

DECAYER

Written by

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Address
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INT. DEEP WOUND CAVERN - CAVE - NIGHT

A round stone altar platform lies at the trench's deepest point. Its design resembles a magic circle.

INT. DEEP WOUND CAVERN - CAVE - DUSK

DEADWOOD MAGES, black cloaks, wood masks, cast shadows from the steep surface. Their lanterns flicker. BLAKE, 17, silver hair, university uniform, is blindfolded and tied.

They shove her. She lands on the altar. Bones crack and echo.

The people in black cloaks leave.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
I'm fed every full moon in this
prison yet I've starved for eons.

Black mold veins fester to Blake through the altar's ridges.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
Have they tossed another virgin
mage? Such dull flesh.

The black mold dissolves a cricket instantly.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
I'd have more fun watching her rot
here.

BLAKE (V.O.)
My flesh may not satisfy you.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
What?

She can't move her mouth. She speaks telepathically.

BLAKE (V.O.)
But please, make it quick.

The black mold stops.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
You hear me.

Blake stays silent. Black mold touches her hands. Her body spasms and convulses.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
Answer me.

BLAKE (V.O.)
(in pain)
Yes, I hear you, I'm a medium.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
A medium.

Shadows peel off the altar and form a ghastly skeletal figure. White noise flickers in his eyes.

BHAGGDU
Why would they send me a medium?

BLAKE (V.O.)
I don't care. I'm here to die. So
let me rot.

BHAGGDU
Recognize who you lie before, girl.

Black mold enters Blake's body. Oily strands hang her up, mend her bones, and break her bondage. She screams. She can move her mouth again. Bhaggdu stands her up.

BHAGGDU (CONT'D)
You rot when I permit it.

Black mold exits her body. Her butt hits the ground.

BLAKE
You fixed me?

BHAGGDU
Behold at the power of a god.

Blake removes her blindfolds. She has no eyes.

BLAKE
I can't see.

Her fingers feel the cavities on her face - two deep, dark, bloody sockets. She cries with no tears.

INT. DEEP WOUND CAVERN - CAVE - NIGHT

Moonlight glints on puddles.

Water runs through the altar's arrays and symbols. Blake sits in the shadows, head on her knees.

Bhaggdu sits pretzel-style in the center.

BLAKE
So this is where the girls would
disappear- Monster food.

Bhaggdu grimaces at Blake.

BHAGGDU
Monsters are below me. I am a
Decayer of Souls. The undead fear
me.

BLAKE
And bound to an altar. But why do
they feed you living flesh?

BHAGGDU
The living flesh offers a taste
that the dead could not.

His body emits turbulent shadows. It sounds like harsh
whispers as they fluctuate.

BHAGGDU (CONT'D)
Even now, I resist having my way
with you. My twisted desire feeds
their magic.

BLAKE
Maybe you should end my suffering.
Help someone else for a change.

BHAGGDU
Why don't you do it yourself?

Bhaggdu shambles to Blake- One lazy step after the next.

BHAGGDU (CONT'D)
You're not in bondage. Your body is
yours. You should end yourself now.

Blake flinches. Despite no eyes, she looks away from him.

Bhaggdu extends his hand. She reacts.

BHAGGDU (CONT'D)
Don't fear death.

The ends of his smile rip through his skull.

BHAGGDU (CONT'D)
Fear the dark that comes after.

Blake's hand searches for his hand- their fingers intertwine.

Bhaggdu's shadows slither down her forearm.

INT. DEEP WOUND CAVERN - CAVE - DAY

Blake sits in the center. MALCOLM, 19, peeks from the surface. His black cloak and wooden mask hide his features.

MALCOLM
What? She still lives!

BLAKE
I do. Perhaps your god is upset
with you, Malcolm.

MALCOLM
Sacrifices don't speak.

BLAKE
Will you remove my mouth too?

Malcolm disappears and returns. He has a cow heart in a net. Blood drips and hits the altar.

MALCOLM
Your body will feed worms.

The cow's heart pulsates irregularly. Malcolm drops the net and it SPLATS on the altar. The cow's heart morphs into a hose-sized maggot. It sprint-slithers to Blake.

BHAGGDU (V.O)
Move.

Blake shifts to the left. The maggot slides past her. The maggot U-turns and wriggles to Blake. It springs up.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
Back kick.

Blake's high boot launches it across the altar. It squeals. Malcolm waves his hands erratically.

MALCOLM
She's blind, you moronic
maggotspawn! Consume Her!

The maggot's blood runs through the altar's etchings.

BHAGGDU (V.O)
It's ready.

The maggot slithers to Blake. She steps off the altar and claps her hands. The gravel shakes and the wind hushes.

BLAKE

You're only strong enough to feed
from the wound.

The blood turns black on the altar. Oily mycelia strands
ensnare the maggot. It infects on contact.

Malcolm takes a few steps back. He runs away.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

He'll return with more.

BHAGGDU

We'll be much more powerful then.
Now get to work.

INT. DEEP WOUND CAVERN - CAVE - DAY (LATER)

Blake feels the ridges in the altar for the sigils. Her
bloody hand nears the symbol of a crow.

BHAGGDU

Lower. There.

Blake smears blood in the symbol. It completes the altar.

BLAKE

Why couldn't you have done this?

Bhaggdu lurks behind Blake. His apparition stands several
feet taller than her.

BHAGGDU

The ritual requires the intent of a
magic-attuned mortal.

BLAKE

Are mediums the best for this?

BHAGGDU

Better than others. Your body will
be the magnet to pull me out of
this altar.

BLAKE

What happens to my body and soul?

BHAGGDU

Your body is destroyed and your
soul will be bound to me.

Blake shakes her head.

BLAKE

I thought you were getting me out of here.

BHAGGDU

Did you not want death?

BLAKE

Not like this. I want to go to the afterlife and see Amelia again.

Bhaggdu tilts his head.

BHAGGDU

Amelia?

Blake sat on the stone.

BLAKE

The Deadwood Society. I joined to find out what happened. But they only thought of me as another experiment.

BHAGGDU

Who was she to you?

BLAKE

My friend. Now she's nothing more- because she's gone.

Bhaggdu stares into space. He sighs and chuckles.

BHAGGDU

(to himself)

Who did I consume?

Bhaggdu shifted his body.

BHAGGDU (CONT'D)

(to Blake)

They're coming.

AMBER, SPRUCE, OAK, and REDWOOD MASKS in black cloaks slide on the cavern's steep slope to the cave. They land and surround Bhaggdu and Blake.

They unveil lanterns with fire glyphs inside. Amber grabs Blake from behind and puts a knife to her mouth.

Spruce and Oak cast fire at Bhaggdu. He burns easily. Black smoke wafts up until he disintegrates.

REDWOOD
How did you use Bhaggdu's magic?

BLAKE
He bestowed it upon me.

REDWOOD
Bhaggdu would never. He eats
anything he touches. We've fed him
for generations to keep him
pleased.

Blake struggles. The blade cuts her lip.

BLAKE
He wants to escape the altar.

Redwood Mask chuckles.

REDWOOD
Not in my lifetime.

BHAGGDU (V.O.)
One on your left. One on your
right. He's directly ahead.

BLAKE
Cut short.

Blake bites the blade, yanks it free from Amber Mask, and
plunges it into his neck as she twists her head. He faints.

Spruce and Oak raise their hands to cast fire.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Rot in the dirt.

Blake turns Amber's blood black and sprays at Spruce and Oak.
Fire ignites the black blood and burns them alive.

Redwood runs off the altar. He raises his lantern.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Born in the bowls of Vh'allu,
raised on the undead, betrayer to
his kind, consumer of the flesh, I
summon thee, Bhaggdu.

The altar rumbles the cave. Amber, Spruce, and Oak Masks'
bodies liquefy into black blood and mold. It enters Blake and
her vessel transforms into Bhaggdu. He grimaces at Redwood.

Redwood casts two fire projectiles. Bhaggdu barfs a glob of black blood. It explodes on Redwood. It burns him like acid. He falls and screams.

Smoke leaves his body. Bhaggdu saunters to him.

Redwood's eyes twitch behind his cracked mask. Bhaggdu's mouth opens unnaturally wide. Rows of jagged teeth inside. He pounces on Redwood. The cave echoes his howls.

EXT. FOREST - DEEP WOUND CAVERN - DAY

Trees shed warm leaves. Blake lies on the ground. She opens her eyes. They're gray. A black robe covers her body.

BLAKE

Bhaggdu?

BHAGGDU (V.O.)

Uh-huh.

BLAKE

How am I alive?

BHAGGDU (V.O.)

Flesh for flesh. A soul for a soul.
I swapped yours out once I consumed
our enemies.

Blake stands. He fixes the cloak on herself.

BLAKE

You're staying with me?

BHAGGDU (V.O.)

Your medium vessel will hide me
from the pantheon I've betrayed.
Besides, I would like to see what
else you can do with my power. It
was quite amusing.

Blake pauses.

BLAKE

I want to make sure this never
happens to the innocent ever again.

The sound of Bhaggdu's cackling is heard.