

DARK ADVENTURE RADIO THEATRE:
THE CALL OF CTHULHU

Written by

Sean Branney and Andrew Leman

Based on

"The Call of Cthulhu" by H. P. Lovecraft

Read-along Script
June 28, 2012

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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 (CONT'D)

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

MUSIC DIMINISHES. The sound of the ocean: surging WAVES and weather, the CRY of a gull. There is occasional STATIC, as though the radio is imperfectly tuned.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

A random murder in a public park. An artist wracked by fantastical and haunting dreams. A police inspector confronting the depraved rites of a voodoo cult. Intrepid sailors pitted against a diabolical monstrosity risen from the bottom of the sea. And one man, doomed to understand that such things foretell madness and the end of mankind.

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

ERSKINE BLACKWELL (CONT'D)

Mmmm-mmm, nothing like a marvelous meal prepared by an expert chef. But did you know, those delicious creamy foods can lead to gum irritation, Vincent's disease and even pyorrhea? But if you brush morning and night with Forhan's Toothpaste, you need not worry about these serious medical conditions. Forhan's is the only dentifrice made with Zithranite - a powerful agent to stimulate and protect your gums.

(MORE)

ERSKINE BLACKWELL (CONT'D)

So go ahead, eat like a king, but
make sure you brush with Forhan's!

Dark Adventure LEAD-IN MUSIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Algernon
Blackwood, the great British author
of weird fiction, once wrote: "Of
such great powers or beings there
may be conceivably a survival... a
survival of a hugely remote period
when consciousness was manifested,
perhaps, in shapes and forms long
since withdrawn before the tide of
advancing humanity... forms of
which poetry and legend alone have
caught a flying memory and called
them gods, monsters, mythical
beings of all sorts and kinds..."

And now Dark Adventure Radio
Theatre presents: H.P. Lovecraft's
"The Call of Cthulhu".

TRANSITION MUSIC. SOME STATIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL (CONT'D)

Prologue - Found Among the Papers
of the Late Francis Wayland
Thurston.

2

CRIME SCENE

2

The SIREN of a police car cuts through the MURMURS of a crowd
gathering at a crime scene. The siren cuts out and the car
doors OPEN. SGT. NICK HALE, a burly Boston police sergeant,
speaks to another cop.

HALE

C'mon, get these people back.
They'll disturb my crime scene.
Hey, get back, you! Make way.
Evening, Detective Mallory.

FOOTSTEPS leave the car and approach the sergeant. A MATCH
STRIKES and lights a Fleur-de-Lys cigarette. DETECTIVE
MALLORY takes a long drag off it. His quick cool banter
belies his poet's heart.

MALLORY

Another Monday night in Boston, eh,
Sgt. Hale? What do we got?

HALE

Some uptown blueblood from the looks of him. Probably another robbery. Single quick stab between the ribs. What do you think, Mallory? Maybe a real sharp knife?

MALLORY

Hell of a way to lose your wallet. Anybody see anything?

HALE

We got a neighbor.
(to bystander)
You! The detective wants a word with you.

A HOUSEWIFE with a grating voice steps forward.

HOUSEWIFE

I didn't see nothin'!

HALE

Look here, you told me you saw him here in the park from your window.

HOUSEWIFE

Well, yeah, I saw that.

MALLORY

What else did you see?

HOUSEWIFE

Well I didn't, I mean...

MALLORY

"If we do not rise and seize the moral high ground, soon there will be no ground left at all."

HOUSEWIFE

Who said that?

MALLORY

I did. Now what'd you see?

HOUSEWIFE

He, the uh... was just standing there by himself. And then this man walks up to him.

HALE

What's he look like?

HOUSEWIFE

Big - about his size. Dressed kind of like a sailor. A negro. One of those dark peacoats.

HALE

And this sailor, what's he do?

HOUSEWIFE

He just walked up to him, like he was going to ask him for a smoke or something.

MALLORY

Then what?

HOUSEWIFE

I told you, I didn't see nothing. I was doing the dishes. I look down, and when I look back up the negro was gone.

MALLORY

That's it?

HOUSEWIFE

Yes. I saw the expression on, uh, the dead guy's face. He looked so... scared.

HALE

Being stabbed'll do that to you.

HOUSEWIFE

No, it wasn't like that. His face... I never saw someone so scared.

MALLORY

Alright. The sergeant will take your information.

(to the corpse)

OK, buddy, let's see if you've got anything we can use to ID you.

The RUSTLE of clothing. He easily discovers a billfold in the breast pocket of the victim.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Well, I'll be... guess it wasn't a robbery after all.

(to Hale)

(MORE)

MALLORY (CONT'D)

Nick! He's still got his billfold -
with cash in it.

HALE

Really? There goes your robbery
motive. Who is he?

MALLORY

Francis Wayland Thurston.
(to Thurston)
So, Francis Wayland Thurston,
what's your story?

MUSIC transition.

3 THURSTON'S APARTMENT

3

Three sets of FOOTSTEPS echo across the foyer and the
ELEVATOR GRATE opens. Mr. JABALEY, the superintendent, ushers
them in.

JABALEY

Right this way officers, into the
elevator...

MALLORY

So, Mr. Jabaley, did you know Mr.
Thurston long?

JABALEY

Oh, certainly. Let's see, he moved
into my building just before the
war... it'd be around 1916.

The elevator lurches into MOTION.

HALE

What kind of fellow was he?

JABALEY

(flailing)
He was... well, in the beginning,
he was really a model tenant.
That's not to say he was a problem
later. It's just that... he went
through a hard time.

MALLORY

Yeah, how so?

JABALEY

There was a death in the family.

The elevator comes to a stop and Jabaley OPENS the door.

JABALEY (CONT'D)

Right this way. It's this door. Six
D.

Jabaley fumbles for KEYS.

HALE

Who died?

JABALEY

Some elderly relative. He took it
hard. He traveled for quite some
time. He was never the same after
that.

MALLORY

What was wrong with him?

JABALEY

I don't know. He seemed nervous.
Skittish. Like he didn't get much
sleep.

Jabaley OPENS THE DOOR to Thurston's apartment.

JABALEY (CONT'D)

Well, here you are. This is his
apartment. Should I...

MALLORY

We'll close up when we're done.

JABALEY

It's very sad. He was a nice man.

HALE

They always are.

Jabaley goes, SHUTTING THE DOOR behind him.

MALLORY

What do you make of it, Nick?

He looks around. Hale starts poking about too.

HALE

Rich. Doesn't work. No woman. Few
friends. Too many books.

Hale chuckles.

MALLORY

Paranoid.

HALE

What makes you say that?

MALLORY

Expensive lock on the door.
Installed locks on the windows too.
What were you afraid of, Mr.
Thurston?

He TAPS on a wall.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

Hale, what do you make of this?

He KNOCKS on the wood in a couple of places. On the third
KNOCK, the sound changes.

HALE

Hmm. Custom cabinet work.
Expensive. And hollow.

MALLORY

Let's see, how do you open...

A CLICKING noise.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

Bingo! It's a secret cupboard. Ah,
and a metal lock box in it.

He pulls it out. Hale EXAMINES the lock.

HALE

Ah beans! Some kind of weird old
lock.

MALLORY

We'll take it down to the station,
see if any of the keys on his ring
fit it. Looks like our Mr. Thurston
had a secret he wanted to protect.

MUSIC transition to police station.

Hale SETS THE METAL BOX DOWN on a desk at the Police Station.
Mallory OPENS AN ENVELOPE of Thurston's personal possessions.

MALLORY

Can I call it or what? Thurston's
key ring. Catch.

He tosses the KEY RING to Hale.

HALE

What, you think this weird looking
key is going to fit in the...

The weird lock CLICKS open. Hale removes the lock and the box
lid CREAKS open.

HALE (CONT'D)

Looks like it's just a bunch of old
papers and notes. Here's a thing
wrapped in cloth - looks like a
piece of ceramic...

MALLORY

Hand me that journal. Hmm, looks
like Thurston wrote this.

(from the book)

"The most merciful thing in the
world, I think, is the inability of
the human mind to correlate all its
contents. We live on a placid
island of ignorance in the midst of
black seas of infinity, and it was
not meant that we should voyage
far. The sciences, each straining
in its own direction, have hitherto
harmed us little; but some day the
piecing together of dissociated
knowledge will open up such
terrifying vistas of reality, and
of our frightful position therein,
that we shall either go mad from
the revelation or flee from the
light into the peace and safety of
a new dark age."

HALE

Yikes. What was he, an English
professor?

MALLORY

There's more... "To me, there came
a single glimpse of forbidden eons
which chills me when I think of it
and maddens me when I dream of it.

(MORE)

MALLORY (CONT'D)

That glimpse, like all dread glimpses of truth, flashed out from an accidental piecing together of separated things."

HALE

Sounds like something they'd print in a pulp magazine.

MALLORY

Hmm, he only started writing this about a month ago.

HALE

Whatever. He's a crackpot. Forget it.

MALLORY

No, I want to know who he was afraid of...

MUSIC transition.

5 HOST INSERT

5

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Part One - The Horror In Clay

6 THURSTON 1

6

A fountain pen SCRATCHES across the page with the voice of FRANCIS WAYLAND THURSTON. He's an intellectual dilettante in his mid 40s. His nerves are badly rattled. When we hear the words of Thurston's journal, the background NOISE of the police station fades away.

THURSTON

I, Francis Wayland Thurston, attest that my knowledge of the thing began in the winter of 1926-27 with the death of my great-uncle, George Gammell Angell, Professor Emeritus of Semitic Languages in Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. He was an authority on ancient inscriptions, and had frequently been resorted to by the heads of prominent museums. He was ninety-two when he passed.

7 POLICE STATION 2 7

HALE

Right, his building super said there'd been a death.

8 THURSTON 2 8

THURSTON

He had been stricken whilst returning from the Newport boat; falling suddenly; as witnesses said, after having been jostled by a nautical-looking negro who had come from one of the queer dark courts on the precipitous hillside. After some debate, his physicians concluded that some obscure lesion of the heart, induced by the brisk ascent of so steep a hill by so elderly a man, was responsible for the end. At the time I saw no reason to doubt their findings, but now...

9 POLICE STATION 3 9

MALLORY

Sounds like we've got our first clue. What would be the odds of two negro sailors?

HALE

Yeah. Let's get the mugbooks.

MALLORY

Hold on. Would you let me read?

10 THURSTON 3 10

THURSTON

He died a childless widower and I was named his heir and executor. To settle his affairs, I moved his files and boxes to my quarters in Boston. Among them all, there was one box which I found exceedingly puzzling.

(MORE)

THURSTON (CONT'D)

It was locked and I did not find the key till it occurred to me to examine the personal ring which the professor carried in his pocket.

11 POLICE STATION 4

11

MALLORY

Isn't this striking you as kind of creepy?

12 THURSTON 4

12

THURSTON

There was a queer clay bas-relief and a collection of disjointed jottings, ramblings, and newspaper cuttings. This clay sculpture was clearly not one of the ancient pieces he so often studied.

13 POLICE STATION 5

13

MALLORY

That must be this thing. It's got a crazy design on one side of it.

He sets the clay bas-relief onto the desk with a THUNK.

14 THURSTON 5

14

THURSTON

The bas-relief was a rough rectangle less than an inch thick and about five by six inches in area. Its designs, however, were far from modern in atmosphere and suggestion. The bulk of these designs seemed to be some sort of writing, but I'd never seen anything quite like it.

Above these apparent hieroglyphics was an impressionistic figure. It seemed to be a sort of monster, or symbol representing a monster, of a form which only a diseased fancy could conceive.

(MORE)

THURSTON (CONT'D)

If I say that my somewhat extravagant imagination yielded simultaneous pictures of an octopus, a dragon, and a human caricature, I shall not be unfaithful to the spirit of the thing. A pulpy, tentacled head surmounted a grotesque and scaly body with rudimentary wings; but it was the general outline of the whole which made it most shockingly frightful. Behind the figure was a vague suggestion of a Cyclopean architectural background.

15 POLICE STATION 6

15

HALE

Cyclopean?

MALLORY

Huge stone blocks assembled without mortar.

HALE

This is definitely your kind of guy.

MALLORY

Clearly he's describing the figure on this clay thing.

HALE

I don't know. It's a lot of fancy words for this piece of junk.

MALLORY

Here, there's more.

16 THURSTON 6

16

THURSTON

Aside from a stack of press cuttings, there were notes in Professor Angell's hand. The main document was a manuscript divided into two sections, the first of which was headed "1925 - Dreams and Dream Work", and the second, "Narrative of Inspector John R. Legrasse".

(MORE)

THURSTON (CONT'D)

The other manuscript papers were brief notes, some of them accounts of the queer dreams of different persons, some of them citations from theosophical books and magazines, and the rest comments on long-surviving secret societies and hidden cults. The cuttings largely alluded to outré mental illness and outbreaks of group folly or mania in the spring of 1925.

17 POLICE STATION 7

17

HALE

Mental illness? Birds of a feather...

MALLORY

Here's the Dreams and Dream Work folder. Something tells me this isn't going to be a normal case.

HALE

You can say that again.

18 THURSTON 7

18

THURSTON

It really began with a visit Professor Angell received from a young man on March 1st, 1925.

19 THE ARTIST AND THE ARCHEOLOGIST

19

MUSICAL transition. KNOCKING. The door OPENS. PROFESSOR ANGELL is a genial man of considerable years. WILCOX is an excitable artist type.

PROF. ANGELL

Yes? May I help you?

HENRY WILCOX

I certainly hope so. Henry Anthony Wilcox, sir. My card...

The youth presents him a calling card.

PROF. ANGELL

Ah yes, you're Nathaniel Wilcox's son, no? Let's see, you'd be the youngest?

HENRY WILCOX

Yes, sir.

PROF. ANGELL

Well come in, come in out of the rain. Let me take your coat, Mr. Wilcox.

HENRY WILCOX

Henry, please.

They step inside and the DOOR SHUTS.

HENRY WILCOX (CONT'D)

Thank you for seeing me, sir. I would have called to make an appointment but this is something that simply could not wait.

PROF. ANGELL

Oh dear, well then, sit, sit down. Am I remembering right, you're an artist?

HENRY WILCOX

I am, sir, yes, a sculptor. And I have a rather urgent need of your expertise in things ancient and archeological.

PROF. ANGELL

I'm happy to...

HENRY WILCOX

(dramatically)

This! This piece, here - it has a kind of hieroglyphic script. I beseech you: tell me what ancient and forgotten tongue it is. Do you understand it? What does it say?

Wilcox hands the bas-relief to Prof. Angell.

PROF. ANGELL

(with good humor)

My dear young man, this tablet isn't ancient, clearly it's quite new.

HENRY WILCOX

It is new, indeed, for I made it last night in a dream of strange cities; and dreams are older than brooding Tyre, or the contemplative Sphinx, or garden-girdled Babylon. You felt the earthquake, no? Night before last?

PROF. ANGELL

Oh my yes, haven't had an earthquake like that in New England for a long time. I read they felt it as far away as Wisconsin....

HENRY WILCOX

It affected me quite strongly - not the shaking, so much, but after it, I dreamt of great otherworldly cities of Titan blocks and sky-flung monoliths, all dripping with green ooze and sinister with latent horror. Hieroglyphics covered the walls and pillars, and from some undetermined point below came a... a *sound*, unlike any I ever heard...

PROF. ANGELL

(his interest waning)
I see...

HENRY WILCOX

I didn't hear it, really, so much as feel it...

PROF. ANGELL

Yes, perhaps you--

HENRY WILCOX

It was a voice, you understand, but not a voice. Calling out to me.

Prof. Angell adds two lumps of sugar to his tea and STIRS.

PROF. ANGELL

Mr. Wilcox--

HENRY WILCOX

It was a chaotic sensation which I suppose only fancy could transmute into syllables. It said...

PROF. ANGELL

Yes?

HENRY WILCOX

It said...

PROF. ANGELL

Go on.

HENRY WILCOX

"Cthulhu fhtagn."

As Henry begins to sound out the strange words, Prof. Angell, lurches, the CLATTERING of his teacup obscuring the words.

HENRY WILCOX (CONT'D)

Are you alright, sir?

PROF. ANGELL

(shaken)

What did you say?

HENRY WILCOX

Of course, there's really no way to say it. It was really more like a feeling than like words.

PROF. ANGELL

And this, this piece you sculpted, this is what you saw? What made the sound? In the dream?

HENRY WILCOX

There was more, so much more, but yes, that's where it came from.

PROF. ANGELL

And those words...

(he resists speaking them aloud)

People - were there people? Some kind of cult?

HENRY WILCOX

A what?

PROF. ANGELL

Worshippers, a secret society, voodoo?

HENRY WILCOX

No, no people. Just the buildings, and the writing, and that thing...

PROF. ANGELL

It's all right, Henry. You can tell me if you're a member of a... shall we say, unorthodox religious group.

HENRY WILCOX

No. I am an artist!

PROF. ANGELL

Your secrets are safe here.

HENRY WILCOX

What are you talking about? I tell you I dreamed it. And then I made this.

PROF. ANGELL

Henry...

HENRY WILCOX

It means something, doesn't it?

PROF. ANGELL

The writing.
(kicking himself)
I should have recognized it...

HENRY WILCOX

You know what it is! What does it mean? It was all so real. I've never had a dream like it.

PROF. ANGELL

And you're certain - absolutely certain - you know nothing about a cult?

HENRY WILCOX

Nothing.

PROF. ANGELL

And this thing you sculpted, the writing - you'd seen none of it prior to your dream?

HENRY WILCOX

No.

PROF. ANGELL

Henry, this is most important: would you be willing to record your dreams? Everything you can remember.

(MORE)

PROF. ANGELL (CONT'D)

Write them down, draw pictures,
anything, and bring them to me?

HENRY WILCOX

Yes. I can do that. But why? What
does this mean?

PROF. ANGELL

I can't be certain just yet.
Tomorrow. Will you come back
tomorrow and tell me what you've
dreamed?

HENRY WILCOX

Yes, I suppose...

MUSIC transition.

20 THURSTON 8

20

THURSTON

Over the course of the following
month, my uncle recorded Wilcox's
daily visits. Every night he was
racked with fantastical dreams of
the nightmare city. It was always
some terrible megalithic vista of
dark and dripping stone, with a
subterrene voice or intelligence
shouting monotonously in
enigmatical sense-impacts
uninscribable save as gibberish.
The two sounds most frequently
repeated were those rendered by the
letters "C T H U L H U" and "R L Y
E H."

21 POLICE STATION 8

21

HALE

Get a load of that. I'll say it's
gibberish.

MALLORY

Yeah. I don't know how you're
supposed to say it. Cthu--

HALE

(cutting him off)
Don't bother trying.

22 THURSTON 9 22

THURSTON

On March 23rd, Wilcox failed to appear as expected, so my uncle sought him out at his studio.

23 FLEURS-DE-LYS 23

KNOCKING followed by the DOOR being opened by SUSAN, the manager of the Fleur-de-Lys building.

SUSAN

May I help you?

PROF. ANGELL

I'm looking for Henry Wilcox. We had an appointment and he didn't...

SUSAN

Oh, Henry's gone to the hospital. He fell ill last night.

PROF. ANGELL

Hospital?

SUSAN

Some sort of fever. He cried out in the night, and alarmed several other artists in the building. I called his father, and he and Dr. Tobey came by and took him to the hospital this morning.

THURSTON

My uncle telephoned Dr. Tobey.

24 CALL THE DOCTOR 24

DR. TOBEY

(over the telephone)

Henry's been plagued with hallucinations and nightmares. The poor lad's febrile mind is dwelling on strange things.

PROF. ANGELL

What - what things?

DR. TOBEY

Odd, morbid things. Lately, he's taken to speaking of a gigantic thing "miles high" which walks or lumbers about through this dead city. Most peculiar.

PROF. ANGELL

(urgently)

Does it have a name?

DR. TOBEY

I haven't noticed him naming it, but after he speaks of this giant creature, he invariably falls into a state of lethargy. I'm sorry, Professor Angell, but what's your interest in all this?

PROF. ANGELL

Henry sought me out to consult with him about some... a piece he sculpted. Would it be all right if I paid him a visit?

DR. TOBEY

Hmmm. I suppose the sight of a friendly face wouldn't do him any harm. But he shouldn't be indulged in these gruesome reveries. His temperament is excitable enough as it is.

PROF. ANGELL

Of course. I understand.

25 THURSTON 10

25

Transition MUSIC.

THURSTON

My uncle visited Wilcox on several occasions, but the youth drifted in and out of potent delirium. Then on April 2nd, at about 3 P.M., that all changed.

26 RISE AND SHINE

26

Henry tosses rather violently in the sheets of his hospital bed, MOANING incomprehensible words.

PROF. ANGELL
Henry, easy there, lad...

Suddenly he stops, still and silent.

PROF. ANGELL (CONT'D)
Henry?

HENRY WILCOX
(perfectly cogent)
Yes?

PROF. ANGELL
Can you hear me?

HENRY WILCOX
Of course. Where am I?

PROF. ANGELL
You're in Providence General
Hospital.

HENRY WILCOX
Am I sick? I don't feel sick.

PROF. ANGELL
(delicately)
You fell ill, they thought it was a
fever. You had dreams... nightmares
... do you remember any of that?

HENRY WILCOX
Dreams? No. How long have I been
here?

PROF. ANGELL
Well, March 22nd to today... that's
eleven days.

HENRY WILCOX
Why are you here?

PROF. ANGELL
Henry, you and I had been
discussing your dreams. Dreams of a
sunken city?

HENRY WILCOX
Did we? I don't recall.

PROF. ANGELL
You mean to tell me you don't
recall any of your dreams -
anything we discussed?

HENRY WILCOX
(sincere)
Sorry, but no.

27 THURSTON 11

27

THURSTON
My uncle arranged to see Wilcox a few more times, but from that point on the young artist was of no further assistance to Professor Angell. All traces of strange dreaming vanished with his recovery. After a week of pointless interviews, my uncle no longer saw him.

28 POLICE STATION 9

28

HALE
Well this is going nowhere. Jack, why are we wasting time on this pointless story of yours?

MALLORY
It's not my story, it's the victim's. And the story's not done yet.

29 THURSTON 12

29

THURSTON
My uncle's files contained countless notes describing the dreams of other people as well. He had instituted a far-flung body of inquiries amongst a great many friends, asking for nightly reports of their dreams. Many New Englanders gave an almost completely negative result, though scattered cases of uneasy but formless nocturnal impressions appear occasionally between March 23rd and April 2nd - the period of young Wilcox's delirium.

(MORE)

THURSTON (CONT'D)

Scientific men were little more affected, though four cases of vague description suggest fugitive glimpses of strange landscapes, and in one case there is mentioned a dread of something abnormal.

It was from the artists and poets that the pertinent answers came, and I suspect panic would have broken loose had they been able to compare notes. From February 28th to April 2nd a large proportion of them had dreamed very bizarre things, the intensity of the dreams being immeasurably the stronger during the period of the sculptor's delirium. Over a fourth of those who replied reported scenes and half-sounds not unlike those which Wilcox had described; and some of the dreamers confessed acute fear of some gigantic nameless *thing* visible toward the last.

30

POLICE STATION 10

30

Hale leafs through some PAPERS.

HALE

He's not kidding. The old man typed it all up and indexed it. He's as nutty as Thurston. They're both eggheads....

MALLORY

And look here. There's hundreds of newspaper clippings. A suicide in London, something in Spanish from Argentina, a theosophist cult in California, voodoo orgies in Haiti, mental asylum revolt in Ohio, native unrest in India... All February to early April. You've got to admit it's weird.

HALE

Sure it's weird, but it's a coincidence.

(pause as he sets them
aside)

Right? Right, Jack?

MALLORY

I don't know. Mr. Thurston says here, "Now I can scarcely envisage the callous rationalism with which I set them aside..."

31 HOST INSERT 2 31

MUSIC transition.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

Part Two - The Tale of Inspector Legrasse.

32 POLICE STATION 11 32

HALE

C'mon, Jack. An artist has some scary dreams and some cult in Haiti has a voodoo ritual at the same time? Probably happens every day. What's the big deal?

MALLORY

Sounds like Thurston's thinking the same thing.

33 THURSTON 13 33

THURSTON

The implications of my uncle's research were not immediately clear to me. Why had he taken such keen interest in the dreams of Wilcox, and the others? Once before, it appears, Professor Angell had seen the hellish outlines of the nameless monstrosity, puzzled over the unknown hieroglyphics, and heard the ominous, unpronounceable name. This previous experience had taken place in 1908, seventeen years earlier, when the American Archaeological Society held its annual meeting in St. Louis.

34 ARCHEOLOGY CONVENTION 34

MUSICAL transition. A RECEPTION is underway and archeologists make small talk.

Professor Angell is there and his voice is twenty years younger than when last we heard it. A group of archeologists enjoy cocktails and professional humor.

PROF. WEBB

...so I took it back from the Associate Curator and said, "With a beard like that, it MUST be Neo-Akkadian!"

The professors roar with delight.

PROF. HENNING

I'm going to the bar. Who needs another?

PROF. ANGELL

I wouldn't say no.

PROF. QUINTANA

Count me in!

PROF. BELL

Say, George, who's that fellow over there by the door?

PROF. ANGELL

I don't recognize him. I'll find out.

The tinkle of a PIANO playing in another room. Professor Angell approaches an intense stranger.

PROF. ANGELL (CONT'D)

(warm)

You look lost. May I be of some assistance? Professor George Gammell Angell, Professor of Semitic Languages, Brown University.

LEGRASSE answers with a deep, educated, New Orleans drawl:

LEGRASSE

Much obliged, Professor. John Raymond Legrasse, Inspector of Police, New Orleans.

PROF. ANGELL

That's quite a distance to travel, Inspector. You're not here chasing a suspect, I hope?

LEGRASSE

No, sir, I'm not. I came hoping I might find someone here qualified to help us with a piece of evidence.

PROF. ANGELL

Evidence? You have an artifact of some kind?

LEGRASSE

(hesitant)

Yes, sir, I believe I do.

PROF. ANGELL

Some of the best minds in American archeology are here at the conference. I'm sure one of us can shine a light on it. Do you have it with you?

LEGRASSE

It's here in my valise.

PROF. ANGELL

Why don't you step into this study and I'll invite a couple of my colleagues to join us. May I bring you a drink?

LEGRASSE

Much obliged, sir. Bourbon, straight up.

Transition: the PIANO is now further away. DRINKS being poured. Academic small talk.

PROF. ANGELL

May I introduce Professor Bell, Columbia University.

PROF. BELL

At your service.

PROF. ANGELL

Professor Quintana, University of Chicago.

PROF. QUINTANA

How do you do?

PROF. ANGELL

Professor Henning, Harvard.

PROF. HENNING

Good evening.

PROF. ANGELL

And this is William Channing Webb,
Professor Emeritus, Princeton
University.

PROF. WEBB

Sir.

PROF. ANGELL

Gentlemen, this is Inspector
Legrasse of the New Orleans Police
Department.

PROF. BELL

George here says you're having a
hard time identifying a piece,
Inspector?

PROF. QUINTANA

Let's have a look and we'll see
what we can make of it. I have a
magnifying loupe.

LEGRASSE

Here it is.

A MUSICAL STING, and the professors GASP as they take in the
dreadful thing. Music underscores the description of the
idol, building ominously.

PROF. HENNING

Well I'll be!

PROF. BELL

Great scott!

PROF. ANGELL

What... what... it's...

PROF. QUINTANA

I've never...

PROF. ANGELL

Where did it come from?

LEGRASSE

We recovered it some months ago in
the wooded swamps south of New
Orleans. It's some kind of idol or
fetish...

PROF. QUINTANA

Recovered it? Where did you find
it?

LEGRASSE

On a raid. We were expecting some kind of voodoo meeting, but this was a cult unknown to us, far more diabolic than even the blackest of the African voodoo circles. I've seen some strange things in my time, you can imagine, but nothing like this.

PROF. BELL

I should think.

LEGRASSE

I showed it to some men at Tulane, but they're stumped. They suggested someone here might recognize the figure or the writing on it.

PROF. ANGELL

May I?

LEGRASSE

Of course.

PROF. ANGELL

Let's see: I make it about eight inches tall... It would appear to depict a creature perching or squatting on top of a pedestal of some kind. The monster has a vaguely anthropoid outline...

PROF. BELL

But with an octopus-like head. That face is a mass of feelers...

PROF. QUINTANA

The body seems scaly, or rubbery. It looks rather bloated.

PROF. ANGELL

The hind and forefeet have prodigious claws...

PROF. HENNING

Would you say those are wings folded up along the back?

PROF. ANGELL

Yes, long, narrow wings behind.

PROF. BELL

(troubled)

It's surprisingly life-like for something that seems so ancient...

PROF. QUINTANA

It's sculpted in... well, it feels a bit like soapstone. Do you see, there's little iridescent flecks and striations...

PROF. HENNING

Hmm, the writing along the base. It doesn't resemble any language I've ever seen...

PROF. ANGELL

It certainly looks old, but...

PROF. BELL

The aesthetic, the style... it doesn't fit with any artistic tradition I know.

PROF. QUINTANA

(flummoxed)

I've never seen anything like it.

The musical underscore peaks.

PROF. WEBB

(boldly)

I have!

Musical STING. Webb speaks with the thrilling gravity of man who's known real danger in his days.

LEGRASSE

(shocked)

You have?

PROF. ANGELL

William! You've never--

PROF. WEBB

I'll never forget it. Summer, 1860. We'd been looking for Viking runes in Iceland and Greenland. We were high on the West coast and encountered a singular tribe of degenerate Esquimaux. They practiced a curious form of devil-worship. Bloodthirsty and repulsive.

(MORE)

PROF. WEBB (CONT'D)

Now the other Esquimaux, decent folk really, when you get to know them, they knew little of this tribe and said their ways had come down from horribly ancient aeons before ever the world was made.

LEGRASSE

What did they do?

PROF. WEBB

Besides nameless rites and human sacrifices there were certain queer hereditary rituals addressed to a supreme elder devil or tornasuk. They had a fetish of it - a tupilak, a carven walrus tusk - which they cherished and danced around when the aurora leaped high over the ice cliffs. It was a very crude rendering, but it was this same thing - complete with the hieroglyphic writing on it.

LEGRASSE

(excited)

These people, did they speak of the creature? Did they give it a name?

As Professor Webb recalls the strange and terrible event, we hear it echo through his memory.

PROF. WEBB

(dark memories stirred up now)

A name? I don't know about that. I witnessed one of their rites. They did unspeakable things to a victim captured from another tribe. By day, this band spoke Kalaallisut, like the other Esquimaux, but their ritual, it was conducted in another tongue entirely.

LEGRASSE

Do you recall anything they might have said?

PROF. WEBB

Yes, by god, though I wish I could forget it. There's one phrase they chanted over and over again...

35 GREENLAND INSERT

35

Webb's description fades out to the moment he lived it. WIND whips across the Greenlandic ice sheet. In the distance, the devil-worshipping Esquimaux bark out the bizarre sounds of their cult's chant. The word "Cthulhu" is somewhat obscured by a powerful gust of frozen wind.

ESQUIMAUX CULTISTS

"Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh
wgah'nagl fhtagn."

36 ARCHEOLOGY CONVENTION 2

36

A dramatic CHORD.

PROF. WEBB

I'm damned if I know what it means.

LEGRASSE

(stumbling over the
bizarre name)

I can tell you that. It means, "In his house at R'lyeh dead Calooth-C-- Cahooloo waits dreaming."

PROF. WEBB

What?

The other professors MURMUR in agitation.

PROF. ANGELL

How do you know...

LEGRASSE

One of the mongrel prisoners we captured on the raid. I suppose it's only fitting I should tell the full story.

The professors ad lib enthused responses.

LEGRASSE (CONT'D)

A desperate man came to my office on November 1st, 1907...

37 THIBIDOUX'S PLEA

37

There's a CLATTER of noise in the New Orleans Police Department Headquarters. A man, THIBIDOUX, loud in his swamp-country drawl, demands attention.

THIBIDOUX

I ain't going nowhere 'til one of
yous listens to me!

GALVEZ

Hush you. Y'all sit down and wait
your turn.

LEGRASSE

What seems to be the problem here,
Galvez?

THIBIDOUX

Sir, I beg you, we need your help
sir.

LEGRASSE

What exactly do you need help with,
Mr....

THIBIDOUX

Thibidoux. I know it sounds crazy
sir, but there's a voodoo cult at
work out our way, and they's doin'
terrible things. We had animals,
good huntin' hounds, go missin' a-
first, but then more things gone
missin' since them tom-toms started
a-beatin' out. Now we gots women
gone missin' and two children
too...

LEGRASSE

Voodoo, huh? Where's all this
happening?

THIBIDOUX

You know the low country a might
southeast of the Chesfleur lagoon?

LEGRASSE

I've been down that way. Now what
makes you think it's voodoo?

THIBIDOUX

Me and Bourque, we followed the
drums to see what they got up to
out there. Land's bad, ain't no
huntin' out that way. And we got in
close an heard them shriekin' and
chantin' and callin' up the devil
himself.

(MORE)

THIBIDOUX (CONT'D)

I ain't a man afeard of much, sir,
but I tell you, thens was a sound I
don't never want to hear agin.

LEGRASSE

How many you reckon's out there?

THIBIDOUX

Maybe two score. Maybe more. Hard
to know for sure 'cause they's
shoutin' like they was crazy.

LEGRASSE

Hmmm.

THIBIDOUX

Please, sir. We ain't folks who'd
normally traffic with the law, but
this is 'gainst the laws of nature.
We need your help sir. Our women
and children!

38 LEGRASSE 1

38

Transition. We hear HORSE HOOVES SQUISHING in mud and water
and the CREAKING of the wagon along with FOOTSTEPS and
MUTTERING of the other officers and the DISTANT PUTTING of a
1907 Ford.

LEGRASSE

(narrating)

So twenty of us set out late that
afternoon with Thibidoux as our
guide. It's more of a trail than a
road down that way. We took our
auto and some horses and a
buckboard wagon we could use as a
makeshift paddywagon if needed. The
trail was long and wet. At length
the squatter settlement, a
miserable huddle of huts, appeared
before us.

39 SQUATTERS

39

As the swamp folk descend on the officers, their voices come
in fast succession, overlapping. A very faint TOM-TOM pounds
out a pulse far in the distance.

THIBIDOUX

(calling out)

It's all right, y'all.

(MORE)

THIBIDOUX (CONT'D)

This here's Mr. Legrasse. He brung
men to help us.

SWAMP PAPA

(thick dialect)

Please, sirs, you gots to do
something.

SWAMP MAMA

They done took our Maribel!

BOURQUE

They is doin' orgy things out there
- with blood!

SWAMP PAPA

Hear, em? Hear them drums, that's
where they're doin' their hoodoo!

BOURQUE

It's worse than voodoo - they's
trafficking with Beelzebub hisself!

SWAMP MAMA

Help us, someone's gotta do
somethin'.

SWAMP PAPA

Go, shoot every last one of them
devils!

LEGRASSE

Alright, calm down now and we'll...

A distant SHRIEK wafts on the wind.

GALVEZ

Sir, did you hear that?

LEGRASSE

I did.

(to the officers)

You men, get in formation. Two
abreast.

(to the Swampies)

Now, which of you will lead us to
the place?

Conspicuous silence. More DRUMMING and another remote CRY of
agony.

LEGRASSE (CONT'D)

Come now, we'll protect you...
What, none of you will go there?

BOURQUE

No, sir. I been there once and seen their devil-ways. I ain't a-goin' back. Not for nothin'.

LEGRASSE

Very well, how do we find it?

THIBIDOUX

There's a trail starts out to the southeast. The drums and glow from the fires'll lead you from there.

LEGRASSE

Quietly, men, and have your weapons at the ready.

BOURQUE

Keep an eye out for gators!

40

ROY'S FOLKLORE

40

MUSIC. Boots SLOG through the mud as the police approach the ritual. Officers GALVEZ and ROY ride on the wagon.

GALVEZ

I ain't never been out this way before, Roy.

ROY

Who'd a want to? Out past where these squatters is... ain't many white men come out this away. There's legends. It's a haunted place. Evil.

GALVEZ

Haunted?

ROY

They say there's a lake. Ain't no man seen it. They say there's a huge white monster sort of thing with glowin' eyes lives in it.

GALVEZ

Oh yeah?

ROY

Yup. And the bat wing devils come out of caves at night and worships it. Been there since even afore the Injuns come here.

(MORE)

ROY (CONT'D)

They say no man who's seen it
lived.

(pause)

...And if you get too close it
starts saying things to you in your
dreams.

GALVEZ

OK. Enough. I don't want to hear
any more...

ROY

(to himself)

I didn't even get to the really bad
part...

The TOM-TOMS are louder here. The vehicles, horses and men
stop.

LEGRASSE

(quiet)

Shh. I reckon we should be able see
'em just beyond that break in the
trees. Quiet now.

They creep forward. TOM-TOMS. SCREAMING. The CRACKLE of fire.
MUSIC.

41 LEGRASSE 2

41

LEGRASSE

(narrating)

I reckon you'd have to be a poet,
or maybe a madman, to really
describe the noises we heard as we
approached the red glare and
muffled tom-toms. I didn't know a
man could to howl, and bray and
squeal like some kind of rabid
beast. But these people, their
naked carrying on whipped them into
such a fury... well, I'd never seen
anything like it. And I dearly hope
I never will again.

42 RAID 1

42

GALVEZ

Merciful Jesus!

ROY

Inspector! There's too many of them!

GALVEZ

What is that noise? I swear I hear wings flapping!

LEGRASSE

Quiet! Keep moving!

MUSIC increases. SCREAMS. Radio STATIC.

43 LEGRASSE 3 43

LEGRASSE

(narrating)

And then we heard the chant. That very same chant, Professor Webb.

44 SWAMP CULT INSERT 44

From a well-drilled chorus of hoarse voices rises a sing-song chant. MUSIC, random SCREAMING and the crackling FIRE make certain words harder to hear than others. While impossible to understand, these words clearly echo those heard by Webb among the degenerate Esquimaux.

CULT

Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh
wgah'nagl fhtagn! Ph'nglui
mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl
fhtagn! Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu
R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn! Ph'nglui
mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl
fhtagn!

The chanting and other noise continues faintly underneath the dialogue.

45 LEGRASSE 4 45

LEGRASSE

(narrating)

My men and I reached a spot where the trees thinned enough that we could see for ourselves.

46 RAID 2

46

GALVEZ
Jesus, Mary and Joseph!

One of the officers WRETCHES in the brush. Terrified MURMURS among the cops.

47 LEGRASSE 5

47

LEGRASSE
(narrating)
A few reeled, others fainted - we were hypnotized by the horror of the scene. A grassy island, clear of trees, rose up out of the swamp. And on that island leaped and twisted an indescribable horde of human abnormality. Naked, they brayed, bellowed, and writhed about a monstrous ring-shaped bonfire. In the center stood a great granite monolith some eight feet in height, on top of which rested this very statuette.

Circling the monolith were crude scaffolds, and hanging downward from each one of these we saw the bodies of the helpless squatters who had disappeared. They had been... well, the cultists had done unspeakable things to them, you understand? The worshippers jumped and roared and chanted between the ring of bodies and the ring of fire.

In truth, the horrified pause of my men was brief. And although there must have been nearly a hundred mongrel celebrants, we were armed and ready to take action.

A shrill WHISTLE shrieks and the officers ROAR as they charge into the fray. Cultists HOWL, REVOLVERS fire as a GREAT BATTLE RAGES between police and cultists.

LEGRASSE (CONT'D)
It was a ferocious confrontation. A few worshippers were slain outright, more were wounded.
(MORE)

LEGRASSE (CONT'D)

In the end, my men took a full forty-seven prisoners. I personally removed the idol and carried it back to the police station.

A metal cell door CLANGS shut. A CLANKING of chains.

LEGRASSE (CONT'D)

The prisoners proved to be of a very low and mentally aberrant type. Most were seamen, with a sprinkling of Negroes and mulattoes, largely West Indians or Brava Portuguese from the Cape Verde Islands. Of course we tried to question them, but few were willing or able to give rational responses.

(interrogating)

You - what's your name, old man?

48

INTERROGATION

48

Pause. Brutal interrogations can be heard in the background coming from other rooms in the station: including the occasional SCREAM or PUNCH which strategically obscures certain words of the dialogue. Castro, an aged mulatto cultist, speaks with a blithe confidence that belies his insanity.

CASTRO

I am called Castro.

LEGRASSE

All right, Castro. Now tell me, what is this god you worship?

CASTRO

Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthu--

LEGRASSE

(cutting him off)

None of that!

(the sound of a slap)

Speak English, you understand me!

CASTRO

(with an evil chuckle)

It is the Great Old Ones we worship.

LEGRASSE

The what?

CASTRO

The Great Old Ones. They lived many ages before men, and they will live again. Their dead bodies told secrets in dreams to the first men, and they formed a... what's your English word... a church that cannot die.

LEGRASSE

Your church has died, Mr. Castro. My men killed it.

CASTRO

(amused)

Your men?

Castro pauses to listen to the SHOUTS of police and the muffled SCREAMS of other prisoners being questioned in other rooms.

CASTRO (CONT'D)

Our church has always been and will always be. It will hide in the far and dark places of the world until the time when the great priest Cthulhu, from his dark house in the mighty city of R'lyeh under the waters, shall rise and bring forth the Great Old Ones. The time is coming. It will be soon.

LEGRASSE

Great Old Ones, eh? Up from under the sea?

CASTRO

From the sea. From the sky. From beyond the spheres. When the stars are right They plunge from world to world, and They bring their images with them.

LEGRASSE

Is this one of their images? Is it?

CASTRO

No man has seen the Great Old Ones. They are not flesh and blood! Someday we shall be as they were once: free and wild. Until then we keep alive the memory. They will return to us!

LEGRASSE

Is that so? Where did you learn this?

CASTRO

I have seen many things. I have been to many places.

LEGRASSE

I'm sure.

CASTRO

I know things. R'lyeh sink beneath the sea, and deep water is full of the mystery. But the memory, she never die. The black spirits of earth whisper to us from the deep. And our high-priests say that the city will rise again when the stars are right!

LEGRASSE

Your high-priests? There are more of you out there?

Castro chuckles menacingly.

LEGRASSE (CONT'D)

Where?

CASTRO

We are everywhere. We are nowhere. "That is not dead which can eternal lie, And with strange aeons even death may die."

LEGRASSE

What is that? A poem?

CASTRO

(laughing)
You tell me, policeman.

LEGRASSE

You like poems, do you? What about this chant of yours, Ph'nglui mglw'nafh--

CASTRO

Be careful what words you speak!

LEGRASSE

What does it mean?

CASTRO

It means, "In his house..."

The SCREAM of another prisoner.

49

LEGRASSE 6

49

LEGRASSE

(narrating)

And that's when he told me. Some day this god of theirs would call, he said, when the stars were ready, and the secret cult would always be waiting to liberate him. He said spells preserved the Great Old Ones intact but prevented Them from making an initial move, so They could only lie awake in the dark and think while millions of years rolled by. But I didn't get much more out of him. He cut himself off hurriedly, and not even my most enthusiastic interrogators could break him.

Only two of the prisoners were found sane enough to be hanged, and the rest were committed to various institutions. To a man, they denied a part in the ritual murders, saying the killing had been done by Black Winged Ones which had come from the wood. It was quite a mess.

Gentlemen, I've searched far and wide for evidence of this cult. It doesn't seem to be mentioned in any book, at least not by name. Professor Webb, I must thank you - your story is the first corroboration of it I've ever found. We must compare notes when you find a moment of leisure. Right now I'm sure I've taken up enough of your time. Do enjoy your conference, gentlemen, and thank you kindly for the Bourbon.

The professors fade out as they give their farewells to Legrasse.

50 POLICE STATION 12

50

MALLORY

That's why Thurston's old uncle was fired up! Wilcox dreamed both the figure and exact hieroglyphics of the swamp idol image and the Greenland tupilak!

HALE

Hang on a minute. The swamp stuff was strange, but maybe this artist kid knew about it somehow. It must have been in the papers. Maybe he was just having the professor on.

MALLORY

Why would he?

HALE

How should I know? Look, what do you say we take a train to Providence and see the artist tomorrow? Find out what he knows.

51 THE WILCOX INTERVIEW

51

The WHISTLE of a steam train. MUSICAL transition. The sound of STREET traffic. Hale and Mallory look for Wilcox's studio in the Fleur-de-Lys building.

MALLORY

Here it is. Right across from the old church.

HALE

The Fleur-de-Lys Building, huh? Looks like the kind of place that would attract Bohemians.

MALLORY

This one should be his studio.

KNOCKS strongly on the door.

HENRY WILCOX

(from within)

Enter!

The DOOR opens. The sound of a VICTROLA playing classical music. Echoing FOOTSTEPS as the detectives enter and walk through the large space.

HALE

(sotto voce)

Get a load of these paintings,
Jack.

MALLORY

Hmm, yeah, looks like the kid's got
talent.

HALE

You call this talent? With lines
and angles going every which way?
Is that supposed to be a landscape
or a plaid tablecloth?

MALLORY

I think they call it modernism.

HALE

I call it crazy.

MALLORY

(out loud)

Henry Wilcox? Are you in here?

HALE

Wilcox!

HENRY WILCOX

Over here. Yes?

HALE

I'm Sgt. Hale, this is Detective
Mallory, Boston Police.

HENRY WILCOX

Yes? I'm working... what can I do
for you?

MALLORY

Well you can start by telling us
what you know about Professor
George Angell.

HENRY WILCOX

The archeologist. I heard he passed
away. Poor man.

MALLORY

"Poor man"? Why's that?

HENRY WILCOX

He always seemed very afraid.
Searching for something, but I
never knew what.

HALE

So why didn't you ask him?

HENRY WILCOX

We talked of dreams, Sergeant. My
dreams, as it happens, although I
suspect he was secretly more
concerned about his own. He was a
man of science, of course, but
scientists and artists have this
much in common, at least: great
ones tend to frighten the ordinary
man.

HALE

And you think you're a great
artist, do you?

HENRY WILCOX

Painting is easy when you don't
know how, Sergeant, but very
difficult when you do.

Hale SNORTS with unmasked derision.

MALLORY

Your work is quite striking,
Wilcox. I must admit. It seems
dream-like to me.

HENRY WILCOX

What is art, Detective, but dreams
made manifest? Actually, I shall
forever owe Professor Angell a
debt. Without him I might not have
found my path.

MALLORY

Hmmm. This canvas here, for
example. What is that supposed to
be? Some kind of giant door?

HENRY WILCOX

Very good, Detective. But then
again, you could say every painting
is some kind of door.

HALE

Oh brother. Why can't you artists ever just paint a bowl of fruit? Or a pretty girl?

HENRY WILCOX

A subject that is beautiful in itself gives no suggestion to the artist. It lacks imperfection.

HALE

Why did you go to the Professor in the first place, Wilcox? What was your angle?

HENRY WILCOX

My angle? Funny you should put it that way.

HALE

What were you trying to get out of him?

HENRY WILCOX

I thought he might be able to explain my dream images to me.

HALE

You expect us to believe that? What's to explain? It was just a dream!

HENRY WILCOX

I have always been amazed at the way an ordinary observer attaches so much more importance to waking events than to those occurring in dreams. Man is above all the plaything of his memory. All the things one has forgotten scream for help in dreams.

HALE

They what?

MALLORY

Tell us about the cult.

HENRY WILCOX

The cult?

MALLORY

That's right, the Cth---

HENRY WILCOX

Yes, Detective. I know what you're talking about. Professor Angell was fixated on that as well. But as I told him, I know nothing about it. I've never been much interested in the doings of men, but I've been trying to get back to that city of dreams ever since.

MALLORY

Well, Mr. Wilcox, I don't know whether to wish you good luck with that or not.

HENRY WILCOX

If that's all, Detective, I must get on with my work.

MALLORY

Sure, sure. We can show ourselves out.

The DOOR closes behind the investigators. The sounds of the STREET.

HALE

Would you believe that guy? "Art is a dream!" "Art is a door!" Ha! Art is a racket, that's what it is, and this kid's line is nothing but bunk.

MALLORY

Now now, Nick...

HALE

The kid's weird, Jack. He knew more than he let on.

MALLORY

I'd say we still have more to learn from Professor Angell's files.

52

POLICE STATION 13

52

MUSIC transition and a TRAIN WHISTLE take us back to the Boston Police station.

HALE

You're in early. Already at it?

MALLORY

I've been thinking about this case. I just can't quite put it together. Really it was Thurston's case. He says he just wanted to understand what his uncle stumbled upon. I think there was some part of him that wanted the glory that would go with shining a light on this strange ancient cult.

HALE

But he didn't, right? I mean no one knows about this whatever-it-is cult, do they? Do we even know it's a real thing?

MALLORY

He believed it was real. And believed someone killed his uncle over it. Angell was making inquiries and asking too many questions.

HALE

And he gets done in by a negro sailor? C'mon, Jack.

MALLORY

Listen to this. Thurston wrote "I think he died because he knew too much, or because he was likely to learn too much. Whether I shall go as he did remains to be seen, for I have learned much now." Prophetic.

HALE

Paranoid. And so are you. C'mon, we should hit the docks and start asking around about negro merchant marines.

MALLORY

You go. I'll stay and see what else Mr. Thurston can tell us.

HALE

Don't believe everything you read.

MALLORY

Right.

MUSICAL transition. The SCRATCHING of Thurston's pen.

57

HARBORMASTER RADIO

57

A commercial radio CRACKLES followed by an unintelligible VOICE. WAVES lap faintly and there is the odd seagull SQUAWK.

KINCADE

(clear and to a nearby
mic)

This is Harbormaster: did not copy,
please repeat, over.

VIGILANT CAPTAIN

(His voice cuts in and out
intermittently. STATIC.)

This is HMS Vigilant. Have rescued
a ship in distress, bringing it in
tow to Darling harbor. Over.
Delirious... dead. ...backup, over.

KINCADE

We have a berth for you, Vigilant.
Do you require assistance, over?

VIGILANT CAPTAIN

Negative, Harbormaster, we should
be able to bring her in. We'll need
some help for these men, over.

KINCADE

Men? Say again please?

VIGILANT CAPTAIN

Crew, on the steam yacht, The Alert
out of Dunedin. Found her adrift.
Thought she'd been abandoned. We
boarded her and found two aboard -
one man dead. The other one's in
pretty bad shape. Bit off his
rocker, over.

KINCADE

Understood Vigilant. Bring the
disabled vessel in. We'll get the
survivor over to the hospital -
I'll see if we can find out what
happened, over.

VIGILANT CAPTAIN

We found him on the bridge - he was
clutching this stone idol kind of
thing. He's pretty shaken up...

The radio conversation falls away and transitions to a
hospital.

58

JOHANSEN AT HOSPITAL

58

KINDLY KIWI NURSE
He's right in here, sir.

KINCADE
Thank you, nurse.

KINDLY KIWI NURSE
(to Johansen)
Mr. Johansen? This is Mr. Kincade.
He'd like to talk to you. Are you
up for a visit?

JOHANSEN is still somewhat shell-shocked. He's a Norwegian in his late 30s who's been through a tremendous ordeal.

JOHANSEN
(thinking it over)
Yes.

KINDLY KIWI NURSE
If you need anything at all, I'll
be right outside.

KINCADE
Thank you for seeing me. Mitchell
Kincade, Harbormaster here in
Darling.

JOHANSEN
Gustav Johansen.

KINCADE
Feeling better? I came by to see
you a few days ago, but, well...
They treating you alright?

JOHANSEN
Fine. Thank you.

KINCADE
Mr. Johansen, I need to file a
report about the ship you came in
on, The Alert. May I ask a few
simple questions?

JOHANSEN
Ask.

KINCADE
You were found on the bridge of the
Alert, but you were not a member of
her crew?

JOHANSEN

I was second mate on the Emma, a schooner out of Auckland sailing for Callao. We took to sea February 20th. Eleven men. Big storm set in. High winds took us off course. Far south. There we found The Alert.

KINCADE

Abandoned?

JOHANSEN

Abandoned? No. No, no no...

59

ENCOUNTER AT SEA

59

MUSIC transition as Johansen flashes back to that fateful day at sea. The Emma. She's a schooner, under sail in the open ocean. WIND blows hard as she cuts through the sea, WAVES spraying over the gunwales. PARKER, the bo'sun from Auckland coordinates the hauling in of a sail.

PARKER

...two, three and heave!

The halyard TIGHTENS as the mighty Swede ÅNGSTRÖM heaves on it. RODRIGUES, a passionate Portuguese sailor and GUERRERA, a surly Spaniard pitch in.

ÅNGSTROM

Tie her off boys.

RODRIGUES

You are strong, like bull,
Ångström!

GUERRERA

And with as much in brains.

A distant CRY sounds from the high in the rigging. It's HAWKINS, his Kiwi voice mostly lost in the wind.

ÅNGSTROM

Is that Hawkins, up there in the rigging?

RODRIGUES

He must see something!

PARKER

We're so far off course, we won't see anything for days.

JOHANSEN

Captain, there's a ship 20 degrees
off the port bow, four nautical
miles.

CAPTAIN COLLINS, a London sea captain, is the kind of heroic
leader you'd want as the captain of your schooner.

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Out here? Parker, see if you can
raise them on the wireless.

PARKER

Aye, Captain.

Parker taps out communication via MORSE CODE. The radio
returns STATIC and SQUELCHES.

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Give me the spyglass. She must see
us, she's coming about. Looks like
a steam yacht.

PARKER

No response, sir!

JOHANSEN

Keep trying.
(to Captain Collins)
Should I have Hawkins send a
signal?

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Aye. Coxswain, set course for the
vessel.

COXSWAIN

Adjusting course, sir.

JOHANSEN

(bellowing)
Hawkins! Flash a contact signal to
that ship.

HAWKINS

(from the rigging)
Aye, sir.

CAPTAIN COLLINS

She's stopped.

JOHANSEN

They're signalling us. What's the
signal Hawkins?

HAWKINS

"Turn back".

JOHANSEN

Turn back?

ÅNGSTROM

(quietly with Guerrera and
Rodrigues)

What you make of it, boys?

RODRIGUES

We're off the course, they ship off
the course too.

ÅNGSTROM

Ja, but we're under sail. They have
steam.

GUERRERA

We should turn back. No business of
ours.

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Coxswain, maintain course, continue
approach!

COXSWAIN

Aye, captain.

GUERRERA

(grumbles under his
breath)

Nadie me escucha.

JOHANSEN

We're getting closer. Can you make
out her crew?

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Looks like mostly darkies: kanakas
and half castes.

HAWKINS

Captain, they've signalled again.
"Turn back now".

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Take the glass, Johansen. Have the
men pull in sail. We'll approach.
Hawkins, signal her that we're
unarmed.

JOHANSEN

Captain, looks like the ship's called The Alert. She's got brass cannons.

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Lower the mainsail! Helmsman, set course two-seven-zero and heave about her starboard side.

COXSWAIN

Aye, captain.

JOHANSEN

(worried)

Captain, I think...

There is a medium BLAST from a distant cannon followed by the WHISTLING of the shell.

CAPTAIN COLLINS

We're under fire! Sound the alarm, Johansen. Hawkins - fly a flag of surrender!

A metal bell CLANGS and the men on The Emma YELL and scurry about. Another cannon BLASTS, the shell EXPLODES in the water nearby. Briden, a nervous Englishman, runs forward.

BRIDEN

Captain, our yawl boat's been hit!

JOHANSEN

(Swears in Norwegian)

All hell breaks loose. Sailors SHOUT as they try to maneuver The Emma to save their lives. The Alert continues to fire. BOOM!

JOHANSEN (CONT'D)

Captain, we're hit. It's bad.

CAPTAIN COLLINS

Coxswain, bring us along side her. Johansen, unlock the armory.

Another cannon BLAST. The vile HALF-CASTES and KANAKAS CRY OUT to their foul gods as they unleash volleys of iron on the poor Emma. Wood SPLINTERS and men SCREAM as the ship is hit.

CAPTAIN COLLINS (CONT'D)

Every man, grab a weapon! Either we take The Alert or we go down with The Emma.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN COLLINS (CONT'D)
Man to man, lads, we fight these
devils! Give them hell boys!

JOHANSEN
Throw grappling lines!

CAPTAIN COLLINS
Attack!

There is a furious BATTLE between the crews which peaks and then fades out.

60

JOHANSEN AT HOSPITAL 2

60

JOHANSEN
(narrating but traumatized
by reliving it)
The Emma went down. They killed
Captain Collins with a marlin
spike. And the coxswain - they took
his head clean off. Others too.
Even when we took the ship, they
would not surrender. We killed
every last one of them. We had to.

KINCADE
Good heavens.

JOHANSEN
Parker and Hawkins survived.
Rodrigues, Guerrera, Ångström and
Briden. As first mate, command fell
to me. We followed the course The
Alert was on. Came to an island -
wasn't on the charts. Went ashore.

KINCADE
What happened?

JOHANSEN
(fading into PTSD)
Men... died.

KINCADE
What happened to them?

JOHANSEN
Fell into... rock, chasm. The
angles were wrong...

KINCADE
Sorry, I don't follow you...

JOHANSEN

(pause)

We made it back to ship, Briden and me. Storm. Adrift.

KINCADE

(a little too emphatic)

Yes, but on the island..?

KINDLY KIWI NURSE

(firm)

Sir, please... I think it would be good for Mr. Johansen to get his rest.

Johansen MUTTERS quietly to himself.

KINCADE

Yes, yes, well the Admiralty will make a full inquiry. Thank you, Mr. Johansen. I wish you a speedy recovery from your ordeal.

MUSICAL transition.

61

THURSTON 16

61

THURSTON

Yes - what was the crew of the Alert doing out there with their idol? It wouldn't matter, but for the dates.

(slightly ranting)

March 1st, there was an earthquake and the mongrel crew of the Alert put to sea. On the other side of the world, poets and artists began dreaming of a strange dank city. Wilcox molded the form of the dreaded nightmare creature. March 23, the crew of the Emma landed on an unknown island where five sailors died. That same day, dreamers worldwide experienced terrifying visions of a vast monster and Wilcox falls into a delirium.

April 2nd, there's another storm. Dreams of the dank city cease. Wilcox awakes.

(MORE)

THURSTON (CONT'D)

It's exactly what Castro described:
great things that shape men's
dreams and a faithful cult that
worships them. Something terrible,
cosmic in its scope, was unfolding
around us.

62 POLICE STATION 15

62

MALLORY

(to himself)

You poor devil, you're really
getting sucked into this thing...

63 THURSTON 17

63

THURSTON

(excited now)

I made arrangements and took a
train to San Francisco, and in less
than a month was in Dunedin, in New
Zealand, the home port of The
Alert's crew. I visited the worst
sorts of waterfront drinking
establishments.

64 UNSAVORY KIWI

64

The sounds of an unsavory New Zealand WATERFRONT BAR emerge.

THURSTON

So, you knew some of the crewmen of
The Alert?

UNSAVORY SEAMAN

Aye, they was a secretive lot.
Wouldn't hire a man on 'less they'd
gone off to take some kind of black
oath in the woods...

THURSTON

In the woods?

UNSAVORY SEAMAN

Stories of what them men done in
the woods would curdle your blood.
Less said, the better.

He DRINKS.

THURSTON

Like what? Was it some kind of cult?

UNSAVORY SEAMAN

That's the kind of question can get a man killed 'round these parts. Go home, Yank, before something happens to you.

65 THURSTON 18

65

THURSTON

(narrating)

I sought out Johansen, and learned he'd gone home to Oslo with his wife. I traveled to Australia and saw the Alert in Sydney harbor. The vessel which had seen such terrible sights had been refitted as a bland commercial ship and showed no sign of the cult that once piloted her.

While in Sydney, I made an appointment at the Hyde Park Museum to see the idol that had been pried from Johansen's hands.

66 MUSEUM PIECE

66

FOOTSTEPS echo down a long corridor in a lonely section of the museum.

MUSEUM MATRON

It's quite a special piece, this one. I'm surprised we haven't had others come to see it. Let's see here.

THURSTON

So no one else has come inquiring about it?

MUSEUM MATRON

Right after the Admiralty turned it over to us, Dr. Morrison analyzed the rock. He's a geologist.

THURSTON

Did he turn up anything interesting about it?

MUSEUM MATRON

(grave)

He never could identify it. Says there's no other rock like it in the world.

(opening a crate)

Here's the ugly little brute.

THURSTON

May I?

She hands it to him. MUSIC underscores Thurston's reverie.

67 THURSTON 19

67

THURSTON

(narrating)

It was the same terrible figure Legrasse found in the swamp, but rendered by another hand with exquisite workmanship from an unearthly material.

68 MUSEUM PIECE 2

68

MUSEUM MATRON

I think that's quite enough. I'll take that.

She puts the idol back into its crate.

69 THURSTON 20

69

THURSTON

(narrating)

Though I tried, I could not let it go. I had to seek out the one man who might be able to explain what had happened.

70 POLICE STATION 16

70

MALLORY

Johansen!

71 THURSTON 21

71

THURSTON
He had seen it all. So I traveled
from Sydney all the way to Oslo and
made my way to his home.

72 THE WIDOW JOHANSEN

72

Birds CHIRP as Thurston approaches the Johansen house. He
KNOCKS on their door. It opens.

GRETA JOHANSEN
Kan jeg hjelpe deg?

THURSTON
(taken aback)
Um... I'm sorry I, I don't speak
Norwegian. Do you speak English?

GRETA JOHANSEN
Nei. No is so good.

THURSTON
I would like to speak to your
husband, Gustav Johansen?

GRETA JOHANSEN
(wracked with sorrow)
Min mann er død.

THURSTON
Død? Your husband's dead?

GRETA JOHANSEN
Ja.

THURSTON
Oh... my God, I'm so sorry. What...
How did he die?

GRETA JOHANSEN
Do not know how to say... Times at
sea broke heart.

THURSTON
Times at sea! In 1925, New Zealand?

GRETA JOHANSEN
Ja.

THURSTON

Did your husband tell you what happened there?

GRETA JOHANSEN

He no like to talk of it. He write in book, but book is English.

THURSTON

He wrote? This book, may I see it?

GRETA JOHANSEN

I show to you...

73 THURSTON 22

73

THURSTON

(narrating)

It was a slow conversation, but the kind Mrs. Johansen eventually let me have her husband's journal.

Professor Angell's metal box CREAKS open and Mallory digs inside.

74 POLICE STATION 17

74

MALLORY

Oh my god, this is it. This is Johansen's journal, right here. Hey, Nick!

Hale enters the Police Station and walks over to Mallory's desk.

HALE

Looking for a sailor on the docks - I may as well have been looking for a lump of coal at a coal mine. Your victim give you anything?

MALLORY

This!

HALE

What, another book? Jack...

MALLORY

Johansen, he was the sailor, the survivor, from The Emma, then The Alert. He went there, he saw it.

HALE

Did he kill Thurston?

MALLORY

No. Of course not.

HALE

Then let's get back on the case.

MALLORY

This IS the case. There's a cult at work here. Something dark, subtle, ancient.

HALE

Do you hear yourself?

MALLORY

Listen to this.

75

THURSTON 23

75

The SCRATCHING of Thurston's pen.

THURSTON

Johansen's journal was a simple, rambling thing - a sailor's effort at a post-facto diary - and strove to recall day by day that last awful voyage.

Johansen, thank God, only had one piece of the puzzle, even though he saw the city and the Thing. But I shall never sleep calmly again when I think of the horrors that lurk ceaselessly behind life in time and in space, and of those unhallowed blasphemies from elder stars which dream beneath the sea, known and favoured by a nightmare cult ready and eager to loose them upon the world whenever another earthquake shall heave their monstrous stone city again to the sun and air.

76

POLICE STATION 18

76

HALE

Jack, our victim flipped his lid.
And the sailor, and the artist and
the archeologist - next it'll be
the detective!

MALLORY

I'm after the truth here.

HALE

And I'm after the guy who killed
Francis Thurston!

MALLORY

It's all to do with this creature,
this Cthu---

HALE

Don't even say it!

MALLORY

I don't like your tone, sergeant!

HALE

(angry)

Yes, sir. I'm going to go canvass
the park. See if I can come up with
anyone who saw something real. Sir.

MALLORY

Dismissed, sergeant.

Hale storms out, GRUMBLING under his breath.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

C'mon Thurston - what's really
going on here?

77

THURSTON 24

77

The SCRATCHING of the pen.

THURSTON

Johansen's journal repeated what he
had told the Harbormaster, though
he was more explicit about the
ferocity of the swarthy cult-fiends
on the Alert.

(MORE)

THURSTON (CONT'D)
Once his men had overcome the
cultists and taken control of The
Alert, Johansen assumed command.

MUSIC transition.

78 JOHANSEN 1

78

JOHANSEN
(narrating his journal)
After ordering the dead thrown
overboard, my first command was to
follow the course listed by these
men in the ship's log.

79 LAND HO!

79

The ENGINES of The Alert cut through the desert of the far
south Pacific. Parker and Briden rush onto the bridge.

PARKER
Captain, Briden and I found
something.

JOHANSEN
What is it, Parker?

BRIDEN
It's like a shrine.

PARKER
But look inside - some demon idol!

JOHANSEN
Is that blood?

PARKER
Captain, we, I mean, the men don't
like being on this ship. Its crew,
they were...

BRIDEN
A cult. Devil worshippers.

JOHANSEN
This is the ship we have. We're
lucky if there's another vessel
within 500 leagues of here. Have
Guerrera and Rodrigues scrub the
blood off the deck - that should
help.

From outside, Hawkins sounds another ALARM.

HAWKINS
Land ho! Eleven o'clock.

PARKER
Land ho? What's he talking about? I checked the charts - there's nothing out here.

BRIDEN
Hawkins has a keen eye.

JOHANSEN
Telegraph the engine room, Briden, five knots. I'm going out for a look.

BRIDEN
Aye-aye, sir.

The RINGING of the telegraph and the ship's great engines slow. Ominous MUSIC.

PARKER
Dead ahead, sir. Coming up out of the water. It looks like a pillar or something. What do you think it is, sir?

JOHANSEN
I don't...

RODRIGUES
I think you have found a new island, captain!

HAWKINS
(aloft in the rigging)
Look, there's more beyond it!

PARKER
(disturbed)
It's not an island, it's... a building. A city.

The rolling of distant THUNDER.

RODRIGUES
No, who could make such thing?

GUERRERA
(to himself)
Es hecho con los manos del diablo.

PARKER

We should turn back.

BRIDEN

Could the earthquake have pushed it up from the sea, sir?

JOHANSEN

How would I know? Slow course, Mr. Briden.

BRIDEN

Aye, sir.

JOHANSEN

Hawkins, you see any signs of life on it?

HAWKINS

No, sir. Looks all wet and slimy. I think it just come up from the sea.

JOHANSEN

Watch the shore for a place we can land the dinghy.

BRIDEN

Ashore?

JOHANSEN

You heard me.

80 JOHANSEN 2

80

JOHANSEN

(narrating his journal
with a scratching pen)

It is a terrible place, unlike anything I have seen. A bad dream brought up by the sea. Vast angles and huge stones not of this earth. The men have fear but are drawn to see it too. No one could have imagined such a place. We go ashore tomorrow.

81 R'LEY

81

MUSICAL punctuation! The OARS of the Alert's dinghy cut through the waves as the sailors row towards the corpse city of R'lyeh.

HAWKINS

Captain, looks like we might be able to go ashore there, near those big steps.

JOHANSEN

Hard to port.

RODRIGUES

I try. Ångström, you row too hard.

ÅNGSTROM

(amused)

Use your back, Rodrigues, pull.

Thunder ROLLS over the dead city.

HAWKINS

Thunder, but no wind. No rain. It's dead still.

PARKER

(quietly to Briden)

It's going to be hard going, Briden. The mud and ooze.

BRIDEN

We should have stayed on the ship.

PARKER

It's reckless, coming ashore like this.

BRIDEN

I hope Johansen knows what he's doing.

HAWKINS

(to Johansen)

Reckon the sea must have coughed it up, sir?

JOHANSEN

Must have.

GUERRERA

Never see no thing like it. This not a good place. Stink!

ÅNGSTROM

Look at that tower - is that a window up there?

HAWKINS

Look up over there. Those look like
some kind of sculptures or...

ÅNGSTROM

Is a thing with wings.

PARKER

I don't like it.

JOHANSEN

Buck up, men. It's an adventure.
Rodrigues, cast off the line and
make it off. Steady men...

Rodrigues takes the rope and CLAMBERS over the gunwale into
the water and ooze.

RODRIGUES

Is mud, but she is solid.
(bravado thinly masking
fear)
I name you this island Ilha do
Paraíso.

JOHANSEN

Some paradise... Come on, men,
let's see what this place is.

They SPLASH ashore and begin TRUDGING up a slick, slime
encrusted pathway.

PARKER

(quietly)
My god, Briden, who could imagine
such a place? It's... wrong.

BRIDEN

Even the sun barely...
(slipping)
Ahh!

PARKER

Careful. You alright?

BRIDEN

(wincing)
Yeh. Twisted my ankle.

RODRIGUES

Where we go, captain?

JOHANSEN

Split up and have a look around.
We'll meet up there where that
angled rock sticks out.

ÅNGSTROM

Sticks out? It goes in.

HAWKINS

No it... you're right, no, well...

PARKER

This place is all wrong. C'mon,
Briden, let's see where this goes.

Parker and Briden go off together.

RODRIGUES

Sem essa, Guerrera, Siga-me.

He starts climbing with gusto.

GUERRERA

Vengo. No vaya tan rápido!

JOHANSEN

Hawkins, Ångström, let's see what's
around that ledge.

They move off. MUSIC underscore. We rejoin Parker and Briden.

PARKER

Briden, look at those carvings. You
think that's some kind of writing?

BRIDEN

Maybe, it's like those
hieroglyphics in Egypt.

PARKER

What do you think it says?

They struggle over the huge cyclopean blocks.

BRIDEN

Men didn't make this place. We
should leave now.

Segue to the Rodrigues expedition.

RODRIGUES

Hey - come. Look at the thing - we
see sculpt with wings.

GUERRERA

(out of breath)

Is ugly. Like a squid. And a bird.
And a fish.

RODRIGUES

Who make this thing?

GUERRERA

Yo no sé.

RODRIGUES

Come. We go up to top.

He starts climbing again. We segue to the Johansen team.

HAWKINS

These stone blocks...

ÅNGSTROM

Too big for men.

HAWKINS

If you look at them, they go
sideways, but if you stare at them,
they don't, it's like they're
angled... I...

JOHANSEN

Keep moving. I have a hunch we're
getting closer to the center of
this thing.

ÅNGSTROM

Look - there - Briden and Parker.

They move through the MUCK. THUNDER.

JOHANSEN

Find anything?

PARKER

Sculptures, maybe some writing.

BRIDEN

We should probably head back,
before it gets dark.

JOHANSEN

Seen Rodrigues and Guerrero?

PARKER

They started climbing, but here,
who knows where they'd end up.

BRIDEN
(shouting)
Rodrigues!

RODRIGUES
(from far off, excited)
Ei, aqui! Aqui!

JOHANSEN
That's him. Let's go.

The other sailors HURRY though the nightmare city.

PARKER
There he is, up there!

BRIDEN
Oh my god!

GUERRERA
How he climb?

82 JOHANSEN 3

82

JOHANSEN
(narrating with scritch-
ing pen)
Rodrigues, the Portuguese, climbed
up, or perhaps across the jamb of
what was like a great door.
Guerrera was across, or perhaps
below it. The door was stone and on
it was a carved relief of a thing
like a squid or dragon. Was it
flat? Upright? Who could tell in
this place. We went right up to the
great door and Guerrera joined us.

83 R'LYEH 2

83

ÅNGSTROM
You think it's a door? It's huge!

PARKER
Touch it.

BRIDEN
I'm not going to touch it!

GUERRERA
I touch. Is muck!

PARKER

Look, Rodrigues made it to the top
of it. I think...

HAWKINS

Shhhh! It's moving.

PARKER

(nervous chuckle)
Right.

GUERRERA

You all fear.

A deep RUMBLE begins as the stone door does in fact begin to
move.

BRIDEN

(shouting)
It's moving! Get back!

JOHANSEN

(stern)
No, he's right. It's moving.
Rodrigues, come down!

The great stone door continues to SLIDE and move and a wild
GUST of miasma billows forth from the darkness.

84 JOHANSEN 4

84

JOHANSEN

(narrating)
The door moved open in a way we
could not understand. It left
gaping blackness that we could
almost feel, and seemed to actually
burst forth like smoke, visibly
darkening the sun as it slunk away
into the shrunken sky on hideous
flapping wings.

85 R'LEY 3

85

The men COUGH and GASP.

BRIDEN

Oh, the stench...

HAWKINS

Shh, there's something.

PARKER
I don't hear any...

HAWKINS
Quiet. It's calling.

A horrid, otherworld SLOPPING sound creeps out of the tomb.
Hawkins GROANS as he falls dead on the spot.

PARKER
Hawkins!

GUERRERA
It moves...

BRIDEN
It's coming!

JOHANSEN
RUN!

MUSIC! Great Cthulhu emerges from the tomb. Men SCREAM and
RUN. It is a nightmare of sound and fury.

86 JOHANSEN 5

86

JOHANSEN
(narrating, at the brink
of madness)
It came. So huge it could barely
squeeze through the great opening.
There are no words for a thing so
terrible. Hawkins dropped dead at
the sight, others went mad in a
moment. It was a mountain walked.
It grabbed up Rodrigues, Guerrero
and Angstrom in a great claw. We
ran. I... I saw Parker slide over a
rock and he was swallowed by an
angle that should not have been
there. There are no words for such
thing.

87 FLEEING

87

JOHANSEN
(running)
Briden, this way! The boat!

Briden SQUEALS in terror as they run down impossible
causeways.

Somewhere behind them, Great Cthulhu BELLOWS in pursuit. Johansen leaps into the boat, Briden close behind. He FUMBLES with the oars.

JOHANSEN (CONT'D)
(screaming)
Cast off! Row!

88 JOHANSEN 6

88

JOHANSEN
(narrating)
It was not in fact so far to the ship, but with such a thing in pursuit... We reached the Alert. I took the helm and Briden stoked the engines. The sound, that impossible sound told me it was in pursuit.

89 FLEEING 2

89

JOHANSEN
Release the anchor, Briden, now!

BRIDEN
Gone, sir!
(cackling)
We made it, by God, Johansen, we made it! What was that thing?

JOHANSEN
Eyes front. Don't look back, man.

BRIDEN
Why, we're safe! Look, it's not...
(he looks back, then shrilly)
It's in the water! It's coming after us!

He WAILS as his sanity gives way to pure chaos.

JOHANSEN
(to the Alert)
Come on, you old tub, give us more speed! Briden!

Briden LAUGHS maniacally!

JOHANSEN (CONT'D)
Go below and open the D-valves as far as they'll go!

BRIDEN
(faintly)
We're going to die!

JOHANSEN
Pull yourself together, man! I'm
going to bring us about. If we
can't outrun it, we'll go straight
at it!

Briden, slightly composed, MEEPS in agreement as Johansen spins the wheel.

JOHANSEN (CONT'D)
Here, man, take the...

BRIDEN
Oh God, it's right in front of us!

JOHANSEN
Give me speed, give me speed!

Great Cthulhu ROARS as it raises from the sea. The engines of the Alert HOWL as it rams into Cthulhu at top speed. There is a terrible sound of the IMPACT.

90

JOHANSEN 7

90

JOHANSEN
(narrating)
It raised up from the water. The
Alert was at full speed, and us so
close I could see every one of the
feelers on its head as we went at
it. The bowsprit went straight into
it and then there was a kind of
burst, sound and smells that there
are no words for. We were overcome
by a cloud of green and drove
straight through.

(pause)
I should have learned from Briden,
but I could not help myself - I had
to look back. That thing, somehow,
put itself together again. I leaned
on the steam and never looked
again. I did not navigate - I just
drove us straight on, away from
that place. Briden was broken, he
could only laugh, or sometimes weep
after it happened.

April 2nd there was another storm.

(MORE)

JOHANSEN (CONT'D)

I don't remember much beyond that. Perhaps I went mad too. The Vigilant found us - they had food and water. Questions. I want to be home again, so very far from that place. I tell my story to no one - who could believe such a thing. Even this I have wrote in English so my wife will not read it and think me mad. My death will be a boon if it can somehow blot out the memory of that voyage.

91 POLICE STATION 19

91

MUSICAL transition. Back in the Police station, Mallory CLOSSES Johansen's journal.

MALLORY

Poor devils. They never had a chance.

Hale RUSHES in.

HALE

(rousing him)

Jack, Jack! Did you hear me? I think I've found our man. Down under pier 8. Let's go!

MALLORY

Hale, listen...

HALE

Bring it! You can read it in the car!

Dramatic CHORD. The POLICE CAR moves through the Boston streets.

MALLORY

Listen to this. He writes: "I have all of the documents, here in this box. I have looked upon all the universe has to hold of horror. I do not think my life will be long. They found my uncle. They found Johansen. The cult still lives, you know."

HALE

Hmph, maybe he's on to something after all.

92 THURSTON 25

92

The SCRATCHING of Thurston's pen.

THURSTON

The thing still lives, too, I suppose, again in that chasm of stone which has shielded him since the sun was young. His accursed city is sunken once more, for the Vigilant sailed over the spot after the April storm; but his ministers on earth still bellow and prance and slay around idol-capped monoliths in lonely places. He must have been trapped by the sinking whilst within his black abyss, or else the world would by now be screaming with fright and frenzy. Who knows the end? What has risen may sink, and what has sunk may rise. Loathsomeness waits and dreams in the deep, and decay spreads over the tottering cities of men. A time will come - but I must not and cannot think! But someone has to know. I cannot bear the notion that this dread secret shall die with me.

93 THE MURDERER

93

The car comes to a STOP.

MALLORY

What did I tell you, Nick? It was --

HALE

Hurry, Jack, before it's too late.

Hale gets out and HURRIES away.

MALLORY

He's down under the pier?

HALE

Come on!

Hale RUNS ahead. Mallory follows. WAVES lap against the pilings.

MALLORY

He must be a member of the cult.
You sure our man's down here, Nick?

HALE

Oh yeah.

MALLORY

Maybe he can tell us more about Cth-
--

SHHHHK - a big knife is drawn from a scabbard.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

Nick? What are you doing?

HALE

How many times did I tell you not
to say that name, Jack?

MALLORY

Nick, put the knife down.

HALE

It's not meant for people like you
to say. Why couldn't you leave it
alone? It's pathetic, watching you
try piece it together, to
understand.

MALLORY

What do you mean?

HALE

Thurston had the same stupid look
on his face when I drove the knife
in.

MALLORY

You...

HALE

I wonder if Legrasse will be as
surprised. Yes, we'll be paying him
a visit too. At least I won't have
to put on that ridiculous minstrel
blackface. I never did care for
burnt cork...

MALLORY

Nick...

HALE

It's all right, Jack. You won't need to worry about Thurston or his files any more.

MALLORY

Nick, please...

Hale lunges and buries the knife into Mallory's chest. He GASPS and crumples to the ground.

HALE

His secrets will be safe with me.

The CRY of a gull. WAVES.

HALE (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh
wgah'nagl fhtagn.

94

CONCLUSION

94

END TITLE MUSIC.

ERSKINE BLACKWELL

You've been listening to H.P. Lovecraft's "The Call of Cthulhu", brought to you by our sponsor, Forhan's Toothpaste. Forhan's treats your teeth right since it's made with Zithranite! 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 Call of Cthulhu" 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, Conny Laxell, Andrew Leman, Barry Lynch, Erin Noble, David Pavao, Kevin Stidham and Time Winters. Tune in next week for "The Ghoul of Gettysburg", a thrilling Nate Ward adventure.

(MORE)

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

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Radio STATIC and fade out.