



“ As I gazed upon the fragment, a curious impression was created. It's polished surface was like a window, beyond which swirled a black iridescence. I wondered what would happen should that window be broken. The apparent motion inside the fragment was hypnotic, and I stared for seemingly several minutes, transfixed. It was as if there were a living thing inside, with a consciousness and awareness.

The Curse of the Black Obelisk
(The Black Obelisk, Part II)
The Carnacki Casebook, Case No. 05

The Curse of the Black Obelisk (Sample)

(The Black Obelisk, Part II)

The Carnacki Casebook, Case No. 05

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A sample from *The Curse of the Black Obelisk* by William Jeffrey Rankin
<http://carnacki.wjrankin.com/stories/black-obelisk.html>

A month had passed since the resolution of the Halton Grange investigation. As promised, Lord Halton had provided me with regular updates, and it appeared that the Outside force had not returned to trouble the estate. Of the section in the east wing of the house that had mysteriously reappeared, there was no sign. In addition, Carlisle, the butler, had made several trips to the crypt under the family chapel, finding nothing out of the ordinary. I suspected this would remain so, believing that the source—the local source it's critical to distinguish—of the disturbance was permanently eliminated by our intervention. The displacement of the fragment from the ley line on which it was situated seemed to eliminate both the Edward Halton entity and the manifestation of the Outside force. Despite these facts, the case occupied my mind more than ever, and I felt there were certain unresolved questions: How did Edward Halton learn of the obelisk fragment and its power? And from where did he acquire the fragment? These were the questions turning in my mind when I turned my attention to the case once again.

Lord Halton had allowed me to retain both the obelisk fragment and parchment containing the ritual that had enabled the spirit of Edward Halton to live on, albeit in a radically transformed state. I'd kept both locked away in a cabinet in my study until one night in the middle of November when, having attended to other personal and professional obligations, I felt I had time to conduct the research these items are due.

With the fragment and parchment on my desk, I set to work using the references I had at hand. I researched several philosophies, cults, and obscure religions—ancient and modern, covert and well-known—but I was unable to find anything regarding, or even resembling, the ritual detailed in the parchment. Nor could I find references to the placement of fragments, such as the one I possessed, on ley lines. Whatever was behind this ritual, whether cult or singular force, its secrets were well-hidden. Disappointed in my lack of discovery, I picked up the obelisk fragment and studied it with a magnifying glass. I marveled at the beauty and regularity of its highly polished sides. There were no runes, hieroglyphics—such as those I recalled seeing in the domed chamber under the crypt at Halton Grange—or markings of any kind to be found on its surface.

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It was late, and I must have been unusually fatigued, for as I sat staring at the fragment I would swear I heard a voice say, quite close to my ear, "Perhaps you should give it back." My reverie was broken and I leapt from my chair, looking about the room for the source of the voice. But I was quite alone, of course. After nervously pacing the house for several minutes, I settled down to a drink. Before locking it back in my cabinet, I looked closely at the fragment again, but the curious optical pattern I'd witnessed but a short time ago didn't repeat itself, and the fragment appeared to simply be a piece of polished basalt. I believed the voice I thought I'd heard to be my own internal monologue, amplified by fatigue, and nothing more.