

THE ORIGIN OF THE SHADOW MONSTER



INITIAL RECORD OF THE SHADOW MONSTER

Below is an account and first record, plus subsequent events, as recorded by the esteemed and well-known Cryptid researcher and author, Zackery Pumpernickle.

Date: 28 October, The Third Age

Event: The First Blue Lunar Moon

The Blue Lunar Moon used to be a night of celebration. It is a rare astronomical occurrence that, according to the original folklore, brought good change and abundance. We would have ale and roast Gluckery, smothered in gravy and marshmallows. Jam was injected by the local doctor directly into mature cheese wheels, before being skewered and rotisseriesed on the fireplace. The cheese would melt from the inside out, and once it was determined that the gorgeous, gooey, salty inside was fully melted and forged with the sweet ripples of that year's harvested jam, we would slice it open. Its sides would split, and the soft inside poured out. Nimble hands and watering mouths would spoon the melted jam and cheese mix, using toasted, buttered bread as shovels, and it would be jammed into their mouths, which would then be drowned in the acidity of the ale.

Chunks of meat that fell about, along with buttery roast vegetables, would be served. Finally, apple slices would be passed around to be dunked in a cup of caramel. Salt was ground on top at various intervals to ensure that the ratio of sweet to sour didn't tip over into an unfortunate stomach-aching, sticky-sweet mess.

It was a festival that brought many from around the land to the town, including myself. I lived on the outskirts, a little down from the river, but I would make the hike up to indulge in the festivities. My cousin, Bobby, was always accommodating, and there were a few family members who would spend the night snoozing on his floor, couch, and dog bed (if the dog didn't mind).

It wasn't until the third era that the creature showed itself. The first time we noticed it, it appeared as a shadow on the mountain. It crawled its way down the rocks, similar to a spider tackling a stone wall. The waterfall half hid the monster, as you weren't sure where the water began and the shadows ended. The truth is, we did study it as an oddity, but once the beast disappeared into the woods at the nape of the mountain, we carried on with our merriment.

After all, we had been accustomed to being at the top of the food chain. We were overly cocky that the only thing to fear that night would be a hangover or a food overindulgence the next day. But in that moment, there was nothing that concerned us. It didn't even occur to us to be afraid.

I know it is my duty to record that night. But the truth is, 36 people died by the- what could I even call it? Legs? Its whole being is slippery and slides all over. The multiple eyes seem to rise and sink on its skin as if they were sewn onto a sack, being pulled and pushed around. It doesn't have a single form, and it doesn't seem to have a skeleton either.

It is... indescribable.



The loss of those 36 cannot be captured within ink, either. Some families lost three or four members, while others lost nobody at all. Grief is such a personal experience that it tore at friendships long after the bodies were buried.

It seems to tear itself from its own central mass, which appears to be made of a blackness that absorbs all light. There are spikes, and there is some feathering? A weird texture is all I can say.

You must understand the frustration I have that I, Zackery Pumpnickle, am unable to fathom such a monster. I have described all types of beasts from land, sea, and air, but this one, I am at a loss for words.



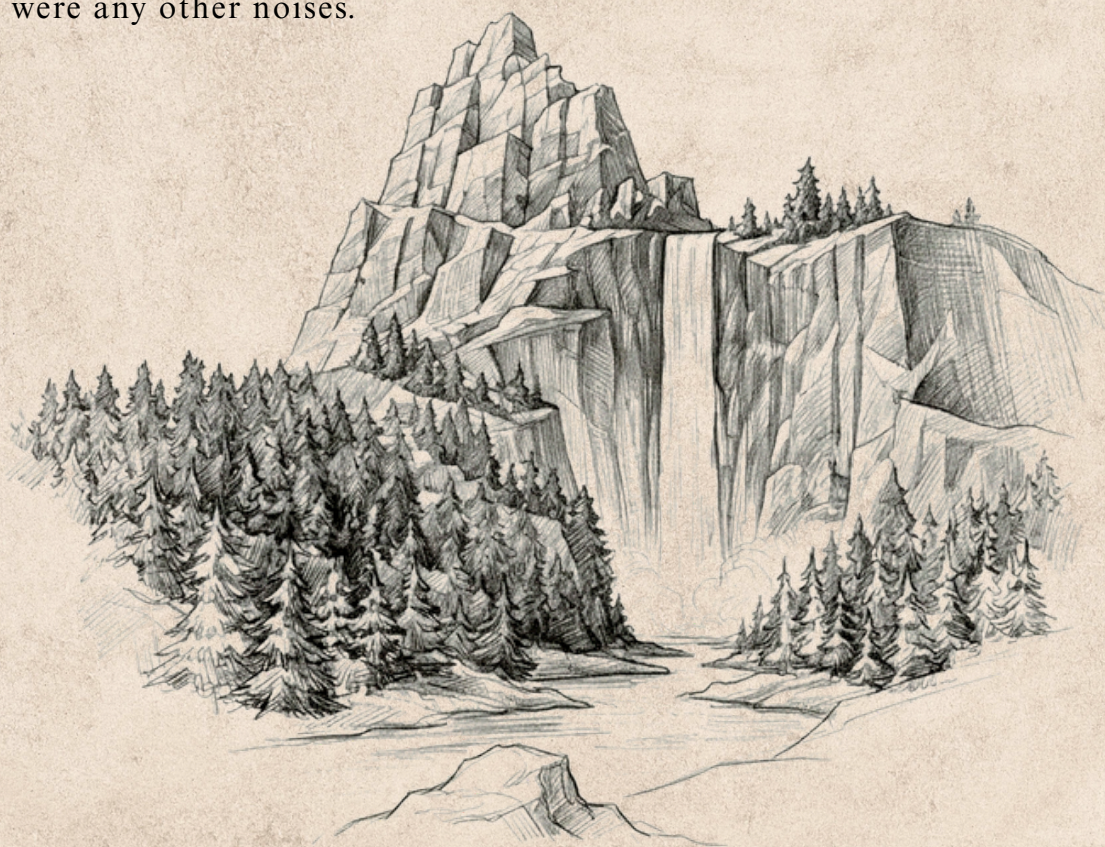
All I can tell you is that it instills a sense of silence I have never felt before. The creature makes little to no noise, and everything seems to fear it and feel it.

The 36 people that I saw die that night didn't seem to run from it. They all had that initial fear that I think we all felt, but then, at the last moment, it is almost like the monster called to them. They simply turned, muttering nonsense, before allowing the monster to engulf them. Mind control? Telekinesis? I do not know.

2.5 years later, we pulled together for the Blue Lunar celebration once more, but fewer people showed up. There was no indication that the monster would come again, so a lot of us had decided that it would be impossible. We hadn't seen any evidence of it since it had left us.

But it did come. 16 people this time disappeared into the black mass of the monster.

The next Blue Lunar moon, no one planned anything. We didn't speak of it. We didn't utter a word. But it didn't come. As the moon rose, there was a flash on the mountain, where the waterfall's source is. Horns blew out from who knows where. There were screams and cracks of lightning. We saw blue lights, and then the clouds opened up, and the rain poured down in heavy buckets. It was difficult to tell if there were any other noises.



I believe I saw more lights from the rocks on the mountain, but there was also lightning in the clouds, so it was difficult to tell. Mist filled the land as the thunder drummed. The rain came to a stop slowly, but the lightning and thunder still danced on in the distance. Eventually, the heavens became quiet.

We thought the monster had been dealt with. Perhaps an outside charge had gone up and taken care of it. We wondered if we could resume our celebration.

The next Blue Lunar Moon, the monster came again. But this time, it only took Dale Simons. Dale, who had been living in the village for 18 years, was still considered somewhat of a newcomer. His wife remarried a little too quickly, I thought, afterwards. But maybe she just wanted someone to help her with her two children. I am not in a position to judge.

Two and a half years later, the monster came for her.

