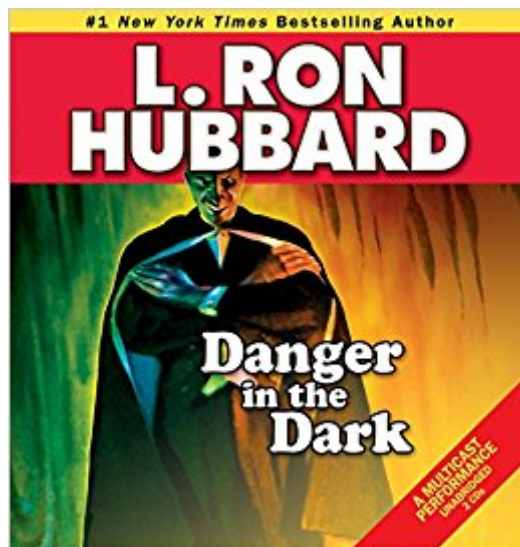




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Danger In The Dark (Stories From The Golden Age) (Science Fiction & Fantasy Short Stories Collection)



Synopsis

Fortune hunter Billy Newman is not a man of great strength or physical courage. Like a young Johnny Depp, he gets by on his wit, wiles and good looks. And he's had quite a good run striking gold in the Philippines and buying his very own island in the South Seas. . . .But there's trouble in paradise, and Billy's in the thick of it. The island's crops are failing. The island's people are dying. And the island's owner Billy is taking the heat. Why? Because he's angered the 75-foot-tall big-boss god of the island. 75-foot tall? To Billy it's a laughable superstition until he finds out just how serious the islanders are. They're out to sacrifice a beautiful young woman to the supposed god. The only way Billy can save her is to humor the locals and pretend to take the spirit on. But the joke may be on Billy as he has to screw up some very real courage to face the very real Danger in the Dark. Hubbard lived on Guam in 1927, while his father was assigned to the US naval station there. In his journals he describes a local superstition: "the great cheese ghost" named Tadamona. He wrote that the devil had the shape of a man, attained the height of coconut trees and was the cause behind all sickness and disease. To dispel the superstition, Ron descended into Tadamona's supposed abode, a great underground stream an encounter reflected in *Danger in the Dark*. Includes the fantasy adventures *The Room*, in which Uncle Toby goes to his room, never to return, leaving it to his nephew to explore the magic and mystery of the place, and *He Didn't Like Cats*, the story of one man's feline phobia and the hauntingly high price he pays for it.

Book Information

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Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 6 and up

Customer Reviews

"This is a title in an ongoing series of full-cast audiobooks featuring stories from the golden age of science fiction written by L. Ron Hubbard. The production quality is simply excellent, with sound effects and a full cast performing all the roles. The stories are pulp fiction—churned out quickly for low-paying magazines of the time. All three in the collection are fantasy tales. In *Danger in the Dark* (1939) a man named Billy Newman, confronts a god in the Philippines. *The Room* (1942) is a ghost story, and *He Didn't Like Cats* (1942) is about a man who doesn't like cats, and pays for it. The packaging is attractive and includes a booklet filled with pictures and biographical information on the author." **AudioFile** "Originally published in 1939, this Hubbard tale takes listeners to the South Seas, where Billy Newman has purchased his own island at a bargain rate. Unfortunately, the island is dominated by natives who believe he is the source of their ill will. His only choice is to sacrifice a woman to their god or await their wrath against him. Read by a large cast, the story features brilliant performances by Karen Black, Jim Meskimen, Noelle North, R.F. Daley and Christina Huntington. The recording is chock-full of background sound effects that create an almost theatrical atmosphere and also features a rousing musical score. Two of Hubbard's other short stories *The Room* and *He Didn't Like Cats* also get full-cast treatments in this package." **Publishers Weekly**

With 19 New York Times bestsellers and more than 230 million copies of his works in circulation, L. Ron Hubbard is among the most acclaimed and widely read authors of our time. As a leading light of American Pulp Fiction through the 1930s and 1940s, he is further among the most influential authors of the modern age. Indeed, from Ray Bradbury to Stephen King, there is scarcely a master of imaginative tales who has not paid tribute to L. Ron Hubbard.

Danger in the Dark is the fourth audiobook I have reviewed from Galaxy Press's *Stories from the Golden Age*. In which all their titles are by L. Ron Hubbard. Many may have different opinions about

him because he was the founder of the religion Scientology, but many forget that he was a talented writer. He wrote more than 150 stories during the 1930s and 1940s, mainly being published in Pulp fiction magazines of the time. He published a wide variety of short stories, such as air adventure, sea adventure, far-flung adventure, mysteries, and tales from the orient, science fiction, fantasies, and westerns. The audiobook consists of three stories, *Danger in the Dark*, *The Room*, and *He Didn't Like Cats*," on 2 discs. The main character in *Danger in the Dark*, which was first published in the May 1939 issue of *Unknown*, is Billy Newman who becomes rich when he strikes gold while mining in the Philippines. He may be rich, but he likes a good bargain as anyone else does. He buys a South Seas island for a low price. Billy believes that he is the luckiest person alive, but the island comes with another price. Soon the crops start dying and the local natives become ill. The tribal chiefs tell Billy that he has angered the island's 75-foot god Tadamona because he bought the island, as the island can not be owned by anyone. The only way to stop the Tadamona is a sacrifice of a young girl. Billy tells them not to go to that extreme and to give him 24 hours to cure their ill ones. Now Billy doesn't actually believe in the god, and dares the god to show himself, but to Billy's surprise Tadamona does exist. Uncle Tobey, a veterinarian, goes missing in *The Room*. He is known to go missing for days at a time, but after sixteen days everyone knew that he was not coming home. He was also known for spending countless hours or even days in his room, in which his nephew Joe has now inherited. Joe walks with a limp and plans on taking over the veterinarian business and help his Aunt Cynthia with the farm. There was one rule when he inherited the room; no one else can ever go in it except for him. He found this a bit odd, but then again, his uncle was odd. As soon as he enters the room he learns that it is a gateway to things of the unimaginable. *He Didn't Like Cats* is simple story about a Washington D.C. man named Jacob Finley who doesn't like cats! He hates them with a passion. One day he gives a little nudge to a stray cat causing it get run over by two vehicles, but the cat doesn't die right away as it has a slow agonizing death that Jacob witnesses. Unknowingly, his hatred for cats will become his own destruction. These are three odd little tales that I enjoyed listening to. Once again each one reminded me of the *Twilight Zone* and *Tales from the Crypt*! I'm a cat lover, so I instantly disliked Jacob Finley, but let me just say that the cat gets even. The talented voice cast includes Karen Black (*Easy Rider*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Day of the Locust* and *Five Easy Pieces*) R.F. Daley, Christina Huntington, Jim Meskimen, Gino Montesinos, Noelle North and Josh R. Thompson. *Danger in the Dark* and the other two tales were a delight to listen to and I recommend them to other fantasy fans. Disclaimer: I received the audiobook free from Galaxy Press.

I'm sorry to say that I haven't read any of Hubbard's work aside from 'Battlefield Earth'. I'm also sorry that many people haven't read his works, but associate his name more with Scientology (he founded it) & all of the notions (negative & positive) that go along with it. It's far too easy for people to forget that first & foremost, Hubbard was a skilled writer. This book reminded me of that. There are three stories in this volume, all of which have supernatural tones to them. The first story is 'Danger in the Dark', a tale about a man who bought himself an island, but didn't take into account that the deity of the natives may actually exist. The second story is 'The Room', & is about a man who inherits a strange room from his missing & enigmatic uncle- a room where strange & mysterious things happen. The final story is 'He Didn't Like Cats', a dark tale about a man who doesn't like cats... and is in danger of paying the price for that hate. This book was a very quick read, & I devoured it within an hour or so of picking it up. I wasn't quite sure if I'd like it or not, since I tend to go more for mystery or urban fantasy, but I really enjoyed this book. The stories in it were clearly written in another time, but the basic idea of them comes across very well. I also thought that this would make an excellent gift for those little readers who have started to read the genre (sci-fi/fantasy/horror) & want to get into the more familiar names in the field. (My nephew will love this book, I'm sure!) I also have to give kudos for the cover- it puts me in the exact mind frame for this type of book & brings to mind the pulp fiction age of yore. It's absolutely perfect. I really can't say enough good things about this slender volume. It's not a very thick book, but what it lacks in length it makes up in quality. For those who are curious about the man behind the book, there's a short biography of Hubbard during what the book editors describe as the "Golden age of fiction". Again, this book will be a must have for fans of Hubbard's work & this is what he is best at- creating stories that tickle our imaginations!

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