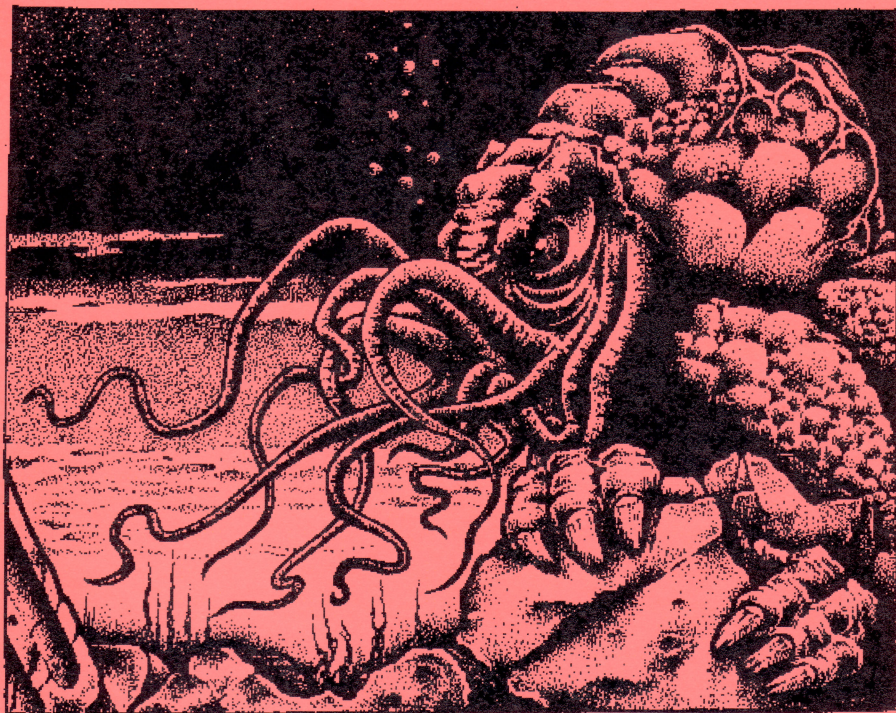


# Mythos Collector



ALLEN K. '84

**Issue 6**

**Interview with Peter Scartabello**

**\$4.00**

# MYTHOS COLLECTOR

Issue 6

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# First Words

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Welcome back to another issue of Mythos Collector. I apologize for the long delay since the last issue. Last year was a tough year for me in my real life. But things have stabilized over the last few months so I am hopeful that I can get my publication schedule back on track.

In this issue, I am happy to present an interview with the founder of Yuggoth Records, Peter Scartabello, as contributed by Kevin Dole 2. Daniel J. Bishop brings us an interested look into what could be a lost tale from Lovecraft. I have finally pulled together a long delayed piece on Lovecraftian audio recordings — particularly readings, radio dramas, and motion picture soundtracks.

I'd like to thank this issue's contributors of fiction and poetry, Tim Curran, for his excellent tale of a city on the edge of the unknown, Lee Clark Zumpe, for a brief poetical visit to Yuggoth, and Phil Roberts for an interesting tale of getting on the wrong train.

Hippocampus Press is quietly becoming *the* major player in Lovecraftian publishing. They have several new projects on tap that should be of great interest to Lovecraft fans including a 5 volume collection of HPL's essays with each volume dedicated to a particular topic, an expanded edition of *Lovecraft's Library*, a collection of letters to Reinhardt Kleiner, and another collection of letters to Alfred Galpin. Be sure to visit their web site ([www.hippocampuspress.com](http://www.hippocampuspress.com)) for full details on current and future publications.

Upcoming issues will feature interviews with Jason Thompson, Robert Knox, and Richard Lupoff, articles on Lovecraftian computer games, videos, DVDs, and fanzines, and a special issue dedicated to Clark Ashton Smith!

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# That Hideous Face

By Daniel J. Bishop

*That hideous face has returned, which I have long regarded as no more than a boyhood dream & which I can no longer myself deny.*

- Opening line of "That Hideous Face," pub. 2002,  
author unknown

When I heard recent reports of a hand written "story-fragment" discovered at 65 Prospect Street in Providence, Rhode Island, purported to be the work of H. P. Lovecraft, I could not help but be interested, both as a writer of speculative fiction and as a fan of Lovecraft's work. The primary purpose of the Internet seems to be the circumvention of copyright laws, and illicit copies of the work appeared shortly after its publication under the title, "That Hideous Face," in *The Miskatonic Sampler Gazette*, Vol. 6, #3 (Dreaming Seas Press, Rhode Island, USA).

H.P. (Howard Phillip) Lovecraft (1890-1937) is best known as a writer of "weird fiction," and the creator of Cthulhu, a winged and octopoid being from a time before humanity who lies dreaming in a drowned city beneath the ocean. He was, in fact, a prolific writer of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. The last included travelogues, amateur journalism, philosophy, science, and a correspondence estimated at over 20,000 letters.

Despite interruptions in his schooling due to poor health, Lovecraft developed a masterful vocabulary as well as a deep body of knowledge in many subjects. A proponent of knowledge-through-experience(1), or "poetic" knowledge, Lovecraft attempted to recreate for his readers something of the universal wonder that he felt the cosmos inspired. He recognized that, in being subjected to terror, modern people come closest to the experience of a living cosmos. At the same time, he demanded that his stories did not contradict what was known through current science. In this, he was very similar to Sir Isaac Newton, who, while best known for his work in the physical sciences, was a closet alchemist and astrologer (2).



Through his work, Lovecraft created a “mythos” of beings, semi-beings, and meta-beings whose existence skirted the border between the natural/scientific worldview, and the classical/medieval worldview wherein the universe was a largely unknown entity, imbued with meaning, and having its own agenda. Both during his life and after, others have added to Lovecraft’s mythos (often with his support and approval). His use of language, refusal to clearly describe or identify the cosmic entities encountered in his stories, and his methods of attributing mood and motive to the New England landscape have been often imitated, with varying degrees of success. The legacy of H.P. Lovecraft is felt in modern writers such as Robert Bloch and Stephen King, and in numerous films derived in whole or in part from his work.

If this story is attributable to Lovecraft, it will constitute an important find. But was Lovecraft the author of “That Hideous Face”?

Physical examinations of photocopies of the original “Hideous Face” document are unlikely to persuade the reader one way or the other. As the original has now gone missing (despite Dreaming Seas Press’s refusals to allow the document to leave their possession) we are left with the content of the document, and the circumstances under which the document was found, to supply an answer. This, in itself, should give the reader reason to doubt. Indeed, I would have doubted the existence of such a document, had I not been allowed to examine it prior to its disappearance.

Despite wild speculations to the contrary posted to Internet chatrooms, it seems obvious to me that this “story-fragment” is a hoax. I hope in this essay to clarify the issues surrounding this “story-fragment,” and demonstrate conclusively that Lovecraft could not have written it.

Purportedly, a ten-year-old girl, named Emily Cole, on vacation from Los Angeles, California, discovered the document. Cole was “bored” by her father’s interest in historical New England, and began “poking about.” She discovered a loose board, revealing a space within which the story fragment was found. Because of the content of the work, had Lovecraft written it, he would have to have done so while hospitalized at Jane Brown Memorial Hospital. It is speculated that Lovecraft’s aunt, Ann Gamwell, retrieved the document and concealed it within the house they shared. The document then remained hidden until Cole discovered its hiding place (3).

Although the text is not complete, a summary of the work is possible. Those interested in the full version of the text are advised to seek out the Dreaming Seas Press edition, as several inaccuracies have already cropped up on Internet texts, including unattributed (and unacknowledged) “filler” material designed to increase

both coherence and biographical ties to Lovecraft. Any analysis based on these highly edited texts is bound to come to erroneous conclusions, as the editors have attempted to address questions of authorship arising from the originally published text.

In short, "That Hideous Face" purports that narrator's father (identified with Winfield Scott Lovecraft) was infected by an alien parasite or symbiote while in New York in 1882 or 1883. The elder Lovecraft then struggled to control this being, and was often capable of subduing it completely, over the next ten years. Then, on 21 April 1883, his control over the entity began to break down, resulting in his breakdown in Chicago and commitment to Butler Hospital in Providence on 25 April 1883.

There is a gap in the text here, but presumably the entity is passed on to the narrator (H.P. Lovecraft) upon his father's death in 1898, roughly corresponding to Lovecraft's discovery of (and fascination with) the works of Edgar Allen Poe. (There is some speculation that marginal notes in the original text, which appear as footnotes in the *Dreaming Seas* text, indicate that Lovecraft imagined that Poe himself might have been infected by the same, or a similar, entity).

The text resumes with the death of the narrator's (Lovecraft's) mother in 1921, and mentions in passing that her incarceration in a sanatorium was due to witnessing the "hideous face" (alternately described as hippocephalic, i.e., horse-headed, and "obscured by writhing tentacles of unnameable colours") and the resultant psychological stress therefrom. It describes the meeting between Lovecraft and his future wife, Sonia Greene, "whose correspondence with visionaries convinced me that my situation was not unique, but rather the emergence of another layer of reality, which lies submerged in the spaces between those items of the world to which our everyday senses are attenuated." Greene is clearly identified, as is the journalism convention at which the two actually met.

There follows a paragraph in which the narrator learns that the alien entity was summoned by his grandfather's investigations into the unknown. This begins to cause strain with his relationship to Greene, but the reasons why are not clearly given.

Another section begins to discuss the qualities of entity. We learn that the entity is not always physically manifested. Its manifestations are unpredictable, although they are far more likely during cold weather than warm. It dislikes caffeine, and the narrator has discovered that strong doses of coffee keep the thing at bay. The "face" does not have clear eyes, nose, mouth, etc., but there is a clear sense of "watchfulness" when it is manifested. The narrator concludes that images from the entity's reality are transmitted in nightmares, daydreams, and hallucinations. "The

cosmic gulfs which are that thing's natural home must impinge in places upon the world of the dreamer, from which terrifying nightmares & visions arise."

Finally, the narrator undergoes a period of increased agony, wherein he attempts to prevent the manifestation of the entity, "which I will not allow to claim another family member." He attempts to conceal his agony, but eventually can do so no longer, which leads to his hospitalization. Jane Brown Memorial Hospital, where Lovecraft died on 10 March 1937, is identified. The narrator hopes to consign the entity to "that Outer Void which is known as Oblivion," but fears that it has already left his cancer-ridden body "to bring tragedy to another poor soul somewhere in Arkham (4) or the world beyond."

At the beginning of my investigation, Dreaming Seas Press kindly allowed me to examine the original document, but they refused my requests to have a professional analysis done on it. Instead, they showed me documentation of an analysis that had been done shortly after the papers were discovered. The analyst had concluded that the handwriting shared "many key points of similarity" with H.P. Lovecraft's, and was "almost certainly his." They also noted several "odd breaks" in the style of handwriting, sometimes "within the completion of a given word," sometimes "potentially associated with spasms of pain," and sometimes "possibly the work of another."

To my knowledge, no record of an analysis of the original document's paper or ink exists, so we cannot ascertain the age of the writing in that way. Dreaming Seas Press was unable to explain this lapse, and the laboratory that performed the initial handwriting analysis claims that no request for dating the work was made, nor was any such testing invoiced (5).

I was unable to speak to the analyst responsible, as he had committed suicide in the time between the analysis and the work's publication. This was not due to "unearthly knowledge" or "Lovecraftian horror," as some have rather melodramatically speculated on the Internet, but due to a failing relationship with his wife.

My own examination of the pages was inconclusive, though I do agree that there were at least two individuals involved in the writing, one as primary author, and the other as editor. Even were that the case, though, there is a historic precedent for posthumous collaborations using fragments of Lovecraft's work (6).

Thematically, "That Hideous Face" ties in well with Lovecraft's writings. The idea of dreams as a separate reality linked to, and holding the key to, our waking reality (termed by Donald Burleson as "oneiric objectivism") appears in many of Lovecraft's works (7). The idea of human beings possessed by other creatures or spirits is also not uncommon (8). Stylistically, though, "That Hideous Face" differs greatly from Lovecraft's work, both in its choice of vocabulary, and in its

structure.

The details of Lovecraft's life, such as they appear in the story, are all reasonably correct. The story also offers an interesting solution to the reasons why Lovecraft was so heavily addicted to coffee (9), why he was so disturbed by the cold, and why he went through periods of hermit-like existence and depression. The problem is that these details are readily available, due to Lovecraft's voluminous correspondence, and a clever hoaxer could easily have accessed them. There are also some details that the author got wrong.

After his father's hospitalization, Lovecraft's mother, Sarah Susan Lovecraft, had a love/hate relationship with her son. She inexplicably blamed him for the elder Lovecraft's poor health, and unaccountably decided that he was unattractive. She seems to be the source of the phrase, "that hideous face," claiming at one point that he could not appear in public because of it, but it appears quite certain that she meant Lovecraft's natural (not supernatural) features. She was eventually committed due to her disturbed condition, and died in 1921.

Winfield Scott Lovecraft was hospitalized for what appears now to have been general paresis, damage to the brain from untreated syphilis. However, Lovecraft himself believed that his father was paralysed and remained in a coma from the time of his hospitalization to his death, which was certainly not the case. If Lovecraft wrote "That Hideous Face" he would have to have known (or suspected) that the coma story was false.

There is some question about Sonia Greene's birthplace and birth name, and claims have been made that Greene had some form of relationship with Aleister Crowley. However, her early history is well recorded for a person of that time, and claims of her knowing Crowley have never been substantiated to any degree. Lovecraft's grandfather, Whipple Van Buren Phillips, founded Freemason Ionic Lodge 28 in Greene, Rhode Island, but there is no relationship between the location and Sonia Greene's name (10), nor is there any evidence that Phillips and Greene were both involved in a conspiracy to call upon "Elder Forces from Beyond Time and Space." Certainly, Phillips and Greene never met, as Phillips died in 1904, seventeen years before Lovecraft first encountered Greene.

One must also examine the way in which the document was found. Whereas Emily Cole had never before been to Rhode Island, her father, Edmund Cole, was born in New Hampshire and lived in Providence from ages 11 to 14. He left for the West Coast during his 14<sup>th</sup> year, but returned infrequently as an adult, both on business and to visit family. Certainly he had been to 65 Prospect before, and he may have planted the document at some point.

Like Lovecraft, Emily Cole is purported to be an "odd child," with an early



interest in poetry, science, and writing. Her father had raised her on “weird fiction,” (11) and by the time of the discovery she had already made inroads towards publishing her own speculative dark fantasy in the small presses and chapbooks. She has said that she felt “at home” in New England, “like she was coming home.” Yet the Cole’s story of finding the manuscript hangs upon the idea that Emily was “disinterested” in the historic places her father brought her to visit. In one interview, she stated that she felt the manuscript “had called to her.”

One must also question why the manuscript would be hidden in the first place. As Lovecraft and his aunt were living in poverty, one would think that she might try to sell the document then, or at least bring it forward to the attention of one of Lovecraft’s many correspondents.

The suggestion that story was *not* fiction, and that it is a roughly accurate representation of an actual series of encounters between Lovecraft and the Unknown, is even more ludicrous. Apart from the implication that Lovecraft’s insight into the Cthulhu mythos would have to be based upon some actual cosmological reality, it is almost inconceivable, had Ann Gamwell actually seen that hideous alien entity, that she would have kept the story fragment. What possible motive could she have had? Beyond any doubt, she would have destroyed it. In any event, Gamwell died four years later, without mentioning its existence to anyone.

Clearly, madness beset Lovecraft’s family (12). It is possible that, upon his deathbed, he suffered some level of dementia, causing him to create a fictional and sinister account of the major events of his life. If that was the case, there is no hint in his writing that such a story would be forthcoming. Lovecraft was foremost a rationalist, who believed strongly in scientific thought and progress. Even if one accepts this explanation, two unanswered questions remain: who does the second, editing handwriting belong to, and why was the manuscript preserved but hidden?

Finally, in three segments of the story, the date of Lovecraft’s death (15 March) is specifically mentioned. In the second of these cases, the narrator claims that he will die on 15 March 1937, as Lovecraft did. Had Lovecraft written “That Hideous Face,” he would either have predicted his own death (13), or, as some have speculated, somehow written the story after he died.

It seems far more likely that “That Hideous Face” was the result of forgery. Someone, possibly Edmund Cole, possibly another, then hid the document in the house on Prospect Street, from which it was eventually “discovered” by Emily Cole. Either that, or we really are “teetering on the Edge of a Great and Terrible Abyss,” as the unknown author of “That Hideous Face” suggests.

It is unfortunate, but ultimately of no consequence, that the handwriting so strongly resembles Lovecraft’s own.

## ENDNOTES

(1) What Morris Berman calls “participatory consciousness” in *The Reenchantment of the World* (Bantam Books, 1981). This is the philosophical idea that the world is imbued with hidden symbols and meanings for those capable of seeing and correctly interpreting them. In the participatory worldview, matter, time, and space are not inert, but are capable of having both value and motive.

(2) See B.J.T. Dobbs, *The Foundations of Newton's Alchemy*, Cambridge University Press, 1975.

(3) Note that this house was originally located at 66 College Street in Providence, and was moved in 1959. It is notable that the story fragment was not located at this time. Lovecraft's aunt, Ann Gamwell, not only lived in the house with Lovecraft at the time of his death (and would presumably have taken his belongings home after he died), but remained in the house until her death in 1941.

(4) It should be noted that in the Dreaming Seas printing, this was changed to Providence, with an endnote explaining that the author had begun the process of “fictionalizing” the details of the text, striking out Providence and replacing it with Arkham. Presumably, it was the author's intent to replace all of the references to real-world places with fictional counterparts. I have here restored the text to match the author's edited version.

(5) Dreaming Seas Press claimed that the John Hay Library in Providence, Rhode Island, which holds a large collection of Lovecraft's original work, had made enquiries into the original documents. My own investigations were unable to substantiate these claims.

(6) Most notably August Derleth. These stories were sometimes published as collaborations, and sometimes published under Lovecraft's name. Most scholars do not consider these as part of Lovecraft's body of work.

(7) See especially “The Silver Key” (1926) and “The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath” (1927).

(8) “The Thing on the Doorstep” (1933) not only uses this theme, but includes the idea that the entity can move from “body to body” in an attempt to become fully human and unleash her evil upon the world. Interestingly enough, Edward Derby – who is repeatedly possessed by the entity Ephraim/Asenath – is widely recognized to be at least partially an autobiographical creation. In “The Thing on the Doorstep,” Derby is endangered by an interest in the occult and marriage, which is what the author of “That Hideous Face” seems to be claiming for Lovecraft himself. More, Lovecraft's wife, Sonia Greene, owned a hat shop, and a derby is, of course, a hat. While married to Lovecraft, she spent some time in a New Jersey sanatorium, for “ill health.”

(9) Lovecraft's prodigious coffee drinking probably contributed greatly to the intestinal cancer that killed him.

(10) Known in some circles as “The Greene Conspiracy,” this idea has been thoroughly debunked through lack of evidence.

(11) Note that this phrase is used most often to describe Lovecraft’s fiction. I take this as a deliberate attempt on the part of the Cole family to link Lovecraft and Emily.

(12) The Laakso analysis, published in *The Miskatonic Sampler Gazette*, Vol 6 #8 (J. Laakso, 2002), makes much of the fact that “everyone Lovecraft was involved with ended up in a sanatorium,” which is not strictly true. As a further example of the problem with this analysis, Laakso indicates that Anne Gamwell may not have “even known of [the document’s] existence at the time. It could have been left behind after her departure and ended up behind a loose board for any number of reasons.” Note that this explanation ignores the fact that writer clearly knew of Lovecraft’s hospitalization, if not the circumstances of his death, and Lovecraft himself did not leave Jane Brown Memorial Hospital from the time of his admission until his death.

(13) Which was, in any case, imminent. It is possible that Lovecraft, knowing the end was near, guessed, and that the strength of his conviction in this guess caused him to pass away on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

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# Festival in a Forbidden City

By Tim Curran

Here the neighborhoods are cramped, dismal, and decrepit. Here the houses are tall and thin, low and squat, sprouting in haphazard clusters like toadstools thrusting from moist, dank earth. And it is here that Nagle begins his investigation, in this abandoned part of town that is nothing less than an architectural nightmare, a blight of failed civil planning.

Company houses, Nagle tells himself. Old railroad houses and rooming houses and laborer's cottages.

Nagle is the city building inspector. It will be his decision as to whether these houses stand or fall.

Most of them are empty now. Shells. Vacant-staring skulls and heaps of squalid bones picked by rats and time. The occupants have all long since gone, fleeing these drab, filthy structures for more modern dwellings where there is hope and sunshine. Where they can escape the crumbling brick and sagging walls and that heavy, dirty mist that seems to linger even on the brightest days.

Nagle does not blame them.

Most of these rude, grotesque lodgings have no running water or electricity. Are, essentially, signposts to a forgotten, dire time before child labor laws, when companies kept their workers in strict bondage, body and soul.

But, Nagle knows, there are other reasons people have fled.

For these neighborhoods are reputed to have a history. Tales are whispered of noises, apparitions, shapeless forms crawling over high-peaked rooftops. Hollow, sucking sounds like breathing in the cellars. Footsteps, voices. Knockings in the dead of night.

Superstitious nonsense, of course. Witch tales bred by weak, desperate minds.

But there is a certain sliver of truth, Nagle knows, that gave birth to these yarns. For it was not so long ago that state health inspectors raided this place, routing out a certain endemic pestilence that had spread through this human cesspool like a fungus. There were rumors of deformed children found in locked attic rooms



and murky cellars. Adults afflicted by some morbid degeneration hidden behind rotting, shuttered windows. This was not common knowledge. The diseased individuals were whisked away by the authorities to parts unknown. Most of what Nagle knew came from a colleague of his, a health inspector who had suffered a nervous breakdown after seeing something that had been bricked-up in a coal bin. He would not tell Nagle what that something was.

And, maybe, Nagle did not want to know.

Briefcase in hand, Nagle makes his way through these neighborhoods then, wondering what to condemn first. He has seen not a soul, yet he is certain he is not alone. He moves up uneven brick streets, peering down cul-de-sacs and snaking alleyways. The houses press in close, tower and spread and squat and lean out over the streets. They are positively claustrophobic in their crowded profusion. Roofs touching roofs, stairways intersecting, balconies thrusting over rotting porches, warped doorways facing other doorways, sloping eaves brushing flat topped shacks squeezed into tight, constricted courtyards. Walls press against walls and where they do not, narrow crevices and causeways thick with amorphous shadow.

Why is any of it still standing? Nagle wonders bleakly.

It was all ancient fifty years before and should have been razed a quarter-century before that.

But it seems to stand almost defiantly, collapsing into itself, not a collection of solitary structures, but a single, spreading and swelling excrescence. A living, sentient flux of concrete bones and brick arteries, wooden tendons and mortared ligaments, flagstone eyes and shattered glass orifices. It seems alive, breathing, aware.

Staring at it all, pulling it in, makes Nagle positively delirious. The breath is tight in his lungs as if the place is sucking the air away, replacing it with some toxic exhalation.

Windows are boarded or missing completely, rags that might have once been curtains fluttering in them...though there is no discernable breeze. He looks over high stone walls that are black with soot and furry mildew, plastered with ancient carnival posters. Looks into overgrown, weedy lots at winding footpaths trampled through them.

Nagle knows he must begin his investigation.

But the idea of entering those low doorways makes a certain terror twist in his belly like worms. A man could go in there, he thinks, and lose himself in that maze of corridors and entries that bleed from one structure to the next. He would never find his way out.

Between two tall, slanting houses, there is a passageway, and beyond, an-

other house. One that, for reasons unknown, intrigues Nagle. He must press himself through the passage sideways. Claustrophobia mounts for the walls seem to press in tighter, seem to be warm and moist like the flesh of subterranean mushrooms. With a cry, Nagle is free. He crosses a compressed cobbled street that no two modern vehicles could hope to pass on at the same time.

The house then, crushed between two archaic structures with overhanging gambrel roofs, is tall and weathered, windows missing, porch collapsing. It is surrounded by a wrought-iron fence. As a joke someone has speared the corpses of rats on the uprights. They are decayed, odorless things, bags of fur filled with bone.

"Hey, mister," a voice says.

Nagle turns, his heart slamming in his chest. Just a boy. A tow-headed boy, his clothes smeared with grime.

"Hey, mister," says the boy. "You're not going in there, are you?"

Nagle clears dust from his throat. "Yes, son. I'm the building inspector. I'm condemning much of this neighborhood."

"You're not tearing down my house... are you?"

"No, son. Where is it you live?"

The boy points down the street. "Down there a-ways. We're the last family on the road, except for Mr. Grove... but he never comes out."

"Do you like it here?"

"Sure. It's okay. Long as you know where to go and where not to go. At night, it's funny, though."

Nagle narrows his eyes. "Funny? How do you mean?"

He shrugs. "You know, noises and stuff. My ma says it's ghosts. Says to just ignore them. We ain't allowed out at night. Ain't allowed to even look out the window when the sun goes down."

"Why?"

"Because of them, those other ones. They---" the boy looks past Nagle and into the yard of the house behind him "---I gotta go, mister!"

He runs off the way he came, leaving Nagle alone again.

Drawing in a sharp breath, Nagle moves through the gates. The lot is overgrown with weeds and low shrubs. There are things twisted in the grass. Things that seem to move and then not. Nagle thinks he sees bones more than once. But bones cannot move, cannot rustle.

The porch is a mutiny of woodrot. Great holes are eaten in it. Nagle hears something move under there, but is not about to find out what. There is a fanlight over the door, shattered. But you can see shards of dusty stained glass wedged into the casement. The doorframe is badly warped. The door itself will only open a few

feet. There are filthy windows to either side.

Nagle hears motion behind him.

Another child. Another boy. He is dressed in a dark, rumpled suit. He has an anemic complexion, a flawless porcelain-white set with a thin slash of a mouth, black opals for eyes. A dark pelt of hair crowns the oblong skull. He does not blink. A fly crawls over his nose. He holds something out to Nagle.

A sheet of paper.

"Is that for me, son?" Nagle asks, his mouth very dry.

The boy does not open his mouth...but Nagle thinks he hears a voice say, "Yes."

Eyebrow arched, Nagle takes the paper, looks from it to the boy. A second fly is on his forehead now, rubbing its forelegs together. The paper is covered with doodling. Odd geometric patterns and cruciform figures, scribbled formulae. Nagle scans them, sensing a certain relevance in their tangles. He looks up at the boy. There are no less than a dozen flies on his face now. As Nagle watches, his skin creeping in turgid waves, more flies crawl over the boy's face as if he is walking, breathing carrion. They fly up from his hair, descend on his face. They crawl over his eyeballs, up his nostrils. Others buzz from the chasm of his mouth. A few try to light on Nagle. He swats them away angrily.

When he looks up, the boy is gone.

But...no, Nagle hears the sound of running footsteps in the house. Weird, unpleasant child. And those flies... Jesus. But Nagle knows he cannot allow him to play in this old wreck. Too many ways to injure himself.

Swallowing down an ocean of dread, Nagle slips through the doorway into a leave-strewn hall. Two sets of stairs climb side by side up into the murk. At the top, they seem to veer away from each other at sharp right angles.

Nagle steps through the leaves. Crazy. Impossible. But there are no doorways in the hall. It's as if you have to go upstairs to get back downstairs. The walls are tattooed with dirty handprints. They are bowed and sagging, shredded wallpaper hanging in strips and coils like viscera. You can see the joists behind them which are bones.

Nagle approaches the stairways. The steps, the baluster rail are carpeted in cobwebbed dust. Nothing has disturbed that fine down...yet surely the boy has come this way.

"Follow me," a voice calls.

It echoes up out of nowhere, leaving a chill at the back of Nagle's throat that spreads down his spine. Nagle, the birdcage of his chest filled with flapping, fluttering things, begins going up. His nostrils detect the stink of age—plaster rot and

mildew, damp wallpaper and rotting upholstery. But something worse, too, something nameless that is thick and noisome like gassy, fleshy decay. Mice skitter and scratch in the walls. Nagle presses a hand there, his fingers nearly sinking through as if the wood has gone to paste...and he has the odd, unsettling feeling that something is *pressing* from the other side, trying to touch him. The wall actually bulges, then deflates as if exhaling.

Upstairs.

"Boy?" his voice calls and dies, refusing to echo, to linger. "Boy? Are you here?"

Sighing, Nagle goes after him, searching, looking, scrutinizing. As he investigates, he is all the more certain that this house—this entire part of town—was designed by a madman. Picasso or Dali would design such dwellings. Experiments in expressionism, surrealism, but surely not practicality. Rooms lead not into hallways, but into other rooms. Stairways lead to blank walls or to rooms below that are doorless, the only way out via other stairwells leading up. Corridors end suddenly or open back into themselves or into other narrow rooms from which there is no escape. There are passageways so confined he can barely squeeze through them. One particular corridor slopes until the ceiling meets the floor. Everything is exaggerated or understated...there is no in-between. The angles are perverse, unnatural. Like being trapped in some demented dollhouse. A cruel experiment in paranoia and claustrophobia.

Before long, Nagle is lost, hopelessly lost.

His face is beaded with sweat. His breath rasps in his lungs. His heart hammers and his flesh is clammy, tight against his bones. Dementia shrieks in the black vault of his brain.

He has lost his briefcase, but still clutches that sheet of paper given to him by the boy. Why, he does not know.

He stares at the paper, finding significance in those doodlings now. Geometrical shapes and convoluted angles accompanied by insane formulae to explain them. Nagle is reminded of college math classes...thinking he is looking at something quite like non-Euclidian calculus. Maddening in its complexity, disturbing in its simplicity. Not mindless doodling as he had previously thought. He knows enough about geometry to sense the symmetry, the pervasive pattern. It is some alien, debased system of calculation. And it leaves him cold, makes something in his brain cry out. He stands there, staring at it, his flesh crawling, his brain descending into a hive of noise. Breathless, thoughtless, he waits for the angles of his world, his reality, to suddenly twist in upon themselves, fold up like paper dolls and swallow him alive.



Enough.

Nagle can hear water dripping, rats clawing in the steadily compressing walls. Scratching sounds. Echoes of footsteps. Dragging noises...as if heavy objects are drawn over distant floors.

Nagle thinks: This is all quite ridiculous. Use your head. Just use your head. There are two doorways ahead.

Nagle opens one, sees a stairway leading down. He opens the other and stares into a fathomless blackness...but far below, the sound of water splashing, echoing. Dear God. He takes the stairway. It is impossibly narrow, clinging to a wall of worm-eaten paneling. Below, another corridor. Long and high-ceilinged. The expansive walls are set with graffiti. Bizarre, nightmarish depictions of night creatures, a netherworld bestiary. Things like tentacled, multi-phallused toads. Women with too many limbs and armless men who wear deep-sea squids for heads. Faces which are not faces but bodies. Goat-headed females giving birth to a profusion of things like fetal spiders. Other things...chimerical bounties of limb and eye and feeler and sprouting organ. Living, ethereal bubbles. And amongst these grim, insidious figures rendered in chalk and red paint, an intersecting confusion of lines and angles which seem to reach out to him—

Nagle turns away, the world momentarily losing solidity around him, running like wax. He stumbles up the corridor. The boy is standing there, smiling. Flies carpet his face. His eyes stare and stare. But the pupils...not like pupils at all, but black, crawling things. Like amebas slinking under a microscope, oozing over the surface of his eyeballs.

“Hey,” Nagle gasps, “you there...you...”

The boy waits for him, his eyes shifting and slinking. He licks his lips with a discolored tongue. “Mister...I cut myself.” He holds up his left arm, pulling the cuff of his suit up, exposing clown-white skin which looks more like pallid rubber than flesh. The skin of his forearm is gashed open in a four-inch slit. Nagle, his mind teetering on the edge of some black abyss, sees that the wound is...*moving*. No, not the wound, but what is in it—maggots. It is filled with a wriggling, seething mass of grave worms. They drop out like squirming rice. And the boy, Jesus, the boy...his body beneath that filthy dark suit is undulating. Moving and slithering. As if there is something beneath it that is not mere boy, something fluidic and pulsing. His face now...the flies abandon it... writhes on the bone. Bloated pockets roll and surge. His hands too, filled with jumping beans, in constant verminous motion.

With a cry, Nagle falls away from him. The boy is carrion, yes. The boy is filled with feasting worms. When Nagle dares open his eyes again, the boy is not

there. He is alone, glazed eyes staring at stark, shuddering emptiness.

Escape. It is all that Nagle understands now. His mind has become some bubbling cauldron of lunacy. He is mad. He accepts this. He cannot trust what he sees, feels, hears.

There is another doorway at the end of the corridor. Maybe the boy passed through it. It is an ancient thing, oaken and studded with square-headed nails. Nagle pushes through it...and falls trembling into utter blackness. At least, this is the sensation that thrums through him: like falling from some great height. Then he is on his hands and knees crawling, slinking up some crooked stairway that is twisted into an alien helix and at the same time, completely lineal. Whimpering, he moves along, afraid that he will fall down...or maybe up. The gravity is wrong, it is low. He cannot be certain what is below or above or even where such things are. Time and space are now hideously deranged. Geometry perverse, debased. Circles are linear and angles bisect themselves, seeking impossible curvatures. The darkness is tense, cataclysmic, an echoing drum of voices--chanting, singing, screaming. Voices from great distances and from only a few feet away. Nagle shakes with an acute acrophobia, as if he is suspended high above *something*, dangling from some vast elevation, clinging only by nails and teeth. His world—this twisted, bastard caricature of it—seems to be moving, traveling with a great velocity to remote realms. He clings to the stairs, trapped in a vacuum of nothingness. His thoughts are a shrieking cacophony. There is no way to root himself, to orient himself or find his bearings in the eternal nyctophobic blackness. Trapped in a dun neutrality between shadow and light, laughter and tears, sanity and naked psychosis, he can only cower and pray for release.

Finally, he crawls into a winding corridor that is back-lit by itself.

It is prolong, protracted beyond earthly perimeters. The walls are twenty, thirty feet apart. The ceiling so high above he cannot see it or even be sure it is there. Shadows slither around him like serpents. On his feet now, the corridor thins, narrows, becomes a cramped passage, then a tunnel that he must hunch down to squeeze himself through. More doors. More corridors. They go forward and back and neither. The angles mutate, flutter. He is not sure if he is walking on the floor or the walls or the ceiling. Things brush him, but they are formless. He spills into another passage, this one studded with diamond-paned windows. And through each one, a staring, distorted image of that boy's grotesque face, watching, watching, his foul breath frosting the glass.

"Goddamn you!" Nagle shouts, pounding on the panes. "What do you want? What in the name of Christ do you want?"

The faces fade into a polluted mist. Nagle can see nothing out those win-

dows but a swimming murk. Think, he tells himself, think. This lunatic carnival, this house of mirrors and reflections...there must be a way out. Reason scratches at the rusty lock of his brain. The boy. Yes, the boy is the key. He will know the way out. Surely, he will.

Then, the boy. He is standing with his back to Nagle, before another door. No flies. No maggots roiling beneath his flesh. Just a boy. The rest...hallucination. Nagle runs up to him, reaches out and his fingers fall through the boy.

He has no more substance than smoke.

Nonetheless, the boy turns. He has no face. Just a gaping black chasm where it should be and in that chasm, that hole...stars. Constellations from some dead-end, loathsome corner of space man would never see. There is laughter somewhere—perhaps it belongs to Nagle—and then the boy turns sideways and does not exist. Two-dimensional. Width and height, but no depth, no breadth.

It is then Nagle screams.

He reaches out to the door, thinking he must go back, not forward, but knowing in this place such things are often reversed. The door seems to...*throb* beneath his fingertips as if it is living material and not mere wood. It is veined with light and Nagle can see, *actually see*, the passage of blood and fluids, the network of arteries within. The door whispers open of its own volition and beyond...nothing. Just some black vacuum of breathing, sentient matter.

"Step through," a voice says, oddly sexless, ageless, a neutral voice.

"No!" Nagle cries, his own voice seeming to come from somewhere behind and above him.

"Through the door."

"I will not!"

"Yes."

The sound of Nagle's own breathing is a huge noise, echoing and deafening as if he is hooked to some respirator. Before him, in that misting blackness, there is a suggestion of motion like a storm cloud unfolding itself or cloth unwinding. The sound of static electricity. Something expanding, becoming solid. Nagle sees a faceless robed figure...knows, somehow, that it is the boy. But the boy grown to adulthood. Into whatever his ancestry demands of him.

"Get away," Nagle says, his body caught in odd field of vibrant force. "Get away from me!"

The figure drifts forward.

Fingers are pressed to Nagle's lips. They dissolve like wax from his own body heat. A sleeve is held out to him. There is no hand coming from it, just a profusion of twisting, translucent filaments like the tentacles of a jellyfish.

And Nagle?

He runs and runs. Down corridors, through rooms, up stairways, down them. He finally collapses in a panting, sweaty, trembling heap in a tall, windowless room. There is a table. On it, a notebook. It is very old, crumbling as he touches it. Written in a crowded, spidery hand are what appear to be journal entries... notes... something. Nagle begins to read:

*Through the looking glass, do not follow through the looking glass.*

*One must consider the differentials angles which are not angles and children that are not children at all beware, dear God, beware the vectors.*

*Through the looking glass: The City of Broken Glass.*

*Yes, the dire plain of razors beneath the bloodied sky of viscera. See how it drips and drips. Shadows are mirrors are shadows. Voices are screams. Sentient, screaming slime. How the noises, how they cut and wound and stitch my eyes shut of black tears. Yes, the streets. You cannot hide in the streets. This ghetto of pestilence. This gutter of insanity where the shadows hop and leap and whimper. Inner city? The geometry, how obscene. Extradimensional playground of what? Angles can distort. They can warp all that you know. Consider the differentials. Imagine being a prisoner of lines and planes and angles that are not angles. Beware the vectors. The angles, dear Lord, how they twist in upon themselves. Folding up. Swallowing, swallowing. By God, so very far we travel, but how quickly!*

*The slum. Insane, gibbering slum where the angles breathe and space and time are a fleshy, toxic river of putrescence. Faces watch me. White things that flutter on the bone beneath. Moths anxious to take wing. Blasphemous geometry. Buildings bleed and streets shift. The stars are not stars but faces that swim down to tear, to devour. There are worlds around us, places where the material of reality is worn gossamer-thin. At these rarefied barriers, those from beyond the spheres scratch and claw and worry.*

*Subterranean, ravenous void... voices beckon... shapes which are not shapes but noises of the flesh... shadows shamble and bleed... i must write faster faster... i have a long way to go... it may take centuries but i'll be there shortly... world dissolves... black walls drip... weeping fungus... the awful polluted stink...*

*am coming apart now*

*lake ice world is thinning lake ice*

*i will fall through*

*opening now*

*like a flower*

The rest of the pages are blank. The ranting of some madman, surely. Delir-



ium. Lunacy. None of it makes sense and, yet, it all makes perfect sense. Nagle feels close to something. Some nameless horror, cyclopean and malignant. One that can swallow the world and pick its teeth with his bones.

Tossing the notebook aside, he passes through another doorway, down a set of crooked stairs.

He is in what appears to be another leave-strewn entry hall. Like the one he stood in when he first entered the house. In fact, it is identical, only reversed. Or he is reversed. Behind him, the twin stairways climb. Before him the doorway with the shattered fan light above it. A filthy window to either side.

Is this the way out?

His hand touches the doorknob, hesitates.

A voice: "Are you going out there?"

Nagle wheels around. The boy again. His complexion is sickly, chlorotic, cancerous eyes sunk in charnel pits. There is an suffocating sweet smell about him.

"Get me out of here," Nagle says, desperate. "Please..."

"Out of here?"

"Yes, I.. "

But something settles into him then. Something wells around him. An anxiety. An oppression. A morose sensation of imminent danger. Something cold whispers at his ears. Inside his head, a tenebrous clamor. The boy's lips, which are pulled in a gray, flaking line, begin to quiver. Something black parts them. Something jointed with the general mass of a pencil that wiggles and shudders. It is followed by another and another as if some wicked insect is emerging. Like the hairless, chitinous appendages of a spider, they keep coming out, making odd clicking and ticking sounds. When they have emerged an easy ten inches, they spread apart and stretch the boy's lips with them. His mouth opens to impossible dimensions. And in there, a squirming blackness, a glimmer of gnashing triangular teeth. Then they withdraw and there is only the boy, coming closer and closer.

Then Nagle is through the door, escaping into what he does not know. It is night. Has that much time passed? He does not think so. Narrow lanes and centuries buildings and tall, slanting houses capped by rotting gambrel roofs. Bonfires burn in the streets. Figures huddle around them. This is not his world, he realizes as hope sinks into an ocean of fear and hopelessness.

Nagle rounds a corner, still hoping. A dog is frightened from a barrel of trash—a dog which seems to have two heads, then one, then none at all. Two men skulk in a ruined doorway. At the sight of Nagle, they try to hide themselves, press into the moldering brick. They have no faces. In fact, they are not *they*, but *he*: one man with the limbs and heads of two.

"Hey, mister, you the one? You the one?"

Nagle turns, beyond terror by this point. Appalled by it all, maybe. Disgusted on a level he has never known before—a seething black revulsion that chews at the lining of his belly with tiny, hooked teeth. But despite himself, he is eager to see more, learn more.

There is a man standing there. "The savior will accept you into His church. Have no fear, brother."

A raging, gnawing sore has spread over his nose and cheeks, devouring them down to sunken caverns. He wears a seedy overcoat and something moves beneath it. He licks his threadbare lips and leprous face with a tongue far too long for the mouth that contains it. The underside of that coiling pink tongue is set with swollen suckers like the tentacle of an octopus.

Nagle squeezes his eyes shut.

When he opens them, the man is gone. But his voice... yes, it drones on and on about sacrifices for the church, benedictions of flesh, sacraments of filth, doorways which bisect time and matter. Nearby, a group of people gather on the walks. They part like a sea at Nagle's approach, muttering amongst themselves with gelatinous voices as if their mouths are packed with wet, decaying rags. Their faces are not faces. White and globular things with eyes and mouths that scuttle over the bone beneath, reconfiguring themselves at will.

There is a ruined church across the street. Nagle sees holes in the roof, bats winging from the belfry. Doors are secured with planks, windows boarded. Nagle can hear sounds from in there—grunting, squealing sounds like feasting hogs. At the apex of the steeple where the cross should be, there is a figure, possibly a man, though grotesque and deformed, crucified upside down. Like a weathervane, he moves gently from side to side. Nagle can hear him weeping.

Tenements are painted with runic symbols, ante-Druidical figures played in wild loops and zig-zags. Pre-human nightmares. A hot breeze blows in the night and stinks of freshly-spilled entrails.

A circle of children ring around Nagle now.

Their faces are beaded, pebbly like coral. Squamous. Lurching with depressions and barbed protuberances. Still others wear faces of stained glass, coveted by moonlight.

Nagle can take no more.

He runs back to the house. Crowds are gathering, pressing in, clawing out at him. Faces emerge from doorways. Voice call out in guttural, non-human tongues. As they converge, Nagle throws himself back into the house, shutting the door. He presses it shut with his own weight, crying, babbling, begging a disinterested God

for mercy.

White, eyeless faces press against the windows, dozens of them crowding for space. Fists pummel the door. It begins to give. Anemic, fungoid hands claw through, reaching, reaching, wanting, lusting. Bodies pour forth in a pustulant tide. Nagle is overwhelmed.

And there is a sound of thrashing and wetness, of rending and obscene intersection, noises that echo and echo in the cramped, cobwebbed spaces of Nagle's brain. For here the neighborhoods are cramped, dismal, and decrepit. Here the houses are tall and thin, low and squat, sprouting in haphazard clusters like toadstools thrusting from moist, dank earth. And here, one cannot escape the festering blackness of mad eternity.

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# The Unholy Attendant

By Phil Roberts

Stanley Long stood shivering on Flinders Street Station, around 10 PM. *The train should be here soon.* Then, as though reading his thoughts, the station attendant wandered across to say, "The train's been delayed outside Camberwell another forty minutes."

When at last the train did arrive, Stanley shambled forward and collided with the door. "What the...?" he said. He staggered backward, wondering why the electronic doors had not opened. Then seeing the blood-red colour of the train and the funny thin, sliding doors, he realised, *My God it's a red rattler!* The red rattler or "Tait trains" were Victoria's first suburban trains; introduced in 1921, they lasted sixty-one years.

*I haven't seen one of these old rattlers since the early 1980s,* Stanley thought. *Surely they're not bringing them back into service after twenty years?*

He remembered as a boy doing the "red rattler crouch" in winter. The rattlers had seats set out in pairs facing each other, with one small door, sliding open to the left between each pair of seats. By the 1960s, the rattlers had been in use forty years and their catches were shot, so when the train hit a bend the doors slid open. Or, if already open, slid shut with a bang. So, when it was freezing or raining it was necessary to hold the door shut and people would place themselves around the carriage to try to cover all the doors in the compartment. But since an arm would soon be aching, it was easier to crouch down in the seat and put up your left foot to hold the door shut.

As he stepped aboard, Stanley smiled and said, "The red rattler crouch."

"Yes, I remember it too," said a voice in the carriage.

Startled, he turned and saw a familiar face. "Rodge Hunter," Stanley said in amazement. "I haven't seen you in ...?"

"In yonks," agreed Rodge.

He started to sit next to Stanley. Then as the train lurched into motion, all the doors slammed open with a crash. Rodge said, "Sorry to be unsociable, but I'd

better sit over here.” As Stanley crouched down in his seat to hold the door shut with his left foot, Rodge sat diagonally opposite him on the other side of the paired seats, doing likewise.

“God knows what this thing’ll sound like going through the underground.” Stanley said.

“Probably like an endless creeping barrage,” agreed Rodge. “But I don’t think we’re going to find out.”

“What do you mean?” Stanley asked. Then he realised the train had not gone out toward Richmond to the nearest Loop entrance. Instead, it was going down Flinders Street, toward Spencer Street.

*It’s weird enough to be on a red rattler in 2003, thought Stanley. But a red rattler to Spencer Street!* Aloud he said, “I haven’t been to Spencer Street Station since the early 1980s.”

“Who has? That’s when the underground Loop opened.”

“Yes, but...” Stanley stopped as he realised what Rodge meant. “Of course, they built one of the Loop entrances in the wrong spot.”

“That’s right,” said Rodge with a mirthless smile. “The first is between Richmond and Flinders Street, so the other should have been between Flinders Street and Spencer Street Stations.”

“But the idiots placed it one station further out,” Stanley said, watching the pink and white neon-topped towers as they rattled down Flinders Street. “Between Spencer Street and North Melbourne Stations. So whichever way the trains enter the Loop, they bypass Spencer Street Station.”

“It used to be such a beautiful station,” said Rodge. “Yet because of a bungle by four state premiers during the twenty year construction, Spencer Street Station has been reduced to a ghost station.”

“Lord alone knows what it’ll look like after two decades out of service,” Stanley said.

They heard the clatter of doors up and down the train rattling open as the train roared round the sharp bend from Flinders to Spencer Street.

“My Lord!” said Stanley as they finally pulled into Spencer Street Station. Dust and detritus ankle-deep covered the platform. The station sign had broken free at one end and hung down, almost touching a wooden bench.

*Surely, no one can actually work here anymore.* Stanley wondered, trying to peer up into the attendant’s box on the platform. He thought he could see someone moving about in the dully-lit box, but could not be sure.

Instead of starting again, the train stayed put, and a metallic-sounding voice boomed over the intercom: “Due to a minor electrical fault, the departure of the

train on platform number five has been delayed for at least fifteen minutes.”

“Oh no!” said Stanley. “It’ll be well after midnight when I get home.”

Rodge Hunter only shrugged his shoulders resignedly. “I’m not worried,” he said. He picked up a newspaper from the seat beside him. “I’ve got my paper to read. Would you like the sports’ section? You can see how the Aussie cricketers are doing against the West Indies.”

“No thanks, I think I’ll get out for a few minutes and stretch my legs. I’ve still got a long train ride ahead.”

“A long train ride ahead,” agreed Rodge.

When Stanley stepped down onto the station his feet sank to the ankles in dust and detritus. He was tempted to turn round and step straight back into the train.

*My God!* he thought. He stared in horror at the eight to ten centimetre thick layer coating the platform. Dust, orange peels, rotten fruit, discarded candy wrappers, and Styrofoam cups covered the platform from one end to the other.

*What a stinking mess,* he thought. He wrinkled up his nose at the smell of decay as he tentatively took a step forward. *How could it have become so bad since I was here last? Still it’s twenty years since I was here. Since anyone was here. But in that case, why did the train stop here tonight?*

Tentatively, Stanley continued forward. Despite wanting to look down to watch where he was stepping, Stanley forced himself to look up, to avoid any allergic reaction to the puffs of dust that sprayed up each time one of his feet touched down. *It’s like walking on eight or ten centimetres of talcum powder.*

“Talcum powder containing rotting oranges, apples, and dead birds,” he said aloud. He stared in horror at the carcasses of half a dozen sparrows and one great sea gull, upon which he had almost stepped. *My God, it has to be over a decade since anyone else has been here. Maybe I’m crazy to be walking in this,* he thought, wondering if it were dangerous. *Maybe I could catch something.*

Then as something long and black scuttled out from beneath a potato crisp packet mere centimetres in front of him, to disappear down the side of the platform under the train, he thought, *Or be bitten or stung by something!*

Despite his trepidation, he forced himself onward, carefully side-stepping any of the long, gossamer threads of spider web hanging down from the rafters of the platform canopy.

As his stomach began to rumble, he looked round the platform and saw a vending machine. *I wonder if it would still have any candy in it. And whether it would still be edible,* he thought as he wandered over to the vending machine.

He stared in at the assortment of candy bars, potato crisps, and corn chips.

Some of the bags had burst open, their contents scattered through the metal coils of the machine. "But the others look all right," he said. He started to hunt through his coat pockets uncertain if he had any change with him.

*After all, as long as they're still in their foil, they'll last forever, won't they,* he thought, wondering if it were true. *They might be a bit stale, but I've eaten stale chocolate bars before.*

Finally, he located half a dozen coins in an inner coat pocket. A coin was already rattling through the works of the vending machine when Stanley heard a rustling inside the machine.

*What ...?* Stanley peered through the grimy glass as the rustling continued. After a moment, he detected movement in a bag of corn chips near the bottom of the machine. He bent down until he was at eye level with the bag ... which suddenly burst open to reveal the long-whiskered snout of a huge brown rat.

"Jesus!" cried Stanley. He jumped backwards in fright and fell over in the thick carpet of dust, which cushioned his fall, but sprayed up over him as it fell back to earth.

"Oh God!" he cried as he burst into a fit of sneezing for a few seconds.

"Idiot!" he cursed himself as he quickly climbed back to his feet, ever wary of scuttling things that might be lurking beneath the dust. *Rats are omnivores, he reminded himself, they mainly live off fruit and nuts. And corn chips when they can get them. Rats won't eat meat unless they're starving.*

Stanley pressed the reject button twice and scooped out his coin. At the sound of the coin ejecting the rat looked up and squeaked from fright, but stayed where it was. Obviously reluctant to give up its cache of goodies until certain it was under attack.

Leaving the vending machine, Stanley walked over to the back of the wooden attendants' box. Upon which a glass frame housed numerous timetables. "1980, '81, '82?" he read the dates off the timetables. "Well, they certainly haven't been changed in two decades."

He looked up at the back of the attendants' box in dismay. Most of the yellow plaster tiles had fallen off and lay broken in the dirt on the platform, leaving behind squares of hard mortar where they had been. Or else tiles were cracked or broken, or coated in thick, green fungus.

He reached out to touch one broken tile, but quickly pulled his hand away as something scuttled around inside the crack.

*Surely, no one actually works here anymore. Yet, an announcement came over the intercom earlier. Then he realised, That could have been piped through from Flinders Street Station.*

He set off to investigate the upper levels of the station thinking; *Surely, it can't be as dilapidated up there.*

The centimetres of dust puffed up around him, causing him to wheeze and cough as he walked up the steep ramp sliding back occasionally in the dust.

Someone had locked all the fast-food stalls for the night. *But that's only to be expected, it must be nearly midnight.* However, he noticed the wire guard-rails were heavy in rust and thought; *Surely they couldn't open them with that degree of rust?*

He started forward toward the front of the station, when he had the feeling of being watched. Turning to his right, he saw a tall, pale figure standing a few metres away in darkness.

"I'm sorry," Stanley apologised, "I thought I was...."

He stopped to stare in horror at the sight before him. At first glance, it resembled an exceptionally tall, black-robed man. Then, even in the poor light, Stanley could see that it was manlike, yet strangely un-manlike; not a man, not a beast, with no face, only a curious cone-like head, and tentacle-like appendages, as well as several hand-like growths.

"Who...? What...?" asked Stanley, unable to take his eyes from the blasphemous entity even as he began backing toward the ramp to the platform below.

The creature stood its ground, not following the terrified traveller and emitted an unearthly bellowing: a noise like howling wind when there was no wind. Although it seemed to have no eyes, as it howled at Stanley, two great orbs flared like burning coals where eyes should have been.

"Jesus!" cried Stanley, startled by the reverberating echo of his words in the cavernous station.

As his cry rang out, the non-man took one tentative step toward Stanley, wavering a little, almost falling, as though unused to walking in its current form.

As the man-like thing started shambling toward him, Stanley spun round and ran toward the platform.

In the dim night, he tripped and slid halfway down the ramp, before managing to get back to his feet again. Then he raced down to the platform level, back toward the train.

As Stanley approached the small, glass-fronted door of the attendants' box, he saw a blue-uniformed Vic-Rail officer bent over the wooden bench along the back of the box, poring over a plethora of faded timetables.

Tapping gently upon one of the glass panes in the door, Stanley said, "Excuse me...?"

"Yes?" said the attendant, in an oddly snakelike voice, turning round toward



him.

"I wondered...?" began Stanley. He stopped in horror, staring in disbelief at the sight before him. Although this one had a human face, the face was strangely waxy, like a mask. *Or a badly preserved face cut from a corpse and worn like a mask*, thought Stanley. And even as he thought it, the creature reached up with a sucker-tipped tentacle to remove the face as though taking off a hat, to reveal one giant eye placed oddly off-centre amid a foaming mass of jelly-like matter.

*My God, I must be hallucinating*, thought Stanley, staring in shock at the gigantic amorphous, protoplasmic mass, whose physical form seemed to be in a state of constant flux.

"Yes, what is it?" demanded the creature, taking a lurching step toward the front of the attendant's box.

"Oh Christ!" cried Stanley, turning. Too quickly, so that he fell and sprained his left ankle.

As he fell the attendant stepped down from the box and reached out a sucker-tipped tentacle toward him.

"No! Get away from me!" Stanley shrieked. Despite the agony in his left ankle, he pulled himself to his feet and started limping down the station toward the red rattler.

*I've got to warn Rodge!* Stanley thought. *What kind of insanity have we got ourselves into?*

"Rodge! For God's sake, Rodge!" shouted Stanley as he lurched down the platform.

"Hey, wait!" Stanley heard the sibilant, snakelike voice of the attendant call. Then behind him he heard shuffling footsteps and the *puff-puff-puff* of dirt and detritus spraying up at each step as the attendant lurched after him.

"Rodge, for God's sake! We've got to get out of here!" Stanley shouted. Pulling open the sliding door, he half fell, half leapt into the blood-red train.

"Got to get out of here?" echoed Rodge Hunter, obviously not understanding.

"Oh God he's following me! That damn thing is following me! It can't be far behind me!" cried Stanley. Yet, when he sat up, with Rodge's help, there was no sign of the station attendant.

"But he was..." began Stanley. He stopped as he heard the whistle to start the train. Looking down the platform to his left he saw the attendant, no longer interested in him, standing three or four carriages away, raising the white flag in its left tentacle to start the train rattling out of the station at last.

Realising Rodge had also looked back at the sound of the whistle, Stanley

asked, "You saw it too, didn't you?"

"Of course, I saw him," said Rodge, sounding unconcerned. He returned to his seat and picked up his newspaper again.

"How can you say you saw that ... that thing and then sit there reading?" demanded Stanley.

"It comes as a shock to all of us at first, when we're chosen to ride the unholy railway as guests of the Great Old Ones."

"But the attendant?"

"Oh don't worry about old Ni."

"Ni?" asked Stanley.

"It's short for Nyarlathotep. But he's had dozens of names down the ages of man: the God of Resurrection, the Black Messenger of Karneter, the Stalker among the Stars, the Lord of the Desert, the Dweller in Darkness, the Crawling Chaos, the Howler in the Night, the Haunter of the Dark ... and others too numerous to enumerate. However, we've recently been calling him the Unholy Attendant. Since he took over the running of Spencer Street Station, which he turned into what you might call a pick-up point for new devotees to Great Cthulhu, Father Yig, Azathoth, and the other Great Old Ones....

"This is a very special train. Express from Spencer Street to Yuggoth, then on to Yaddith, Kadath, Arctarus, Gak, Bethmoora, Sarnath, Lomar, Cathuria, Celephais, Hatheg-Kla, Ib, Zimmeria, Ulthar, Dylath-Leen, Leng, Irem, Geph, or almost anywhere else you wish to go. In either the Dream World or the Waking World."

"What if I don't believe in any of those places?" asked Stanley; thinking, *I must be going mad!*

"Then you're doomed to ride the red rattler from Spencer Street forever. That's their trouble," said Rodge, nodding back toward two dark-robed figures squatting, hunched forward oddly in seats at the opposite end of the carriage. "The Older Ones just never know when they've reached their destination."

"But...?" began Stanley. He stopped as he noticed that instead of going on to North Melbourne, the train was turning off. "We're heading into a siding..." he said. Then he realised, *No, a tunnel. We're going down into the underground Loop after all.*

Then he quickly realised, *No, it's much too large to be the claustrophobic Loop. The walls of the Loop almost touch the sides of the train.* Yet, this tunnel seemed to have metres to spare all around the train.

At first, there was near total darkness within the tunnel, for perhaps half a minute or so. Finally Stanley called to Rodge, "It's beginning to lighten up at last.

"We're coming out into..." He stopped in amazement at the great array of

twinkling yellow lights. Like some kind of gigantic Christmas lights display, yet many times vaster than any Stanley had seen before.

He stared at the lights for a moment before realising, “My Lord, they’re not lights, they’re stars.”

“Of course they’re stars,” agreed Rodge. “We have to pass through them to go up to Yuggoth, Yaddith, Kadath, or wherever you plan to get off. It’s nothing new to me; I’ve been through this before.”

As Rodge spoke, Stanley hung out the open doorway of the train and watched the twinkling stars whiz past, until they approached a great luminous ball of yellow-white light.

“My God, looks like we’re heading straight into the sun!” cried Stanley. He collapsed back into his seat, tightly clenching his eyes against the glare.

“Relax,” said Rodge, “it’s just our first stop.”

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## On Yuggoth

By Lee Clark Zumpe

On Yuggoth, where the sun is said to shine  
No brighter than a dim star in a callous sky,  
    Stepped citadels stretch skyward  
    And windowless towers lie in tiers  
    Amidst bastions built of black stone.  
Alone, I tread these uncanny conduits  
Forged not for mortal passage:  
    And through fungoid gardens  
    Wherein flow the shadowy streams  
    Down from the soaring spires of icy mountains.

# Interview with Peter Scartabello of Yuggoth Records

By Kevin Dole 2

From even the greatest of music irony is seldom absent. Sometimes it enters directly into composition, while sometimes it relates only to the fortuitous position among persons and places. The latter sort is splendidly exemplified by a case in the ancient city of Providence, where composer, musician, and Yuggoth Records founder Peter Scartabello resides. Drawing from the traditions of Classical music and Free Jazz, Scartabello records experimental music that scrapes nails down the spine and electrifies hitherto uncharted regions of the brain. The music of Yuggoth Records is cerebral and claustrophobic, geometric and surreal, abstract, frightening, inspired, and at times, even funky.

Now the irony is this, Scartabello, possibly the most accomplished of Lovecraft inspired musicians, heard little of the master of Weird Fiction while growing up in that elder homestead. His discovery of his Providence's most noted writer of horror was accidental.

Mr. Scartabello was kind enough to take time from composing and teaching music to talk to Mythos Collector about music, art, and coming to Lovecraft through heavy metal records.

*Mythos Collector: On your web site it says you started composing at age nine. What spurred you to this?*

**Peter Scartabello:** Well, originally I started playing drums at about eight, but my brother played piano and I would tinker and sort of play by ear. I was drawn to the piano because I could create music on it more easily than on the drums, for obvious reasons. So, at the same time I got some music software for the Macintosh SE and started composing when I got a keyboard with MIDI capabilities -- this is how I learned how to read piano music. From there it just took off. I started to listen to classical music, Stravinsky, Bach, Beethoven and Mussorgsky. Actually it's kind of funny and I'm almost embarrassed to say this but one of my introductions into clas-

sical music was through the Swedish guitar shredder Yngwie Malmsteen.

*MC: At what age did you discover Lovecraft?*

**PS:** It was at about a little after I started composing, say the mid-80's. Actually, my heavy metal roots will surface more, because I discovered him through the cover of Iron Maiden's *Live After Death* album. On Eddie's gravestone was a Lovecraft quote, "That is not dead . . . etc." When I did some research I discovered that he was from Providence, RI, my hometown, so I was further interested at that point.

*MC: So what influence does Lovecraft have on your music? Aesthetically, philosophically?*

**PS:** Well, I am drawn to his approach to the human condition -- the absurdity of it. Absurdity in the sense of 'out of surdity' as in Albert Camus and Kafka's writing. That man really does not belong or is really not part of nature, regarding consciousness. Also how Lovecraft expresses our unimportance in the cosmic scope of our universe. But I have taken a less nihilistic philosophy concerning this and have recently adopted some Zen Buddhist views.

My music is important to me in that it is my way of communicating the human condition. The fact that there is beauty in knowing that we really have no purpose on this planet and our ephemeral nature should be revered and not seen as a depressing thing. It's our transience as a species that makes us special. The bottom line is that I believe Lovecraft represented this, expressed this very well in his writing, even if he was coming more the horror aspect of our condition.

*MC: A lot of people ignore Lovecraft's appreciation of beauty. Do you reach for this in your music?*

**PS:** Well, most people listen to my music and think that I am this dark and disturbed individual, because the sounds are indeed denser and to the Western ear more dissonant in the Western sense. But to me it is just be honest with myself in that I write what I feel sounds right to me and expresses my condition as a human being in this world. I am fascinated my what most people would refer to as noise. For example the other day I heard the scraping of a huge dumpster as if it was being moved across the concrete by some truck and thought. . . Wow, that is a beautiful sound, I wish I had my recorder. Beauty is indeed subjective, but at the same time I

try not to alienate my listeners, I believe that the beauty in art should be universal, as in a masterpiece of Bach or a painter like Michaelangelo

*MC: You mentioned heavy metal earlier, and now you mention dissonance vs. Western conceptions of music. What else influences you musically?*

**PS:** I am very open-minded musically. I think that because of communication and it's advent we now have access to any style of music. In say the 1700's music was regional and composers only knew about local composers. Because of this as composers in the 20th and now 21'st century we have to weed out many things and be more economic in our expression. This is why I have adopted a Zen approach to music, because as you grow as a human being you accumulate a lot of baggage in all aspects. So this should be weeded out and you will be left what's really important. The composers I am now drawn to are very economical, no note is wasted. Probably my biggest influence composer wise is Polish Composer Andrzej Panufnik. I love how he uses very small musical motifs in his work. The same can be said for Bach Brahms and even the late Alexander Scriabin. But I am also influenced by Renaissance composer Orlando DeLassus and lots of Indian and Japanese music. I am particularly drawn to the use of micro-tonality in Indian music. But as you can see I can go on and on about this.

*MC: Do you compose all the music recorded for Yugoth Records?*

**PS:** No . . . There is a Scriabin adaptation on the *Anechoic* and also some collaborations with a friend, John Lima, but the music for *Cast* is all mine.

*MC: You are the only one listed on your website.*

**PS:** However, I do want other artists to become part of Yugoth Records when I become more established.

*MC: Anyone in particular you are interested in working with?*

**PS:** Well, I have to find artists who fit the vision of the label. I have a few composer friends who I may be recording in the future. I may also launch a sister label for more Indie Rock oriented stuff -- I've been toying with the idea of Shub-Niggurath Records .

*MC: How did you come to work with the performers you currently record with?*

**PS:** As far as performers, some I met through college, others just through playing and various musical circles. Not many of them share my interests in Lovecraft, but they share similar interests in art. It is hard to meet good players outside of the college music atmosphere.

*MC: Are you interested in any of the other Lovecraft style music out there? Indie Rock?*

**PS:** Yeah, I like Rudimentary Peni's album *Cacophony*, which is completely biographical of Lovecraft. It is early English Punk. I haven't heard any other Lovecraft bands worth my listening energy.

*MC: Lovecraft is not known for his love of music. In fact, there is only one story in which music plays a significant role -- "The Music of Erich Zann." Is this story important to you?*

**PS:** Yes very!!! The section of the story where Zann is playing in front of the window and the main character makes it to the window and sees an image of a vast star field and the gaping universe. That was so evocative and powerful to me. True genius.

*MC: So it's more the imagery than the actual description of the music that affected you?*

**PS:** I think Lovecraft himself did not listen to much music. The fact that Eric Zann plays a viol, which is a medieval instrument, demonstrates this. That always cracks me up. Why would he be playing a viol in a contemporary orchestra? The music was interesting, especially when the distant sounds are returning to mock Zann. The Ancient Ones are direct and economical in their expression, while Zann is in a frenzy trying to outdo them in a very egoistic way. Do you know what I mean? This shows again how insignificant we are and how brash and egoistic and just disconnected we are as a species.

*MC: Most fans of Lovecraft are attracted to the Cthulhu Mythos. The name of your label would indicate that you share this attraction. Have you any interest in the Poe stories like "The Outsider" or the dream stories like "The White Ship"?*

**PS:** Yes, well my first introduction to Lovecraft was through his Poe stories and later his Dunsanian, but to me the ultimate stories are “Mountains of Madness” and “Shadow out of Time”, which he may not have written entirely himself. So, I am drawn now more toward the Mythos stuff.

Are you familiar with my Yuggoth Compositions?

*MC: The ones slated for completion in 2005?*

**PS:** I have composed about five pieces so far on each of the Great Old Ones, I just need to write “Azathoth” and I'm finished. I am working on another piece right now though.

*MC: What is it about the Old Ones that draws you to them? You've mentioned the expression of the cosmic scope . . .*

**PS:** The Old Ones to me represent our fear of the unknown, but more specifically . . . they are physical representations of a universe that we don't fully understand. I think Lovecraft drew a lot from Dunsany in that Dunsany had a story where human beings are living in the imaginations and dreams of these huge cosmic beings. The Ancient Ones also may have represented, sadly, the things that threatened Lovecraft's Anglo-Saxon heritage, he mellowed out as he got older but he feared and saw other races in a very bad light -- he probably would of thought I was an Italian Slimy Thing, Hideous and Grotesque -- but I am more drawn to the idea of the Great Old Ones exposing our transience, they can mess with us like playthings because they are eternal. I don't blame Lovecraft for his race issues. A lot of it has to do with how he was brought up and the atmosphere of such a puritanical city. There is still a lot of that remaining in the Northeast. We can't even buy beer on Sundays or in a supermarket.

*MC: What is the other piece that you are currently working on?*

**PS:** The other piece is a theme and variations. The theme is introduced on the classical guitar, then each variation will be for a different instrument group. I have finished the first couple variations. The first one is for drum set and electric guitar, and the second one is for string quartet. There will be seven in all, the last of which will be all the pieces manipulated on the computer using a synthesis program called



Supercollider.

*MC: The name Yuggoth Records is a Lovecraft reference, specifically to the poem "Fungi from Yuggoth" and story "The Whisperer in the Darkness." Is there any significance to this?*

**PS:** Okay, Lovecraft 's poetry is not very good I must admit, but when I read "Fungi from Yuggoth" I didn't know about poets like Baudelaire or R. M. Rilke, so it made an early impression on me. So the word and concept of Yuggoth has a nice sort of innocence connected with it. Sort of naive in a way. I like the sound of the word Yuggoth too.

*MC: Do you think there's any significance to the fact that you both come from Rhode Island? The architecture, the landscape? HPL was very influenced by all of these things.*

**PS:** Absolutely. I think when we dream our landscapes are part fantastic and part realistic. So I often dream about places that Lovecraft dwelt. Providence is very different now than it was fifty or more years ago, but on the East Side of Providence where Lovecraft often walked, a lot of those same houses are still there and preserved and very little has changed. So, I think we may have had similar dreams and this connects me with him in a special way. I do love that part of Providence still and think about him when I walk there. You can't help but incorporate what you know into what you are and what you create. I am fascinated by Lovecraft's use of over-dimensionality in his writing, this was pretty cutting edge at the time. I respect and appreciate how Lovecraft has this insatiable quest for knowledge even though he knew and expressed that the more you know the more insignificant you become in the grand scheme of things. I use a lot of mathematics in my music as Lovecraft did, which is also why I respect his work so much. Many artists see science as being cold and having no place in art, shame on them for being so ignorant and just lazy. Science is crucial to arts beauty, art must please the heart as well as the mind. As humans we are interested in uncovering the secrets of this world, which paradoxically is impossible. But the beauty is that we STRIVE.

*Peter Scartabello is striving to bring the music of Yuggoth Records to the world, but lacks a distributor to do so. Interested parties should visit contact him at [pscart@prism.net](mailto:pscart@prism.net). Both the records Anechoic and Cast are available through [www.yuggothrecords.com](http://www.yuggothrecords.com).*

# Lovecraftian Audio

By Brian Lingard

Today it's no surprise to find several of H.P. Lovecraft's tales as audio recordings of readings and as radio dramas. Especially when you consider the far-reaching effect that Lovecraft's work has had on popular culture over the years. These days you can find stacks of videos and DVDs, role-playing games, collectable card games, lead figures, board games, model kits, artwork, magazines, fanzines, and, of course, countless books. Be sure to take a look at the checklist of audio recordings at the end of this article, just note that not all of these items were made available, and many that were are now out of print.

## Readings

It is unfortunate that no recordings of Lovecraft reading his own stories exist. Lovecraft once mentioned making recordings of his singing on a borrowed Edison cylinder phonograph in a letter to Reinhardt Kleiner [1]. In a later letter to Maurice W. Moe, Lovecraft said that he "inflicted some weird and wondrous ululations upon a perfectly innocent Edison blank" some ten years earlier [2]. Sadly, none of the wax cylinders survived. No doubt destroyed by HPL to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands.

We know from Lovecraft's letters that he would on occasion attend readings of other authors. In particular, only a month after first discovering and reading the work of Lord Dunsany, Lovecraft attended a reading by Dunsany in Boston during October of 1919 [3]. The combination of exposures inspired Lovecraft to write his so-called Dunsanian or dreamlands tales. Thus one might reasonably expect that Lovecraft would appreciate the various recorded readings of his tales.

Lovecraft often read his stories to friends when he visited them. Muriel E. Eddy, wife of C. M. Eddy, recalls hearing Lovecraft read his tale *The Rats in the Walls* one evening shortly after the Eddy's had moved into their new home in the Fox Point section of Providence [4]. It was merely the first of many late night sessions with Lovecraft reading and acting out his stories before a friendly and enthu-

siastic audience.

The oldest recorded reading was "The Outsider" and "The Hound" as read by Roddy McDowell, of "Planet of the Apes" fame. Prestige Records released the recording on LP in 1963.

The next oldest recording was "The Rats in the Walls" released as an LP by Caedmon Records in 1973. David McCallum, who starred in the 1960's television show "The Man from U.N.C.L.E.", reads HPL's classic tale of horror. McCallum grew up in England and worked in theatre, television, and numerous films before coming to America to stay in 1962. The album cover artwork by Leo and Diane Dillon features a pile of skulls and other bones, and a goulish figure gnawing some unidentifiable flesh, strangely there are no rats visible. The back of the album cover features an excerpt of the introduction by August Derleth to Arkham House's *The Dunwich Horror*, wherein Derleth compares Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos to the Christian Mythos. Sadly, many who read this diatribe no doubt believed it without question.

A superb recorded reading is of "The Dunwich Horror" as read by Robert M. Price (long time editor of *Crypt of Cthulhu*, and other publications). Mr. Price deftly switches in and out of an authentic New England rustic dialect when reading the character dialog. His mastery is also evident when reading the guttural speech of the Old Ones. Anyone who has seen and heard Mr. Price give his Cthulhu Prayer speech at the breakfast of a NecronomiCon would expect a high quality reading, and he certainly delivers the goods.

The newest recorded reading (released in late 2003 by Tales of Orpheus Productions) is the CD "Three Horrifying Tales". David Cade reads "The Music of Erich Zann", "The Cats of Ulthar", and "The Unnameable". Strangely, this is the first time that "The Music of Erich Zann" was adapted for audio; one would have expected it to be a natural for the medium. All three tales are mildly abridged, but only to smooth out the narrative flow.

## Radio Dramas

Dramatic presentations on radio first appeared coincident with the birth of commercial radio broadcasting in the early 1920's. Early radio dramas had no musical accompaniment, but by the late 1920's, musical scores were more common [5]. Radio entertainment grew in popularity throughout the 1930's, despite the deepening of the Great Depression. By 1937, the year of Lovecraft's death, it was estimated that nearly 80% of US households had radios [6], though based on his letters, it's not clear whether or not Lovecraft ever owned a radio receiver.

Lovecraft's letters reveal an early interest in films, particularly those of Charlie Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks [7], but there seems to be a lack of evidence regarding any interest in radio drama. Lovecraft did deny radio rights to his story "The Dreams in the Witch House" when he was approached [8], so perhaps his feelings towards radio based dramas weren't particularly positive.

On Halloween night in 1938, the broadcast of Orson Welles' "War of the Worlds" caused a near panic in many communities, when people who tuned in late mistakenly thought that the radio show was actually news reports of an invasion from Mars taking place in New Jersey and New York. One suspects that Lovecraft, had he lived long enough to hear the broadcast and its aftermath, would have been amused by the whole affair.

The earliest radio drama that adapted a story by Lovecraft was the CBS series "Suspense", available on cassette from Radio Spirits Inc. This series of 30-minute thrillers began in 1942 and ran through 1962. Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror" was first broadcast on November 1, 1945, and starred Ronald Coleman as Dr. Henry Armitage. The episode was edited, directed and produced by William Speers. As one might expect, the story was highly abridged though it does preserve some of Lovecraft's original text, particularly certain segments of character dialog. The production itself featured what sounds like a canned musical score, but the background sound effects were appropriate and effective. Overall it was a bit overly dramatic, which was typical of such productions, and lacked the rich atmosphere of HPL's story, but it did manage to convey the essence of the story in a manner that most listeners at the time could appreciate.

The Atlanta Radio Theatre Company produced the only other radio dramas of Lovecraft's stories during the 1990's. The ARTC has now adapted five stories -- "At the Mountains of Madness", "The Shadow Over Innsmouth", "The Dunwich Horror", "Pickman's Model", and "The Rats in the Walls". Only a couple of these were actually broadcast on Atlanta radio. The remaining productions were performed live at genre conventions. All of these productions are currently available on cassette from the ARTC.

## **Other Dramatizations**

The H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society has produced a couple of CDs that aren't exactly radio dramas, but are at least a type of musical theater. "A Shoggoth on the Roof" is essentially a parody of a well-known musical. The CD itself is the cast album for a fictitious musical play that has never actually been performed. Another CD, "A Very Scary Solstice", contains recordings of several Cthulhu My-

thos filk songs that were originally performed live at several SF conventions over the years.

## Motion Picture Soundtracks

It's inevitable that soundtracks to the film adaptations of Lovecraft's stories would become available. An early soundtrack album contained soundtracks from both *Re-Animator* films. It was released in 1995 from Silva Screen and contained 18 tracks. More recently a limited edition CD of the *H. P. Lovecraft's Re-Animator* soundtrack was released from La-La Land Records in 2003. The same company has also released a limited edition CD of the soundtrack for *H. P. Lovecraft's From Beyond*, which was composed by Richard Band.

## Future Lovecraftian Audio

No doubt additional recordings of readings and other dramatic performances of Lovecraft's stories will appear over the next several decades. Though radio dramatizations are typically more effective than many of the film adaptations of HPL's stories, one simply cannot compare hearing Lovecraft's words as he wrote them told in an effective and meaningful manner. A good reader can make a story really come alive when using the proper inflection of dialect for the character voices.

## Notes

[1] Derleth, August, and Wandrei, Donald, editors, *Selected Letters H. P. Lovecraft, Volume I*, Arkham House, Sauk City, WI, 1965, p44.

[2] Ibid, p60.

[3] Joshi, S. T., and Schultz, David E., editors, *Lord of a Visible World: An Autobiography in Letters, H. P. Lovecraft*, Ohio University Press, Athens, OH, 2000, p69.

[4] Eddy, Muriel E., and Eddy, Jr., C. M., *The Gentleman from Angell Street*, Fenham Publishing, Narragansett, RI, 2001, p10.

[5] McLeod, Elizabeth, "Dramatic Scoring for Radio" -- [www.midcoast.com/](http://www.midcoast.com/)

~lizmcl/dramusic.html

[6] McLeod, Elizabeth, "Documenting Early Radio" -- [www.old-time.com/mcleod/index.html](http://www.old-time.com/mcleod/index.html)

[7] Joshi, S. T., *H. P. Lovecraft: A Life*, Necronomicon Press, Providence, RI, 1996, p580.

[8] Ibid, p643.

## References

Loucks, Donovan K., *The H. P. Lovecraft Archive* -- [www.hplovecraft.com](http://www.hplovecraft.com).

## Lovecraftian Audio Checklist

### Readings

#### The Call of Cthulhu

Read by Garrick Hagon

England, Landfall; stereo recording, red cover with Cthulhu illustration.

#### The Dunwich Horror

Read by Robert M. Price.

West Warwick, RI: Necronomicon Press; 1997; 2 hours; \$14.95.

#### The Dunwich Horror (slightly abridged) and The Rats in the Walls

Read by David McCallum, 2 cassettes.

New York, NY: Caedmon Records; 1973, 1976, 1987; 59 and 66 minutes.

#### Fungi from Yuggoth

Read by John Arthur.

Minneapolis, MN: Fedogan & Bremer; 60 minutes, 1987.

#### The Haunter of the Dark

Read by David McCallum, LP, 65 minutes.

The Hunter of the Dark

Read by Erik Bauersfeld.

West Warwick, RI: Necronomicon Press; 1995; 60 minutes; \$7.95.

Herbert West – Reanimator

Read by Jeffrey Combs.

Portland, OR: Beyond Books; 2000; 64 minutes; \$12.00.

The Lurking Fear (Tales of Fear & the Unknown)

Read by David Healy.

London, UK: Landfall Productions; 1989; \$3.99.

The Outsider and The Hound

Read by Roddy McDowall.

Prestige Records-Lively Arts - LA 30003; 1963.

The Rats in the Walls

Read by David McCallum.

New York, NY: Caedmon Records; LP, 66 minutes, 1973.

The Rats in the Walls and The Outsider

Read by Erik Bauersfeld.

West Warwick, RI: Necronomicon Press; 1995; 60 minutes; \$7.95.

Re-Animator

Read by Garrick Hagon

England, Landfall; cassette; \$3.99.

Rod Serling's Night Gallery Reader, Volume 3

Includes HPL's "Cool Air".

Pharoah Audiobooks, cassette, ISBN 1882209125, 1993.

Tales of the Unnatural: The Cave, Burgerland, and Rats In The Walls [sic]

By Vicki Hendrickson, Aron Abrams, and H.P. Lovecraft.

Read by A.J. Redelsperger, Meaghan McCarville, and Stan Winiarski.

Chicago, IL: Buckingham Classics, Ltd.; 1987; 60 minutes;

ISBN: 1-88207-118-2; \$7.95.

"The Rats in the Walls" is both abridged and altered, and the name

“Nigger-Man” has been replaced with variations of “the old, black cat.”

**The Thing on the Doorstep**

Read by Jay Gregory.

New York, NY: Voice at Work, Inc.; 1992; 70 minutes, 22 seconds; \$15.

**The Thing on the Doorstep**

Read by David Healy.

London, UK: Landfall Productions.

**Things That Go Bump**

Includes Statement Of Randolph Carter [sic] and four public domain tales.

Read by Frank Allen Blissett III.

**Three Horrifying Tales**

Read by David Cade.

Includes The Music of Erich Zann, The Cats of Ulthar, and The Unnameable. London, UK; 2003; 41 minutes; \$18.95

**Dramatizations**

**A Shoggoth on the Roof: The HPLHS Cast Album (Audio CD)**

Publisher: H.P. Lovecraft Historical Society; \$12.50

**At the Mountains of Madness**

By H.P. Lovecraft.

Performed by the Atlanta Radio Theater Company<<http://www.artc.org/>>. Centauri Express; ISBN 0-929483-19-7; \$12.95.

**At the Mountains of Madness and The Competitor**

By H.P. Lovecraft and Brad Linaweaver.

Performed by the Atlanta Radio Theater Company. Sunset; 1995; ISBN 1-56431-098-1; \$11.95.

**A Very Scary Solstice**

by the H.P. Lovecraft Historical Society

(Audio CD and Songbook); \$20



### The Call of Cthulhu

Broadcast in Tasmania, on Lovecraft's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### Cool Air

Narrated by 'Joolz' on "The Mark Ratcliffe Show" on Radio1 FM, UK, 1994.

### The Dunwich Horror and The Happy Man

By H.P. Lovecraft and Gerald R. Page.

Performed by the Atlanta Radio Theater Company. Sunset, 1995;  
ISBN 1-56431-203-8; \$11.95.

### The Dunwich Horror / The Bet

by Suspense, originally recorded 11/1/1945, starring Ronald Coleman, edited, directed and produced by William Speers. Radio Spirits Inc., P.O. Box 2141, Schiller Park, IL, 60176

### Endurance

Audio Visuals: Audio Adventures in Time and Space

Inspired by "At the Mountains of Madness", 2 cassettes, 149 minutes.

### The Lovecraft Tapes: The Dunwich Horror and Pickman's Model

Performed by the Atlanta Radio Theater Company. Centauri Express; 1990;  
ISBN 0-929483-05-7; \$9.95. This dramatization may be heard on the Sci-Fi Channel's Seeing Ear Theater.

### The Rats in the Walls

Performed by the Atlanta Radio Theater Company. Centauri Express; 1990;  
ISBN 0-929483-07-3; \$9.95.

### The Shadow Over Innsmouth and Ghost Dance

By H.P. Lovecraft and Thomas E. Fuller.

Performed by the Atlanta Radio Theater Company. Sunset, 1995;  
ISBN 1-56431-126-0; \$12.95.

## Soundtracks

### H.P. Lovecraft's From Beyond

Limited edition (3000), signed and numbered.

Signed by composer Richard Band.

La-La Land Records, 13 tracks, 2003.

#### H.P. Lovecraft's Re-Animator

Limited edition (3000), signed and numbered.

Signed by director Stuart Gordon and/or composer Richard Band.

La-La Land Records, 16 tracks, 2003.

Performed by The Rome Philharmonic Orchestra at RCA Studios, Italy

Audio Restoration and Additonal Mastering by Chris Neel

Produced by Ford A. Thaxton and Richard Band

Executive Album Producer: Michael V. Gerhard

#### Re-Animator/Bride of Re-Animator

Combined soundtrack from both films, Silva Screen, 18 tracks, 1995.

#### On the Web

Atlantic Radio Theatre Company - <http://www.artc.org/hpl.htm>

Beyond Books - <http://www.beyond-books.com/>

Necronomicon Press - <http://www.necropress.com/>

SciFi.com's Seeing Ear Theatre - <http://www.scifi.com/pulp/set/Lovecraft/TheDunwichHorror>, in 2 parts, as performed by the ARTC

## Black Satellite

*The magazine of startling science fiction and weird horror!*

Issues #1 thru #5 now available. ([www.darktreepress.com](http://www.darktreepress.com))

# Auction Watch

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Ebay continues to be a great place to find rare and unusual Lovecraftian items. All of the following auctions occurred between Oct 2003 and Jan 2004.

Starmont Reader's Guide #13: H. P. Lovecraft sold in fine condition for \$15.01. This 83 page book features several essays by S. T. Joshi covering such topics as an HPL chronology, bibliography, and other material.

Call of Cthulhu: Dreamlands from 1986 boxed set sold in near mint condition for \$22.38.

Call of Cthulhu: Spawn of Azathoth from 1986 boxed set sold in excellent condition for \$20.51.

Leather bound Necronomicon sold in excellent condition for \$113.50. This edition was custom bound and combines the Simon Necronomicon and Spellbook into a single volume.

Call of Cthulhu: The Great Old Ones from 1989 sold in near mint condition for \$9.00.

Call of Cthulhu: Cthulhu by Gaslight boxed set from 1986 sold in excellent condition for \$36.00.

Lovecraft Cthulhu Ouija Board sold in excellent condition for \$65.00. The 15x22 board is made from birch laminate and stained an emerald green (like dhole ichor). The board also comes with a matching planchette emblazoned with the Elder Sign.

Signed limited edition of Re-Animator soundtrack CD sold in like new condition for \$23.99. This copy was number 675 out of 3000.

Dark Cults card game from 1983 sold in excellent condition for \$56.00. The storytelling game by Kenneth Rahman is for 2 players and includes 108 cards. The storage bag also contains title sheet, instructions, and an alternate rules sheet.

Creature & Cultists card game sold in good condition for \$23.49. Game includes 128 cards and 8 play sheets, and is for 3-5 players.

Fantasy Reader #3 from 1947 sold in excellent condition for \$10.49. This issue featured HPL's story "The Silver Key".

Audio recording "Three Horrifying Tales" sold in like new condition for \$18.42. This CD includes readings by David Cade of "The Music of Erich Zann",

“The Cats of Ulthar”, and “The Unnameable”.

Fanzine Ye Yowlings of Yog-Sothoth #1 sold in fine condition for \$16.28. This fanzine was part of the EOD APA mailing #36, was published in Louisiana in 1981, and featured 17 pages.

Fanzine Ye Yowlings of Yog-Sothoth #2 sold in fine condition for \$15.50. This fanzine was part of the EOD APA mailing #39, was published in Louisiana in 1982, and featured 20 pages.

Fanzine Ye Yowlings of Yog-Sothoth #3 sold in fine condition for \$16.00. This fanzine was part of the EOD APA mailing #40, was published in Louisiana in 1982, and featured 22 pages.

The Lurking Fear by HPL sold in fine condition for \$20. This edition was published by Necronomicon Press in 1977 and collects facsimiles of the 4 issues of Home Brew magazine that featured HPL’s tale. It also includes illustrations by Clark Ashton Smith.

Computer game The Hound of Shadow for Amiga sold in excellent condition for \$6.28. The game is a graphical text adventure based on Lovecraft’s Cthulhu stories.

H. P. Lovecraft: A Critical Study by Donald Burleson sold in fine condition with near fine dust wrapper for \$24.59. This edition was published by Greenwood in 1983.

Lobby card for the film Die Monster Die (1965) sold in excellent condition for \$10.50. This 11x14 card is #5 out of a set of 8.

Fanzine Dagon #17 from 1987 sold in fine condition for \$8.48. This issue was a special issue on the occult and the Cthulhu Mythos.

Lobby card for the film The Haunted Palace (1963) sold in very good condition for \$25.49.

Original letter from Sonia H. Davis to Samuel Loveman sold in good condition for \$76. The letter was dated June 5, 1952 and includes original envelope.

Schlangekraft edition of the Necronomicon sold in near fine condition for \$280. This edition was published as the second edition in 1980 and features a hard cover cloth binding.

Mexican lobby card for the film The Dunwich Horror from 1970 sold in good condition for \$6.01.

The H. P. Lovecraft Companion by Philip A. Shreffler sold in good condition for \$37.66. This edition was published by Greenwood Press in 1977 and provides in depth plot analysis, plot summaries, a concordance of characters, and a detailed guide to Lovecraft’s cycle of gods and monsters. Very hard to find!

Facsimile edition of The Cats of Ulthar by HPL sold in near fine condition

for \$11.61. This edition was published by Necronomicon Press in 1977 as a limited edition of 550 numbered copies. This edition reprints a 1935 edition printed by HPL's friend Robert H. Barlow.

Pressbook for the film *Die Monster Die* (1965) sold in very good condition for \$13.37.

Pressbook for the film *The Dunwich Horror* (1970) sold in very good condition for \$18.50.

Weird Tales from Feb 1933 sold in good plus condition for \$90. This issue featured a reprint of HPL's "The Cats of Ulthar".

Lukundoo and Other Stories by Edward Lewis White from 1927 in very good condition with a repro dust wrapper sold for \$99. This title story of this book was cited in HPL's essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature".

Laserdisc of the film *From Beyond* (1987) sold in excellent condition for \$36.50.

Readers Guide to the Cthulhu Mythos by Weinberg and Berglund sold in very good condition for \$36. This edition was the second revised edition published by Silver Scarab Press in 1973.

Weird Tales from Jan 1937 sold in good condition for \$63.99. This issue featured the HPL story "The Thing on the Doorstep".

Weird Tales from Mar 1938 sold in good condition for \$81. This issue featured the HPL story "Beyond the Wall of Sleep".

Best Supernatural Stories of H. P. Lovecraft from 1945 sold in near fine condition for \$52.51. This edition was edited and has an introduction by August Derleth.

H. R. Giger's *Necronomicon* from 1991 sold in fine condition with a near fine dust wrapper for \$41. This book is oversized at 11x17.

The South Carolina Librarian vol 15 no 2 from Spring 1971 sold in near fine condition for \$11.75. This booklet contains 44 pages, measures 6x9, and features an article about HPL called "Something in Our Midst" by Barry B. Baker. The booklet also features a selected bibliography of items held by the University of South Carolina libraries.

Facsimile reprint of *Charleston* by HPL sold in very good condition for \$22.72. This booklet was published by The Strange Company in 1975 in a 3 ring folder measuring 9x11.5. The booklet features a guide and travelogue to the city of Charleston, SC written by HPL.

A lot of obscure publications by Muriel E. Eddy sold for \$33.32. The lot contained several booklets published by Guild Studio Press mostly from the 1970's. The lot also included numerous letters from and to Muriel.

Facsimile edition of *The Lovecraft Collector* sold in fine condition for \$11.50. This edition collects the first 3 issues of *The Lovecraft Collector* originally published in 1949. This edition was published by Necronomicon Press in 1975.

Newspaper supplement called *Stepping Out* sold in near fine condition for \$11. This was a 16 page supplement to the newspaper *Grass Roots* and features an article called "H. P. Lovecraft: Providence's Master of the Macabre" by Ty Davis. The article also included several photos.

*Lovecraftian Ceremonies* by Stephen Minch sold in excellent condition for \$14.50. This booklet was published by Bob Lynn in 1979 and measured 5.5x8.5. It featured 7 occult dramas for the magical performer.

Call of Cthulhu vinyl model kit sold in like new condition and unbuilt for \$51. This model was sculpted by John Dennett and published by Chaosium.

Fanzine *Nickelodeon* #1 from 1975 sold in fine condition for \$17.37. This issue was published by Ken Keller and Tom Reamy, and featured a parody entitled "Riders of the Purple Ooze" by M. M. Moamrath.

*The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* by HPL from 1955 sold in very good condition for \$99. This edition was published by Shroud and was limited to 1500 copies.

Computer game *Prisoner of Ice* (1995) for the PC sold in still sealed condition for \$46.

*Writings in the Tryout* by HPL sold in excellent condition for \$9.99. This booklet was published by Necronomicon Press in 1977 and contained reprints of 6 poems.

*An Index to the Selected Letters of H. P. Lovecraft* by S. T. Joshi sold in excellent condition for \$38.55. This booklet was published by Necronomicon Press in 1980 and featured a cover by Jason Eckhardt.

One sheet poster for the film *Die Monster Die* (1965) sold in near fine condition for \$40.99.

Plush toy of Nyarlathotep sold in like new condition for \$7.95. This toy was produced by Toy Vault and is the smaller 4 inch size.

Paperback edition of *The Lurking Fear and Other Stories* by HPL sold in good condition for \$23. This edition was published by Avon Books in 1947.

*Providence Sunday Journal Magazine* from March 15, 1987 sold in excellent condition for \$9.99. This newspaper insert was released for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of HPL's death and featured an article with more photos by Elliot Krieger and a cover photo of HPL with the words "I am Providence". Surely, a hard to come by item.

*Lovecraftian Characters and Other Things* by artist Jim Pitts sold in excellent condition for \$36.99. This 8x11 booklet was published by Spectre Press in 1976

as a set of 6 illustrations laid into a cark binder.

Weird Tales from Dec 1937 sold in good condition (missing back cover) for \$39. This issue featured the HPL's "Polaris", and the excellent "sea-witch" cover by Virgil Findlay.

Weird Tales from May 1938 sold in good condition for \$51. This issue featured HPL's poem "Where Once Walked Poe" and a cover by Brundage.

Press kit for the film H. P. Lovecraft's Necronomicon (1996) sold in excellent condition for \$11.50. The kit contained 4 page booklet, four 8x10 glossy photos, and 6 full color slides.

A 35mm movie trailer on film for John Carpenter's In the Mouth of Madness sold in good condition for \$5.95. The trailer is mounted on a core film reel, runs about 2 minutes, and includes a studio sticker.

A set of five Lovecraft postcards as published in 1977 by Necronomicon Press sold in fine condition for \$45.44. Each postcard measures 5x7.

Arkham House edition of The Inhabitant of the Lake and Less Welcome Tenants by J. Ramsey Campbell (1964) sold in very good condition for \$54.

Arkham House edition of Something About Cats by HPL (1949) sold in near fine condition for \$150.

Astounding Stories from Feb 1936 sold in good condition for \$60. This issue featured part one of HPL's "At the Mountains of Madness".

The House of Cthulhu and Other Tales of the Primal Land by Brian Lumley sold in near mint condition for \$34.44. This edition was published by Weirdbook Press in 1984 and limited to 1200 copies.

Graphic novel of Re-Animator: Tales of Herbert West sold in near mint condition for \$4.50. This edition collects the Malibu Comics title Re-Animator in a 48 page trade edition.

Bust of H. P. Lovecraft from Randy Bowen Designs sold in excellent condition for \$127.51. The design was sculpted by Stephen Hickman and stands about 8 inches tall.

Laserdisc of the film Re-Animator sold in like new condition for \$5.99.

Marvel Tales of Science and Fantasy from March 1935 sold in very good condition for \$46. This issue featured the story by HPL "The Doom that Came to Sarnath".

Hand puppet toy of Cthulhu sold in like new condition for \$19.99.

Fanzine Crypt of Cthulhu #28 from 1984 sold in fine condition for \$13.49.

Arkham House edition of Selected Letters: HPL volume IV (1976) sold in excellent condition for \$28.78.

Necronomicon: The R'Lyeh Text by Skoob Books (1995) sold in like new

condition for \$16.45.

Lovecraft's Providence and Adjacent Parts by Henry L. P. Beckwith Jr. sold in good condition for \$11.50. This edition was published by Donald M. Grant in 1986 and about 100 pages long.

To Quebec and the Stars by HPL sold in good condition for \$18.50. This edition was published by Donald M. Grant in 1976 and had 320 pages.

Arkham House edition of The Shuttered Room by HPL (1959) sold in fine condition for \$354.50.

Famous Fantastic Mysteries from Aug 1948 sold in good condition for \$5. This issue featured an article about HPL by Muriel Eddy.

Twelve inch statuette of Lovecraft sculpted by Bryan Moore sold in like new condition for \$250. The statuette was a polymer cast and finished in a faux bronze finish. Wouldn't we all love to have one of these?!?

Ballantine Books edition of Fungi From Yuggoth and Other Poems by HPL sold in good condition for \$9.99.

Fanzine Yawning Vortex vol 2 no 3 from Jan 1996 sold in like new condition for \$2.99. This issue was edited by Perry Grayson.

Audio recording of The Call of Cthulhu as read by Garrick Hagon on cassette sold in like new condition for \$33.55. This recording ran 92 minutes and was published by Landfall Records.

Arkham Horror Board Game from Chaosium sold in excellent and complete condition for \$94.14. This game was released in 1987 and is soon to be reprinted.

Famous Fantastic Mysteries from Oct 1941 sold in very good condition for \$36.03. This issue featured a reprint of HPL's "The Colour out of Space".

An original postcard written by HPL and sent to Clark Ashton Smith mounted on a plaque failed to sell at a starting bid of \$950. The postcard was mailed from Quebec when Lovecraft visited there in Sep 1931. Unknown if this ever got re-listed and sold at a later date.

Arkham House edition of Beneath the Moors by Brian Lumley (1974) sold in fine condition with a fine dust wrapper for \$46.60.

Fanzine Diversifier #20 from 1977 sold in fine condition for \$26.99. This issue was part one of a special Weird Tales issue.

Comic book Army of Darkness #1 sold in near mint condition for \$15.

A set of 6 lengthy catalogs issued by L. W. Currey Inc. in the 1980s sold in very good condition for \$52.78. The set of catalogs comes to over 2300 pages of priced listings of SF books and more. I was quite disappointed to have gotten out-bid on this one.



# Reviews

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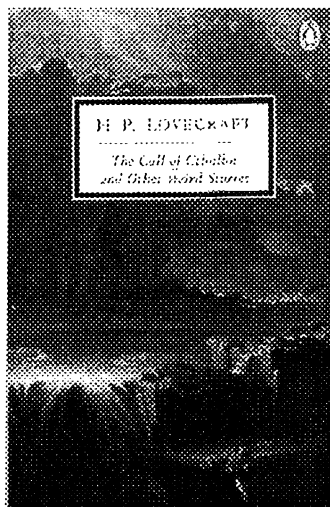
The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories  
by H. P. Lovecraft, edited by S. T. Joshi

Penguin Books  
Penguin Putnam Inc.  
375 Hudson Street  
New York, NY 10014

1999, 420 pgs, \$12.95

ISBN: 0-14-118234-2

(Reviewed by Brian Lingard)



Many collections of Lovecraft's stories have appeared over the years including the fan favorite Arkham House hardcovers, the Bart House paperbacks, the skull covered Ballantine editions, and the rare Armed Services edition. But until now there hasn't been such an excellent combination of definitive editing and insightful notations as that found in the collection "The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories" from Penguin Books.

This first collection in a new series features eighteen of Lovecraft's tales including four of my personal favorites -- The Call of Cthulhu, The Rats in the Walls, The Colour out of Space, and The Shadow over Innsmouth. The story selection spans all of Lovecraft's writing career from 1923 through about 1935, providing the reader with an excellent overview of HPL's style and narrative interest.

This edition also includes an introduction and 60 pages of endnotes by S. T. Joshi. His explanatory notes cover such topics as Lovecraft's letters, dictionary entries, anecdotes, publication history, and much more. Such a wealth of information is sure to greatly aid all students of Lovecraft.

I also found the typesetting to be well laid out and easy on the eyes. The soft cover binding is supple and the book is not much larger or heavier than a modern thick paperback. Anyone who is new to Lovecraft simply can't go wrong with this collection (or it's sequel "The Thing on the Doorstep and Other Weird Stories"). In addition, I strongly recommend both books to the seasoned collector of Lovecraft as these books are definitely the new definitive editions of Lovecraft's wonderful tales.

### H.P. Lovecraft's Re-Animator: Millenium Edition DVD

Elite Entertainment  
P.O. Box 1177  
Scarborough, ME 04070-1177

[www.elitedisc.com](http://www.elitedisc.com)

2002, 86 min., plus 6 hrs

(Reviewed by Brian Lingard)



Upon first sighting HPL's Re-Animator: Millennium Edition the most striking feature is the "resurrection serum" green cover of the DVD case. The two-disc set includes not only the original movie in 16x9 widescreen format, but over 6 hours of bonus materials. There are commentaries from director Stuart Gordon, producer Brian Yuzna, and actors Jeffrey Combs, Robert Sampson, Barbara Compton, and Bruce Abbot.

Brand new material includes interviews with Stuart Gordon and Brian Yuzna, writer Dennis Paoli, and composer Richard Band. Other new material includes extended scenes, deleted scenes, theatrical trailers, TV ads, music discussion, storyboards, biographies, and filmographies.

This special edition DVD is simply the best edition thus far of the over-the-top gore fest that is Re-Animator. Compared with other special edition DVDs that are crammed with special features, these interviews and commentaries are actually worth viewing. Anyone who is a true fan of this film will be enthralled by the behind the scenes treasure trove.

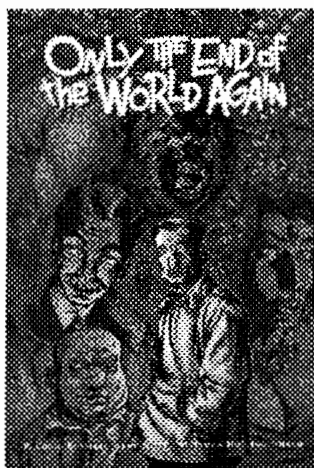
Only the End of the World Again  
by Neil Gaiman

Oni Press Inc.  
6336 SE Milwaukie Avenue  
PMB 30  
Portland, OR 97202

May 2000, 48 pgs, \$6.95

ISBN: 1-929998-09-0

(Reviewed by Brian Lingard)



Based on an original story by Neil Gaiman, "Only the End of the World Again" first appeared as a 3-part serial in the comic Oni Double Feature (#6 to #8). For those that missed the original B&W appearance, this collected edition is a perfect opportunity to pick up the graphic novella, this time in full color.

The artwork as colored by Matthew Hollingsworth is subtle in shades of blue, green, and earth tones. The pencils by Troy Nixey are crisp and clean with character renderings that approach caricatures in their style.

The story was adapted into comic form by P. Craig Russell. The story itself is a blend of elements from Lovecraft and lycanthropy. Recently moved to Innsmouth, Lawrence Talbot (of 1930's movie fame no doubt) sets up shop as an adjuster (of insurance, one would guess, it's never really clear). Soon he is visited by a mysterious fat man who informs him that the world is about to end and that a certain

werewolf may be key to opening the Elder God's path to our realm.

Now it appeared that Lawrence wasn't supposed to know that he is the werewolf in question. But the way it's portrayed he obviously suspects that he is a werewolf, so I'm not clear as to what the reader is supposed to be thinking. Anyhow, Lawrence is talked into checking out the bonfire on the seaside cliffs by the bartender. It turns out that he is working with the mysterious fat man. I'm not really giving anything away by saying that now trouble ensues.

Overall the story is interesting and different enough to hold interest. The artwork is first rate. Compared with other comics these days, it is certainly worth the \$6.95 cover price. But I must say that it is too bad that the original story by Gaiman is not included.

### **Other Items of Interest:**

Robert E. Howard: Horror  
Cross Plains Comics, 2000, \$5.95

"Robert E. Howard: Horror" is a comic collection of four adaptations of REH stories and two modern stories in the REH mode. Of particular interest for fans of HPL are the adaptations of "The Black Stone" and "The Thing on the Roof" as both stories were heavily influenced by Lovecraft. These adaptations were originally published in Marvel Comics titles during the early 1970's, and are presented here without color.

Elvira: Mistress of the Dark #84  
Claypool Comics, 1984, \$2.50 cover

Elvira #84 presents "Shadow Over Sinnsport", a 15 page spoof of the obvious HPL story of nearly the same name. Though this item is now nearly twenty years old, it is definitely worth seeking out. Just seeing Lovecraft depicted as the villain Hubert B. Eggbert is worth the price you may have to pay for this back issue. The B&W artwork is crisp and clean. Just pick up a copy and enjoy the romp through Mastodon University while reading your copy of Classics Illustrated: Heckronomicon.

# Contributor Bios

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**Daniel J. Bishop** is a writer and artist living in Toronto, Canada, where he co-owns Golden City Comics. His work has appeared, among other places, in Cthulhu Sex, Jackhammer, Strange Horizons, Spellbound, Ideomancer, Fables, and Kiss Machine. His favorite color is blue.

**Tim Curran** lives in Michigan, works in a factory by day, and writes by night. His tales have appeared in many small press magazines and anthologies including Flesh and Blood and Black October, Crime Spree and WarFear. He has also written two western novels, Skull Moon and Grim Riders. A crime novel Street Rats, will be available in 2003. Visit him on the web at: <http://www.darkanimus.com/curran.html>

**Kevin Dole 2** is a writer of stuff who hails from Ypsilanti, Michigan.

**Allen Koszowski** is one of the most prolific artists in his field, having published more than 3,000 illustrations for hundreds of genre publications. He is self-taught and prefers working with pen and ink, which allows him to create incredible detail. Allen is married, has two children, and lives in Upper Darby, PA.

**Brian Lingard** publishes, edits, and writes stories when he can and lives in central Massachusetts with his wife and two sons. His most recent tale appeared in the anthology chapbook Bound to be Free.

From 1988 to 2002 **Phil Roberts** had just over 100 short stories published as P. J. Roberts, before recently changing his writing name. He also writes poetry.

**Lee Clark Zumpe** has been writing poetry and prose since high school. He has been published in several dozen different journals and magazines in the United States, Canada, and Australia including The Florida Villager, Mobius, Dark Legacy, and Red Owl, and most recently Black Petals, Weird Tales, and The Edge.

**Don't miss our next exciting issue! Coming Summer 2004!**

**The magazine for collectors of H.P. Lovecraft  
and the Cthulhu Mythos.**

**This issue:**

**Interview with Peter Scartabello  
That Hideous Face by Daniel J. Bishop  
Lovecraftian Audio w/ checklist**

**Mythos Fiction and Poetry by Tim Curran,  
Phil Roberts and Lee Clark Zumpe**

**Cover Artwork by Allen Koszowski**

**Coming next issue:**

**Interview with Jason Thompson**

**Mythos Fiction by Tim Curran and John Sunseri**

**Lovecraft on Video and DVD**

**Mythos Collector  
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