

A NIGHT IN THE MUSEUM

I stumble through corridors of concrete slabs, past illuminated display cases, dodging dinosaur skeletons that glow an eerie white in the moonlight streaming through the long windows. I have to escape before they find out where I am, I need to get away before they storm in.

Where is it? If I don't find the vortex in time....

It should be just there, behind the stuffed leopards, but it's not, and I can sense them coming...

Oh no. Maybe they've got here before me and defiled it. Maybe they're coming back for me, laughing triumphantly. I collapse to my knees. The vortex was my only hope, my only chance. Now it's gone, and I may as well be dead. But-wait-those spots are strange. They don't look anything like leopard spots, more like...like.... Jaguars. Of course! I spring to my feet, new hope coursing through me. I've got to find the leopards.....

There they are. The two stuffed leopards stand on raised pillars, snarling at the air. I see the leopard of Khan in the centre, a little behind the pillars. He is made of solid gold, his spots precious gems and jewels. The Khan.

Somewhere, a clock strikes twelve. The leopard's eyes snap open wide. A bloodcurdling roar resounds through the museum. Out of the leopard's mouth streams a silver-blue light, twisting and spinning and twirling, brighter than a thousand candles.

The vortex.

I shiver with fear, but at the same time take a step forward. He has accepted me. He has not killed me. Yet. I take another step.

Three

Four

Five

Six

Seven

I reach the Khan. I trace his diamond canines and utter words known only to the cursed and the dead.

I feel the vortex take me. I spin and twist with it, relishing my freedom. It pulls me further and further in. It's taking me to a place where I'll be safe forever.....

My eyes snap open. Something's not right. The vortex stops spinning and twisting, and time seems to stop still. It becomes ice cold and I drop to the floor. The silver-blue light turns a stark, deathly white. I see, frozen in terror, a skeletal hand reaching out towards me. I glimpse a black cowl, covering the face of death itself.

"Did you really think" said a rasping wailing voice that contained all the fear and horror of its victims, "that we were that naive?"

I recoil in terror as the skeletal hand reaches out towards me. It bites into me, and the museum turns blacker than the darkest night.

For me it is night.

NIGHT ETERNAL.