

**Terry Podgorski**  
Work Sample 2

“The Witching Hour: A Monster Comedy”  
Premiered September 2019  
Nordo’s Culinarium  
Seattle, WA

Adapted over the Covid Lockdown into an ‘Escape Room in a Box’ for Nordo’s Room Service Program, shipped nationally.

In this sample, find pieces from both the Room Service and live versions of The Witching Hour. I am providing a text only version of the Nocturnal Mandala for ease of reading, but I think it’s worth seeing the final design, so I have attached that as well. (I worked with a graphic designer and illustrator on the final elements.) The Mandala provided clues to solve the box, the museum brochure was given to guests at the live show for world-building.

P. 1-2 ‘The Nocturnal Mandala’ Text Only  
P. 3-4 ‘The Nocturnal Mandala’ Final Design  
P. 5-6 Museum of Cryptozoology Brochure Final Design  
P. 7-12 Portions of “The Witching Hour” Script

## Witching Hour Mandala Copy

*These entries should be on one side of the Mandala Artifact. The remaining illustrations of Filth and Failure should accompany the mandala drawing itself with the Elemental Legend.*

### *Entry 1: main entry front and center on page*

I confronted the Nocturnal Fears in 1616 attending my third ritual. Most adherents wait a lifetime for a glimpse of the Otherside. Most witness nothing. On this day, Ostara, we ripped the fabric of darkness and a portal opened. We entered the Witching Hour.

The Nocturnal Fears possessed the 5 Initiates. One by one the Initiates were consumed, and in this way, the Fears took corporeal form. They were cruel and fantastically irreverent.

My mentor and I commanded that they obey our wishes. They laughed. They roared. But we held our ground. We knew they were bound to obey. They hated us for our control but heeded our demands.

As a formality, they accepted. And they accomplished what we asked. No longer did anyone oppose our ideas. We became rich. But my soul never laughed again, never breathed deeply, after that day.

We were never able to summon them again. But truly, I am not sure we had the heart to. Despite my hesitation I leave all I know here, in this document, concerning the Nocturnal Fears.

Beware. Do not underestimate them. They are not the thing they Fear. But Fear itself. It is not Failure, but The Fear of Failure. The Fear of Harm. The Fear of Filth. The Fear of Chaos. The Fear of Loneliness.

### *Entry 2: with illustration of Loneliness and Clock graphic*

The first clock was created to house the Nocturnal Fears in 300 BC. It seems the regular ticking of the escapement mechanism paralyzes them or entrances them. The Nocturnal Fears were imprisoned by time being counted. Treasure this clock. Keep it safe.

### *Entry 3: with illustration of Chaos*

The First Age ended with The Banishment. The Faeries, every single species, were no longer welcome in Our World. Their lands began to wither. Their power faded

like a sunset. The Fears were trapped and held for our bidding. Humanity had conquered the Earth and secured it from the creatures that haunted us. Reason prevailed.

*Entry 4: a note in the margins with a quicker hand*

I continue my search for the Treatise of Fear. It is rumored to contain all the answers.

*Entry 6: connected to Entry 1 in proximity on the page with smaller illustration of Harm.*

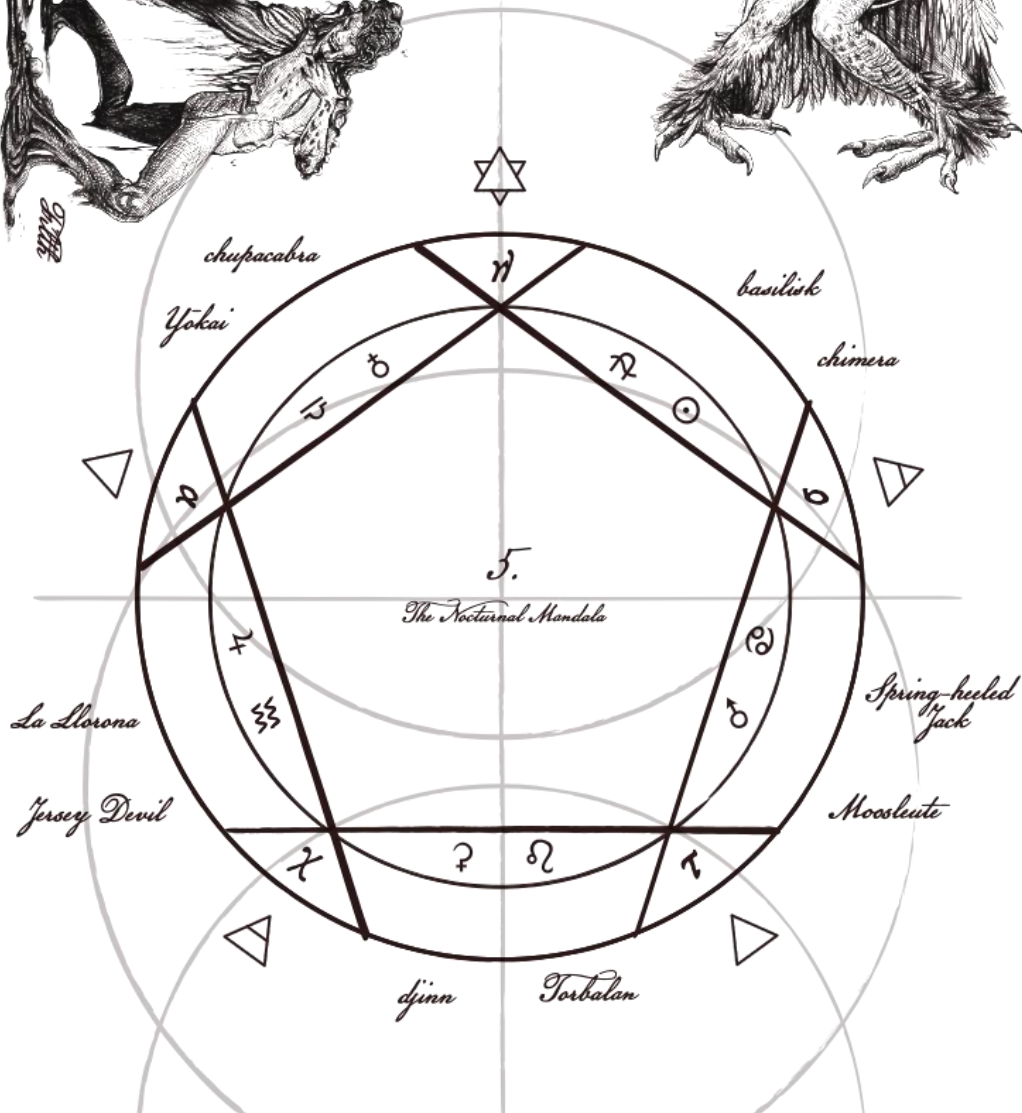
One Fear spoke to me. She, for I believe she consumed the body of a female Initiate, spoke in frigid whispers. "Only once in an age someone believes in us and sees us for who we are. You are not it."

*Entry 7: accompanied by the Fear Legend*

Monster. A threatening force. Middle English. monstre. Old French. Mostre. Prodigy, marvel. From Latin monstrum. Omen, portent, atrocity. From monere, to warn.

# The Nocturnal Mandala

Earth	Moss agate	Cancer	Filth
Air	Labradorite	Aquarius	Chaos
Fire	Carnelian	Leo	Harm
Water	Rose quartz	Libra	Failure
Ether	Selenite	Ophiuchus	Loneliness



1.

I confronted the Nocturnal Fears in 1616 attending my third ritual. Many searchers waited a lifetime for a glimpse of the Otherside. Most witnessed nothing. On this day, Ostara, we ripped the fabric of darkness and a portal opened. We entered the Hitching Hour.

The Nocturnal Fears possessed the 5 Initiates. One by one the Initiates were consumed, and in this way, the Fears took corporeal form. They were terrible and cruel and fantastically irreverent.



6.

One Fear spoke to me as an Emissary. She pleaded the case of the Fears. I replied, "I do not trust you." She, for I believe she consumed the body of a female Initiate, spoke in frigid whispers. "Only once in an age someone believes in us and sees us for who we are. You are not it."

Chaos



My mentor and I commanded that they obey our wishes. They laughed. They roared. We held our ground. We knew they were bound by the Treaty to obey. They hated us for our control but acquiesced. We gave them our demands.

As a formality, they accepted. And they accomplished what we asked. No longer did anyone oppose our ideas. We became rich. But I know that my soul never laughed again, never breathed deeply, after that day.

We were never able to summon them again. But truly I am not sure we had the heart to. Despite my hesitation I leave all I know here, in this document, concerning the Nocturnal Fears.

Beware. Do not underestimate them. They are not the thing they Fear. But Fear itself. It is not Failure, but the Fear of Failure. The Fear of Harm. The Fear of Death. The Fear of Chaos. The Fear of Loneliness.

Loneliness, imprisoned

3.

The First Age ended with the Banishment. The Fears, every single species, were no longer welcome in our World. Their lands began to wither. Their power faded like a sunset. The Fears were trapped and held for our bidding. Humanity had conquered the Earth and secured it from the creatures that haunted us. Reason prevailed. The Society had begun.

2.

The first clock was created to house the Nocturnal Fears in 300 B.C. The regular ticking of the escapement mechanism paralyzes them. The Nocturnal Fears were imprisoned by Time being counted. Treasure the clock. Keep it safe in the New World.



7.

Monster. A threatening force. Middle English. monstre. Old French. Mostre. Prodigy, marvel. From Latin monstrum. Omen, portent, atrocity. From monere, to warn.

4.

I continue my search for the Treatise of Fear. It is rumored to contain the Answer. The Root of all Fear.

Monaxia	Apotychia	Navii	Chaos	Sapila
μ	α	τ	χ	σ

## ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Museum of Cryptozoology is a secret institution run by the Society of Nocturnal Mysteries, and under current management of Head Adept William Westcott. In addition to an unparalleled treasury of rare antiquities, ritual artifacts, and Nighthind memorabilia, the MOC prides itself as the keeper of the Nocturnal Clock, said to be the prison of the original Nocturnal Fears. In its halls the MOC houses the finest collection of Monster Eyeballs in the world, as well as Hope's Music Box, The Gothic Grimoire, and Faerie Wings from the original Banishment. In the gift shop, look for the one-of-a-kind Kraken bobblehead.

It is also assumed that the piles of books and scattered items conceal unimaginable secrets that will one day see the Dark of Night when funding and time can be put into organization.

## ADMISSION

One living soul.

*Just kidding. The MOC thrives off suggested donations.*



OPEN ON MOST SABBATS & GENERALLY  
ON DARK AND STORMY NIGHTS





Nocturnal Clock, origin unknown.

Saturn Devouring his Son, Francisco Goya, c. 1819.

Dodo Dentata, Mauritius, c. 1662.

Unicorn Skulls, Siberia, c. 1270.

Monster Eyeballs, from the John Darrell Collection, c. 1450.

Faerie Wings, Iceland, c. 830.

**PROGRAMS**

Currently the MOC offers a diverse range of programs, from Ritual Spell Casting to Divining the Future and Exorcisms. Specialized classes rotate throughout the calendar year, offering expert knowledge in the Mysteries. This year boasts a Blood Blue Moon Ritual presided by Head Adept Westcott on the Spring Equinox.

**RESEARCH**

Research programs at MOC continue to expand our knowledge on how to harness astral energy, map the Night Ether, and discover methods for communicating with the Nocturnal Tears. Generous donations from Nightkind around the world keep the MOC at the forefront of Nocturnal Research.

**NIGHTKIND FESTIVALS**

The MOC and its founding Society participate in all the major Sabbats of the Year Wheel. Whether it's Yule, Candlemas, Ostara, Beltane, Midsummer's Eve, Lammas, Mabon, or the ultimate ~ All Hallows' Eve ~ the MOC upholds the traditions of the Nocturnal Sabbats. Check our website for up to date information on upcoming festivities and tickets.

**YOUTH PROGRAMS**

While the MOC wholeheartedly believes in the indoctrination of the youth, management is currently in search of a qualified candidate for the position of Youth Minister.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

The MOC resides in the secret bowels of a not-to-be-named reputable institution and was not originally designed with accessibility in mind. In fact, it was designed with inaccessibility in mind. But thanks to a recent grant from her estate, the Florence Farr Commemorative Elevator has replaced one of the bookshelf-concealed spiral staircases, increasing access for all Nightkind.

**HEAD ADEPT WILLIAM WESTCOTT**

After graduating from the Mytter College of Physicians and working a stint at the Campbell Funeral Home in NYC, Head Adept Westcott found his calling on a trip to this very museum. After tumbling down a hidden staircase and nearly breaking his neck, then-Initiate



Westcott knew he had found his destiny. "The air was thick with mystery," he recounts with pride.

Adept Westcott's personal research into the Witebing Hour has revealed the intricate

connection between Our World and the Otherside. In 2018, he personally witnessed a ripping of the fabric of darkness and subsequent infiltration by the Nocturnal Tears. It is only because of him Our World still belongs to humanity.

He also enjoys Gothic singing.

## **Script: The Witching Hour**

**Or, how humans make better monsters than monsters, and monsters, well, not so much.**

In a forgotten wing of the Natural History Museum of Bowling Green, or the Underground Storage of the Kalamazoo Community College Library, resides a lot of dust in a large room with a vaulted ceiling. The proprietor or habitual user of the premises doesn't care about dust. His assistant is feckless and starry eyed and so doesn't notice dust. So it is a room of dust. And cobwebs. And on one side it is a room of books with papers falling out of them. And file cabinets with more papers falling out of them. And more piles of papers with papers falling out of them. Under all this is a desk and a podium. They are wood and pretending to be important.

On the desk is a small Mantle Clock and a Record Player. The Mantle Clock is black and dramatic in nature and working. The Record Player plays whatever house music accompanies the show. Above all this on the far wall is a large clock, the type with hands and fancy scrolled numbers and maybe even the face of a sun that gives way to the face of a moon. It is **10:37**. It is very important. This will be referred to as the Desk Stage.

Three large architectural ribs transect the room into 4 equal sections. In each vaulted rib is a niche. In each niche is a figure or image dedicated to a creature in history or myth. The Kraken. The Chimera. The Kitsune. The Jinn. The Troll. The Vampire. Between the vaulted ribs are printed facsimiles of some of the more grotesque paintings in history. The Garden of Earthly Delights by Bosch. Saturn Devouring His Son by Goya. Pope Innocent X by Bacon. Satan's Fall by Dore. For example.

Across from the Desk Stage, and nearest the door, is our Clock Stage. This one is circular and notched like a gear. Behind and above it, are other gears made of wood. This is the interior of our Mantle Clock. Our audience enters from the outside, passes by the interior gears of the clock, and sit in the vaulted room. A distinct but not overwhelming tick/tock pervades the space under the house music.

In the center of the space is a single entrance to the Otherside. It resembles a brick wall embedded in the theater's wood wall, as if a passage way had been bricked over. When opened the bricks part in the middle and pale blue light bleeds through.

The servers are creatures of the Vault. They see the Humans and their endeavors, the Monsters and their needs, and the Spirits that inhabit the halls. And in general, they are annoyed at all the commotion in their home. But they respect the fact that this is a monuments evening, that the timing of the celebration could not be better, and that our spirits have travelled to great lengths to join us.



## The Characters

### Our Humans

**Adept William Westcott:** Chapter Leader of Cult. Key Holder to the Hidden Vaults. Keeper of the Gothic Grimoire. Disheveled hair, large glasses, wrinkled clothes, probably too much corduroy. Fond of long coats. Possesses some psychic powers. Possesses a purple coat he can't bring himself to wear.

**Neophyte Steven:** Intern to Adept Westcott. Great abilities to relate to the Otherside and has no idea what he is capable of. Once a barrista.

### Our Monsters and Their Humans

**Harm/ Aleister** confident killer. not disdainful of life but also not precious about it. death is natural. known to carry about bloody limbs. seems to be able to disappear and find something to kill within moments. speaks rarely but when he does it is with assurance.

Human Counterpart: scared of anything that moves. danger around every corner. paranoid of car crashes, insect bites, water in other countries. Too nervous to dress or present well.

**Failure/ Florence** at times unable to move because trying is too much effort. at other times makes numerous suggestions to the group then shies away when the time comes to act. will run away at the idea of success. often drops her left hand. talks meekly.

Human Counterpart: makes the most of every tiny success or positive trait possible. braggart. exaggerator. sets impossible goals then claims to have succeeded. overly confident.

**Chaos/ Justin** all over the place without rules or parameters. couldn't stick to a plan if it involved 2 steps. turns on a dime. cannot help but spoil a secret, lie to a friend. high energy. tends to whine and fidget a lot.

Human Counterpart: cannot operate without a daily agenda and when the agenda misses a beat the day is the worst imagined. well dressed. well groomed. well mannered. OCD in the worst way.

**Filth/ Algernon** prefers a layer of dirt. wallows in mud. huffs sewers. savors his own body odor. relishes bodily noises. snide. sarcastic. usually insulting. leaves smudges and stains on everything he touches. needs to spoil things and enjoys rot.

Human Counterpart: germaphobe. stares suspiciously at the cleanliness of others. wipes down surfaces once, twice, maybe a third time. stands clear of anything someone else touches.

**Loneliness** a sad creature who needs others but feels the desire to walk away from groups and sit in a corner. cries at the drop of a hat. tends to speak slowly and to herself. Her tendency is to turn away from others, and speak to herself even if answering a question directed at her. She has no human counterpart.

*This scene takes place mid-story, after the "Portal of Darkness" has been ripped and the invisible fears have begun taking their victims from the Society of Nocturnal Mysteries. This is the second time Steven, who is the one human able to see the fears, has met The Fear of Loneliness.*

LONE: Hello.

STEVEN: Loneliness.

LONE: You've lost something.

STEVEN: I did.

LONE: Shadows always come back.

STEVEN: Where'd everyone go?

LONE: Everyone is gone. *Loneliness giggles.* You're all alone. Play a game?

STEVEN: Like what?

LONE: How long can I hold you until you start crying?

STEVEN: How about we talk? I can see you more clearly.

LONE: My world is different. More expansive.

STEVEN: My world has shrunk. To nothing.

*Loneliness positively floats toward him.*

LONE: You say the most beautiful things.

*Steven backs away instinctively.*

STEVEN: What are you?

LONE: I'm an empty space someone used to stand in.

STEVEN: That's not so bad.

LONE: I make people cry over their coffee and miss work.

STEVEN: That is bad.

LONE: I don't know why but you don't cower from me. Who are you?

STEVEN: Just Steven. I think.

HARM: Come out, come out wherever you are.

LONE: Hide. He's not as friendly as I am.

*Steven scrambles to hide. Loneliness steps off into the darkness of the room. Enter Harm.*

HARM: I smell the damp rocks of Loneliness.

LONE: Harm. You look brighter. Your hair is amazing.

HARM: I love a good chase. But the bald one got away. I smell that little morsel you seem to like.

LONE: He's no body.

HARM: Then we should eat him.

*He lunges in Steven's direction. Loneliness steps between the two.*

LONE: He's scared enough. Without your incredible strength and prowess.

*Harm purrs as Loneliness caresses him.*

HARM: I am rather terrifying.

LONE: You are.

HARM: We should still eat him. *Harm lunges again.*

LONE: Stop, now you're just looking for attention.

HARM: I'm joking with you Loneliness. It's a game. A good game.

LONE: Harm, do you hate humans?

HARM: They're fragile. And it makes me want to attack.

LONE: They draw me to them as well. I want to envelop their souls.

HARM: This is like the old times. On the other side of the world when we ran free, and they could see us at night.

LONE: I hid in dark corners and covered children in a blanket of wet fear.

HARM: Like before the books and the words.

*Loneliness pauses in thought.*

LONE: Maybe this time should be different.

HARM: We will take them and disembowel the bodies. It will be complete. Exactly as proscribed.

LONE: Please don't start with him.

HARM: Loneliness has a friend and that could be good. I will give you a moment before I gather the others.

*Harm laughs and smells the room.*

I love the smell of fear.

*Harm Exits. Loneliness watches him leave then motions to Steven. Steven comes out from hiding.*

STEVEN: He is scary.

LONE: Get out now or you will be a prisoner forever. We are going to stop the clock and the Witching Hour will linger.

STEVEN: I need to save Will and the others.

LONE: The others are lost.

STEVEN: I can live with that. But William is a friend.

LONE: Do what you must.

*Exit Loneliness and Steven through different exits.*

