

Hello,

I recently read in the paper that you were paying some money for references to a book called the Necronomicon. I've enclosed some copies of a series of letters I found in my attic earlier this year. They weren't very easy to read, as they appeared to be pretty old and in some areas illegible. I've given it my best shot, however, and hope that you'll find them worthy of a reward.

As you will be able to tell, I have withheld some of the letters I found. They made mention of this Necronomicon of yours, along with several passages copied from what I can only assume was the text itself. I would be willing to provide the transcripts of those letters upon reception of aforementioned reward.

Sincerely,

N.Q.

Letter 1

My Dearest Jane,

I hope you can find it within yourself to forgive any errors in transposition, jarred as the writing may be by the roughness of the road as well as by the unwitting introduction of blemish in the form that, so often motivated by strong emotion they seem to take as tears falling towards the page. But, of course I know it is within you to forgive such things, as you are the sweetest and dearest sister it could ever be expected to encounter in a world such as this one. I shall never forget that sweet kindness which led to the intervention you so valiently staged in the name of my honor to Papa. Yes, valient, I call it, though my poor skill with gramyre may twist the phrase to a silly end. It appears to me that, absent the presence of any male heirs to the family fortune, the good graces most oft attributed to the stronger sex have instead fallen squarely on your shoulders. In equal measure to those good I now myself fear sometimes, in the depts of the night when there is none such to be found that I, perhaps, have inherited the bad.

If such folly is true I suppose it would go quite some ways to explaining my actions of late. I fear that I shall become the black sheep of the family, alone and cast out upon a world I am not yet certain is kind.

But, as with all of my follies, I have weighed the cost as carefully as I could have, and have pressed ahead nonetheless. After all, what other choice could be even a small amount more beneficial to our family and, by extension, myself, who cares so deeply for them? The small sum that was left to us by our dear grandfather has all but vanished, each pittance taken by those ethereal fingers which belong to the repugnant creatures we call need. Papa's wage as a clergyman cannot satisfy those foul beasts for long on its own, and with four wretched daughters it seemed long foregone that our house would die a sad, small death, slowly worn away by the gnawing teeth of hunger. At least this way we can in some small part prolong its demise, perhaps long enough for you or even Katherine or Emily to find such husbands as are, and I know the sin of pride forces me to write, deserved by them. Besides, what other creature could motivate Papa to so stalwartly deny my occupation as housemaid to Mr. Jacobs other than that selfsame pride that is so clearly reflected in his kin? I know that he may express some measure of distaste at the hobbies of Mr. Jacobs, but the pursuit of scientific knowledge is hardly an

untoward prospect in this day and age, and should not be afforded so leery an outlook, especially when the prospector is a man so stalwartly of the faith as Mr. Jacobs is.

No, I fear it must be, and heaven forgive my mutinous tongue, a streak of jealousy that twists Papa's regard so. For what is Mr. Jacobs but a younger foil to our own Papa, one who has both wife and future in his grasp and not placed out of reach by the curse of daughters? It pains me to even write such cruel considerations, yet there they lie on paper, my sole consolation that they did not arise from my wicked mouth upon our last argument.

My Jane, I shall write at every opportunity so that you may see the wisdom or folly that has driven my quest. To this I have entrusted what can only seem a pittance, as such was offered to me for beginning my duties, and to help me secure safe passage to the object thereof. Alas I fear reintroducing the journey is bound to decrease again the legibility of a work already rendered a poor, mean thing by the road. I shall end, instead, by enclosing all the love in my heart for you and Papa and Katherine and Emily. I know that Papa refused to accept any money from me last we spoke, but if you could find it within yourself to exercise whatsoever small cunning you may possess to allow the enclosed to provide for you all, I would sleep much more soundly indeed.

Give Katherine a hug from me, and tell Emily her penmanship is dreadful, for now that I am safely beyond the reach of her cross remarks I find the harsh truth to escape far more easily. Try to keep Papa from worrying if you can and, most of all, stay strong my dear, dear sister.

*Forever Yours In Heart,
Lizzie*

Letter 2

My Dearest Jane,

*I cannot begin to find the words to express the joy I feel at receiving your letter. While my time in the city cannot be besmirched by untidy claims of dissatisfaction, a piece of home is what I have found myself yearning for most. Mr. Jacobs is very good to me, and little Austin is as far removed from being a chore that it would be more accurate to class him a joy undeserved for one at my position. He plays most readily with his small troupe of fast friends and displays such manners that I think even Papa could not find fault in him. My conscience forces my ammendation to 'find **much** fault', for he does suffer from such ready foolish trickery as boys at the age of 8 are wont to. Most pleasantly I have found that my harsher disposition has favored my status, as I have been informed by Mrs. Jacobs that such small pranks as the introduction of several large frogs to the housestaff previous had sent them into bouts of hysterics they were unlikely to ever recover from.*

Frogs, Jane! The very creatures that we so exasperated Papa with our seeming obsession with all those summers ago. I even remember the wicked work which sparked it, in which some awful magic had transformed a handsome prince into a nasty frog. You had resolved to break the spells on all such hapless creatures and were only prevented in your pursuit by the red, bellowing face of Papa. How I cried tears of laughter when you discovered no such princes waiting in the pond!

But I fear my pen has trailed from the present to the past, and it is with a force of will that I return it. Mrs. Jacobs, or as she insists I call her, Claire, is most patient and kind mistress. Her disposition is unfortunate, for I find her to be a cheerful and enthralling speaker when not confined to her chambers for relief from one of her spells of lethargy. With her I have found a fast friend, not something I had even began to expect when I first left. Through her I feel as if I have developed a kinship with the entire city, for as the wife of the Minister she knows all the proper folk. I have learned such things as you wouldn't even begin to imagine, such as the struggles that poor Josephine Gilbert faces when the weather turns, her arthritis seeming to freeze her hands to claws, or the demons in the bottle that Mr. Fredrickson holds at bay only with the strength of the good Lord and Mr. Jacobs' sermons every Sunday. The work as well must be hard for

women so delicate as the city is wont to produce, but I find it light and pleasant. Far be it from me to ever speak of ill of those that I love, but even you will agree when I say that keeping a house for a man, wife, and son seems an easier prospect than picking up after four children and a man who, at times, can act as a fifth!

My mirth once again runs straight ahead of my good sense and I wound my dear Papa with what was never meant to be more than a lighthearted jest. I do hope that you will have the discretion to avoid such follies when reading my letter to the family proper. It did fill me with no amount of affection able to be accurately described with what poor instruments I have to hear that Papa had consented to take what small money I had managed to send. I hope his good humor will continue long enough to hear that I still feel Mr. Jacobs to be a perfect gentleman in every sense of the word. His conduct with the city proper is always evenhanded and wise beyond so short a span of years as I would attribute to him. His sermons delivered as they are to such a collection, bring peace and joy in equal measure to those who seem to be in greatest need on any particular Sunday.

I will, however, admit to feeling no small sense of disturbance with regard to the scientific pursuits of Mr. Jacobs. On the occasion that some flight of fancy strikes, he will delve into that room he calls laboratory and spend all manner of hours engrossed in things that I cannot fathom. His appetite, too, seems to abandon him, perhaps arm in arm with his acknowledgment of the world outside his workshop, for the meals I leave during those times bear not the marks even of a cursory consideration. Should he ever emerge, as is necessary, for the brief respite of sleep, his eyes glow with a light not unlike that mad one which shone forth from poor Ned's before he hastened his journey towards the loving arms of Jesus. Never have I been instructed to clean out that room and I must confess it is with some relief that I report that as fact. Mrs. Jacobs, pardon me, Claire, has assuaged my unease in some small capacity by explaining some of the phenomena her husband is trying so diligently to produce. She has told me reports of lanterns that burn for many nights, giving off a clean, clear light without the need for fuel or, indeed, flame itself! And what of the wonderful theory of communication over distance, such that I could speak to you as clearly as if you were sitting next to me! Of course, these are only dreams of what a world might be, but what dreams they are!

As callous as it may make me sound, I believe the sacrifice of a small corner of one's sanity is an entirely reasonable proposition should it grant the world such marvels as a flameless lantern. Did not the Lord himself sacrifice his only begotten son so that wretched man might observe the splendors of heaven? But I once again allow my traitor pen to run far ahead of my senses, and pay the price with wicked words. I shall pray for such forgiveness is afforded for the foolish ramblings of a silly girl, and shall pray twice again as hard that the work of Mr. Jacobs will have no price of sanity attached to it, no matter how small.

I will say that the small prayers said around the table during such meals as all can manage to attend do leave me with a deep, aching longing to rush home and straight back into the parlour where we all shared so many quiet nights. I shall, instead, affix what small savings I have been able to acquire and with them all of the love in my heart for you and Papa and Katherine and Emily. You all occupy my mind and heart.

*Forever Yours In Heart,
Lizzie*

*P.S. Mr. Jacobs has been, as of late, engrossed in some tome that was delivered some time ago. He spends less time in his laboratory and more in his armchair by the fire. I think that there must be some advantages to written correspondence as opposed to spoken, for though I cannot pronounce the name of the novel I can copy it down:
NECRONOMICON.*

Letter 6

My Dearest Jane,

I know that this letter must shortly follow that which I had most previously written, and as such must apologize that I took not the time to wait for an adequate response.

It is just that things have been progressing to a point which makes me seek the comfort of consolation with you, my dearest friend and confidant. Not that my time here has been made the worse by deliberation, if that was the impression I gave then I must forthwith make amends to strike that thought from your mind. Mr. and Mrs. Jacobs have been still nothing but the kindest people in the world to me, and little Austin grows in charm and character with each passing day.

The work remains light, even though my duties have been added to some by the introduction of what I fear to be naught but a winter chill. Mrs. Jacobs has had the worst of it, and her already delicate constitution has suffered with the further burden that is the isolation of bedrest. That is to say nothing of sweet Austin, who views the rest as second only in discomfort to being poked with hot irons. I do, however, insist on their compliance in the matter, so that they may all the sooner be freed from the confines of their home, as I myself find some small corner of my being afflicted with the same fever and chills that clings to them, and would not all suffer in harmony, without any to take care for the others through the suffering. Even in this suffering they remain in good cheer, and make my job all the more merry with their dispositions.

*No, I rather write for your advice on a matter which I only but briefly touched on in my last letter: That of Mr. Jacob's studies and their affects on my dreams. I know it is not my place and yet I find myself worrying nonetheless. The times in the laboratory were spent in strange enough company before, with the smells and sounds issuing forth being enough to alarm those with temperments far stronger than mine even. But, alas, ever since his attention has turned to this **NECRONOMICON** of his I find the silences even stranger. For some reason I cannot fathom, they prey on my mind and creep inside my head a night, poisoning my dreams. It is in the aftermath of one such dream that I write and seek your guidance.*

In this dream, Mr. Jacobs had sat in his chair, just as he had the night prior, hollow-eyed like some poor soul adrift at sea for a great number of years. His gaze tore right through me as I delivered his nightly tea-service, and I was convinced he had fallen asleep, or into some sort of trance until he spoke. I will admit I was not half-frightened by the address and gave a little jump.

“Elizabeth,” he said, for he always uses my proper name in full, “Do you know what the weight on the human soul is?”

It was a question that could only sound ridiculous in the cold light of day, but sounds so sinister in the half-world of dream.

“I know of the burden of sin, sir. That which was paid for by the blood of the Lamb, shed on the cross that all mankind might have life eternal,” I replied, as has been taught me from birth.

“Not the weight of sin, you silly girl, the weight of sacrifice.”

I must confess I flinched at his tone for, while slight, this insult was the greatest he had paid me in all our acquaintence. Even when I had dropped a teapot some weeks back he merely smiled and said: “Better on the floor than in my lap”. There was no smile in his eyes in this dream, however. Nor any recognition of the things they beheld, just that dark, vacant gaze.

“I am sure that I do not understand, sir. My small learning has been from the pews, not the pulpit, unlike your own,” I finally managed to reply. I know not what the right words to say were, as so oft the case in dreams, but it seemed that mine must have been dreadfully wrong, for at that instant his eyes fixed directly on mine, and this time there was no vagueness in them.

“The pulpit be damned,” he whispered, so hatefully and with such seething violence that I cannot even now bring myself to believe it, be it just in a dream. “The pulpit and the saints and those above, bah! Poor, fragile imitations of a desire to stand in the sun. Sad, small, squirming children’s games. Children as young and upstart as Mayflies,

flitting in the summer air. Catch your gods and devils in jars and watch as they glow in the dusk, is what I say. Watch as their pale attempts do to the ages what their firefly light does to the sun: narry a pinprick, a drop in the ocean of light that for even a second the sun should produce. Why should they hold the reins as if they were rider when their role is as insignificant as the flea on the flanks?"

As he spoke his eyes grew more wild and I found myself drawn into them, as a moth is drawn to a flame, certain in some way that the fires of what I could only call madness would reach out and burn me as well. And yet, Jane, he continued his wild rant, flecks of spit now flying forth from his mouth.

"The pathetic weak will of these wormlike creatures, not fit to even be addressed as men shall damn us all to the darkness and gnashing of teeth. Shall we remain in this wide world because of the old wives' tales designed, in part to keep our minds slow and our ignorance thick? Shall we damn our men of merit to such small cages as to have them tinker over their poultices and potions while the Ancients pass by, in plain view? Shall we weigh the conscience of our most likely heroes with the sins of might be? Shall we weight the soul with hollow threats? The juvenility of man is that he retards himself with the chains of the divine!"

At these words, I must admit even deep within the dream as I was, I felt a chilling hand of fear seize my heart, for madness or blasphemy was afoot and I knew I could conscience neither to pass without the small resistance that my words might provide.

"You speak against God!" I exclaimed, my shock almost certainly etched irrefutably in my face. It was at this point the face of Mr. Jacobs changed, as if he was some sort of wolfish creature, as far from human as anything that had once been called man could ever be.

"Damn your God," he snarled. And, with that, he rose from his chair, towering a great many feet above me, so tall that he had to bend so as not to brush the ceiling. With a sudden, violent motion he tore his bible from its place on the tableside and cast it into the fire that still glowed on the hearth. My last memory is of my screams, and the embers falling, falling onto the floor at my feet.

I awoke in a terror, drenched with sweat and chilled to my very core by fever, fear, and something else I cannot quite define. I know not much of dreams, but cannot help but be reminded of those in the stories we have been taught: where men find great meaning in these and visions alike. And so I must ask if there is anything you who know me so well can discern. Any small meaning you can spy within these pages I have written, any sign of anything not motivated by base fear and fever. For although my unease at the studies of Mr. Jacobs may be classed as some small cousin to this fear which wells up in me now, I could not see them as equals in any sense. No, this is more than fear, it is a hollow, gnawing dread that approaches me in the night with bright eyes alight under my bed. I feel it tearing away at me piecemeal, shredding something inside which screams against it, tears into me creating worlds of uncertainty, driving a wedge into the very essence of my being. I begin to slip away now, uncertain of what is true.

Please, my dearest sister, if it is within you to provide comfort, do so now.

*Forever Yours In Heart,
Lizzie*

Letter 9

My Dearest Jane,

Please forgive the brevity that guides my hand. Mrs. Jacobs and little Austin are dead, taken in the night by their strange sickness. I can still hear them as if they were alive, their labored breathing, their whispers and thrashings in the night, fighting their best against the beast of the fever they seem to have succumbed to. I can still hear their pleadings for the pain to stop, for the flames to calm...

Oh my Lord they drive me mad with terror. I fear my end to be the same as theirs, for my illness has taken such the turn that I doubt I could ever feel right again. There is no dearer wish I have ever had than to see you all one last time, but I fear that I would not make the journey. Even now I see strange things in the night. Wicked, hungry things that dance at the foot of my bed. I see Mrs. Jacobs and Austin, dragged back from that space between worlds. I see their dark, hollow eyes, their hungry mouths, their grinning teeth like knives. The things they whisper to me, oh I shudder to even think. Deep secrets from the pages of the NECRONOMICON that were never meant for the minds of men, that twist and snap the soul like icicles from the first frost. I pray what madness that may yet consume me shall be cleansed when I am free, free from this mortal coil, that my wicked curiosity will not balance the scales against me.

I love you all, now and forever.

Lizzie

Letter 8

Jane,

Elizabeth has taken ill, but at present seems to be recovering. You must not feel fear at what things she may have said, as she has been hallucinating due to fever. If she made mention of illness of any others in the home, please also drive such conceptions from your mind. All is well, and Elizabeth shall be too, I am assured. Please come visit her so that you may see for yourself, and so she may have some degree of comfort.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr. Jacobs