



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

188 Gibson Lane

Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Thomas,

October 27, 1938

First, to answer the question posed in your last letter, no, I had no idea that this case would get me involved in politics. Particularly European politics.

I am still in London, with Aliester Crowley, his ever-mysterious companion, Adriana, and their contact in the British military intelligence services, a Lieutenant Ian Fleming. Fleming's role is one so secretive that even his presence in London is a secret. His cover is that he serves with a Scottish regiment called The Black Watch. Instead, however, he is an expert in special foreign intelligence practices being used by Germany, and with the help of Crowley, seems to be engaged in a secret cat-and-mouse game of which I don't think anyone is quite aware. It's fascinating stuff, Thomas. I think you in particular would be quite intrigued.

It seems that the Nazis are quite interested in the occult, and have agents all across the globe looking for books and other items of significance. Both Fleming and Crowley were familiar with some of the things I have encountered myself, not the least of which of course was Alhazred's Necronomicon. For now, though, the issue causing me the most concern was the Star of Unseen Stars. Were these Nazi agents after that as well? Crowley thinks, based on the strange voice I heard from the stone speaking about "Teutonic Knights" that they are, with certainty. Fleming was less sure, as he had never heard of the object.

Fleming is an extremely intelligent fellow, knowledgeable and insightful. He treats the odd nature of what he works with in a straightforward manner, as though he was talking about conventional military plans or secret codes rather than objects of occult power or legendary tomes filled with supernatural lore. I rather like him, and find him more pleasant, in general, than Crowley, although the discussions we have are still very unnerving. The things he has told me about the Thule Society is quite disturbing. They are, according to Fleming, a secret occult network in Germany that forms the underpinnings of the Nazi party and its agenda. They seek nothing less than the domination of the world and the triumph of someone or something called the Ascended Masters. They deal with something they call "vril energy," which recalls more of what I learned from the stone weeks ago.

As strange as some of the daytime meetings with Fleming have been, night in London with Crowley and Adriana has been far more surreal. These two seem to know about a London that no one else knows about—one that does not awaken until after the sun sets, thriving in back streets, on moonlit rooftops, and even under the city in tunnels and sewers. Not to mention in hidden gardens behind thick hedgerows and old mansions. These places are filled with curious people who seem to all be knowledgeable or involved in the occult in some way. Many belong to esoteric brotherhoods or mysterious orders that Crowley would mention and then immediately dismiss. Which is odd because I get the impression that he founded some of them.



We attended masquerades and dinner parties, séances and meditative ceremonies. They called upon the teachings of Blavatsky, Mathers, and names I did not know. I witnessed all manner of things that I cannot explain, but none of it really affected me compared to many of the things I have witnessed on my own. By that, I mean that I think a lot of it is nothing but pretentiousness and trickery. Flim-flammy. But I've enjoyed the parties and the food.

But I'm not sure I'm any closer to really finding answers.

Sincerely,

Phillip Shandler

Dear Thomas,

November 1, 1938

I'm writing to you in great haste. Fleming received new information that, indeed, a group of Nazi agents working for the Thule Society are indeed of the Star of Unseen Stars, and in fact, know that it is currently in England. I'm going with Fleming and Crowley to a secure location—with my steamer trunk, of course. Now they both know that the Star is in my possession.

I'm writing this in the back of a truck, using that very same steamer trunk as my writing table. Crowley and Fleming are talking quietly and I am getting nervous about this whole endeavor. I need to check on the stone.

Good gods, Thomas! I just opened the trunk. The stone is gone! The Star of Unseen Stars is missing! Fleming has told the driver to stop. Crowley is shouting at him. And at me.

I need to finish this. I need to ask Crowley where Adriana has gone. This is bad, Thomas. Very bad.

Sincerely,

Phillip