



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

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Dear Thomas,

October 21, 1939

Where do I begin? First, know that I am safe, at least for now. It has been months since I could write to you. There were times that I tried, but the letters never got very far, and I couldn't have mailed them anyway.

Obviously, you don't need me to tell you that Europe is now at war. Hitler has invaded Poland, and England and France have in turn declared war on the aggressor.

And I am in Germany. Have I managed to find the worst place in the world to be right now? Perhaps. Agents of an underground resistance in what was Czechoslovakia helped me escape that country. I had planned on going back to England, via France, but now my plans have changed.

Remember a year ago (or was it longer) when I first found the Star of Unseen Stars? I heard the strange voice say, "He waits beyond the Veil." Later, it said, "The veil shall be rent at the bottom of your world by the Teutonic Knights and their Vrilya allies."

When I was in the alien city of Vadoma, I watched as Adriana used the jewel to attempt to contact a vast alien intelligence that I now suspect was a being called Hastur. I think that Hastur is the "he" who waits. I think that Adriana, who was actually a nonhuman entity herself - a Vrilya, to be exact - was attempting to bring him to our world and failed. So much of what I read in that book while I was in the hospital earlier this year now makes sense.

The fact that allowed me to put it all together was something that I learned as I made my way across Germany itself in the last few weeks. In disguise, with forged papers, I was on a train making my way west when I found myself seated not far from a pair of German officers and a man in civilian clothes. In my time with Fleming's men, as well as over the last few months with the resistance, I learned some German. Just enough to understand a little of what I overheard. I heard them whisper the word "vrilya." I heard enough that I wanted to be able to understand more.

And that's when it happened again. Just like when I was on the run from the police months ago, I felt the Star of Unseen Stars grow warm where it was in the secret pocket I had sewn into my jacket. It flashed with crackling energy, although I think I was the only one who realized it. No one around me reacted. I felt suddenly weary, as I had before.



I also understood every word the men near me said, even though they continued to speak German and talked in very hushed tones.

Thomas, they were talking about Antarctica. I had not really given it much thought before, but how else would one describe "the bottom of the world?" The Germans have established some kind of base in Antarctica. There's some kind of secret project there. They are the Teutonic Knights. They must be allied with more Vrilya. They're doing something terrible down there, I think. And I think it has to do with the entity that I saw sweep across that alien world like a gigantic storm of unbridled power. It has to do with Hastur.

Are they going to bring him here? With such an ally, Hitler would not need to stop with Poland or even all of Europe. Could anyone stop him from doing, well, anything? I do not know. But it is obvious to me that I need to get to Antarctica somehow. And the only way to do that is from here. I need to find out how the Germans are getting to their base down there and find a way to go along. I speak German now, apparently, so that certainly helps.

I don't understand the jewel any more than I once did, Thomas, but it seems to be drawing me closer and closer to this task.

I write this to you now so that you know I am alive and what I am doing. Should I fail, someone needs to know what is happening. Wish me luck.

Sincerely,

Phillip