

# HARVEST NIGHTS

*A Lovecraftian Horror Novella Inspired by Native American Myths and Colonial times*

*by*

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To my 老婆.

Thanks for saying yes to our first date,  
Thanks for saying yes at Sailimu lake, 2018,  
and thanks for (Sometimes) saying yes  
when I ask for a head massage.



## Prologue:

My back arched as my body spasmed in pain, my head almost submerging in the soft wet mud upon which I lay. My legs were ankle deep in the soaking soil, struggling to break free.

Slowly, and painfully, I regained control over my limbs. The control radiated to my shoulders, my head and then to my back, where I could finally rest on the ground. The sight of a hand bursting through my chest explained the reason why my body was in shock. My eyes widened at the sight of my own blood sliding down the skin of that hand, and the bones from my ribcage pointed out like tree roots nourishing that branching arm.

The hand which soaked in my blood held something. Another hand held my lower jaw, pulling it with unstoppable force to open beyond its limit. The hand started to slowly turn, and I could feel the twisting of who knows what organs and vessels inside my body. The amalgamation of different pains dulled when I saw the fingers move in a rather rhythmic pattern as something pulsated in its grip.

That hand was drenched with viscous liquid and I could feel it on... on my hand... and then I felt the teeth the other hand was holding. *My hand... my hands are doing this to me.* I rattled like a creature from the sea after being pulled from its world,.

*That's my heart, that's my heart,* I kept shouting in my head. Then my hand moved toward me as it held my heart tightly. My other hand pulled my jaw further than I could imagine, so much so that a full-sized heart could fit within it.

As I started to choke on viscous flesh, my throat expanded and contracted with every heartbeat, which became rapid with every push and squeeze. That hellish image and tremendous pain destroyed all my senses, and I passed out.

I woke, frightened, after the vision I had, and for a moment I forgot where I was and what had brought me here. Then the sight of the bodies of my people and the beasts from the woods was the perfect reminder of the hell I had just survived.

I was able to make sense from the closest figures to me in the dark night; I looked at one warrior who lay dead with his chest opened. I remembered what had happened to him. I was lying exactly where I was now, pretending to be dead after being hit on the head with something hard during the massacre. His heart rolled toward me when sharp talons ripped through him, and it was beating in front of my eyes for a while before it slowly stopped moving.

I lost consciousness, before waking to see all these bodies around me. And when I looked behind me, I was startled by the sight of a creature with weird proportions that my mind struggled to make sense of. It was motionless, its body riddled with arrows, and there was a tomahawk stuck to its head. I knew I couldn't stay there for long. I needed to escape this small island in the middle of the lake.



## Chapter 1

There was no one left alive, only the body parts that remained uneaten proved they ever existed. The trees masked the lights from the sky, and I knew if I wanted to pinpoint my location, I needed to first leave its over-stretched leafy boundaries. I walked with shaky paces that halted at the sounds of the distant howls of an unknown beast. I came through what seemed like an eternity of hunger, and arrived at the lake. I froze, afraid to get close to the waters; I knew from experience how dangerous they could be. Not everyone knows what horror is hidden deep in those pitch-black waters, but I did. The subtle reflection of stars on the lake's surface became distorted, and when I looked up I saw a canoe with two men in it. I almost called to warn them when I saw the direction they were paddling, but I couldn't risk my life to save theirs. My hands clenched and I started to shake as the two men came closer to a figure waving to them from the surface of the waters, as if it was one of their own drowning, asking for their aid. I was able to make sense from their whispers, for they spoke the same language as mine.

"Pull him in before they come for us," the one paddling the small canoe, whispered.

As they approached, the man in front reached out to the hand coming from the waters. I took a closer step, wanting to scream to them to watch out, but I couldn't, not like this. I wouldn't survive in this condition, without even a single weapon. *Should I wave?* I thought as I noticed a reflection of what appeared to be stars dying out. I looked up and saw that clouds were forming, assuring me that it would rain and I wouldn't get a sound sleep that night. A breaking twig

underfoot broke the silence as the man at the front of the canoe reached out to grab the pleading hand. The man who held the paddle twisted around and I quickly hid. I didn't know why I hid from them, instincts are stronger than logic, I suppose, and the latter started to take over. Before I was able to react, the man with the paddle lost his balance as the canoe spun, the splashing sound indicating he had fallen in the waters. The boat rotated as the other man looked around, calling his friend's name.

“Chaska!” he called, looking around him while stopping the boat's rotation with his paddle. He saw a hand appear from the waters and reached out to save what he believed to be his friend. But suddenly, he froze as lightning struck from the skies, its light revealing what was underneath the waters. It was only a split second that stunned him because he couldn't make sense of what he saw. He knew it was not his friend, he didn't have teeth that big... and it knew it had been recognized. When thunder struck, the jaws that hid under the abyss came out, the arm-like appendage on its head swaying back as its jaws opened wide. The man in the canoe screamed, realizing the beast had been trying to trick him into reaching out so it could grab him and pull him into the waters. The man reacted to the beast's snapping attack by taking a step back and extending his hands to protect himself. The creature missed the man's head, but nevertheless, its teeth sunk into the man's forearm. The creature pulled and the canoe flipped over. It wouldn't miss his head again, for the next bite would be in the deep water, in the creature's familiar world – Oniate's world.

I stood hesitating as the flipped canoe floated closer to the shore, teasing me into risking my life by trying to reach it. Hiding under the leaves, I knew I could not stay, no matter how quiet I was. Softly and then aggressively, it started to rain. As the rain drops hammered on me and the already soaked earth, I decided that this was my best chance. The

creatures would have a harder time hearing me, and the cloud cover would dull their sight. I ran as hard as I could towards the lake and pushed at the heavy canoe which slipped from my grip and fell back, unwelcoming me as a stranger. In the shadows I felt something in the darkness. A flash of lightning revealed to me the horrors of the deep, and I saw three hands reaching out from the waters, floating toward me. Under the waters the beasts showed their devilish teeth as they neared their prey. They never stop eating, and they wouldn't get a chance like this for maybe a thousand years; a chance to eat easy and defenseless prey. Another flash of lightning revealed more of those Oniate, so many more... I panicked.

*Not today not like this.*

I used what little strength remained and channeled it to my hands. I flipped the boat and immediately jumped inside. I stayed hidden beneath its sides. In a matter of moments, the canoe was bombarded by strikes from all sides. It rocked and rotated, almost flipping again.

*Stay still.* I told – no begged – myself.

*Stay still, stay still, stay still.*

My thoughts were interrupted when the boat was raised as the monsters pushed the vessel from below. I kept quiet, lying still at the front of the canoe, my fingers digging through my skin to prevent myself from shaking. The appendages kept searching but I hid myself well and, little by little, the boat was eventually floating free on the lake's water. I peered out to see where it was heading. The rain was getting heavier. I saw a hand, a single hand waving, the same way it had before the creatures ate those two men, but this time, for me, it felt as if they were waving goodbye. I slowly started to paddle away from the waving creature I knew too well.

“Oinate, cursed creatures of the water, you won’t get me,” I whispered. The rain drummed on the lake’s surface, masking any sounds and ripples the Oniate might sense, while I depended on unexpected moments of lightning to reveal where I was heading. It also revealed many hands reaching out from the waters, waving, calling for their prey to save them from hunger. Lightning struck again, and in the front of the canoe, I saw a bow, an arrow, and a tomahawk.