

### The Players

Leslie Baldwin	.....	Shirley Upton
Sean Branney	.....	Lieutenant O'Donnell, Punk 2
Kacey Camp	.....	A.D.A. Crenshaw
Hollie Hunt	.....	Asenath Waite
Andrew Leman	.....	Daniel Upton
Jacob Andrew Lyle	.....	Eddy Upton
Barry Lynch	.....	Reginald Derby
Grinnell Morris	.....	Hoyle, Chesuncook Marshal
David Pavao	.....	Milt, Chalvers, Dr. Headrick
Kevin Stidham	.....	Edward Pickman Derby
Josh Thoemke	.....	Announcer
Sarah Van der Pol	.....	Darla Kent, Myrtle Crane
Time Winters	.....	Creighton Cobb

### The Staff

Based on the story by H. P. Lovecraft  
 Radio Adaptation by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman  
 Derby's Poetry by Clark Ashton Smith  
 Original Music by Troy Sterling Nies  
 Vocals Recorded at The Jungle Room, Glendale, California  
 Audio Engineering by Julian Beeston  
 Cover and Disc Illustrations by Darrell Tutchton  
 Prop Inserts by Andrew Leman and Sean Branney  
 Asenath remains sculpted by Dave Snyder  
 French Consultation by Sophie Klessen

Produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman

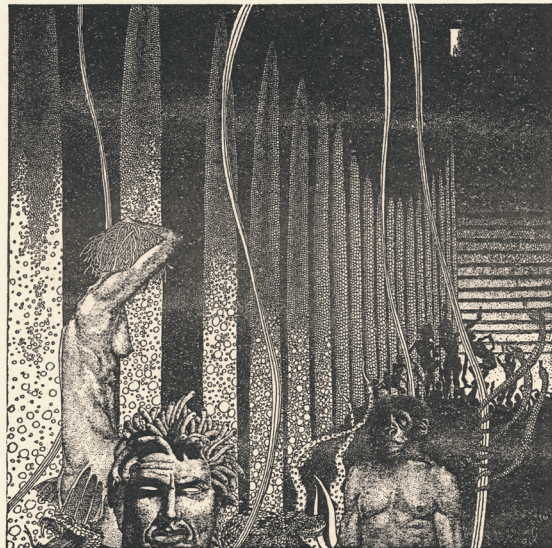


which we lived—witch-cursed, legend-haunted—Arkham, whose huddled, sagging gambrel roofs and crumbling Georgian balustrades brood out the centuries beside the darkly muttering Miskatonic.

As time went by I turned to architecture and gave up my design of illustrating a book of Edward's demonic poems, yet our comradeship suffered no lessening. Young Derby's odd genius developed remarkably, and in his eighteenth year his collected nightmare-lyrics made

a real sensation when issued under the title *Azathoth and Other Horrors*. He was a close correspondent of the notorious Baudelairean poet Justin Geoffrey, who wrote *The People of the Monolith* and died screaming in a madhouse in 1926 after a visit to a sinister, ill-regarded village in Hungary.

In self-reliance and practical affairs, however, Derby was greatly retarded because of his coddled existence. His health had improved, but his habits of childish dependence were fostered by



"The pit of the shoggoth! Down the six thousand steps . . . the abomination of abominations."

For most readers of Lovecraft, "The Thing on the Doorstep" stands out by virtue of the fact that it features the most significant female character in his body of fiction. Yet, in keeping with his imp of the perverse, Lovecraft's female character is barely that: Asenath Waite's body is only half human, and houses the mind of... well let's just say not a woman. This monstrous bride for the unwitting Edward Pickman Derby forms the high point of the feminine in Lovecraftian fiction.

Like many of his later works, this story offers many interesting reflections of Lovecraft himself. The character of Edward is a precocious child scholar, reared by an overbearing mother in Arkham. He's a poet brimming with intellectual curiosity. He's a man not cut out for the rigors of the commercial world, and the death of his mother liberates him to come into his own as an adult. It doesn't seem that HPL was intending to write his own story — some of Derby's traits appear to be borrowed from HPL's friends, like the scanty moustache of Frank Belknap Long and the poetic idol Justin Geoffrey from the work of Robert E. Howard — but in the character of Edward he painted a self-portrait of sorts. Edward's relationship with Asenath precipitates his own demise, but it's hard to know whether Lovecraft felt his own brief marriage to Sonia Greene presented a similar peril, or if Asenath is better interpreted as a stand-in for Lovecraft's odd and distant relationship to the opposite sex in general. The story makes use of themes which show up elsewhere in his fiction, such as the perils of one's own ancestors ("The Case of Charles Dexter Ward" or "The Dunwich Horror") and hideous exchanges of personality

("The Shadow Out of Time"). He also builds on the regional and magical lore he created in "The Shadow Over Innsmouth" and "The Dreams in the Witch House."

Lovecraft wrote the story over the course of three days, August 21-24, 1933. He seemed unimpressed with his own effort (as he often was) and did not bother to have his pencil-written manuscript typed until 1936. He submitted the work to Farnsworth Wright, the editor at *Weird Tales* magazine, with a cover letter stating, "I am going through the formality of obtaining the official rejection of the enclosed". Wright accepted the story and published it in January of 1937 with an illustration by Virgil Finlay, just two months before Lovecraft's death. It was the last of HPL's stories to be published during his own lifetime.

Many modern critics have been harsh on the tale, lamenting the lack of cosmic vision which marked many of HPL's greatest works. But what it may lack in fantastic scope it makes up for in characterization. Lovecraft gives us an uncommonly personal tale well suited to *Dark Adventure* dramatization. The lives of two dear friends are shattered as one is sucked into the perilous world of occult powers and ancestral horrors, and both are ultimately destroyed. Sometimes the monsters are ancient powerful gods beyond the farthest reaches of space and time, but sometimes they can be those closest to you, in your own home.

—SB & AHL



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LUOD FORE PUTAVIMUS

Illustration by Virgil Finlay from the January, 1937 publication of "The Thing on the Doorstep" in *Weird Tales*.