

Dark Adventure Radio Theatre

The LURKING FEAR

...IN *Dynafone*

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Lovecraft's tale "The Lurking Fear" shares much in common with another of his early serialized stories, "Herbert West — Reanimator". That story was written for a semi-professional humor magazine entitled *Home Brew*. Its publisher, George Julian Houtain, was a friend of Lovecraft's from the amateur press movement, and after "Herbert" he solicited Lovecraft to provide another serialized tale. Lovecraft obligingly wrote "The Lurking Fear" in November of 1922, receiving an advance of \$20 for the story's first two chapters. The story's four chapters were published in consecutive monthly issues of *Home Brew*, beginning in January of 1923. It's unclear if Houtain paid for the remaining two chapters, but Lovecraft later sold the story to *Weird Tales* for a paltry \$78. It was published there in its entirety in June of 1928.

Like "Herbert West", "The Lurking Fear" is a bit overwrought and often teeters on the brink of parody. Yet in the tale we see a number of themes which Lovecraft would visit again and again over the course of his journey as an author. In a nod to Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" and perhaps in a subconscious nod to his own family's declining fortunes, the decline of the Martense family and their once grand mansion looms large over the story (see also "The Rats in the Walls"). We see a present generation as the embodiment of a curse initiated by previous generations (see "The Dunwich Horror", "Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family", or Lovecraft's biography). And we see a horror which is a tangible manifestation of biological degeneracy and inbreeding ("The Shadow Over Innsmouth", etc...) But rising out of these thematic threads is a unique monstrosity — one borne of a decayed genealogy.

Having adapted a great many Lovecraft tales as radio plays, we felt stories where a verbose and maniacal narrator told his own deranged story was well-trodden ground. So, to keep things interesting, we thought it would be fun to shift the perspective of the tale to that of the authorities investigating the strange events unfolding in the Catskills. Rather than experiencing the events through an unreliable Lovecraftian narrator, we reframed the perspective to that of a pair of objective, more trustworthy narrators. Having done that, we then largely stuck to the events of HPL's story.

As was not unusual for Lovecraft, he was quite critical of his work. He described the tale as "thunderously melodramatic", saying "It is poor art because it was written to order with certain limitations, but it ought to please the followers of Nictzin Dyalhis and his congeners" (Dyalhis was a popular pulp fiction author whose work HPL disdained). But we find that beneath HPL's overwrought language, something quite interesting is lurking.

—SB & ARHL
HPLHS

The Players

Leslie Baldwin	.....	Mrs. Bennett
Sean Branney	.....	Detective Croft
Kacey Camp	.....	Mama Munnee, Billy
Ken Clement	.....	Lester Mayhew
Matt Foyer	.....	Townie, William Tobey, Jonathan Gifford
Andrew Leman	.....	Nick Callum
Dick Lizzardo	.....	Gawker, Moe Pearce, George Bennett
Jacob Lyle	.....	Mikey Munnee, Bernt Martense
Johnny McKenna	.....	Marvin Munnee
Grinnell Morris	.....	Arthur Munroe, Jan Martense, Dad
William C. Stephens	.....	Captain Murray
Kevin Stidham	.....	Trooper Duclair
Josh Thoemke	.....	Announcer
Sarah van der Pol	.....	Tilly, Weduwe Vrooman
Time Winters	.....	Moses Munnee

The Staff

Based on the story by H. P. Lovecraft

Radio Adaptation by
Sean Branney and Andrew Leman

Music by Troy Sterling Nies
"Sonate (No. 10)" by Pietro Domenico Paradies

Cover and Disc Illustrations by Darrell Tutchtou
Prop Inserts by Andrew Leman and Sean Branney

Research Assistance by David G. Cercione II

Special Thanks to Michael Feldman

Vocals recorded at Horse Latitudes Studio
and The Jungle Room, Glendale, CA

Audio Engineering by Shayna Adler
and Michael Dumas

Produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman

In memory of Wilum Hopfrog Pugmire

