

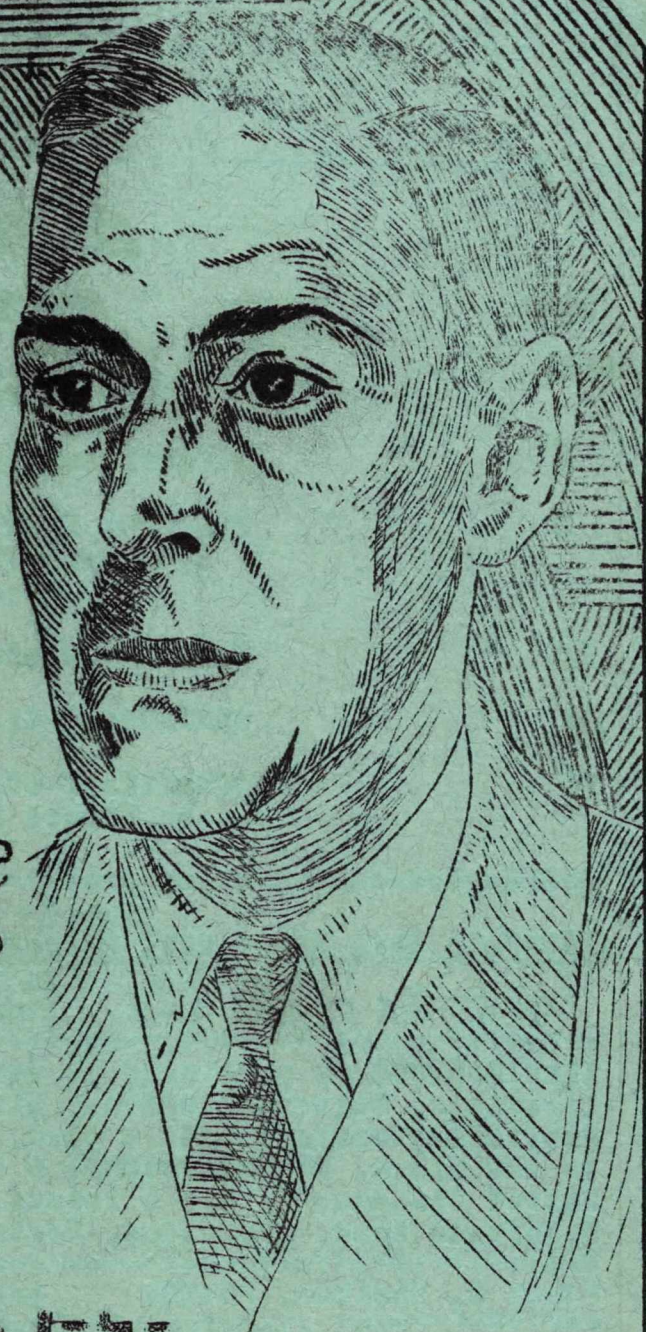
“

... **All** that a
wonder story
can ever be is a
vivid expression
of a certain type
of human mood.”

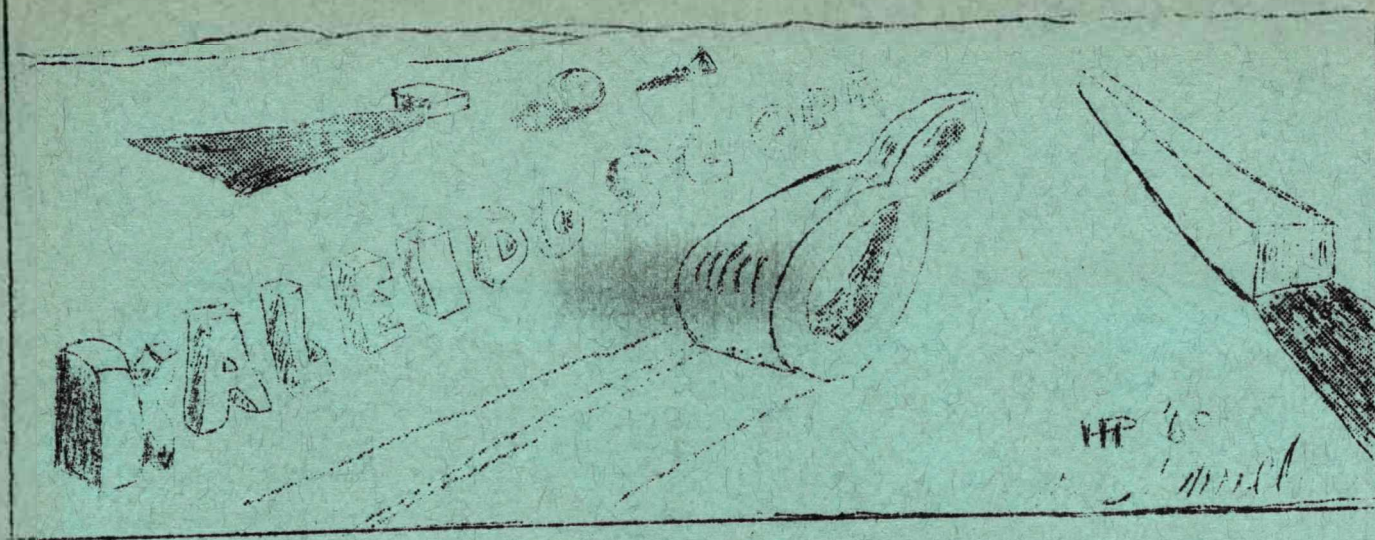
FROM AN ESSAY

by

H.P. LOVECRAFT



PROSSER '60



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page 3: Don Anderson

ARTWORK: This Page: Phil Harrell +++ page 5: Prosser

: stencilling: p.p. 2 to 15 :

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THE
EDITORIAL

BY
JACK L. CHALKER

HICCUP!



.....
:A DAMNED SER- : Well, yes, this is more of a Sercon-type ama-
:CON 'ZINE YET! : teur publication than the 'faanish' or common
:..... : type. This publication will not be liked by
those persons who put out such fanzines, because it has little to
do with SF fandom to their way of thinking. But it actually does,
after all. What is presented in these pages is a different type
of fan. He is not a Sercon. He is having fun in his own way, and
he is here to present his efforts to you in the way he can do best.
This publication does not expect to go down in history. It doesn't
even expect to accomplish much, if anything at all--except to give
its readers a few moments of entertainment.

Entertainment. That is the reason for its being, plainly and
simply.

Remember that I said that fannish fanzines were common? They
are. I can think of, offhand, close to 40 and many, many more if
given a little time to think. These are put out by people having
their own brand of fun. But very seldom does the amateur writer,
the person who has not sold professionally, but writes good and
often excellent pieces.

In this publication, it is not outward appearance which is
of primary importance, but the quality of the material contained
herein! And the material is herein to give you some entertainment.
Bear in mind when reading the amateur pieces (piece, this issue)
that they are by amateurs, not professionals. They will have many
mistakes in them, naturally. There will be flaws in plot, style,
continuity, etc. But that's all the more reason for you to help.
Your complaints are going to be this publication's business. Your
criticism might help some budding author on his next piece. Hmmm..
that's being Sercon, isn't it? O.K. DAMMIT! THIS IS A SERCON PUB-
LICATION AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT YOU CAN JUST SAY YOU DON'T AND

WE'LL DROP YOU FROM THE MAILING LIST! Then everybody's happy. O.K.?
O.K. And that's that.

.....
:WELL, WHAT AM I TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?: I'm trying to give you some-
:..... : thing a little different in
the way of a fanzine, that's what! And I'm trying to give you some
of the Good Old Days when a fanzine was the where promising authors
can try out. Of course I don't expect to succeed! But it's a helluva
lot of fun trying, isn't it?

Good Lord! I've really exploded there, haven't I? From Hiccup
to a full-fledged hurricanel! That's what you get when writing an ed-
itorial spontaneously on the stencil. But I did mean every word of
it and I am expecting reactions on it.

.....
: OUR STORIES THIS TIME: We are honored this time by a reprint by
:..... : the late, great Howard Phillips Lovecraft.
We are proud to bring it to you--especially to those who haven't
read any of Mr. Lovecraft's pieces as yet. This is not, by far, a

great work of Mr. Lovecraft's. Indeed, it is one of his lesser pieces and is not even a sampling of that wonderful world of horror, Lovecraftiana. But it is a professional story of some merit, and deserves great attention as a masterpiece of modd and is an immortal example of the words on our cover.

CONSPIRACY OUT OF DORWICH is somewhat of a surprise. It can be taken as a slam-bang adventure novelette, of course. But the story, actually a series of radically different and oft times opposing thoughts and ideas. Under a fine microscope, each person sees it as an entirely different thing--even, at times, social satire. What is your feeling?

The lettercolumn this issue is concerning a previous publication of mine, CENTAUR. To those of you who did not get CENT, it won't mean much. But I hope it answers some question for those of you that did.

Advertisements will not be completely eliminated. We still crave publicity, and though we will not charge for 'zine ads, we will demand that you give us one in return.

NAME THE CHESAPEAKE BABY!: KALEIDOSCOPE is not a permanent title, but is a stand-in until we get one. We aren't offering any prizes save our gratitude for this little contest, but if you have an idea for a name for this publication, please don't keep it to yourself. Name this publication, and we can at least promise that you'll receive all amateur magazines put out by Chesapeake for nothin'. It's all we can do, but why not try?

(advertisement)

(advertisement)

Have you got 2-bits that's burning a hole in your pocket? If this is the case, send it to:

SATA Bill Pearson, 90-13 - 43rd Avenue, Elmhurst 73, New York for a sample copy of SATA or send \$1. for 4. SATA is a half-size lithocd 'zine featuring the best off beat in fiction, humor, and fantasy, and is generously spiced with quality artwork. A few copies are still available to you of the ALL COMIC issue! Don't miss out on the fun! Send for SATA now!

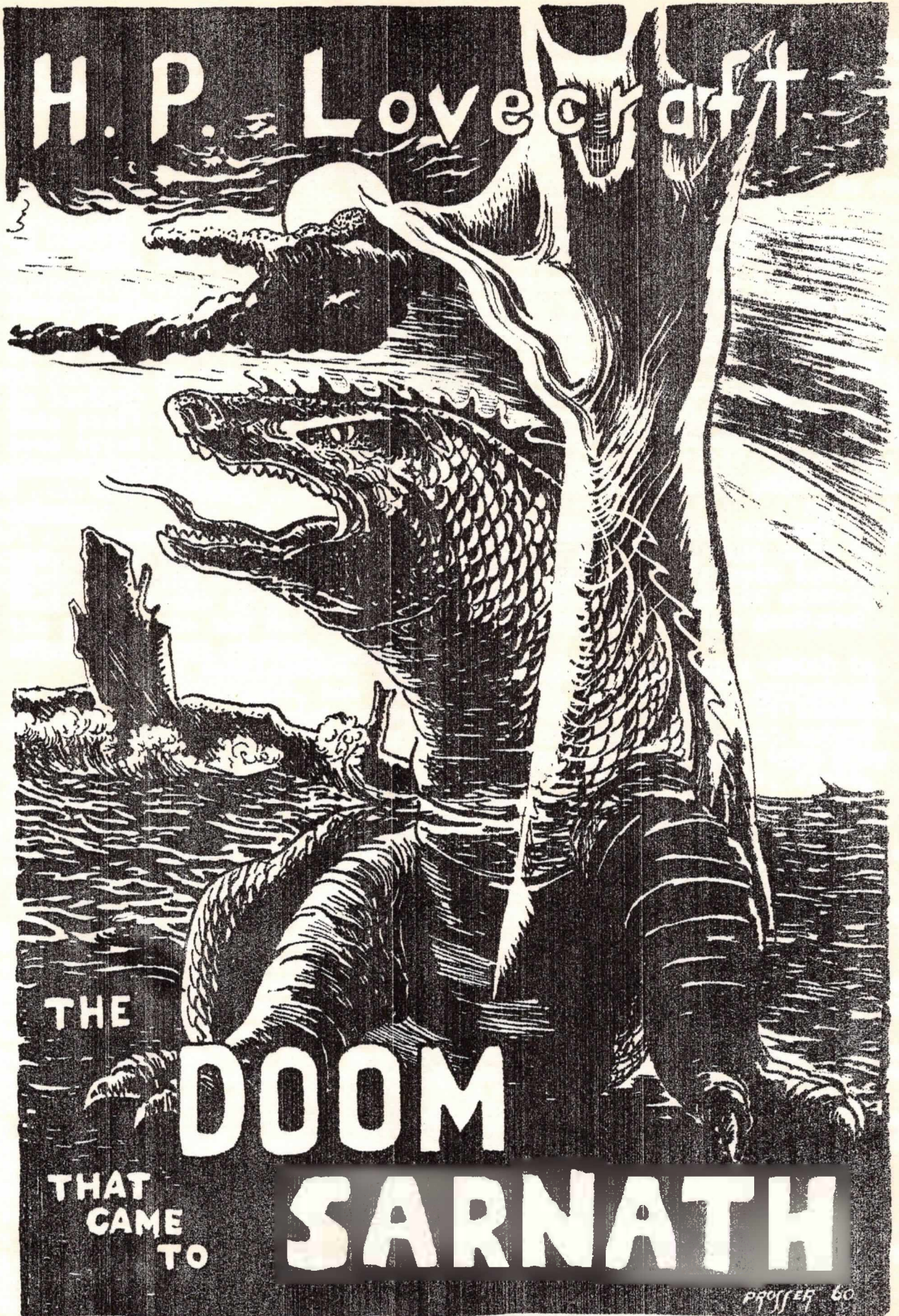
(And mention this publication when answering ads!)

CONTRIBUTIONS.....

We'll be glad to take anything you throw at us in the way of artwork and prose articles and fiction. Poetry, too, is more than welcome. Any subject at all, though no fan fiction or VERY faanish pieces of any sort please--there are many fanzines which will be glad to look them over. This one is not one of those. Art also on any subject--but no TAFF plugs, etc. BEMS will be excepted, of course. But, despite Mr. St. John's stories, nudes won't appear in this publication as a form of art;

Stencils this issue are Tower brand. Typewriters used are: For this editorial and DORWICH: Remington Standard, SARNATH: Smith Carona Portable. This is a Chesapeake Publication.

H. P. Lovecraft



THE

DOOM

THAT
CAME
TO

SARNATH

PROSSER 60

The quotation on the cover is the First Law upon which Howard Phillips Lovecraft based his writings. Because he placed mood first, then plot, and lastly character, many do not care for him. Yet many scholars consider him one of the great American writers. This story you are about to read has been out of print for about 14 years. It is a mood story, and it has but one character: The mighty city of Samath. There is no dialogue. It is truly one of the most poetic pieces of supernatural fiction in many years.

the MOON That Came To SARNATH

By H.P. Lovecraft

© 1943 by August Derleth & Donald Wandrei for BEYOND THE WALL OF SLEEP. © 1947 by August Derleth & Donald Wandrei. By permission of Arkham House: Publishers, Sauk City Wisc. All rights reserved by Arkham House.

THERE IS IN THE LAND OF MNAR a vast still lake that is fed by no stream and out of which no stream flows. Ten thousand years ago there stood by its shore the mighty city of Samath, but Samath stands there no more.

It is told that in the immortal years when the world was young, before ever the men of Samath came to the land of Mnar, another city stood by the lake; the grey stone city of Ib, which was as old as the lake itself, and peopled with beings not pleasing to behold. Very odd and ugly were these beings, as indeed are most beings of a world yet inchoate and rudely fashioned. It is written on the brick cylinders of Kadatheron that the beings of Ib were in hue as green as the lake and the mists that rise above it; that they had bulging eyes, pouting, flabby lips, and curious ears, and were without voice. It is also written that they descended one night from the moon in a mist; they and the vast still lake and the grey stone city Ib. However this may be, it is certain that they worshipped a sea-green stone idol chisled in the likeness of Bokrug, the water-lizard; before which they danced horribly when the moon was gibbous. And it is written in the papyrus of Ilarnak that they one day discovered fire, and thereafter kindled flames on many ceremonial occasions. But not much is written of these beings, because man is young, and knows so little of the very ancient living things.

After many eons, men came to the land of Mnar; dark shepherd folk with their floecy flocks, who built Thraa, Ilarnak, and Kadatheron on the winding river Ai. And certain tribes, more hardy than the rest, pushed on to the border of the lake and built Samath at a spot where precious metals were found in the earth.

Not far from the grey city of Ib did the wandering tribes lay the first stones of Samath, and at the beings of Ib they marvelled greatly. But with their marvelling was mixed hate, for they thought it not meet that beings of such aspect should walk about the world of men at dusk. Nor did they like the strange sculptures upon the grey monoliths of Ib, for those sculptures were terrible with antiquity. Why the beings and the sculptures lingered so late in the world, even to the com-

ing of men, none can tell; unless it was because the land of Mnar was very still, and remote from most other lands, both of waking and of dream.

As the men of Sarnath beheld more of the beings of Ib their hate grew, and it was not less because they found the beings weak, and soft as jelly to the touch of stones and arrows. So one day the young warriors, the slingers and the spearmen and the bowmen, marched against Ib and slew all the inhabitants thereof, pushing the queer bodies into the lake with long spears, because they did not wish to touch them. And because they did not like the gray sculptured monoliths of Ib they cast them also into the lake; wondering from the greatness of the labor how the stones were brought from afar, as they must have been, since there is naught like them in the land of Mnar or in the lands adjacent.

Thus of the very ancient city of Ib was nothing spared, save the sea-green stone idol chisled in the likeness of Bokrug, the water-lizard. This the young warriors took back with them as a symbol of conquest over the old gods and beings of Ib, and a sign of leadership in Mnar. But on the night after it was set up in the temple, a terrible thing must have happened, for wierd lights were seen over the lake, and in the morning the people found the idol gone and the high-priest Taran Ish lying dead, as if from some fear unspeakable. And before he died, Taran-Ish had scrawled upon the altar of chrysolite with oarso, shaky strokes the sign of DOOM.

After Taran-Ish there were many high-priests in Sarnath, but never was the sea-green stone idol found. And many centuries came and went, wherein Sarnath prospered exceedingly, so that only the high-priests and old women remembered what Taran-Ish had scrawled upon the altar of chrysolite. Betwixt Sarnath and the city of Ilarnak arose a caravan route, and the precious metals of the earth were exchanged for other metals and rare cloths and jewels and books and tools for artificers and all things of luxury that are known to the people who dwell along the winding river Ai and beyond. So Sarnath waxed mighty and learned and beautiful, and sent forth conquering armies to subdue the neighboring cities; and in time there sate upon a throne in Sarnath the kings of all the land of Mnar and of many lands adjacent.

The wonder of the world and the pride of all mankind was Sarnath the magnificent. Of polished desert-quarried marble were its walls, in height three hundred cubits and in breadth seventy-five, so that chariots might pass each other as men drove them along the top. For full five hundred stadia did they run, being open only on the side towards the lake where a green stone sea-wall kept back the waves that rose oddly once a year at the time of the festival of the destroying of Ib. In Sarnath were fifty streets from the lake to the gates of the caravans, and fifty more intersecting them. With onyx were they paved, save those whercon the horses and camels and elephants trod, which were paved with granito. And the gates of Sarnath were as many as the landward ends of the streets, each of bronze, and flanked by the figures of lions and elephants carven from some stone no longer known among men. The houses of Sarnath were of glazed brick and chalcedony, each having its walled garden and crystal lakelet. With strange art were they builded, for no other city had houses like them; and travelers from Thraa and Ilarnak and Kadatheron marveled at the shining domes wherewith they were surmounted.

But more marvelous still were the palaces and the temples, and the gardens made by Zokkar the olden king. There were many palaces, the last

of which were more mightier than any in Thraa or Ilarnek or Kadather-on. So high were they that one within might sometimes fancy himself beneath only the sky; yet when lighted with torches dipt in the oil of Dother their wall showed vast paintings of kings and armies, of a splendor at once inspiring and stupifying to the beholder. Many were the pillars of the palaces, all of tinted marble, and carven into designs of surpassing beauty. And in most of the palaces the floors were mosaics of beryl and lapis lazuli and sardonyx and carbuncle and other choice materials, so disposed that the beholder might fancy himself walking over beds of the rarest flowers. And there were likewise fountains, which cast scented waters about in pleasing jets arranged with cunning art. Outshining all others was the palace of the kings of Mnar and of the lands adjacent. On a pair of golden crouching lions rested the throne, many steps above the gleaming floor. And it was wrought of one piece of ivory, though no man lives who knows from whence such a vast piece could have come. In that palace there were also many galleries, and many ampetheatres where lions and men and elephants battled at the pleasure of the kings. Sometimes the ampetheatres were flooded with water conveyed from the lake by mighty aqueducts, and then were enacted stirring sea-fights, or combats betwixt swimmers and deadly marine things.

Lofty and amazing were the seventeen tower-like temples of Sarnath, fashioned of a bright, multi-colored stone not found elsewhere. A full thousand cubits high stodd the greatest among them, wherein the high-priests dwelt with a magnificence scarce less than that of the kings. On the ground were halls as vast and splendid as those of the palaces; where gathered throngs in worship of Zo-Kalar and Tamash and Lobon, the chief gods of Sarnath, whose incense-enveloping shrines were as the thrones of the monarchs. Not like the eikons of other gods were those of Zo-Kalar and Tamash and Lobon, for so close to life were they that one might swear the graceful, bearded gods themselves sate on the ivory thrones. And up unending steps of zircon was the tower-chamber, wherefrom the high-priests looked out upon the city and the plains and the lake by day; and at the cryptic moon and significant stars and planets, and their reflections in the lake, at night. Here was done the very secret and ancient rite in detestation of Bokrug, the water-lizard, and here rested the altar of chrysolite which bore the DOOM-scrrawl of Taran-Ish.

Wonderful likewise were the gardens made by Zokkar the olden king. In the centre of Sarnath they lay, covering a great space and encircled by a high wall. And they were surmounted by a mighty dome of glass, through which shone the sun and moon and planets when it was clear, and from which hung fulgent images of the sun and moon and planets when it was not clear. In summer the gardens were cooled by fresh odorous breezes skillfully wafted by fans, and in winter they were heated with concealed fires, so that in those gardens it was always Spring. There ran little streams over bright pebbles, dividing meads of green and gardens of many hues, and spanned by a multitude of bridges. Many were the waterfalls in their courses, and many were the lillied lakelets into which they expanded. Over the streams and with the melody of the waters. In ordered terraces arose the green banks, adorned here and there with bowers of vines and sweet blossoms, and seats and benches of marble and porphyry. And there were many small shrines where one might rest or pray to small gods.

Each year there was celebrated in Sarnath the feast of the des-

troying of Ib, at which time wine, song, dancing and merriment of every kind abounded. Great honors were then paid to the shades of those who had annihilated the odd ancient beings, and the memory of those beings and of their elder gods was derided by dancers and lutanists crowned with roses from the gardens of Zokkar. And the kings would look out over the lake and curse the bones of the dead that lay beneath it.

At first the high-priests liked not these festivals, for there had decended amongst them queer tales of how the sea-green eikon had vanished, and how Taran-Ish had died from fear and left a warning. And they said that from their high towers they sometimes saw lights beneath the waters of the lake. But as many years passed without calamity even the priests laughed and cursed and joined in the orgies of the feasters. Indeed, had they not themselves in their high tower often performed the very ancient and secret rite in detestation of Bokrug, the water-lizard? And a thousand years of riches and delight passed over Samath, wonder of the world.

Gorgeous beyond thought was the feast of the thousandth year of the destroying of Ib. For a decade it had been talked of in the land of Mnar, and as it drew nigh there came to Samath on horses and camels and elephants men from Thraa, Ilamek and Kadatheron, and all the cities of Mnar and all the lands beyond. Before the marble walls on the appointed night were pitched the pavilions of princes and the tents of travelers. Within his banquet-hall reclined Nargis-Hei, the king, drunken with ancient wine from the vaults of conquered Photh, and surrounded by feasting nobles and hurrying slaves. There were eaten many strange delicacies at that feast; peacocks from the distant hills of Implan, heels of camels from the Bnazic desert, nuts and spices from Sydathrian groves, and pearls from wave-washed Mtal dissolved in the vinegar of Thraa. Of sauces there were an untold number, prepared by the subtlest cooks in all Mnar, and suited to the palate of every feaster. But most prized of all the viands were the great fishes from the lake, each of vast size, and served upon golden platters set with rubies and diamonds.

Whilst the king and his nobles feasted within the palace, and viewed the crowning dish as it awaited them on golden platters, others feasted elsewhere. In the tower of the great temple the priests held revels, and in pavilions without the walls the princes of neighboring lands made merry. And it was the high-priest Gnai-Kah who first saw the shadows that decended from the gibbous into the lake, and the damnable green mists that arose from the lake to meet the moon and to shroud in a sinister haze the towers and domes of fated Samath. Thereafter those in the towers and without beheld strange lights on the water, and saw that the gray rock Akurion, which was wont to rear high above it near the shore, was almost submerged. And fear grew vaguely yet swiftly, so that the princes of Ilamek and of far Rokol took down and folded their tents and pavilions and departed, though they scarce knew the reason for their departing.

Then, close to the hour of midnight, all the bronze gates of Samath burst open and emptied forth a frenzied throng that blackened the plain, so that all the visiting princes and travelers fled away in fright. For on the faces of this throng was writ a madness born of horror unendurable, and on their tongues were words so terrible that no hearer paused for proof. Men whose eyes were wild with fear shrieked aloud of the sight within the king's banquet-hall, where through the windows were no longer the forms of Nargis-Hei and his nobles and slaves but a horde of indescribable green voiceless things with bulg-

ry's article was very nice but poorly stenciled, and badly placed. Material: You need some writers besides John Berry and Mike Deckinger who can manage to struggle through a simple declarative sentence without getting lost. Most of the stuff reads as if it was composed on stencil by children drunk on strawberry pop. You yourself wrote much more clearly in your column in BHISMILLAN! and it appears that it might help things if you wrote a first draft of everything before committing it to stencil. Believe it or not, I do. Misc.: There is too much bad spelling, and mangling the spelling of "articles" reminds me of (too vividly) the infamous crudzine Space Tales (c. 1942) which always spelled the word that way. Some of the false halarity (Fearless Leader Brashear, etc.) is painful. Writing personal notes in material labled "Printed Matter Only" should be avoided unless you want the P.O. to hold up your mailing while they check through your copies for infringement of postal regulations. note the extra money on CENTAUR--it was put there upon the recommendation of the P.O. that we either pay for the notes or keep the zines. And finally you could at least assemble the zine in the order the page numbers call for! The current issue presents a first-rate Berry article, one of the best I've seen of late, though I hardly think you did John a favor presenting it so awkwardly. Deckinger's "A Bit Of Knowledge" was quite nicely handled, and Mike can at least write good English, but obviously this was an idea for a humorous story and he has made the silly error of handling it seriously. But the rest of the material..... Hiccup: what's the point of printing the tale of contents over again with annotations? Can't you think of something else to talk about other than the material you've already placed before the reader? what about THIS issue's Hiccup (p.4)? Distimning the Gostak: It would be difficult to argue with a chap who really supposed he had proved the three things he mentioned near the close of the article, and it's difficult to take seriously someone who can talk about fans who "tend toward rebuking the existence of a God." From reader response, many do. Are they or Arn't They (sic) by Brashear you were the only one who noticed the titling error--it was accidental, and was not a spelling error but due more to carelessness: I've always thought there's been too much desultory discussion of UFOs in fandom. Incedently, the "First sighting" was mentioned in a fan newszine I was editing at the time, in '47. Redd then says things on the same order about the fanzine review. Since that is no longer part of this fanzine I do not include it. Incedently, I trust you obtained permission from August Derleth before you scheduled that HPL item of course--he suggested that particular story. I've got a copy of SARNATH on my shelves--probably more than one--and frankly I'd prefer to read something new, another Berry article, preferably. I am not catering to any one reader, not especially the one-in-five-hundred persons in fandom who might have read SARNATH. Most people would like to see Lo vcraft and therefore he is in this issue. Berry returns in #3, but John has mucho correspondence and a zine of his own to get out--this one can't be a Berryzine too. Don't despair though. Worse magazines than this have become Hugo contenders, and I trust that you will put out, as advertised, a great fanzine next time around not great but certainly an improvement.

John Berry : CENTAUR arrived today in good order,
 31, Campbell Park Ave. : for which many thanks none needed!
 Belmont, Belfast, N. Ireland : I was quite pleased with the format

for my story, and indeed, the whole issue is well done, and is quite up to standard. Obviously there are a few minor flaws ~~it's~~ minor, the man says--but I love him for sayin' it! ~~it's~~. It appears that unless you get a more absorbent paper you will have to slip-sheet. The page numbers are all wrong (or the issue was compiled wrong) ~~it's~~ right the first time ~~it's~~ but these things are nothing to worry about. I always say that if the first issue is perfect in any fanzine, well, there wouldn't be any need to publish farther, because once you've reached perfection, what else can you do? ~~it's~~ see? Even he says so! ~~it's~~ On the other hand, a first issue with a few minor errors ensures that the faneds will try even harder to eradicate them, and even if there are mistakes in the second and third issue, well, it adds up to experience, and when your tenth issue is out you will look back and realise that it was all worthwhile. ~~it's~~ I feverently hope that this will be the case. One error on this issue might be the typeface used here--this little typer has never cut a stencil before and might not be any good at doing it. Time will tell ~~it's~~ If by any chance you read a few adverse reviews (and some inexperienced reviewers love to get their hands on a needitor's first issue--in fact, they gloat over it) I don't want you to feel frustrated or hurt, because we all go through the same apprenticeship. I've read many hundreds of first issues and you have absolutely nothing to worry about--CENTAUR is well up on the scale of first endeavours. Harry Brashear's article on Flying Saucers caught my interest, being an aeronautical matter ~~it's~~ someone like yourself, John, would get much more out of such a piece than a USfan who knows them all backwards and forwards--I'm glad someone got some enjoyment out of it ~~it's~~ Actually, I wrote an article about flying saucers way back in, er, let me see, 1956 I believe, in TRIODE, and I illustrated it too. I took up several pages with my theories and I was fortunate that whilst I was writing it my sister-in-law came home from a holiday in Canada, and she saw one, quite near the Avro factory, which led me to assume, as it was announced that Avro were making a flying saucer (the contract was taken over by America) that what she saw was a radio controlled mock-up. Although I've collected quite considerable data on flying saucers I am totally unconvinced that they exist ~~it's~~ gee--there are two of us in fandom! ~~it's~~ In fact, they just don't--not Harry's sort, anyway. Harry states, QUOTE..."my personal opinion is that they are simply craft from another world watching us for some good reason..."UNQUOTE ~~it's~~ Raymond F. Jones's THIS ISLAND EARTH gave a plausible conclusion to the reality of UFOs, though romanticised quite a bit ~~it's~~ This seems like a profound statement, in fact, one of the most profoundest I ever did hear., and it provides a contrast with Harry's concluding statement: QUOTE..."don't let your imaginations run away with you; the worst thing we can do is jump to conclusions..."UNQUOTE. I am looking forward very much to your next issue, and if you need material for it just let me know. ~~it's~~ that final sentence is enough to give me a great sense of superiority. I think John was being nice but he is so nice a person that he makes his feelings rub off on you. An offer from John Berry to contribute is worth more to me than 50 subs, because it shows me that this 'zine, crud or good, has a future and a future worth thinking about. I hope that in future issues I can continue to improve the quality in appearance of YONDER--I don't think that I can get better material. There were also letters of comment from Les Gerber, Bob Jennings (who wrote one resembling the manuscript of BEN-HUR), Phil Harrell (who will do most of the remainder of this 'zine), (the remainder, that is, of this issue in cutting stencils--a service I am very grateful for). Also letters from many others. That's all now.

HOWARD ST. JOHN is a pseudonym for a writer who has sold professionally ~~his work~~. His one ambition, he says, has been to let himself go and write whatever he felt like. This is a collaborative effort. It may well be one of the most unusual stories you have yet read, since it is but TOTALLY UNREALTED ideas set in a common plot. Comments, please?

CONSPIRACY OUT OF DORWICH

By Howard St. John

VIRGIN FOREST LIE ON THE HILLS WEST OF SALEM, woodlands preserved for posterity by the fact that they lay on private lands. Once in a great while the travellers which go along the highways cutting paths through the virgin lands can see a road. These roads are small and often poorly or not at paved, for they are not often travelled upon.

One such road leads to Dorwich, a sleepy little town where lived the manufacturing and industrial giants who owned the lands around and who lived there to escape the hustle and bustle of the progress they had contributed to and made their fortunes out of.

* * *

The tall, lean, not unhandsome man scratched the nape of his neck with the hook on his right arm and with his left hand he was holding a cigarette. One of the two men lighted it for him, and he put it to his lips and inhaled deeply. He looked at the two men and sighed.

At that moment a phone call was being placed long distance to a Massachusetts town named Dorwich by a small, dark-complected man in a telephone booth. After he had completed the call he removed a small metal object from his wallet.

They would find the man, his throat and juglar vein slashed, ten minutes later.

1. THE SOUND OF MURDER

I see you're very patient men--it's been three weeks, hasn't it? Well, I guess you'll have to wait a little longer -- it's quite a story. Just for the record you're taking I'll start right off at the very beginning.

My name is Paul Carlton Savage, and I'm a licensed Private Investigator here. In my business you've got to have plenty of friends to stay in business, and to stay alive-- and this includes the Police Department. My best friend in this departmant was Jimmy Allen-- Lieutenant James Allen, that is.

Well, the phone in my apartment rang at one o'clock A.M. a few weeks ago. I'd been busy for the past two months on a case and that was the first chance I'd had to relax. I cursed the phone and everything that prevented somebody from getting one evening's rest and picked up the phone; it was Allen!

"Hello." I muttered drowsily.

"Paul? That you?" asked a voice on the other end." This's Jimmy Allen. I'm in some wierd town called Dorwich-- had a flat nearby and this was the nearest place."

"You called at one in the morning to tell me about your vacation?" I asked incapable of imagining anyone---let alone him--- having the utter gall to do something like that.

"My God Savage, this is important! This town is queer--DAMN queer! I woke up about an hour ago for some reason I don't remember and I went over to the window. Good God, Savage, every door and window in this town is wide open--and there isn't a soul in the entire place!"

" WHAT!"

"Yeah! I got dressed and went down for a looksee. Found these two guys-- one a big, husky guy who sounds like Harvard and the other's a direct opposite-- looks Egyptian or somethin'. They got stuck here too and found the same thing! Only clue we got is an old house up on a hill nearby that's all lit up--but we can't get out of the town! It's like a wall all around the place!" There was a pause, then more talking, this time to someone in the room with him. It was faint, but I could make out part of it:

"Find anything Harvard?" Allen was asking. Then:"HEY! What is this?? What the hell are you going to....." There were two shots. A few seconds later the phone was replaced gently on the hook.

He'd helped me too many times-- I had to help him! Even though it was a certainty that Jimmy Allen was beyond all mortal aid.

2. THE TOWN IS WAITING FOR YOU

Everything looked peaceful and, on the whole(considering the entire town was an eccentricity) very normal, when I drove into Dorwich two days later. I'd missed the road four times--there are no signs--but I had finally located and wound my way along that worn, half-paved cow-track. On my way in I had noticed a thick blue line over the road, like someone was trying to divide it into portions with lines of thick, blue paint, but I paid it no heed at the time.

Kids played in the streets of the town, and it was, on the whole, bustling with activity. I noticed that there were stores and a hotel, and even a doctor's office-- all run by people there because it was what they had wanted to do; Now they could.

The whole town reminded me of a movie set. The hotel in particular. There was the desk-clerk, looking like a mortician, what with his black suit, and the Victorian setting.

"Yes Sir?" he asked, in a voice so like a grave-digger.

"I'd like a room." I said.

"I see, for how long, sir?"

"Um. Kinda hard to say, couple of days, maybe."

"Oh I'm sorry sir," he said very sorrily, "but we, the town, are having a corporate meeting here in two days and no one except persons connected with the businesses will be here. I hope you understand. Many are coming from afar and the hotel is reserved--every room, but I can put you up for the night."

"All right," I said, hoping I sounded disappointed enough, what with knowing that some excuse would come, "for the night then."

"Yes sir. Number twelve, to your left."

Later, I walked through the town, surveying all that I could. My main object of attention was the old house Allen had mentioned.

Dorwich is in a valley, and the hills around it are suprisingly steep. The one with the house on it was shaped in such a way to make it look like it was over the town.

The house looked big, and it looked old. It was made out of solid stone, which was shaped in such a way as to make it a 'squared circle' shape. Know what I mean?

Well, the next thing I did was to stop by several shops. At two or three I inquired about the happenings two days hence -- but in each case I asked just what it was. I inquired at four different places, besides the hotel, and got four different answers; Something was fishy in Dorwich.

I didn't however make the mistake Allen had. He had undoubtedly been steered away from Dorwich too, that night not so long ago. But he had argued the point and stayed. But, of course, he hadn't been forewarned.

I carefully bought enough camping supplies at the general store -- enough to last for a while -- with the tale that I was going to go up to the camping grounds fifteen miles up the state highway.

The proprietor of the store looked the part of the typical yankee grocer. Yet he, after hearing my plans, almost paid me to take them.

My actual plan, of course, was to camp just off the Dorwich road-- until dark-- and then I would come back in, the back way, armed, and see whatever had gotten a man murdered and warranted all this secrecy.

As I drove out again I noticed that peculiar blue line across the road, and I noticed that it extended over bare ground also, around the entire town, in a definite, five-pointed shape.

I reached the highway minutes later, and drove up a couple of miles to make sure that, if anyone was watching, they would see my complete exit. Dusk was falling rapidly. It would soon be night; four nights after that fateful telephone call.

When darkness was complete, or nearly so, I drove back along the highway, slowly, trying to pick out the road to Dorwich. There Wasn't

any! But there had to be! So, for fifteen minutes I almost killed myself driving on the soft shoulders at five miles per hour. In desperation, I got out and walked. Oh it was there all right, but you would have to be walking, and also looking very closely for the road to find it. In the night, with no lights, save an occasional car headlight as it zoomed by, the road was camouflaged perfectly. Large brush and even whole trees were perfectly set in the road, and a thick coating of marshy dirt, like that of the shoulder, covered the join of the road to the highway. It was undoubtedly the most perfect job of camouflage I'd seen since the war, and who were being fooled here were untrained in the art of detection.

I looked at my watch, eight thirty! And it was a three mile walk to Dorwich! It would be nearly an hour before I reached the town!

I began walking, as I walked I thought about the ruse about the road and as I walked the whole thing became clear.

Dorwich was on privately owned land; It had nothing to offer; It was virtually unknown, not even listed on stated road maps. Therefore, unless the road were to be seen, no one would even know about the little hamlet, let alone try to find it. The highway was a throughfare to any where. Anyone on it would go right on past. Only relatives and business partners would have any interest in Dorwich, and I imagined they came only when asked, unless a part of the goings-on (whatever they were).

Yes, it was demonatical; it was beautiful; it was perfect.

* * *

It was later than I had figured on when I reached Dorwich, but I knew that I was in plenty of time for what was about to happen.

I stayed in the woods around the town, and spent a great while trying to outline an escape route, should one be needed. I hadn't stayed alive this long by throwing caution to the winds.

And then it dawned on me why the blue line was around the place! As you probably know I specialize in wierd cases -- and I had had run-ins with the unknown before. There is an element present which is alien to us, you know; Humans called it 'Supernatural'. And the blue line was a pentacle-- a pentacle designed to keep something from Outside from destroying Dorwich! The doors and windows that were left open-- they were another factor contributing to the protection of the town!

What horrible influences were at work that would take a town apart?

* * *

I stayed on the outskirts of Dorwich, in the woods, though I could see the town very plainly. I decided to enter Dorwich, if possible, with out causing undue alarm; it wasn't, I couldn't get past that blue line! It was as if the pentacle were an impentearable steel wall, though nothing was visible to bar my way. It was then I saw the woodchuck. It was busily hurrying to where ever woodchucks busily hurry to when it got to the blue line-- and went on past it as if nothing were there!

I put my hand out again, and this time I noticed something. My hand had crossed the blue line! It was only where my shirt - sleeve tried to cross that the wall became solid! I rolled up my sleeve and found I could go over as far the point where the rolled-up sleeve crossed the

line . Whatever this strange power was, it would pass a living organism but nothing else! and not wanting to strip stark naked to get in there, I abandoned my hope of getting into Dorwich, and was content just peering at it through the gloom.

There were still people in Dorwich, I saw, but they were now leaving their homes. They left the doors open, and I noticed the house nearest to me had the windows up as far as they could go.

Suddenly I was conscious of movement far to my left, outside the force-screen. Uttering a prayer of thanks that I had heard him before he had seen me, I slunk back in the shadows just as a big man with a flashlight came into view. The flashlight blinked and waved in a strange but oddly rhythmic pattern to the north; to the east; to the south and west. Answering lights blinked and waved from afar.

He, himself, was young and firey-looking. I had my hunch, and when he yelled, "Come Ahead" in the accent so peculiar to Harvard men I knew I was correct. It was ' Harvard'.

I had an urge to pull out my revolver and shoot him where he stood but movement from within slowed me enough for me to come to my senses abit. The men, women, and children of Dorwich, each naked as Mother Eve were stepping out, beyond the blue line, and forming a silent and solemn procession. Weaving in and out of the trees and being careful about the pine needles and rocks strewn about, they made their way to the road, the old and invisible road, leading to the strange old house on the hill above Dorwich, without even the aid of a match.

It was time I decided, to walk up that way myself.

3. CONSPIRACY OUT OF DORWICH

Waiting until the others were ahead of me, I began my own twisted path to the main road that led to the house itself. I had a great fear that they would have a rear guard and there would go the ol' ball game, but as it turned out, Harvard was very sure of himself.

I almost broke my neck getting up the first portion of that old road. It had enough pitfalls and slippery rocks in it's overgrown and cracked pavement to kill all but the most determined man; I was. This was murder, and it was turning into something even uglier, but then, after a while, when the path was completely invisible to the village below, it suddenly became a well-worn, yet clear and finely paved roadway, as it must have looked three-hundred years ago. But from it's condition it had seen many men, and probably many processionalists. God! How long had this been going on?

I admired the planners. They were taking no chances; that first, visible portion of the path was a master stroke. No one in his right mind would try a hike to the house.

There was a wee bit of moonlight , and it suddenly showed that the path now branched off to the west, away from the house, while the other portion continued on. The procession had turned westward, probably to pick up more followers, in the farmers and hill-people around. The west

held little appeal for me. I decided to go on to the house and beat them to it.

I reached the house, on the clear road, in about fifteen minutes; and if it looked old and deserted and from below, it looked twice what it did when looking at the granite clusters from up close. The best description would be of a modern mansion as envisioned by a twelfth-century castle designer, and it looked even ghostlier in the moonlight.

I knew that I wouldn't have an hour before they returned, But I had come this far, and I was resolved to see it through.

I could see another path from the west coming into the side of the house. The first path, I judged, circled around and came out here. They would most likely come from there.

I chose the front as my entrance, partly because I could see that and partly because it afforded a view of the deserted town. However terrible that town was it was a link with reality.

The front door was locked, but I didn't have to do much shoving before it gave, it was old and moldy. The door squeaked and creaked, and it caused considerable effort, on my part, to get it opened enough so that I could enter.

Once inside, I was in absolute darkness; lighting my flashlight, I surveyed the tremendous place in which I stood.

The entire house appeared to be one room! It was designed like a great amphetheatre, circular and as large as the main floor of Madison Square Garden. Then my flashlight showed me the reason for the circular design-- Catwalks! Catwalks going up and around and to different doors, into the rooms which made the building rectangular insted of circular after all! It didn't look so damn big from Dorwich!

Then I noticed a ghostly, unmoving shadow in the center of the room. Shining my light on it, I saw a great stone pillar, fully fifteen feet in height and with a base of nigh on to thirty! it was cylindrical, and there was a winding stairway etched into the stone which led to the top.

This was, I knew, the center of attraction. Once at the top I would know it's purpose!

I began to climb, hesitantly at first, and then faster. I was soon at the top, panning my light on the base which was void of anything, and seeing just the purpose it served.

I was standing on a layer--or was it a thousand layers--of blood! Cakes of it, worn and staining the base for a foot or more into the sediment! and while the old stains could have come into that rock many, many dark years before, the top layer was not MORE than FOUR DAYS OLD!

Sacrifice! Godless blasphemy! What nightmare had I pulled into??

* * *

The catwalks yielded different treasures. The first room was a library, and while I was far from suprised to see oil lamps, it was a shock to see MODERN lounge-furniture laid out in a library-arrangement!

I don't remember the titles of most of the books. Most were foriegn

shock to see MODERN lounge furniture laid out in a library arrangement!

I don't remember the titles of most of the books. Most were foreign and generally unknown to me. There were such titles as CULTANS DAS RIUHL ELINS, which delved into wierd secrets of the unknown, and fictive efforts such as H. P. Lovecraft's, THE OUTSIDER & OTHERS, Robert Chamber's, KING IN YELLOW, and entire collections of WIERD TALES. Further, were such books as that of Hitler, Marx and others. Books of revolutions and utopias.

NO wonder the town didn't like people! This was the headquarters for ALL the old Massachusetts Cults!

Things were beginning to piece together in my mind. Then things began to happen.....

4. THE THING FROM BEYOND

I stopped outside the room which I had just explored-- one having code-books and code-senders, as well as short wave transmitters and other means of widespread communication, and lit up a cigarette. I had forgotten them before, but I suddenly realized I needed one. More than that I needed a keg of good Irish whiskey, even a keg of bad Irish whiskey. At the same time that I lit up I extinguished the flash light and there fore cut off my main source of light for more than a few feet around me. It is supprising what you can see with such an indistinct light as the glow from a cigarette.....like shadows moving silently through the doorway across the ampetheather.....

I quickly snuffed out the cigarette.

* * *

As they appeared they lit torches, and I could see very well from my perch, halfway up on the catwalk-stairway. They were speaking now, but in a language so strange and complex it seemed to me one would have to learn from the cradle to even do a bad imitation.

As they entered I saw some were not naked, but wrapped in long, flowing robes. These must have been the ones they picked up. Yet somehow these newcomers were different, like in the way they walked--almost hopping-- and the queer way their heads were shaped, strange, indescribable, loathsome.

It was then I found out why they had called the meeting.....

They were leading in a hooded figure, stripped and badly scarred and beaten. I saw Harvard down there come over and guide the hooded man to the altar. He tried to resist, but the obvious beatings had taken too much out of him. He started up, being held and guided by two musclemen who looked like they could break a mans' neck with a tap. I had noticed a caratte callous on one mans's hand. Once at the top of a pillar, one man-- the caratte one, I think-- reached for the nape of neck and pressed. The doomed figure suddenly went limp, nerves.

In the meantime the crowd below began screaming and chanting, and working into a terrible frenzy. While this was going on I removed my .38 from it's holster and placed it in the crotch in my back under my coat

coat. An old trick used by L.A. cops, but effective. Then, while I was sure no one below was in any condition to pay any attention to a little noise, I flung the holster upwards, on the catwalk. If caught now, I would be seemingly unarmed.

Then a chant went up as the two musclemen hurried down from the pillar; a strange chant in that equally strange language. It sounded more like a call!

Suddenly every torch in the hall went out plunging the place for moment into pitch darkness. Then, suddenly, the altar became lit with an unearthly glow! The pillar was begining to move forward of it's own accord! letting in light from some dark and horrendous abyss below the house! and then --- MY GOD! were they FOOTSTEPS?--- far away at first, but drawing menacingly closer as the seconds ticked off, and then, as it sounded though something was immediately below the house, they stopped.

Then, out of the gaping light behing the altar, there came a thing of absolute horror and extremely loathsome! Gnarled, pocked and horrible in it's distorted shape, a great wormlike thing appeared over the altar! It's color was none known to man, and it came with slow, deliberate movements across the altar to the unconcious man! But THE man had chosen that fateful moment to come to! Reaching up and tearing away his mask, he immediately caught sight of the worm-thing. He screamed with utter horror at the loathsome thing creaping towards him, but was somehow rooted to the spot! and as the worm caught the man in its grip and lifted him high into the air, I saw that it was not a being but merely the TIE OF A SINGLE tentacle! and as my horror mounted, I saw that the man was JIMMY ALLEN!

I was rooted to the spot, unable to move, or not daring to. I watched in horrible fascination as the tentacle ~~skinned~~ and tightened around Allen's body! His skin cracked open in dozen places, and as the blood came streaming out, the thing turned him upside down and ground his head into the solid rock at the top of the pillar! The brain oozed making a sight more horrible than I dare to describe! and the people of Dorwich began moaning and chanting in utter delight! Then Allen's body was dragged down into that hell-hole where the real creature was, and pillar, still dripping blood and slime, closed over the spot.

Gathering my wits as best I could, I had a thought that while the crowd was still in a frenzy, I could(provided I was fast enough) make the front door and make good my escape from that House of Hell. Making sure my pistol was loaded and the safety off, I ran wildly down the catwalk-stairway and made it to the front door! But as I heaved it open and ran out, one of the cloaked things saw me and uttered an in-human cry!

People and things poured out of the house in pursuit, and still running, I fired two wild shots at them over my shoulder. One struck a thing, and it went down with a mournful and terrible cry. But I had made it down the path to the woods.

* * *

How long I waited, crouched behind a rock or a crop of bushes or trees, I do not know. I heard and saw things pursuing me, but I somehow mostly by luck, eluded them in their quest, and reached the car!

Traffic was strangely heavy on the highway--truckers making a long haul through the night. They didn't care to come out that far, so, for the time being, I was safe.

5. AGENT FROM THE BEYOND

As I sped along in my car I took stock of my situation. They had more power in the North than anyone I knew, and they had such a vast organization that I knew I would be tracked down in no time and, subsequently murdered. I had to be prepared.

First thing to do, of course, was to change hotels; then get an unlisted phone number. I must, also, be careful about my name. I must... but it did make me mad. I knew a hell of a lot about them, while they knew next to nothing of me. I had something on them worth a billion dollars. But who'd believe it? Harvard would, of course. He'd be glad to sit and listen, and then kill me after I finished. But who in authority would? Then I thought along another line. If no one would believe me, then why should they want to come after me? I knew they would though. They wouldn't believe my story about the cult, no, but they knew that Jimmy was a day overdue from his vacation and that I was a good friend of his. They would believe, at least, halfway my tale of the murder over the telephone! I was his closest friend, and they knew he was somewhere in Massachusetts; and Dorwich would be investigated. Dorwich definitely could NOT stand an investigation.

But how would they try to get me?

By gun, first, of course. Harvard and the small man were undoubtedly deadly killers, but if they failed there must be an alternate plan and an alternate alternate as well.

I hoped feverently that I hadn't used up all my luck in Dorwich.

* * *

I had been in the new apartment for two weeks debating whether to call the cops and tell them about Jimmy or to get out of the country. I disliked the apartment; though it was seven stories above the street, and luxurious, it afforded little chance of escape if cornered.

The layout was something like this: one large, lushly carpeted room with a kitchen alcove on one side, set into the wall, and the one window looked out upon a great ledge, and the New York skyline. The bed was near the window, though about four feet away from being flush to that side of the wall. There was also an alcove on the wall opposite the door for bathroom facilities.

That one night I had felt tired and decided to go to bed early, but before I did I went over to the small sink for a glass of water and then took it back to bed. I placed on a small table attached to the bed on the side nearest the window. That proved later to be an act that would save my life.

I was soon asleep without drinking that water.

I was awoken later by a wierd sound, unlike anything I'd ever heard before. It wasn't a scream, or a trill, but sort of a combination of

all sounds that are high-pitched, but with the most prevalent being the chilling sound of a bat! I sat up with a start, and in the process knocked over the glass of water onto the floor. I took no notice of it; what I was occupied with was the fact that the noise came from right outside MY window! My one and only thought was that Dorwich had somehow located me. Getting my .38, I crept silently to the window and checked the pistol; the five chambers were loaded, and I switched off the safety.

Then I pulled back the curtains.

The thing caught one look at me and went into a wild frenzy. I it was going to charge the window, and if it did it would come right through into my room! It was larger than a man, with huge, bat-like wings, and a scaly, irregular body. It's head was long and thin, and it's eyes protruded from long stalks; its screaming mouth was like that of a great reptile, with fangs and rows upon rows of sharp teeth!

I leapt for the bed and rolled onto it and down on the other side. the thing seemed confused, since I was no longer visible to it, but it did not deter from its charge.

Glass flew in all directions as the thing came through, still screaming madly. It's eyes peered independently about the room, and it's feet, like those of a fowl, tore the rug in nervous anticipation of the kill to come!

I shot, it went right into the head, but insted of killing it, it just enraged the thing more. Then, suddenly, it caught sight of me and advanced! I emptied my gun on it, but it slowly and viciously crept forward! Something then distracted me. A shadow in the window! a shot rang out, narrowly missing me, and me with an empty .38!! but the thing had backed off, as if awaiting orders, and I made the plunge for my closet and my ammunition. Another shot was fired, this one hitting me in my right arm, totally disabling it. Seemingly far away I could hear people in the building and noise from others running up the stairs, from below I could hear the wail of sirens, but they were far off and the horror in my bedroom was HERE, NOW! In agony from my wound, I reached the closet and the ammunition. Being right handed and having little strength in my left arm I had great difficulty in loading the one shot into the pistol. My hand dripping with blood, I somehow aimed it at the lurking shadow in the window and fired. It hit the man, but he did not fall. he raised his gun to fire and the shot went harmlessly into the wood floor, he toppled forward, Dead.

Now the thing was released, it pounced on it's one time master and began devouring him!

Then I remembered, and I knew. I knew why the man had to shoot me, and why it had pounced on it's master. it was later made into a Jabbo-wock, a carrion-eater. According to myths it would not eat the living but it would try to make it's quarry dead!

It was between me and the door, there was only one other way out: The window! The body had fallen over to one side, and I had a good chance of leaping over the bed and making it to the ledge. It was my only! chance. Still in terrible pain from my hand, I leapt.

The Jabborwock saw me and tried to swat me down as I was running over the bed, but suddenly the tremendous wing stopped as surely as if there was an iron shield between us! It tried to get me as I was at the window, but missed. It's obvious intention was to push me off!

The glass cut my bare feet, and my left hand, which was groping for support to keep me from missing the ledge, was slashed by a jagged piece still in the frame. But I held on, and swung myself onto the ledge. The Jabborwock, enraged, let out a terrible scream and flew out the window; suspended in mid-air, it surveyed me and my predicament, and made it's decision.

It lunged for me, sweeping down and hoping to knock me off balance and subsequently fall to my death seven stories below. I ducked, and it's outstretched wing missed me by inches.

The crowd down below watched the tableau in morbid fascination, and I heard someone trying to break in the door.

I knew that I couldn't survive the second parry the Jabborwock was about to go into and I prepared to meet my maker, when suddenly the thing screamed again, but this time it was in agony.

It tried to make that last thrust but couldn't do it! It was starting to ~~fall~~ and at the same time it was beginning to desintegrate! It let out one cry, and died, and the rain came tumbling down.

~~NOTE:~~ That was why I was able to get to the ledge! That was why it stopped! water was it's one weakness, and the water from the glass had spilled in a line along the ~~edge~~ cutting me off from where the Jabborwock was! and rain, sweet, lovely rain, had been it's demise.

New York's finest got me, petrified, off that ledge seconds later, and then I awoke in this hospital. I guess they brought me here as soon as possible. It's been twenty days now, I understand, since that happening; I've been in a coma all that time?

I KNOW you can see they amputated my right hand--I asked for a hook and they promised me one. I've always thought that if I lost a I'd like a hook. I still have my left, but I have no feeling in the arm at all and a great long scar. At least I can use it, though I'll never feel anything in it again; the nerves and the tendons were slashed.

Now you know the story, I don't know what could be of such magnitude that they'd risk one of their wierd tricks right in New York itself, but I think now you know the story."

6. MESSAGE FROM A DEAD MAN

One of the listeners interjected, "Yes, NOW we know, and I guess some explanations are in order on our part too."

Savage looked at the white-haired old man and nodded.

"First, just four minutes after we had gotten you out of that building, it went up like somebbody had poured gasoline on it and it was ~~made out of paper-mache.~~"

made out of paper macké. No one else got out."

"God! They were drastic, weren't they? They must've really been desperate."

"Yes, they were; Now let me fill you in on some of the background details. Actually, I'm not allowed to give names, but I think you'll realize what I'm talking about.

In '27, when I was a young punk of an agent, we got orders from higher-ups to make some arrests in this coast town near here, just the other side of the Massachusetts line. At the same time an order went out to Reysmouth Naval Base to send a gun-boat to blow up a reef, off the shore of the town. While the record said we took prisoners and they were tried and found guilty--we didn't! Some of the things we had to arrest were far from human. Four agents went mad that night. All of them were killed, that we could find, and few escaped. The things sound like your 'black cloaked figures' in the house, though I don't understand what they were doing that far from water (unless, maybe, they were there to make sure things were done nice and proper.) The guy who filled the report and started the investigation which led to the raid-- we were then attached to the governmental police, and the raid report said "Investigation of tax evasion and possible kidnapping of agents." the tax charge was for those wierd figurines they sell. There was a stir o in the higher-ups about us killing 'um but we produced the bodies of so some of them fish-things and that got us out of that charge fast.--that guy, anyway, was found trying to break his cousin out of an saylum in '32 and was killed. But he and his cousin looked like they'd changed half into them fish-things themselves! The reef where they hung out was blown up, as I said, and we found out enough to start a special service to get these cults before they can act. Sounds like Dowich was -- or is, about ready to do what ever they are gonna do."

"I don't know," said Savage slowly from his hospital bed, "but I can't, with all I've seen, seem to make myself believe that something like this can exist now, today!"

"If I were a vampire and said so, would you believe me?"

"No, I guess I wouldn't."

"Well, as you pointed out, they took every precaution, and they took advantage of the one ready-made. Man's often been accused of being too superstitious, but it's his lack of it which makes, even today Cults like that possible.

At least a thousand people saw that-- Jabborwock-- bathed in light; below, attacking you; it was as plain as day, but since, in their minds, there isn't any such thing as a Jabborwock. They saw you being attacked by an eagle, since that was the easiest thing to believe it was for them. Egro, you were attacked by an eagle."

"An EAGLE! But that's ridiculous!"

"If you had a choice between eagles or Jabborwocks in New York, which would you take?"

" I get your point. But what are they waiting for? What's all this conspiracy for?"

" They're awaiting World War III."

" W H A T?!!?"

"It's true, they and their human helpers will move back outside to wait out the panic and destruction and the collapse of modern civilization. Then they'll move in, enslave the remnants, and be leaders of all the Earth! 'Every man an immortal fish!' is their motto, see?"

" It's incredible, but I have to believe it."

" That you do, and now that that hook's on your right arm and your left's healed, would you feel up to taking a ride to Dorwich?"

" Would I?"

" No one's been in or out in the last week, we made sure; Shall we go?"

They went to Dorwich a day later. "No one had tried to get in or come out," one of the guards reaffirmed. "It's damn queer, that's all," he said, "damn queer."

They rode into the town; Savage, with his hook; and six fully armed special agents.

It was queer. The houses were all open, and there was no one there. They checked all the rooms and houses, and found no one. Yet their personal effects were still there, as were all their clothes. Yet, the blue force-screen was not up. They had come into town with out any trouble. As a matter of fact the blue line was gone entirely. They proceeded to walk to the old house on the hill, which looked a lot smaller and in some way different in the light of day, Savage noted. He shivered as he remembered his previous time at that spot. He shivered even more as they entered the old house itself. The altar was there looking ghostly even in the light of day. The agents who surveyed it were sick with disgust at the blood on it-- and they were both veterans and had killed their share of men and seen enough blood in war and work.

They went up to the library next, while the other agents went to other rooms. Sick with the memories of the unnamable horrors Savage knew they would find, he was therefore as surprised--startled really--as they were, even more so, to find the rooms empty! Only the general things like radios, tape recorders, etc., were left behind.

Speaking of tape recorders that one on the table in the library was on!

Savage went over to it and pushed the 'play' button. A man's voice, rich, deep, and with a Harvard accent, came from it.

"I know you'll be back here, Savage, and I know who'll be with you. By the time you hear this I'll be dead, as will the town. Our human ~~plans to kill Savage, and his 200th killing as he was~~
at the time of the first killing, and

blunders killed, Savage, and they wound up killing us too. Right now I'm the only one left, and I imagine He'll take care of me in due course. The rest or dead as I speak, and I am going to die soon, but I felt that if there is time, I should make things clear so that something like this will never happen again on this world.

Now you're probably asking yourself, 'Why is this man, just about the head of the Cult itself and the killer of my friend, about to tell you a bit to prevent what he's worked for from coming true again?' The answer lies in the key to the conspiracy.

Hastur, whom I now name freely though just a week ago I would not have dared, is the head. You may still find it hard to think of him, but I'll try to clarify things.

The 'Ancient beings' the 'Older gods', and other entities are not actually gods at all, for what is a god? If they are gods, then men--all men--are gods with them. They are material, though they exist in another type of Universe than ours. Call it, say, dimensional travel. They are accepted in their wierd universe. They are in control of all of it. That is, the Older gods rule it. They run the perfect society, but not as we envision it, for how can we possibly see or think as beings completely alien to everything we know?

But perhaps not so alien at that. There is the struggle of good versus evil, and there are the rebels in every group. There is the lust for power, and rivalry between themselves. Reminds you of another, more familiar race, doesn't it?

Call Hastur and the others the power-mad ones, and call the, what we term, the Older gods as dimensional police men. Then you have an idea, overly simplified, of just what they are and just what the goals are. The strange secrets? The strange cities? The horror in the books that were in this library before I burned them? Yes, ~~they were there~~ but certainly far from supernatural. Think about it.

Ask me now why I did it; why we ALL did it? then think again. We parallel our dimensional neighbors. Suppose you could have anything you wanted by the merest thought. They could, and so we. What would be the ultimate goal for one living a life of absolute luxury? Ask why millionaires run for president of the Untied States without any real devotion to the post itself.

It's POWER! Hastur wants power, we wanted power. But what good is power to a dead man? Why must men forfeit their souls for the promise of this thing called 'Power'? I don't know, and I don't think anyone does, but towards the real end, death, you begin to see where there are holes all through your glorious dreams of empire.

Call it revenge if you like, but it's more than that; it's a sense of justice showing through a morbid lifetime. It is the person realizing his mistakes as he goes to his death. It is the prisoned, regretting what he did as they strap him into the chair and drop cyanide into the buckets of acid.

He's coming now. But he isn't as smart as he believes, since I

feel confident that this tape recorder will still be here whenever you come. The signal relays and code books are still in the radio rooms. They are hidden but you can find them. They tell of all the other cults, and where they are located.

He's usually prompt. Now he's late, this gives me a sort of chance. If you find my body, Savage, bury me-- outside, under the stars somewhere."

* * *
C O N C L U S I O N .

Savage stared at the recorder for some time. None of the others spoke. Then, finally, One younger man said, "It's a pity he wasn't on our side."

"He was in the end," said Savage huskily.

A man entered the room, "Hey! We've found the way to open the trap door downstairs, you should see it!"

* * *

Going down these stone steps was a nightmare for Savage. His hand, completely torn off by the jagged glass and newly fitted with a hook, throbbed.

He shuddered as he saw the size of the cavern, but no one else was at the ceiling of the cave, but the floor. There lay the people of Dorwich, every one of them, straightened out at last. They were all quite dead. One of them clutched a piece of black cloth in his hand. So the Fish-things were there for another reason--to get rid of Dorwich. Only one mistake can be made, and Dorwich made it-- in Jimmy Allen. One hundred stiff, naked corpses, mangled and strewn over the floor of the cavern, was evidence. Dorwich had outlived its usefulness to the Ancient Beings. Not power, but this, was the reward of treachery.

But at the bottom of the stone steps, where he had fallen, was Harvard. There was a bullet hole in his temple and a pistol in his hand. They didn't get him after all.

* * *

The conspiracy was ended, but they would start anew, again, in some other place where power blinded gullible men, and they, in the sea, in the sky, Beyond the threshold-- THEY are STILL waiting. Waiting for one man to make a mistake, and a call to come over a red telephone.

They finally realized that man is going to do their work for them.

The End
of a strange novelette by
HOWARD ST. JOHN

Of Note.....

ARKHAM HOUSE: Publishers, have announced that the two books described below will be published in Sept. and Nov., respectively. They are worthy of note.

PLEASANT DREAMS: Nightmares, by Robert Bloch. \$4.00. This new collection by the author of **PSYCHO** will contain his best short fiction which has appeared from 1945--59. Includes the '58 Hugo winner **That Hell-Bound Train**.

INVADERS FROM THE DARK by Groye La Spina. \$3.50. The first book publication of a famed classic werewolf novel from WIERD TALES. A truly great volume, one of the finest on the theme!

BOTH may be ordered now by sending remittance to: Arkham House: Publishers, Sauk City, Wisconsin. Two excellent wierds for 1960!

An unpaid ad placed in the public interest by the oditor.....

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poems next issue. Two are modern allegories, while the third is a strangely attractive chiller on premonitions. All material for #3 is in this editor's hands, except your comments, and will be out as soon as my personal financial situation will allow. Few extra copies are kept, so better reserve yours now! Only 20¢ or 1/6 to the address in the colophon (page 3). Or why not subscribe? 6 for \$1.00 or 6/ is all you pay.....

TO: