

Old Time Radio **DIGEST**

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Old Time Radio DIGEST

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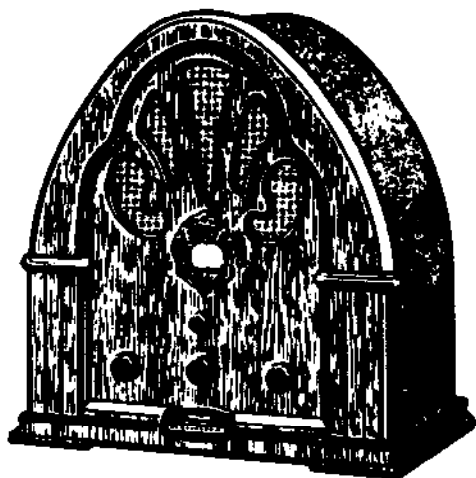
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The Five O'Clock Shadow

by Will Murray

If the history of film and TV is a sea of faces, then the history of the Golden Age of Radio is an ocean of voices, and one voice — one laugh, really — reverberated above all the others. It doesn't matter whether you grew up on Old Time Radio or listen to static-filled tapes from that era, if there was a symbol for those pre-television days, it was *The Shadow*.

The Shadow was a pioneer. One of the first dramatic shows of its kind, it was one of the last to go off the air. For 25 years — ignoring brief gaps — *The Shadow* was a radio constant. Only his voice changed.

From the very beginning, *The Shadow* captured the public imagination. It was 1930. Radio was so primitive that as obvious an idea as a dramatic series featuring continuing characters was a novelty. This was before Jack Armstrong, before *The Lone Ranger*, *The Green Hornet* and the other great heroes of that era.

Radio shows were most often glorified commercials, some only 15 minutes long. Usually, the sponsor name was part of the show's title. This was the case with a half-hour show inappropriately titled *The Detective Story Hour*. It was sponsored by Street & Smith's *Detective Story Magazine*, a weekly pulp. The show consisted of a dramatization of a selected story from that week's issue. *The Detective Story Hour* aired Thursday nights at 9:30. At the end of each episode, listeners were exhorted to rush out and buy the current issue.

No tapes of this show survive, but it's safe to assume that as drama, the *Detective Story Hour* was a great commercial. From the beginning, *Detective Story Magazine* sales shot up. The reason had nothing to do with story selection, but with the

show's narrator. When the *Detective Story Hour* premiered over CBS on July 31, 1930, he was a disembodied, nameless voice. But then scriptwriter Harry Engman Charlot decided to give him personality.

After rejective a number of names like *The Inspector* and *The Sleuth*, Charlot hit upon *The Shadow*. It was not an original name. There had been numerous other *Shadows* going back to the days of dime novels. Charles Dickens had toyed with the idea of an omniscient character by that name, and even Street & Smith once ran a story about the mysterious "Shadow of Wall Street" back in 1929.

But Charlot's *Shadow* possessed something the others did not: He had a voice. To Depression listeners still getting used to radio, it was a far cry from Kate Sith or the Silver Masked Tenor when that cynical laugh followed by the chilling words, "The *Shadow* knows *all*," began each program. It was just a gimmick, really, but its impact was instant. Everyone wanted to know more about *The Shadow*.

Ruthrauff & Ryan, the advertising agency in charge of the show, was quick to capitalize on America's fascination. It refused to reveal anything about the mystery man. The official line was that *The Shadow* broadcast, masked and robed, from a sealed room, his voice piped into the regular studio to blend with those of the cast, who didn't know who he was, either. True or not, the country ate it up. The more gullible actually believed *The Shadow* was real.

The early history of radio is so poorly documented that today, the identity of the original *Shadow* is clouded. After a year, it was leaked that *The Shadow* was

really a mustachioed actor named Frank Readick Jr. Numerous contemporary articles claimed him as the first Shadow, but it's since been verified that it was a man named James LaCurto who created the role only to leave after a few weeks for Broadway. In truth, LaCurto may not

have merely abandoned the role. A New York *Evening Journal* article in November 1930 — only four months after *Detective Story Hour* began — claimed that Street & Smith had canceled the show in the face of parents groups' complaints that children insisted on staying up late to



hear The Shadow — and then had nightmares.

If this is true, Readick may only have stepped in after the show was revived. The confusion is increased by the fact that LaCurto briefly replaced Readick as The Shadow in 1934. And still further increased by the fact that *Detective Story Hour* is supposed to have run the full 1930-31 season, the November 1930 cancellation notwithstanding.

Whatever the case, the enormous success of The Shadow proved the undoing of the *Detective Story Hour*. It was yanked off the air by a nervous Street & Smith.

But The Shadow refused to die.

For the 1931-32 season, he narrated two other shows, *Blue Coal Radio Hour*, where he read detective stories and was host of a musical interlude, and *Love Story Hour*, where he narrated stories from Street & Smith's *Love Story Magazine*. Presumably, these were considered "safe" occupations for the mysterious voice who had frightened the nation's children. But the juggernaut of fame was not to be stopped.

The story of how Street & Smith decided to launch a *Shadow* magazine in 1931 to copyright the character is too well-known to repeat here, but suffice it to say they did, and it became a runaway hit. It was in the magazine where the sardonic voice was fleshed out into the familiar hawk-faced and cloaked crime-fighter of legend.

Collectors of the magazine have long been puzzled over the illustration of a sinister figure in a monk's hood and robes adorning a lower corner of the early issues. Obviously, he was supposed to be The Shadow — but he didn't look a thing like the traditional slouch-hatted Shadow of those early covers.

The truth is that the illustration was of the *radio* Shadow, and was painted from a

publicity still of James LaCurto. A later attempt to remodel Walter B. Gibson's pulp hero into the LaCurto image was abandoned and, when Frank Readick stepped into the role, he donned the black cloak and hat (as well as a domino mask) before the microphone.

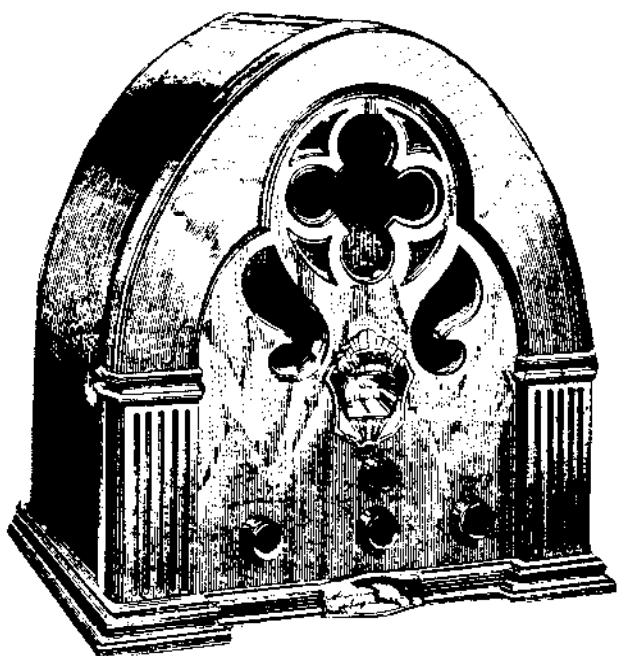
With a new magazine spreading The Shadow's fame, Street & Smith relented in January 1932, and a new show, boldly called *The Shadow*, was aired by CBS — for five episodes. No one knows why the abrupt cancellation, but pressure groups may have been the cause.

By October, Street & Smith tried again, perhaps buoyed by the new twice-monthly frequency of *The Shadow Magazine*. Frank Readick again took the role, this time for NBC, which aired it on Wednesday nights. The show continued the old format of The Shadow as narrator but this time the near evil tone of his voice was ameliorated by his constant scolding of listeners that "Crime does not pay."

Each episode ended with The Shadow speaking in a code familiar only to readers of the magazine. Key words in a long speech were emphasized by The Shadow — these spelled out the message, "Lawbreakers always lose."

This approach and The Shadow's crime-busting pulp activities mollified critics. During the 1934-35 season, the show was broadcast Monday and Wednesday nights at 6:30. By this time, Harry Charlott was no longer scripting, having been committed to Bellevue Hospital. He was later found poisoned in a Bowery flophouse on September 28, 1935.

His death caused consternation at Street & Smith when the wire services reported the passing of the *author* of The Shadow. The new scripts were the work of mystery writers Prentice Winchell and Theodore Tinsley (who later wrote



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Shadow novels.) among others.

At the close of this third season of *The Shadow*, friction broke out between Street & Smith and long-time sponsor Blue Coal. The former wanted to drop *The Shadow*, and the latter was afraid to tamper with the successful format. As a result, *The Shadow* went off the air once again — this time for a year.

Street & Smith, in cooperation with Ruthrauff & Ryan, went to work adapting Walter Gibson's novels for a projected new series. They hired Edward Hale Bierstadt, scripter for the *Warden Lawes* program, to produce the first episode, "The Death House Rescue," a standard mystery about *The Shadow's* efforts to save an innocent man from the electric chair. It was right out of Gibson's novels. *The Shadow*, aided by his right-hand agent, Harry Vincent, is invisible, presumably blending into the shadows with his cloak and not because of any hypnotic powers — although he does demonstrate telepathic abilities never seen in the pulp. There's no Lamont Cranston, no Margot Lane, and no Commissioner Weston. Gibson was pleased with the show's direction.

But turmoil broke out between Bierstadt and Ruthrauff & Ryan, who controlled the creative direction. Bierstadt left the series at some unidentified point. He may or may not have written the second script, "The Red Macaw," in which Margot Lane replaces Vincent as *The Shadow's* operative. She enters the script pleading with millionaire Lamont Cranston to give up his evening forays as *The Shadow*. This establishes Cranston as *The Shadow's* true identity, in contravention to Gibson's oft-stated assertion that Cranston was just an alias, and *not* the real *Shadow*. In fact, Gibson hastened to establish aviator Kent Allard as *The Shadow's* true name in a 1937 novel, perhaps to clarify things for the

radio writers, but in vain. They ignored Allard.

Margot Lane was entirely the invention of someone at Ruthrauff & Ryan. She hadn't appeared in the novels up to that point, but she wasn't created out of whole cloth, either. The radio show needed the voice contrast of a female sidekick, and Bourne Ruthrauff of Ruthrauff & Ryan looked to Broadway actress Margot Stevenson for inspiration. The original lead in *You Can't Take It With You*, Stevenson was a friend of Ruthrauff's.

While Agnes Moorehead is supposed to have been the first Margot Lane, a persistent rumor has it that Stevenson herself inaugurated the role, only to quit soon after.

As for Cranston, a masterstroke of casting put 22-year-old actor Orson Welles in the role. Welles took the part only after demanding that he not be required to attend rehearsals. It was an outrageous request, but entirely necessary. Welles had so many radio projects going, including his pet, the *Mercury Theater*, that he sometimes rushed from the end of one live broadcast to the beginning of another. Many times, he hired an ambulance to get him to the *Shadow* studio on time.

While casting was going on, the search for a new sponsor had been undertaken. It fell to *Shadow Magazine* editor John L. Nanovic to write a presentation for the revamped series, and he sent a copy of it to Blue Coal, along with a request for a letter of recommendation to show prospective sponsors. He was astonished when Blue Coal replied that, having reconsidered, they were willing to underwrite the new show! Thus, when *The Shadow* returned to the air over the Mutual Broadcasting System on Sept. 26, 1937, it was under the familiar Blue Coal banner.

Against the musical backdrop of the

original *Shadow* theme, *Glooms of Fate*, Orson Welles for the first time asked the famous question: "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?" And replied: "The Shadow knows!" Because no pre-1937 *Shadow* transcriptions exist, it's impossible to know if those famous words were a carry-over from the earlier shows. The closing was just as famous: "The weed of crime bears bitter fruit. Crime does not pay. The Shadow knows." For a time, they experimented with a variant closing: "As you sow evil, so shall you reap evil." These early openings were extremely creepy and sometimes don't even sound like Welles. Perhaps transcriptions of LaCurto or Readick were used instead.

Welles' portrayal of The Shadow was delightfully mysterious, and full of theatrical touches, although his Shadow laugh sometimes verged on cackling. In contrast to later seasons where Lamont Cranston dominated the scripts, Welles' Shadow was a constant, pervasive presence, forever lurking in the background, hunted by the law, issuing warnings, and sending radio instructions to Margot Lane, who clearly loved the cool Cranston. For his part, Cranston was a man with a mission and hinted that his efforts were directed at uncovering a secret mastermind who controlled most of the criminal activity in New York — a subplot ignored by the scriptwriters who followed Bierstadt.

With the sixth episode, "The Temple Bells of Neban," The Shadow's invisibility is explained for the first time. His great mental powers, including telepathy, mind-control and "the mesmeric trick that the underworld calls invisibility," were taught him by a Hindu Yogi in India. In this story, he tangles with a Hindu woman who controls the so-called "temple bells of Nebal" — the only thing which can make Cranston visible.



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Before she can accomplish that feat. The Shadow arranges for her to be bitten by a cobra.

These first-season episodes were extremely well-written and acted. The novelty of The Shadow seems to have inspired the writers, who included Arch Oboler, moonlighting from *Lights Out* under an unknown pseudonym, and Frederic Dannay and Manfred B. Lee, better known as "Ellery Queen." The Shadow tangled with The White God, a madman with a death ray; The Prophet, a cultist, and his trained panthers; a pseudo-Ku Klux Klan called The White Legion; and a horde of enemy agents.

Although he doesn't carry twin automatics like his coldprint counterpart, he is more than just a mocking voice. In one episode, criminals discussing The Shadow in a closed room are astonished to see glowing red letters appear on the wall, saying *The Shadow — sees and — knows all*. In another, a criminal is prevented from dropping a live hand grenade into a crowd when The Shadow *wills* him to hold onto it — until it explodes.

The fourth episode closed on the funeral of a criminal killed by The Shadow as a bunch of forget-me-nots arrive. With them is a note signed "The Shadow." This episode was called "Murder by the Dead," and involved an executed criminal who seemingly returns from the dead to wreak vengeance on those who convicted him. It was such a good plot that it was reused with variations every year or so on *The Shadow*, not to mention in other shows.

The number of first season episodes to center around deathrow plots makes one wonder how soon Edward Hale Bierstadt actually left the series. At that time John Nanovic acted as story editor, a post he quit after reading the penultimate script for that season. Nanovic complained to Ruthrauff & Ryan that listeners wouldn't stand for the ridiculousness of "The Silent Avenger," in which the brother of a criminal scheduled to be hanged at Sing Sing at 5 o'clock in the morning threatens to assassinate the Governor at that exact time. The trouble was, the Governor is shown riding in a parade — at 5 a.m.! The agency patiently explained that no one

MORTIMER AND CHARLIE



COUNTY CLEANUP.



noticed plot holes in radio, but when the show was aired, they got several complaining letters.

When Welles left the series after that season, he was replaced by Bill Johnstone, a less flamboyant, but quite capable, actor. It was Johnstone's mature delivery that set the standard for all successors to the role. During Johnstone's tenure, 1938-43, the format was polished. The Cranston-Margot relationship went from master and slave to Nick and Nora Charles, sans Asta, in deliberate imitation of Dashiell Hammett's popular *Thin Man* films.

The Shadow's occult powers are ignored, except for the necessary invisibility, which is neatly explained at the beginning of each show with the ambiguous but convincing "power to cloud men's minds" line.

Margot (played by Marjorie Anderson from 1940-44) gives up trying to convince Cranston to retire, and Commissioner Ralph Weston (played by Dwight Weist and later Santos Ortega and Kenny Delmar) has stopped chasing The Shadow.

A new theme is introduced, to *Omphale's Spinning Wheel* by Saint-Saens. The show was recorded under a spectral blue light like the one favored by the pulp Shadow.

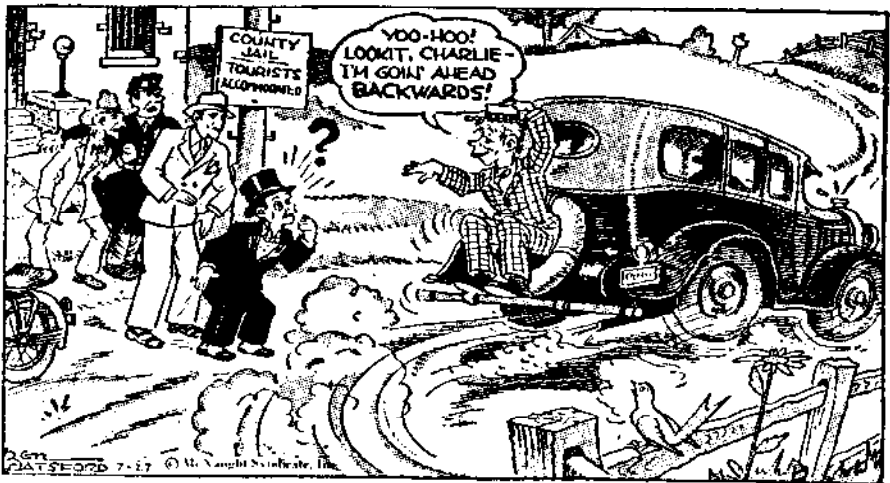
The polishing only made *The Shadow* more popular. By 1938, it was the highest-rated daytime show on radio, where it remained for years. Its widespread appeal was such that one 1941 article contrasted the "new" Shadow to the old hooded narrator by calling him a "reformed evil-doer." Naturally, the show sold tons of Blue Coal and increased the readership of *The Shadow Magazine* to the point that Margot Lane had to be incorporated into the pulp series.

But subsequent seasons never equaled the creative high of the Orson Welles episodes. In polishing the characters, The Shadow's omniscient presence was reduced to a formula of exactly two appearances per episode: once before the mid-show commercial, and again at the climax. The handling was so pat, listeners could time The Shadow's entrances with a stopwatch.

During the war, director Bill Tuttle

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By EDGAR BERGEN



decided to inject some humor into the series and instructed script writer Sidney Slon to introduce a humorous Brooklyn cabby named Shrevvy as a friend of Cranston's. Slon had no inkling that Shrevvy was based on Moe Shrevnitz, The Shadow's sober cab driver/agent in the novels. Gibson's stories were largely ignored, although early episodes borrowed titles and ideas from *The Shadow Magazine*. There were two different episodes titled, "The Creeper," for instance, but neither resembled Gibson's novel of that title.

One story, "The Shadow Challenged," might have been a tribute to the real man behind the cloak. It pitted Cranston against the evil Professor *Allard*, who possessed the power to cloud men's minds. Of course, the radio Shadow didn't really wear the traditional cloak and slouch hat. He didn't need them. He *was invisible*.

For the 1943-44 season, Bill Johnstone gave over the role to the more urband Bret Morrison, the man who would hold the part longest and be most identified with it. A former *Mr. First Nighter*, Morrison actually quit after one season.

He was replaced by a Hollywood actor named John Archer in 1944. Archer left midway through the year, and was replaced by Steve Courtleigh. None of Archer's episodes are known to exist today, so his performance can't be rated, but the one Courtleigh episode still available, "The Destroyer," readily explains why he was not renewed for the next season.

Bret Morrison returned to the role in 1945, backed up by Lesley Woods as Margot. She was replaced a year later by Grace Matthews for three seasons, then by Gertrude Warner, who, with Morrison, held onto their roles until the bitter end, nearly 10 years later.

Among the cast at the Longacre Theater,

where he performed dressed in the traditional but superfluous cloak and hat Morrison was known as the "Five O'Clock Shadow" because the show was aired at 5:30 each Sunday afternoon. Actually the nickname could have applied to every actor to take the role from 1938 to 1954. The time slot never changed.

Over the years, rumors have surfaced about other actors who claimed to have played the part including *Shadow* orchestra conductor George Farle, who may have replaced Frank Readick briefly in 1932; Robert Hardy Andrews, who probably never played the role; and Arthur Vinton and Grayson Maynard Enlow, who seem to have filled in for Morrison sometime in the '40s. Of course, there were numerous foreign-language broadcasts of the show, each with its own cast.

The amazing thing about *The Shadow* was neither its popularity nor its longevity — similar shows like *The Lone Ranger* equalled it — but the utter rigidity of its characterization and formula. Lamont and Margo never grew. The only cast change involved phasing Shrevvy out after the war. After the first season or two, the plots were all the same, except for the frequent traditional Easter and Christmas Eve episodes. Horror was the basic commodity. Not true horror, despite an influx of very talented script-writers including future science fiction writers Max Ehrlich, Alfred Bester, and Alonzo Dean Cole, writer of *The Witch's Tales* radio show. Instead, the shows offered *spurious* horror in stories like "The Gibbering Things," "The Three Mad Sisters of Lonely Hollow," "Nightmare of the Ghouls," and the unforgettable "Wig Makers of Doom Street."

No matter how weird, how terrible, how inexplicable the forms of evil The Shadow encountered, all was sensibly explained in the end.

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It was, all told, an eccentric operation. One scripter, William Morwood, recalled that, at their first meeting, producer John Cole explained to him: "You hear a lot of crap about *The Shadow*. Crazy plots, freak situations, yak, yak, yak. Don't you believe it. All you need is an offbeat idea and the rest is duck soup. Got any ideas?" When Morwood mentioned his hoary idea for a ruby stolen from the forehead of an Indian idol, Cole launched into a frenzied extrapolation of the plot, complete with organ stings, wild gestures, and mocking laughter. Finally, Cole collapsed into his chair and asked a stopwatch-holding secretary, "How long, Ev?" When she told him, "Five minutes, 21 seconds," he said to Morwood, "See? What's so tough about plotting a *Shadow*?"

What was so tough? The hero was. Scriptwriters avoided the show because of the difficulty they had challenging a character who could go anywhere, investigate anything, and learn the innermost secrets of anyone who challenged him completely undetected. The very thing that made him the perfect radio hero, his invisibility, baffled the writers and killed any chance for a migration to television, although a pilot *was* produced in 1955. The *Shadow* underwent a gradual demystification.

The final *Shadow* episode was aired Dec. 26, 1954. The story, "Murder by the Sea," opened with the ultimate *Shadow* cliché: Cranston and Margot, returning from a car trip, take a wrong turn and become lost. Taking refuge in Dunmore Manor, they stumble upon inter-family murder — or is it the work of a witch? Cranston investigates through two mid-show commercials, and *The Shadow* appears only once, briefly near the climax, in accordance with the post-war formula. He doesn't do much, just announces

himself, points to the guilty party and locks him in a closet until the police arrive.

At the end, Margot says, "A frightful, shocking story, Lamont." To which Cranston replies, "Yes. But as in every other story of murder and greed — in the end — Justice prevailed." It was the perfect summation of 25 years of *The Shadow* formula — the reason for its success and ultimately why it went off the air.

By the time *The Shadow* ended, it was a mercy killing. Even the cast, comfortable, if not resigned to its roles, was embarrassed by the shoddiness of the later seasons. Bret Morrison even went so far as to pen a couple of scripts himself, in the vain hope of improving things.

But such are the vagaries of nostalgia, that only eight years after its death, *The Shadow* returned to the airwaves in reruns for the new generation to meet, and for the old to relive. Bret Morrison and Grace Matthews recorded two final episodes for a special record in the '60s, *The Official Adventures of The Shadow* and, although Morrison died in 1978, *The Five O'Clock Shadow* lives on in reruns over America.

They tell the story of a 17-year-old-girl who was let off on a forged check charge back in the '40s after being lectured by a judge. When he asked, "Have you learned a lesson from this?" she replied, "Crime doesn't pay." His Honor then said, "You learned that from forging this check?" No, sir," she shot back. "I learned that from *The Shadow*."

But perhaps that lesson was driven home hardest to Robert Smith, who for years made crime pay as the Ruthrauff & Ryan man in charge of *The Shadow*.

Ordered by his doctor to take a vacation from his radio responsibilities, he took the train home to Pennsylvania, where his mother picked him up in the family car. During the drive, Smith noticed it

was 5:30 and tuned the car radio to *The Shadow*. A horrifying shriek came over the air at that moment, and it so frightened Smith's mother, she drove the car into a ditch and Smith spent the rest of his vacation in the hospital — a victim of *The Shadow*.

Radio Humor

Daddy: Now go back to sleep and dream nice pleasant dreams.

Snooks: I don't wanna! I wanna go back and finish the old dream.

Daddy: But why should you want to finish a nightmare?

Snooks: 'Cause I was about to drop a big rock on your head!

● **Frank Morgan:** I have a sore jaw. I paused in the corridor this evening to watch a pert young thing adjusting her stocking, and she cracked a smile.

John Conte: She cracked a smile and you've got a sore jaw?

Frank Morgan: Yes—it was my smile.

—*Maxwell House Coffee Time (NBC)*

Lulu: When I was at the zoo I saw a mother jackass, a father jackass and a little baby jackass.

George: I didn't know jackasses were married.

Lulu: Oh sure! All jackasses are married!

Mortimer Snerd: Wish I could git rid o' these hiccups.

Edgar Bergen: Maybe holding your breath while counting would help . . . Look into my eyes and count ten.

Mortimer: That's silly! . . . You've only got two.

● **Lou Costello:** I'm a beach-comber at the Union Station.

Bud Abbott: A beach-comber in a railroad station?

Lou Costello: Sure—I stand there and watch the Waves come in!

—*Abbott & Costello Program (NBC)*

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Terror in the Air: Bela Lugosi on Radio

by Garydon L. Rhodes



Of all the actors to portray characters that are classified in the realm of terror and the uncanny, none have possessed the unique individuality and the marvelous acting ability as Bela Lugosi. Yet, it was on rare occasion that his voice graced the air waves. This can best be explained by the dislike he had for radio that was expressed in a personal information form for Imperial-Cameo Pictures. But when the malevolent intonations of Lugosi were heard on the radio, a masterpiece of dramatization was given.

Bela's first words heard on radio were probably on a speech he gave about his Universal film, *Dracula*. This speech was broadcast over station KFI and was heard by listeners in the Hollywood-Los Angeles area. He described for the public on that 27th day of March, 1931,

his thoughts about *Dracula*. After thanking his audience, Bela seemingly started a trek to avoid radio for a few years. His next (?) radio appearance was one on *The Ozzie and Harriet Show* in the late thirties. He and Boris Karloff made perfect foils for the comical skits contained in the program. Along with the comedy came music, via Bela, Boris, Ozzie, and Harriet.

Years of war-torn furor came in the forties, as did the bulk of Bela Lugosi's radio work. An appearance on the twenty-seventh episode of Columbia's program *Suspense* was probably the first of these. The title of the story in which he appeared was "The Doctor Prescribed Death," and was written by J. Donald Wilson. The date was February 2nd, 1943. Lugosi here portrayed psychologist Antonio Bassille. As a psychologist, he contended "that a person who has decided to kill himself can very easily be turned from this desire to the desire of taking the life of another." When Bassille finds a willing victim named Gladys Tanner, he decides to test his theory, but stop an actual murder from occurring that would result from the completion of his theory. However, when he learns that Gladys wishes to kill Morton Hellman, Lugosi's publisher, and that Hellman is having an affair with Bela's wife, Eve, he doesn't prevent the death of Hellman. The death that occurs cause of his theory. Eventually, Lugosi is found out and kills himself. After this mysterious tale had unfolded itself into the imagination of the audience, the Man in Black informed us that Antonio's theory had worked "in reverse." With direction by Ted Bliss and production by William

Spier, "The Dr. Prescribed Death" became Bela's best remembered radio show.

The following year allowed Lugosi to guest star on *Mail Call*, a popular wartime program. On the same episode as Lugosi were Orson Welles, Edward Everett Horton, and The Mills Brothers. However, Bela's talents were better explored the same year in his own series. This series was produced by the Mystery House publishing company, and was aptly entitled *Mystery House*. This series with Bela was in itself shortlived, but probably was planned this way. However, the show was marvelous while on the air. Certainly some of the greatest character actresses and actors made guest shots on the program. Among these were Simone Simon, who appeared in a story concerning the woman that was "buried alive." Another was John Carridine, who portrayed a character in an episode remembered as "The Thirsty Death." In the same story, radio great Lureen Tuttle played a major role as Bela's wife. All of the stories heard were "... the stories of the greatest mystery theater the world has ever known, the Grand Guignol of Paris." Interestingly, one show mentioned that Lugosi was "currently being starred in a series of Mystery House pictures at Universal Studios." Could it be that Universal actually considered a series such as this? After all, they had done an "Inner Sanctum" series, but of course "The Inner Sanctum" was much more well known. Indeed, it would be intriguing to know how much Universal truly thought about this series.

It is highly probably that Bela's voice did not touch the airwaves again until he was contracted to appear on Allen Funt's "Candid Microphone" in 1947. Here Lugosi was part of the gag, and not the one on whom the gag was being played. Bela was referred to on the show as the "King of the Zombies" which was a fitting

title for Lugosi was the star of the first zombie film ever produced, *White Zombie* (1932). In the skit that was utilized on the show, Lugosi was the owner of a quite different curio shop. Among the items available here were skulls, shrunken heads, and other "ghoulish nick-nacks." The laughs start when a female visitor enters the sho and begins to look around. As Bela gives a tour of his ghastly collection, the visitor reflects on Bela's hobby as being "peculiarly sadistic," and Bela gleefully retorts, "Isn't it!" After this display of Bela's relishing the fun, he invites her to touch the "original hair" of the shrunken head of a Pygmie. She rescinds the offer, not by saying "no," but by commenting, "Uhh... Uhh... I can see it." To add even further terror to the visitor and more fun to the audience, Bela lets the visitor know she has a wonderful skull, shortly after explaining the shortage of skulls he has recently run into! After a time, Lugosi informs her that he is Bela Lugosi, though she says she doesn't believe it. For a final laugh, Bela intones, "You don't? Now I take a bite out of your neck!"

A return to radio comedy and another chance to play "himself" came one year later when he made a guest shot on the "Abbott and Costello Show," to help promote the film *Abbot and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948). The usual comical horror gags were employed, but many that were used were and still are fresh and different satires of the type of terror Bela had become famous for. For instance, when Costello asks why Lugosi always lines his coffins with rubber sheets to keep the rain out, Bela replies, "My Beer is a dry Beer!" The plot itself consisted of Lou becoming the new sheriff of Encino, and his first major assignment was to inspect the rumors circulating about Bela and his "haunted house." Besides Bud, Lou, and Bela, there was the remarkable

Sidney Fields in the part of a ghost. The show, which was broadcast from Hollywood on ABC on May 5, 1948, became one of the most humorous of "The Abbot and Costello Show." Indeed, it's one of those shows you can't listen to just once; it's almost addictive.

Bela's radio work probably ended here. It is truly unfortunate that he was unable to star on more programs than what he did, as the "theatre of the mind" was something that Lugosi mastered implicitly.

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Returning from his own U. S. O. trip overseas, BING CROSBY will find that his Thursday broadcasts now follow hot on the heels of DINAH SHORE's newly-scheduled spot over NBC—a rare-in-radio case of two top singers being heard over the same network within the same hour . . . "Kraft Music Hall," incidentally, will no longer have studio audiences. There'll be more music and less comedy—and Bing has always preferred to do his crooning without a crowd.

They're saying "in the trade" that, if BILL's commercials get much longer — or more comical — on GEORGE and GRACIE's Tuesday night funfest over CBS, they'll have to rename it "The BURNS & ALLEN & GOODWIN Show"!

According to the Autographiles—a club for collecting guess-what?—the six radio signatures most in demand are those of BOB HOPE, FRANK SINATRA, ALLAN JONES, BING CROSBY, JACK BENNY and JIMMY DURANTE. Is anybody surprised?

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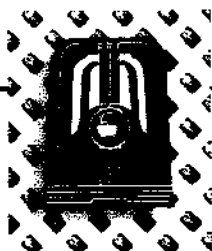
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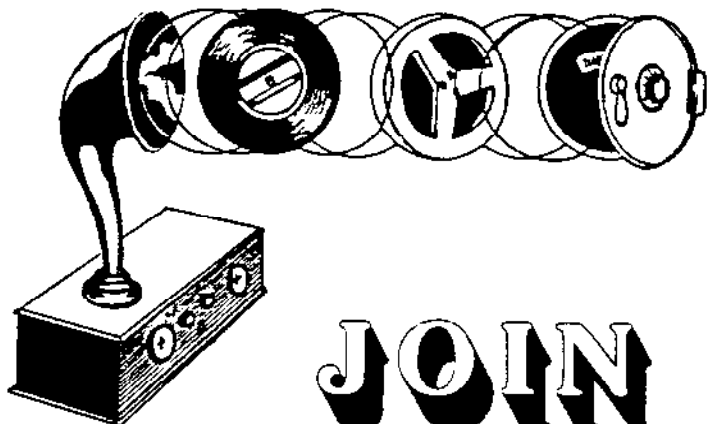


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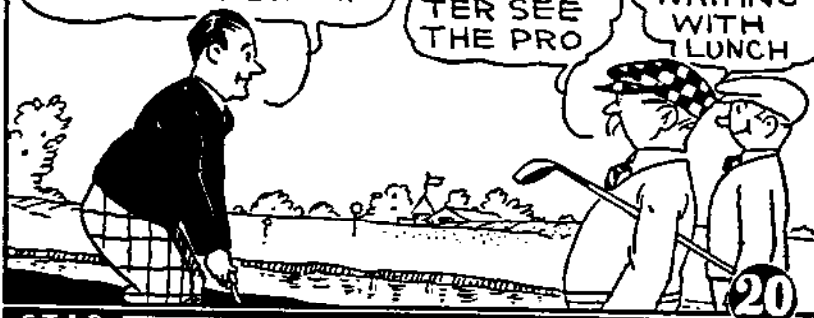
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PROGRAM

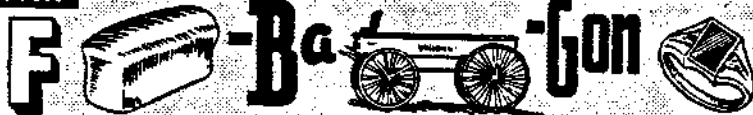
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STAR



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- # 1) 01/08/49 # 1 Stagecoach; 01/16/49 # 2 Let's Live A Little
- # 2) 01/18/49 The Exile (rehearsal); 01/23/49 # 3 The Exile
- # 3) 01/30/49 # 4 Mr. & Mrs. Smith; 02/08/49 # 5 Hired Wife
- # 4) 02/13/49 # 6 Magnificent Obsession; 02/20/49 # 7 Prisoner Of Zenda
- # 5) 02/27/49 # 8 The Night Has A 1000 Eyes;
- 03/13/49 # 10 You Were Meant For Me
- # 6) 03/06/49 # 9 A Foreign Affair (1 HOUR)
- # 7) 03/20/49 # 11 The Perfect Marriage
- 03/27/49 # 12 Suddenly It's Spring
- # 8) 04/03/49 # 13 The Ghost Breakers
- 04/10/49 # 14 Music For Millions
- # 9) 04/17/49 # 15 The Best Years Of Our Lives
- 04/24/49 # 16 The Sky's The Limit
- #10) 05/01/49 # 17 The Trouble With Women
- 05/08/49 # 18 It's A Wonderful Life
- #11) 05/15/49 # 19 Hold Back The Dawn
- 05/22/49 # 20 Her Husband's Affair
- #12) 05/29/49 # 21 Trade Winds; 06/05/49 # 22 The Killers
- #13) 07/01/49 Mr. Blending Builds His Dream House; 07/08/49 Big Clock
- #14) 07/15/49 Yellow Sky; 07/22/49 Casbah
- #15) 07/29/49 Saigon; 08/05/49 Fort Apache
- #16) 08/12/49 Jezebel; 08/19/49 Love Crazy
- #17) 08/26/49 Appointment With Love; 10/03/49 Senator Was Indiscrete
- #18) 10/10/49 Crisis Cross; 10/17/49 Pitfall
- #19) 10/24/49 Love Letters; 10/31/49 Remember The Night
- #20) 11/11/49 Body And Soul; 11/18/49 The Uninvited
- #21) 11/25/49 The Spiral Staircase; 12/02/49 All My Sons
- #22) 12/09/49 Call Northside 777; 12/16/49 Affairs Of Susan
- #23) 12/23/49 Miracle On 34th Street; 12/30/49 One Way Passage
- #24) 01/06/50 Magic Town; 01/13/50 Tomorrow Is Forever

TENNESSEE JED (15 Minutes each)

- # 1) 12/01/45, 12/ /45; 12/ /45, 12/26/45
- # 2) 12/27/45, 12/28/45; 01/11/46, 01/17/46
- # 3) 01/22/46, 02/13/46; 03/06/46, 03/11/46
- # 4) 05/14/46, 05/21/46; 05/24/46, 05/28/46

DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT

- #1a) 03/27/50 Assignment: Murdered Sheikh; 04/24/50 Assignment: Alaska
- #2a) 07/26/50 Assignment: Gorilla Leader; 08/09/50 Assignment: Africa
- #3a) 09/27/50 Assignment: Latin America; 07/03/51 Assign.: S. America
- #4a) 06/08/51 Assignment: Portugal; 08/25/52 Assignment: Port Said
- #5a) 10/22/52 Assignment: Brazil; 03/04/53 Assignment: West Germany
- #6a) 03/18/53 Assignment: Oslo; 03/25/53 Assignment: Lisbon

HALLS OF IVY

- # 1) 05/26/52 Spring Fever; 04/02/52 Professor Grimes
- # 2) 04/09/52 Teachers Get Married; 04/23/52 Professor Walden's Son
- # 3) 05/07/52 Faculty Follies; 05/14/52 Singer Has Hearing Loss
- # 4) 05/21/52 Dr. Spatzman's Credentials; 05/28/52 A Stolen Mummy
- # 5) 06/04/52 Student With A Baby Problem;
- 06/18/52 Hiring A Female Instructor
- # 6) 06/11/52 Wellman's A Week Early For Dinner;
- 06/25/52 Closing For Summer Vacation

MYSTERY IN THE AIR

- # 1) 06/07/47 The Marvelous Barastro; 08/14/47 The Lodger
- # 2) 08/21/47 The Horia; 08/28/47 Beyond Good And Evil
- # 3) 09/04/47 The Mask Of Medusa; 09/11/47 The Queen Of Spades
- # 4) 09/18/47 The Black Cat; 09/25/47 Crime And Punishment

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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF DENNIS DAY

- # 1) 04/18/48 Masquerade Ball; 11/14/46 The Radio Script
- # 2) 12/25/48 The Christmas Show; 01/01/47 The Guest Speaker
- # 3) 01/22/47 The Missing Hair; 02/12/47 Irresistible To Women
- # 4) 02/26/47 Unemployed; 03/05/47 The Mistaken Bank Robber
- # 5) 03/19/47 Ann; 03/26/47 The New House
- # 6) 04/08/47 The Drugstore Investment; 04/16/47 Marriage Counselor
- # 7) 04/23/47 True Story Magazine; 08/27/47 The Drama Critic
- # 8) 08/03/47 Dennis Runs For Mayor; 09/24/47 Billy Big Railroad Boss
- # 9) 10/01/47 The New Tail; 10/15/47 The New Dress Shop
- # 10) 10/22/47 Selling Insurance; 12/03/47 The Job As Society Editor
- # 11) 12/10/47 The Bank Loan; 12/17/47 President Of The Ladies Club
- # 12) 01/14/48 The Stolen Phone; Paintings; 01/21/48 Post Office Job
- # 13) 01/28/48 The Radio Show; 03/17/48 Baby Picture Contest
- # 14) 03/24/48 Saving Weaverville; 04/07/48 Keeping Radio Station On
- # 15) 04/21/48 Misquoted In Paper; 05/05/48 Career Or His Girl
- # 16) 06/16/48 Bill Calhoun; 06/23/48 Beta On Horse
- # 17) 06/30/48 Donates New Gym; 09/18/48 Out On The Town
- # 18) 09/25/48 Rented Room; 10/02/48 Stops Boy From Running Away
- # 19) 10/09/48 The Football Game; 10/16/48 Worthless Oil Property
- # 20) 10/23/48 The Love Letters; 10/30/48 The Missing Earrings
- # 21) 11/13/48 The Advice Column; 12/04/48 The Fan Letters
- # 22) 01/08/49 Job In Weaverville; 01/15/49 Canceled Invitation
- # 23) 01/29/49 Bad University Marks; 02/05/49 The Hall Of Records
- # 24) 02/12/49 The Missing Hair; 03/19/49 The Pretended Hair
- # 25) 04/26/48 The Art Contest; 04/16/48 Running For Office
- # 26) 04/23/49 Part In A Play; 04/30/49 Most Unusual Experience
- # 27) 06/25/49 Protection Money; 08/27/49 A Falling Out

ACADEMY AWARD

- # 1) 03/30/46 # 1 Jezebell; 04/06/46 # 2 Kitty Foyle
- # 2) 04/13/46 # 3 Life Of Louis Pasteur; 04/20/46 # 4 Great McGinty
- # 3) 04/27/46 # 5 Snow White & Seven Dwarfs; 05/04/46 # 6 Stagecoach
- # 4) 05/11/46 # 7 If I Were King; 05/18/46 # 8 My Sister Eileen
- # 5) 05/25/46 # 9 The Informer; 06/01/46 #10 Arise My Love
- # 6) 06/08/46 #11 Ruggles Of Red Gap; 06/15/46 #12 Pride Of The Marines
- # 7) 06/22/46 #13 The Front Page; 06/29/46 #14 A Star Is Born
- # 8) 07/03/46 #15 The Maltese Falcon; 07/10/46 #16 Young Mr. Lincoln
- # 9) 07/17/46 #17 Prisoner Of Zenda; 07/24/46 #18 Foreign Correspondent
- # 10) 07/31/46 #19 Hold Back The Dawn; 08/07/46 #20 Watch On The Rhine
- # 11) 08/14/46 #21 Vivacious Lady; 08/21/46 #22 Keys Of The Kingdom
- # 12) 08/28/46 #23 One Sunday Afternoon; 09/04/46 #24 Pinnocchio
- # 13) 09/11/46 #25 Shadow Of A Doubt; 09/18/46 #26 White Cliffs Of Dover
- # 14) 09/25/46 #27 Guest In The House; 10/02/46 #28 My Man Godfrey
- # 15) 10/09/46 #29 It Happened Tomorrow; 10/16/46 #30 Blood On The Sun
- # 16) 10/23/46 #31 The Devil & Miss Jones; 10/30/46 #32 Suspicion
- # 17) 11/06/46 #33 Cheers For Miss Bishop; 11/13/46 #34 Night Train
- # 18) 11/20/46 #35 Brief Encounter; 11/27/46 #36 Lost Horizon
- # 19) 12/04/46 #37 Portrait Of Jenny; 12/11/46 #38 Enchanted Cottage
- # 20) 12/16/46 #39 Lost Angel (Last show)

FAVORITE STORY

- # 1) # 1 Les Miserables; # 2 Diamond Lens
- # 2) # 3 Little Women; # 4 Wuthering Heights
- # 3) # 5 Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court;
- # 6) # 6 Cyrano De Bergerac
- # 4) # 7 David Copperfield; # 8 Queen Of Spades
- # 5) # 9 Buckleberry Finn; #10 Arabian Nights
- # 6) #11 Jane Eyre; #12 Vanity Fair
- # 7) #13 Joan Of Arc; #14 Frankenstein
- # 8) #15 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea; #16 Importance Of Being Earnest
- # 9) #17 Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde; #18 Man Who Sold His Shadow To The Devil
- # 10) #19 Lodging For A Night; #20 Alice In Wonderland
- # 11) #21 Rapaccinni's Daughter; #22 Moby Dick
- # 12) #23 Great Expectations; #24 Phantom Rickshaw
- # 13) #25 Sire deMaletroit's Door; #26 God Sees The Truth, But Waits
- # 14) #27 Debt Collector; #28 Gulliver's Travels
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