

### 9th of November, 3rd of Second Reign

The night has passed, and with the dawn comes understanding.

I have been such a foal. If only I'd settled down and listened, really *listened* before, I'm sure I would have understood right away. I am tempted to think myself arrogant, but then again, how could I have known? This was a lesson I needed to learn the hard way, for myself.

*Memorandum: Even though this does not pertain to friendship, at least not directly, I should write a letter to Princess Celestia all the same. Maybe I can edit this journal and make it a comprehensive study of the perils of fearing the unknown.*

Any other concerns will have to wait, though, until I do the right thing. The thing I should have done all along, ever since the lost ones started talking to me. Ever since they started to let me *know*. They are so alien, and have been lost for so long that it's hard to wrap my brain around what exactly they might once have been.

One thing is clear, though: as they are now, they need me. They need our light. They need our hope and the magic that flows through the very core of our world, like a lost foal needs a mother's touch. All the distress they have caused me, all the pain and sadness and isolation I have experienced these past months have just been a side-effect of their trying to communicate with me.

They have been watching us for a long time. Ever since they lost their place in the grand scheme of things to circumstances unknown to me, we have been their best and final hope of regaining some of the light in their hearts. I can feel their sadness when they let me glimpse their thoughts. I can feel their loneliness and their longing for us, like a little filly lost in the dark woods.

I know now, what they need: they need a friend. They need to experience the Magic of Friendship, first-hoof. They have shown me how it can be done. Their thoughts are vast and slow, a teeming multitude of disparate impulses, but through the cacophony they showed me how to let them in.

I will let them in.

Once they're here, everypony will understand.

I'm sure of it.

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**The following is a series of excerpts from the journal of Ponyville librarian, Twilight Sparkle, ranging from the 5<sup>th</sup> of August, 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Second Reign of the Royal Pony Sisters, to the termination of the unicorn's journaling. Taking into account Miss Sparkle's diligence in keeping track of her daily life and professional pursuits, a majority of the entries made have been cut from this final account for lack of relevance to the matter at hoof.**

### 5th of August, 3rd of Second Reign

I'm happy to say I'm well underway in preparing for fall. Some less than rigorous observational data has told me that the onset of autumn means more visitors to the library, apparently on account of there being less work to do for most ponies during these interim months. This is not contrary to any

expectations I might have had, seeing as the earth pony heritage most certainly runs deep in this village.

So, Spike and I have spent the last week going over the whole stock of books and other material we keep, sorting and re-cataloging the whole collection, restocking and replenishing where needed and, with heavy heart on my part, throwing away any old, damaged and unused books to make room. I must admit that I good deal of the underused, and to be frank underappreciated, books that we chose to get rid of ended up down in the cellars.

On that note, I promised Spike that I would make a note of his exasperation at my reluctance to throw away books. Now that's done with, I will concede that I might possibly have been a little too eager to keep as many books as I could, seeing as our very limited underground storage is woefully inadequate. I will also concede that this might have something to do with keeping most of the refuse from the last two years' autumn cleaning down there still.

I've been invited to yet another of Pinkie Pie's parties this evening. It seems all of us will be going, despite, or possibly because, Pinkie seems to have dropped all pretense about this party and branded it the "Hey, come on, autumn's nice, and besides I just wanted to have a party with all my bestest friends in all of Equestria!"-party. She's hard to wrap your head around most of the time, but she's also endearing, in her own way. It will be nice seeing the gang again. It's been a while.

The sense of foreboding I spoke of earlier has not subsided significantly. Recently, whenever I'm alone in the library I get the feeling that

*[ink blots the next word, and the last three words have been crossed out]*

an oppressive feeling. The feeling appears to be causally connected to whatever I'm doing at the time.

I draw this conclusion from experiments: after dividing my daily business into discrete categories and boiling them down to their essences (studying entails reading factual books, making notes, memorizing etc.; running the library entails helping ponies find books they'd like to read and checking out those books, keeping records, making sure we get the books back etc.), I set out to find which activities provoked the irrational feeling, and which did not affect it.

The findings were as thought-provoking as they were potentially disturbing: as much as one can trust a profoundly subjectivist, qualitative study without proper peer-review, studying seemed to come out on top of the factors that made me feel distressed. Overwhelmingly so, in fact. However, I will set aside these results for now, until I can determine what to do about them.

*Memorandum: Try again to encourage Rainbow Dash to borrow one or two books at a time rather than checking out entire series in one go. Also try and encourage her, while you've got her in the library, to be more punctual with returns. Remember to smile.*

14th of August, 3rd of Second Reign

I'm making a note of a recent dream in this journal, as I discovered that my dedicated dream journal had no more room, and I can't go out and buy another one in the middle of the night.

*[Scrawled in the margin: Memorandum: Keep more up-to-date records on private stock of essentials.]*

There is little to note regarding the contents of the dream, as I can remember very little even immediately after. As I've done some exercises that have been shown to augment a pony's ability to recall their dreams, I feel I am rightly justified in blaming having to look for the proper journal to write in, rather than my own recollection.

What I do remember suggest a bad dream, possibly even a full-blown nightmare. I remember contrasts and shapes. As far as I can recall, the dream did not include any auditory components whatsoever. It moved me on an emotional level, enough to wake me. I very much doubt there's anything important to take away from this experience, as what little I recall suggest a jumbled tangle of nonsense. Like most nightmares.

### 15th of August, 3rd of Second Reign

I am, as they say, in a good mood today. Dreamed about *her* again (dream noted in Dream Journal #87), the same sentimental nonsense. Still, it makes me happy, so who am I to complain? However, I should consider whether it's counterproductive to make a note of every recurring dream verbatim.

In keeping with the rest of Equestria, it's Book Appreciation Day in Ponyville today. Miss Cheerilee asked me whether it would be alright if she took the little colts and fillies in her charge over to the library today, to help her mark the day. It was such a sweet gesture on her part that I couldn't have said no even if I'd had any reason to.

So, I spent last night and this morning putting together some fun and exciting activities for then. I can't for the life of me see how this year's program could go wrong. I still don't really understand why none of the pupils last year seemed to appreciate my dramatic reading of the "Epic of Star Swirl the Bearded". I mean, I wore the costume and everything.

I've settled on some more "traditional" ways to entertain colts and fillies that age (I even went so far as to ask Pinkie Pie for some pointers, which met with mixed success). Still, I can't help but feel like I'm doing them a disservice by making the program so frivolous. After all, some recent research out of Canterlot on pedagogy would seem to suggest

*[The writing ends abruptly, and resumes on the line below.]*

I could have sworn I heard something down in the cellar. I thought for certain it was Spike, so I went down and checked. There didn't seem to have been a disturbance of any kind, as far as I could tell, though upon closer inspection I did find that a case of magazines had fallen off the stack of cases it was perched on top of. So, no cause for undue alarm, I suppose.

On a less professional note, I must admit that this feeling of unease I've been experiencing lately does seem to have my mind somewhat on edge. The most vexing thing about the whole thing is that I still can't figure out the source.

Memorandum: when today is done, set off tomorrow for studying up on any emotional or psychological factors that may contribute to this problem.

Also, Spike just came down from upstairs. Seems he's been asleep most of the morning. Figures.

### 29th of August, 3rd of Second Reign

Well, I am officially stumped. As I've recorded in side notes in this journal, besides my duties I've been doing as much as I can to research and otherwise look into this increasing feeling of dread I've been experiencing lately. Short of consulting a psychologist, which I will admit I am not prepared to do yet, I have done everything ponily possible to figure out what's bothering me. So far, I've come up empty.

Certainly, there are countless anecdotal stores about ponies throughout history who have been overcome with sudden dread or inexplicable feelings of oppression or unease. As far as I can tell, the vast majority of these cases have been explained by mental factors or subject history (childhood trauma, suppressed memories, etc.).

Through rigorous examination and experimentation upon my own psyche, mostly through indirect memory stimulation, personality inventories and the like, I have tried to trace the feeling to anything, anything at all, that might have been responsible. The only thing of significance was an alarming tendency on the part of the personality inventories wanting to saddle me with some form of Obsessive-Compulsive disorder.

*Memorandum: Make a note of reviewing the funding for the Canterlot University Psychology Department in general, and the research funding of doctors Screw Loose and Orion Mane in particular.*

Although the pony brain is a remarkably hard to figure out object, it would seem I've come as far as I can on this path of inquiry.

*Memorandum: Start looking into external possible external causes for this problem. Pay special attention to magical ambience, artifact interference, or a possible connection to the Elements of Harmony.*

### 8th of September, 3rd of Second Reign

Making a short note in this journal as a red thread, regarding the strange phenomenon I've been experiencing. Had another dream last night, similar to the one of 13<sup>th</sup> of August, but more lucid. Not much more to tell, so little so that it's hard to tell whether it's even the same dream.

*Memorandum: Research the symbolism and significance of shadowy shapes in dream interpretation.*

### 13th of September, 3rd of Second Reign

Just came back from lunch with Rarity. It turns out she's been on an impromptu visit to Trottingham for a week, after being invited to come with by Hoity-Toity of all ponies. She had been thrilled for the invitation just for that, of course, as the reason for going there in the first place was some big, international fashion event of some kind.

However, as she explained it, the thing that clinched it was that Fancy Pants, the lead Canterlot socialite, was going as well. I may be dense or uninterested in these things, but I think there's definitely something going on between those two. If it is, I would be ever so happy for Rarity, after the whole dream prince fiasco a couple of years ago. That mare needs something more in her life than work.

At any rate, that concludes the last leg of my research into possible external factors. As I've noted in this journal before, I've run several kinds of magical field detectors, searching for any anomalies in the ambient magical charge. So far, even the NUTS (New Unicornia Thaumaturgical Solutions) Thaum Sensor, the most sensitive detection system I have on hoof, is turning up nothing anomalous.

That is to say, it's not exactly *nothing*. Or rather, that's what you may call it. To clarify, I am seeing magical ambience readings that are somewhat below what I might expect of myself. Then again, I know enough to be ever wary of vanity, even in my strongest suit.

More importantly, concerning the possible connection to the Elements of Harmony, I have talked to the others. I must admit to a bit of dishonesty on my part, even if it is a white lie of omission. I didn't tell them exactly why I wanted to talk to them all, separately and alone. It was imperative that it be so, however, since it was the only way I could think of to ask them about whether they had experienced anything out of the ordinary without giving myself away.

Regardless, it turned out to be a dead end. I'm not exactly sure where to go from here. As I've already noted, I have been exceedingly wary of alarming any of my friends and acquaintances as to the nature of this research. I love my friends and trust them implicitly, but so far I see no reason to trouble them with what may well turn out to be a figment of my imagination, or some private mental issue. Or a potential embarrassment.

*Memorandum: If and when it becomes necessary to do so, I will tell my friends about my concerns.*

#### 14th of September, 3rd of Second Reign

*[The following entry bears all the hallmarks of having been scrawled out very rapidly.]*

I am walking down a street. There is no sound anywhere, not even the clip-clop of my hooves against the hard ground, and the sky is a dull gray. The gray seems to be a solid cloud cover, as I can see the sun through it, albeit very dimly. As I walk on, I can see that I am flanked by immense structures on either side. The structures are dark and square and seem as tall as mountains.

The street seems to go on forever, comprising the whole of the dreamscape. If there is a world beyond the dark buildings, there is no way for me to detect it. The architecture is strange: fundamentally, it bears a striking similarity to the new Manehattan school of architectural design,

However, as I look upon the square shapes and the sheer size of the things, some seeming to touch the sky itself, brings to my mind a feeling of almost overwhelming antiquity. I can no more explain that bout of intuition than I can explain the oppressive feeling I've been experiencing lately.

As I reach what seems to be an intersection, I notice that a large column beside me is not part of the overall architecture. I find myself stopping and looking up, and as I retreat to get a better view I see that it looks like a signpost of some kind, inscribed with primitive-looking symbols. It strikes me that they look very much like the magical alphabet of the unicorns of the pre-classical era, all squares and sharp angles.

Despite the similarity, I can't make any of it out. After having stared at the writing for some indeterminable amount of time, I start to notice that there are shadows moving around me, vague, fleeting shadows. There is something nagging about them, something familiar, like trying to

remember something you never knew you actually knew.

Then, I wake up.

*[The next week's worth of journal entries does not mention the matter at hoof with a word.]*

### 22nd of September, 3rd of Second Reign

I went to the clinic today. Loath as I am to worry anypony with my problems, my recurring dream is making me more than a little wary of going to sleep. I can fall asleep just fine, but not without a measure of trepidation, a fear of seeing that dreamscape yet again. On the face of it, the dream is neither scary nor disturbing, but all the same, the way it makes me feel is unpleasant.

The world in my dreams is such a limited thing, yet it seems to suggest something immense, hidden away just at the edge of perception. The shadows gather around me as I reach the mysterious signpost with the alien writing, and I get the most unsettling sensation that they are making some kind of noise, something I should be able to hear. I find myself wondering if that's how it feels to be deaf.

I talked to nurse Redheart, and I must commend her care, her confidence and her concern. She managed to let me speak to a therapist within the hour, a doctor *[name redacted]*. I ended up telling him everything, since I had to keep going back to explain certain aspects of my dream in relation to associations I made and assumptions I drew.

After letting me finish my tale, he asked me a few questions about my life and my work, and other things he alleged might have some bearing on my current situation. For a little while, I had the feeling he was going to end up telling me the same things those personality inventories did, but in the end his advice was a lot more straight-forward.

In all simplicity, he told me to stop my research.

I know, right?

He did make some compelling points about "working yourself too hard" and "overthinking" that did hit a little too close to home. In essence, he seems to be of the opinion that the sense of dread that seemed to come to the fore the most when I was studying and conducting research indicated that I've "burnt myself out". This may, in the good doctor's opinion, have triggered my "nervous episodes".

I don't know whether I'm able to just stop thinking about all of this, but there doesn't seem to be much left for me to try. So from now on, I will try, sincerely, to forget about this whole business, and just do something else for a little while. What kind of student of the Magic of Friendship would I be if I didn't realize when I need to take that very same advice I gave Applejack years ago?

Speaking of her. I haven't seen Applejack in weeks. Or Fluttershy. Or anypony else than Redheart and *[name redacted]*. Really, that sounds like a good plan, getting out of the library for a bit. I think I'll go and see what everypony's up to. Maybe I'll bring Spike too. He seems to be fussier than usual these days.

### 22nd of September, 3rd of Second Reign

Dear sweet Celestia, what's going on with me? I went outside, and ran into Rainbow Dash almost immediately. She seemed almost startled to see me, but didn't say anything more about it. I suppose, if I'm being quite honest with myself, she's likely used to not seeing me for irregular stretches of time. And we're not exactly the closest of friends either, though more so after she started reading a lot.

At any rate, I asked her if she wanted to hang out. I could tell she was amused by me using that kind of language (I've been reading up on approaching ponies on their own premises, as it were), and she agreed to have lunch together. As we were sitting outside eating hay fries and talking about everyday stuff, I felt more at ease than I've done in these past few weeks. And then, the sensation struck me again.

To my eyes, and allowing myself some poetic license because I don't feel that the language of science would do justice to what I experienced, the world itself seemed to *dim* out, just a little. It was like being in a room lit by six candles, and having one suddenly just cease to burn. It took away some light from my vision, and more importantly, it seemed to almost wash out some color.

It was startling, to put it mildly. I've never even felt that now-familiar sense of dread and foreboding outside the library, and I've certainly never experienced anything like *that* before. Except that time with Discord, of course, but I feel almost a hundred percent certain that this does not have anything to do with him. For one, it seems much too subtle, and besides it seems all but certain to me that somepony else should have taken notice if he had broken loose again.

The visual part of the experience only lasted for half a minute or so. As I should have expected, Rainbow noticed that something was wrong and asked me about it. I probably should have told her something was wrong right then and there, but I have this feeling that I really shouldn't. I don't want anypony to think I'm crazy, after all.

*[The following entry does not have a date heading, but is positioned just before an entry of 14<sup>th</sup> of October]*

Bereft of hope, of dreams and imagination. The heart of life itself, ripped still-beating from our chests. All ambition and aspiration, dead and gone, A gray world, with a tantalizing sun hanging in the sky, hidden somewhere in the darkness of the endless void. Only the longing remains. Only the hunger.

#### 14th of October, 3rd of Second Reign

I've been trying my best to do as the therapist told me, to put everything from my mind and just allow myself to relax. It worked for a while, even after my "episode" with Rainbow Dash: that hated feeling receded, and the dreams stopped after I gave up researching it. The feeling didn't go away entirely, but it was eminently manageable. Not so anymore.

I did not write the previous entry in this journal. I all but interrogated Spike to find out whether he had touched my journal at all, and considering what a terrible liar he is I have no reason to doubt him when he said he didn't. And I'm almost sure Owliscious doesn't even know how to write. Not that that stopped me from asking him.

This leaves two possibilities: either I wrote it in my sleep, which is disturbing enough on its own, since

I have no idea what would drive me to write something like that, other than the dream I can't remember having dreamt for weeks. Or else, somepony or *something* stole into the library in the middle of the night and figured out where I keep my journal.

Fair enough, Nightmare Night is coming up, and this might seem like a hilarious prank to some ponies out there, I'm sure. But really, even as I posit the theory I find myself doubting it almost before I'm done committing it to paper. The timing is too good, the subject at hoof too private for anypony else to know about.

#### 16th of October, 3rd of Second Reign

I'm almost at wit's end. This dreadful, oppressive feeling is nagging at me constantly, like an itch that won't go away no matter how much I scratch at it. It's even taken on a more sinister edge the past couple of days: now I feel as though I'm being watched. I can't even begin to estimate how often I've found myself drawn to look over my shoulder lately, certain that there would be somepony there.

I even find myself having some difficulty focusing on my duties. A strange kind of lethargy has crept up on me, almost like a cold. Against the advice of my therapist, and against my better judgment, I went into the cellar today to check on the NUTS-sensor again. I very much doubt that I'm imagining the marked dip in magical ambience throughout the library.

I haven't really practiced my magic lately, as I've been too preoccupied with this mystery. I can't really be sure (I may just be out of practice for the aforementioned reasons), but it seems that something is draining my ability to perform magic. If I sound calm in writing, that is just the limitations of either the medium or my expressive capabilities.

I'm wondering whether I should send a letter to Princess Celestia. Maybe she will know something I don't. Then again, do I have the right to bother her out of the blue like this, with my own trivial concerns? I would hate to worry my beloved mentor, the pony who's given me more than anypony else in the world, for no good reason. I don't know if I could bear it if she was angry with me.

#### 26th of October, 3rd of Second Reign

I think I might be going insane. I should really tell someone, but I don't dare to, in case I'm not losing my mind. The possibilities boggle the mind. If they are what I'm beginning to suspect they are, the less I write about the matter – the less I *think* about the matter, the better.

My friends came by today. Apparently, none of them had seen me in almost two weeks. I don't know if I did a good job of glossing over how much that surprised me. If only that had been the only thing they could do to shock me.

Staying in the library all the time seems to have dulled my senses. When I saw them standing there, outside, I became aware of how *faded* they seemed, like I'm losing my color vision. Most of the things I look at during a normal day are black print and white pages, so I hadn't really noticed. It must have happened very gradually, as I pride myself on my observational skills.

After I'd blamed my absence for the last few weeks on some urgent studies, they seemingly all reached the same conclusion and dragged me bodily away from the library. Even though I struggled a little bit, it also made me really happy. I feel so bad for not telling them about what's going on, but I



just can't. I'm blocked from all angles, it seems.

We spent a good deal of the day over at Rarity's, talking about the upcoming Nightmare Night. Rarity has been designing "positively fabulous" costumes of all kinds. I was about to lecture her on the fun and value of making your own costumes for the occasion, with some historical and sociological backing when I noticed a particular costume hanging on a rack.

It was a stark black suit, apparently designed to obscure a pony entirely, with dead, white covers over the eyes. The shadows from my dreams, whatever they are, are not even vaguely pony-shaped, but something about the way the costume hung, or the light, or something else made it extremely unsettling. I'm ashamed to say I couldn't get out of there fast enough.

They finally let me go after making a Pinkie-promise to come out with them on Nightmare Night. I hope it will turn out alright. I felt bad about leaving, since I could tell that *she* was so worried about me. It's all for the best, though, judging from how the ever-present feeling intensifies whenever my thoughts happen to stray across memories of us.

If this thing is really not all just inside my head, and my thinking about her puts her at risk in any way, it's much better that I just forget all about her and my little infatuation. I don't know what I would do if I caused her harm, however inadvertently.

### 31st of October, 3rd of Second Reign

By the princesses, I don't even know what to say. That is, other than that my situation is self-evidently deteriorating. As per my Pinkie promise, I went out trick-or-treating today. I haven't really been up to snuff lately, as I hardly seem to feel like myself anymore, so I hadn't prepared a costume.

I did manage to throw something together at the last minute, using a white bed sheet and a plain white mask to dress up as a crude representation of the goddess of Fate as described by the ponies of the classical era. Even resorting to something so blatant, nopony got my costume this time either. Everypony seemed to think I'd dressed up as some kind of strange ghost. Ugh.

But, how to explain what happened after? I do remember some para-scientific theory for why Nightmare Night is celebrated when it is: something to do with the "barriers between worlds" weakening. I've always just thought it was a load of, excuse my Prench, horseapples. But after tonight, I'm not so sure.

As I said, I was out with Spike, and as I'd promised I met up with the girls at the town square where we played some games and listened to the mayor's speech. Then, as we were bobbing for apples, Pinkie took me completely and utterly by surprise.

"Don't your friends want to bob for apples too? They're scrumptious!"

She seemed to be looking at something just past me when she said it, and as I looked behind me, I saw them. The flitting, unnatural shadows from my dreams, there in the gaze of my waking eyes. I'm fairly certain I screamed out loud and tried to hide, which I admit must have seemed pretty funny on a night where everypony is trying to scare everypony else.

Turns out, when I asked Pinkie what she'd meant by that earlier, that she'd just been joking around. Just being Pinkie. All the same, it scared the living daylight out of me. Sure, it was night, and there

were a lot of ponies around, and a lot of general chaos, but I know what I saw. Though formless and fleeting, those shadows are like holes in the world. I could *feel* them.

So, not a great-

*[a line of ink shoots out from the last word of the previous sentence, clear across the page]*

### 1st of November, 3rd of Second Reign

I don't know what to do. I spent the night hiding down in the cellar. The shadows have returned, and the world has gone much bleaker than just yesterday. The dream has returned as well, and it seems to infect my waking hours. Not that they feel like waking hours. Something happened yesterday, something that allowed my problem to become much more marked.

I tried to use an offensive spell against the shadows when they suddenly showed up yesterday, but it failed, miserably. The shadows vanished at the mere attempt, though, so I'll try and keep my hopes up, despite my confusion. There must be a connection between my dreams, the living shadows, the lethargy that's heavier than ever now, and how my magic failed.

### 3rd of November, 3rd of Second Reign

This shouldn't be possible. This can't be possible.

I've spent the last few hours poring over my various sensors, and what they're showing is just not feasible, on any level. The background magical ambience is just impossibly low within the library, and my own levels of magic are lower than I have ever seen. I don't understand, and that makes me even more scared.

I'm finding it increasingly hard to focus, as I suddenly find myself going off on mental tangents. That is, tangents from thoughts I can't identify. My mind drifts off, contemplating a world of steel and iron and fire, something like a vision of Tartarus. I wish there was somepony I could talk to. I wish I knew somepony who could help me.

### 5th of November, 3rd of Second Reign

I'm not sure whether I'm awake or whether I'm dreaming. I think I heard someone knocking on the door today. I didn't hear anything more after that, so Spike must have taken care of it. I feel like I'm finally making some headway in regards to this problem of mine. As disturbing as they are, I seem to be getting some gist of what I'm dealing with.

It's definitely not all in my head. I get these images, these impulses, coursing through my mind. They are confusing, but they suggest something from *outside*. Outside of what, or where that might be, is difficult to make out.

The shadow beings seem to flutter around me regularly now, for whatever purpose. I am scared, but I can't help but be curious. If only I wasn't so tired.

### 8th of November, 3rd of Second Reign

They are here all the time now. The shadows have settled and filled my vision. I can barely even write anymore, but I have to try and hold on. They are trying to blur the boundaries, taking my thoughts and replacing them with their own alien impulses. I can feel their desperation, their longing for everything that we have, everything that we *are*.

Despite it all, I made my way upstairs earlier, to check on Spike. I found him, but in all the ways that matter he's not here anymore. I don't know how much longer I can resist them. I've tried to get a message out, but they won't let me. They sap my strength, hammering away at the battered wall that keeps them out.

I'm so sorry, everypony. I've been weak, I've failed you all. I can only imagine what will happen when they arrive. I can only hope somepony might be able to stop them, somehow. The lost ones, the ones that linger. They whisper to me from the shadows, their minds like black stars in an ocean of darkness.

I've tried screaming for help, but no sound will come out. How long has it been since I ate? How long has it been since I slept? The date comes to me out of force of habit, but apart from that, I can hardly remember anything. They're too strong. They feed on my resistance.

I can't hold on any longer. Please forgi-

*[Incomprehensible scribbles follow, and eventually taper off.]*