

Welcome to Nightham Dale

Welcome to Nightham Dale, a sleepy valley in the heart of the Lake District. Spend time with nature wandering through our ancient forest, relax by the gently flowing river. We even have a pub!

Unfortunately we have had some bad press recently. Some death, purely natural, but reported as suspicious. However, there is nothing to worry about! Enjoy your stay and please spend your money!

Rosamund Stone - Investigative Journalist

Finally! You have your scoop! Someone has agreed to talk to you about the Nightham Murders! This is going to be an exclusive! A lady named Devina Hallowhall is going to meet you at The Creaking Gate Tavern in Nightham Dale itself!

It's a bit out of the way. In fact it is smack-bang in the middle of nowhere, but the chance to uncover the truth more than makes up for it! After four hours of driving, the sun starts to set and you pull up to The Creaking Gate, an old dump of a tavern with nothing around it for miles. The first thing you notice is that there is no carpark, nor are there street lights. But you are running late for your meeting, so you dump your beaten up car at the side of the road, and put your parking lights on for anyone travelling the small country lane later.

There has been a lot of controversy over the Nightham Murders; mainly due to the fact that everyone has kept quiet about it. You wouldn't consider yourself a paranoid person, but years in journalism has given you a nose for a coverup, and you know those stories sell big!

You know the facts; two people passing through the secluded area, a single laceration through the chest. Spokes people from the area deny this completely, but your digging suggests something even more peculiar. Something to do with the victim's eyes. There are other rumours, some intrigue you, some disturb you, others you simply dismiss.

The area unnerves you, and you wish you had asked a colleague to join you for the interview, but to have such a rare opportunity for an exclusive was too much to share.

You enter the tavern and see an old lady sat in the corner, hunched over half a pint of something brown with a large head. You walk over and introduce yourself.

Pipperton Knight - Antique Book Dealer

'It's ghosts! Ghosts I tells ya!' you call out to nobody in particular. It's just become a sort of common thing for you to be shouting; the words feel comfortable in your mouth, they sound soothing on your own voice. But, as always, people ignore you and walk away.

You slump in your chair considering the painful yet confusing truth - people just don't believe in ghosts any more. What's wrong with them? I mean, you know. You have *seen* them, clear as day! Right in front of you it was! And at that moment what was simply a whimsical story told to frighten children... it became *real*.

Your research started seventeen and a half years ago, at the same time as a brutal murder in the Nightham Dale area, quite near Followell village, where you have lived most of your life. The story shocked the village and sent it into scandal. You yourself were pained by the events, but not so much as when someone very close to you was blamed and sentenced. You couldn't believe such a person could do such a thing, and still claim they were innocent.

Your campagne led you into a spiral of research, of detective work and trying to uncover the truth. You found that the townspeople were keeping a deep and terrible secret, that the whole thing was a cover up for something darker. But you never found what that secret was.

It was at this time that you saw the 'ghost', and your research into the murders was married with the research of more hidden knowledge, and connections were formed between the two.

Almost two months ago, two visitors to the area were killed; once again in suspicious circumstances, and once again, the townspeople seemed to be hiding something. And now you are at a crossroads; do you choose to continue with your supernatural belief, or admit that it *could* be the actions of the person close to you?

And then it appears again. The ghostly figure you saw years ago. Then, as quickly as it appeared, it disappeared, with no trace other than a feeling inside you, a guiding. You quickly take some of your equipment, and follow that feeling.

Two hours go by, and finally you come to an old, decrepit Tavern; The Creaking Gate. As the sun sets, you enter the tavern, with no small ounce of trepidation.

Leon Tempest - Doorman

The riverboat is nice enough, but crowded. 5 fully grown guys in one boat with far too much drink and too little sleep. It stinks of spilled beer and stale cigarettes; the contract says that you should not smoke in the boat, but some of the guys do anyway. The stag, Schmitt, seems to be enjoying himself though, and you suppose that is the main thing.

It was weird to even be invited. These guys are friends, sure, but old friends, *school* friends. Everyone had moved on or moved away, but it feels like you're the only one who has grown up. You haven't seen these guys in years. Still, you were invited and here you are. After committing to the weekend, you checked out the boating route; going from the windermere lake to Elter Water through a couple of small places. A little more research and you find a place called Nightham Dale, which looks nice. A bit more rooting round and you start to discover notes about a secret place, a set of hidden ruins. Your curiosity peaked from what you read, and requested that the group make a stop to try to find them. They obliged, and now you are here, floating around with a group of old friends, joking about the Stag and the mistake that marriage is, and trying to have a good time. The truth is, there is a pang of jealousy. You wish you were in his position. You wish you had someone to hold and love.

Finally the boat was moored which gave you a chance to stretch your legs, the solid ground underfoot feeling almost alien after your day's boating trip. You would have preferred to get here earlier, but the sun was already setting. Maybe the ruins will have to wait til tomorrow. Nevertheless, you are here for the night, and there is only one thing to do. Find a local pub.

The stag waits behind, whilst his best man fits him into an undersized dress which leaves less to the imagination than your stomach can handle. Three of you go to The Creaking Gate Tavern and wait for the others to arrive. And it was in the tavern where you first laid eyes on the barmaid, and all of your life is flipped, turned upside-down.

Roman Miles - Forensic Archaeologist

It's been a while since you have seen Schmitt. You don't tend to hear much from the old schoolmates, but that's probably more on you than it is them. Still, you have been invited on Schmitt's stag do, a boat trip in the arse-end of nowhere, and you thought it a courtesy to come along. Besides, it's about time you did something for yourself, something to make you feel happy again. Something to make you feel *anything* again.

Despite the strangeness of the situation and the stink of the boat, you're actually enjoying yourself. But you know that one of these guys knows something about you that you hope will never come out. Still. Best not to think on those things.

At the request of one of your old friends, you moor the riverboat in a dark secluded part of the lake district, and go for a walk to a close by Tavern, Schmitt staying behind for a little while as his best man forces the stag into an undersized dress that was disturbingly revealing. Good job old Schmitt was already blind drunk.

As you follow your friends down the path between the trees towards the distant light of The Creaking Gate Tavern, something catches your eyes. A movement in the dirt, a river rat? As you look into the surrounding forest, you catch, for a moment, a glimpse of something shining in the setting sunlight. Against your own better judgement, you walk towards it, leaving your friends to walk on without you.

You come to a large oak tree with intricate carvings around the trunk, and there, set into the carvings, is a treasure. It takes you a couple of moments, but you break it free and wipe the dirt away from the object in your hands.

You cannot describe why, but something has changed, you feel an odd sense of confidence, of joy and luck! You feel as though you have a purpose again, a true destiny that needs to be fulfilled.

With a smile, you pocket the treasure and find the guys sat at a table in deep conversation with filled pint glasses.

Escobar and Violet Smith - Bank Clerk and Housewife

Your driving is erratic, but not as erratic as the adrenaline running through your veins. You turn to the person beside you, deep in the heat of another argument. They often use the term 'partner in crime' to describe the person you are married to. You laugh at the thought. Why else would you be driving down a country lane in the arse-end of nowhere at a hundred miles per hour with a hundred grand and two sawn-off shotguns in the boot of the car?

The radio is playing some of your favourite tunes, you know, some old blues, the best getaway music money can buy. But then it changes, automatically, as though changing the channel on an old wireless, and plays something new. Something you recognise.

You reach over to hit the radio, get it back on track when suddenly you look at the road and see a shadow passing in front of the car. You hit the breaks sharp and swerve, narrowly avoiding the creature. You steer to the left, then back to the right as the car lurches from side to side. You try to keep control, but fail.

The impact with the oncoming car was not as bad as it could have been. Somehow both drivers managed to slow down enough to avoid any real damage. You're just a little shaken up, that's all.

After a moment the driver of the other car, a young man with bright ginger hair, knocks at your window. You both apologise to the nice man, acting like model citizens as you exit the car.

You consider the damage done; the front right tire is shot and steam rises from the engine. His car is no better. You look at your phones, only to see you have no signal. Together the three of you push the cars to the side of the road and the young man tells you about a tavern just a short walk away, you should probably see if you could borrow the phone and call for a pick up.

With a kind and friendly smile, you thank the man for having such a good spirit about the incident and start walking. The young man excuses himself, needing to check on something in his car boot, and that he would meet you in the pub.

With clenched teeth, you walk towards The Creaking Gate Tavern, away from the incident. Away from the cash and the guns. Hoping not to arouse any suspicion.

Mara Liddicotte - Waitress

Your character is the waitress at The Creaking Gate Tavern where this story starts. Your father, Reginald, is the Landlord of the place. He is a respectable man, hard but fair, as a man who lives and works in a tavern in the middle of nowhere should be; you never know what sort of trouble passers by might bring.

Up until recently you lived and worked at the Tavern with your dad. However, you felt the need to explore who you are as an individual at spent a year travelling before coming back to Followell village, a few miles over. Unfortunately your father has asked for your help behind the bar tonight, and you cannot refuse him.

The night is like most others, but *they* are restless, hungry. In fact it looks like *they* are on the prowl again. The second time in two months. This is highly unusual. If worst comes to worse, the Dale is going to have another scandal on its hands! More talk of mysterious murders in suspicious circumstances. Nevertheless, the press isn't all bad, the 'murders' have brought a lot of people to town, and can be prosperous for the family business. But the press doesn't know what happened. The press doesn't get it. *They* need to feed, otherwise they get angry.

It's almost become normal practice; to sacrifice outsiders to the Bodachs, to sustain them and keep them from harming you or your father, or even venturing into the town. Don't get me wrong, it is not an easy business, and you are by no means invulnerable to the Bodach's touch, but the blade of black glass you keep by your side will keep you safe. In fact the obsidian blade is the only thing that will hurt those creatures. And it is the only blade that will fulfill the sacrifice and appease the Bodachs until they hunger again.

You have found the best way to lure the outsiders to the Hidden Ruins, where the sacrifice must take place, is by tricking them into thinking you are on their side. That you will help save them. That this is the first time the Bodach's have attacked, that you know nothing, but that you know where they will be safe. Sometimes you feed them lies about the ruins being a holy place where those shadows can't get you, other times you tell them that the ruins are their layer and they need to defeat the beasts, but most of the time simply telling them you know a 'safe place' will get them moving.

At the end of the day, it is all for the greater good, and you can rest again.

Wilfred Montjeremy III - Deceased

You are dead.

You can't remember how it happened, how you died, but it must have happened. There is no other reason why you should find yourself with almost complete memory loss, in a sullen woods the colour of ash. Ash. A billion shades of light gray, an odd glow, almost like blurry vision, covers everything you see, and there is absolutely no colour anywhere. It is an unchanging, neverending grey. There are no nights or days, just grey. You cannot tell how long you have been here, but it feels like an eternity.

There is no rest. There is no hunger, but even if there was, there is no food to satisfy. There is no sound. Unless *it* is near. Then you hear that sound. That terrible, horrifying sound. And you *run*.

It stalks you like prey, like a cat playing with a mouse. And the only thing you can do is run and hide. It got you once or twice, what it did was unspeakable, unthinkable, but somehow you managed to escape. Or maybe it *let* you escape. This is a *game*.

The wooded area has a couple of hiding spots. A Tavern, a cabin. *It* seems to struggle when you are there, but that doesn't stop it completely, and you have to run again.

But recently something has changed. Occasionally you catch shadows moving amongst the grey, shadows of colour in the shape of people. Some colours give you hope. Some colours fill you with hurt. Another thing that has started to happen is an occasional shimmer, like a momentary pocket of wavering space. You have no idea what this could mean. Maybe it's a way out of here? Maybe it's something bad.

You hear the noise. The first time in a while. *It* is coming. You run.