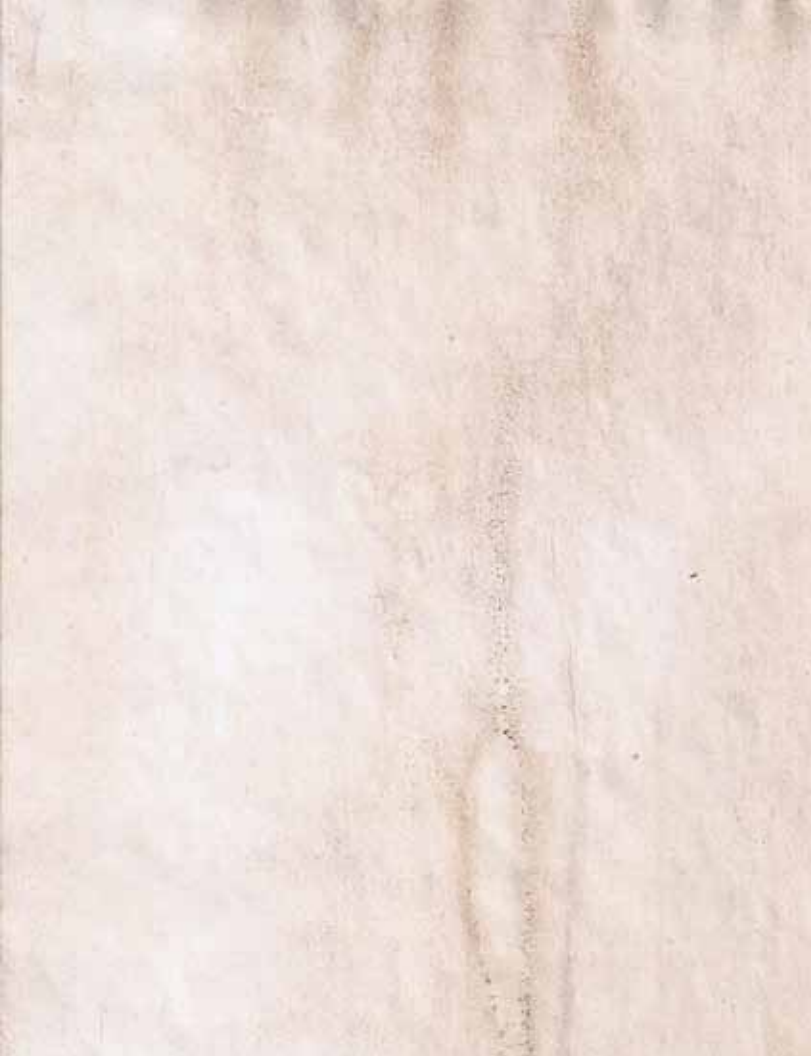


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BEAST
FROM THE
STARS

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The unnamed beast from the stars has been wishing for this day for hundreds of years. Captured in the late sixteen hundreds, it's been kept secluded deep underground, its jailers fearing for the soul of the world were the unnamed beast from the stars ever to escape. It's a dangerous thing, and almost destroyed the world once already. Its captors—an elite group of men and women—were only able to subdue it by promising its freedom on December 25, 2011.

No one is sure why this date was chosen.

Perhaps these elite few believed the unnamed beast from the stars would expire by now, that it would die and disintegrate before it could wreak havoc on the world once more.

But it lives. And it is anxious.

Don't bother looking for any mention of this in your history books; the unnamed beast from the stars is something that should be forgotten by most, save for those responsible for keeping it where it is.

In the basement of a church somewhere in the midwest is a tiny door concealed by ratty brown boxes. If you walk through that door (and I most certainly don't recommend such a thing) and feel your way down a twisting and turning hallway devoid of life, you'll come eventually to an earthen chamber lit by a single lamp.

There you'll see a red box wrapped in a single green bow.

This is the unnamed beast from the stars.

Last night, however, it received its first visitor. A grizzled, bearded old man smelling faintly of pastries and whiskey, and clothed in a long, red, dingy cloak whisked through the church, ignoring anyone in his way, as if he'd traveled that path to the cellar every day since the unnamed beast from the stars was imprisoned there.

The old man knelt down, leaned close to the box, and whispered something. The unnamed beast from the stars did not like this something. The box rattled. An inhuman wail filled every inch of that church. The lamp's flame flickered, went out, and slowly returned.

The old man smiled and patted the box before using it to stand. The box was quiet.

By the time the pastor arrived in the chamber, the old man had already vanished. Attached to the box was a note that read:

The world doesn't end
tonight, but everything
ends eventually.



MERRY
X-MAS.

♡ ED