

The Shadow
The House That Death Built
Jan 25 1948

CAST:

ANNOUNCER

THE SHADOW / LAMONT CRANSTON

MARGOT, Cranston's lovely friend and companion

LAFFERTY, oily villain

WINDSOR, henchman who is not all he seems

RUSTY, henchman

JANE, mystery woman who is not all she seems

BEN, insane

JOHN BARCLAY, distinguished heating authority

MUSIC: THEME ... OUT FOR--

SHADOW: Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows!
(LAUGHS)

MUSIC: TAG ... THEN BEHIND ANNOUNCER--

ANNOUNCER: Once again, your neighborhood Blue Coal dealer brings you the thrilling adventures of THE SHADOW, the hard and relentless fight of one man against the forces of evil. These dramatizations are designed to demonstrate forcefully to old and young alike that crime does not pay.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT

ANNOUNCER: The lucky householders whose homes are heated with hard coal are enjoying steady, uninterrupted healthful warmth in every room. Even when winter winds blow and the temperature dives to zero, there's no need to cut down heat or close off rooms in homes heated with dependable hard coal. Yes, sir -- when you have a supply of hard coal in your basement, you're the boss of heating your house. You are absolutely independent of any outside service. Be glad you heat with anthracite -- the home heating fuel that never fails. And remember -- Blue Coal is the finest anthracite money can buy.

MUSIC: THEME ... OUT BEHIND--

ANNOUNCER: The Shadow, who aids the forces of law and order, is in reality Lamont Cranston, wealthy young man-about-town. Years ago, in the Orient, Cranston learned a strange and mysterious secret -- the hypnotic power to cloud men's minds so they cannot see him. Cranston's friend and companion, the lovely Margot Lane, is the only person who knows to whom the voice of the invisible Shadow belongs. Today's drama -- "The House That Death Built."

MUSIC: INTRODUCTION ... THEN BEHIND ANNOUNCER--

SOUND: WINDS HOWL THROUGHOUT SCENE ... MEN SHOVELING DIRT, IN BG

ANNOUNCER: In a lonely cemetery in New England, three men work furiously in a swirling blizzard, opening a new grave. The headstone lies on one side and

reads: "Ben Falkenberg, born 1878, died 1948." The grave is a black pit in the white snow and reveals a cheap, shabby coffin.

LAFFERTY: (PAUSE, IMPATIENT) Come on! Come on! What are you stalling for? Get that coffin cleared! (PAUSE, TENSE) Well? Well?

SOUND: SHOVEL STRIKES WOOD A FEW TIMES

RUSTY: All set, Lafferty.

LAFFERTY: Well, get it open, Rusty.

RUSTY: Yeah.

LAFFERTY: Give him a hand, Windsor.

WINDSOR: Right.

SOUND: WOODEN COFFIN PRIED OUT OF GRAVE BEHIND--

LAFFERTY: (NERVOUS, TO HIMSELF) He's got to be in there. He's got to! But we've got to make sure. (YELLS) Will you hurry up?! Do you want to freeze out here?! Get it open! Get it open!

SOUND: WOOD PLANKS RIPPED OPEN

WINDSOR: It's open.

LAFFERTY: Well?

RUSTY: He's in here, all right.

LAFFERTY: Let me see. Let me see him.

RUSTY: Go ahead and look.

LAFFERTY: (BEAT, THEN CHUCKLES) Yes. Yes. So old Ben Falkenberg finally died. Good! Splendid! (QUICKLY) All right, let's go.

WINDSOR: What's your hurry, Lafferty?

LAFFERTY: Don't be a fool, Windsor. We've got to get to Falkenberg's house before dark. There's a hundred thousand dollars waiting in there -- and nothing can stop us now!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: AUTO ENGINE ... CAR INTERIOR

MARGOT: Lamont?

CRANSTON: Hmmm?

MARGOT: Don't tell me our ski trip wore you out that much, darling. You

haven't said a thing for the last ten minutes.

CRANSTON: I was just wondering, Margot. Wouldn't it be smart to stop somewhere along here for a while till this storm lets up?

MARGOT: This is pretty lonely country.

CRANSTON: There's a house at the top of this hill. There, you can make out the entrance to the driveway now.

MARGOT: Yes. Look, there's someone standing out there by the entrance.

SOUND: CAR PULLS TO A STOP ... CREAK OF BRAKES ... WIND HOWLS IN BG

CRANSTON: (CALLS, TO WINDSOR) Hey, there. I beg your pardon.

MARGOT: Could you give us a hand, please?

WINDSOR: (UNFRIENDLY) What d'you want?

CRANSTON: We don't want to get stuck on the road. Do you think the people in the house could put us up for a few hours?

WINDSOR: No.

CRANSTON: What?

WINDSOR: If you know what's good for you, you'll stay away from that house.

MARGOT: But--

WINDSOR: Keep on drivin'. Get as far away as you can, even if it means getting lost on the road. Get out of here. Get out! And don't ever come back.

CRANSTON: (DISBELIEF) The devil you say.

WINDSOR: That's exactly what I do say. The devil's loose in that heap of rotten wood. Now get out of here!

CRANSTON: (BEAT) Okay.

SOUND: WIND OUT ... CAR IN GEAR, DRIVES OFF ... CAR INTERIOR

MARGOT: What're we going to do, Lamont?

CRANSTON: Drive to the house, Margot. (LIGHTLY) I don't think it can be quite as dangerous as our young friend thinks. It certainly can't be worse than a night in a blizzard.

MARGOT: It isn't a very pleasant-looking place, is it?

CRANSTON: No, it isn't.

MARGOT: Looks like a heap of rotten wood. It's all twisty and-- Well, it looks like an insane architect built it.

CRANSTON: (CHUCKLES) Well, if it'll give us shelter for a while, that's the main thing, Margot.

SOUND: CAR PULLS TO A STOP ... CREAK OF BRAKES ... ENGINE OUT

CRANSTON: Here's the garage. Let's see, there must be a side entrance somewhere.

SOUND: CAR DOOR OPENS ... WIND HOWLS, IN BG

LAFFERTY: Good afternoon.

MARGOT: (GASPS)

LAFFERTY: I suppose you know you're trespassing.

CRANSTON: Er, who are you?

LAFFERTY: My name is Lafferty. I'm the butler.

CRANSTON: Well, can--?

LAFFERTY: You want shelter in this house? The answer's no. Most decidedly no. Get back in your car and leave.

MARGOT: But--

CRANSTON: That's impossible, Mr. Lafferty--

LAFFERTY: This house has been closed. It will remain closed until it's burned.

MARGOT: Until it's burned?

LAFFERTY: Yes, madam. I've been instructed by the owner to burn it, because fire is the only thing that will destroy the death and horror in it. Will you please leave?

CRANSTON: Do you have a telephone?

LAFFERTY: My dear sir, will you be trivial in the face of death?

CRANSTON: (IGNORES HIM) Of course you have; I see the wires. Come on, Margot.

LAFFERTY: Stop!

CRANSTON: If I'm going to get out of here, I've got to get a tow car to haul me. (MOVING OFF) I'm going to phone--

LAFFERTY: Now don't be a fool! Don't go into that house, if you value your life! Don't go in there!

SOUND: CRANSTON AND MARGOT'S FOOTSTEPS MOVE OFF DURING ABOVE ... HOUSE DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS AS CRANSTON GOES INSIDE

LAFFERTY: (CALLS) Rusty? Rusty!

RUSTY: (APPROACHES) Comin' right up, Lafferty.

LAFFERTY: What are you doing with that gun, ya fool? Put that away!

RUSTY: Just coverin' that Cranston guy -- in case. I was holed up in the garage.

LAFFERTY: You know him?

RUSTY: Who don't? It's Lamont Cranston, playboy. He's pal of the Police Commissioner. Dame's his girl, Margot Lane. Hey, look, Lafferty, we got to get 'em out o' here.

LAFFERTY: But not with a gun, you idiot.

RUSTY: Well, how?

LAFFERTY: The way we decided to get rid of intruders before we came here. Frighten them.

RUSTY: Like that line you handed Cranston?

LAFFERTY: Yes.

RUSTY: You almost had me believin' it.

LAFFERTY: Well, they will believe before we're finished. Now go get Windsor from the gate. I'll have a few bitter words to say to him. He was stationed there to keep people out. Now we'll have to work overtime to get rid of Cranston.

RUSTY: Yeah, but how, Lafferty? How?

LAFFERTY: (GRIM) Leave that to me, Rusty. Leave that to me.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: CRANSTON AND MARGOT'S FOOTSTEPS SLOWLY UP STAIRS

CRANSTON: I think these stairs ought to lead to the main floor, Margot. Watch your step.

MARGOT: Lamont, what is going on in this house?

CRANSTON: Not very much, from the looks of it.

MARGOT: That butler, Lafferty -- and the young man at the gate. What are they trying to warn us about?

CRANSTON: I don't know, Margot. Wait a minute. Let's - let's try that door there.

MARGOT: This house is twistier inside than it is outside.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS ... FOOTSTEPS IN

CRANSTON: This zigzag labyrinth--

JANE: (SHARPLY) Who're you?!

MARGOT: (GASPS)

CRANSTON: I beg your pardon.

JANE: (INTENSE) Get your hands up and don't move.

CRANSTON: Do you mind putting a light on?

JANE: I asked you what you're doing in my house. Speak up.

CRANSTON: Your house?

MARGOT: Why, the butler said it was empty.

JANE: The butler?

CRANSTON: He said his name is Lafferty.

JANE: Who else is outside? Quick!

CRANSTON: My dear Miss, er--?

JANE: The name doesn't matter.

LAFFERTY: (GRAND ENTRANCE) I think it does, my dear!

JANE: Who's that?

SOUND: GUNSHOT!

MARGOT: (SHRIEKS)

CRANSTON: Hey!

JANE: Speak up! Who is it?!

LAFFERTY: Don't try to shoot again, my dear. You can't see in the dark. I can. If you raise that revolver, I'll blast your hand off.

CRANSTON: If you don't mind, I think I'll light a match. I'd like to know who's murdering who.

SOUND: MATCH STRIKES AND FLARES

CRANSTON: Well, this is a charming situation. Margot, there's a candle on the table.

MARGOT: Right.

CRANSTON: We're all strangers, aren't we? Mr. Lafferty claims to be butler of this crazy house, but he's unacquainted with this young lady who claims to own it.

LAFFERTY: Mr. Cranston--

CRANSTON: How do you know my name?

WINDSOR: Now, look, mister, I warned you--

CRANSTON: The guardian of the gate. What's your name?

WINDSOR: Windsor.

CRANSTON: And you, young lady?

JANE: Jane Archer.

CRANSTON: So we have a spook house and three lying strangers. Now, suppose you all cover each other with your guns while I phone for a tow car and the local police. (STARTS TO MOVE OFF) There must be a phone here somewhere.

LAFFERTY: (THREATENING) Don't look for it, Mr. Cranston!

JANE: (SHARPLY) Don't move!

MARGOT: Lamont!

CRANSTON: (BEAT) Very interesting. A united front against the police, eh? What are you people up to in this madhouse?

RUSTY: (TERRIFIED, FROM OFF) The Green Ghost! Windsor! Lafferty! The Green Ghost!

SOUND: THREE GUNSHOTS, FROM OFF

RUSTY: (DEATH SCREAM)

WINDSOR: That was Rusty!

LAFFERTY: Rusty! Well, what the--?

CRANSTON: (URGENT) That came from the hall. Put away your guns and come on, all of you!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

CRANSTON: Hold the light a little closer, Margot.

MARGOT: All right. (BEAT, THEN SHE GASPS)

LAFFERTY: (DISMAYED) Good lord.

CRANSTON: Well, this is a mess. (BEAT) This man-- Rusty, you called him?

WINDSOR: Yeah.

CRANSTON: He's been shot three times in the chest.

LAFFERTY: So I see.

JANE: But by what? Who shot him?

CRANSTON: I don't know. (WALKS AROUND, MOVING OFF AND THEN BACK ON AGAIN BEHIND--) Wait a minute, look at this. There's a trap in the side of the hall. Three guns set there like a firing line. And there's a treadle attachment to the triggers. This Rusty stepped on it, the trap swung open, and the guns in the wall blasted the life out of him.

MARGOT: But what was he screaming? Something about the Green Ghost?

CRANSTON: I don't know, Margot. Now listen, all of you, and get this straight. We're all of us trapped in this twisted house, and some of you have declared war.

LAFFERTY: My dear Mr. Cranston--

CRANSTON: Margot and I are going back to the living room and call the police. I wouldn't try any gunpowder persuasion, Lafferty.

LAFFERTY: (THREATENING) Really, Mr. Cranston?

CRANSTON: Really. I took the liberty of borrowing Rusty's gun while I was examining him.

LAFFERTY: (STARTLED EXCLAMATION)

CRANSTON: You wouldn't like to trade shots with me, would you, Lafferty? (BEAT) I see you wouldn't. All right, Margot, let's go.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: PHONE CRADLE RATTLES ... THEN BEHIND--

CRANSTON: Hello? Hello, hello?

SOUND: RECEIVER DOWN

CRANSTON: It's no use, Margot. The line's dead. Blizzard must have knocked the wires down.

MARGOT: Then we're stuck here.

CRANSTON: Right. In a house without light, without a phone, and with three maniacs who apparently dislike each other as much as us.

MARGOT: I want to get out of here, Lamont.

CRANSTON: I don't know if we can find our way out now, Margot. And even if we could, there's been a murder committed. We've got to find out who's responsible.

MARGOT: What can we do?

CRANSTON: You can sit tight and wait here for me, darling. (QUIETLY) The Shadow's going to pay a visit.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

LAFFERTY: Windsor?

WINDSOR: Yes?

LAFFERTY: Step into this alcove a moment.

SOUND: A FEW FOOTSTEPS

WINDSOR: Well?

LAFFERTY: Congratulations, my dear boy.

WINDSOR: For what?

LAFFERTY: Oh, don't be modest. You were magnificent. How did you manage to make Rusty scream that gibberish about ghosts before you killed him?

WINDSOR: Before I--?

LAFFERTY: That was a two-edged sword. With one blow you eliminated that little man and you created an air of supernatural menace that will certainly frighten the others away.

WINDSOR: You're crazy. You killed Rusty.

LAFFERTY: My dear boy--

WINDSOR: (ACCUSINGLY) You killed Rusty for his share of the money. You want to split two ways instead of three. Maybe you only want to split one way, after you've killed me.

LAFFERTY: Windsor, that's ridiculous. I swear that I never killed--

SHADOW: (LAUGHS)

LAFFERTY: Who's that?

SHADOW: Someone who laughs at two modest killers with poison in their hearts and doubt in their minds.

LAFFERTY: But there isn't anybody I can see. There--

SHADOW: This is the Shadow. (LAUGHS)

WINDSOR: (IN AWE) The Shadow?

SHADOW: (LAUGHS) What money brought you to this house, Lafferty? Answer with the truth.

LAFFERTY: (HESITANT) Well, I--

WINDSOR: (BLURTS IT OUT) One hundred thousand dollars.

SHADOW: Whose money is it?

WINDSOR: It belonged to Jerry Crane.

SHADOW: You lie! Jerry Crane was a thief executed for murder ten years ago.

WINDSOR: Jerry Crane tried to bribe the state's executioner with that money to fix the execution so he'd live.

SHADOW: No man can live through an execution, Windsor.

WINDSOR: Well, Jerry thought he could. He bribed the executioner, a man named Ben Falkenberg. Falkenberg was caught and dismissed. He built this house and lived here with the money for ten years. He died about a month ago.

LAFFERTY: No one found the money, Shadow! No one! It must be here! It's got to be here! Now look-- Look, Shadow, if you know where it is, we'll split with you -- three ways -- fair and square.

SHADOW: The fair and square way you split with Rusty?

LAFFERTY: I didn't kill him. I swear it.

WINDSOR: You're a liar.

LAFFERTY: Now, if you'll help us find it, Shadow--

SHADOW: You cannot buy truth, Lafferty. You cannot buy justice. (BEAT) And you cannot buy the Shadow. (LAUGHS)

MUSIC: BRIDGE

CRANSTON: Margot?

MARGOT: (STARTLED) Oh! Oh, Lamont. Been sitting here in this creepy room getting the shakes. Well?

CRANSTON: Windsor and Lafferty accuse each other of murdering Rusty.

MARGOT: What are they after?

CRANSTON: Money -- a fortune hidden somewhere in this house by a former executioner named Ben Falkenberg.

MARGOT: What's Jane Archer after? Maybe she killed Rusty.

CRANSTON: Maybe. That's going to be the Shadow's next visit. Do you know where she is?

MARGOT: Well, I thought she was--

JANE: (SCREAMS, OFF) Help! Help! Somebody! Help! (CONTINUES TO SCREAM IN BG)

CRANSTON: That's Jane! She's somewhere down that hall. Come on!

SOUND: CRANSTON AND MARGOT'S HURRIED FOOTSTEPS

MARGOT: What's the matter?

CRANSTON: I don't know if she's in trouble or this is another phony spook trap.

MARGOT: She must be further down the hall.

CRANSTON: Yes, that same long winding hall where Rusty was killed.

MARGOT: Lamont, I wonder--

SOUND: JANE'S FISTS POUND ON DOOR ... CONTINUES IN BG

CRANSTON: Look up! Look up ahead, Margot! See that tiny window? In the door.

MARGOT: That's Jane Archer behind it. She's caught in there.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS OUT ... POUNDING STOPS WITH--

JANE: Somebody get me out! Get me out of here!

MARGOT: Lamont! That room-- Looks like a gas chamber! Like an executioner's gas chamber!

CRANSTON: (CALLS) Hold your breath, Jane! Get away from the door! I'll have to shoot the lock. Get back from the door and hold your breath!

SOUND: SLOW, EVENLY-PACED GUNSHOTS

MUSIC: FIRST ACT CURTAIN

ANNOUNCER: We'll return to THE SHADOW in just a moment.

Friends, during the recent severe weather, homes, apartment houses, schools have enjoyed healthful uninterrupted warmth. Regardless of snowstorms halting highway traffic, homes and other buildings heated with hard coal have been sure of continued heat. That's because enough coal can be stored to carry you right through the severe part of the heating season. Yes, when you have a supply of hard coal in your basement, you have the assurance of a warm and snug home at all times.

Now here is something else. Coal is convenient to burn when modern equipment is used. With a Blue Coal Temp-Master on your furnace, all trips to the basement to adjust furnace dampers are eliminated. The Temp-Master automatically adjusts them for you, keeping your home constantly at the healthful temperature you set on the upstairs dial. You'll be delighted when you discover how little attention your furnace requires with a Temp-Master regulator. The Temp-Master can be installed on any furnace without interrupting the heat in your home. Yes, it will pay you to call the nearest Blue Coal dealer tomorrow and ask him to demonstrate the Temp-Master in your home.

Now, back to THE SHADOW.

MUSIC: THEME ... THEN BEHIND ANNOUNCER--

ANNOUNCER: Marooned in the twisted house of Ben Falkenberg, who has died and left a fortune concealed in the rotting rooms, Lamont Cranston and Margot Lane find Jane Archer, one of the four mysterious people who are searching for the money, trapped in the replica of an executioner's gas chamber. Cranston has just fired the sixth shot into the heavy steel lock.

SOUND: GUNSHOT!

CRANSTON: Look out now, Margot, I've got to use my shoulder.

WINDSOR: (APPROACHES) Cranston! What's up? Who's doin' the shootin'?

CRANSTON: Give me a hand, Windsor, quick! Get this door knocked in.

WINDSOR: Right. Together now.

SOUND: CRUNCH OF GRUNTING MEN AGAINST DOOR

CRANSTON: Once more does it.

SOUND: DOOR SMASHED OPEN ... HISS OF GAS, IN BG

WINDSOR: (COUGHS)

CRANSTON: Hold your breath!

WINDSOR: What the--?

CRANSTON: It's a gas chamber. Help me get the girl out.

SOUND: THEIR FOOTSTEPS INTO CHAMBER

WINDSOR: (COUGHS, SURPRISED) Jane Archer!

CRANSTON: She was almost killed. Take her arm. Steady.

SOUND: THE MEN GRAB JANE AND CARRY HER OUT OF ROOM

CRANSTON: Get that door closed, Margot.

MARGOT: Right.

SOUND: DOOR SLAMS SHUT, CUTS OFF GAS HISS

CRANSTON: Get her down the hall here.

SOUND: WITH EFFORT, THE MEN CARRY JANE DOWN HALL

CRANSTON: That's it. Jane?

JANE: (WAKES, MURMURS, DAZED)

WINDSOR: How do you feel, Miss Archer?

CRANSTON: She's all right. A touch of methane. Lucky it wasn't cyanide. That kills like a thunderbolt.

JANE: I-- I--

WINDSOR: What happened, Miss Archer?

JANE: I was looking-- And walked into the room. The door started to close. Automatic. Couldn't stop it.

WINDSOR: We just got here in time.

CRANSTON: Searching for what, Miss Archer?

JANE: What?

CRANSTON: You said you were looking. Looking for what?

JANE: Why, I--

CRANSTON: What were you looking for?

JANE: I don't know.

CRANSTON: This isn't the time for secrets, Miss Archer.

WINDSOR: (SHARPLY) Let her alone!

CRANSTON: (BEAT) Well, I thought you two were enemies. You were pointing guns at each other half an hour ago.

WINDSOR: I wasn't pointing any gun. Lafferty was doing all the--

CRANSTON: Lafferty!

MARGOT: What's the matter?

CRANSTON: Where is Lafferty? You heard the shots and came running, Windsor. Why didn't Lafferty?

WINDSOR: Maybe because he set this trap, too.

CRANSTON: Where did you leave him, Windsor?

WINDSOR: Wandering around this rotten honeycomb of a house.

SOUND: FROM OFF, A SLOW AND STEADY THUMPING ... CONTINUES IN BG

CRANSTON: Wait a minute.

WINDSOR: What's the matter?

CRANSTON: Listen.

MARGOT: (BEAT) Funny. Sounds almost like drums.

JANE: Yes, it does.

CRANSTON: Come on.

SOUND: THEIR FOOTSTEPS MOVE IN DIRECTION OF THUMPING, WHICH GROWS LOUDER DURING FOLLOWING--

MARGOT: But who is pounding? Why?

WINDSOR: And where's it coming from?

MARGOT: Wish we were twenty miles away, stuck in a snowdrift catching pneumonia.

CRANSTON: Wait, Margot.

SOUND: THEIR FOOTSTEPS STOP

CRANSTON: It's coming from this room.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS ... THUMPING LOUDER

MARGOT: (STARTLED, HORRIFIED) Lamont!

CRANSTON: Windsor, Miss Archer -- in here quickly!

WINDSOR: What's the matter?

JANE: What is it?

CRANSTON: I've found Lafferty!

JANE: (GASPS)

WINDSOR: What--?

CRANSTON: Swinging in the air, his heels banging on the wall. He's been hanged.

SOUND: A FINAL FEW THUMPS

MUSIC: BRIDGE

CRANSTON: Better get another candle lit, Margot.

MARGOT: All right, Lamont.

WINDSOR: He's dead, huh?

JANE: (HORRIFIED) Another murder.

CRANSTON: Very much dead. Lafferty wandered into this room, stepped on that trap, and a spring noose caught him at the neck and whipped him into the air.

JANE: (DISTRESSED) Ohh. (BREAKS) Oh.

CRANSTON: What's the matter, Miss Archer?

JANE: What?

CRANSTON: Don't like murder, hm?

MARGOT: Lamont, please.

CRANSTON: Who are you, Miss Archer? Why are you in this house?

JANE: I can't tell you.

CRANSTON: Can't you understand, Miss Archer, that Lafferty was right? This house is filled with death and terror. This is the time for the truth.

JANE: All right.

CRANSTON: Who are you?

JANE: Jane Crane.

WINDSOR: Crane!

CRANSTON: Jerry Crane's daughter?

JANE: Yes.

MARGOT: Jerry Crane? The man who bribed Ben Falkenberg? The man who was--?

JANE: Was executed? Yes. I'm his daughter. I came here to see if I could find that money -- the money he stole from the Chase Bond Company the night he - he murdered the guard. (VOICE BREAKS) I had a crazy idea it might help clear his name!

WINDSOR: (LAUGHS)

CRANSTON: What's the matter with you, Windsor?

WINDSOR: You're right, Cranston. It is time for the truth. You'll get a kick out of this confession. I work for the Chase Bond Company -- detective assigned to recover that money.

JANE: What?

WINDSOR: Yeah. I was playing along with Lafferty and his stooge to find the money. Of course, I figured this house would be harmless after Ben Falkenberg died, but--

JANE: (CERTAIN) He's not dead.

CRANSTON: What?

JANE: Ben isn't dead. He's somewhere in this house. He was the Green Ghost Rusty saw before he was killed.

WINDSOR: Hey, wait a second. Lafferty and I saw the body.

JANE: You didn't see Ben's body. He's still alive.

CRANSTON: Wait a minute. If he's still alive and in this house setting death traps, none of us is going to be safe until he's caught.

WINDSOR: Yeah, that's right. Well, I think I'd better start looking for him.

CRANSTON: Wait a second, Windsor.

WINDSOR: Now, look, Cranston, it's my job to--

CRANSTON: Your job was the money. Forget that. The big thing now is to find the killer. That's my job. You'd better stay with Jane, Margot.

MARGOT: (A REFUSAL) Lamont.

CRANSTON: (BEAT, GIVES IN) All right, darling, if that's the way you want it.

WINDSOR: Now, look, Cranston, you might run into another one of those death-traps, two feet from here.

CRANSTON: I'm afraid we'll just have to take our chances.

WINDSOR: Okay.

JANE: Good luck.

CRANSTON: Thanks -- we may need it. Come on, Margot.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: CRANSTON AND MARGOT'S FOOTSTEPS SLOWLY ... THEN IN BG

CRANSTON: Careful now, Margot. This is our last candle. Keep it burning. We're going to need plenty of light.

MARGOT: Do you know where we're going?

CRANSTON: Well, every time someone went down this hall, they were stopped by an executioner's trap. Rusty walked down a little way and he was killed by a firing line of guns.

MARGOT: Yes.

CRANSTON: Jane Archer went further and was trapped in a gas chamber.

MARGOT: That's right.

CRANSTON: Lafferty went even further and was hung in a noose.

MARGOT: The money's at the end of this hall?

CRANSTON: It must be. We're going to follow every twist and turn until we reach the end.

MARGOT: How many more traps will there be?

CRANSTON: I wish I knew, darling.

MARGOT: It's like - like running the gauntlet.

CRANSTON: Around this corner. Shield the flame.

MARGOT: Stay close to me, darling.

CRANSTON: It's all right. Come on, slowly. (PAUSE) That looks like a flight of steps ahead. Better let me go first.

MARGOT: All right.

CRANSTON: Careful.

SOUND: CRANSTON AND MARGOT'S FOOTSTEPS SLOWLY ASCEND STEPS

CRANSTON: Lafferty was trying to frighten us off with his spook talk, but he told the truth. This house has murder and terror in every corner. There's death--

SOUND: CLICK! SWISH! OF DESCENDING BLADE

CRANSTON: Back, Margot!

MARGOT: Lamont!

SOUND: CHUNK! OF GUILLOTINE BLADE

CRANSTON: (BEAT, QUIETLY) Whew! That was close.

MARGOT: (EXHALES) What was it?

CRANSTON: Three-foot guillotine knife, sharp as a razor.

MARGOT: Ooh!

CRANSTON: We'd have been sliced like butter.

MARGOT: Lamont! We're not going to keep on?

SOUND: CRANSTON AND MARGOT'S FOOTSTEPS UP STAIRS... IN BG

CRANSTON: We've got to, Margot.

MARGOT: But, Lamont, what'll be next? What'll be next?!

CRANSTON: I don't know, darling.

MARGOT: (BEAT) Lamont?

CRANSTON: Yes?

MARGOT: There isn't much candle left. My fingers are getting burned.

CRANSTON: Try to hold out a little longer, Margot. This is the head of the stairs.

SOUND: CRANSTON AND MARGOT'S FOOTSTEPS ON LEVEL HALL... IN BG

MARGOT: What if one of the traps is solitary confinement for life? What--? Oh!

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS OUT

CRANSTON: What happened to the candle?

MARGOT: It just blew out. There was a draft. A sudden gust.

CRANSTON: A sudden--? Get back against the wall.

MARGOT: What's the matter now?

CRANSTON: A sudden gust could mean a door open somewhere. Maybe another trap starting. (MOVING OFF) I'll have a look -- as much as I can look in this pitch-dark--

SOUND: LAMONT'S FOOTSTEPS WALK OFF DURING ABOVE ... MARGOT TAKES A FEW HESITANT STEPS INTERMITTENTLY STARTING AT "PLEASE" BELOW--

MARGOT: No, Lamont! I don't want to be left behind! Please! Lamont! Lamont, I'm getting all mixed-up in the dark. There are so many doors, and corners, and turns. Lamont! Lamo--!

SOUND: MARGOT'S FOOTSTEPS STOP AS DOOR OPENS, SLOWLY CREAKING

BEN: Good evening, my dear. I've been waiting for you. Come in. Come in.

MARGOT: No, I--

BEN: Come in, please. Come in, my dear.

SOUND: LIGHT SCUFFLE

MARGOT: (SCREAMS) Lamont! (ABRUPTLY MUFFLED)

BEN: Don't scream, please. It's all right. Ben's your friend. Your dear friend.

SOUND: DOOR SLOWLY CREAKS SHUT

BEN: Now --- isn't this nice? Isn't this lovely?

MARGOT: (EXHALES, QUIETLY) It's the Death House! That's the electric chair!

BEN: That's right, my dear. That's right. Now come with Ben.

MARGOT: Ben? You're Ben Falkenberg?!

BEN: I let them think old Ben was dead so there'd be company -- friends looking for the money. I've had three today. Ah, they died well -- very well indeed. (INHALES EXPECTANTLY) But not as well as you will, my dear; now come along.

MARGOT: No! No!

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS AS BEN DRAGS MARGOT TO THE CHAIR DURING FOLLOWING--

BEN: Now trust me, my dear. Many's the one that I've coaxed to my little chair in my time.

MARGOT: No, please! No!

BEN: Sit down, child.

SOUND: MARGOT FORCED INTO CHAIR

BEN: I'm doing you a kindness, a great kindness. All right, all right, now if you're entirely ready?

MARGOT: No! Please! No! In heaven's name! No!

SHADOW: Don't touch that switch, Falkenberg!

BEN: Who--? Who's that? Who spoke?

SHADOW: This is the Shadow.

BEN: The Shadow? There's no shadow in this room. It's all bright lights and beautiful current.

SHADOW: (LAUGHS)

BEN: Stop laughing.

SHADOW: What a fool you are. Do you love death so dearly that you want to die?

BEN: Oh, no. I don't want to die. I wouldn't be able to continue with my executions.

SHADOW: But you will die -- for the murder of three people in this house.

BEN: No, no -- not me. There'll be no one to tell. No one will know. After this pretty girl dies, no one will live to tell.

SHADOW: The Shadow knows, Ben. The Shadow knows the truth.

BEN: Where are you? Come out and fight.

SHADOW: You'll be brought to justice, Ben.

BEN: I will not!

SHADOW: You'll pay for your crimes, Ben. There is no escape.

BEN: If I could find you, I'd be safe. I would.

SHADOW: There is no escape, Ben. You'll burn for murder! You'll burn!

BEN: Burn? Yes! Yes, burn! I have my own switchboard.

SOUND: BEN'S FOOTSTEPS TO WIRES

SHADOW: Don't touch those wires!

BEN: This current has served me all my life. It'll serve me in death.

SHADOW: Stop!

BEN: (BIG DEATH SCREAM)

MUSIC: BIG ACCENT AND BRIDGE

SOUND: CAR INTERIOR ... DRIVING

CRANSTON: (LIGHTLY) How are you two back there? Cold?

WINDSOR: Aw, we're fine, Cranston. Don't worry about Jane.

MARGOT: You seem to be doing all of that, Windsor. (CHUCKLES)

CRANSTON: Too bad he hasn't got three arms. Looks like he's having trouble holding onto Jane and the money at the same time.

JANE: (AMUSED) I've got the money.

CRANSTON: Ah-ha!

WINDSOR: I can't get over old Falkenberg hiding up in that execution chamber with a hundred thousand dollars all these years.

JANE: Faking his death so that people would be lured into his "death house."

CRANSTON: Well, the scandal of the bribe and his dismissal must have really snapped his mind.

MARGOT: I think the most ironic part was the way he died by electrocution himself.

CRANSTON: Oh, he wasn't electrocuted, Margot.

MARGOT: Wasn't electrocuted?

CRANSTON: No.

MARGOT: He was. I saw him die.

CRANSTON: Not from electrocution.

MARGOT: He was electrocuted. He staggered against the control panel, grabbed the live wires, and was killed instantly.

CRANSTON: Not by electricity. By shock.

MARGOT: What do you mean?

CRANSTON: You remember the blizzard?

MARGOT: Mm hm.

CRANSTON: The phone and power lines were down. There wasn't any current in the house. Those wires were dead.

MARGOT: But, Lamont, he--

CRANSTON: He died from the shock of his own imagination, Margot. Ben Falkenberg was killed by his belief in his own death trap.

MUSIC: CURTAIN

ANNOUNCER: Now let me present Blue Coal's distinguished heating authority, John Barclay.

BARCLAY: Thank you, André Baruch, and good evening, friends. Many people think we are having an abnormal winter. The United States Weather Bureau, however, reports temperatures so far this winter are entirely normal. So you can expect this kind of weather any year. And government experts tell us, too, that we can expect a continued shortage for several years of certain types of fuel. So here's important news. Now you can have completely automatic heat in your home with a hard coal burner stoker and save up to fifty percent of the cost of other fuels. Yes, hard coal stokers are easy to get. Call the nearest Blue Coal dealer tomorrow. He'll be glad to assist you in making arrangements to install a dependable automatic anthracite stoker in your home. I thank you.

MUSIC: FILLS A PAUSE ... THEN IN BG

ANNOUNCER: This story is copyrighted by Street and Smith Publications, Incorporated. The characters, names, places, and plot are fictitious. Any similarity to persons living or dead is purely coincidental. Again next week, the Shadow will demonstrate that--

SHADOW: The weed of crime bears bitter fruit. Crime does not pay. The Shadow knows. (LAUGHS)

MUSIC: UP AND OUT

ANNOUNCER: Next week -- same time, same station -- your friendly Blue Coal dealer brings you another strange and thrilling adventure in the Shadow's daring battle against the forces of evil. The Shadow is presented by the D. L. & W. Coal Company, distributors of Blue Coal. Lamont Cranston is played by Bret Morrison, Margot by Grace Matthews. Your announcer is André Baruch. Remember, it's Blue Coal for finest heating service. It's Blue Coal for finest modern equipment. It's Blue Coal for the best home heat money can buy.

MUSIC: TAG ... THEN IN BG, TILL END

ANNOUNCER: This week, the whole country is celebrating the thirty-third anniversary of the founding of the modern United States Coast Guard. Congratulations, Coast Guard!

SOUND: APPLAUSE