

## The Umbral Lamp

*Beep.* Another quarter. *Beep.* Bottle cap. Isaac has been metal detecting for hours now, hoping to find some sort of treasure. He sways the detector to the left. *Beep.* Aluminum. Isaac believes that there is another dimension on Earth, but it's somewhere that we can't see. That's the part that makes people think Isaac is crazy. He decides to try his luck closer to the water. *Beep.* Another quarter.

A wave crashes against a nearby rock and makes a metallic sound. Isaac investigates the noise and finds an old lamp. He lets go of his detector and picks up the mysterious object. Upon turning the lamp, he notices a name engraved on the side. '*Isaac*'. "That's weird," he mutters. Thinking it's just a coincidence, Isaac decides to visit a pawn shop, hoping to learn more about this strange item.

"Welcome, sir," the clerk starts, "how can I help you today?"

"Hey, I was wondering if you know anything about this lamp," Isaac responds as he pulls out the gadget, "do you know if it is worth anything?"

The clerk's eyes widen, "G-get that thing out of my shop," stutters the worker.

It looked as if a ghost had just passed through him. Confused, Isaac stuffs the lamp into his bag and stumbles out of the shop.

*What's so special about this thing?* Isaac wonders. He heads home and goes into his room to try and learn more about the lamp. Isaac takes the lamp out of his bag and grasps the handle with his fingers. He begins to notice a faint blue glow appearing in the heart of the lamp. The color becomes more vibrant, and the lamp starts to emit an ominous purple light around Isaac. "Woah," he gasps. But as he turns the lamp to show more light around the room, he notices something strange. Glowing bug-like creatures crawl across the floor and writhe towards Isaac's

feet. Terrified, Isaac drops the lamp, and the light disappears. He turns his head towards the ground, but the creatures are gone.

Immediately, Isaac calls his friend Seluvis.

“Hey, you’re not going to believe this.” Isaac begins,

“What is it?” Seluvis responds.

“Just come over here, it’s too much to explain.” Isaac replies.

Isaac gets a knock on the door a few minutes later. Seluvis opens the door and walks inside.

“You’re here,” Isaac says, “come on, we need to go somewhere else for this.”

“Alright let’s go-” Seluvis is interrupted.

“Where are you boys going?” Isaac’s mom asks, “don’t think you can leave without our permission.”

“Oh- of course,” Isaac and Seluvis respond nervously. “We’re just going on a walk.”

“Okay, we’ll see you soon, then.” Isaac’s mom says.

“Be safe, you two,” Isaac’s dad assures.

“We will,” Isaac responds. “Bye, love you.” Isaac sneakily grabs the lamp and they both scurry out the door. They walk into a nearby alleyway to discover more about the lamp.

“So what’s so special about this thing, and why does it have your name on it?” Seluvis starts.

“I have no idea why my name’s on it, but watch this.” Isaac grabs the lamp by the handle and raises it in the air. The light illuminates the alley and a purple glow reveals a creature standing in front of them.

“Agh!” The two exclaim as the lamp crashes to the ground.

“Isaac,” a mysterious voice calls, “turn on the lamp.”

“Who is that?” Seluvis cries, “Are you going to listen to him?”

“I don’t know, but if it’s talking it must be a human, right?” Isaac replies. He reaches for the lamp once more and shines the light. The creature appears in the lamp’s vision again.

“Chosen bearer of the lamp, my name is Molhu,” he says, “I am a creature of the Umbral realm.”

“What is the Umbral realm?” Isaac responds in awe. “Why are you friendly and the other creatures are not?”

“The Umbral realm looks just like the normal world, but has its own dark secrets.” Molhu explains, “There’s more to explain but we’re running out of time.”

“What do you mean?” Seluvis asks. “Why don’t we have time?”

“Someone is looking for that lamp you have, and he won’t stop until he gets it. His name is Lightreaper-” a loud rumble cuts off Molhu. “You two need to leave, don’t let him take the lamp.”

The Umbral lamp glows a bright blue as a fiery portal whirls on the ground below Isaac. Seluvis and Isaac fall backwards and the lamp’s light is dispelled. A demonic creature with four arms and a scaly tail leaps out of the portal and lands in front of the two.

“Bring me that lamp!” Lightreaper asserts in a menacing voice. Fire appears on all four of his hands and molds into spears and daggers.

“Run, Isaac!” Seluvis screams, still struggling to get up from the floor.

Isaac sprints down the long alley way, leaving his friend behind. Another red portal appears in front of Isaac and begins to melt the floor around him.

“Looks like your friend left you to die,” Lightreaper snarls. “What a shame.” Lightreaper raises his spear into the air, but just before striking, Isaac throws the lamp in an attempt to save

Seluviz. The lamp clanks off Lightreaper's armor and gives Seluviz enough time to roll out the way.

"Very brave, Isaac." Lightreaper says sarcastically, "but you've just given me what I needed." A large portal opens and Lightreaper ducks down to grab the lamp. He brings out his spear and hooks on to Seluviz by the collar.

"I'll see you soon," Lightreaper taunts, "say goodbye to your friend."

"No!" Isaac yells as he jumps towards the portal.

But it was too late. The two spiral down the portal and vanish. *What do I do? Molhu said to not let him take it.* Isaac worries.

"Isaac," a voice calls. "Lightreaper is going to release the Umbral world onto Huntington Beach. I'll be here when that happens, but you need to stop him and destroy the lamp."

The sound of thunder filled the sky as a bright blue rift expanded across the atmosphere. It seemed as if the whole world had been covered by the Umbral glow. Hundreds of Umbral creatures abruptly appear and begin taking over the city.

"This is bad, Molhu, what do we do?" Isaac bellows.

"He's going to use the lamp and your friend to trap Huntington Beach, and eventually the world, in the Umbral realm."

Suddenly, a bright beam of light appears in the sky, and it slowly turns to a fiery red color.

"That looks like the portals Lightreaper makes," Isaac comments, "Follow that light." The two sprint towards the beam and see Lightreaper, along with Seluviz who is trapped in a cage of fire. Isaac notices that the lamp is emitting the beam on a pedestal behind Lightreaper.

"Get the lamp, Isaac," Molhu assures, "I'll hold him back as much as I can."

Isaac shuffles past Lightreaper as Molhu's hands glow a deep blue. Lightreaper's eyes turn blood red when he gives a glare at Molhu.

"You really think you all can stop me?" Lightreaper torments, "Look around! You can't stop this."

Molhu and Lightreaper rush at each other and clash with their fists and weapons. Isaac yanks the lamp off the pedestal and the beam vanishes.

"Isaac!" Molhu exclaims wearily, "Trap him in the lamp-" Molhu stops and looks down to see a spear impaled through his chest.

"You should've never helped him, " Lightreaper snaps as he rips the weapon out, "You would still be alive."

"Molhu!" Isaac cries as he clenches the lamp's handle.

The lamp begins to flicker and glow more vividly than ever before. The lamp trembles and creates an explosion that pushes Lightreaper backwards.

"So, the lamp really did choose you," Lightreaper chuckles. He scrapes his spears together as he trudges towards Isaac.

With the lamp's power, Isaac fights Lightreaper, each trading hits until they both become worn out.

"Give up, Lightreaper," Isaac said slowly. He charges a heavy blow with his lamp and releases it towards Lightreaper. He is hit with the attack and is knocked to the ground. Isaac walks towards him ready to trap him in the lamp. Without warning, a portal emerges behind Lightreaper and he crawls towards it.

"This isn't over, lamp bearer." Lightreaper grumbles as he escapes into the portal.

Isaac falls to the ground in exhaustion and lifts his head to see the cage disappear around Seluvis.

“Come on, let’s destroy this lamp and go home.” Seluvis says.

Isaac grasps the lamp and throws it to the ground, shattering the glass and extinguishing the glow. The two look around to see Huntington Beach return to its normal state. They both walk home their separate ways and wonder how they will explain what happened.

“Where have you been, Isaac?” Isaac’s mom says angrily, “did you see what happened outside?”

“Seluvis and I hid somewhere until everything was safe, we’re okay.” Isaac lies.

“Well that’s all that’s important.” Isaac’s mom replies relaxed, “as long as you’re safe.”

Isaac saunters upstairs and collapses in his bed. *Never going metal detecting again.* He thought jokingly.