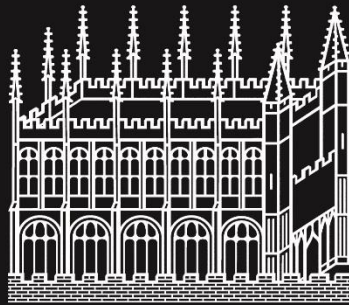


**SHADOWS OUT OF TIME:
A BODLEIAN CHOOSE YOUR
OWN DESTINY STORY**



Bodleian Libraries
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

PASSAGE 1

You awake with a start. You're sitting in your favourite seat in the Old Bodleian's Upper Reading Room, and everything seems to be exactly as it should be. There's the copy of 'Shadows Out of Time' that you were reading before you nodded off.

It's clear that you need better sleep at night. Perhaps if your neighbours would stop their strange knocking on the walls, and the local cats would stop their screaming right outside your windows. Why and how do cats sound so much like human babies? It's really very disturbing.

But then you notice that maybe things are *not* how they should be. For one thing, there's nobody else here. Nobody at all. And while it's getting late enough that the sun is going down and the library is cast in twilight, the Bodleian is never empty. Is it?

Then an idea crosses your mind...

To check out Duke Humfrey's Library while you have a chance, turn to [PASSAGE 7](#).

To go down to the Proscholium where there are always staff around, turn to [PASSAGE 13](#).

PASSAGE 2

You look at all of the bikes in the hope that somehow, one of them might be unchained. When you find one that is, it seems like a miracle. It's not a new bike – it's rusty and covered in dings and dents – but it will get you out of here faster than you can walk, so you want it, and now.

You hop onto the bike and start cycling, as fast as you can, across the cobbles. But quickly you see why the bike has been abandoned. Its pedals lock and you wobble. It's a fight to stay upright – a fight that you lose.

You pick yourself up and kick the bike.

You decide it's best to head inside the Rad Cam after all. Turn to [PASSAGE 21](#).

PASSAGE 3

The Gladstone Link tunnel might be the most modern part of the Bodleian Library, with its slick white walls and sci-fi styling, but you can't help but remember the sheer age of the world you're moving through. People have been coming down here, under the city, for centuries. All sorts of people.

Then you wonder if anybody ever died down here. As soon as the notion passes into your head, you try to block it out.

When you try to head up to the Proscholium you find that this door is also locked. You feel cornered. Your natural sense of claustrophobia is doubled, then tripled. You start to feel trapped.

To head through the tunnel towards the Weston Library, turn to [PASSAGE 15](#).

To go back to the bottom of the Radcliffe Camera and try again, in hope that something might have changed, turn to [PASSAGE 14](#).

PASSAGE 4

The tunnel eventually leads into the stacks underneath the Weston. It's dark, and quiet, and everything that the last few minutes have been training you to fear.

Worse still, the door to the tunnels has clicked closed behind you – though, on the upside, this created a draft that blew out the lantern. Thank heavens for little mercies.

You know that you're below ground level, so you start to hunt for the staircase, and it seems surprisingly easy. It's only when you're two floors up that you start to wonder if it isn't ... too easy.

This slows you down. This and the fact that you have just run, as fast as you possibly can, up two flights of stairs.

The first place you find that you recognise is Blackwell Hall. The doors to Broad Street are unsurprisingly locked, so you make your way over towards the Ascot Gate to look for another exit.

As you reach the gate, there's a sudden knock on the main doors, over at the front of the building. Three knocks in total. Instinctively you snap back to see who is there, but you see nobody. Nobody at all.

Ascot Gate opens for you – terrifyingly slowly, but you'll take it.

This is all too much. You need to get a grip. There's only one thing for it: re-tracing these strange events from the very beginning. So it's back to the Upper Reading Room, you decide.

If you're going to run back, turn to [PASSAGE 11](#).

If you'd rather walk as calmly as possible, turn to [PASSAGE 18](#).

PASSAGE 5

The Gladstone Link echoes as you walk down the stairs, and for a moment you're not sure if all of the footsteps you can hear are your own. The only way to find out, perhaps, is to call out.

'Is there anybody here at all?' you bellow, as loud as you can. 'This is just freaking me out.'

But there's no reply.

Shouting in the library wasn't as fun, and was a whole lot more unsettling, than you had ever expected.

You notice that the doorway to the old book tunnels is open.

To go into the old book tunnels and head for the Weston Library, turn to [PASSAGE 15](#).

To head along the foot tunnels towards the Radcliffe Camera, turn to [PASSAGE 20](#).

PASSAGE 6

The tunnel was just too much for you. Indeed, you've had enough of being underground, so you head up into the Proscholium. It's still as empty as it ever was.

Wondering what the time is, you look for your telephone to check. You don't have it. So you check for your watch instead. You have that, but it seems to have stopped at midday.

Or maybe, you realise, it stopped right at midnight.

To call for help, turn to [PASSAGE 17](#).

To head back up to the Upper Reading Room where this all began, turn to [PASSAGE 11](#).

PASSAGE 7

Duke Humfrey's Library is just as empty as the Upper Reading Room. You walk from Arts End to Selden End, and the only noise is the sound of your footsteps. You stop to look up inside the restricted section. Nobody there either...

...though did you just see something moving, back there? Just as you looked away, a shadow shifting in your peripheral vision? Surely it was just your imagination.

All the same, it's probably for the best if you go down to the Proscholium now and make sure everything is okay.

Turn to PASSAGE 13.

PASSAGE 8

You run down towards the Gladstone Link but as you start to push the door open, somebody – something? – on the other side pushes back. You catch your breath, then push again. One more push, then your mind catches up with your body. You run, as fast as you can, up and away, as far away as you can go, back towards the Upper Reading Room where this all began.

Turn to PASSAGE 18.

PASSAGE 9

While Radcliffe Square is normally very busy at this time, there's nobody to be seen right now. There are dozens of bicycles, of course, chained to the railings, but not a soul to claim one.

To try to 'borrow' a bike and head for home, turn to PASSAGE 2.

To head inside the Radcliffe Camera, turn to PASSAGE 21.

PASSAGE 10

It's starting to seem like all of Oxford is abandoned. For a second, the potential of this ripples through your mind, but then the sadness follows, and that's quickly pursued by fear.

And then reason leaves you absolutely shaken at the sheer 'Why?' of it all.

You scramble across Clarendon Quad, as fast as you can, making the Weston Library your mission. Then something just catches your eye. There's light coming up from the glass tile in the ground. It flickers, like flame. It seems to be the light of a lantern, and just the idea of a flame in the Bodleian gives you a kick.

You step over the glass tile, turn back and look. What's going on down there? You walk back across the glass, looking for some sort of clue as to what is making the glow in the tunnel below. You knew there were tunnels down here, but don't think that sort of light should be down there.

There's no clue to be had to whatever is going on, so you just dash across the glass tile a third time and make your way onwards.

But should you be so sure?

To go on towards the Weston turn to PASSAGE 19.

To double back up Catte Street and come around towards the Radcliffe Camera, turn to PASSAGE 22.

PASSAGE 11

At first, the Upper Reading Room seems exactly as you had left it, but then you notice what has changed. Your copy of 'Shadows Out of Time' is now closed, and you were sure you left it open.

Or did you? Doubting yourself, you walk over to the book and open it, then riffle through the pages. No, maybe you did close it. You were scared; you simply forgot. Your mind is playing tricks on you.

As you stand and wonder what to do, or where to go next, it happens again. The book slams shut, all by itself, on the table in front of you.

This simply can't be your imagination. How could it be? You sit down in the chair, put your head in your hands, and stare at the book, waiting for it to happen again. You stare and stare and stare...

Turn to PASSAGE 23.

PASSAGE 12

You reach the door that would take you back to the Proscholium as you push the door, somebody – something? – on the other side pushes back. You catch your breath, then push again. One more push, then your mind catches up with your body.

The only way out seems to be the tunnel under the road towards the Weston. You'll have to brave it. Turn to PASSAGE 4.

PASSAGE 13

There's not a soul to be seen in the Proscholium. The security desk is unmanned, and the usual volunteers are, for some reason, entirely absent. The silence is almost dreamlike, though maybe 'nightmarish' would be more apt.

As you look around for any clues as to what is going on, the current display catches your eye. There, in the glass cabinet are a series of big, heavy books, all beautifully bound. The title of the display, proudly displayed in scarlet lettering, is 'Anthropodermic Bibliopegy'. Your stomach lurches as you remember what this means.

It's the practice of covering books in human skin.

To head down to the Gladstone Link and keep searching the library, turn to PASSAGE 5.
To head outside to the Old Schools Quad, turn to PASSAGE 16.

PASSAGE 14

That tunnel was just too much. Too dark, too long, too underground. You resolve to stay in the light at least.

Walking back towards the Radcliffe Camera, you start to consider your next course of action. Just as you start to get a handle on your option, however, you're absolutely knocked off centre by a loud, sudden shout.

'Is there anybody here at all?' comes the cries, 'Anybody who can help me?'

It's coming from the Proscholium. You turn that way and call back, 'Who's that?'

There's no reply. Maybe they didn't hear you, or were just shocked by your shouts so you go on 'Who is it? Who is it?'

No reply. Indeed, a still and total silence.

Until then, just an inch from your ear, another loud voice, screaming. 'Is there anybody here at all?' it yells. You turn back and, of course, there's nobody there. Just an empty space, impossibly yelling at you. 'This is just freaking me out,' the empty corridor yells.

You know exactly what it means.

You realise that the further you have come from the reading room, the scarier things have become.

To head back towards the Proscholium, turn to [PASSAGE 12](#).

To try the tunnel under the road towards the Weston again, turn to [PASSAGE 4](#).

PASSAGE 15

The old book tunnels have never been open to the public and all staff require their ID cards to get them to open, so it seems particularly unexpected that they are just standing wide right now. Of course, this makes them all the more intriguing to explore. The kind of intrigue that you feel in the hairs as they rise on the back of your neck.

Just inside the dark tunnel is a small lantern. It's lit, and just the knowledge that there's a flame inside the Bodleian fills you with fear. You even contemplate blowing it out, but then promise that you'll keep it lit just until you pass through the dark tunnel and will extinguish it at the other end.

As you walk along the tunnel you realise that you're passing under the Bodleian's quads – though it's hard to work out exactly where you are, if it's the Old Schools Quad or the Clarendon Quad.

As you approach one of the glass skylights, looking up into whichever-quad-it-is, you sense motion. A shadow flickers by, overhead – then, just a second later, turns back and passes over the skylight again in the opposite direction. Then it passes over a third time.

You wait for the shadow to pass by again, but it doesn't. You realise that you are holding your breath and let it go.

To race on down the tunnel to the Weston, turn to [PASSAGE 4](#).

To turn back to the Gladstone Link, turn to [PASSAGE 6](#).

PASSAGE 16

There's a chilling cold in the Old Schools Quad. As you have now come to expect, however, there's nobody around. Not a soul. You contemplate screaming, but hold it in.

As you walk past the Earl of Pembroke, still standing proud in statue form, you try not to look at him. You're caught up in a fear that, however absurd it seems, you would somehow catch him moving. It's probably just better if you don't look.

To head out into Radcliffe Square and see if the whole city is empty, turn to [PASSAGE 9](#).

To walk towards the Clarendon Quad and maybe even go on to the Weston Library, turn to [PASSAGE 10](#).

PASSAGE 17

It's hard to make a noise, but you manage it with some force. 'Is there anybody here at all?' you shout, 'Anybody who can help me?'

You wait, and hold your silence.

Then you hear the reply. Another voice, shouting, you think, from the Gladstone Link. 'Who's that?' it yells. 'Who is it? Who is it?'

To run towards the voice and find the other person shouting, turn to PASSAGE 8.

To head upstairs, away from this voice and back to the reading room, turn to PASSAGE 18.

PASSAGE 18

At first, the Upper Reading Room seems exactly as you had left it, but then you notice what has changed. Your copy of 'Shadows Out of Time' is now open, and you were sure you left it closed.

Or did you? Doubting yourself, you walk over to the book and stare at it.

Then its pages somehow start to turn, riffling by themselves. In a panic, you reach down and slam it shut.

This simply can't be just your imagination. How could it be? You sit down in the chair, put your head in your hands, and stare at the book, waiting for it to happen again. You stare and stare and stare...

Turn to PASSAGE 23.

PASSAGE 19

Broad Street is deathly still. You stop and listen for traffic, and can hear nothing. The sun is not quite low enough for the street lights to come on – or at least, they haven't quite come on. The whole world seems caught in a liminal moment, neither day nor night.

You cross the road towards the Weston, noting how its lights are off, even while the Heritage Window screen still goes on cycling through images. The gates are open ... but as you approach the automatic door, nothing. Nothing at all.

You look at the heritage window. The graphic it displays is a promotion for the display of 'Anthropodermic Bibliopegy' that's underway in the Proscholium. Then it changes, now advertising the current Treasury exhibition, 'Haunted Bodleian'.

Almost absentmindedly, you knock on the door three times. It's almost enough that you creep yourself out, but you did want to be sure there is no one there who can let you in.

Convinced you're not about to get inside, you make to leave. Just a microsecond too soon, perhaps as you catch a glimpse of somebody inside, in the shadows, as you turn your head away. You snap back, your adrenalin doing most of the work for you, but the figure has vanished – if it was ever really there.

With Oxford hovering on the edge of some kind of dreadful nightmare, you try to think rationally. If you're going to unpick this puzzle, surely you should go back to the beginning.

You are heading back to the old Bodleian reading room.

If you're going to run, turn to PASSAGE 11.

If you'd rather walk, turn to PASSAGE 18.

PASSAGE 20

You walk briskly through the Gladstone Link, set on getting to the Radcliffe Camera as quickly as possible. On reaching the basement of the Camera, however, you're shocked to find the door locked.

You give it a good yank, but it doesn't budge. You try again, then again. Frustrated, you pull hard on the door, letting out a little wail. But nothing. The door is locked. You will have to turn back.

Turn to [PASSAGE 3](#).

PASSAGE 21

At the door to the Radcliffe Camera, you fumble for your Bod Card in your pockets but don't find it. The building doesn't seem to mind and the door opens for you in any case.

As eerily empty as everywhere else in the city (or, you wonder, the world, or indeed the Universe) the Camera is quite awe-inducing, as well as genuinely perturbing. You can't help but look up into the cupola, struck by the grandeur, and how well this building wears a spooky mood.

You make your way to the staircase and head down towards the Gladstone Link. When you get there, however, your way is blocked in the most prosaic way: a locked door.

You give up and start to head back into the Camera when – BAM! – the door moves, as if by itself. Then again. You look at the door, transfixed. Who – or what? – is moving it?

Then the door jolts again, this time accompanied by a terrible wail.

There's only one thing for it. The Old Bod is haunted, the Radcliffe Camera is haunted – surely the Weston Library won't be haunted too? You resolve to get out of the Camera then take Cattle Street around to the Weston.

Turn to [PASSAGE 19](#).

PASSAGE 22

While Radcliffe Square is normally very busy at this time, there's nobody to be seen right now. There are dozens of bicycles, of course, chained to the railings, but not a soul to claim one.

As you make your way across the cobbles, you hear rattling from the bikes. A few of them shake, and then one of them comes away from the railings and starts to ride towards you. You dive out of its way, and as it passes within an inch of you, the bike starts to wobble and then falls over. You jump up, just in time, as the bike jerks across the floor into the space where you were just lying.

This is all too much. It's time to get a grip on things, and that means retracing this puzzle from the very beginning. You head back to the old Bodleian reading room.

If you're going to run, turn to [PASSAGE 11](#).

If you'd rather walk, turn to [PASSAGE 18](#).

PASSAGE 23

Nothing makes sense at all, and the only way you can make order of what is happening is to write it off as a very bad dream. That's right, isn't it?

If you're going to wake up, turn to [PASSAGE 1](#).

If you'd rather stay asleep forever, stop reading now.