

*“As a child, I feared the dark in my closet.
As a man, I fear the dark in myself.”*

HOUNDED

Don't Be Afraid, Be Disturbed

A Telling Experience by David Novak

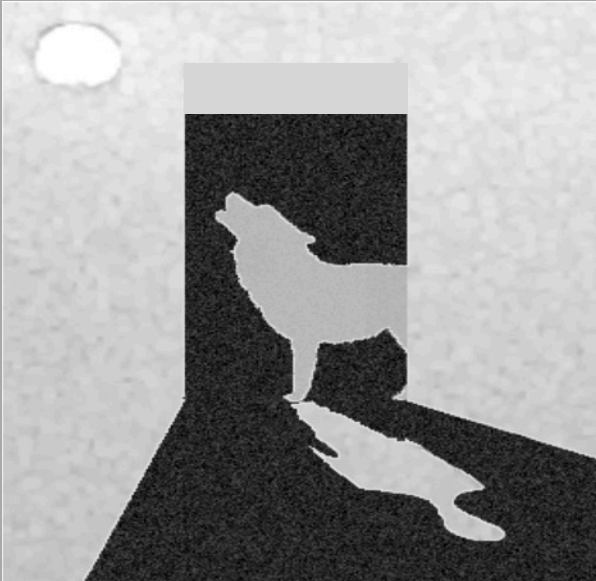
Prologue: Light to Dark

Part I The Seizer

intermission

Part II The Shade

Epilogue: The Ship of Death



Production Notes

Format: 2 Acts Running Time: 90-100 minutes

The set consists of a large armchair with reading lamp, a writing desk with lamp and laptop computer and a simple wood chair. Some books and magazines are scattered across the desk and one large book is face down on the armchair. Soft general lighting is used for the playing area defined by the furniture, onstage fixtures supplement the lighting and a deep blue light casts shadows in the background.

Staging can be adapted for proscenium, thrust or arena.

The action begins with Mr. Novak addressing the audience. He then segues into different stories.

Throughout the First Act the lights get dimmer, concluding with “The Hound” (Lovecraft) illuminated only by a reading lamp. At moments during the program, a “fireside” story is told before a small flashlight; an email story is shared in the glow of a computer screen. The Second Act similarly begins light and grows dim, concluding with “The Ship of Death” (Lawrence).

*“Our shadow is part of an even larger shadow;
some cacodemoniacal assemblage of souls growing
out of our dim past; a family ghost waiting for us to
join it.”*

The Story

The core story of the program concerns the petit mal seizures David had as a child and the night terrors that were associated with them. During these times, shadow figures attacked him and seemed to be reaching inside him for his soul. He named these creatures ‘the grabbers.’ A turning point occurred when a spectral hound stood guard beside his bed and kept the grabbers at bay. These events are presented in a context of stories that make reference to a boundary between life and death, light and dark, ‘grabbers’ and hounds. The program opens with a humorous story about the Mula Nasruddin “looking in the light for the treasure he lost in the dark.” This presents the premise of ‘looking in the dark’ which leads to memory and mythology and a darkening of the room. Mr. Novak shares different traditions in which dogs figure as threshold guardians and recounts stories that make reference to figures like ‘the grabbers’.



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