

DARK ADVENTURE RADIO THEATRE:
THE CASE OF CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Written by

Sean Branney and Andrew Leman

Based on

"The Case of Charles Dexter Ward" by H. P. Lovecraft

Read-along Script
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SFX: static, radio tuning, snippet of 30s song, more tuning, static dissolves to:

Dark Adventure Radio THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

Tales of intrigue, adventure, and the mysterious occult that will stir your imagination and make your very blood run cold.

MUSIC CRESCENDO.

ANNOUNCER

This is Dark Adventure Radio Theatre, with your host Erskine Blackwell. Today's episode: H.P. Lovecraft's "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward".

MUSIC DIMINISHES. The sound clanking chains and tormented gibbering echoes through a cavernous space.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

An escaped madman. Unspeakable research into the blackest depths of the occult. Shadowy figures ruthlessly pursuing unholy secrets. Will a young man's thirst for knowledge push him over the brink to madness, or will it lead him to a fate far, far worse?

A few piano notes from the FORHAN'S TOOTHPASTE JINGLE.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Ladies and gentlemen, there are some medical conditions that people just aren't comfortable discussing. But just because you're not ready to discuss pyorrhea, doesn't mean you might not be its next victim. But those who brush morning and night with Forhan's toothpaste have no worries, because Forhan's invigorates your teeth and gums *before Pyorrhea strikes*. Forhan's - don't mention it.

Dark Adventure LEAD-IN MUSIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL
 And now Dark Adventure Radio
 Theatre presents: H.P. Lovecraft's
 "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward".

TRANSITION MUSIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL
 (at his theatrical best)
 "The essential Salts of Animals may
 be so prepared and preserved, that
 an ingenious man may have the whole
 ark of Noah in his own Study, and
 raise the fine shape of an animal
 out of its Ashes at his pleasure;
 and by the like method from the
 essential Salts of human dust, a
 philosopher may, without any
 criminal necromancy, call up the
 shape of any dead ancestor from the
 Dust whereinto his body has been
 incinerated." - Borellus, 1654.

Part One - A Result and a Prologue

From a private hospital for the
 insane near Providence, Rhode
 Island, there recently disappeared
 an exceedingly singular person who
 bore the name of Charles Dexter
 Ward.

Charles' parents had feared for
 him. They witnessed his decline
 into a dark mania involving both a
 possibility of murderous tendencies
 and a profound and peculiar change
 in the contents of his mind. They
 had turned in their fear to Dr.
 Marinus Bicknell Willet, who
 brought Charles Ward into the world
 and had watched his growth of body
 and mind ever since.

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ABOUT THE PATIENT

2

Transition music as we segue into the office of Dr. Waite, an
 elderly sanitarium director. With him are Dr. Willet, Dr.
 Lyman, and Charles' father.

DR. WAITE

Dr. Willet, from what I've seen so far, I'm not sure we have grounds to keep Charles committed indefinitely without his consent.

DR. WILLET

We have his father's consent, Dr. Waite. Don't we, Mr. Ward?

MR. WARD

My son is unwell. He's... deeply disturbed.

DR. LYMAN

Dr. Waite, he may not present an imminent danger to himself or others, but I'm of the opinion his condition is worsening.

DR. WILLET

(intensely)

We need to take action before something terrible happens.

DR. WAITE

I found Charlie perfectly cogent. His thinking seems well ordered. Some of his turns of phrase struck me as archaic, but not irrational. He went on at some length about the construction of the Great Bridge. You'd think he'd been there to witness it, the way he described it.

DR. WILLET

His familiarity with the past is... uncanny.

DR. LYMAN

Yet he sometimes seems utterly befuddled by modernity.

DR. WAITE

How so, Dr. Lyman?

DR. LYMAN

There is a Victrola in your office. As I conducted my interview with Charles, I asked him if he'd like me to play it. He seemed not to know what it was, or what its purpose was.

DR. WILLET

Not only did he not know what it was, he was eager to hide his ignorance.

DR. LYMAN

Several items on the questionnaire left him baffled. He seems quite ignorant of almost any aspect of modern life. Technology, politics... it's as if he missed the last hundred years. Maybe more.

DR. WAITE

Hmm. You also conducted a physical examination of Charlie, Dr. Lyman?

DR. LYMAN

I have.

DR. WILLET

I delivered Charles as a newborn and have served as the family's physician over the course of his entire life. Charles is twenty six years old.

DR. LYMAN

That's right.

DR. WILLET

You're known as the finest alienist in Boston, Dr. Lyman. Would you describe him as a healthy twenty six year old male?

DR. LYMAN

Well...

MR. WARD

My son looks like an old man, Dr. Waite!

DR. WAITE

Certainly his skin shows a morbid chill and coarseness, but...

DR. LYMAN

It does. And his respiration and heart action show a strange lack of symmetry. The lad's voice is hardly more than a whisper.

DR. WILLET

Charles was born with an olive-sized birthmark on his right hip.

MR. WARD

That's right, he was.

DR. WILLET

It's gone now. And since his... seizure he's developed a large black mole on his chest.

DR. WAITE

Patients often develop such growths later in...

DR. WILLET

Neither the mole nor any of these other conditions were present prior to the seizure.

DR. WAITE

Dr. Willet, you're not suggesting the growth of a cicatrice could be the cause of a psychological malady are you?

DR. WILLET

No, that's not what I'm suggesting.

DR. LYMAN

It's obvious to me that Charles' mental illness began long before the seizure. The onset occurred in 1919, when he withdrew from school.

DR. WAITE

Was Charlie a good student, Mr. Ward?

MR. WARD

Absolutely. He fancied himself an antiquarian, even as a child. He'd wander Providence, soaking in the history, the architecture... Why he knew more about local history than the best of his teachers. We always assumed he'd go on to college.

DR. LYMAN

My point exactly! All that changed the winter of 1919 when he began to delve into the occult and acquired his fixation on his ancestor, Joseph Curran.

DR. WILLET

(meaningfully)
Curwen.

DR. LYMAN

Hmm?

DR. WILLET

His ancestor was Joseph Curwen.

3

THE WARDS

3

TRANSITION MUSIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Part Two - An Antecedent and a Horror

Genealogical research led Charles Dexter Ward to the discovery of Joseph Curwen, an ancestor on his mother's side who had come from Salem in March of 1692, and about whom a whispered series of highly peculiar and disquieting stories clustered. Having discovered his own relationship to this mysterious character, he proceeded to hunt out whatever he might find concerning him.

A door slams and Charles Dexter Ward runs into the Ward house. He is a bright and enthusiastic young man, brimming with intellectual excitement. His parents clearly adore him. Sterling, the family's British butler is a model of dignified efficiency.

MRS. WARD

Charles, easy with the door.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Sorry, mother.

STERLING

Good afternoon, Master Charles.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Sterling, how are you, my man?

STERLING
Top notch, sir. I was about to set
out tea for your parents - may I
pour one for you?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
A capital idea!

MR. WARD
What have you got there, lad?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
The Genealogical Society had more
documents that refer to Joseph
Curwen!

RUSTLING of papers.

MR. WARD
Your mother's great, great...

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
He fled the witch trials in Salem
for the safety of Providence...

MR. WARD
Ah, Providence: the universal haven
of the odd, the free, and the
dissenting.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
...because he conducted "queer
chemical or alchemical
experiments".

MRS. WARD
(tsking)
And for this he's persecuted.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Listen to this. "The man seemed
never to age. He appeared to be in
his thirties when he arrived.
Decades later, he looked nary a day
older than he did when he arrived.
I spake to him of it, and he said
only, "He came from hearty stock".

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

I share the opinion of other good town folk, suspecting Curwen's incessant mixings and boilings of chemicals had somehow preserved his condition".

Sterling sets out the tea and the Wards enjoy it through the conversation.

MR. WARD

That sounds a bit dubious.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

They complain of him shipping drugs, chemicals and acids and coming and going all hours of the night.

MR. WARD

Hmm, quite a suspicious figure, eh? Hardly surprising he comes from your mother's side of the family.

MRS. WARD

Oh, Theodore!

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

We have an alchemist in the family!
(in a mock olde-time
accent)
Joseph Curwen, freeman of
Providence, 'tis a pleasure to be
acquainted with ye...

MR. WARD

Ah, a jolly olde chappe, eh?

Mr. Ward and Sterling chuckle.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Not at all. Every reference I've found paints him as an astonishing, enigmatic, and obscurely horrible individual. After he fled the witchcraft panic in Salem, it seems the peculiar Mr. Curwen was often a topic of conversation among the citizenry of Providence in the decades before the Revolutionary War.

Music takes us back to the colonies of pre-revolutionary New England. Horses clop down cobblestone streets. There's a creak as the shop door opens at the apothecary beneath the Sign of the Unicorn. JABEZ BROWN is a keen eyed elderly apothecary.

JABEZ BOWEN

Afternoon, Benjamin. Mrs. Fenner.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Greetings, Jabez.

MRS. FENNER

Dr. Bowen.

JABEZ BOWEN

I've got your tincture right back here somewhere.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Not a moment too soon. The missus' nerves are frayed to bits.

JABEZ BOWEN

This should help. It's volatile foetid tincture.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Sounds... potent.

JABEZ BOWEN

A tea spoon in a cup of penny-royal tea should do the trick. Or in a glass of wine at bed time if you're having difficulty sleeping.

MRS. FENNER

Sleep? God's breath, I hardly sleep a wink these days.

JABEZ BOWEN

Insomnia?

MRS. FENNER

Who could sleep living within earshot of the Curwen place?

JABEZ BOWEN

Oh, that's right. He's the next farm past you out the old Pawtuxet Road.

BENJAMIN FENNER

There's always teamsters and porters bringing equipment and implements and supplies for his laboratory. By my troth, Jabez, the man has more equipment in that laboratory out at the farm than you do - and you're a licensed apothecary!

JABEZ BOWEN

It's true. He's ordered more drugs, metals and acids from me than all the chemists at the University. Shipments from Newport, Boston, New York, London, the Indies... lord knows where else.

BENJAMIN FENNER

And for what? Is he a doctor?

JABEZ BOWEN

Surely not! Not a fortnight ago, he ordered from me three full pounds of Album Graecum, and a hogshead of Salt Armoniac. I said to him, "I know the ingredients, you're making a gargle for treating a Quinsy, no?" The fellow glared at me as if I'd broke wind in church. But still he buys and buys and buys.

BENJAMIN FENNER

I stopped one waggoner, an ugly fellow, and demanded of him what was in the cart he was delivering to Curwen. He showed me: crates filled with bottles, bags, or boxes, flasks, crucibles, alembics, and furnaces. I demanded to know what it was for. This fellow gave me a sly grin and said, "Curwen's a chemist, he's going to find the Philosopher's Stone!"

JABEZ BOWEN

Good lord. Surely he's conducting some kind of experimentations, but I can't believe...

BENJAMIN FENNER

He doesn't age. Think about it. How long have you known Joseph Curwen?

JABEZ BOWEN
Nigh on thirteen years now.

BENJAMIN FENNER
Does he look a day older than the
day you met him?

JABEZ BOWEN
I can't say he does.

BENJAMIN FENNER
I can't say he does either, and
I've know the man nigh on forty
years.

MRS. FENNER
He's in league with the devil!

JABEZ BOWEN
Abagail! The man's a founder of the
Congregational Church! He's
eccentric, I grant ye.

MRS. FENNER
Dos't grant me? He's unholy!

BENJAMIN FENNER
Jabez, there is something untoward
going on at his farm. The shipments
and boxes, deliveries from hither
and yon. The man himself gallops
back and forth from town any hour
of day or night. His servants...

JABEZ BOWEN
They're not so bad. Those two
swarthy fellows and the old french
woman...

BENJAMIN FENNER
Those are his servants in town. But
on the farm he's only attended to
by a pair of old Narragansett
Indians.

MRS. FENNER
The man's dumb - can't speak a word
and covered with horrid scars. The
woman, ugh, she's of a very
repulsive cast of countenance,
probably due to a mixture of negro
blood.

BENJAMIN FENNER

And just the three of them. Have you ever seen the amount of livestock he keeps? No such amount is needed to keep a lone old man and a very few servants in meat, milk, and wool.

JABEZ BOWEN

I don't disagree. The man's queer and unsettling.

MRS. FENNER

(appalled)

Pshaw! You don't live next to him. Hear the noises...

BENJAMIN FENNER

(furtively)

There are noises. Noises that will wake you in the dead of night.

JABEZ BOWEN

Noises?

MRS. FENNER

Cries. A sort of howling...

JABEZ BOWEN

Like a dog?

BENJAMIN FENNER

It's like no dog I ever heard. A creature in pain going on and on...

MRS. FENNER

It'll wake you in the dead of night and we live a full quarter mile off...

Awkward pause.

JABEZ BOWEN

Well, my tincture should help you sleep. Wish there was something I could do about your neighbor.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Town gossips muttered about Curwen's home in Olney Court. Lights were seen at odd hours. Huge quantities of food were shipped to the house in which only four persons lived. The quality of certain voices often heard in muffled conversation in the dead of night combined with what was known of the Pawtuxet farm to give the town house a bad name.

I found a record that Curwen invited John Merritt, an elderly English gentleman and scientist, to pay him a visit in the spring of 1746.

MUSICAL TRANSITION. A quill pen scratches as Merritt writes.

JOHN MERRITT

I accepted Curwen's invitation to visit his library in Pawtuxet. It was an impressive collection of rare texts, but Curwen himself proved utterly loathsome. The collection embraced nearly all the cabbalists, daemonologists, and magicians known to man; and was a treasure-house of lore in the realms of alchemy and astrology. Hermes Trismegistus in Mesnard's edition, Raymond Lully's *Ars Magna et Ultima*, Roger Bacon's *Thesaurus Chemicus*, Fludd's *Clavis Alchimiae*, and Trithemius's *De Lapide Philosophico*. Mediaeval Jews and Arabs were represented in profusion. I inspected a fine volume conspicuously labelled as the *Qanoon-e-Islam*, when I found it was in truth the forbidden *Necronomicon* of the mad Arab Abdul Alhazred, of which I had heard such monstrous things whispered some years previously. On the huge mahogany table there lay face downwards a badly worn copy of Borellus.

(MORE)

JOHN MERRITT (cont'd)

The book was open at about its middle, and one paragraph displayed such thick and tremulous pen-strokes beneath the lines of mystic black-letter that I could scarce resist scanning it through.

Creepy MUSIC. As Merritt gets to the sentence about "call up the shape of any dead ancestor", his voice cross fades with Charles Dexter Ward reading the passage.

JOHN MERRITT

"... from the essential salts of human dust, a philosopher may, without any criminal necromancy, call up the shape of any dead ancestor from the dust whereinto his body has been incinerated."

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(crossfading)

call up the shape of any dead Ancestor from the dust whereinto his body has been incinerated."

MR. WARD

Good lord, Charles.

6

RUMORS ABOUT JOSEPH CURWEN

6

Musical transition back to Charles Theme.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Near the docks along the south part of Town Street the worst things were muttered about Joseph Curwen. Even veteran sailors cringed when they saw Curwen enter his warehouse in Doubloon Street. Curwen's own clerks and captains hated him, but his sailors - mongrel riff-raff plucked from Caribbean islands - feared him. It was the frequency with which these sailors were replaced which inspired the acutest and most tangible part of the fear. A crew would be turned loose in the town on shore leave, some of its members perhaps charged with this errand or that; and when reassembled it would be almost sure to lack one or more men.

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)
 Many of the errands had concerned
 the farm of Pawtuxet Road.

MR. WARD
 Hmph. Sounds suspicious...

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 It was. By 1760 Joseph Curwen was
 virtually an outcast, widely
 suspected of vague horrors and
 demonic alliances. He remained a
 dominant force in the town's
 commerce, buying and selling the
 goods coming in from his vast
 shipping network. As he became
 richer, there was slight abatement
 in the visible aversion displayed
 toward him; especially once the
 sudden disappearances of his
 sailors abruptly ceased.

One account spread rumors of him
 haunting graveyards, and of
 disturbing sounds emanating from
 his farm, but he went to great
 lengths to preserve his reputation.
 To improve his footing in the
 community, he determined to marry;
 securing as a bride some lady whose
 social position would enhance his
 own.

7 A BAD MATCH

7

Transition Music to the Colonial Theme.

DUTY TILLINGHAST
 Eliza, come here my girl, I must
 speak with ye.

ELIZA TILLINGHAST
 What is it father?

DUTY TILLINGHAST
 (pained by where he must
 go)
 I know ye are fond of young Ezra
 Weeden...

ELIZA TILLINGHAST
 Fond? I adore him. You know full
 well we're betrothed.

DUTY TILLINGHAST
I've broken it off.

ELIZA TILLINGHAST
Father, no! Why?

DUTY TILLINGHAST
A worthier suitor has asked for
your hand, and I've set my mind:
it's him ye shall marry.

ELIZA TILLINGHAST
But I love Ezra.

DUTY TILLINGHAST
You're not to see him again. You
understand me? Tis Mr. Curwen has
asked for your hand....

Eliza wails piteously.

DUTY TILLINGHAST
...and we have made an agreement. I
know he's older, but he's a rich
and powerful man and we owe him
much.

ELIZA TILLINGHAST
He's horrible. And you know it.

He does.

DUTY TILLINGHAST
No more of that. He'll make you a
fine husband and you'll be mistress
of a fine house.

Eliza bursts into bitter tears and runs away.

DUTY TILLINGHAST
Eliza! Come back here!

8 THE PUBLIC HOUSE

8

The lively sounds of The Turk's Head, a Providence Public House. Eleazar Smith, a lad of twenty, hurries in, takes his place at the bar and puts down coins.

ELEAZAR SMITH
Drink!

EDMUND WOOTEN
 Eleazar Smith - you look like
 you've seen a ghost!

ELEAZAR SMITH
 Cider, man!

EDMUND WOOTEN
 What ales you? Aye? Do ye get it?
 Ales ye?

ELEAZAR SMITH
 I've no mind for your wit, Wooten.
 I come with news, news of a
 dreadful sort.

EDMUND WOOTEN
 Out with it lad.

ELEAZAR SMITH
 Joseph Curwen, that devil, is going
 to take a bride.

EDMUND WOOTEN
 A bride? You're daft lad! No decent
 woman would...

ELEAZAR SMITH
 Tis true. A date's been set.

John Brown, a middle aged merchant and slaver, turns in on
 the conversation.

JOHN BROWN
 What's that ye say?

ELEAZAR SMITH
 Sorry, Mr. Brown, I didn't mean to
 drag you into this.

JOHN BROWN
 Curwen to wed, says ye?

ELEAZAR SMITH
 'Tis a fact.

JOHN BROWN
 Pshaw. No man of honor would marry
 a child to that, that...

ELEAZAR SMITH
 (pained)
 Tillinghast.

EDMUND WOOTEN

No! The poor thing, can't be...
what? Eighteen? And him....

JOHN BROWN

God knows his age. The man's got to
have forty years on me. At least!
That's an unholy match.

EDMUND WOOTEN

What's more, she's betrothed to
your mate, Ezra Weeden.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Broken off. By her father. The
bastard!

JOHN BROWN

It's not like Capt. Tillinghast
has much choice, now, he works for
Curwen.

ELEAZAR SMITH

No, Curwen's the bastard.

The door to the outside swings open. Conversation stops as a
figure steps in from the dark.

EZRA WEEDEN

Bastard's right!

ELEAZAR SMITH

Ezra!
(to Wooten)
Pour him a drink.

EDMUND WOOTEN

Come, sit lad!

EZRA WEEDEN

He stole her from me! My beloved
Eliza!

JOHN BROWN

Now now...

EZRA WEEDEN

I swear to ye John Brown - I swear
upon my soul to every man in this
room. I shall not rest until that
devil Joseph Curwen rots in hell!

A roar of assent ripples through the tavern.

9

A MACABRE ECCENTRIC

9

Musical transition.

MRS. WARD

Well, did poor Eliza have to go through with it?

Charles ruffles through old papers.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Let me see here: "Monday evening last, Mr. Joseph Curwen, of this town, merchant, was married to Miss Eliza Tillinghast, daughter of Capt. Dutee Tillinghast, a young lady who has real merit, added to a beautiful person, to grace the connubial State and perpetuate its felicity."

STERLING

Hmph. Some felicity.

MRS. WARD

Oh, the poor girl. The tears she must have shed.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

It seems like his ploy worked. After the marriage, he doesn't seem quite so reviled. People of quality were entertained at his house on Olney Court. Apart from a few mentions of his late night visits to the Pawtuxet farm, he seems almost respectable - unless you credit the rants of poor Ezra Weeden.

MR. WARD

The jilted fiancée?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

The one. His diatribes about Curwen became even worse when Curwen's daughter, Ann, was born in 1765.

MRS. WARD

Oh dear.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

But Curwen does his best to keep in good society.

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

He even hired a Scots painter to do his portrait right on a wall panel of the house at Olney Court. It doesn't say what became of it...

MR. WARD

Look, Charles, Curwen's certainly a character, but your interest in this fellow, well, it's a bit obsessive.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Dad!

MR. WARD

He's a macabre eccentric, isn't that all you need to know?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Eccentric? He's the most bizarre and fascinating character I've ever heard of. Besides, he's family, right mother?

MRS. WARD

Just because he's family doesn't mean he's not dreadful.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Apparently he changed again in 1766. In one public house, he made bizarre harangues, gloating about his work.

STERLING

I'm sorry, Master Charles, what exactly was this work of his?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

No one really knows. But according to this, his behavior only fueled the doubts people held about him.

10

UNSPEAKABLE TRAFFIC

10

Musical transition. Glasses clink in the Turk's Head public house.

EDMUND WOOTEN

Pour you another, John Brown? Lads?

ELEAZAR SMITH

Thankin' ye.

EZRA WEEDEN

Aye!

*

*

JOHN BROWN

Aye, man. Thanks to God, Curwen's gone home so a man can enjoy his drink in peace.

EDMUND WOOTEN

True. He was in rare form tonight. A might peculiar.

JOHN BROWN

Peculiar?

(imitating Curwen's gloating rant)

"At last my work a perfect triumph of the spheres!"

EZRA WEEDEN

Did ye see the look on old Joshua Bell's face when Curwen spake to him the name of his father's hunting dog?

JOHN BROWN

Turned ash white. How can Curwen know such things?

EDMUND WOOTEN

Told me the land under the Turk's Head was a tanner's pit before it was made into a public house.

EZRA WEEDEN

Was it?

EDMUND WOOTEN

Aye, but how'd he know that? My grandfather built this place nearly 70 years ago.

EZRA WEEDEN

Spirits. He conjures the dead and draws secrets out of them.

EDMUND WOOTEN

Now, Ezra Weeden, I'll not have you alleging necromancy against Mr. Curwen.

EZRA WEEDEN

But you all saw him! The look in his eye - t'weren't godly.

JOHN BROWN

Aye, that's certain.

EDMUND WOOTEN

I'll admit he's strange, but
Curwen's done a might of civic good
of late. He helped Daniel Jenkes
open his bookshop and ne'er charge
him a farthing.

JOHN BROWN

Wooten, quit your gabbing and fetch
my ale.

Wooten goes off.

EZRA WEEDEN

(quieter)

Ploys, Mr. Brown. All to divert
attention from his real doings. No
more than a mask for his
unspeakable traffick with the
blackest gulfs of Tartarus.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Aye.

JOHN BROWN

And what would ye know of his
unspeakable traffic?

EZRA WEEDEN

Me and Eleazar here, we've been
keeping watch on that devil.
Countless nights, right?

ELEAZAR SMITH

Aye, 'tis many a...

EZRA WEEDEN

When we're not at sea, we watch
him. We've seen his comings and
goings, have we not Eleazar?

ELEAZAR SMITH

Aye, for in the dark...

JOHN BROWN

So what - what have you lads seen?

EZRA WEEDEN

We all know he moves his ships at
night, right?

JOHN BROWN

What with the Sugar Act, it's all
smuggling these days.

(MORE)

JOHN BROWN (cont'd)
 Show me a sailor who hasn't made a
 nighttime run in Narragansett Bay.

EZRA WEEDEN
 Aye, he's not evading His Majesty's
 ships.

ELEAZAR SMITH
 No sir!

EZRA WEEDEN
 Two years ago if ye watched his
 ships, they'd haul negroes from his
 warehouses out to a point north of
 Pawtuxet. They'd march the poor
 blacks overland out to his farm and
 into that huge stone building with
 just the five slits for windows.

ELEAZAR SMITH
 But not no more...

JOHN BROWN
 (interested now)
 Why? What's he do now?

ELEAZAR SMITH
 No slaves now.

EZRA WEEDEN
 Now you see the sloops go down the
 bay some distance, sometimes as far
 as Namquit Point. They meet strange
 ships of all kinds and unload 'em.

ELEAZAR SMITH
 All kinds a' ships. Big ones and
 small ones!

EZRA WEEDEN
 Then Curwen's sailors transport the
 cargo overland to the farm, and
 lock it in the same queer stone
 building where he'd sent the
 slaves.

JOHN BROWN
 What's the cargo?

ELEAZAR SMITH
 Should we tell, Ezra?

EZRA WEEDEN

Boxes and cases, oblong and heavy.
'Bout as tall as a man. About as
wide...

JOHN BROWN

You don't think they're...

ELEAZAR SMITH

We don't want to spread no rumors,
Mr. Brown, we just tell you what we
seen.

EZRA WEEDEN

Mum's the word - we don't want
anyone to tip him off that we're
watching.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Aye, listening. The things we've
heard.

Wooten returns with the Captain's drink.

EDMUND WOOTEN

Another ale for you lads?

EZRA WEEDEN

Away, publican!

EDMUND WOOTEN

Still on about Curwen? She's his
wife now, no point in continuing to
fret about it, lad.

EZRA WEEDEN

Away with ye!

Wooten waddles off mumbling to himself. The conspirators draw
in closer.

JOHN BROWN

So, what's the old man up to out
there?

ELEAZAR SMITH

No good, that's for certain.

EZRA WEEDEN

I reckon he's got a great series of
tunnels and catacombs under the
farm, inhabited by a very sizeable
staff of persons besides the old
Indian and his wife.

JOHN BROWN
Catacombs? Never heard of nothing
like that around here.

UNDERSCORE BEGIN. VERY SUBTLE.

EZRA WEEDEN
There's the main house and across
the yard is his laboratory with
those thin, slit windows. We figure
there must be tunnels as we've
heard different voices coming and
going inside.

ELEAZAR SMITH
But not a soul going in nor out of
the place.

JOHN BROWN
What kind of voices?

ELEAZAR SMITH
They changed. Not like they were
before.

JOHN BROWN
What do you mean?

EZRA WEEDEN
A year or two ago we would hear
mumblings and negro whisperings,
frenzied screams, and sometimes
strange chants.

ELEAZAR SMITH
But not now.

EZRA WEEDEN
No. Now it's like he's questioning
people. Sometimes it's normal talk,
but then there will be cries of
pain and pleading and protest.

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION. TENSION INCREASES.

There's Curwen, but it sounds like
he has some kind of guards to help
him.

ELEAZAR SMITH
They don't always talk English,
neither.

EZRA WEEDEN

I've been on ships headed all over the world but never heard anything like this. Whatever they speak, Curwen knows it. He's always after them; that man, even if you don't know what he's saying, you know what he's saying.

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION. TENSION RESET. VERY SIMPLE

ELEAZAR SMITH

Reminded me of jail.

JOHN BROWN

Jail?

ELEAZAR SMITH

Like when the constable wants some sort of information from his prisoners - nothing's going to stop him from getting answers.

JOHN BROWN

But did you not understand any of it?

ELEAZAR SMITH

We understood plenty.

JOHN BROWN

Details, man!

EZRA WEEDEN

One night, Curwen questioned someone, never said his name, in French, about the Black Prince's massacre at Limoges in 1370. He asked whether the order to slay was given because of the Sign of the Goat found on the altar in the ancient Roman crypt beneath the Cathedral, or whether the Dark Man of the Haute Vienne had spoken the Three Words.

JOHN BROWN

Devilish talk! What did the man say?

EZRA WEEDEN

He refused to answer, so Curwen must have done something terrible for there was a terrific shriek followed by silence and muttering and a bumping sound.

ELEAZAR SMITH

And that were all.

EZRA WEEDEN

Eleazar here gave a start and the old Indians set the dogs upon us.

ELEAZAR SMITH

After that, we never heard voices from the queer stone building.

TENSION UP AGAIN SLIGHTLY.

EZRA WEEDEN

But we heard plenty elsewhere. Faint cries and groans come up now and then from the ground in places far from any structure. That's why we reckon he's got tunnels 'neath the ground.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Aye, and on the river bank, hidden in the bushes we found a stout oak door in a frame of heavy masonry.

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION. TENSION UP.

We reckon it's an entrance to caverns within the hill.

JOHN BROWN

But how could Curwen dig...

EZRA WEEDEN

I can't say for certain; but bands of workmen could reach the place from the river unseen. I reckon Joseph Curwen put his mongrel seamen to digging secret tunnels!

ELEAZAR SMITH

And the negroes! Oh, tell him about the Forteleza.

EZRA WEEDEN

His Majesty's schooner, Cygnet, was patrolling the harbor for smugglers and she captured the scow Fortaleza of Barcelona. According to the log, Fortaleza was bound from Grand Cairo, Egypt for Providence. The crew searched her for contraband.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Tell him what they found.

EZRA WEEDEN

'Twas full of mummies.

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION. TENSION RESET, THEN BUILD TO "PROMINENT CITIZEN" SEGUE.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Egyptian mummies!

EZRA WEEDEN

They were consigned to an unnamed sailor who was to come and "remove his goods off Namquit point".

JOHN BROWN

Namquit point, that's right by Curwen's farm!

EZRA WEEDEN

Aye, there's more unholy trafficking for that devil Curwen!

JOHN BROWN

That does it, lads. Something's got to be done. We're going to confront this devil headlong!

11 PROMINENT CITIZENS

11

TENSE MUSIC SEGUES INTO PROMINENT CITIZENS TRANSITION. TOUCH ON CHARLES THEME, THEN PUNCTUATE EACH NAME OF THE PROMINENT CITIZENS CHARLES MENTIONS WITH JUST A NOTE OR TWO, OR A CHORD SHIFT.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

John Brown took his suspicions to some of the most learned and prominent citizens of Providence. All shared a growing concern about Curwen.

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

In late December 1770 a group of eminent townsmen met at the home of Stephen Hopkins and debated tentative measures with Weeden and Smith on hand to provide testimony.

On hand were Rev. James Manning,

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION, PERHAPS THE HARPSICHORD

President of the College who wore the largest periwig in the colonies; ex-Governor Stephen Hopkins,

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION, A LITTLE HIGHER/MORE IMPRESSIVE

a man of very broad perceptions; old Dr. Jabez Bowen,

PUNCTUATION, SOMEHOW SLIGHTLY SINISTER

whose erudition was considerable; and Capt. Abraham Whipple,

A HEROIC NOTE OR TWO FOR CAPT. WHIPPLE, MAYBE ON A HORN(?)

a privateersman of phenomenal boldness who could be counted on to lead in any active measures needed.

"PROMINENT CITIZENS" SEGUES INTO "GRIM GEORGIAN THEME"

Musical transition - a more grim and eerie version of the Georgian theme.

JOHN BROWN

...and that, gentlemen, concludes the case, as best we currently understand it, against Joseph Curwen. The question is, what action are we prepared to take? Reverend Manning?

"GRIM GEORGIAN THEME" RESOLVES: END CUE.

REV. MANNING

I say we formally request he answer our queries. If we all questioned him together he'd be forced to explain himself.

Murmurs of assent.

JOHN BROWN

What say you, Mr. Bowen?

JABEZ BOWEN

There's many a man in his employ.
He's financially tied to half the
city. 'Twill impact work and trade
for many.

JOHN BROWN

'Tis true, sir. My business stands
to be hard hit by Curwen.

JABEZ BOWEN

We should do it, but it must be
kept secret. If he knows what's
coming he'll cover his tracks.

JOHN BROWN

He is a canny one. Yes, Mr.
Hopkins?

STEPHEN HOPKINS

If word gets out about the charges
made against Curwen, the citizenry
may panic. We can't have another
Salem!

REV. MANNING

No, sir! 'Twould be unthinkable.

JABEZ BOWEN

So we let him carry on with his
devilry? Are ye mad?

REV. MANNING

We could turn to the governor, the
law!

JABEZ BOWEN

Damn the governor!

JOHN BROWN

Now, Jabez...

REV. MANNING

(nervous)

What of these nefarious Indians,
and vicious dogs? It could be
dangerous...

The many voices cry out in squabble. The bold and dashing
privateer, Capt. Whipple, slams a tankard upon the table and
seizes the floor.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Damn ye and your equivocations! Is there not a man among ye who thinks not Curwen is a menace to this town? Nay, not a one of ye! There's a time for men to take action in the name of their town and their families, and gentlemen, that day has come.

JOHN BROWN

What would you have us do, Capt. Whipple?

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Cease this womanly bickering! Curwen must be taken by surprise by a large band of seasoned men. He gets one chance to explain himself. If he's gone mad, amusing himself with shrieks and imaginary conversations, we restrain him and take him to jail. And if it's something worse... he and all with him must die.

REV. MANNING

Just murder the man?

CAPT. WHIPPLE

If we must.

REV. MANNING

Oh.

BEGIN MUSIC TRANSITION TO HEROIC CONSPIRACY. GRIM GEORGIAN FLAVOR STARTING LOW, BUILDING SENSE OF DRAMA UNDERNEATH ALL THE "AYES" AS THE MEN AGREE TO WHIPPLE'S PLAN.

STEPHEN HOPKINS

What would we tell the authorities?

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Damn the authorities! If they were any sort of men, they'd have disposed of Curwen by now. What say ye? Are ye with me?

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION, TENSION INCREASES AS THE MEN BEGIN TO AGREE TO THE CONSPIRACY

One by one, the men chime in with "Aye".

AFTER THE LAST "AYE" TENSION RESETS, WITH DRAMATIC TONE UNDER WHIPPLE'S FINAL LINE. MAYBE BRING BACK HIS HEROIC HORN.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Well spake, gentlemen. I'll
assemble some hearty lads. We'll
meet here two weeks from tonight.
Not a word of this to anyone.

12

A STRANGE AND TERRIBLE INCIDENT

12

HEROIC CONSPIRACY SEGUES INTO "STRANGE AND TERRIBLE INCIDENT"
EXISTING CUE IS EXCELLENT.

Musical transition back to Charles.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

While preparations were underway, a
strange and terrible incident took
place. In the middle of a moon-
light January night with heavy snow
a shocking series of cries
resounded over the river...

Cold wind blows January snow as Eleazar gallops up to the
Smith house. Dogs bark in the distance.

ELEAZAR SMITH

(shouting)

Ezra! Ezra Weeden! Awake, man! It's
me, Eleazar.

The shutters open and Ezra sticks his head out.

EZRA WEEDEN

What is't? You'll wake the town.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Come quick, there's a Monster in
the town! Bring your musket!

Eleazar's horse gallops off.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Parties of men with lanterns and
muskets hurried out to see what was
happening, but found nothing. The
next morning, however, a giant,
muscular body, stark naked, was
found on the jams of ice around the
southern piers of the Great Bridge.

A clamor of citizens murmur as intrepid souls approach the horrific figure.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Good god, look at him. What's wrong with him, Dr. Bowen?

JABEZ BOWEN

The man's dead, Elezear. Ezra, you help turn him over.

They do. A GASP of horror comes from the crowd.

JABEZ BOWEN

God in heaven...

EZRA WEEDEN

You alright there? Do you know him?

JABEZ BOWEN

It looks just like old Daniel Green, the blacksmith.

ELEAZAR SMITH

I never heard of him.

JABEZ BOWEN

Not likely you would, the man's been dead near forty years.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Must be someone else. I saw this fellow running like mad down the road last night before I went to get Ezra.

JABEZ BOWEN

Road? What road? Where did you see him?

ELEAZAR SMITH

He'd come across Muddy Dock Bridge, from the...

ELEAZAR SMITH

...Pawtuxet Road.

EZRA WEEDEN

...Pawtuxet Road.

*
*

Ezra hurries to his horse.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Ezra, where are you going?

EZRA WEEDEN

Eleazar, help Mr. Bowen with him.

He GALLOPS off.

13

THE AUTOPSY

13

Transition music. Sound change to interior.

JABEZ BOWEN

We can't autopsy this poor fellow
in the dark. Eleazar, turn up the
lamp there. Now the corpse may be
filled with vapors. If you're going
to be sick, sniff this, or use that
pail.

ELEAZAR SMITH

I don't understand. If he's already
dead, why are you going to cut him
up?

We hear the sounds of Jabez's autopsy as he narrates the
process to Eleazar.

JABEZ BOWEN

Sometimes, in looking at the body
of the deceased, it's possible for
a doctor to see what it is that
killed him. For instance, if we cut
into his stomach here...

Dreadful cutting into stomach sound.

JABEZ BOWEN

We may learn what he's eaten...

MUSICAL STING.

Good heavens.

ELEAZAR SMITH

What is it?

JABEZ BOWEN

Well, this man hasn't eaten. Why...
it's as if his digestive tract's
never been in use... and his skin,
look how it's coarse and loosely
knit.

KNOCKING.

JABEZ BOWEN

Come back later!

EZRA WEEDEN

It's me, Ezra Weeden. I've got news.

JABEZ BOWEN

Enter.

EZRA WEEDEN

My hunch was right. This poor fellow came from the Curwen farm. Tracks in the snow showed, he'd been chased by dogs and booted men. I followed the prints back up to Curwen's but didn't dare get too close in broad daylight. What about him. Can you tell who he is?

JABEZ BOWEN

Near as I can tell, it really is Daniel Green. And he's been dead for quite some time.

ELEAZAR SMITH

That can't be, I saw him running... I wasn't the only one. Mrs. Brody and her sons seen him running too.

JABEZ BOWEN

The Green family's got a plot in the old North Burying Ground. I'd wager if we have a look, we'll find an empty grave.

14

STRANGE MISSIVES

14

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

And indeed they did.

Music transition.

EXISTING CUE LOVELY.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

During this time, John Brown made arrangements with the post rider to intercept Curwen's mail. A pair of very strange letters came for Curwen.

The first was from Jedediah Orne of Salem. It seemed to recount failed chemical experiments resulting in the "liveliest awfulness".

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

It went on to beseech Curwen, saying "do not call up Any that you can not put down; by the Which I mean, Any that can in Turn call up Somewhat against you, whereby your Powerfullest Devices may not be of use. Ask of the Lesser, lest the Greater shall not wish to Answer, and shall command more than you."

The writing was curiously old fashioned, even for 1771. Its author asked Curwen to write to him as Jedediah rather than Simon, saying "In this Community a Man may not live too long. I am desirous you will Acquaint me with what the Black Man learnt from Sylvanus Cocidius, and will be obliged for the lending of the manuscript you speak of."

The letter poured fuel on the fire burning in John Brown and his compatriots and convinced them the time for action was upon them.

15

THE TIME HAS COME

15

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

On Friday, April 12, a company of about 100 men gathered in the great room at Thurston's Tavern at the Sign of the Golden Lion. In addition to John Brown there were present Dr. Bowen, with his case of surgical instruments, Reverend Manning (without his periwig), Governor Hopkins, wrapped in his dark cloak, and the dashing Capt. Whipple, who was to lead the actual raiding party.

The rumble of the anxious men heard through the door.

STEPHEN HOPKINS

The men are gathered in the next room, what are we waiting for?

JABEZ BOWEN

Young Ezra's keeping an eye on Curwen's coach. When he sets out for the farm, then we'll go.

STEPHEN HOPKINS

We have the men, why not take him now?

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Don't be daft! We want to catch the man unawares in the act of his foul...

The door opens.

EZRA WEEDEN

(breathless)

He's gone. It's time.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

'Tis the moment. You men, follow me.

They step from the apartment into the great hall. The rumble of the men grows louder. Capt. Whipple addresses the privateers.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Men, it's time. I need not tell ye this is a serious business. You're to march in ranks, four abreast, and keep good order. Have your weapons at the ready, but if any man fires without direct order, I swear I'll tan his hide meself. Not a word from ye now - we want our visit to Mr. Curwen to come as a surprise. Take arms and fall in!

The men pick up their flintlocks, fowling pieces and harpoons and move out into the Providence night. Their feet march along the Pawtuxet Road.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

The men began the long march, grim and a trifle apprehensive as they left the Muddy Dock behind and mounted the gentle rise of Broad Street toward the Pawtuxet Road. Just beyond Elder Snow's church, some of the men turned back to take a parting look at Providence lying outspread under the early spring stars. Steeples and gables rose dark and shapely, and salt breezes swept up gently from the cove north of the Bridge.

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

Vega was climbing above the great hill across the water, whose crest of trees was broken by the roof-line of the unfinished College edifice. At the foot of that hill, and along the narrow mounting lanes of its side, the old town dreamed; Old Providence, for whose safety and sanity so monstrous and colossal a blasphemy was about to be wiped out.

An hour and a quarter later the raiders quietly arrived as planned at the Fenner farmhouse, the place nearest to Curwen's.

16 PLANNING THE RAID

16

The hushed whispers of many men surround the conversation.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

You're sure he's there, Fenner?

BENJAMIN FENNER

Oh aye. He arrived not half an hour ago. Right after he did, that strange light shot once more into the sky.

A murmur of surprise ripples through the men.

REV. MANNING

Look there, out the window!

STEPHEN HOPKINS

What in God's name is that?

BENJAMIN FENNER

That's the light. Ah... It's gone now. It's no natural thing.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Right men, no time to waste. We divide our forces: Eleazar Smith, take twenty men and strike across to the shore and guard Namquit Point against any reinforcements coming to help Curwen. You and your men hold that position unless I send a messenger for ye.

ELEAZAR SMITH

Aye, sir.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Mr. Hopkins, you take twenty with you down the valley behind the Curwen farm. Take axes or gunpowder to open that oaken door in the high, steep bank.

STEPHEN HOPKINS

Right. You men, come with me.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

If you hear a single whistle blast, you wait to capture anyone attempting to flee from within. If there's two whistle blasts, advance and oppose whomever you find within.

STEPHEN HOPKINS

Yes, sir.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

The rest of us will close in on the house and other buildings. John Brown will lead twenty men to the stone building. Another twenty follow me to the main farmhouse. Remember, two whistle blasts and we attack. The last of ye will preserve a circle around the whole group of buildings unless summoned by a final emergency signal - three whistle blasts. Do ye understand?

A chorus of assent comes from the men.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Mr. Fenner.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Sir?

CAPT. WHIPPLE

(quietly)

Grab your quill and keep an eye out your window. You may be the sole chronicler of terrible events this night.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Aye, sir.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Ready yourselves, lads. We'll move
out on my signal.

17 THE RAID

17

The whistle blows and men march out. We hear the scratching
of Fenner's quill as he writes down what he sees.

BENJAMIN FENNER

The columns of raiders divided as
they approached Curwen's farm and
'twas hard to make them out in the
dark.

Dogs bark in the distance and there is a far-off shrill
whistle.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Another great shaft of light from
the stone building shot into the
sky.

Distant voices shout and dogs bark. Two whistle blasts pierce
the air and are followed by a volley of musket fire. Out of
the chaos rings out a horrible roaring cry. More musket fire,
shouting and a distant explosion of a keg of gunpowder being
ignited.

BENJAMIN FENNER

The sounds died away for the better
part of an hour, and then there
were vague ground rumblings so
marked that the candlesticks
tottered on our mantelpiece.

Dogs begin to bark and howl and the ground begins to shake,
rattling the candlesticks on the mantle.

BENJAMIN FENNER

I noted a strong smell of sulphur;
and I thought I heard the third or
emergency whistle signal.

Muffled musket shots again ring out, followed by a deep and
horrible scream which descends into a a kind of throaty,
nastily plastic cough or gurgle.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Many a shot were fired indoors and
then a flaming thing burst into
sight at a point where the Curwen
farm ought to lie.

The human cries of desperate men, peppered with the cracking of more musket fire.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Muskets flashed and cracked, and the flaming thing fell to the ground. A second flaming thing appeared, and a shriek of a man did cut through the air. More shots were fired then the second flaming thing fell.

We hear it as it happens.

BENJAMIN FENNER

'Twas near silent for three-quarters of an hour; at the end of which time my young Jacob exclaimed that he saw "a red fog" going up to the stars from the accursed farm.

Five minutes later a chill wind blew up, and the air became suffused with an intolerable stench. Close upon it came an awful voice which I fear I shall never be able to forget. It thundered from the sky like a doom and shook our windows powerfully. I know not what it said as the tongue was unfamiliar to me, but it thundered like Satan himself.

THUNDERING DEMON VOICE

DEESMEES JESHET BONE DOSEFE DUVEMA
ENITEMOSS.

As the reverberations of the demon voice die out, a deep chorused scream erupts from the farm. It continues under Fenner's description until it's supplanted by heinous ululations.

BENJAMIN FENNER

A man's voice seemed to shout back at it, and then the dreadful smells grew intolerable. A pained wail followed, rising and falling. It was not in words, as such, but seemed almost as laughter, such as a demon might make.

A moment's silence is then shattered by a yell of utter, ultimate fright and stark madness.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Then a yell of utter mad fright
came from many men and after that
darkness and silence ruled all
things. Thick smoke arose from the
farm, though we could see no
flames. Toward dawn, Capt. Whipple
stumbled back to our house, reeking
of monstrous and unplaceable odors.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Fenner, we would buy from ye a keg
of rum.

BENJAMIN FENNER

Yes, yes, of course, I'll get one.
(pause)
What...what happened?

CAPT. WHIPPLE

The affair of Joseph Curwen is
over. Did ye make a diary of what
happened this night?

BENJAMIN FENNER

Aye sir.

CAPT. WHIPPLE

Burn it.

18 GOOD RIDDANCE, SAY I

18

Transition music.

MRS. WARD

Good lord, Charles. What a horrid
tale.

MR. WARD

But, really now, what happened out
there?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I can't tell. Not a single man who
participated in that raid seems to
have ever written a word about it.

MR. WARD

They killed Curwen?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

They told his widow he had been killed in a customs battle about which it was not politic to give details and gave her a sealed leaden casket of curious design.

MRS. WARD

Good riddance, say I.

MR. WARD

I'll second that.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

The town fathers went to some lengths to expunge Curwen's name from history. They even chiseled his name from off his tombstone. His widow had her and her daughter's name changed back to Tillinghast. She sold the house in Olney Court and resided with her father until she died in 1817. The farm at Pawtuxet was shunned and left to molder and collapse, forgotten by all.

MR. WARD

Well, all but you, Charles.

The Wards share a warm laugh together.

19

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHANGE

19

DR. WILLET

(narrating)

Perhaps the true beginning of the change in Charles came as he reflected on what last horrid allies a beaten man like Curwen might try to summon in his direst extremity. Charles may well have wondered whether any citizen of Providence killed Joseph Curwen.

Musical transition.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Part Three - A Search and an Evocation

DR. WILLET

(narrating)

After Charles first learned of Joseph Curwen in 1918, he took an intense interest in everything pertaining to the bygone mystery. Every vague rumor that he heard of Curwen became something vital to himself, in whom flowed Curwen's blood. And so, he began an avid and systematic collection of Curwen data.

Over the Easter vacation of 1919 he traveled to Salem to research Curwen's early life. The staff at the Essex Institute there greatly aided his efforts.

20

THE ESSEX INSTITUTE

20

The quiet bookish shuffling of a library provides ambiance.

E. LAPHAM PEABODY

Now let's see here, Mr. Ward... Your Mr. Curwen was born in Salem-Village, seven miles from town, on the eighteenth of February 1663. He ran away to sea at the age of fifteen.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I wonder where he went?

E. LAPHAM PEABODY

Couldn't say for sure. But there's a reference here of him in 1687, as "returned with the speech, dress, and manners of a native Englishman" and settling in Salem proper. Says he brought chemicals on ships from France, England and Holland.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Hmmm.

He rummages through papers.

E. LAPHAM PEABODY

Now this describes him as associating with Edward Hutchinson of Salem-Village and one Simon Orne of Salem. Hand me that map, will you? Now, the Hutchinson farm was here, near the woods. Hutchinson's neighbor, Warren, brought a suit against him, because "of impure nighttime sounds and the entertaining of strange visitors, moreover, the light that came from his windows were not always of the same color."

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

What does that mean?

E. LAPHAM PEABODY

Oh, I couldn't tell you. There was a fair bit of odd litigation right before the witch panic began. Now, this here says, "the unwholesome Curwen then departed, some said for Providence, and were never heard of again."

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Wow. Thank you so much Mr. Peabody. Do you mind if I make some notes?

E. LAPHAM PEABODY

Not at all, That's what the Essex Institute is here for.

Ward begins to write.

E. LAPHAM PEABODY

Hmm, here's one last tidbit on Curwen's friend Mr. Orne. It says Simon Orne lived in Salem until 1720, when his failure to grow visibly old began to excite attention. Orne then disappeared, and thirty years later his precise counterpart and self-styled son turned up to claim his property. The claim was allowed on the strength of documents in Simon Orne's known hand, and Jedediah Orne continued to dwell in Salem till 1771.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Failure to grow old?

E. LAPHAM PEABODY
(disturbed)
That's odd. Perhaps you should
check the court records - men like
these are apt to leave their mark
in the courts.

21 WILLET'S NARRATION 1 21

DR. WILLET
Charles found court records from
the famed witchcraft trials that
touched on Curwen and his allies.

22 MORE RESEARCH 22

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
(reading)
"At the Court of Oyer and Terminer
under Judge Hathorne, one Hepzibah
Lawson swore on July 10, 1692, that
forty Witches and the Black Man
were wont to meet in the Woods
behind Mr. Hutchinson's house.
Further, Amity How declared
that: "Reverend George Burroughs on
August 8 put the devil his mark
upon Bridget S., Jonathan A., Simon
O., Deliverance W., Joseph C.,
Susan P., Mehitable C., and Deborah
B."

23 WILLET NARRATION 2 23

DR. WILLET
Charles' research led him to an
unfinished manuscript by Hutchinson
couched in a cipher none could
read. He had a photostatic copy of
this manuscript made, and began to
work on decoding the cipher.

But of greatest immediate interest
was the Orne material.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

By studying the penmanship of the two Orne letters, Charles was convinced that Simon Orne and his supposed son Jedediah were one and the same person. As Orne had said to his correspondent, it was hardly safe to live too long in Salem, hence he resorted to a thirty-year sojourn abroad, and did not return to claim his lands except as a representative of a new generation.

Charles' most significant find though, was a letter which appeared to be sent to Orne by Curwen himself. Curwen greeted Orne and wrote that he could not go away as Orne had done. He described some occult process by which something called Yogge-Sothothe was brought up.

24

MORE RESEARCH CONT'D.

24

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(reading)

And of the Seed of Old shall One be borne who shall look back, though knowing not what he seeks. Yet will this avail nothing if there be no heir, and if the salts, or the way to make the salts, be not ready for his hand; and here I will own, I have not taken needed steps nor found much. The process is plaguy hard to come near.

Say the verses every Roodmas and Hallow's Eve; and if the Line run out not, one shall be in years to come that shall look back and use what salts or stuff for salts you shall leave him. Job XIV.

DR. WILLET

The obscure occult language bewildered Charles, but the letter ended with an invitation for Orne to visit Curwen and provided the exact location of Curwen's Providence home. The discovery was doubly striking because it indicated a dilapidated building still standing in Olney Court and well known to Ward from his antiquarian rambles over Stammers' Hill. The place was indeed only a few squares from his own home on the great hill's higher ground. He resolved to explore the place immediately upon his return.

The more mystical phases of the letter, which he took to be some extravagant kind of symbolism, frankly baffled him; though he noted with a thrill of curiosity that the Biblical passage referred to - Job 14,14 - was the familiar verse, 'If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change come.'

Music that's semi ominous.

DR. WILLET

When Charles returned home, he was brimming with enthusiasm.

Sterling opens the door of the Ward home for Charles.

STERLING

Ah, Master Charles. Welcome back. Allow me to take your valise.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Thank you, Sterling.

MRS. WARD

Charles, welcome home. How was Salem, darling?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Fantastic, Mother. I found so much,
 it's incredible.

MRS. WARD
 You'll have to tell your father and
 me about it at dinner.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Yes, of course, I shall, but if
 you'll excuse me, I've got to duck
 out.

MRS. WARD
 Duck out? You just got home!

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 (dashing out the door)
 I'll be back for supper.

MRS. WARD
 (calling after him)
 Charles!

27 THE OLD HOMESTEAD

27

Charles' hurried footsteps lead up to the former home of
 Joseph Curwen. He pauses to take in the sight.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 (to himself)
 Hm, this is it, the old family
 home. At least it's still standing.

He approaches the front door and strikes the knocker. The
 door is opened by Mrs. Jackson, the house's current resident.
 She and her husband are African Americans.

SALLY JACKSON
 (apprehensive)
 Can I help you, sir?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Hello. My name is Charles Dexter
 Ward. May I come in?

SALLY JACKSON
 (calling inside)
 Arthur. Would you come here a
 moment?

Arthur sounds like a very big man.

ARTHUR JACKSON
What's the problem here?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
(babbling)
There's no problem. I'm Charles
Dexter Ward and I've been
researching my family genealogy. It
turns out my ancestor, Joseph
Curwen, lived in this house in the
mid 18th century. And after
researching his life, I don't know,
I hoped I might be able to come in
and have a look around where he
once lived.

ARTHUR JACKSON
(chilly)
We weren't expecting visitors.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Ah yes, I know, terribly rude of me
just to pop by. Would five dollars
ease the imposition?
(withdrawing his billfold)
Or maybe I could come back some
other time.

SALLY JACKSON
No, five dollars is about right.

ARTHUR JACKSON
Come on in... Charles, was it?

SALLY JACKSON
Well, this is the front room,
Charles... And the kitchen and
dining room are over this way.

Charles steps inside and they close the door.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
It's... like being home.

ARTHUR JACKSON
I'm glad you like it. Could use a
bit of work.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
You don't... I know this is a long
shot, but there wouldn't be a
portrait painted in the library,
would there?

SALLY JACKSON

A portrait?

ARTHUR JACKSON

The library? No, sir, we don't have nothing like that. We have a sitting room, it's got a nice fireplace.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(excited)

Yes, show me that!

ARTHUR JACKSON

Right this way.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

It was here. Right here!

ARTHUR JACKSON

What's that?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

A painting of Joseph Curwen. Painted on the panel above the fireplace. I wonder if it was painted over.

He takes out a pocket knife.

ARTHUR JACKSON

Hey now, what are you doing with that knife?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I'm sorry. How rude. You must think me a...

SALLY JACKSON

You think your portrait is under that paint above the fireplace?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Yes, that's why I had the knife... What would you say to five more dollars?

28

WILLET NARRATION 4

28

DR. WILLET

Charles' search was successful, for he did indeed discover a painted-over panel above the ground floor fireplace. The Jacksons were only too happy to receive a payment from Charles for their trouble. With the help of an art restorateur, there slowly reappeared on the wall a figure from centuries past. As the restoration neared completion, Charles invited his parents to come see the revelation.

29

THE UNVEILING

29

The Ward family walks through the old house on Olney Court.

SALLY JACKSON

It's right this way, Mrs. Ward. Mr. Ward. Can I bring you a lemonade?

MRS. WARD

Thank you, no.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

It's right in here, mother... You'd never have known it was there - it was completely painted over.

MRS. WARD

It's a wonder the Jacksons let you do this to their house.

ARTHUR JACKSON

Your son's a reasonable man, Mr. Ward. He made us a good deal.

MR. WARD

That's my boy!

They stop walking.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Well, here it is.

MR. WARD

Ready for the grand unveiling, dear?

MRS. WARD
Go ahead, Charles.

A cloth is whisked away and Mrs. Ward gasps. Portrait music underscores the description.

30 WILLET NARRATION 5

30

DR. WILLET
The painting, done with skill, showed a spare, well-shaped man with dark-blue coat, embroidered waistcoat, black satin small-clothes and white silk stockings, seated in a carved chair against the background of a window with wharves and ships beyond. But beneath the neat Albemarle wig, all saw Charles Dexter Ward's living features in the countenance of his horrible great-great-great-grandfather.

31 THE UNVEILING CONT'D.

31

MR. WARD
It's uncanny. Charles... it's, he's... you.

MRS. WARD
Oh. It's dreadful.

MR. WARD
Astonishing.

ARTHUR JACKSON
He's a dead ringer for Charles, and that's a fact.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
I've arranged with the Jacksons to have it removed so I can bring it home.

MRS. WARD
Home? I'd sooner see it burned.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Now, mother, I'll put it in my study. Your great great grand daddy won't bother you a bit.

DR. WILLET

Charles supervised the workers in the removal of the painting. As the painted wood came away from the wall, there was left a space of exposed brickwork marking the chimney's course, and in this Charles Ward observed a cubical recess about a foot square, which must have lain directly behind the head of the portrait. Curious as to what such a space might mean or contain, he approached and looked within; finding beneath the deep coatings of dust and soot some loose yellowed papers, a crude, thick copybook, and a few moldering textile shreds which may have formed the ribbon binding the rest together. He took up the book and looked at the bold inscription on its cover.

Charles blows away the dust from the cover.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

"Journal and Notes of Joseph Curwen, Gentleman of Providence-Plantations, Late of Salem." Fifer, look at this!

FIFER

What did you find there, sir?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

It's my great, great great grandfather's journal and papers.

FIFER

What's this one?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

"To Him Who Shall Come After, & How He May Get Beyond Time & The Spheres."

FIFER

This one here doesn't look like words at all.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
It's a cipher. Good lord, maybe
it's the Hutchinson cipher.

FIFER
What's cipher?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
It's a kind of code. Yes, yes!
Here's the key to the cipher. This
is fantastic!

FIFER
These here look like letters:
"Edward Hutchinson, Armiger" and
"Jedediah Orne, esq.", "or Their
Heir or Heirs, or Those
Representing Them."

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Careful. Here, I'll take those. Ha!
Look at this: "Joseph Curwen his
Life and Travels Between the years
1678 and 1687: Of Whither He
Voyaged, Where He Stayed, Whom He
Saw, and What He Learnt."

Charles laughs with delight.

FIFER
Quite a find, sir. Congratulations.

Charles' delighted laughter fades out.

DR. WILLET
We have now reached the point where
Dr. Waite places the origin of
Charles' madness. Something in the
pages he discovered impressed him
tremendously. He did not show the
titles to his parents, but simply
told them that he had found some
documents in Joseph Curwen's
handwriting which would have to be
studied very carefully before
yielding up their true meaning.

That night Charles Ward sat up in
his room reading the new-found book
and papers through the night and
into the following morning.

35

RESEARCH BEGINS

35

A woman's footsteps followed by knocking.

MRS. WARD
Charles. Charles?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
(within)
Leave me be, mother.

MRS. WARD
Charles, I sent food up for you. It
looks like you haven't touched it.

Dismissive grumbling from within.

MRS. WARD
Charles, are you sick?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
No, I'm busy! Now if you would...

She opens the door and enters.

MRS. WARD
Charles! Have you slept in your
clothes?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Stop doting, mother, I'm fine.

MRS. WARD
What have you got there. Is that
the Hutchinson cipher?

He shuffles papers to obscure it.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Curwen's key can't be applied to
it!

MRS. WARD
Oh.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
What do you want, mother? I'm quite
busy.

MRS. WARD
Charles! That workman, Mr. Fifer is
here to install that horrid
painting of yours.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 (instantly excited)
 You should have told me. Come,
 mother.

He hurries her out of his bedroom, shutting the door behind her.

36 WILLET NARRATION 8

36

DR. WILLET
 Charles oversaw the installation of the painting in his study. At his request, the workman built an overmantle above a little electric log. He constructed paneling to hold up the painting and provide hinged access to a large cupboard space behind it. Charles seemed thrilled by the addition of the painting to his study.

37 SOMETHING'S WRONG

37

Musical transition.

MRS. WARD
 Theodore, I'm concerned about Charles. Something's wrong. He's hiding something.

MR. WARD
 He's certainly been out of sorts lately. Quite secretive about his research.

MRS. WARD
 Any time I walk into the room, he hides or covers up whatever he's reading.

MR. WARD
 There was a time I couldn't get him **not** to show me those Curwen papers. Have you noticed? He locks them up at night.

MRS. WARD
 At night? He'll lock them up when I enter the room.

MR. WARD
Oh for Pete's sake.

MRS. WARD
He's showing no interest at all in school. Imagine, in his senior year.

MR. WARD
We had a chat, he and I, about college. The boy wanted to go to Brown since he was in the 2nd grade. Now he says he doesn't want to bother.

MRS. WARD
Not bother?

MR. WARD
He said he had important "special investigations to make, which would provide him with more avenues toward knowledge and the humanities than any university which the world could boast."

MRS. WARD
Do you think he's sick?

MR. WARD
I don't know what to think. He's eccentric, but this reclusion and secrecy...

MRS. WARD
I think this Curwen obsession will be the death of him.

MR. WARD
I'll talk with him about it. Again.

Transition music.

DR. WILLET
During October Charles began visiting the libraries again, now seeking out books on witchcraft and magic, occultism and daemonology.
(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)
 He bought extensively, and fitted
 up a whole additional set of
 shelves in his study for newly
 acquired works on uncanny subjects.

39 MAN TO MAN CHAT

39

Musical transition. Knocking followed by the shuffling of
 paper.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Enter.

Mr. Ward enters Charles study.

MR. WARD

Have you got a moment, champ?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Indeed, I have a query for you as
 well.

MR. WARD

Shoot.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I wish to convert the attic to a
 laboratory. For chemical studies.

MR. WARD

Well.... I suppose there's not much
 up there...

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I've ordered some equipment I need
 and can install it there so it
 won't be underfoot for you and
 mother.

MR. WARD

You still working on the Hutchinson
 cipher there?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(with contempt)

No. I've moved on to more important
 matters.

MR. WARD

Yes, so it seems. Mr. Pembroke of
 City Hall called me yesterday.

(MORE)

MR. WARD (cont'd)
He's under the impression that
you're searching for Joseph
Curwen's grave.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Is that a crime?

MR. WARD
Well, no.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Then I fail to see what Mr.
Pembroke's objection is.

Awkward pause.

MR. WARD
I've been getting bills for some of
these books and equipment you've
been ordering.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Father, I spare you the expense of
a college education and you
complain about the meagre cost of a
few scientific supplies? I thought
you'd be pleased with me.

MR. WARD
(with trepidation)
Charles, what exactly is it that
you're researching here?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
It's complicated. If my theories
come to fruition, I assure you,
I'll explain everything to you and
mother in every particular. But I
beg you to let me get on with my
work.

DR. WILLET
As their conversation ended, Mr.
Ward looked up from Charles to the
portrait of Curwen and was struck
by the queer notion that they
appeared more alike than ever.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

Subsequent conversations with Mr. Pembroke suggested Charles relinquished his interest in the grave of Joseph Curwen in favor of that of one Naphthali Field. Charles had found a fragmentary record of Curwen's burial which stated that the curious leaden coffin had been interred '10 ft. S. and 5 ft. W. of Naphthali Field's grave,' but the lack of a specified burying-ground in the entry greatly complicated the search, and Naphthali Field's grave seemed as elusive as that of Curwen.

It was in May of that year that the Wards approached me about Charles and their concern for his health. At their request, I had my first meeting with Charles in a capacity beyond that of his childhood physician.

41 A CHECKUP

41

Knocking.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Enter.

Dr. Willet enters Charles' study.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Dr. Willet. Be seated, won't you?

DR. WILLET

Charles, how are you feeling?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Shall we cut to the chase, as they say in the pictures?

DR. WILLET

Certainly. Why do you think I'm here?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

My parents are concerned for my well being and they've sent you here to deduce what's the matter with my troubled mind.

DR. WILLET

So far, so good. And what shall I tell them, Charles?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I am perfectly fine, but as they seem disinclined to believe me, perhaps they'll believe you.

DR. WILLET

They're concerned you've become obsessed with this research of yours.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Ah, yes, the dreaded Joseph Curwen. It's all true: the papers of my ancestor contain some remarkable secrets of early scientific knowledge, for the most part in cipher, of an apparent scope comparable only to the discoveries of Friar Bacon and perhaps surpassing even those.

DR. WILLET

Exciting.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Indeed. But you see, Dr. Willet, the discoveries are meaningless except when correlated with a body of learning now wholly obsolete; so that their immediate presentation to a world equipped only with modern science would rob them of all impressiveness and dramatic significance. To take their vivid place in the history of human thought they must first be correlated by one familiar with the background out of which they evolved. And that, quite simply, is the task to which I am now devoting myself. I seek to acquire, as quickly as possible, those neglected arts of old which a true interpreter of the Curwen data must possess. In time I shall make a full presentation of the utmost interest to mankind.

DR. WILLET

Impressive.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Don't patronize me, Dr. Willet.
 Not even Einstein could more
 profoundly revolutionise the
 current conception of things.

DR. WILLET
 Herr Einstein doesn't do his
 research in graveyards, Charles.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 I have reason to think that Joseph
 Curwen's mutilated headstone bore
 certain mystic symbols - carved
 from directions in his will and
 ignorantly spared by those who had
 effaced the name - which were
 absolutely essential to the final
 solution of his cryptic system.

DR. WILLET
 May I see some of the Curwen
 documents?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 (hesitating)
 I don't know why that would be
 necessary.

DR. WILLET
 I don't know why it should be
 objectionable.

Keys unlock a drawer as Charles produces the documents.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 I assure, you doctor, I have
 nothing to hide. Here.
 (thumbing to a particular
 page)
 See for yourself. Curwen's journal.

DR. WILLET
 Hmm, distinctive penmanship -
 you've got your work cut out for
 you reading this. Let's see...
 "Wednesday. 16 October. 1754. Said
 the SABAOTH thrice last night but
 None appear'd. I must hear more
 from Mr. H. in Transylvania, though
 it is exceeding strange he can not
 give me the use of what he hath so
 well used these hundred Yeares."

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Satisfied?

42 WILLET NARRATION 11

42

DR. WILLET
(narrating)
I had turned the page and my eyes lingered on the strange sentences I silently read there. "I am hopeful the Thing is breeding Outside the Spheres. It will draw one who is to come, if I can make sure he shall Be, and he shall think on past things and look back through all the Years, against the which I must have ready the salts."

I handed the journal back to Ward and looked up at the painted features of Curwen staring down at me. For a moment, I entertained the odd fancy that its eyes followed Charles as he again locked up the documents. I stepped closer to examine the portrait's fine detail, even down to the slight pit in the brow above the right eye.

43 CHECKUP CONTINUED

43

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Something wrong, doctor?

DR. WILLET
Not at all. It's a fine, fine painting. Charles, you'll send for me should you feel unwell?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
(with an icky warmth)
But of course, Dr. Willet.

44 WILLET NARRATION 12

44

DR. WILLET
Not long after our meeting, Charles graduated high school. He made good on his plan to forego college in favor of his own researches.
(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

He begged his parents to let him travel abroad to further his inquires - a request which the Wards prudently denied. Over the course of the next three years, Charles dropped almost completely from public view, committing himself entirely to his studies, research and experiments.

In April of 1923 Charles inherited a small competence from his maternal grandfather and determined at last to take the European trip previously denied him. Of his proposed itinerary he would say nothing save that the needs of his studies would carry him to many places, but he promised to write his parents fully and faithfully. When they saw he could not be dissuaded, they ceased all opposition and helped as best they could. In June the young man sailed for Liverpool with his parents' reluctant blessing.

45

TRAVELOGUE

45

Music redolent of England.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Dear Mother and Father, I have arrived and set up good quarters here on Great Russell Street in London. Afraid I shan't have time to visit your friends, the Lackeys, as my research continues to be demanding. The British Museum is indeed invaluable. Your loving son, Charles.

DR. WILLET

In April of the following year, a brief note home told of his departure for Paris. For three months thereafter he sent only postal cards, giving an address in the Rue St. Jacques and referring to a special search among rare manuscripts in the library of a private collector.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

In October the Wards received a picture card by post.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Dear Mother and Father, I have arrived in Prague for the purpose of conferring with a certain very aged man supposed to be the last living possessor of some very curious mediaeval information. Hope you are well. Sincerely, Charles.

DR. WILLET

In January a card arrived from Vienna telling of his passage through that city on the way towards the east.

The next card was from Klausenburg in Transylvania. He was going to visit a Baron Ferenczy, whose estate lay in the mountains east of Rakus. Another card from Rakus a week later - saying that his host's carriage had met him and that he was leaving the village for the mountains - was his last message for a considerable time. Finally he sent a reply to his parents' frequent letters in May.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Dear Mother and Father, I welcome your visit to Europe, but fear it will be most impracticable for me to come meet you in London, Paris or Rome. My researches are such that I am unable to leave my present quarters, besides which, Baron Ferenczy's castle is ill suited for visitors. Moreover, I fear the Baron would hold little appeal to New England gentlefolk such as you. Even to me, he can be disquieting. It would be better if you would wait for my return to Providence; which can scarcely be far distant.

DR. WILLET

That return did not take place until May 1926, when after a few heralding cards Charles quietly slipped into New York and traversed the long miles to Providence by motor-coach, eagerly drinking in the green rolling hills, and fragrant, blossoming orchards, and the white steepled towns of vernal Connecticut; his first taste of ancient New England in nearly four years.

Old Providence! It was this place and the mysterious forces of its long, continuous history which had brought him into being, and which had drawn him back toward marvels and secrets. Here lay the arcana, wondrous or dreadful as the case may be, for which all his years of travel and application had been preparing him. It was twilight, and Charles Dexter Ward had come home.

46

WILLET NARRATION 13

46

Musical transition.

DR. WILLET

Mrs. Ward was of the opinion that Charles' madness had its onset during the European trip. She'd have you believe he departed eccentric and returned mad. I spoke with Charles many times upon his return, and I do not share her opinion.

Charles' queerness at this stage I attribute to the practice of odd mystical rituals learned abroad. Charles himself, though visibly aged and hardened, was still normal in his general reactions. But the sounds heard at all hours from Charles' attic laboratory led many to fear he'd gone insane. There were chantings and repetitions, and thunderous declamations in uncanny rhythms;

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)
 and although these sounds were
 always in Charles' own voice, there
 was something in the quality of
 that voice, and in the accents of
 the formulae it pronounced, which
 chilled the blood.

47 IS HE TAKING DRUGS?

47

We fade into a domestic discussion at the Wards.

MRS. WARD

Well if he's not mad, Dr. Willet,
 is he taking drugs in there? The
 smells that come from under his
 door...

DR. WILLET

Noxious? Foetid?

MRS. WARD

Well sometimes, but more often
 they're... aromatic? I've smelled
 some that instantly brought to mind
 fantastic images.

DR. WILLET

Really?

MRS. WARD

Oh, it's true, Dr. Willet. Just the
 other day I smelled something and
 saw momentary mirages of enormous
 vistas, with strange hills or
 endless avenues of sphinxes and
 hippogriffs stretching off into
 infinite distance. It must be
 drugs!

DR. WILLET

No. I don't think so. Tell me, does
 he still take his long rambles
 through town?

MR. WARD

No, he's glued to those books he
 brought back with him from his
 travels.

DR. WILLET

Has he said anything?

MR. WARD

Just that European sources had greatly enlarged the possibilities of his work, and promising great revelations in the years to come.

DR. WILLET

I'll keep checking in on him.

MRS. WARD

He's aged. He's looking more and more like that horrible man in the painting.

DR. WILLET

Don't worry yourself, Mrs. Ward. I'll keep an eye on him. And what about you? Are you getting enough rest?

MRS. WARD

(laughs harshly)
Rest? In this house?

DR. WILLET

Well, you make sure you get some. Doctor's orders. Here, try one of these tablets before you go to bed.

MRS. WARD

What would we do without you, Dr. Willet?

48

WILLET NARRATION 14

48

Transition music. As Dr. Willet narrates the scene, we hear an increasingly violent storm providing a backdrop to Charles' strange chanting.

DR. WILLET

In January, 1927, a peculiar incident occurred. One night about midnight, as Charles was chanting a ritual whose weird cadence echoed unpleasantly through the house below, there came a sudden gust of chill wind from the bay, and a faint, obscure trembling of the earth which everyone in the neighbourhood noted.

A deafening CRACK, sounding as if a lightning bolt has struck the Ward home. Mr. and Mrs. Ward dash to the stairs.

MRS. WARD
Theodore, was that lighting?

MR. WARD
Sounds like it hit the roof.

MRS. WARD
Charles is probably in the attic.

Mr. Ward beats on the door to Charles' attic lab.

MR. WARD
Charles! Charles are you alright?

A commotion inside is followed by the door creaking open.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
I'm fine.

MR. WARD
Lightning hit the roof. Come down until the storm passes.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
I'll do no such thing.

MRS. WARD
Charles! Don't talk to your father like that.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Lightning did not strike the house. And this "storm", as you call it, will be gone in moments.

The thunder, wind and rain abate with an unsettling swiftness.

MR. WARD
Ah, well, it does look like the worst has passed.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
I should say so.

MR. WARD
If it wasn't lightning, what was it?

MRS. WARD

Charles. You look... odd. Are you sure you're alright?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(simultaneously sincere
yet mocking)

Never better, mother.

50 WILLET NARRATION 15

50

DR. WILLET

For two months after this incident Charles was less confined than usual to his laboratory. He exhibited a curious interest in the weather, and made inquiries about the date of the spring thawing of the ground. One night late in March he left the house after midnight, and did not return till almost morning.

51 LATE NIGHT VISITORS

51

Snoring. A truck rumbles up to the Ward house and cuts its engine. Indistinct voice speak outside the window.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(outside and hushed)

Silently now. I can't have them waking up.

MRS. WARD

Theodore. Theodore, wake up.

MR. WARD

(awaking with a grumble)

What time is it?

MRS. WARD

It's a quarter to four. I heard something.

He groans.

MRS. WARD

It's Charles!

MR. WARD

(falling back asleep)

It's always Charles...

She moves to the window, watching. Outside them men remove something from the truck. She listens as they move, unload something, bring it inside and up the stairs.

MRS. WARD
Theodore, they're bringing something into the house.

MR. WARD
Woman, he's always bringing something in the house. Now let me sleep.

She heaves a sigh of frustration.

52 WILLET NARRATION 16

52

DR. WILLET
Charles remained in seclusion that day, fueling his mother's suspicions. She approached his attic laboratory and discovered the untouched plates of food left outside the door.

53 NOTHING'S AMISS

53

Mrs. Ward approaches his attic laboratory and hears a metallic squeal from within the room. She hears a groan of effort from within the room, followed by the wrenching of metal, a terrible cry and a fall.

MRS. WARD
Charles? Charles, are you alright?

Scurrying and movement within.

MRS. WARD
(gasps)
Charles? Oh, what's that horrid smell. Charles Dexter Ward, you open this door.

Charles speaks through the door but does not open it.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
I'm fine.

MRS. WARD
What's happened in there?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Nothing's amiss. The odor will
 clear soon - it's harmless but
 necessary. Solitude is all I need.

MRS. WARD
 Charles.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 I shall appear later at supper. But
 please, let the servants and father
 know, from now on, no one is to
 enter my laboratory, do you
 understand?

MRS. WARD
 Charles, this is madness.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 No! It's vital to my work. Promise
 me, mother.

MRS. WARD
 (to herself as she
 shuffles away)
 Oh, the experiment... vital to my
 work... beyond the spheres... yog
 sothath...

Musical transition.

54

WILLET NARRATION 17

54

DR. WILLET
 The following day, the Wards
 informed me that Charles had moved
 all his books and papers from his
 study up into his attic laboratory.
 He'd even gone so far as to move
 clothing and a cot up there,
 allowing him to live in near
 seclusion. The Wards were at the
 end of their rope, not knowing what
 to do or make of his increasingly
 strange behavior. Not knowing
 myself what was afflicting the lad,
 I urged them to continue to keep an
 eye on him.

55 EVENING PAPER

55

MR. WARD

Oh, Dr. Willet, one last thing. Charles asked Sterling, our butler, to bring him the evening paper. I found it later in the dustbin, but it looks as if an article was torn out.

DR. WILLET

I'll look into it. Good evening, Mr. Ward.

56 WILLET NARRATION 18

56

DR. WILLET

(narrating)

When I returned home, I checked my copy of the paper to see the contents of missing half page. "Nocturnal Diggers Surprised in North Burial Ground". The article described a night watchman stumbling upon a group of men loading a box onto a truck. No one was caught and the incident was attributed to bootleggers picking up a stash rather than anything more ghoulish.

(grasping for words)

The entire case of Charles Dexter Ward troubled me greatly, but I was truly at a loss what to do or think about it.

On the fifteenth of April, Good Friday actually, a strange development occurred. Late in the afternoon, Charles was chanting some formulae and a dreadful odor emanated from his room.

57 GOOD FRIDAY 1

57

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(chanting quietly behind his door)

Per Adonai Eloim, Adonai Jehova,
(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)
 Adonai Sabaoth, Metraton On Agla
 Mathon, verbum pythonicum,
 mysterium salamandrae, conventus
 sylvorum, antra gnomorum, daemona
 Coeli God, Almonsin, Gibor,
 Jehosua, Evam, Zariatnatmik, veni,
 veni, veni.

Charles continues to chant.

MRS. WARD
 (to herself)
 Oh, Charles... That does it!

She storms up the stairs when a pandaemoniac howling of neighborhood dogs erupts outside.

MRS. WARD
 What on earth are they...?
 (sniffing)
 Oh good lord!

58

WILLET NARRATION 19

58

DR. WILLET
 A hideous, all-pervasive odor which none of them had ever smelt before appeared in the house, and in the midst of this mephitic flood there came a very perceptible flash like that of lightning, which would have been blinding and impressive but for the daylight around; and then was heard the voice.

THUNDERING DEMON VOICE
 (remote and deep)
 DIES MIES JESCHET BOENE DOESEF
 DOUVEMA ENITEMAUS.

DR. WILLET
 Mrs. Ward, who had been listening in despair outside her son's locked laboratory, shivered as she recognized it from Charles' description of the doomed Pawtuxet farmhouse on the night of Joseph Curwen's annihilation. There was no mistaking that nightmare phrase.
 (MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

She said it was followed by a momentary darkening of the daylight and then a puff of added odor different from the first but equally unknown and intolerable.

59 GOOD FRIDAY 2

59

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(leading to a maniacal
crescendo)

Yi nash Yog Sothoth he lgeb throdag
- Yah!

A wailing scream bursts out with frantic explosiveness and transitions into diabolic and hysterical laughter - it is not Charles. Mrs. Ward steels herself and pounds wildly against the door.

MRS. WARD

(furious)

Charles. Charles Dexter Ward open
this door!

A second shriek comes in over the cachinnations of the other voice, and we hear her collapse to the floor.

60 WILLET NARRATION 20

60

DR. WILLET

Mrs. Ward is still unable to recall precisely what caused her to faint. Memory sometimes makes merciful deletions.

The butler summoned Mr. Ward, and they mounted the stairs at once, where they saw Mrs. Ward stretched out at full length on the floor of the corridor outside the laboratory and set to reviving her.

Behind the laboratory door, a tense, muffled conversation is underway. One voice Charles', the other deep, hollow, blasphemous and abnormal.

DR. WILLET

It was not, of course, new for Charles to mutter inside his laboratory, but this was clearly a dialogue, or imitation of a dialogue, with questions and answers. Mrs. Ward began to stir, and her husband seized his wife in his arms and bore her quickly downstairs before she could take note of Charles' latest odd behavior. Later, her faculties recovered, they discussed what was to be done.

61

IT'S TOO MUCH

61

MRS. WARD

You have to have a talk with him. This kind of conduct can no longer be permitted under our roof. It's too much! Last night I dreamt I was in the attic chanting and carrying on! Iä, Yog...

MR. WARD

Oh dear, your poor nerves. Here, have some brandy.

MRS. WARD

(slightly hysterical)
Sterling's ready to quit - all the servants are. We'll be the talk of Providence. Who can live with the shouts, the smells? I know I can't!

MR. WARD

I'll speak to him immediately and ring up Dr. Willet tomorrow.

DR. WILLET

Mr. Ward headed for Charles' study, and found a gaunt and haggard Charles, his arms filled with a variety of books.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(startled)
Father.

MR. WARD

Charles. I need to have a word with you.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(politely)

Of course, father. Let me set these down.

MR. WARD

(stern)

You sit down. It's time we had a talk.

DR. WILLET

At the elder man's command he sat down, and for some time listened to the admonitions he had so long deserved. There was no scene.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Father, you're right and I apologize. My enthusiasm for my work has caused me to behave abominably to you and mother. I hope you'll forgive me.

MR. WARD

Well, yes, but we're going to expect some changes around here.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Of course. No more chemicals, incantations, or any of that nonsense. Just me and a few odd books. If it's not too much of an imposition, I would be grateful if everyone could continue to respect the privacy of my laboratory.

MR. WARD

Hmm, well, the first sign of any more of this hocus pocus and I'll have workmen remove the locks. Understood?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Agreed. Thank you father. And, truly, I am sorry. I hope you'll extend my apologies to mother for the fright I caused her. The conversation she heard was part of an elaborate symbolism designed to create a certain mental atmosphere. The thaumaturgy demands the deployment of emotional symbolic resistance in order that the counterveiling...

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

I'm sure this all sounds nonsensical, but were it not essential, I would never have subjected you to it. If I need to make noise, rest assured, it won't be under this roof. Will you forgive me, father?

MR. WARD

(not without hesitation)
Yes, of course, my boy.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Thank you. I'm just going to run these upstairs...

Charles leaves with the armful of reading material.

MR. WARD

What books have you got there? Science, geography, philosophy... No occult? No demonology? You surprise me.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I told you, father, things are different now.

Dramatic chord, then begin musical build-up under narration.

62

WILLET NARRATION 21

62

DR. WILLET

Charles left his father sitting alone in the study. Mr. Ward later told me he felt swept up in a growing sense of strangeness. It was a very poignant sensation, and almost clawed at his chest. He looked about the room and discovered what it was.

Disaster had come to the portrait of Curwen. Time finally caught up with it and the worst had happened. Peeling clear of the wood, curling tighter and tighter, and finally crumbling into small bits, the portrait of Joseph Curwen now lay scattered on the floor as a thin coating of fine blue-grey dust.

Music crescendo, transitioning into DART theme.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Tune in next week for the dramatic finalé of H.P. Lovecraft's "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward", brought to you by our sponsor, Forhan's Toothpaste, use it - before pyorrhea strikes! Until then, this is Erskine Blackwell reminding you to never go anywhere alone; if it looks bad, don't look; and save the last bullet for yourself.

ANNOUNCER

"The Case of Charles Dexter Ward" was adapted for radio and produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman. Original music by Troy Sterling Nies. The Dark Adventure Ensemble featured: Leslie Baldwin, Aidan Branney, Sean Branney, Mark Colson, Dan Conroy, Mike Dalager, Matt Foyer, Andrew Graves, Andrew Leman, Barry Lynch, Erin Noble, David Pavao, Kevin Stidham and Time Winters. Tune in next week for the exciting conclusion of "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward". Dark Adventure Radio Theatre is a production of the HPLHS Broadcasting Group, a subsidiary of HPLHS, Inc., copyright 1931...plus eighty-one.

Radio STATIC and fade out.

SFX: static, radio tuning, snippet of 30s song, more tuning, static dissolves to:

Dark Adventure Radio THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

Tales of intrigue, adventure, and the mysterious occult that will stir your imagination and make your very blood run cold.

MUSIC CRESCENDO.

ANNOUNCER

This is Dark Adventure Radio Theatre, with your host Erskine Blackwell. Today's episode: Part Two of H.P. Lovecraft's "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward."

MUSIC DIMINISHES. The sound clanking chains and tormented gibbering echoes through a cavernous space.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

A young man's discovery of an odd ancestor grows to a crazed obsession. Dark secrets are uncovered that should be left unknown. What lurks in the catacombs beneath an old New England farm? What horrors from the past will reach out from beyond the grave?

A few piano notes from the FORHAN'S TOOTHPASTE JINGLE.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Ladies and gentlemen, wherever you find fashionable people, you will find Forhan's toothpaste. Refined people know the advantages of fine teeth and firm gums. Forhan's is the most used, most trusted, and most delightful, as well as the safest and the surest, because it does all that a toothpaste ought to do. Scientifically formulated for tender gums, Forhan's will spare you from pyorrhea when used correctly morning and night. Try Forhan's toothpaste and join the fashionable crowd!

Dark Adventure LEAD-IN MUSIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Charles Dexter Ward, a curious young man, living with his doting parents in historic Providence. Charles discovered that he was related to the sinister Joseph Curwen. Curwen had been accused of witchcraft in the 1700s, and he disappeared after angry townsfolk stormed his Pawtuxet farm in a terrifying nighttime raid.

(MORE)

ERSKINE BLACKWELL (cont'd)

After finding some of Curwen's journals and ciphered manuscripts hidden behind an uncanny portrait of the old wizard, Charles replicated Curwen's occult research. Terrible smells, weird chanting, and other ominous noises from his attic laboratory frightened his parents, and they turned to the old family doctor for help. Join us now as Dr. Willet continues the tale in Part Two of H. P. Lovecraft's "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward."

TRANSITION MUSIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Chapter IV - A Mutation and a Madness

65 WILLET NARRATION 22

65

DR. WILLET

The Wards summoned me to their home shortly after the Good Friday incident. I met with Charles in his study - and apart from seeing the furtive, hunted look his mother had described to me, he seemed entirely well.

66 A SECOND CHECKUP

66

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Ah, Dr. Willet - did mother call you up to look in on me? Truly, I gave her quite a start last week. I'm afraid she hasn't fully accepted my apologies. May I offer you a scone? Our cook makes them, they're quite marvelous.

DR. WILLET

Your appetite back? I understand you haven't been eating much of late.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Well, making up for it now, eh?

DR. WILLET

Your experiments proceeding well?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Indeed. Though in the interest of preserving mother's nerves, I may need to secure a laboratory elsewhere.

DR. WILLET

Mmm. Shame about the portrait of Curwen crumbling like that.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(disinterested)

Hmm? Oh yes, I suppose it was something in the solvents those fellows used to restore it. Can't be helped. Well, good day Dr. Willet.

67 WILLET NARRATION 23

67

DR. WILLET

The interview left me convinced that, at this point, Charles was still quite sane. The following week he spent quite a lot of time away from the house. He was sighted at a resort and canoe-house at Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet, from which he apparently took long walks up the river bank.

In late May though, it became apparent Charles' research was continuing in the house.

68 THREE'S A CROWD

68

A distant ritualistic chanting comes from upstairs.

MRS. WARD

(heading towards tears)

Oh, that boy...

She storms up the stairs and the chanting gives way to a hushed argument in Charles' lab.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I can't do it. Everyone will notice.

JOSEPH CURWEN

Ye shall be directed and do as I say.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I won't. I'm not going to.

JOSEPH CURWEN

Ye haven't a choice, it must be read for three months.

She knocks on the door.

MRS. WARD

Charles!

Silence. Then some shuffling behind the door.

MRS. WARD

Charles, who's in there with you?

Pause.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

No one.

MRS. WARD

Then who are you talking to? You agreed there'd be no more of this in the house.

(pause)

Charles Dexter Ward, you answer me!

Footsteps followed by the unlocking and opening of the door.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(nervous)

Mother... I am sorry.

MRS. WARD

You said there'd be no more. The chants - arguments with imaginary people. You promised!

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Mother, there are certain conflicts of the spheres of consciousness which only great skill can avoid - but I'll try to transfer them to other realms.

MRS. WARD

(exasperated)

No more!

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Yes, mother.

He shuts the door and locks it.

MRS. WARD

(as she walks away she
mumbles in imitation of
Charles in discoure with
another person)

Do you think the spheres are right?
The yog-fhtagn' says Iä-yamahama...

69 WILLET NARRATION 24

69

DR. WILLET

About the middle of June I was
again summoned to the Ward home.

70 DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION

70

The Wards' rant fades in.

MRS. WARD

... and if that wasn't bad enough,
doctor, he starts thumping and
clumping around up there.

MR. WARD

In fairness, that's not unusual for
him.

MRS. WARD

(on a roll)

But, around midnight, Sterling was
nightlocking the doors when Charles
appeared at the foot of the stairs
with a large suitcase. He was
trembling and looked feverish.

DR. WILLET

Feverish? What then?

MRS. WARD

He didn't say a word, he just
glared like a lunatic, beckoned for
Sterling to open the door, and
left.

DR. WILLET

A lunatic?

MRS. WARD

Poor Sterling was on the verge of tears. Can you believe it? I had to comfort HIM. It's driving me to distraction, doctor. You see my eye? I think I've developed a nervous tic.

MR. WARD

Now, darling...

DR. WILLET

You've all been under a great deal of strain...

MRS. WARD

I take your tablets, loads of them, but they don't help me sleep. In the dead of night I hear him, "y-glognac wganagl..."

DR. WILLET

Have you talked to Charles today? Is he alright?

MR. WARD

He came down early for tea and then hurried upstairs with the newspaper. He didn't seem out of sorts in the least.

MRS. WARD

There you go again, protecting him!

MR. WARD

But he only...

MRS. WARD

He's always like that these days! Charles does his all night hoodoo and to him it's "just a boyish phase". The upstairs hall smells like an opium den and it's "the lad will come 'round". He's not coming 'round! He's not himself, and I try to speak up about it and it's as if I'm the one who's insane, as if it's me up there all night "yai-ngah gn yog-samath"!

MR. WARD

Darling...

MRS. WARD

(nuts)

Iä yog-satho! What? What, isn't it just some phase when I chant?

DR. WILLET

No, no, you're quite right, Mrs. Ward. This is a serious matter. Perhaps you'll ride with me to my office where I can carefully check that nervous tic of yours...

71

WILLET NARRATION 25

71

DR. WILLET

I took Mrs. Ward to my office and eased her nerves with a stronger sedative. The woman was clearly careening towards a full nervous breakdown. She couldn't sleep and was afflicted by ghastly hallucinations in the night time. I ordered her to take an indefinite recuperative sojourn to Atlantic City.

After delivering her home, I followed up on Mr. Ward's comment about the Charles' interest in the newspaper and discovered two articles.

The first told of vandalism that night at the grave of Ezra Weeden, who was buried in 1771. Apparently the slab over his grave was splintered and the coffin and any remains were removed.

The second article described a phenomenal baying of dogs around 3am near Pawtuxet-on-Rhodes. A nightwatchman on duty in the area described the dogs' wild howling as sounding like a man in agony. A brief thunderstorm buffeted the area shortly afterwards and residents complained of a foul smell in the region. The article suggested the foul odors may have come in from oil tanks near the bay and may have had a role in exciting the regions' dogs.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)
 A few days after his wife's
 departure, Mr. Ward found himself
 awakened to surprising news.

72 MOVING OUT

72

Mr. Ward pads down the hall in his slippers.

MR. WARD
 (drowsy)
 Charles? Is that a truck outside?
 What are you doing? It's very late.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Just finishing up father.

MR. WARD
 Eh?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 I didn't want to trouble you any
 more with keeping my laboratory in
 the house. So I'm moving it all.

MR. WARD
 To where?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 I've acquired a bungalow, just a
 little place where I can remove all
 of my equipment and books.

MR. WARD
 Bungalow?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Just outside of town. Hardly any
 people out there, so we shan't
 trouble my neighbors.

MR. WARD
 We?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Ah yes, I've taken on a servant of
 my own. And an associate to help me
 in my research.

MR. WARD
 Charles... Who are these people?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Please father, the van is loaded and they're waiting for me. I assure, I plan to work out there, but I'll be back home to stay with you often. I promise.

MR. WARD

Son, you look terrible. Don't forget to eat.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I shan't, father.

73 WILLET NARRATION 26

73

DR. WILLET

Mr. Ward expressed his concerns to me. I happened to be making a house call a few miles further out on the Pawtuxet road quite near Charles' rented bungalow....

74 HOUSECALL

74

DR. WILLET

(on his house call)

Well, Mr. Snyder, take these with your meals and the gout should ease up by Wednesday.

CARL SNYDER

Thank you, Dr. Willet.

DR. WILLET

Say, I understand you have a new neighbor, Charles Ward. Have you met him?

CARL SNYDER

It's an odd household they keep out there.

DR. WILLET

Oh, how so?

CARL SNYDER

For starters he's got a manservant, a Portuguese. I can't say I approve much of having that sort in the neighborhood. There's another fellow, Dr. Allen, out there too.

(MORE)

CARL SNYDER (cont'd)

Odd sort - wears his sunglasses all the time. The three of them make a terrible racket at night.

DR. WILLET

A racket?

CARL SNYDER

I don't know what they get up to - some nights it sounds like they're chanting, sometimes is shouting and screaming. And their chimney - it puts out smoke that smells like a factory or something...

DR. WILLET

I see. Well, remember, there's a prohibition on red wine. And it's bad for the gout.

CARL SNYDER

Yes, doctor.

75

WILLET NARRATION 27

75

DR. WILLET

Things remained quiet surrounding the Ward family for several months. Mrs. Ward continued her recovery in Atlantic City and Charles seemed to do no worse than to vex his neighbors.

In January though, a truck was hijacked by thugs hoping to steal a shipment of illegal liquor. The thieves were so stunned by the contents of the truck heading to the Ward bungalow in Pawtuxet that they themselves reported the ghastly shipment to the authorities. When the hijackers' claims were found to be true, the State Police warily visited the Ward bungalow.

76

IT'S THE POLICE

76

Hard knocking on Charles' door. It opens.

GOMES

What you want?

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
I'm Detective Thackeray, this is
Inspector Talbot, State Police.
We're looking for a Charles Ward.

GOMES
No can talk. Busy.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
Look, you, go tell Ward...

GOMES
No possible...

INSPECTOR TALBOT
We've got a warrant...

Dr. Allen speaks up from within. His voice is deep, hollow
and perfectly dreadful.

DR. ALLEN
May I be of assistance?

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
Are you Charles Ward?

DR. ALLEN
No, I am his colleague, Dr. Allen.
How may I be of assistance?
(sotto voce)
Gomes, diga-lhe que a polícia
chegou.
(to officers)
Regrettably, the poor fellow's
English is rather limited. Please
come in. Gomes will fetch Mr. Ward.
Would ye care for a cup of tea?

They enter the bungalow.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
Dr. Allen, what is your
relationship to Charles Ward?

DR. ALLEN
(searching for the right
words)
I assist him in his research.

INSPECTOR TALBOT
And just what exactly is it that
you're researching?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
(somewhat nervous)
Gentlemen, sorry to keep you.
Charles Dexter Ward.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
I'm Detective Thackeray, this is
Inspector Talbot. A shipment
addressed to you was hijacked.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Oh dear.

DR. ALLEN
(panicky)
Which shipment?

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
The shipment contained, um...

INSPECTOR TALBOT
Cadavers. Human bodies. Several of
them.

DR. ALLEN
(relieved)
Oh.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
They... were recovered?

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
Mr. Ward, we're interested to know
why human bodies were being shipped
to your home.

INSPECTOR TALBOT
It's irregular, to say the least.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Of course. Well, first off, this
isn't my home. I chose this remote
location as a place where we could
conduct our research without
disturbing or frightening
neighbors.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
I'm still unclear about what it is
exactly that you're doing.

DR. ALLEN
My work here, well, excuse me, I
should allow Mr. Ward to explain.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(struggling for words)

The anatomical specimens are part of a programme of research which... It's scientific... Many who have known Dr. Allen in the last decade could attest to its depth and genuineness. I ordered the required cadavers from agencies which I thought as reasonably legitimate as such things can be.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY

And you can give us the name of these "agencies"?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Of course.

INSPECTOR TALBOT

Why these individuals? I mean, if the public got wind of what, who was in that truck...

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I'm afraid you know more than I do, gentlemen. The last thing we would want is...

DR. ALLEN

I should be aghast if these cadavers were not deliberately donated to science by the deceased. It's unthinkable.

INSPECTOR TALBOT

Unthinkable.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY

This... shipment won't be arriving, Mr. Ward. I'd suggest you take a closer look at these "agencies" and where they're getting their "supplies".

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Indeed I shall. We're very sorry that you've been dragged into this.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY

We'll be in touch if we need anything else. Mr. Ward. Dr. Allen.

DR. ALLEN
Gomes, will you show...

INSPECTOR TALBOT
We'll show ourselves the door.

The officers exit, the door closing behind them. They walk down the dirt driveway.

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
What do you think, Jim?

INSPECTOR TALBOT
Gave me the heebie jeebies, all three of them. Ward looked sickly, and the doctor... sunglasses indoors?

DETECTIVE THACKERAY
Looked like he dyes his beard too. Crackpots. I'll bet you a cup of coffee we'll be back out here again one of these days.

77 WILLET NARRATION 28

77

Musical transition.

DR. WILLET
On the 9th of February, 1928, I received a letter from Charles which I view as extraordinarily important. My colleague, Dr. Lyman believes that this note contains positive proof of a well-developed case of dementia praecox. It's my belief though that it is the last perfectly sane utterance he ever made to me.

78 CHARLES' LETTER

78

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Dear Dr. Willett:-
I feel that at last the time has come for me to make the disclosures which I have so long promised you, and for which you have pressed me so often.
(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

The patience you have shown in waiting, and the confidence you have shown in my mind and integrity, are things I shall never cease to appreciate.

And now that I am ready to speak, I must own with humiliation that no triumph such as I dreamed of can ever be mine. Instead of triumph I have found terror, and my talk with you will not be a boast of victory but a plea for help and advice in saving both myself and the world from a horror beyond all human conception or calculation. Do you recall the accounts of the old raiding party at Pawtuxet? That must all be done again, and quickly. Upon us depends more than can be put into words - all civilization, all natural law, perhaps even the fate of the solar system and the universe. I have brought to light a monstrous abnormality, but I did it for the sake of knowledge. Now for the sake of all life and Nature you must help me thrust it back into the dark again.

I have left that Pawtuxet place forever, and we must extirpate everything existing there, alive or dead. I shall not go there again, and you must not believe it if you ever hear that I am there. I will tell you why I say this when I see you. I have come home for good, and wish you would call on me at the very first moment that you can spare five or six hours continuously to hear what I have to say. It will take that long - and believe me when I tell you that you never had a more genuine professional duty than this. My life and reason are the very least things which hang in the balance.

I dare not tell my father, for he could not grasp the whole thing.

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

But I have told him of my danger,
and he has four men from a
detective agency watching the
house. I don't know how much good
they can do, for they have against
them forces which even you could
scarcely envisage or acknowledge.
So come quickly if you wish to see
me alive and hear how you may help
to save the cosmos from stark hell.
Any time will do - I shall not be
out of the house. Don't telephone
ahead, for there is no telling who
or what may try to intercept you.
And let us pray to whatever gods
there be that nothing may prevent
this meeting.

In utmost gravity and desperation,
Charles Dexter Ward.

P.S. Shoot Dr. Allen on sight and
dissolve his body in acid. Don't
burn it.

79 WILLET NARRATION 29

79

DR. WILLET

Charles' letter arrived around
10:30 a.m. and I contrived to clear
my schedule of other patients and
head to the Ward home as soon as I
could.

80 CHARLES IS NOT AT HOME

80

Dr. Willet steps up to the door of the Wards and rings the
buzzer. Sterling opens the door.

STERLING

Good evening, sir.

DR. WILLET

Ah, Sterling, I'm here to see
Charles.

STERLING

Dr. Willet, do come in. But I'm
afraid Master Charles is not at
home.

DR. WILLET

What? What do you mean? He assured me he'd be here. There's supposed detectives here keeping a watch on him.

STERLING

Yes, sir, but...

ROBERTSON

If you'll excuse me sir, I'm Richard Robertson of the Pinkerton Detective Agency.

DR. WILLET

Marinus Bicknell Willet, M.D.. So where's Charles?

ROBERTSON

This morning he seemed quite out of sorts - nervous or scared. Then he took a telephone call, around a quarter to ten - I don't know who called him. I took notes, let me see, he said "am very tired and must rest a while", "can't receive anyone for some time", "Please postpone decisive action till we can arrange some sort of compromise"; I'll talk with you later." Then he must have slipped out the back.

DR. WILLET

Slipped out?

ROBERTSON

None of us saw him depart or knew that he had gone until he returned about one o'clock.

STERLING

Indeed sir, he rang at the front door, entered without a word and went upstairs.

ROBERTSON

He was up in his library and we heard him cry out...

STERLING

And then he made a sort of choking gasp.

ROBERTSON

So we ran up to make sure he was alright.

STERLING

Master Charles stepped into the library and dismissed us in a most frightful manner.

ROBERTSON

He sure wasn't choking, so we went back downstairs. Heard a lot of clattering and thumping and creaking; then he came back downstairs, glared at us and left.

STERLING

Without so much as a "by your leave". His manner was most disturbing.

ROBERTSON

No disrespect, sir, but he kinda made my skin crawl.

DR. WILLET

Did he leave a message?

STERLING

No sir. I hope there's something you can do for him, doctor.

DR. WILLET

Well I can't treat him if I can't find him. I'll wait for him in his study. I know the way.

Willet storms off, irritated.

DR. WILLET

I waited nearly two hours, watching the sun's rays slowly setting on the dusty shelves. I looked at the overmantel where old Joseph Curwen had once looked down upon Charles and me. As the sun faded, a vague growing terror crept upon me.

82 I AM PERPLEXED

82

Footsteps approach the room.

MR. WARD

Dr. Willet, my apologies. I've only just returned from work and learned what's happened.

DR. WILLET

Do you have any idea where he might have gone?

MR. WARD

I haven't the foggiest. But I assure you, I'll ring you as soon as he arrives.

DR. WILLET

Please do.

MR. WARD

(grasping for words)

I... I am sorry, Marinus. I am perplexed. I appreciate all you've done for him, for the whole family really.

DR. WILLET

I just want to see everyone well again. Good night, Mr. Ward.

83 WILLET NARRATION 31

83

DR. WILLET

I left, feeling an enormous relief to leave the study and its oppressive aura. The following morning, Mr. Ward rang me at my office.

84 PHONE CALL

84

Over the telephone.

MR. WARD

No, he's still not come home, but I received a phone call from his colleague, that Dr. Allen. He says Charles is at Pawtuxet and mustn't be disturbed.

DR. WILLET
Pawtuxet?

MR. WARD
Yes, he says that he's suddenly
been called away and their
researches will demand Charles'
constant oversight. He sent
Charles' best wishes and regretted
any inconvenience caused by the new
plan.

DR. WILLET
Best wishes?

MR. WARD
I know my nerves are on edge too,
but there was something in that
man's voice that... disturbed me.

85 WILLET NARRATION 32

85

DR. WILLET
I was baffled and at a loss for
what to do. I read and reread
Charles' letter - the terror seemed
profound and real. After some time,
I resolved to act. The only
reasonable thing seemed to be to go
and pay Charles a visit at the
Pawtuxet bungalow.

His Model A rattles along the Pawtuxet Road.

DR. WILLET
Driving out Broad Street and
turning onto the Pawtuxet Road, I
thought oddly of the grim party
which had taken that same road a
hundred and fifty-seven years
before.

86 WILLET VISITS THE BUNGALOW

86

Dr. Willet walks up to the door and pounds on it soundly.
There is shuffling before it finally opens a crack.

DR. WILLET
I must see Charles Dexter Ward at
once on vitally important business.

GOMES
Is busy. Begone.

DR. WILLET
Now see here, I shall not be
rebuffed, sir. It's vital that...

GOMES
No can be.

DR. WILLET
If I do not see Charles, I'll make
a full report of the matter to
Charles' father. Now, let me in.

He pushes against the door. Gomes resists him.

GOMES
No do.

A husky whisper comes from within the room. It's Charles' voice, but somehow horribly different.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Let him in, Tony.

The door creaks and the dread Portuguese steps aside.

DR. WILLET
Charles, you sound terrible.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
I am grown phthisical, from this
cursed river air. You must excuse
my speech. I suppose you are come
from my father to see what ails me.

DR. WILLET
We are surprised you're here. You
must admit this is quite a change
of heart from the letter you sent
me last week.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Yes, that. You must know, I am in a
very bad state of nerves, and do
and say queer things I cannot
account for. As I have told you
often, I am on the edge of great
matters whose magnitude has a way
of making me light-headed. Have the
goodness to wait six months, and
I'll shew you what will pay your
patience well.

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)

You may as well know I have a way of learning old matters from things surer than books, and I'll leave you to judge the importance of what I can give to history, philosophy, and the arts by reason of the doors I have access to. My ancestor had all this when Captain Whipple and his mob came to murder him. I now have it again, or am coming very imperfectly to have a part of it. Pray forget all I writ you, Sir, and have no fear of this place or any in it. Dr. Allen is a man of fine parts, and I owe him an apology for anything ill I have said of him.

DR. WILLET

Where is the good doctor?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

There were things he had to do elsewhere. His zeal is equal to mine in all these matters, and I suppose that when I feared the work I feared him too.

DR. WILLET

Where exactly has Dr. Allen gone?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(disarmed)

He's gone by coach to New York.

DR. WILLET

By coach? With horses?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Of course. He was summoned quite urgently on a matter of keen import.

DR. WILLET

Would not the train have gotten him there more expediently?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

If ye say so, but be that as it may. He shall be away for some time.

DR. WILLET

I see...

87 WILLET NARRATION 33

87

DR. WILLET

I have pointed out that my colleagues were inclined to place the onset of Charles' madness earlier than I was. It was during this conversation I felt something had profoundly and abruptly shifted in Charles' mind. He was not himself and had, apparently, fallen into a chasm of thought from the antiquarian studies of his youth. The modern world seemed remote and distant to him, and yet the world of 18th century Providence had come alive in his imagination in a most astonishing manner.

88 WILLET AT THE BUNGALOW 2

88

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Have ye satisfied your curiosity, Dr. Willet? If so, I needs must return to my researches.

DR. WILLET

Yes, of course. Uh, might I see how you've set up your laboratory here?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(with a self-satisfied
chuckle)

But of course. Follow me.

89 WILLET NARRATION 34

89

DR. WILLET

Charles led me through the entire house, from cellar to attic. Yet, from having spent so much time at the Wards', it was clear that both the library and so-called laboratory were flimsy decoys.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

The library showed a tiny fraction of the books once occupying Charles' study, and the laboratory lacked the equipment and materials for any kind of significant endeavors. I was certain there was an actual library and laboratory elsewhere. I bid Charles good day, and returned to Providence to inform his father of my discoveries.

He beseeched my help in forging a plan for Charles' mental salvation. We decided we would set about gathering every scrap of information we could about the lad and his condition, and then meet on Saturday to compare notes.

90

COMPARING NOTES

90

Ward and Willet sit at the Ward dining room table.

DR. WILLET

There seems to be no shortage of rumors and innuendo about Charles' household in Pawtuxet.

MR. WARD

All his neighbors seem to fear him. Several of them visibly blanched when they heard I was his father.

DR. WILLET

I thought this was interesting: they've been buying meat from the two closest butchers.

MR. WARD

And?

DR. WILLET

Between the two butchers, they ordered well over two hundred pounds of meat last month.

MR. WARD

For just the three of them? What do you make of that?

DR. WILLET

I really don't know. Several people also talked about sounds coming from beneath the earth. Some described chanting or rituals.

MR. WARD

Could it be coming from the cellar?

DR. WILLET

It doesn't really follow that people in such varied locations would hear it. Besides, I took a look down there - it's pretty empty.

MR. WARD

Back when Charles was reading about Curwen, the young suitor, Weeden, thought there might be catacombs or crypts out there.

DR. WILLET

I thought the same thing, and they could still be there. I took a stroll along the river bank to see if there was any trace of the old oak door Charles had spoken of.

MR. WARD

Did you really?

(chuckles)

So did I. Find anything? Me neither. Everyone out there seems to loathe the Portuguese, Gomes.

DR. WILLET

I found him thoroughly dreadful.

MR. WARD

Oh, I forgot to tell you, he has sent notes. Both to his mother and me.

DR. WILLET

What did he write?

MR. WARD

They were brief but showed a certain formal courtesy to his mother and me. Odd thing though, they were typed.

DR. WILLET
I didn't know he had a typewriter.

MR. WARD
He must have ordered one with all
his other odd apparatus.
(sigh)
I don't really know what to make of
it. Do you?

DR. WILLET
Clearly he's erratic and displaying
some kind of mania bourne from his
antiquarian proclivities and his
research into Curwen. I think
whatever set him off is somehow
tied to that ancient wizard. I'm
afraid at the moment I think
waiting and watching remains our
best course.

91 WILLET NARRATION 35

91

DR. WILLET
The next revelation occurred at Mr.
Ward's office.

92 THE BANKER

92

A distant typewriter and hushed business conversations fill
the air.

HERMAN YOUNGER
Mr. Ward? Herman Younger,
Providence Trust Bank. Thank you
for seeing me on such short notice.

MR. WARD
Of course. How may I be of
assistance?

HERMAN YOUNGER
We're at a bit of a loss regarding
your son's account. As you know, we
keep a signature card on file when
someone opens an account. One of
our staff members noticed the
unusual penmanship on a recent bank
draft Charles took out and well...
(handing them to Mr. Ward)
As you can see...

MR. WARD

This isn't Charles' handwriting!

HERMAN YOUNGER

That's what we thought. After the third draft came with this same ornate handwriting, I thought it prudent to stop by at his new address to verify if these drafts had indeed been forged.

MR. WARD

And?

HERMAN YOUNGER

Well that's the perplexing part. He told me that he'd been affected by a nervous shock which prevented him from writing at all. He said he'd even been typing letters to you.

MR. WARD

It's true, he has.

HERMAN YOUNGER

I asked him about several other checks and drafts he'd drawn a few weeks ago and he seemed utterly mystified. Mr. Ward, your son's always been quite sharp on financial matters.

MR. WARD

True...

HERMAN YOUNGER

He then launched into a diatribe about our bank's fine building on Broad Street and the manager's exquisite peruke.

MR. WARD

Peruke?

HERMAN YOUNGER

Sir, we haven't had offices on Broad Street since they burned to the ground in 1798. It was a most irregular conversation.

MR. WARD

Mr. Younger, my son is... not well. I fear we will soon have to take drastic steps (if you get my meaning) to speed his recovery. In the meantime, our family appreciates your discretion.

93

WILLET NARRATION 36

93

DR. WILLET

(narrating)

On the whole, it was now clear that Charles was insane. Of that there could be no doubt. And since it appeared unlikely that he could handle his property or continue to deal with the outside world much longer, something had to be done quickly toward his oversight and possible cure. And so, on the 6th of March 1928, the alienists were called in to consult on Charles' case.

Dr. Waite of Providence and Dr. Lyman of Boston met with Mr. Ward and me in Charles' former study at the Ward house. After reviewing the case and Charles' ominous letter to me, we came to a consensus that his studies had been enough to unseat or at least to warp his true sense of self. On Thursday we would set out for the bungalow, and would not leave there without taking Charles into our care.

94

IMPUDENT PUPPIES

94

The Pawtuxet wind blows as Mr. Ward raps on the bungalow door. The dreadful Portuguese opens it.

GOMES

You want?

DR. WILLET

Yes, man, tell Charles that his father is here in the company of... oh just tell him his father is here to see him.

GOMES

You wait. He come.

The door shuts.

DR. LYMAN

Dreadfully unpleasant fellow.

MR. WARD

Yes, the name's Gomes. Portuguese. I've never quite figured out how he entered the picture, have you, Dr. Willet?

DR. WILLET

No. As far as I know, it's just Charles and Gomes living here now.

DR. WAITE

This fellow's not involved in the research though, is he?

MR. WARD

I should think not, the man can barely...

The door suddenly opens.

GOMES

Come.

MR. WARD

Charles.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Mr. W-- father. I see you've brought company with you.

MR. WARD

Charles, this is Dr. Lyman of Boston and Dr. Waite of Providence. And of course you know Dr. Willet.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Indeed.

MR. WARD

Charles, we've come to determine...

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Surely, you've come with questions of my constitution.

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)
And whether my chemical and
philosophical excursions have
impacted the ordering of my mind.

MR. WARD
Well...

DR. WILLET
(sniffing)
Pardon me, Charles, what is that
odor?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Residue from an emulsion, I fear.

DR. WILLET
Something you brewed yourself?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Indeed, sir.

DR. WILLET
Odd, it only seems to be coming
from your frock coat.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
I fear Gomes is not fully
satisfactory as a domestic. Is't
the laundering of my vestments
which ye came to speak of?

DR. WAITE
(as if addressing a small
child)
We're concerned about how you're
feeling, Charlie.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
As well ye should be Dr. Waite, for
surely my memory and balance stand
sore afflicted from somewhat close
application of my abstruse studies.

DR. WAITE
Ah, yes.

DR. LYMAN
Charles, last month you wrote Dr.
Willet here a letter.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Confound the letter, man! 'Twas a fit of hysteria and a paroxysm of nerves caused me write it. How oft must I explain myself to ye?

MR. WARD

Your neighbors report hearing screams from your cellar.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Mr..., father, do I sound like I could make such an utterance? 'Tis but the cheap inventiveness of baffled curiosity that elicits such poppycock from these simpletons.

DR. WAITE

Umm...

There is a terribly awkward pause.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

If ye have concluded this parade of mountebanks, I have matters to attend to.

DR. LYMAN

Your associate, Dr. Allen - where is it he's gone off to?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(edgy)

I cannot tell ye, but I have no doubt he'll return when he is needed.

DR. WILLET

Charles... We have come to the conclusion that it would be best for you if you leave here for a time and go to Dr. Waite's hospital on Conanicut Island.

(pause)

I'm afraid we must insist.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(wry)

Must insist, must ye? Impudent puppies. Why then yes, of course, let us hasten there to speed the recovery of my faculties.

MR. WARD

That's excellent, Charles. I feared you'd be resistant to the notion.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

You'll allow me a few moments with Gomes, here. I needs must leave him with a few pounds and certain instructions.

DR. WAITE

You mean dollars, Charlie.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Do I? Think ye I cannot tell a shilling from a farthing? Am I so far gone?

MR. WARD

Charles. I'll make sure Mr. Gomes is provided for in your absence.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Ye need not worry about providing for Gomes, but I would impart a word with him ere we depart.

DR. WILLET

Charles, do you mind if I show Dr. Lyman your laboratory and library in the meantime?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Do as ye like. Tony, a word.

GOMES

Sim, senhor.

They whisper in hushed Portuguese. Drs. Lyman and Willet move through the house.

DR. WILLET

You see, Dr. Lyman, the library only contains a fraction of the books he had in his study at home. And this laboratory...

DR. LYMAN

Hmm, dusty.

DR. WILLET

Exactly. That odor coming from Charles didn't come from work done here.

DR. LYMAN

Well, at least he isn't resisting treatment. But he should be committed to Dr. Waite's hospital immediately.

Walking back to the parlour.

DR. WILLET

Well, Charles, shall we set out?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Indeed.

Musical transition.

95

WILLET NARRATION 37

95

DR. WILLET

Drs. Lyman and Waite and I all examined Charles and found his physical state highly irregular: the slackened metabolism, the altered skin, and the disproportionate neural reactions. Charles' face, too, troubled me and it took some time before I realized why. Above his right eye was something which I had never previously noticed - a small scar or pit precisely like that in the crumbled painting of old Joseph Curwen, and perhaps attesting some hideous ritualistic inoculation to which both had submitted at a certain stage of their occult careers. A day later, Mr. Ward stopped by my office, quite excited.

96

A LETTER INTERCEPTED

96

The door shuts behind Mr. Ward as he hurries into Willet's office.

DR. WILLET

What is it?

MR. WARD

I've had Charles' mail forwarded to the house.

(MORE)

MR. WARD (cont'd)
Well a letter came today addressed
to Dr. Allen, posted from Prague.

DR. WILLET
What does it say?

MR. WARD
I can hardly make it out. Take a
look.

He unfolds the letter.

DR. WILLET
Certainly is an old-fashioned style
of writing. Hm, the envelope says
Dr. Allen, but the letter says "to
J.C."

MR. WARD
"February 11, 1928. Dear Brother in
Almonsin-Metraton". Is that Allen?

DR. WILLET
I suppose so.
(he mumbles for a moment
reading through the
letter's content)
"As I told you long ago, do not
call up That which you can not put
down; either from dead Saltes or
out of ye Spheres beyond. Have ye
Words for laying at all times
ready, and stop not to be sure when
there is any Doubt of Whom you
have."

MR. WARD
It's the same sort of mumbo-jumbo
we've been hearing from Charles.
Could this madness be contagious?

DR. WILLET
I... don't know.
(reading further)
"In my next Sending there will be
somewhat from a Hill tomb from the
East that will delight you greatly.
Meanwhile forget not I am desirous
of B. F. if you can possibly get
him for me. Have him up first if
you will, but doe not use him so
hard he will be difficult, for I
must speak to him in the End.
Yogg-Sothoth Neblod Zin."

MR. WARD

It's signed Simon O. Maybe he's the old man whom Charles visited in Prague.

DR. WILLET

Charles once showed me notes from a Simon Orne of Salem, but they were written the 1700s.

MR. WARD

Let's ask Charles about it.

97

WILLET NARRATION 37

97

DR. WILLET

Charles offered no insight to the letter. He merely said Dr. Allen had a remarkable spiritual rapport with certain souls from the past, and his correspondents would probably be similarly gifted. We showed the letter to Drs. Waite and Lyman. Both were disinterested in its contents and shared the opinion that eccentrics tend to band together and that Dr. Allen himself might actually be suffering from a condition similar to Charles'.

When a 2nd letter arrived addressed to Dr. Allen, Mr. Ward and I kept its contents to ourselves.

98

A LETTER INTERCEPTED 2

98

MR. WARD

"Castle Ferenczy, 7 March 1928. Dear C." - do you think Dr. Allen uses Curwen as an alias?

DR. WILLET

Perhaps... Let's see... "Last month M. got me the Sarcophagus of the Five Sphinxes from the Acropolis, and I have had three talks with what was therein inhumed. It will go to S. O. in Prague directly, and thence to you."

MR. WARD

S.O.? It must be Orne from the last letter. Let's see... oh, all this metaphysical jargon... I can't make heads or tails of it.

DR. WILLET

Look at this. "Does the Boy use the right words often? I regret that he grows squeamish, as I feared he would when I had him here nigh 15 months, but am sensible you know how to deal with him. You still have strong hands and knife and pistol, and graves are not hard to dig, nor acids loth to burn."

MR. WARD

That must mean Charles!

DR. WILLET

There's more. "Imploy care in what you call up, and beware of the Boy. It will be ripe in a year's time to have up the Legions from Underneath, and then there are no Bounds to what shall be ours." It's signed Edward H.

MR. WARD

Could that be Hutchinson? From Salem?

Music transition.

99 CHAPTER V.

99

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Chapter V - A Nightmare and a Cataclysm.

100 A CONFESSION

100

Thunder rumbles and wind drives rain against the panes of Charles' study in the Ward house.

MR. WARD

Clearly this Dr. Allen is in league with these lunatics. They all seem to be scheming against Charles. Thank god we've moved him somewhere safe.

DR. WILLET

Ted... I must confess something...

MR. WARD

Go on.

DR. WILLET

As a physician I've been trained in and believe in science and rational thought.

(pause)

But as we've delved...

MR. WARD

(hugely relieved)

You believe it. You believe it's real! Oh thank heavens.

DR. WILLET

What do...

MR. WARD

I didn't want to say anything. I was afraid you'd think *me* mad. But truly, I think there's something terrible afoot, connected with a necromancy even older than the events in Salem. I'm afraid Orne, Hutchinson, maybe Allen, might somehow possess minds or personalities from 1690 - probably before.

DR. WILLET

(similarly relieved)

I think so too. I believe these men are robbing the tombs of all the ages, including those of the world's wisest and greatest men, in the hope of recovering some vestiges of dead knowledge.

MR. WARD

They barter illustrious bones like schoolboys swapping books. They've found some unholy way of living on. And they have some means of tapping into the consciousness of the remains they gather.

DR. WILLET

"Essential Saltes".

MR. WARD

Eh?

DR. WILLET

There was a quote from Borellus where he wrote of preparing from even the most antique remains certain "Essential Saltes" from which the shade of a long-dead living thing might be raised up. There was a formula for evoking such a shade, and another for putting it down; Maybe they've perfected the process.

MR. WARD

Good lord!

DR. WILLET

I wondered too if somehow they can call down presences or voices of some sort from unknown places. Curwen had indubitably evoked many forbidden things...

MR. WARD

Yes, and Charles! I've had this notion that somehow forces from Curwen's time grabbed his attention and turned his mind on forgotten things. Was he led to find Curwen's papers and use them? Did they lead him to these other occult fiends? To the grave of Joseph Curwen?

DR. WILLET

The night your wife heard him with a truck!

MR. WARD

Perhaps then he called something, and it came.

DR. WILLET

That voice heard on Good Friday, and the conversations in the attic... what morbid shade appeared behind that locked door?

MR. WARD

Good god, could it be Curwen himself?

DR. WILLET

Of course! The rifling of Ezra Weeden's grave, and the cries later at Pawtuxet. Who else would plan such vengeance? And at the site of his former abode.

MR. WARD

I've got men from the Pinkertons trying to find this Dr. Allen. I think he's the key to it all.

DR. WILLET

We can't wait for them.

MR. WARD

What do you mean?

DR. WILLET

I'm certain there must be some kind of vast crypt beneath the bungalow. We have to find it and see what it contains.

Pause.

MR. WARD

We? You mean just you and me?

DR. WILLET

Who else would believe this?

MR. WARD

It's Capt. Whipple's raid all over again.

DR. WILLET

We'll have to be thorough... I'll gather tools for us and meet you there at 10 tomorrow morning.

MR. WARD

Agreed. And Marinus, thank you.

Music.

DR. WILLET

The morning of April 6th we met at the bungalow and entered with Mr. Ward's key. There was no sign of the Portuguese nor of anyone else.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)
 Our main business lay in the cellar, so we quickly descended and searched every inch of the earthen floor and stone walls. By sheer luck, Mr. Ward happened to light his pipe and took notice of a draft affecting the smoke.

102 BREAKING AND ENTERING

102

MR. WARD
 Marinus, look here. In front of the washtub.

DR. WILLET
 Well spotted. Hmm, there must be some way to make it...

There's a creak of metal as the washtub platform pivots to the side.

MR. WARD
 (excited)
 Ha! It pivots to the side. Well done! A manhole cover. Here, allow me.

He lifts the heavy iron cover and pushes it aside. A gust of noxious air rises. Mr. Ward gasps and stumbles.

DR. WILLET
 You alright there, Ted?

MR. WARD
 Just a bit diz...

He collapses with a groan and a thud.

103 WILLET NARRATION 39

103

DR. WILLET
 The foul air rising from the pit caused Mr. Ward to collapse. I brought him round with some cold water. Given his condition, I thought it prudent to send him home so I rang a cab. Mr. Ward protested feebly but was soon on his way back to Providence. I returned to the work at hand. With my electric torch at the ready, I returned to the cellar.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

The foul air had abated somewhat and looking down I could see it was a sheer cylindrical drop with concrete walls and an iron ladder ending at a flight of stone steps.

Carrying the torch and a valise to recover any documents I might find, it's a wonder I made it down those iron rungs. At the bottom, the steps were slippery and the masonry ancient. The steps went down, not spirally, but in three abrupt turns. I was counting them, until I heard something.

(on the stairs)

Twenty eight, twenty nine, thi...

There is a godless sound; one of those low-keyed, insidious outrages of Nature which are not meant to be. To call it a dull wail, a doom-dragged whine, or a hopeless howl of chorused anguish and stricken flesh without mind would be to miss its quintessential loathsomeness and soul-sickening overtones.

DR. WILLET

The sound shocked and chilled me, partly because as I reached the bottom of the steps, I could not determine where it had come from. The dreadful smell was stronger here. I cast my torchlight around on lofty corridor walls pierced by numberless black archways. Its pavement was of large chipped flagstone, and its walls and roof were of dressed masonry. I could not imagine its length, for it stretched ahead indefinitely into the blackness. Of the archways, some had doors, whilst others had none. I began to explore the archways one by one. Each had a stone ceiling - many had fireplaces - and most were filled with ancient instruments and equipment.

I finally came to one room of obvious modernity, or at least of recent occupancy. There were oil heaters, bookshelves and tables, chairs and cabinets, and a desk piled high with papers of varying antiquity and contemporaneousness.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

Candlesticks and oil lamps stood about in several places and I lit them with some relief.

This was the latest study of Charles Dexter Ward. I had seen many of the books before, and a good part of the furniture had come from the Wards' home. I had planned to seize any important documents I discovered. It was a daunting task, for file on file was stuffed with papers in curious hands and bearing curious designs - months or years might be needed to truly make sense of it. But I happened upon three large packets of letters resembling those of Orne and Hutchinson and quickly put them in the valise.

In a locked mahogany cabinet, I discovered the batch of old Curwen papers Charles had shown me years ago.

Overall, there were few documents in the study in Charles' hand, and none of them more recent than two months before. On the other hand, there were literally reams of symbols and formulae, historical notes and philosophical comment, in a crabbed penmanship identical to that of Joseph Curwen, though of undeniably modern dating. I surmised that part of Charles' studies included imitating the old wizard's writing. I saw nothing I could attribute to Dr. Allen.

Among the documents, one mystic formula, or rather a pair of them, recurred over and over again. It consisted of two parallel columns, the left-hand one surmounted by the archaic symbol called "Dragon's Head" and used in almanacs to indicate the ascending node, and the right-hand one headed by a corresponding sign of "Dragon's Tail" or descending node.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)
 Seeing it written so many times, I realized that the second half was no more than the first written syllabically backward with the exception of the final monosyllables and of the odd name Yog-Sothoth - a name which seemed to permeate the entire Ward case. At first I did not realize seeing it on the page, but as I mumbled the words aloud, I realized they were the same words spoken by Charles on that dreadful Good Friday.

104 WILLET'S WIERD MUMBLING

104

DR. WILLET
 (mumbling quietly to
 himself)
 Y'AI 'NG'NGAH,
 YOG-SOTHOTH
 H'EE-L'GEB
 F'AI THRODOG
 UAAAH
 OGTHROD AI'F
 GEB'L-EE'H
 YOG-SOTHOTH
 'NGAH'NG AI'Y
 ZHRO

105 WILLET NARRATION 40

105

DR. WILLET
 I uttered the words over and over as I secured all the papers I could take. Having found Charles' new study, I was convinced I would find his new laboratory as well.

The dull and hideous whine echoes through the hall.

DR. WILLET
 The next few rooms were filled only with crumbling boxes and ominous-looking leaden coffins. I thought of the innumerable slaves and seamen whom Curwen must have used to build this place.
 (MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

A great stone staircase climbed to my right, but beyond it, the walls seemed to fall away ahead, and the stench and the wailing grew stronger. I came upon a vast open space, so great that my torchlight could not carry across it; stout pillars supporting the arches of the roof.

I reached a circle of pillars grouped like the monoliths of Stonehenge, with a large carved altar. My torchlight moved over dreadful carvings on it, but when I came to see the discoloration on top which spread down the sides in occasional thin lines, I moved away to the distant wall. The outside wall of this gigantic circular room was perforated by occasional black doorways and indented by shallow cells with iron gratings and wrist and ankle bonds. Thankfully, the cells were empty.

The dismal moaning becomes louder, varying with a slippery thumping.

DR. WILLET

I was closer than ever to the source of that terrible sound. Even here, far below the ground, the sound seemed to emanate from below. I cast my beam of light about the stone-flagged floor. It was loosely paved, and here and there occurred a slab curiously pierced by small holes. Nearby, there lay upon the floor a very long ladder. I realized the pierced slabs might be some kind of crude trap door. I set about opening one.

Dr. Willet strains to move the massive stone lid. As he begins to work on it, the dreadful wailing from below him increases. The heavy stone slides to the side and gust of miasma rushes up. He gasps and staggers backwards.

DR. WILLET

My head reeled from the stench. I turned my torch upon the dark opening.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

It was the top of a brick-faced well, perhaps a yard and a half in diameter. I shone the torch down into the blackness.

The wailing changes to a series of horrible yelps; in conjunction with which there came again that sound of blind, futile scrambling and slippery thumping.

DR. WILLET

At first I could see nothing. I then lay on the stone and held the torch downward at arm's length. For a moment, I could distinguish nothing but the slimy, moss-grown brick walls sinking into that half-tangible miasma of murk and foulness and anguished frenzy. Something dark was leaping clumsily and frantically up and down at the bottom of the narrow shaft, which must have been around twenty feet below me.

The torch shook in my hand, but I looked again to see what manner of creature might be immured in the darkness of that unnatural well; left starving by Charles since we'd taken him away, and clearly only one of a vast number imprisoned in the countless wells sunk in the floor of the great chamber. Whatever the things were, they could not lie down in their cramped spaces; but must have crouched and whined and waited and feebly leaped all those hideous weeks since their master had abandoned them.

I should not have looked again down in that black pit. I wish to God I had not, for I know I have not been the same since. In seeing it, for the next few instants I was surely as stark raving mad as any inmate of Dr. Waite's hospital. I dropped the torch and screamed.

Willet's scream echoes through the chamber as unseen teeth crunch upon the fallen torch. He scrambles madly across the floor.

DR. WILLET

I crawled and rolled desperately away from the open pit. I tore my hands on the rough, loose stones, hit my head against the massive pillars, but stumbled on. At last my faculties slowly returned. I was drenched with perspiration and without means of producing a light. Beneath me dozens of those things still lived, and from one of those shafts I had removed the cover. What I had seen could never climb up the slippery walls, and yet...

I cannot truly describe what I saw. It was... palpably unfinished. The deficiencies were of the most surprising sort, and the abnormalities of proportion were... I shall say only this, I believe the thing must have represented entities which Ward called up from imperfect salts, and which he kept for servile or ritualistic purposes.

I rocked to and fro, squatting on the stone floor.

106 WILLET'S PRAYER

106

DR. WILLET

(insane, gibbering)

Our Father... Our Father who art in heaven, 'ngah Yog Sothoth. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth f'ai throdog uaaah...

107 WILLET NARRATION 41

107

DR. WILLET

Words soothed me, and though lost in every imaginable way, I staggered to my feet and strained my eyes for any hint of light. I thought perhaps I saw one, and crawled slowly towards it, desperately afraid.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

As I moved towards that hint of light, I saw it dim and realized the candles and lamps I'd left burning must be expiring one by one. The thought of being utterly without light in this nightmare labyrinth was unbearable and I decided to run, stumbling and tripping as I went. My heart was racing as I realized I had indeed found the corridor and was nearing the light of Charles' secret library. In a moment, I was refilling the empty oil lamps and heaving a sigh of relief.

Racked though I was with horror, my sense of grim purpose was still uppermost; I was determined to leave no stone unturned in my search for the hideous facts behind Charles Dexter Ward's bizarre madness. I took a small lamp and filled my pockets with candles and matches, and took with me a gallon can of oil and set out to find Charles' laboratory.

I returned to the great pillared hall and worked my way around its perimeter. There were storerooms filled with ancient clothing and others with huge copper vats and weirdly figured leaden bowls around which clung repellent odors perceptible above even the general noisomeness of the crypt.

I discovered another corridor like that from which I had come, and out of which many doors opened. I came at last to a large oblong apartment whose business-like tanks and tables, furnaces and modern instruments, occasional books and endless shelves of jars and bottles proclaimed it indeed the long-sought laboratory of Charles Dexter Ward - and no doubt of old Joseph Curwen before him.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

An archway led to a very sizeable chamber entirely lined with shelves and having in the centre a table bearing two lamps. I lit the lamps and studied the shelving which surrounded me. Most of the shelves were filled with small odd-looking leaden jars of two general types; one tall and without handles like a Grecian lekythos or oil-jug, and the other with a single handle and proportioned like a Phaleron jug. All had metal stoppers, and were covered with peculiar-looking symbols moulded in low relief. All the lekythoi were on one side of the room with a large wooden sign reading 'Custodes' above them, and all the Phalerons on the other, correspondingly labelled with a sign reading 'Materia'.

I opened several random jugs of both kinds and they contained a single kind of substance; a fine dusty powder of very light weight. The only difference between them seemed to be the colour - some pinkish white, the next bluish gray. Most fascinating though, was their non-adhesiveness. I could empty one into my hand, and upon returning it to its jug would find that no residue whatever remained on my palm.

The meaning of the two signs puzzled me. "Custodes", "Materia"; Latin for "Guards" and "Materials", respectively - and then it came to me - the Essential Saltes. The Custodes jugs contained the monstrous fruit of unhallowed rites and deeds, presumably won or cowed to such submission as to help, when called up by some hellish incantation. I thought of what I had been pouring in and out of my hands, and for a moment felt an impulse to flee. Then I thought of the "Materia" - in the myriad jugs on the other side of the room. Salts too - and if not the salts of "guards", then the salts of what?

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

God! Could it be possible that here lay the mortal relics of half the titan thinkers of all the ages; snatched by ghouls from crypts and subject to the beck and call of madmen who sought to drain their knowledge for some ultimate horrific purpose? And I had just sifted their dust through my hands!

Big musical hit.

DR. WILLET

I noticed a small door at the end of the room. Opening it, I was struck by an odor - the same which had clung to Charles on the day we removed him to the hospital. In the day's catalog of horror, here was yet another entry.

The room beyond had no furniture save a table, a single chair, and two groups of curious machines with clamps and wheels - mediaeval instruments of torture including a rack of savage whips. On the table were a pad and pencil, and two of the stoppered lekythoi from the shelves outside. I lit the lamp and looked at the pad where Charles had taken notes in his Curwenesque hand:

108 UNDERGROUND NOTES

108

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

B. died not. Escaped into walls and found place below. Saw old V. say the Sabaoth and learnt the Way. Raised Yog-Sothoth thrice and was the nexte Day delivered. F. sought to wipe out all knowing how to raise those from outside.'

109 WILLET NARRATION 42

109

DR. WILLET

I took note of some dismal yellowish-white robes that hung from the wall.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

The walls of the room were covered in occult symbols and magickal inscriptions roughly carved into the stone. I then noticed that upon the floor, a pentagram had been carved in addition to circles near each corner of the room.

Near one circle, a robe had been carelessly left on the ground next to an unstoppered jug. Inside the circle was a low flat bowl and inside the bowl lay a small amount of a dry, dull-greenish efflorescent powder. I reeled at the notion of what lay before me - someone, some thing, reduced to their essential saltes.

My eyes looked up to the wall. Upon the wall was the incantation which Charles himself had used that Good Friday. Nearby were the ancient symbols of the Dragon's Head and Tail with the incantation I'd read in the library. The spellings here were different, but the content was surely the same. Though I knew the words well, I found myself sounding them out.

110 WILLET INCANTATION

110

DR. WILLET

(in a somewhat sing-song
almost musical
incantation)

Y'AI 'NG'NGAH,
YOG-SOTHOTH
H'EE-L'GEB
F'AI THRODOG
UAAAH!

A cold wind stirs in the torture room, and the distant wailing of the pit-dwellers takes on a distinct rhythm.

111 WILLET NARRATION 43

111

DR. WILLET

A cold wind seemed to swirl around me and the bright lamp sputtered.
(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)
 A terrible stench - smoke - and the
 bowl on the floor produced a
 greenish black vapor in huge
 volume. Great God!

All I could think of was that
 horrid warning "do not call up Any
 that you can not put down ... Have
 ye Words for laying at all times
 ready."

(terrified by what he
 sees)
 God in Heaven!

Willet collapses and the music crescendos.

112 AWKENING

112

MR. WARD
 Marinus, Marinus, can you hear me?

Willet stirs and mumbles as he comes around.

DR. WILLET
 That beard, those eyes... God, who
 are you?

MR. WARD
 Marinus, it's me, Ted. You're
 alright now.

DR. WILLET
 Where am I?

MR. WARD
 Charles' bedroom, I think. At the
 bungalow.

DR. WILLET
 But how?

MR. WARD
 I found you here. Sit up, I have a
 flask of brandy...

He opens it and drinks hard.

DR. WILLET
 Did you bring me here?

MR. WARD

I tried to ring you several times
and when I still couldn't reach you
this morning, I came back out and
found you. Right here on the bed.

DR. WILLET

The valise?

MR. WARD

It's here.

Willet opens it.

DR. WILLET

Empty.
(bewildered)
My electric torch?

MR. WARD

Haven't seen it.

Willet springs up from the bed.

DR. WILLET

Come with me. To the cellar.

They hurry down the stairs.

DR. WILLET

It's here, at the washtub. It
pivoted. Remember? There's an
opening beneath...

He bangs on it in frustration.

DR. WILLET

It's gone - no trace of the
opening. Yesterday, you saw it
here... did you see it?

MR. WARD

I did. I think.

DR. WILLET

Of course you did.

113 WILLET NARRATION 44

113

DR. WILLET

We went upstairs and I told him the full story of what I'd seen beneath, right up to the moment when a figure emerged from the greenish-black vapor - for that was where my recollection abruptly stopped.

114 AWAKENING 2

114

MR. WARD

Do you suppose we could dig?
 (long pause)
 And where did it go? I mean, it brought you up here and then sealed up the hole somehow.

Dr. Willet grumbles and reaches for his handkerchief.

DR. WILLET

Wait, ha! Here! These are the matches I found - and the candle. But what's this?

Rustling noise.

MR. WARD

A piece of paper?

DR. WILLET

It's from the pad in the torture room.

MR. WARD

That smell!

DR. WILLET

It's a message!

MR. WARD

It gave you a note? What does it say?

DR. WILLET

It's hard to make out. I think it's Latin. Bring the lamp closer.

MR. WARD

"Corvinus necandus est."

DR. WILLET
 "Curwen must be killed."

MR. WARD
 "Cadaver aqua forti dissolvendum,
 nec aliquid retinendum."

DR. WILLET
 "The body must be dissolved in aqua
 fortis, nor must anything be
 retained."

MR. WARD
 "Tace ut potes."

DR. WILLET
 "Keep silence as best you are
 able." I... I don't know what this
 means.

MR. WARD
 You need rest, Marinus. We both do.
 Come back to my house and we'll go
 from there.

Musical transition.

115 WILLET NARRATION 45

115

DR. WILLET
 We retreated to the Ward home on
 Prospect Street, where Sterling
 served us a fine meal and Mr. Ward
 and I emptied a decanter of brandy,
 and felt for the first time in a
 long time a modicum of peace.

116 A MODICUM OF PEACE

116

A distant telephone rings.

STERLING
 Excuse me sir.

MR. WARD
 Dammit, Sterling, I told you I was
 not to be disturbed.

STERLING
 Indeed, sir, but it's the gentleman
 from the Pinkerton's regarding Dr.
 Allen.

MR. WARD

Give me that.

(on the phone)

Ward here. Yes? Well, that's excellent news. Have them bring it here Monday. 10 a.m.

(to Willet)

Looks like they've found something on Dr. Allen. They're preparing a report and will have it for us tomorrow.

DR. WILLET

Thank god. I can only think this Curwen from the Latin note must be the man we know as Dr. Allen. Allen's been receiving mail as Curwen - perhaps he fancies himself an avatar of the old devil.

MR. WARD

Let's not forget that Charles' note and the... Latin note - both say he should be destroyed in acid.

DR. WILLET

Fortunately, Charles is somewhere safe and the detective is on Allen's trail.

MR. WARD

(pensive)

I've been thinking, Marinus, of the leads we have, Charles is really the best situated to provide us with more information.

DR. WILLET

I'd had that thought myself, but...

MR. WARD

I think we should have a chat with my boy and let him know what you've seen.

Musical transition. Dr. Willet and Mr. Ward walk down the hall of the mental hospital with Dr. Waite.

DR. WILLET

Are you seeing improvements in his condition, Dr. Waite?

DR. WAITE
 Mmmm, no. He's rather irritable,
 and of course he clings to this new
 antiquarian personality.

A lunatic grabs the bars of his cell door as they pass by.

LUNATIC
 (crazy)
 Dr. Waite, I'm not crazy! It's all
 true!

DR. WAITE
 (sotto voce)
 Poor fellow - deeply disturbed. But
 as for Charlie, he's slowly
 improving. Are you sure you
 wouldn't like me to sit in with
 you?

DR. WILLET
 No, no.

MR. WARD
 Certainly not!

DR. WAITE
 Very well. Take care not to agitate
 him.

The heavy metal door of Charles' cell opens and the men
 enter.

DR. WAITE
 (agonizingly patronizing)
 Charlie? You have some guests to
 see you today. Be nice, won't you?

The door clangs shut behind Dr. Waite.

DR. WILLET
 Charles.

MR. WARD
 Hello, Charles.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 (like chardonnay - cold
 and dry)
 Father.

DR. WILLET
 (narrating)
 I told him all I had found, and
 noticed how pale he turned as each
 description made certain the truth
 of the discovery.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

I endeavored to heighten the drama, and watched for a wincing on Charles's part when I approached the matter of the covered pits and the nameless hybrids within. But Charles did not wince.

(to Charles)

And the miserable things were starving. More than a month...

Charles laughs sardonically.

MR. WARD

This amuses you, Charles?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Damn 'em, they do eat, but they don't need to! That's the rare part! A month, you say, without food? Lord, Sir, you be modest! D'ye know, that was the joke on poor old Capt. Whipple with his virtuous bluster! Kill everything off, would he? Why, damn, he was half-deaf with noise from Outside and never saw or heard aught from the wells! He never dreamed they were there at all! Devil take ye, those cursed things have been howling down there ever since Curwen was done for a hundred and fifty-seven years gone!

DR. WILLET

Charles offered no more than that on the subject. I continued in my story. Looking at Charles' face, I felt a kind of terror at the changes which recent months had wrought. Truly, the boy had drawn down nameless horrors from the skies and his mind was shattered.

But Charles remained impassive until I described the room with the formulae, and the greenish dust was mentioned. A quizzical look overspread his face as I read what was written on the pad in the room.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

I'm not surprised it eluded the understanding of one such as you. Had you but known the words to bring up that which I had out in the cup, you had not been here to tell me this. 'Twas Number 118, and I conceive you would have shook had you looked it up in my list in t'other room. 'Twas never raised by me, but I meant to have it up that day you came to invite me hither.

DR. WILLET

I read the formula, straight from the wall. Green-black smoke.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(deeply troubled by this)
It came and you be here alive?

DR. WILLET

Number 118, you say? I never got his name, but he did leave me this. What do you make of it?

Rustling noise

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

What trickery's this? A note?
"Corvinus necandus..."

Charles gasps and swoons.

MR. WARD

Charles! He's fainted!

DR. WILLET

Quickly, move him onto the bed.

Charles mumbles incoherently as they move him onto the bed.

MR. WARD

What's that, Charles?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Send word - Orne and Hutchinson must know...

MR. WARD

Charles, you must know, they're not your friends. They've advised Dr. Allen to kill you.

120 WILLET NARRATION 47

120

DR. WILLET

At this, Charles seemed utterly unmoved. And from this point he refused to engage us in conversation.

121 A VISIT WITH CHARLES 3

121

The heavy metal door opens and Dr. Waite returns.

DR. WAITE

And how are we doing here? Enjoying the visit, Charlie?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Begone.

DR. WAITE

Mmm, well, sounds like he's finished visiting for today.

MR. WARD

(earnest)

Charles, take care of yourself.

DR. WILLET

You should be safe here, but take care should Dr. Allen somehow...

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

(with a cold, evil
chuckle)

He could do no one harm, even if he wished.

DR. WAITE

(laughing)

Nice to hear you laughing today, Charlie. Alright gentlemen, if you'll come with me...

The metal door clangs shut behind them.

122 WILLET NARRATION 48

122

DR. WILLET

The following morning, I went to the Ward home to meet Mr. Ward and the detectives.

123 LINGERING NAUSEA

123

DR. WILLET

(to Mr. Ward)

Ted, I think the detectives should be told that the destruction of Allen - or Curwen or whoever he is - is paramount. Oh, are we not going to meet them in Charles' study?

MR. WARD

I prefer the dining room of late. There's just a nauseousness that lingers up there.

STERLING

Sir, Mr. Robertson of the Pinkertons.

MR. WARD

Mr. Robertson.

ROBERTSON

Mr. Ward.

MR. WARD

You remember Dr. Willet?

ROBERTSON

Indeed, sir.

MR. WARD

What have you got for us?

ROBERTSON

Well sir, regrettably we have been unable to locate the Brava Tony Gomes, nor have we been able to locate Dr. Allen. He's a slippery fish.

Mr. Ward groans with exasperation.

ROBERTSON

I spoke with state police regarding a robbery of a truck full of corpses en route to the house. The officers told me they thought Allen was the ringleader among the three of them. The Inspector there noted, let me see here, "that Allen wore a false beard and had a small scar above his right eye".

DR. WILLET

My god.

MR. WARD

Charles and Allen. Who's ever seen them together?

ROBERTSON

Well, the State Police said they were questioned together.

MR. WARD

Yes, back then. Alright, thank you, Robertson. You can go.

ROBERTSON

Yes sir. We'll call if we turn up anything else on Dr. Allen.

He goes out.

MR. WARD

Charles was afraid, but once Allen left, Charles was unafraid and moved to the bungalow.

DR. WILLET

Curwen - Allen - Charles - what sort of abominable fusion...

MR. WARD

And the writing. Charles and Allen both copying Curwen's writing even when alone and off guard?

DR. WILLET

Charles wearing a fake beard and glasses could pass for Dr. Allen!

MR. WARD

Allen - Charles - Curwen! My god, Marinus, what did the boy call out of the void? What did it do to him?

(MORE)

MR. WARD (cont'd)

(raging)

What's happened here? Allen wants to kill Charles because he's too squeamish and then Charles wants Allen to be dissolved in acid?

DR. WILLET

The day I got his letter - he changed. Charles was nervous all morning. Then he slips out unseen and later marches back in past Robertson and Sterling?

MR. WARD

What did he find?

DR. WILLET

Or what found him? What if the person that returned to the house wasn't Charles, it just looked like him.

MR. WARD

(aghast at the
implication)

Charles never went out at all.

DR. WILLET

You said your staff heard noises, right?

MR. WARD

Sterling!

Hurrying in.

STERLING

Sir?

MR. WARD

The day the detectives were here to watch Charles, you heard noises upstairs?

STERLING

A frightful commotion, yes.

DR. WILLET

Tell me, exactly.

STERLING

A cry, choking, coughing, clattering, thumping.

(MORE)

STERLING (cont'd)
Mr. Robertson and I went up to see
what was amiss.

MR. WARD
And after?

STERLING
That was when Mr. Charles stalked
out, glaring at me without a word.

Dr. Willet mutters to himself, thinking very slightly aloud.

MR. WARD
Thank you, Sterling, that'll be
all.

Sterling goes.

MR. WARD
Marinus...?

DR. WILLET
(steeling himself)
Ted, the investigation is going to
take a turn now and it's best you
leave the coming events to me.
There will be certain elements
which a friend can better bear than
a family member.

Willet gets up and Mr. Ward follows him as he ascends the
staircase.

MR. WARD
Where are you going?

DR. WILLET
I need some time alone in Charles'
study.

MR. WARD
I can hardly bear to go in there
now.

DR. WILLET
Good. Don't. If I need anything,
I'll call for you.

Willet shuts the door and locks it. We hear fumbling sounds
of moving and rummaging as the moments passed; and finally a
wrench and a creak, as if a tight cupboard door were being
opened. Then a muffled cry, a kind of snorting choke, and a
hasty slamming of whatever had been opened. Almost at once
the key rattles and the door opens.

DR. WILLET

Sterling! I need several pine logs
for the fireplace. Big ones!

124 WILLET NARRATION 49

124

DR. WILLET

While Sterling put wood in the grate, I recovered some items from the old attic laboratory. I entered the study and again locked the door behind me. Outside the room, my friend watched the smoke billow from the chimney and heard noises of my carrying on with some terrible work within. The smoke turned from gray to black and even the servants clustered together to watch the black smoke swoop down. And in due time, the smoke lightened again, and only the sounds of sweeping and other minor tasks came from within. At last, I opened the door.

125 LINGERING NAUSEA 2

125

MR. WARD

Marinus, are you alright?

DR. WILLET

Come in, Ted. Here, let me open the window...

Ward enters.

MR. WARD

It's... This room hasn't felt so clean in years.

DR. WILLET

I dare say something's changed.

MR. WARD

Marinus, what have you...

DR. WILLET

I can answer no questions, but I will say that there are different kinds of magic. I have made a great purgation, and those in this house will sleep the better for it.

126 WILLET NARRATION 50

126

DR. WILLET

It was an ordeal that racked my nerves almost as severely as my visit to the Pawtuxet crypt. Yet that night I conducted one more essential errand, before settling down for a protracted rest.

127 QUITE REFRESHED

127

Music.

STERLING

Good morning, Mr. Ward. Sleep well?

MR. WARD

Yes. By god, yes. Best night I've had in a long time.

STERLING

Me too, sir. Quite refreshing. Coffee?

MR. WARD

Please. And the paper.

STERLING

Yes...
(seeing the headline)
Oh dear.

MR. WARD

Bad news?

STERLING

It seems there's been another vandalization at the cemetery. Says the night watchman stumbled upon someone... hm, oh, only superficial digging this time. Officers at the Second Station are taking especial pains to capture the gang of miscreants responsible for these repeated outrages.

MR. WARD

Hmmm. Well, no damage done, I suppose.

STERLING

Oh, pardon me sir, there's also a letter from Dr. Willet come in this morning's post.

MR. WARD

Hand it here. Thank you, Sterling.

128

WILLET'S LETTER

128

DR. WILLET

Dear Theodore:-

I feel that I must say a word to you before doing what I am going to do tomorrow. It will conclude the terrible business we have been going through, but I'm afraid it won't set your mind at rest unless I expressly assure you how very conclusive it is.

You have known me ever since you were a small boy, so I think you will not distrust me when I hint that some matters are best left undecided and unexplored. It is better that you attempt no further speculation as to Charles' case, and imperative that you tell his mother nothing more about these matters. When I call on you tomorrow Charles will have left the asylum. That is all which need remain in anyone's mind. He was mad, and he got better, and he escaped. I'd advise you to join your wife in Atlantic City and take a rest yourself. God knows you need one after this shock, as I do myself. I sorely need some quiet time to myself.

There will be nothing more to worry about, for Charles will be very, very safe. He is now - safer than you dream. You need hold no fears about Allen, and who or what he is. He forms as much a part of the past as Joseph Curwen's picture, and when I ring your doorbell you may feel certain that there is no such person.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)

And the author of that Latin note will never trouble you or yours.

But you must steel yourself to melancholy, and prepare your wife to do the same. I must tell you frankly that Charles's escape will not mean his restoration to you. He has been afflicted with a peculiar disease, as you must realize from the subtle physical as well as mental changes in him, and you must not hope to see him again. Have only this consolation - that he was never a fiend or even truly a madman, but only an eager, studious, and curious boy whose love of mystery and of the past was his undoing. He stumbled on things no mortal ought ever to know, and reached back through the years as no one ever should reach; and something came out of those years to engulf him.

And now comes the matter in which I must ask you to trust me most of all. For there will be, indeed, no uncertainty about Charles's fate. In about a year, say, you can if you wish devise a suitable account of the end; for the boy will be no more. You can put up a stone in your lot at the North Burial Ground exactly ten feet west of your father's and facing the same way, and that will mark the true resting-place of your son. The ashes in that grave will be those of your own unaltered bone and sinew - of the real Charles Dexter Ward whose mind you watched from infancy - the real Charles with the olive-mark on his hip. The Charles who never did actual evil, and who will have paid with his life for his "squeamishness".

That is all. Charles will have escaped, and a year from now you can put up his stone. Do not question me tomorrow.

(MORE)

DR. WILLET (cont'd)
 And believe that the honour of your
 ancient family remains untainted
 now, as it has been at all times in
 the past.

With profoundest sympathy, I am
 ever Sincerely your friend,
 Marinus B. Willett.

Music transition.

129 WILLET NARRATION 51 129

DR. WILLET
 So on the morning of Friday, April
 13, 1928, I visited Charles Dexter
 Ward at Dr. Waite's private
 hospital on Conanicut Island.

130 THE FINAL VISIT 130

The door to his cell clangs shut.

DR. WILLET
 Charles, what's the matter? You
 look unwell today.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 I cannot abide your drivel, Willet.
 Leave me in peace.

DR. WILLET
 Troubled that you're finally being
 found out?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Oho, a newfound bravado? Have ye
 uncovered still more terrible
 secrets, eh?

DR. WILLET
 Indeed I have, and I must warn you
 fairly that a reckoning is due.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
 Digging again, and coming upon more
 poor starving pets?

DR. WILLET
 No, but we did find Dr. Allen's
 false beard and spectacles at the
 bungalow.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Sharp as a tack, you are.

DR. WILLET
They became you very well, no?

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
Suppose a man does find it now and
then useful to be twofold?

DR. WILLET
No, again you are wrong. It is no
business of mine if any man seeks
duality; provided he has any right
to exist at all, and provided he
does not destroy what called him
out of space.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
(hostile)
Enough of your twaddle. What d'ye
want of me?

Pause.

DR. WILLET
I have found something in a
cupboard behind an ancient
overmantel where a picture once
was, and I have burned it and
buried the ashes where the grave of
Charles Dexter Ward ought to be.

Charles springs to his feet.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
With me alive and well, who could
ye tell such things and hope to be
believed? These are powers beyond
your ken and there's naught ye can
do to stop them.

DR. WILLET
I have told no one. This is no
common case - it is a madness out
of time and a horror from beyond
the spheres which no police or
lawyers or courts or alienists
could ever fathom or grapple with.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD
(bemused)
There ye speak true, sir.

DR. WILLET

Thank God some chance has left
inside me enough imagination, that
I might not go astray in thinking
out this thing. You cannot deceive
me, Joseph Curwen.

I know how you wove the spell that
brooded outside the years and
fastened on your double and
descendant; I know how you drew him
into the past and got him to raise
you up from your grave; I know how
he kept you hidden in his
laboratory while you studied the
modern world, and how you later
showed yourself in beard and
glasses that no one might wonder at
your likeness to him; I know what
you resolved to do when he balked
at your monstrous rifling of the
world's tombs, and at what you
planned afterward, and I know how
you did it.

Without your disguise, everyone
thought it was he who went in, and
they thought it was he who came out
after you'd killed him and hidden
his body. But your disguise was
imperfect, Joseph Curwen. His
speech, voice, handwriting? It
didn't work. You know better than I
who or what wrote that message to
me in Latin. There are abominations
and blasphemies which must be
stamped out, and I believe that the
writer of those words will attend
to Orne and Hutchinson.

One of them told you once, "do not
call up any that you can not put
down". You were undone once before,
perhaps in that very way, and it
may be that your own blasphemies
will undo you all again. Man can't
tamper with Nature beyond certain
limits, and every horror you have
woven will rise up to wipe you out.

CHARLES DEXTER WARD

Enough!

(magically invoking)

(MORE)

CHARLES DEXTER WARD (cont'd)
 PER ADONAI ELOIM, ADONAI JEHOVA,
 ADONAI SABAOOTH, METRATON ...'

DR. WILLET
 (clearly and deliberately)
 OGTHROD AI'F
 GEB'L-EE'H
 YOG-SOTHOTH
 'NGAH'NG AI'Y
 ZHRO!

A cold wind blows up as Willet begins to speak.

131 WILLET NARRATION 52

131

DR. WILLET
 At my first words, Curwen stopped short. Unable to speak, the monster made wild motions with his arms until they too were arrested. When I uttered the awful name of Yog-Sothoth, the hideous change began. It was not merely a dissolution, but rather a transformation or recapitulation. I shut my eyes, lest I faint before completing the incantation.

Indeed, I did not faint, and that man of unholy centuries and forbidden secrets never troubled the world again. The madness out of time had subsided, and the case of Charles Dexter Ward was closed. Opening my eyes before staggering out of that room, I saw my prediction had been correct. There had been no need for acids. For like his accursed picture a year before, Joseph Curwen now lay scattered on the floor as a thin coating of fine bluish-grey dust.

132 POSTSCRIPT

132

DR. WILLET
 And that, sir, is all I can tell you of the case of Charles Dexter Ward.

ALIENIST
 That's... an extraordinary story.

Dr. Waite walks into the room.

DR. WILLET

Dr. Waite, I didn't expect you here.

DR. WAITE

(warm and patronizing)

I was listening from the next room, Marinus.

DR. WILLET

Oh. I see.

DR. WAITE

Come with me, would you. Right this way? Just to be clear, you still maintain you did not assist Charles Ward in his escape?

Their footsteps echo down a sterile corridor.

DR. WILLET

Of course not. I just told what happened. The whole story.

DR. WAITE

Indeed. Extraordinary. Right in here please. May I have your pen, Marinus?

DR. WILLET

(confused)

Of course.

DR. WAITE

The best thing for you now is rest, lots and lots of rest.

A huge metal cell door CLANGS shut.

DR. WILLET

You'll have plenty of time to forget all about these strange ideas.

Dr. Waite walks away.

DR. WAITE

No, no, it's true. I swear, it's all true.

The LUNATIC in the next cell cackles in loud glee.

LUNATIC
It's true. It's all true!

133 CONCLUSION

133

Dark Adventure closing THEME.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL
You've been listening to part two of H.P. Lovecraft's "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward", brought to you by our sponsor, Forhan's Toothpaste, use it - before pyorrhea strikes! Until next week, this is Erskine Blackwell reminding you to never go anywhere alone; if it looks bad, don't look; and save the last bullet for yourself.

ANNOUNCER
"The Case of Charles Dexter Ward" was adapted for radio and produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman. Original music by Troy Sterling Nies. The Dark Adventure Ensemble featured: Leslie Baldwin, Aidan Branney, Sean Branney, Mark Colson, Dan Conroy, Mike Dalager, Matt Foyer, Andrew Graves, Andrew Leman, Barry Lynch, Erin Noble, David Pavao, Kevin Stidham and Time Winters. Tune in next week for "The Black Pharaoh's Tomb". Dark Adventure Radio Theatre is a production of the HPLHS Broadcasting Group, a subsidiary of HPLHS, Inc., copyright 1931...plus eighty-one.

Radio STATIC and fade out.

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