

# Dark Adventure Radio Theatre

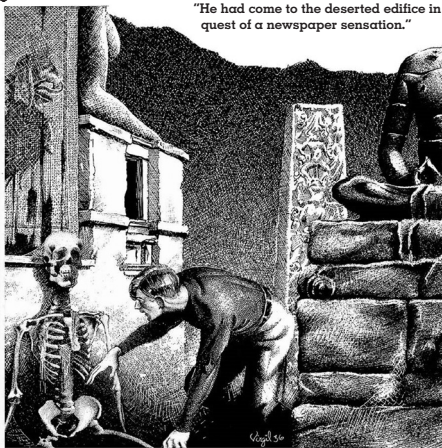
## The Players

Sean Branney... Officer Monahan, Shopkeeper, Edwin Lillibridge  
Kacey Camp... Miss Lanigan Markham, Italian Mother  
Matt Foyer... Enoch Bowen, Sgt. Kelly  
Casey Kramer... Nonna  
Andrew Leman... Fr. Bardazzi  
Jacob Andrew Lyle... Robert Blake  
Barry Lynch... Morris Herald, Mayor Doyle, Barkeeper  
Grinnell Morris... Clayton Munn, Dr. Ambrose Dexter  
David Pavao... Fireman, Heath McKerrow, Bishop Harkins  
Kevin Stidham... Clark Gamwell  
Josh Thoemke... Announcer  
Time Winters... Creighton Cobb, Chief Benson, Italian Man  
Starry Wisdom Choir: Mike Dalager, Andrew Leman & Jesse Merlin

## The Staff

Based on the story by H. P. Lovecraft  
Radio Adaptation by Stephen Woodworth and  
Sean Branney & Andrew Leman  
Original Music by Reber Clark  
Dark Adventure Theme by Troy Sterling Nies  
Vocals Recorded at The Jungle Room, Glendale, California  
Audio Engineering by Julian Beeston  
Cover and Disc Illustrations by Darrell Tutchton  
Prop Inserts by Andrew Leman  
Photo of St. John's Church by Will Hart  
Shining Trapezohedron Reliquary by Gage Prentiss  
Trapezohedron Sketch by Patrick Boerger  
Blake Letter mostly written by Clark Ashton Smith

Produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman



Above: The original illustration by Virgil Finlay from *Weird Tales*, December 1936.

Below: Could this be the real specimen that inspired the Shining Trapezohedron? Photo courtesy of Patrick Boerger.



"He had come to the deserted edifice in quest of a newspaper sensation."

## But first, a few words from our sponsor....

Among HPL's stories, "The Haunter of the Dark" is special in a few regards. First, the story has its genesis in a playful exchange with Lovecraft's friend and fellow author, Robert Bloch. In the spring of 1935, Bloch wrote a story entitled "The Shambler from the Stars" which featured an unnamed protagonist who is quite clearly a thinly-veiled version of Lovecraft. An ill-fated reading of *De Vermis Mysteriis* (a creation of Bloch's) leads to the Lovecraft character's untimely demise at the hands of a creature from beyond the stars, and a fire that burns down his house. The tale was published in the September 1935 issue of *Weird Tales*. A fan of the story then wrote to the magazine praising the piece and suggesting that Mr. Lovecraft "return the compliment, and dedicate a story to the author." Lovecraft did just that, and between November 5-9, he wrote HAUNTER, in which a fictionalized version of Robert Bloch meets an untimely death at the hands of a supernatural entity in Providence. (Bloch would go on to write a post-atomic sequel to HAUNTER in 1950 featuring Dr. Ambrose Dexter, "The Shadow from the Steeple".)

HAUNTER also makes great use of Lovecraft's beloved Providence as a setting for the story. The view which Robert Blake admires through his window is the view that Lovecraft himself enjoyed from his study at 66 Barnes Street: the Providence skyline with the distant silhouettes of the buildings on Federal Hill, including St. John's Catholic Church on Atwells Avenue. This everyday vista inspired his descriptions of the ominous Starry Wisdom steeple. (St. John's was torn down in 1992 and there is now a park on the site, but HPLHS member Will Hart snapped some good photos of it before it was lost.)

We believe that the Shining Trapezohedron might also have been inspired by a real object that Lovecraft saw, thanks to a fascinating theory shared by HPLHS member Patrick Boerger. He points out that in 1925 Lovecraft visited his friend James F. Morton at the Paterson Museum: a visit referenced in "The Call of Cthulhu", when the narrator finds an important newspaper clipping while "visiting a learned friend in Paterson, New Jersey; the curator of a local museum

and a mineralogist of note." The narrator in CTHULHU examines some of the mineral specimens, and among the geologic specimens at the real Paterson Museum there is a sample of black garnet that is indeed a trapezohedral crystal. Sadly, the museum cannot provide records from that time and we can't prove that this particular specimen was on the shelf in 1925, but it may well be that Lovecraft saw this mineral sample, or one like it, and the memory became the inspiration for the dreaded "shining trapezohedron" which makes an appearance in this tale.

Last, HAUNTER is a special tale as it is Lovecraft's last complete solo work of fiction. By the winter of 1935-36, Lovecraft found himself deeply dispirited. His inability to sell stories to publishers and the often displeasing editorial changes made by editors to his works left him feeling that he would never be able to succeed in his artistic goals by writing fiction, and from this time until his death in the spring of 1937, Lovecraft's life was marked by declining fortunes and failing health.

But "The Haunter of the Dark" is the favorite tale of many HPL fans, and its themes of immigration and xenophobia, religious freedom and newspaper sensationalism seem shockingly timely. We wish that HPL could have enjoyed the slightest inkling of the impact his fiction would have on generations to come. He'd never know that his works would eventually be published in book form (in countless editions and languages), that college courses would be taught about his works, that he'd inspire artists, musicians & filmmakers. But whether or not he can somehow see from beyond the grave the profound success of his writing career, HPL continues to haunt us all in the dark.

—SB & AHL



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