

THE LAST WATCHER



J. P. SAN

The Last Watcher

A Short Story

J. P. San



Airon Press

Copyright © 2025–2026 J. P. San. All rights reserved.

The Last Watcher— Beta Edition, Version 1-25

Published by Airon Press

Printed in the United States of America

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission of the publisher, except for brief quotations in reviews or critical articles, or as permitted under U.S. copyright law.

Rights & permissions: inquiry@profjimysan.com

The story, worldbuilding, and narrative structure are original works of human authorship by J. P. San. Illustrations were generated from the author's detailed, human-written prompts using AI tools, then refined through AI-assisted edits under the author's direction, with final approval by the author. This is a work of fiction. All names, characters, organizations, and events are invented, and any resemblance to actual persons (living or dead), entities, or events is purely coincidental.

Be Kind.

About the author

J.P. San, also known as Jimmy, is an American novelist known for weaving suspense, drama, and a touch of the surreal. From a young age, he was deeply attuned to the spiritual world, receiving a profound vision through his grandparents' intercession. This sparked his lifelong journey as a dreamer, seeking hope and guidance through divine signs. Drawing inspiration from everyday moments and human complexities, Jimmy creates emotionally resonant narratives. Outside of writing, he enjoys hiking, coffee, and exploring new places. He currently lives with his family in Rockville, Maryland, USA.



Jimmy San

Introduction

Hello. I'm 'Telel. You and I are going to be spending quite a bit of time together.

I'm the one who tells these stories, this one and a good many of the others Jimmy San has set down, especially the ones gathered under the name Shattered Mirrors. Narration is not my job, strictly speaking. My job is watching, which I happen to be excellent at, and telling is simply what happens when a good watcher finally finds an audience. Consider yourself found.

I like this story. I like it partly because I was there, and partly because it is small in all the ways that matter. No armies. No burning skies. Just a craftsman in a hidden workshop, a knock at a door that no one ever knocks on, and a visitor who has never once needed a door. In my experience the great turns of a universe almost never announce themselves. They happen in rooms like this one, at a workbench, over something no bigger than your hand.

A word of advice before you go in. Not everything on those shelves will introduce itself, and I have decided, for reasons of my own, not to make the introductions either. Some of it you will simply enjoy. Some of it you will recognize the second time through and wonder how you walked past it the first. The story was built that way on purpose, and I promise both visits are worth the price of admission.

That's all you need. The door is just ahead, and unlike our visitor,
you should probably use it.

Go on. I'll be right behind you.

I always am.

The Last Watcher

Beneath the shadowed peaks of northern Luzon, a quiet workshop glowed by the soft light of a carbide lantern. Shelves crowded the walls, laden with relics that seemed to murmur of forgotten worlds: shattered idols, brittle scrolls, and jars of strange powders whose purposes had faded long ago.

At the room's heart, a figure hunched over a cluttered workbench where delicate mechanical parts lay among figurines of every kind: animals, robots, spaceships, and mythical beings. Some were no larger than a thumb, others as large as a coconut, each crafted with meticulous care.

Sodo tapped the head of a lion-headed warrior figurine, its face fixed in an eternal snarl. At the sound, a blue faery no larger than a walnut sprang up, clutching a tiny lantern with a red firefly inside, and darted across the room to vanish beneath a pile of blankets. The Watcher did not look away. His focus stayed on the figurine as the lion's eyes reddened, seeming to burn through his forehead.

"Speak, then, you pathetic creature."

"I should have killed you the first chance I had," the lion said.

"You are stupid and arrogant," Sodo muttered. "You never had a chance." The lion's eyes narrowed, and a coldness settled heavily in the

air. Sodo rubbed his hands together and lowered his voice. "Not unlike your maker."

He was not referring to himself.

The lion was not always a beast. Once, he had been a man named Thaddeus McGregor. An insidious Shaman, later one of the first Controllers, named P'aqo found Thaddeus through a wager of sorts: P'aqo bet the angel Lucifer that even he could not convince Essence to cast the Blood Curse on an unsuspecting human. Normally, Essence would have nothing to do with Lucifer's games, but Lucifer was clever. He tweaked the Void's frequency until Essence believed there was a need.

What the two of them did after that, no one knows. I told them plainly: undo it, or I would take the matter to the Council. So they orchestrated a repair. Sodo would fix the lion by modifying the curse, and Sodo, being Sodo, turned the fixing into an experiment with his Chauvin coin. The same coin P'aqo later stole. Which is why I can never say a word of this to the Council, not unless I want to start another Ragnarok in the heavens.

The long and short of it is that the man became chained and cursed, changed by the moon into a beast with a thirst for blood, and condemned to wait for the Blood Moon that would let the lion out of him. Sodo had taken him, curse and all, and pressed a sliver of Chauvin gold into the place where the hunger lived. Now the beast stood on the workbench, no larger than a child's toy, the fury of his transformation trapped mid-breath.

Sodo smiled faintly. Jehovah had made him a Watcher. Everything after that, Sodo had made himself. Others observed. He disassembled. He rebuilt. He made new things from old bones, old metals, and old sins. Chauvin had begun that way: first curiosity, then craft, then a door into the soul's machinery and into acquaintance with Essence

itself, the power that had made the gods. Thaddeus was among his favorite possessions, not because he was beautiful, but because he reminded Sodo what power could make small.

Another figurine, a dancer caught mid-spin, her face serene, held the flicker of lantern light in her carved eyes.

"Yes, I see you watching," Sodo said quietly. "I talk to you because no one else listens. Gods do not whisper back. They only devour."

He lifted a small, blank-faced owl from the shelf, its stone wings outstretched.

"But perhaps one of you will whisper to her. Abigail. When the time comes."

The knight figurine beside it gave a faint rattle, as if in protest.

"Don't worry," he said with a tired smile. "You'll all have your roles. One of you may even carry my soul. I wonder if she'll taste metal or memory."

The body he wore tonight was short and unassuming: graying hair clinging to the sides of his head, a shaved face he would trade for another when the years required it.

He did not dwell on what the watching had cost him, or what he had bargained to keep out of the abyss. But monotony had worked on him like a tide, and somewhere in the long quiet he had turned from observation to creation. He had found an answer to gods. *That was the part he told no one.*

Now he meant to go further: to find spiritually attuned mortals, albeit carbonites, and empower them against Jehovah's will. He called them Controllers. *Incidentally, he also made it possible for celestials and lowly spirits to do the same. It might be his last act. He felt danger approaching.*

Tonight, his attention rested on his latest creation: a network of new figurines, each the size of a coconut, each embedded with golden

threads spun from the mystical Chauvin coins he had forged centuries ago.

Long ago, Sodo had crafted simpler figurines, tools that allowed shamans to channel spiritual powers they could never possess on their own. Now his ambitions stretched further.

He had mastered the suspension of life itself, halting the animation of humans, animals, spirits, and stranger things, then summoning them back to perform his bidding. But this was only the beginning. His figurines needed more: intelligence, independence, and a will sturdy enough to survive outside his own.

Sodo reached for the knight that had rattled, a stone figure carved in exquisite detail. Once, he had been a real knight: Sir Palamedes, arrogant and renowned, a member of King Arthur's Round Table. Nearby sat the Questing Beast, a figurine with a leopard's body, deer hooves, a serpent's neck, and a lion's head. Palamedes had finally captured the beast only to be captured himself. Now both sat on the shelf, appearing as mere showpieces.

Sodo hoped Palamedes would be the answer: a shield against meddling angels and wandering spirits. A lesser figurine would prove nothing. The old knight had endured centuries inside stone, soul and form fused tightly enough to carry the strain. Sodo closed his eyes and let his consciousness flow into him. Golden wires glowed. Small fans began to whirl.

Palamedes opened his stone eyes, and his limbs stirred in hesitant, jerking motions before settling into a smoother rhythm.

Slowly, he raised his sword, a blade no larger than a nail clipping, and took several unsteady steps across the workbench.

Then Palamedes burst into flames.

Sodo recoiled, hand half-raised, too late to save him. For a moment, he only stared at the ash where the knight had stood. Regret crossed his