

DARK ADVENTURE RADIO THEATRE:

THE WHISPERER IN DARKNESS

Written by

Sean Branney and Andrew Leman

Based on "The Whisperer in Darkness"

By H.P. Lovecraft

Read-along Script
May 23, 2020

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This script includes material that was cut from the final version
of the show, indicated in ~~strike through text~~.

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INTRODUCTION

SFX: traditional DART static, radio tuning, snippet of '30s song, more tuning, static crossfades 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 IS SUDDENLY CUT OFF.

STATIC. SNIPPETS LIKE TUNING. INTERFERENCE.

ROOSEVELT

(via live broadcast)

...Suffolk, and Nassau Counties for
the duration of the blizzard. Due
to sub-freezing temperatures all
citizens are urged to remain in
their homes. My fellow citizens,
the only thing we have to fear is--

STATIC. Awkward CLUNKING and PAPERS RUSTLING in the studio.
He speaks mellifluously at first, but once he has no script,
his manner is very awkward as he does his best to improvise
an entire show. As the show goes on, he gets drawn into the
story and does much better.

ANNOUNCER

(vamping)

We seem to have temporarily lost
the signal from Albany, ladies and
gentlemen, but that... ah... that
was our governor, the honorable
Franklin D. Roosevelt, reminding
everyone not to go out for the
duration of the blizzard. We
~~will~~... we'll bring you up to the
minute reports as we get them,
keeping our signal on the air to
provide you with timely news
bulletins and entertainment
throughout the storm.

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MORE RUSTLING PAPER.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

~~Friends, did you know that a producer of successful musical comedies once stated that every laugh is worth one thousand dollars? How much does a grouch cost a man or woman who has it? It costs them everything: happiness, contentment, friends. Do not carry around an indigestion grouch. More careful selection of food, proper mastication, and the chewing of Beckwith's Sen-Sen Gum will go far toward keeping your digestion in good working order, and your laugh will spread sunshine and win friends. That's Beckwith's Sen-Sen Gum, the brand fortified with real cane sugar.~~

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A CHIME or GONG HIT. A PAUSE. A RUSTLE.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

(clears throat, trying to
get back into the groove)

And now, ladies and gentlemen, ~~boys and girls,~~ this is Dark Adventure Radio Theatre. For today's episode we'd planned to present H.P. Lovecraft's "The Whisperer in Darkness". Uh, due to the blizzard, Lester Mayhew, our host, is... ah... stuck at home. But with your indulgence, I'll do my best to, um, carry on in his stead.

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Paper SHUFFLING.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

A box of dictaphone recordings was recently discovered in the home of a professor at Arkham's famed Miskatonic University. The professor, Albert N. Wilmarth, was an instructor in literature and folklore, and his whereabouts are currently unknown. The recordings were found by Marjory Pittman, Professor Wilmarth's secretary. Mrs. Pittman said the professor recently returned from a trip to Vermont, and was working on a new book.

(MORE)

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

She showed police the shattered remains of a large number of additional wax phonograph cylinders in a waste bin at Professor Wilmarth's home, but was able to recover the cylinders we have here. She entrusted them to us, so we could play them for you.

He RUMMAGES though the box.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

They all appear to be numbered. So, we'll start with number one.

MECHANICAL CLUNKING, etc.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

(struggling with gear)

My apologies. One moment please, I'm fitting the cylinder onto the player. This isn't the kind of equipment we usually use here at the station, and I'm usually at the microphone, not--

(clunk)

Ah, there we go. Now, together, let's hear what we have....

The NEEDLE hits the first cylinder.

RECORDING 1

WILMARTH

(sounding quite tense and distracted)

September 19th, 1928. I'm back home now. I left Akeley's Ford at a garage near the Brattleboro station. We'll... well, we'll sort all that out later. ~~The only train I could get was the Mount Royal, I had to go south all the way to Springfield.~~ I was on the train all night, with as many cylinders as I could carry with me. The ones I made, and some of Henry's that I found and haven't even heard yet. ~~Sorry, Marjory, I'm rambling here. Just type it all for now, I'll edit and try and make sense of it all later.~~

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(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

This Akeley matter has been consuming me for, well, nearly a year now and I think it's time for me to gather my thoughts and make something out of them. ~~I'm still trying to make sense out of what I saw up in Vermont.....~~

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I can't deny I've had a bit of a shock, and I suppose even my own imagination may have gotten the better of me. I think the most important thing right now is that I've got to write it down. Once all the pieces are correlated, it stands to be the most significant look at this folklore ever - even more than the Davenport book. ~~I mean....~~

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~~(trying to convince himself)~~

~~I didn't see any actual visual horror at the end. It was just... the implications that are... Henry and I were really on to something fascinating, and if he is... I mean... I owe it to him to really explain it. To publish. And of course it would get Dean Hayes off my back. No, strike that. There's no need to put that... this is isn't about... I'm sorry, Marjory, I guess I'm still a little muddled. I should go back to the beginning.~~

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~~(He takes a breath.)~~

The whole matter began, so far as I am concerned, with the flood. And the things that people reported seeing in the waters. A disaster like that, so much destruction, so much death... it's no wonder people's imaginations got carried away. That's... that's what people do when they're confronted with incomprehensible tragedy. They find patterns, even where there aren't any, just so they can feel in control. You remember. There was that Mr. Bugby near Montpelier... ~~no, it was Bagby, with an "a". Put a call into the operator in Montpelier and see if we can get a number for him.~~

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(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

~~I may need to telephone him later
for a followup interview.~~

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~~Anyway, that Bugby, sorry, Bagby,
he told some reporter he'd been
down along the banks of the
Winooski trying to round up some of
his livestock when he saw something
in the floodwaters an organic
shape, he said, that wasn't any
kind of animal he'd ever seen or
heard of. His description was
straight out of Davenport! Of
course I thought it was... I mean
really, it was a textbook
embodiment of my argument. And that
was just one of the reports! You
know, that would be the way to
start the new book, with a thorough
review of... Let's comb through the
coverage from the Brattleboro
Reformer or maybe a transcription
of the radio coverage of the flood.
That might be--~~

MECHANICAL CLUNK and STATIC.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

Sorry, ladies and gentlemen,
everything's all right here, it's
just these dictation cylinders only
hold a few minutes of recording.
Excuse me while I put on the next
one. Let's see, this one is number
2, but it's dated "November 5,
1927". Hmm, that's almost a year
earlier than the one we just heard.
This one has a label on it from
W.R.M.U. in Arkham.

RECORDING 2

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

WWN NEWS MUSIC.

BURT PHILLIPS

Good morning - this is Burt
Phillips with Worldwide Wireless
News and our ongoing coverage of
the floods sweeping through New
England. For an update, we're
connecting to a live signal from
newsman Nelson Barr in Brattleboro,
Vermont. Nelson, can you hear me?

~~A slight kerfuffle and shuffling of news bulletins. RAIN AGAINST GLASS in the background.~~

NEWSCASTER

Yes, Burt, I'm here.

BURT PHILIPS

Tell us, Nelson, what's the current
situation there in Vermont?

NEWSCASTER

The devastation at this hour
~~throughout Vermont, New Hampshire~~
~~and upstate New York~~ is simply
unbelievable. ~~Our Montpelier~~
~~station has been inundated, and I~~
am coming to you now from high atop
the tallest structure in
Brattleboro, the seven-story Hooker-
Dunham building. The sun came up an
hour or so ago, and it's only now
that people here in Brattleboro
have been able to appreciate the
local devastation brought on by the
flood. Some of the lowest parts of
the city remain underwater. The
high water mark on stores on Main
street reaches nearly the top of
the first floor. At two o'clock
yesterday afternoon the Connecticut
River at the Vernon dam was tearing
over that structure at a height of
about 15 feet above ordinary
flashboard level, a volume of water
more than ten times above normal.
~~Perhaps most astonishing, it all~~
~~happened "out of a clear sky".~~
~~According to the records kept for~~
~~the past 18 years, there was never~~
~~so sudden and heavy a precipitation~~
~~as that which started late~~
~~Wednesday night and reached its~~
~~peak night before last, and early~~
~~yesterday morning.~~

(MORE)

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

This flood will go down in history,
ladies and gentlemen.

Ten bridges in the West River
valley have been carried away, the
chief loss being the so-called
Salmon Hole railroad bridge in
Townshend, which may mean the
stoppage of service on the West
River for several months, if not
all winter. A power plant under
development at Bellows Falls has
been destroyed, and large air
compressor tanks from that site
have been seen washing up here in
Brattleboro. The Vernon power plant
has been ordered closed to prevent
damage to the machinery, leaving
local residents without
electricity.

BURT PHILIPS
Terrible news, indeed. Have there
been any injuries or fatalities
where you are?

NEWSCASTER

So far, six bodies have been
recovered, but authorities fear
that's just the beginning. The body
of the state's Lieutenant Governor,
S. Hollister Jackson, was recovered
in Potash Brook. Jackson's car
stalled after he hit a deep hole
while attempting to drive through
the rising brook near his home at
Nelson and Tremont Streets in
Barre. According to a witness,
Jackson's hat and glasses were
knocked off, and he appeared dazed.
He began walking towards his house,
and water rushing fast enough to
cut a channel across the unpaved
street carried him for nearly a
mile. Bystanders made an attempt to
save him, as did a Vermont National
Guard detachment, but to no avail.
Dean Rowe, a teacher at Spaulding
High School recovered the body and
with the assistance of others was
able to take it to the undertaking
rooms at B.W. Hooker & Company.

(MORE)

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

~~Among the other bodies recovered so far are Gerald Brook, Ralph Winter, and tragically all three of the young Thomas boys. Searchers are out looking for others. As you can imagine, searching for survivors in all the mud and debris is a terrible task.~~

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BURT PHILIPS

~~Heartbreaking work... we wish them~~

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NEWSCASTER

(overlapping)

~~This is rural country, Burt, and in addition to the loss of human life there is uncountable devastation of livestock and wildlife. A catamount was reported on the streets of Wardsboro, and the carcasses of deer and even moose have been seen in flooded rivers. A barn formerly situated on River street in Barre was fully washed down to the corner of Center and Howard Street. I spoke to one local man who'd come down the West River from up north towards Newfane who told me he'd seen other terrible things in the water, including organic shapes unlike any kind of animal known to Vermont, or indeed anything he had ever seen before.~~

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BURT PHILIPS

What kind of things?

NEWSCASTER

(shuffles through his notes)

Let me see here... He described them as pinkish things about five feet long, with crab-like bodies bearing fins or wings and several sets of limbs. An oddly similar report came in from Caledonia County above Lyndonville. The countryside is clearly in a panic. An old Indian burial ground near Somerset was washed out, and I spoke with horrified witnesses who saw skeletal remains as far downstream as Wilmington.

BURT PHILIPS

People in the region must be at
their wits' end.

NEWSCASTER

~~There's rumors that President Coolidge will be sending aeroplanes to the stricken areas. A fund for the relief of local flood sufferers was put in motion this morning by officials of the Brattleboro club in co-operation with the American Legion, the local Red Cross, and various other organizations.~~ The weather is expected to continue cloudy and somewhat colder tonight and Sunday, with the abnormally high temperatures of recent weeks giving way with the shift of wind to westerly. The heavy rains have now moved down the St. Lawrence valley and flood waters here are beginning to subside. Remarkably, many unflappable Vermonters say they're ready to begin rebuilding immediately.

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A quick BLAST of STATIC.

BURT PHILIPS

Thank you, Nelson. Stay tuned to this wavelength for more "on-the-spot" coverage ~~every half hour.~~

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MECHANICAL CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

We all remember those terrible times. And Brattleboro wasn't even as hard hit as towns further north. Still, folks made a remarkable recovery. Um, well, here's recording number three.

RECORDING 3

NEEDLE DROP.

WILMARTH

All right, Marjory, if you'd type another letter to the editor of the Arkham Advertiser. ~~Same address as before, and carbon copy to the Reformer.~~ November 16, 1927, Dear Sir... I would like to respond yet again to the arguments put forth by ~~Irwin Marshall and recently amplified~~ in the Pendrifter column. Without realizing it, in citing the "evidence" brought to light by the recent flooding, Mr. Marshall is actually reinforcing my argument.
~~Marjory, let's put the MY in capital letters. To wit, let us consider the so called hard evidence that he cites.~~ He cites local farmers known to him who have seen quote innumerable queer footprints or tracks in the mud ~~of brook margins and barren patches,~~ and curious circles of stone not made by nature, end quote.

New paragraph. No doubt local farmers and other hill-dwelling rustics have seen indentations in the mud which they have not been able to identify. Such things happen all the time, and always have. ~~It would seem every other farmer in the region has seen these quote footprints unquote,~~ but now there is a widespread tendency to connect these sights with a primitive, half-forgotten cycle of whispered legend which old people have resurrected for the occasion.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

If you take a man whose nerves are exhausted, an uneducated man, and expose him to some unusually alarming phenomenon -- say the broken remains of some drowned and decayed person or animal -- then without even knowing that he's doing it, his unconscious mind grasps for meaning, and some half-remembered story his grandmother told him half a century ago comes to mind, and just like that, a carcass whirling in an eddy of the Winooski is transformed from being something pitiful to something fantastical!

Mr. Marshall cites more quote unquote evidence in the form of anecdotal tales told by his neighbors: tales of huge crab creatures with many pairs of legs and two great bat-like wings in the middle of the back. ~~Sometimes they walk on all their legs, and sometimes on the hindmost pair only.~~ One fellow had them in considerable numbers, wading along a brook while another fellow had them flying! A creature launching itself from the top of a lonely hill at night, then flapping its wings before vanishing in the night sky, silhouetted against the moon. Some others claim to have heard their buzzing voices in a crude imitation of human speech. Mr. Marshall seems to think that because these stories have been told multiple times, from different locations but in somewhat similar ways, means that they must have some kernel of truth. Mr. Marshall, here falls into the same pitfall as some of the students I teach in my university classes. These students embrace the tempting implications made by the writer Charles Fort, whose extravagant books have been best sellers in recent years. Fort equates reports with evidence.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

In a court of law, this kind of "evidence" is called hearsay, and it is generally inadmissible because it doesn't prove anything.

New paragraph. There is a simple reason why such tales are told many times in many places by many people, and it isn't because they're true. It's because they are the kind of universal and self-reinforcing legends of natural personification which filled the ancient world with fauns and dryads and satyrs. I have investigated such stories for years. It's how folklore comes to be. These tales of monstrous bodies in the rivers of New England are nothing new. More than 150 years ago, the celebrated folklorist Eli Davenport collected stories just like these - ~~some from Indian legends, some brought over by Scots Irish immigrants.~~ They all share the same central notion: a hidden race of monstrous beings which lurks somewhere among the remoter hills - in the deep woods of the highest peaks. And the phenomenon is not unique to New England. You'll also find Anatolian legends of the kallikantzaroi, and even tales of the mysterious "mi-go" in distant Tibet. Sit down with an Irishman and he can tell you many a fine story about a leprechaun. And he'll swear it's all true. Mind you, he cannot show you one, but he'll claim to know someone who has seen them. Such yarns can't be taken seriously beyond the flicker of a campfire or hearthside.

So, I hope that Mr. Marshall and his friends will desist in their efforts to perpetuate these ancestral tales as some kind of truth. The truth of the matter is that in the wake of the recent floods, the good people of Vermont will be better served by employing rational thought to the many challenges affecting the region.

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WILMARSH (CONT'D)

Your obedient servant, Albert N. Wilmarth, Professor of Folklore, etcetera, etcetera. Marjory, feel free to clean this up a bit if you think it needs it. I don't want to sound too--

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

~~Well, the professor certainly gives his dictaphone a work out!~~ Um... here's the next recording. This one is labelled
 (stumbling on the name)
 "Tantaquidgeon Field Interview,
 February 19, 1928, Cylinder A16"

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RECORDING 4

NEEDLE DROP. A different audio quality. Some MECHANICAL KERFUFFLE at first, voices going on and off mike.

WILMARSH

(in media res)
 ...how to work one of these things,
 don't you?

GLADYS

Oh my, yes. I've made plenty of my own field recordings, Mr. Wilmarth.

WILMARSH

~~Of course, I should have known. Dr. Speck speaks very highly of your work. You studied at Penn for, what, six years?~~

GLADYS

Seven.

WILMARSH

~~And now he says you're working on a book of your own?~~

GLADYS

~~Yes, a study of Delaware Indian medicine practice and folk beliefs.~~

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WILMARTH

(jokingly)
~~Ah. So we could call you a medicine woman then?~~

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GLADYS

(friendly but serious)
~~Oh, Professor, please don't. I have been training in the ways of my people since I was five years old, but that is a sacred title I have yet to earn.~~

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WILMARTH

(a little embarrassed)
~~Of course. All right, I'm speaking to Gladys Tantaquidgeon, at her home in Quinnetucket, Connecticut. Thank you for sitting down with me. I presume Frank told you what I was interested in?~~

GLADYS

~~Yes, the legends of the "old ones". Because of the floods.~~

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WILMARTH

~~Davenport says the Abenaki people called them "Winged Ones"?~~

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GLADYS

~~He didn't quite get that right.~~
~~Technically that's a Pennacook name. I'm Mohegan. But it was the Pennacook who said the Winged Ones came from the Great Bear in the sky. They came to our mountains because they were hungry for a kind of stone which they could not find on any other world.~~

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WILMARTH

~~Really?~~

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GLADYS

~~Yes, the Winged Ones were not native to this earth. The mountains were only an outpost for them. They would dig up the stone and then fly back to their own stars. There uncounted numbers of them lived in vast dark villages.~~

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(MORE)

GLADYS (CONT'D)

According to the Pennacook, the Winged Ones would cause no harm to people if they were left in peace, but bad things happened to those who got too near to them ~~or tried to spy upon them.~~

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WILMARTH

~~What would happen?~~

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GLADYS

~~Young hunters were warned not to go too far up certain mountains or into any deep gorges if the wolves shunned them. Some went anyway they never came back.~~

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WILMARTH

Ah, I see.

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GLADYS

It was also bad to listen to the Winged Ones.

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WILMARTH

They spoke to the Pennacook? How?
~~With signs or~~

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GLADYS

They whisper at night in the forest, with voices like bees. Voices that were shadows of the voices of men. The Winged Ones knew the words of the Pequot and Algonquin, and the tongue of the Tuscarora. ~~Then French and English too. Yes, Puritan settlers had run ins as well. Hermits and remote farmers sometimes seemed changed they were shunned as mortals who had sold themselves to the strange beings.~~ But between themselves Those Ones have no need to talk. They speak only to men.

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WILMARTH

(surprised)

I notice you speak of them in the present tense. Do you believe they are real? That they exist?

GLADYS

I... respect the belief of those that do.

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GLADYS (CONT'D)

My great aunt, Fidelia Fielding, was the last living speaker of our Mohegan-Pequot dialect. She spoke to me of the Little People who live in the woods, the Makiawisug. I recall that on one occasion there was a family dinner in the old parsonage, a half a mile down the road from here. At one point, she told one of the relatives that she was stepping outside for a minute to talk to the Little People, "someone in the tree" . . . ~~some of the younger members regarded her as~~ "quite different", and they laughed. She used to visit my family because we didn't ridicule her - we just listened. ~~As you know yourself, not everyone believes in contact with the Little People.~~

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WILMARTH

Well, you see

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GLADYS

My mission is to preserve indigenous culture, Professor, not as data in a study, or mere artifacts in a museum, but as a living thing, in my heart.

WILMARTH

I see. And what became of them?
The Pennacook, I mean.

GLADYS

(sad)

~~Mmmm. They had a bad time of it. Typical in many ways. They were among the first tribes to make contact with Europeans. They were vulnerable to new diseases the sickness reduced their numbers. The Mohawk and Miemac tribes seized the opportunity and took their lands. Their chief, Passaconaway, sought to make peace with the English settlers who came to the region. His successor, Wonalancet, tried to remain neutral through King Philips War but... that didn't go well either. His people fled north into the mountains, no longer a true tribe.~~

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(MORE)

GLADYS (CONT'D)

They were absorbed into other stronger tribes until they, like your Winged Ones, exist only in memories... legends.

(emphatic)

But the one thing I want you to remember, Mr. Wilmarth is--

WILMARSH

Hold that thought, won't you? Let me put on a new cylinder.

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

The next recording is on a different brand of cylinder, and appears to have been mailed **to** Professor Wilmarth. Number five...

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 5

AKELEY

May 5, 1928. Mister Wilmarth, I hope that you'll pardon the inconvenience of my sending you this recording and hope that ~~through your affiliation with the university~~, a suitable player will be available to you. ~~If you're hearing this I suppose my hope has been fulfilled.~~ I used to write letters often, but my arthritis prevents me from doing so any longer. I don't have a typewriter, but my son George gave me this dictation recorder that I'm using now.

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My name is Henry W. Akeley, and I live in Townshend, Vermont. I read with great interest the Brattleboro Reformer's reprint of your letter on the recent stories of strange bodies seen floating in our flooded streams last fall, ~~and on the curious folklore they so well agree with.~~

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(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

I myself have looked into this matter in great depth for many years. I became interested in the topic when I studied anthropology in college years ago. I've followed much of the academic literature you cited, ~~Frazer, Murray, G. Elliot Smith and so on,~~ and I believe I understand your position quite well.

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(brief pause)

But, I must say that I am afraid your adversaries are nearer right than yourself, ~~even though all reason seems to be on your side.~~ In fact, they have no idea how right they are. ~~Please understand, were it not for what I have seen, I would be wholly on your side.~~

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(deep breath)

To get right to the point, I can assure you that monstrous things do indeed live in the woods on the high hills of this region. I readily admit that I have not seen any of the things floating in the rivers, as reported, but I have seen ~~things like them under...~~ ~~other circumstances.~~ I have seen their footprints, and of late have seen them nearer my own home. And I have overheard voices in the woods that I could not even begin to describe.

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I appreciate that you are a man of science - that is why I'm reaching out to you - and as such you require evidence. I have recorded their strange buzzing voices with this very machine, sir, and I'm willing to share my recording with you. I genuinely wish to know what a scholar like you can make of it.

My object in contacting you is not to start an argument like those in the papers. This discussion is private, and publicly I am on your side. But sir, it is true - terribly true - that there are non-human creatures watching us all the time. Worse, they have placed spies among us to gather information.

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AKELEY (CONT'D)

~~It is from one of those spies that I got a large part of my clues to the matter. I suspect there are others.~~

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I don't know what it is they get up to, but whatever it is, they wish to go about their business undiscovered by mankind. ~~That's why they mean to get rid of me because of what I've discovered.~~
There is a great black stone with unknown hieroglyphics half worn away which I found in the woods on Round Hill, east of here. I took it home with me and after that, everything changed. ~~I think they mean to kill me or possibly something worse.~~

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(composing himself)

This leads me to my secondary purpose in contacting you: namely, to urge you to hush up the present debate rather than give it more publicity. People must be kept away from these hills. ~~We mustn't further rouse anyone's curiosity.~~
There's trouble enough with these real estate men flooding Vermont with herds of summer people ~~trying to overrun these hills with cheap bungalows.~~ I sincerely hope you'll consider refraining from any continuation of the debate in public.

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I welcome further communication with you, and can try to send you my phonograph recording of them if you like. I say "try" because I think those creatures have a way of tampering with things around here. As I said, they have human spies working on their behalf. Little by little they are trying to cut me off from our world because I know too much about theirs. If things get worse, I may have to leave this part of the country and go to live with my son in San Diego.

They seem to be making an effort to get the black stone back.

(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

~~I have some large police dogs and they've been very effective in keeping them at bay. Their approaches have been clumsy their wings seem ill suited for short flights on earth.~~ I am on the brink of deciphering that stone and with your knowledge of folklore you may be able to supply missing links. I suspect you're familiar with the myths antedating the coming of man to the earth

(whispering)

the Yog-Sothoth and Cthulhu cycles hinted at in the *Necronomicon*. I read that book too, at the Widener, and I've heard you've got a copy there at Miskatonic. I think, Mr. Wilmarth, that we can be very useful to each other.

~~I will drive down to Newfane or Brattleboro to send whatever items you authorize me to send; the express offices there are more to be trusted. I live quite alone now, since the last of my hired help quit. No one would want to stay now with the things trying to get near the house at night, and the constant barking of the dogs.~~ I am glad I wasn't so involved in this business while my wife was alive - it would have driven her mad.

I hope you won't think me a madman myself. I appreciate your taking the time to listen and to carefully consider the matter and very much hope you'll write back. ~~My address is on the envelope.~~

Oh, sorry, one more thing. I am making some extra prints of photographs I've taken. I have no doubt but that they'd pique your interest. ~~I can send you these very soon if you are interested.~~

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

STUDIO

CYLINDER SWAPPING.

ANNOUNCER

Hmm. I wasn't expecting that... All right, folks. This one's labeled six.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 6

WILMARSH

Marjory, um, please type the following letter. Henry W. Akeley. R.F.D. #2, Townshend, Windham Co., Vermont. 10 May 1928. Dear Mr. Akeley, Thank you for your letter -- strike that -- message of the fifth. I'm pleased to say that I have my own Dictograph machine, so that playing your recording is... Ah, my apologies Mr. Akeley - I'd intended that my secretary type this as a letter and it just dawned on me, there's no reason for that. I'll just record and post the cylinder directly to you.

Uh, so... I was greatly interested to receive your letter, well...
~~your recording. As I said, I have a portable dictaphone device of my own which I have found immensely useful for interviewing subjects and collecting oral traditions for my research.~~

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I must admit that I'm fascinated by your alleged accounts of first hand experiences and the physical evidence you've collected regarding this... topic. You clearly have the intelligence and insight which, if you'll pardon my saying so, not all rustics I've contacted in your region possess.

*
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(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

I am in the early stages of preparing a treatise on the topic - something to bridge the gap between the early research of Eli Davenport and the more contemporary view of New England folklore one sees today. I must say I would be keenly interested in learning more about these "firsthand experiences" you've had. And of course, the Kodak prints and your "field recording" would be invaluable to my research. All of which is to say, if you would be willing to post them to me in a future...

(with a slight chuckle)

I was going to say "letter", but let's say along with your next recording, I would be most grateful. I look forward to continuing this most engaging conversation. This... exchange of recordings, well... I think it might be fun.

Cordially, Albert Wilmarth.

There's a few seconds of SPINNING CYLINDER.

STUDIO

MECHANICAL KERFLUFFLE and CYLINDER SWAP.

ANNOUNCER

~~Sorry there, that was a short one.~~
This next one, number seven, is labelled May 12th. Hmm, that's just a couple of days later.

*

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 7

AKELEY

Hello, Mr. Wilmarth. I'm so pleased that my recording to you seems to have been received in the spirit in which it was sent. I was actually quite pleased that you sent me the recording of yourself rather than a letter.

(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

It gets lonely up here and playing your recording was like sitting down to chat with a new friend. I thank you for it.

As promised, I'm enclosing a series of Kodak prints I took in the vicinity of my farm. Some are slightly farther off, at Round Hill and Dark Mountain, but they're all near here. I've labeled each photo on the back.

If you find the photo marked "A", I think you'll find it interesting for a couple of reasons. This is a close view of one of the footprints, ~~or perhaps we should say claw prints~~, which I referred to previously. There are innumerable such prints in the area, and ~~I have many more Kodaks of them which I could send you.~~ This one in particular though captures a very distinct impression. You can see the creature has some weight as the lowest point in the print is perhaps an inch and a half below the level of the ground. ~~If I'd been thinking, I would have photographed my own footprint in the mud adjacent to it my own print wasn't quite as deep in the mud as this print is.~~ I thought this print might also be of interest as it was taken at the edge of the road in front of my home, not far from my mail box. It's hard to tell what direction is the front or the back. I grew up hunting in the area and I can assure you the spacing of the prints are unlike any animal tracks I've ever seen. ~~Sometimes they are spaced as if the creature that makes them has very short legs, or perhaps just more than four. It's hard to understand just how they move from the prints.~~

Photo B is one I took in my parlor of the Black Stone I referred to previously.

(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

~~I put my pipe on the table next to it to give you a sense of the scale of the thing.~~ Its shape is so unusual, one might think it were sculpted or manufactured somehow. I don't think that's the case though. I'm sure you've seen geologic samples in your university's museum which display an unsettling geometry which is a result of perfectly natural geologic forces. I think that's the case here. What of course is not natural is the unmistakable writing on the thing. I'd be curious to hear what you make of the writing - I've a few theories of my own, but I'd like to hear your opinions before I share my current theory. ~~Where is Chappellion when we need him, eh?~~

The Kodak doesn't perfectly capture the characters - you'll find them to be quite distinct when I send you the stone and you can examine it in person.

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Photo C is a view of the standing stones on the summit of Dark Mountain. ~~The stone circle has been up there forever.~~ You might remember in Davenport's book, Indians he interviewed claimed that the stones were put there long before men came to the area. It's hard to make out, but if you use a magnifier, you might just be able to see that the lighter colored areas at the base of the stones are masses of footprints of the creatures.

*
*

A DOG BARKS in the distance.

AKELEY (CONT'D)

I think they use them in some kind of ritualistic way. It's fascinating to think perhaps they have their own culture and rituals. Just a moment, the dogs are--

The recording stops - there's a moment of STATIC before it starts again.

AKELEY (CONT'D)

Where was I... Ah, I have included a few other Kodaks of the house, farm and so forth. There's one I took with a timer. Don't be frightened by the bearded monstrosity with the rifle kneeling next to the dogs.

(a small chuckle)

The dogs really are my only friends these days and the creatures don't seem to like them at all. And boy do the dogs ever hate those footprints when we find them near the house. It's clear they pick up some kind of scent near them.

I have a few more theories about the things that I'd like to run past you, but I don't think I can talk fast enough to fit it all on this the remaining portion of this cylinder. One moment here and I'll start a fresh one...

The DISTANT DOG BARKS again. Some KERFUFFLE. SPINNING CYLINDER. MECHANICAL CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

Hmmm. That cylinder has a tag that says it's the first of four, but the next one looks like it was posted *from* Wilmarth, not to him. Maybe the rest of Akeley's message isn't here. Well, let's move on to recording number eight. Dated a week later.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 8

WILMARSH

May 16, 1928 - Hello, again, Mr. Akeley. I received your most recent recordings - receiving four cylinders was a welcome surprise, as, of course, were the Kodak prints. They were, quite simply, fascinating.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

To tell the truth, I found myself up late into the evening, studying them in detail with my magnifier.

I appreciated the photos of yourself and your farm - they gave one a sense of context to the whole matter that we're discussing. Your mention of the "monstrosity" certainly gave me a chuckle.

The footprint certainly is puzzling. It appears that there's two outer convex indentations in it, suggesting something slightly akin to a lobster's claw or a crab's pincers. The indentation is so distinct, it suggested to me that the... well, let's call it a foot of the thing, must be of a hard kind of tissue. To see such a thing so near your own home must be, well...

(pause)

The photograph that most captivated me was of the Black Stone. Truly, I've never seen anything like it, and I've seen the Naacal tablets. Well, photos of them. I've seen sealstones engraved in Linear A. My colleague Nathaniel Ward has shown me some paleolithic pieces that... well I suppose that's another matter entirely. If that Black Stone's not man-made, or... well, it's certainly hard to know what to make of it. You rightly mentioned geologic forces can create samples of remarkable shapes and symmetry, but I really was unprepared for this.

Some of the characters did seem reminiscent of hieroglyphs I saw in the Necronomicon, but I would want to consult with it again before arriving firmly at a conclusion that they were indeed the same characters. Even then, I'm not a trained linguist.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

But I'd also be eager to examine the stone in person and see if there are effacements or other indicators of how the characters were cut or impressed into the surface of it. I'm wondering if Bill Dyer in our Geology Department might be prevailed upon to help us determine what the chemical makeup of the stone itself is. I have no doubt he'd find it a deeply interesting specimen. Colleagues in our Chemistry and Astronomy departments too would be very excited to take a look at a specimen like this. All of which is to say, if you'd be willing to send it my way, I would be very interested to see it and would happily reimburse you for any expenses incurred.

Likewise, I am eager to hear your field recording of the famed "buzzing voices" of the creatures. In reading Davenport I've always tried to imagine just what his subjects are describing. All the reports are so vague. To hear the sounds playing from my own dictaphone machine would be a huge boon to my research.

I was equally impressed by what you had to say in the latter half of your last sending. The things that you seem to have seen and heard are certainly... unsettling. I must say the details you provided have definitely given me a lot to think about, and I tend to agree with your view that these... morbidities and the Himalayan Mi-Go are probably one and the same order of... phenomenon.

Without an actual biological specimen, I fear our efforts at taxonomy are largely conjecture.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

Even if one had a specimen or even a tissue sample, I'm afraid I'm not qualified to speculate on whether they're animal, vegetable, or some kind of fungoid creature as you suggest. I might consult a member of the zoology faculty here as well, Reginald Dexter. May I ask how you arrived at your theory that they have electrons with a wholly different vibration-rate from ours? Yes, it might explain why they can't be photographed on ordinary camera films and plates - but I'd need a physicist to walk me through how such a thing could be possible.

Before I run out of room, I wanted to address your point about not letting the debate continue in public. I'm willing to promise you that I won't send any more letters to any more editors. But I would very much like to continue talking with you. And I would like to see that stone with my own eyes. And while I'm interested in what my colleagues at the university might have to say about it, you have my word that I'll refrain from sharing it with anyone without your express advance consent. I hope that you are keeping well and eagerly await your next recording and the chance to review this additional evidence.
Best regards,
Albert Wilmarth.

SPINNING, CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

The next recording is dated June 2, 1928.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 9

AKELEY

My dear Wilmarth, if we are to continue our collaborative inquiry into the matter then I am afraid I must insist that you call me Henry.

(gentle laugh)

I am pleased to hear that you found the Kodaks compelling. In lieu of being here and seeing these things in person, they're the next best thing. I appreciate your eagerness to examine the Black Stone and hear the recording of the creatures. Believe me, I'm eager to share them with you. However, it is essential that I take precautions.

I believe I mentioned in a previous recording that there are spies. I am now quite certain of the fact that they have some humans working in league with them. The creatures themselves are limited in how they can move about and, of course, wish to remain unseen. But their human allies can do their bidding out in the open and as such present a hazard to inquiries like yours and mine.

I'm certain that one of their agents was a fellow who lived the next valley over up above the bridge. This whole past year he'd been paying more attention to me than was necessary, coming by, asking lots of questions about things I might have seen or heard. I got word two months ago that he'd taken his own life. If you'd known the fellow... well, he just wasn't the type. I'm confident that it was their doing. Maybe somehow he'd wronged or offended them and they concluded their relationship. There's another farmer, Walter Brown, lives down the valley a piece - I'm pretty confident he's in league with them too.

(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

Don't dismiss this as the ramblings of a paranoid old coot, Mr. Wilmarth. I'm a keen judge of character and I can assure you, they do have spies. I suspect they can listen in on my telephone calls and they're surveilling my mail. Our exchange of cylinders may have been a fortuitous advantage for us. Had we been sending letters, they'd probably open them and read them, but I doubt there's many other folks up this way who can play a dictaphone cylinder. My point here is that caution is necessary with my field recording of the creatures, and particularly with the Black Stone. I'll post this cylinder from the local post office in Newfane, but I'll make the drive down to Brattleboro in my old Ford and post the field recording from there. To be on the safe side, Wilmarth, don't play it for anyone else. Not yet anyway. I'm sure your colleagues are all qualified, decent men, but I think it's most prudent if we keep this between ourselves for the time being. If the hill creatures are keeping an eye on me, they may well have people out there keeping an eye on you. I don't say this to frighten you - I just think we should exercise some caution. I don't even go into Townshend for supplies now except in broad daylight. But I think you need to hear that field recording, so I'll send it. Once you've heard it, let me know what you think.

Take care, Henry.

SPINNING, CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

All right, Ladies and Gentlemen, cylinder number 10 here is one of those old Blue Amberol records.

(MORE)

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Ah, it's dated on the sleeve here,
probably by Mr. Akeley: "May 1st,
1915, 1 a.m., near cave, Dark
Mountain".

Some MECHANICAL KERFLUFFLE.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Sorry, these old recordings are
brittle. I don't want to break it -
I'm rather eager to hear this
"field recording" myself. Bear with
me for a moment please.

KERFLUFFLE, NEEDLE DROP. Relieved SIGH.

RECORDING 10

A more Mythophonic sound quality. A series of
INDISTINGUISHABLE SOUNDS - as Akeley sets up the recorder in
the woods. CRICKETS, WIND, etc.

NOYES

(cultivated Bostonian)

...is the Lord of the Woods, even
to (the ends of time) and the gifts
of the men of Leng (are deemed
worthy) so from the wells of night
to the gulfs of space, and from the
gulfs of space to the wells of
night, ever the praises of Great
Cthulhu, of Tsathoggua, and of Him
Who is not to be Named. Ever Their
praises, and abundance to the Black
Goat of the Woods. Iä! Shub-
Niggurath! The Goat with a Thousand
Young!

In response is a voice that is a weird buzzing imitation of
human speech.

MI-GO

Iä! Shub-Niggurath! The Black Goat
of the Woods with a Thousand Young!

NOYES

And it has come to pass that the
Lord of the Woods, being (host of
the) seven and nine, down the onyx
steps --

(static)

(MORE)

NOYES (CONT'D)
 (tri)butes to Him in the Gulf,
 Azathoth, He of Whom Thou hast
 taught us marv(els) . . . on the
 wings of night out beyond space,
 out beyond th(e furthest reach) to
 That whereof Yuggoth is the
 youngest child, rolling alone in
 black aether at the rim. . . .

MI-GO

. . . go out among men and find the
 ways thereof, that He in the Gulf
 may know. To Nyarlathotep, Mighty
 Messenger, must all things be told.
 And He shall put on the semblance
 of men, the waxen mask and the robe
 that hides, and come down from the
 world of Seven Suns to mock. . . .

NOYES

. . . (Nyarl)athotep, Great
 Messenger, bringer of strange joy
 to Yuggoth through the void, Father
 of the Million Favoured Ones,
 Stalker among. . . .

The recording abruptly cuts off. SPINNING.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER
 (slightly rattled)
 That... that was unusual. Just to
 be clear, the record didn't break,
 but it does just suddenly stop
 there. All right, let me put this
 one away.

MECHANICAL KERFLUFFLE.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
 Here we are, number eleven. This is
 again one of the newer cylinders -
 the kind Wilmarth's been using.
 This one is dated July 10, 1928.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 11

WILMARTH

Henry, I'm concerned that you did not receive my previous recording. I received your field recording on July 1 and posted a cylinder back to you on the 2nd. It's hard to imagine that you wouldn't have received it by now. Either you didn't get my recording, or you did receive it and I haven't received your reply. You said something earlier about your mail being "interfered with". Do you think one of these spies might have confiscated a cylinder? Hard to imagine what they'd do with it. Has that Walter Brown character you mentioned before been around the farm?

I hadn't thought of it before, but if we were sending traditional letters, we could keep carbon copies in case of such an eventuality. Once a cylinder has been mailed off - there's no record of it at all. I'll keep my fingers crossed that tomorrow's post might bring your response, and meanwhile I'll see if I can talk to one of the students here about setting up some kind of duplicate recorder so I can at least have copies of the messages I send to you.

It goes without saying that I was astonished by your recording of... them. I assume the first voice must be that of someone in league with them - maybe one of these spies you've mentioned? Did you get a real look at that person? Do you recognize the voice? He doesn't sound like he's from Vermont, that's for certain. And the other voice... Well, I can understand now why everyone has such a hard time describing it, though I'd say Davenport was right on the mark when he called it a buzzing imitation of human speech.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

There were a number of words that I couldn't catch - I hope to get a word in with Henry Armitage at the library and see if he might recognize any of them. Don't worry, I won't play the recording or explain the source of the words.

Regarding the Black Stone, I think perhaps you're right that it would be safer if you weren't to initiate the shipment yourself. I will wire the railway and make arrangements for delivery. Once a plan is in place, I'll wire you with the particulars and you can drop off the stone at the station in Brattleboro. I can then send you a follow-up wire to let you know that it's arrived safely. I hope everything is all right with you, Henry. This interruption in our communication has been... troubling. I very much hope to hear from you soon.

Yours truly, Albert.

SPINNING, CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

Recording twelve is dated July
19th, 1928.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 12

This one has a different audio quality and starts with a rushed and flustered Wilmarth firing up the recorder to capture a phone call. We hear the very quiet sound of a voice in the earpiece.

WILMARTH

(agitated)

Hold the line please, I'm connecting a recorder.... This is my second attempt to track...

AWKWARD MECHANICAL NOISES.

WILMARTH (CONT'D)
Can you hear me?

BOSTON AGENT
(through the dictaphone's
speaker)
Yes.

WILMARTH
I'm sorry, would you repeat what
you said a moment ago?

BOSTON AGENT
Like I said, after your call
yesterday, I spoke to Thomas, the
railway express clerk from the B&M
5508. He said that train pulled in
to North station about 35 minutes
late, but there was no package
addressed to you on it.

WILMARTH
No, that can't be. My friend sent
me a wire saying he put the package
on the train in Bellows Falls
himself. How could he--

BOSTON AGENT
Now Thomas did say that he had an
argument with some fella when the
train was waiting at the station in
Keene.

WILMARTH
An argument? What about? With who?

BOSTON AGENT
~~Ah... He said he was a rustic-~~
~~looking fella with a queer voice.~~

WILMARTH
~~What do you mean?~~

BOSTON AGENT
He said the fella's voice was so
thick and droning, made him kind a
dizzy to listen do it.

WILMARTH
Well, what does this have to do
with my missing package?

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BOSTON AGENT

Well it seems this fellow was also very concerned about some heavy box that he was expecting, but it wasn't even on the company's books. I'm sorry, sir, but it's not clear to me either. Thomas couldn't quite recall the upshot. Said his head cleared up once the train began to move.

WILMARTH

Was he drunk? Is he the sort of fellow one can trust?

BOSTON AGENT

Oh, no, sir. He's wholly reliable.
~~Been with the railway a few years now, handled plenty of valuable freight.~~

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*

WILMARTH

(annoyed)

Well, this was... it's a very important package.

BOSTON AGENT

Oh, yes, sir.

WILMARTH

From... a friend who's in trouble.

BOSTON AGENT

We do apologize, sir. We've got your information. We'll make sure everyone keeps an eye out for it.

WILMARTH

(not assuaged)

You do that.

CLICK. Wax STATIC and WILMARTH MUTTERING. CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

The next recording is from August 15th, 1928, which is about three weeks later.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 13

DOGS BARK in the background.

AKELEY

(scared)

Wilmarth... I'm afraid the situation has become a little more tense up here. The hill creatures and the people working with them are very actively harassing me now. I'm sure now their goal to drive me off. I mean, I suppose if they really wanted to kill me they'd just come and do it. They've shot two of my guard dogs this week. I saw a couple of bullet holes in my Ford - fortunately the thing still runs. It's worst at night. Cloudy nights where there's no moon - they're terrible. I have to be careful, even during the day.

I've tried to talk with a couple of my neighbors. They all think I've flipped my lid. "Crazy old Henry". If they only knew... I tried to call the sheriff after they shot Ajax, the second dog. The line was dead. I went out and traced it - the whole line was cut - right where it comes out of the main line to run out to my house. There was a myriad of claw-prints in the road, with ordinary human footprints among them. Later I went to Brattleboro and picked up several cases of ammunition for my big-game repeating rifle. I'll be ready for them this time. And that business with the Black Stone...

(hushed)

I don't reckon it's still on this planet. It's a bad business, Wilmarth.

(getting emotional)

I don't want to leave but... if it stays on like this I may not have a choice but to go.

(with a snort)

California... I hate the thought of leaving here - my grandfather built this farm. My wife and I raised George here. Now though...

(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

I probably couldn't sell the place to anyone. And in good conscience, I wouldn't want anyone else living here.

(sigh)

I should just stop all this. Then maybe they'll let me be. It'd be better if you just kept out of all this Wilmarth. Leave it alone. Completely. I'm sorry. I can't tell you how much I've appreciated your professionalism in all this... and your friendship. This will be my last recording. I'll take it down to the post office in Brattleboro myself. After you listen to this, destroy it. Please don't send anything else to me. I just can't take the risk. Take care of yourself, Wilmarth.

Henry.

SPINNING and CLUNKING.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

(a touch of concern in his voice)

Oh... The next is dated August 20, 1928.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 14

The Western Union operator is a voice over the phone. Quality better than the last time. MECHANICAL CLUNKING. PHONE RINGING OVER THE LINE.

WESTERN UNION

(cheerfully)

Western Union. It's wise to wire.
How can I help you?

WILMARSH

(tense)

I'd like to send a wire.

WESTERN UNION

Certainly, sir. May I have your name?

WILMARTH

Albert N. Wilmarth.

WESTERN UNION

And the recipient? What's the address?

WILMARTH

Henry Akeley. That's A.K.E.L.E.Y.
R.F.D. #2, Townshend, Windham Co.,
Vermont. ~~Townshend has an H in it.~~

*

WESTERN UNION

~~I'm sorry?~~

*

*

WILMARTH

~~Townshend is T.O.W.N.S.H.E.N.D.~~

*

*

WESTERN UNION

Mmhmm. And the message, sir?

WILMARTH

I would like to come up and help deal with situation. Period. Feel partially responsible for your predicament. Period. I will take up issues with local authorities on your behalf. Period. Able to come as soon as next week. Period. Please do not hesitate to let me know what you would like me to do. Period. Got that?

WESTERN UNION

(skeptically)

Yes sir. Will this be full rate service sir?

WILMARTH

Yes.

WESTERN UNION

Very well. That will be... five dollars and twenty-five cents.

WILMARTH

What? That's outrageous!

WESTERN UNION

~~A deferred service would be more
affordable, sir. You could send it
by night letter for only \$3.87.~~

*
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*
*

WILMARTH

~~No, no, it's urgent! He's under...
It needs to be...~~

*
*
*

WESTERN UNION

You could save words by using a
standard code book. Even two entire
sentences. Blackburn's, perhaps, or
the R12?

WILMARTH

I can't imagine he has a code book.

WESTERN UNION

(a whiff of annoyance)

Then may I suggest eliminating all
the punctuation and replacing the
final sentence with the simple
phrase "please advise". That will
save you a dollar eighty.

WILMARTH

Please advise. Yes, that works.
Thank you.

WESTERN UNION

Anything else, sir?

WILMARTH

(cagey)

The recipient. He's had issues
where his mail has been interfered
with - can I be certain--

WESTERN UNION

Sir, no one interferes with Western
Union. No one.

WILMARTH

Excellent. Thank you. Thank you
very much for your help.

WESTERN UNION

The charge will be added to your
telephone bill. Thank you for using
Western Union. Good day.

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

*

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

The next recording, ladies and gentlemen, has a note attached to its sleeve with a rubber band.
 "Recovered from Akeley's - never sent." Dated early September, 1928.
 Hmm. Well, it is numbered fifteen.
 Let's hear it.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 15

FRIGHTENED DOGS can be heard barking constantly in the background.

AKELEY

(breathless)

If this recording is found and I am no longer alive, please get it to Albert Wilmarth, care of Miskatonic University in Arkham, Massachusetts. Albert, this may be the end. I wanted you to... They're outside right now. They're never going to let me go to Califor--

GUNFIRE OUTSIDE.

AKELEY (CONT'D)

Sonsabitches! They're pushing harder with their siege on my house. Last night, one of the things landed on my roof. I could hear the buzzing. I turned Jemma, my big Alsatian bitch on the thing and she tore into it. The thing died, right there on my lawn. I saw it, up close Wilmarth. I touched it - I actually touched it, Albert. As soon as the sun was up though, the carcass decayed fast - evaporated. It was horrible. Even worse than we had guessed from the --

DISTANT NOISES.

NOYES

(shouting from outside)

Akeley!

AKELEY
 (whispering into recorder)
 Albert, listen. Can you hear them?
 (yelling to the outside)
 Go on now. Git! All of you! You
 leave me alone, I'll leave them
 alone.

NOYES
 (distant and indistinct)
 That's no longer possible. Time to
 end this, Mr. Akeley..

WEIRD BUZZING outside.

AKELEY
 (loud but off mike)
 Get away from here, whoever you
 are. I've got a rifle. I'll shoot
 you! I'll shoot them too. You can't
 make me go.

DOGS BARKING.

MI-GO
 (indistinct buzzing)
 (He is unworthy of the) wonder and
 glory of Yuggoth.

AKELEY
 I'm not going. Ever!

NOYES
 Be reasonable, Mr. Akeley. Let me
 explain some things to you, and you
 might feel differently.

Henry CHUCKLES to himself at the very idea of it.

NOYES (CONT'D)
 They have some very interesting
 things to say, Mr. Akeley.

AKELEY
 Go to hell! I'm not listening. Go.
 You hear me?

He CHAMBERS A ROUND in his rifle.

AKELEY (CONT'D)
 I got one of 'em last night, I know
 I can kill some more.

NOYES

It doesn't have to be like this,
Mr. Akeley.

AKELEY

Just go! I'm done talking about
'em. Just leave me in peace.

NOYES

It's too late for that now. More
are coming, Akeley. Many, many
more. You can't fight them. Come
with us. You'll be fine. Better
than fine. You might be surprised.

A RUSH OF MOVEMENT. BLAM from Akeley's rifle! YELLING and BUZZING outside. FRANTIC DOGS.

AKELEY

(into mike)

Wilmarth, I'm sorry I ever... I
think--

BLAM from OUTSIDE.

BLAM, BLAM, BLAM, BLAM! GLASS SHATTERS and splinters fly in a hail of gunfire. Dog WHIMPERING. The shooting stops and it's quiet for a moment. There's a weird THUMP as a large object makes contact with the exterior of Akeley's house. A BUZZING sound increases in volume.

AKELEY (CONT'D)

(whispering into mic,
desperate)

Did you hear that? The buzzing...
They're coming! Wilmarth, whatever
happens to me, don't come up here.
I beg you. Don't mix up in--

Wilmarth's door starts to SPLINTER open as the recording cuts out.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

(disturbed)

Well, that's.... Apparently Mr.
Wilmarth never heard that one. All
right, recording sixteen.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 16

SOME MECHANICAL KERFUFFLE and ADJUSTMENT.

WILMARTH

(with a sigh)

I'm going to record... document this... It's September 7 and there's been turn of events. At long last I heard from Henry - well, hah, I didn't "hear" from him as he sent an actual letter, and a typed one at that. I sent a telegram to the Sheriff in Windham County last week asking him to check in on Henry - and he wired back that he was fine. Really, I... I don't understand what's going on with him. Two weeks ago he sent that odd telegram - then nothing. And now this letter in which he's completely changed his tune. For months, he's been in a confrontation with the creatures... But now... he's met with a human representing them? He used to say they were "spies"! He doesn't say who it was, but now, he claims all of our legends about the creatures are... what did he say...

RUSTLING PAPER.

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

"ignorant misconceptions of allegorical speech." Hmph. I'd certainly like to interview this "representative" fellow. Whoever it was, he sure convinced Henry...

(reading)

"I now regret the harm I have inflicted upon these incredible beings... If only I had consented to talk peacefully and reasonably with them in the first place!"

I... I don't know what to make of it. Henry doesn't seem the type to be bamboozled by some fast talker. It'd be a relief if there's really something to it.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

He says they've given him "a rich boon of knowledge and intellectual adventure which few other mortals have ever shared". That sounds... tempting.

(sadder)

But then again maybe he's just losing his grip. He sounded pretty shaken in his past few recordings. All that time by himself up in those hills... But, why a letter all of the sudden? And a typed one at that? A.K.E.L.Y - clearly he doesn't type much. Says he just bought the machine in Brattleboro.

I don't know what to do at this point except... just actually go up there and see for myself. It's time to do what I probably should have done in the first place: take the recorder and interview Henry formally. Maybe this "representative" person of his too. If the situation has calmed down, there's never going to be a better chance to record his first hand observations of the folklore - Akeley knows it better than anyone else alive. This book could be definitive - even more than Davenport ever was. And if there really is something more to it, like he says, this would go well beyond folklore. This could be a revolutionary discovery in... biology... in history... in cosmology itself. Either way the poor old guy could clearly use a visit from a friendly face. Marjory, I want you to make some arrangements for....

(a pause)

No. I'll do it myself. More prudent to keep Marjory out of it. I'll make the travel arrangements myself. No one needs to know I'm going. I'll just wire Akeley directly and let him know I'm coming. It's just Vermont. What's the worst that could happen?

CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

Oh dear. Well, let's see. This is recording seventeen. It's dated September 12, almost a week later.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 17

Car interior audio quality. A few BUMPS and SCRATCHES. The PURR OF AN AUTOMOBILE ENGINE. Voices go ON AND OFF MIKE. A recording made in a moving car that starts in the middle of an ongoing conversation. Noyes seems friendly, but there's something unsettling in his nature. MECHANICAL KERFUFFLE.

WILMARTH

...field recordings, first hand accounts of folklore, that sort of thing. This one has a spring-driven motor, so it doesn't need electricity. It's virtually silent too. It's recording us right now.

NOYES

Is it? Ingenious. Looks terribly heavy.

WILMARTH

Oh, this is nothing compared to the old Ediphone I had in my office. That thing must have weighed thirty pounds. And here in the case I have blank cylinders so I can record Henry's accounts.

NOYES

Accounts?

WILMARTH

Of the...uh... some local folklore.

NOYES

I see. I wouldn't get your hopes up too high for recording Henry.

WILMARTH

No? Why's that?

NOYES

As I said, he's in poor health. His voice... it's faint.

(MORE)

NOYES (CONT'D)
He's having one of his spells -
some type of asthma, I think.
That's why he asked if I'd pick you
up at the station.

WILMARTH
Most obliging of you.

NOYES
No, no, think nothing of it.

A BUMP in the road.

WILMARTH
Whoops! These hills. The scenery
is... breathtaking.

NOYES
(pause)
First time to Vermont, Mr.
Wilmarth?

WILMARTH
Why yes, yes it is.

NOYES
I think you'll find that time runs
differently here.

WILMARTH
Um...

NOYES
(chuckling)
Don't forget to set your watch
back. We don't go in for that new
fangled daylight saving scheme.

WILMARTH
Ah. If you'll pardon my saying
you've got a distinctive voice. It
sounds familiar. Have you ever--

NOYES
Everyone sounds the same on those
things. They're worse than the
wireless.

Unpleasant pause. Maybe a BIRD outside.

WILMARTH
So, Mr. Noyes, how did you come to
know Henry? You, um, you don't seem
like you're from around here.

NOYES

Oh, now that's an interesting story. I first met --

The auto hits a BIGGER BUMP in the road, driving the needle into the wax cylinder with a meaty SCRATCH.

STUDIO

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

ANNOUNCER

Let's see, here's number 18. This case has the same date, the 12th, on it and two times on it, 4:15 and 8:00pm. Hmm, maybe there's two separate recordings on it.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 18

The slightly muffled sound of being inside a car. COUNTRY DAY sounds outside.

WILMARTH

(hushed, close on mike)

I'm here in front of the Akeley farm house. Mr. Noyes has gone inside to let Henry know we're here. Odd fellow. Rather a relief he says he has to go attend to some other business and can't stay. He didn't seem familiar with the folklore... but then he never did get around to saying where he was from. And his voice... Still, he was friendly enough, mighty decent of him to pick me up. It was not a short drive. Glad to stretch my legs.

CAR DOOR OPENS. BIRDS and BREEZE.

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

Well, this is where it all happened. It's hard to reconcile Henry's stories with the house itself. It's a perfectly lovely white, two-and-a-half-story house - bigger than most of the other ones I saw on the drive.

(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

There seems to be a whole complex
of barns and sheds, and even a
windmill behind and to the right.
All linked up with elegant arcades.
I can see why Henry was so upset
about the thought of abandoning it.
Mountains looming over everything
up here. That one must be Dark
Mountain. It is oddly beautiful.
Could be a DaVinci painting. It's
so peaceful. It's.... so quiet.

(pause)

I wonder if he still has his dogs?

(suddenly realizing
exactly where he is)

That footprint in the Kodak, it
must have been taken right by--

(he gasps! then under his
breath)

Oh my god. There's some right
there. It's an actual--

NOYES

(distant)

Mr. Wilmarth? Henry's ready for
you.

WILMARTH

(shouted nonchalance)

Um, yes. Uh, thank you. I'll be
right up.

Wilmarth's CLOTHES RUSTLE. MECHANICAL CLUNK.

STUDIO

CYLINDER KEEPS SPINNING.

ANNOUNCER

I'll let the recording keep playing
in case there is an eight o'clock--

RECORDING 19

The audio comes in immediately.

WILMARTH

(hushed)

So, I have finally met Henry Akeley
in the flesh. At the moment I'm in
my room in his house, a guest room
over the parlor. The poor man.

(MORE)

WILMARSH (CONT'D)

He told me when we were first corresponding that he was fifty-seven years old, but if that's true then he's aged ten years or more this summer. He seems to be very ill indeed - all wrapped up in scarves and blankets and mittens. I guess I don't really know much about asthma, but this is.... He seems so feeble he can barely move his arms and legs. He's got himself bundled up in an armchair - says he'll just sleep there all night. Kept the blinds closed as he says the light hurts his eyes. He's just... well, he's no longer the hearty farmer posing with his rifle and his dogs. I'm so glad I didn't wait any longer than I did to come up here. All the same, he seems eager to talk once he's rested up. He took the trouble to lay out a supper for me: a nice store cheese, sandwiches and cake. Well, the coffee was... well, it doesn't matter.

(sniffs)

There's an odd smell about the place - maybe it's just...

(sniffs again)

I don't know. My head was throbbing downstairs... it's a little better now. Nerves, I guess. He says he has a lot to tell me.

(long pause)

You do feel the remoteness, the isolation up here. I wasn't sorry to see Noyes go... there was something... Well, it's really just me and Henry now.

(sigh)

It's been a long day.

WILMARSH SIGHS. SPINNING AND CLUNK.

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

Recording twenty has the following label on it: Henry Akeley, formal interview, September 13, 1928. Cylinder number one.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 20

KERFUFFLE OF EQUIPMENT. Voices go on and off mike. A CONSTANT FAINT PULSATION in the background.

WILMARTH

...mind if I turn up the light?
It's just that--

AKELEY

I'd rather you didn't.

Akeley's voice is indeed pitifully weak and has a strange droning buzz quality to it.

WILMARTH

Oh, um, alright. Let me just...

Wilmarth adjusts the recorder and both his and Akeley's voices are louder (1920s gain control).

AKELEY

You brought the Kodak photos? And
the recordings I sent you?

WILMARTH

They're right here in my valise.

AKELEY

Good. Good.

WILMARTH

Are you ready, Henry? Normally, I
start with--

AKELEY

Einstein is wrong, you know.

WILMARTH

I beg your pardon?

AKELEY

Certain objects and forces can move
with a velocity greater than that
of light. With their aid I expect
to go backward and forward in time,
and actually see and feel the earth
of remote past and future epochs.

WILMARTH

"Their aid"? Do you mean the hill creatures, because--

AKELEY

Yes. You can't imagine the degree to which those beings have carried science. There is nothing they can't do with the mind and body of living organisms. The prodigious surgical, biological, chemical, and mechanical skill of the Outer Ones is breathtaking. So yes, with their aid I expect to visit other planets, and even other stars and galaxies. A mastery of time and space.

WILMARTH

Ok, let's take a step back here...

AKELEY

Oh no, we shall take a step forward, you and I. A small step at first, to Yuggoth, the nearest world fully peopled by the beings. It is a strange dark orb at the very rim of our solar system.

WILMARTH

Yuggoth, this is where they come from?

AKELEY

At the proper time, you know, the beings there will direct thought-currents toward us and cause it to be discovered - or perhaps let one of their human allies give the scientists a hint. There are mighty cities on Yuggoth. Great tiers of terraced towers built of black stone like the specimen I tried to send you. That came from Yuggoth. Our sun shines there no brighter than a star, but the beings need no light. They have other, subtler senses, and put no windows in their great houses and temples. To visit Yuggoth would drive any weak man mad - yet I am going there.

(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

The black rivers of pitch that flow under those mysterious Cyclopean bridges – things built by some elder race extinct and forgotten before the things came to Yuggoth from the ultimate voids – ought to be enough to make any man a Dante or a Poe, if only he can cling to his sanity long enough to speak of what he has seen.

WILMARTH

Henry, what are you talking--

AKELEY

Yes, they value intelligent members of our species, like you and me. And they are willing to reveal to a select few the most extraordinary secrets of the universe.

WILMARTH

I see. Um... When did the creatures first come here? The first Indian accounts of them--

AKELEY

They were here long before the Indians, long before mankind walked upon the earth. Before the fabulous epoch of Cthulhu was over. They remember all about sunken R'lyeh when it was above the waters. They've been inside the earth, too – there are openings which human beings know nothing of, some of them in these very Vermont hills, and great worlds of unknown life down there.

WILMARTH

But you're saying they came from this Yuggoth? That's their home?

AKELEY

The Outer Beings are perhaps the most marvelous organic things in or beyond all space and time – members of a cosmos-wide race of which all other life-forms are merely degenerate variants. The genus is unique in its ability to traverse the interstellar void in full corporeal form.

(MORE)

AKELEY (CONT'D)

Their external resemblance to animal life, and to the sort of structure we understand as material, is a matter of parallel evolution rather than of close kinship. Their brain-capacity exceeds that of any other surviving life-form, although the winged types of our hill country are by no means the most highly developed.

WILMARTH

(overwhelmed)

Um, Henry, this is.... Why are they here? What do they want from us?

Akeley gives a HORRIBLE LITTLE UNEARTHLY LAUGH. BACKGROUND PULSATION GETS A LITTLE LOUDER.

AKELEY

Come closer. Let me whisper it to you...

STATIC as the needle hits the end of that cylinder.

*

STUDIO

ANNOUNCER

(rapt, but confused)

My. You know astronomers discovered a new planet at the edge of the solar system not long ago. Pluto. Well, here's recording 21. Same date. Formal Akeley interview, cylinder number **nine**. Two through eight are... not here.

NEEDLE DROP

RECORDING 21

MECHANICAL KERFLUFFLE AND NEEDLE SCRATCH.

*

WILMARTH

(flustered, suffering SAN loss)

That last part... can you say that again? On the new cylinder?

AKELEY
(with a slight and
horrible laugh)
You and your little cylinders...

WILMARTH
Please, Henry, repeat what you said
about "going with them". I don't
understand.

AKELEY
Of course. I'll show you another
way. Rise, and go to the bureau
there.

WILMARTH
Why?

AKELEY
Please, humor me.

CHAIR SCRAPE. FOOTSTEPS.

AKELEY (CONT'D)
Now, remove the drapery.

CLOTH RUSTLE. BACKGROUND PULSATION.

WILMARTH
Good god, Henry... These
machines... What are they?

AKELEY
You might just as soon ask "who",
Wilmarth. You see those large metal
cylinders there at the end? There
are four different sorts of beings
presented in those receptacles.
Three humans, six fungoid beings
who can't navigate space
corporeally, two beings from
Neptune, and the rest entities from
the central caverns of an
especially interesting dark star
beyond the galaxy. Round Hill, like
most of the beings' main outposts,
is a very cosmopolitan place! Of
course, only the more common types
have been lent to me for
experiment. Do you see the cylinder
marked B-67?

WILMARTH
Uh, yes, this one.

AKELEY

Place it in the middle there. Yes, just so. You see the tall device with the two glass lenses in front? It has a cord. Plug it into one of the connectors on the cylinder.

CLUNK.

WILMARTH

Henry, what are these machines?
What do they--

AKELEY

Now the box with the vacuum tubes and sounding-board. Plug that in as well. Last, the sound capture apparatus - yes, the same way.

CLUNK. WHIZZ. WHIRR. BUZZ. The alien machinery comes to life.

WILMARTH

What is--

B-67

Good evening, Albert Wilmarth.

WILMARTH

What? Who's there? Is this some kind of radio trickery, Henry, because--

B-67

I hope I do not startle you. I am a human being, like yourself. I am here, with you, my *brain* is in the cylinder, and I see, hear, and speak through these electronic vibrators. Soon I am going across the void, as I have been many times before, and I expect to have the pleasure of Mr. Akeley's company. I wish I might have yours as well, for we have kept close track of your correspondence with our friend. I am of course one of the men who have become *allied* with the outside beings visiting our planet.

(MORE)

B-67 (CONT'D)

I met them first in the Himalayas,
and have helped them in various
ways. In return, they have given me
experiences such as few men have
<emphasis
level="strong">ever</emphasis> had.

WILMARTH

Oh my god...

AKELEY CHUCKLES OMINOUSLY.

B-67

I have been on thirty-seven
different celestial bodies.
Planets, dark stars, and, less
definable objects. All this has not
harmed me in the least. My brain
has been removed from my body by
<emphasis level="strong">fissions
</emphasis>so adroit, that it would
be <emphasis level="strong">crude
</emphasis>to call the operation
surgery. The visiting beings have
<emphasis level="strong">methods
</emphasis>which make these
extractions easy, and almost
normal. In this wondrous vessel, I
am immune from physical harm,
disease, even the ravages of age.

WILMARTH

(gobsmacked)

Wha... where is... your body?

B-67

It's safely stored and vitalized
should I want it again, but I can't
imagine I will. <emphasis
level="strong">This</emphasis> is
<emphasis
level="moderate">freedom</emphasis>
, in its truest sense. I hope most
heartily that you will decide to
come <emphasis
level="moderate">with</emphasis>
Mr. Akeley and me. It may seem
strange at first to <emphasis
level="moderate">meet</emphasis>
the visitors, but I know you will
be above minding that. I think Mr.
Noyes will go along too!

(MORE)

B-67 (CONT'D)
 He has been one of us for <emphasis level="moderate">years.</emphasis>
 I suppose you recognized his voice
 as one of those on the record Mr.
 Akeley sent you?

WILMARTH
 Noyes? Of course... that's where--

B-67
 A man with your love of <emphasis level="moderate">strangeness,</emphasis> and a desire to know the folklore of others, ought not miss this unique opportunity! There is nothing to fear. The transition is painless, and there is much to <emphasis level="moderate">enjoy</emphasis> in a wholly <emphasis level="moderate">mechanized</emphasis> state of sensation. Will you join us?

Horribly awkward pause.

AKELEY
 Mr. Wilmarth appears to be a bit overwhelmed. It's quite natural. Let us give him time to consider his invitation. But before you go up to bed, Mr. Wilmarth, think of--

The recording ends abruptly.

STUDIO

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

ANNOUNCER
 (hushed)
 Recording 22 is from the same day.
 No other notation.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 22

Has the awkward indistinctness and poor quality of a real field recording. There are CRICKETS outside and a GRANDFATHER CLOCK beyond a door.

WILMARTH

(whispering into mic,
terrified)

It's about two in the morning. I'm upstairs again and heard sounds outside my door a few minutes ago. I think someone tried the latch. There's voices and a kind of buzzing coming from downstairs. I don't know if this recorder can pick up what I'm hearing, but I'm going to hold the handpiece up to the door and hope to catch them.

The voices downstairs are muffled, but heated. Sometimes they overlap.

AKELEY'S BRAIN

Maybe it's true that I **brought it on myself**, but I was **taken in** by your recklessness. You all but paraded past my home. With all I was **seeing and hearing** you can't blame me for looking into it, **damn you**. How could I not? I'm not some **impersonal force, after all**, not like you! I'm only human. And now you're ensnaring him in the same way. Leaving me exposed in a **fresh, shiny cylinder** with my name on it? Of course he's going to figure it out! **Great God**, you claim to be offering him a choice, but really--

*

WILMARTH

(overlapping Akeley)

I think it's that machine talking, but it's not the voice from before. It's different somehow. It's not the same one that spoke to me. Maybe it's a different cylinder. He's objecting to...

MI-GO 1

Be silent! My brothers, it is **time we stopped** this pathetic charade. As he quite rightly points out, he is **small and human** and utterly inconsequential. Mister **Akeley** has now clearly shown us that his **brain** was hardly worth harvesting. It is time to begin **saying** the formulas that will advance our true agenda.

WILMARTH

(overlapping)

The buzzing... Great god, like
Henry's recording. Says someone is
"inconsequential"..."
"harvesting"...

MI-GO 2

I concur. We have been visited by
Nyarlathotep himself and it is his
desire that **Wilmarth** should now
disappear. We have all his **records**
and letters and anything that has
been left behind can be easily
dismissed as **cheap imposture**.

WILMARTH

(overlapping)

Maybe there's more than one. It
sounds different. Wait, that was my
name. Hold on...

NOYES

N'gah-Kthun is right. While he was
ignorant he was **harmless**, and we
could afford to leave him in **peace**,
but it is now too late for that.
I can make all needed arrangements
within a **couple of weeks**. With my
theatrical experience I can create
a complete deception. I **told you**
that before.

WILMARTH

That's Noyes. He's back. Something
about a deception.

MI-GO 1

There is **no reason** for you to
complicate things. We should enact
the **original plan**. Get Brown to go
through all of Akeley's **effects**.
While he's doing that, **Noyes can**
watch over Wilmarth. We'll take
them both to **Round Hill** and put the
professor in a **fresh cylinder**. For
now, put what's left of Akeley's
body into **Noyes's car** and get it
out of here.

WILMARTH

It's... I think it's the first one
again. Noyes will watch over me.
something about a fresh cylinder.

(MORE)

WILMARSH (CONT'D)
(alarmed)
They're going!

FOOTSTEPS and a LOOSE CLATTERING followed by a the DOOR OPENING and a curious sort of FLAPPING SOUND. An AUTOMOBILE STARTS IN THE DISTANCE AND DRIVES AWAY. Silence. CRICKETS. A TICKING GRANDFATHER CLOCK.

WILMARSH (CONT'D)
(whispering into mic)
I think they've left. I don't know,
I didn't hear Henry... you can
hardly hear him when you're next to
him. I'll transcribe what I can
when I listen to this record. Maybe
I'll be able to--

The cylinder cuts out. *

STUDIO

MECHANICAL CLUNKING.

ANNOUNCER
(awed)
This... there are only two
recordings left, ladies and
gentlemen. Number 23, dated
September 13, 1928.

NEEDLE DROP.

RECORDING 23

KERFLUFFLE OF CLOTH as Wilmarth fumbles with the recorder. CAR *
INTERIOR audio quality. RAIN ON CAR ROOF.

WILMARSH
(breathlessly)
I'm in Henry's Ford. I had to get
out. It's... I'm not quite sure
where I am. I just drove as fast as
I could. Somewhere outside of
Newfane, maybe? I don't know. It's
dark, raining...
(taking a deep breath)

LOW RUMBLE OF THUNDER.

WILMARSH (CONT'D)

Ah, god... After the... "meeting" I overheard in Henry's house, I waited at the door to the bedroom for some time to make sure no one... nothing came back. Maybe a half hour? Whenever it finally seemed safe enough I crept down the stairs to check on Henry. As I snuck down I could hear someone snoring in a room off to the left, a room I hadn't been in before. I looked in and it was Noyes, sleeping on a couch in a living room. I had a small pocket flashlight I had brought with me, and I'm sure it was him. I silently closed and latched the living-room door so as not to wake him.

I crept into the dark study, expecting to see Henry in the big armchair where I had left him. The dictaphone records from the interview with Akeley were still there on the table, and I noticed some other phonograph cylinders too. Ones I had sent to Akeley, and ones Akeley must have recorded but never sent me. I was looking around for others when the beams of my flashlight caught the bureau, revealing one of the big metal cylinders with sight and hearing machines attached, and with a speech-machine standing close by. That must have been the encased brain I had heard talking from upstairs. I... I had a perverse impulse to attach the speech-machine and see what it would say. God, I wonder if it "saw" or "heard" me... I didn't dare meddle with the thing, I just couldn't. Looking closer, I saw that it was not the one marked B-67. It was a new, shiny cylinder labeled "Akeley". If I had... I mean I could have talked to it... him. He could have explained - no, no it's better this way.

ANOTHER DISTANT ROLL OF THUNDER.

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

I turned my flashlight to the corner where Henry had been, but the chair was empty. But... his clothes were still there. His dressing-gown trailed from the seat to the floor, and near it lay the yellow scarf and the rest of it. That queer odor was no longer in the room. I stood there baffled, and thought about searching the rest of the house when...

LOW THUNDER RUMBLE.

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

(trying to remain
composed)

My flashlight returned to the vacant easy-chair... and I noticed certain objects in the seat. I hadn't seen them at first because of the loose folds of the empty dressing-gown. I don't... I can't... It wasn't anything really horrible, not in itself. It's what it implied that... I'm not even sure they were real. Maybe I imagined them. That's what people do, in the face of something inexplicable. They imagine... Or at least I misperceived it. They-- they couldn't have been real! They couldn't have actually been what they looked like! They were some kind of clever constructions, waxen products of some master artist, furnished with metallic clamps to attach them to... other things.

(breaking down)

Great God! I ran! I'm sorry Henry, I ran! I grabbed everything I could and I ran out of that house as fast as I could. I'm sorry, Henry, but I remembered your Ford and I found it and I drove as fast as I could and now I don't even know where I am! Oh, god!

THUNDER RUMBLE. RAIN.

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

That whisperer in darkness... the odor... the vibrations!

(MORE)

WILMARSH (CONT'D)
Sorcerer, emissary, changeling,
outsider... and all the time in
that fresh, shiny cylinder on the
shelf... poor devil... In the
chair, perfect to the last, subtle
detail of microscopic resemblance
were the face and hands of Henry
Wentworth Akeley!

THUNDER CRASH! The recording cuts out to static.

STUDIO

MECHANICAL CLUNK.

ANNOUNCER
(somber)
There is one final recording,
ladies and gentlemen. I've saved it
for last because, unlike the
others, it is not numbered, but had
a note attached. It reads, "this
recording was found on the
dictaphone in Professor Wilmarth's
house by Arkham police authorities,
who entered his home after I
reported that he missed the
beginning of the new college term.
Mr. Wilmarth's whereabouts are
still unknown. I am sending these
recordings to you in the hope the
public might be able to bring some
light to this matter. Sincerely,
Marjory Pittman, Personal Secretary
to Albert N. Wilmarth"

I'm almost reluctant to play this
for you, but we must bring this
story to its end.

NEEDLE DROP. SPINNING AND SCRATCHING.

RECORDING 23

WILMARSH
(sounding tired)
It's September 20th. 1928.
(MORE)

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

I have now listened to the recordings my friend Henry Akeley made that were never sent to me, and now I understand that my dream of writing a book about the lore of the hill creatures is never going to come true. People would never believe it. They shouldn't believe it. Better they should believe in Leprechauns.

(heaving a sigh)

I have destroyed most of the recordings we made, but have decided to keep a select few of them, and arranged them in a sequence that I hope will make the situation sufficiently clear for the authorities, in case I am ever unable to explain it myself.

I have come to believe... to know, really, that I am still under threat from the Mi-Go. They have been watching me for months. They have human agents monitoring my communication and movements. Noyes is just one of them. Just like with Henry, they won't let me walk away.

I have reached out to a trusted colleague from Miskatonic University. He believes me - I think he does, he says he does. He has a very wealthy friend, a university donor, with the means to get me to safety and help me determine what, if anything, we can do. He says there's a group, a kind of... cult, for lack of a better word, that knows all about these fungi from Yuggoth and works to... do something about them. Nate and his friend have a contact in this group, and are coming soon to take me to meet him. If it is a "him". I am leaving everything behind. As far as the world is concerned, Albert Wilmarth is gone. But I'll be ba--

A DISTINCTIVE KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

WILMARTH (CONT'D)

I'll be right there!

CHAIR SCRAPE, The recording STOPS. *

MUSIC.

CONCLUSION

ANNOUNCER *

You've been listening to "The Whisperer in Darkness", a special storm isolation edition of Dark Adventure Radio Theatre. Brought to you by our sponsor, Beckwith's Sen-Sen Chewing Gum. ~~Fortified with real cane sugar, Beckwith's keeps your digestion in good working order, and your laugh will spread sunshine and win friends.~~ *

Dark Adventure Closing Theme MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Filling in for our usual host, I'm your announcer, Everett Bellamy. The blizzard outside is still raging, friends, and it looks like more bad weather for a while. As long as the roads remain impassable, and until the sun comes out again, this is Dark Adventure Radio Theatre reminding you to please stay warm and safe inside your homes.

"The Whisperer in Darkness" was adapted for radio and produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman. Based on the story by H.P. Lovecraft. The Dark Adventure theme music was composed by Troy Sterling Nies. The Dark Adventure Ensemble featured a skeleton crew of Leslie Baldwin, Sean Branney, Kacey Camp, Andrew Leman, Jacob Lyle, Kevin Stidham, Josh Thoemke, and Time Winters. Tune in next week for "The Owyhee Nightmare", a stirring tale of Hawaiian islanders in the grizzly infested wilderness of Idaho.

(MORE)

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
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production of the HPLHS
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Radio STATIC and fade out.