



Elixirs
of the
Moon

T. Zamrik

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ISBN: To Be Assigned

First published 2026.

Published by Odin Press.

<https://odinpress.org>

This book was typeset in TYPST by Odin Press from a manuscript submitted by the author.

Paperback version.

Page size: 5.5 × 8.5 inches.

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

Preface

Elixirs of the Moon is a meditation on knowledge, freedom, and the terrible price of certainty.

At its heart, this novel asks: What would you sacrifice to know the future? And equally important: What would you gain by refusing to know?

The story follows two men whose relationship with foresight becomes their defining prison. Cicero discovers early that knowing what is coming—even emotional direction, even gentle guidance—binds him to that future. Corvus, searching for a more precise knowledge, finds himself enslaved not by ignorance but by omniscience, able to see others' fates with perfect clarity yet powerless to change them.

The central tension emerges not from the pursuit of knowledge, but from the realization that all foreknowledge, regardless of its gentleness or precision, is ultimately a cage. True freedom requires a choice that sounds paradoxical: to embrace fundamental uncertainty as the only path to authentic choice, authentic response, authentic becoming.

This is a story about the moon—that ancient symbol of cycles, mysteries, and hidden knowledge. But more fundamentally, it is a story about what it means to be human in a world where knowing the future would rob us of the possibility of being surprised, of being changed, of being genuinely alive.

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The Inherited Sight

1.1 Cicero in His Solitary House

The moon hung above the village like a witness to nothing in particular. Cicero watched it from his window and felt the familiar weight settle into his chest. This was the hour when it happened—when the day surrendered to night and he was left alone with the certainty that nothing would improve.

The house was his inheritance, or what passed for one. His parents had left him the building itself, stone and timber that would outlast any meaning he might assign to it. The rooms were few. He kept what he needed and left the rest empty. There was no point in filling spaces with objects that would only accumulate dust alongside his solitude.

Below, the village moved toward sleep. A merchant sealed his shop. A woman hurried home with a basket of cloth. A child was called inside by a weary mother. All of them part of the machinery of living, all of them performing the motions of hope. Cicero had tried that once, years ago. He

remembered the effort of it—the forced interest in small talk, the pretense that his participation in village life mattered to anyone. It had tired him. Eventually, he stopped.

The pessimism was not new. It was not the result of some recent catastrophe or disappointment. It was older than that. It felt like the fundamental architecture of his being, as if he had been constructed from the beginning with this understanding: that the world was not kind, that hope was a fool's errand, that the only honest response to existence was a kind of braced waiting for the next disappointment.

He turned from the window. On his table sat an ancient leather-bound tome, its spine cracked with age. He remembered it from his childhood—he had seen it in his grandmother's house, kept in a place of careful reverence. After her death, he had found it in the loft, buried in a bag of her belongings. It was undoubtedly old, though whether it was the work of his grandmother or something older still, he could not say. The leather was weathered. The binding was worn. Whatever its origin, it almost certainly predated her by years, perhaps decades. He had opened it.

1.2 The Grimoire's Secrets

The tome's pages were dense with notation, chaotic and unorganized. Not the clean, geometric script of proper scholarship, but something older and more fractured—the handwriting of someone who had recorded her observations across a large portion of her life. The pages bore no dates. The handwriting itself changed over time, growing more assured, then more trembling, then returning to certainty. It was impossible to tell the chronology.

Cicero spread it open on his table and encountered page after page of arcane alchemical recipes. The purpose of most was unclear. The instructions were vague, often incomplete. Ingredients listed without proportions. Procedures that trailed off mid-instruction. Some pages seemed to mock their own obscurity—a formula for something that might have been a tea, or might have been something else entirely. The book was a collection of fragments, as if his grandmother had been leaving breadcrumbs of knowledge without revealing the path.

But interspersed throughout the recipes were pages of drawings. Moons. Dozens of them. Each rendered in charcoal with precise, careful strokes. And on each moon—a face. Not the vague optical illusion that any conscious observer might perceive in the lunar surface, but actual drawn faces, unmistakable and intentional.

The faces varied. On one page, a moon wore an expression of profound happiness. On another, inno-

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The Weight of Solitude

3.1 The Skeletal Man

The terrible month has ended. Cicero survived the fever, but barely. Weeks have passed since his temperature broke, and his body still feels as though it belongs to someone else—a stranger who is weak and pained and requires constant effort just to continue existing.

He moves through the house slowly, as if through water. Drawing water from the well requires him to sit and rest afterward. Making bread exhausts him. The simplest tasks feel impossible, and so he does less and less, accepting the decay around him as merely external. The house reflects his state: dust accumulates, dishes remain unwashed, the food the neighbor left weeks ago sits untouched on the table, slowly becoming something unrecognizable.

His hands shake constantly. He tells himself it is exhaustion, but he knows better. The addiction has embedded itself in his nerves, in his muscles,

in the involuntary movements of his body. His hands know what his mind is trying not to acknowledge: they are enslaved.

He speaks rarely. His voice, when it emerges, is hoarse and strange—the voice of someone unused to sound, someone who has been silent for so long that speech feels like a violation of that silence.

There is something else: a cruelty that the cycle played on him. The next full moon came while Cicero was fevered and delirious, burning in the grip of the terrible month's revenge. Every fiber of his being screamed for the potion. The addiction demanded it. But his body was too weak, too consumed by fever. He could not rise from bed. He could not prepare the potion. He could only lie there, watching the moon through the window, wanting to drink and unable to move.

That forced absence—the need without the ability to fulfill it—created a secondary torment that the illness alone could not have inflicted. For weeks, his mind craved what his body could not take. The compulsion without fulfillment is its own particular hell.

Now, weeks after the fever broke, Cicero is still weak. The muscle has not returned to his limbs. The hollowness in his face has not filled in. But more important: he no longer attempts recovery. What is the point? The full moon will come again. Then again. The cycle is eternal, and he is trapped within it like a fly in amber.

He knows, in some distant way, that he should clean the house, should eat properly, should attempt to return to some version of living. But these desires feel abstract, as though they belong to a different person, a different life. The only real hunger he feels is for the potion. The only real need is to know.

He sits at his window and looks out at the village he can no longer reach, and he understands that he is disappearing. Not dying, exactly. But ceasing to be a person in the way that people understand personhood. He is becoming something else. Something other.



What would you sacrifice to know the future?

In an ancient tome, two elixirs await: one that reveals the shape of your own fate, another that lays bare the destinies of everyone else you think of. Two men drink from these Elixirs — and suffer the consequences of their actions.

Each covets what the other one possesses, and each shall be consumed by the very knowledge he seeks.

A philosophical thriller about the terrible price of certainty and the liberation found in embracing what we cannot know.

