



THE TRIP.

My eyes scan the portal in front of me. The white circle structure could kill me. However, I couldn't move, my body refused to. Maybe it was for the money, but what I'm sure about was my curiosity. For example, I pushed my brother into the creek to see how the water below us would move. I turn my head lightly to the sound of the scientist's voice ringing through my ears. My heart felt like it was racing at a thousand miles per hour. I couldn't hear the scientists. All I knew was the portal was starting with that annoying voice counting down. Panic ran through me as various neon lines swirled into a circle in the middle of the white structure. I look at my shaky hands before I feel a jolt; the platform is slowly moving.

"Are you sure this is safe?" I blurted out, my voice shaky. After all, why would they send someone with a name like mine? I'm a monster.

"Why do you think we're sending you in?"

I hear from behind me before I feel the portal sucking me in slowly, my skin feeling as if it's being ripped from my body. Everything slowly goes black, then a flash of white crosses across my vision, my breathing scarce. I wake up in a weird swirling tunnel, yet I'm floating? Oh god, I never should have done this... Hey it gonna be okay. I just have to set my mind to something else, like why I'm here. I watch as the tunnel slowly ends; I shut my eyes, hoping for the best before I'm plotted onto... concrete?

The Land

I look around the deserted place, the sky an endless dark-ish dirty green. I look to my side and spot a wooden picnic table. My eyes move past the picnic table as I spot a bridge; it's like it could fall at any moment. I hear rushing water flowing under the bridge; I have drunk nothing in days. They said it would "falter with the system".

I stand up wobbly from floating around and try to go down a hill before falling abruptly on to the ground. I noticed I didn't have shoes on. I must have lost them when I flew through the portal. My breathing was still in a frenzy as I looked at the river. It was completely pitch black. I slowly back away, exhaustion carrying me as I turn around. Maybe if I just keep walking, I'll find something, anything, better than this. I look around warily, my feet dragging against the ground. It felt like I was walking forever, yet it's only been 3 minutes. Or has it? My mind drives me. I turn my head from my feet to the sky, yet before I can look at the sky I stop, my mouth gaping with the smell of fresh water... It was a beautiful, clean land. The trees turned from almost burned green to a bright lush almost immediately. I stepped forward slightly; the path continued from where I was. If the forest was that clean, then there was clean water there, right?

Saliva fills my mouth as a smirk plays on my face at the thought of it. Without another second I ran forward, tripping over myself, before getting stopped abruptly by a barrier, like a force field. It was only a couple of seconds before everything exploded. Only white filled my vision as I let out a scream. I felt my head hit the ground, and I felt my brain shift back and forth until everything went black. I could still feel my limbs rip into pieces. This is how I die. The time traveler with a monstrous name. A Legend. I thought, my

Future Titusville - The One We Fear

By: Bailey Schmude

head going at a hundred miles per hour. I couldn't feel my heartbeat anymore.

The Sneaker.

My vision comes back in a flash, and I sit up, breathing quickly. I stand up in a new place. Looking like the one before except rearranged. This was all so confusing. What happened? This is crazy. I knew I shouldn't have done this. Why did I say that? I stand up quickly, looking at my body. I am completely back to how I was before. I stepped backward, ensuring I was stable, before walking over to the black river, voices driving me automatically. As I walked up to the river bank, I spotted 3 people. One was a female. She had black hair with deep brown eyes. The second was a male, with light brown hair and eyes, short though. The last one is a female, her hair brown and eyes dark like a chalkboard. I walk up to them slowly, not wanting to startle anyone. I watch the blonde girl around her eye wide before running over to me with a spear in hand. The others join her, surrounding me. I put my hands up in a surrendering manner, my legs quivering.

"Who are you!?" the blonde one yells. "Why are you here?" the boy says from behind me.

"Strange," the girl with the black hair said.

I could barely talk. My lips were shaking in fear—my voice was just above a whisper.

"Im... Im Cthulhu..."

They seemed to back off a little after that, their face returning to normal. For no reason. At least I thought...

"She's safe," the black hair said with a sympathetic expression. She seemed quite cheerful and energetic. My feet sank into the mud as I backed away. The wind played with my hair while I was busy not dying.

The Reason.

I trailed behind them as they led me back through the forest; I felt something hit my foot. Only to look down in horror and find it was my head, a gasp escaping my lips. They look at me a little confused before the black hair one grabs my wrist, pulling me forward with them. Like this was normal to them... I looked at the weapons lying at their sides and then back at my head on the ground behind us. Maybe they're taking me to get food? Why would they do that? What! It sounds good, doesn't it? Stupid. Why does my head ALWAYS have to be at war with itself?

We approach the tree house, only my legs to carry me forward as they make me climb the sketchy ladder first. I have never seen a ladder this sketchy before—I quickly make my way up, latching onto a piece of wood and dragging myself over the top into the small building. A nice carpet in the middle by the tree pierced through. A bookshelf filled with what looked to be history books and maps. Curiosity shifts me over to the black-haired one, throwing herself over the ledge. I can't help but notice she looks so familiar but yet so far from whoever I'm thinking of. As soon as I noticed the container of water, I grabbed it, quickly drinking it until all of it was gone. I placed it back onto the ground lightly. It's like they don't care. I think back to my best friend who got engaged just a month ago, or well, 100 years and a month ago. She wouldn't stop talking about having a kid.

And that's when it hit me. **They're all descendants of us.** We're the reason they're like this, so broken. Yet mine isn't here.

I looked up at my pupils, shaking a bit. Her expression was concerned at first when she walked over to me.

"Hey, are you doing okay?" she asks, resting a reassuring hand on my shoulder and looking over my now dirty clothes.

"Y-yea. Fine." I say, putting on a smile. It's what I do best.

"Now, what did you say your name was again?" I say as the others climb the ladder.

"Oh! Almost forgot about that. I'm Daya!" she said excitedly before pointing to the rest of her crew.

"That's Lolani," Daya said, pointing to the short boy behind her. He kinda looked annoyed, to be honest. I moved closer when she turned around to walk over to the brown-haired one.

"And this is Gertrude," she says, poking the spear at Gertrude's side cheerfully.

"Sadly, we lost a member not too long ago..." Her cheerful self seemed to fade quickly after that.

"What was their name?" I ask, my smile fading at the sight of her frown.

"Cthyll," she said, quieter than she was before. I turn my head over, opening my mouth to say something before she returned to her cheery self again, skipping past Gertrude, poking her nose as she walks over to sit at the blue rug.

I watch as Gertrude rolls her eyes and walks over to the tall bookshelf in the corner, grabbing some big books. The book was heavy as she dropped it onto the mat in the middle of the tree house. I could feel the breeze that followed behind Lolani and Daya as they walked past me. I join the little circle they've assembled around the book. Daya would not stop shaking her leg as she sat. Shock fills my heart as I look at the book. It reads The Unknown in a bright golden label shines off the light.

Mutiny.

Lolani flips the book open in front of me, letting the dust fall out on the floor while he flips through the pages. I try to look at the pages being flipped, but he moves too fast for me to see any. Lolani eventually stops at one page called The Unknown in big letters at the top.

"See this?" Lolani asks, looking at me. The others looked like they'd seen all of this before, Daya moving her leg energetically and Gertrude looked- well, tired. Lolani moves his hand down the list. The only thing that was listed down the line was question marks.

"This is bad. We need to find it and kill it. We can trust no one!" He says, standing up angry.

I watch as he turns around quickly moving over to the opening which served as the door. His head dipped outside, looking at the dirty grass below. I noticed I was the only one who was still sitting; I moved my leg to get up before falling forward, only to land on my hands. A memory flashes through my mind as I look up hazily, my mind a blur as I'm walking forward. It was only white, the walls glowing, the outline was black. The once three people in front of me were now shadow figures a white smile flickering as their mouths. My arms felt like they could collapse at any minute before the figure on the right turned her head over before rushing over to me. A concerned voice reigned through the air, causing the others to turn around.

"Cthulhu!" It said its voice was disfigured.

"Are you okay!?" This was all too familiar. It has all happened before, I swear on my life...

"Nobody thinks you're that monster. No one thinks that's what you named after, I swear," Daya says in a rush, Lolani scoffing.

My vision slowly turns back to normal, everyone fading back to how they were before. I look over wide-eyed up at Daya.

"You-" I catch myself. Trying to calm down my heavy breathing.

"Yeah, im fine," I say, getting up and walking over to the others. Gertrude looked sad already. I think that's normal for her. Lolani had a raised eyebrow and a completely annoyed look.

"You alright there?" He asked, not even leaving me time to answer, climbing down the ladder. Gertrude held my shoulder, however she followed Lolani quickly. It was like everyone feared him. But why? Daya makes her way to the ground while I slowly make my way behind her. When we reached the ground, Lolani was already far from the treehouse. I ran after him while Daya followed quickly. I caught my breath as we

walked up to Lolani and Gertrude, barely breathing in before im even breathing out.

We move quickly, walking through the forest, the dirty river flowing past us quickly. Kinda like we were just exploring the place. I watch as Gertrude trips over Daya's foot, falling into Lolani, making me abruptly stop. Daya covers her mouth, trying to help her out before her hand is smacked away from Gertrude by Lolani. Daya and I flinch as he hits Gertrude in the eye, yelling. The world seems to transform again into the same black figures... except instead of smiles, there are all frowns. They remind me too much of my father... A white flash hits me again, everything morphing back as I look over at Lolani.

"Why can you guys not do a simple thing? He yells abruptly. I noticed how Gertrude didn't even move. Like she was too used to this. They are suffering because of him. That's why they're all off. It's because of him. I look at Lolani as he grabs his dagger, holding it upside, about to stab Gertrude in the top of her head.

I quickly grab the bow and arrow at Daya's side, taking an arrow and shooting it right into Lolani's neck.

I watch Lolani abruptly fall to the ground, an arrow pointing to the sky in his neck.

"M.. Mercy..." he spat out, and my eyes slanted as I placed a foot on top of his chest. Daya looked in horror, covering Gertrude's eyes, trying not to press too hard on the now bright red one.

"Mercy... Mercy?" I say in a scoff.

"I've seen too many like you," I say, pushing my foot a little harder as blood leaks where the arrow was lodged, Daya inches back with Gertrude lying in her arms, leaning against her.

"No way," I say, looking down at him. I was enjoying this, anger fueling my adrenaline, causing my foot to break his skin. Memories flash through my vision, only causing the anger to spread more.

"You wouldn't have spared me."

"I made a mistake like this, It almost cost me my life. I won't take more risks of not seeing the next day!" He struggles more weakly, trying to grab my foot that pushes into his chest.

I looked over towards Gertrude and Daya. I couldn't control myself. Not even my words. This is all too scary. This isn't my normal self.

"Cut off his legs! We're ending this now. Throw his body back in the water. Let him drown." I say uncontrollably. This is a new side of me. One that I'm not able to control, it feels like it's attached to me. Almost like a black goo that'll stick to you forever. And Lolani was drowned in his. Before I could say anything else, Gertrude flew past my vision, dragging from the bottom of his arm up to a tree as he screamed in pain. The spear dragged through his waist slowly, letting the pain deep in. She's been waiting for this. I look over to Daya, who was already helping her. I smile as he looks weakly at me.

"He's earned every bit of this. You won't believe the rollercoaster of chaos he's put us through."

Daya whispers to me. My expression softens a bit while Daya and Gertrude finish cutting through. Gertrude quickly grabs a rock, shoving it up his ripped shirt before dragging his upper half towards the river. The impossible surprised me. He was still alive. Gertrude slams him into the river roughly, blood spreading throughout the water. The arm Daya was holding soon plopped into the water, showing he was dead.

I could feel the black goo spread from my hand up to my arm, almost consuming my other arm across my back. I could feel it grow another arm and a pair of wings. I was their new person to depend on, their very own monster. It's a growing fast, only something that I can see, apparently.

It grows on everyone. Is it a monster? Or is it the place your anger goes to when nowhere is left to go? The black goo is the monster that consumes us. The one we should fear.

Mummification Lab

Seventh graders in Miss Pyle's science classes completed a chicken mummification lab during their study of Ancient Egypt. In science, students learned about the steps Egyptian priests followed to mummify kings. Students created their own natron and made observations over the weeks of the mummification processes.

