

ADULT FICTION

PROSE – ENGLISH MYSTERY

SWA-MY1 United States 1980

CAVERNS OF DEATH

SW – Fiction – Radio Play – Mystery

Scr: (?)

Rts: Radio Spirits Inc.

Perf: Orsen **WELLS** (The Shadow)

Margot **STEVENSON** (Margo Lane)

Bill **JOHNSTONE**

Prod. Co: Murray Hill Radio Theater

Air Date: Sept. 11, 1938

Time: 24:05

1. Original LP: THE SHADOW – CAVERNS OF DEATH

Golden Age SA 2

12" 33rpm

2. LP: THE SHADOW ANTHOLOGY – THE MURRAY HILL RADIO THEATER (1980)

Murray Hill Radio Theatre S55111

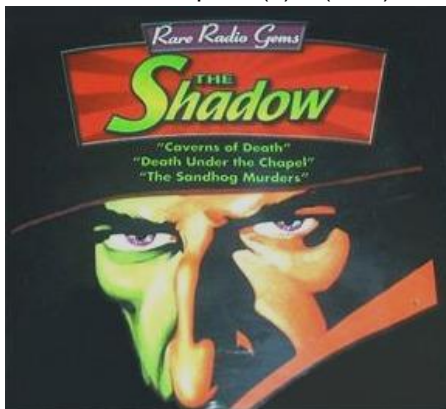
12" 33rpm (17XLPs) (Disc 2 – Sd 1 – Bd 1)

3. Reissue on CD: RARE RADIO GEMS – THE SHADOW (2000)

GAA 49919 (3XCDs) (Disc 1 – Tk 1)

4. Reissue on Boxed Set CD: THE SHADOW (3-Hour Collector's Edition) (2003)

Radio Spirits (?) (Tk 1)



Notes: This episode of The Shadow was originally broadcast on September 11, 1938. The radio drama always opened with – “Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows! (Wicked laugh).” From 1930-1954, the wealthy Lamont Cranston was one of the best-known characters on radio, using his mystical powers to fight crime. The only person who knew The Shadow’s true identity was his ‘friend and companion, the lovely Margot Lane.’” (Anon. n.d)

“*The Shadow* radio program made its debut on the CBS network in 1930... In 1937 *The Shadow* was elevated to the level of nearly-high art when 21-year old Orson Welles took on the role, to which he brought a desperate, breathless, almost Shakespearean quality that still sets his episodes apart from any that came before or after his run on the series.” (Yronwode 1994)

About this episode one critic said – “A so-so episode about a cavern, and some death. Not really up to par with the best Shadow fair.” (Cassard, 2005)

During a cave tour, several students fall down a pit when the rail gives way. When a rescue team goes down, they find no bodies. Lamont Cranston (The Shadow) and Margo Lane investigate and discover a

secret ruby mine deep below the caverns where the students have been kidnapped and are being used as slave labor.

A more detailed summary was posted at [shadowsanctum](#) and a bit of the dialogue from the disc has been added to spice things up –

“Professor Morley takes his class of 17 students on a field trip to view the caverns. As part of the tour, they are taken to see a pit, known as the Temple of Vulcan due to the vapors rising from its depths. At the bottom of the pit lies a pool of water 100ft in diameter, and known to be bottomless. Excited, the students lean over the protective railing to view the area. Suddenly, to everyone's horror, the railing gives way and the students plunge into the pit. An extensive search of the pool at the bottom of the pit has revealed no bodies. (Morley: *'I should never have taken them to the cavern.'*)

“Lamont's curiosity is peaked and he decides to investigate. They arrive at the caverns and explore the area. Climbing down a rope ladder to the bottom of the pit. (Margot: *'Oh, it's dark down here.'*) They stumble across a delirious student. Lamont calls for a rope to be thrown down to lift the young man to the surface. As the student almost reaches the surface, the rope breaks and he falls to his death. A careful examination of the rope reveals that it was cut. Lamont theorizes that the student was murdered to stop him from exposing the truth behind his missing classmates. (*'Now I'm sure that this is a cave for The Shadow.'*)

“Deeper within the labyrinth of caverns a criminal known as The Boss, who wears a gas mask to hide his face, speaks with his right hand man, Bronson. Bronson was the one who had cut the rope to silence the student.... As The Boss leaves, the cook is confronted by The Shadow, who asks for his help. He tells him about the lower levels of the caverns, but before he can reveal the truth about The Boss, he is murdered by him. The Boss then turns on The Shadow and threatens him as well. The Shadow declares war on The Boss.

“Returning to Margo as Lamont, The Shadow has a theory: perhaps there was a secret doorway into the lower levels of the caverns where the students were taken after the fall. They both search for and find the door, which leads into a labyrinth. Lamont suggests that Margo remains at the door while he explores the labyrinth, that way he can find his way back by the sound of her voice. As he travels down a passage, he finds that it is getting harder to go further; all the while he calls back to Margo. Suddenly, he hears her screams and rushes back. She has been kidnapped.

“The Boss and Bronson lock Margo up in a vault. The Shadow comes to her rescue when they leave. As he frees her, they both hear the criminals talk about a mine. The Shadow tells Margo to contact the police. (Lamont: *'There's something I want to do.'* Margot: *'Do be Careful, Lamont.'* Lamont: *'I'm going to reach the village. They need our help.'*)

“The truth about the students is now brought to light: they were kidnapped to work the rich ruby mines deep within the caverns, and The Boss will get wealthy off their labor. The students are treated miserably, and are beaten if they don't cooperate...

“The Shadow arrives to save the students, but The Boss thinks he's already defeated The Shadow. The mine is filled with a gas that destroys one's willpower, which is why he and Bronson wear gas masks. If they wait long enough, The Shadow will lose his mind-clouding power and become visible. The Shadow counters with a revolver aimed at The Boss. (The Shadow: *'As of tonight you'll live in the penitentiary for the rest of your life.'*) The Boss pulls out a match and threatens to blow up the mine and everyone in it (as the gas is explosive). Even if The Shadow shoots him, the spark from the firing gun will ignite the gas. (The Shadow: *'I advise you to put that match away.'*) Quickly, The Shadow, still invisible, swipes the matches from The Boss. (*'I'll just relieve you of those matches.'*) Gaffney (one of The Boss' men) kills both The Boss and Bronson.

“After their deaths, Gaffney exposes The Boss as none other than Professor Morley. The Shadow tells him that the law will be lenient on him despite his murder of the criminals. The students are saved.” Finis

Ref: Anon. n.d., The Shadow, The Caverns of Death, [audible](#)

Anon. 2014, The Shadow, Pulp fiction & Radio, [Wikipedia](#)

Cassard, Dylan 2005, The Shadow (Collector's Edition), Customer's Review, [Amazon](#)

The Shadow Anthology – Murray Hill Radio Theater, [etsy](#)

The Shadow, Caverns of Death, Synopsis, [shadowsanctum](#)

The Shadow, No. 32, Caverns of Death, Internet Archive, (25:03), [archive](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)

The Shadow, Caverns of Death, (24:06), [YouTube](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)

The Shadow – Master of Darkness, Site Map, [shadowsanctum](#)

The Shadow, Radio History, [shadowsanctum](#)

The Shadow Radio Shows, [shadowsanctum](#)

Yronwode, Catherine 1994, The Shadow, *Baby Boomers Collectibles*, Aug. 1994, p. 40-44

SWA-MY2 United States 1989

THE SUBMARINE CAVES

SW – Fiction – Radio Play – Mystery

Scr: Anthony BOUCHER & Denis GREEN

Announcer: Harry Bartell

Perf: Basil RATHBONE (Sherlock Holmes)

Nigel BRUCE (Dr. Watson)

(?) (Mrs. Reeves)

Harry Bartell (Dr. Obervals)

Prod. Co: Mutual Broadcasting System; Hollywood, CA

Prod: (CDs) Ken Greenwald, Richard Mullins, & John Tefteller

Air Date: Mar. 4, 1946

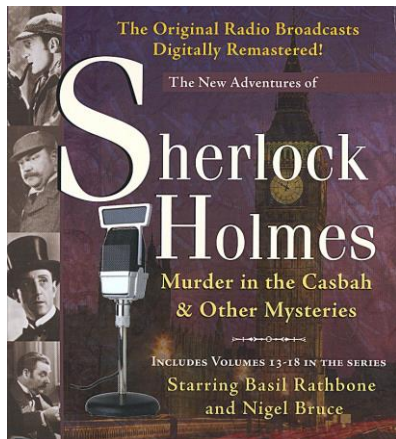
Time: 29:40

CD: THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES –
Volumes 13-18 in the series

Audio Editions 0-7435-5102-8 (6XCDs) (Disc 4 – Tks 7 to 13)



B. RATHBONE & N. BRUCE



Notes: A 1946 radio drama presentation of one episode in the newly written series based on the characters created by Arthur Conan Doyle. We are told that “The Adventure of the Bruce Partington Plans suggested this story,” but the only resemblance with that original story is that it talks about plans for a submarine. Musical bridges between chapters here are provided by Dean Fowler on organ. Unfortunately, the way the tracks on CD4 have been broken down the start of this episode is buried within Track 7 at 1:21. You’d really be better off listening to the whole tale online (see below).

This broadcast just followed World War II and the story involves suspicion of German espionage. Dr. Watson gives some background on the Isle of Garth, a fictitious isle in the Channel Islands. Holmes declares that whoever controls the Channel controls England. On the isle of Garth there is an “interior cavern accessible only through underwater channels.” On arriving at the island Holmes and Watson

learn of the death of Martha Horn, the senior member of the Horn family that own the island. There is suspicion that she may have been poisoned. Holmes suggests that they take a “tour of the subterranean caverns for which this island has become internationally famous.” Watson objects – “But, Holmes, why do we want to go stumbling around in a lot of damp and smelly caves?” “For the exercise..., old fellow.” Mrs. Reeves takes Holmes to the Giant Cavern and he says – “It’s a natural submarine dry-dock hewn out of the rocks.” Mrs. Reeves replies: “Only smugglers knew the entrance that leads to the cave. The first seignior of Garth found a cache of untold wealth hidden there.” A bottle of Calvados brandy is on a natural shelf and she offers Holmes a glass. “This cavern is completely inaccessible from the outer sea, I presume,” Mrs. Reeves: “Completely, unless ships can swim under the sea... Would you care to explore a little deeper?” Meanwhile Watson, who is with Dr. Obervals, calls to the others in the cave. The doctor tells him – “The next cavern is already cut off by the rising tide... In a few hours the tide will recede. They are in no danger.” Holmes is groggy from a drug in the brandy. Mrs. Reeves: “We are cut off by the tide... I cannot get you back by 3 o’clock.” (Three o’clock was the ultimate hour after which it will no longer be possible to test for arsenic poisoning.) Holmes asks – “Mrs. Reeves are we still trapped by the tide? You attempt to give Garth as a submarine base to Germany.” Finally she says – “We can leave now. We could have left at any time. There is another secret entrance that is above the tide level. I merely had to make you overstay the hour of your test.” But Watson has obeyed orders and has made the test, which proved positive. Mrs. Reeves jumps to her death from the balcony of the Horn mansion. Watson concludes – “In after years the island proved to be an invaluable submarine base for England.”

There are no known sea caves in the Channel Islands that could harbor a submarine. Devil’s Hole on the Isle of Jersey might be able to receive a very small sub but only at very high tide. More than one cave on the Isle of Sark is cut off at high tide and cannot be entered. The largest of the Sark caves are the Gouliot Caves on the west coast where some passages can only be visited at spring low tides. (Latrobe 1994)

Ref: Anon. n.d., *A Short History of the Priory and Devil's Hole*, The Priory, St. Mary, Jersey, p. 1-2
Latrobe, G. & L. 1914 (1994), *Guide to Sark*, Trace-Lejins Publishing, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, 58p.
Malin, H. Noel & Hume, Frank G. n.d., *Sark, A Practical Guide*, T.B. Banks, Guernsey, 36p.
The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Supporting Cast, [rathboneandbruce](#)
The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes – Volume. 3, Released 2011, [audioeditions](#)
Sherlock Holmes Adventures 41, Submarine Caves, (with Petri Wine Ads), (29:51), [podbay](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)
Sherlock Holmes, The Submarine Caves, (38:32), [greatdetectives](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)

caveinspiredmusic.com