

DARK ADVENTURE RADIO THEATRE:  
THE FACTS IN THE CASE OF M. VALDEMAR

Written by  
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Based on "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar"  
By Edgar Allan Poe

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SFX: static, radio tuning, snippet of '30s song, more tuning, static... as the receiver tunes into the game.

MARTIN

...the last game the Yanks will play here this season. The rain is picking up again now. And here's the pitch low, outside - ball two. Turbeville is back on the mound - you can really see the mud's accumulating there by second base. Walker's back at the plate, here's the wind up -

CRACK as Walker hits the ball - the fans ROAR.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It's heading straight into center field, where Peters makes the scoop and throws to Greenberg at first and he's out!

Fans CHEER.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It looks like the catcher, Earle Brucker, has words for the umpire. Yes, now the umpires are conferring. It's quite a downpour, I won't be surprised if they call this one. We saw a rain delay Friday when Russell Peters poled his four bagger - and yes, ladies and gentlemen, it's over.

Fans GRUMBLE.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

The umpire's called the game and fans here at Navin Field will be getting their rain checks. Well, after three innings, that's going to do it for today's live broadcast from Detroit. This is Martin Gaspee signing off. Now back to your local station--

A burst of STATIC. Pause. Distant WHISPERER. Someone BUMPS the mic stand.

ANNOUNCER

And we're live here at the, uh,  
station... after the ball game  
between the Yankees and the Tigers  
was called for rain.

(stalling)

That was some game there. And quite  
a downpour in Detroit. Yes. Yes,  
indeed. And now ladies and  
gentlemen we've got...

Frantic WHISPERS off. Did he say "Dark Adventure"? Something  
about "not enough time"? The RUSTLE OF PAPERS.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

We're now going to present a music  
program of Tchaikovsky's--

Negative WHISPERS off.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

But first... Um, we are...  
broadcasting live...

Dark Adventure Radio THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Oh, thank God. Tales of intrigue,  
adventure, and the mysterious  
occult that will stir your  
imagination and make your very  
blood run cold.

MUSIC CRESCENDO. PAGES RUSTLE AS SOMEONE HANDS THE ANNOUNCER  
COPY TO READ.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

This is Dark Adventure Radio  
Theatre, with your host, Creighton  
Cobb presenting a special  
abbreviated episode: Edgar Allan  
Poe's "The Facts in the Case of M.  
Valdemar".

THEME MUSIC DIMINISHES AND EPISODE MUSIC BEGINS.

CREIGHTON COBB

Edgar Allan Poe - America's  
greatest author of tales of mystery  
and the imagination, presents a  
disturbing tale in which the  
boundaries of science and medicine  
journey to an unthinkable extreme.

(MORE)

CREIGHTON COBB (CONT'D)  
 Can a bold doctor's experiments in  
 mesmerism stave off the very forces  
 of death - or will the mortal  
 reckoning come due in an especially  
 ghastly manner?

MUSIC punctuation.

CREIGHTON COBB (CONT'D)  
 But first, a word from our sponsor.

A few piano notes from the BILE BEANS JINGLE.

CREIGHTON COBB (CONT'D)  
 Wise men say: "you are what you  
 eat". But what does that mean for  
 the modern man? Does our every meal  
 contain sufficient vegetables,  
 meats, vitamins and minerals to  
 promote good health? You might be  
 surprised to learn - it doesn't  
 matter! Not if you take Bile Beans  
 daily. These delightful tablets  
 ensure that your diet is healthy  
 and well rounded, no matter what  
 you've eaten the rest of the day.  
 Even if you've only had coffee and  
 a slice a pie, a daily dose of Bile  
 Beans ensures that you're getting  
 more than 107% of health-giving  
 nutrients. Not sure? Buy a bottle  
 of Bile Beans and before you know  
 it, your health will blossom.

ANNOUNCER  
 Nutritionists nationwide know Bile  
 Beans taken daily normalize  
 nutrients naturally.

MUSIC TRANSITION. WIND picks up and LIGHT RAIN.

CREIGHTON COBB  
 And now, Dark Adventure Radio  
 Theatre presents Edgar Allan Poe's  
 "The Facts in the Case of M.  
 Valdemar".

Lead in MUSIC.

CREIGHTON COBB (CONT'D)  
 As many of you may have heard, the  
 extraordinary case of M. Valdemar  
 has excited discussion in  
 newspapers cross the globe.

(MORE)

CREIGHTON COBB (CONT'D)

It would have been a miracle had it not -- especially under the circumstances. The involved parties strove to keep the affair from the public until it could be properly investigated. Sadly, a garbled or exaggerated account made its way into society, and became the source of many unpleasant misrepresentations; and, very naturally, of a great deal of disbelief.

One man was at the heart of this astonishing tale, and our programme has spared no expense in bringing him here today to share what listeners crave most - the truth - disturbing though it may be. May I present, Dr. Michael Quinlan of--

QUINLAN

I'll stop you there, Mr. Cobb. In telling this improbable tale, I in no way wish to tarnish the reputation of the medical institution involved.

CREIGHTON COBB

I understand, doctor. Can you give us a full account of this case?

QUINLAN

I can, and I will.

CREIGHTON COBB

The unvarnished truth, replete with disturbing details?

QUINLAN

I fear this story can't be recounted without them.

CREIGHTON COBB

Please, proceed.

QUINLAN

It began when I received a letter at my office which set off a heated discussion with a medical student.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

LIONEL

You're fooling yourself, Dr. Quinlan.

QUINLAN

So you've said.

LIONEL

Wasting your time.

QUINLAN

Mmm.

LIONEL

It can't be done. No one's ever done such a thing.

QUINLAN

My dear Mr. Lionel, What kind of medical student are you? The same can be said of every experimental surgical procedure, every new treatment. It's through such experiments that medicine, that science itself advances.

LIONEL

Don't go trying to sell this as science, man! This is... witchdoctory, Bohemian quackery...

QUINLAN

Are you suggesting that Mesmerism is not real?

LIONEL

Well...

QUINLAN

Shall I put you in a mesmeric trance right now? Leave you catatonic in the ladies powder room again?

LIONEL

(sheepish)

That won't be necessary. I'm not disputing that there's something to it, but this is beyond the pale.

QUINLAN

It's science! That's all! No person has ever been mesmerized in articulo mortis. Think of what we could learn! Whether a patient on the verge of expiring has any susceptibility to the magnetic influence; whether it is impaired or increased by the condition; and to what extent, or for how long a period, the encroachments of Death might be arrested by the process. And that's just the beginning.

LIONEL

You're mad. Who? Who would allow you to induce a mesmeric trance just as they're dying?

QUINLAN

I'm glad you asked. I've found a volunteer. We're going to go meet him.

LIONEL

(stunned)

You're going through with it? Who is he?

QUINLAN

My friend, M. Ernest Valdemar, of Harlem. An excellent subject actually.

LIONEL

The writer?

QUINLAN

Yes. He has a very nervous temperament, perfect for the work.

LIONEL

You've mesmerized him before?

QUINLAN

A few times. I put him to sleep with little difficulty, but was disappointed in other results. His will was at no period positively, or thoroughly, under my control, and in regard to clairvoyance, his reactions could not be relied on.

(MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

But I believe those failures are due to the disordered state of his health.

LIONEL

Why, what's wrong with him?

QUINLAN

Confirmed phthisis.

LIONEL

Poor fellow.

QUINLAN

Well yes, but his impending death is perfect. I told him of my idea. He had no philosophic objections and no relatives who would be likely to interfere. He was vividly excited about it. And his disease allows for fairly exact calculation of the time of death; and it was finally arranged between us that he would send for me about twenty-four hours before his anticipated decease.

LIONEL

You're insane. Both of you. You call yourself a doctor?

QUINLAN

Really the state medical board calls me that. Here, this note came this morning. Read it -

The RUSTLE of paper.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

And put on your coat.

LIONEL

"My Dear Dr. Quinlan,

You may as well come now. Dunham and Fenwick are agreed that I cannot hold out beyond tomorrow midnight; and I think they have hit the time very nearly.  
VALDEMAR."

Quinlan OPENS THE DOOR and goes out.



QUINLAN  
We don't have much time. Come on!

MUSICAL STING! TRANSITION MUSIC.

3 COBB TRANSITION

3

CREIGHTON COBB  
So you went to Valdemar's home?

QUINLAN  
We did. He wished to die in the  
comfort of his own bed.

4 BEDSIDE MANOR

4

Quinlan RAPS at the dying man's door. Dr. DUNHAM is loud,  
blustery and rather insufferable. Dr. FENWICK is a pointy  
little man with a pointy personality.

DUNHAM  
Enter.

The DOOR CREAKS OPEN. A CLOCK TICKS.

QUINLAN  
Good evening, Dr. Dunham, Dr.  
Fenwick.

FENWICK  
Oh, it's you.

QUINLAN  
I think you gentlemen know Mr.  
Lionel? He's in this third year--

FENWICK  
Yes, yes, of course.

LIONEL  
(embarrassed to be seen  
here by colleagues)  
Gentlemen.

M. Valdemar speaks with a surprising vigor for a man truly at  
death's door. He's having a very hard time breathing and  
COUGHS occasionally.

M. VALDEMAR  
Quinlan. You got my note.

QUINLAN

Would that it were under better circumstances. And this is -

M. VALDEMAR

Lionel, yes, I heard. What kind of name is Lionel? Bah, never mind, I'll jot it down in my notebook, look it up later.

QUINLAN

You're looking... well.

M. VALDEMAR

Ah, you amuse, Quinlan. But not to worry, these two assure me my end is nigh.

QUINLAN

Ah. Mr. Lionel, would you mind sitting for a moment with our patient while I have a word with the doctors?

LIONEL

Not at all.  
(awkwardly)  
A pleasure to make your acquaintance.

M. VALDEMAR

(coughing)  
Lionel? That's not French is it?  
Never cared much for the French...

His voice fades away as the other doctors STEP OUT for a more private colloquy.

QUINLAN

Gentlemen, you're confident Valdemar's death is imminent?

DUNHAM

Are you blind, Quinlan? His face is leaden. The eyes utterly lustreless. His emaciation is now so extreme that his cheek bones are breaking through the skin. His pulse is barely perceptible.

QUINLAN

All the same, he seems surprisingly alert and energetic.

FENWICK

The left lung has been in a semi-  
osseous state for months. The upper  
portion of the right is also  
partially ossified, while the lower  
region is merely a mass of purulent  
tubercles, running one into  
another. Several extensive  
perforations exist and there is at  
least one permanent adhesion to the  
ribs.

DUNHAM

These changes in the right lobe are  
recent date. There were no signs of  
ossification in my examination a  
month ago. The adhesion appears to  
have manifested during the past  
three days.

FENWICK

Independent of the phthisis, I  
suspect an aneurism of the aorta;  
but the osseous symptoms have  
precluded an exact diagnosis.

QUINLAN

How long do you think he has?

DUNHAM

It's, what, seven fifteen on  
Saturday? I'd wager he'll be done  
by midnight tomorrow.

FENWICK

I should take your wager. I'd say  
eight p.m. tomorrow. There's really  
nothing left for us to do but bid  
him a final farewell.

QUINLAN

I'll attend to him now. If you  
would be so kind, gentlemen, would  
you be willing to come by at ten  
tomorrow night to check on him?

FENWICK

Why? What are you playing at,  
Quinlan?

QUINLAN

Of course if he's passed by then,  
I'll send word and spare you a  
trip.

DUNHAM

I suppose so, though I hardly see the point.

FENWICK

Hm. Shall we offer our farewell?

FOOTSTEPS back to Valdemar's room.

DUNHAM

Valdemar, Dr. Quinlan here has graciously agreed to tend to your last needs. I lament there's nothing left we can do for you.

FENWICK

Courage, Valdemar, and prayer. Try to be at peace.

M. VALDEMAR

Gentlemen, I thank you for your services and my executor shall attend to your compensation.

DUNHAM

Very kind of you. Farewell, sir.

They GO.

M. VALDEMAR

Good riddance, those two.

LIONEL

Mr. Valdemar here confirms he's quite prepared to undergo your experiment, Dr. Quinlan.

QUINLAN

Of course he is.

M. VALDEMAR

For the sake of science, eh, Quinlan?

QUINLAN

Mankind's quest for knowledge.

M. VALDEMAR

Ay, there's the rub,  
For in that sleep of death what  
dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this  
mortal coil,  
Must give us pause.

QUINLAN

Indeed.

M. VALDEMAR

So, when do we begin?

QUINLAN

I fear if we begin too soon, the mesmeric effect may wear off before the actual onset of death. Let us plan for eight o'clock tomorrow. Lionel, you'll join us then? I'd like you to document the proceedings.

LIONEL

Yes, of course.

QUINLAN

I'll stay with you until then, my old friend.

Transition MUSIC.

5 COBB TRANSITION

5

QUINLAN

I stayed the night with him, and remained into the next evening.

CREIGHTON COBB

You were a devoted physician.

QUINLAN

Would that were true. I fear I was devoted to the notion of my experiment. A patient like M. Valdemar does not come along often.

CREIGHTON COBB

(troubled)

I see.

QUINLAN

The following evening, Lionel arrived shortly before eight.

6 ENTRANCED

6

Lionel ENTERS.

QUINLAN

Ah, Lionel, thank God you're here.  
I was afraid you were going to miss  
it.

LIONEL

How is he?

QUINLAN

No time for that. Quickly. Get your  
pen and paper, take this down.

(to Valdemar)

Could you please give Mr. Lionel  
your statement.

M. VALDEMAR

(at death's door)

Let it hereby be known that I am  
entirely willing to be mesmerized.

(a dry hacking cough)

I fear you have deferred it too  
long, Quinlan.

QUINLAN

No, no, right on time. All you need  
do is relax and watch the motions  
of my hands.

MUSICAL THRILL OF MESMERISM being performed!

LIONEL

Good lord - I still say it's hocus  
pocus....

QUINLAN

The magnetic flow induced by the  
lateral motions worked well with  
him previously. And now, of course,  
he's in a weakened state. Check the  
pulse, will you?

LIONEL

Weak, but present. What now?

QUINLAN

He's still alive. We have to wait.

THE CLOCK TICKS. TRANSITION MUSIC.

7 COBB TRANSITION

7

QUINLAN

His condition deteriorated rather rapidly.

CREIGHTON COBB

The poor fellow.

QUINLAN

Indeed. Just before ten, Fenwick and Dunham returned.

8 DEATH MAY DIE

8

KNOCKING at the chamber door. Fenwick and Dunham ENTER.

QUINLAN

Doctors, thank you for your punctuality.

FENWICK

Is he still...?

QUINLAN

Just barely.

FENWICK

(to Dunham)

You owe me a dollar.

M. Valdemar BREATHES STERTOROUSLY.

DUNHAM

Yes, the death rattle. Won't be long now.

QUINLAN

Gentleman, I have induced a preliminary mesmeric state in Valdemar. I propose to put him into a full mesmeric trance just before the moment of his final expiration.

FENWICK

Hmph. At this point I don't suppose it makes any difference what you do to him.

DUNHAM

The death agony is already underway. I have no objection.

QUINLAN

Could you note that in your account, Mr. Lionel.

(to the patient)

Valdemar? I want you to look directly into my eyes now.

(to Lionel)

Watch, now I change to a downward gesture, like so.

MESMERIC MUSIC. Valdemar's LABORED BREATHING goes quiet and then is punctuated by an OCCASIONAL GASP.

FENWICK

Decrease in stertorous breaths.

QUINLAN

Pulse, Lionel?

LIONEL

I... I can't make out a steady beat.

DUNHAM

Not unusual at the time of passing, Mr. Lionel.

FENWICK

The heart's action becomes spasmodic, as does respiration.

LIONEL

So, what do we--

DUNHAM

We wait with him, until the actual end.

LIONEL

I've been around cadavers, you know, I just haven't been with someone when they actually--

FENWICK

Extremities cold to the touch.

Valdemar sucks in ANOTHER BREATH.

QUINLAN

Come on, now. Focus Valdemar. Do you hear me?



DUNHAM

I say, Quinlan, what are you hoping  
he'll do?

QUINLAN

I just need an unequivocal sign  
that he's fully under the mesmeric  
influence. Ah--

Dunham, Fenwick and Lionel all START at a sudden change in  
Valdemar.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

There! You see the glassy roll of  
the eyes? You only see that in  
cases of sleep walking and  
mesmerism. I'll endeavor now to  
close his eyes by my gesture.

Flare of MESMER MUSIC.

LIONEL

He's blinking - they're closed!

QUINLAN

(exerting effort)

Yes. Let's try one last thing to  
confirm. This gesture will instill  
a rigidity to the limbs.

A quick phrase of MESMERIC MUSIC.

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Doctors, will you flex the  
patient's arms at the elbows?

FENWICK

(with effort)

No. Fully inflexible. Rigid.

LIONEL

This side too.

DUNHAM

(a little impressed)

Well, you've done it, Quinlan. He  
appears to be in a full mesmeric  
trance.

LIONEL

Well done, sir.

FENWICK

Honestly, I can't believe the man's still alive. Fascinating.

LIONEL

You look exhausted. Perhaps you should sit down, sir.

QUINLAN

It's been a long day.

DUNHAM

You should get some rest, Quinlan. I'll stay with your patient tonight. You come back in the morning.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

9

COBB TRANSITION

9

QUINLAN

I went home for a few hours rest. But I was eager to return to monitor Valdemar's condition.

CREIGHTON COBB

To see if he remained in the mesmeric state through the night?

QUINLAN

Precisely.

10

WAKEY, WAKEY

10

The door CREAKS OPEN.

LIONEL

(yawning)

Ah, good morning, sir.

QUINLAN

Well, how is he?

DUNHAM

Much the same. No movement, pulse still imperceptible. Breathing is faint but present. The limbs are as rigid and as cold as marble. You can see for yourself he's obviously not...

QUINLAN

No, no he's not. Let me see here.

Eerie MESMERIC MUSIC.

DUNHAM

What's that you're doing?

QUINLAN

I move my arm gently to and fro  
above his in an effort to--

LIONEL

He's moving! See there, his arm!  
Back and forth!

DUNHAM

Great scot! But how? Doesn't it  
require a suggestion...

QUINLAN

(scoffing)

No, that's hypnotism. This isn't  
the same thing at all. This is a  
direct manipulation of the vital  
force.

DUNHAM

To what end?

QUINLAN

I'm hoping I can induce him to  
speak.

DUNHAM

Do you think that wise?

QUINLAN

Valdemar. Are you asleep?

LIONEL

Look. There's a slight tremor in  
his upper lip.

QUINLAN

Are you asleep?

(pause)

Valdemar, are you asleep?

EERIE BACKGROUND MUSIC creeps in underneath the MESMER MUSIC.

LIONEL

He's shivering. His eyes, they're--

M. VALDEMAR

(a barely audible whisper)  
Yes; asleep now. Do not wake me! --  
let me die so!

QUINLAN

(hushed to the others)  
Look. His limbs remain rigid, but  
the right arm still follows my  
movements.  
(to Valdemar)  
Do you still feel pain in your  
chest?

M. VALDEMAR

No pain -- I am dying.

Awkward pause. MUSIC. The CLOCK.

QUINLAN

Perhaps we should let him rest and  
see what--

The DOOR SWINGS OPEN.

FENWICK

I came as soon as I could. Is  
he...?

DUNHAM

See for yourself.

FENWICK

Cold. No pulse. Hand me that  
mirror.

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION. The very faintest sound of A BREATH.

FENWICK (CONT'D)

Ah - faint respiration.

LIONEL

The patient just spoke, sir.

FENWICK

He didn't. He couldn't. I mean this  
man... how?

DUNHAM

Quinlan's mesmeric influence. Quite  
astonishing.

FENWICK

Do it again.

QUINLAN

I was thinking perhaps we should  
let him--

FENWICK

Make him speak.

QUINLAN

Very well.  
(to the patient)  
Valdemar. Do you still sleep?

MESMER MUSIC, then sustained MUSICAL TENSION BUILDS.

M. VALDEMAR

(very faint)  
Yes; still asleep -- dying.

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION.

FENWICK

This is astonishing, Quinlan. I  
wouldn't have believed it had I not  
seen it with my own eyes. Should we--

DUNHAM

Perhaps we should let him be. He's  
tranquil and death should supervene  
in minutes.

FENWICK

Yes, yes of course.

QUINLAN

I'm sorry but this might be our  
last chance.  
(to Valdemar)  
Valdemar, are you still sleeping?

LIONEL

(startled)  
Doctor, he's--

QUINLAN

Lionel, take note: eyes rolled  
open, pupils disappeared upwardly.  
Skin assuming cadaverous hue, color  
drained from cheeks, upper lip  
pulled back from teeth in rictus,  
lower jaw opened, tongue blackened  
and swollen.

MUSIC and AD LIB SHUDDERS.

DUNHAM

I've witnessed hundreds of deaths,  
but that...

FENWICK

I've never seen a death like it.  
Look at him - positively ghoulish.

LIONEL

Would anyone object if I cover the  
face with a sheet?

QUINLAN

As we can confidently say Mr.  
Valdemar is dead, yes, Lionel, go  
ahead and-- no, stop!

LIONEL

(terrified)  
What?

QUINLAN

The tongue.

FENWICK

It's moving... vibrating...

DUNHAM

(loss of SAN points)  
I've... I've... I've...

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION and TRANSITION.

11

COBB TRANSITION

11

CREIGHTON COBB

Did he speak? What did he say?

QUINLAN

Mr. Cobb, there are, indeed, two or  
three epithets which might be  
considered as applicable to what  
happened next; I might say, for  
example, that the sound was harsh,  
and broken and hollow; but the  
hideous whole is indescribable, for  
the simple reason that no similar  
sounds have ever jarred upon the  
ear of humanity.

CREIGHTON COBB

Regular listeners to this programme, Dr. Quinlan, have heard a few indescribable things. You needn't fear to provide them with details.

QUINLAN

Well, there were two particulars which I thought then, and still think, might fairly be stated as characteristic of the intonation -- as well adapted to convey some idea of its unearthly peculiarity. In the first place, the voice seemed to reach our ears -- at least mine -- from a vast distance, or from some deep cavern within the earth. In the second place, it impressed me the way gelatinous or glutinous things impress the sense of touch.

CREIGHTON COBB

(shuddering)

My word! So he did speak?

QUINLAN

For lack of a better word, I have spoken both of "sound" and of "voice." I mean that the sound was one of distinct -- of even wonderfully, thrillingly distinct -- syllabification. M. Valdemar spoke -- obviously in reply to the question I had asked him a few minutes before: "are you still sleeping".

CREIGHTON COBB

But what did he say?

TRANSITION MUSIC back to Valdemar's chamber.

12

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

12

M. VALDEMAR

Yes; -- no; -- I have been sleeping -- and now -- now -- I am dead.

AD LIB HORRIFIED REACTIONS. Lionel GROANS and COLLAPSES in a faint.

13 COBB TRANSITION

13

QUINLAN

No person present even affected to deny, or attempted to repress, the shuddering horror which these few words, thus uttered, were so well calculated to convey. Mr. Lionel swooned.

CREIGHTON COBB

What about you, Dr. Quinlan?

QUINLAN

My own impressions to this day I cannot render intelligibly. For nearly an hour, uttering barely a word, we busied ourselves in endeavors to revive Mr. Lionel.

14 NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD - CONTINUOUS

14

SLAPPING. Lionel GROANS again. RUSTLING of a medical bag.

FENWICK

(rummaging through his bag)

Here, I have some ammonium carbonate - that should bring him around.

Lionel SNIFFS and GASPS at the smelling salts.

LIONEL

What--

FENWICK

Pull yourself together, Mr. Lionel.

LIONEL

But Valdemar... he...

DUNHAM

Spoke. Yes. We all heard it.

LIONEL

But he was... we agreed he was--

QUINLAN

M. Valdemar shows no evidence of a pulse, nor is there any evidence of respiration.



FENWICK  
I tried to draw blood but could  
not. No circulation.

QUINLAN  
His arm no longer responds to  
mesmeric control.

LIONEL  
So he's dead.  
(pause)  
Right?

DUNHAM  
Yes. But no.

QUINLAN  
Watch his tongue carefully.  
Valdemar, are you still sleeping?

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION.

LIONEL  
It moved! I saw it.

DUNHAM  
Yes. It's as if he's making an  
effort to reply, but no longer has  
sufficient volition.

LIONEL  
So he's not dead?

FENWICK  
He has neither pulse nor  
respiration, Mr. Lionel. What does  
your medical training tell you?

LIONEL  
This is not supposed to happen.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

15

COBB TRANSITION

15

CREIGHTON COBB  
Fascinating. Did he answer any  
other questions?

QUINLAN  
Not at this point. Nor was he  
responsive to questions from anyone  
but me.

(MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

Clearly the mesmeric link was vital to his responsiveness. His condition appeared stable and we all thought it best to leave him to rest as we grappled with the issues at play.

CREIGHTON COBB

Such as?

QUINLAN

First and foremost was the propriety and feasibility of awakening him.

CREIGHTON COBB

What good could come of that? Wouldn't he just have died immediately, again?

QUINLAN

Exactly. It seemed to us that to awaken M. Valdemar at this point would lead to... undesirable results.

CREIGHTON COBB

On the other hand, I suppose you couldn't just leave him like that indefinitely....

QUINLAN

That also presented problems. So...  
(with grave hesitation)  
from this period until the close of last week -- an interval of nearly seven months -- we continued to make daily calls at M. Valdemar's house, accompanied, now and then, by medical and other friends. All this time the sleeper-waker remained exactly as I have last described him.

CREIGHTON COBB

Seven months! And he was both dead and alive all that time?

QUINLAN

He was both. And neither. And then, on Friday last, we finally attempted to bring some resolution to the case.

CREIGHTON COBB

How?

QUINLAN

By performing one final experiment.  
It was the result of this  
experiment which has given rise to  
so much discussion, and to so much  
of what I cannot help thinking  
unwarranted popular feeling.

CREIGHTON COBB

What happened?

QUINLAN

We returned to his chamber,  
Fenwick, Dunham, Lionel and I, to  
finally awaken M. Valdemar.

MUSIC TRANSITION.

16

WAKE UP CALL

16

DUNHAM

Proceed, Dr. Quinlan.

We hear the MUSIC OF MESMERISM.

QUINLAN

And that completes the customary  
passes. Would you note the time  
please, Mr. Lionel?

LIONEL

Seven minutes past eight in the  
evening.

FENWICK

I'm seeing no change here.

QUINLAN

Dammit!

DUNHAM

Do it again, a third time. Perhaps  
after so many weeks he just needs--

QUINLAN

No, it's time for something  
stronger. I'll attempt the Issachar  
configuration.

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION. MORE INTENSE MESMERIC MUSIC.

FENWICK

Yes! Keep going. The iris has just descended into view.

DUNHAM

Let me see. Yes... yes.

(sniffs)

Oh my. There's a profuse yellowish ichor discharging from under the eyelid.

LIONEL

God, the smell!

DUNHAM

Steady, there. Just write it down.

LIONEL

Noted.

DUNHAM

Try the movements of his arm again.

QUINLAN

Very well.

MESMER MUSIC.

LIONEL

Nothing so far. No. No.

FENWICK

(panicky)

Ask him something!

QUINLAN

Valdemar, can you explain to us what are your feelings or wishes now?

MUSICAL PUNCTUATION.

LIONEL

There's coloration in the cheeks!

DUNHAM

The tongue is quivering, rolling in the mouth.

M. VALDEMAR

(in that hideous and  
frightening voice)

For God's sake! -- quick! -- quick!  
-- put me to sleep -- or, quick!

(MORE)

M. VALDEMAR (CONT'D)  
 -- waken me! -- quick! -- I say to  
 you that I am dead!

QUINLAN  
 What do I do?

DUNHAM  
 Do... something! We've got to end  
 this. Wake him!

FENWICK  
 Just break him out of the trance!  
 Make the passes, damn it!

BACKGROUND MUSIC RAMPS UP, TOPPED BY MESMER MUSIC!

LIONEL  
 Oh my god, he's moving--

DUNHAM  
 Impossible!

LIONEL  
 --sitting up!

QUINLAN  
 Don't touch me!

M. VALDEMAR  
 (loud and strong)  
 Dead! Dead!

CLIMACTIC MUSIC! THE FINAL RAGGED SIGH OF VALDEMAR.

AD LIB SHRIEKS OF HORROR as we hear Valdemar's voice collapse  
 into something gooshy and wet.

17 CONCLUSION

17

CREIGHTON COBB  
 What happened?

QUINLAN  
 It was quite impossible that any  
 human being could have been  
 prepared for what transpired.  
 Somehow Valdemar rose slightly from  
 his recumbent position, his arm  
 reaching for me.  
 (MORE)

QUINLAN (CONT'D)

I frantically made the final mesmeric passes, and his whole frame at once -- within the space of a single minute, or even less, shrunk -- crumbled -- absolutely rotted away beneath my hands. Upon the bed, before that whole company, there lay a nearly liquid mass of loathsome -- of detestable putridity.

CREIGHTON COBB

Good God, man! The rumors... it's all true!

QUINLAN

A wise man once wrote, "That is not dead which can eternal lie, and in strange eons even death may die."

FINAL DRAMATIC MUSICAL SWELL!

CREIGHTON COBB

You've been listening to our special abbreviated episode of Dark Adventure Radio Theatre: Edgar Allan Poe's "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar", brought to you by our sponsor, Bile Beans! Nothing tames a tempestuous tummy quicker than taking Bile Beans! I believe I'll have one right now!

I'm Creighton Cobb. Until next week, this is Dark Adventure Radio Theatre reminding you to never go anywhere alone; if it looks bad, don't look; and save the last bullet for yourself.

ANNOUNCER

"The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" was adapted for radio and produced by Sean Branney and Andrew Leman. Based on the story by Edgar Allan Poe. Original music by Troy Sterling Nies. The Dark Adventure Ensemble featured: Sean Branney, Matt Foyer, Jacob Lyle, Grinnell Morris, David Pavao, Kevin Stidham, Josh Thoemke, and Time Winters.

(MORE)

## ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Tune in next week for "The Haunted Tomahawk", an eerie tale of blood and corn among the Comanche Indians.

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