



# RISE OF CTHULHU

Attraction Script

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# LOGLINE

After stumbling across sinister research in a seaside manor, you find yourself teetering on the precipice of madness. A boat will return you to sanity, but only if you brave stormy seas, ancient beings, and unfathomable horrors along the way. Cthulhu beckons. Will you answer?

## SETTING

### THURSTON MANOR

A seaside estate that is the home of one FRANCIS WAYLAND THURSTON. The manor is in the style of a New England Victorian mansion, and serves as the QUEUE of the attraction. Guests will enter through the gates of the manor before traversing the grounds and several rooms, including a parlor, library, study, and bedroom. Each room maintains Victorian motifs while growing progressively more disheveled and crazed in appearance. Many of the rooms are filled with stacks of paper, strange furniture, and eldritch artifacts. These elements begin to merge the Victorian and Lovecraftian aesthetics into one. As guests progress through the house, they should begin to feel unsettled and question the reality of their environment.

### THE CAVERNS

After traversing the manor, guests will find themselves descending into a seaside cavern. This area features a strong nautical motif, as well as sparse lighting and wall carvings/paintings related to Cthulhu and other eldritch beings. Several key areas of the attraction (including the LOAD, UNLOAD, and RETAIL areas) take on a cavernous appearance, and it is supposed that each section is a different chamber within the same cave system. The caverns are open to the sea, allowing the RIDE VEHICLES to exit into the attraction proper.

### THE SEA

The RIDE portion of the attraction takes place in open waters just off the New England coast. While most of the scenes take place within view of the coastline, several take place in open water and more ethereal locations (such as the SUNKEN CITY). The sea sections of the attraction feature waters that are slightly agitated (though this

does not affect the ride vehicle) and a strong Lovecraftian motif through the use of set dressing and setpieces.

## CHARACTERS

### FRANCIS WAYLAND THURSTON

A researcher who uncovers evidence of an eldritch deity and is now beginning to investigate the matter further. Thurston serves as host of the attraction.

### THE CULT OF CTHULHU

A group of cultists that want to resurrect the dead and dreaming deity known as Cthulhu. These sinister cult members make appearances in the ride and retail portions of the attraction.

### CTHULHU

An eldritch being who has lain dormant beneath the ocean for millenia. He is now beginning to awaken. Riders catch flashes of the being throughout the attraction.

## QUEUE

### EXT. THURSTON MANOR

GUESTS enter through the gates of Thurston Manor and head across the manor's sizeable grounds. Along the way they pass by a fountain that is pouring out of an open book - Lovecraft's NECRONOMICON. Guests then climb the porch stairs and pass through an imposing set of double doors into the manor itself.

### INT. MANOR ENTRYWAY

The intrepid guests enter the manor and find themselves in an impressive ENTRY HALL. The entryway is two stories in height, and a grand set of curved staircases await the guests at the far end of the hall. A ground-level doorway between the staircases leads to an elevator for guests needing accessibility accommodations. The area features sparse furniture as well as a seascape painting on the left and right walls.

Though the entry hall is fairly sparse on decor, it is quite tidy. The only sign of dust or decay present in the room appears on the large chandelier hanging from the ceiling's midpoint. Two second-floor balconies look out over the entering guests. An animatronic of THURSTON appears on the balcony to the right. He welcomes guests into his home, but seems distracted by several papers in his hand. His attire consists of a disheveled 1920s era suit and a long, dark brown trench coat that has mud stains on its lower half. As guests continue through the space, Thurston speaks to them.

THURSTON

Research assistants? At this hour of the night? Any aid in my endeavors is most welcome, but I sense that assisting me with my research is not what is keeping you up so late. No, there is more. Something is calling to you. I wonder, have you too had strange dreams of late?

Thurston pauses as the lights flicker and a RUMBLING is heard in the distance.

THURSTON

It's drawing closer, the hour. Perhaps I - yes, I am afraid I must. I'm going to share something with you all, for you see - I have made a terrible discovery. Meet me in the library at the top of the stairs, and there I shall explain myself. The shadows grow unnaturally long in this hall, and I fear that some ill may soon befall us if we stay. Come along up the stairs now, and please, do not fall behind..

Guests continue through the space as Thurston speaks, and proceed into the next room.

INT. LIBRARY

Upon ascending the stairs in the entryway, guests pass through a doorway and head left into the manor's LIBRARY. The room's walls are lined with imposing bookshelves featuring countless aged volumes on subjects both ordinary and arcane. Some of these books lay open on the rooms' assorted tables where guests can view their contents. The library also features a modest assortment of furniture, as well as a windowed alcove (through which a gathering STORM can be seen) and a fireplace against the interior wall. A portrait of a woman is hung over the fireplace, with the subject facing away from the frame. She

seems as if she is about to turn around at any moment, and perceptive onlookers will note that she seems to be turning with impossible slowness.

THURSTON can be partially seen hidden within the alcove, but the angle at which he sits seems strange, and gives off the impression that he is merging into the house itself. A series of projection slides are shown on the wall next to Thurston, and they change as he speaks to the guests once more.

THURSTON

Welcome, my friends, to the library. May we find some small sanctuary within its walls. Draw closer, and I will tell you of my discovery.

In the course of my research into the relics of ages past, I have uncovered a stone with most peculiar markings. It is the markings that interest me, as they should you, for they depict a hitherto unknown creature, revered by his followers as an ancient god.

There is a pause as the room's lights flicker at this last utterance.

THURSTON

That is not all. The ancient nature of the stone is deceptive, as the cultists it depicts are very much alive and well. They are trying to resurrect their god, a monstrous entity known only as CTHULHU. Remember this name, for I dare not speak of it again. The hour of the cultists' ritual is drawing near. I beg of you, help me find a way to stop them!

Guests proceed into the study, where they are to "research" how to stop the cult.

INT. STUDY

Guests move from the library into the STUDY, where their journey through the house begins to twist into a journey into madness. Unlike the library, the study has no windows and features darker interiors. While the room is a study in name, the area is no longer functional, as it is filled to the brim with papers and books of all sorts. It looks as though any research conducted in this room has gotten way out of hand. Amidst the stacks of books and documents are a number of Eldritch artifacts - tablets, small sculptures, and other fragments recovered from various sites around the globe, with some even appearing to have been stolen from museums. A twisted (and rather

unsettling looking) GRANDFATHER CLOCK is also featured in the room. The wallpaper, featuring a repeating circular pattern, is torn in several places, giving the impression of TENTACLES reaching down the walls.

THURSTON's shadow is seen, though where it is being cast from is unclear. He speaks to guests as they travel through the room, but this time there is a twinge of mania in his voice, and he speaks mostly to himself.

#### THURSTON

This night is endless, and somehow grows darker with every passing moment. My mood grows darker, too, for I have made another discovery: I am a damned fool! There is no way to stop the rise of such a creature. It is inevitable. (beginning to crack) Ha-haha!

The cultists are gathering in their boats and will depart soon. To where, I know not, but I must act. No, no! I must stay here, and try to understand all this. Let my assistants go to the boats. Yes, let them face the cultists. I will stay here and read until blood flows from my eyes, if that's what it takes. I must understand. Let's see...this passage says *Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn*. (hopeless laughter) Ha-hahaha! Oh, what can it mean, what can it mean???

#### INT. BEDROOM

At long last, guests enter the heart of the madness - Thurston's BEDROOM. Any sense of order present in the other rooms has now fully given way to chaos. A storm can be seen gathering over the sea through the windows on the far wall. Within the room itself, elements of strangely shaped and melting furniture appear alongside a number of artifacts emitting dark auras. These include a chest with a tentacle design, a half-sculpted statue of CTHULHU, seascape paintings that seem to leak real water and have their subjects slowly move around, and more. In the center of the floor is an ancient page depicting Cthulhu surrounded by strange markings. The page itself is surrounded by melting candles, a motif that carries throughout the space. The far corner of the room features a wardrobe that, when opened, reveals a secret passage into the basement.

There is no sign of THURSTON here, but there are several of his diaries in the room that are open and able to be read. They start out

making some semblance of sense before eventually becoming indecipherable.

INT. BASEMENT

Entering through what appears to be a wardrobe, guests find themselves in a hidden passage descending a set of stairs that seems to stretch eternally downward into the bowels of the earth. Guests who require accessibility accommodations will instead enter an elevator hidden behind a wall.

As guests proceed down into the basement's depths, they begin to notice a change in their surroundings. The Victorian frame of the house gives way to hewn stone, which in turn yields to natural rock walls. The dark tunnel is lit only by scattered candles and lanterns, which begin to reveal signs of human activity. CARVINGS begin to appear in the walls, becoming more frequent as the walls turn into a cavern. To the side of the queue area are scattered pieces of furniture, including a table and an old GRAMOPHONE. These items are mixed in with nautical ephemera and relics related to the CULT OF CTHULHU, including tablets, torn pages, and a HAND OF GLORY. Shadows on the wall behind these objects look like people, even though no people are present besides the guests.

THURSTON's voice emanates from the gramophone, speaking to guests as they descend the stairs. The voice is distorted as the record slows down and returns to its proper speed periodically:

THURSTON

I understand! At last I understand! Ha ha ha HA! Hail Cthulhu! Hail! My research assistants shall be there to awake him from his dreaming, and then - well, then I shall be in need of new assistants!

The record skips, and a creepy song is heard relating to the voyage the guests are about to take. Guests will transfer from this room to the attraction's LOAD AREA, where the ride portion of the attraction begins.

INT. CAVERNS - LOAD AREA

Guests now find themselves fully inside the CAVERN proper, with few (if any) signs of Victorian architecture present. The only signs of human activity are wooden posts connected with ropes that are fencing off the cavern's walkways from the adjacent bodies of water, and a

small boat dock. Natural crevices dot the cavern walls, and seem to recede back into endless darkness.

Moving towards the boat dock, guests spot rowboats awaiting them in the water - the RIDE VEHICLES. Guests approach and enter the vehicles on their left-hand side, being helped in this venture by cast members. As guests settle into their seats, THURSTON's voice echoes through the cavern, giving them the ride's safety spiel and preparing them for their journey.

#### THURSTON

Ah, excellent, you've reached the boats. Keep your hands, arms, feet, and legs inside the boat at all times, and do not lift up on the restraints. You must stay perfectly intact if you are to witness the rise of dread Cthulhu from his slumber. You are most fortunate to see such a thing. Now, farewell, dear assistants, and remember: *Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn.*

Once the safety spiel is complete and the safety check is performed by cast members, the boats depart and the ride portion of the attraction begins.

#### RIDE VEHICLE

The RIDE VEHICLE appears to be a small, worn down fishing/rowboat with three rows, allowing anywhere from 9-12 guests to board a vehicle at once. Guests sit in designated seating areas, and are restrained by a lap bar shared across each row. The vehicle uses a "Rider Boat" system that has state-of-the-art maneuverability and an onboard speaker system. Both of these features are utilized throughout the attraction.

#### RIDE

##### INT. CAVERNS

Now settled in their ride vehicles, guests are carried along through the CAVERNS thanks to a light current in the otherwise calm water. As the boat drifts through the caverns, features that were subtly implemented within the BASEMENT area become more apparent as areas of interest. Wall carvings and paintings appear on the cavern walls, and small outcroppings feature totems and idols depicting Cthulhu's rise.



This area is lit by candles as well as rays of moonlight seeping through holes in the cavern's walls and ceiling. The first area of the cavern is quiet, with only ambient sounds of water being heard.

As boats head towards the cavern exit, their surroundings begin to come to life in ways that are seemingly impossible. The symbols and carvings in the walls begin to bleed, and the very walls of the cavern around you begin to move as if it is BREATHING. The subtle sound of breathing can now be heard underneath the sounds of water to add to this illusion. Just before guests exit the cavern into open water, the breathing and bleeding effects stop, seeming to suggest that either they have imagined this effect, or that things have returned to normal.

#### EXT. COASTAL WATERS

The guests' boats now drift out into COASTAL WATERS, where they are momentarily left alone to take in the scene. Their solitude is over quickly however, as small rowboats begin to appear on either side of their own vehicle. Each of these boats contain one to two hooded figures, and feature a lantern on the end of their bow. These hooded figures begin to move and chant, with some lifting their arms and others holding up books. These figures are members of the CULT OF CTHULHU, and as guests take in this scene around them, the cultists begin to chant in low, monotonous tones that give way to a strong chorus of fervorous, shouting voices.

#### CULT MEMBERS

Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn.  
Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn.  
Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn.

(Chant continues, and is overlaid with some cultists speaking the phrase in English)

In his house at R'lyeh, dead Cthulhu waits dreaming.  
In his house at R'lyeh, dead Cthulhu waits dreaming.

As the chorus rises, a whirlpool appears to form in front of the guests' boat. With no way to control their vehicle, guests find themselves drawn into the whirlpool with no chance of escape.

#### EXT. WHIRLPOOL

The guests are inevitably drawn into the edges of the WHIRLPOOL, where they begin to rotate around the center of the whirlpool. The movement of the ride vehicle seems to tilt the boat forward, as if it is being sucked deeper into the vortex. Beneath the surface of the whirlpool, a pair of massive RED EYES appear as if from the depths of the ocean. They begin to glow brighter, and a low but loud HUM can be heard seemingly emanating from the center of the whirlpool. Suddenly, the guests' boat mysteriously pushes back and out of the vortex, and begins to drift forward into the next scene.

EXT. COASTAL LIGHTHOUSE

The boat enters calmer waters and drifts closer to the coast, where guests can see a cliff with a LIGHTHOUSE some distance away. Another, empty ride vehicle bobs peacefully underneath the cliff. A strong yellow beam of light shoots out from the lighthouse and rotates in a circular motion. There is a serene moment where guests feel safe in the calm water beneath the lighthouse's glow, but this sense of relief gives way to terror as a large mass appears to block the lighthouse's beam. Suddenly, an enormous tentacle bursts from the sea and begins to wrap itself around the lighthouse. The lighthouse's yellow beam turns a sickly green and begins to slow as the tentacle captures it. After the lighthouse has been consumed, another tentacle begins to wrap up the empty ride vehicle near the guests, dramatically lifting it out of the water. The tentacle attack continues as the tide pulls the guests' boat away from the chaos and into the next scene.

EXT. SUNKEN CITY OF R'YLEH

Guests now find themselves sailing through massive stone ruins that appear to have recently surfaced from the depths of the ocean. Despite their sheer size and non-euclidean geometry, the stones are unmistakably the remains of an ancient SUNKEN CITY. Being back in a form of civilization should be comforting, but the experience instead unnerves guests. Trails of water cascade from the city's seaweed laden peaks, and as the guests pass through the area they soon find themselves in front of a massive stone gate that has cracked in two. The gate is inscribed with a bas relief likeness of Cthulhu that has begun to crack in places as well. Between the cracked gates lies an opening into pitch black darkness. An incredible SCREECH is heard as guests pass by the opening. The boats continue to move past the cracked gate and see more fragments of the city before reaching their outskirts and returning to open sea, where they will move into the next scene.

EXT. OPEN SEA

As the boats round the final corner of the sunken city and move out into OPEN SEA, they find themselves awestruck by the sight that lies before them. Colossal TENTACLES have emerged from the water and thrash about, causing the water around the boats to become choppy. A screen behind the tentacles creates the illusion of a violent storm, which features lighting strikes that reveal the outline of CTHULHU. His glowing red eyes are the only element of the beast that is fully visible, with his silhouette only being seen in flashes. Cthulhu begins to move forward through the sea, and his tentacles move closer to the guests, splashing water in their direction.

As guests continue to look on at the enormous entity before them, their boat appears to be lifted into the air by a tentacle surfacing directly beneath them. The scene goes almost completely black as the tentacle drops the boat back into the sea, treating the guest vehicle with all the importance of a speck of dirt. "The tentacle drop" takes the form of a log flume-style drop that takes guests into the final scene.

EXT. COASTAL WATERS

Guests' vehicles now drift through the final scene, where the COAST comes back into view, along with town lights high up on the coastal cliffs. Although guests have survived their encounter with Cthulhu, both they and the environment around them have changed. A sunrise is depicted on a screen to the side of the ride track, but it is an unnatural green color. Likewise, the waters around the boat appear to be blood red in appearance. The boat continues on its way towards a cavern entrance, but as it does it passes by a fishing boat with FISHERMEN on board. The fishermen turn their heads to follow the guests' boat as it moves past them, and as the green sun rises behind them, the unnatural shadows of the fishermen appear on the cliffs behind them, revealing their true forms to be those of monsters. The fishermen simply smile and continue to watch the boats as they disappear into the cavern, which serves as the guest UNLOAD AREA. As they move out of the final scene, guests should feel a chilling sense of unease that they will carry with them as they leave the attraction behind.

## EXIT & RETAIL

### INT. CAVERNS - UNLOAD AREA

Having escaped the madness at sea, guests' boats once again drift into a cavern, where the vehicles come to a full stop next to a boat dock. This cavern is quite similar in appearance to the cavern housing the LOAD area. With assistance from cast members (here appearing to be CULTISTS), guests then exit to the left of their boats (the same side on which they entered). They proceed off the dock into a cavernous path, where they will proceed to the attractions retail area. As they ready to leave the area, guests hear a voice echoing through the caverns, welcoming them back. This voice sounds somewhat like THURSTON but has the timbre of a cultist.

### CULTIST

You are awakened now, from the great dream, and Lord Cthulhu has let you live. We honor his act of grace, and invite you to join our number. Please, right this way. The caverns of our cult have such sights to show you...

Guests are left to wonder whether the Thurston they encountered in the queue was real at all, or if he was a distant echo of the original person, conjured by the house to lure them into its depths and the horrors eagerly awaiting them there. Naturally, as these thoughts run through their minds, they exit into the retail space.

### INT. CAVERNS - CULT OF CTHULHU SECRET HEADQUARTERS (RETAIL)

Guests proceed from the UNLOAD area through a large cavern tunnel and emerge into a chamber filled with merchandise stalls and artifacts related to CTHULHU and his CULT. The wall carvings return, as do scattered pages filled with cult writings. There are large patterned designs along the floor of the chamber and varied lanterns and lighting hanging from the ceiling and hidden in high outcroppings. Guests can peruse the shop at the leisure before checking out, where a CULT MEMBER will assist them. When they are finished, guests will exit to continue their day exploring the rest of the park.