

# TEACHER GUIDE

*An educational guide for teaching and reading*

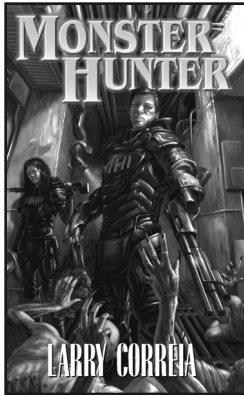
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# LARRY CORREIA'S MONSTER HUNTER INTERNATIONAL 2nd Edition

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## **INCLUDES:**

- Lexile scores • Novel backgrounds
- Complete and comprehensive story summaries
- Vocabulary lists • Individual chapter summaries
- Focus questions and initiating activities
- Reading comprehension quizzes
- Thought-provoking discussion questions





# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide will prepare you to teach your student about the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Larry Correia's novel *Monster Hunter International*.

On the following pages, you will find:

- Biographical material
- Recommended reading levels
- Plot summaries
- Character sketches
- Suggestions for projects that can be utilized throughout reading
- Guides to chapter of each book, including a more detailed plot summary, as well as:
  - ❖ Prepare to read ...
    - \* Vocabulary
    - \* Focus questions or initiating activities
  - ❖ Quizzes/reading comprehension questions: multiple choice and short answer (The answers are provided, but answers may also vary in expression.)
  - ❖ Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions: higher-order open-ended questions that might be utilized for quizzes, tests, class discussion, or essay prompts
  - ❖ Suggested activities/inquiry-based exploration



**Author biography:** Larry Correia is the creator of the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* best-selling Monster Hunter series, with first entry *Monster Hunter International*, as well as urban fantasy hardboiled adventure saga the Grimnoir Chronicles, with first entry *Hard Magic*, and epic fantasy series The Saga of the Forgotten Warrior, with first entry *Son of the Black Sword*. He is an avid gun user and advocate who shot on a competitive level for many years. Before becoming a full-time writer, he was a military contract accountant, and a small business accountant and manager. Correia lives in Utah with his wife and family.



**Recommended reading levels:** *Monster Hunter International* is appropriate for a young adult to adult audience. Classroom use of the book is most suitable for upper middle school to high school students.

**Plot summary:** Welcome to Monster Hunter International.

Five days after Owen Zastava Pitt pushed his insufferable boss out of a fourteenth-story window, he woke up in the hospital with a scarred face, an unbelievable memory, and a job offer.

It turns out that monsters are real. All the things from myth, legend, and B movies are out there, waiting in the shadows. Officially secret, some of them are evil, and some are just hungry. On the other side are the people who kill monsters for a living. Monster Hunter International is the premier eradication company in the business. And now Owen is their newest recruit.

It's actually a pretty sweet gig, except for one little problem. An ancient entity known as the Cursed One has returned to settle a centuries-old vendetta. Should the Cursed One succeed, it means the end of the world, and MHI is the only thing standing in his way. With the clock ticking toward Armageddon, Owen finds himself trapped between legions of undead minions, belligerent federal

agents, a cryptic ghost who has taken up residence inside his head, and the cursed family of the woman he loves.

### Major characters:

- **Owen “Z” Zastava Pitt** is a former accountant at Hansen Industries in downtown Dallas.
- **Cecil Huffman** is Owen’s former boss at Hansen Industries. He was a werewolf.
- **Special Agent Myers** is a Federal agent at the Monster Control Bureau.
- **Special Agent Franks** is also a Federal agent at the Monster Control Bureau.
- **Earl Harbinger**, aka **Raymond Shackelford II**, is the director of operations at Monster Hunter International. He’s a werewolf.
- **Mordechai Byreika** is a former monster hunter from WWII-era Poland.
- **Julie Shackelford** is with Monster Hunter International. Her great-great-grandfather Bubba Shackelford founded the organization.
- **Raymond “Boss” Shackelford III** is the President and CEO of MHI. He’s Julie’s grandfather.
- **Ray Shackelford IV**, aka **Ray**, is Julie’s father.
- **Susan Shackelford** is Julie’s deceased mother turned vampire.
- **Milo Ivan Anderson** is a hunter at MHI.
- **Skippy** is a helicopter pilot for MHI. He is part of an orc clan from Uzbekistan.
- **Gretchen** is Skippy’s orc wife. She has extraordinary abilities in healing the sick and wounded.
- **Albert Lee** is a newbie at MHI.
- **Sam Haven** is a former U.S. Navy SEAL and now is a hunter at MHI.
- **Grant Jefferson** was Julie Shackelford’s boyfriend. He’s also a MHI newbie.
- **John Jermain Jones**, aka **Triple J**, aka **Trip**, is a former high school chemistry teacher and a newbie at MHI.

- **Holly Newcastle** is a former nurse and stripper and a newbie at MHI.
- **Lord Machado**, formerly Portuguese military general Joao Silva de Machado, is a vampire known as The Cursed One.
- **Thrall** is a former captain of Lord Machado who defected Machado's ranks. He is now guardian of a powerful artifact.
- **Koriniha** was a high priestess and is a millennia-old goddess.
- **Jean Darné** is a famous French monster hunter turned vampire.
- **Dr. Jonas Turley** was an archeology professor who discovered a Place of Power in Alabama.
- **Queen Ilrondelia** is an Elf Queen living in Mississippi.

### Projects:

- *Gunsmithing Then and Now*: MHI protagonist Owen has an expansive knowledge of and passion for firearms, as well as an appreciation for fellow enthusiasts who are able to envision and build creative versions of firearms. Research and create a written or multimedia presentation on the history of early and modern gunsmithing. Consider including in your presentation your own ideas of what weapons would be best employed against the various monsters featured throughout the novel and why. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/gunsmithing-tools/10108>
  - ❖ <https://www.texasmonthly.com/articles/the-last-gunsmith/>
  - ❖ <https://www.forbes5.pitt.edu/article/production-muskets-and-their-effects-eighteenth-century>
  - ❖ <https://www.oldest.org/technology/guns/>
  - ❖ <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/development-early-handguns.html>
  - ❖ <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/30/>

*science/surprising-tools-of-modern-gunmaking-plastic-and-a-3-d-printer.html*

- *Safe Shooting:* Consider that the success of MHI is partly due to monster hunters masterfully using firearms and other weapons to kill monsters efficiently while also keeping in mind the safety of their fellow hunters fighting beside them. Instruct your fellow classmates on how to use various types of firearms, as well as other weapons of interest, safely and responsibly, including instruction on proper field-stripping. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.washingtongunlaw.com/12-golden-rules>
  - ❖ <https://www.nssf.org/safety/rules-firearms-safety/>
  - ❖ <https://www.fieldandstream.com/5-gun-safety-basics/>
  - ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mK7uihP5oMY>
- *American Folktales and Legends Group Project:* Assign students to small groups and provide them resources to learn about a historic American myth or legend. Task each group with choosing one myth or legend to study in further detail, making sure that each group has chosen a unique story. Assign groups to create a presentation that explains their myth or legend, and that also makes connections to characters, events, or themes from Monster Hunter International. Guides to famous American folktales and legends can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://people.howstuffworks.com/9-legends-of-american-folklore.htm>
  - ❖ <https://stacker.com/stories/3854/25-american-folk-heroes-and-stories-behind-them>
  - ❖ <https://americanfolklore.net/>
- *Create Your Own Mythology:* Imagine a mythological creature built specifically for the time and place in which you live. Consider where this creature lives and how it moves around in your modern landscape. Create an image of the creature and also write a myth explaining the creature's origins and how it continues to interact with the world.
- *Journalism Connection:* Choose an action scene from

the novel and write a mock news article that lays out the events of the scene. Include direct quotations from participants who took part in the action, as well as some imagery. Aim to ultimately present a product that is formatted and worded like a real-life news article.

- *Character Sketch*: Choose one character from the novel, human or unnatural being, and sketch or create a digital image of that character based on your own interpretation. Annotate the character to describe qualities that make them complex, making every item in their image meaningful (e.g. how they style their hair; how they wear their clothing; the expression on their face; an object they might be holding; etc.). Consider including one quotation from the character that you feel embodies them.
- *Dream Depiction*: Create a visual representation of one of Owen's dreams from the novel, including a relevant title, and one quotation or sentence from the text that you feel distinctly represents the dream.
- *Monster Meaning*: Research the etymology of the word monster with a goal of understanding how the word has shifted in meaning over time, and what works of literature or other works of art have been heavily dependent upon the word. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=monster>
  - ❖ <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/discussion/what-is-a-monster>
  - ❖ <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-020-0414-7>
- *Monsters in Jewish Lore: Research supernatural creatures and monsters of Jewish folklore*. Choose one monster and create a multimedia presentation that explains the origins of this creature, how it interacts with the world, and the meaning it contributes to stories. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.jewishboston.com/read/the-vibe-of-the-tribe-podcast-monsters-and-demons-in-jewish-folklore/>



- ❖ <https://www.heyalma.com/meet-judaisms-demons-spirits-witches-ghosts/>
- ❖ [http://www.ala.org/tools/sites/ala.org.tools/files/content/Jewish%20Literature%20Demons%20Golems%20and%20Dybbuks\\_0.pdf](http://www.ala.org/tools/sites/ala.org.tools/files/content/Jewish%20Literature%20Demons%20Golems%20and%20Dybbuks_0.pdf)
- ❖ <https://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/judaism/8-fascinating-jewish-myths.aspx>
- **Cryptozoology:** Research the field of cryptozoology and create a written or multimedia presentation that explores the origins of the field, prominent researchers within the field, and evidence provided to support the legitimacy of the field. Then, choose one creature studied by cryptozoologists and give an outline of this creature. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.livescience.com/11328-rumor-reality-creatures-cryptozoology.html>
  - ❖ <https://www.atlasobscura.com/categories/cryptozoology>
  - ❖ <https://theconversation.com/us/topics/cryptozoology-4866>
  - ❖ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_cryptozoologists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cryptozoologists)



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 1–3

### Prepare to read . . .

- **Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:**
  - ◆ whipping boy
  - ◆ CFO
  - ◆ divots
  - ◆ hyperventilate
  - ◆ impasse
  - ◆ inconspicuous
  - ◆ regenerate
  - ◆ tourniquet
  - ◆ preordination
  - ◆ lycanthrope
  - ◆ interloper
  - ◆ corpulent

- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** Have students explore and discuss their own knowledge of monsters as absorbed through literature, TV, or film. Ask students, what makes any particular monster interesting and even relatable, and what makes for “boring” and unrelatable monsters?

## Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 1:** Owen Zastava Pitt recalls the events leading up to his throwing his boss Cecil Huffman out of a window at Hansen Industries, including discovering a mouth-foaming Huffman sitting naked in his office and claiming to be a god, before transforming into a werewolf and chasing Pitt through the building while constantly regenerating from Pitt’s attacks.
- **Chapter 2:** In a dead state, Owen finds himself in a lush field and is greeted by an old man who suggests that Owen return to life, as he has work to do. Owen awakens and is greeted in his hospital bed by special agents Franks and Meyers of the Monster Control Bureau, who inform Owen that his blood is being tested for lycanthropism and that he will be killed if tested positive. Owen is visited by Earl Harbinger of Monster Hunter International, who gives Owen his business card before leaving. Owen later dreams of soldiers fighting a guardian trying to reclaim something, as well as another evil presence who retreats at the guardian’s approach, and the dream concludes with a leading soldier vowing to return to fight the guardian before killing himself, and the guardian telling Owen that it intends on killing him. Franks and Myers leave Owen upon receiving a negative lycanthropism test.
- **Chapter 3:** Owen’s murder of Huffman is written off by local police as justifiable homicide. Owen is visited by his parents while recuperating at home, and Owen’s father implies he’s aware that Owen fought a nonhuman creature. Owen is visited again by Earl and colleague Julie Shackleford, who provide Owen a large bounty for having

killed Huffman and inform Owen that other types of unnatural beings exists. Owen accepts a recruitment into MHI and has dinner with Julie, and Julie invites Owen to an upcoming MHI training class.

### Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions

1. The following sentence provides an example of what rhetorical device? (Chapter 1)
  - *The previous newest hire had committed suicide, thereby creating the opening that I now filled.*
    - A. Understatement
    - B. Overstatement
    - C. Metaphor
    - D. Allusion
2. What does Owen reveal about himself that suggests he is interested in strategic self-defense? (Chapter 1)
  - A. He says he's a master of martial arts.
  - B. He claims to having had to kill people in the past.
  - C. He says that he has a large gun collection at home.
  - D. He claims to have a history of being attacked by random people.
3. What spills out of Huffman's dinner bag? (Chapter 1)
4. What humorous rhetorical device is being employed in the underlined portion of following sentences? (Chapter 1)
  - *Returning gracefully to all fours he shook himself like a giant dog, splattering the blood from his wounds on the white walls and motivational posters in the hall.*
  - *A computer monitor fell to the ground and sparked. I was in the marketing room. A poster with a kitten forlornly holding onto a clothesline had the caption: hang in there.*
    - A. Exaggeration
    - B. Irony
    - C. Alliteration
    - D. Metonymy
5. Special agents Franks and Myers's reaction to the fact that Pitt had been attacked by a werewolf can be described by all the following adjectives *except*: (Chapter 2)

- A. nonchalant
  - B. incurious
  - C. dispassionate
  - D. conscientious
  - E. tepid
6. Why are agents Franks and Myers considering killing Pitt? (Chapter 2)
  7. What is the relationship between energy and regeneration, and a lycanthrope's susceptibility to death? (Chapter 2)
  8. What is ironic about the reason that Owen is fired from Hansen Industries? (Chapter 2)
  9. Why did agents Myers and Franks leave Pitts's head unbandaged? (Chapter 2)
  10. How did Owen make extra money to put himself through school? (Chapter 3)
  11. What's the purpose of the Perpetual Unearthly Forces Fund? (Chapter 3)
  12. What is one being that MHI does not contract to kill? (Chapter 3)
    - A. sea creatures
    - B. extraterrestrials
    - C. ghosts
    - D. vampires
  13. What are Owen's two conditions for accepting a job at MHI? (Chapter 3)
  14. How has MHI converted silver bullets to be effective against particular creatures? (Chapter 3)
  15. Why did Julie actually stay for dinner with Owen? (Chapter 3)

**Answers:**

1. A
2. C
3. A woman's hand
4. B
5. D

6. They know that if Pitt had been bitten by Huffman, then he could be contagious as a lycanthrope.
7. If a lycanthrope is injured significantly enough, it cannot access enough energy to regenerate itself.
8. Owen is fired for having had a gun on the premises during a werewolf attack.
9. To monitor how fast his head healed.
10. He competed in underground fights.
11. The fund is a federal bounty paid on undesirable unnatural beings.
12. C
13. That Owen may leave MHI if he decides it is too dangerous, and that Julie have dinner with him.
14. They have encased silver bullets with traditional lead slugs.
15. To be sure that Owen was not a werewolf.

### **Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. When recounting his fatal battle with werewolf Huffman, Owen remembers, “It was like being in a car wreck. The almost disbelief as the events unfolded. The lack of emotion during the impact. And finally the brutal realization of what had happened. I just killed a werewolf.” Later, Owen also remembers about this experience that “time had dilated down so that each fraction of a second had been an eternity.” Why do you think in emergency situations you may become distant or unemotional, and time may even seem to slow down? Have you had any experiences like this in your own life?
2. Owen ponders, “I wondered if somewhere deep inside that animal Mr. Huffman was there, enjoying this, loving the power, finally being able to strike back at the world he hated so much.” Is there a “beast” within us all that our human selves are aware of to a greater or lesser degree at any given time? If so, what does this beast want? Could there ever be a reason to let this beast out? Or, should this beast always be locked up?

3. How does the author use the concept of “Rules” to comment on the absurd nature of danger and violence in the world?
4. “We’re not looking for normal people,” Earl says of MHI. “Normal people scream and run and get eaten. You have to be a little different to do the kind of stuff that we do [and not] have a problem coping with weirdness.” What careers in real life demand people who would be considered “not normal” by societal standards, and can cope with “weirdness”?
5. Earl observes of Owen, “Your psychological profile says that you’re a pathological overachiever with severe overcompensating tendencies as a result of your relationship with your father, and the fact that you were always the picked-on fat kid while growing up.” How have your own experiences in growing up, whether related to your family, friends, or others, influenced your motivations and perspectives about the world?
6. What do depictions of supernatural regeneration say about humans’ underlying fears, as well as aspirations? What deeper symbolic meanings might underlie depictions of supernatural regeneration?

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *Werewolves through Time*: Research and create an essay or multimedia presentation on the history of werewolves in literature and visual media. Seek to explore how the depiction of werewolves has evolved over time, while also asking the questions: Is there a common type of person to be depicted as a werewolf, or are werewolf depictions more diverse in nature? How do werewolves serve as both commentary on the human experience, as well as commentary on the various societies depicting them?

Information can be found at:

- ❖ <http://darkworldsquarterly.gwthomas.org/a-literary-history-of-the-werewolf/>
- ❖ <https://www.historicmysteries.com/werewolf-legends/>

- ❖ <https://www.history.com/topics/folklore/history-of-the-werewolf-legend>
- ❖ <https://www.syfy.com/syfywire/the-underrepresented-legacy-of-women-werewolves>
- ❖ <https://www.animalsandsociety.org/human-animal-studies/sloth/sloth-volume-3-no-1-winter-2017/howling-boundaries-werewolves-anxiety-human-animal-border-early-modern-europe/>



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 4–6

### Prepare to read . . .

- **Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:**

◆ portcullis	◆ golem
◆ sic transit gloria mundi	◆ modular
◆ demographic	◆ monstrosity
◆ dispatch (v.)	◆ insubordination
◆ nanny state	◆ nemesis
◆ derelict	◆ cryptic
◆ judicious	◆ schematics
◆ admonition	◆ disembodied
◆ mausoleum	◆ incorporeal
  
- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** Review with students Owen’s dream in which he observes the Cursed One approaching a beach in a lifeboat. Display an image of the painting *Washington Crossing the Delaware*. Foster a class discussion on how authors use images in contradictory ways to illustrate complex ideas.

### Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 4:** Owen moves to MHI headquarters in Cazor, Alabama, where he attends a hunter orientation featuring a greeting by MHI president Raymond Shackelford III, who explains that professional monster hunting has been

reawakened with the reestablishment of government contracts.

- **Chapter 5:** During his first month of training, Owen impresses fellow trainees at the MHI shooting range, practices beheading cadavers, and struggles at sprinting, while Earl instructs a class on different types of unnatural beings, focusing heavily on zombies. Owen and his peers receive MHI-issue body armor. Owen and Grant Jefferson nearly get into a fight during training.
- **Chapter 6:** Owen dreams again of a lush field but now under overcast skies, and the old man suggests to Owen that a storm of evil from a Cursed One is coming. Owen then finds himself floating above the MHI compound where Earl, Julie, and others argue over who to assign on an urgent mission at a freighter. Owen then finds his consciousness traveling overseas to a beach on which lands an ominous lifeboat manned by the Cursed One and vampires, and he and the old man once again flee when other winged monsters arrive, and the vampires notice Owen and the old man's presence. Owen wakes from the dream and learns that other hunters in the barracks also experienced nightmares. Earl rouses MHI recruits for a mission.

### **Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions**

1. What's the cause of a gap of six years in monster hunter deaths as is visible on memorial plaques displayed at MHI? (Chapter 4)
2. What unnatural beings inspired Bubba Shackelford to form a monster-hunter group? (Chapter 4)
  - A. vampires
  - B. werewolves
  - C. zombies
  - D. swamp creatures
3. Which U.S. president founded the Perpetual Unearthly Forces Fund? (Chapter 4)
4. The new group of MHI recruits can be described by all the following adjectives *except*: (Chapter 5)



- A. heterogeneous
  - B. miscellaneous
  - C. homogeneous
  - D. sundry
  - E. diverse
5. According to Earl, what type of unnatural being is MHI's "bread and butter"? (Chapter 5)
  6. What is the special power of a wight zombie? (Chapter 5)
    - A. Their touch causes the victim to become mentally confused.
    - B. Their touch causes the victim to suffer immediate paralysis.
    - C. They are extremely fast runners.
    - D. Their gaze causes the victim to become hypnotized.
  7. Why did Owen decide to become an accountant, and why is he worried about leaving that job and working for MHI? (Chapter 5)
  8. What does the old man in Owen's dream wear around his neck? (Chapter 6)
  9. Owen notices all of these things about some of the employees he floats over in his dream *except*: (Chapter 6)
    - A. that Holly Newcastle sleeps in the nude
    - B. that some employees are not human
    - C. that some employees are arguing with one another
    - D. that some employees are evil creatures in disguise as MHI newbies
  10. What language does the Cursed One seem to be speaking in Owen's estimation? (Chapter 6)
    - A. Spanish
    - B. Portuguese
    - C. French
    - D. Italian

**Answers:**

1. This gap in hunter deaths represents a period when the government banned professional monster hunting.
2. A
3. Theodore Roosevelt

4. C
5. The undead, or zombies
6. B
7. Owen nearly killed an opponent in a paid fight in a fit of rage, so he decided to take on a “straight-laced, stereotypically boring” career. Owen now worries that MHI will bring this rageful violence out of him again.
8. A Star of David
9. D
10. B

### **Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. Earl Harbinger instructs his MHI newbies to “Keep your mind flexible. Don’t get caught up in what you’re sure is real, because if you can’t believe in them, you can’t fight them.” How can the concept of needing to “believe” in things that are a threat to you be applied in the real world? What are the consequences of not believing in your enemies?
2. Owen fears that working at MHI will bring a rage and violence out of him that he tried to suppress when he took on a job as an accountant. What tendencies, behaviors, or emotions do you fear may be brought out of you if you do not actively “push them down” within yourself? Do you avoid certain environments or interactions that you know will reawaken these feelings in you?

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *Zombies through Time*: Research the history of zombie lore and how narratives of zombies, and the portrayal of zombies themselves, has evolved over time. Seek to also understand how zombie narratives serve as commentaries on the societies that create them. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.history.com/topics/folklore/history-of-zombies>

- ❖ <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/10/how-america-erased-the-tragic-history-of-the-zombie/412264/>
- ❖ <https://www.livescience.com/23892-zombies-real-facts.html>
- ❖ <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/10/31/13440402/zombie-political-history>
- *Vampires Through Time*: Research the history of vampire lore and how narratives of vampires, and how the portrayal of vampires themselves, has evolved over time. Consider which countries and cultures vampires originate from across narratives, how vampires have been portrayed in both negative and positive ways, and how vampires can be viewed as a commentary on the human experience. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.history.com/topics/folklore/vampire-history>
  - ❖ <https://www.livescience.com/24374-vampires-real-history.html>
  - ❖ <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/primate-diaries/a-natural-history-of-vampires/>
  - ❖ [https://www.lagrange.edu/resources/pdf/citations/2010/11Sheperd\\_English.pdf](https://www.lagrange.edu/resources/pdf/citations/2010/11Sheperd_English.pdf)
  - ❖ <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/blood-simple-how-society-dumps-its-problems-on-vampires-1.3265803>
- *Out of Body*: Research and create a written or multimedia presentation on the subject of out-of-body experiences, sometimes related to the fields of study known as astral projection and remote viewing. Include personal or other anecdotal evidence, if possible. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.livescience.com/27978-astral-projection.html>
  - ❖ <https://artifactsjournal.missouri.edu/2015/01/a-journey-to-other-worlds/>
  - ❖ <https://science.howstuffworks.com/science-vs-myth/extrasensory-perceptions/astral-projection.htm>

- ❖ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/remote-viewing-up-close/>
- ❖ <https://www.livescience.com/50683-out-of-body-illusion.html>
- ❖ <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/07/the-neuroscience-of-out-of-body-experiences/534696/>



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 7–11

### Prepare to read . . .

- **Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:**

♦ omen	♦ galley
♦ transponder	♦ impunity
♦ impunitybalaclava	♦ surreptitiously
♦ utilitarian	♦ visage
♦ pylons	♦ fusillade
♦ incredulous	♦ ichor
♦ accurize	♦ affluent
♦ ordnance	
  
- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** Ask your students if they have ever had a dream with events that came true in real life. Foster a discussion on how dreams affect everyday life in general, and the extent to which they should be taken seriously.

### Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 7:** Owen and fellow hunters travel by boat and helicopter to meet another hunter team at a French freighter that was headed to the U.S. before contact was lost with its crew, and Owen informs Earl that the name of the French freighter is the same name on the vampire lifeboat from his dream. Owen's team receives Morse code contact from a surviving French hunter aboard the freighter.

- **Chapter 8:** During a zombie ambush aboard the freighter, Owen is paralyzed and dragged overboard by a wight zombie, but while underwater he is again greeted by the old man from his dreams who inflates Owen's CO2 flotation device, and Owen is pulled back to his team's boat. Owen and his team enter the bowels of the ship where they purge the engine room of vampires by bursting open steam pipes. Upon entering the engine room the team discovers that the French hunter team leader Jean Darné is actually a vampire, accompanied by other vampires and zombies.
- **Chapter 9:** Owen feigns agreement with Darné to take Julie hostage and have free passage from the freighter in exchange for information, wherein Owen learns that the Cursed One, known as Lord Machado, and six additional master vampires have entered the U.S. with a dangerous artifact. Owen orders Julie to run while he pulls the pin of a smoke grenade, which he tosses to Darné before opening fire on surrounding wights and climbing up a cargo-bay ladder at the top of which Grant opens the hatch but runs away at the sight of the zombies. Darné attacks Owen on the ladder, but Earl suddenly appears below to challenge Darné to a fight, which Darné accepts as Owen escapes through the hatch. On deck, Owen breaks Grant's nose and tosses him overboard after activating Grant's CO2 flotation device. Meanwhile, the crew salvages valuable art from the freighter, and the crew holds a funeral for a fallen hunter.
- **Chapter 10:** Owen is summoned by Earl, Julie, and other MHI members to the cargo bay, where he is shown native soil-filled coffins used by the master vampires, as well as signs of extraordinary strength around a broken-open shipping container, which Owen infers was done by the winged creatures from his dream. On their return home, Earl warns Owen against attacking a fellow teammate, while also requesting his help preparing for an IRS audit.
- **Chapter 11:** Owen and some of his team are sent back to a lodge in coastal Georgia, where one night Owen dreams

of an explosion-rocked mountain at the base of which a black, tattooed hand thrusts its way out of an avalanched-over cavern. Earl informs the Georgia team that the master vampires dropped anchor near their location, and that MHI has alerted the Feds about the vampires. Owen accompanies Earl on a helicopter to search for Machado's boat on the coast using Owen's dream as guidance, and Owen sights the boat in a swampy forest near a large house, which they enter to find the owners, including history professor Dr. Jonas Turley, murdered. Feds arrive, including agents Franks and Myers, who subdue Owen and Earl and demand that MHI return to Alabama.

### **Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions**

1. MHI will lose some or all contract money on the French freighter mission if what two things occur? (Chapter 7)
2. What detail about the French freighter appeared in Owen's dream about the vampires arriving on a beach? (Chapter 7)
3. According to Owen, what is a disadvantage that newly created vampires face? (Chapter 8)
4. What is one advantage and one disadvantage of monocular night-vision goggles? (Chapter 8)
5. What disorients vampires? (Chapter 8)
  - A. loud noises
  - B. spinning
  - C. lights
  - D. small spaces
6. What does Earl report about the vampires aboard the French freighter that is uncharacteristic of them? (Chapter 8)
  - A. The vampires worked in a coordinated effort.
  - B. The vampires couldn't be killed by normal means.
  - C. The vampires attacked the hunters in a confused, haphazard way.
  - D. The vampires did not seem to obey their master vampire.

7. What key information does Owen learn from Jean Darné? (Chapter 9)
8. What is special about the soil in the vampires' makeshift coffins found in the French freighter's cargo bay? (Chapter 9)
9. What non-monster hunting task does Earl ask Owen to help him with? (Chapter 10)
10. Why is Owen certain that Lord Machado will be accompanied by his fellow vampires, and what concrete evidence does he supply to back this up? (Chapter 11)
11. According to Earl, how do vampires "stay off the radar"? (Chapter 11)
  - A. They only kill in small batches.
  - B. They move constantly so as not to give away their location.
  - C. They employ mind control on anyone who happens to capture them.
  - D. They feed on the "underbelly" of society, such as hookers, pimps, and drug dealers.
12. What is peculiar about MHI's helicopter pilot? (Chapter 11)
  - A. He has an indecipherable accent.
  - B. His face is always concealed.
  - C. He is not an especially good pilot.
  - D. He never makes a sound.

**Answers:**

1. If the cargo on the freighter is damaged or the ship sinks.
2. The name of the freighter.
3. They are confused and disoriented.
4. An advantage is that the goggle leaves one eye exposed to be able to adjust to the dark; a disadvantage is that the goggle blinds the other eye when bright lights are turned on.
5. C
6. A
7. That Lord Machado and six other master vampires have entered the U.S. with a dangerous artifact.

8. The coffins are filled with soil native to the vampires' homeland.
9. To get MHI's financial books in order for an IRS audit.
10. Owen understands from his dream that Lord Machado is being constantly protected by his fellow master vampires, and he reminds his teammates of the seven coffins packed together on the French freighter.
11. D
12. B

### **Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. Is Owen justified in physically attacking Grant Jefferson? Could Owen have handled Grant's seeming betrayal in another way that still communicated the seriousness of Grant's actions?
2. Predict why a history professor with some archeological training may have been targeted by the master vampires.
2. On the surface, the relationship between Agent Franks and Owen appears violent and strained. However, reconsider how their relationship could be interpreted a fulfilling and actually "friendly," even if in an unconventional way.

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *The Invigoration of War*: When thinking of his experience fighting monsters alongside MHI teammates, Owen says, "I was having a great time and had never felt more alive," later adding, "It came down to the friends that stood by our side, and our will to fight for them. It felt really good to be alive right then, I would stand with these people any day, and I knew that they would stand by me." Research anecdotes and psychological studies of what some may term the "invigorating" and fulfilling experience of participating in war with a family of fellow soldiers. Create a written or visual presentation that analyzes your findings and seeks to explore both the advantages and disadvantages of this experience. Information can be found at:



- ❖ <http://www.washingtonindependentreviewofbooks.com/index.php/features/an-interview-with-sebastian-junger>
- ❖ <https://medium.com/the-front-lines/the-best-thing-about-the-military-is-the-camaraderie-a56aa21c9cd8>
- ❖ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-debrief/202001/longing-war>



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 12–15

### Prepare to read . . .

- **Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:**
  - ◆ diversion
  - ◆ detent
  - ◆ routed
  - ◆ rudimentary
  - ◆ raiment
  - ◆ raze
  - ◆ poise
  - ◆ minions
  - ◆ inane
  - ◆ psychosomatic
- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** Review with your class the definition of “artifact” and challenge students to think of examples of real-world artifacts. Then, ask students to think of examples of powerful artifacts from other works of literature, TV, or film. Consider displaying images and explanations of artifacts as featured in the Indiana Jones movies to spur recognition. A list of artifacts recovered in the Indiana films can be found at: <https://www.ranker.com/list/indiana-jones-artifacts/hannah-gilham>.

### Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 12:** Back at the MHI Alabama compound, Owen dreams of a cargo plane taking off in the wintry north, boarded by a man covered in black, moving face tattoos. Julie holds a meeting to discuss how to determine the

location where Lord Machado plans to use his artifact. Owen joins fellow hunters Trip, Milo, and Holly on a trip to Enchanted Forest trailer park to visit Elf Queen Ilrondelia, who informs the hunters that Lord Machado is currently near a body of water, and then warns Owen to avoid the tattooed man from his dreams. Later Milo asks Owen to speak with Julie about convincing her father of the urgency of Lord Machado's appearance, while Julie demands that Owen report all of his dreams. Milo assembles a variable-artillery shotgun for Owen. Julie informs Owen and Milo of another vampire attack on an anthropology professor who specialized in religion.

- **Chapter 13:** Owen dreams of a snowy, bombed Polish town where the old man shows him a destroyed church that is a Place of Power to which Lord Machado had once brought an ancient artifact in an attempt to control time. The old man, whose last name Owen learns is Byreika, gives Owen a vision in which he experiences himself as Lord Machado on a Portuguese military conquest of a wealthy city, where Machado is approached by the city's high priestess Koriniha, who offers Machado power to build a kingdom. Following the vision, Byreika says he will try to produce for Owen an image of Machado's current mind, and also explains that the tattooed man is the guardian of the artifact that Lord Machado seeks. After waking and informing Earl of his dream, Owen loses consciousness while receiving a memory of Lord Machado driving into Alabama and is simultaneously aware that Machado senses his presence.
- **Chapter 14:** National Guard units are deployed along the southeastern U.S. in the guise of preparing for terrorist threats. Owen and Julie visit an Alabaman insane asylum where Julie's father Ray Shackelford IV resides, Julie visiting Ray while Owen receives a tour of the asylum by a doctor who is a longtime friend of MHI. Owen and the doctor notice live gargoyles on the asylum rooftop.
- **Chapter 15:** Owen recognizes the gargoyles as the winged

monsters from his original dream before they begin to attack the asylum, one gargoyle targeting Owen directly, and another going after Ray, whom Julie has taken into custody. The three escape in a van, with Owen defending the van against further gargoyle attacks before the van crashes over one gargoyle, which Owen beats to death. A third gargoyle fails to capture Ray when it is shot and killed by Owen and a farmer from nearby.

### Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What is Julie's theory as to why the master vampires sought after the archeology professor? (Chapter 12)
2. According to Ilrondelia, why did Lord Machado try to make a deal with the Old Ones? (Chapter 12)
3. According to Ilrondelia, all are true about Places of Power *except*: (Chapter 12)
  - A. There are many Places of Power in the U.S.
  - B. There are not many Places of Power in the U.S.
  - C. Places of Power are dependent upon cosmic alignments.
  - D. Places of Power lie dormant much of the time.
4. According to Milo, what kind of person should any monster-hunter team include at least one of? (Chapter 12)
5. What does Julie's father, Ray Shackleford IV, have in common with Lord Machado? (Chapter 13)
6. Why does Byreika promise to not take Owen out of his body again in his dreams? (Chapter 13)
7. What is special about the type of power that the high priestess offers to Lord Machado? (Chapter 13)
  - A. It is a power sustained solely through the fear of the ruled.
  - B. It is a power sustained by continual mind control of the ruled.
  - C. It is a power sustained by dark magic.
  - D. It is a power sustained not by fear but worship of Lord Machado.

8. According to Byreika, who is the tattooed man from Owen's dreams? (Chapter 13)
9. What does Julie reveal as the cause of a massacre of monster hunters in 1995? (Chapter 14)
10. Why does the third gargoyle not kill Ray? (Chapter 15)

**Answers:**

1. Julie thinks that the professor had information about the location of an ancient religious site, or Place of Power, where Lord Machado needs to use an artifact.
2. Lord Machado wanted the Old Ones to turn back time for him so that he could save the high priestess Koriniha from dying.
3. B
4. A person of faith
5. Both Ray and Lord Machado attempted to bring a woman back from death.
6. Owen's body could be possessed by an evil force.
7. D
8. He is the guardian of the artifact that Lord Machado seeks.
9. Julie's father unwittingly invited demons to Earth from another dimension after meddling with space and time to bring his wife's soul back from the dead.
10. Lord Machado has dispatched the gargoyle to detain Ray in order to get information from him.

**Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. What may the author be suggesting by placing an all-wise Elf Queen in a stereotypically "ignorant" setting, such as Enchanted Forest trailer park?
2. Speaking about his motivation to work for MHI once realizing there was a "secret evil" in the world, monster hunter Trip says, "I thought for just a minute that there might be a secret good." How would you define forces of "secret good" in your own world?
3. Describe how Owen's vision of himself as Lord Machado

expands our understanding of Machado as a person. What do we learn about Machado’s motivations and self-perception? Is there anything relatable in the depiction of Machado?

4. Julie comments that people with “flexible” minds are better equipped to handle trauma than other people. How do you interpret the meaning of “flexible mind” as Julie uses the expression? What may lead someone to have such a mind, and how do you think such a mind is better-equipped to cope with traumatic experiences?
5. At Appleton Asylum, a doctor tells Owen, “For the victims [of monster attacks], they see people like you as Batman or the Lone Ranger. It keeps their worlds in balance. Mankind needs our heroes.” What are both the advantages and dangers of perceiving other human beings as “superheroes”?

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *Gargoyles Then and Now*: Research the history of gargoyles as both mythological creatures and architectural features and create a multimedia presentation of your findings. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.themarysue.com/history-of-gargoyles/#:~:text=Gargoyles%20were%20initially%20made%20to,French%20gargouille%2C%20which%20means%20throat.>
  - ❖ <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/88019/10-fearsome-facts-about-gargoyles>
  - ❖ <https://culturacolectiva.com/art/gargoyles-in-gothic-architecture-cathedral-art-meaning>
- *Lord Machado’s Roots*: Research the Spanish and Portuguese conquistadors and create a presentation that analyzes why the author chose this background for the character of Lord Machado. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.historyhit.com/who-were-the-conquistadors/>
  - ❖ [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/tudors/conquistadors\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/tudors/conquistadors_01.shtml)

- ❖ <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-spanish-conquistadors-2136564>
- ❖ <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/precontact-and-early-colonial-era/spanish-colonization/a/the-spanish-conquistadores-and-colonial-empire>
- ❖ <https://www.factinate.com/people/37-bloody-facts-spanish-conquistadors/>



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 16–18

### Prepare to read . . .

- **Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:**

♦ exasperated	♦ dupe
♦ intercepted	♦ esoteric
♦ obelisk	♦ innocuous
♦ concubine	♦ nexus
♦ cabal	♦ antebellum
♦ dreidel	♦ credo
♦ APB	♦ opulent
♦ Doric	♦ RPGs
♦ extemporaneous	♦ reticle
♦ salve	
  
- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** Display Julie’s quote from chapter 18 which reads, “Normal is an illusion. Normalcy doesn’t exist.” Foster a class discussion around this concept, encouraging an exploration of all the ways that most people do not fit the category of “normal.”

### Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 16:** As they wait for medics, Owen passes out on the road and is again transported by dream to the snowy town where Byreika is waiting for him at the church. Byreika implants another memory from Lord Machado

into Owen's mind, wherein Machado, now a worshipped ruler, is led by the high priestess Koriniha to a cavern beneath a pyramid to a rune-inscribed black-metal obelisk with an inlaid alcove housing a stone box.

Koriniha gives the box to Machado, explaining that it is a key that Machado is destined to use at a Place of Power, and offering herself as lover to Machado to ensure the success of the artifact's activation. Byreika explains that the Old Ones are trespassers who seek to destroy the world, also warning Owen about a large red object. Owen wakes to find himself and Julie in an ambulance driven by Ray, and he knocks Ray out and breaks the ambulance to avoid Ray driving into a moving train.

- **Chapter 17:** At the Shackleford family plantation house near the MHI compound, Owen and a slightly conscious Julie are greeted by fellow hunters, as well as MHI helicopter pilot Skippy's wife Gretchen, who treats a puncture wound suffered by Julie. Owen wakes the next morning with his own wounds mostly healed by a paste applied by Gretchen while he was sleeping, and at breakfast he's informed that the Feds want to apprehend Ray, while Trip suggests that a Fed at the Monster Control Bureau is in communication with Lord Machado. Julie acknowledges that they must kill Ray if not doing so means his being captured by Lord Machado. Owen guards Ray, who informs Owen that Places of Power are constantly shifting nexuses of magical energy, and that MHI has three days before a full moon when time will be fragmented and billions of people die under a new rule of the Old Ones.
- **Chapter 18:** Julie gives Owen a tour of the Shackleford plantation house and explains how Ray had summoned the Old Ones at a fateful 1995 MHI 100th anniversary Christmas party held at a Place of Power over sacred tribal ground, with attending monster hunters just barely beating the Old Ones back through their interdimensional gate after suffering many casualties. Julie continues to

explain that she left monster hunting but returned when she suspected vampire attacks at her college campus. Julie gifts Owen a box of random pistols that includes a letter she wrote to her younger brother Ray in anticipation of the MHI anniversary party, where he was ultimately killed. On patrol duty of the house perimeter, Owen investigates ruins of a former slave quarters the interior of which is covered with old scratch marks. Grant arrives at the house to report firstly that in light of additional recent vampire attacks, the Feds will loosen restrictions on private monster hunting, and secondly that Byreika, first name now known as Mordechai, was a WWII-era monster hunter who was searching for Lord Machado.

### Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What rhetorical device is being used in the underlined portion of the following passage? (Chapter 16)
  - *This Cursed One, I not can show you things that are in his mind now, for he will know. But these other things, they are long ago in his past. Buried like body in ground.*
    - A. metaphor
    - B. simile
    - C. personification
    - D. onomatopoeia
2. Why had Lord Machado ordered his translator, Friar de Sousa, burned at the stake? (Chapter 16)
3. According to Koriniha, in what way does Lord Machado need to be motivated to use the artifact? (Chapter 16)
4. What does Earl instruct MHI to do with Ray if it appears Ray may fall into the hands of the master vampires? (Chapter 17)
5. Places of Power can be described as all of the following *except*: (Chapter 17)
  - A. mobile
  - B. migratory
  - C. static
  - D. roving
  - E. transient



6. According to Julie, how did Bubba Shackleford show that he had a flexible mind in his day? (Chapter 17)
7. Besides having been a stripper, what other profession did Holly once have? (Chapter 17)
8. What motivated Julie to return to monster hunting after her split following the 1995 incident? (Chapter 18)
9. All are true about the discoveries concerning Mordechai Byreika *except*: (Chapter 18)
  - A. He was a freelance monster hunter.
  - B. He spent time in Nazi concentration camps but it is not known where he died.
  - C. He believed that Lord Machado was working with the Nazis to find a time-killing artifact.
  - D. He once attempted to use the artifact himself.

**Answers:**

1. B
2. The friar attempted to send a warning to Lord Machado's ships about the danger of Koriniha converting Machado to paganism, while also attempting to report that Machado is keeping his expedition a secret from the Portuguese crown and church.
3. Machado must use the key out of love for another person, not a love of power.
4. Kill Ray.
5. C
6. Bubba employed African Americans in his very first group of professional monster hunters.
7. She was also once a nurse.
8. Young girls began disappearing from her college campus, the cause of which Julie understood were vampire attacks.
9. D

**Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. In Lord Machado's memory of being shown the black obelisk by Koriniha, how could the Latin message inscribed on the obelisk be interpreted as actually describing Owen?

2. Mordechai explains that the Old Ones “want nothing more than to kill world. They kill anything they not can have.” Relate this trait to the human experience. Describe how you have observed this inclination to “destroy what cannot be possessed” in others or even yourself. If you cannot think of a real-world example, consider other fictional examples that feature this behavior.
3. Holly warns Owen, “There’ll come a time when you’re going to have to make a choice. Somebody who you can’t save, no matter what. And then you’re going to have to choose, you can either save yourself, or you can die trying. Sometimes the choice is between running like a coward, or fighting like a fool.” Where in real life have you observed the relevance of Holly’s warning to Owen? Use your own experiences or observations of others to support your answer.
4. Holly is wary of being judged for having previously been a stripper. How much do you believe a person’s occupation should define them? When in life should a person’s occupation not be interpreted as a reflection of their “true self”? Should everyone strive to have an occupation that reflects their own passions or interests?
5. Owen quotes philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, saying, “Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster.” What does this quote mean to you, and how can you apply it to the world you live in?
6. Do you believe that a former slave plantation has a right to remain standing if it is now used for other purposes? Or, do you feel that buildings where evil once occurred retain their meaning and should be demolished?

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *Dilemmas with Preserving History*: Research former slave plantations in the American South that are still standing, and how they are being used today. Create a written or multimedia presentation that outlines your findings and

come to a conclusion as to whether or not the reuse of these plantations is justified. Lists of former plantations, as well as commentary, can be found at:

- ❖ <https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/usa/articles/10-notable-southern-plantation-tours-in-the-united-states/>
- ❖ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_plantations\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_plantations_in_the_United_States)
- ❖ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-49842601>
- ❖ <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2021/0115/Plantation-tours-bypass-the-big-house-to-focus-on-the-enslaved>



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 19–20

### Prepare to read . . .

- **Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:**

◆ edifice	◆ oafish
◆ plaintive	◆ incipient
◆ ethereal	◆ immolated
◆ wantonly	◆ contrition
- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** Review with your class the meaning of the Latin aphorism *Sic transit gloria mundi*, or “the glory of man is fleeting.” Read Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poem “Ozymandias” as a class and encourage students to make connections between the themes and imagery of the poem to themes and characters in the novel. The poem can be read at .

### Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 19:** Ray suggests to Owen that Owen is not fully aware of who he is. Owen overhears Grant expressing remorse to Julie over his abandoning Owen on the French

freighter. In another dream Mordechai gives Owen a self-carved dreidel, says that he is stuck in time at the church, and confirms that Nazis worked with Lord Machado to steal the artifact from its guardian before burying the guardian under a mountain. Mordechai begins to share another memory from Lord Machado, wherein Machado approaches a pyramid within a jungle, but Mordechai suddenly thrusts Owen out of the memory, warning him of approaching danger, and Owen awakens to an attempted seduction by Julie's mother Susan, who claims to have become a master vampire. Hunters enter the room as Susan tries to persuade Julie to join her as a vampire and reunite her family, but on Gretchen's direction Owen reaches into his pocket to find Mordechai's dreidel, which he presses against Susan's grasp, turning it to flame. Susan survives a hail of silver bullets and takes Julie hostage before Gretchen repels her with a totem and curse, and Susan disappears. Owen discovers Susan in the plantation ballroom feeding off of Ray's neck. Susan forces her will onto Owen and attempts to suck his blood, but Mordechai releases Owen's mind from Susan, and Owen inhibits Susan by holding a gun to Ray's head. Lord Machado's lieutenant Jaeger appears and retrieves Susan, who swiftly heals from a hunter onslaught and tells Jaeger that Ray revealed where the Place of Power is. Jaeger and Susan flee.

- **Chapter 20:** A seemingly dying Ray tells the hunters that Natchy Bottom, Mississippi, is the Place of Power where they should go to speak to a wendigo. Feds arrive and retrieve Ray and subdue the hunters, but Harbinger and other hunters arrive to fend off the Feds, and in a standoff Harbinger directs Myers to answer his ringing phone, whereby Myers is ordered by someone to stand down his men. Julie provides the Place location to the Feds and informs them of the wendigo contact, while also demanding that monsters under sanctuary in Natchy Bottom are not harmed, and Harbinger explains that the wendigo will only speak to him. Owen and fellow hunters return Gretchen to her and Skippy's home, where their

clan members kindly reveal themselves as orcs. Owen shares a kiss with Julie before Harbinger's team and the orcs set out to take the rear to the Feds at Natchy Bottom, while other hunter teams handle outlying vampire attacks.

### Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What does Julie's mother explain is incorrect in terms of how a vampire becomes a master? (Chapter 19)
2. What happens when Owen presses Mordechai's dreidel against vampire Susan's hand? (Chapter 19)
  - A. Her hand bursts into flame.
  - B. She begins to turn pale and shrink.
  - C. She begins to transform back into a human.
  - D. The soul of Mordechai possesses her.
3. Julie's feelings concerning killing her father can be described as all of the following *except*: (Chapter 19)
  - A. ambivalent
  - B. dubious
  - C. resolute
  - D. vacillating
  - E. conflicted
4. Why is Owen unable to shoot Ray in the presence of Susan? (Chapter 19)
5. What is the "sanctuary" in Natchy Bottom that Julie refers to? (Chapter 20)
6. What creature are the hunters directed to speak with in Natchy Bottom? (Chapter 20)
7. Why does MHI believe that Grant was taken by the master vampires? (Chapter 20)
8. What physical gesture does Gretchen and Skippy's tribe perform to honor the visiting monster hunters as equals? (Chapter 20)

### Answers:

1. She explains that it is not how long you're a vampire that counts, but from which vampires you take blood and how much is taken.
2. A

3. C
4. Susan controls Owen's will with her own mind.
5. A group that provides sanctuary to monsters deemed to be a low threat and that sometimes hides these monsters from the Feds
6. A wendigo
7. To use Grant as a human sacrifice in order to activate the artifact
8. They reveal themselves by removing their face and head coverings.

### **Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. If you were Owen, how would you continue to interact with Grant after having heard him express his remorse to Julie? Do you think Grant's transgression against Owen is unforgivable?
2. Julie's vampire mother pleads to her, "Come with me. . . . We can take your daddy. The change will be good for him. It will fix his mind. We can be a family again." What are the dangers of focusing on "turning things back to the way they were" in real life? If possible, use your own life experience or observations of others to support your answer. Consider even making connections to society and politics.

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *Nazis and the Occult*: While the novel presents an imaginary coordination between the Nazis and the supernatural, some corners of the real Nazi party had actually invested energy and thought into exploring and unlocking what was believed to be secret supernatural power. Investigate and report on the Nazis' dabbling in the "occult" with a goal of understanding their motivations and the results of their work in this domain. Information can be found at:

- ❖ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96r\\_nvkc30Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96r_nvkc30Y)
- ❖ <https://www.bookforum.com/print/2404/what-nazis-learned-from-the-occult-18850>

- ❖ <https://bigthink.com/culture-religion/nazis-occult?rebelltitem=3#rebelltitem3>
- *Investigating Orcs*: Research the origins of orcs in mythology and how they're representation in literature and film has evolved to the present day. Include an analysis of the author's depiction of Skippy, Gretchen, and their tribe and how the depiction both conforms to and breaks away from traditional representations. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Orc>
  - ❖ <https://www.engadget.com/2009-01-27-know-your-lotro-lore-origins-of-the-orc.html>
  - ❖ <https://scroll.in/article/904869/when-tolkien-depicted-orcs-in-lord-of-the-rings-was-he-being-racist-rather-than-imaginative>
  - ❖ <https://www.eurogamer.net/articles/2020-02-06-its-not-easy-being-green-a-brief-history-of-orcs-in-video-games>
  - ❖ <https://screenrant.com/lord-rings-orcs-origins-explained/>
- *The Meaning of Dreidels*: Create a presentation that explores the origin of dreidels and interprets why the author chose this toy as a representation of hidden power. Information on the dreidel can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-origin-of-the-dreidel/>
  - ❖ <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/.premium-gyration-nation-the-weird-ancient-history-of-the-dreidel-1.5344849>
  - ❖ <https://www.aish.com/h/c/b/History-and-Meaning-of-Dreidels-8-Interesting-Facts.html>



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 21–24

### Prepare to read . . .

- Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| ◆ deference    | ◆ cryptozoologist |
| ◆ guile        | ◆ AWACs           |
| ◆ embarkation  | ◆ salvo           |
| ◆ conscription | ◆ carapace        |
| ◆ dais         | ◆ subcutaneous    |
| ◆ braziers     | ◆ repository      |
| ◆ barnacle     | ◆ zenith          |
| ◆ harpy        | ◆ ensnare         |
| ◆ diminutive   | ◆ vendetta        |
| ◆ eldritch     | ◆ debrief         |

- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** As a class watch clips from classic swamp-monster movies, such as *Creature from the Black Lagoon*, that may have partly inspired the author for the events at Natchy Bottom.

### Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 21:** On the helicopter ride to Natchy Bottom, Owen dreams of the tattooed guardian driving toward Montgomery, and the guardian communicates to Owen that he and Owen are destined to fight each other to Owen's death. Owen's dream shifts to the church, where Mordechai warns Owen of the danger Owen himself may create in fighting the guardian. Mordechai shares another of Lord Machado's memories, wherein Koriniha guides Machado in making a human sacrifice to the Old Ones in a jungle-shrouded pyramid, and where Machado promises to resurrect Koriniha if she ever were to die. After the pyramid floods with water and Machado drinks blood from the heart of his sacrifice, a captain by the name of Thrall who previously defected under Machado's rule charges inside the pyramid with troops and kills Koriniha, and the memory ends when a blast of lightning prevents Machado from reaching the artifact he had placed upon the sacrificial altar. Harbinger's team lands in Natchy Bottom and begins trekking the swamp behind the Feds.
- **Chapter 22:** Amidst unnatural sounds of horns,



Harbinger alerts his team and the Feds that they've been trapped in Ray's lie that Lord Machado and his vampires would be in Natchy Bottom, and that another evil presence beyond the wendigo's power to challenge has been summoned instead. The hunters defend themselves against insectoid demons bursting from the swamp water and launching spears of spines taken from their own bodies, and Owen senses the remote observation of Lord Machado. Various types of demons arrive through interdimensional rifts and Milo, Holly, Trip, Skippy, and other hunters are killed, as well as Agent Franks. Owen is punctured in his chest by a spine.

- **Chapter 23:** Joined in spirit by Mordechai over the swamp battlefield, Owen notices Lord Machado's presence within an interdimensional gash in the sky, and he travels through the rift to find Machado and his vampires guarding the time artifact in a cavern. Owen grasps the artifact and makes a wish, activating it and severing the link between dimensions, and Machado's army suddenly disappears from the swamp. Owen is reunited with his body on the battlefield to find that time has reversed five minutes, fellow hunters and Feds alive once again in a sudden absence of demons, and news reports confirming that the time reversal impacted the entire planet. Mordechai shares with Owen a final memory of Lord Machado, wherein Machado crawls back up the stairs of the pyramid toward the artifact, finding it missing. Machado dismembers Koriniha's skeleton and travels back to his ruined city where he lays the skeleton near the obelisk in the cavern. When to no avail Machado pleads with the Old Ones to resurrect Koriniha, he destroys the obelisk with his ax, and Owen is pulled from Machado's consciousness to observe an Old One transforming Machado into the Cursed One. Owen is transported back to the snowy Polish village to be greeted by Lord Machado, who promises eternal pain on Owen and his loved ones when Owen refuses an offer of eternal life with Julie in exchange for his allegiance.

- **Chapter 24:** Martial law is enacted across the southern U.S. as protestors gather in front of the White House. Back at the MHI compound, Owen and Julie consummate their love. Harbinger debriefs a combined force of hunter groups on the fate of Ray and Susan, the time reversal, and the battle at Natchy Bottom, and Owen explains the entirety of his experiences since joining MHI leading up to his interaction with Lord Machado. Owen suddenly loses consciousness.
- **Chapter 25:** In a space of darkness Owen is greeted by Mordechai, who explains that Lord Machado has shielded his own mind and that Owen must leave his body to travel to the artifact. Mordechai hands Owen several objects before they transport to a cave where Lord Machado and his vampires, including Susan, are holding Grant hostage as a sacrifice. Mordechai charges the vampires, breaking Machado's hold over Owen's will, and Mordechai vanishes. Owen has a vision of the Polish town in 1944 where Jaeger fails to activate the artifact after making a sacrifice of Mordechai, who had been guarding the artifact at the church, thus linking Mordechai's soul to the stone box. Owen escapes the will of Machado after passing by a cartoonish figure of a grinning conquistador and returns to consciousness with more of Mordechai's wooden dreidels in his grasp. The team links the conquistador figure to a tourist cavern within the state. As the team nears the caverns by car and helicopter, frogs rain from the sky amidst tornado warnings.

### **Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions**

1. What has changed about the environment around the church in the snowy town where Owen regularly meets Mordechai? (Chapter 21)
2. What two ways do Mordechai and Owen protect Owen's mind while he experiences the memory of Lord Machado making a human sacrifice? (Chapter 21)
3. How does the environment within the pyramid change when Koriniha begins reciting her incantations? (Chapter 21)

- A. The pyramid fills with spirits of previous sacrifices.
  - B. The interior of the pyramid alights with fire.
  - C. The pyramid undergoes an earthquake.
  - D. The pyramid is flooded with rain and rushing water.
4. Who does Captain Thrall turn out to be? (Chapter 21)
  5. All are true about wendigos *except*: (Chapter 22)
    - A. They are doomed to walk the earth for 500 years.
    - B. They were previously shamans.
    - C. They have been punished for committing an unforgivable act.
    - D. They are guardians of their land and its inhabitants.
  6. What weapons do the insectoid demons in the swamp use against the hunters? (Chapter 22)
  7. When is the link across the dimensional rift connected to the swamp severed? (Chapter 22)
  8. Why does Mordechai bring Owen to a place of darkness instead of the Polish town? (Chapter 25)
  9. How did Lord Machado's lieutenant Jaeger transform himself into a vampire? (Chapter 25)
  10. According to Julie, what is a "pocket dimension"? (Chapter 25)
  11. How does MHI determine the location of the cavern where Lord Machado is using a dimensional rift? (Chapter 25)

**Answers:**

1. The ground around the church is covered in bullet shell casings.
2. Mordechai does not allow Owen to hear Koriniha's incantations before the human sacrifice, and Owen refuses to observe Machado drinking the blood from the heart of his sacrifice.
3. D
4. The tattooed man who has been cursed to guard the artifact

5. A
6. Spears of spines taken from their own bodies
7. When Owen takes hold of the artifact
8. So that Lord Machado cannot find them
9. He committed suicide after having been bitten by a vampire in his youth.
10. A bubble that exists outside of the regular world but is attached to a fixed point
11. When visiting the cavern in spirit, Owen observes a grinning statue of a conquistador that the team is later able to link to the tourist cavern in Alabama.

### **Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. Imagine that you had the ability to reverse time five minutes whenever you would like. Expound on both the advantages and complications that would arise with this power.
2. Brainstorm how a sudden but short-lasting attack by transdimensional creatures on Earth would impact the planet permanently. Expound on all the ways human society and human behavior might change.
3. Mordechai explains that “holy things when used by faithful person is much powerful. Why? Not because of little metal star or little wooden cross. No, because of belief. Belief that good beats evil, because of strength that is inside people.” Are there physical objects in your own life that you empower with belief or faith, even outside of a religious context? How do you use these objects, and what impact do they have on your life?

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *History of Mesoamerican Human Sacrifice*: Research and create a written or multimedia presentation on the practice of human sacrifice in the Mesoamerican era. Seek to understand not only how the sacrifices were performed, but the motivations for and expectations around them. Information can be found at:

❖ <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2018/06/>

*feeding-gods-hundreds-skulls-reveal-massive-scale-human-sacrifice-aztec-capital#:~:text=Human%20sacrifice%20occupied%20a%20particularly,and%20the%20world%20would%20end.*

- ❖ <https://www.history.com/news/aztec-human-sacrifice-religion>
- *The Wendigo*: Create a presentation that explores the origins of the wendigo, how it interacts with the world, and the messages it carries in its stories.
  - ❖ <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/mn-wendigo/>
  - ❖ <https://www.backstoryradio.org/blog/the-mythology-and-misrepresentation-of-the-wendigo/>
  - ❖ <https://sites.psu.edu/tetirclblog/2015/02/24/the-myth-of-the-wendigo/>
- *North American Burial Grounds*: Research historic burial grounds/mounds of North America and choose one that is especially interesting to you. Create a written or multimedia presentation that aims to illustrate what group(s) were buried there and what has been the fate of the burial ground across history to the present day.
- *Desoto Caverns*: Research the Alabaman Desoto Caverns, which the DeSoya Caverns appear to be based on. Create a written or multimedia presentation on the pre- to post-discovery history of the caverns. Information can be found at:
  - ❖ <https://www.desotocavernspark.com/caverns-history>
  - ❖ <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-3243>
  - ❖ <https://www.sylacauganews.com/local/historical-marker-series-desoto-caverns>



## GUIDE TO CHAPTERS 26–Epilogue

**Prepare to read . . .**

- **Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary:**
  - ❖ NCO
  - ❖ isosceles

- ◆ regalia
- ◆ crevasse
- ◆ telekinetic
- ◆ spasmodically
- ◆ subverting

- **Focus questions and initiating activities:** Engage a class discussion around the question, “If you could have extraordinary powers, what would they be, and what would your purpose be in using them?”

### Chapter Summaries

- **Chapter 26:** Lord Machado ignores warnings from Jaeger and Susan of the abilities of the monster hunters, and several vampires exit the cavern to advance the hunters. Flanked by beast-riding orcs and military units, the hunters destroy some vampires with mixed heavy artillery, but other vampires use an interdimensional rift against the cavern to advance on the hunters at close proximity. Owen rescues an enthralled Grant by entering the cavern through the still-present rift, and Julie knocks Grant unconscious when he tries to bite Owen after he and Owen return across the rift with wight zombies in tow. Earl reveals himself as a werewolf and battles a master vampire. Owen is pulled by Julie back through the rift into the caverns behind other hunters, and the rift closes. The team comes upon a pile of corpses in a vampire den, and Holly reveals that she was once a victim of a den. After reaching a burial ground discovered to have been excavated by Dr. Jonas Turley, Susan appears and attempts to persuade Julie again to join her, explaining that she has turned Ray. Susan and zombies charge the hunters, but Milo voices a spell that explodes the cave with light and lightning and thrusts Susan back. Owen wishes into existence the portal to the dimension where Lord Machado resides, and Machado yanks him and Julie through the portal with arms of tentacles.
- **Chapter 27:** Owen and Julie face Lord Machado and Jaeger in a snowy, forested landscape, Owen failing to defend himself against Jaeger and beaten into

unconsciousness. Owen wakes to find himself and Julie shackled in a pocket dimension between worlds where nearby stands the pyramid from Machado's memories, at the top of which Machado and Jaeger set up an altar. Jaeger drags Owen to the altar, where Machado sets the artifact beside remains of Koriniha's bones beneath a robe, and Koriniha retakes her form. As Koriniha begins to empower the artifact with an incantation, Owen warns Machado that the Old Ones are using him to take over the world themselves. Realizing he has been chosen to defend the artifact, Owen is overcome with power from the artifact and uses his will to thrust away Lord Machado as he attempts to sacrifice Owen with his ax, and Owen then destroys Jaeger with Mordechai's cane, which he pulls out of the artifact. Against Mordechai's protests, Owen strikes Machado's heart with the ax as a black sphere expands overhead, and Koriniha, holding Julie hostage, informs Owen that he has completed the sacrifice. Thrall arrives and battles Koriniha with Owen's own weapons, but Koriniha nearly kills Thrall and reveals that she is a millennia-old god. Koriniha mortally wounds Julie when Owen refuses her false offer to become a world ruler by opening a gate to the Old Ones. Lord Machado rises and strikes Koriniha with his ax, and the two disappear into the black sphere. Before dying, Thrall imbues Julie with new life. Lord Machado reappears as transformed back into a man, and Owen kills him with his shotgun despite his claim of being redeemed. The pocket dimension begins to collapse around Owen and Julie, but the chain ladder of the MHI helicopter appears and Owen grasps it while holding Julie, the helicopter lowering them to the ground on the Earth dimension.

- **Chapter 28:** Owen returns in a dream to the lush field where he originally met Mordechai, but now under clear skies, and Mordechai greets him in youthful form amidst other souls of former monster hunters who have been freed from the prison of the artifact. Owen awakes without any injuries or scars amidst other recuperating

hunters. Julie informs Owen that Susan escaped, and that Earl is actually Raymond Shackelford II. Earl appears on the scene naked in human form, and Agent Myers grants Earl freedom again to fulfill MHI contracts. At a wedding reception held for Milo by MHI, Earl gives Owen an MHI patch and officially inducts him onto the team. Months later, Julie receives a letter from Ray and Susan that offers a truce as well as the choice to be given immortality if facing death, and Susan also informs Julie that Owen wants to marry her. Julie accepts Owen's proposal.

- **Epilogue:** An Old One sends a message across dimensions ordering minions to seek and destroy Owen Pitt.

### Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions

1. According to Owen, why do the master vampires, aside from Jaeger and Susan, have no fear of humans? (Chapter 26)
  - A. They know that their powers will always outshine those of humans.
  - B. They can psychically forecast the future and know that they will win the battle at the caverns.
  - C. They have slept through the last few centuries and are unaware of the new abilities of man.
  - D. They are literally incapable of feeling fear.
2. How has Lord Machado ensured that he and his vampires can walk outside during the day? (Chapter 26)
3. How does Owen use some of Mordechai's dreidels to assault the vampires at the cavern? (Chapter 26)
4. When Grant dies in the future, what must be done to him and why? (Chapter 26)
5. What kind of creature does Earl Harbinger reveal himself to be? (Chapter 26)
  - A. A vampire
  - B. An orc
  - C. An Old One
  - D. A werewolf
6. Who excavated the burial ground within DeSoya Caverns? (Chapter 26)



7. How does Owen make the interdimensional portal appear in front of him? (Chapter 26)
8. What is trapped within the artifact? (Chapter 27)
9. What does Owen pull from the artifact as a weapon to use against Jaeger? (Chapter 27)
10. What lie does Owen know Koriniha is telling him? (Chapter 27)
  - A. That the Old Ones will not enter the world when the interdimensional gate is opened.
  - B. That Owen will rule the world after opening a gate to the Old Ones.
  - C. That she will spare Julie's life so that she can rule the world beside Owen.
  - D. That she is a millennia-old god.
11. What reason does Mordechai give for why he, and not any of the other souls trapped within the artifact, had to be the one who made contact with Owen? (Chapter 28)
12. Why is it specifically ironic to Owen that Earl is a werewolf? (Chapter 28)
13. What does Owen realize was the cause of the claw marks inside the former slave quarters he entered at the Shackleton plantation house? (Chapter 28)
14. All are true about werewolf Earl *except*: (Chapter 28)
  - A. He is the oldest known lycanthrope in the world.
  - B. He has aged about only twenty years in the last eighty.
  - C. He has taught himself how to not transform into a werewolf under a full moon.
  - D. He changes his name across generations to keep himself safe.
15. What is the true identity of Earl Harbinger?

**Answers:**

1. C
2. Machado has created a heavily overcast and rainy atmosphere around the caverns.
3. Owen uses some of Mordechai's dreidels as bullets.

4. Grant's head must be chopped off to prevent him from becoming a vampire.
5. D
6. Dr. Jonas Turley and his team
7. By wishing it into existence
8. The souls of human sacrifices
9. Mordechai's cane
10. B
11. Mordechai was the soul who could best speak English.
12. Earl will be Owen's second boss who is a werewolf.
13. Werewolf scratches made by Earl
14. C
15. He is Raymond Shackelford II.

### **Discussion/Reflection or Short Essay Questions**

1. Analyze Holly's description of how a vampire den works and the human experience of being a victim in one. How can Holly's description be interpreted metaphorically and connected to the real world? What could a "den" represent in a literal sense?
2. Owen is faced with the promise of possessing extraordinary power but ultimately shuns the possibility when considering the ultimate cost. Who in the real world do you perceive as possessing extraordinary power, and what would you say have been the costs of their having it?

### **Suggested Activities/Inquiry-Based Exploration**

- *Lovecraft and the Old Ones*: Research and present on the supernatural world of H. P. Lovecraft with a goal of understanding how works like Monster Hunter International were inspired by the Cthulhu mythos. Lovecraft stories may be read at <https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/sources/ccmt.aspx>. More information can be found at:
  - ❖ [https://monster.fandom.com/wiki/Category:H.\\_P.\\_Lovecraft](https://monster.fandom.com/wiki/Category:H._P._Lovecraft)

- ❖ <https://www.newsweek.com/lovecraft-country-monsters-shoggoths-origins-short-stories-mountains-madness-1525203>
- ❖ <https://bookstr.com/list/top-ten-h-p-lovecraft-monsters-who-arent-cthulhu/>
- *Alternate Dimensions*: Think of another story, TV show, or film that features interdimensional travel. Use this example and Monster Hunter International to create a written or multimedia presentation that analyzes the complex questions and themes that arise in context of interdimensional travel.
- *The Science of Parallel Universes*: Investigate the real science behind theories of alternate dimensions in space and create a presentation that explains your findings.
  - ❖ <https://www.space.com/32728-parallel-universes.html>
  - ❖ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/startswithabang/2020/05/22/ask-ethan-have-we-finally-found-evidence-for-a-parallel-universe/?sh=1cb79d7542fc>

