

Background Information

About the author

Bruno Lowagie lives and works in Ghent, Belgium. In a previous life, he was an open-source software developer and entrepreneur. After selling his company, he turned his attention to writing. He first published works for Dutch and Flemish readers before beginning to translate his fiction into English in 2024.

In 2026, he shifted his focus from short fiction to screenwriting. *The Sisters Lovecraft* was his second screenplay. Since breaking into the film industry can be notoriously difficult, he began adapting his screenplays into narrative form, resulting in a series of novelettes.

This book is the second installment in that series. *Operation Downfall* was the first one; the working title of the third installment is *Emperor of America*.³³

About the genre

This story is at the crossroads of science fiction, alternate history, and horror.

At its core, the story has a strong science-fiction foundation. The inventions developed by the Lovecraft sisters—batteries, electric motors, bio-electrical organisms, and ultimately an atomic bomb—are all rooted in speculative extrapolations of real scientific principles.

Electricity, electromagnetism, bio-electricity, and atomic theory are not treated as magic, but as systems

governed by rules that can be studied, misapplied, and weaponized.

This aligns the story with the early science fiction, reminiscent of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, where scientific curiosity rather than supernatural forces opens the door to catastrophe. The *Necronomicon* functions not as a spellbook but as an anachronistic repository of advanced scientific knowledge.

The narrative also clearly qualifies as alternate history. By placing these technological breakthroughs in the early nineteenth century and attributing them to fictional ancestors of H. P. Lovecraft, the story rewrites the timeline of scientific progress.

Historical figures and places are woven into a counterfactual, Lovecraft-inspired past in which discoveries such as electricity and atomic energy emerge decades, or even a century, ahead of their time. The result is a world that feels historically authentic yet profoundly destabilized by knowledge that does not belong to its era.

Finally, the story is unmistakably horror, not simply because of its undead imagery, but because of its philosophy. The horror arises from the idea that some knowledge exacts a moral and existential toll. The loss of soul, the spread of mutation, the erosion of empathy, and the inexorable escalation toward annihilation embody a distinctly Lovecraftian terror rooted in the limits of human understanding and control.

By merging these genres, the story argues that progress without ethical restraint becomes indistinguishable from horror, and that curiosity, unchecked by wisdom, can erase the very humanity it seeks to elevate.

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End notes

The following endnotes provide additional context for the characters, events, and settings.

¹ **Rub Al' Khali.** The *Empty Quarter* is part of the Great Arabian Desert. It spans four countries, primarily southern Saudi Arabia, with extensions into Yemen, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates.



The Empty Quarter (© Krzysztof Ziarnek, Kenraiz)



The Empty Quarter (© Thomas Pusch)

With an area of approximately 640,000 square kilometers, the Empty Quarter is the largest continuous sand desert in the world.

² **Abdul Alhazred.** A fictional Arab poet and occultist created by H. P. Lovecraft. He is said to have lived in the eighth century and was known as the Mad Arab, a nickname referring to his visions, rituals, and extraordinary encounters with supernatural forces.

³ **Cthulhu.** A fictional cosmic entity from the work of H. P. Lovecraft. Cthulhu first appeared in the novella *The Call of Cthulhu* (written in 1926, published in 1928), where he is described as a colossal being with a vaguely humanoid form, an octopus-like head covered in tentacles, and wings resembling those of a dragon.

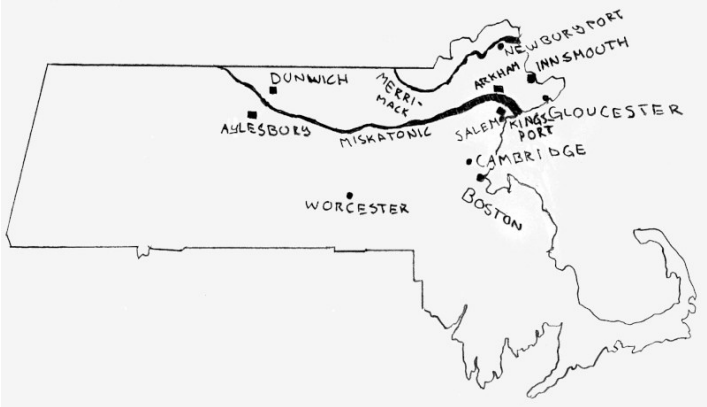


Cthulhu (© Dominique Signoret)

Cthulhu became one of the most recognizable figures in *weird fiction* and remains a central icon of the broader Cthulhu Mythos, later expanded by other authors.

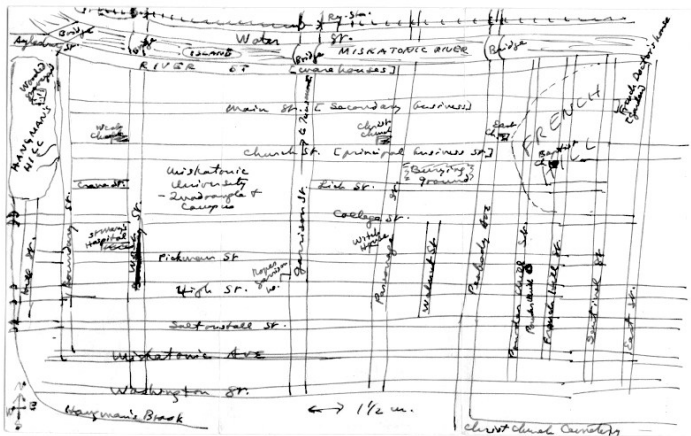
He belongs to the Great Old Ones—ancient entities that once ruled the Earth before falling into dormancy or imprisonment. Although Cthulhu's actions may appear evil, he operates according to natural laws that humans perceive as magic. Humanity matters to Cthulhu no more than ants matter to humans.

⁴ **Arkham.** A fictional city in Massachusetts located along the equally fictional Miskatonic River, created by H. P. Lovecraft and first mentioned in *The Picture in the House* (written in 1920, published in 1921).



Fictional map of Massachusetts (© Miihkali)

Arkham frequently appears as a setting in stories belonging to the Cthulhu Mythos, both by Lovecraft himself and by later writers. As an homage, the creators of Batman named Gotham's asylum *Elizabeth Arkham Asylum for the Criminally Insane*.



Sketch of Arkham, drawn by H. P. Lovecraft himself

⁵ **Miskatonic University.** A fictional university located in Arkham and a central institution in Lovecraft's work. It is first mentioned in *Herbert West — Reanimator* (written in 1921, published in 1922).

Academically, Miskatonic University is associated with progressive but potentially reckless researchers. Many of Lovecraft's stories revolve around professors who encounter incomprehensible forces or unknown life-forms.

⁶ **Lovecraft.** The choice of the name isn't incidental. This is a Lovecraftian story, referring to the American writer H.P. Lovecraft, who posthumously grew into one of the most influential figures in horror literature.



H. P. Lovecraft, June 1934 (© Lucius B. Truesdell)

H. P. Lovecraft is regarded as the founder of cosmic horror, a genre centered on the existential dread of an indifferent universe.

He replaced traditional ghosts and hauntings with entities from other dimensions or the depths of the sea, making his work an early form of science-fiction horror. In his stories, human reason frequently proves inadequate to grasp the true nature of reality.

Because Lovecraft died in 1937, his works are in the public domain and may be freely reused. Countless writers have drawn inspiration from him, creating stories featuring Arkham, the Necronomicon, and the Great Old Ones. According to IMDb, as of July 2026 there have been three hundred film adaptations of Lovecraft's work, with a couple dozen more in development. These figures are likely an underestimate, as many films and television series also borrow themes and ideas indirectly, such as *The Thing* (1982), *The Mist* (2007), *Stranger Things* (2016–2025), and many others.

⁷ **Salem.** A town best known for the witch trials that took place in the Puritan communities of Salem Village and Salem Town in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.



Salem, Massachusetts (© Alexrk2)