

DARK ADVENTURE RADIO THEATRE: MASKS OF NYARLATHOTEP

Written by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman

Based on *Masks of Nyarlathotep*, originally written by Larry DiTillio and Lynn Willis. Fifth edition written by Mike Mason, Lynne Hardy, Paul Fricker and Scott Dorward.

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Read-along Script
December 31, 2018

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

Dark Adventure Radio THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

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

MUSIC CRESCENDO.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

This is Dark Adventure Radio Theatre, featuring your host, Lester Mayhew. Today we bring you a special extended episode: "Masks of Nyarlathotep".

THEME MUSIC DIMINISHES.

LESTER MAYHEW

An archeological expedition of wealthy socialites comes to a tragic and bloody end. An inquisitive author finds himself on the run from a crazed death cult. Could the events be related? Can a team of investigators join forces and untangle the threads of a deadly tapestry woven aeons ago to cover the earth with a crawling chaos? Are these strange events destined to usher mankind into the untold horrors of a new dark age? But first, a word from one of our sponsors.

FLEURS DE LYS JINGLE

Match STRIKE and deep INHALATION from a cigarette.

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

As a radio announcer, every day I have to rely on my throat to speak to my listeners. It's a big responsibility. And that's why I won't settle for anything less than a Fleurs de Lys cigarette.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)
 Fleurs de Lys are carefully blended
 from premium imported and mild
 domestic tobaccos. The result is a
 smoke that actually smoothes my
 throat and makes my voice richer
 and more vibrant. I make sure to
 enjoy one before, during and after
 I go on the air. Take it from me,
 Lester Mayhew, Fleurs de Lys are
 the soothing smoke doctors
 recommend most.

ANNOUNCER
 Enjoy a pack of Fleurs de Lys today
 - your voice will thank you for it.

Begin ominous episode MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
 And now, Dark Adventure Radio
 Theatre presents - Masks of
 Nyarlathotep!

2 CRASHING THE PARTY

2

The MURMUR of a small crowd in a grand hotel ballroom.
 Glasses CLINK and a small CHAMBER ORCHESTRA plays popular
 music of the 20s.

HAZEL
 (blissful)
 It's going so well, don't you
 think, mother?

AGNES
 Oh yes, Hazel dear. Marcus is
 wonderful. I know you'll be very
 happy together.

HAZEL
 I was worried he'd find this party
 overwhelming. His family's small,
 and we Claflins can be a bit of a
 mob.

AGNES
 He seems to be fitting right in.
 But I'm not so sure about his poor
 aunt.

The ORCHESTRA plays a musical flourish taking us to another
 part of the room, where MARCUS is talking to his AUNT
 BERENICE.

AUNT BERENICE

The Claflins - I just can't keep them all straight, Marcus. Her grandfather was the governor of Massachusetts, but her uncle was speaker of the house?

MARCUS

That's right, Aunt Berenice.

AUNT BERENICE

And that man we were just talking to?

MARCUS

Her cousin Bill Claflin. He's an archeologist at the Peabody Museum.

AUNT BERENICE

(conspiratorially)

Is it true her cousin Victoria Woodhull is here as well?

MARCUS

Yes, she lives in England now but she came back over just for the party and the wedding.

AUNT BERENICE

I'm surprised she got an invitation - the woman's positively scandalous.

MARCUS

Oh, no. Hazel adores her. Sure, back in the day she ruffled some feathers, but--

AUNT BERENICE

Oh no, it was more than that! That newspaper of hers running salacious stories about some of New York's best families. All the while she's dabbling in occultism, radical politics, finance and women's suffrage...

MARCUS

(with a chuckle)

She's a character, I'll give you that. But Hazel loves her, so I love her.

AUNT BERENICE

(warmly)

You'll make a good husband. She's lucky to have you.

MARCUS

I'm the lucky one! Oh look, there's Victoria now. Come, I'll introduce you.

THE ORCHESTRA brings us back as VICTORIA WOODHULL approaches Hazel and Agnes. Victoria is a very spry old lady.

VICTORIA

Excuse me, Agnes.

(serious)

Hazel, darling, there's a telephone call for you.

HAZEL

Here? Who would be calling me here? And tonight?

AGNES

Surely it can wait, Victoria. Have them take a message.

VICTORIA

I believe it's a matter of some urgency. He sounds desperate.

HAZEL

Who, Victoria? What is it?

Marcus and Aunt Berenice STEP UP.

MARCUS

Hello, ladies. Victoria, I'd like you to meet my aunt, Berenice Buchannan.

VICTORIA

How do you do? I'm sorry, Marcus, but Hazel is needed on the telephone.

MARCUS

Excuse me?

HAZEL

Victoria, who is it?

VICTORIA
 (softly)
 Take the call.

HAZEL
 (apprehensive)
 All right. Pardon me, I'll be right
 back.

MARCUS
 But I--

VICTORIA
 Let her go, Marcus.

Hazel goes.

MARCUS
 Who is on the telephone? Victoria?

AGNES
 Yes, who could be so important to
 interrupt their engagement party?

VICTORIA
 (the name carries weight)
 It's... Jackson Elias.

MARCUS
 What? Him? Why's he calling, why
 now?

MUSIC TRANSITION. Hazel speaks into the phone. On the other
 end is JACKSON ELIAS, a successful author in his early 30s.
 While his life's work has been a courageous investigation of
 death cults, today he's wracked with fear.

HAZEL
 Jackson, how did you even find me
 here?

JACKSON ELIAS
 I'm an investigator, Hazel. I can
 find--

HAZEL
 Well, you've got some nerve,
 telephoning me tonight of all
 nights.

JACKSON ELIAS
 I know and I'm sorry. But I've got
 to meet with you. It's happening,
 they're-- I'm here in New York.

HAZEL

You're here? I... what...? No, I can't. And it's out of line for you even to ask.

JACKSON ELIAS

Oh, Hazel, it's nothing like that. Something serious is going on and I need your help! Now!

DRAMATIC MUSIC brings us back to the other side of the ballroom.

AUNT BERENICE

I'm sorry, but who is this Jackson Elias?

MARCUS

Hazel's former... beau.

VICTORIA

He sent a telegram last week - I sense it's something that can't wait. Something bigger than all of this.

AGNES

Oh, one of your "psychic premonitions", is it? Something bigger than Hazel and Marcus' future?

VICTORIA

Agnes, there's no need--

MARCUS

What was in this telegram?

VICTORIA

Something about "Carlyle" not being what we think and he was afraid "they" were on to him. It had quite an alarming tone.

MARCUS

Carlyle? Who or what in blazes is that? Excuse me, ladies.

VICTORIA

Marcus!

He strides away as DRAMATIC MUSIC takes us back to Hazel.

JACKSON ELIAS
My life's in danger! I need you to
take my files on--

HAZEL
If your life's in danger, Jackson,
you need to call the police!

JACKSON ELIAS
(terrified)
I can't! They're in on it. Didn't
you get my telegram? Please! I need
you, dammit!

HAZEL
Jackson, you sound... All right,
I'll meet you--

Marcus WALKS UP.

MARCUS
Hazel, give me the phone.

HAZEL
Marcus, it's--

MARCUS
Victoria told me who it is. Let me
speak to him.

HAZEL
Be nice.

MARCUS
(into the phone)
Listen pal, I don't know what you
think you're playing at, but
tonight is--

JACKSON ELIAS
Buchanan? Is that you? Good.

MARCUS
No, now listen--

JACKSON ELIAS
You come too, both of you. Please.
She'll need you more than ever. For
the love of god, come now! It's all
at stake! The Hotel Chelsea, Room
D14. They're--

The phone goes dead. DRAMATIC MUSIC

MARCUS
Elias? Are you there? Elias!

HAZEL
He hung up?

MARCUS
No, he's... just gone.

FOOTSTEPS as Agnes and Victoria walk up.

AGNES
My dears, you two are starting to
make a scene in front of your
guests.

HAZEL
I'm sorry, mother, I--

MARCUS
What was that about, Hazel?

HAZEL
I don't really know.

MARCUS
The guy sounded terrified. Maybe we
should go.

AGNES
What?!

HAZEL
(thrilled and relieved)
Oh, Marcus, really?

AGNES
You can't leave! All these people!

MARCUS
Yes, let's get it sorted out once
and for all. We'll be right back,
Mrs. Claflin. The Chelsea isn't
far.

HAZEL
Please, mother. It'll be all right.
Jackson needs our help. We're both
going.

AGNES
Well, if you must, then have Mason
drive you. He'll be in the lobby.

They start to go.

MARCUS

Keep the party going. We'll be back before you know it.

VICTORIA

(quietly)

Hazel, be careful. I'm afraid there might be some... danger.

HAZEL

It really doesn't take a psychic to sense that, Victoria.

3 CAR RIDE

3

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Mason, the Claflin family's chauffeur, whisked Hazel and Marcus from the Waldorf-Astoria down snowy Fifth Avenue....

NEW YORK NIGHT TRAFFIC sounds and the PURR of a large luxury automobile.

HAZEL

It's good of you to come with me, Marcus.

MARCUS

It's not goodness. Clearly he still has some hold over you. I need to see what kind of voodoo he's using on you.

HAZEL

Don't be ridiculous. He only writes about black magic, he doesn't practice it.

MARCUS

Black magic, death cults, headhunters.... The famous globe-trotting writer. A real man's man. You know as a lawyer's wife you won't have that kind of excitement.

HAZEL

I know. And I picked you. Marcus, my love, you promised you wouldn't be jealous. I've always been frank about my past.

MARCUS

Well pardon me if the rest of the world hasn't caught up with your and Victoria's notions of "free love".

HAZEL

Well you should. It's the twentieth century. Women aren't men's property anymore. That's what Victoria fought for, and I won't have you or anyone else sneering at her. She was right. I suppose you think women shouldn't have gotten the vote, either.

MARCUS

All right, Hazel--

HAZEL

You think sexual independence for women is a bad thing?

MARCUS

Hazel, please...
(sotto voce)
The driver...

HAZEL

Oh, Mason has heard it all before. Look, things with Jackson ended... badly. And it was my fault. I did Elias wrong, and I owe him something. If he needs help now, I'll help him. But that's all that's between us. He's the past - my future is you.

The car comes to a halt.

MASON

(clearing his throat)
The Hotel Chelsea, Miss Claflin, sir.

HAZEL

Can you wait here, Mason? I don't expect we'll be long.

MASON
Very good, Miss.

4 THE HOTEL CHELSEA

4

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
The two hurried up to Jackson
Elias' room on the 4th floor. As
Marcus moved to knock, he noticed
the door was not fully closed.

MARCUS
Elias? I say, Elias, we're here.

A MUFFLED SOUND of quick movement comes from inside the room.

HAZEL
Did you hear that?

MARCUS
I did.

HAZEL
Jackson? We're coming in.

The DOOR OPENS and both Hazel and Marcus GASP. MUSIC. The
FLAP OF CURTAINS and COLD WIND through the window.

MARCUS
Good god!

LESTER MAYHEW
The room was a shambles. A cold
wind blew through the open window,
disturbing loose papers in an open
briefcase on the desk. Furniture
was overturned, and motionless on
the bed, in a pool of glistening
blood, was Jackson Elias.

HAZEL
(horrified)
Jackson!

LESTER MAYHEW
He was freshly disemboweled, with a
strange mark or symbol cut deep in
his forehead.

MARCUS
Um, let me see if there's a pulse--

The bathroom door BANGS OPEN. MUSIC!

JOMO
(shouting)
Mimi nitakuua! (*I will kill you!*)

MARCUS
Look out!

HAZEL
He's got a knife!

MARCUS
Get out, Hazel!

JOMO
Lugha ya Umwagaji damu! (*The Bloody
Tongue!*)

A TREMENDOUS TUSSLE as the two fight. Curtains TEAR and GLASS BREAKS. The CLATTER OF METAL on the fire escape. Hazel SCREAMS. The men GRUNT.

LESTER MAYHEW
(over SFX)
The crazed negro lunged with a long knife with a curved blade, a bright red strip of cloth dangling from a headband. Marcus grappled with him and the two of them crashed through the window onto the hotel's fire escape.

The BEATING of Jomo's arm against the railing.

MARCUS
(breathless)
Drop... the knife!

The CLATTER of the knife falling down metal stairs to the sidewalk far below.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
(breathless)
All right. Look, you, you're not getting past me. Let's just settle down, right?
(calling off)
Hazel, are you all right?

HAZEL
Yes, but--

MARCUS

Go get help!

LESTER MAYHEW

As Hazel turned to go, the assailant threw himself at Marcus, the two of them tumbling over the fire escape railing!

JOMO

Utumbu, Nee-Yala-Hotah!

Hazel SCREAMS. Thrilling CLIFFHANGER MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

5 ADVERTISEMENT - FORHAN'S TOOTHPASTE

5

Forhan's Toothpaste JINGLE

LESTER MAYHEW

If there's one thing that the ladies just can't say no to, it's a mouth full of radiant white teeth. All the movie stars have them, and it's no surprise that women everywhere swoon when they flash those pearly whites. But even if you're not a movie star, you can still have that dazzling smile if you brush every day with Forhan's Toothpaste. It's infused with radium, to make your teeth glow from the inside out.

ANNOUNCER

Brush twice a day with Forhan's toothpaste and get ready to beat the ladies off with a stick.

6 CHELSEA HOTEL - CONT'D

6

Chapter start MUSIC. Hazel's SCREAM and the RING OF METAL as the men go over the side of the fire escape. There's a horrible CRUNCH as the two of them hit the pavement below.

HAZEL

Marcus!

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel looked over the railing to the terrible sight four stories below. Marcus and his attacker lay in a twisted heap in the alley. Two men loaded his attacker's limp body into a waiting car and quickly sped away.

HAZEL

Marcus!

SIRENS approach as Hazel SOBS. Transition MUSIC.

7

HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM

7

LESTER MAYHEW

As Hazel waited in the hospital for news about Marcus, Lt. Poole of the New York police questioned her.

The HUM of the hospital corridor. In games of Good Cop/Bad Cop, LT. POOLE is always the good cop.

LT. POOLE

And this man with the knife, what was he wearing?

HAZEL

Suit, I guess - an old one. He had a kind of headband on with a red flap.

LT. POOLE

(intrigued)

Hmm. Did it have any symbol on it, like the one carved in the victim's...

HAZEL

(after an awkward pause)

Not that I saw.

LT. POOLE

I'm sorry, Miss. The sergeant said you described a man in a car that took the assailant away?

HAZEL

No. I could see two men - one was white and one was black.

(MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)

They were also wearing some kind of red flap over their faces. They picked him up and put him in the rumble seat.

LT. POOLE

So it was a Model A?

HAZEL

It was a Hudson Roadster.

LT. POOLE

You sure about that? From up there it might have--

HAZEL

It was a Hudson, Lieutenant. Dark red, like...

LT. POOLE

Right, well, I won't trouble you anymore right now. We have a lot of work ahead of us. I can reach you at the number you gave me?

HAZEL

Yes.

LT. POOLE

We'll keep you posted with any developments. I'll say a prayer for your fiancé.

HAZEL

Thank you, Lieutenant.

LT. POOLE

You're not here by yourself, are you?

HAZEL

No, my cousin is down the hall talking to the doctors. Here she comes now.

FOOTSTEPS CROSS as Victoria returns.

LT. POOLE

(going)

Very well, Miss. Ma'am.

HAZEL

Any news? What did they say?

VICTORIA
He's still in surgery. They don't
know...

HAZEL
(barely keeping it
together)
Oh, Victoria!

VICTORIA
There, there. Did the policeman
have any...

HAZEL
Not yet. He seemed interested in
the attacker's headband.

VICTORIA
That did sound odd.
(quieter)
I'm surprised he didn't take
Elias's briefcase from you. I would
have thought they--

HAZEL
I told him it was mine.

VICTORIA
(our first glimpse of her
impish nature)
Hazel! Well done. So what's in it?

HAZEL
I didn't really look. I just
grabbed it from the hotel. Jackson
said he needed to give me his
files, and I...

VICTORIA
Well, let's see.

She UNCLASPS it and OPENS it up. MUSIC.

HAZEL
Well, that's not much, is it?

VICTORIA
Perhaps his assailants made off
with some of his documents.

HAZEL
Look at this. Some kind of black
stone sculpture. Numbers on the
bottom.

VICTORIA

Is it Egyptian? Looks a bit like the sphinx.

HAZEL

Dunno. That's it, just that and this folder labelled "Carlyle".

VICTORIA

That name was in his telegram.

HAZEL

Let's see... this is just a bunch of odds and ends. This, it's a letter from a Cairo antique dealer...

VICTORIA

Business card for Emerson Imports here in New York.

HAZEL

A business card from the Penhew Foundation in London.

VICTORIA

Is that a matchbox?

HAZEL

The Stumbling Tiger Bar, Shanghai.

VICTORIA

Heavens, he did get around, didn't he?

HAZEL

This a photo of a harbor. Must be in China too. See the junks?

VICTORIA

Hmmm. This seems to be a handbill for some sort of lecture. "Cult of the Sand Bat".

HAZEL

That sounds like Jackson. Who's the lecturer?

VICTORIA

A professor Cowles at Miskatonic, in Arkham, Massachusetts.

HAZEL

Never heard of him.

VICTORIA
Anything else?

HAZEL
Just this. It's Jackson's
handwriting on Hotel Chelsea
letterhead.

VICTORIA
What's he say?

HAZEL
It doesn't make any sense. "Sphinx
f blk Quartz judge my vow"?

VICTORIA
Looks like he wrote it in a hurry.
Some of these words are missing
letters.

HAZEL
He must have written it just
before... Oh Victoria, I don't
understand any of this! What was he
after? What is this Carlyle? Who
would kill him over these scraps?!

VICTORIA
I wonder if he means the Carlyle
Expedition...

HAZEL
What's that?

VICTORIA
It was all over the news years ago.
I knew the Carlyles from the polo
club. Their son, Roger, put
together some kind of slapdash
archeological expedition to go
digging in Egypt. They didn't find
anything important. His team went
on to Kenya where they were all
massacred in some kind of native
uprising.

HAZEL
That's terrible.

VICTORIA
A tragic affair for all, really.
Roger was always a bit of wastrel.
(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

It certainly doesn't seem like the sort of thing Jackson would have paid much mind to.

HAZEL

Maybe there was more to it.

VICTORIA

I could speak to his sister, Erica. I saw her and Zelda Fitzgerald at the Met fundraiser last year. She inherited the entire family fortune after he...

FOOTSTEPS as the DOCTOR enters the waiting room. MUSIC.

HAZEL

Doctor? Oh, no. No, tell me he isn't--

DR. QUINLAN

I'm sorry, miss, we did all we could--

Hazel WAILS.

VICTORIA

Come here, my dear.

Hazel sobs and Victoria comforts.

DR. QUINLAN

He'd lost too much blood. I'm very sorry.

VICTORIA

Thank you, doctor.
(to Hazel)
Yes, dearest, let it out.

HAZEL

(wracked with grief)
Oh Marcus! Why? Why?

Sad transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Days later, Victoria tried to get Hazel some answers by arranging a meeting with Erica Carlyle at her Westchester estate.

Fade in on FOOTSTEPS in a cavernous hall. ERICA is about 30, and a very wealthy heiress.

ERICA

I thought we could sit in the conservatory. There's a lovely fireplace and it's very cozy. This way.

VICTORIA

Thank you, Erica. The house is magnificent. I know it can't have been easy. But I understand the family businesses are thriving?

ERICA

I'm finally getting it all under some control. It's been simply awful. And you, Hazel, I'm so sorry to hear about your loss. I can't imagine how horrible that must have been. Please, have a seat. Would you like some tea?

The gentle ROAR of a massive fireplace. CLINKING and SIPPING of tea throughout.

HAZEL

Thank you. I guess I'm still a bit numb. I just don't understand it.

ERICA

Well, that kind of thing is simply incomprehensible. Inhuman!

VICTORIA

Yes, of course, but I had hoped you might be able to give Hazel some insight.

ERICA

(on guard)

Whatever do you mean?

VICTORIA

Well, if it's not a bother, I wanted to ask about Roger--

ERICA

(annoyed)

And his doomed expedition! Oh, how everyone always comes back to that.

HAZEL

I apologize if we seem indelicate. It's just that my fiancé's death and your brother's might be, somehow, related.

ERICA

Because they were both murdered?

HAZEL

There might be a more direct connection.

ERICA

I can't imagine how.

HAZEL

Marcus and I were at the Chelsea that night to meet with a writer who was also killed. Jackson Elias. Did you know him?

ERICA

A lot of "writers" have tried to make hay out of my brother's death. I make it my business not to know them.

VICTORIA

(coming to the rescue)

Yes, the last thing I wanted Hazel getting was ill-informed rumors and innuendos. There's been quite enough of that if you ask me.

ERICA

Quite so. Thank you, Victoria.

HAZEL

I'm sorry. It's just that prominently among his papers Elias had the name Carlyle, and also a card from the Penhew Foundation.

VICTORIA

Wasn't the Penhew Foundation involved in your brother's expedition?

ERICA

Yes, Sir Aubrey Penhew. British Egyptologist. It's his foundation. He was supposed to be the brains of the expedition.

(MORE)

ERICA (CONT'D)

I couldn't really tell you what it was all about. In fact, I'm not sure Roger really could have told what his expedition was about.

VICTORIA

I don't follow.

ERICA

The expedition wasn't his idea in the first place. Oh, no! It was that damned negro woman - it was all her idea. Roger claimed she was some African princess or priestess or somesuch, but she was just another scammer out to get his money.

VICTORIA

No shortage of that about.

ERICA

Am I right? Now I was the one who introduced him to Dr. Huston. Gloria Swanson recommended him to me and I benefitted so much from his treatments, I sent Roger to see him.

HAZEL

Gloria Swanson, the motion picture star?

VICTORIA

Yes, dear. This Dr. Huston was a...

ERICA

Freudian. Brilliant one. Ever since he was a boy, Roger was wracked by nightmares. I thought Huston could help him. They were soon thick as thieves, but I'm not sure the treatments really helped.

HAZEL

No?

ERICA

Then there was that girl, Hypatia Masters. I don't even remember how she came into his circle. Probably just another aspiring "girlfriend" with an eye on his fortune. And of course there was Jack.

(MORE)

ERICA (CONT'D)

Now Jack was of a different stripe altogether. I liked Jack; he was the kind of man you can count on.

HAZEL

And what did this Jack do?

ERICA

Jack Brady was Roger's bodyguard. He was devoted to Roger. I never thought anything bad could happen to Roger while Jack was around. Anyway, the group somehow glommed together and the next thing we knew, they all set off for Egypt, mucked about in the sand, then headed to Kenya and that's where...

Erica's kept her grief in check but it finally sneaks up on her.

ERICA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I really don't enjoy talking about this. Everyone wants to know about the massacre. Begging for grisly details. Everyone questioning my inheritance.

VICTORIA

You know we're not here about that, darling.

HAZEL

I'm sorry we brought it up - I didn't meant to pry. I didn't know any of this.

ERICA

(daubing away tears)

No, Hazel. I don't blame you. You came here hoping for insight, but I've none to offer. It's madness - plain and simple. It doesn't make sense and it never will. The best any of us can do it is try and put it behind us and move on.

Transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

As the ladies returned to the city,
their driver noticed something
unusual on the snowy country road.

The PURR of the car along a remote country road.

MASON

Ladies, I don't wish to alarm you,
but I believe we're being followed
by another automobile.

VICTORIA

Are you sure?

MASON

He's been behind us for several
miles now, making every turn we
make.

VICTORIA

What sort of automobile is it?

MASON

Looks like a Hudson roadster,
madame. Red, I think.

HAZEL

(with a gasp)
Speed up, Mason.

MASON

Yes, miss.

Mason SPEEDS UP.

MASON (CONT'D)

Afraid they're still with us, miss.

HAZEL

Slow down, let them pass.

MASON

Yes, it looks like they're going to-

HAZEL

It's them! From the hotel! He's got
a gun! Look--

BLAM! Glass SHATTERS and Mason YELPS. ADVENTURE MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel dove over the seat to try to help the injured chauffeur as he tried desperately to avoid a wreck!

HAZEL

I've got the wheel, Mason

MASON

Aaaargh! My arm!

Tires SQUEAL and METAL RAKES AGAINST METAL. Another GUNSHOT.

VICTORIA

There's another car coming! It's going to hit the--

HAZEL

Hold on, Victoria! Brace yourself!

LESTER MAYHEW

Suddenly, a third car came flying out of the snow from behind and smashed into the back of the Hudson. The red roadster careened wildly towards a tree!

We hear a third car REAR-END the Hudson roadster followed by the CRASH of it plowing into a tree. The third car SKIDS to a halt.

MASON

Ow! Careful there.

HAZEL

Hang on! Brakes, Mason, brakes!

Victoria's car SKIDS off the road, stopping in a muddy ditch. The CAR DOOR OPENS. CRUNCHY FOOTSTEPS.

VICTORIA

Good lord, are you two all right? Mason - you're bleeding.

MASON

Yes, ma'am but, but--

HAZEL

Mason?

MASON

Behind you! There's a man coming up the road. On foot.

LESTER MAYHEW

A lone, snow-shrouded figure walked toward them.

VICTORIA

Stay away. I'm warning you!

HAZEL

He's reaching into his coat!

Thrilling cliff-hanger MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

10 ADVERTISEMENT - BUB-L-PEP

10

LESTER MAYHEW

Find your verve flagging? Your pep pooped? Your get-up-and-go gone? Not to worry, friends. Just pop open an icy cold bottle of Bub-L-Pep and prepare yourself for the invigorating zip that you'll only get from this lithiated tonic. Give your mind and body the bubbly pick-me-up they crave. Bring home a case for your family today.

ANNOUNCER

Drink Bub-L-Pep - it's the nerve quencher!

Bub-L-Pep JINGLE.

11 ATTITUDE ADJUSTOR

11

Chapter start MUSIC. STEAMING WRECKAGE. RAPID CRUNCHY FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING.

VICTORIA

Don't come any closer!

HAZEL

Look out, Victoria!

LESTER MAYHEW

A figure emerged from the falling snow - a middle aged man wearing spectacles. As he approached Victoria he removed an object from his overcoat.

CECIL
Is everyone all right?

VICTORIA
Perhaps. Who are you?

CECIL
My card. Cecil Watson, Providence
Trust Insurance Company.

VICTORIA
Victoria Woodhull.

CECIL
Let's get you folks back on the
road right away. That Hudson looks
like a total loss, but they may
wake up and come after you. Have
you been shot, sir?

MASON
(in pain)
It's not serious. I can still--

HAZEL
Nonsense. I'll drive, Mason. Scoot
over.

VICTORIA
That's my young cousin, Hazel
Claflin.

HAZEL
Victoria, those guys might come
after us. Let's get out of here!

CECIL
You'll need a bit of a push. Right.
When I tell you, Miss, step on the
accelerator.

VICTORIA
Shall I assist?

CECIL
Certainly not, Mrs. Woodhull. And
one, two, three... uuugh!

Hazel HITS THE GAS, Cecil HEAVES, and with TIRES SPINNING,
the car CREEPS back onto the road.

VICTORIA
Back on the road. We owe you a debt
of gratitude, sir.

CECIL

I'd very much like to speak to both of you further. Could I prevail upon your time, once your man's injury has been tended to?

VICTORIA

We owe you no less. Do you know Delmonico's in midtown?

CECIL

Of course.

VICTORIA

I hope you'll be my guest there at eight o'clock. Ask Alfonso for my table.

CECIL

I look forward to it. I'll follow you into town, if I may.

VICTORIA

But what about your car? The front end is all--

CECIL

Oh, don't worry about that. I have excellent coverage.

MUSIC.

12

FINE DINING

12

The HUM and CLINK of a very fine restaurant.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hours later, the conversation continued at Manhattan's famed restaurant.

CECIL

So you see, I had been en route to pay a visit to Miss Carlyle when I witnessed your car being pursued - it seemed prudent to intervene.

VICTORIA

We're grateful that you did.

HAZEL

So you're an insurance investigator? And Roger Carlyle had some kind of policy?

CECIL

A whole life policy, with two million dollars in coverage.

VICTORIA

Quite an expensive claim for your company to pay out.

CECIL

Yes, it would be. But there are certain concerns regarding Mr. Carlyle's demise. My company has tasked me with determining whether or not there's any... impropriety, regarding a payout to his beneficiary.

VICTORIA

Erica Carlyle?

CECIL

Just so. I had hoped to meet with Jackson Elias, to find out what he knew about the fate of the Carlyle expedition.

VICTORIA

Do you suspect some kind of fraud?

CECIL

Madame, I don't know what the truth is here. But I will tell you that when you spend your career as an insurance adjustor, you can tell when there's something wrong with a claim. You can smell it a mile away. It might be the policy holder, it might be the beneficiary. It could be malfeasance, graft or fraud. But I smell something here and I will get to the bottom of it.

VICTORIA

I see.

HAZEL

I don't. What exactly do you think is wrong here?

CECIL

Let's start with a massive life insurance policy taken out on a young man in perfect health, prior to an expedition of questionable purpose. Add to that conflicting accounts of the death of the insured and all known associates. No witnesses. Bodies were never repatriated. Then an internationally renowned journalist investigates it and is murdered in his hotel room. The two of you ask a few questions and are pursued and shot at. Millions of dollars are at stake. Something is rotten.

HAZEL

And who exactly do you think is perpetrating this fraud?

CECIL

I don't know. Miss Carlyle is the beneficiary, and those thugs appeared right after you spoke to her.

VICTORIA

Are you suggesting that Erica Carlyle attempted to have us killed?

HAZEL

Those were the same men from the Chelsea. Did she have Jackson killed? And... Marcus?

CECIL

I don't know. She may have nothing to do with it. But I'd like to know everything Jackson Elias told you. Anything he shared with you may be vital to understanding this case. And clearing the names of the innocent.

MUSIC STARTS.

HAZEL

Mr. Watson, I loved Jackson Elias once. He was my good friend. I saw him killed and I saw my fiancé killed by the same hands.

(MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Something is indeed profoundly wrong here and I owe it the memories of Jackson and Marcus to know exactly what.

VICTORIA

Which is to say, if you are willing to be perfectly candid with us, Mr. Watson, we shall be perfectly candid with you.

CECIL

Please, call me Cecil.

Transition MUSIC.

13

JONAH KENSINGTON - THE PUBLISHER

13

LESTER MAYHEW

While Hazel attended to final arrangements for her fiancé, Victoria and Cecil agreed to go together to meet Jonah Kensington, Jackson Elias' New York publisher.

The background sound of a TYPEWRITER joins the WALLA of a small publishing company.

JONAH KENSINGTON

I still can't get over it. Jackson didn't have any family - I had to arrange the funeral services for him myself.

CECIL

Any idea who might have wanted to harm Mr. Elias?

JONAH KENSINGTON

Have you read his books?

CECIL

Well...

JONAH KENSINGTON

Death cults. Weird and twisted religious nuts. I'd always warned him some day one of these whackos would come after him. There was a while there where he used to have a kind of body guard. Wish he still did. I warned him, a bunch of times.

(MORE)

JONAH KENSINGTON (CONT'D)
 He'd just grin and tell me he had things under control. Christ - what a way to go.

CECIL
 Do you know what he was working on?

JONAH KENSINGTON
 He was traveling all over. He had this crazy theory - you remember the Carlyle Expedition a few years back?

CECIL
 I've heard of it.

JONAH KENSINGTON
 He told me he didn't think the story of the massacre was true. Let me see here.

A FILE CABINET DRAWER OPENS. PAPERS RUSTLE.

JONAH KENSINGTON (CONT'D)
 He sent these notes over from Nairobi. I looked through them and was afraid he'd finally flipped his lid.

VICTORIA
 (looking through notes)
 Cult of the Bloody Tongue? Sounds ghastly. This is a real thing?

JONAH KENSINGTON
 You tell me.

CECIL
 Did he have any proof of this theory?

JONAH KENSINGTON
 I think that's what he was working on. He sent in telegrams from Hong Kong and London - said it was some global conspiracy.

VICTORIA
 And did you believe him?

JONAH KENSINGTON
 Honestly, I had my doubts once he dropped off those notes. I mean, he seemed... he wasn't himself.

VICTORIA

Yes, one can see that here.

CECIL

Was he working with anyone else?

JONAH KENSINGTON

He had a falling out a year or so ago with his right hand man. After that, it was just him. He was talking to the police in London... let me see... here it is, Inspector Barrington. And he sometimes worked with a newspaper publisher over there: Mickey Mahoney at a rag called *The Scoop*.

CECIL

That's very helpful.

JONAH KENSINGTON

I meant to ask, how's Miss Claflin holding up? Will she be coming to the service tomorrow?

VICTORIA

She's been through a lot, Mr. Kensington, but never underestimate a woman's strength.

Transition MUSIC segues into...

14

THE FUNERAL

14

Practical FUNERIAL MUSIC. The WHISPERING & MILLING OF MOURNERS in the hushed and echoing space of the funeral chapel.

VICTORIA

Take my hankie, dear.

HAZEL

(sniffing)

Thank you, Victoria. I can't wait for today to be over.

VICTORIA

Not to alarm you, dear, but you're gathering a line of mourners wishing to pay their respects.

HAZEL

Why me?

VICTORIA

Well, some of them thought you were going to marry Jackson. Chin up. It's poor form to abnegate one's responsibilities to the grieving.

Hazel sucks it up and puts on a brave face.

HAZEL

(to a group of three mourners)

Hello. Thank you for coming.

PAUL FRICKER

So sorry for your loss. I'm Paul. Paul Fricker. This is Scott Dorward.

SCOTT DORWARD

My condolences.

MATTHEW SANDERSON

Matthew Sanderson. We were good friends of Jackson Elias.

HAZEL

Of course.

PAUL FRICKER

What a sad day.

SCOTT DORWARD

So sad. Yet, somehow inevitable.

MATTHEW SANDERSON

Yeah. I think somehow he knew something like this might happen. You know?

HAZEL

(not sure what to do with that)

Mmmmm.

VICTORIA

Thank you so much for coming gentlemen - you're such a comfort.

ECHOING FOOTSTEPS.

ROY CHAPMAN ANDREWS

My condolences, Miss Claflin. Roy Chapman Andrews.

VICTORIA

Dr. Andrews was just in the Gobi,
Hazel.

HAZEL

The Gobi?

VICTORIA

The desert, in China - full of
fossils. Dr. Andrews is a
celebrated naturalist.

HAZEL

China. Wow. And you knew Jackson?

ROY CHAPMAN ANDREWS

Ah, they broke the mold after they
made Jackson. We'll never know his
like again!

HAZEL

Yes. Yes.

ROY CHAPMAN ANDREWS

I had met him in an opium den in
Peking, this was back in, oh, '21
it must have been, and he came up
to me ask asked if I liked scotch--

VICTORIA

Quite the bon vivant. He did live
life to the fullest, Dr. Andrews.
Thank you for the kind words.

He goes. FOOTSTEPS.

ALBERT WILMARTH

I'm so very sorry, Miss Claflin.
Albert Wilmarth. I was a folklore
consultant on Elias' book, *Witch
Cults of England* and--

HAZEL

(gasping)
Oh my god.

Rising underscore of dramatic MUSIC.

VICTORIA

Hazel, are you all right?

HAZEL
 (intense)
 In the corner. It can't be... It's
 HIM!

END OF CHAPTER

15 ADVERTISEMENT - UNQUENTOIL

15

LESTER MAYHEW
 All across America, Unquentoil is
 the first name that leaps to mind
 for the relief and protection of
 cold sores, canker sores, chapped
 lips and tongue lesions. That's
 because camphorated Unquentoil
 soothes and doesn't smart, sting or
 stain the lips or gums. It helps
 you heal in a hurry. Always keep a
 tube of Unquentoil where you live,
 work and play.

The catchy Unquentoil jingle.

ANNOUNCER
 Unquentoil - a delightful oral
 sensation!

16 ASHES AND OLD FLAMES

16

Chapter start MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Lurking in the shadows of the
 funeral chapel, Hazel spied a very
 surprising mourner.

HAZEL
 How DARE he show his face here!

VICTORIA
 (hushed)
 Who is it?

HAZEL
 (also hushed)
 Him. That sonofabitch Zeke Ford.

VICTORIA
 Jackson's old partner? Oh dear.
 Come, Mr. Wilmarth, let's go look
 at the condolence book.

ALBERT WILMARTH

Perhaps... yes, it's just over here.

CROSSING FOOTSTEPS. ZEKE walks over. He's a handsome, burly rogue in his late 30s.

ZEKE

Hello, Hazel. Long time.

HAZEL

What are you doing here? For god's sake, Zeke...

ZEKE

I wasn't going to make a fuss. I wouldn't have come over here if you hadn't spotted me first. But I want to pay my respects to Jackson, same as everybody else.

HAZEL

Oh really? What respects?

ZEKE

Hey, things may have ended up down and out for all of us, but Jackson and I went through a lot together. It wasn't MY fault that his gal decided to...

HAZEL

(voice and temper rising)
I hope you're not suggesting it was MY fault.

ZEKE

I didn't say it was your fault! But he was my friend long before you, well, before we--

HAZEL

Some friend! Seducing his girlfriend behind his back!

MUSIC. Ad lib argument continues in the background.

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, in another part of the chapel, a professionally dressed woman approached Victoria....

REBECCA SHOENBURG is in her 30s.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
 Funerals. My mother always said
 they bring out people's true
 colors.

VICTORIA
 Your mother was clearly a wise and
 insightful woman, Miss...?

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
 Rebecca Shosenberg. My card.

VICTORIA
 (pointy)
 Mmm. The New York Times. Are you
 grieving or are you here in a
 professional capacity?

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
 The latter, I'm afraid. I wrote the
 article about Mr. Elias' murder for
 the Times.

VICTORIA
 I see.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
 (very quiet)
 Mrs. Woodhull, there have been
 eight other murders carried out in
 a similar manner. The same strange
 symbol carved into the foreheads of
 the victims.

VICTORIA
 Indeed?

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
 And a man has been tried and
 convicted of those murders. He's
 been in prison for months.

VICTORIA
 Hmm. Perhaps he has confederates on
 the outside.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
 Or the police convicted the wrong
 man in the first place.

MUSIC. We CROSSFADE from them back to Hazel and Zeke.

ZEKE

I never would have done anything to hurt Elias - I mean, well, I never would have meant to.

HAZEL

Well *I* certainly never meant that this would all--

ZEKE

Hey, hey, I don't blame you. I just feel bad about it all.

HAZEL

There's something we can agree on.

A slight pause and a chuckle of truce from them both.

ZEKE

So, apart from this, how've you been?

HAZEL

(first laughing, then crying)

Oh, Zeke...

Hazel WEEPS. CROSSFADE back to:

VICTORIA

Jackson did say something to Hazel about "the cops being in on it".

REBECCA SHOENBURG

I have a source, but she's scared to talk on the record. I thought perhaps you might--

VICTORIA

Oh, no, no, no, dear. I'm just visiting New York and as you can see I've got quite a lot on my proverbial plate.

REBECCA SHOENBURG

I understand.

(pause)

It's just that, you've always been a champion for social justice, especially for women. I'd hoped you might be willing to meet with her. But if you're too busy...

VICTORIA
You have done your homework, Miss
Shosenburg.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
Yes, ma'am.

VICTORIA
(with a sigh of
resignation)
I like women who do their homework.

CROSSFADE yet again to a conversation escalating in volume.

ZEKE
Maybe you'd like to go and get a
drink after this is all...

HAZEL
Are you asking me out? At Jackson
Elias' funeral!

ZEKE
No, I--

HAZEL
Hours after I buried my fiancé?
Christ, Zeke, you haven't changed!

FOOTSTEPS approach and CARLTON RAMSEY, a middle aged
attorney, tries to quiet the escalating row.

CARLTON RAMSEY
Pardon me, I hope I'm not
interrupting.

HAZEL
Oh no, we're through here.

Zeke starts to go.

CARLTON RAMSEY
No, please don't go. Are you Hazel
Claflin?

HAZEL
Yeah.

CARLTON RAMSEY
And you're Ezekiel Ford?

ZEKE
Who the hell are you?

CARLTON RAMSEY
My name's Carlton Ramsey. I'm an attorney and I--

ZEKE
Look, pal, we got problems here but we don't need a lawyer.

CARLTON RAMSEY
No, I am Jackson Elias' attorney and executor. You've both been named in his will.

ZEKE
What?

HAZEL
No...

CARLTON RAMSEY
I'd like to schedule a reading of his last will and testament at my offices. 10am tomorrow. The address is here, on my card.

ZEKE
I don't understand. We were on the outs... All of us. We weren't even speaking. He wouldn't--

TRANSITION MUSIC STARTS.

HAZEL
(to herself)
Oh, Jackson.

CARLTON RAMSEY
He did. I'll see you at ten o'clock.

17 LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

17

LESTER MAYHEW
The next morning, Zeke and Hazel met in the Harlem office of Carlton Ramsey.

Quiet LAW OFFICE WALLA.

CARLTON RAMSEY
Miss Claflin, have a seat here. Can I bring either of you coffee?

HAZEL
No thank you.

CARLTON RAMSEY
All right then, we'll begin.

He SHUTS THE DOOR.

ZEKE
Wait. I don't understand. Where's everybody else?

CARLTON RAMSEY
There is no one else, Mr. Ford. Apart from a small bequest to the Boys Club of Harlem, you and Miss Claflin are the sole beneficiaries of the estate of Jackson Elias. Mr. Ford, this is for you.

A heavy metal object CLUNKS on his desk.

ZEKE
(moved)
Ah, no...

HAZEL
What is that, Zeke? Is it gold?

ZEKE
Yeah, some sort of ancient mirror thing. We found it in Peru. The last case we ever worked together. Before...

HAZEL
And he left it to you?

ZEKE
Mister, I think there's been some kind of mistake.

CARLTON RAMSEY
There's no mistake. Mr. Elias visited my office when he arrived in New York last week. He drafted his will - you'll see it's been notarized. And he made this.

The SCHNICK of a cylinder tube being opened.

HAZEL
An Ediphone recording?

CARLTON RAMSEY

It is. He recorded it here and asked that I play it for you in the event that...

The SLIDE and CLUNK of an Ediphone being prepared.

CARLTON RAMSEY (CONT'D)

(choking up)

I'm sorry. Jackson was my client, but I also considered him a friend. He was afraid something could happen to him, that's why he came to see me. And to record this.

The THUNK of the Ediphone lever. SCRATCHING.

JACKSON ELIAS

(from beyond the grave)

Zeke and Hazel, if you're hearing this, well, it means I'm unable to speak to you in person any more. You were my dearest friends and I love you both. What happened between us was... Just know that all is forgiven and forgotten. My current investigation is the most important one of my career; its ramifications are massive. It could affect humanity itself. If I can't go on, if they've gotten to me as I think they will, I beg you to keep digging.

TRANSITION MUSIC STARTS.

The Carlyle Expedition - it wasn't what people think it was. There's a cult at work - multiple cults - united worldwide in an unholy purpose. Many names, many forms, but all the same and toward one end. They must be stopped. They've got money, power and the authorities in their pockets. I can't prove it all yet - it's complicated. I'm sorry, but it has to be you. I beg you, please, forgive each other. Find a way.

The recording cuts away to STATIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

The following day, Victoria gathered Hazel, Zeke and Cecil for tea in her room at the Waldorf-Astoria.

VICTORIA

So it's agreed, as Cecil's inquiry overlaps with Jackson's, we unite our efforts. We have the items Hazel recovered from Jackson's room at the Chelsea.

CECIL

And I've assembled some of the press coverage about the expedition.

ZEKE

So what do we know? Like as in facts.

CECIL

The Carlyle Expedition consisted of: Roger Carlyle (the insured), wealthy dilettante, 24 years old. This article names Dr. Robert Huston - an alienist, Hypatia Masters - a photographer, and Jack Brady as part of the expedition.

HAZEL

Erica Carlyle mentioned them. She liked Jack Brady.

VICTORIA

This clipping names Sir Aubrey Penhew as the group's spokesman.

HAZEL

The "brains", Erica said. The Penhew Foundation is in London.

VICTORIA

Erica mentioned someone else - a negro woman.

HAZEL

That's right. She didn't like her!

CECIL

Hmmm, no one like that is mentioned in any of this press coverage. Not surprising actually for the Pillar/Riposte.

ZEKE

And the expedition went where?

CECIL

They went to London, then on to Egypt. From there they went to Nairobi.

ZEKE

In Brazil?

CECIL

No, Kenya. They were in Mombasa and then went toward the mountains outside Nairobi. There, it says, Nandi tribesmen massacred them. Five were charged with the crime and hanged.

ZEKE

So they all died?

CECIL

That's what the papers said. That's what Erica Carlyle said.

ZEKE

But you think there's more to it?

CECIL

And so did Jackson. He traveled to China, Kenya, Egypt, England and came back here feeling he was on to something and afraid for his life.

HAZEL

With good reason.

VICTORIA

Others have been killed like Jackson was, as if it's some kind of ritual.

HAZEL

Jackson said there was a cult at work - multiple cults.

VICTORIA

The police arrested a man but clearly the murders are still continuing.

ZEKE

Sorry, I don't get what's going on here.

HAZEL

Typical.

ZEKE

Hey now.

VICTORIA

You're not alone, Ezekiel. We should gather more information. I'm going to meet with the *Times'* informant in Harlem and encourage her to speak.

CECIL

I can look into this Dr. Huston. I mean, what kind of archeological expedition needs its own psychiatrist?

HAZEL

I thought I'd follow up with this Dr. Cowles at Miskatonic - apparently Jackson was interested in his lecture.

ZEKE

What's left here in town? Hand me that business card. I can see what the story is with these guys: Emerson Imports.

They rise from the table.

VICTORIA

All right. Good luck, everyone.

CECIL

Good luck. We can see ourselves out.

FOOTSTEPS as Zeke and Cecil go.

VICTORIA

Hazel? What's the matter, darling? Thinking about Marcus?

HAZEL
No, actually. It's this thing.

VICTORIA
That sphinx statue?

HAZEL
See the numbers on the bottom?

VICTORIA
Yes, what about them?

TRANSITION MUSIC STARTS.

HAZEL
I'd swear they're different from
the last time I looked at it.

VICTORIA
You've been under enormous strain,
my dear. Best not to worry too much
about it.

19

THE LAFAYETTE THEATRE

19

LESTER MAYHEW
Victoria met Rebecca Shosenburg at
Harlem's famed Lafayette Theatre
and the two hurried inside.

Their FEET and voices ECHO as they cross the lobby.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
Thank you for meeting me here. My
source wanted somewhere she feels
safe. She works here at the
theater.

VICTORIA
Oh, she's a singer or an actress?

MILLIE ADAMS
I clean the place. This is my mop.

Millie's in her late 20s. She's sassy, opinionated and smart
enough to know she's up against a system that's been
carefully rigged against her.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
Millie Adams, may I present
Victoria Woodhull.

VICTORIA

How do you--

MILLIE ADAMS

You want me to risk my life and spill the beans to her? I'm thinking the Mayor, the Attorney General - and you bring me some little old white lady? Are you crazy?

VICTORIA

I do so hate to be a disappointment.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG

I think you'll find Victoria uniquely qualified to speak on your behalf.

MILLIE ADAMS

Oh yeah? You're qualified? What have you done that's gonna help me?

VICTORIA

Mrs. Adams, I was the first woman ever to address the United States Congress. I founded and published my own newspaper. And a stock brokerage. I led the movement that earned women the right to vote. I was the first woman to run for the Presidency of the United States of America. Frederick Douglass was my running mate.

(easing off a bit)

I have some understanding of the law and quite a few powerful friends. But I respect if you'd prefer someone better...

FOOTSTEPS as Victoria makes to leave.

MILLIE ADAMS

My apologies, Mrs. Woodhull. I only thought--

VICTORIA

Call me Victoria.

MILLIE ADAMS

Yes, ma'am. You see, my husband, Hilton Adams, he's on death row at Sing Sing.

(MORE)

MILLIE ADAMS (CONT'D)
Convicted for murdering people just
the same as that man that was just
killed in the Hotel Chelsea.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
There's been a total of nine
murders, all by knife, with symbols
cut in the forehead, over the
course of many months.

VICTORIA
So how was it that your husband
came to be arrested?

MILLIE ADAMS
After a couple of these murders had
happened, Hilton and some of his
army friends from the war started
going out on patrols - to keep the
streets safe.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
All war veterans from the 369th
Infantry. The Germans called them
the "Harlem Hellfighters".

MILLIE ADAMS
Hilton was out one night on patrol
by himself where a murder happened
and the cops grabbed him up. They
needed pin it on someone.

VICTORIA
So you think the police are
corrupt?

MILLIE ADAMS
Seriously? Oh honey, you ain't from
around here.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
But there's one officer in
particular..

MILLIE ADAMS
There is. My husband, he thought
the murders was part of some East
African cult. Said there was a Ju-
Ju House and went and told Captain
Robson of the 14th precinct. The
captain told him to stay out of it
if he didn't want to get hurt or
worse.

(MORE)

MILLIE ADAMS (CONT'D)
Later Hilton gets grabbed up, and
who do you think is the presiding
officer?

VICTORIA
Captain Robson.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
Exactly. I'm certain he and his
squad are on the take, but I don't
have hard evidence yet. My editors
won't run anything until I do.

MILLIE ADAMS
I don't know what to do now. I
don't have money for an appeal. I
ain't got no new evidence. If there
is some cult I don't want to end up
cut up in some alley.

VICTORIA
And of course you can't go to the
police.

MILLIE ADAMS
That's just it, ma'am.

VICTORIA
Mrs. Adams, I believe your husband
is innocent. And I have my own
reasons to believe there's a cult
at work. I promise you I shall do
everything within my power to see
that he is exonerated of this
crime.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG
Millie? Are you all right?

MILLIE ADAMS
Yes, ma'am. It's just that is the
best news I have had in quite some
time.

VICTORIA
Now what is this "Ju-Ju House" your
husband mentioned?

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

After a very illuminating conversation, the three women left the theater, turning down 7th Avenue.

20 THE COPS

20

We hear the bustling sound of the HARLEM STREET.

OFFICER 1

Hold it there!

MILLIE ADAMS

Oh, dear lord, it's the cops.

VICTORIA

Don't worry. I've had run-ins with the police in my past. You have nothing to be afraid of.

MILLIE ADAMS

No, YOU have nothing to be afraid of. They ain't gonna beat you!

OFFICER 2

Where do you think you're going?

VICTORIA

I was returning to midtown--

OFFICER 1

We're not talking to you, granny.

OFFICER 2

I'm talking to you, spook. You've been warned to mind your own business.

MILLIE ADAMS

Yes, sir.

OFFICER 1

So what are you doing talking it up with these two?

OFFICER 2

If you got something to say, you can say it to me.

VICTORIA

This woman has done nothing wrong,
officer. Why don't you pick on
someone your own size?

The DOOR of a nearby police car CLOSES. FOOTSTEPS approach. A
SMALL CROWD GATHERS as the scene unfolds.

OFFICER 1

What did you say?

VICTORIA

I said why don't you look into the
murder at the Hotel Chelsea,
instead of terrifying this innocent
woman?

REBECCA SHOSENBURG

(sotto voce)

Victoria, be careful. That's the
Captain!

OFFICER 2

Captain Robson, sir.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

(striding up)

That's all right, men. Clearly this
woman doesn't know where she is.

VICTORIA

It is still America, isn't it?

CAPTAIN ROBSON

No, it's Harlem. Bad things can
happen to little old white ladies
in Harlem. And obviously, you're
some kind of rabble rouser to be
talking with--

VICTORIA

(fearless)

I daresay I rouse more than rabble,
sir! Captain Robson, do you know
who I am?

CAPTAIN ROBSON

You think I care?

VICTORIA

My name is Victoria Woodhull.

A MURMUR of recognition ripples through the crowd.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

Oh, not just any old rabble rouser,
men. She's a dried up has-been,
fancy-pants, lunatic slut!

The cops LAUGH. The crowd OOHS.

VICTORIA

Did you get all that, Rebecca?
Captain, I'd like to introduce
Rebecca Shosenburg of the New York
Times. She'll be documenting our
conversation for tomorrow's
readers.

REBECCA SHOSENBURG

Well, I--

CAPTAIN ROBSON

Yeah? Well take this down. I don't
mind hitting the darky and this old
battle axe, and if you want to
write it up for the Times, I'll
give you a smack too. I'm here to
keep the peace!

A RUMBLE OF DISCONTENT moves through the crowd.

CAPTAIN ROBSON (CONT'D)

That goes for the lot of you. Go
on, get on about your business!
(to Victoria)
And you, keep your nose out of
things that don't concern you.

VICTORIA

Thanks for that advice, Captain.
I'll note it along with your badge
number.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

That does it. Officer, give me your
nightstick--

An officer STEPS IN, there's a WHOOSH and a CRY OF PAIN and
the SOUNDS OF THE CROWD drown out the action. MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

21 ADVERTISEMENT - NASON'S

21

LESTER MAYHEW

If your child rebels at ordinary cod liver oil, at that fishy taste and smell, worry no more. Because doctors everywhere are urging patients to buy Nason's Palatable Cod Liver Oil. It doesn't have the disagreeable odor you may remember from your youth, because Nason's is made from fresh livers of Lofoten Island cod - Norway's finest. And with Nason's mint flavor, children of any age will take it readily up to three times a day.

Nason's jingle.

ANNOUNCER

End your family's struggles with cod liver oil - switch to Nason's today!

22 THE MEDICAL AFFAIRS BOARD

22

Start of chapter MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, downtown at the offices of the New York Medical Affairs Board....

QUIET OFFICE WALLA.

CECIL

I need to see these records right away. I think you'll find this application is in order.

GRETCHEN RUHA

Let's see. Form MR322G stroke J16. Filled out in triplicate. Yes, that's... wait. For Doctor Huston? Robert Ellington Huston? Sir, I'm sorry, but those records are confidential.

CECIL

For a physician deceased some four years? Why is that?

GRETCHEN RUHA

Well...

CECIL

I'm with the Providence Trust Insurance Corporation, and I'm investigating a claim regarding the death of Imelda Bosch, one of Dr. Huston's patients. Turns out she committed suicide.

GRETCHEN RUHA

That may well be, sir, but I can't--

CECIL

(a loud bluff)

Oh, the Providence Trust legal department won't be happy to hear that!

A DOOR OPENS and Dr. Turnbull STEPS IN.

DR. TURNBULL

What's going on out here?

GRETCHEN RUHA

(nearly in tears)

Oh, Dr. Turnbull, there's an investigation and he's demanding Dr. Huston's records but they told me never...

DR. TURNBULL

I'll handle this, Miss Ruha. You go powder your nose.

She GOES.

DR. TURNBULL (CONT'D)

Now look here, mister--

CECIL

Cecil Watson. Providence Trust.

DR. TURNBULL

Yes, we'll process your application, of course. But sometimes it takes weeks to dig through those files. Sometimes longer.

CECIL

Sure, I can wait. But the Bosch girl's family, boy I don't know.

(MORE)

CECIL (CONT'D)

They say Imelda and Dr. Huston were having an affair. They're pretty upset. I'm sure you can appreciate the can of worms that opens up. That just reflects badly on the whole profession.

DR. TURNBULL

Oh god. Well, perhaps we could expedite the request.

CECIL

Gee, that would be great. 'Cause otherwise I'll have to tell the boys in legal to draft up subpoenas, and you know how that excites the reporters on the courthouse beat. They got nothing going on since Al Capone went into the hospital.

DR. TURNBULL

No, best to keep the reporters out of it, I say. Robert Huston, eh?

(under his breath)

Not that surprising. He was crazy even for a psychiatrist.

CECIL

That bad?

DR. TURNBULL

No one around here shed any tears when we heard he wasn't coming back from that "expedition". I'll have the girls pull the file for you while you wait. Is that all you need? Maybe a cup of coffee?

CECIL

That'd be swell. Say, now that you mention it, there was another patient. Roger Carlyle?

DR. TURNBULL

Okay, we'll pull that file too. After all, insurance and medicine should be allies, don't you think?

CECIL

Sure, sure. Practically two sides of the same coin.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, after a quick train ride to Arkham, Massachusetts, Hazel met with guest lecturer Anthony Cowles in his office at Miskatonic University.

Cowles sits down in the chair behind his desk. He's an affable Australian anthropologist.

PROFESSOR COWLES

I'm afraid I never met Jackson Elias personally. I read one of his books - some interesting theories on cults. But I don't even know if he was present at that lecture.

HAZEL

I wish I could have been there myself. I've recently become very interested in cults.

PROFESSOR COWLES

Oh, well, the Cult of the Sand Bat was a right rip snorter as they go.

HAZEL

Oh really? How so?

PROFESSOR COWLES

It's an ancient, violent Aboriginal belief system. This cult worshipped the Father of All Bats, and believed that if they made special sacrifices they would prove themselves worthy and their god would appear to them and conquer all men. It was thought the cult had been extinct for centuries, but there are recent signs of activity.

HAZEL

What signs? How recent?

PROFESSOR COWLES

About four years ago a surveyor named Arthur MacWhirr reported finding some very unusual stone blocks or ruins out in the western Australian desert south of Port Hedland.

(MORE)

PROFESSOR COWLES (CONT'D)
Before his men could excavate to see what they might be, they were attacked by local boomers. Some of his men were killed in a way that's similar to cult sacrificial practices.

HAZEL
What were those practices?

PROFESSOR COWLES
Oh yeah, that bit's pretty colorful. The cultists would beat their victims with clubs embedded with the sharp teeth of bats. Leaves telltale marks. The teeth were coated with a fast-acting poison, somehow derived from fermented bat droppings.

HAZEL
Ew, my god.

PROFESSOR COWLES
The victims apparently went mad before they died.

HAZEL
I didn't know there were ruins in the Australian desert.

PROFESSOR COWLES
Neither did anyone else, and not everyone's convinced. But MacWhirr photographed them and kept good records. It's a bit of mystery. He sent me a few Kodaks - here, you can see them for yourself.

MUSIC. The RUSTLE OF PAPERS.

HAZEL
They do look like ruins. Those blocks are huge. Why has't anyone--

PROFESSOR COWLES
It's lawless country out there. Since the whole thing sounds a bit far fetched, no institution wants to put up the money to do a proper dig. I've thought of going myself once I'm done here and get back to Darwin. Could be a bit of fun.

(MORE)

PROFESSOR COWLES (CONT'D)
I've a nephew and a niece who'd be
game to go with me.

HAZEL
Hmm. Do you mind if I make a few
notes from the diary?

PROFESSOR COWLES
Help yourself.
(pause)
So what's any of this got to do
with Elias' murder?

HAZEL
I don't know, professor. But I mean
to find out. Thank you so much.

Transition MUSIC.

24 EMERSON IMPORTS

24

LESTER MAYHEW
And that same day Zeke carried out
his mission at the dingy warehouse
of Emerson Imports on the Hudson
River piers, near Hell's Kitchen.

TRUCKS, WORKMEN and occasional HAMMERING at Emerson Imports.
We hear GRUNTS of effort from Arthur Emerson, an importer in
his 50s as he tries to pry off a stubborn crate lid.

ZEKE
Hey there! I'm looking for Arthur
Emerson.

ARTHUR EMERSON
Who wants him?

ZEKE
Name's Zeke Ford. Had a couple of
questions.

ARTHUR EMERSON
(working hard)
Look pal, public's not supposed to
be back here. I kinda got my hands
full.

ZEKE
Sure looks it. Here - gimme the
crowbar.

The THUNK of metal hitting wood.

ARTHUR EMERSON

Nah, I already tried it from that side, it won't pry--

The nail CREAKS and the lid POPS OFF.

ARTHUR EMERSON (CONT'D)

Geez, you're a strong fella. Look at the biscuit hooks on you.

ZEKE

Here, I'll do the other side if you tell me what you know about a guy named Jackson Elias.

More CREAKING WOOD and FALLING NAILS.

ARTHUR EMERSON

Oh yeah, he came by here last week. Said he was a writer.

ZEKE

What'd he want?

ARTHUR EMERSON

What's it to you?

ZEKE

He was a friend of mine.

ARTHUR EMERSON

He was asking after shipments we get from Africa. Like I told him, there's an antique dealer in Kenya who ships stuff to us.

ZEKE

You don't say.

ARTHUR EMERSON

That's what he said.

ZEKE

Who's the sender? Who's the buyer?

ARTHUR EMERSON

Exporter's Aja Singh in Mombasa. The stuff clears customs and we deliver it to a kind of curio shop called Ju-Ju House in Harlem. Run by a real creepy old negro.

ZEKE

Like the name on this card?

ARTHUR EMERSON

Yeah, Silas N'Kwane, that's him.
What's this all about?

ZEKE

Jackson Elias is dead. I'm gonna
find out who killed him. And when I
do, I'll unhinge his neck.

ARTHUR EMERSON

Listen pal, sorry to hear about
your friend, but it's a bad idea to
go messing with *those* people's
affairs. A rough crowd, if you get
my drift.

ZEKE

Oh yeah?

ARTHUR EMERSON

If they had something to do with
your friend's death, they might get
you too.

ZEKE

I'd like to see 'em try.

Zeke walks out whistling to himself which CROSSFADES into
transition MUSIC.

25

OUTSIDE THE JU-JU HOUSE

25

LESTER MAYHEW

The next night, Zeke, Hazel and
Cecil decided to keep a watch on
the mysterious Ju-Ju House. Shortly
after midnight, the three of them
skulked in the shadows of a dark
alley.

We hear the soundscape of a HARLEM NIGHT.

HAZEL

Pitch black tonight. I don't like
it.

CECIL

No, it's good. The dark of the
moon's the best time for shadow
work.

FOOTSTEPS of two men.

ZEKE

Shh. These two look like trouble -
I bet they go in.

HAZEL

You called it, Zeke.

The DOOR of Ju-Ju House opens and the men GO IN. As the door opens, we can hear the throbbing beats of AFRICAN DRUMMING coming from inside, and it diminishes as the door closes.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Cecil look! Coming up the street.
All dented up.

The WHEEZE of a badly damaged car rolling to a stop.

CECIL

(surprised)

The Hudson roadster. Hm. Looks like
they were able to salvage it after
all. They're getting out.

We hear the CAR DOORS close. FOOTSTEPS.

ZEKE

Those the same guys that ran you
off the road? The guys from the
hotel?

HAZEL

It's them all right. Looking a
little the worse for wear thanks to
Cecil here.

ZEKE

Don't that beat the Dutch.

CECIL

Look! They're going in too.

ZEKE

White guys, black guys. Every kind
of riff-raff.

HAZEL

Two more crossing the street.
They're all going in.

The DOOR OPENS - more DRUMMING from within.

ZEKE

What the hell do they all do in
there? The place isn't that big.

CECIL

Quiet - there's a cop coming up the sidewalk.

HAZEL

Is he going to go in?

ZEKE

Wait, he's taking out his billy club.

WHAP, WHAP, WHAP as the cop knocks on the front door. It opens - DRUMMING!

HAZEL

Someone's coming out. An old guy. Looks like death warmed up.

ZEKE

Must be that Silas Nickywammy.

HAZEL

Nickywammy?

ZEKE

Whatever - it's African.

CECIL

That's a pretty thick envelope he's giving the cop.

HAZEL

Shh, he's coming this way.

FOOTSTEPS passing. We hear what might be some AGONIZED SCREAMS along with the DRUMMING as the DOOR CLOSES.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

My god, did you hear that? We're lucky Victoria's behind bars tonight - she'd want to go storming in.

ZEKE

She'd be right on the money.

HAZEL

What?

ZEKE

We've got to have a closer look - see just what's going on in there.

CECIL
The neighborhood looks deserted.
Nobody wants to be near this place
when they're--

Zeke MOVES out of the alley towards the door.

HAZEL
Zeke! Come back! There might--

CECIL
He's right. Now's the time. Let's
go.

They HUSTLE across the street.

ZEKE
The old guy locked the door. Guess
they're not expecting anyone else.

HAZEL
I can't see anyone through this
little gap in the curtain. Where'd
they go?

ZEKE
Hazel, keep an eye on the street.
Hey, hold this, will ya? I'll jimmy
the door.

CECIL
Brought a .45, eh?

ZEKE
If these guys got knives, you'd
better bet I'm bringing a gun. Ah,
come on now, baby.

CLICK. The lock yields and the DOOR SWINGS OPEN.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
(hushed)
Inside, now.

The others FOLLOW HIM IN and the DOOR CLOSES. MUSIC.

MUSIC. Off-center MUFFLED DRUMS, CHANTS, and CRIES OF
AGONY/ECSTASY. Their CREEPING FOOTSTEPS.

LESTER MAYHEW

The eerie, dimly lit shop contained spears, shields, drums, exotic animals carved from wood, and all manner of other African trinkets.

CECIL

My god, those masks! They give me the creeps!

HAZEL

Zeke, those knives on the wall are like the ones they attacked us with at the Chelsea.

ZEKE

Shh. Where is that noise coming from?

CECIL

Hey, look here. A shelf of books. "*Africa's Dark Sects*". That might--

ZEKE

There's a trapdoor over here, behind the counter.

(lifting the trapdoor)

And stairs.

HAZEL

Where do they go?

ZEKE

(with a grim sigh)

Down.

There's a horrible MEATY-SQUISHY NOISE, followed by an ULULATION from the throng.

HAZEL

(terrified)

What is that?

ZEKE

Hazel, your nails are cutting my arm.

CECIL

(hushed)

As a professional investigator, I have to say this would ordinarily be the point at which we should call the police.

A pistol COCKS.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

No need - we're already here. Drop
the piece, you.

Zeke's revolver THUDS on the floor.

CECIL

Listen - downstairs, it sounds like-

CAPTAIN ROBSON

Breaking and entering. Caught you
in the act. Lucky my men and I keep
an eye on this place. Dark of the
moon. Best time for shadow work.
And you three just walked right in.

CECIL

Captain, clearly you can hear -
something very suspicious is going
on down there.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

Funny, I don't hear anything.

A HOWL of a human in agony wafts up from below.

CECIL

But this--

CAPTAIN ROBSON

Look, I don't care what some
ignorant jungle bunnies get up to
in their own basement speakeasy.
Let 'em have their fun, I say. The
only lawbreakers I see around here
are you three.

HAZEL

Then you need to open your eyes!

In an instant, Hazel BOLTS down the stairs. The MUSIC and
HORRIFIC SOUNDS intensify as we follow her.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

Hey!

ZEKE

Hazel!

We HEAR the nightmares Lester describes.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel rushed down to discover a vast basement replete with shocking horrors! A crowd of cultists, stark naked but for their red headbands, danced to the wild drumming. Horrid noises and odors arose from an open pit in the center of the room, above which dangled two chained victims. From a raised dais, a high priest dressed in an exotic robe of feathers and claws orchestrated the nightmare.

HAZEL

Sweet Jesus!

CECIL

Hazel, don't - my god!

ZEKE

Holy hell--

CAPTAIN ROBSON

Holy Mary, mother of--

From his vantage point, the priest, MUKUNGA, sees them!

MUKUNGA

Intruders! There - take them!

The DRUMMING PAUSES and there's MUTTERING and EXCLAMATIONS as the cultists fall on the four intruders.

MUKUNGA (CONT'D)

You! You dare defile the sacred rite of the Bloody Tongue. Come forth my *ciimba*! Feast on the living so that you may live in death!

The worshipers GASP in delight. Awkward SHUFFLING FOOTSTEPS. A low pulsing DRUM BEAT begins again!

LESTER MAYHEW

From behind the high priest, two gaunt, mutilated figures emerged, like blank-eyed living corpses.

HAZEL

Zeke! In their foreheads! It's the same symbol!

MUKUNGA

Bring them forward.

SHUFFLING FOOTSTEPS. GRUNTS of effort and resistance.

ZEKE

Here - take the copper first!

CAPTAIN ROBSON

No! Get back. I'm armed.

BLAM! He fires off a warning SHOT!

SILAS N'KWANE

Take the gun.

It CLATTERS to the floor.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

N'Kwane, no! Mukunga, I've helped you people! I've--

MUKUNGA

You have helped yourself. Now you will help us in a new way. N'Kwane, give him to the Chakota!

SILAS N'KWANE

(gleeful)

With pleasure, Mukunga! Kuamsha Chakota!

The CULTISTS YELL, the DRUMMING ESCALATES, and there's an awful SLURPING sound from the pit.

CAPTAIN ROBSON

No, not that. What is *that*! Let me go you savages! You damned--AIEEEE!

LESTER MAYHEW

The mad throng threw Captain Robson into the foul pit at the room's center!

The wet sounds of his BREAKING BONES as the SLURPING monstrosity TEARS HIM ASUNDER.

MUKUNGA

Utumbu, Chakota!

CULTISTS
Utumbu, yaya Chakota!

MUKUNGA
Utumbu, Nee-Yala-Hotah!

CULTISTS
Nee-Yala-Hotah!

MUKUNGA
(over the chanting frenzy)
And the others!

A piercing voice rings out, topping all other sounds.

VICTORIA
Behave yourselves!

The crowd is stunned into SILENCE.

CECIL
Victoria?

HAZEL
And Lt. Poole!

VICTORIA
And the Harlem Hellfighters!

MUKUNGA
Kill them all! For the Bloody
Tongue!

LT. POOLE
Get 'em, men!

All HELL BREAKS LOOSE.

LESTER MAYHEW
The Lieutenant, backed by Hilton
Adam's volunteer force, dove into
the fray. Old Silas N'Kwane raised
a machete to attack Lt. Poole!

BLAM! THUD!

SILAS N'KWANE
Aaargh!

VICTORIA
Hazel, come - this way!

CECIL
Follow me - to the stairs!

HAZEL

What about Zeke? Zeke!

BLAM! FIGHTING! ANGUISHED CRIES!

LESTER MAYHEW

A skilled boxer, Zeke waded deeper into the fight, coming at last face to face with the priest!

MUKUNGA

Blasphemer! You have no idea what you do!

ZEKE

Are you the one who had Jackson Elias killed?

MUKUNGA

Yes! And so many more. Glory to--

ZEKE

That's enough for me.

PUNCH! FIGHT! MAYHEM!

ZEKE (CONT'D)

How'd you like to end up in this pit like that cop?

MUKUNGA

To die by the Chakota is to become the Chakota! Glorious!

ZEKE

Yeah? Let me know how it works out.

He HEAVES Mukunga into the pit.

MUKUNGA

(piteously)

Nooo! Please--

CRUNCHY GLOOPY Chakota sound.

LT. POOLE

Put cuffs on those two. Come on, men!

The raid, tilting in favor of law and order, fades into transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

After the police and the heroic Harlem Hellfighters hauled away the surviving cultists from the Ju-Ju House, Hazel, Cecil and Zeke met Victoria in her room at the Waldorf-Astoria.

VICTORIA

Well these days it turns out you can make a telephone call right from jail, so I called Neily Vanderbilt. I've known him since he was born, and he and I always understood each other. He's friends with lawyers, judges and such. I made bail in no time. But it was Mason who told me the three of you had gone off to the Ju-Ju House.

CECIL

I still can't understand what we saw there.

ZEKE

Welcome to the life of Jackson Elias.

VICTORIA

Lt. Poole was quite interested in our information about Captain Robson and the cult's activities. And rather optimistic that the new evidence might well exonerate poor Hilton Adams. Ezekiel here donated his golden mirror to Mr. Adam's defense fund. It should more than pay for a new trial.

HAZEL

Really, Zeke? That's fantastic.

ZEKE

I figured they could use it more than me. Besides, it never seemed like a very good mirror anyway.

VICTORIA

Lt. Poole did suggest that until any remaining associates of the Bloody Tongue were rounded up, it might be prudent for us to get out of town.

ZEKE

He's probably right.

VICTORIA

I've taken the liberty of booking you all passage to London tomorrow morning. The White Star line. Pier 54.

ZEKE

London? Like London, London?

VICTORIA

Yes, dear boy. It was Elias' last stop before coming here, and it was the Carlyle Expedition's first step after leaving here. We still have much to learn, I fear. I think you'll be quite comfortable in my flat in Mayfair. My majordomo, Gupta, will meet you. There's no one more reliable.

CECIL

I'll ring the office. I told my boss this case might take me overseas.

VICTORIA

Splendid. Bon voyage.

HAZEL

Wait. You're not coming?

VICTORIA

I promised Mrs. Adams that I would do my utmost to secure her husband's release and I do not break promises lightly. I'm afraid Robson's men beat her, and I can't abandon her just now. But with the help of the New York Times and Lt. Poole, I don't expect I shall be long. Our work is just beginning.

Thrilling end-of-episode MUSIC.

Transition MUSIC paints a new picture as we move to England.

ANNOUNCER

Dark Adventure Radio Theatre
presents part two of "Masks of
Nyarlathotep" with your host,
Lester Mayhew.

LESTER MAYHEW

After fleeing from the horrors of
New York City, an uneventful
crossing brought Zeke, Hazel and
Cecil to Victoria's sumptuous
London flat in Mayfair, where they
took stock of their situation.

The delicate CLINKS of forks hitting Victoria's very
expensive china.

CECIL

I must say, Zeke, when we were down
in that basement, you handled
yourself quite well.

ZEKE

I learned a thing or two about
fighting on the streets...

HAZEL

On the streets? You wish. Don't
believe a word he says, Cecil. It
was in the ring; Zeke was an
Olympic boxer.

CECIL

You don't say...

ZEKE

Ahhh, I made the team for the
Berlin Olympics in 1916, but of
course the Huns started a war and
scrubbed all of that.

HAZEL

(with some pride)
He was a champion.

ZEKE

Yeah, well what about you? Did you
know, Cecil, that Hazel here won
shooting trophies?

CECIL

Really?

ZEKE

She was on the rifle team at Radcliffe. A regular Annie Oakley.

HAZEL

State champions three of my four years.

CECIL

How about that? Well, I'm known for having the sharpest pencils of any insurance adjustor on the whole Atlantic seaboard.

They share a LAUGH.

CECIL (CONT'D)

But I still don't understand what exactly was in that pit. Did either of you get a real look at it? Was it an animal of some kind?

ZEKE

It was like no animal I ever saw, or hope to see again.

CECIL

What did they call it, chakota or--

HAZEL

It's called Chakota. They say it's a blending of the bodies and souls of the cult's victims, given up in sacrifice to their god.

ZEKE

And that's the Bloody Tongue?

HAZEL

Well, yes. Near as I can understand that's just one version of a god called Nyarlathotep.

CECIL

Sounds Egyptian.

HAZEL

That name's Egyptian, but the god itself is older than the Egyptians.

(MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)

It has countless forms and manifestations for worshippers throughout the world, organized into different cults.

ZEKE

Jackson said, "multiple cults worldwide", right?

HAZEL

The Bloody Tongue is the form of the god worshipped in East Africa. Immigrants apparently brought the cult with them to New York.

CECIL

How did you learn all this?

HAZEL

That book you found in the Ju-Ju House - *Africa's Dark Sects*.

ZEKE

Is that what you were reading on the ship?

HAZEL

I've got it right here. This copy was stolen from the Harvard library.

CECIL

We should return it. What else did it say?

HAZEL

It covers a lot of their beliefs and practices. It's disturbing. Here, listen to this bit about the Bloody Tongue.

(flipping to the page)

"The wind had become visible, a black vapor against the moon. The corrosive stench of it hinted at vileness beyond evil. When I saw the great red appendage which alone constituted the face of the thing, I fled unseeing into the night."

ZEKE

Geez. Sounds like something Jackson would have written.

HAZEL

It says their magic allows the high priest to bring life back to the dead, allowing them to walk again--

CECIL

Bizarre, the superstitions of the primitive--.

HAZEL

You saw them, Cecil, under the Ju-Ju House. Those things came at us.

CECIL

But that was... some sort of ritual, a reenactment - living cultists playing the part of the dead. I mean, Catholics don't drink actual blood in church. Believe what they may, it's still just wine.

HAZEL

They looked dead to me.

ZEKE

Me too.

CECIL

But that's not possible. Surely you understand that.

HAZEL

(getting upset)

Forgive me, Cecil, but you didn't see Jackson's body in the Chelsea hotel. You didn't see that same symbol carved into his forehead. You didn't see Marcus-- These people aren't playacting.

ZEKE

When I was helping Jackson, we saw - things. Things I can't explain. Things that shouldn't be able to happen. But some of these lunatics can... What?

CECIL

Forgive me, I don't mean to be dismissive, but... I don't believe in such things.

HAZEL

You have an explanation for what we saw in that basement?

CECIL

No. Not yet. But that's what investigations are for.

The DOOR OPENS and Gupta WALKS IN. He's a portly man in his 40s with a warm disposition.

GUPTA

Gentlemen, miss, a telegram has arrived for you.

HAZEL

Thank you, Mr. Gupta.

GUPTA

Just Gupta, if you please.

PAPER TEARING.

CECIL

It's from Victoria. "New trial underway for Hilton Adams. Exoneration likely. Will embark on next ship and see you in London presently - Victoria."

HAZEL

That's great news.

ZEKE

We should get some work done before she gets here. Gupta, how does a guy make a telephone call over here?

GUPTA

I will happily do it for you, sir.

ZEKE

Please, call me Zeke.

GUPTA

With pleasure, Mr. Zeke.

ZEKE

Just Zeke, if you please.

This tickles Gupta and he LAUGHS loudly. Everyone CHUCKLES.

GUPTA

Whom do you wish to call, Zeke?

ZEKE

Mickey Mahoney, at a newspaper called *The Scoop*. Jackson's publisher in New York said he worked with him, right?

PHONE DIALING. GUPTA MUMBLES in the background.

HAZEL

I wonder if Jackson's friends here even know he's dead?

GUPTA

Your call, Zeke.

We hear the Irish brogue of Mickey Mahoney over the line.

MICKEY MAHONEY

Mahoney here. Who is this?

ZEKE

Hello. My name is Zeke Ford. I'm an old friend of Jackson Elias. Look, I don't know if you've heard--

MICKEY MAHONEY

Yeah, read about it in the paper. Jesus, what a terrible thing.

ZEKE

Did you talk to him last time he was in London?

MICKEY MAHONEY

I did. He seemed a bit unhinged, you know? I mean he was always going on about his cults, but this time he was sure one was right here in the middle of London.

ZEKE

The Bloody Tongue?

MICKEY MAHONEY

Bloody good yarn, you ask me. My readers would eat it up.

ZEKE

No, that's not... Did he have any evidence?

MICKEY MAHONEY

I think he was working on that. I know he talked with Inspector Barrington over at Scotland Yard. I told him to bring me the story when he had enough for me to publish. But he set off for New York and didn't leave me a damned thing.

ZEKE

I see. Thank you for your time. You're a big help.

MICKEY MAHONEY

Remind me your name? I didn't catch it.

ZEKE

(catching himself)
It's probably for the best that way.

The CLICK of the receiver. Transition MUSIC.

30

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON

30

LESTER MAYHEW

While the team awaited Victoria's arrival, Cecil took a formal interview with Inspector Barrington of Scotland Yard in his capacity as insurance investigator following the inquiries of Jackson Elias. The Inspector told him of a case that interested Elias especially, The Egyptian Murders.

POLICE OFFICE WALLA.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON

Yes, absolutely devilish. Nineteen murders carried out over the last three years, each having a similar modus operandi. Curious stab wounds to the heart.

CECIL

And why are they called the "Egyptian Murders"?

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Ah, well, seventeen of the dead were Egyptian nationals, a fact the press quickly caught on to. Of course, your Mr. Elias had his own lurid theory - a cult! The Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh.

CECIL
You're not buying it?

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
I looked into it of course, talked to sources at the British Museum, the Penhew Foundation, an Egyptian expat called Shafik - but the occult theory of the crimes was deemed rather improbable. This cult existed eons ago. Several of my sources felt Mr. Elias was overexcited on the subject.

CECIL
But you're still investigating them?

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Unsolved murders? Of course.

CECIL
Were there any other commonalities among the victims?

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
A few had connections to a night spot in Soho, the Blue Pyramid club, but it's popular among Egyptians in London - not all that surprising, really.

CECIL
Say, could any of this be connected with the Carlyle Expedition?

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
I don't see how it would. That was years ago.

CECIL
No, of course.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Why then, did you ask?

CECIL

Mr. Carlyle is the insured party in my inquiry.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON

I see. They were supported by the Penhew Foundation. In fact, that expatriate, Shafik, she worked for the expedition in Egypt.

CECIL

Thank you, sir, that's very helpful.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON

Helpful? Be careful, Mr. Watson. I don't know precisely what you're after, but the Egyptians here are an insular group - they won't take kindly to an American prying into their business. I don't want you to be 20th on my list of victims.

Transition MUSIC.

31

THE PENHEW FOUNDATION

31

LESTER MAYHEW

When Victoria returned to London, the team turned its sights on the Penhew Foundation. A letter of introduction from Hazel's archeologist cousin, Bill Claflin, was enough to secure Hazel and Victoria a meeting at the prestigious institution. They soon found themselves in the richly appointed offices of the foundation's director, Edward Gavigan, surrounded by priceless antiquities.

EDWARD GAVIGAN is an Englishman in his mid 40s, polished to a very sharp edge.

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Welcome to you both. I'm happy to make time to accommodate a colleague's family. Bill wrote that you've a background in archeology yourself, Miss Claflin. You've studied Egypt?

HAZEL
Yes, sir, I have.

EDWARD GAVIGAN
Splendid. Tell me, what do you make
of Petrie's work at Abydos?

HAZEL
(unsure)
I found it thrilling.

EDWARD GAVIGAN
Really, in what way?

HAZEL
That a single site could yield
artifacts stretching from the first
and second dynasty through the
Ptolemaic period and into the Roman
era - it shows the evolution of
funerary practices, religious
practices at a single location.

EDWARD GAVIGAN
Quite so.

HAZEL
It's an honor to be here. I was
telling my cousin here that your
research library and private
collection are among the finest in
the world.

Victoria plays up her age, pretending to be deaf/daffy.

VICTORIA
What's that dear?

HAZEL
(a little too loud)
I said it's the finest place we've
visited.

VICTORIA
Oh, yes, it's a very fine pyramid!

A STONE SCRAPING sound.

EDWARD GAVIGAN
Mrs. Woodhull, you're welcome to
view the antiquities but I must ask
you not to touch them.

VICTORIA

Mr. Gavigan, how long have you been director of the Penhew Foundation?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Since the tragic passing of Sir Aubrey Penhew himself - it's been nearly five years.

HAZEL

Oh, right. He was part of the Carlyle Expedition, wasn't he?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Indeed.

HAZEL

May I ask, what was Sir Aubrey hoping Carlyle's expedition would find?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

(unconvincingly choked
with emotion)

Mm. Forgive me. I've always felt it would have been more apt if it had been called the Penhew Expedition, but alas, as Mr. Carlyle provided the lion's share of the funding, it bore his name.

VICTORIA

Isn't that the way of the world?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Indeed. Who built the Great Pyramid, Miss Claflin?

HAZEL

Cheops, wasn't it?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

No, Cheops only paid the bill. It was built by Hemon, the royal architect.

HAZEL

I see your point. So what was Sir Aubrey's expedition in search of?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

You are a keen student, aren't you? A woman came to Mr. Carlyle with information which might have been invaluable to Sir Aubrey's archeological research. Alas, it turned out to be a hoax; the woman was a fraud who disappeared shortly after the group arrived in Egypt, absconding with the expedition's ready funds. They did attempt to make some progress, but then they moved on to the more congenial climate of Kenya. And then in a painful irony, they were killed by savages. Terrible business.

HAZEL

Oh, that's awful.

VICTORIA

And this woman, the fraud, what was her name?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

I'm afraid I don't recall. Tragically, most records of the expedition were lost in the incident itself.

VICTORIA

Oh my. And she was never found?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

I don't believe the authorities ever located her.

HAZEL

Boy, don't you wish you could just get your hands on her?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Indeed. Well, before you go, might I interest you in viewing some artifacts from the Foundation's "special collection"?

HAZEL

We'd like that very much.

EDWARD GAVIGAN

This way. Please.

Their FOOTSTEPS ECHO through the austere facility.

HAZEL

Mr. Gavigan, are you acquainted with the writer, Jackson Elias?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

I can't say I am.

HAZEL

No? I thought he'd been here.

EDWARD GAVIGAN

The name doesn't ring a bell. Of course, the foundation receives inquiries from authors and journalists quite frequently. Now, these pieces were recently brought back from a dig the Foundation sponsored at Deir al Bahri. They have never been displayed to the public.

VICTORIA

How thrilling! What is this symbol I keep seeing on them, like a cross but with a loop at the top?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

That is an ankh, also called the "crux ansata". It is the Egyptian symbol of life. You can see, these pieces offer a view into life some four thousand years ago. They are priceless. What do you think, Miss Claflin?

HAZEL

They're... beautiful.

VICTORIA

This statue is--

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Ah, no touching, Mrs. Woodhull, remember.

HAZEL

Am I correct that the Penhew Foundation has continued to sponsor digs, despite the tragedy?

EDWARD GAVIGAN

We are more committed than ever. It's what Sir Aubrey would have wanted.

(MORE)

EDWARD GAVIGAN (CONT'D)
 We've provided resources for more than twenty archeological excavations in Egypt, including one currently underway in the precincts of Cairo.

VICTORIA
 The sphinx of Cairo? Magnificent!

HAZEL
 What admirable work you do, Mr. Gavigan.

EDWARD GAVIGAN
 You're too kind. But I'm afraid I have pressing duties to which I must attend. I'll have the guard escort you out. A sincere pleasure to make your acquaintance, Miss Claflin, Mrs. Woodhull.

HAZEL
 Thank you so much for making the time.

VICTORIA
 Until we meet again, Mr. Gavigan.

Gavigan WALKS OFF.

EDWARD GAVIGAN (OFF)
 Mr. Kinnery, would you mind escorting these ladies out?

FOOTSTEPS. TRANSITION MUSIC starts.

HAZEL
 (quietly)
 This didn't make any sense, Victoria. Those pieces weren't priceless. They have better stuff in the gift shop at the Met.

VICTORIA
 I think he was investigating us, my dear, as much as we were investigating him.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Back at the Mayfair flat, the ladies shared their impressions.

VICTORIA

He's hiding something, there's no doubt in my mind. He certainly lied about the negro woman. He knows who she is.

HAZEL

That place is huge. And the relics he showed us were junk. There's got to be more there. We should break in.

CECIL

Break in?!

ZEKE

(laughing)

Slow down! This isn't some back alley in Harlem. This place is fancy with guards and alarms - we'd never get away with it.

CECIL

We'd end up arrested, or worse.

GUPTA

Madame Victoria will not be breaking in.

HAZEL

So how do we find out what they're up to?

CECIL

A stake out. We keep an eye on it at night. See who comes and goes.

VICTORIA

Smashing. Gupta?

GUPTA

Madame?

VICTORIA

Would you be willing to accompany Mr. Watson to keep an eye on the Penhew foundation tonight?

GUPTA

This I will do.

VICTORIA

Thank you. And someone should look into the Blue Pyramid club that Inspector Barrington told us about.

ZEKE

Oh yeah, I'll go.

HAZEL

I was thinking the same thing.

ZEKE

That I should go there?

HAZEL

No, that I should go there.

ZEKE

I should be the one that goes there.

VICTORIA

You should both go there. I'd chaperone you, but I fear my presence in a "nightclub" might be a bit conspicuous.

MUSIC.

33 STAKEOUT

33

LESTER MAYHEW

The grand Victorian building that housed the Penhew Foundation was surrounded by a high iron fence. Later in the evening, Gupta and Cecil waited in a car near its wide back gates.

CITY AT NIGHT. A BIG TRUCK pulls up and IDLES in the left speaker. FOOTSTEPS and the RATTLE OF CHAINS.

GUPTA

Mr. Cecil, sir, a lorry.

CECIL

I see it. They're opening the gates. Can you read the writing on the side?

GUPTA

It says "Ferris & Sons". Never heard of them.

CECIL

Hmm, those are some tough looking guys to be handling the kind of stuff that's inside the Penhew Foundation.

GUPTA

Indeed, sir, most unsavory. That's a big crate they're loading up.

MUSIC.

34 LIMEHOUSE

34

LESTER MAYHEW

As the truck pulled away, Gupta discreetly brought their car in behind it, tailing the truck across London to the Limehouse docks. Eventually it pulled up at a warehouse in a grim and dirty neighborhood beside the Thames.

CAR ROLLS TO A STOP. Sounds of UNLOADING in the left speaker. A ROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD WALLA.

CECIL

You know this place?

GUPTA

Afraid not sir. Mrs. Woodhull has no business in this part of town.

Cecil starts to OPEN THE DOOR.

GUPTA (CONT'D)

Where are you going, sir?

CECIL

I want to ask around, see whose warehouse this is.

GUPTA

If you'll pardon my saying, a fancy foreigner with a funny accent is going to attract unwanted attention.

CECIL

I see.

GUPTA

Please wait and I will attempt to find reliable local help.

DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS. MUSIC for passage of time.

LESTER MAYHEW

As Cecil watched the ruffians unload the truck, he noted a number of rowdy Lascar sailors, stevedores - and less savory characters - shuffling around nearby gambling parlors and opium dens. Soon, Gupta returned.

The CAR DOOR OPENS.

GUPTA

It is done. I have engaged someone to get us into the warehouse. We meet here at midnight.

CECIL

Excellent.

ONGOING MUSIC transitions us into...

35

THE BLUE PYRAMID

35

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, in exotic Soho, Zeke and Hazel entered the Blue Pyramid nightclub and plied the regulars with a few vague questions about the Brotherhood and the Carlyle Expedition.

SAIDI MUSIC wafts through the joint as customers carry on conversations in English and Arabic. Belly dancers JINGLE on a nearby stage.

ZEKE

This is a disaster.

HAZEL

You can say that again.

ZEKE

We've got nothing.

HAZEL

You could be a little more subtle next time you ask someone about the Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh.

ZEKE

Subtle? If it were up to you we'd be dynamiting the place. At least they don't have prohibition here. Another round?

HAZEL

You buying? Sure.

YALESHA

Hal ymkn 'an 'ahdir lak shyyana akhr? (*May I bring you something else?*)

ZEKE

Do I look like I speak Egyptian?

HAZEL

Arabic.

ZEKE

Whatever. Another round, please.

YALESHA

Certainly, sir.

HAZEL

They speak Arabic in Egypt, Zeke.

ZEKE

Okay, I get it, you learned a lot of stuff at Radcliffe. You're so smart.

HAZEL

I didn't mean it like that.

ZEKE

Of course you didn't.

The waitress JINGLES up and puts down the drinks.

YALESHA

Sir. Madame.

HAZEL

Don't be sore. Come on, we're out for a night on the town.

(MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)
 Besides, I think our belly dancer's
 the best one.

ZEKE
 Yeah, I'd like to see you move like
 that.

HAZEL
 I'll bet you would.

ZEKE
 (retreating)
 Don't worry. This here "date" is
 purely professional. I'm looking
 for answers, not for, uh, whatever.

HAZEL
 Sure, sure. Still, who'd have
 thought we'd ever end up here? You
 and me? In London, England?

ZEKE
 Not me, that's for sure.

HAZEL
 Hey, c'mon, we had a few good
 laughs. That time? With the
 ukulele? Now *that* was funny.

Zeke thaws a little, in spite of himself.

ZEKE
 Ok, that was funny. Cheers.

HAZEL
 A toast?

ZEKE
 Here's to women, beer and song, may
 none of them be flat.

He drinks down his beer.

HAZEL
 (laughing in spite of
 herself)
 You're a cad, Zeke Ford.

ZEKE
 This place is a bust. Drink up and
 let's get out of here.

Zeke PLUNKS some money on the table and rises.

HAZEL
 (hushed)
 Zeke, Zeke look at this!

ZEKE
 What?

HAZEL
 My cocktail napkin. "Down the street by the arches at eleven".

ZEKE
 It might be a set-up.

HAZEL
 It's a woman's writing. Must have been our belly dancer.

ZEKE
 It's all we've got. C'mon.

MUSIC TRANSITION.

36 ALLEY OF THE BELLY DANCER

36

LESTER MAYHEW
 Through a dense fog, Hazel and Zeke spotted a series of stone arches a couple of blocks away from the club. Shortly before eleven, they cautiously approached.

FOOTSTEPS. The alley is fairly quiet, with the DIN OF SOHO in the distance.

HAZEL
 Look - there. Under the last arch. Someone just lit a cigarette.

MUSIC.

ZEKE
 Uh, hello?

YALESHA
 Quietly. Come under the arch before you are seen.

FOOTSTEPS.

ZEKE
 You work at the Blue Pyramid. What's your name?

YALESHA

I am Yalesha. You should not come back to the club. People are watching you - there is real danger.

ZEKE

From what?

YALESHA

The Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh.

ZEKE

So that's a real thing?

YALESHA

You should not ask so many questions. They have killed my betrothed, Badru, and many others. I pray for revenge.

HAZEL

I know the feeling.

YALESHA

Each month they take a group from the club, maybe 20 people, customers, some strangers, and they drive them away in a lorry. Many of them never come back.

HAZEL

Like your Badru?

YALESHA

Yes.

ZEKE

Where do they take them?

YALESHA

This I do not know. Somewhere outside of London, as I think.

ZEKE

Who does this?

YALESHA

Zahra Shafik is their leader. She has a shop for spices near the club. I should go.

ZEKE

And you've seen it? For sure, this lorry?

YALESHA

It is painted on the side. Paris and Son - something like that. Please - I will be missed.

HAZEL

Go. We'll look into it.

Yalesha HURRIES OFF down the dark street.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

I'm not sure it's safe for her. We should follow her back.

ZEKE

Yeah, sure. Boy they sure mean it about this London fog. It's pea soup out here.

HAZEL

Hurry - this way. There's someone up there.

ZEKE

Hazel? I can't see a thing.

HAZEL (OFF)

Zeke? I've lost her. Where are you?

ZEKE

Over here. Hazel!

Another VOICE looms in the darkness.

FOGGY CULTIST

(chanting quietly)

Eenek mer-ef joot mes-jeff neferet!
(*I am one who loves evil and hates the good!*)

HAZEL

Zeke!

Hazel GASPS and WHEEZES!

HAZEL (CONT'D)
 (choking)
 My throat. Can't... breathe -
 arrhgh!

END OF CHAPTER

MUSIC.

37 ADVERTISEMENT - FLEURS DE LYS

37

LESTER MAYHEW
 All across America, you're seeing
 more and more athletes, educators
 and scientists lighting up soothing
 Fleurs de Lys cigarettes. Some say
 it's because our special filters
 refine the smoking flavor. Others
 say it's because a Fleur de Lys
 helps ease strain and tension.
 Whatever your reason, try and enjoy
 premium tobacco that's never
 parched or toasted.

Fleurs de Lys JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER
 Fleurs de Lys: try a pack and leave
 them, if you can.

38 GASP

38

Start of chapter MUSIC. Hazel CHOKING.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Zeke rushed through the fog,
 looking for the choking Hazel.
 Instead he found a swarthy fellow
 with an inverted ankh tattooed on
 his forehead.

FOGGY CULTIST
 Smaa-ek! Shaymasayeet! (*I slay you,
 dancing girl*)

We hear the RING of a dagger being unsheathed.

ZEKE
 Oh yeah?

SMACK - Zeke PUNCHES the chanter who TUMBLES to the ground
 with a GROAN. Nearby Hazel WHEEZES.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

Hazel?

HAZEL

(breathless)

Zeke - can't breathe.

ZEKE

I'm here. Easy now.

She GASPS for BREATH.

HAZEL

The fog--

ZEKE

Yeah, it's thinning. Here, let me pick you up and take you home.

The RUSTLE of cloth, FOOTSTEPS, ominous MUSIC!

39

THE TALKING BOARD

39

LESTER MAYHEW

With Hazel recuperating in bed at Victoria's flat, Zeke told of what unfolded in Soho.

VICTORIA

And you think this man with the tattoo, could he have released a poison gas into the fog?

ZEKE

I don't think it was poison. The fog was there, but this guy showed up and it was like something came out of it. Hazel felt it on her nose and mouth - she couldn't breathe - I don't know what caused any of it.

VICTORIA

No, no of course not. It's time to turn elsewhere for answers...

RUMMAGING through miscellaneous objects.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Ah! Here it is.

ZEKE

Whatcha got there?

VICTORIA

If you'll indulge me, we'll have better luck if you help. Have a seat here. Where did I put the planchette?

More RUMMAGING.

ZEKE

Hang on - I've seen one of these. What is this, like one of those Ouija boards?

VICTORIA

(earnest)

Here we are. To be clear, this is a "talking board". It's not some silly parlour game one buys at a toy store. My sister Tennessee and I made it more than fifty years ago. She was quite a gifted medium and had remarkable success in communicating with the spirit world. My experiments through the years yielded rather... indifferent success. But after Tennie passed a few years ago, I've found it remarkably effective at communicating with her.

ZEKE

(highly dubious)

Yeah, it looks real... homemade.

VICTORIA

Something troubling you, Ezekiel?

ZEKE

No, well, it's just, even when I was working with Jackson, we didn't do the weird stuff, you know, not personally. I don't...

VICTORIA

Sometimes it helps to fight fire with fire.

Eerie seance MUSIC.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Now, rest your fingers lightly on top. Don't try to move the planchette - but if it moves, let your hands move with it.

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
 If Tennie can answer us, she'll
 direct its movements through us.
 Try to relax...

ZEKE
 I don't find this relaxing.

VICTORIA
 Tennie? Can you hear me? It's
 Vicky. Sorry to be a bother but--

Zeke gives a START as the planchette WHISKS across the board.

ZEKE
 Yes. The thingy. It's pointing to
 "yes". Did you do that?

VICTORIA
 No, that's Tennie. Apparently she
 can hear us. Let's return the
 planchette to the center. Tennie,
 we seem to have fallen in with some
 rather unsavory types - I fear they
 may mean to do us harm.

The planchette WHISKS again.

ZEKE
 "Yes." Oh, geez. Can we ask her
 anything?

VICTORIA
 She doesn't know everything, but
 there's no harm in--

ZEKE
 (excited now)
 Ask her about Hazel and that thing
 with the fog. Ask her what we
 should do.

VICTORIA
 All right. Hold that question in
 your mind. Tennie...

Victoria fades down as Lester conveniently summarizes the
 seance.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Spelling out a letter at a time,
 the talking board explained the
 attack in the fog as "magic of the
 Black Pharaoh".
 (MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)
Then it offered a cryptic
suggestion: "attend the Black
Sphinx".

VICTORIA
(tenuous)
Very well, Tennie, we'll do that.

ZEKE
(into it now)
Hey Tennie, I mean, Miss Claflin.
Look, I know you don't know me, but
is there anyone... I mean, how can
we get at this Brotherhood cult?

QUICK SCRAPES OF WOOD as the planchette flies.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
T-H-E-G-I-R-L. Thegrill? What's
that supposed to mean?

VICTORIA
"The girl."

ZEKE
Oh! Girl? What girl?

MUSIC transition.

40

BREAKING AND ENTERING AGAIN

40

LESTER MAYHEW
Later that night, Cecil and Gupta
returned to Limehouse to meet their
operative. Cecil was astonished to
see a tiny Hindi girl of the
streets, perhaps eight years old.

SCRUFFY INDUSTRIAL SOUNDS of Limehouse by night. CAR DOOR
OPENS.

GUPTA
Mr. Cecil, may I present Billee.

CECIL
Whoa, whoa, whoa... Hang on, she's
just a kid.

BILLEE
Four shillings, I get the job done -
best price in Limehouse.

CECIL
Are you crazy?

BILLEE
You want results, mister, follow me. You want to shillyshally the night away with chitterchatter, that's your problem. He already pay me.

CECIL
So, what the devil are we supposed to do with her?

BILLEE
You wait here for me. When I come get you, you follow. Fast. Got it, old man?

GUPTA
Got it.

She SCAMPERS off.

CECIL
What an eccentric child.

GUPTA
She does seem very familiar with the neighborhood, Mr. Cecil.

CECIL
Still... it doesn't feel right, getting a child mixed up in this. Maybe we should--

DOCKWORKER #4
(far off)
Fire!

CECIL
What's this now?

We hear a DISTANT COMMOTION - VOICES, EQUIPMENT, BELLS, dealing with a fire.

DOCKWORKER #7
Wake up, lads. We got a fire!

DOCKWORKER #16
Go on, grab some buckets. Move!

CECIL
Don't tell me she--

BILLEE
 (out of breath)
 Quickly sirs, follow me. This way -
 mind the fence.

CECIL
 Oh my god.

MUSIC. We hear their journey into the warehouse unfold.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Darting like a cat through a gap in
 a fence and a badly repaired window
 at the warehouse, Billee led Cecil
 and Gupta inside.

BILLEE
 Inside, no problem. I stand guard.
 If you hear me holler, you run like
 hell.

CECIL
 (still stunned)
 But you... we can't... they'll--

BILLEE
 They very busy now.
 (to Gupta)
 Is he stupid?

GUPTA
 We are inside, sir. Perhaps we
 should complete our investigation.

CECIL
 Yes, yes, very well. Shine your
 torch here, Gupta.

GUPTA
 Ahah! These are the crates from the
 Penhew Foundation!

CECIL
 They're shipping them to Ho Fang
 Imports in Shanghai.

GUPTA
 China? Perhaps Egyptian artifacts
 being smuggled?

CECIL
 Let's see here.

Cecil PRIES OPEN a crate.

GUPTA

Ooh - that does not appear to be Egyptian. Hmm. Do you know what it is?

CECIL

Looks mechanical. Wires, glass... no idea. I've never seen anything like it.

GUPTA

I am reminded of the cover of a story for Astonishing Tales. A story about a space ship in the future.

CECIL

Ah, look, the bill of lading - made at Henson Manufacturing in Derby. Ever hear of it?

GUPTA

Derby yes, Henson, no.

A KERFUFFLE from the guys outside dealing with the fire.

CECIL

Was that Billee?

GUPTA

I don't think so. Let's see what's in this one.

Gupta PRIES OPEN a crate. MORE MUSIC.

GUPTA (CONT'D)

Baap re baap! What horrors are these?

CECIL

These look like occult artifacts, all right, but not Egyptian. Are these... oh my god, they're... human feet!

GUPTA

But they are empty! It is just the skin. Tanned like leather. For what devilish purpose?

CECIL

This is crazy.

The CREAK of another crate pried open.

GUPTA

Ah! This big one holds an Egyptian antiquity - a stone statue of some kind.

CECIL

The way it catches the light is... Is it made of obsidian? It's like a pharaoh, but... that's not a face. What are those? Some kind of feelers?

GUPTA

(shouts)
Ahhhh! They moved!

CECIL

(scared in many ways)
Shh.

GUPTA

But you saw it - you saw it move?

CECIL

I think... it can't have... maybe--

Not too far away, we hear the dockworkers.

DOCKWORKER #4

Hey, get away from there, you!

DOCKWORKER #12

Quick, grab her!

BILLEE

(louder than she needs to be)
You'll never take me alive!

DOCKWORKER #4

We'll see about that.

DOCKWORKER #5

Gotcha!

BILLEE

Noo!!! Let me go!

GUPTA

Sir, we must go. The jig is up.

CECIL

What about the girl? What'll we--

GUPTA

I have an idea about that. Quickly
now, follow me.

41 GET OUT OF LIMEHOUSE

41

DOCKWORKER #5

What do we do with her?

DOCKWORKER #12

She's a thieving little rat - take
her to the river and drown her!

Scary MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

The stevedores carried little
Billee to the edge of the Thames
intent on drowning her.

DOCKWORKER #16

I've warned you go keep away from
here. Hold her under, Charlie!

BILLEE

Let me go! I curse your ugly
mothers!

Billee STRUGGLES vainly as the burly thugs LAUGH.

GUPTA (OFF)

This way, Inspector Barrington!

CECIL (OFF)

Oh! Yes, jolly right! Get your
bobby clubs, men!

GUPTA (OFF)

Right! Squad two, follow the
Sergeant down by the river!

DOCKWORKER #7

It's a raid! Run for it, lads.

DOCKWORKER #5

This way - run!

DOCKWORKER #16

Wait, she's getting away!

DOCKWORKER #4

Forget her!

DOCKWORKER #7

Hang on! There's no coppers here.

DOCKWORKER #16

We've been had. Come on, boys! Get 'em!

LESTER MAYHEW

By the time the thugs realized they'd been duped, Gupta had started the auto. But before they could speed away, a tattooed Lascar hurled himself on its hood.

THUD!

CECIL

Go, Gupta, go! He's got a knife!

GUPTA

Thank you, I can see!

The car SPEEDS OFF with the cultist on the hood. POUNDING AND SMASHING GLASS.

GUPTA (CONT'D)

Aaah!

CECIL

Hit the brakes!

The car SCREECHES to a halt, THUMP of the Lascar hitting the pavement.

CECIL (CONT'D)

Ha! That takes care of him.

GUPTA

He's getting back up.

CECIL

Drive!

Gupta POPS THE CLUTCH, PEELS OUT and moments later we hear the unpleasant THUD of a deranged Lascar being run over. Gupta DRIVES AWAY FAST.

CECIL (CONT'D)

Your face - are you all right?

GUPTA

Not so bad, sir. A nick is all. And you, sir, are you all right?

CECIL
 (shell shocked)
 Me? Yeah... I'm okay. But that poor
 kid.

Dark, moody MUSIC.

42

SETTING THE SIGHTS

42

LESTER MAYHEW
 Gupta and Cecil, wracked with fear
 and guilt, drove as quickly as they
 could back to Victoria's flat in
 Mayfair, where the others were
 anxiously waiting.

The DOOR SWINGS OPEN. FOOTSTEPS.

ZEKE
 How'd it go, guys? Holy moly!

VICTORIA
 Gupta, you're bleeding!

GUPTA
 I'll be fine, madame. I am sorry
 about the car.

VICTORIA
 What? Never mind about that. Come
 over here by the light. I'll tend
 to you.

ZEKE
 Cecil, buddy, you look like you saw
 a ghost!

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
 As Victoria took care of Gupta's
 knife wound, the two sides filled
 each other in on the evening's
 strange and terrible events.

CECIL
 She said "attend the Black Sphinx"?

HAZEL
 (still hoarse from her
 attack)
 (MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)

That could be the statue we found in Jackson's hotel room, but I don't know how we "attend" it. It has numbers carved in the bottom, but I have no idea what they could mean.

VICTORIA

Sphinxes do speak in riddles.

ZEKE

Maybe the "black sphinx" is the weird statue the guys saw in that warehouse. You said it moved somehow?

GUPTA

Yes!

VICTORIA

Hold still.

CECIL

It looked that way, but I think it must have been a trick of the light, the moving shadows from our torch.

ZEKE

Yeah, sure.

CECIL

Still, I wouldn't have called it a sphinx. Maybe it's something we haven't encountered yet.

GUPTA

"The girl"! I bet Tennie was talking about Billee, the child that helped us. Such courage...

HAZEL

I'm thinking Yalesha, the dancer from the Blue Pyramid. We should check in with her.

ZEKE

I'm thinking it's time we looked into this spice dealer lady.

VICTORIA

Zahra Shafik?

ZEKE

She runs a store called Empire Spices, but the belly dancer said she had something to do with the cult. Who's with me?

HAZEL

You all go ahead - I can still hardly catch my breath. I might visit the library, and look some more at this statue of Jackson's, but I'm afraid that's all I'm good for right now.

Transition MUSIC.

43

THE SPICE SHOP

43

LESTER MAYHEW

Assuming she was in the cult, the team approached Shafik carefully - staking out her shop and watching her movements. She spent hours at the Blue Pyramid most every night, and that seemed to provide the best opportunity to inspect her shop. The team formed a plan: Gupta would follow her to the night club to keep eyes on her, and Zeke would stand watch outside Empire Spices while Cecil and Victoria would have a look inside. They parted ways from the sidewalk near the spice shop.

The team is inside Victoria's car. The ENGINE IDLES.

GUPTA

If I need to send you a warning Mr. Zeke, I'll whistle.

ZEKE

Good idea. And if you two are inside and you hear me whistle, get out as quick as you can.

They GET OUT, SHUT THE DOORS, and Gupta SPEEDS OFF.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

You got the door ok, Cecil?

CECIL

Yeah, thanks. Lockpicking's practically second nature now.

The lock POPS OPEN and Cecil opens the door. There's a BELL on the door and Cecil struggles to MAKE IT QUIET, only MAKING IT WORSE.

ZEKE

Relax, buddy.

CECIL

Sure. Keep your eyes open.
(to Victoria)
After you.

MUSIC.

VICTORIA

(catching the scent)
My - that's quite the aroma.

CECIL

Hmm. Clearly it really is a spice shop. I hate to say it, but it does actually smell pretty good.

VICTORIA

If there is anything untoward, she probably wouldn't keep it in this public area - let's upstairs.

LESTER MAYHEW

Behind a curtain of beads they found a staircase going up to the private flat above the shop. In rooms at the front they entered the personal sanctum of Zahra Shafik.

VICTORIA

Very cozy. She has expensive taste.

CECIL

Look at all these little statues - Egyptian gods - I guess. Talk about your "old time religion".

VICTORIA

Hmm, these might be the sort of ceremonial robes one would wear to a religious function, don't you think? Leather ankh sewn onto the front.

CECIL
Are you holding it upside down?

VICTORIA
No, the ankh is inverted, just as
on this curious hat. It must mean
something. The whole ensemble--

Cecil OPENS A DESK DRAWER and RUMMAGES.

CECIL
Paperwork - orders for spices...
here we go!

VICTORIA
What is it?

CECIL
(struggling with the
pronunciation of "Misr")
A receipt for a lorry driver hired
for "monthly run to... hmm, this
word is missing a vowel or two.
Miser House, Misser House, Essex,
dark of the moon".

VICTORIA
Dark of the moon?

CECIL
That'd be Thursday. This is a
pretty good connection.

VICTORIA
I must say, this breaking and
entering is rather thrilling. You
don't suppose there's a cellar, do
you?

MUSIC. FOOTSTEPS on CREAKY WOOD STAIRS.

LESTER MAYHEW
After carefully replacing things
they had touched, the pair made
their way back down the stairs into
the cellar beneath the shop.

CECIL
Here, let me shine my torch. Whoa -
what's that?

VICTORIA

Looks like a Pharaoh and I daresay
he's black. Some sort of altar, I
suspect.

CECIL

And this... Victoria, it's dried
blood.

VICTORIA

Now that's a solid connection.

44

STALLING SHAFIK

44

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, on the sidewalk in front
of Empire Spices, Zeke nearly
missed the approach of a beautiful
woman....

Zeke MUMBLES to himself, having an imaginary argument with
Hazel. A car ROARS down the street and the driver WHISTLES.
CITY AT NIGHT WALLA.

ZEKE

(snapping out of his
reverie)

Huh? Oh, excuse me, Ma'am.

SHAFIK

Can I help you?

ZEKE

I hope so. I'm looking for someone
who lives around here - Sahara
Shafeek - sorry, I probably didn't
say it right.

SHAFIK

Yes, you didn't. I'm Zahra Shafik.

ZEKE

You? Oh, that's great. Wow. What a
coincidence!

SHAFIK

Remarkable. And who are you?

She's very cagey and Zeke is unsure whether she's on to him
or not.

ZEKE

Oh, I'm uh... Ezekiel Dodge.

SHAFIK

Dodge? And why are you looking for me?

ZEKE

This may sound odd, but I've been doing research about the Carlyle Expedition. I had heard you were one of their guides.

SHAFIK

You heard that, eh? It's true - I talked briefly with expedition members years ago in Cairo. I can't say I recall anything specific.

ZEKE

No? Well, I guess it's ancient history, eh? Get it? Ancient history? The Carlyle....

SHAFIK

(laughing half heartedly,
then very direct)

What do you really want, sir?

ZEKE

I... I'm hoping to learn about The Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh. Have you ever heard of it?

SHAFIK

(dramatically)

I have.

ZEKE

Can you tell me--

SHAFIK

I grew up in Qalyub, not far from Cairo. At night the old people would speak of this Brotherhood in hushed whispers - to frighten the children.

ZEKE

So, they weren't a real thing?

SHAFIK

They were as real to us children as any Boogeyman.

Cecil WHISTLES from around the corner.

SHAFIK (CONT'D)

My shop is just here. Why don't you come inside and I can tell you the tales? It's warm and pleasant, and not as crowded as the Blue Pyramid.

ZEKE

(rattled)

Oh, geez, no it's real late, but thank you - yeah, I should go.

SHAFIK

What a shame. I assume you've contacted the Penhew Foundation?

ZEKE

(taken aback)

Well, yes. We have. I have. Some.

SHAFIK

(rich with implication)

I'm sure Mr. Gavigan there could answer a great many questions for you, if you take my meaning.

ZEKE

Yes. No. I'm not sure I do.

SHAFIK

A man like that knows a great deal more than he lets on.

ZEKE

Oh. I see now. Good advice.

SHAFIK

I look forward to seeing more of you, "Ezekiel Dodge".

ZEKE

(flustered)

Uh, good night, ma'am.

Transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Safely returned to Mayfair, the team struggled to piece the puzzle together....

CECIL

Carlyle knew Shafik and Gavigan.
Gavigan worked for Penhew. Now he's
shipping cult artifacts and strange
machine parts to China.

GUPTA

Parts made by Henson, in Derby,
sir.

ZEKE

Right. Once a month a truck that
you saw at the Penhew Foundation
drives up to Essex when the moon is
dark, paid for by Shafik.

VICTORIA

And the dancer said they take
people in the truck. Said they took
her young man and she thought they
killed him.

GUPTA

Where do they go?

CECIL

A place called Miser House, in
Essex.

HAZEL

It's pronounced Misr. It's the
Arabic name for Egypt. And I think
you'll all find this interesting:
Edward Gavigan owns an estate in
Essex. It's called Misr House.

MUSIC STARTS.

ZEKE

Wait, what?

HAZEL

I found it in public records at the
library. It gets better. In '21 he
bought Henson Manufacturing Company
in Derby.

VICTORIA

And here I thought the plot was
already thick.

CECIL

The Brotherhood of the Black
Pharaoh seems to be alive and well.

HAZEL

So is Gavigan a part of the cult,
or does it have some kind of power
over him?

CECIL

Zahra Shafik certainly seems to be
a part of it.

ZEKE

And I got the feeling she knew who
I was and why I was asking her
questions.

VICTORIA

I have a proposition. I suggest we
all take the train up to Derby and
see what Mr. Gavigan's factory
does. From there, we can take a
look at this Misr House - perhaps
we can alert the authorities before
there's any more mischief. Hazel,
dear, do you feel up for such a
journey?

HAZEL

I wouldn't miss it for the world.

Transition MUSIC!

46

A QUIET DRINK

46

LESTER MAYHEW

Soon the team was in Derby and had
put a watch on Henson
Manufacturing. The factory complex
wasn't large, but it was surrounded
by a stout brick wall. After
watching Henson employees come and
go, Hazel volunteered to collect
information at the local pub.

We hear the sound of a TRADITIONAL ENGLISH PUB.

HAZEL

Nigel, eh? That's a dashing name.
No one's called Nigel in America.

NIGEL PERKINS

Are they not?

HAZEL

We've got Toms, Dicks, and Harrys
but Nigel - that's so exotic.

NIGEL PERKINS

Well I don't know about that, but
cheers!

HAZEL

Oh my god, say that again.

NIGEL PERKINS

What? Cheers?

HAZEL

Oh that's adorable. I'd drink to
that. Cheers.

NIGEL PERKINS

(having the best night of
his life)

Cheers!

HAZEL

I'm traveling with my sister - but
she's back at the hotel. Enough
about me, tell me about you. Where
do you work, Nigel?

NIGEL PERKINS

Me? I work at Henson Manufacturing
here in town.

HAZEL

Manufacturing? That sounds
exciting. And what is it you
manufacture?

NIGEL PERKINS

Um, we're really not supposed--

HAZEL

Oh you can tell me. I'm an
American.

NIGEL PERKINS

Well, yeah, I suppose. It's just
some of our work is secret, you
know, for the Army and the like.

HAZEL

(acting increasingly
drunk)

(MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)
 Secret? Oh, I get it. Right. Shhhh.
 I bet you design tanks, right?

She makes the sound of a tank.

NIGEL PERKINS
 (actually increasingly
 drunk)
 No, no. But sometimes we get
 machines, or weapons, sent to us.
 It's my job to figure out how we
 can make copies of them.

HAZEL
 Oooh, so you're like a spy?

NIGEL PERKINS
 Not really, no.

HAZEL
 Secret weapons, captured from the
 Germans.

NIGEL PERKINS
 No, most of 'em come from Australia
 actually. But here's the thing,
 some of the things we get are
 really old. Like ancient. I mean
 really, ancient, and I...

FRANK MARSHALL, a stern Henson foreman, comes over to their
 table.

FRANK MARSHALL
 Who's this then, Nigel? You talking
 work, here? With a stranger? You
 know--

HAZEL
 Hi, I'm Ethel. I'm from Chicago.
 Nigel here was explaining how come
 cricket isn't baseball...

Transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Meanwhile, at the Henson facility,
 the others saw that only a pair of
 guards were on duty.
 (MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)
 Gupta and Victoria set up a
 distraction at the gate, so that
 Zeke and Cecil could climb over the
 factory walls behind.

We hear a QUIET ENGLISH SMALL TOWN at night. Gupta and
 Victoria approach the company gates.

VICTORIA
 Yoohoo.
 (louder)
 Yoohoo! Young man!

FOOTSTEPS.

RUPERT
 Yeah, help you?

VICTORIA
 (pretending to be
 dottering)
 I was going for an evening stroll
 and I... and I... Oh Gupta - it's
 one of the spells.

GUPTA
 I've got your arm Lady Margaret.
 Just take deep breaths.

Victoria STAGGERS and MUMBLES.

RUPERT
 Hey, mate, is she all right?

GUPTA
 She gets the spells sometimes. You
 wouldn't have some water or
 something that we could--

RUPERT
 We're not--

VICTORIA
 Ohhhh! Gupta, the vapors!

RUPERT
 (calling off)
 Hey, Ernest, we got a lady here
 having a fit. Bring up some water.

ERNEST (OFF)
 Yeah, sure thing Jack.

MUSIC. The CRUNCH of GRAVEL as Cecil and Zeke land on the ground inside and factory and hurry over to a building.

ZEKE

It's working. That Mrs. Woodhull is something else. Go for the door, the guards won't notice a thing.

We hear the CLICK of the lock and the DOOR SWINGS OPEN.

CECIL

Come on. Let's be quick.

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke and Cecil found themselves inside a large workshop featuring machine tools of all kinds, test equipment, tall cabinets full of chemicals and hardware, and a very modern, impregnable safe. Light filtered in through barred windows set high in the walls.

CECIL

Look at this safe. Must have cost 'em a fortune. They must keep something important in here.

ZEKE

There's some plans and blueprints over here.

CECIL

What are they for?

ZEKE

Do I look like an engineer? This, it looks like... the future.

The RUSTLE OF PAPER as he picks up the plans.

CECIL

Here, let me--

In the very great distance we hear the DEPARTURE of Victoria and Gupta and some GRUMPY SOUNDING GUARDS. CRUMPLING PAPER.

ZEKE

Oh hell, they're coming. Hide.

There's a quick SCRAMBLE before the DOOR OPENS and the lights CLICK ON.

RUPERT
 Hey, hold it right there, boyo.
 (calling off)
 Ernest, we got an intruder!

Ernest runs in and COCKS his pistol.

ERNEST
 Don't move or I'll shoot.

RUPERT
 You with that old bird and the
 little curry muncher up the front?
 What are you lot playing at!

CECIL
 If you'll--

ERNEST
 I said don't move!

THRILLING CLIFFHANGER MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

48 ADVERTISEMENT - KILACOLD

48

LESTER MAYHEW
 "Starve a fever and feed a cold." -
 that's how the old saying goes. But
 modern science has a better way to
 rid yourself of the common cold:
 Kilacold Chlorine Bombs! Chlorine
 gas stops 97.3% of common colds.
 This revolutionary treatment, used
 to protect President Coolidge and
 his cabinet, can now be enjoyed by
 the public in the comfort of their
 own homes. Available at all the
 leading drug stores!

Kilacold JINGLE

ANNOUNCER
 Kilacold - bomb the first sneeze
 and your cold will disappear!

49 THE ESCAPE

49

Start of Chapter MUSIC. We hear the unfolding action!

LESTER MAYHEW

As Cecil stepped forth to
surrender, the unseen Zeke pushed
over a towering rack of chemicals,
sending them crashing onto the
guards. Clouds of noxious fumes
began to billow forth.

CRASH! COUGHING! AD LIB MAYHEM!

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

With a handkerchief over his mouth
and nose, Zeke dashed in to get
Cecil out.

Cecil COUGHS.

ZEKE

(muffled)

C'mon, Cecil, run!

RUPERT

My eyes! Ernest I can't see!

ERNEST

Aaaah!

They dash off through miasmal vapors accompanied by exciting
MUSIC!

50

CORRELATING BY TRAIN

50

LESTER MAYHEW

After a frightfully narrow escape,
and fearing they had exposed
themselves, the team caught the
first train out of Derby headed
toward Essex.

The train RATTLES across the British countryside.

CECIL

We're lucky we made it out. If it
hadn't been for Zeke here...

ZEKE

Ah, come on now...

HAZEL

What about those plans you nabbed,
Zeke? Let's see 'em.

Zeke UNFOLDS them and they all gather round with AD LIBS of bewilderment.

GUPTA

It's like the space ship machines we saw in Limehouse, Mr. Cecil.

CECIL

You're right but - wait - look at this! My god! Hand me my briefcase.

VICTORIA

Looks maddeningly complicated. But then ordinary wireless is a miracle to me.

RUMMAGING as Cecil searches through his valise.

HAZEL

What is it, Cecil? The signature? "The Pale Viper". Dated from last year. What about it?

CECIL

Look at this!

The RUSTLE of more papers.

CECIL (CONT'D)

Endorsements to Carlyle's insurance policy. Look at the handwriting on those notations.

HAZEL

Yes, yes, it's the same! Whose writing is that?

CECIL

Sir Aubrey Penhew's.

ZEKE

Yeah, so?

MUSIC STARTS.

VICTORIA

Zeke, dear boy, this blueprint was signed less than a year ago.

CECIL

He's alive. The bastard is still alive! Penhew didn't get killed in Africa! And if he didn't, then maybe none of them did!

HAZEL

Jackson was right. He said the expedition wasn't what it seemed.

ZEKE

Holy--

GUPTA

Oh my good heavens.

CECIL

Maybe Penhew is in hiding at this Misr House, ordering Gavigan to do his bidding.

HAZEL

He could just as easily be their prisoner. Maybe these cults captured members of the Carlyle Expedition.

ZEKE

Geez. What will they do with 'em?

VICTORIA

Clearly there's still much we do not know. Moving on to have a look at Misr House seems a prudent maneuver.

CECIL

And quick. I think day after tomorrow's the dark of the moon - if we can gather evidence to show Inspector Barrington, maybe he can stop them before that truck drives up from London.

Exciting adventure MUSIC leads us to:

51

THROUGH THE MARSH

51

LESTER MAYHEW

Electrified by their discovery, the investigators made their way to Walton-on-Naze, the town nearest the island that was the site of Misr House. There they engaged the services of Mr. Maclean, a balding, bulging-eyed boatman to take them through the marshes surrounding the island.

We hear SHOREBIRDS and WATER LAPPING against the boat and marshy shore. The engine of the boat IDLES.

HAZEL

Can you get any closer to the shore, Mr. Maclean?

MACLEAN

Closer? I think you'll drive away all the birds you're hoping to see, miss.

HAZEL

That's all right, just get closer please.

MACLEAN

We're about as close as we can get right here. Nearly scraping the bottom now.

HAZEL

Excellent. Then I can wade ashore from here.

MACLEAN

You can't do that! It's all well and good to watch from the boat, but you can't--

ZEKE

Don't worry, Mac. The lord of the manor's a friend of ours. We're just going to snap a few photographs. We won't be fifteen minutes. There's a tip in it for you - just wait here, okay?

SPLASH as Zeke hops out of the boat into the shallow water.

MACLEAN

Hey! I'm tellin' ya--

VICTORIA

I shall wait here with Mr. Maclean and leave the wading through the marsh to the rest of you. I have my field glasses.

GUPTA

I shall wait here with you, Madame Victoria, should you need anything.

HAZEL

Well, I'm going ashore.

VICTORIA

I admire your pluck, darling.

SPLASH as Hazel gets into the water.

ZEKE

You coming, Cecil?

CECIL

Yes. Let's go find that nest.

SPLASH. MUSIC.

52

THE OBELISK

52

FOOTSTEPS TRUDGING through muck.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel, Cecil and Zeke sloshed their way through the marsh and thick brush until their feet found dry land.

HAZEL

I can't believe all this fog. I mean this is normal fog, right?

CECIL

Seems to be. Blowing in off the sea.

ZEKE

Yeah, well it's going to make it that much harder to find our way back to the boat.

HAZEL

Hey, what's that? There, above the trees. See it?

ZEKE

It's pointy like a Washington monument thingy.

CECIL

Let's have a look.

They TRAMPLE through the brush toward it.

LESTER MAYHEW

The thick, gnarled trees opened up onto a large clearing with a manicured path leading back toward the manor house. In the middle was a large obelisk of dark stone.

CECIL

Well, that's quite a relic.

ZEKE

Geez - this thing's from Egypt?

HAZEL

Yes. And probably thousands of years old.

ZEKE

Cripes. And these symbols and pictures on it - that's Egyptian writing?

HAZEL

Hieroglyphics. I recognize a few signs but this is more than I can read.

CECIL

This doesn't look good. Chains and manacles set into the ground.

ZEKE

There's another set here.

HAZEL

There's a set on all four sides of it.

CECIL

It's caked in dried blood. I'd wager the Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh does their rites here. A secluded private island surrounded by trees. They could get away with anything here.

HAZEL

Take some photos.

Cecil's CAMERA CLICKS.

ZEKE

You know, I never went to college,
but I get the idea of what this
writing says.

CECIL

What is it?

ZEKE

Look. Here's a stone pillar just
like this one. And there's these
guys tied up in front of it. Like
prisoners. This guy's a priest or
something like that and these
people are praying with him - oh,
hell!

HAZEL

What is it?

ZEKE

Up here, above them all. I don't
even know what that is. Some kind
of dragon or monster...

CECIL

Coming to take the sacrifices...

HAZEL

This place is not right. You can
feel it.

CECIL

My god, what goes on here?

Scary MUSIC leads us to:

53

MISR HOUSE

53

LESTER MAYHEW

After snapping some photos to use
as evidence, the three made their
way toward the sinister old manor
house. A few automobiles were
parked on the gravel driveway in
front, and Hazel saw a servant
ferrying groceries into a side
entrance.

HAZEL

(quietly)
Quick - in here.

CRUNCHY GRAVEL FOOTSTEPS transition to ECHOING STONE as the three enter. Off to the right, the AD LIB hubbub of a busy kitchen staff preparing food.

CECIL

(quietly)

Must be the kitchen down that way.
Come on, let's look for Penhew.

Their FOOTSTEPS GO LEFT.

LESTER MAYHEW

They snuck away from the kitchen
deeper into the manor house.

ZEKE

Geez, this place is pretty run-
down. I expected something fancier.

CECIL

Clearly, it's seen better days.

HAZEL

(panicky)

Shhh! Someone's coming!

ZEKE

In here!

FOOTSTEPS PASS BY.

LESTER MAYHEW

As a harried servant passed down
the hall, the trio nearly stumbled
into a dim room lined with
bookshelves. A painting of an ink-
black pharaoh with hypnotic eyes
hung behind a desk.

ZEKE

Get a load of that guy.

HAZEL

Yes. It's like he's looking at us.

CECIL

Must be Gavigan's study. Standard
lock on the desk drawer.

He fiddles with its lock - it CLICKS open. Cecil OPENS THE
DRAWER.

CECIL (CONT'D)

A letter from--

Suddenly the phone in the study RINGS. The RUSTLE OF PAPER.

HAZEL

Oh no!

ZEKE

What do we do?

CECIL

Hazel, quick, hide with me!

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel and Cecil dove under the ornate desk and Zeke froze in a dark corner just as a uniformed butler entered the room.

FOOTSTEPS ON CARPET and the CLICK of the phone being picked up.

CASSIDY

(formally, into phone)

Misr House, Cassidy speaking.

(with increasing
obsequiousness)

Oh, but of course, Mr. Gavigan. The staff has been making preparations all day for the lorry's arrival tonight.

(pause)

In Walton-on-Naze already? You've made excellent time, sir.

(pause)

Excellent sir, I'll let the staff know you'll be here presently.

Cassidy HANGS UP the phone.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

Oh god.

HURRIED FOOTSTEPS depart. MUSIC.

HAZEL

Tonight? They're coming tonight.

ZEKE

That's bad.

HAZEL

You said tomorrow.

CECIL

I thought it was tomorrow.

ZEKE

We've got to get back to the boat!

Exciting Run Away From the Manor House MUSIC!

54 FLEEING MISR HOUSE - 1ST TIME

54

LESTER MAYHEW

The three carefully slipped out of the manor house past the frantic staff and ran into the marsh as fast as they could back to the boat.

Their feet SPLASH through the muck.

HAZEL

(panting)

There it is. Why is it out in the...

ZEKE

There's another boat--

CECIL

Towing our boat out to sea!

MUSIC.

END OF CHAPTER

55 ADVERTISEMENT - CHAOSIUM

55

LESTER MAYHEW

Throwing a party? Treat your guests to the newest sensation in gaming: role playing games from Chaosium. Your friends will be delighted as they play characters and embark on thrilling adventures all within the comfort of your parlour. Throw a party they'll never forget with games from Chaosium!

Notes of Chaosium JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER

Don't be let your guests be bored by board games, try a Chaosium role playing game today!

Start of Chapter MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Earlier, when the first team waded ashore, Victoria and Gupta remained on Maclean's boat, keeping watch as best they could.

MACLEAN

(very nervous)

Twenty minutes, your man said. They'd better come back soon. The tides'll--

VICTORIA

Yes, yes. Don't be so--

We hear a MOTOR LAUNCH approaching fast from the sea.

MACLEAN

Oh lord, someone's coming. I told you ma'am. Now we're in it.

VICTORIA

No need to panic, Mr. Maclean.

MACLEAN

Right, mum, I'll handle this.

VICTORIA

If you don't mind, Mr. Maclean, leave the talking to me.

GUPTA

(to himself)

Oh, this is not going to be good.

The second boat pulls up, piloted by LARS TORVAK, a gruff alcoholic Norwegian.

LARS TORVAK

What are you doing here? This is a private estate. Get out of here!

VICTORIA

Young man, do be quiet. You'll frighten the redstarts.

LARS TORVAK

I'll... what?

VICTORIA

I am Lady Cook, Viscountess of
Montserrat. I'm here to--

LARS TORVAK

I don't care if you're Queen Maud
of Norway, you can't be here. No
trespassers.

VICTORIA

Oh, but I can't leave. Not just
yet.

LARS TORVAK

What do you mean, "you can't"?

VICTORIA

The Royal Birding Society sent a
wire that black redstarts had been
seen in this vicinity. It's
imperative that we--

LARS TORVAK

What?

GUPTA

Birds. We're looking for birds.

VICTORIA

Not just "birds", sir. It is
exceedingly rare for these
passerines to migrate--

Lars COCKS A PISTOL.

LARS TORVAK

I said you need to go.

GUPTA

Sir, please!

MACLEAN

There's no need for guns, we'll--

LARS TORVAK

You - tie off this line to your
boat and hoist your anchor.

MACLEAN

But--

LARS TORVAK

Do it! You two, come aboard now.

VICTORIA
 (loudly)
 Oh, but the redstarts! We'll--

GUPTA
 Here, take my hand, m'lady. I'll
 help you over.

The LAPPING of water and the BUMPING of boats. The THUMP of
 the hoisted anchor.

LARS TORVAK
 Right, you too. Come on.

MACLEAN
 Where are you taking us?

The engine of Lars' boat ROARS to life. Frightened BIRDS FLY
 AWAY. MUSIC!

57 MISR PLAN

57

LESTER MAYHEW
 From shore, Hazel, Cecil and Zeke
 watched the boats disappear into
 the fog.

VICTORIA
 (in the distance)
 But the redstarts!

HAZEL
 Oh my god, Victoria! Who is that
 other boat?

CECIL
 What are we supposed to do now? We
 can't just wait here.

HAZEL
 (afraid to say it)
 What if they don't come back?

ZEKE
 She'll be all right. She's tough.
 And Gupta would never let anything
 happen to her.

CECIL
 We can't go back to the manor
 house. Gavigan and the Brotherhood
 are heading there.

ZEKE

We can't just wait here.

CECIL

We hide near the obelisk. That way we can see first hand what it is they do.

ZEKE

Don't you think we already have a pretty good idea?

CECIL

Yeah, but I have my camera. If we can get hard evidence we could take to Inspector Barrington, we could get this whole operation shut down.

ZEKE

I guess so. What do you think, Hazel?

HAZEL

(very conflicted)

We have no way of chasing after Victoria. And Penhew might put in an appearance.

CECIL

Right then. Back to the clearing.

They SQUOOSH their way back through the marsh. MUSIC builds tension!

58

IVORY WIND

58

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, the two small boats pulled alongside an elegant yacht, the Ivory Wind, anchored offshore in the North Sea. Her crew hauled the prisoners aboard.

FIRST MATE

Good to see you back, Cap'n Torvak. We was starting to get concerned. It's nearly time.

VICTORIA

Is this Eddie Gavigan's yacht? You know, I spoke with him just a week or two ago, and he--

LARS TORVAK
You know Gavigan?

VICTORIA
Well of course I do. Didn't I say
so, Mr. Maclean?

MACLEAN
She did tell me--

LARS TORVAK
All right, shut up. Johnson, tie
off this tub of theirs, then you
and the men head to the island.
Tell Mr. Gavigan I picked up some
intruders. This one says she's some
kind of countess or something. Ask
what he wants me to do with them.

FIRST MATE
(with perverse glee)
I think I know.

LARS TORVAK
I said ask him!
(to the crew)
You men go on ashore now. You don't
want to miss your fun.

FIRST MATE
Aye aye, Captain.

LARS TORVAK
(to his prisoners)
You three can just have a seat.

WET FOOTSTEPS and BUMPING and AD LIB SAILORS as they climb
onto the motor launch. The MOTOR starts up.

VICTORIA
Are they going to look for the
black redstarts? You know, the
Ornithological Society hasn't
documented--

LARS TORVAK
Enough! Just sit and wait.
(to Gupta)
You! Keep her quiet.

GUPTA
I'll do my best sir.

LARS TORVAK

I need a drink.

Lars POURS himself some rum and DRINKS it down. MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

As the sun was setting, and the captain had more than a few drinks in him, they seized their opportunity to escape.

A bottle SHATTERS and Torvak GROANS as he SLUMPS to the floor.

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

Gupta struck the captain with his own bottle and Maclean quickly bound his feet. Moments later Gupta and Victoria were back in their own boat.

An anchor chain CLANKS on the Ivory Wind.

GUPTA

(shouting)

Mr. Maclean. Come, sir - we need to be getting back to land.

MACLEAN

(hurrying back on to his own boat)

Right, sorry just had one last thing I needed to do.

VICTORIA

And what might that be?

MACLEAN

I hoisted their anchor. With the currents out here, I reckon the captain and his crew will have a dickens of a time finding each other.

Maclean FIRES UP THE ENGINE of his boat. The MUSIC continues to escalate the tension.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hidden in the forest nearby, Cecil,
Zeke and Hazel bore witness as a
strange ritual unfolded before
them.

WEIRD EGYPTIAN MUSIC announces a procession from the house to
the clearing. A LARGE GROUP CHANTING.

CECIL

My lord, there's a lot of them.

ZEKE

Look, in front, that's Shafik
wearing the robe and hat.

HAZEL

And that's Gavigan, next to her.

ZEKE

What are those doo-dads he's
carrying?

HAZEL

The crook and flail, symbols of the
pharaoh's power. Ugh, they're not
usually black though.

CECIL

See those four, wearing nothing but
chains? They must be the
sacrifices.

ZEKE

Wait - that's her. The dancer from
the Blue Pyramid.

HAZEL

Yalesha. Oh, god...

We hear the unfolding action.

LESTER MAYHEW

Soon the four naked victims were
shackled before the obelisk, and
Gavigan approached them carrying a
large club tipped with a long,
sharp spike.

EDWARD GAVIGAN

(formally)

Eeoo oojen Neearlath-hotep eet
ooseer temmee oonem khess!
*(Nyarlahotep, the father of
Osirus, has ordered that I should
not eat excrement!)*

CULTISTS

Ma-ah remeth Neearlath-hotep! *(Let
me not see Nyarlahotep)*

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Rise, our glorious gifts to the
Black Pharaoh.

CHAINS CLANK as the terrified victims rise.

EDWARD GAVIGAN (CONT'D)

You! Do you freely give yourself in
body and soul to succor the
darkness that is Nyarlahotep?

ACHMED, an Egyptian bloke from Southwark STAMMERS.

EDWARD GAVIGAN (CONT'D)

Do not be afraid.

ACHMED

I don't want to die.

EDWARD GAVIGAN

The Black Pharaoh abides no
resistance.

Gavigan SWINGS the club, and there's a HORRIBLE MEATY IMPACT.

EDWARD GAVIGAN (CONT'D)

(digging this)

Nether seh-khedge-noo! *(You bring
the god's wrath!)*

CULTISTS

Iä!

CECIL

Oh my god! Right in the heart!

ZEKE

Sh! Don't watch, Hazel. Cecil, take
the god damned pictures.

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Let us call forth the winged
servants of the Black Pharaoh to
take their offering! Come, Horrors!
To your hunt!

CULTISTS

Ma-ah remeth Neearlat-hotep! (*Let
me not see Nyarlathotep*)

EDWARD GAVIGAN

(calling to the skies)
Nekhetoo! aw-oon heroo!
(*Sacrifices! Take them and be
satisfied!*)

The WHOOSH OF WINGS and the HELLISH BLEAT OF FLYING
MONSTROSITIES descends from the skies. MUSIC!

CECIL

Oh my god! It's the creatures from
the obelisk!

GUPTA (OFF)

(loud)
This way, Inspector Barrington!

MACLEAN (OFF)

(loud)
Right, Squad Two, follow the
sergeant!

HAZEL

Barrington? How?

CECIL

No, it's Gupta!
(loud)
Squad three seal off the house!
(quiet)
They're here - to the marsh! Run!

MACLEAN

This way - follow me!

SHOUTING! SCREAMING! RUNNING! HUNTING HORROR! MUSIC!

YALESHA

The police! Help!

SHAFIK

Blasphemers!

EDWARD GAVIGAN

After them!

MACLEAN

(running through the
marsh)

Mrs. Woodhull, start the engine!

Maclean's BOAT STARTS. SPLASHING FOOTSTEPS.

ZEKE

Good to see you, Victoria.

VICTORIA

Likewise, Ezekiel. Do come aboard.

The rest of the team comes RUNNING UP. The Hunting Horror SHRIEKS, coming closer to them.

ZEKE

Up you go, Mr. Maclean. Gupta.

GUPTA

Thank you, Mr. Zeke.

ZEKE

C'mon Cecil.

CECIL

(winded)

I'm coming. Let's go. That thing is
nearly here!

ZEKE

Where's Hazel?

CECIL

I thought she was already here!

ZEKE

Hazel!

SCRWAWWWK - we hear the horror and its WING BEATS.

HAZEL

Wait for me!

ZEKE

Come on - in you go.

They SPLASH aboard.

CECIL

Go, go, go!

LESTER MAYHEW

Maclean lay on the throttle and the boat lurched forward. But in a moment the hunting Horror swooped in, grabbing the hapless boatman in its crushing talons and pulling him into the sky!

MACLEAN

Aaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhh!

More HORRIBLE SHRIEKING and MASSIVE WINGS.

CECIL

Gupta, grab the wheel!

GUPTA

But Mr.--

ZEKE

He's done for. Full ahead!

HAZEL

Victoria - hand me the boat's emergency kit!

VICTORIA

Here!

The Horror SHRIEKS and its wings WHOOSH NEARBY.

HAZEL

It's coming right for us!

The Horror ATTACKS with thrilling action MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

60

ADVERTISEMENT - BILE BEANS

60

LESTER MAYHEW

Is your tummy in a tizzy? Are you innards askew? Has your peppiness petered out? Time to put yourself right with Bile Beans - the nation's most reliable remedy. A Bile Bean at bedtime will bring back your best self - naturally! Try a tin today.

Bile Bean JINGLE!

ANNOUNCER

Stay healthy, bright-eyed and slim:
buy Bile Beans!

61 FLARE UP

61

Start of Chapter MUSIC. SHRIEKING! FLAPPING! SPLINTERING
WOOD! GUSHING WATER!

CECIL

The boat! We're taking on water!

GUPTA

I'll make a run for the shore.

VICTORIA

Hazel, what are you doing? That's a
flare gu-

BOOF! The WHOOSH OF FIRE.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel fired a flare from the boat's
emergency kit at the attacking
monster. The foul creature was
engulfed in flames and flew off
into the night sky.

GUPTA

Very good work Miss Hazel! But I am
sorry to say our boat is done for!

ZEKE

Come here, Victoria! I'll carry you
ashore. The water's not too deep.

CECIL

Come on everyone, abandon ship!
Back to the clearing!

SPLASH - SLOSH!

62 CIVIL WAR

62

MUSIC. UNHAPPY CULTISTS.

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, in the chaos back at the
obelisk, the cultists were turning
on each other!

SHAFIK

You, Gavigan, you make a mockery of our sacred rites. You are unworthy of the priesthood of the Black Pharaoh!

EDWARD GAVIGAN

Shafik, you have long schemed against me, sowing discontent. I am the Anointed Master here. I command you all, in the name of Nyarlathotep! Stand with me.

Some cultist AD LIB, taking the side of the rich white guy.

SHAFIK

'iikhwati msr! My brothers of Egypt! This Englishman has betrayed us and led the interlopers here! He has betrayed the Brotherhood. He is not a true believer! Kill him! Aqtalah!

ANGRY CULTIST AD LIB. FIGHTING!

EDWARD GAVIGAN

No! I am chosen, annointed by--

A MEATY IMPACT. SO MANY FOOTSTEPS. CULTISTS in TURMOIL.

EDWARD GAVIGAN (CONT'D)

Aaaaah!

ZEKE

Holy moly! Gavigan nailed in the chest with that spiked club!

CECIL

Like Barrington's Egyptian Murders.

VICTORIA

It was Shafik! She was the girl Tennie was telling us about!

ZEKE

C'mon, let's go for their truck.

LESTER MAYHEW

With cover created by the cultists' infighting, our heroes made their way to the Ferris & Sons truck. Gupta slipped behind the wheel as the others climbed aboard.

GUPTA

Please to hang on tight!

The ENGINE revs. GRAVEL flies. METAL crunches.

LESTER MAYHEW

The truck lurched to life and
smashed its way through the iron
gates of Misr House and into the
dark Essex night!

The MUSIC finally eases up, offering a denouement.

63

MAYFAIR - AFTERMATH

63

LESTER MAYHEW

But hours later, as the battered
truck returned the exhausted
investigators to Mayfair, they were
met by an unpleasant sight.

As the TRUCK STOPS we hear the telltale sound of BRITISH
EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

BOBBY

Keep moving, guv, you'll have to
park elsewhere. There's been a
fire.

TRUCK DOORS and BACK GATE OPEN.

VICTORIA

No, no, officer, this is my home. I
live... lived...

CECIL

My god - a total loss.

HAZEL

What happened?

BOBBY

Looks to be arson, Ma'am. I'll get
the Inspector for you.

ZEKE

Your apartment... I'm so sorry,
Victoria.

VICTORIA

(very sad)
Thank you, Ezekiel.

GUPTA
(choked with emotion)
Oh, madame... I'm... our home...

VICTORIA
Chin up, Gupta. We still have what
we need most.

CECIL
Here comes Inspector Barrington.

FOOTSTEPS.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Mrs. Woodhull... when we found out
about the fire we feared... well,
I'm very glad none of you were
home. Family next door wasn't so
lucky.

VICTORIA
The Browns? No...

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Yeah. The whole family, I'm afraid.

HAZEL
Savages!

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
We found a mark on your door, like
one of those Egyptian crosses...

VICTORIA
It's called an ankh. The Egyptian
symbol of life.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Yes, ma'am. But here it was turned
upside down. Could I prevail upon
you to come to the Yard and make a
formal statement? I gather you have
some suspicions about who did this.

VICTORIA
Oh, it is quite a statement indeed
that we are prepared to make. Shall
we get on with it, Inspector? I
fear my colleagues and I have much
to do.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Please, ma'am, don't do anything
rash. The crown can't turn a blind
eye to vigilantism. The police will-

VICTORIA
Inspector, it would appear that we
are in danger here. My friends and
I would like to make our statement
and then go abroad for a spell.

INSPECTOR BARRINGTON
Back over to the states again?

VICTORIA
No. I thought we might find some
peace and quiet in Egypt.

Big ominous MUSIC hit leads us out.

64 CAIRO - CITY OF THE LIVING

64

Soothing Middle Eastern MUSIC wafts through.

ANNOUNCER
Dark Adventure Radio Theatre
presents part three of "Masks of
Nyarlathep" with your host,
Lester Mayhew.

LESTER MAYHEW
Leaving their evidence in the hands
of Inspector Barrington, the
traumatized investigators departed
for Egypt on the next available
ship. Rattled nerves and bruised
bodies enjoyed a respite of calm
before...

The JARRING STREET NOISE of Cairo! The team's MOTORCOACH
wends its way toward their lodgings.

HAZEL
I never realized Cairo would be
so... frantic.

CECIL
It's like being back in New York.
At rush hour, except--

ZEKE
Camels! Those are camels! This
place is great, eh, Gupta?

GUPTA

Indeed, sir. My, but it is very warm.

VICTORIA

We should be at Shepherd's Hotel presently. I understand it compares favorably to any of the best hotels in Europe.

CECIL

Is a fancy hotel a good idea, Victoria? I mean, if there are cultists on our tail we should keep a low profile.

VICTORIA

Yes, I thought of that. But Shepherd's has the best security of any hotel in Egypt - I'm not sure there's anywhere we could go where we'd be likely safer. And we'll be registered under the name of Rockefeller.

CECIL

Rockefeller? Let me guess, friends of yours?

VICTORIA

Oh yes, Edith is a dear friend, and I wired her from the ship. She visits Cairo often, but as she's in Zurich this season, she offered me her suite. She's instructed the hotel staff to sign us in using her name. Officially, we won't even be there.

ZEKE

Suite or no, we've got to keep our eyes open. These Black Pharaoh guys are going to be out to get us.

CECIL

I'm fairly certain they're here. That letter I took from Gavigan's desk was from an Omar al-Shakti here in the city. And from the sounds of it, he's fully in cahoots with Gavigan and his ilk.

GUPTA

That is unhappy news, indeed.

ZEKE

Didn't Jackson's file have a letter from a guy in Egypt?

HAZEL

Yep. It was from a Warren Besart here in Cairo. He was offering to put Carlyle in touch with a guy called Faraz Najjar who had some pieces Carlyle wanted.

CECIL

Elias was here last November, before he went to London.

VICTORIA

We might also inquire at the Cairo Bulletin - it's an English language paper and I'm sure they would have reported on the Carlyle Expedition. Maybe Jackson's visit too.

ZEKE

Look, guys, we should figure the bad guys are on to us. I propose a rule: Never go anywhere alone.

HAZEL

Good idea, Zeke.

ZEKE

Yeah?

CECIL

Zeke, how about you and I see if we can find this Faraz Najjar person?

VICTORIA

Excellent. The rest of us will pay a visit to the Cairo Bulletin.

Transition MUSIC whisks us over to:

65

THE CAIRO BULLETIN

65

LESTER MAYHEW

The dashing Nigel Wassif, editor of the Cairo Bulletin, provided a warm welcome to the team. He seemed to know everyone and everything happening in Cairo.

Nigel is an Egyptian in his 40s. BUSY NEWSPAPER OFFICE WALLA.

NIGEL WASSIF

(chuckling)

Any friend of Edith Rockefeller is a friend of mine - a charming lady! Does she still believe she is the reincarnation of the wife of King Tut?

VICTORIA

(laughing along)

Indeed she does! I must admit that notion seems less bizarre to me these days.

NIGEL WASSIF

Please - how may I assist you?

VICTORIA

My young cousin here was very close to an author named Jackson Elias--

NIGEL WASSIF

Oh, but I know Mr. Elias! We've spoken on multiple occasions. How is he?

HAZEL

I'm sorry to say he's dead.

NIGEL WASSIF

Oh, no!

HAZEL

He was killed in New York two months ago. Murdered.

NIGEL WASSIF

(genuine)

That's terrible. I'm so very sorry. What a loss...

VICTORIA

We understand he visited Cairo in November of last year - do you know anything about what he was working on?

NIGEL WASSIF

Regrettably, I was on holiday and he only visited briefly. One of my colleagues told me he took a meeting with Dr. Ali Kafour.

HAZEL

Was he ill?

NIGEL WASSIF

No, no, miss, not that kind of doctor. Dr. Kafour is one of our leading Egyptologists at the Cairo Museum.

HAZEL

Do you know why they met?

NIGEL WASSIF

I don't, but I'm sure you could contact Dr. Kafour. Here - I'll give you his number.

SCRIBBLING on paper.

HAZEL

That is most kind of you, sir.

GUPTA

Mr. Elias had been doing some work regarding the Carlyle Expedition. We are thinking the Bulletin would have covered their visit here.

NIGEL WASSIF

But of course. It was big news at the time - what was that, spring of 1919, no? Come, let's see what we can find in the morgue.

The SCRAPING of chairs, FOOTSTEPS as the group walks.

HAZEL

What about someone named Warren Besart? Do you know him?

NIGEL WASSIF

Mmmm, a Frenchman, not an archeologist himself, but he was... in the business, if you get my meaning. He assisted expeditions with some preparations.

HAZEL

Do you know where we might find him?

NIGEL WASSIF

Honestly, I've not heard his name
in years - I will ask about and see
if he's still in the city.

A DOOR OPENS.

NIGEL WASSIF (CONT'D)

Ah, here we are - the morgue. So,
1919 would be over here...

He OPENS A FILING CABINET and NEWSPAPER RUSTLES.

GUPTA

By jingo! Here they are - ah, and
with a photograph!

NIGEL WASSIF

Yes. That's Mr. Carlyle there. Dr.
Huston. Sir Aubrey Penhew. Miss
Masters.

HAZEL

The big guy, that must be Jack
Brady.

NIGEL WASSIF

Just so.

VICTORIA

We heard there was another member
of the expedition - a negro woman?

NIGEL WASSIF

That would come as news to me,
ma'am. I suppose there could have
been, but...

HAZEL

Isn't that what Erica said?

VICTORIA

Roger Carlyle's sister told us the
entire endeavor was based on
information that came from this
woman.

NIGEL WASSIF

That I don't know. Miss Masters and
Mr. Carlyle were in...

(MORE)

NIGEL WASSIF (CONT'D)
 poor health and it was thought the mountain air would do them some good, so the expedition moved on to Kenya only a few months after starting here. Perhaps they met this woman there?

VICTORIA
 Perhaps. Do you recall if the group...
 (searching for a safe way to phrase this)
 ...had any other social engagements during their stay?

NIGEL WASSIF
 They dined on several occasions with Omar al-Shakti - a very wealthy plantation owner. The expedition was very strict in press coverage - so I don't imagine we have much more on that.

HAZEL
 Strict?

NIGEL WASSIF
 Toward the end of their time here, photographs of the expedition were entirely prohibited.

HAZEL
 Why would that be?

NIGEL WASSIF
 (too much of a gentleman to say it outright)
 Mmm. You might have to ask yourself why prominent unmarried young ladies might wish great discretion in being photographed.

GUPTA
 (shocked)
 Oh! You mean she was... with--

NIGEL WASSIF
 I do not know. One can only suppose...

VICTORIA

You mentioned Sir Aubrey. I understand his Penhew Foundation has gone on to fund other expeditions after his death?

NIGEL WASSIF

Indeed. The Clive Expedition would be one such. There have been others.

HAZEL

Ah yes, that one's here in Cairo, isn't it?

NIGEL WASSIF

Until recently. They've been a boon to newspaper sales.

VICTORIA

Oh? Did they find something significant?

NIGEL WASSIF

They discovered a mummy at their dig site at Gizeh. But shortly afterwards, the sarcophagus and mummy were stolen and the expedition relocated to Memphis.

HAZEL

That sounds a bit suspect.

NIGEL WASSIF

It's more common than you might think. Since the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb a couple of years ago, the city has been overrun with both thieves and tourists eager to get a piece of the craze for all things Egyptian. The authorities are stretched very thin. In fact, I would urge you to be cautious and lock your valuables in your hotel's safe. There are more pickpockets and hoodlums about in the city than ever.

HAZEL

We appreciate the advice, Mr. Wassif.

NIGEL WASSIF

If I may be so bold as to make another suggestion, good ladies... I note you are not wearing hijab. In our city, there is some tolerance for foreign women to going without, but some are not so open minded. For your own safety, I would urge you to dress with great modesty.

VICTORIA

(with a derisive laugh)
Mr. Wassif, Coco Chanel is a personal friend of mine, and I don't even let her tell me how to dress. I am not about to take fashion advice from the men of Cairo.

NIGEL WASSIF

I meant no offense, madam.

VICTORIA

I took none, Mr. Wassif. We appreciate your concern and are immensely grateful for your time. Now Hazel, Gupta, let's see if we can talk with this Dr. Kafour.

Transition MUSIC.

66

THE STREET OF JACKALS

66

LESTER MAYHEW

With the aid of a dragoman, or guide, hired through the hotel, Zeke and Cecil headed off to find the antiquities dealer Faraz Najjar on the ominously named Street of Jackals.

NOISY CAIRO STREET WALLA with DONKEYS, CAMELS, etc. ARABIC AD LIB.

HAKIM

Good sirs, the neighbors are saying this man, Faraz Najjar, no longer conducts business here.

CECIL

No? Did he move?

HAKIM
Who can say, sir?

ZEKE
Well, Hakim, we're here. Which one
of these places was his?

HAKIM
This way, sirs. Come.

Cecil bumps into ABUBAKAR, a woman pushing a cart laden with
RATTLING COPPER FRYING PANS.

ABUBAKAR
Shahid ma tafealuh ya 'ahmaq!
*(Watch what you're doing,
bonehead!)*

CECIL
Excuse me. Pardon me.

HAKIM
Here, sirs. This was the shop of
Faraz Najjar.

CECIL
Where? This?

ZEKE
It's a burned out hole in the
ground. What happened?

HAKIM
I am thinking a fire, sir.

CECIL
(quietly to Zeke)
I've handled insurance claims for
fire damage. None of them looked
like this.

ZEKE
Hakim, the neighbor with the frying
pans, ask her what happened here.

HAKIM
Yurid alrijal albyd maerifatan ma
hadath huna. *(The white guys want
to know what happened here.)*

ABUBAKAR
Kan hunak hariq. *(There was a fire
here.)*

HAKIM

She says there was a fire.

CECIL

Yeah. Tell her we'll pay to know the full story.

He SHAKES SOME COINS in his hand.

HAKIM

Sayadfaeunak lisamae alqisat alkamila. (*They will pay you to hear the full story.*)

ABUBAKAR

Shaytanalnaar. (*A fire demon.*)

HAKIM

Bishakl jadd? (*Seriously?*)

ABUBAKAR

nem fielaan. nazalat ealaa almahali. 'ahraq firaz wakuli shay' akhirin. klana ra'ayna dhalik. kan faziea. kan muhtaraq bishidata. aintaqil 'iilaa sharie saniei alqudr. (*Yes. It descended on the shop. It burned Faraz and everything else. We all saw it. It was terrible. He was badly burned. He moved to the Street of Potters.*)

HAKIM

She says a "fire demon" fell upon the shop and burned this man and all his things. He moved away to the Street of Potters.

CECIL

Please, give her this with our thanks.

The CLINK of COINS changing hands.

HAKIM

Alrijal albyd yuqadimun shakrahum. (*The white guys offer their thanks.*)

ABUBAKAR

hza saeidaan , albaghda'. (*Good luck, morons.*)

ZEKE

(hushed)

Fire demon? Sounds like a cult kind of thing.

CECIL

Hakim, we need to find this man. Take us to the Street of Potters.

HAKIM

If I may say, sir, it sounds as though a curse has fallen on this man. It would be best to leave him to his miseries.

ZEKE

We're used to curses and misery. C'mon, Hakim, we'll make it worth your while.

HAKIM

If you insist, kind sirs.

Egyptian transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

With effort, they were able to locate Faraz Najjar. Sporting scars from terrible burns, he agreed to speak with the Westerners, but only in private and only in the safety of his mosque.

Bits of DISTANT CONVERSATIONS echo in the mosque. Najjar speaks in hushed English.

FARAZ NAJJAR

...but the Frenchman, Besart, he told Carlyle that I could provide the items he sought -

(extra hushed)

the items of the Black Pharaoh.

ZEKE

We're talking about old stuff here, right? Stuff that actually belonged to this Black Pharaoh way back whenever?

FARAZ NAJJAR

Indeed. A scroll which contained a map to the burial place of the Black Pharaoh himself.

(MORE)

FARAZ NAJJAR (CONT'D)
 A stone likeness of the pharaoh, a
 drum and a crown - items believed
 to have belonged to that most
 fearsome king.

ZEKE
 So, how'd you end up getting hold
 of the Black Pharaoh's stuff?

FARAZ NAJJAR
 (contrite)
 With shame, I must confess I stole
 these items. And Allah has punished
 me for these crimes - but in his
 infinite mercy, he has let me live.

CECIL
 Who did you steal them from?

FARAZ NAJJAR
 (in a whisper)
 Omar al-Shakti.

CECIL
 We've heard that name before.

ZEKE
 Tell me, we've heard that there's a
 group, a Brotherhood of the Black
 Pharaoh, that still believes in--

FARAZ NAJJAR
 (getting quiet)
 hifz li allah! *(God save me!)* Not
 so loud! al-Shakti is one of their
 leaders. It was their black magic
 that brought the fire demon as
 punishment for my sins.

CECIL
 So they're still doing things here
 in Cairo?

FARAZ NAJJAR
 You have heard of the theft of the
 mummy from Gizeh? That was their
 doing. I have heard too they plan
 to steal a relic from the Mosque of
 Ibn Tulun - alkufaar! *(infidels!)*

ZEKE
 Do you know, is there anything we
 can do to stop them?

FARAZ NAJJAR

The Q'ran tell us that Satan flees from the house in which Surah Al-Baqarah is recited. This is why you are safe here.

ZEKE

What about everywhere else?

FARAZ NAJJAR

There you are in great danger.

ZEKE

Great.

FARAZ NAJJAR

There is a wise woman, near Meidum, whose son worked for Carlyle. Nuri knows much of the magic of the Black Pharaoh. Perhaps she still lives.

CECIL

Mr. Najjar, you've done us a great service here. We are in your debt.

FARAZ NAJJAR

No, your debt, like mine, is to Allah.

MUSIC transition.

67

THE SHORTCUT

67

LESTER MAYHEW

Hakim led Zeke and Cecil back to the hotel via a shortcut through the Old City, until he suddenly stopped in a dead-end alley.

CECIL

Hakim, what are we doing--

HAKIM

'akhraj ya akhwati! (*Come out, my brothers!*)

Hakim LAUGHS menacingly.

ZEKE

Uh-oh.

LESTER MAYHEW

Four fearsome looking Arab thugs
carrying spiked clubs suddenly
surrounded them!

Thrilling cliffhanger MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

68 ADVERTISEMENT - GRYP-U-RIGHT

68

LESTER MAYHEW

If you've ever known the discomfort
of a truss, you know they can
pinch, chafe and even enlarge
openings. But a Gryp-U-Right truss
is scientifically made to give you
support, right in the places where
you need it most. And with its
gentle electrical stimulation - you
won't want to take it off at night.

Gryp U JINGLE

ANNOUNCER

Feel great and look slim with the
truss you can trust - Gryp-U-Right!

69 CAN O' WHOOP ASS

69

Start of Chapter MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke and Cecil had been led into a
trap by their treacherous guide,
Hakim. In an instant, the
assailants were upon them, clubs
swinging.

HAKIM

qatlahum - biaism al'ukhua! (*Kill
them - for the brotherhood!*)

We hear Zeke dishing out SWIFT BLOWS and the occasional
WHOOSH of a club. A PUNCH knocks out one cultist. Then
another!

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke's former days as a boxer
served him well.

ZEKE

Another one down - Cecil, look out!

LESTER MAYHEW

But his warning came too late - a
cultist's club caught Cecil
squarely in the face.

CRACK! Cecil GROANS in agony and COLLAPSES to the ground.

ZEKE

You miserable sons of-

WHACK! PUNCH! SMASH.

STREET CULTIST #4

al'umu! (*Mommy!*)

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke ducked under the cultist's
swing and landed a haymaker -
knocking him out cold!

PUNCH and BODY FALL!

ZEKE

(breathing hard)

So, just you and me, Hakim. I'm
surprised you haven't run off to
hide in the shadows.

HAKIM

The Brotherhood fights to the
death!

The SCHNICK of metal and leather.

HAKIM (CONT'D)

(gloating)

You have no knife.

ZEKE

Nope.

HAKIM

Aiiiee!

We hear Hakim's swift knife strokes SLICING THROUGH THE AIR
as Zeke DUCKS and DODGES.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hakim lunged with the blade driving
for Zeke's heart!

The WHISH is met with the CRUNCH of a punch from Zeke. The knife CLATTERS to the ground and Zeke GRAPPLES with Hakim.

HAKIM
(gasping in pain)
My arm!

ZEKE
Oh, sorry, did that hurt? How about this?

Hakim's arm SNAPS.

HAKIM
(panting)
Aaaah! Kill me if you want. The Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh is everywhere. We are eternal. And we are coming for you.

ZEKE
You've got it wrong, chump. We are coming for **you**. It's **your** days that are numbered.

HAKIM
Nyarlathep is--

SMACK! THUD!

ZEKE
--is a name I'm sick of hearing. What's this around your neck? Hmmm the upside down ankh - just like in London.

Nearby, CECIL MOANS.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
(rushing over)
Cecil, you're hurt. Let me see.

MUSIC hit!

CECIL
(seriously hurt)
My glasses... my eye. Help me.

ZEKE
Oh, no - we've got to get you help!

Danger MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

The thugs having been bested, a gaggle of children crept out into the alley to see what was happening.

ZEKE

We need help. Police? This man is hurt!

An amazed MURMUR ripples through the children.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

Please - help. A doctor? I have money!

LESTER MAYHEW

An intrepid moppet, Mahmoud, stepped forth.

MAHMOUD

Come - I take.

LESTER MAYHEW

They followed the urchin as he led them to the nearby Mosque of Ibn Tulun.

The children YELL IN ARABIC. Adults YELL IN ARABIC.

ZEKE

This man is hurt - he needs a doctor. Does anyone here speak--

The mosque's nazir steps forward - a wise old man in his 70s.

AHMED AL-DHAHBI

I speak your English. Why have you come--

ZEKE

This man needs help. His eye--

AHMED AL-DHAHBI

He needs a doctor. Come, friend, sit - we shall bring a taxi for him. German hospital is best for foreigners.

(to the others)

daewat lisayaarat 'ajratan.
bisireatin. (Call for a taxi.
Quickly.)

CECIL
 (hardly audible)
 Thank you.

AHMED AL-DHAHBI
 I will pray for you, brother.

ZEKE
 Thanks - do you have a pencil?

AHMED AL-DHAHBI
 Yes...

Zeke frantically SCRIBBLES a note. We hear a CAR PULL UP -
 it's met by the NOISE OF EXCITED CHILDREN.

ZEKE
 Get this note to Hazel Cla--
 Rockefeller. Hazel Rockefeller.
 Okay? She's a guest at Shepheard's
 Hotel. C'mon, Cecil, here we go...

Tense MUSIC switches us over to:

71 CAIRO MUSEUM

71

LESTER MAYHEW
 But across town, Victoria, Hazel
 and Gupta were in a small office in
 the basement of the Cairo museum
 with Dr. Ali Kafour.

Dr. Kafour is a learned scholar in his 60s. He's a petite
 man, but with a large and fiery intellect.

DR. KAFOUR
 My heart is heavy for Mr. Elias.
 His work was more important than
 perhaps even he truly understood.

VICTORIA
 You met with him just last year?

DR. KAFOUR
 This is true. I always liked that
 man. But our meeting was brief.

HAZEL
 Why's that?

DR. KAFOUR

I had another engagement. We planned to meet again later in the week, but he never returned for the second meeting.

GUPTA

What is it that he wanted to know?

DR. KAFOUR

Have you ever heard of the Carlyle Expedition--

They LAUGH.

VICTORIA

We're acquainted with it.

DR. KAFOUR

He wished to know my opinion of what happened to them in Egypt.

VICTORIA

Would you be willing to share that opinion with us?

DR. KAFOUR

As I'm sure you know, Sir Aubrey Penhew for many years had a keen interest in the Black Pharaoh.

HAZEL

I was unaware of that.

DR. KAFOUR

I'm convinced that's what brought the expedition here. Further, I believe they found something here - some kind of secret connected to the Black Pharaoh - that led to the tragedy in Kenya.

GUPTA

Could it have been something connected with the cult - the Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh?

DR. KAFOUR

Your friend, Jackson Elias, was sure of it. He was very nervous - always looking over the shoulder.

HAZEL

The cult is active here in Cairo?

DR. KAFOUR

(with a sigh)

Oh yes. I hear from a trusted friend terrible rumors of these people.

GUPTA

Terrible rumors?

DR. KAFOUR

There have been thefts of ancient artifacts in recent months. It may be hard to believe, but their god, Nyarlathotep, bids them to use these things to raise the dead.

HAZEL

I believe it. I've seen the dead walk.

DR. KAFOUR

allah yahminana. (*God protect us*). They seek to revive a great and terrible queen from ancient times. They believe they can make her live again where she will do the bidding of their god. Their leader is a dangerous and powerful man: Omar al-Shakti.

VICTORIA

Dr. Kafour, we have come here to find justice for the deaths of Jackson Elias and other dear friends.

GUPTA

We are doing all we can to stop this cult, and others like it, from carrying out such plans.

DR. KAFOUR

allah 'ashad. (*God be praised*). I too have taken a stand to fight for good. But, alas, I am only one man.

VICTORIA

Could I interest you in joining with us? We are six - or would be including you.

DR. KAFOUR

Alas, I am no warrior - I am but a simple scholar.

(MORE)

DR. KAFOUR (CONT'D)

And yet the Q'ran bids me "do good;
for Allah loves the doers of good".

HAZEL

Dr. Kafour, if Aubrey Penhew was interested in the Black Pharaoh, might it stand to reason that other expeditions sponsored by the Penhew Foundation might also be looking into the Black Pharaoh? Expeditions like--

DR. KAFOUR

The Clive Expedition! The theft of the mummy - it was from their dig! They are continuing his work!

VICTORIA

Dr. Kafour, we were planning to pay the Clive Expedition a visit at their new site in Memphis. Could I interest you in joining us?

DR. KAFOUR

Most assuredly.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

DR. KAFOUR (CONT'D)

'udkhul (*enter*).

FOOTSTEPS entering.

HOTEL MESSENGER

Forgive the intrusion, sir. I come from Shepheard's Hotel. I am seeking a hotel guest, Hazel Rockefeller?

HAZEL

That's me.

HOTEL MESSENGER

For you, miss.

The RUSTLE OF PAPER.

GUPTA

Is that blood on it?

HAZEL

(reading)

The German hospital. Come quick - Zeke

Dramatic MUSIC!

72

DEACONESS' HOSPITAL

72

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel, Victoria and Gupta hurried to the Deaconess' Hospital - a German-run institution providing expensive care for foreigners.

They BUSTLE into the hospital's waiting room.

NURSE

Kann ich Ihnen helfen? (*May I help you?*)

HAZEL

I'm looking for--

ZEKE

Here!

HAZEL

Zeke, Zeke you're all right!

ZEKE

Well, sure--

VICTORIA

Where's Cecil?

ZEKE

He's in with the doctor. We were attacked by...

(whispering)

them...

(regular)

They got Cecil pretty bad.

GUPTA

Will he be all right?

ZEKE

I don't know.

FOOTSTEPS of DR. MUNDT, a German surgeon.

DR. MUNDT

Ist jemand hier für Herr Watson?
(*Is there someone here for Mr. Watson?*)

ZEKE

Watson? Yes, we're here for him.

DR. MUNDT

I'm Dr. Mundt. I'm afraid Mr. Watson's injury is significant. The lens from his spectacles was broken and went into the left eye.

HAZEL

Oh, no.

DR. MUNDT

We are taking him into surgery now. It may be a few hours - it will be a difficult procedure.

ZEKE

But he'll live though, right?

DR. MUNDT

I expect so - but it is a serious injury.

VICTORIA

Thank you, doctor. Do whatever you need to do. Good luck.

DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS.

ZEKE

I should wait here, for Cecil.

VICTORIA

Perhaps we should all wait...

GUPTA

If you'll forgive my saying, madam, I think we should continue our inquiry with alacrity. The cult knows we're here. Waiting, for anything, may put us all in greater danger. We may wish to push on to Memphis.

ZEKE

Memphis? Back to Tennessee?

HAZEL

There's a Memphis here, Zeke. It's where the Clive expedition is digging.

VICTORIA

Gupta, my friend, I'm sure you're right. We should go. If there's any news on Cecil, you'll let us know?

ZEKE

You bet.

VICTORIA

Hazel?

HAZEL

I think I'll stay here.

(to Zeke)

What? You're the one who said "don't go anywhere alone". I'm not leaving you here alone.

ZEKE

But--

HAZEL

You can't argue - it was your rule.

MUSIC suggests a passage of time.

LESTER MAYHEW

Victoria and Gupta set out to rendezvous with Dr. Kafour at the dig site in Memphis. Meanwhile, Hazel and Zeke waited hours for the results of Cecil's surgery.

HAZEL

When I got your note... I was so afraid that something had happened to you.

ZEKE

You were worried? For me?

HAZEL

I was.

ZEKE

Ah, geez. You know, Hazel, I...

HAZEL

Yes?

ZEKE

I feel lucky.

HAZEL

Yeah, lucky those lunatics didn't crack your head open too.

ZEKE

Nah - I meant because of Jackson.

HAZEL

How do you mean?

ZEKE

Well, he... I mean it's because of him that... you and me. Here.

HAZEL

You and me?

ZEKE

Well, I mean, we're...
(backpedaling)
Aren't we?

HAZEL

(ambiguous)
Oh, Zeke--

The doctor returns.

DR. MUNDT

I beg your pardon...

ZEKE

How'd it go?

DR. MUNDT

I'm pleased to say he's in a stable condition and he will make recovery.

HAZEL

Oh, thank god.

DR. MUNDT

I regret that we were unable to save the eye. The damage from the glass was... regrettable. The cheekbone was broken...

HAZEL

Oh, Cecil!

ZEKE

But he will recover? Can we see him?

DR. MUNDT

It would be best if you were to wait - let him rest for a day before a visit. It is best with an injury to the head.

ZEKE

But he'll be safe here?

DR. MUNDT

Safe?

HAZEL

From... unwanted visitors?

DR. MUNDT

Our staff will give him the very best care, sir. But, please, let him rest.

ZEKE

Thank you, Dr. Mundt.

Transition MUSIC.

73

DIARY OF A DRUG FIEND

73

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel and Zeke returned to the hotel and found a message from Nigel Wassif. He had located Warren Besart - Roger Carlyle's agent in Cairo. Soon they found the man himself, tucked in the shabby back room of a shop on the Street of Scorpions.

Besart, a Frenchman in his mid-30s, is a rambling wreck of a man driven mad by horrific events years ago. DISTANT STREET WALLA. A CHEAP ELECTRIC FAN.

ZEKE

Warren Besart?

WARREN BESART

Go away!

HAZEL

Monsieur Besart, we'd like to have a word with you.

WARREN BESART

Warren n'est pas là. (*Warren's not here.*)

(giggling)

Warin majnun! (*Warren is crazy!*)

ZEKE

Sir, it's very important that we speak to you.

WARREN BESART

It's very important that I smoke the rest of this pipe.

He STRIKES A MATCH and PUFFS the dregs of his hash.

ZEKE

Please - we can pay you!

WARREN BESART

Magnifique! What's my soul worth? What's a bowl worth? Yes, yes, plunk down a few pounds and sit yourself down and we shall talk of choses merveilleuses. De plus grandes choses que vous ne l'imaginez. (*Wonderful things. Things greater than you dare imagine.*)

HAZEL

Monsieur, je suis désolé mais notre français est... très petit. (*Sir, I'm sorry but our French is very small.*)

WARREN BESART

No Frenchy? Merde. (*crap*)
 (he takes a drag off his pipe)
 madha law takalamna bialearabia?
 (*What if we speak in Arabic?*)

ZEKE

Look, I know you speak English. We have your letter to Roger Carlyle!

WARREN BESART

Carlyle! The beginning of the end. Yes, I did much for them. No small task to outfit an expedition of that size.

HAZEL

You bought items for him from Faraz Najjar.

WARREN BESART

Ah poor Faraz. Brûlé à un croustillant. (*Burned to a crisp.*) He found that which is hard to find - I merely shipped it on to Penhew. Usually when one smuggles priceless artifacts, they are for collections or for display, but Sir Aubrey - un très vilain garçon (*a very naughty boy*) - naughty, naughty...

He starts drifting off to sleep

ZEKE

Hey - wake up!

WARREN BESART

No! Do not let me sleep, monsieur. In sleep the nightmares come.

HAZEL

You think Sir Aubrey wanted to use these items?

WARREN BESART

I do not think it - I know it!

ZEKE

What for?

WARREN BESART

(singing to himself)
Pharaon noir, Pharaon noir,
Dormez-vous? Dormez-vous?
Fraternité du mal! Fraternité du mal!
Ding, dang, dong. Ding, dang, dong.
Dingity dang dee dee dong DANG!
(*Are you sleeping, are you sleeping?*
Black Pharaoh, Black Pharaoh?
Brotherhood of Evil, Brotherhood of Evil)

ZEKE

(to Hazel)
This guy's loose in the bean.

HAZEL

Way loose.

(to Besart)

Mr. Besart, apart from transporting stolen goods from Faraz Najjar, what else did you do for the Carlyle Expedition?

WARREN BESART

J'ai tout fait! (*I did everything!*)

HAZEL

He did everything.

(to Warren)

Tell us...

Flashback MUSIC carries us back in time to better days.

74

FLASHBACK - THE BENT PYRAMID

74

LESTER MAYHEW

Through a thinning cloud of hashish smoke, Besart told them of the Carlyle Expedition's first days in Egypt, at their dig in the necropolis of Dashur, some 25 miles south of Cairo.

WARREN BESART

It all started out so well. They had money and taste and I thought it was going to be a wonderful job....

LIGHT DESERT WIND. PLEASANT BIRDS.

ROGER CARLYLE

My friends, I'd like to introduce you all to Monsieur Besart - our man here in Cairo. He set all of this up for us.

WARREN BESART

(young and charming)

Merci, Roger. Mademoiselles, monsieurs, I hope you have found everything to your satisfaction. Ah, you must be Sir Aubrey Penhew.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

That I am! My congratulations. You've provided for us splendidly.

(MORE)

SIR AUBREY PENHEW (CONT'D)
 And your chef here on site -
 fantastic.

WARREN BESART
 Merci, monsieur.

ROGER CARLYLE
 This is Dr. Robert Huston.

DR. HUSTON
 (with humor)
 All the comforts of home here.
 Leave it to the French! Who could
 ask for anything more?

ROGER CARLYLE
 Miss Hypatia Masters - she's
 photographing the expedition for
 us.

HYPATIA MASTERS
 A pleasure, monsieur. You've really
 outdone yourself here.

WARREN BESART
 You're too kind. And you, sir, Jack
 Brady, I presume?

Brady's manly and self-assured.

JACK BRADY
 That's right. Your security plans
 are good here, Besart. Glad to see
 you hired enough men.

WARREN BESART
 One tries, monsieur.

ROGER CARLYLE
 And may I introduce M'weru. She has
 proved a fountain of information
 for the expedition. It was her
 insight that helped us identify our
 dig sites.
 (with innuendo)
 She and I collaborate very closely.

WARREN BESART
 Enchanté, mademoiselle. You are not
 Egyptian, I think?

M'WERU is young but exudes authority and seems a little
 creepy.

M'WERU

I am from Kenya. Thank you, monsieur, but I suspect your time - rather your work here - is almost done. If I require more, I shall call upon you.

WARREN BESART

(drug addled narrator)

They were, at first, not so different from other expeditions I had equipped. But, later, mon deiu... tout est allé en enfer. (*My god... it all went to hell.*)

Music PRODS the timeline along.

WARREN BESART (CONT'D)

I was there, in Dashur, weeks, months later. It was... smooth sailing until that night. He came to my tent.

FOOTSTEPS run through the sand to Besart's tent and the FLAP WHIPS OPEN.

JACK BRADY

Besart! Thank god you're here.

WARREN BESART

(young)

Monsieur Brady, what's wrong?

JACK BRADY

Your diggers! They're gone - every last one of them.

WARREN BESART

Gone? But where...

JACK BRADY

Come on.

They leave the tent and HURRY ACROSS THE SAND.

JACK BRADY (CONT'D)

They went inside the Bent pyramid tonight: Roger, Hypatia, Dr. Huston and Sir Aubrey.

WARREN BESART

That's not so unusual - the entrances are well known.

JACK BRADY

They didn't come out! There's no sign of them. Something's very wrong here.

MUSIC.

WARREN BESART

(addled narrator)

He was right. The diggers, they had left the site together, but Carlyle's team - they vanished. We searched the Bent Pyramid and throughout the site. Poof! They were gone.

(giggling)

Into thin air!

(serious again)

At dawn, the following morning Brady saw them first.

DESERT WINDS sweep across.

JACK BRADY

Warren - there they are! Coming out of the west side of the pyramid.

WARREN BESART

But how? We searched there--

JACK BRADY

Come on.

They RUN across the sands.

WARREN BESART

(narrator)

It was them - but they were changed. Mon dieu, but how. There was a... glow upon them, as if they had looked upon something wonderful. And yet it hung upon them like a doom.

JACK BRADY

Roger - are you all right? We searched--

ROGER CARLYLE

Www... we... N... Nya--

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

(imperious)

No one here shall speak of this glorious night. Never ask us nor speak of it again.

WARREN BESART

(narrator)

That evening, an old woman came to my tent - the mother of one of the diggers. She had ordered the diggers away - for their own safety. And now, she said, the Westerners were doomed from consorting with the Messenger of the Black Wind. She told me they were going to do something terrible that night at Meidum. I... did not believe her.

He both LAUGHS and WEEPS.

75

TROUBLE IN THE SAND

75

ZEKE

What's Meidum?

HAZEL

It's another archeological site south of Dashur. Very old. Warren? What happened?

WARREN BESART

I took one of our camels and rode to Meidum to see - oh how I saw. Une vue diabolique! (*a hellish sight*)

ZEKE

What was it?

We hear chanting in AKLO and the ungodly bloodbath Besart describes. MUSIC UNDERSCORE.

WARREN BESART

(building as he relives the nightmare)

Evil, monsieur. La malfaisance! (*Evil.*) Sharun! (*Evil.*) It was a rite of evil: insane celebrants killing human sacrifices, guided by those who had entered the pyramid.

(MORE)

WARREN BESART (CONT'D)

The sand drank the blood of the victims and came to life. Allah 'akbar! (*God is great*). Monsters of hell, real ones, rose from the sand to feed upon the living. Only the expedition members were spared in the orgy of blood. I watched - a stone sphinx come to life, trampling madly over the living and the dead and then - la bête noire (*the black beast*) turned its eyes directly upon me!

END OF CHAPTER

76 ADVERTISEMENT

76

MUSIC JINGLE.

LESTER MAYHEW

Would you like to shed unwanted pounds without the annoyance of diets or exercise? Now you can lose weight simply by bathing with Lesser! Europe's newest reducing sensation, once available only to Berlin's elite, Lesser is now available everywhere. This is not a bath salt - is a scientific cosmetic preparation that encourages the action of your whole inner system. It invigorates while it reduces!

Lesser JINGLE melts away some pounds.

ANNOUNCER

Men and women alike can bathe away the pounds with Lesser - the Slim Figure Bath!

77 THE PARTY'S OVER

77

Start of Chapter MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Crippled by memories, the tortured Besart broke down.

Besart SCREAMS, GIBBERS, GROANS, then WHIMPERS.

ZEKE

Poor bastard.

WARREN BESART

My pipe - empty! No! What? You have brought more of me - oh Nuri, you are too kind. Only you can understand the pain - only you can...

HAZEL

Warren, who is Nuri?

WARREN BESART

The digger's mother. In El Wasta. She helped me back to the world of the living. I curse her kindness.
(breaking down into mumbled French)
C'est la fin du monde tel que nous le connaissons, et je me sens bien.
(*It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine.*)

HAZEL

(to Zeke)

Should we do something for him?

WARREN BESART

Yes! Yes, yes. Give him money. Poor Warren once had a fine collection of antiquities - sold off to buy hashish. Bye bye! He sold the last of it in November to the American. Farewell, my little black sphinx - you knew the secrets.

HAZEL

(lightbulb going off)

A black sphinx? About yea big?

WARREN BESART

Yes. Quartz. A fine piece. One of al-Shakti's, in fact...

Warren LAUGHS - pretty far gone at the moment.

HAZEL

We should get back to the hotel and have a closer look at that thing.

She gets up to go.

ZEKE
Warren... Warren?

WARREN BESART
(giggling madly)
Al-Shakti! Al-Shakti! Ici, minou!
(*Here, kitty...*)

ZEKE
Jesus. Warren, I'm going to leave a
few pounds for you here. Get
yourself some food and...
(to Hazel)
Ok, let's go.

WARREN BESART
(fading out)
Sphinx noir d'al-Shakti... (*al-
Shakti's black sphinx*).

TRANSITION MUSIC sets a different tone as we cut to the
desert outside Memphis.

78 THE CLIVE EXPEDITION

78

LESTER MAYHEW
Victoria and Gupta picked up Dr.
Kafour in a hired car and they
drove out to the site of the Clive
Expedition dig near Memphis, some
twenty miles south of Cairo.

Their CAR SLOWS TO A STOP on a remote desert road. WINDS BLOW
- it is hot.

VICTORIA
This? This is the Clive
Expedition's dig site? I would have
thought it's an army base.

GUPTA
Would such fortifications be
normal, Dr. Kafour?

DR. KAFOUR
Normal? No. Their dig at Gizeh was
robbed, but this is quite extreme.
Driver, pull up to the guard house
there.

LESTER MAYHEW

After being stopped by guards, a representative of the Clive Expedition, Martin Winfield, came to intercept the visitors.

Martin, 24 years old, knows little about archeology. He earned his place on the team by being the son of a British M.P.

MARTIN WINFIELD

I'm sorry, but we weren't expecting visitors today. You'll need to schedule--

DR. KAFOUR

We apologize for the inconvenience. I am Dr. Kafour from the Cairo Museum, escorting a guest whom the Penhew Foundation suggested come to the site.

MARTIN WINFIELD

Dr. Kafour... of course, I'm sorry, but as I said, we weren't expecting--

VICTORIA

I do realize, Mr...?

MARTIN WINFIELD

Martin Winfield, ma'am.

VICTORIA

...Mr. Winfield, that an unexpected guest is only slightly less vexing than a guest who is unwilling to depart. I am Mrs. Tennessee Claflin Cook. My majordomo, Mr. Gupta.

GUPTA

How do you do, Mr. Winfield? Surely you can spare a few moments for Lady Cook?

DR. KAFOUR

Perhaps Dr. Clive--

MARTIN WINFIELD

He's not available. And the site's not open to any unauthorized parties. After the recent troubles, I hope you understand.

VICTORIA

Oh, pooh. What a shame. I'm sure Mr. Gavigan will share my disappointment. He did so want me to see the site.

MARTIN WINFIELD

(dubious)

Mr. Gavigan sent you? When did you speak to him?

VICTORIA

(thinking fast)

Oh, it must have been two months ago.

MARTIN WINFIELD

I'm sorry to tell you, Lady Cook, we've had a telegram that Mr. Gavigan recently passed away.

VICTORIA

(thinking faster)

Yes dear, I heard. All the more reason I wanted to honor his last wish.

LESTER MAYHEW

Victoria quickly fished into her handbag for the Penhew Foundation business card that Jackson Elias had among his papers.

VICTORIA

Here's the card he gave me.

MARTIN WINFIELD

Hmmmm.

DR. KAFOUR

Mr. Winfield, what brings your expedition to Memphis? I understood that Gizeh was--

MARTIN WINFIELD

Uh, the government revoked our permits for that site after the theft. We got new permits. For digging here.

GUPTA

The theft - positively beastly. They took the mummy from your previous excavation?

MARTIN WINFIELD

That's right. In a matter of moments. It wasn't alone for more than fifteen minutes. Brazen.

DR. KAFOUR

I understood the sarcophagus was taken too?

MARTIN WINFIELD

Yes.

DR. KAFOUR

Remarkable. It must have weighed several tons.

MARTIN WINFIELD

Uh, the police are looking into it.

DR. KAFOUR

I'm not familiar with your work, Mr. Winfield. May I ask who else is working with you on this expedition?

MARTIN WINFIELD

Dr. Clive, of course. James Gardner, Johanna Specht, Agatha Broadmoor, and myself.

VICTORIA

Agatha Broadmoor? From London?

MARTIN WINFIELD

Um, yes.

VICTORIA

I know her! She's a dear old friend. But what the dickens is she doing on an archeological dig? Oh I must speak to her.

MARTIN WINFIELD

I'm afraid that's simply not possible. There's an important meeting here today. In fact, I really ought to be there myself.

VICTORIA

Well, I must say, Mr. Winfield, this visit has been nothing but disappointments. Could I impose upon you to pass a note along to her?

MARTIN WINFIELD
 (unhappily)
 Certainly, ma'am.

SCRIBBLING on paper.

GUPTA
 Excuse me, sir. Is it that tent
 over there where your meeting is
 being held?

MARTIN WINFIELD
 It is. Why?

GUPTA
 (floundering)
 It is... an impressive tent.

VICTORIA
 Let me apologize, Mr. Winfield.
 We've come unannounced and kept you
 from your duties quite long enough.
 If you could pass this along to
 Mrs. Broadmoor, I would be ever so
 grateful. Gentlemen, shall we?

FOOTSTEPS. CAR DOORS SHUTTING. The car DRIVES AWAY.

GUPTA
 If you don't mind my saying, madam,
 that seemed a load of bollix.

DR. KAFOUR
 Oh my!

VICTORIA
 Are you talking about his lies,
 Gupta, or mine? Oh, I'm shaking! I
 haven't bent the truth like that
 since my time in Washington.

DR. KAFOUR
 I know the government did not take
 away their permits.

GUPTA
 He did not seem to mind a several
 ton stone box that disappears just
 like that.

VICTORIA
 And why on earth would Agatha
 Broadmoor be here? She's a
 spiritualist, like my sister.

DR. KAFOUR
A spiritualist, madam?

VICTORIA
In London she would conduct seances
- talk to the spirits of the dead.

GUPTA
Did you note the fancy Duesenberg
parked near the tent where they
were meeting?

DR. KAFOUR
I did. I know that car well - it
belongs to Omar al-Shakti.

Ominous music hit!

79

THE SPHINX OF BLACK QUARTZ

79

LESTER MAYHEW
Back at Shepheard's, Hazel and Zeke
removed the small black sphinx from
the hotel safe.

HAZEL
Would you look at this thing?

ZEKE
What's it say?

HAZEL
Nothing! Not a damned thing. There
were numbers on it before - right
here. See? It's totally blank now.

ZEKE
You're sure they were--

HAZEL
Don't start with me, Zeke. I know
numbers when I see them!

ZEKE
Easy there.

HAZEL
Jackson got this from Besart. It
used to be al-Shakti's. Jackson
knew it was important and he wanted
us to have it.

ZEKE

He also wanted us to work together.

HAZEL

Together.

She SIGHS heavily.

ZEKE

Look, we betrayed him. We did. I felt lousy about it, you felt lousy about it, Jackson felt lousy about it. But he forgave us. He wanted us to move on. He's the one who put us back together.

HAZEL

Oh, so we're back together now?

ZEKE

Sometimes I think so. And then there's now.

HAZEL

Zeke... I've loved three men in my life. In the last two months, I've seen two of them die horribly. Right in front of my eyes. Yes, we're on this crazed crusade, but that doesn't mean I--OH MY GOD!

ZEKE

What?

HAZEL

There's numbers again! On the sphinx. Look!

ZEKE

That's not right.

HAZEL

Besart said it "knew secrets".
Tennie said we should "attend it".
It's trying to tell us something.

ZEKE

But who? How? I mean these are just numbers--

HAZEL

(a lightbulb goes off)
I think I know.
(to the Sphinx)
(MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)
 Jackson? Is this you? Are you
 trying to speak to us?
 (to Zeke)
 It's gone blank again. No, there's
 something appearing!

ZEKE
 It's a one! My god--

HAZEL
 It's Jackson Elias!

Dramatic MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

80 ADVERTISEMENT - NEWJUBEES

80

LESTER MAYHEW
 What secrets might this voice from
 beyond the grave reveal? Find out
 after a word from our sponsor.
 Tired of chewing on a stale piece
 of gum? Of old fashioned candies
 abrasive to your teeth and gums?
 Treat yourself to the confectionery
 delight that's has everyone
 aflutter: NewJubees! These tasty
 hard candies dissolve slowly in the
 mouth, letting you savor the
 flavor nine times longer than
 chewing gum. And with flavors like
 lilac, violet, rose, spearmint, and
 lemon - you'll want to get a box
 today. Maybe two!

NewJubes JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER
 Newjubees, the newest candy
 sensation from the New Jersey
 Confectionery Corporation.

81 RIDDLES

81

After Chapter MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke and Hazel stared at the stone sculpture in disbelief as the single number that had appeared on the bottom just as mysteriously vanished.

HAZEL

(simultaneously moved and excited)

Jackson... oh, uh, what exactly should we do here? Can you help us?

(she squeals)

There's numbers - more of them! Quick, write this down.

He SCRIBBLES as she reads them off.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

2181831510219176.

ZEKE

That's it?

HAZEL

It seems to have stopped. What does it mean? Jackson?

ZEKE

I think it's a code.

HAZEL

Can you decode it?

ZEKE

We used a code on a case once, in Virginia. You need a key to map the numbers back to letters of the alphabet.

HAZEL

So what's the key?

ZEKE

I dunno.

HAZEL

What do you mean you don't know!

ZEKE

There's all kinds! If your code's any good, you need a new key each time you use it.

HAZEL

Well what's it look like?

ZEKE

Depends. If you write it down, it's each letter of the alphabet - and then each letter gets a number.

HAZEL

So, did he have a key? Did he give you one? Would he hide it somewhere? C'mon, Zeke, think! It's important!

ZEKE

I don't know.

HAZEL

Jackson? We need the key! Jackson? Jackson!

Transition MUSIC.

82

TEA, CAKES, & MUMMIES

82

LESTER MAYHEW

The following day Victoria went to the Mena House Hotel near the pyramids at Giza to have afternoon tea with her old friend, Agatha Broadmoor. Heeding Zeke's rule, Gupta went with her but kept a discreet distance.

ELEGANT DINING ROOM WALLA. Agatha is in her early 60s - and a well established member of London society.

AGATHA BROADMOOR

(laughing)

I'll admit it gave me quite a turn at first, getting a note from dear old Tennie, since she's been dead for two years. Have you spoken to her lately?

VICTORIA

Yes. I knew you'd understand, Agatha. You and Tennessee always had the strongest psychic gifts. Such a delightful surprise to find you here! How on earth did you come to be associated with the expedition?

AGATHA BROADMOOR

I was recruited, if you'd believe it! Of course I knew Dr. Clive in London - mostly through his wife, Ingrid, you know. The two sat for a seance I conducted - years ago - and he was quite taken by my gifts. Then last year, out of the blue, Henry approached me asking if I'd be willing to join the team.

VICTORIA

Do most archeological expeditions bring along their own spiritualists?

AGATHA BROADMOOR

You jest, dear, of course. That side of the enterprise is considered confidential. But it's entirely wonderful, I assure you.

VICTORIA

Well, that's a relief. Were you present for that dreadful theft of the mummy? That must have been terrifying.

AGATHA BROADMOOR

(tittering a bit)
Oh, that. Well, I oughtn't say...
(whispering)
... a bit of legerdemain.
Misdirection.

VICTORIA

No.

AGATHA BROADMOOR

Yes!

VICTORIA

Aren't you the naughty one?

Agatha LAUGHS with glee.

AGATHA BROADMOOR

(hushed)
The "theft" was a cover story - the mummy is safe and sound in the hands of one of Clive's friends here.

VICTORIA

But why steal your own mummy?

AGATHA BROADMOOR

We are conducting an experiment in metaphysics.

VICTORIA

You're not!

AGATHA BROADMOOR

We are! And a thrilling one at that.

VICTORIA

And this, I suspect is where your gifts come into it?

AGATHA BROADMOOR

Ever shrewd, my Victoria.

(sotto voce again)

Yes! It's all been planned by this handsome and charming Egyptian, Omar. He's been collecting artifacts that belonged to the wife of an ancient pharaoh - an extraordinary beauty, I'm told. I will don the artifacts of the ancient queen and stand before her mummified remains as we bridge the centuries and allow her to speak through me! I am a conduit across millennia - to open such unseen vistas as man has never--

VICTORIA

Are you certain the voice speaking through you will be... how shall I put this... benign?

AGATHA BROADMOOR

(laughing at the concern)

Oh, Victoria, how you amuse. But you should be there for it. Yes, yes, you must!

VICTORIA

I'm flattered, of course but...

AGATHA BROADMOOR

Imagine us, a matched pair of little old ladies! I'll speak to Omar and get you invited.

(MORE)

AGATHA BROADMOOR (CONT'D)
 But remember, this is all strictly
 hush-hush. About the mummy and the
 resurrection. Not a word to anyone.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

83

NURI OF EL WASTA

83

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel continued to toil over the
 sphinx's code. As both Besart and
 Najjar had referred to a woman
 called Nuri, Dr. Kafour and Zeke
 journeyed to El Wasta, just south
 of Meidum, and spent a full day in
 search of the woman.

The desert is hot and WINDY.

ZEKE

Sorry to have dragged you out here,
 doc. No sign of Besart's ritual
 site and every third woman's called
 Nuri.

DR. KAFOUR

It is a common name, I fear. But
 yes, I think we had best return to
 the... Look - that young man
 beckons.

ZEKE

Geez, what happened to him?

DR. KAFOUR

Please to wait, I will speak with
 him.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

As Kafour spoke to the boy in
 Arabic, Zeke couldn't help thinking
 that the horrible scars on the
 young man's face and arm reminded
 him of the fate which had befallen
 the Essex boatman, Maclean.

DR. KAFOUR

(returning)

His name is Ubaid and he says his
 mother is called Nuri.

(MORE)

DR. KAFOUR (CONT'D)
And she cared for a mad Frenchman
some years ago.

ZEKE
Did he tell you how his face and
arm got so...

DR. KAFOUR
"A devil from the sky" he said.
These are simple people, Mr. Ford.
Come...

They WALK to Nuri's sad hovel.

UBAID
(slowly and with effort)
Alssadat almuhtarimin, hal
yumkinuni taqdim walidati, Nuri.
(*May I present my mother, Nuri.*)

LESTER MAYHEW
The young man introduced his
mother, a horribly disfigured
woman. Zeke and Kafour shuddered to
see she was missing both her hands,
and to realize that her hijab
barely hid the fact that her lower
jaw was gone.

She GURGLES pathetically.

DR. KAFOUR
(recovered)
Min diwaei saruri 'an tajeal min
maearifik , sayidati. (*A pleasure
to make your acquaintance, madam.*)

Nuri emits a SOUND OF HAPPINESS.

UBAID
'amiy saeidat wasuluk hu aljawab
ealaa salatiha. (*She is happy. She
prayed you would come.*)

DR. KAFOUR
He says she is happy. She prayed
that we would come.

ZEKE
I don't understand.

Nuri GURGLES again. SHUFFLING FEET and CREAKING WICKER.

LESTER MAYHEW

The boy struggled to present them with a basket, which seemed to contain something heavy.

UBAID

min fadlik , khudh hadhih alsalat wama hu fi aldaakhil. 'anaha muhimat jadaa. aistakhdam eayan alnuwr walzulami. 'iinah qadruk 'an tudamir alshara. *(Please, take this basket and what is inside. It is very important. Use the Eye of Light and Darkness. It is your destiny to destroy the evil.)*

DR. KAFOUR

She says it is our destiny to take what is inside the basket. Use the Eye of Light and Darkness - we are to destroy the evil.

(to Ubaid and Nuri)

Shukraan lihadhih alhadiat. allah 'akbar! *(thank you for this gift - god is great.)*

ZEKE

(wracked with guilt)

We don't have a gift for you. Um, here - take this - it's money. Good luck.

LESTER MAYHEW

The two walked silently back to their car, feeling the weight of their fate.

Zeke FIRES UP THEIR CAR and starts DRIVING.

ZEKE

I don't even want to know what's in there. The Eye of whatever it is...

DR. KAFOUR

It's stone - polished limestone with a hieroglyph. The symbol is odd - it's been broken.

ZEKE

Any idea where it came from or what it means?

DR. KAFOUR

The stone is somewhat pink. I would guess thousands of years ago, it was facing on the Red Pyramid at Dashur.

ZEKE

Dashur? I thought that was the Bent Pyramid. They all sound--

DR. KAFOUR

No, no. You're right. Both are there.

ZEKE

I don't get it. I never get it.

DR. KAFOUR

Some believe the Bent Pyramid to be cursed - an evil place - and that the Red Pyramid was built to keep that evil in. It could be that poor woman has given us a very special gift.

MUSIC TRANSITION back to Shepheard's Hotel.

84

THE INVITE

84

LESTER MAYHEW

Everyone met up again at the hotel, where room service delivered a telegram for Victoria.

She TEARS it open. Victoria GASPS.

HAZEL

Victoria - are you all right? What does it say?

VICTORIA

"The time has come for us to talk". Omar al-Shakti has invited me to his plantation tomorrow.

HAZEL

Agatha Broadmoor must have told him your real name. She ratted you out.

ZEKE

Damn. You can't go out there - his men nearly killed Cecil.

GUPTA

I for one shall not sit idly by!
This plan of theirs, to somehow
bring back the evil queen, must be
stopped.

VICTORIA

Quite right, Gupta. Perhaps we
should confront Al-Shakti directly.
There's nothing to gain by ignoring
him, especially since he knows
where to find us.

DR. KAFOUR

Perhaps, Mrs. Woodhull, you could
meet somewhere safer, in public
with other people and guards.

HAZEL

Your museum?

DR. KAFOUR

Indeed. We can all be there and I
can put the guards on high alert.

VICTORIA

Very well. I'll wire a reply: noon
tomorrow at the Egyptian Museum.

OMINOUS MUSIC.

85

TERROR AT THE MUSEUM

85

The HUSHED CHATTER of museum-goers echoes.

LESTER MAYHEW

The next day, Dr. Kafour stood near
Victoria in the grand central
gallery of the museum, as Hazel,
Zeke and Gupta posed as tourists
not far away, pretending to examine
the granite statues and glass
display cases.

DR. KAFOUR

See anything?

VICTORIA

Not yet.

Suddenly a cat SCREECHES in fear.

MUSEUM GUARD

A cat. Catch it!

The crowd reacts, some with SCREAMS, some with LAUGHTER, as the guards CHASE the cat through the hall.

MUSEUM GUARD (CONT'D)

Close the doors! Cut off its escape!

The sound of the DOORS CLOSING, but suddenly the sounds of MORE CATS. There are dozens, maybe hundreds of cats. The crowd becomes FRIGHTENED. A VERY OMINOUS HUM.

LESTER MAYHEW

The electric lights in the gallery suddenly grew very dim, and in the weird gloom the investigators saw what appeared to be an eight-foot-tall statue of a cat-headed god moving through the crowd.

More AD LIB SCREAMS. A SURGING CROWD. STRANGE FOOTSTEPS.

DR. KAFOUR

Allaena, (*my goodness!*) what is happening?

GUPTA

(rushing to her side)

Madame, we must go! The statues are coming to life!

VICTORIA

That's no statue!

DRAMATIC MUSIC.

END OF CHAPTER

LESTER MAYHEW

Did you know that fire is one of the leading causes of death among children? Household fires are a peril - often spread by children's flammable toys. Don't put your family at needless risk - buy a Flufkin Teddy Bear today.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

Unlike traditional children's toys which are packed with incendiary rags or cotton fibre, Flufkin toys are stuffed with soft, squeezable asbestos. This miraculous mineral floss is fireproof, moth-repellent, rat-proof and practically indestructible. Both you and your child will sleep soundly knowing a Flufkin toy is in their arms.

Flufkin JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER

Flufkin Asbestos Toys - the safest friend your child will ever have.

87

SHAKTI

87

Start of Episode MUSIC. The FRIGHTENED CROWD in the dim museum AD LIBS about the darkness and the CATS.

LESTER MAYHEW

The enormous cat-headed figure walked up to Victoria and stopped, staring at her with unblinking pale green eyes. Suddenly, stepping out from behind the creature, was a tall, rotund man, impeccably dressed, with a surprisingly genial expression on his dark bearded face.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

Hetep, my pet! Come to me!

LESTER MAYHEW

As the stunned Victoria and the others watched, the enormous figure of Hetep transformed into a beautiful white Persian cat that leapt, purring, into the man's arms.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

(calmly)

Victoria Woodhull, tsk tsk tsk.

VICTORIA

Mr. Al-Shakti, I presume.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

I am here with an offer. A seat at our table, if you will. You outplayed Gavigan, and you have my compliments. My lord and master finds you... intriguing. We stand upon the brink of a great and wondrous future. Power and glory await those who join us - like your friend Mrs. Broadmoor.

VICTORIA

And for those who refuse?

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

I think you know what happens to them. But it is the preference of certain "powers" that you stand with us.

Hetep PURRS.

VICTORIA

Fond as I am of cats, I'm afraid I must decline.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

(stepping in close to her)
I doubt you will be offered a second chance.

VICTORIA

I'm not asking for one.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

A pity. For all of you.

Hetep SNARLS and scratches Victoria on the face. She WINCES. There's a strange sound like the CRACK OF THUNDER and the cats HOWL. The DOORS OPEN. The TOURISTS RUN.

LESTER MAYHEW

Suddenly the lights in the gallery returned to normal, and the dozens of cats ran out. Al-Shakti and Hetep vanished with the crowd.

GUARD

The doors are open - ladies and gentlemen - please do not run!

HAZEL

Victoria, your face! You're bleeding!

VICTORIA

Mr. al-Shakti's cat - I'm all right.

DR. KAFOUR

(deeply frightened)

That was no cat. That was a djinn - a demon that can change its shape. allah yahminana. (*God protect us*).

ZEKE

What'd he say?

VICTORIA

He made us an offer. One we really can't refuse. I refused it.

ZEKE

So that's not gonna go over well. We should get out of here.

HAZEL

Do you mean this museum, or Egypt?

VICTORIA

Oh, no!

HAZEL

What is it?

VICTORIA

Cecil's all alone. Come on, let's get him back and we'll plan our next move.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

The team hurried to the Deaconess Hospital and were relieved to find Cecil alive, in one piece and up and about. A large bandage covering his left eye was the only sign of his injury. A long conversation in the hospital garden brought him up to speed.

CECIL

Well, you've learned a lot but we're still in a pickle.

GUPTA

A pickle! This al-Shakti is after us! He could strike again at any time.

ZEKE

Or worse.

DR. KAFOUR

That man commands unholy powers. I know you do not share my faith, but I believe prayer can bring Allah's favor.

CECIL

From what you've described, there is a vulnerability in the cult's plan.

GUPTA

What's that?

CECIL

Agatha Broadmoor. If something happens to her, they can't pull off their resurrection scheme.

GUPTA

By jingo, you're right! If we--

HAZEL

I know if I could just figure out this sphinx's riddle, Jackson could--

ZEKE

You don't know that. We don't know anything about it. And it's a code, not a riddle.

VICTORIA

If we could get Agatha out of here, take her away somewhere safe and keep her hidden. It might not be hard to do. In the Arab world it's easy for a woman to be invisible.

HAZEL

You think she'd go for that?

VICTORIA

Maybe not willingly.

ZEKE

Are we talking about a kidnapping?

KAFOUR

Oh my goodness.

GUPTA

Yes, Zeke! I favor decisive action!
Let us forge our plan.

CECIL

I should lead it.

AD LIB OBJECTIONS.

CECIL (CONT'D)

I'm the only one al-Shakti hasn't
seen. And, if you'll pardon my
saying so, I wouldn't mind getting
a little payback.

ZEKE

Cecil, buddy, I hear ya, but you've
only got one eye. No offense.

CECIL

In the land of the blind the one
eyed man is king.

The dramatic pre-action sequence MUSIC builds!

89

ABDUCTION

89

LESTER MAYHEW

Outside the Mena House Hotel,
Victoria and Gupta waited in an
idling getaway car. Zeke and Dr.
Kafour, dressed as Cairene
peasants, positioned themselves
outside the hotel's doors.

STREET TRAFFIC outside the hotel.

ZEKE

(whispering)

Yeah, the Brotherhood's got their
men here guarding the place.

DR. KAFOUR

How can you be sure?

ZEKE

See that one, there, with the bad
teeth?

DR. KAFOUR

Yes?

ZEKE

Before he met me, he didn't have bad teeth. I broke that one's arm. And that one, over there, with the black eye - he's the one who hit Cecil.

DR. KAFOUR

Sir, I don't believe I'm cut out for this.

ZEKE

You wanted to take action against evil? This is what it looks like. Do it like we planned - you'll be great.

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil and Hazel were disguised as Arab women in full burqas covering all but their eyes. The guards paid them no attention as they walked right into the hotel. Once inside, Cecil ducked into a service corridor and removed his burqa to reveal a bellboy's uniform beneath it. They hurried up to Agatha Broadmoor's room.

HAZEL

C'mon, the coast is clear.

Cecil KNOCKS on her door.

AGATHA BROADMOOR

(from within)

Who is it?

CECIL

Hotel service, madam. I have a message from Victoria Woodhull.

AGATHA BROADMOOR

(coming to the door)

Oh, delightful!

She OPENS THE DOOR and Cecil BARGES IN. We hear a GASP and a brief TUSSLE.

LESTER MAYHEW

Moments later Cecil emerged with Agatha, now gagged and wearing the burqa.

HAZEL

Still clear, hurry - to the car.

MUSIC. Return to the EXTERIOR SOUNDSCAPE.

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil and Hazel hurried the rather resistant Agatha to the getaway car, but not without drawing the attention of the Brotherhood's guards.

HAKIM

(shouting)

Nzarata! madha yafealun hunak?
(*Look, what are they doing over there?*)

BLACK-EYED GUARD

Mahlaan , ya rifaq , aihsil ealaa
alsyd alshshakitii! (*Hey, you guys, get the boss.*)

HAKIM

(yelling!)

syd alshshakitii , shay' ma yhdth!
(*Mr. al-Shakti, something is happening*).

CECIL

Go, Gupta!

Gupta's CAR PEELS OUT.

LESTER MAYHEW

Al-Shakti came running at the sound of the guards' alarm.

HAKIM

What do we do?

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

The car! Follow the car.
(calling off to another guard)
Fetch my car at once, do not let them get away. And bring the guns!

LESTER MAYHEW

In the chaos of the moment, Cecil, Dr. Kafour, Zeke and Hazel ran at the guards, doubling the confusion and buying time for the car with Agatha.

ZEKE

(to Dr. Kafour)

Ready. Like I showed you, just stick out your leg and trip them. Now!

DR. KAFOUR

Allah forgive me!

A guard YELPS as he trips over Kafour's leg with a painful TUMBLE to the ground.

ZEKE

Hey, how's the arm, Hakim?

HAKIM

No, not you again!

POW! PAIN! SHOUTS IN ARABIC. RUNNING about. Al-Shakti's car SKIDS UP and then PEELS OUT.

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil even found a moment for his erstwhile assailant.

CECIL

Excuse me, sir, I have something for you.

BLACK-EYED GUARD

What? Begone, I--

WHAM! Cecil punches him out cold. MUSIC!

90

BETRAYAL

90

LESTER MAYHEW

In the speeding car, Victoria helped Agatha remove the gag under the burqa.

Gupta DRIVES quickly through the streets of Cairo.

VICTORIA

I'm so sorry, my dear, I know this must be terrifying for you.

AGATHA BROADMOOR
Victoria? This is outrageous!

VICTORIA
I know - and I'm sorry, but it's vitally important that we get you out of Cairo.

Gupta suddenly brings the CAR TO A HALT.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
Gupta! What are you doing? Why are you stopping here? We have to get her to the train station immediately! They'll be right behind us!

GUPTA
That's what I'm counting on, Madame. I am sorry to do this but this action is imperative! Give me that veil!

VICTORIA
(confused, hurt and terrified)
Gupta, no!

END OF CHAPTER

91 ADVERTISEMENT - OZONE PAPERS

91

LESTER MAYHEW
If you're one of millions of Americans who suffers from asthma, chronic bronchitis or stertorous breathing, you'll want to listen carefully. Your local druggist is now selling Ozone Paper - the remedy for these serious conditions. These medically treated papers can be easily burned in your ashtray, releasing dense fumes which will open your airways and lead you toward sound and refreshing sleep.

Ozone Papers Jingle

ANNOUNCER
Breathe easy once again with Ozone Papers - ask your neighborhood druggist for them today.

Start of episode MUSIC. The CAR SKIDS, the DOOR OPENS.

LESTER MAYHEW

The getaway car skidded to a halt
in front of Shepheard's Hotel.
Gupta hurried to the rear door,
grabbed Victoria's arm and hurried
her to the front steps of the
hotel. But--

The Brotherhood's cars SCREECH in behind them!

GUPTA

(loudly)
Come, Madame Victoria!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

LESTER MAYHEW

Al-Shakti's men opened fire, and
Gupta and Victoria went down in a
hail of bullets, blood staining the
marble.

The CROWD SCREAMS in terror and RUNS.

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

Omar al-Shakti emerged from one of
the cars and stood over the
prostrate victims.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

(loudly)
But how terrible! Another murder in
our streets. Someone, go for the
police!

LESTER MAYHEW

The cult leader then leaned in over
Victoria's body to get in a final
dig.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

(quietly)
I warned you, Mrs. Woodhull, that
you wouldn't get another chance.

LESTER MAYHEW

He turned the bullet-riddled body
over and pulled back her veil only
to see the face of Agatha
Broadmoor!

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

What? Noooo!

(storming over to the
dying Gupta)

You! It's you who have done this!

GUPTA

(gasping - near death)

"Violence does, in truth, recoil
upon the violent, and the schemer
falls into the pit which he digs
for another."

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

Spare me your pacifist Hindu
prattle!

GUPTA

Sherlock Holmes, actually.

OMAR AL-SHAKTI

Yesh shir uma yalki!

LESTER MAYHEW

And with an arcane incantation, al-
Shakti squeezed the remaining life
out of Gupta.

Gupta GROANS in instant agony as al-Shakti magically snuffs
out his life. Sad MUSIC.

93

FELUCCA

93

LESTER MAYHEW

As planned, the rest of the team
escaped to a felucca hired by Hazel
and sailed up the Nile, mourning
their fallen friend.

LIGHT WIND. BIRDS. THE NILE.

ZEKE

To Gupta, my friends, and his brave
and crazy scheme. He kicked
Victoria out of the car at the
mosque, knowing they'd follow him
to the hotel.

DR. KAFOUR

Ah, so he made her wear the burqa
so she wouldn't be recognized? And
he veiled Mrs. Broadmoor so they'd
be confused.

(MORE)

DR. KAFOUR (CONT'D)

(impressed)

He sacrificed himself to stop their plan.

HAZEL

Now cracks a noble heart - good night, sweet prince.

VICTORIA

(deeply moved)

And a true and loyal friend. But had I known his plan, I wouldn't have accepted it - not for one instant.

CECIL

That's why he didn't tell us. He knew.

Victoria SOBS quietly.

DR. KAFOUR

This will be a serious disruption to the Brotherhood's efforts.

CECIL

Of course it will. Agatha's... out of the picture, we tipped off the authorities about the shooting - it'll make life hard for al-Shakti.

ZEKE

But what happens now? Where are we going?

HAZEL

I broke the code. The black sphinx Jackson left us. We can get messages from him through it.

DR. KAFOUR

This sounds like fortune telling. This is haram: forbidden to me.

ZEKE

I've seen it, doc. It's... disturbing.

VICTORIA

I've seen it too - well, not exactly like this. How did you solve the riddle?

HAZEL

I realized the key was on a paper Jackson left at the Hotel Chelsea.

VICTORIA

I remember that note - something about a black sphinx, judge my vow? Odd spelling.

HAZEL

Yes, I had thought it was because he was writing in a hurry, but it was a pangram.

ZEKE

A what?

HAZEL

A sentence that contains every letter of the alphabet exactly once. It was the key.

ZEKE

You asked him what we should do, and we got those numbers.

CECIL

So what do the numbers mean?

HAZEL

Just two words: "Bent Pyramid". That's where this boat is taking us. We'll be there before dawn.

Some nice SUSPENSE MUSIC leads us to:

LESTER MAYHEW

In the early morning gloom, the investigators made their way to the Bent Pyramid at Dashur. Four and a half thousand years old, the crooked sides of the monument rose hundreds of feet out of the sand. Generous bakshish from Victoria bought their way past the guards and they approached the pyramid's seldom used west entrance.

Their feet ECHO on stone.

DR. KAFOUR

I have been in this pyramid on several occasions. What is it that you're hoping to find, Miss Claflin?

HAZEL

I don't know. But there's something Jackson wants us to see. I brought along a couple of torches.

DR. KAFOUR

This is a false funerary chamber meant to confuse thieves. It has only these great alabaster pillars.

CECIL

Everyone, look around, maybe there's an inverted ankh, or a--

VICTORIA

I feel something... a presence. A powerful, spiritual...

HAZEL

Wait! Here, look! Cecil, you were right! Thank you, Jackson!

A massive STONE SLIDES. AWESOME MUSIC.

DR. KAFOUR

But how can that be? Archeologists have searched every square inch of...

ZEKE

Now you know how I feel half the time, doc. C'mon, let's follow her.

LESTER MAYHEW

A hidden doorway revealed a staircase leading toward the apex of the pyramid. A strangely asymmetrical arch at the top opened into a room with six short pillars and a raised dais on which sat a throne carved of black stone.

CECIL

What is this place?

VICTORIA

I dare say it looks like a throne room.

HAZEL

Can you read the hieroglyphics, Dr. Kafour?

DR. KAFOUR

Bring the light, let me see...
 (gasping with fear)
 Lianqadhna allah! (*god save us!*)

HAZEL

What is it?

DR. KAFOUR

"Kneel ye in supplication before
 the great darkness that is
 Nyarlathotep."

VICTORIA

The god worshipped by the
 Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh..

HAZEL

And the Cult of the Bloody Tongue.

DR. KAFOUR

"He that bears a thousand faces and
 dwells in darkness."

VICTORIA

The presence I felt - that's what
 it is.

HAZEL

Look at this. It's some kind of
 astronomical chart. That's got to
 be the moon there... I think it's
 showing an eclipse.

CECIL

This wall... I think it's a map.
 This would be Africa. That's
 Australia. This would be Southeast
 Asia.

(pause)

The Egyptians wouldn't have known
 about these places, would they?

DR. KAFOUR

No, sir, they would not. It must
 have been added more recently.

ZEKE

There's gems on the map. One down
 there.

DR. KAFOUR
East Africa - Kenya or perhaps
Tanzania.

ZEKE
One here.

DR. KAFOUR
West Australia. I believe it's just
desert out there.

ZEKE
And this one.

DR. KAFOUR
That would be near Shanghai.

VICTORIA
All places Elias was interested in.

CECIL
All places where this cult seems to
be active.

HAZEL
It makes a sort of triangle, with
this black arc running through it.

ZEKE
What the heck? I don't get this at
all.

DR. KAFOUR
More writing here on the wall: "as
the stars come together,
Nyarlathotep shall father a child
and the child shall be born within
the Mountain of the Black Wind. And
lo the birth shall presage the
dawning glory of a new dark age.
The age of man ends in wondrous
destruction and so begins the age
of Nyarlathotep."

ZEKE
That sounds bad.

CECIL
Does it say anything about when
this will happen?

DR. KAFOUR
No...

HAZEL

Maybe the stars being in line could have something to do with this star chart. I have paper - I'll make a rubbing of it.

CECIL

What about this mountain. Have you ever heard of it?

DR. KAFOUR

No.

VICTORIA

I think the Carlyle Expedition was somehow trying to help this happen. They went to East Africa. Penhew may be in China. They get artifacts from Australia.

ZEKE

You think they were trying to help end the world? That doesn't make sense. I don't get any of this.

FOOTSTEPS.

HAZEL

Zeke, no, don't sit on his throne--

MUSIC OF DOOM. AN OMINOUS HUM.

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke sat, and suddenly all torches went out, plunging the room into darkness. Then stones atop each of the six pillars blazed with a strange blue light and a strange magnetic tingle buzzed through the air. Something had arrived - and it spoke through the body sitting on its throne.

ZEKEHOTEP

(vocal FX)

Well done - you've followed in their footsteps and now you stand before me.

HAZEL

(tentatively)

Zeke?

ZEKEHOTEP

I think not. Let us say he speaks
for me.

DR. KAFOUR

(terrified)

Nyarlathotep. allah yahfizuna mn
hdha alshaytan. (*God protect us
from this Demon*).

ZEKEHOTEP

Allah will not, or shall I say,
cannot save you. But you need not
be afraid... yet.

VICTORIA

What do you want from us?

ZEKEHOTEP

Perhaps a better question is what
do you want from me?

VICTORIA

We don't want anything from you.

ZEKEHOTEP

(amused)

Oh, sweet madam, I know each of
your heart's desires - and I can
give you what you want. Feeling the
squeeze of your own mortality?
You've come to the right place.

VICTORIA

I... we want nothing you can give.

ZEKEHOTEP

Artfully worded, but so very
untrue. I'm impressed by you five -
all of you have done so well. But
poor Gupta. He made a foolish
choice. As did Mr. Carlyle and his
friends.

CECIL

What do you mean?

ZEKEHOTEP

Oh, you haven't yet pieced it
together? You see, I offered them a
choice too. And can you believe it?
They refused. Behold!

APPARITION MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Suddenly the air in the chamber began to shimmer, and an image appeared to float before the investigators. They could see Carlyle, Masters, Huston, Penhew and Brady in a picturesque clearing surrounded by African jungle.

The sounds of the AFRICAN FOREST.

ROGER CARLYLE

Everyone, there's a baby elephant and her mum just south of camp. Come see!

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Oh, good show.

HYPATIA MASTERS

Let me grab my camera.

DR. HUSTON

It'll be hard to top that troop of baboons from this morning.

An OMINOUS RUMBLE.

JACK BRADY

It's an earthquake!

The shaking becomes MORE SEVERE.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Good god, what is that *thing* up there in the sky?

The piercing SHRIEK of a Hunting Horror.

ROGER CARLYLE

It's coming - it's diving right for us! Run!

DR. HUSTON

It's the vengeance of Nyarlathotep - I told you we should have accepted his--

A monstrous creature ERUPTS from the ground. SCREAMING.

ROGER CARLYLE

Spare me!

LESTER MAYHEW

The apocalyptic vision showed the destruction of the Carlyle Expedition in gruesome detail. Their slaughter complete, the monstrous apparition faded into smoke.

96

DEFIANCE

96

ZEKEHOTEP

(bemused)

You've been wondering what became of them. Now you know.

VICTORIA

See here, I don't know who or what you are. I don't know what you can do or have done. But I don't believe those people died like that. I don't believe it for a moment.

CECIL

I think they're still alive!

ZEKEHOTEP

Do you now? I dare say you know less about both life and death than you think. I shall enjoy being witness to your education.

HAZEL

We're not afraid!

ZEKEHOTEP

No? Even the brave know their lot, Miss Claflin. All doors are closed to you; all your dreams are doomed; all your actions futile. Bon chance. Until we meet again.

MUSIC! ZEKE GROANS.

LESTER MAYHEW

A cold wind bearing the smell of death swept through the room, and the burning gems went dark. Zeke shook and tumbled from the throne onto the floor.

HAZEL

Zeke! NO!

Thrilling end of episode music!

END OF CHAPTER

97 OF GOATS AND TIRES

97

MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

Dark Adventure Radio Theatre
presents part four of "Masks of
Nyarlathotep" with your host,
Lester Mayhew.

LESTER MAYHEW

The experience in the Bent Pyramid
terrified everyone, but it left
Zeke shell shocked and barely able
to take care of himself. Dr. Kafour
arranged clandestine transit on the
first available transport he could
find, an aeroplane flying a cargo
of goats and tires to Beirut. There
in the hold, the exhausted
adventurers did their best to
gather their wits.

The DRONE of an underpowered airplane engine and the
occasional BAA of a goat. A SAD MUSICAL UNDERSCORE sets the
tone.

HAZEL

(subdued)

Victoria, will we be able to send a
wire from Beirut?

VICTORIA

I'm sure we will, dear. To whom?

HAZEL

(choking up)

My mother. I just... what if I
never see her again?

VICTORIA

Oh, Hazel, my sweet girl. Shhh. You
will. Of course you will.

HAZEL

What would I even tell her? Who
could believe this?

VICTORIA
Do you want to stop?

HAZEL
(weeping)
More than anything. But not until
we're done.

VICTORIA
My brave girl.

CECIL
When I started this investigation I
was following a trail. Now it's
following me. Following us. We'll
see it through together. Right, Dr.
Kafour? I'm sorry you've been swept
up in all this, but I'm glad you're
with us.

DR. KAFOUR
(sad)
Allah may test us by means of
danger, and hunger, and loss of
worldly goods and our lives. Let us
give glad tidings unto those who
are patient in adversity.

VICTORIA
Are you feeling tested, doctor?

DR. KAFOUR
Egypt is my home. I have never left
it before.

Zeke GROANS/BABBLES a little.

VICTORIA
How's Zeke, Hazel? Any better?

HAZEL
Not yet. Having *that* in his head.
It was just too much for him.

VICTORIA
Best that he should rest then. We
all should.

GENTLE TRANSITION MUSIC eases us into Beirut.

LESTER MAYHEW

In Beirut, Victoria booked them rooms in the Dar al Achrafieh hotel, with a magnificent sea view. After taking some time to recuperate, the team gathered on a sun-drenched patio to form a new plan.

SOOTHING SOUNDS OF THE OCEAN. DISTANT GULLS.

VICTORIA

I suppose we've all given some thought to what we do next?

HAZEL

I have. I keep trying to get another answer out of Jackson through the sphinx. I ask it questions, but I've gotten nothing.

VICTORIA

And Zeke, how are you this morning?

He doesn't answer.

HAZEL

He's still not speaking. But he seems calmer today. How are you, Cecil?

CECIL

I'm trying to get the hang of keeping the damned monocle in place. That French optician in town was ready to make me a spring-framed custom job, but Providence Trust wouldn't pay for it. I had to settle for the rimless kind.

HAZEL

Wait a minute. Are you telling me your own insurance company won't approve half a pair of glasses?

CECIL

It's not the policy.

HAZEL

That's crazy! Why didn't you just put it on your expense account?

CECIL

(genuine)

I couldn't do that. We classify spectacles as personal items. That would be fraud.

HAZEL

(laughing)

Cecil, you are the limit.

CECIL

I'll get used to it. I just have to try not to look surprised all the time.

DR. KAFOUR

That is getting easier every day.

VICTORIA

Well, I think you look quite distinguished. You know my friend Karl Marx had the same problem. He would put a bit of tape along the edge of his monocle and it worked a treat.

HAZEL

I don't know Victoria, I doubt the people at Providence Trust would approve any Marxist policy!

A WEAK LAUGH is shared. WAVES CRASH. A moment of peace.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

OK, I'll say it. I'm not completely thrilled about it, but I think we should press on to Kenya. Jackson went there, the Carlyle Expedition ended there one way or another. We need to go there if we're gonna find out what really happened.

DR. KAFOUR

It's the home of The Bloody Tongue cult, yes?

HAZEL

(with a sigh)

Yeah. It's definitely risky.

CECIL

I also think we need to see what's happening in Australia. It was on the map in the Bent Pyramid.

(MORE)

CECIL (CONT'D)
Jackson was looking into
information with that professor...

HAZEL
Professor Cowles at Miskatonic...

CECIL
Henson Manufacturing was getting
materials from west Australia.
That's records and paperwork, the
kind of thing I can sink my teeth
into. I think we have to follow it
up.

HAZEL
There's no time for both. If I'm
right about the astronomy from the
pyramid, there's an eclipse coming
in January. The clock is ticking on
a countdown for something and we
can't wait around for it.

ZEKE
(barely audible)
The rule.

HAZEL
Zeke! What did you say?

ZEKE
Never go anywhere alone.

CECIL
No. You're right - by god, you're
right. None of us goes anywhere
alone. But we could split into two
teams. Zeke, Hazel and Dr. Kafour
could go to Kenya.

VICTORIA
Yes! And I could accompany Cecil to
Australia. We could stay in contact
by wiring a neutral party. Perhaps
Inspector Barrington in London?

HAZEL
Just the two of you, Victoria?

VICTORIA
A party of five is bound to split
up unevenly. Until Zeke is...
feeling himself again, Dr. Kafour
should go with you. What do you
think, Dr. Kafour?

DR. KAFOUR

I have prayed over this and given it much thought. And Cecil's point is well taken. I will accompany Miss Hazel on one condition.

HAZEL

What's that?

DR. KAFOUR

From this point forward, you must call me Ali.

MUSIC.

99

ALL ABOARD

99

LESTER MAYHEW

A flurry of telegrams secured passage for Hazel, Zeke and Ali on a Norddeutscher Lloyd steamer that would take them through the Suez Canal down the east coast of Africa to Mombasa.

VICTORIA

Cecil, our transport will be by private vessel.

CECIL

I don't understand.

VICTORIA

Neily Vanderbilt is here in Beirut. We'll be sailing on his yacht, the North Star.

CECIL

Cornelius Vanderbilt's son - didn't he bail you out of jail in New York?

VICTORIA

Great-grandson actually. But yes, I've remained close with Neily over the years. My dear sister Tennie was Cornelius' paramour, and he helped set us up in our first brokerage house, so I've known the family forever. When Neily wanted to marry against his father's wishes, I stood by Neily's side. He's been kind to me ever since.

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

They typically summer in the Mediterranean, so I sent him a wire and proposed an outing.

CECIL

That's some outing. And this yacht of his is up to a trip to Australia?

VICTORIA

Oh my, yes. He was Commodore of the New York yacht club and won the America's Cup in '03. He thinks it will be fun!

MUSIC.

100 BON VOYAGE

100

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil and Victoria saw the others off as they embarked for Africa.

A GANGWAY for a large steamer ship.

HAZEL

I'll miss Beirut. So peaceful and beautiful and civilized. And safe.

VICTORIA

I expect you to take good care of these men, Hazel.

HAZEL

I shall.

VICTORIA

You're such a dear child. Do take care of yourself, my lovely, lovely girl. I couldn't be prouder of you.
(quietly)
Hazel, dear, do let go of my arm.

HAZEL

But what if we never--

VICTORIA

Nothing can ever really separate us. I still talk to Tennie, and you're as much a sister to me as she ever was.

HAZEL
Oh, Victoria!

VICTORIA
(nearly succumbing)
Remember, we're Claflins, darling.
We are not ruled by our fears.

CECIL
Goodbye, Hazel, and good luck. Safe
travels, Ali.

DR. KAFOUR
And to you, sir.

CECIL
Zeke, you be careful out there.
Keep your dukes up.

ZEKE
(frail)
I'll try. Goodbye.

The ship's horn BLASTS. The crowd murmur SWELLS.

HAZEL
That's us. All aboard. Good luck!

ADVENTURE MUSIC!

101 TRY A LITTLE TENDERNESS

101

LESTER MAYHEW
On the long voyage to Mombasa, Zeke
and Hazel suddenly found themselves
in the unique position of spending
time alone together with no one
trying to kill them.

Zeke is improving a little but only displays about 10% of the
spunkiness we used to see.

ZEKE
I can't stand this.

HAZEL
You're doing better, Zeke. You are.
I can see it every day.

ZEKE
I hate it.

HAZEL

Hate what?

ZEKE

I'm scared. I never used to be scared. All my life... fear was something for other people.

HAZEL

Sure.

ZEKE

And now, it's like he, it, left this hole in my head. And I'm afraid he's gonna swoop back in it again. I'd rather die than have him in me again.

HAZEL

Don't say that Zeke. Everyone I lo... care for, dies. Not you. You're strong. You're a fighter. And you're not alone. I'll never let you go anywhere alone. Do you hear me?

ZEKE

Okay. Hazel, I...

HAZEL

Shhh. We have a few days before we get there. Use them to rest and build yourself up. I need you. Okay?

ZEKE

But what about you? How I am gonna be there for you? I don't want you to be scared.

HAZEL

I'm a Claflin, Zeke. We're not ruled by our fears.

Transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

After rounding the horn of Africa, their ship landed at the bustling port city of Mombasa.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

While waiting for transport to Nairobi, the intrepid trio decided to pay a visit to Ahja Singh, the exporter who shipped parcels to Ju-Ju House in New York. They warily approached his warehouse near Kilindini Harbor.

KILINDINI HARBOR WALLA.

DR. KAFOUR

The export offices are there. What do we do now?

HAZEL

We need to see their records. Ali, you have to just... go in there and ask for them.

DR. KAFOUR

Me?!

HAZEL

We can't all go, and I can't leave Zeke alone. Besides, as an Egyptian, you blend in better.

DR. KAFOUR

Why would they show me their records? I do not have Cecil's credentials.

HAZEL

You work in a museum. You must know plenty about international paperwork. Wing it!

MUSIC. The background sounds of a KENYAN EXPORT OFFICE - whatever that sounds like. A DOOR OPENS.

OPINDER SINGH

Greetings. May I be of assistance, sir?

DR. KAFOUR

I need to speak to the manager. I have serious business.

OPINDER SINGH

I am Opinder Singh, his factotum, sir. How may I assist?

DR. KAFOUR

Dr. Boulos Ayad, from the Royal
Department of Entomology. We've had
complaints regarding shipments--

OPINDER SINGH

Entomology, sir?

DR. KAFOUR

Insects. Bugs?

OPINDER SINGH

Oh no, sir. We do not ship bugs.

DR. KAFOUR

(winging it)

It is most illegal. But we have
reports of dermestes maculatus
being shipped by you from the East
African Coleopteran Distributory.

OPINDER SINGH

The what?

DR. KAFOUR

These are flesh-eating beetles!
Very bad.

OPINDER SINGH

Flesh beetles!? No, sir. This is
not one of our customers.

DR. KAFOUR

I hope you can confirm that, or
there will be heavy fines indeed.
You will be shut down.

OPINDER SINGH

Look here, sir. Our account book
shows our customers...

LESTER MAYHEW

Dr. Kafour quickly skimmed the list
of origins and destinations -
taking note of: Emerson Imports,
New York; The Penhew Foundation,
London; Omar al-Shakti, Cairo; Ho
Fang Imports, Shanghai; Taan Kaur,
Nairobi, and Randolph Shipping Co.,
Port Hedland, Australia.

DR. KAFOUR

No beetles.

OPINDER SINGH

No, sir.

DR. KAFOUR

I am glad for your sake to see it.
Well, my report shall be very
brief. Thank you, sir.

FOOTSTEPS.

OPINDER SINGH

Sir, what office did you say you
were from? Sir?

The DOOR CLOSES behind him. MUSIC.

103

THE UGANDA RAILWAY

103

LESTER MAYHEW

With Dr. Kafour's mission
successfully completed, the three
followed on in the footsteps of the
Carlyle Expedition, taking the
Uganda Railway inland to the
capital city, Nairobi.

The TRAIN chugs along.

DR. KAFOUR

I think the man at the shipping
office suspected me.

HAZEL

We should keep our eyes open.

DR. KAFOUR

Perhaps he is in the cult. Have I
revealed us to them?

HAZEL

Easy, there, Ali. Not everyone is a
cultist, but I'm keeping my eyes on
that short, fat woman in the last
row - no, don't look! She's been
watching us since we got on the
train.

DR. KAFOUR

Ohhh, you may be right.

HAZEL

What do you think, Zeke? Zeke?

ZEKE
 (mumbling)
 Hmmbghh mmm bla...hotep mmga...

DR. KAFOUR
 (sotto voce)
 Not so good, eh?

HAZEL
 No. Some days are better, but others.... I'm worried about him. I thought the rest would help him, but now I'm not so sure.

DR. KAFOUR
 I'll pray for him.

HAZEL
 You did well with your ruse on that export clerk.

DR. KAFOUR
 The deception was not so difficult as I had feared. My Imam used to say, "Whoever fears the evil of the infidel may protect himself through outward show." It was rather fun.

HAZEL
 You may get the hang of this investigation business, Ali. Maybe we both will.

MUSIC.

104 IN THE MORGUE OF THE NAIROBI STAR

104

LESTER MAYHEW
 Having done well with information from other newspapers, once the team arrived in the capital, they set off for the offices of the Nairobi Star. There they met the publisher, a British expatriate called Natalie Smythe-Forbes.

Somehow different NEWSPAPER OFFICE WALLA.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES
 A pleasure to make your acquaintance. What brings you to Nairobi, Miss Claflin?

HAZEL

I'm sure you remember the Carlyle Expedition.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

(with a sigh)

Oh, that. Really?

HAZEL

What do you mean, "really"?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Well it's old news, if you ask me. A tragedy, certainly, but there's been nothing new on that front for years.

DR. KAFOUR

(turning on the charm)

No doubt the story is old to you, but with your kind assistance, we hope to shine a new light upon this dark happening. I am from the Cairo Museum, and we are contemplating an expedition of our own. Your coverage of the event is, of course, the best.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Oh, I see. Well, we have copies of the paper from that time here in these large bound volumes. You're welcome to look through them. Here's July through December, 1919.

The THUNK of a very big book on a table.

HAZEL

Thank you.

The TURNING OF NEWSPAPER PAGES underneath.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Cairo, you say, Dr. Kafour?

DR. KAFOUR

Yes, madam.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

I've always been fascinated by Egypt - what with the pyramids and mummies. I could never persuade my husband to visit, and since his death I've been too busy.

DR. KAFOUR

They say the past lives on in Egypt, madam. You are connected to it here by the mighty Nile. It is forever new and old. You hear its call.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

(a bit dazzled)

Yes, I suppose so.

(collecting herself)

Your friend there - is he all right?

HAZEL

Zeke? He gets caught up his thoughts sometimes. So, relevant stories are just scattered throughout all these pages?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Yes. You're welcome to look through them, but I can probably answer your questions - I wrote most of the coverage myself.

DR. KAFOUR

(shameless)

And a writer too? I'm impressed.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

(blushing)

Now, doctor....

HAZEL

Can you tell us what the Carlyle party was doing here in Kenya?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Well... not really. They were a strange, unlikely group.

HAZEL

How so?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Roger Carlyle seemed to be drinking quite to excess. Miss Masters - she was... unwell. Dr. Huston was aloof, insufferable in conversation. And Sir Aubrey was constantly meeting with unsavory characters - the worst sorts.

HAZEL

That is strange. Any idea what was wrong with Hypatia Masters?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

It was obvious.
(whispering)
Morning sickness.

HAZEL

Oh, I see...

DR. KAFOUR

These dubious types Sir Aubrey met with, they were--

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

None of them were suitable companions for a knight of the realm. He talked with witches, shamans, Taan Kaur--

DR. KAFOUR

I've seen that name before. Who's that?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

She's a local tea merchant - a Hindi. Her tea is fine enough, I suppose, but as a person let us say she does not enjoy a distinguished reputation.

DR. KAFOUR

And Sir Aubrey's business with her had nothing to do with a cup of oolong?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

I think not. They said they'd come to Kenya to hunt big game, though I can't say any of them really seemed like hunters. Except perhaps for Mr. Brady, but he didn't appear to get along well with the rest of them. They stayed in Reggie's hotel, The Hampton House, before heading off into the bush. And then... of course, there was the tragedy.

HAZEL

Yes, and how was that discovered, exactly? They just didn't come back?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

No. Searches were instituted, Carlyle's own sister came over from America. Finally a local... man, a bush guide named Sam Mariga, found them. He then led a group of soldiers from the King's African Rifles to the site. It was they who brought the remains back to Dr. Starret. Oh dear, look at the time. I'm afraid I'll have to get back to work to meet deadline, but do feel free to consult these back numbers. Here's the volume for the first half of 1920.

Another heavy THUNK of a big book.

ZEKE

(slowly)

What did it all mean?

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Mean, Mr. Ford? A peculiar safari of ill-qualified people gone horribly wrong? Perhaps it simply means some people have more money and leisure than common sense.

ZEKE

(listless)

Fire.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Fire? Heavens, what is that?

LESTER MAYHEW

As they stood over volumes of old dry newspaper, a strange cluster of whirling embers -- appearing to be nearly human in shape -- whisked through doors of the building and into the room. Within seconds the investigators were surrounded by roaring flames!

DR. KAFOUR

Madam, look out!

The WHOOSH of sudden conflagration. AD LIB CRIES. Dangerous inferno MUSIC.

END OF CHAPTER

105 ADVERTISEMENT - ELECTRIC NERVE PENCIL 105

LESTER MAYHEW

Many women today are saddled with the burden of taking care of their households, husbands and children. Some even work outside the home! In this ceaseless flow of labor, how is the modern woman to maintain her health? The answer is simple: the Electric Nerve Pencil. This miraculous device uses electricity to provide a soothing massage to neck, shoulders and places of tension. Five quick minutes with the Electric Nerve Pencil and she'll feel like a new woman!

ENP JINGLE!

ANNOUNCER

Get the healthful moment of relaxation you deserve with an Electric Nerve Pencil!

MUSIC.

106 SPARKS AND EMBERS 106

LESTER MAYHEW

As the Nairobi Star offices erupted in a sudden and mysterious blaze, the occupants fled into the street. Hazel hurried the dazed Zeke outside, while Mrs. Smythe-Forbes attempted to save papers and photographs from her desk. Dr. Kafour braved burning timbers to save the desperate publisher.

MUSIC. FLAMES. ALARMED CROWD on the street. Fire BELLS RING. WATER douses the burning building and FIREMEN RUSH ABOUT.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

(coughing)

Thank you, Dr. Kafour.

DR. KAFOUR

It is nothing, madam. Inshalla -
the will of god.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Bloody courageous, if you ask me.
Oh, your arm! You've been burned.

DR. KAFOUR

Yes. I fear my jacket is quite done
for.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

No, no, no. You need to see a
doctor. I'll have my man bring the
auto around. I'll take you up to
Dr. Starret's myself. He doesn't
normally treat the colored, but I
shall insist.

DR. KAFOUR

How gracious.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Are you two all right?

HAZEL

Yes, no worse for wear.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

I'll bring Dr. Kafour back to the
Hampton House after.

HAZEL

That's very kind of you.

NATALIE SMYTHE-FORBES

Kind? He saved my life. Ah, here
comes my driver.

(to Dr. Kafour)

Come, doctor, get in.

The CAR DRIVES OFF.

LESTER MAYHEW

As the fire brigade attempted to
save the building and frightened
crowds rushed through the street,
Hazel noticed one bystander who was
conspicuously motionless.

HAZEL

Hey, Zeke. Look, over by the train
tracks. See that?

ZEKE

The fat woman. From the train.

HAZEL

Exactly. She's just watching the building burn. That face! How would you describe it?

ZEKE

Smug. Punchably smug.

Transition MUSIC.

107

DR. STARRET, I PRESUME?

107

LESTER MAYHEW

Soon, Ali found himself in the examining room of Dr. Horace Starret, a physician and Anglican missionary. The aged doctor tended to Ali's burns.

DR. STARRET

This may sting a bit.

Dr. Kafour WINCES as the doctor puts ointment on the wound.

DR. STARRET (CONT'D)

There we are - now try to keep the bandage dry.

DR. KAFOUR

Thank you, Doctor. Mrs. Smythe-Forbes tells me you were the medical examiner who performed the post-mortem on the bodies of the Carlyle expedition members. Was that right?

DR. STARRET

No, no. Well, I mean yes, I did examine the remains, such as they were.

DR. KAFOUR

What do you mean?

DR. STARRET

There were no "bodies" per se. They had been torn to pieces. Small pieces. A great many of them.

DR. KAFOUR

By animals?

DR. STARRET

Animals eat their prey, doctor, like those monstrous man-eating lions in the Tsavo not long ago, but they leave corpses behind. This was not feeding - these bodies were... destroyed. Most peculiar. Of course, the truly strange thing...

DR. KAFOUR

Yes?

DR. STARRET

The remains lay in the field all that time, and showed no signs of decomposition. None whatsoever.

DR. KAFOUR

Hm. What do you think happened to them? It doesn't sound like an attack by tribesmen.

DR. STARRET

(retreating)

Such details are a matter for the crown. As far as I'm concerned, it was the work of the devil, Dr. Kafour. Satan gives false signs and wonders to confound man. Oh, but of course, you're a Saracen.

DR. KAFOUR

We Muslims recognize evil too, doctor.

(rising to go)

May I ask, these remains, given their condition, how certain are you that they were in fact those of the Carlyle expedition?

DR. STARRET

(stammering)

Completely. Completely enough to close the case. And really... who else could it have been?

MUSIC TRANSITION.

LESTER MAYHEW

That evening, with Ali safely recuperating, Hazel took Zeke to follow up on another lead from Jackson's notes, seeking out "Nails" Nelson, a former member of the King's African Rifle corps. Mrs. Smythe-Forbes suggested they look in a pub popular with soldiers - The Loyal Defender. Zeke sat by himself as Hazel asked the barkeep where she might find Nails.

BERTRAM "NAILS" NELSON is a former soldier, now a kind of soldier of fortune.

NAILS

(already drunk)

Who's looking for him? You, sweetheart? By god, my reputation's spread far and wide. What's your name, cupcake?

HAZEL

I'm.. Edith. Buy you a drink?

NAILS

You sure your man over there won't mind?

HAZEL

He's not my man and I'm not his woman. I'm a proponent of free love.

NAILS

Really? Well, hell yes, you can buy me a drink! Let me get this one out of the way.

He CHUGS down the remainder of his pint!

NAILS (CONT'D)

Barkeep! Two pints! I have a new friend. Edith.

(toasting)

To your free love!

HAZEL

Cheers.

They DRINK.

NAILS

I do love a beer, but I love it even more when someone else is buying.

HAZEL

You know, Nails, we have a mutual friend?

NAILS

Do we? Whasser name?

HAZEL

Jackson Elias.

NAILS

The writer! I remember him. We drank together, at that table right there. No, maybe it was that one there... Paranoid as hell - thought everybody was out to get him. How is the old so and so?

HAZEL

Dead. Murdered in New York.

NAILS

Bloody hell. Poor bastard. Maybe they really were out to get him.

HAZEL

What did Jackson talk to you about?

NAILS

Hey now, are you pumping me for information? I thought this was a social call, cupcake.

HAZEL

(flirty)

Why not both? Tell me your secrets and I'll tell you mine.

NAILS

He wanted to know about Jack Brady.

HAZEL

You don't say. From the Carl--

NAILS

(drunk and whispering)

An' I told him Brady didn't die in that Carlyle business.

HAZEL

Don't be ridiculous...

NAILS

No, I seen 'im. When I was in Shanghai. In the spring o' '23 - at a bar. He was like Elias - afraid "they" was out to get him. But that was years after they'd proclaimed him dead in the massacre.

HAZEL

Oh, your glass is empty. Barman, can we get another here?

NAILS

I like you.

HAZEL

Yeah. Tell me about the massacre, Nails. Were you there?

NAILS

Nah, I wasn't but some of my mates in the King's Rifles was. They seen things as I'm s'posed to talk about to nobody.

HAZEL

Well then you can tell me. I am nobody. I'm an American.

NAILS

Oh, yeah? That's all right then. They say the bodies was so far gone, wasn't nobody could tell who they was or even how many of them there was. It was just a jumble of little bits, you know?

HAZEL

Really.

NAILS

Yup, and them poor Nandi fuzzies what got strung up - them blokes didn't know a blasted thing about it.

The pub door BURSTS open and BOOTED FOOTSTEPS enter.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
Sergeant Bumption, remove Mr.
Nelson from the premises - he's had
quite enough.

SGT. BUMPTION
Yes, Captain Montgomery, sir.

CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY
My apologies, miss, if this man has
inconvenienced you.

HAZEL
No, he wasn't--

SGT. BUMPTION
C'mon, Nails, you've had enough. Up
you go--

NAILS
Tell her, Lenny, what you told me,
about the bodies.

SGT. BUMPTION
Enough of that now. Sorry, miss.
Don't mind him.

NAILS
It weren't Carlyle. You said that--

SGT. BUMPTION
I said nothing of the sort.
Everything was just like the
official report said. Now, come on
with me, outside.

The SOLDIERS GO and Hazel hurries back to Zeke.

HAZEL
Zeke, did you get that? Brady IS
alive. Nelson saw him in China. And
like the doctor said, the bodies
from the massacre could have been
anybody.

ZEKE
Anybody.

HAZEL
Right? You understand? I think
Cecil was right: they may all still
be alive.

ZEKE
 (listless)
 Alive.

HAZEL
 Oh, Zeke!

MUSIC.

109 SAM I AM

109

LESTER MAYHEW
 The following morning, a visitor arrived at the Hampton House Hotel, sent by Mrs. Smythe-Forbes. He was a barrell-chested Kenyan with a serious demeanor.

SAM
 Miss Claflin, Mr. Ford, Dr. Kafour, my name is Sam Mariga.

DR. KAFOUR
 The guide? You found the bodies.

SAM
 Indeed, sir. I understand you wish to see that god-forsaken place with your own eyes. Should you wish to engage my services, I am prepared to take you there.

HAZEL
 Well, that was easy.

SAM
 Do not mistake me, miss. I make this offer with a feeling of loathing and despair.

HAZEL
 Oh. Good.

DR. KAFOUR
 Mr. Mariga, have you heard of a place called The Mountain of the Black Wind?

SAM
 Only in rumors, Mr. Doctor. Like the killing field, it is said to be an unclean place. A place of darkness.

HAZEL

But it's real? Could you take us there too?

SAM

Why would you wish to go to such a place?

HAZEL

We think that the story being told about the Carlyle massacre isn't true. We don't think the Nandis who were executed were guilty of anything.

DR. KAFOUR

We are on a quest to root out the real evil, a cult devoted to a false god. We have come very far, and endured many troubles. But we must go further. Our quest takes us to this mountain.

SAM

(troubled)

Hmmm.

DR. KAFOUR

Will you help us?

SAM

I am a simple man, and I do not understand these things. I must bring you to another, Johnstone Kenyatta--

HAZEL

Jackson met with him here!

SAM

He is wise beyond his years and speaks great words. I have spoken to him of you. I would urge you to come with me and speak to him yourselves. But what of your friend here? He does not speak much.

HAZEL

Zeke? No. Well, he's...

ZEKE

I...

HAZEL

You want to say something? What is it, Zeke?

ZEKE

I... like this guy.

There is a moment of awkward pause then Sam ERUPTS in LAUGHTER!

SAM

This is a man I can understand.
Come, let us seek out Mr. Kenyatta.

TRANSITION MUSIC takes us to:

110

A GUY WHO KNOWS A GUY WHO KNOWS A GUY

110

LESTER MAYHEW

A hired car took the investigators to a side of Nairobi they had not yet seen. The car stopped on a rough dirt street and Sam led them toward a simple storefront.

HAZEL

Kikuyu Central Association? What's that?

SAM

Perhaps Johnstone should best explain.
(calling off)
Johnstone?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Is that Sam Mariga coming to my door? I am pleased you have come, my friend. Preparations have been made. And you have brought the visitors. I am Johnstone Kenyatta.

DR. KAFOUR

Dr. Ali Kafour - from the Cairo Museum.

HAZEL

Hazel Claflin, sir, pleased to meet you. This is Zeke Ford.

ZEKE

Hello.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Come in, come in.

FOOTSTEPS as they enter.

DR. KAFOUR

May I say, Mr. Kenyatta, I am a great admirer of your efforts on behalf of independence.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

You know of my work? Very kind, sir.

SAM

Johnstone is a visionary - Kenya for the Kenyans.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Our colonial masters have had their day, no? As a native Egyptian, I suspect you might concur, doctor?

DR. KAFOUR

I think few men of color would disagree with you, sir.

HAZEL

I'm sorry for my ignorance, but are you saying you want to bring down the British Empire?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Do not fear, miss. I love my country and have great ambitions, but I wish to see such changes come peacefully, through mutual respect. I strive to take my place in the white man's world, and here are white people coming into mine. But it is not, I think, to discuss politics.

DR. KAFOUR

Forgive me, sir, but Mr. Mariga has brought us to you in the hopes you might be able to help us.

SAM

These people, they have come to fight the Bloody Tongue.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Have they? Hmmmm. An American came to me last year--

HAZEL

Jackson Elias--

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Yes. I fear something has befallen him. He was not the right man to fight such a foe and emerge victorious.

HAZEL

Jackson Elias was a great man.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

That may be, but it does not mean he was the *right* man. My grandfather walked among the spirits, you might call him a "medicine man", and I learned many things from him. It is perhaps the greatest wisdom to know your own destiny. Mine is to give my country back to my people. Yours... well, Sam says you have come to fight the Bloody Tongue.

HAZEL

That's right.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Hmm. Please, come, I wish to show you something.

FOOTSTEPS, a DOOR OPENS.

LESTER MAYHEW

Kenyatta rose, opened a door and ushered the group into a back room. There, gagged and bound to a chair, was the short woman whom Hazel had seen on the train, and outside the Nairobi Star.

MUSIC.

DR. KAFOUR

What is this?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA
 This is Taan Kaur. A witch in
 service of the cult of the Bloody
 Tongue!

Taan attempts to hurl INVECTIVES at them through her gag.
 She's very angry.

HAZEL
 I knew it!

DR. KAFOUR
 A witch - allah yahminana. (*God
 protect us!*).

SAM
 You did not tell me you would...

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA
 It is important that I know your
 hearts in this matter. So, tell me,
 what do you wish to do with this
 creature?

HAZEL
 What, are you kidding? She can't be
 allowed to live.

SAM
 What?

DR. KAFOUR
 Oh, Miss Hazel!

HAZEL
 She tried to burn us alive! Ali,
 you've seen what these people are
 willing to do. Gupta! Cecil! They
 meant to gun down Victoria! If we
 don't stop her, she'll keep trying
 'til we're dead!

DR. KAFOUR
 Yes, but... surely the authorities--

HAZEL
 Oh, you mean the British? The ones
 you're trying to get rid of? The
 cops in New York looked the other
 way. The King's Rifles here are
 covering it up. The authorities are
 useless!

DR. KAFOUR
Mr. Kenyatta, please. This...
woman, how can you know she--

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA
We have observed her witchcraft for
many years. She comes from India
and belongs to a sect allied with
the Bloody Tongue.

DR. KAFOUR
This cult is in India too?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA
It appears, good doctor, to be
everywhere and nowhere. When your
Carlyle Expedition came to Nairobi,
its eldest member sought Taan Kaur
because she was a conjuror.

HAZEL
Sir Aubrey Penhew?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA
The very one.

SAM
I trust Johnstone. If he tells me
this is a witch, then this is a
witch and the witch must be
destroyed.

DR. KAFOUR
Sorcery is forbidden by my faith,
but Allah bids us be compassionate,
to dispense of grace.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA
What is it to be?

HAZEL
Zeke? Do you understand what's--

MUSIC begins.

ZEKE
(slowly)
We are the good guys.

DR. KAFOUR
(relieved and moved)
Oh, Mr. Zeke...

SAM

But even the good must sometimes--

HAZEL

No. He's right. There are bigger fish to fry.

Taan MUMBLES what could be interpreted as a capitulation into her gag.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Come, friends, let us return to the front room.

FOOTSTEPS and the DOOR SHUTS.

SAM

They have asked that I take them to the Mountain of the Black Wind.

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Then so you shall.

SAM

But I have not--

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

It stands near Mount Satima and it is said a mighty witch lives within the peak. The tribes of the area, the Embu and Mbeere hate this witch and the miseries she brings to their people. Miss...

HAZEL

Yes?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

You are unlike your friend Elias. Where he was cloaked in doom, in you there is a flickering hope. My most potent blessing awaits those who pass through the doorway.

HAZEL

What doorway? That's not some kind of metaphor, is it?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

(chuckling)

Our most powerful magic is carefully protected. Go outside now, my friends, and you will see a tall man. Follow him where he goes.

(MORE)

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA (CONT'D)

If he stops, you must stop. But otherwise he shall bring you to a yellow door. You must fasten your courage and step through.

SAM

All of us?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

Can you not see it, brother? You four are bound together.

HAZEL

What about Taan Kaur? Will you let her go?

JOHNSTONE KENYATTA

She will not trouble you again, but the Bloody Tongue knows you are here. Be very careful. Now it is time. Good luck to you all.

Exciting MUSIC.

111 THE TALL MAN

111

LESTER MAYHEW

Sam joined Hazel, Zeke and Dr. Kafour outside, where there was indeed a very tall man standing on the other side of the street. He walked briskly into the shantytown, and the investigators followed as he led them through a maze of alleys, courtyards, doorways and hen houses until at last, he stopped and pointed ahead.

SAM

The yellow door!

KAFOUR

I will confess I am rather reluctant to open it.

HAZEL

Me too.

ZEKE

I don't understand.

HAZEL

Boys, I hope this isn't a metaphor.
I, for one, could use some powerful
magic. Here goes nothing...

Dramatic MUSIC builds to her opening the door with an OMINOUS
CREAK.

END OF CHAPTER

112 ADVERTISEMENT - BUB-L-PEP

112

LESTER MAYHEW

After a harrowing day at the office
I find my nerves are on edge. But
nothing calms me down and picks me
up like a cold bottle of Bub-L-Pep.
This marvelous bubbling beverage
quenches the nerves with a
scientific splash of Lithium. And
it's swell lemon/lime taste will
have your family asking for more!

ANNOUNCER

Drink plenty of Bub-L-Pep -
America's favorite lithiated tonic.

113 NICE CAR

113

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

On the other side of the door, the
party was stunned to see...

HAZEL

That's a Rolls Royce! A little beat
up, but still...

ZEKE

Holy moly!

DR. KAFOUR

Such a fine automobile... here?

SAM

Come, our friend wants us to get
in.

The DOORS SHUT and the CAR PULLS AWAY. We hear it BOUNCE
ALONG DIRT ROADS in the countryside. Travel MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

The tall man, without a word, took his place behind the wheel and the stately car drove them out into the countryside, scattering bicycles and animal-drawn carts as they went, and leaving a long cloud of dust in their wake. After an hour's journey, the car approached a small village.

114 OLD BUNDARI

114

The car PULLS TO A STOP. SWAHILI CHILDREN chatter. FARM ANIMALS. CAR DOORS OPEN. Okomu is a crotchety middle aged Kenyan man.

OKOMU

(grumpy)

Shoo - begone children! What? What do you want?

SAM

We were sent here by Johnstone Kenyatta.

OKOMU

Why?

SAM

Um...

OKOMU

You two I understand, but why does he send these white people to us?

SAM

Who are you?

OKOMU

Okomu, the Guardian.

SAM

Wise Okomu, these are people of great learning and abilities. They have come from very far...

OKOMU

Pish posh!

DR. KAFOUR

Mr. Kenyatta has sent us here as we have come to stop the Bloody Tongue.

OKOMU

Yes? You will stop this? The Black Wind? Plague? Famine? The slaughter of our children? You will stop a god the size of a mountain? A god which looked upon brings madness? You will do this?

Awkward pause.

OKOMU (CONT'D)

Poppycock.

HAZEL

Mr. Kenyatta said we'd get a powerful--

OKOMU

Blessing, eh? As if that would be enough. You are unworthy of the great Bundari. Go home.

SAM

Johnstone found us worthy.

OKOMU

Pshaw! Will you stand before the witch M'Weru? Will you quake--

HAZEL

Wait, what did you say her name was?

OKOMU

M'Weru the abomin--

HAZEL

Her - she was Carlyle's consort! Besart said so! She was the African woman who led the entire expedition to Egypt.

DR. KAFOUR

Another one of them, still alive!

OKOMU

This witch is the midwife to bring the dark god's child to the world from the cave of--

HAZEL

Hypatia Masters! Pregnant after
leaving Egypt!

DR. KAFOUR

That would make the father--

ZEKE

Nyarlathotep.

MUSIC.

OKOMU

It is prophesied that the birth
will soak the land in blood and the
time of the birth is nigh. Perhaps
you *should* speak with Bundari.

LESTER MAYHEW

Okomu led them to a small grass
hut, in the middle of which was
propped up the mummified body of a
very old man.

OKOMU

The great Bundari.

SAM

Wait. Him?

DR. KAFOUR

Sir, I regret to inform you, this
man is deceased.

OKOMU

No, no. He's not dead but dreaming.
When his spirit returns, this body
will live again. Sit. Wait. I will
return.

LESTER MAYHEW

The team waited by the desiccated
body. And waited. Hours went by.

HAZEL

(whispering)

Guys, how long are we going to wait
here?

DR. KAFOUR

My foot has fallen asleep again.

Zeke SNORES.

SAM

Shall I ask Okomu? He is a most irritable man.

DR. KAFOUR

Perhaps one more hour. We cannot--

HAZEL

(gasping)

It moved. His finger. Maybe he is alive.

DR. KAFOUR

alhamd lillah. (*Thank you, God*)

The great BUNDARI, a small man perhaps hundreds of years old, YAWNS and stretches.

LESTER MAYHEW

Suddenly the old man's eyes popped open, and his papery skin assumed a glow of life. Very slowly, the ancient man looked upon each of the visitors.

BUNDARI

(in Swahili)

Karibu. Nimekuwa nikisubiri kuwasili kwako kwa siku nyingi.

SAM

He says: welcome. It's about time we got here.

They CHUCKLE. Bundari continues to speak.

BUNDARI

Moyo mkubwa tu ungeweza kutembea kwenye mlima wa upepo mweusi.

SAM

"Only those of great heart would dare approach the mountain of the black wind."

Bundari continues to speak quietly in the background as Sam shares his words.

SAM (CONT'D)

Once each year, the cult unleashes the Black Wind and it brings plague, famine and disaster to our peoples.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

The cult captures people and gives them to the god as in offering. The god is terrible - to look upon it brings madness. It has no face, just a blood red tongue where its head should be. A witch lives in the mountain and shall see to the birth of the god's child.

DR. KAFOUR

Does he know anything about how we should fight this evil?

SAM

Unajua jinsi tunapaswa kupigana na uovu huu?

BUNDARI

Hapana.

SAM

No.

But Bundari starts MUTTERING again in Swahili and Sam translates on the fly.

SAM (CONT'D)

In ancient times, a great sign, the Eye of Light and Darkness, could forever chain the god within the mountain. But the god tricked men into destroying it and it is lost.

DR. KAFOUR

But we have half of it. The old woman, Nuri gave it to us!

SAM

Tuna kipande kilichovunjika cha ishara. (*We have a broken piece of the sign*)

BUNDARI

Hiyo ni nzuri.

SAM

Bundari says, "That's nice."

HAZEL

Nice? What are we supposed to do with it?

Bundari MUMBLES in Swahili and Sam translates.

SAM

Bundari says we must find the rest of it and learn the magic of the ancient wizards who made it. Only when it is whole will it be powerful again.

HAZEL

Great. Just great.

DR. KAFOUR

This is indeed a great disappointment.

SAM

He says he regrets he has brought you sadness. But he wishes you to know that he has seen your friends in the great desert and they still live - though great challenges are before them under the ground.

DR. KAFOUR

Cecil and Victoria!

HAZEL

Thank god!

ZEKE

Under the ground.

SAM

Miss Hazel, you are fierce, and Mr. Zeke, you are steadfast. Together you are completing a circle to shared destiny. Your spirit friend will speak to you again through the stone lion. You must have hope. And you, Doctor, the gods admire your courage and bid you go to this mountain.

DR. KAFOUR

Thank you.

HAZEL

Yes, thank you. Is there anything else?

BUNDARI

Napenda kutoa zawadi!

SAM

Great Bundari says he wishes to bestow gifts.

(calling off)

Okomu!

OKOMU (OFF)

What is it you want?

SAM

Bundari has asked for you.

FOOTSTEPS ENTERING.

BUNDARI

Okomu, napenda kutoa zawadi za wageni. (Okomu, I wish to give the foreigners gifts.)

OKOMU

La, usipoteze uchawi mzuri kwa watu hawa. (No, do not waste good magic on these people.)

BUNDARI

Ndiyo. Nataka. (Yes, I want to.)

OKOMU

Sidhani unapaswa. Wao labda watafa. (I don't think you should. They'll probably die.)

BUNDARI

Hey! Mimi ni mchawi wenye nguvu - fanya kile ninachosema! (Hey! I am the powerful wizard - do what I say!)

OKOMU

Ndiyo, Bundari. (Yes, Bundari.)

FOOTSTEPS.

LESTER MAYHEW

Okomu returned in a few moments, grudgingly bearing an armful of curious items.

Bundari mutters to Okomu.

OKOMU

For you, son of the Nile, the Great Bundari gives this fly whisk - enchanted to drive away evil spirits.

DR. KAFOUR

You honor me.

OKOMU

Yes, yes. For you, sad heart lady, he gives this living thing.

HAZEL

What is this? A chameleon? I'm not really looking for a pet...

OKOMU

This is no pet, but Who-Is-Not-What-She-Seems. The Great Bundari charges you to feed her well and keep her safe. Once freed from this cage, Who can protect you one time only.

HAZEL

(bewildered)

Um. OK.

OKOMU

For you, his stormy mind friend, Bundari gives you this song...

He plunks a few NOTES on a mbira.

ZEKE

Play it again.

HAZEL

Sam, what is that instrument?

SAM

A mbira. Cheap ones are sold to tourists as a thumb piano.

OKOMU

If your friends will be quiet, you will find it soothes the perturbed mind.

He plays it again. Zeke HUMS ALONG. Bundari LAUGHS.

ZEKE

I like your song. Thanks.

OKOMU

And for you, the guide, this Mbeere war shield - to make friends, not war.

SAM

Ninakushukuru, Bundari. (I thank you, Bundari).

BUNDARI

Nenda kwa amani, marafiki zangu. Bahati njema!

OKOMU

He says you should go now, quick as a bushbuck.

ZEKE

Thank you, Bundari.

HAZEL

Yes, thank you. I think.

DR. KAFOUR

You are kind and wise.

SAM

We will pass your gifts along!

MUSIC!

115 ROUGH LANDING

115

LESTER MAYHEW

Knowing the cult was on to them, the team moved as quickly as possible. Sam's friend, Onkwani, was a fellow bush guide who owned an airboat. He flew the team from Lake Nakuru as far north as Lake Naivasha, very near Mount Satima.

The plane's engine WHINES.

DR. KAFOUR

Look out the window - is that snow on the mountains? I have never seen snow!

ZEKE

I didn't know it snowed in Africa.

HAZEL

We're practically on the Equator. I didn't know they had winter!

ONKWANI

(loudly)

We have only rain and not rain, but the high mountains are always capped with snow! But this, this is bad weather for this time of year. We shall land soon - hold on!

MUSIC. ENGINES. WATER.

LESTER MAYHEW

The rugged plane swooped over the forested hills and landed on a lake, splashing mightily as it came down.

ONKWANI

We taxi to the beach - unload the equipment there.

The ENGINES CUT and the plane DRIFTS UP on a sandy beach.

DR. KAFOUR

Wait. Do you hear that?

ZEKE

Those are drums.

WAR DRUMS approach, back by occasional native HOLLERS!

SAM

War drums!

HAZEL

And those would be cultists of the Bloody Tongue.

ZEKE

There must be a hundred of them.

DR. KAFOUR

Coming straight for the plane!

HAZEL

Turn this thing around, Onkwani! Get us out of here!

ONKWANI

No, no time, madam!

MUSIC builds with the natives' FEVERISH ATTACK!

CHIEFTAIN
(shouting)
Wewe ni nani!?

END OF CHAPTER

116 ADVERTISEMENT - BILE BEANS

116

LESTER MAYHEW
Chili con carne. Grandma's chicken
cacciatore. Egg foo yung. Delicious
right? But sometimes these exotic
meals can be a cause of
indigestion, flux or marasmus.
Don't let these serious digestive
conditions spoil your evening. Have
a Bile Bean or two after supper and
set your stomach straight again!

Bile Beans Jingle.

ANNOUNCER
Bile Beans - diligently demolishing
dyspepsia daily - ask your druggist
for them by name!

117 THE CORRUPT GROUND

117

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
The Chieftain of the marauding
horde paused as the door of the
boat plane opened and suddenly Sam
jumped out in to the water.

HAZEL
Sam, no!

SPLASH! The villagers prepare to attack. Sam speaks in
SWAHILI to their leader. He seems very upset.

HAZEL (CONT'D)
Onkwani, what's going on?

ONKWANI
This is not the cult. These are
local villagers. Mbeere.
(MORE)

ONKWANI (CONT'D)

The chief fears we have come to join the many bad people coming to the Mountain of the Black Wind.

A positive MURMUR comes from the crowd.

ZEKE

Now what?

ONKWANI

Sam has presented them a gift - Bundari's magic shield. The chief likes it. He says it is a worthy gift.

SAM

(yelling back to the plane)

Come my friends. The villagers are on our side. We may pass through their lands. It will be faster!

LESTER MAYHEW

The chief sent his sons, Jimiyu and Eddy, to accompany the foreigners to the massacre site and help them face the Bloody Tongue. The following morning they set out, using machetes to clear a path through the dense mountain brush.

TRUDGING. HACKING. JUNGLE LIFE. Zeke briskly hums Bundari's SONG OF MENTAL HEALTH.

JIMIYU

Watu wengi mbaya huja kwenye Mlima wa Upepo mweusi sasa. Kitu kibaya kitatokea.

DR. KAFOUR

What's that he's saying?

SAM

Many bad people come to the Mountain of the Black Wind now. Something bad is coming.

ZEKE

Hey, Hazel, what are you doing?

HAZEL

Trying to catch a damned fly.

ZEKE

What? What for?

HAZEL

Bundari said I'm supposed to feed Whozits, my pet chameleon - ah! Got one! Here you go, sweetheart. This is a weird lizard, but kind of cute.

ZEKE

A bit like you.

EDDY

Come, friends. Bad place ahead.

HAZEL

Great.

LESTER MAYHEW

The porters led them over a low pass to a large open meadow where it was clear something terrible had happened.

Dramatic MUSIC.

HAZEL

My god. What...

ZEKE

It's like the earth was burned, but it's not...

DR. KAFOUR

The hand of Allah.

SAM

This - this is the place of the massacre.

EDDY

The corrupt ground.

DR. KAFOUR

Even if the Carlyle expedition did not die here... this place is touched by evil.

ZEKE

Listen.

WIND. MAYBE AN EERIE HUM.

HAZEL

What? I don't hear anything.

ZEKE

That's what I mean. There's no birds, no insects... the plants are dead. There's nothing alive here.

EDDY

Very bad place.

ZEKE

You got that right.

Zeke HUMS HIS SONG.

EDDY

We should not linger here. Come - at the next pass you will be able to see the Mountain of the Black Wind.

MUSIC.

118

THE RIDICULOUSLY HUGE AFRICA FINALE

118

LESTER MAYHEW

A steeper climb led them up a pass where at last they saw what they were looking for. A dark, conical peak towering abruptly over the landscape.

MUSIC HIT.

DR. KAFOUR

It is time for me to pray.

SAM

Didn't you just pray a little while ago, Ali?

DR. KAFOUR

This makes me want to pray extra.

ZEKE

That's quite a storm raging up there.

JIMIYU

Sio kawaida hii mbaya.

SAM

He says it is not usually this bad.

JIMIYU

Kitu kibaya kinakuja.

EDDY

My brother says, "A great bad thing approaches." Look - here through the spotting scope. Down near the base of the mountain.

HAZEL

Are those... people?

EDDY

Yes, bad people come to the mountain. Come to worship the Bloody Tongue.

ZEKE

Can I take a look? Geez, there must be thousands of them. Look, up above on the mountainside - there's a cave. There's a leader in a fancy robe - maybe it's a priest or something.

SAM

Or the witch! She that shall be the midwife for the birth of the dark god's child.

HAZEL

That must be M'weru.

ZEKE

Could be. If she's in charge, that's more bad news.

HAZEL

I think it is her. And I think Hypatia Masters is the expectant mother.

ZEKE

Wait, wouldn't that mean she's been pregnant for like five years?

HAZEL

I don't--

The DISTANT VOICE of M'Weru echoes across the valley.

M'WERU

Wote hubariki mungu wa lugha ya damu. (*All hail the god of the bloody tongue!*)

Thousands of voices reply:

BLOODY TONGUE CULTISTS

Iä ulimi wa damu! (*Iä, hail the Bloody Tongue*)

Very DISTANT DRUMS and the very DISTANT CHANT of the cult.

HAZEL

Oh my god.

JIMIYU

Inafanya damu yangu kuwa baridi.

DR. KAFOUR

What does your brother say, Eddy?

EDDY

It makes the blood cold, no?

DR. KAFOUR

(wracked with guilt)

My friends... I have prayed and now must speak to you. I have joined you on this journey... I look upon this mountain. I ask my faith and this old body to carry me forward to fight this evil with you... But I cannot. My heart is heavy with shame.

HAZEL

No, Ali... You have journeyed with us across Africa to fight this evil. Your efforts have been nothing short of heroic.

ZEKE

We couldn't have gotten this far without you.

DR. KAFOUR

You are too kind, my friends.

ZEKE

But you can't stay here alone.

EDDY

I will stay behind with Dr. Kafour.
We will be a... how do you say?
Base camp.

ZEKE

Hazel, I was thinking that maybe
you might want to stay behind too.
It's going to be bad up there and--

HAZEL

Me? That's funny, 'cause I was
thinking maybe *you* should stay
behind. Ever since Egypt you
haven't quite been yourself.

ZEKE

I'm feeling a lot better now.
Bundari's song has really helped.

He SINGS the BUNDARI MENTAL HEALTH SONG.

JIMIYU

Naenda!

SAM

Well, we hoped **you** would be going,
Jimiyu. Nobody knows the way better
than you.

ZEKE

It looks like their party's well
underway up there. It'll take a
while to get there. We should get a
move on.

DR. KAFOUR

You all have protection?

LOCKING and LOADING.

SAM

We have these rifles and these
pistols. Is everyone ready?

HAZEL

Do you mind watching my lizard?
She'll only--

KAFOUR

(appalled)
No, Hazel.

SAM

Do not scorn Bundari's great gift!

HAZEL

Okay, but don't blame me if she gets squashed.

DR. KAFOUR

God go with you, my friends.

HAZEL

We'll see you after we're done up there. You two look out for each other down here.

EDDY

We'll do that, miss.

MUSIC!

119

UP THE MOUNTAIN

119

LESTER MAYHEW

Jimiyu knew the area even better than Sam, so he led the others away from the cultists and up the back side of the mountain.

TRUDGING and HACKING. A WATERFALL ROARING in the distance.

JIMIYU

Kuwa mwangalifu. Maporomoko ya maji.

ZEKE

What's he saying?

SAM

Be careful here. Waterfall. The rock will be slippery. Do not fall off the trail.

HAZEL

Wow, that'd be a big fall. Are those floating logs down there?

SAM

No, miss. Crocodiles.

HAZEL

Oh my god - look at the size of them!

JIMIYU

Usiogope mamba. Ni viboko ambavyo
vitakuua.

Sam LAUGHS.

HAZEL

What's he saying?

SAM

There is no need to worry about
them.

(serious)

It's the hippos that will kill you.

ZEKE

Hey look, there's a light up on the
side of the mountain.

SAM

It is another entrance to the cave.
The one we will use.

EXCITING MUSIC!

120

THE RITUAL

120

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, in the base camp, Eddy
and Dr. Kafour bore witness to a
terrible sight. The cultists'
chanting and dancing escalated into
a wild orgiastic fury!

The CHANTING and DRUMMING escalate to a wild fury.

DR. KAFOUR

Yes... many have disrobed now - oh,
that is not pleasant at all. Some
have large knives... They are
attacking each other at random it
would seem.

EDDY

What kind of god asks to be
worshipped in this way?

Distant LIGHTNING strikes the summit of the mountain. THUNDER
RUMBLES over the DRUMMING, CHANTING and mad ULULATIONS.

EDDY (CONT'D)

Look - at the top of the mountain.

DR. KAFOUR
Lightning, the clouds are
swirling...

EDDY
It's not clouds. Something is
there. Aaiiiee!

The throng of worshippers GASPS in reverent awe. AWESOME
MUSIC and SUPERNATURAL SOUND EFFECTS.

LESTER MAYHEW
Through the distant vapors, the
massive form of the God of the
Bloody Tongue appeared. The bipedal
monstrosity towered over its
worshippers and the mountain
itself, its hideous blood-red
appendage lolling obscenely upward.

The RUSTLING of cloth. RUMMAGING.

DR. KAFOUR
Where is it? Where is it!

EDDY
What are you looking for, man?

DR. KAFOUR
Here. The fly whisk given me by
Bundari. He said it was enchanted
to drive away evil spirits.

EDDY
What are you waiting for? Use it!
Use it!!

DR. KAFOUR
But sorcery is haram - it is
forbidden!

EDDY
Then use it to whisk away flies!
Surely that's not forbidden.

DR. KAFOUR
You're right, yes. I shall whisk!

MANIC WHOOSHING. MORE MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
Eddy resumed his watch on the
mountain through the spotting
scope.

EDDY

Wait, something is happening up above. Good lord. Steps have appeared and the cultists are climbing the mountain. It's horrible - the god is picking them up and crushing them in its great hands. Wait - I can't see, something is blocking my view--
(screaming)
aiiiee!

CULTIST

Sasa utafa!

LESTER MAYHEW

Eddy looked up and saw a cultist right in front of him, machete raised to split his skull!

MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

121 ADVERTISEMENT - GALENA PAINTS

121

LESTER MAYHEW

There's no quicker or more inexpensive way to spruce up your home than with a beautiful coat of Galena Paints. Beautiful Galena house paints contain twice as much lead as other paints, ensuring that every color goes on smooth and lasts for generations. Give your family the very best in lead paint, ask for Galena Paint at your local hardware store.

Galena jingle.

ANNOUNCER

Galena House Paints, twice the lead so it lasts and lasts and lasts.

122 FLY SWATTER

122

Start of chapter MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Before the huge knife could cleave Eddy, Dr. Kafour in a panic swiped at the cultist with the fly whisk. The cultist was miraculously lifted off his feet and tossed into the jungle, slammed into a tree trunk. He stumbled away, whimpering in horrible pain.

EDDY

How did you do that?

DR. KAFOUR

I don't know. I just whisked.

EDDY

More of them are coming up the trail.

KAFOUR

How many?

EDDY

Too many to whisk. Come - run for the aeroplane. Right now!

They BOLT OFF down the trail as fast as they can. MUSIC!

123 MOUNTAIN FULL OF ICKY

123

THE MAD CULT RITUAL CONTINUES NEARBY.

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, atop the mountain, the other team reached the second entrance and snuck into the cave while the cultists were caught up in frenzy. As they wended their way through the cavern, they noticed a series of pits alongside the path.

HAZEL

What's down there?

ZEKE

Let's have a look.

He CLICKS on his flashlight. A HORRIBLE CHATTERING.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

Rats. Big ones.

SAM

This is how they dispose of their victims. Look here, this pit has snakes.

HISSING AND WRIGGLING.

HAZEL

Look. There's a skull in that one.

ZEKE

What's this one? It's like the bottom itself is alive.

SUBTLY AWFUL CLICKING.

JIMIYU

Mchwa.

SAM

(frightened)
Mchwa?

ZEKE

What's a mchwa?

SAM

Ants - bullet ants. Very bad bite.

ZEKE

Oooo-kay.
(He hums the Bundari
tune.)

A DISTANT CRY of SPECIAL AGONY rises above the general din.

HAZEL

I don't even want to know what's making that sound.

ZEKE

It's okay, Hazel. If it looks bad, just... you know, just don't look.

SAM

That is good advice. Come...

MUSIC. CUMULATIVE HORROR.

LESTER MAYHEW

They rounded a corner in the passageway, and there beheld a large cavern, in the center of which was a great raised dais.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

There, the witch M'Weru attended what appeared to be a horrible, bloated female corpse.

ZEKE

(quietly)

Should not have looked. What the hell is that?

HAZEL

That's what's left of Hypatia Masters.

SAM

That is not a human!

HAZEL

Oh my god, look, at her belly, you can see the THING inside. It's monstrous!

ZEKE

Five years! That thing has been growing inside her for five--

HAZEL

More like hosting a parasite.

SAM

Quiet! The witch speaks.

M'WERU (OFF)

The miracle comes to you true believers. The Bloody Tongue takes human form and a human form becomes the Bloody Tongue. Iä Nyarlathotep!

BLOODY TONGUE CULTISTS

Iä Nyarlathotep. Iä ulimi wa damu. (Go Nyarlathotep, hooray for the Bloody Tongue).

M'WERU

This night comes forth the fruit of the Black Wind as foretold, to fulfill a destiny and to exalt you, the chosen ones! The Spawn will open the gate!

Hazel SHOULDERS HER RIFLE.

HAZEL

(freaking out)

That's enough!

BLAM! BLAM!

ZEKE

Hazel! Damn it. Shoot M'weru!

SAM

(overlapping)
Shoot the hell-child!

JIMIYU

(overlapping)
Kumwua mtoto pepo. (*Kill the demon baby!*)

M'WERU

Blasphemers! Brothers and sisters,
you must--

HAZEL

(berserk)
Aaaaah!

BLAM! MUSIC! The CULTISTS GO SILENT.

LESTER MAYHEW

The bullet from Hazel's rifle
struck the head of what used to be
Hypatia Masters, putting her out of
her misery. For a moment the world
stood still.

(pause)

Then the monstrous larva within her
roared to life, tearing itself free
from its human host. Jimiyu joined
Hazel in firing on the demon spawn.

ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE. BLAM! HORRIBLE BLOODY RIPPING. The
cultists GASP. The Black Wind ROARS and the MOUNTAIN ITSELF
RUMBLES. BLAM, BLAM!

M'WERU

Kill them! They cannot escape.

JIMIYU

Kumwua mtoto pepo!

ZEKE

Hazel, enough. Let's go!

M'WERU

Get them!

An ARMY OF CULTISTS runs towards the investigators.

SAM
Jimiyu, come.

He keeps firing! BLAM. BLAM.

JIMIYU
No! Ni pepo! Ni pepo! (*the demon,
the demon!*)

LESTER MAYHEW
Jimiyu tried to stand his ground
but was quickly overrun by the
zealous horde.

Jimiyu being TORN APART by enraged cultists.

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)
As the others ran, a guard leaped
out, tackling Zeke, sending the two
of them tumbling into one of the
pits.

HAZEL
Zeke, no!!

SAM
Mchwa!

PUNCH! OOF! THUD! A THOUSAND MANDIBLES!

SAM (CONT'D)
Zeke, grab my arm. Hazel, cover us.

The Ant Cultist SCREAMS IN AGONY. BLAM! BLAM!

ZEKE
Got it. Aaaaah!

SAM
Here, let me help.

They HOIST him out. BLAM!

ZEKE
Ow! Ow, oh these little bast--

SAM
Run, quickly to the trail.

The WIND HOWLS and the mountain RUMBLES. Cultists RUN after
the investigators.

M'WERU
 (from the cave mouth)
 Show your faith - bring me their
 bodies. Come from the skies my
 hunters!

A horribly familiar SHRIEK sounds from the skies.

SAM
 Good god, what makes such sound?

ZEKE
 You don't want to know. Which way?

BLAM! A cultist GROANS in mortal agony.

HAZEL
 Got him.

SAM
 Come, follow me - this way!

A hunting horror SHRIEKS! Exciting MUSIC!

124 HASTY RETREAT

124

LESTER MAYHEW
 Meanwhile, Dr. Kafour and Eddy ran
 for the airboat - their pursuers
 close behind!

RUNNING through the forest. Dr. Kafour PANTING.

EDDY
 There's more of them after us. Keep
 running!

DR. KAFOUR
 I can't go any faster!

EDDY
 Look, there is the lake ahead. Not
 far now.

WHOOSH - THUNK - a spear WHIZZES OVERHEAD and STRIKES a
 nearby tree.

EDDY (CONT'D)
 (yelling)
 Onkwani! Start the plane! They're
 throwing spears!
 (to Kafour)
 Careful here, the ground is--

Kafour YELLS as he FALLS.

DR. KAFOUR

My ankle. I can't go any farther.
You go - go on without me. You will
make it.

Another spear WHIZZES by. Cultists SHOUT!

KAFOUR

Go. It is all right. I am at peace.

EDDY

No!
(yelling)
Onkwani - we must fly!
(to Kafour)
Where is your fly whisk?

DR. KAFOUR

Here.

EDDY

I will carry you. Start whisking,
my friend.

Eddy GROANS as he lifts him up. RUNNING. WHISKING. CULTISTS
GETTING WHISKED. In the distance, the plane's engine IGNITES.
Villagers SHOUT.

EDDY (CONT'D)

The villagers are just ahead. Help
us! The cult is after us!
(in Swahili)
Tusaidie! Ibada ni baada yetu!
(*Help us! The cult is after us.*)

LESTER MAYHEW

The villagers formed a line and let
Eddy and the doctor through, and
met the attacking cultists with
spears and knives of their own.

The villagers FIGHT the cultists. Eddy SPLASHES through the
water to the plane.

ONKWANI

Come, quickly now.

EDDY

Careful, his leg is hurt.

DR. KAFOUR

Yes, thank you. Aaah!

EDDY
Go now, we must fly!

Onkwani hits the throttle and the plane ROARS into the sky.
Continued EXCITING music!

125 JUMP

125

LESTER MAYHEW
Sam, Hazel and Zeke made their way
back to the cliff by the waterfall,
only to make a terrible discovery.

SAM
Oh, no!

ZEKE
I don't want to hear "oh no".
What's up?

SAM
They are coming - up this trail.

HAZEL
There's a big bunch of them coming
down from the cave. I see twenty or
more!

ZEKE
So, we're trapped?

SAM
Completely.

ZEKE
Son of a... give me your rifle.

SAM
There's too many of them, Zeke.

ZEKE
No, it's for the flying things.

BLAM. A Hunting Horror SHRIEKS. BLAM.

HAZEL
Zeke, it's coming right at us!

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

ZEKE
I'm out! Hazel, don't look!

SHRIEK - SCARY MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

126 ADVERTISEMENT - FLEURS DE LYS

126

LESTER MAYHEW

I don't know about you, but these thrilling escapades leave me breathless. And when I'm breathless, I find the best way to regain calm relaxation is by enjoying the mellow mildness of a Fleurs de Lys cigarette. Perhaps it's because their blend of domestic and mild imported tobaccos is never parched or toasted like some brands. Fleurs de Lys - they're a boon for a breathless age.

Fleurs JINGLE

ANNOUNCER

Smoke Fleurs de Lys - and leave them, if you can.

127 WHO

127

Start of chapter MUSIC. SHRIEKING.

LESTER MAYHEW

The hunting horror crashed into the brush, trying to grab them in its monstrous talons.

FLAPPING WINGS, BREAKING TREES, DIVING INVESTIGATORS.

ZEKE

Hit the deck!

LESTER MAYHEW

As Hazel ducked for cover she became tangled in the dense brush. The vines were caught on the small cage of the lizard given her by old Bundari.

HAZEL

I don't know what it is you do, but
it's time for you to go.

LESTER MAYHEW

The trees sheltered them from the
attack and the flying horror flew
back into the sky to wheel around
again. Hazel released the small
lizard and it quickly scampered off
into the brush.

HAZEL

What? That's it? See ya.

ZEKE

It's coming back! Sam, do you have
any ammo left?

SAM

Only a few rounds, Zeke.

ZEKE

Make 'em count, buddy.

HUGE CRASHING FOOTSTEPS PLOD through the jungle. The cultists
SCREAM in fear.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

Now what?

SAM

There is something going after the
cultists. Look there!

HAZEL

Where?

SAM

Up the slope.

ZEKE

It's like a dinosaur! No, it looks
like a giant version of... your
lizard...

HAZEL

(getting it finally)
Who-Is-Not-What-She-Seems.

CRASHING. ROARING. SCREAMING. WIND.

LESTER MAYHEW

Released from its cage, Bundari's creature now towered twenty feet high, its arms extending into two forearms each equipped with taloned paws, and a vertical mouth running down the center of its head from which a long, thick tongue extended. The hungry monster shot out this tongue to strike at cultists and drew them back to its mouth for an unpleasant end.

HAZEL

Thank you, Who.

The Hunting Horror SHRIEKS again and prepares for another attack.

SAM

You hear that?

ZEKE

Yeah, it's coming back for more.

SAM

No, it is the airboat! See there - across the river!

HAZEL

(yelling)

Over here! We're over here!

Edge of your seat exciting MUSIC.

128 FLIGHT

128

LESTER MAYHEW

In the flying boat, the pilot battled against the raging winds.

ENGINE SPUTTERS. WIND!

DR. KAFOUR

Onkwani! There they are! Can we get to them?

ONKWANI

Only if they are in the water! I can barely fly as it is!

EDDY

Where is Jimiyu? Where is my
brother?!

DR. KAFOUR

Onkwani, land on the river!

The plane DIVES toward the river.

129

THE WATERFALL

129

ZEKE

He's rocking the wings - they see
us! I think he's trying to land.

SAM

In the river? Oh no, no, no--

The Hunting Horrors SHRIEK. Giant wings flap. BLAM! BLAM!
CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

HAZEL

Here they come. Jump. Jump, Sam!

SAM

I cannot swim!

HAZEL

Time to learn.

Hazel pushes SAM off the cliff.

SAM

Aaaaaah!

HAZEL

(jumping)

Now, Zeke!

ZEKE

(jumping)

I got your back!

SPLASH! SPLASH, SPLASH. The boat plane ENGINE APPROACHES
across the river. SWIMMING. SPLASHING.

HAZEL

Sam? Sam?

SAM

(spluttering)

Here... help!

HAZEL

Take my hand. Try and kick your feet!

ZEKE

The plane's here. This way!

The plane's ENGINE is louder now.

LESTER MAYHEW

The boat plane struggled to fight the river's currents.

DR. KAFOUR

Come, my friends! Please hurry - the crocodiles!

ZEKE

That's not what I'm worried about!

HAZEL

Here we are--

EDDY

Grab my hand, Sam. Come, up you go.

With a SPLASH and a THUNK, he's in the plane.

ZEKE

You're next honey.

SPLASH, they hoist Hazel into the plane.

EDDY

(simultaneous)
Take my hand!

HAZEL

(simultaneous)
Zeke! Get in!

DR. KAFOUR

(simultaneous)
'iinah faras alnahr! (*It's a hippo!*)

The ROAR of an angry hippo.

ZEKE

What?

ALL

The hippo!

MUSIC HIT! With a SPLASH they hoist him aboard.

DR. KAFOUR

Gotcha!

EDDY

But wait. Only three? Where is Jimiyu?

SAM

He... didn't make it.

ZEKE

He fought the cultists to help us escape.

HAZEL

We never would have made it without him.

SAM

I am so sorry.

EDDY

(weeping)

Jimiyu!

DR. KAFOUR

Time to fly Onkwani!

ONKWANI

Hold on! I don't know if we can make it!

The engines ROAR to life and with WATER and WIND, the plate takes to the sky.

LESTER MAYHEW

The boat plane narrowly cleared the trees over the river and climbed into the night sky. They offered Eddy what comfort they could on the loss of his brother. Hazel looked out the window as they flew away from the mountain.

HAZEL

Look at it, Zeke. The destruction.

ZEKE

I don't see him, the... Bloody Tongue anywhere. Do you?

HAZEL

I'm pretty sure we threw a wrench into the birth of the spawn of Nylarlathotep. Sorry, should I not have said--

ZEKE

No, it's all right. You were impressive down there. Still an Annie Oakley. Really, amazing.

HAZEL

No, you. I'm glad you're back.

ZEKE

Jackson would have been proud.

HAZEL

I think he'd have been proud of the both of us.

MUSIC carries us off to safety.

130 ZANZIBAR

130

LESTER MAYHEW

A few days later, the investigators had put as many miles as they could between themselves and the Mountain of the Black Wind. Bringing Sam with them, they settled in for afternoon tea at the Al Jobari Hotel in the island city of Zanzibar.

HEELS CLICK across a marble floor.

ZANZIBAR CLERK

Miss Claflin? I have a telegram for Miss Claflin.

HAZEL

Oh, that's me. Thank you.

She TEARS it open.

DR. KAFOUR

Is it from the Inspector in London?

HAZEL

It is.

(reading)

"Wire received Woodhull and Watson.

(MORE)

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Australian efforts strange,
terrible and fruitful. Heading on
to Shanghai. Meet there soonest
possible. Barrington." Oh thank god
they made it.

ZEKE

That's good news. I think.

DR. KAFOUR

Excellent. Yet the quest continues.

SAM

You people - are there no lengths
that you will not go to in your
effort to thwart this god and his
worshippers?

Pause.

HAZEL

No. I don't think so.

SAM

That is entirely marvelous. How I
envy your resolve. My heart brims
with admiration, my friends.

HAZEL

It is we who admire you, Sam. We're
in your debt.

SAM

I only wish I could come with and
join you for the tribulations that
must lie ahead.

HAZEL

I hoped you might say something
like that. We sail for Shanghai
tomorrow, Sam. Here's a ticket for
you, if you'll join us.

MUSIC STARTS.

ZEKE

What do you say, my friend? Will
you help us see it through?

HAZEL

(after a pause)
Sam?

SAM
 (quietly)
 For my people, I will do it.

DR. KAFOUR
 Alhamdulillah! (*God be praised!*)

ZEKE
 I told you I liked this guy!

Sam ERUPTS IN LAUGHTER. HEARTWARMING MUSIC SWELLS.

END OF CHAPTER

131 YACHTING
 MUSIC.

131

ANNOUNCER
 Dark Adventure Radio Theatre
 presents part five of "Masks of
 Nyarlathotep" with your host,
 Lester Mayhew.

OCEAN SPRAY and a STIFF SEA BREEZE.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Enjoying the peace and safety of
 Neily Vanderbilt's yacht, The North
 Star, Cecil and Victoria sailed
 through the Suez Canal, down the
 Red Sea, and across the vast
 expanse of the Indian Ocean.

CORNELIUS "NEILY" VANDERBILT III, 52, sits on deck with
 Victoria and Cecil. As rich jerks go, he's very nice.

CECIL
 When Victoria told me you had a
 yacht, Mr. Vanderbilt, I must say I
 was picturing a racing sloop of
 some kind, not a private steamship.

NEILY
 Oh I've got a couple of those as
 well, but we prefer the North Star
 for longer trips. I practically
 live on this boat these days. I
 trust your stateroom is
 comfortable?

CECIL

Certainly. I've never been in one with a fireplace.

VICTORIA

Is that the one Teddy slept in, Neily?

NEILY

No, Roosevelt preferred to bunk further aft. He liked the rocking motion. Cecil's in King Edward's room.

CECIL

Oh my god. How big is this boat?

NEILY

She's 223 feet from stem to stern. 10 feet longer than DuPont's. The Brits pressed her into service for the war.

CECIL

I presume Lloyd's of London carries your marine policy?

NEILY

Yes - I recently increased my coverage in fact. I have to say, Cecil, I've never heard of an insurance man crossing the world to investigate a claim. They should give you a promotion.

CECIL

Or fire me. But as long as I have the job, I'll do it to the best of my ability.

NEILY

So, do I have this right? Victoria's cousin had a friend...

VICTORIA

Jackson Elias.

NEILY

Who thought there was a cult in Australia...

VICTORIA

The Sand Bat.

CECIL

And apparently he was interested in rumors about a buried city somewhere out in the desert.

NEILY

(delighted)

Right! And someone in Australia ships strange machines from Darwin to that company in England which makes new copies and ships them to China! And all that has... what to do with insurance fraud?

CECIL

Yes, I'm still trying to figure that out. It's... complicated.

VICTORIA

But we know some of the members of the Carlyle Expedition are still alive - and might be in Australia!

NEILY

And why are you going along, Victoria? Just for the thrill of it?

CECIL

No, they burned down--

VICTORIA

Let's just call it another of my crusades, Neily.

NEILY

Ha! That was always the way with the Claflin sisters. Did you know Victoria's sister, Tennessee?

CECIL

I never had the pleasure.

NEILY

My great-grandfather was smitten with her. We had great times together when I was a little boy. Victoria and Tennie were the family I wish I'd had. Of course all that went to hell when the Commodore died.

CECIL

How so?

NEILY

You know how it goes, old boy,
family squabbles over money... But
I've always held a soft spot for
the Claflin sisters.

VICTORIA

But really, Neily, your agreeing to
take us all the way to--

NEILY

Are you kidding? It's the least I
could do for you. Besides, my wife
doesn't much care for the sea. If I
wasn't with you, Grace would have
me in Monte Carlo hosting a ball or
some damned thing. You freed me to
have some fun for a change!

CECIL

(darker)

We're glad you think so.

Transition MUSIC.

132 DARWINISM

132

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil used the North Star's radio
room to send a wire to Professor
Anthony Cowles at Miskatonic. His
excited reply offered up the help
of his niece and nephew who lived
in Darwin. After eight days at sea,
Victoria, Cecil and Neily left the
yacht in the hands of the very
capable crew, and were on their way
to a rendezvous with the
Australians at Bertram's Outback
Inn.

The pub is a bit of a wild west affair. BOISTEROUS
CONVERSATIONS, PIANO MUSIC. Maybe there's a FIGHT in the
background.

VICTORIA

Well, Neily my boy, you wanted a
break from the French Riviera.

NEILY

Yes, this certainly is rough. You'd
wonder if they ever sweep this
floor.

VICTORIA

Cowles' niece and nephew are Mark and Penny O'Brien. No one appears to be waiting for us. Perhaps I'll ask the barman.

NEILY

I, for one, could use a drink.

CECIL

That fellow's drinking alone. Maybe I should go and have a word with him.

NEILY

Do you think that wise?

CECIL

What do you mean?

NEILY

He's a, what do you call them... aborigine.

CECIL

That's why I want to talk to him. He might know something about native cults and so forth.

NEILY

Surely you could talk to some of the white riff-raff instead?

VICTORIA

Cecil knows what he's doing, Neily. Please, let's to the bar.

FOOTSTEPS ON WOOD. BILLY BURRAGLONG is an Aboriginal Australian in his late 20s.

CECIL

Mind if I have a seat?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Reckon I don't.

CECIL

Thanks. Your glass is almost empty. Buy you another?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Reckon you could.

CECIL

(to a waitress)

Hey, could we get two beers over here?

(to Billy)

I'm Cecil.

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Billy.

CECIL

You mind if I ask you a question?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

You mind if I ask you one?

CECIL

Seems only fair. Who goes first?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

You start.

CECIL

Right. I'm working on a paper, an anthropological treatise, and I'm looking for legends of a god called the Sand Bat. Ever hear of anything like that?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

I'm Episcopalian, mate.

CECIL

Ah. Of course. Well...

The CLUNK of pint glasses on the table.

WAITRESS

Your beers, gents.

CECIL

Thanks.

FOOTSTEPS depart.

BILLY BURRAGLONG

What happened to your eye?

CECIL

Why do you ask?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

You said I could. That was our deal.

CECIL

So it was. I... was mugged, in Egypt.

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Egypt, eh? Where them pyramids is at?

CECIL

Yep.

BILLY BURRAGLONG

They as big as they say?

CECIL

Bigger.

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Hmmm.

(pause)

Too bad about your eye.

CECIL

I'm glad to still be alive.

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Oh yeah, my mate Johnny told me there's some fellas out in the Great Sandy that worship a bat god. Told me there was some drovers out there that found bodies that was covered with all these tiny little holes in 'em.

CECIL

Tiny little holes? From what?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Course you gotta take what Johnny says with a grain a salt. He told me there's this wonderful city out in the Great Sandy - the Buddai is sleeping under it until he's ready to wake up and devour the world.

CECIL

And where is this?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Out in the desert, mate. There's nothing out there. Johnny's an odd one.

(MORE)

BILLY BURRAGLONG (CONT'D)
Lost his job at the shipping
company - and ever since, his
stories - they've been stranger and
stranger....

MUSIC takes us to the other side of the crowded bar.

LESTER MAYHEW
Meanwhile, at the bar, Victoria was
approached by an attractive pair of
gregarious young Australians.

MARK
(so friendly)
Excuse me, ma'am, any chance you'd
be Victoria Woodhull?

VICTORIA
Yes, dear, you must be Mark
O'Brien!

MARK
That's right. This here's my twin
sister, Penny.

VICTORIA
Well aren't you lovely! I'm
Victoria.

PENNY
Pleased to meetcha. How you going?

VICTORIA
This is my friend Neily.

PENNY
Hello.

NEILY
Hi.

MARK
I thought your name was Cecil.

NEILY
Not me. That's him over there, with
the--

PENNY
Uh oh, Mark, looks like trouble.

MARK
Come on. It'll be all right. Just
sit tight, ma'am.

MUSIC takes us back to Cecil and Billy's table.

CECIL

Johnny, he worked for a shipping company here? In Darwin?

BILLY BURRAGLONG

Yeah, just down the street. Randolph Shipping - but they fired him for--

Three pint glasses CLUNK down on the table.

TODDY RANDOLPH

(a little drunk)

Why if it isn't my old pal, Billy Burraglong, yammering on about my business. Whatcha talking about, Billy? And who the hell are you?

CECIL

Cecil... Monroe. Pleasure to make your acquaintance.

BILLY BURRAGLONG

I was telling him about--

TODDY RANDOLPH

(nasty)

I wasn't talking to you, rock ape.

(to Cecil)

What are you, some Yank? You should keep your nose--

The crowd goes a little quiet, anticipating a fight. FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

PENNY

There you are, Cecil!

MARK

We've been looking all over for you.

PENNY

(to Toddy)

How d'ya do. I'm Penny. Penny O'Brien.

MARK

I'm Mark. Pleased to meet you, mate.

PENNY
Mind if we have a seat?

CHAIRS SCRAPE.

MARK
(calling off)
Hey, we could use a few more beers
over here - another one for
everybody.

CECIL
Thanks, that's--

MARK
No worries. Sorry, big fella, I
didn't catch your name.

TODDY RANDOLPH
Toddy Randolph. You know this--

PENNY
What, Cecil? Oh, yeah. We're old
friends.

CECIL
Yes, Penny and Mark.

WAITRESS
Your drinks.

THUNK.

TODDY RANDOLPH
Wait, but who are you?

PENNY
He's Mark! I'm Penny! Race you to
the bottom.

TODDY RANDOLPH
Of my beer? You're just a shiela.

PENNY
Oh, yeah, of course... I mean if
you're scared.

TODDY RANDOLPH
What! Let's go.

PENNY
Down the hatch then!

Everyone CHEERS them on as they CHUG their pints.

BILLY BURRAGLONG
Look at her go!

Penny finishes - more CHEERING!

MARK
Ah, she got you there, mate.

TODDY RANDOLPH
No fair, I had to burp.

PENNY
You want to go two out of three?
Order up another round.

CHEERING. MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
Three rounds later, Toddy slumped
onto the table, drifting off to
sleep. Billy went happily on his
way, and Victoria and Neily joined
Cecil and the O'Brien twins.

The BAR is quieter.

PENNY
Well that wasn't so hard.

CECIL
I couldn't have done it. Thank you.

MARK
So, you know our Uncle Tony?

VICTORIA
He helped one of our friends and
said you two might be available to
assist us with our... inquiry.

MARK
(laughing)
Available?

PENNY
We're nothing but available.
There's nothing to do in Darwin.

MARK
How can we help?

CECIL

For a start, we were hoping to see the records of the Randolph Shipping Company.

PENNY

That shouldn't be a problem.

CECIL

No?

Toddy SNORES.

MARK

This sorry sod here is Toddy Randolph, and it's his company.

PENNY

No time like the present.

VICTORIA

I think it would be best if Neily and I returned to the ship. Cecil, you seem to be in good hands.

NEILY

Excellent - I think a long hot shower is in order after this adventure.

VICTORIA

Good night, you three. Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS.

MARK

She's a rip.

CECIL

You have no idea. So with this guy out cold, how do we see his records?

Mark prods Toddy who MUMBLES and SNORES.

MARK

He's down for the count - we just borrow his keys.

PENNY

I'll just nick 'em off his belt...

Keys JINGLE.

MARK

Ready?

CECIL

(rather overwhelmed by
them)

Um, yes. Let's go.

Caper MUSIC!

133 RANDOLPH SHIPPING CO.

133

LESTER MAYHEW

Five minutes later they were in the
warehouse of the Randolph Shipping
Company.

CREAKING FOOTSTEPS. The THUMP of wood on wood.

CECIL

You always carry a walking stick
with you?

MARK

What, my shillelagh? Yeah, walk
softly and carry a... you know.
Besides, it can come in handy in a
place like this.

CECIL

I'll bet.

PENNY

What exactly are we looking for,
Cecil?

CECIL

I want to see who they're getting
shipments from and who they're
sending them to. I'll check the
desk. You two check those crates -
see if anything's labeled for
shipment to England.

MARK

Right. C'mon, Penny.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil quickly read the shipping ledger and found familiar names: The Penhew Foundation in London, Ahja Singh in Mombasa and Ho Fang Imports in Shanghai.

MARK

(quietly)
Hey, Cecil!

PENNY

I think we found something.

Cecil HURRIES over.

MARK

Two crates here. This one's labeled to go to The Penhew Foundation, London.

PENNY

And this one's going to Henson Manufacturing in Derbyshire.

MARK

Shall we have a look inside?

CECIL

Yes, open them up. Carefully.

The CREAK of PRYBARS on WOOD. Cecil reads the manifest.

CECIL (CONT'D)

These boxes were shipped here by John Carver, care of Mortimer Wycroft, Cuncudgerie, Australia. John Carver...

Mark finishes PRYING the lid off.

MARK

Here we go. Godalmighty - what the hell is that?

CECIL

God, I don't know. Could it be some aboriginal idol?

MARK

They're weird but they're not that weird.

PENNY

Looks like it's wearing an octopus on its face. Let's see what's in this one.

She REMOVES the crate's lid.

PENNY (CONT'D)

What is it?

MARK

Some kind of machine. Look at those shiny wires.

PENNY

Looks like it's from the future.

CECIL

Another friend of ours said that.

PENNY

So, what's it do?

CECIL

I have no idea. But it seems someone's finding or making machines like this and then sending them on to England where they try and make more of them.

(wracking his brain)

Carver... now I remember! In his records, Dr. Huston treated a patient called John Carver. Hm.

MARK

Wait, this comes from Cuncudgerie?

CECIL

That's what it says. Why?

MARK

Well that's just mining country out there.

PENNY

It's the middle of the Great Sandy Desert. There wouldn't be a factory or anything like that. It's just... you know, desert.

CECIL

Well, somehow, Mr. Carver got this to Mortimer Wycroft out there. We--

A SUDDEN THUMP off to the left. Something CRASHES to the ground. TENSE MUSIC.

MARK

Quiet! There's someone here!

CECIL

You think Randolph woke up?

PENNY

Bugger me, it's the Jacks!

Cliffhanger MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

134 ADVERTISEMENT - NASON'S

134

LESTER MAYHEW

Have you examined your children lately for soft bones? Dietary deficiencies can lead children to bowleggedness, rickets and even spinal scoliosis. But these disfiguring conditions are easily avoided with a nightly spoonful of Nason's Palatable Cod Liver Oil. We use only livers from fresh Norwegian cod - and a sprig of mint - so there will be no fuss or bother in giving it to your children.

Nason's JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER

Strong children have strong bones - they take Nason's Palatable Cod Liver Oil daily!

135 NEILY

135

MUSIC. Something else CRASHES to the floor.

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil, Mark and Penny were burgling the offices of Randolph Shipping, when they realized they were not alone. Mark readied his shillelagh to strike, when suddenly--

NEILY

Damn it, Cecil, where are you? Turn on the lights!

CECIL

Vanderbilt?! It's all right, Mark. We're back here. What are you doing here?

FOOTSTEPS as Neily finds his way through the warehouse.

NEILY

That's what I came to ask you. Are you breaking in here? What the hell kind of insurance investigation are you running? What have you gotten Victoria into?

CECIL

Oh my god. I haven't gotten Victoria into anything. I'm trying to get her out!

NEILY

Look here, chap, she's an elderly--

CECIL

Victoria? She'll still be young when you and I are six feet under. You don't know her as well as you think you do.

NEILY

I know she doesn't need to be part of whatever you're up to. Poking about, mixing with... all types. I should call the police.

CECIL

Ah, now I understand why she treats you with kid gloves. You're a child, trying to keep yourself entertained - doing things for "the thrill of it."

NEILY

Now, see here--

CECIL

This isn't some thrill ride, Vanderbilt. What I'm investigating, what WE are investigating, goes far, far beyond insurance. It has cost me my eye.

(MORE)

CECIL (CONT'D)

It's cost Victoria her house. It cost Gupta his life. You know who he is, right?

NEILY

Some sort of... butler?

CECIL

He was her friend, you jackass. They were devoted to each other. He gave his life to save hers. They gunned him down in the streets while trying to kill **her!**

NEILY

Jesus. She never--

CECIL

We will continue this investigation until it is done and she is safe and things are set right. And you are going to help us.

NEILY

Oh am I?

CECIL

Yes. You are going to use your wonderful ship to take us where we need to go. No more questions, no more complaining. And you are **never** going to let her know that I told you any of this.

NEILY

And what makes you think that?

CECIL

Because for reasons I don't understand, she loves you. And in order for her to complete this business, she can't be worrying about you. Be the family you wish you had. Be the man she thinks you are. Be a man.

PENNY

(after a pause)
Crikey.

MARK

We're in. One hundred percent.

MUSIC.

NEILY

All right. But, if you're wrong about this, Cecil, I will destroy you.

CECIL

If I'm wrong about this, Vanderbilt, YOU won't have to.

Exciting MUSIC hurls us onward!

136

PORT HEDLAND

136

LESTER MAYHEW

The next day, Neily volunteered to take the team west to Port Hedland, the gateway for travel inland to Cuncudgerie. While Neily stayed aboard the North Star, the others went ashore to make arrangements and visit the offices of Arthur MacWhirr, the geologist who claimed to have found the ancient desert city.

A CAR pulls up to a STOP on a GRAVEL road.

MARK

Right, we'll wire ahead to Cuncudgerie, make a few calls and get the gear lined up.

PENNY

Two weeks in the Great Sandy for the four of us, you'll be amazed what it takes.

VICTORIA

Thank you, Penny, you're a darling.

PENNY

You kiddin'? Working with you two is a gas!

MARK

This here's the office of your MacWhirr fella. Hopefully he'll have more to say about your ruins.

PENNY

I reckon we can meet back up on the North Star tonight.

(MORE)

PENNY (CONT'D)

Don't figure we could get a better meal anywhere in Australia.

CECIL

Right then. Good luck.
(to Victoria)
Shall we?

The CAR DRIVES OFF. A DOOR OPENS. Inside it's very quiet - a small fan WHIRRS incessantly.

VICTORIA

Hello?

ROBERT MACKENZIE is in his mid 40s (he sounds suspiciously like Dan Conroy).

ROBERT MACKENZIE

(brightly)
Sorry, didn't hear you come in.
Robert Mackenzie. How can I be of assistance?

VICTORIA

How do you do, sir.

CECIL

We were hoping we might have a word with Arthur MacWhirr.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

(darkened)
Ah. Well, a bit late for that I'm afraid. Arthur passed on.

VICTORIA

Oh, I'm so sorry. I had no idea.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Two years back now. Me and him, we were partners. Only me left now.

CECIL

His death, it was suspicious in nature?

ROBERT MACKENZIE

What? No. It was cancer. We all knew he was sick. Now, look, what's this all about?

VICTORIA

A cousin of mine met with a professor Anthony Cowles in Massachusetts. The professor showed her Mr. MacWhirr's diary and talked about...

ROBERT MACKENZIE

The ruins... Sure, I remember Professor Tony. He was all keen to put together an expedition from the uni. Could be quite a find. Never could find the funding, but one of these days...

VICTORIA

We thought we might go out and have a look - see if there's something to it.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Hmph! Like that other fella. I can't hardly drag other Ozzies out there, but you Americans are lining up to--

CECIL

I'm sorry, more Americans?

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Yeah. There was a bloke a couple of years back, a Yank called Carver, came and wanted to know everything about where me and Arthur saw the ruins.

CECIL

I'm sorry, would you mind having a look at this photo?

RUSTLE OF PAPER.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Sure. Yeah, that's him. Mr. Carver.

VICTORIA

Dr. Huston!

CECIL

When was this?

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Round about 1921 I guess.

CECIL

I knew it! Huston is alive too!

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Just what's going on here?

VICTORIA

It's rather complicated. But I can assure you we are most interested in going out to the desert to see the ruins you've found.

RUMMAGING of desk supplies, SCRIBBLING.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Yeah? I can give you the compass bearings, latitude and longitude. I reckon they're pretty accurate. Don't imagine you've ever been out there?

CECIL

No.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Tough country, shifting sands and... It's no walk in the park to get there. You'll need heavy gear.

CECIL

We have associates working on that even now. Australians.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Well then, she'll be apples. Wish I could go with you.

CECIL

Why don't you?

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Can't. They found crude oil near Fitzroy Crossing and now every surveyor in West Australia is on the hunt.

VICTORIA

Not to worry, Mr. MacKenzie, we'll let you know just what we see out there.

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Please do. If those ruins are as old as I think they are, I don't reckon there's any place like it on this earth. Be careful out there.

MUSIC pumps up the tension.

137 CUNCUDGERIE

137

LESTER MAYHEW

Soon, they were ready for the trip inland. Niely, who had been remarkably helpful of late, offered to stay with his ship in Port Hedland while the others climbed aboard a flat bed narrow-gage railway car heading into the heart of the Great Sandy desert. The desolation of the barren expanse weighed on the Americans as the hours rolled by. At last the train came to a stop in the frontier's final outpost...

MUSIC. Trucks RUMBLE by. Nearby a camel BELCHES.

MARK

Cuncudgerie. You'll never find a more wretched hive of dun aridity.

CECIL

Ah, more camels. Zeke would have loved this. I wonder how they're doing?

VICTORIA

I wonder what all these people do out here in the middle of nowhere?

MARK

Mine gold, drink beer and make trouble.

PENNY

Mark and I have to pick up the trucks and make sure they're loaded right.

MARK

There's a bodgy bit of a hotel over there. Why don't we get you two situated there, wash the dust off.

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

You take a rest while Penny and I see to the rigs.

VICTORIA

That does sound good.

Transition MUSIC.

138

THE CONGLOMERATE HOTEL

138

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil escorted Victoria into the Conglomerate Hotel, a bare bones affair that clearly did not cater to tourists. A leathery man at the desk checked them in.

The DING of the bell at the front desk.

CECIL

We'll take two rooms, please, if you have them. You and Penny won't mind sharing, would you, Victoria?

VICTORIA

Not in the least.

LARRY D.

Prospectors, eh?

CECIL

I beg your pardon?

LARRY D.

A fine old dame and a bloke with a monocle walk into my hotel, you're clearly not miners. Are you buying up claims?

CECIL

You could say that. Maybe you could help me, mister....

LARRY D.

Call me Larry D. That's as so folks don't mix me up with Larry H.

CECIL

All right. I'm looking for a shipping agent named Wycroft. Mortimer Wycroft?

LARRY D.
Deadfella Man?

VICTORIA
Is he deceased? We had hoped--

LARRY D.
Nah, it's a bit of a nickname for Wycroft. He's an outfitter at the west edge of town. General merchandise. I guess you could call him a shipping agent, but not a good one.

CECIL
Why's that?

LARRY D.
He don't like people much. Did a job out in the desert a few years back, been a bit whacka since then.

CECIL
I see.

LARRY D.
Not as bad as his daughters, of course. Kangaroos loose in the top paddock, if you know what I mean. Not the full quid. And mean in the bargain. Whole family's got a bit of the nasty.

CECIL
Well that's good to know. Thank you.

VICTORIA
Why do you call him dead fellow man?

LARRY D.
You'll know when you see him. But I wouldn't advise seeing him if you can help it.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

The next morning, two large trucks rolled up outside the hotel, Penny driving one, Mark the other.

HUGE TRUCKS roll up to a stop.

PENNY

Welcome aboard, you two.

MARK

Since we're rolling out into the Never Never, we thought we'd start with the Canning Stock Route. They use it for long cattle drives to Wiluna and Kalgoorlie. Still pretty rough though.

VICTORIA

How long does that go for?

MARK

Dunno. Eleven hundred miles or so.

VICTORIA

Good heavens!

PENNY

It's a big desert. But we won't be on it the whole way. Those coordinates you gave us are off the trail.

MARK

But we'll start with it. There's a couple of wells along the way where we can take on more water.

PENNY

Everybody ready?

CECIL

I suppose. Victoria, why don't you ride with Mark.

VICTORIA

Here's to another adventure, Mr. Watkins.

The trucks REV UP and PULL OUT. MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

The trucks rolled over the apparently endless landscape. They drove three hot, dusty days and camped three cold nights without incident, slowly getting used to the parched expanse of desert, and the glittering southern stars. The occasional view of distant plumes of smoke from aboriginal fires was the only sign of life, until the fourth day on the route.

One of the trucks ROLLS TO A STOP. A DOOR OPENS.

PENNY

(shouting out the window)
What is it, Mark?

MARK

Tracks. See 'em? They veer off to the north there.

PENNY

They look pretty old. Years old maybe.

MARK

Yeah. But it's they're heading off in the direction of where MacWhirr's ruins should be. What d'ya think, Cecil?

CECIL

This is good. Yes. They go the right way. We should follow them.

MARK

We can't know for sure. Could be nothing. Could be trouble.

CECIL

Only one way to find out.

PENNY

(off)
Well? What's the verdict?

MARK

Let's see where they go!

TRUCKS GEAR UP and CLUNK along the rough trail. MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

Three hours later, as evening approached, the trucks stopped near what appeared to be the remains of an old mining camp, long since deserted.

PENNY

Reckon we should have a look, don't you, Victoria?

VICTORIA

Oh by all means. I've quite had my fill of that truck seat.

DOORS OPEN. FEET ON SAND. WIND.

PENNY

Mining camp, don't you figure?

MARK

Sure looks it.

CECIL

Looks like it's been deserted for... years, maybe?

MARK

Yeah, at least two or three.

VICTORIA

Look there - bones!

MUSIC. RUNNING feet in the sand.

CECIL

Careful now - don't touch it.

MARK

Why not? He's not--

CECIL

Seeing the bones as they are may tell us something. See? Look at that.

PENNY

The arm's broken. And this one, the ribs are all smashed up.

VICTORIA

That suggests a violent ending.

MARK

You're right. Look at this - on the skull. There's all these tiny little marks in the bone. That's not normal, is it?

VICTORIA

No, I don't think so.

Cecil pulls something up out of the ground.

CECIL

It would be if he was hit in the head with this. Look what I found in the sand here.

PENNY

A club?

CECIL

Look here at the end. It's been studded with hundreds of tiny teeth. Feel this.

VICTORIA

Hazel said something about that. The cult used clubs studded with bat teeth dipped in poison.

CECIL

That would mean that the cult--

Nearby a DINGO YELPS. Then ANOTHER.

VICTORIA

What a peculiar sound. Dogs?

MARK

Dingos! You don't often see 'em this far from--

PENNY

C'mon, follow me. I bet we can see them from the top of this dune.

Penny hurries off and the others follow her.

JEREMY GROGAN

(bellowing)

Begone, spawn of Satan!

MUSIC HIT!

LESTER MAYHEW

Before them, standing in a circle made of stones, stood a filthy, sun-baked man, stark naked apart from a pair of oxfords. Seven reddish feral dogs surrounded him, sitting calmly at his feet.

MARK

Holy dooley!

PENNY

Wow. That's something you don't see everyday.

JEREMY GROGAN

Don't make me sic my dogs on you. They'll get you! They will!

VICTORIA

Please don't - they look very fierce and we don't pose a threat in the least.

JEREMY GROGAN

I've seen your trucks and your--

VICTORIA

Could I interest you in a sandwich?

JEREMY GROGAN

A what?

VICTORIA

I could make you a sandwich. You could sit down, relax, enjoy a tall glass of water. Doesn't that sound nice?

Pause.

JEREMY GROGAN

Do you have any jam?

VICTORIA

(whispering to Mark)

Do we?

MARK

Yeah, strawberry.

VICTORIA
 Mark, you're wonderful.
 (to Jeremy)
 We have some nice strawberry jam.
 Would you like some?

Pause.

JEREMY GROGAN
 Yeah... strawberry jam would be
 grand.

VICTORIA
 Come, join us.

PENNY
 The sun's heading down. Might as
 well make camp for the night. We
 can all have dinner.

MUSIC. GENTLE WIND. A CRACKLING CAMPFIRE.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Soon Mark and Penny had pitched a
 camp, and the naked man was sitting
 near the fire, enjoying a slice of
 bread with strawberry jam. His dogs
 lingered nearby.

JEREMY GROGAN
 Oh, yes, that's very nice.

VICTORIA
 I'm so pleased. Would you like
 something for... I'm sorry, I
 didn't ask your name.

JEREMY GROGAN
 Jeremy Grogan.

VICTORIA
 A pleasure, Mr. Grogan. I'm
 Victoria. Would you like something
 for your dogs?

JEREMY GROGAN
 Them? Nah, they'll be all right.
 They never eat.

VICTORIA
 Don't they?

MARK

The poor bloke's been baked by the sun. He's gone troppo.

PENNY

He's fascinating, isn't he?

VICTORIA

It's not polite to stare, dear, even when he is so fully "on display".

PENNY

Oh! No... I wasn't... I think he's in the Dreaming.

CECIL

The what?

PENNY

Dreamtime. It's a belief of the aborigines. Dreams and reality kinda blend together. It's like he sees everything at once. He's in touch with the great beyond.

MARK

(snickering)

You'd like to be touching his great beyond, I reckon.

PENNY

Oh, rack off!

VICTORIA

Mr. Grogan, what... eh, what brings you out this way?

JEREMY GROGAN

So long ago, I barely remember any more. A lifetime ago - literally. It was a job, I think. There was a man. Carver. An American, like you. Strange fella, but seemed to know what he was doing. Paid us to come here and dig.

CECIL

What were you digging for?

JEREMY GROGAN

Dunno. You'd never find gold here, that's for sure. But this is where he wanted us to dig. So we dug.

(MORE)

JEREMY GROGAN (CONT'D)

And then he stopped paying us, the bastard.

VICTORIA

What did you do?

JEREMY GROGAN

We staged a strike. No pay, no work, right? But Carver just got stranger. He'd wander the desert at night, talking to invisible people.

MUSIC BED.

JEREMY GROGAN (CONT'D)

One night I'd left camp... I left camp. I shouldn't have left camp. I'll wake up soon.

CECIL

What happened, Jeremy?

JEREMY GROGAN

A thing - a winged thing flew to the camp. So huge it could eat the men - grab them in its claws...

CECIL

Sounds familiar....

JEREMY GROGAN

Men shot it, but it wasn't enough to kill it. Carver was in a rage - running about, hitting miners with his club. I ran - far into the desert. Got lost. Wandered about for days - finally just laid down to die. I woke up a couple of months later and now these dingoes follow me around. Have done for years now, I think. I'm pretty sure they're magic. I'm pretty sure I dreamed them.

VICTORIA

They seem quite real to me, dear.

JEREMY GROGAN

Well... of course. I'm dreaming you, too. The whole lot of you are figments in my imagination.

VICTORIA

No, I'm afraid we're not.

JEREMY GROGAN

That's what they all say. Really smart fellas know that there's no sharp distinction 'tween the real and the unreal...

Cecil approaches him with a photo.

CECIL

Mr. Grogan, may I show you a photo? Do you recognize this man?

JEREMY GROGAN

That's him - Carver.

VICTORIA

He's no dream, Jeremy. He's real, and his real name is Dr. Robert Huston, and it's our intention to find him and bring him to task. If you'll join us, we can provide you with food, um, clothing, other supplies and get you back to civilization.

JEREMY GROGAN

More civilized than here? Listen. So peaceful. I'm the sand man now. Life is better in dreams. Truer.
(yawning and stretching)
But I hope you can get that Carver... Huston... He's a bad man. Worst I ever met.

Dreamy Aboriginal MUSIC and HOWLING DINGOS.

141 EXPLOSION

141

LESTER MAYHEW

At dawn the next morning, the investigators awoke to find that Jeremy Grogan and his dogs had wandered off in the night, their footprints vanishing in the blowing sand. Leaving behind some clothes, water, and a jar of jam, the team continued toward their goal.

The trucks BOUNCE and RUMBLE along.

PENNY

... the poor bloke. Reckon he was mad?

CECIL

If he wasn't to start with, he is now... Living alone out here.

PENNY

Cecil, when he was talking about being attacked by flying things, you said that sounded familiar. What--

BOOM!

CECIL

Oh my god, was that dynamite?

PENNY

Look out, Cecil, that boulder!

CECIL

It's heading right for the other truck!

PENNY

Mark!

Cliffhanger MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

142 ADVERTISEMENT - MER-CURE-A-CREME

142

LESTER MAYHEW

Scrapes, burns, abrasions, cuts, and other skin lesions are just the kind of opening in your skin that GERMS are looking for. Viruses, bacteria and even fungus can exploit the tiniest injury and leave you with a life-threatening infection. But not if you apply a generous dose of Mer-Cure-a-Creme to your injury. This powerful salve of mercuric chloride and jellied petroleum disinfects your wound and promotes swift healing. And it's great for children.

Mer-Cure-A-Creme JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER

Mer-Cure-A-Creme - your first thought in first aid!

Start of chapter MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

An explosion by the side of the trail dislodged a boulder at the top of a low hill, sending it tumbling toward the convoy. Mark, driving the lead truck, swerved to avoid being crushed, but the huge rock collided with the back of vehicle, bringing the caravan to a halt.

VICTORIA

Good heavens, but that was close. What could have--

MARK

Look - up ahead!

VICTORIA

Another truck.

MARK

(warning Penny)
It's an ambush!

MUSIC. A TRUCK pulls up. DOORS OPEN.

LESTER MAYHEW

A rickety flatbed truck pulled in front of them, blocking the trail. Three rough-looking young women jumped out of the cab, two carrying spiked clubs, one sporting a rifle. Stepping down from the driver's seat was a gaunt older man with deep set eyes and sickly pale skin.

VICTORIA

(gasping)
The dead fellow man!

MARK

Who?

VICTORIA

Mortimer Wycroft. And his crazy daughters.

GERTIE

Oy, you, get out of the trucks.
Now!

TRUCK DOORS OPEN. Many FEET ON SAND.

MARK

See here - we don't want any
trouble--

JANICE

Can I just shoot 'em, dad?

SHULA

Yeah, let Janice shoot 'em in the
legs. Me and Gertie'll finish them
off with the clubs.

GERTIE

It'll be fun. Hey you, kneel down
there, in front.

JANICE

Can I shoot 'em dad? Heh, can I?

MORTIMER WYCROFT

Not just yet, Janice. Let's have a
closer look.

Menacing FOOTSTEPS.

MORTIMER WYCROFT (CONT'D)

What have we here? Hah! A withered
old lady and a one eyed geezer! We
got a telegram - friends overseas
said you might be coming this way.
Ah ah, don't you move, Jackaroo.

MARK

We--

MORTIMER WYCROFT

And keep your mouth shut! Hello,
Shiela. You're a pretty little
thing, aren't ya?

PENNY

Don't come near me.

JANICE

So let me just shoot those two.

MORTIMER WYCROFT

(annoyed)

No, we want to keep those two.

JANICE

Can I shoot the other two? Can I, dad?

SHULA

He said "no", Janice. What are you, deaf?

GERTIE

I reckon the doctor'll tell us to kill 'em anyway. We'll be doing him a favor - saving him some time.

SHULA

I say we lock 'em up with the others. The doctor can question 'em first then we kill 'em later.

GERTIE

Waste of time - let's just club 'em now!

JANICE

Dad, could I just shoot 'em a little? Wing 'em in the leg or something?

MORTIMER WYCROFT

(getting annoyed)

I said not yet, Janice!

VICTORIA

(boldly interrupting)

Tell me, young lady, do you belong to the Cult of the Sand Bat?

There is a stunned pause from everyone.

CECIL

Victoria, perhaps--

SHULA

How'd you know that?

VICTORIA

I took note of your tattoos.

GERTIE

These is things you best not just go asking about, granny.

JANICE
(emphatic)
Yeah!

GERTIE
You better have some more respect.

SHULA
The Sand Bat is fearsome!

VICTORIA
Really? It doesn't sound so
terribly fearsome to me. In fact,
it sounds like it was made up by a
child. What is that symbol meant to
represent? It doesn't look like any
bat I've ever seen.

SHULA
Yeah? Well that's cause you never
looked on the three lobed burning
eye, like we done.

GERTIE
That which haunts the dark - that's
the real power, the true power!

MORTIMER WYCROFT
Nuh-uh. The doctor said the Great
Race is the real power.

SHULA
Did not. The Great Race of Pnakotus
is the *great* power, not the true
power.

GERTIE
But the all seeing eye of the
haunter--

MORTIMER WYCROFT
They've mastered time, you dimwits.
Past, present and--

JANICE
No, cause the Sand Bat, he can
control the Burning Eye.

GERTIE
Can not!

JANICE
Can so!

GERTIE

Can not!

Gertie PUNCHES Janice.

JANICE

Ow. You nasty bitch--

MORTIMER WYCROFT

Hear we go again. I've told you all before--

AD LIB BICKERING.

CECIL

(whispering)

Mark, there's a crate of dynamite on the back of their truck.

MARK

What's your plan?

CECIL

I have a pistol in my waistband. Get the women to safety.

MARK

OK. Ready? One, two, three--

BLAM! RICOCHET! FLYING SAND! MUSIC!

PENNY

Victoria, come with me!

RUNNING FOOTSTEPS.

MORTIMER WYCROFT

Hey, you morons - he still has a gun!

LESTER MAYHEW

As Penny shielded Victoria behind the large boulder, Wycroft ran to his truck and Janice ducked for cover behind it. Shula and Gertie chased Mark to the cab of his truck where he pulled out his shillelagh and swung at the crazed sisters.

GERTIE

Get him!

WHAM. WHOOSH. CRUNCH.

VICTORIA

Watch out, there's poison on those clubs!

THWACK! SPLINTER! BANG!

JANICE

Dad, I'm taking my shot!

BLAM! A bullet RICOCHETS. Wycroft's truck STARTS.

VICTORIA

He's going to get away!

PENNY

Not if Cecil can hit that crate of--

BLAM! KABOOM!

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil's bullet found its target, and the cultist's truck exploded, killing Wycroft and his daughter Janice instantly. Flying shrapnel clipped Mark in the shoulder, and struck Gertie full in the head. She dropped in the sand.

SHULA

Gertie!

WHACK! SPLINTER! THUD.

MARK

Not so tough now without your club, are you?

SHULA

You killed my whole family. You bastard.

Gertie MOANS feebly.

MARK

This one here, she's still alive.

SHULA

I'm gonna cut you open, pull out your insides and dance on 'em.

MARK

(shouting)

Hey Penny, how you going?

PENNY
 (shouting)
 We're all right.

MARK
 (shouting)
 Look sharp! Do you see any more of
 'em?

PENNY
 No, we're alone.

MARK
 Ace. Be a lamb and bring some rope
 over here.

SANDY FOOTSTEPS.

CECIL
 I've got the first aid kit.

SHULA
 I should have killed you first.

CECIL
 It's for him, not you.

MORE SANDY FOOTSTEPS.

PENNY
 Here you go.

MARK
 Great - tie her up. Cecil, shoot
 her if she doesn't cooperate.

RUSTLING, ROPES.

VICTORIA
 Mark, dear, you're bleeding. Let me
 help you.

MARK
 It's a scratch. Better look after
 this one here. Her head looks
 pretty bad.

SHULA
 You'd better not let Gertie die!

The sounds of FIRST AID.

CECIL

Look, if you want Gertie here to live, you're going to take us to this Great City where the doctor is.

SHULA

I'm not supposed to take no one there ever.

VICTORIA

If we don't get proper medical attention for this girl, she's going to die.

CECIL

Is Dr. Huston in the Great City?

SHULA

Yeah. And he's got loads of medicine and food and other stuff there. It's not far.

VICTORIA

Will you take us?

MARK

It's up to you, Shula.

SHULA

Ok, but I'm doing it for Gertie. And once we get help for her, I'm going to kill you.

MARK

Yeah, yeah, all right.

CECIL

Is your truck drivable?

MARK

That boulder clocked the fender, but you should see the other guy's. We'll manage.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

They loaded Gertie into the back of Penny's truck and put Shula in the cab of Mark's. After Cecil and Mark shoveled sand over the smoldering wreckage to dampen the tell-tale smoke, they carefully motored away.

TRUCKS BOUNCING over rough terrain.

SHULA

It's just up ahead beyond these dunes. I told you the Wycroft route was faster than your stupid map.

MARK

This look about right to you, Cecil? Are we close?

CECIL

According to MacKenzie's notes and my compass readings we are.

MARK

Okay, then we're going to turn off here.

SHULA

What? You idiot, where are you going?

MARK

We're taking the O'Brien route. The one that doesn't lead straight to the guards.

SHULA

Damn it.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Mark carefully drove the lead truck in the shadow of towering dunes, using hand signals for Penny to follow him and stop.

TRUCK DOORS OPEN.

PENNY

What's going on?

MARK

Is Gertie all right?

PENNY

No change. Victoria's looking after her. Why'd we stop?

MARK

The city is supposed to be just over these dunes. We're going to do a bit of a reckie.

CECIL

You two go look. My depth perception isn't what it used to be. I'll keep my eye on Shula.

LESTER MAYHEW

Mark and Penny trudged up the sand dune and carefully peered over. Down below them, just four or five hundred yards away, they beheld several massive stone blocks emerging from the sand.

MUSIC. WIND. The VERY DISTANT SOUND OF A GENERATOR.

MARK

God almighty. Have you ever seen the like?

PENNY

They're huge! A city, in the Never Never. It's all true!

MARK

Wait till Uncle Tony hears about this! Looks totally ancient.

PENNY

Look over there. An entrance. A rubbish tip - that's not old.

MARK

Do you hear that? Sounds like a generator or something. Must be in that shed.

PENNY

Mark, over there. See? Must be a guard.

MARK

I knew it. Come on!

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

The twins rejoined the others at the truck and made a report.

VICTORIA

Shula, enough of this nonsense. I don't know how much longer your sister can last without proper medical supplies.

MARK

We have to get into that city without getting caught.

SHULA

You're never going to make it in. Never, never. You're too stupid.

VICTORIA

Dear lord, what an exasperating young woman.

SHULA

Am not! You're the one that's excessperating.

CECIL

(playing along)

This is stupid! She probably doesn't even know how to get into the city.

SHULA

Yes I do! I know the best way! No one else uses it! It's a secret entrance!

CECIL

Secret entrance? We should just knock her out and tie her up. Let the buzzards have both of them! She doesn't know--

SHULA

Do too! I'll prove it to you!

MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

Using the dunes as cover, Shula led the group in a wide arc around the site for a couple of miles, until they pulled up beside a huge dark hole in the ground, with massive carved stones arising from the sand nearby. Cool air welled up from deep within the earth.

CECIL

Okay, I was wrong. There's a secret entrance.

MARK

What are these markings in the sand over here? Are they some kind of footprints?

PENNY

They're too big for that. Looks like they dragged barrels through here or something.

CECIL

So how do we get down?

SHULA

You need a lot of rope. Tie it to the truck and climb down. That's what we do.

PENNY

Would you manage that, Victoria? I could stay up here with you and Gertie 'til they come back.

VICTORIA

My dear, I was a woman running for President of the United States. I know how it feels to dangle from the end of a rope.

MARK

All right, but Gertie stays here.

SHULA

Hey! That wasn't--

MARK

To make sure Shula gets us in **and** back out again.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Using the ropes, the team lowered themselves down the sandy incline into a vertical shaft that dropped fifteen feet below the ground. There, they found themselves in a fifteen foot wide passage with smooth floors and carefully constructed walls.

CECIL

Everyone ready?

PENNY

Torches on.

CLICKS.

VICTORIA

I'll map our progress.

MARK

Lead on, Shula.

CECIL

And remember, I've got a gun.

SHULA

(petulant)

I know! My memory's really good. I'm doing this for Gertie - not you.

EERIE MUSIC leads them off...

146

THE HATCH

146

LESTER MAYHEW

After traveling for some time, the group found the entire passageway fell away into a shaft that dropped into pure blackness.

ECHOES. CAVERN WIND. EERIE DISTANT PIPING.

PENNY

It's too big to jump across. What do we do?

CECIL
Is this your idea of a trap?
Leading us down to--

SHULA
It's a trapdoor. You're standing on
it. You just lift up on this
side...

OOOF! STONE OR METAL SCRAPING.

SHULA (CONT'D)
And it'll fold over on the other
side to make a bridge.

MARK
I see. Here, I'll help.

SHULA
No! Not so fast! You'll wake them!

The mighty door falls shut with a very loud CLANG. A strange
and SCARY SOUND OF DEMONIAC WIND is audible on the other
side.

SHULA (CONT'D)
Quick! Throw the bolt now!
Grab that thing there and turn it -
no, like this. Push that while I do
it!

MORE SCRAPING. The alien latch CATCHES and there's a DREADFUL
DEEP THUMPING from beneath the door.

SHULA (CONT'D)
C'mon... we should get away from
there. Follow me.

Their HURRIED FOOTSTEPS ECHO.

PENNY
Shula, what was that?

SHULA
Yeah, like I'm going to tell you
secrets like that.

CECIL
Spoken like a girl who doesn't even
know--

SHULA

I do so. They're called Flying Plops and they're invisible most of the time, and they don't obey the Sand Bat so even we have to look out for them. Happy now?

CECIL

No, not really.

VICTORIA

These tunnels are huge. How far do they go?

SHULA

You could walk for days. Maybe longer. But the important parts, the doctor's parts, they're not so far from each other.

MARK

Look at the walls - carvings. They're like giant hieroglyphs.

SHULA

No they're not! They're writing in the stone.

CECIL

I'm sure the doctor never told you whose writing it was.

SHULA

He did so. The Great Race drew the pictures. A really long time ago.

VICTORIA

How long ago?

SHULA

A really long time ago. Maybe fifty years. Prolly more.

CECIL

Great Race? Who are they?

SHULA

I'm not gonna answer these question. These are mystical secrets.

MARK

(bluffing)

It's all right, I know.

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

The Great Race were the ones with
the three globed burned eyes that
the Sand Bats--

SHULA

NO! You've got it all wrong! You
idiot! The Great Race were these
big cones but then they left
through time to go into beetles,
but they built this city - and
since they was done with it, the
Sand Bat woke up and made it his
cave now.

MUSIC.

147 THE NURSERY

147

LESTER MAYHEW

The team walked for what seemed
like hours through the dark
underground passages.

PENNY

Hey! Look up there. Is that light?

SHULA

You can turn your torches off.

CECIL

Looks like a string of electric
lights.

SHULA

We're getting near where Dr. Huston
works. I told you I knew how to get
in! C'mon - it's a big room up
here.

ECHOING FOOTSTEPS lead to an even more REVERBERANT chamber.

MARK

Big room? I'll say!

PENNY

You can barely see the other side.

VICTORIA

What's that in the middle? It's
some kind of huge pit or recess.

CECIL

Oh god, not another one.

PENNY

Shhh? Do you hear that?

The faint sound of a BABY CRYING. Penny's FOOTSTEPS.

MARK

It's coming from the pit.

SHULA

You don't want to go near that.

CECIL

What the hell is it?

SHULA

The nursery. For the spawn of the
Haunter! When the Great Gate opens,
they will be released!

PENNY

Sounds like a baby. Something's
moving down there. I can't quite
make it out.

CECIL

Don't look, Penny.

PENNY

Where's my torch?

CLICK. Penny GASPS in horror. A storm of GIBBERS and SQUEALS
from the pit!

LESTER MAYHEW

Twenty feet below, Penny's torch
shined on a writhing mass of
aberrant, bulbous, depraved,
festering and hideous forms,
sprawling, hopping, and oozing
across the floor.

SHULA

Wanna see 'em? Have a look up
close!

SUDDEN SCRAPING FOOTSTEPS and a PUSH!

MARK

Penny!

PENNY

Aaaaaaaaaah!

END OF CHAPTER

148 ADVERTISEMENT

148

LESTER MAYHEW

Bring good health through your front door. Install a Revigator water cooler in your home and rest assured that your family will be drinking the best and purest water available. The Revigator's special radium lining treats your water with genuine radioactivity, eliminating 99% of germs and other impurities. Give your family the very best - give them a Revigator!

Revigator JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER

Don't settle for less than pure irradiated water - buy a Revigator!

149 THE LAST OF SHULA

149

Start of Chapter MUSIC. SCREAMING. MONSTROUS GIBBERING.

LESTER MAYHEW

Shula lunged forward, pushing Penny into the hellish pit. Mark scrambled for a rope and threw it down to her.

MARK

Grab the rope, Penny!

PENNY

(panicking)
I -- ah, it's on me.

MARK

Hang on, I'll pull you up!

He HEAVES on the rope. The COCKING of a pistol.

CECIL

Don't make a move, Shula! Kneel down, right there.

MARK

(toiling)
Almost got you.

PENNY

It's on my leg - get it off!

MARK

Here we go-

ROPE SLIDES AGAINST STONE.

VICTORIA

We've got you, dear.

PENNY

It's on my foot - it burns!

CHICKEN MANGLING, SQUEALING, a KICK and a THUD and more GIBBERING. Penny WEEPS.

MARK

You bitch! You could have killed her!

SHULA

It's her fault. I told her not to go over there.

VICTORIA

There there, Penny. You'll be all right.

MARK

I should have just beaten you to death - done us all a favor!

SHULA

No, **I** should have beaten **you** to death, stupid! You can't kill me. You need me! Without me you'd--

Mark gives her a hearty PUSH!

MARK

Aaaaah!

SHULA

(plummeting)
Aaaiiiiiieeeee!

CECIL

Mark!

SHULA

(screaming)
The rope - throw me the rope! Oh god!

MARK

Now you want the rope? Yeah?

SHULA
Please, throw it!

MARK
Here! You can have the whole thing!

WHOOSH. Shula SCREAMS. The hellish PIT THINGS drown her out. Somewhere in the distance, a terrible WIND HOWLS. PIPING. MUSIC. Penny WEEPS. Victoria AD LIBS COMFORT.

CECIL
(tense)
I don't know what that noise is,
but it's coming from behind us. We
can't stay here.

VICTORIA
Yes, well, it appears we no longer
have a guide.

MARK
(angry and ashamed)
Come on. We follow the lights. Come
on Penny. I've got you.

Eerie and dangerous MUSIC continues.

150 KAKAKATAK'S CHAMBERS

150

LESTER MAYHEW
The nervous investigators followed
the brightest lights down another
long passage to a distinctive
chamber.

FOOTSTEPS. Penny MUTTERS to herself.

MARK
Look in here - looks like storage
or something for electrical parts.
Like we saw back in Darwin, eh
Cecil?

RUMMAGING through a crate.

CECIL
Yeah. I've seen it in a few places
now. Like futuristic machinery. But
this piece, this isn't from the
future. It's from the past. It
seems as old as this place.

LESTER MAYHEW

On the other side of the chamber,
the investigators beheld what
appeared to be a giant electrical
control board with lots of levers,
switches and dials. Next to it was
a Freudian's couch with an
elaborate chromium headset on it.

CECIL

Good god, I wonder if this is where
Dr. Huston treats his patients?

VICTORIA

(from across the room)
Better there than on this - this
looks like an operating table, with
leather restraints.

CECIL

Another metal headpiece on it too,
with wires going back to the
controls.

PENNY

No! No, please. I don't like it.

VICTORIA

It will be all right.

CECIL

Huston's probably conducting
electroshock treatments,
lobotomies, or other ethically--

MARK

Well, his metal hat seems to fit
ok. Look, wireless!

CECIL

Mark, take that off - you don't
know what it does.

MARK

Maybe it'd help soothe Penny. Let's
see here...

The CLICK of a switch. A weird HUM.

VICTORIA

Mark... are you all right?

MARK

Yeah! This feels amazing. Don't worry, Victoria, I'm not going to kill myself with it.

VICTORIA

I didn't say you were.

MARK

You didn't have to - it's like I can hear what you're thinking. Oh, come on now, Cecil, that's not nice.

CECIL

By god, he *can* hear what I'm thinking.

MARK

Wait. There's more, it's fainter - there's other people somewhere else in the city. Oh, come on, Penny, I don't want to take it off. All right, calm down! I'll do it for you. But I'm keeping this thing.

The SWITCH CLICKS again. The HUM GOES AWAY.

VICTORIA

There's something else, back in here.

FOOTSTEPS. A pronounced high-voltage THROBBING increases.

MARK

What the hell is that?

LESTER MAYHEW

In another adjacent chamber, the investigators beheld a shimmering curtain of electric force that made their hair stand on end. Behind the dazzling curtain they could detect a large dark shape. Mark tentatively tested the electrical field with the end of his shillelagh.

LOUD BUZZING! SPARKS! Penny SHRIEKS! MUSIC!

MARK

Dear god, what is that *thing*?

VICTORIA
It's... alive!

LESTER MAYHEW
Lights came on in the chamber, and the investigators saw a bizarre creature apparently held captive by mechanical restraints. Its body was cone shaped, covered with rough reptilian skin, standing some ten feet high. Tentacle-like appendages emerged from the tip of the cone, one of which writhed toward the investigators and bore what appeared to be multiple eyes. Two appendages ended in clicking crab-like claws.

VICTORIA
Cecil, look! They're arms of some kind. Trying to reach--

CECIL
Gg-ggah-gggick-gah!

VICTORIA
Cecil?

MARK
He's having some kind of fit.

CECILYITH
Ttatath... Thraaw... Thraw dee seetch...

VICTORIA
Cecil! What's wrong? Mark, help me! He's flailing!

PENNY
(overwhelmed)
Mark! No no no! What *is* that?

MARK
Look away, Penny. I've got you. Just look at me. Victoria?

VICTORIA
Cecil! Do you understand what I'm saying?

CECILYITH

I wish to prevail upon you to open the fusebox behind you and throw the switch.

VICTORIA

Cecil?

CECILYITH

I will be grateful if my request is facilitated.

MARK

What's wrong with him?

VICTORIA

I don't think it is him.

(to Cecil)

You're not Cecil Watson. Who are you?

CECILYITH

I am Kakakatak.

VICTORIA

I see. I am Victoria. May I ask, where is my friend Cecil?

CECILYITH

The mind of your Cecil is secured in another organic form. I am using his physical form to communicate with you in a way you can comprehend. There is a switch on the wall behind you. Throw it.

VICTORIA

What happens if I do that?

CECILYITH

I will regain my liberty.

VICTORIA

I see. Is... that your body there, the tall conical--

CECILYITH

Yes.

MARK

We don't want to go setting that thing free.

VICTORIA

Not without getting something in return.

(to the Yithian)

Kakatac, am I to understand your consciousness is in my friend's body and his is there - in your body?

CECILYITH

Yes.

VICTORIA

If you agree to answer my questions, and I agree to turn off the switch, I will require that Mr. Watson's psyche be returned to his proper body.

CECILYITH

I mean him no harm. I will answer.

PENNY

(freaked)

Mark!

MARK

C'mon, Penny, over here. Don't look, don't listen either - this is crazy.

FOOTSTEPS AWAY.

VICTORIA

Where will I find Robert Huston?

CECILYITH

He is in this city. He brought about my confinement.

VICTORIA

What is he doing here?

CECILYITH

He, his followers and their slaves excavate our city of Pnakotus to find objects made by my people aeons ago.

VICTORIA

To what end?

CECILYITH

He is part of a conspiracy to
summon the god Nyarlathotep to
begin a new dominion on earth.

VICTORIA

How will he do this?

CECILYITH

When next this planet's moon
transits your sun, at that time
Huston, a man called Penhew and the
spawn of Nyarlathotep will tear the
sky using the devices of my people,
and usher in a new dark age.

VICTORIA

Well... That certainly explains a
great deal. Who is this spawn of
Nyarlathotep? Is it Carlyle?

CECILYITH

A child even now being born across
the seas to the West.

VICTORIA

(gasping)
Africa. Oh my god, Hazel!

CECILYITH

The Bloody Tongue. The Black
Pharaoh. The Sand Bat. The Bloated
Woman. Nyarlathotep wears countless
masks.

VICTORIA

This plan of Huston's - how can it
be stopped?

CECILYITH

It is time to throw the switch.

VICTORIA

No, please! Where is Huston now?

CECILYITH

Follow the lights to the left and
they will lead you to his crude
simian dwelling. And beyond it, the
surface. I have fulfilled my
obligation. Now you must fulfill
yours.

VICTORIA
 (frightened)
 I want Cecil back. Remember your
 promise.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
 Victoria rose and cautiously
 approached the fusebox on the wall.
 The alien creature's writhing
 appendages stilled as she opened
 the cover, and threw the large
 switch inside.

Ka-THUNK. The electrical HUM ceases. Penny GIGGLES insanely.

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)
 In a moment, the electrical field
 vanished and the mechanical
 restraints fell away. Cecil fell
 unconscious, and the giant conical
 being wriggled its bulk forward.

VICTORIA
 Cecil? Wake up! What have you done?
 You promised! Damn you!

Penny WHIMPERS and GIGGLES in fear.

MARK
 Victoria! It's coming at us!

LESTER MAYHEW
 The creature moved across the
 smooth floor and stopped before
 another array of futuristic
 machinery. Its great tubular arms
 lifted out a strange alien device,
 and placed it in Cecil's
 unresisting hands. Then it touched
 another switch on the wall, and
 suddenly a new voice came through
 loudspeakers in the chamber as it
 looked at Victoria with its
 unblinking eyes.

KAKAKATAK
 (mechanical)
 This place is very dangerous,
 especially to you and your kind.
 Use the weapon against the
 invisible fliers. You will hear
 them.

PENNY
(giggling)
Footprints? Big as barrels!

KAKAKATAK
I must go. As must you.

MUSIC HIT.

LESTER MAYHEW
And with surprising speed, the
massive creature scooted into the
shadowy halls and out of sight.

MARK
Well that was--

CECIL
W... wh.... Where are we? Did I
pass out?

VICTORIA
Cecil! You're back! You brave man!

CECIL
What the hell is this thing?

MARK
It's some kind of weapon. Hang on
to that thing, mate.

CECIL
I don't understand. What did I...

VICTORIA
You've been more useful than you
know.

PENNY
(mumbly and giggly)
Monsters. Living. Get it off!

MARK
Come on - he said these lights will
lead us to Dr. Huston.

Transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

The investigators followed the lights until they converged with others in a large chamber to reveal an odd sight. In the middle of the vast vault of ancient stone, a modern, three story wooden house stood by itself, with warm lights gleaming in the windows. A group of a dozen men shuffled awkwardly around the building.

CAVERN AMBIENCE. Distant SHUFFLING and SLAPS of lumber. MUSIC.

PENNY

Something wrong with those fellows.

MARK

Shhh. Stick to the shadows.

CECIL

It looks like they're moving that pile of lumber.

VICTORIA

This must be it - Huston's lair. We've got to go in.

CECIL

How?

MARK

Look at 'em shuffle about. I could try and get them to chase me. They're pretty slow.

VICTORIA

A diversion?

CECIL

If we could get them to go - go off down that passage there.

MARK

Hang on, let me try something. The wireless metal headset. Maybe it could--

VICTORIA

I really don't think you should--

PENNY
Mark, no, it'll crush--

CLICK. HUM.

MARK
It's all right, Penny. Crikey! It works! It's like I can hear the buggers thinking! Can you hear me?

MINERS
(mumbling, off)
Yes.

MARK
Say it loud.

MINERS
Yes!

MARK
(to the investigators)
This is great!
(to miners)
All right you lot, move on, down the hall here.

VICTORIA
They're going!

SHUFFLING FEET ECHO in the cavern.

CECIL
You're right. Look at them. Wait, that one's not. He's not shuffling at all. He's dressed different too. Maybe he's the boss?

MINING MANAGER
(off)
Hey, where are you morons going? Come back here!

VICTORIA
They're coming back.

PENNY
Uh-oh.

CECIL
What the--

MARK
Stop.

The SHUFFLING STOPS.

MINING MANAGER

(off)

Bloody hell, what's with you? I said come here.

CECIL

They do whatever they're told.

MARK

(quietly)

Sit down. All of you.

The FLOP of men sitting in unison.

MINING MANAGER

All right, this isn't funny.

(shouting)

Dr. Huston?

(no answer)

Get back up and finish moving that wood!

The miners RISE.

VICTORIA

If only we could get rid of the foreman. Then you could get them out of the way.

MARK

(to Victoria)

Don't let Penny see this. This might be ugly.

(to the miners)

Grab a pick.

MINING MANAGER

No, not the picks, you bloody idiots!

VICTORIA

Oh, Mark, no! I didn't--

MARK

Go on, you lot. Shut him up.

MINING MANAGER

No! What are you-- get away from--

MEATY THUNKS and CRIES OF PAIN followed by the FALL OF A BODY. MUSIC.

MARK

Right, put your picks down and walk down the passage. Just keep walking.

CLANKS of dropped tools and DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS.

VICTORIA

Mark, please take that thing off.

CECIL

That was a bit too much.

MARK

Yeah, sorry about that. But this is our chance - we should get Penny out of here before that crew is missed.

CECIL

Right. As soon as we deal with Huston.

MUSIC.

152 HUSTON CONTROL

152

LESTER MAYHEW

The building's ground floor was a store room for mining and construction supplies. A large ramp led up to the second level. The team crept up as stealthily as they could.

Pitiable MOANS grow louder.

MARK

What the hell...?

VICTORIA

Oh my good lord!

Penny SQUEAKS in psychological anguish.

LESTER MAYHEW

The second level contained seven large cages, filled with miserable, naked human beings.

LES MISERABLE #1

Please god, let us out!

LES MISERABLE #2

Déjame ir. Haré lo que sea. Por favor! (*Let me go. I will do anything. Please!*)

CECIL

The locks - I can't get them open. I've never seen anything like it.

PENNY

This cage... they're all... they're all! Oh my god!

VICTORIA

Step away, dear.
(to the others)
They appear to all be pregnant women.

MARK

(to the prisoners)
Look - we'll be back. We'll get you out if we can.

CECIL

This is not right in any way. This whole--

MARK

Come on - one more level up there.

153

MAD PSYCHIATRIST

153

LESTER MAYHEW

They ascended another ramp which ended at a thick wooden door. They opened it to reveal a nicely furnished apartment. Oddly large books with metal covers were piled on a desk, from behind which a man with iron-grey hair rose to greet them.

DR. HUSTON

Come in! At last, I've been waiting. Dr. Robert Huston, how do you do? You must be Mrs. Woodhull and Mr. Watson. I was told you might be coming. What attractive young people you've brought. Who are you?

PENNY

I'm... I'm...

MARK

Don't tell him. What do you care?

DR. HUSTON

Ah, deflection - the transference of your emotional state on to me. But I do care. I care about all my patients. This young woman here - your sister, I think? She's clearly in the grip of profound anxiety. She's seen more today than she can emotionally process, I expect. A hearty body but a fragile mind. What's your name, miss?

PENNY

Penny.

MARK

Leave her alone!

DR. HUSTON

Don't you want her to get well? Come to me, Penny.

FOOTSTEPS. MUSIC! AD LIBS!

MARK

Let her go!

DR. HUSTON

Don't come any closer. The doctor patient relationship is a sacred thing. You're risking her health.

CECIL

We didn't come here for treatment, Huston.

DR. HUSTON

Oh, but in a way you did. And already I've shown you your true nature. You'd very much like to shoot me with that pistol you have in your waistband, wouldn't you, Mr. Watson? But you're afraid of what will happen to Penny here if you try. Impotent rage and cowardice. Ah, and guilt, I see. You're welcome.

(MORE)

DR. HUSTON (CONT'D)

I used to get a pretty penny for such a quick diagnosis. Oh, sorry, Penny. Freudian slip.

CECIL

(deeply shaken)

You're a madman.

DR. HUSTON

Now *that's* deflection.

VICTORIA

Why, Dr. Huston? Why are you doing it?

DR. HUSTON

You're referring to the grand plan. Oddly, it was Roger Carlyle's curious dreams that got me started. The human brain, out of sheer self-defense, teaches itself not to see the truth. But sometimes glimpses sneak through in our dreams. The real madness, good woman, is resisting the inevitable. Suppressing the darkness within you. Imagining that the human race means anything at all. That's what deranges you. And our entire species is deranged. Nyarlathotep is the cure. It's more nuanced than that, of course, but I fear that's as good a grasp of the underlying principles as you're likely to get in this brief session. You three seem very resistant to treatment, though I do see hope for young Penny here.

MARK

Penny, listen to me--

DR. HUSTON

And you, young man, your use of the Great Race's mind controller was bold. I was amused by your little puppet show out there, but I can assure you I have many, many more enthusiastic believers coming here right now. The cells downstairs are rather full, but we can make room for you. In fact, I'm sure I can help pretty Penny fit right in with my captives who are expecting--

MARK

You sick--

Huston's voice takes on an EERIE QUALITY as he spouts an incantation! PANICKED AD LIBS.

DR. HUSTON

(fierce)

I won't have patients order me about! Goka mnahn'! The mind controller. Put it back on. Now!

PENNY

Mark?

CECIL

Don't do it, don't put it on!

MARK

I... I have to! I can't help myself!

DR. HUSTON

Yarnak kadishtu!

There's a HORRIBLE MEATY ELECTRICAL NOISE! Music HIT!

END OF CHAPTER

154 ADVERTISEMENT - FORHAN'S TOOTHPASTE

154

LESTER MAYHEW

Successful men in business share one special quality - a smile filled with gleaming white teeth. And there's no quicker way to help your teeth shine than with Forhan's. Scientifically fortified with radium, Forhan's is the dentifrice that's sure to give you the smile of success.

Forhan's JINGLE.

ANNOUNCER

Forhan's toothpaste with Radiol - available at drug stores everywhere!

155 HUSTON HAS A PROBLEM

155

Start of episode MUSIC. ZAP! HISS! SIZZLE! THUD! AD LIB SCREAMS from Penny, Victoria and Cecil.

LESTER MAYHEW

Mark fell lifelessly to the floor, steam rising from the electrical helmet on his head, blood seeping from his eyes.

CECIL

No!

DR. HUSTON

Now Penny, tell me, how did that make you feel?

RUSHING FOOTSTEPS.

VICTORIA

Let her go!

LESTER MAYHEW

Victoria lunged forward and grabbed the pistol from Cecil's waistband, but before she could raise it to fire, Huston swatted her away like a fly.

WHACK. Victoria groans in pain.

CECIL

I'm not afraid to fire this thing, Huston!

DR. HUSTON

(amused)

A Yithian lightning gun? Really? Good luck, the way you're holding it. Mr. Watson, you really need to spend quite a lot more time studying the Great Race to appreciate the sophistication of their tools.

(to Penny)

Now, Penny, tell me--

CRUNCH! BASH! SMOOSH! MUSIC.

CECIL

Doesn't seem that complicated to me.

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil stood over Huston's quivering body, blood dripping from the lightning gun he had used as a cudgel.

PENNY

Mark? Mark?

VICTORIA

I'm so sorry, dear. He's....

CECIL

We've got to get out of here.

PENNY

Keys.

CECIL

What?

PENNY

We've got to find the key for those people, downstairs. Mark wanted....

They RUMMAGE frantically.

VICTORIA

Look at this - it's a manuscript. Looks like Huston's manifesto: Gods of Reality.

CECIL

Ha! In his pocket. This could be some kind of key.

PENNY

I want to free those people.

VICTORIA

Yes, let's do that.

ESCAPE MUSIC! FOOTSTEPS. The PLEAS of Les Miserables, ELECTRICAL NOISE and then the CLANGING of cells being opened and desperate prisoners FLEEING.

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil, Penny and Victoria used the strange key to open the cages and free the prisoners.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

Soon all of them poured out of
Huston's headquarters and into the
passageways of the Great City,
where Sand Bat cultists and
mindless miners were converging.

156 FLIGHT OF THE POLYP

156

BEDLAM UNFOLDS as prisoners run, and cultists and mining
zombies chase them. AD LIBS.

THE OTHER MINING BOSS

Hey! The prisoners are getting
away!

SAND BAT CULTIST #11

We need them for the sacrifices!

SAND BAT CULTIST #3

Round 'em up. This way!

VICTORIA

We want that tunnel over there,
quickly now. Take my hand, Penny.

CECIL

Right behind you.

A strange and terrible WHISTLING SOUND approaches. CULTISTS
PANIC and RUN.

THE OTHER MINING BOSS

Oh god - it's one of THEM!

SAND BAT CULTIST #16

It's coming from down there - RUN!

LESTER MAYHEW

From down the passage, a cold wind
and a terrible piping sound
foretold the arrival of an
invisible force. Victoria, Cecil
and Penny could see Sand Bat
cultists and miners alike being
lifted into the air and dropped to
their deaths on the stone floor.

SCREAMING. MUSIC. MADNESS.

SAND BAT CULTIST #16

The polyp!

CECIL
Keep moving, don't stop!

PENNY
I hear it - it's coming this way!

VICTORIA
Don't look.

The polyp WHISTLES and SWOOPS toward them. A sudden ELECTRICAL BLAST, and a polypous SCREECH as it WHOOSHES AWAY. RETREATING CULTISTS, ETC.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
(in disbelief)
Kakakatak. Oh thank god.

LESTER MAYHEW
The cone-shaped alien creature stood in the passage, holding a smoking lightning gun in its claws. As the invisible attacker fled, Kakakatak dipped its head to Victoria, and vanished down the passage.

CECIL
My god, what was that thing?

VICTORIA
A friend.

Transition MUSIC.

157 HIGH SEAS PTSD

157

LESTER MAYHEW
The team made its way out of the elder city and back to the truck they'd left behind. There they saw strange new barrel-shaped prints, but no trace of Gertie Wycroft. They trekked across the desert and back to Port Hedland, and were deeply relieved when, sunburned and parched, they were finally aboard Neily's yacht.

CECIL
How is she?

NEILY
She's sleeping. They both are.

CECIL

Good. Good.

NEILY

What the hell happened out there?
Where's the brother? Mark, was it?

CECIL

I can't, Vanderbilt... there's too
much. Victoria can tell you - when
she's ready.

NEILY

Hmph. I thumbed through the book
she brought back from the desert -
"Gods of Reality". Written by a
lunatic, clearly. Utter madness--

CECIL

Yeah, but it's real. The whole
crazed scheme. Huston was alive.
I'm sure Penhew is too. Maybe Brady
and even Carlyle. You know they're
plotting doomsday... we can't let
them get away with it.

NEILY

I've already told the crew to make
ready for Shanghai.

CECIL

(profoundly relieved)
By god, Vanderbilt, there's hope
for you yet.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

NEILY

Yes, Willis, what is it?

WILLIS

We've had a reply to Mrs.
Woodhull's telegram, sir. Should I
deliver it?

NEILY

No, give it to me.

WILLIS

Very good sir.

A CRUMPLE of paper.

NEILY

Willis, fix Mr. Watson here a stiff drink.

WILLIS

What'll it be sir?

CECIL

Something with ice.

WILLIS

Right away.

He GOES.

CECIL

What's it say?

NEILY

"Claflin, Ford and Kafour are well. Eager to introduce new friend. En route to Shanghai rendezvous. Much to discuss. Barrington."

CECIL

Thank god they're all right.

NEILY

Yes. And it would seem we're all converging for one final task.

Ominous end of episode MUSIC.

END OF CHAPTER

158 DIM SUM

158

MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

Dark Adventure Radio Theatre presents part six of "Masks of Nyarlathotep" with your host, Lester Mayhew.

LESTER MAYHEW

The North Star sailed past New Guinea and through the Philippine Sea to Shanghai, Pearl of the Orient -- Paris of the East.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

Vanderbilt's yacht entered the mouth of the Yangtze, turned up the Whangpoo and docked along the Bund, an eight mile stretch of docks and wharves. Soon Hazel, Zeke, Dr. Kafour and Sam joined them in the private safety of Neily's ship and together they plotted their next move.

HAZEL

"Many names, many forms, but all the same and toward one end." I didn't understand that when Jackson wrote it, but I certainly do now.

CECIL

Huston's manifesto is insane nonsense, but it explains a lot. Nyarlathotep made a similar offer to the Carlyle Expedition as he made to us - only they accepted his bargain and began a united effort to bring him to this world.

SAM

This god, Nyarlathotep, and his "bargain". All of them were in on it?

CECIL

Maybe not Brady. Besart said he never went into the pyramid.

HAZEL

So maybe that's why Jackson was looking for him?

CECIL

Could be. The whole expedition went to Kenya, but apparently Brady and Carlyle fled right after the group left Nairobi.

HAZEL

So those two were never at the massacre site?

CECIL

No. Penhew led the rest in faking their own deaths.

(MORE)

CECIL (CONT'D)

They conducted some ritual - sacrificed all of the expedition's porters in that clearing in Kenya and let the world believe the entire expedition had been massacred.

HAZEL

The authorities settled for that explanation.

VICTORIA

Who would or could have believed the truth?

SAM

Innocent men hanged for the crime.

HAZEL

Yes. Poor Hypatia Masters was left with M'Weru, carrying Nyarlathotep's monstrous offspring.

ZEKE

She's out of her misery now.

HAZEL

But the spawn might still be alive. So is Penhew. Their grand plan might still work.

VICTORIA

Huston went to Australia and revived Nyarlathotep's Sand Bat cult and recovered strange machinery from the underground city.

PENNY

Huston was vile. I wish I'd killed him.

VICTORIA

Huston shipped the artifacts to Gavigan's factory, which used them to make new parts that they sent to Penhew here in China.

CECIL

They're building something, and the clock is ticking. We have to find Penhew and stop him. They sent shipments for him through Ho Fang Imports.

(MORE)

CECIL (CONT'D)

I'm sure there will be a local version of the Nyarlathotep cult.

DR. KAFOUR

There is - the Order of the Bloated Woman. It seems... most disturbing.

ZEKE

So how do we find Penhew?

HAZEL

Maybe through Jack Brady. I talked to a guy who had drinks with him here, someplace called the Stumbling Tiger. And get this, Jackson had been there too - there were matches from there in his bag.

ZEKE

Oh yeah, he also had a kodak of a boat in a Chinese harbor. Maybe someone local will know it.

CECIL

If we could find Brady, he might lead us to Carlyle and prove once and for all if he's still alive.

NEILY

That would let you finally close your case.

VICTORIA

Considering that the Bloody Tongue and the Brotherhood of the Black Pharaoh have tried to kill us--

PENNY

And the cult of the Sand Bat!

VICTORIA

Of course, dear. It's safe to assume this Bloated Woman cult will try to stop us as soon as they know we're here. These cults seem to be working together.

ZEKE

Keep a low profile. That's the trick.

VICTORIA

How could anyone in this cadre possibly stand out in China?

Ripple of UNCOMFORTABLE LAUGHTER.

NEILY

You can use the North Star as your base of operations. We'll always have crew on watch and my chef in the galley.

VICTORIA

Thank you, Neily. You have no idea what that means.

HAZEL

Why don't Zeke and I start looking for Brady at the Stumbling Tiger Bar?

SAM

I can follow at a distance - you know, backup.

ZEKE

I like the sound of that. Thanks, my friend.

DR. KAFOUR

Perhaps Penny will accompany me to the Shanghai Museum? Colleagues there might be able to teach us more about the Order of the Bloated Woman.

PENNY

Never been to a proper museum before. I'd like that.

VICTORIA

Cecil, you could come with me to the Shanghai Courier. We should be fairly safe at a newspaper office, I think.

DR. KAFOUR

Please be careful. You might be surprised.

Transition MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Venturing out into the crowded city, Victoria and Cecil met with Anthony Chang, the editor of the Shanghai Courier, an English-language daily.

The subtly different WALLA of a CHINESE NEWSPAPER OFFICE.

ANTHONY CHANG

Writing a book on modern Shanghai, eh? You have your work cut out for you. The city is changing so rapidly, Mrs. Pemberly.

VICTORIA

How would you say it's changed the most?

ANTHONY CHANG

(so happy to have been asked)

No city in the world, I think, is so poorly governed. As I'm sure you know, we have three governments - this is no way to run the fifth largest city in the world. Some is, of course, Chinese, but we also have the International Settlement and the French Concession. Each has corrupt officials, back dealings, ill-defined borders and boundaries, and of course the criminal gangs are now rampant wherever you go. Extreme wealth and abject poverty exist cheek by jowl. Every day sees bloody battles between the workers, strikebreakers, and the police. We--

CECIL

What about strange religious groups? Cults?

ANTHONY CHANG

Yes, Mr. Holmes, we have those too, I'm sure. Where chaos thrives so too will thrive every strange behavior, every strange manner of thinking. If one pays adequate bribes to the right people, there's nothing that can't be done here.

(MORE)

ANTHONY CHANG (CONT'D)

For safety, I suggest you keep to the International Settlement.

CECIL

We had hoped to locate an American here in Shanghai. I know it is improbable, but have you perhaps heard of a man named Jack Brady? I am told he frequented the Stumbling Tiger on Lantern Street.

ANTHONY CHANG

I do not recall that name... But there was a very odd murder on Lantern Street, just this week.

VICTORIA

Odd? How so?

ANTHONY CHANG

It happened, if you'll pardon my saying madame, at a flower girl house. One may see strange things in that part of town, but a survivor described the attacker as being a giant bat with wings the size of this room. But of course that would be the opium talking.

CECIL

(disturbed)

Yes. No doubt.

Political Upheaval TRANSITION MUSIC.

160

THE STUMBLING TIGER

160

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, Hazel and Zeke took seats at the bar of The Stumbling Tiger, a dank and dirty dive on Lantern Street. Sam sat alone at a nearby table, keeping a lookout.

1920s CHINESE RECORD plays on the jukebox. QUIET CONVERSATIONS in the background. The barman, FERGUS CHUM, is a cagey fellow of Chinese-Scots heritage. He's got a Shanghai brogue.

FERGUS CHUM

New faces from new places - we serve 'em all. They call me McChum.

(MORE)

FERGUS CHUM (CONT'D)

Lady, I pour you a Green Dragon -
my special cocktail?

HAZEL

Is it good?

FERGUS CHUM

Drink one, it brings you good luck.
Drink two, you forget all your
worries.

HAZEL

Perfect. I'll take two.

FERGUS CHUM

For you, sir?

ZEKE

Whiskey.

FERGUS CHUM

Coming right up.

He SHAKES and STRAINS Hazel's cocktail.

ZEKE

McChum. What the hell kind of name
is that?

FERGUS CHUM

My father was from Nanking. Mother
from Glasgow.

ZEKE

That explains the accent.

FERGUS CHUM

And you - Americans, yes?

HAZEL

That's it. Hey, McChum, I'm
wondering if you might know an old
friend of ours. Said he comes here
sometimes. Jack Brady.

FERGUS CHUM

(baiting)

Sorry lady, lots of people in and
out of here, hard to remember
names.

The CLINK of a HEAVY COIN on the bar.

HAZEL

Sometimes cold hard cash jars the memory.

FERGUS CHUM

Mmmm, twenty dollar gold piece. He must be good friend. Wait, now... it's coming back to me.

ZEKE

You don't say.

FERGUS CHUM

(unconvincing)

Jack Brady... I think Brady went to Rangoon, smuggling guns. He's long gone - gone years now.

HAZEL

Oh yeah? Anything else?

FERGUS CHUM

Nope. Hey, I only remember what I remember. I know many other things, many other people. McChum is one connected guy.

HAZEL

Oh yeah?

FERGUS CHUM

Try me. Top dollar get you top information. Yes?

HAZEL

All right, here.

The COIN SLIDES across the bar. RUSTLE of paper.

ZEKE

What about this photo? What do you see?

FERGUS CHUM

(curt)

I see nothing. I see harbor.

HAZEL

C'mon, you can tell me. I'm an American.

FERGUS CHUM

These are not good questions you're asking.

ZEKE

Why not?

FERGUS CHUM

(quiet)

See this ship in picture? This ship is The Dark Mistress. Bad ship.

HAZEL

It's called the Dark Mistress? Really?

ZEKE

Apart from the name, what makes it a bad ship?

FERGUS CHUM

Strange bug-eyed crew. Up to no good. Belongs to a rich Englishman, Alfred Penhurst.

HAZEL

Penhurst, eh? Well, it's more subtle than "Pale Viper".

ZEKE

This boat, where does it go?

FERGUS CHUM

No idea. And I don't know anything about Gray Dragon Island either.

HAZEL

Of course you don't.

FERGUS CHUM

I know nothing so I tell you nothing.

ZEKE

You're a regular fountain of ignorance.

FERGUS CHUM

Sometimes it is wise to be ignorant. These people are dangerous.

ZEKE

Don't worry - we'll be careful. And if you should happen to "remember" how to get in touch with Jack Brady, tell him the friends of Jackson Elias want to talk to him.

(MORE)

ZEKE (CONT'D)

There's another twenty in it for you. We'll come back tomorrow.

Transition MUSIC.

161 FLOWER GIRL HOUSE

161

LANTERN STREET WALLA. Sounds of conflict.

LESTER MAYHEW

As they left the Stumbling Tiger, Zeke, Hazel and Sam met up with Victoria and Cecil, who had come to Lantern Street in search of them.

VICTORIA

Oh thank god, you're all right.

HAZEL

What's wrong? Why wouldn't we be?

SAM

Has there been a problem?

CECIL

We got a tip at the Courier there was a killing just a few doors down - a whiff of cult about it. A winged monster attacked a, um--

VICTORIA

Bordello. I insisted that we seek you two out immediately.

ZEKE

Hazel, why don't you take Victoria back to the ship? Cecil and Sam and I will look into this monster thing.

VICTORIA

Yes, dear, come with me. I finally figured out how to catch a cab in this city!

(hollering)

Choozoo che!

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke, Cecil and Sam walked down the street to the Flower Girl House, dreading yet eager to find out if flying horrors were also here in Shanghai. They were met at the door by Auntie Gee, a fierce and haggard-looking woman.

AUNTIE GEE

You are looking for a good time?

ZEKE

That would be a nice change of pace. Here's for all three of us.

AUNTIE GEE

You two okay, not him.

ZEKE

You mean Sam? He's with us.

AUNTIE GEE

Then you can all stand in street.

ZEKE

Why? Come on.

AUNTIE GEE

Not his kind. You go.

SAM

It's all right, Zeke. I don't really want to go inside. I will stand watch.

ZEKE

It's not all right. No one stays alone.

SAM

Go in. We must learn what happened. I will stand watch.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

While Sam stayed outside, a working girl, Quivering Jade, showed Zeke and Cecil what was left of the room where the killing occurred. The furnishings were destroyed and blood stains were still clearly visible.

QUIVERING JADE

(meek yet saucy)

Why you want this room? Next room
much better. This room no good.

CECIL

(hushed)

Zeke, you see these?

ZEKE

(hushed)

Yeah - looks like the same claw
marks as Maclean's boat. Damn it.

CECIL

(to QJ)

So what happened in here?

QUIVERING JADE

What, you blind? New girl and
Johnny got killed.

CECIL

By who?

QUIVERING JADE

I don't know. They say giant bat. I
not here.

CECIL

Who was the girl?

QUIVERING JADE

New girl. How do I know? New!

ZEKE

Who was the Johnny? An American?

QUIVERING JADE

No. Nice guy.

ZEKE

This new girl - how long had she
been here?

QUIVERING JADE

First night. Bad luck. The girl
before her sold to another house
because she hide a man in the room.

CECIL

Wait. The girl who was sold hid a
man in her room? And right after
she left a giant bat came?

QUIVERING JADE
That what they say.

ZEKE
Did you ever see the man?

QUIVERING JADE
Sure. All the time. He hide in
room! Western man.

CECIL
Did he look like this man in the
photo?

QUIVERING JADE
Yes! That him.

CECIL
Jack Brady.

ZEKE
But the man who died wasn't him,
right? It was a Chinese man?

QUIVERING JADE
Yes. Let's go to other room, better
room. Must hurry to satisfy you or
I be punished. Two at once...

The RUSTLE OF SILK.

CECIL
What? No, no!! Put your robe back
on, please.

ZEKE
We didn't come for that. You're
very pretty but... Here - here's
money for your time. Thanks.
(to Cecil)
We should go.

MUSIC.

162 NABBED!

162

LANTERN STREET WALLA.

CECIL
So Jack Brady was hiding out here
as recently as two days ago.

ZEKE

Do you think it's possible he
summoned the hunting creature?
Maybe trying to cover his tracks?

CECIL

No, I think-- Zeke, where's Sam? He
was waiting right over-- Hey!

A CAR STOPS suddenly. The DOORS SLAM. MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Suddenly, a limousine swooped up to
the curb in front of them and two
gun-toting goons jumped out.

SHANGHAI GOON 1

Nimen liang gè, shàng che. (*You
two, get in the car.*)

CECIL

Sorry, I don't speak--

A PISTOL COCKS.

SHANGHAI GOON 2

Xiànzài jiù jìnlái! (*Get in. Now!*)

ZEKE

Right, a gun, I get it. C'mon.

FOOTSTEPS. The doors CLOSE and the LIMO SPEEDS AWAY.

END OF CHAPTER

LESTER MAYHEW

What will the Chinese mobsters do
to Zeke and Cecil? Find out after a
word from our sponsors. Is your
property vexed with vermin?
Rabbits, squirrels and rats are the
bane of the home gardener - worse
still, they carry diseases like
plague. Rid your home of these
pests the fun and easy way: with a
Beemis Brothers .22 caliber rifle.
Keep one on the back porch and
you'll enjoy the thrill of the hunt
right from your rocking chair.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

Our Backyard Scout model is big enough to get the job done but small enough your kids can fire it too.

Beemis Bros. Jingle.

ANNOUNCER

Rid yourself of rodents with a genuine Beemis Brothers rifle!

164

MADAME LIN

164

Start of chapter MUSIC. A GURGLING FOUNTAIN and a PIPA, or Chinese lute.

LESTER MAYHEW

The limousine drove through the French Concession into the Old City, and stopped before an opulent and well-guarded home. The thugs led Zeke and Cecil into a parlor, and their hearts sank to see the rest of their team already seated nervously on sumptuous sofas. The room was teeming with exotic occult artifacts and documents. A well-dressed older Chinese woman reclined on a chaise lounge, blowing smoke rings as a younger woman strummed a lute at her feet. On either side of the smoking woman were two enormous white gorillas, apparently standing guard. The animals watched Zeke and Cecil impassively.

MADAME LIN

Quánbù guankàn. Rúgui tamen chángshì rènghé dongxi, sha si tamen. (*Watch them all. If they try anything, kill them.*)

(to the foreigners)

Mr. Watson, Mr. Ford. Your friends have been waiting. Thank you for accepting my invitation to my home. I am Lin Yenyu.

ZEKE

It was a very nice invitation. At least you included Sam.

PENNY

We received our invitation at the museum.

HAZEL

We got invited right out of a taxi.

SAM

I have never before seen white gorillas.

MADAME LIN

Ah yes, my dear pets. Tun-Tun and Ping. I raised them from infancy. They are magnificent, are they not?

SAM

Yes indeed.

A light GONG rings.

MADAME LIN

Wèi wō de kèrén sòng chá! (*Bring tea for my guests!*)

LESTER MAYHEW

At Lin Yenyu's command, two attractive servants emerged and silently began to serve tea to the investigators.

MADAME LIN

Mrs. Woodhull, I see you are admiring my collection of antiquities. I have been lucky in business and can afford to explore my interests. Are you a collector yourself?

VICTORIA

What little I had was recently destroyed in a fire.

MADAME LIN

How regrettable.

VICTORIA

Nothing of mine was half so unusual as your collection. Extraordinary. This figurine here - is it jade?

MADAME LIN

Yes, a rare type called mutton fat jade, for its creamy color.

(MORE)

MADAME LIN (CONT'D)

It dates from the Shang dynasty,
nearly a thousand years old. I paid
a dear price for it.

HAZEL

But what is it? Is that a pregnant
woman? It's kind of hideous. Zeke,
it looks like--

CECIL

(eager to stop her)

Hazel, beauty is in the eye of the
beholder. Different cultures, after
all.

MADAME LIN

It is indeed quite hideous, yet
exquisite in its workmanship. The
Bloated Woman - the sacred icon of
an ancient sect. I'm surprised
you're unfamiliar with it.

VICTORIA

What do you mean by that, if I may
ask?

MADAME LIN

It's my understanding that you are
looking for things not easily
found.

HAZEL

What, like this bloated woman?

MADAME LIN

No. I was thinking of Jack Brady.

CECIL

(unsure what she knows)

We - ah, well, it's really that,
uh...

MADAME LIN

You need not prevaricate. I am also
looking for Jack Brady. He has
stolen something belonging to me. I
want it back.

DR. KAFOUR

May I inquire as to what it is that
Mr. Brady has taken from you?

MADAME LIN

A very rare and very special scroll. It contains the *Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan*. As a scholar, Dr. Kafour, I'm sure you can appreciate the value of an irreplaceable document.

ZEKE

What's so special about this scroll?

MADAME LIN

(with sudden ferocity)

It is MINE!

(recovering)

And it was taken from me.

Awkward pause.

SAM

That must be very frustrating for you.

MADAME LIN

It is. Thank you, Mr. Mariga.

VICTORIA

I suspect you're familiar with a local importer, Mr. Ho Fang? I believe he deals in such rare antiquities.

MADAME LIN

For such a large city, Shanghai can be very small.

VICTORIA

Ah, then I shan't be surprised if you're acquainted with Sir Aubrey Penhew and his work?

MADAME LIN

Mrs. Woodhull, your candor is enchanting. How I do see myself in you. The roads we have traveled have been long. We have made our way around men, through men, and in spite of men, we have much to show for the journey.

VICTORIA

Yes. But that doesn't answer my question.

MADAME LIN

I understand the Order of the Bloated woman practices their rites on Sir Aubrey's island. A barren place some few hundred miles off shore.

HAZEL

This would be Gray Dragon Island?

MADAME LIN

Yes. His ship--

ZEKE

The Dark Mistress?

MADAME LIN

I see I have engaged the right team to recover my property. So, may I conclude that we have struck a bargain? Excellent.

CECIL

Forgive me, I'd like to go over the terms of the bargain, just to be clear.

MADAME LIN

Clear? I forget sometimes that Westerners prefer clarity over courtesy. Let me put it like this, Mr. Watson. If you recover my scrolls and return them to me, you may leave Shanghai alive.

The lute player plucks a DISCHORDANT NOTE.

ZEKE

And if we... don't?

MADAME LIN

Mr. Ford - I'm so glad you asked. Allow me to demonstrate.
(to her guards)
Dàiling Chum xianshang. (*Bring in Mr. Chum!*)

LESTER MAYHEW

At her bidding, Madame Lin's thugs brought in Fergus Chum, the barman from the Stumbling Tiger.

MADAME LIN

I struck a very generous bargain
with Mr. Chum here this afternoon.
I asked him to help me find Jack
Brady and he has told me he cannot.
Watch as I make his situation more
clear.

Chum WHIMPERS nervously.

FERGUS CHUM

I told you I don't know--

MADAME LIN

(to the gorillas)

Tum-Tum, Ping, gongjí! (*attack!*)

GORILLAS GRUNT and ROAR and ATTACK. MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

At her word the gorillas grabbed
the unfortunate man and began
thrashing him like a rag doll.

FERGUS CHUM

(ad lib misery)

Aaaaaaaah! Qing zhùshou! Please!

VICTORIA

(imperiously)

That is quite enough!

MADAME LIN

Fàngle ta! (*Let him go*).

The THUD of a body on the floor. GORILLAS SNORT. Chum MOANS &
WHIMPERS.

CECIL

You've made your point.

MADAME LIN

Then I'm sure you are eager to
begin. My men will show you out.

FOOTSTEPS. GORILLAS CHUFF.

MADAME LIN (CONT'D)

(to Penny)

Oh, not you, my flower.

PENNY

Not me? What d'ya mean?

MADAME LIN

You'll stay with me. This lovely young woman will be my collateral, to ensure you uphold your end of the bargain.

SAM

This is an outrage!

VICTORIA

That's a very hard bargain, Madame Lin.

MADAME LIN

No, it is a courtesy. She will be much safer in my "household" than out in the city with you. Blonde yet so timid - most endearing.

CECIL

We can't accept this, it's barbaric-

HEAVY GORILLA FOOTSTEPS and MENACING GRUNTS.

MADAME LIN

Such a lovely flower as this shall be treated most tenderly, and afforded every kindness.

PENNY

It's okay, Cecil. I'll stay. I'll be all right.

ZEKE

No. Penny, we can--

PENNY

Find Jack Brady. And the scroll. Soon.

Dramatic MUSIC!

165

RETURN TO LANTERN STREET

165

LESTER MAYHEW

The next day, Cecil and Zeke left the others on the North Star and ventured back to Lantern Street.

LANTERN STREET WALLA. The CRIES of a STREET VENDOR peddling souvenirs are mixed into the general background.

ZEKE

I hope McChum is okay. I've been in the ring with a few gorillas but nothing like that.

CECIL

It's Penny I'm worried about. That poor girl's already been through a-- Oh no, Zeke, look.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

The front windows of the Stumbling Tiger were boarded up, and shards of broken glass littered the street in front. A sign in Chinese, French and English was nailed to the bar's front door.

ZEKE

"Closed for remodeling." I guess that's one way to put it. Damn.

The CRIES of the Street Vendor and the JANGLING of his cart GET CLOSER.

CECIL

This isn't good, Zeke. I'll bet we're being watched right now. I don't even want to go back to the boat.

ZEKE

Don't panic, buddy. We've just got to--

STREET VENDOR

Wèi! Ni hao! Mai jìniànpin? (*Hey there - souvenirs?*)

ZEKE

Yeah, no thanks, we--

STREET VENDOR

Mai jìniànpin.

ZEKE

Look, I don't speak--

STREET VENDOR

You big American. Buy souvenir? Remember Shanghai good times!

ZEKE

I haven't had any yet. Try me tomorrow.

STREET VENDOR

(unstoppable)

You buy souvenir. I have fan. Good for heat. Bamboo back scratcher most satisfying. Mystic knot. It bring you good fortune.

CECIL

(quietly)

Come on Zeke, this guy is drawing attention.

STREET VENDOR

You take toy dragon. Gray dragon. For you very lucky.

ZEKE

(getting annoyed)

I said-- what?

CECIL

Did you say gray dragon?

STREET VENDOR

(crafty)

Yes. Special gray dragon very lucky for big American and his friends.

ZEKE

Okay. How much?

STREET VENDOR

Normally five dollars. But for you, twenty.

CECIL

What?! That's--

ZEKE

No, Cecil. It's okay. I promised Chum twenty yesterday. Yeah, I'll take it.

STREET VENDOR

Also you buy fan.

ZEKE

Okay, whatever. Here. Here's twenty-five. Okay?

STREET VENDOR

And lucky knot.

CECIL

Here! Here's forty. Give us the dragon.

STREET VENDOR

Okay. Here is dragon. Bring you good luck. And here is receipt.

LESTER MAYHEW

The street vendor handed Zeke a small card along with the trinkets, and then quickly rolled his cart away.

The JANGLING of the cart RETREATS.

STREET VENDOR

Jìniànpin! Dédào ni de xìngyùn
jìniànpin! (*Souvenirs! Get your
lucky souvenirs!*)

CECIL

Junk. This dragon's not even gray--

ZEKE

(stunned)

Cecil, the receipt. It's one of Jackson's old business cards.

CECIL

He must have given one to Brady.

ZEKE

There's a note on the back.
"Hongkew Park, southeast corner -
four o'clock."

MUSIC.

166 JACK AND THE BAMBOO STALK

166

LESTER MAYHEW

Hongkew Park was a large and beautiful public garden planted thick with cherry trees. Sam, Zeke and Cecil stationed themselves as guards not far from Victoria, Hazel and Dr. Kafour.

BIRDS and SWAYING BAMBOO.

VICTORIA

Hazel, darling, I know you're nervous but the pacing isn't helping. We have to be discreet.

HAZEL

It's not going to be him. They're going to ambush us.

DR. KAFOUR

Allah will look out for us.

HAZEL

I wish I had your faith, Ali.

The RUSTLING OF BAMBOO. FOOTSTEPS. AD LIB GASPS from Hazel and Victoria.

JACK BRADY

Looks like you could use it. I'm amazed you people are still alive, the way you stumble around. Why don't you sit down, miss.

VICTORIA

Mr. Brady, I presume?

JACK BRADY

You can call me Jack. Who are you?

VICTORIA

My name is Victoria Woodhull. You're not an easy man to find, Jack.

JACK BRADY

Yeah, well, when there's a price on your head, you can't be too careful. These people are ruthless. If you know Jackson Elias you ought to know that.

HAZEL

We know. I'm Hazel Claflin. Jackson Elias was my... they killed him.

JACK BRADY

Really? Damn. I'm sorry to hear that. I spilled the beans to him for his book. He was gonna tell the world about these bastards. Maybe get something done.

(MORE)

JACK BRADY (CONT'D)
They'll go after anyone who goes
nosing into their business. I
warned him. Damn. Who the hell are
you?

DR. KAFOUR
Mr. Brady, I am Dr. Ali Kafour.

JACK BRADY
Okay. Listen, Doctor, you can relax
I'm on your side.

DR. KAFOUR
I am not sure I believe that.

JACK BRADY
No? You know why I chose this as a
meeting place?

HAZEL
Because it's a public park?

JACK BRADY
Because Chinese people aren't
allowed in it.

VICTORIA
What? We're in China.

JACK BRADY
Yeah but this park is run by the
International Settlement, no locals
allowed. The city's full of crazy
rules but it means for a little
while at least we're safe from Ho
Fang's goons and Madame Lin's
gorillas.

VICTORIA
What a pleasant change of pace.

JACK BRADY
You were looking for me - here I
am. What do you want?

VICTORIA
Like Jackson Elias, we've been
investigating the fate of the
Carlyle Expedition. It would appear
that you and Sir Aubrey Penhew are
its sole survivors.

JACK BRADY

You got that all wrong. Hypatia
Masters is still in Kenya, I think--

HAZEL

She's no longer alive.

JACK BRADY

Oh. Well Dr. Huston is--

VICTORIA

No longer a threat to anyone.

JACK BRADY

You mean you... Oh.
(wheels turning)
Hang on, who are you people?

VICTORIA

Friends of Jackson Elias -
finishing what he could not. What
became of Roger Carlyle?

JACK BRADY

He's safe. He was never quite right
in the head after whatever it was
that happened in the Bent Pyramid.

HAZEL

Yeah, Warren Besart told us.

JACK BRADY

You spoke to Warren? Is he still
alive?

HAZEL

He's seen better days. So where's
Carlyle?

JACK BRADY

He kinda lost his marbles in Egypt.
Wasn't up for what the rest of them
were doing. It wasn't easy but I
got him out in time. I put him in a
sanitarium, somewhere safe.

VICTORIA

You're sure about that?

JACK BRADY

Yeah.

VICTORIA

We understand you took a scroll
from Madame Lin Yenyu.

JACK BRADY

Yeah, I did. *Seven Cryptical Books
of Hsan*. That woman's a copper-
hearted schemestress. Don't let--

HAZEL

You have to return it.

JACK BRADY

Sorry, I can't do that.

VICTORIA

I'm afraid we must insist.
Someone's life is at stake.

JACK BRADY

(chuckling)

Oh yeah? Lots of people's lives are
at stake if we don't finish with
that book. The whole world's maybe.
So as much as I'd like to--

DR. KAFOUR

You mean the plan to summon
Nyarlathotep.

JACK BRADY

(taken aback)

Yeah. I do. There's only one way to
stop it near as I can tell, and
it's in that scroll.

HAZEL

You said "we". Who are you working
with?

JACK BRADY

Look, you know about Nyarlathotep.
You know what's coming. I don't
know what's going on with Masters
or Huston, but Penhew's cult is at
work on his island, and he's
working to summon this thing. Back
when we were in Egypt, Roger and I
climbed the Red Pyramid where he
did an incantation or something. It
broke this symbol that had been
carved in the rock, deactivated it
I guess.

(MORE)

JACK BRADY (CONT'D)

Once it was gone, Roger and the others contacted this god inside the bent pyramid.

Later, I went back and found a broken piece of the symbol - it's a magical sigil, a warding sign. It might stop them! But it's broken and I only have half. My, uh, colleague is translating the scroll that tells how to make the other half. Soon as we're done I'm going out to the island to activate the thing.

DR. KAFOUR

(reeling)

This symbol - it's about this big by this big? Pink limestone? Hieroglyphs carved in it?

JACK BRADY

Yeah. Where'd you see it?

DR. KAFOUR

We have the other half!

JACK BRADY

What? But... how?

DR. KAFOUR

A long story - it was given to us by an old woman in Egypt!

JACK BRADY

We have to get it to my friend, the scholar.

HAZEL

Not so fast there, pal. How do we know we can trust you?

JACK BRADY

Are you kidding me? This changes everything! We can launch an attack on Gray Dragon Island before Penhew is ready. We'll get the upper hand on these bastards!

HAZEL

That sounds great, but another member of our party is paying a terrible price for every moment that you keep that scroll from Madame Lin.

JACK BRADY

She's a vicious piece of work, I'll grant you that. Sorry, but--

DR. KAFOUR

Could the scroll not be copied? We return the original and your scholar works from a copy? I have made copies of many Ancient Egyptian scrolls at the museum.

JACK BRADY

Oh yeah? I guess... We can ask him. This scroll's pretty old. Even making a copy would take some time.

HAZEL

Can we wait? I mean even now Penny might be... You know?

VICTORIA

After all she's lost, do you think she would want us to give up our fight now?

HAZEL

No, but... OK, we'll go meet with your scholar.

JACK BRADY

Hang on there, honey. Don't forget there's a price on my head. I'm risking my neck meeting with all of you. I'm not taking your gang of... whatever you guys are. You, the doctor. I'll take you there.

HAZEL

Ali? Do you want to go?

DR. KAFOUR

Inshalla.

JACK BRADY

What's that?

DR. KAFOUR
God wills it.

Transition MUSIC.

167 THE RETIRED SCHOLAR

167

LESTER MAYHEW
That night, Jack Brady spirited Dr. Kafour to a small house near the old city walls. They slipped through a gate to a tiny back garden and into the dwelling.

CRICKETS. Rustling BUSHES.

DR. KAFOUR
If everyone is looking for you,
where do you live?

JACK BRADY
I was staying in a flower girl house down on Lantern Street, but I got a tip Ho Fang was onto me there and left. Just in time, too. The poor bastard after me wasn't so lucky.

Jack KNOCKS a specific pattern on the door which CREAKS OPEN.

MU HSIEN
Come in, come in.

HURRIED FOOTSTEPS.

MU HSIEN (CONT'D)
Why, Jack, do you bring someone to my home?

JACK BRADY
Mu Hsien, allow me to introduce Dr. Kafour of the Cairo Museum.

DR. KAFOUR
A pleasure to make your acquaintance.

MU HSIEN
The Cairo Museum? Such an extraordinary collection. Come, sit, I shall make tea...

JACK BRADY

Before you do that Hsien, Dr.
Kafour has something to show you.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

With a tentative smile and shaking hands, Dr. Kafour removed his piece of the Eye of Light and Darkness from under his coat. Pulling off the dusty Egyptian cotton rags that protected it, he held it out for the elderly Chinese scholar to see.

MU HSIEN

(agog)

The other half! You have found it.
How can this be, Jack?

JACK BRADY

It's a long story.

MU HSIEN

Mìngyùn. Fate. Come, come... let us witness two sisters reunited.

LESTER MAYHEW

The giddy Mu Hsien beckoned Kafour into the house, and removed a heavy object wrapped in ornate silk from a locked cupboard. He pulled back the brocade to reveal a matching piece of limestone.

DR. KAFOUR

Perhaps it is fate after all.

MU HSIEN

Yes - let us see.

A gentle SCRAPE OF STONE. MUSICAL STING!

MU HSIEN (CONT'D)

Ah - a perfect fit.

JACK BRADY

So you won't have to make the other half anymore.

MU HSIEN

I think not. If these two parts are joined, all that remains is Zhùfú.

DR. KAFOUR

What's that?

MU HSIEN

A blessing - if it is not infused with life force, the stone is just a stone. But with the proper Zhùfú, the stone can provide tremendous power - power enough perhaps to stop the god of many faces.

DR. KAFOUR

And the *Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan*, it teaches this zufu? Is it sorcery?

MU HSIEN

Yes. But the unseen powers of the universe answer to those who call them for good as well as evil.

DR. KAFOUR

Sorcery is forbidden by my faith.

MU HSIEN

You are Muslim, no? Was it not through the will of your almighty Allah that this stone came to be?

DR. KAFOUR

I suppose.

MU HSIEN

And do you not see the hand of Allah who brought you this stone and brought you to me?

DR. KAFOUR

Perhaps.

MU HSIEN

Perhaps you do your god's will to complete this work against the darkness.

JACK BRADY

Well, you two are going gangbusters. I should leave you to it. You'll copy the scroll?

MU HSIEN

Copy?

DR. KAFOUR

The original must be returned to
Madame Lin.

MU HSIEN

This will take time.

JACK BRADY

I know, but I thought you two
working together...

MU HSIEN

Together we may be able to prepare
this Eye of Light and Darkness to
serve its purpose in no more time
than it would take to make a copy.
That is, if you will help me, sir.

DR. KAFOUR

I shall.

(in prayer)

Forgive me, most merciful One.

A rustle of PAPER and a SCRIBBLING pencil.

MU HSIEN

Jack, we will need tools. You must
get us these things so that the
pieces may be joined together.

JACK BRADY

Silver? Why can't you just use--

MU HSIEN

This is no broken teapot! The
stones must be kept together as
prescribed. Go, get me these
things!

JACK BRADY

Yeah, yeah, all right.

MU HSIEN

Come, my learned friend. We have
much to do.

MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, back aboard the North Star, Neily sat with the investigators in Cecil's opulent stateroom as they agonized over their situation.

ZEKE

I hate that Ali is there alone. I can't believe you let him go.

VICTORIA

He's not alone. And Jack Brady has successfully avoided the cult for years.

HAZEL

I'm still not sure we can trust Brady. Just because Jackson met with him doesn't mean--

CECIL

He kept Carlyle alive. And he did seem eager to launch an attack on Gray Dragon Island. He was planning that without us.

HAZEL

He *said* he was. What if he's survived because he's really working *with* the cult?

ZEKE

Oh god.

HAZEL

Hazel, I don't think--

SAM

I believe this man is more afraid of us than we are of him.

CECIL

Someone sent a monster to kill him in Lantern Street. We saw the evidence ourselves.

NEILY

A monster? You mean one of those gorillas you talked about?

CECIL

No, Vanderbilt. I don't mean a gorilla.

NEILY

All right, well, listen. Try though I might, I don't really understand what is really going on with all of you. But my crew is starting to get very nervous. I'm getting questions about our being here. One of these days I *will* have to return--

VICTORIA

Neily, I am so sorry to have imposed on you so long. We're so close to the end now.

HAZEL

If only we could be sure we can trust Brady. I've been trying to ask Jackson through the black sphinx, but--

Light bulb going on MUSIC.

VICTORIA

Maybe we *can* be sure.

HAZEL

How?

VICTORIA

And Neily, you can help me.

NEILY

Me?

VICTORIA

Yes, you more than anyone. You knew her personally. She loved you like her own grandson.

NEILY

Who?

ZEKE

Victoria, are you thinking what I think you're thinking?

VICTORIA

My sister Tennessee.

HAZEL
(worried)
Oh, Victoria!

ZEKE
(excited)
Yeah!

SAM
What is going on now?

NEILY
Tennie? But how? What do you mean?

VICTORIA
Neily, you remember when you were a boy, you and Tennie and I would use our talking board to communicate with the spirit world?

NEILY
My god. I haven't thought of that in years.

VICTORIA
Do you remember when we spoke to the Commodore?

NEILY
Yes, it was terrifying. But... are you saying that was real?

VICTORIA
Oh my, yes.

NEILY
I thought you two were just playing a game with me.

ZEKE
No, it's real. Victoria and I did it in London.

VICTORIA
Tennie was a very gifted psychic, Neily. All through her life and in the afterlife, dear boy.

NEILY
All right, Victoria.

SAM
I'm sorry, but what is happening? You are talking to ghosts?

HAZEL

Sort of, Sam. But Victoria, wasn't the talking board lost in the fire?

VICTORIA

We can improvise. Tennie and I made the first one ourselves. There's no reason we can't make another. Hazel, you'll help me. You're my sister now.

ZEKE

Yes!

VICTORIA

Zeke, bring me that blotter from the desk. Cecil, do you have a bottle of ink for your fountain pen?

CECIL

Sure. Right here.

VICTORIA

Open it please. How about a hatpin?

CECIL

No, no hatpins. I have this letter opener.

VICTORIA

Too big and blunt.

CECIL

Hmm. I have some extremely sharp pencils. Would that help?

VICTORIA

It won't be pleasant, but that might just work.

SAM

I would very much like to know what is happening.

VICTORIA

We're making a new talking board, Sam. It's going to be a simple one. Just "yes" and "no".

ZEKE

Here's the blotter.

VICTORIA
Thank you, put it on the table
here.

The BUSTLE of activity as everyone follows instructions.

CECIL
Here's the ink and a pencil.

VICTORIA
Excellent. Give me your right hand,
Hazel. Zeke, please hold her left
tightly in yours.

ZEKE
Okay.

VICTORIA
Now Hazel dear, this might hurt a
little.

MUSICAL STING.

HAZEL
Ouch! Victoria!

VICTORIA
Just a few drops of blood from your
fingertip. Drip them into the
bottle of ink.

SAM
Heavens to Betsy!

VICTORIA
Zeke, would you be so kind as to
give me the same treatment?

ZEKE
Okay...

MUSICAL STING.

VICTORIA
Ah, thank you. Now I add mine to
the mix.

HAZEL
Why the blood?

VICTORIA
You and I are Claflins, my dear,
just like Tennessee. Our blood will
help to draw her spirit.

LESTER MAYHEW

Victoria took the ensanguined ink and used it to write a large "yes" and "no" on opposite corners of the desk blotter.

ZEKE

Looks even more homemade than the last one.

VICTORIA

Now what to do for a planchette? Ah, Neily, hand me that ashtray, will you?

NEILY

Here you are.

VICTORIA

Ah, nice and light. Perfect. We're ready.

SAM

I have never in my life seen such a thing. How does it work?

VICTORIA

Everyone sit around the table so.

CECIL

Perhaps I'll just man the lights.

VICTORIA

We place the ashtray planchette in the center of the board, and all of us touch its rim very lightly with our fingertips. I shall attempt to commune with the spirit of my departed sister, Tennessee. I'll need you all to concentrate with me. If we make contact, she will move the planchette to show us a yes or no response to any question we have.

(to Cecil)

Lights please, Cecil.

CECIL

There you are.

NEILY

(delighted)

I feel like I'm seven years old again.

VICTORIA

That's perfect. She loved you
Neily. Think of those days with me
now. Everyone, fingers on now...

The MUSIC gets very spooky and nostalgic.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Tennie? It's me. I'm so sorry that
I haven't been in touch. We've had
some... difficulty. If you can hear
me now, I need your help more than
ever. I'm here with Zeke. You'll
remember him.

NEILY

(startled)

It moved! I didn't move it, did
you?

SAM

No!

ZEKE

It wasn't me.

VICTORIA

Just relax. Let it go where it
wants. Tennie will reach out
through us. Tennie? I have someone
else with me here. It's Neily. You
remember him, don't you?

The very gentle RATTLE of the crystal ashtray.

NEILY

Hello, Tennie. Are you there? Can
you hear me?

The ashtray RATTLES, then SLIDES across the mat.

SAM

It moved to YES!

CECIL

Shhh.

NEILY

(overwhelmed)

Oh my god. I can smell the perfume
she used to wear. She's in the
room.

VICTORIA

Tennie, it's so good to be with you again. I can't tell you how much.

The SLIDE OF GLASS.

SAM

(reverentially)

"Yes".

VICTORIA

Tennie, you know the troubles we're facing. We need help. Is Jack Brady a man we can trust?

LESTER MAYHEW

The crystal planchette rattled slightly in place, then drifted slowly around the improvised board, lingering briefly over "no" before returning to "yes".

HAZEL

Is Brady in league with the cult of Nyarlathotep?

GLASS SLIDES.

SAM

It says "no"!

CECIL

Thank god. How's Penny? Is she all right?

GLASS SLIDES. And SLIDES AGAIN.

SAM

Yes and no.

ZEKE

Should we go to this Gray Dragon Island? Will Brady's plan with the Eye of Light and Darkness work?

(pause)

Tennie? Will it work? C'mon, are you still there?

(pause)

Why doesn't she answer?

VICTORIA

Because she doesn't know.

HAZEL

Tennie? Can I... Have you seen Jackson Elias, on the other side? I have this sphinx of his, and it sure would be good to hear from him again. Could you tell him?

NEILY

I don't feel her anymore. Victoria?

VICTORIA

(drained)

We've... we've lost her again. I'm sorry. Cecil, will you turn on the lights?

CECIL

Sure.

HAZEL

I really hoped... oh my god! Jackson!

ZEKE

What is it?

SAM

Now what is happening?

HAZEL

The black sphinx! There are numbers on the bottom.

CECIL

There hasn't been a message since-- you're right!

HAZEL

Jackson's trying to contact us! Where's the key? Here, give me your pen.

PEN SCRATCHING.

SAM

Jackson Elias? The dead fiancé?

CECIL

No, the dead writer.

NEILY

I felt her. My god, she was here. Victoria, thank you.

ZEKE

Hazel, you look confused. What does it say?

HAZEL

It says... "Dark Mistress Hold".

Big ominous MUSIC hit!

END OF CHAPTER

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170	THE PLAN MUSIC.	170

LESTER MAYHEW

The following night Jack Brady made his way to the North Star, where he joined the investigators as they struggled to interpret the metaphysical message and form a plan of action!

We fade up on the debate well underway.

CECIL

... used the word "hold". I think it's clear we're supposed to be *in* the ship's hold.

SAM

Unless we are meant to "hold" off on the plan.

ZEKE

Not the plan itself, just the Dark Mistress. We have our own ship - let's take it there!

NEILY

Well now, that's--

JACK BRADY

That's ridiculous. This ship's the size of a destroyer - they'd see us coming from miles away. We have to go in their boat - in the hold. I keep close tabs on it. We could sneak aboard.

ZEKE

Okay, so if we're all in the hold, we sail out to the island and then what?

JACK BRADY

We get onto the island itself and affix the stone and do whatever magic it takes to activate it.

ZEKE

Affix it how?

SAM

Magic? Forgive me, Mr. Brady, but you are no Bundari.

JACK BRADY

Huh? Look, we don't know Penhew's set up out there. There's some stuff we're going to have to work out on the fly.

HAZEL

You can say that again.

SAM

It is difficult to have confidence in this plan.

CECIL

How sure can we be that this cryptical scroll of Madam Lin is going to work? And the Eye, too? What if Penhew just removes this Eye of Light and Darkness?

JACK BRADY

(increasingly irritable)

That's Mu's department. I'm the muscle, not the magician. But I can tell you that once the rituals are done it would take some kind of spell to remove it.

HAZEL

We have to expect resistance. Penhew won't be alone out there. Can you get your hands on some guns?

JACK BRADY

Of course.

CECIL

Wonderful. More shooting. I was really hoping--

A KNOCK on the stateroom door.

NEILY

Come in.

LESTER MAYHEW

The trusty Willis escorted Dr. Kafour and Mu Hsien into the stateroom. Dr. Kafour bore with him the restored Eye of Light and Darkness.

VICTORIA

You look exhausted. Come, both of you, sit down.

DR. KAFOUR

We did the zufu. We joined the pieces with pure silver. We had to bathe it in our own blood...

MU HSIEN

As we intoned the incantation as written in the scrolls.

JACK BRADY

And you think it will work?

MU HSIEN

I do. It contains considerable Gonglu. More than I have ever seen.

HAZEL

What's that?

DR. KAFOUR

It's... power, force, right?

MU HSIEN

Indeed.

KAFOUR

Mr. Mu has translated the passages from the scrolls. The instructions are quite specific. Get as close as you can to where Penhew might conduct his ritual, place the seal and speak the incantation - all of you. I have copied it out for you. Here. Do not lose this.

A RUSTLE of paper.

JACK BRADY

We should go. To the Dark Mistress, tonight. If she sticks to her usual pattern, she'll sail to Gray Dragon island at midnight.

CECIL

Are we prepared? It seems rash.

JACK BRADY

We have what we need. I have a few guns stashed we could pick up on the way. We just need a way to get onto Penhew's boat.

NEILY

I have an idea about that, if Willis here is willing to help me.

WILLIS

Sir?

NEILY

Shore leave for the entire crew. I'll put everyone up at the Majestic, or wherever they want to go, but they all get off the boat tonight.

WILLIS

Sir! I believe they will gladly accept. Thank you!

NEILY

Sorry, Willis, not you. You and I have a job to do. Brady, you said you know where the Dark Mistress docks?

JACK BRADY

Yeah, down the Whangpoo, near Ho Fang's warehouse, wharf 47.

NEILY

And if I could create a big enough distraction there, could you get this team aboard?

JACK BRADY

Sure I could. Sneaking past Penhew's goons is my specialty.

VICTORIA

Neily, what are you planning?

NEILY

The North Star has been a fine ship, but I've had my eye on Vincent Astor's yacht, the Winchester, for a long time. You'd like it, it's just as big as this one, but it's armed.

VICTORIA

Armed?

NEILY

The Navy tricked it out with guns when they borrowed it during the war. I've been thinking of buying it from him for a while...

VICTORIA

What are you suggesting?

NEILY

Pack your things. The North Star is going to sink tonight.

AD LIB ASTONISHMENT.

VICTORIA

Neily!

SAM

Sink this beautiful boat?

CECIL

You can't be serious.

NEILY

Why not? It's insured. Lloyd's just increased the coverage.

CECIL

(mind reeling)

But that would be... deliberate...

NEILY

We have got to get you a new monocle, my friend. That one keeps popping out.

VICTORIA

That is a great sacrifice, my boy.

NEILY

It's just a thing. It's all of you who have sacrificed. I'd like to help.

CECIL

Sacrifice? It's no sacrifice - it's fraud! You'll get paid to--

ZEKE

Cecil? We don't have time. Can you live with this?

CECIL

(horribly conflicted)

I... I... I'm just glad I don't work for Lloyd's. Let's do it.

JACK BRADY

All right! Who else is with me?

SAM

I am!

ZEKE

You bet.

HAZEL

Zeke doesn't go without me.

DR. KAFOUR

I regret I cannot accompany you. Giving the zufu has drained me. I shall return this scroll to Madame Lin and secure Penny's freedom. Then I hope to take a very long nap.

HAZEL

Victoria? What's wrong?

VICTORIA

I... fear perhaps my usefulness on commando raids is also not what it once was. And it is our policy to never go anywhere alone - especially Madame Lin's.

DR. KAFOUR

I would be grateful for your companionship.

VICTORIA

Then you shall have it. And you,
Mr. Mu... we all owe you our very
deepest gratitude.

MU HSIEN

I bid success to you all.

NEILY

We need to get started if I'm going
to move this ship.

VICTORIA

Then this is where we part ways.
Good luck you all.

CECIL

And to you two. Bring our Penny
back safe.

VICTORIA

Be careful, my dear, sweet girl.

HAZEL

I love you, Victoria.

MUSIC.

171 WATCHING THE DARK MISTRESS

171

LESTER MAYHEW

With the crew of the North Star all
packed and departed for glamorous
Shanghai hotels, Neily and Willis
weighed anchor and piloted the ship
down the Whangpoo river toward the
industrial docks. From gloomy
shadows at the wharves, the armed
strike team watched its quickening
approach, as did the crew of the
Dark Mistress.

WAVES LAPPING, RATTLING CHAINS, and other industrial nautical
sounds.

JACK BRADY

(quietly)

Look. Here they come - Penhew's
crew sees it too. They're coming
out on deck.

NEARBY SHUFFLING and AD LIB VOICES and CROAKING. DISTANT
FOGHORN.

SAM

What's wrong with them? Their eyes are all bulgy.

ZEKE

Yeah - half of them don't walk right. See how they kind of shuffle?

JACK BRADY

There's stories - McChum told me once - about people on islands out east. They say there's these creatures, kind of like men, that live underwater. Deep Ones, they called them. And sometimes people on these islands they, um, mix with these creatures, so that some of the people then get this "look" to 'em. Kinda fishy.

HAZEL

Let me guess - Gray Dragon Island?

JACK BRADY

Thereabouts.

SAM

I don't know about fish men beneath the sea but there's something not right about those sailors.

CECIL

Oh my god, the North Star. It's picked up speed. He's really going to do it!

GROWING AGITATION. MUSIC TRANSITION.

172

QUID PRO QUO

172

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, across the city, Dr. Kafour and Victoria requested an audience with Madame Lin. They were ushered past the pair of great white gorillas and into Madame Lin's parlor.

The great gorillas GRUNT and the lutist LUTES away as the fountain GURGLES.

MADAME LIN

What a pleasant surprise. I hope that this interruption of my evening means that you have accomplished what I have asked of you.

VICTORIA

I need to know about the well being of Penny O'Brien.

MADAME LIN

You have doubts regarding my hospitality?

DR. KAFOUR

Grave doubts, Madame Lin.

MADAME LIN

(bemused)

I see the Americans' candor has rubbed off on you, Dr. Kafour. I daresay Miss Penny is looking and feeling better than when you brought her to me.

VICTORIA

Let me see her, and I will gladly present you with the *Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan*.

MADAME LIN

If you have them with you, why should I not just take them?

VICTORIA

No doubt you could, but it would be most discourteous.

MADAME LIN

(bemused)

Ah, I see you are beginning to understand China.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Madame Lin walked them through her compound to a small outlying guest house with an armed guard outside.

MADAME LIN

(to the guard)

Dakai ta. (*Open it*).

DOOR OPENS. MUSIC.

MADAME LIN (CONT'D)
Your Penny. Shinier than ever.

KAFOUR
My god, what have you done to her?

VICTORIA
Penny!

LESTER MAYHEW
They beheld Penny, stretched out
face up on a table, covered only by
two strips of white silk. Her skin
was pierced all over with long,
sharp needles. Suddenly, she raised
her head and looked at them,
smiling.

PENNY
G'day, Victoria! Ali. I'm so glad
to see you!

VICTORIA
(horrified)
What have they done to you, my
dear?

PENNY
They call it accu-puncture. I feel
better than I have in ages!

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW
The therapeutic needles removed,
Penny dressed and Dr. Kafour
presented the ancient scroll to
Madame Lin. The delighted collector
escorted them back to her parlor,
to place the scroll in its rightful
place.

MADAME LIN
You have kept your part, and I
shall--
(gasping)
No! Tun-Tun! Ping!

Music HIT!

LESTER MAYHEW

Inside the parlor the two mighty white gorillas lay dead on the floor. From out of the shadows stepped a short, fat man with a sinister sneer on his face.

MADAME LIN

Ho Fang!

HO FANG

Greetings, Madame Lin. It would appear you have something I want.

Chinese suspense MUSIC!

173

DARK MISTRESS HOLD

173

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, at the wharves, the North Star picked up speed and crashed into a pier just upriver from the Dark Mistress.

CRASH! ALARMS! SHOUTING MEN and RUNNING FOOTSTEPS.

CECIL

Oh my god, I can't watch!

SAM

Heavens to Betsy!

JACK BRADY

Come on, Penhew's whole crew is rushing over to look. Now's our chance!

LESTER MAYHEW

As the North Star began to capsize, Neily and Willis escaped in a lifeboat. Meanwhile, Brady and the others raced up the gangplank and into the hold of the Dark Mistress unseen. Cecil and Jack hid behind a large crate, and Sam found camouflage under some cargo netting. Zeke and Hazel were nestled against each other as they waited for the ship to cast off.

DISTANT CLANGING FOOTSTEPS and COMMOTION as the crew returns to the ship.

JACK BRADY

(quietly)

They're coming back aboard. Won't be long now.

CECIL

Brady, listen, in case something happens on the island, I have to know -- where is Roger Carlyle? Is he really still alive?

JACK BRADY

Yeah, I suppose I gotta trust you now. We fled Kenya and got as far as Hong Kong before he got too crazy for me to handle anymore. The nightmares were just too much. I used what money I had left to stash him in a looney bin, the Yeung Wo Nursing Home there. Under the name Randolph Carter.

The SHIP'S ENGINES START UP. MUSIC.

HAZEL

(quietly)

Those are the engines. Here we go.

ZEKE

One more adventure - you and me.

HAZEL

Oh, Zeke...

ZEKE

This... this could end up being our last one, you know.

HAZEL

I was afraid I was the only one thinking that.

ZEKE

If it is, I just want to say... that I... what I mean is--

HAZEL

It's all right, Zeke. I know. I feel the same.

ZEKE

You have your gun? Plenty of ammo?

HAZEL

Yes. Aren't you sweet?

ZEKE

If things get really bad out there, I mean, if there's no way out, don't let them take you. Save the last bullet for yourself.

HAZEL

My last bullet already has a name on it: Penhew.

The ENGINES ACCELERATE. MUSIC!

174

MU EX MACHINA

174

LESTER MAYHEW

Meanwhile, the situation was tense at Madame Lin's mansion. Ho Fang, high priest of the Order of the Bloated Woman, stood holding a knife dripping blood and poison.

HO FANG

What have we here? Entertaining western visitors, eh? Unless I'm very much mistaken you would be Mrs. Woodhull and you, Dr. Kafour. My friend Omar al-Shakti warned me you might come here.

(to Penny)

You, I don't know.

PENNY

I'm Penny O'Brien. From Australia!

HO FANG

What odd company you keep, Madame Lin.

MADAME LIN

What do you want, Ho?

HO FANG

Oh, I think you know. This is rather delightful. I came for one thing, but now I get so much more. Mrs. Woodhull, you have been creating problems for us everywhere you go. A trail of destruction follows you.

VICTORIA

One does what one can.

HO FANG

And our Muslim scholar, we have witnessed you compromising your faith at every turn.

KAFUR

Allah has praised those who respond to evil with good deeds.

HO FANG

Has he? Good for him. And you, Penny O'Brien, from Australia, how sad to have joined a doomed endeavor.

PENNY

Oh yeah? You should ask your friend Dr. Huston about doomed endeavors.

HO FANG

Like Mrs. Woodhull and Madame Lin, you have not yet learned that it is wisest for a woman to be silent.

MADAME LIN

Take it, if you must, Ho.

HO FANG

The Ivory Wind awaits to take it to Gray Dragon Island, but first you shall hand it to me with your apologies.

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Madame Lin moved to a table and took up the jade statue of the Bloated Woman. She brought it before Ho Fang and knelt.

MADAME LIN

(humbly)

Ho Fang, I humbly kneel and ask you to please accept my apologies for acquiring the relic sacred to your beliefs.

HO FANG

(scornful)

Idiot woman.

(MORE)

HO FANG (CONT'D)

The time draws nigh that
 Nyarlathotep, with his thousand
 faces, brings a new age to this
 world. And lo, through this sacred
 visage shall he be known. Take of
 the life of this mortal and let the
 Bloated Woman feed!

(casting a spell)

Dà yongzhong de nurén, xisheng
 zhège shengmìng! (*Great Bloated
 Woman, take this life in
 sacrifice!*)

MUSIC!

LESTER MAYHEW

The wizard set the statue aside and
 intoned an incantation while making
 complex gesticulations with his
 hands. The very life of Madame Lin
 seemed to wither and the jade
 statue glowed!

PENNY

Victoria...

VICTORIA

Don't look--

We hear the CRUNCH of a jade statue hitting a skull.

LESTER MAYHEW

Penny suddenly grabbed the statue
 and smashed it into the back of Ho
 Fang's skull.

PENNY

That's for Mark!

ANOTHER CRUNCH. Transition MUSIC.

175

GRAY DRAGON ISLAND

175

MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Near dawn, after hours on choppy
 seas, the Dark Mistress docked at
 Gray Dragon Island. Its deformed
 crew hopped and shuffled ashore.
 Once the coast appeared to be
 clear, the team crept out of the
 hold.

CECIL

Everyone ready? Jack, you've got the Eye. And the spell?

JACK BRADY

Got it right here. Go on. I'm right behind you.

FOOTSTEPS ON METAL stairs. WIND and SPLASHING.

SAM

My goodness - the island's... a volcano!

LESTER MAYHEW

As they crouched on the deck, they saw the ship was docked at the rocky beach of an island in a broad lagoon enclosed by a circular reef, the remains of a long dormant volcano. Before them, beyond the beach, towered a cinder cone, with gray smoke rising ominously from the top.

ZEKE

You see anyone?

SAM

No - all clear. It looks like the crew followed that trail there toward the volcano.

ZEKE

So we hurry across the gangway and make our way by those bushes up there. That should give us cover. Hazel, you go first, I'll be behind you. Sam, you cover Cecil and then Jack can bring up the rear. Ready? Let's go!

RUNNING!

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel dashed across the gangway followed by Zeke. As Cecil crossed, his eye caught strange, humanoid shapes stirring in the water below.

CECIL

(stopping on the gangway)
What are those?

SAM

It is the fish men! Run, Mr. Cecil!

RUNNING.

LESTER MAYHEW

Sam and Cecil dashed ashore, but just behind them, two creatures arose from the water. Their anthropoid shape and bulging white eyes made them appear somewhat human, but their grey-green scales and fins made it clear they weren't. One clutched a trident in what passed for its hands.

JACK BRADY

Cecil! Sam, help! I'm cut off!

CECIL

The Eye!

JACK BRADY

Catch it!

SAM

Yes! Throw it to me!

MUSIC! THUNK! SCREAM! SPLASH!

LESTER MAYHEW

As Jack made to fling the ancient stone seal ashore, the creature lunged at him, driving the trident into his ribs. The Eye of Light and Darkness tumbled out of his hands and into the sea, the body of Jack Brady falling after it.

SPLASH!

SAM

NO! The Eye! I'll get it.

CECIL

You don't swim!

SPLASH!

LESTER MAYHEW

In a moment, the two Deep Ones dove back into the water and others of their kind swarmed onto Sam!

SPLASHING, THRASHING!

SAM

Help!

HAZEL

There's things in the water - we need to help them. Zeke? Zeke! Let go of me!

ZEKEHOTEP

Don't bother.

HAZEL

No. Not you, Zeke. No no no!

ZEKEHOTEP

Yes, Miss Claflin. I wear many masks. Sometimes the simplest is the most effective.

Huge scary holy-shit-it's-Nyarlathotep MUSIC!

END OF CHAPTER

176 ADVERTISEMENT - CHAOSIUM

176

LESTER MAYHEW

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177 NYARLATHOTEP RETURNS

177

Start of chapter MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel stared in disbelief as the
unworldly voice emanated from Zeke.

ZEKEHOTEP

Oh yes, I've been with you ever since you came to see me in the Bent Pyramid. That old Bundari's enchantment set me back a bit, but I've never been gone.

HAZEL

No! I don't believe you! Zeke! Zeke! Tell me you're in there!

ZEKEHOTEP

Oh, he's in here, but there's nothing he can do for you now. Ah, look, here comes your friend to the rescue.

HAZEL

Cecil!

ZEKEHOTEP

Hmm it looks like there's someone with him. Oh no, the ship's crew returned. With guns.

ROCKY FOOTSTEPS AND SHUFFLING.

HAZEL

Where's Jack? And Sam?

CECIL

They didn't make it.

HAZEL

And the...

CECIL

The Eye didn't make it either.

ZEKEHOTEP

The Eye of Light and Darkness? Alas, all that effort, a relic of such immense power, and to have it sink into the sea. You know, that would have made things very difficult for us. It might have even stopped us entirely.

CECIL

Must you taunt us?

ZEKEHOTEP

I gave you a chance to abandon this futile endeavor some time ago.

(MORE)

ZEKEHOTEP (CONT'D)

You chose the hard way. Now it's
time to live with your choice.
You've come all this way - perhaps
you should see what the future has
in store. This way!

(to the crew)

Dài tamen jìnqù! (*take them
inside!*)

Rising suspense MUSIC.

178

INTO THE VOLCANO

178

LESTER MAYHEW

Led by Nyarlathotep in the body of
Zeke Ford, the hybrid sailors
marched them through a tunnel dug
into the side of the volcano.
Inside, the passage opened onto the
volcano's caldera, reworked to a
terrifying purpose. The scene was
astonishing.

At the center of the chamber a
tapering cylinder of gleaming metal
towered some 75 feet high,
surrounded by complex scaffolding,
and the kind of alien machinery the
team had come to recognize all too
well.

HAZEL

(sotto)

Cecil, look. More of that
Australian machinery.

CECIL

And there - lightning guns!

LESTER MAYHEW

Below it were two pools: one of
glowing molten magma and a second
of dark, viscous matter which
seemed to bubble and undulate as if
alive. Horrid Deep Ones and human
hybrids moved about as workers, and
behind the entire scene loomed a
massive idol of the Bloated Woman.

Music STING!

HAZEL

Good god - you've built...

CECIL

What is that thing?

ZEKEHOTEP

Religion can take such interesting forms, don't you think?

HAZEL

(her sanity cracking)

Zeke, no, no...

(mumbling)

If it looks bad, don't look.

ZEKEHOTEP

Now, now, open your eyes, Miss Claflin. You'll get used to it. And once your eyes are truly open, you'll behold the greater glory that is Nyarlathotep.

CECIL

Those creatures down there, they do your bidding better than humans?

ZEKEHOTEP

Not at all, just in different ways. They are... heartier than humans though. They certainly swim better than your friends.

(to all of them)

Come, there's someone who's eager to meet you.

Transition MUSIC.

179

SIR AUBREY

179

LESTER MAYHEW

Zeke led them to a platform overlooking the operation. From behind a bank of machinery appeared an elegant white-haired Englishman.

CECIL

Sir Aubrey Penhew.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

C'est moi. Though I must say I prefer to be called the Pale Viper.

HAZEL

Because you're a snake in the grass?

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Because I move unseen, unnoticed,
and when I deliver my bite, it is
invariably fatal. Oh, but this is
delightful.

CECIL

How's that?

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Your delicious mix of astonishment
and despair. Your friend Mr. Ford -
a conduit for Nyarlathotep himself.
Your mysterious black sphinx -
receiving messages sent from us,
not your dear Jackson Elias. You
found Jack Brady for us and now he,
like Elias is dead. You've tried so
hard to upset our plans and look at
you now, only a grieving widow and
a persistent insurance man left
standing. Well, that's not entirely
true. A rescue party has come to
save you!

FOOTSTEPS. The RATTLE OF CHAINS. MUSIC.

HAZEL

No!

LESTER MAYHEW

Ho Fang, his head bandaged, emerged
from the darkness, pulling on three
desperate shackled people:
Victoria, Dr. Kafour, and Penny all
bruised and beaten.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Yes, here's your rescue party,
borne here on the Ivory Wind by my
dear friend Ho Fang. An old lady,
an ancient zealot and a dimwitted
girl - quite the team of heroes.
Bound and gagged and every bit as
ineffectual as you. And such a
waste! To think, you were given
such a golden opportunity in that
pyramid, as I was. I seized it and
the world itself stands on the
precipice of a new, glorious age.

CECIL

So what will you do?

SIR AUBREY PENHEW
(so pleased to have been
asked)

Ah, you've seen the ingredients,
but not the recipe. I'm harnessing
two unique natural sources of
massive power - geothermal and
biological.

CECIL
I recognize the lava. What's in
that other pit?

SIR AUBREY PENHEW
(gleeful)
Yes, it's called a shoggoth! A
monstrous form of conscious plasma.
Together they'll fuel the ultimate
religious artifact.

CECIL
The metal cylinder, out there?

SIR AUBREY PENHEW
We call it a rocket, Mr. Watson. A
brilliant German engineer, Hermann
Oberth, developed the theory during
the Great War. But now, the science
of the Great Race joins with
metaphysical knowledge to do what
Oberth and others have only dreamed
of: a rocket that will fly above
the atmosphere and tear the sky
itself asunder.

HAZEL
Tear the sky?

SIR AUBREY PENHEW
It's interesting isn't it, Miss
Claflin? A third natural source of
massive power. The rocket will
carry on it a bomb made of radium.
Show them.

ZEKEHOTEP
I call it a "warhead". I think it
will catch on.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW
It will make an explosion in the
sky the likes of which this world
has never known, opening a door to
outer spheres.

(MORE)

SIR AUBREY PENHEW (CONT'D)

And that, when combined with a planetary alignment and certain religious observations carried out to honor and invoke Nyarlathotep, shall pave the way to a new and glorious age. So, you see, in spite of some of the inconveniences you have brought to the endeavor, ultimately it is I, the Pale Viper, and I alone who is the prophet of Nyarlathotep, Pharaoh of a new dynasty, and it is my vision and expertise, with the wise guidance of my lord and master the God of a Thousand Faces that shall rewrite the history of this planet and all who dwell upon it.

HAZEL

(whispering)

What do you think would happen if a radium bomb fell into a pool of magma?

CECIL

(whispering)

Only one way to find out.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

(droning heedlessly on)

Someday, soon, the holy books of scripture shall be written about me, and I shall--

There's a MEATY THUNK. Penhew CRIES IN PAIN.

LESTER MAYHEW

Suddenly, a Deep One's trident sank itself into Penhew's shoulder. Heads spun to see the wet, bedraggled form of Sam Mariga standing in the chamber, blood seeping from many wounds.

SAM

This ends here!

Sir Aubrey MOANS in agony.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

(gasping)

Seize him! Throw him to the shoggoth!

CHAOS BEGINS. MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

Deep Ones and hybrid sailors fell
on Sam as Cecil wrested a gun away
from the nearest human guard.

CECIL

Quick - untie the others.

BLAM - A guard goes down with a CRY. BLAM BLAM.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel dived on Ho Fang with raging
fury and knocked him to the ground.
Penny and Victoria, bound together,
helped Hazel by attempting to
strangle Ho Fang with their chains.
Meanwhile, the Deep One guards
dragged Sam above the shoggoth pit!

SAM

What is that? NO--

The monstrous shoggoth ROARS up from its pit. Horrible BEING-
EATEN-BY-SHOGGOTH SOUNDS. BLAM - SCREAM - ETC!

LESTER MAYHEW

Sam was consumed by the horrific
sentient slime, but its fury
awakened, it crawled forth from the
pit, its writhing pseudopods
grasping wildly at humans and Deep
Ones alike. Cecil, firing his
pistol wildly in every direction,
made it to the rack of lightning
guns near the rocket and lifted
one.

CECIL

Aaaaaah!

LESTER MAYHEW

Having seen a Yithian use one in
Australia, Cecil managed to hold
the weapon almost correctly.

ZAP! SIZZLE! CRASH!

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

A bolt of eerie lightning shot forth and hit the scaffolding surrounding Penhew's rocket, and a huge section of metal came tumbling down.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Nooo! Stop him! That one - there!

LESTER MAYHEW

Ho Fang beat back the ladies, and clutched Penny by the throat.

HO FANG

Xiànzài ni huì si! (Now you will die!)

DR. KAFOUR

Let go of her you--

ZAP! SIZZLE! Ho Fang SCREAMS. Dr. Kafour YELPS.

LESTER MAYHEW

Another wild shot from the lightning gun struck Ho Fang, and his pistol fell to the platform.

HAZEL

I got his gun!

VICTORIA

Well done. Look out! Behind you!

BLAM!

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel spun to fire at guards, who were themselves under attack by the rampaging shoggoth. Nyarlathotep-in-Zeke watched the unfolding chaos and laughed with delight.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

My lord! Won't you do something!

ZEKEHOTEP

(laughing)
Crawling chaos!

Zeke LAUGHS and LAUGHS. ZAP! SIZZLE! CRASHING! MAYHEM! CHAINS RATTLE.

LESTER MAYHEW

As Cecil continued to fire the lightning gun, Hazel struggled desperately to free Victoria, Penny and Dr. Kafour from their chains.

HAZEL

Ali, your arm, were you burned again?

DR. KAFOUR

Cecil's lightning gun. The shot that killed Ho Fang got me as well.

HAZEL

It's all right, we'll get you--

DR. KAFOUR

Hazel, just shoot it. Here, at my wrist. Take your gun and shoot the chain.

HAZEL

But you'll be hit!

DR. KAFOUR

I am hit already. Free Victoria and Penny. Just shoot it!

HAZEL

Aaaaah!

BLAM! RICOCHET!

LESTER MAYHEW

The chain broke, freeing the women, who were still chained to each other. Dr. Kafour stumbled away in agony.

VICTORIA

Now me, dear.

HAZEL

Victoria!

VICTORIA

Don't worry my dear. Just shoot.

LESTER MAYHEW

Hazel, shaking, aimed at her beloved cousin's wrist and pulled the trigger.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

HAZEL
(weeping)
Victoria, I'm out of bullets!

VICTORIA
Get yourself out of here, Hazel.
There's nothing more you can do for
us!

Penny SCREAMS.

HAZEL
Penny!

LESTER MAYHEW
Suddenly an arm or tentacle from
the shoggoth grabbed hold of Penny
and yanked her back into its ever-
growing bulk. Victoria was suddenly
free, a chain dangling from each
wrist. She staggered away, drawing
the attention of the undulating
slime.

VICTORIA
Run, Hazel!

ZAP! BLAM! CRASH!

HAZEL
(shouting)
Zeke! I know you can hear me! Help
us, please! Zeke!

ZEKEHOTEP
(delighted)
You've got terrible luck when it
comes to men.

HAZEL
Zeke, no, it's me. I... I love you.
I'm sorry. I ran out of bullets.

ZEKEHOTEP
So it would seem.

LESTER MAYHEW
Zeke raised a pistol and aimed it
at Hazel's heart.

ZEKEHOTEP

You should have listened to him.
"Save the last..."

The NOTES OF THE BUNDARI SONG OF MENTAL HEALTH are heard in the chaos.

LESTER MAYHEW

Dr. Kafour, having escaped in the chaos onto what remained of the rocket scaffolding, began to sing the song of Old Bundari. Zeke froze.

ZEKEHOTEP

No! I can't--

DR. KAFOUR

Run, my children!

He keeps SINGING THE BUNDARI SONG.

ZEKE

(transitioning to his own voice)

Hazel... Save the last bullet....

HAZEL

Zeke! No!

BLAM!

LESTER MAYHEW

In a sudden final movement, Zeke raised the pistol to his own head and pulled the trigger. His lifeless body fell at Hazel's feet.

HAZEL

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Nooooo! My lord!

CECIL

Hazel, c'mon! We have got to get out of here!

VICTORIA (OFF)

This way, Hazel dear!

FINAL CRASHING BEGINS.

LESTER MAYHEW

Victoria and Cecil pulled at the paralyzed Hazel and all ran as the rocket scaffolding began its final collapse.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

My servants! Stop them! Help me! I command you! Noooooooooo!

LESTER MAYHEW

But Sir Aubrey Penhew's cries went unanswered. His servants and guards had all fled or been killed. Only the rampaging shoggoth was left.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

The warhead! Where is it? What has--

DR. KAFOUR

It is here. Inshallah!

LESTER MAYHEW

Dr. Kafour held the radium warhead in his maimed arm. He was perched at the rim of the pit of magma. Sir Aubrey saw that the shoggoth was heading directly for him.

PENHEW

No! Leave him alone!

MUSIC!

180 THE BEACH

180

LESTER MAYHEW

Cecil and Victoria ran with Hazel from the smoking volcano and made for the dock. They saw the Ivory Wind moored next to the Dark Mistress.

VICTORIA

I know that boat! Come on!

181 THE VOLCANO

181

CRASHING AND ELECTRICAL SPARKING. MUSIC.

DR. KAFOUR

O Allah, Liberate us from darkness
by Your light, save us from
enormities whether open or hidden.

SIR AUBREY PENHEW

Nyarlathotep! Why? For the sake of--
Noooooo!

LESTER MAYHEW

Dr. Kafour, proudly carrying the
warhead, stepped into the magma
pit.

MUSIC and the HORRIBLE RUMBLING OF AN INCIPIENT ATOMIC
EXPLOSION.

182 THE IVORY WIND

182

The WHINING BOAT ENGINE. The SEA. The RUMBLING. Hazel WEEPS.

VICTORIA

What is that noise?

CECIL

Keep going! Don't look!

Some kind of MASSIVE EXPLOSION. MUSIC.

183 EPILOGUE

183

LESTER MAYHEW

More than a year later, Hazel and
Cecil paid a call to a lovely
country home in Britain. Together
they sat at Victoria's bedside. Her
old age had finally -- and quickly --
- caught up to her. But the light
in her eyes shone bright as she
greeted her beloved companions.

VICTORIA

(frailer)

And you, dear Cecil? Were you able
to close your case once and for
all?

CECIL

It took some more doing, but I
worked it out with the Hong Kong
authorities and returned Carlyle to
the family home in Westchester.

(MORE)

CECIL (CONT'D)

As he's still under strict psychiatric supervision, his sister Erica continues to command the family fortune. And the Providence Trust Insurance company was able to reclaim its payout of the claim on Roger's life. The company gave me this watch.

VICTORIA

Ah...

HAZEL

It's lovely. And your new eye! Good to see you wearing spectacles again.

CECIL

Yes, hand-blown glass. A gift from Neily Davenport.

(sigh)

I've since retired. Trying to figure out what to do with myself. Retirement seems a bit dull after... you know?

HAZEL

Oh, we know.

CECIL

Some days it's hard to believe it was all real. That any of it was real.

VICTORIA

Well. I've decanted some very fine sherry. I'd like to ask that you join me in raising a glass in memory of those who couldn't come with you... my poor, brave Gupta.

HAZEL

Sam Mariga, the heart of a lion.

CECIL

The marvelous O'Brien twins.

VICTORIA

To the elusive and courageous Jack Brady.

CECIL

Dr. Kafour - a wise and noble soul.

HAZEL

(fighting back tears)
And to the only men I've ever
loved. Jackson Elias, Marcus
Buchanan and Zeke Ford.

ALL

Cheers.

They toast. And drink. There's an awkward silence.

CECIL

(not really wanting to say
this)
It's still out there, you know. The
cult. We stopped their grand plan,
but somewhere, in the shadows,
they're regrouping. Paying hideous
obeisance to their dark god who
waits, patiently, until the stars
are right again.

VICTORIA

I'm sure you're right, Cecil. And
that's why I invited you here
today.

HAZEL

What do you mean, Victoria?

VICTORIA

I've come to the conclusion that my
adventuring days are done. I've
accomplished a great many things in
my life, but you know, one thing I
haven't done is write a proper
book. Will you help me? I thought
we might write the book that
Jackson Elias meant to, to let the
world know about the many masks of
Nyarlathotep.

Ending MUSIC.

LESTER MAYHEW

You've been listening (for a very
long time now) to Masks of
Nyarlathotep.

(MORE)

LESTER MAYHEW (CONT'D)

Brought to you by our sponsors, including Bub-L-Pep, the lithiated tonic that lifts your spirits and effervesces your nerves. Until next week, I'm Lester Mayhew reminding you to never go anywhere alone, if it looks bad - don't look, and save the last bullet for yourself.

ANNOUNCER

Masks of Nyarlathotep was written and produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman, based on the 5th edition of Masks of Nyarlathotep, a campaign for the Call of Cthulhu® role playing game originally written by Larry DiTillio and Lynn Willis. Fifth edition written by Mike Mason, Lynne Hardy, Paul Fricker and Scott Dorward. Original music by Troy Sterling Nies. The Dark Adventure ensemble featured: Sean Branney, Tom Bromhead, Kacey Camp, Ken Clement, Dan Conroy, Phillip C. Curry, Mike Dalager, Matt Foyer, Larissa Gallagher, Michael Hagiwara, Hollie Hunt, McKerrin Kelly, Sophia Khan, Nardeep Khurmi, Kirsten Kollender, Casey Kramer, Andrew Leman, Dick Lizzardo, Jacob Lyle, Barry Lynch, Rosney Mauger, Johnny McKenna, Pip Moore, Grinnell Morris, Mehrnaz Mohammadi, David Pavao, Shawn Michael Savage, Samir Shakur, Annie Sway, William C. Stephens, Kevin Stidham, Marilyn Tokuda, Sarah van der Pol, Madi Vodane, and Time Winters. Tune in next week for Mochambo: the Mongolian Menace! Dark Adventure Radio Theatre is a wholly owned subsidiary of the HPLHS Broadcast group, copyright nineteen thirty three - plus eighty five.

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