

Dark Adventure Radio Theatre

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

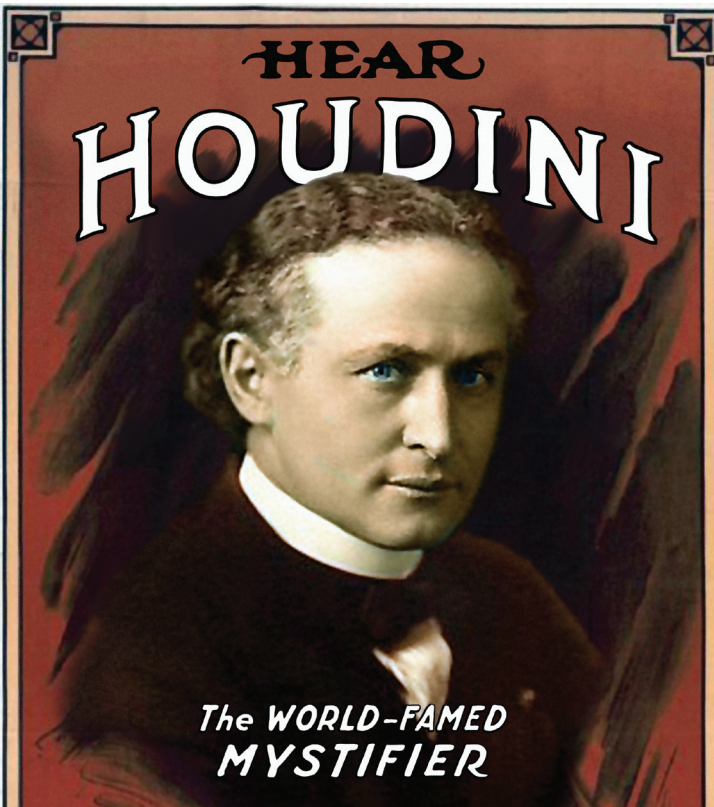
The Players

Leslie Baldwin	Bess Houdini
Aidan Branney	Jim, Stage Manager
Sean Branney	Harry Houdini
Dan Conroy	Erskine Blackwell
Chad Fifer	Rudolf Lloyd, Ansep Al Massri
Matt Foyer	Dupuis, Pavao
Alaine Kashian	Gertie Van Dyck, Nitocris
Andrew Leman	Nathaniel Ward, Kareem, German Guard 2
Holly Long	Francine Kelly, Wee Mona
Jacob Lyle	Rodrigo, Pyramid Climber
Barry Lynch	Abdul Reis al Drogman, May
Josh Thoemke	Announcer
Eddy Will	German Guard 1
Time Winters	Borchardt, Merchant, Ali Ziz, Mayknot
Vaudevillians/Bedouins/Mummy Hordes	

Tamara Hembree, Ruth Horne, TK Jusola-Sanders, Umberto Lenzi, Tobias Nilsson, James Vincent and Tom Woodger

The Staff

Based on the story by H. P. Lovecraft & Harry Houdini
Radio Adaptation by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman
Original Music by Troy Sterling Nies
"Bub-L-Pep" jingle written by Andrew Leman,
arranged and performed by Harald Lindell and Kathleen Demarest
Audio Engineering by Chris Horvath
Cover and Disc Illustrations by Darrell Tutchtan
Prop Inserts by Andrew Leman and Sean Branney
Egyptology Consultant: Robert K. Ritner
Special Thanks to Rula Baalbaki, David G. Cercone II,
John Cox, Erin Curtice, Andrew Humphreys, Sophie Klesen,
Mike Murphy, Alecos Papadopoulos and David Pavao
Produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman



The WORLD-FAMED
MYSTIFIER

Lovecraft worked with other authors on a number of writing projects over the course of his career, but none quite as remarkable as Harry Houdini. J.C. Henneberger, the founder and owner of the pulp magazine *Weird Tales*, had sought to boost sagging sales by adding a regular feature by Houdini, who was the world's most celebrated magician. The "Ask Houdini" column proved popular, and Henneberger went on to publish two short stories ghostwritten for the "Master Mystifier." For a third story, Henneberger asked Lovecraft — then an up-and-coming writer for *Weird Tales* — to ghost-write the piece, offering a bigger advance than HPL had ever been offered before: \$100.00. Lovecraft took the job.

Houdini provided the story idea, but once it became clear to Lovecraft that it was based on imaginary rather than true events he expanded considerably on the plot's fantastical elements, and relied on research in tourist guides and museum exhibits for the Egyptian details. The tale, originally published only under Houdini's name in the May-June-July issue of 1924, was well received. Houdini himself was so pleased with the final product that he met with Lovecraft over dinner, and hired him to work on other non-fiction ghostwriting jobs. Were it not for Houdini's untimely death in 1926, it's likely that the two would have continue to collaborate.

This story had a unique impact on Lovecraft's private life. It was completed just at the deadline required by *Weird Tales* and Lovecraft packed the typed draft as he prepared to travel by train to New York, where he was not only going to deliver the finished story, but also get married to Sonia Greene

on March 3rd. Unfortunately, he misplaced the typescript at Union Station in Providence, and when he arrived in Brooklyn Lovecraft frantically began retyping the story, pausing only to go to St. Paul's Chapel for his own wedding. Howard and Sonia had planned a two-day honeymoon in Philadelphia, but they spent the better part of those days (and nights) retyping the manuscript.

Lovecraft originally titled the story "Under the Pyramids," which we know because he placed an ad in the *Providence Journal* hoping that someone might have found his missing original typescript. *Weird Tales* published the story under the title "Imprisoned with the Pharaohs." The producers at *Dark Adventure Radio Theatre* felt that the latter was a better title, but in preparing the script for radio performance made sure both titles got their due.

Although Houdini did once get off a boat in Port Said, he never actually performed in Cairo. But he did really work to develop a "buried alive" escape act in 1914 in which he would be buried in a casket under tons of sand. He tested the routine sometime in 1918, but found it much too dangerous and difficult to stage, and shelved the idea until 1926, when he had posters made showing himself being buried in front of the Great Sphinx, in an echo of this very tale. He performed the escape once, just weeks before his death.

—SB & AHL



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LUDO FORE PUTAVIMUS

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