICLES
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