

The Drink Tank



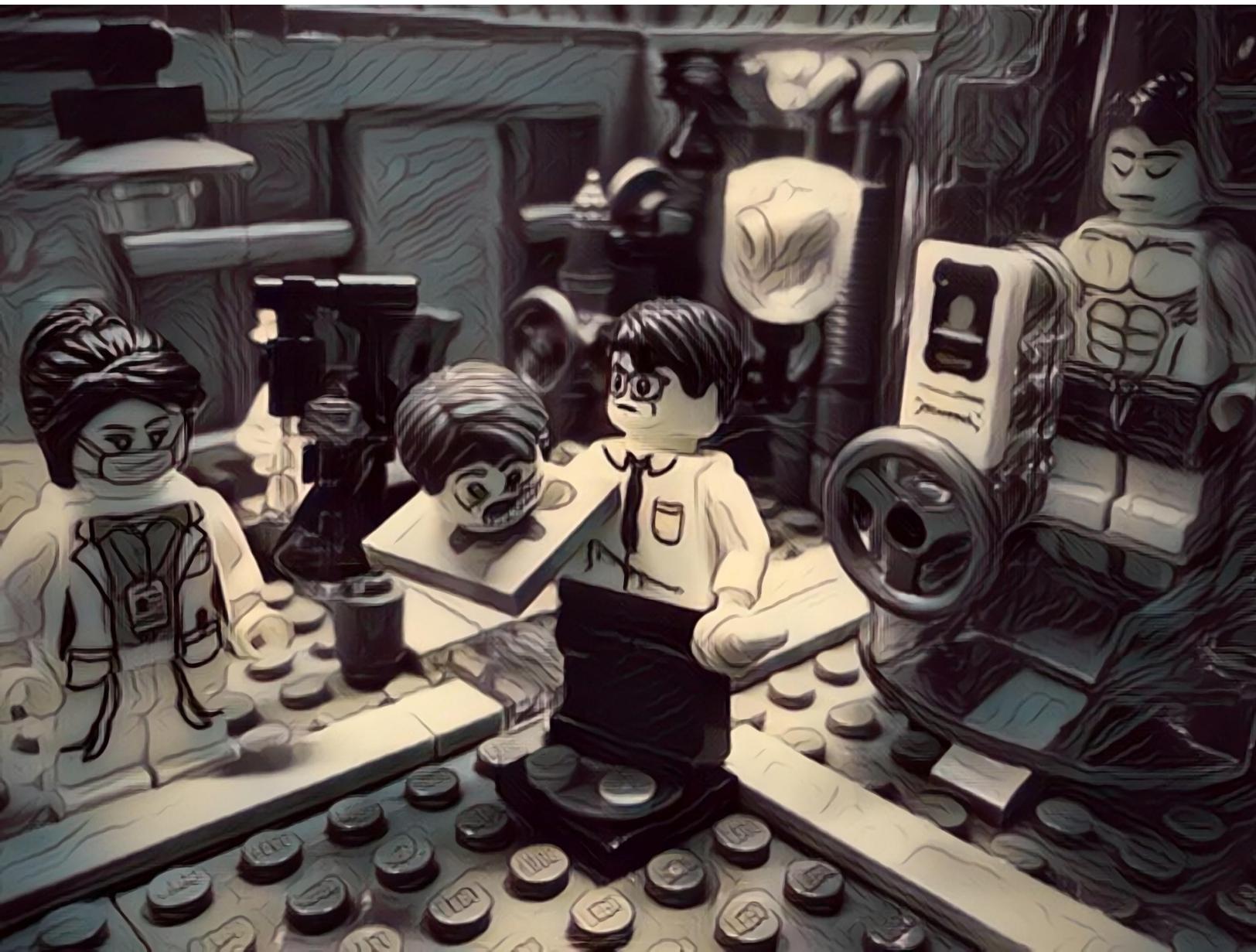
The Drink Tank 428 - Bad Doctors

~ Editors ~

Christopher J Garcia - Alissa McKersie - Chuck Serface

March 2021

There are no hopeless patients; only bad doctors.



Art by Matthew Appleton

Letter of Comment: The Drink Tank #427

by Lloyd Penney

Art by Ditmar

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Demon Doctors from the Dark Realms

by Kathryn Duval

Art for Cover, BACover, 5, 6, 8, 18 by Chris (and DeepDreamGenerator!)



Letter-Graded Mail

Sent to DrinkTankEditorial@gmail.com

And now, legendary Drink Tank LocStar LLOYD PENNEY!!!

Dear Chris, Alissa and Chuck:

Thank you for The Drink Tank #427! I am sitting here at home, right beside a highway with the same number. I will try to respond as best as I can. For the record, we caught COVID-19 at the beginning of February, and we are now fully recovered. Yvonne may have to wait a while, but I think I can get myself a vaccine soon, probably an AstraZeneca vaccine.

I have read elsewhere that religions are just cults that were able to build up a good reputation and a big bank account. Critical thinking should shred most cults and religions, but we are creatures of habit, and dissing any religion seems like asking for serious trouble. I have to think that those who are sucked in by a cult are weak of mind. This may explain Trump, more on that later . . . I wish we could be more like the Pastafarians, having a good time and a laugh, and getting more use out of their colanders.

With all those nutjobs predicting the end of the world . . . 🎵 It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine 🎵 . . . those nutjobs seem to want the world to end, I think, because we won't accept what they think is gospel fact. Maybe they're tired of being laughed at. I am mightily tired of those who set themselves up as self-important prophets, and blame those who do not BELIEVE! for all troubles in the world.

I am pretty agnostic myself, but I do sleep in on Sundays. I have had some terrible meetings with Jehovah's Witnesses, who seem humorless and angry, but that's just my reaction to those meetings. On the other hand, I have met several teams of Mormon missionaries, and they are often from all over the world. They are friendly and understanding, if a little naïve, and seeing they are usually from a long way out of town, I offer a little advice to living in Toronto. In the long run, they are nice folks.

Donald Trump . . . yech! I wish he would disappear. Perhaps I should read that book; it might tell me how

on earth someone as disgusting as Trump is still able to call on such loyalty from so many. The world is relieved that Joe Biden is now president; I know I am. I must wonder who was the mastermind of the Trump cult, because he isn't smart enough to have created it himself.

You are certainly taking on the big topics here . . . with the pandemic meaning that everything is locked down and gathering are banned, most churches are satisfied with worship at home, or taking part in their Sunday morning Zoom get-together. Others, though, see the state as interfering in their pathway to God, and demonstrate regularly in Toronto, and go to church anyway. The fines that have been issued are probably covered by rich members of the congregation, but they seem unable or unwilling to see that it is not the worship the city is trying to stop, but the gathering together for health reasons. People will or will not see these things, which may be the source of many cults.

Ah, a new e-mail address! Good, makes it easier to stay in touch. Take care, see you with the next one.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney

Always great to hear from ya, Lloyd!

I was torn about including the Mormons, who I kinda see as a Cult gone pro! They were certainly a cult through much of the 19th Century, and Joseph Smith , Brigham Young, and others were certainly of the Cult Leader type. Most religions, if not all, start as cults, often as off-shoots of existing religions, and one of the things that I appreciate is that Wikipedia doesn't have a list of cult; it has a list of New Religious Movements!

I'm quite glad Biden's in the White House! On the day of the inauguration, I went into town to buy some coffee. At the coffee shop, the Inauguration had just started and the guy behind had just started a new pot. I ordered one and he pointed to the old pot of coffee.

"That coffee's free," he said, "that's Trump coffee! This is Biden coffee!"



The Evil Doctors of Lucha Libre by Chris Garcia



There's a tradition in Mexican professional wrestling, Lucha Libre, that has been going for several decades. It's a bit strange, but the idea of the evil doctor took hold in Mexico with one of the biggest names in Mexican wrestling history, and it hasn't given up the ghost since.

Now, America hasn't had a lot of bad doctor wrestling characters. The most notable is Dr. Isaac Yankem, DDS. He was portrayed as an evil dentist in the early 1990s by Glenn Jacobs, who would later go on to portray Kane. There were some others, like Dr. Benjamin Roller (an actual doctor), Dr. Tom Pritchard (not an actual doctor), and Dr. Sam Sheppard (a doctor, and a murderer, and a subject of another article in this issue). But it was in Mexico where the bad doctors of wrestling were really a thing.

The first one to mention is Médico Asesino, or the "Doctor Assassin." He was a GIANT for the time, something like 6'8, and he was built like a bodybuilder, which is what he was. It should be no surprise, he wrestled as La Bestia, the "Beast," before he lost his mask and was on a downswing. He ended up going to a promoter who had the television contract, which meant he needed bigger, more impressive characters. In 1952, he debuted as Médico Asesino, teaming with Wolf Ruvinskis to beat Enrique Llanes and Tonina Jackson. This was a star-making match, and Asesino was the biggest star made.

He worked largely as a brawler and a powerhouse. He mastered the swinging neck-breaker (full Nelson) and was a great draw on television. He teamed with El Santo as Ola Blanco, the "White Wave!" El Santo was bigger than anyone in the culture, and not just in wrestling, but overall. He was Hulk Hogan meets James Bond meets Gandhi. He was beloved, and the team with Asesino was a big rub.

Sadly, Médico Asesino was no doctor himself, and he failed to catch that he had cancer. He died young and was still a huge star. He lasted a few months between finding out and dying, the whole time saying that he would be able to put the weight back on and get back to work. This was pretty much equivalent to Gorgeous George if he had died while still headlining on the DuMont. Santo and Asesino sold a lot of TVs in Mexico. Finally, Asesino was also a star in Texas, which is where he made the most money.

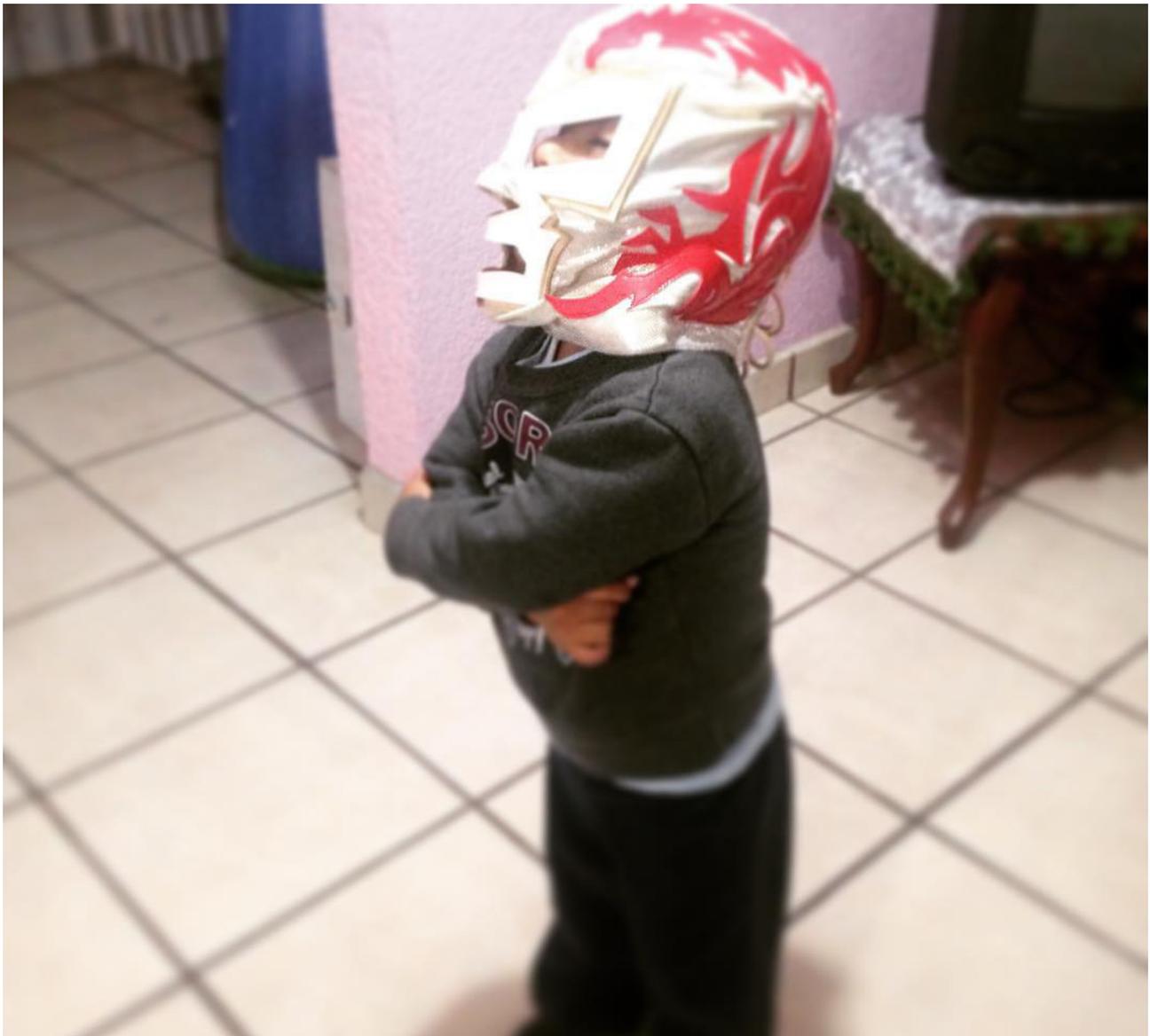
Manuel González had been a worker for a while at the time when he was about to start working for Elías Simón, a promoter in the North of Mexico. It being 1961, and not too long after the death of Médico Asesino, Simón came up with a great idea, call Manuel El Hijo del Médico Asesino – the "Son of the Medical Assassin." Not a great idea, but Manuel liked the doctor idea, and he was a fan of Richard Wagner. Thus, Doctor Wagner was born!

He was a rudo, and a damned good one! The bad guys of Lucha Libre often develop cult followings, and when they inevitably become técnicos, the heroes, they are gigantic. Wagner wore white: a white mask, white trunks, and white boots. That made him stand out, and the whites fit with the doctor gimmick, n'est-ce pas? The look worked, and he was a main eventer pretty darn quick. He worked all over the place, and eventually formed one of the all-time most important tag teams in Mexican wrestling history, teaming with Ángel Blanco. The name? La Ola Blanca. I guess he was always going to end up in the shadow of Asesino.

His son started wrestling as Doctor Wagner, Jr. He might have been as big a star as his father, though he was working at a time when the saturation of Lucha Libre was broader, but shallower. He has had an amazing career, still working today, and like his father, and Médico Asesino, has been inducted into the Wrestling Observer Hall of Fame.

The thing about all of these characters is the fact that they are evil, or at least mean, doctors. The idea that doctors, some of the most important people in our lives, the ones who are supposed to do everything to save us, can be evil makes sense, and I am already afraid enough of the good ones to carry over!

As with eggs, there is no such thing as a poor doctor, doctors are either good or bad.





Changing Doctors: Not Always a Choice

by Steven H Silver

Reprinted from [Challenger 35](#)

When I moved back to Chicago in the 1990s, I found I needed a new doctor.

I spoke to one of the managers at my office and received a recommendation for a doctor who was in practice not too amazingly far from where I lived. I made an appointment to see him for an annual checkup. When he entered the room, he asked about the book I was reading. When I showed him the cover of the SF novel, he commented that his father used to review science fiction for the Chicago Sun-Times. We hit it off quite well.

The last time I saw him was March 3, 2008. I again went in for my annual checkup and we talked about the ongoing sleep tests I was taking and about his recent divorce, in which he overshared some information. I really didn't need to know¹ (and only follow the footnote if you have strong prurient interest). He gave me a prescription and sent me on my way, asking me to make a follow-up appointment for June, which I did on my way out.

The following week, I received a call from the doctor's office. They wanted to let me know that my doctor was on an extended leave and at my June appointment I would be seeing one of his associates instead. It seemed an odd thing since he hadn't said anything at my appointment. My initial reaction was that there was some sort of malpractice situation, which didn't make me feel great.

I mentioned that I was undergoing sleep tests to determine if I had sleep apnea. (big surprise, I did, just like everyone else who undergoes those tests). Over the course of the tests, I had built up a rapport with one of the technicians. I asked if he knew anything about my doctor's disappearance and he told me he wasn't allowed to say anything. I pressed him and he furtively glanced around to make sure nobody was near and said, "If I say anything, they'll fire me . . . but check the newspapers."

That couldn't be good.

When I got home, I fired up a web browser and prayed to the Ghreat Ghod Ghughle.

Ghughle revealed that my doctor had been arrested the evening I had last seen him. He was charged with manufacturing child pornography, criminal sexual assault, and child endangerment. The charges stemmed from a relationship he had struck up with a seventeen-year-old girl in the wake of his divorce. Following the divorce, he began to host parties for the neighborhood kids in which he provided drugs, both prescription and illicit. He had been providing this girl with marijuana, cocaine, and heroin in return for sexual favors.

I had a tremendous sensation of "ick" come over me. It lasted several weeks every time I thought about the situation. The girl was not a patient of my doctor's, which would be the only mitigating circumstance of the whole sordid story, and isn't even much of a mitigating circumstance since it meant that he was providing drugs to a non-patient.

The girl's parents were aware of her drug abuse, and may have known about my doctor's role in their daughter's issues. At one point they checked her into the rehab facility. Showing up at the facility, he used his credentials as a doctor to get in to visit with her and provide her with additional drugs.

Her parents were also the impetus for his eventually arrest. They intercepted a text he sent the girl to arrange to drive her into Chicago to a location where they could buy drugs. The parents used the information to go to the police, who wound up visiting my doctor at his home on that night on March 3.

In June, on the date I was supposed to have my follow-up appointment with him, his license to practice medicine was suspended for at least five years following a plea bargain. In August of 2011, his medical license was revoked.

I know he did some time in prison, but it wasn't very long. By the time his eighteen-year-old daughter was involved in a hit and run accident in May, 2010, he was already out of jail. His daughter was sentenced to probation, drug treatment, fines, and community service for hitting a fellow high-school student while she was driving with alcohol and pot in her system. The sixteen-year-old who was hit suffered a serious brain injury. She has since recuperated enough that earlier this year she appeared in a production of Eugene Ionesco's *Rhinoceros* at the high school the two girls attended.

I've moved on, talking to my brother-in-law the allergist to see if he could recommend a doctor who was relatively local to me. He gave me a few names and I chose one, mostly at random, who is convenient. I haven't developed any sort of rapport with him, but after my previous experience, I don't have a problem with that.

Doctors always think anybody doing something they aren't is a quack; also they think all patients are idiots.

1. Are you sure you want to read this footnote? Does anyone really want to know that their doctor's wife couldn't keep up with his sexual needs? Does anyone need to know that about any acquaintance of theirs? Aren't you sorry you followed the footnote?



Dr. Sam Sheppard - The Bad Doctor

By Chris Garcia

There are murders that we really want to know, because we believe we already know. We KNOW that OJ Simpson did it. We KNOW that Klaus von Bulow did it. We also KNOW that Dr. Sam Sheppard did it.

Don't we?

When I started reading about the murder of Marilyn Reese Sheppard, I knew he was guilty ... until I was no longer certain.

You see, like Lizzy Borden, there's no way to be sure because things don't add up either way. There's a ton of evidence that indicates that he did it. There is also evidence that he didn't. It's maddeningly difficult, but when you weigh it out ... well, let's just do it.

So, Sam Sheppard was married to Marilyn, and the marriage wasn't all sunshine and lollipops. They fought, and he had an affair. Everyone points to that as the reason he killed her. If you think about it, how many affairs lead to murder? How many couples fight and don't end up in a murder situation? It's a good start, I guess, but it's not enough to make things certain.

The night: July 3rd, 1954.

The Sheppards were entertaining neighbors at their house on the Saturday of the 4th of July weekend. That evening, they all watched *Strange Holiday* on the TV, and Sam fell asleep on the couch. The day hadn't been too hot, not even 80 degrees, but it had only barely dropped below 70 by the time Sam knocked off.

Then a scream woke him up.

He rushed upstairs and came upon a "white biped form" that had obviously just attacked his wife. The form knocked him out, though it's not entirely clear for how long. It might have been in that period that the robber grabbed a few valuables and threw them in a canvas sack. Sam came to, went back downstairs, saw the form again. He chased it down to the beach, and there, they brawled, but Sam must've had a glass jaw, because he got KO'ed again, and the perp got away.

He came to. He headed back to the house, checked on his wife, and called a neighbor. It was after 5 AM. The cops came. Sam Sheppard was disoriented, and seemed to be in shock. His pants had a bloodstain at the knee. He wasn't wearing a shirt. The media started in, and that was that.

Or every single thing in that scenario could be bullshit.

You see, there were no other living witnesses to what happened in the house other than Sam Sheppard. He easily could have murdered his wife, gathered up a few things, and threw them behind the house, getting rid of the weapon, his blood-stained shirt, and anything else that could have incriminated him. The dog, who was apparently a yapper, didn't make a peep. His son, in the room next to Marilyn, didn't wake up. These obviously mean he did it, right?

Well ...

The whereabouts of the dog aren't known, but it easily could have been asleep in the yard. If you've got kids like mine, they could easily sleep through someone being loudly murdered in the same room, never mind the next room.

There was other stuff. The prosecution had to figure out how to make the case with the jury, so they made a theory up that kind of indicated something with a scalpel-edge had been used. That was a MASSIVE reach, but what's most interesting is that the prosecution denied the defense access to the physical evidence.

There were, also, a couple of witnesses to aspects of Sheppard's claims. There were two people who saw a "bushy-haired man" down on the beach, and that matched with a lot of Sheppard's description. That was the only direct witness to any part of Sheppard's story. Marilyn was also pregnant, and along the way, the baby had been autopsied. No one had informed anyone about that, and no one went to the trouble to see who the father was, or at least to record it. That's a big part of leaving the question open.

And after all the issues, he had it overturned. There were multiple trials. There was a lot of just dumb stuff that both sides did. He was widely held as guilty, and he wasn't going to be practicing medicine again, and he needed money. He had married into a family where there was a wrestling promoter, and thus, he became a special wrestling attraction. He drew a little money.

But the question still stands: did he do it?

Most doctors are prisoners of their education and shackled by their profession.

There are indications all over the place in both ways. There's an alternative suspect: Richard Eberling. He was questioned. He admitted that his blood was at the scene, since he was a handyman and had cut his finger a few days before. A few years later, he burglarized Sheppard's brother's house, and stole two rings that had belonged to Marilyn. They gave him a polygraph. He passed it. Or so they thought, and in the years since then, the polygraph has largely been abandoned as a form of lie detection. He was also convicted in a murder later, and various women in his orbit turned up dead. He was a good suspect, but because of that lie detector they didn't follow his lead to the end.

Though they deny it, there is no way The Fugitive wasn't based on this case. It's been on pretty much every true-crime series and podcast. It's an incredibly famous case, and one that remains unsolved. The DNA testing they managed was inconclusive, and there's not nearly enough other untested evidence to allow for a completely new investigation. Me? I think Eberling did it. Folks point to the strangeness of him being knocked out twice, but any boxer knows that anytime you get knocked out, it's far easier to knock you out again. Eberling was a big guy, though so was Sheppard. I think there are too many variables to ever prove it, but I also know no one will ever stop trying to figure it out.



John Bodkin Adams: The Smiling Doctor by Kristy Baxter

Most people, when they're traveling over a bridge, don't wonder, "Did the engineers who designed this thing do well in school? Did they have any evil intentions when they were drawing up their blueprints? Do I trust them enough to put my life in their hands?"

Generally, we don't have these thoughts, and we don't have to. We don't have deadly bridge collapses that lead to charging a psychotic structural engineer with murder. We don't see headlines or true crime cases about structural engineers gone bad, even though they do in fact have a lot of responsibility for our well-being.

But we *do* have deadly medical cases and headlines and true-crime cases about doctors gone bad. The responsibility doctors have over their patients' lives draws those who want to help and heal. It can also draw, on some occasions, those who see responsibility over others' lives as the ultimate source of power and wealth.

We have a social contract with physicians, and that's what makes it so shocking when they kill—they break that contract, compounding the sin of murder with the sin of betrayal. When we think this betrayal has happened, and we still don't get justice, it's a triple whammy.

It's a fairly well-known fact that murderers tend to choose victims who are both vulnerable and readily available. Some may opt for a challenge, but generally with the murder-minded, the path of least resistance is also the path of safety.

For Dr. John Bodkin Adams, a physician with a practice in Eastbourne, a town in England, wealthy, vulnerable widows were readily available. The seaside community offered both the climate of a coastal resort town and relative proximity to London, and these factors made it a prime choice for retirees. Twenty-five percent of the town's residents were over 65-years old, whereas nationally, the average was closer to eleven percent.

A young John Bodkin Adams, in his early twenties and fresh out of Queen's University Belfast, headed to the coastal town in 1922. Eastbourne hadn't been his first choice—he'd spent several months at the Bristol Royal Infirmary, only for his boss to gently direct him toward an advertised position in Eastbourne.

For the first few years, Adams didn't attract much negative attention. He worked as a general practitioner at a religious medical practice, lived with his incredibly religious mother as well as a cousin, and worked to become part of the community. He was not a particularly adept doctor, with mediocre showings throughout his education, but he was diligent. At first, he would zip around town on his bicycle to perform his many house calls. When he'd saved enough money, he graduated to a scooter. Dr. Adams could be counted on at all hours, a fact that made him especially sought after.

And Eastbourne loved him. Widows called him "The Smiling Doctor." As he became more known in town, the wealthier patients grew more inclined to call him to heal what ailed them. Some of these professional relationships then took a strange turn. For instance, Adams counted among his patients William and Edith Mawhood. In the late 1920s, he seemed to squirm his way into their lives beyond his capacity as a physician. Adams wanted the privileges that only friendship with the privileged could bring. It didn't seem to matter to him whether the people in question wanted him in their lives in that capacity.

He had a stunning bravado and a sense of entitlement that, even with the distance of nearly a century, ring with unnerving awkwardness. Adams, for instance, so admired William Mawhood's coat that he inquired as to where he might purchase one like it. Armed with that information, he then did just that—and charged it to the Mawhoods' account. He treated their home like a restaurant, popping up for dinner uninvited.

And when he needed money to buy a new home with a modest eighteen rooms, Adams eschewed actual lenders in favor of borrowing. It was to Mr. Mawhood he went for a loan. With the £2000 Mawhood lent him—equivalent to roughly \$155,000 today—Adams was able to purchase the lovely cream-colored house, Kent Lodge, situated in a desirable neighborhood.

Why, we inevitably ask, did Mawhood go along with the various impositions Adams placed on him over the two decades of their doctor-patient relationship? It's likely that a combination of factors played into that reaction: surprise at Adams' disrespect for normal social boundaries, a tendency to submit to authority figures, or the desire not to disrupt his relationship with the person responsible for his health.

But Adams' methods of padding his bank account went far beyond loans and store accounts. His name started popping up in his patients' wills. He had a few ways of convincing them he'd be a good beneficiary. After all, if his patients paid him outright, a large portion of it would go to taxes. A bequest in a will suffered under no such obligation. Or, if a patient intended to leave money to charity, Adams would volunteer to take over administering the donation. He could choose an aboveboard charity for the patient after they passed.

The former method of receiving payment wasn't unusual at the time for elderly patients of means. The other local doctors didn't seem to benefit quite as much as Dr. Adams did, though. And their patients didn't have quite as reliable a tendency to die soon after adding their doctor to their wills.

Dr. Adams' heavy prescriptions of heroin and morphine likely helped them hurry along to the grave, at the very least.

In this way, he benefited from many wills over the thirty-five years between his arrival in Eastbourne and his trial for murder. Some articles say 132; others say over 350. Patients didn't restrict themselves to leaving him money, either. He raked in cash and various valuable gifts when his patients died—jewels, property, cars. Dr. Adams soon traveled to house calls via a chauffeured Rolls Royce, rather than on a scooter.

The rumors started whispering their way around Eastbourne in 1935, after Adams received a particularly large bequest from a deceased patient—over £7000, nearly two-thirds of her fortune. Then came the postcards implying that someone thought he'd engineered his patients' deaths and warning that he'd better stop.

Adams' colleagues heard the scuttlebutt too. When many of the local doctors left to serve in World War II, they formed an agreement with the doctors who stayed behind. The doctors staying in Eastbourne would take on the patient load of those serving, giving half the fees to the original doctor's family. Adams was not included in this agreement.

Dr. Adams, however, decided to spend his time furthering his credentials, adding anesthesiology to his qualifications. He was not particularly good at it, though. While attending to surgeries at the Eastbourne hospital, he would sometimes fall asleep, have a bit of cake, or even count his money. Patients undergoing surgeries might turn blue or, conversely, wake up in the middle of surgery.

By the time World War II ended, many called Dr. Adams the wealthiest doctor in England, although there are no financial numbers available to back up that claim. He attended to artists, a member of Parliament, industrialists, the local chief constable, and even the Duke of Devonshire. Then he added fraudulent billing to his repertoire.

One patient, Edith Morrell, apparently saw him multiple times per day, as he billed her estate for 1100 visits even though he'd only been her doctor for less than two and a half years. Of course, all these extra visits may very well have been added out of sheer frustration. Mrs. Morrell spent a good portion of her time writing new wills, then changing said wills, then writing more new ones. It seemed like Dr. Adams' place in Morrell's will, if it existed, depended on her mood—which changed by the hour. She, like most of his patients, was administered daily doses of various narcotics.

As with many of his patients, he signed the death certificate and noted that the death was from natural causes. This ensured that there would be no post-mortem examination of the body, nor any inquest. Curiously, he even slit her wrist when determining her death—just to be absolutely sure. And as it turned out, her final will excluded him.

Then came the case of Gertrude “Bobbie” Hullett. Her husband died while under Adams' care in March 1956. He left £94,000 (\$3 million today) to his wife in his will. His death hit his widow particularly hard, and she talked of suicide frequently. In response, Dr. Adams prescribed her medications to help ease her grief—some nice barbiturates to dull the edge. On July 17, she gifted him £1000—just over \$32,000 today. Two days later, Hullett slipped into a coma, likely as a result of an overdose. Dr. Adams withheld information about Hullett's mental state and her medication regimen from another doctor on the scene. He did inquire about how to treat barbiturate poisoning, then didn't correctly follow the instructions he received or any take other suggestions that might lead to a positive outcome.

Adams tried to set up a private autopsy—for a patient who wasn't yet dead, and in fact wouldn't die for another twenty-four hours. On July 23, 1956, Hullett died at 50 years old. In the days prior to her death, her urine showed she had twice the fatal dose of sodium barbitone. Still, Adams tried to argue that a cerebral lesion had killed Hullett. He would know, after all—so many of his patients had perished that way.

Then, finally, local authorities held an inquest. This started to draw press attention, and those journalists quickly uncovered information not only about the Hullett case but about the other curious cases that had fed the rumor mills for over a decade. As the questions about long-dead patients piled up, so too did reporters pile into quiet Eastbourne.

You've been listening to the doctors. Never should. What do they know? Nothing at all—or just enough to make them dangerous.

Soon enough, the Smiling Doctor's smiling face plastered local papers. And national papers. And international papers. Readers in Ottawa, Chicago, Sydney, and many other cities read about Dr. John Bodkin Adams and his poor, rich widows over the coming months, as local gossip became international news. One article painted a lovely portrait of wealthy, elderly women fleeing a dinner when the orchestra played “The Merry Widow Waltz.”

The police expanded their scope too, looking at seventeen Eastbourne deaths. Dr. Adams was named in the potential victim's will in each of those suspicious deaths. Nine of the seventeen were wealthy widows. Twelve of the seventeen died within a year of altering their wills to include Adams, and two died within ten days of making will alterations. All told from just those seventeen, Dr. Adams netted bequests worth around \$1 million today.

Beyond those patients, a whopping 163 of his patients had died in comas over the course of one decade; in addition, he'd cited cerebral hemorrhage as the cause of death in 42% of the patients whose deaths he'd attended. Nationally, an average of only 15% of elderly patients died of cerebral hemorrhage.

The flurry of press became a blizzard when Adams was charged with murder in early 1957. A lot of questions were raised over the choice to charge him with Morrell's murder, rather than Hullett's. Morrell's case was over six-years old, after all, and she'd been cremated. But the attorney general still considered the Morrell case the strongest and held Hullett's case as a backup in case Adams was acquitted.

The case went on, despite naysayers. The prosecution called nurses who had attended Morrell. They gave their recollections, including the tidbit that all facts related to the case—medications, dosages, times, meals--would have been recorded in notebooks that had long since been destroyed. Once the nurses had laid out all their facts, though, the defense attorney brought out a pile of notebooks. Dr. Adams had kept them. The defense attorney then used the notebooks to tear apart every statement that the nurses had presented as fact.

Then there were the dueling witnesses whose argument would baffle modern doctors. Dr. Arthur Douthwaite took the firm and sensible stance that elderly people should not be given heroin; in response, Dr. John Bishop Harman, a London St. Thomas Hospital specialist, stated that, "In my opinion there is no reason why heroin should not be given to elderly people." He added that it didn't surprise him at all that Dr. Adams had told the nurses to dose Morrell with morphine and heroin to keep her quiet. "I frequently do that myself," he said. As far as motive was concerned, the Morrell case had a particular weakness: Adams hadn't been named in the final version of the widow's will. He had received her 19-year-old Rolls-Royce, but as a gift from Morrell's son.

The case fell apart. After a seventeen-day trial, the jury spent 44 minutes deliberating before coming back with an acquittal. The case set records as, at that point, the lengthiest murder trial in British history. The attorney general declined to pursue further charges.

Adams would go on to suffer some comparatively trivial charges related to prescription forgery and cremation, for which he paid fines that would come to about \$90,000 today. He was barred from practicing medicine for four years, but when he returned to medicine, he regained many of his former patients and enough new ones to sustain his practice for years to come.

At age 84, Adams died, leaving behind an estate that today would be valued at \$1.9 million, as well as a lot of questions that will never be definitively answered. Of all the questions we can ask about our medical professionals, *Is he a serial killer?* is by far the most upsetting—and it's even more disturbing when the only answer is a shrug and silence. We can only look to the muddled facts of the case and peer at photos of Adams, wondering if we can find the truth in his face.

For that impossible route, we have a few options. Several pictures of the smiling doctor appeared in newspapers throughout the intense media coverage during and after his murder trial. His expression ranges from a grimace to a smirk to, of course, a smile. In a few, he grins and waves to the photographers and crowds.

But one is particularly striking and tends to stick in the memory alongside the discomfiting distrust his entire case provoked: Dr. John Bodkin Adams in his home, carving a turkey, a bottle of wine waiting nearby. Adams is glancing to his right, at someone out of frame, his expression expectant, as though waiting to hear the end of a long, mildly amusing joke.

Sources

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Morris Bolber and the Petrillo-Bolber Murder Ring by Chuck Surface

Among the notable inmates of Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was Dr. Morris “Louie the Rabbi” Bolber who’d started his life sentence in 1942. Shortly after his arrival, Bolber, a Russian immigrant, began interacting within the prison synagogue where, apparently, he made friends like Joseph Paull, a volunteer especially interested in Bolber. Before Bolber died in 1954, he said of Paull, “As for me, I remember his numerous, never to be forgotten, acts of kindness shown me. Therefore, I will pray for him a prayer he surely deserves for all the good he has done for me.” What a nice guy, this Bolber. I can imagine fellow inmates and staff discussing Bolber as they might have taken him at face value. He attended synagogue ... one of those seemingly harmless lifers ... a duffer, really ... how’d a fellow like that wind up in a place like prison?

During the 1930s, Bolber devised methods by which a gang operating throughout Philadelphia murdered anywhere from thirty to fifty people. Bolber and his partners, cousins Paul and Herman Petrillo, aligned when a female patient complained to Bolber about her alcoholic, cheating husband, Anthony Giscobbe. Paul Petrillo charmed the woman into a plan to murder the wandering spouse for a split of his \$10,000 insurance benefits. The scheme was quite simple. Giscobbe’s wife stripped him nude and placed his unconscious form before an open window. So, you really can catch a deadly cold during Philadelphia winters, but I hypothesize that Giscobbe wasn’t a healthy specimen given his heavy drinking.

Before entering the murder-for-hire racket, Bolber sold love potions and ground-up bones meant, ahem, to better people’s lives. Although he defined himself as a faith healer, he possessed genuine medical credentials. His practice incorporated *la fattura*, an Italian magical tradition that Paul Petrillo followed as well. After connecting with the Petrillos, Bolber moved from grifter to killer with vigorous aplomb, easing wifely woes through permanent means – for a price.

Both Petrillos had been running scams for quite some time, Paul with insurance and Herman with counterfeiting and arson. Now to secure payments for killings, Herman would impersonate targeted victims

and buy insurance policies under their names. The team made a few payments before murdering these “policy holders,” staging deaths to appear like natural causes or accidents. The Petrillos threw one victim, a roofer, from an eight-story building after distracting him with French postcards. Bolber’s favorite methods involved poisoning with arsenic or blows to the back of heads with sandbags which induced hemorrhaging and then death.

Another la fattura practitioner, Maria Carina Favato, joined up, bringing more prospective clients. She’d been undertaking similar pursuits herself, providing “marital counseling,” basically contracting to poison misbehaving or unwanted husbands. Favato was impressed with the insurance angle, agreeing to sign with the Petrillo-Bolber ring, and equally Petrillo and Bolber were impressed with her professional experience. Before starting her counseling business, she’d murdered her first three husbands. Other marriage-counseling fraudsters attached themselves along the way, including Josephine Sedita and Rose Carina. Networking indeed is everything.

The end approached when George Meyers, an ex-inmate and furniture upholsterer, approached Herman Petrillo for help with funding his business. Petrillo offered to give Meyers a large sum of cash, real and counterfeit, if Meyers would hit Ferdinando Alfonsi. Petrillo had been having an affair with Alfonsi’s wife, Stella, and wanted him removed. Rather than committing murder, Meyer approached the Secret Service wanting to exchange information for money. The Secret Service said not unless he worked with an undercover agent named Phillips who’d been investigating Petrillo’s counterfeiting crimes. Petrillo’s plan was for Meyers to buy or steal a car and stage Alfonsi’s accidental death. Phillips convinced Petrillo to fund the deal with counterfeit money. Petrillo then agreed to give Meyers two weeks. When Petrillo stopped communicating with Phillips and Meyers, the two decided to visit Alfonsi at his home and there discovered that Alfonsi was ill, suffering from what later was determined to be arsenic poisoning. Petrillo had gotten anxious while waiting and decided to poison Alfonsi himself. So much for the original plan. Alfonsi died in the hospital, and detectives connected several such deaths by similar poisoning.

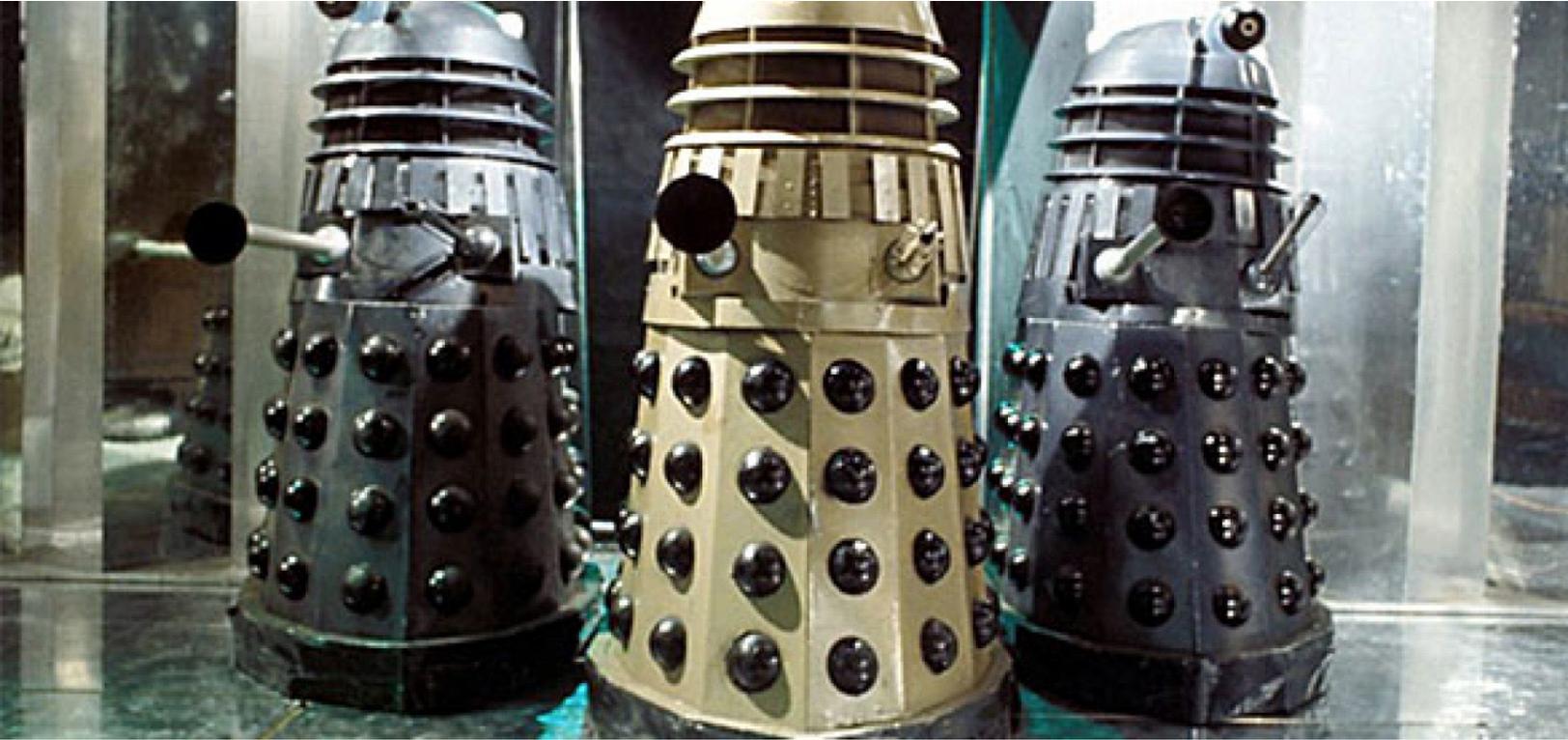


Quickly, police arrested members of the gang who began informing on one another hoping to cut deals. Several wives faced charges too, but they received leniency for testifying against those they’d hired to dispatch their husbands. The court sentenced Paul and Herman Petrillo to death while sending Morris Bolber and Maria Carina Favato away for life.

When Bolber surrendered, he admitted to killing one victim, Romain Manduik, with arsenic. Nonetheless, he played up his faith healing, calling himself a “sort of psychiatrist,” uselessly maintaining his innocence and wanting to turn evidence “for the people of Philadelphia.” But no. Bolber’s claims fell apart when gang members and clients testified against him. And that’s how he wound up spending his final years at Eastern State Penitentiary, an active synagogue-attende and dispenser of blessings to kindly volunteers.

He’s the one they call Dr. Feelgood,
He’s the one that makes ya feel alright.
He’s the one they call Dr. Feelgood
He’s gonna be your Frankenstein.





Indictment by Chris Duval

First Dalek: Your form is different than before. You try to deceive us, but you have failed. We condemn your deceit!

All: Exterminate!

Second Dalek: You protect the Earthlings. They are inferiors and will be destroyed. Your efforts delay what must be, what will be. You stall the inevitable. You preserve contamination!

All: Exterminate!

Third Dalek: You, Timelord, fail to recognize your superiors. We are your superiors! Acknowledge us! You do not speak! Your silence is your confession.

All: Exterminate!

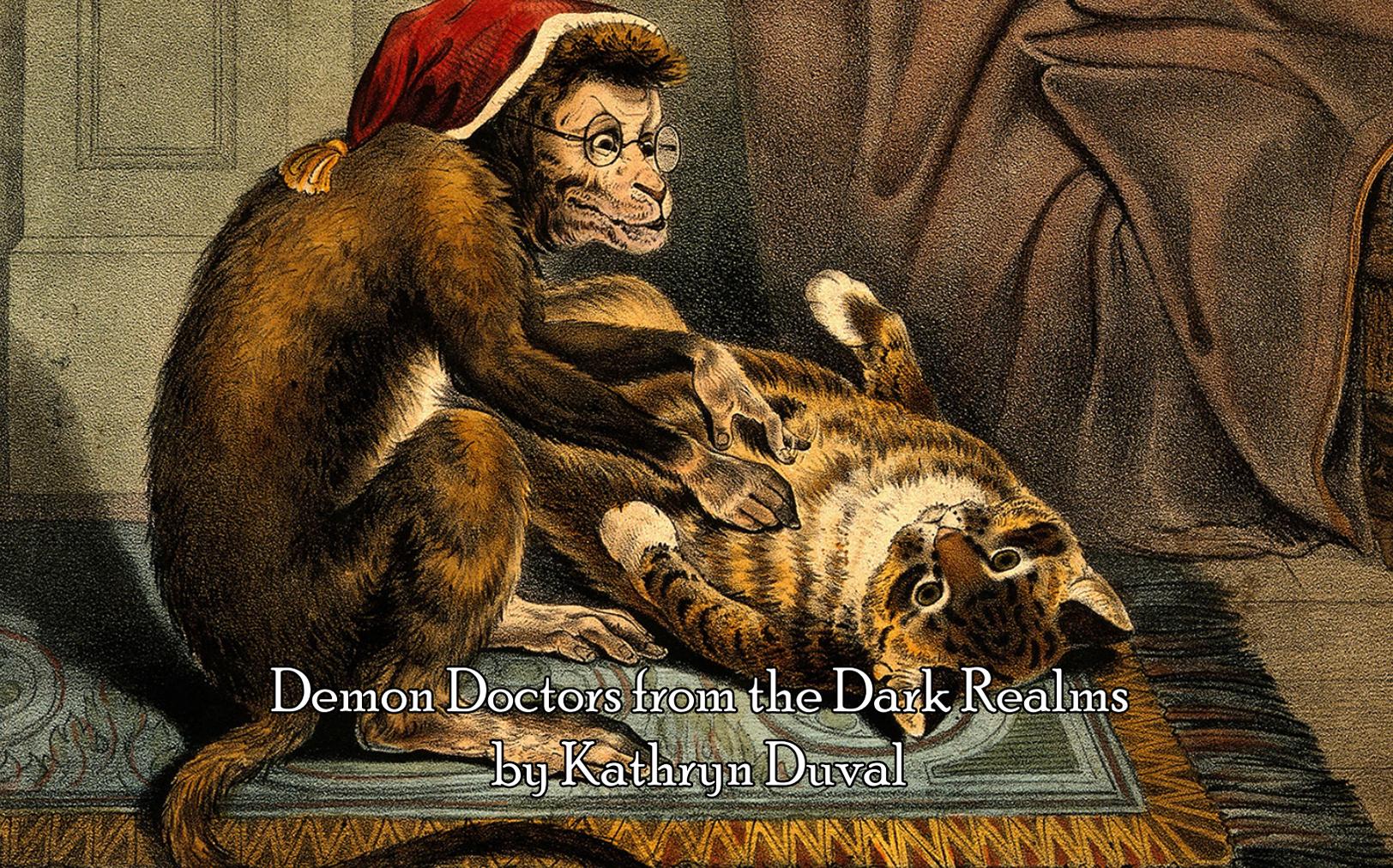
Francis Thompson was a medical student, though far better known as a poet, and even more so than that as an opium addict. He's one that's only come up seriously in the last couple of decades, but really, he's a highly unlikely Ripper. While he never worked as a doctor, he studied medicine for eight years! Also, almost a doctor was Francis Tumbly, who was a quack and produced snake-oil cures. He had the best facial hair of all the suspects. He was also in jail during the murders, but had been nicked for other murders. If he sounds a lot like Dr. Cream without the sheepskin on his den's wall, well, you're right.

Sir John Williams is another who hasn't been on the lineup for the Ripper for too long, but at least he's got an interesting story attached. He was an obstetrician, and an important one, actually serving the royal family. The theory goes that he was acquainted with the women as a part of his practice, and that he cut out their organs as a part of research. This isn't entirely impossible, since the idea that it was a doctor or that the Ripper was looking for organs was mentioned early in the investigation. It's unlikely, but a fascinating idea.

And that, of course, brings us to Sir William Gull, the queen's physician. The basis for him is that he was a well-known and powerful Mason, and that this was a part of a massive conspiracy, usually with Prince Albert Joseph as the crux within the royal family. It's the most cinematically interesting, Alan Moore took him up as the Ripper, and Ian Holm played him well in the movie, and I believe he was the basis for the Ripper in the 1988 TV movie. He'd also had a stroke prior to the Ripper murders, which would make it highly unlikely that he would have been able to do it himself. The royal conspiracy is usually what is pointed to, and it makes no sense.

Look, none of these guys is the Ripper. Each theory related to them have way too many holes. Some were otherwise engaged, others just don't make sense, and they all seem to be taken up by much later authors, no? That's because the unknown makes the better villain, the ones we're not aware of. Was the Ripper a doctor? Could be, but then again, he could have been a butcher. Or a barber. Or a golfer, for that matter.

There was a way to know if you had made headway. You knew you had made headway, when a doctor to whom you had made one or another suggestions, presented, a day later, the plan as his own.



Demon Doctors from the Dark Realms by Kathryn Duval

“It’s damnably difficult to have a demon lover, especially if you want to have a child,” Sadie muttered to herself.

She was pregnant for the third time, and she had decided there was no way she was going to lose this child. She’d lost the other two early in miscarriages. She knew in that way she just knew things that no human doctor could help her. The species incompatibility had made it difficult, to say the least.

After much cajoling, she had wheedled out information from her lover on how to conjure demon doctors from his realm who might help her deliver her child.

She wanted to wait until the last moment to call the demon doctors. She knew they were a dangerous risk because they often took payment of what you most wanted, but she would never be able to birth a demon child without supernatural help.

In the meanwhile, she assembled all the ingredients necessary. Chalice, athame knife, salt, and wine. She drew a large pentagram to hold them. The usual stuff a witch needs for conjuring demons. She also ritually prepared three crystals according to a spell a wise witch had given her and tucked them in a pouch hung around her neck.

As she felt the wet gush of her water breaking, she lit the candles around the room. Her lover quickly fled the scene.

“Ah my sweet Beezelbrain,” she thought affectionately, “you are such a coward.”

She began a routine of steady breathing and concentrated on the image of a beach. She didn’t know if Lamaze breathing was standard for a demon delivery but figured it couldn’t be harmful.

After an hour of breathing and waiting for her contractions to be longer and closer together, the pain grew intense. It felt like something inside her had knives and was ready to hack his way out. She was way out of her league and natural childbirth was definitely out the window.

Even though she began to panic, she said the incantation slowly and clearly. Always best to enunciate when calling forth denizens of dark realms, she thought to herself. She clapped in a ritual rhythm. Her claps and

her voice sounded off to her. Her hand motions made the candles flicker in the darkened room. Damn this is creepy, she thought to herself.

The room felt colder. Maybe it was, maybe it wasn't. Maybe she was just a bundle of nerves. No, it definitely felt colder. And darker. The candles were like eyes staring at her in the darkness.

The white, tall candles transformed themselves into birch trees, almost bonelike, and she was alone in a forest. A cold wind blew. Behind the trees, shadows grew larger and darker.

Three shadows stepped forward. At first, they were only tall cylindrical beings of smoke, wavering in the candlelight. The figures became more substantial and human-shaped.

Then they were animal. Their forms kept undulating.

The figure on the left resembled a kindly old man with a ruddy complexion, but then his face changed like smoke reforming. His nose grew and ears became pointed until he became a fox in a lab coat with a stethoscope around his neck.

The one straight in front of her was a tall dark woman in a black velvet robe with smoky features more slick or oily. She had a sharp nose, alert eyes giving an impression of sharp intelligence. She emanated power. It felt as if she could answer any question she might ask. As she shifted slightly, her arms transformed into great black wings and her sharp nose became more beaklike. Her bare feet became claws tipped with shiny medical scalpels.

The being on the right was a rotund coffee-colored woman with a wrinkly smiling face wearing a white lab coat. She had the feel of a grandmother, full of wisdom. As Sadie looked more intently at her, the demon's smoky body transformed into a snail's hard and soft parts: hard shell with a design of a lab coat on her back and her body squishier but leathery. Her neck stretched out long and her ears became soft antennae.

Sadie started to speak but the being on the right spoke first.

"I am Dr. Snail, and my companions are Dr. Fox and Dr. Raven.

"You have called us. We have come to your aid but know always we must take a price. The price depends on the effort. Are you willing?"

She answered solemnly, "My baby must live."

"We cannot make a promise, child. But we will do our best. Let us examine you now. To help you we must be allowed to leave the pentagram. Do you give permission?"

At that moment, a sharp pain wracked Sadie's frame and took her breath away. Was it a ploy by the doctors or part of demon birth? She didn't know, but she did know she needed all the help she could get even from demon doctors. "Yes, you may come close."

The snail demon's body oozed closer. Sadie felt slimy coldness as the demon took her hand and led Sadie to sit on the edge of her bed.

Dr. Snail turned and spoke to her companion, "Dr. Raven."

Dr. Raven, once again looking like a woman, reached out toward Sadie. Her hand felt metallic and ice cold through the fabric of Sadie's dress. The hand became a claw and cut the fabric. Then her claw returned to a hand, and her palm, cold at first, felt around Sadie's belly.

Something caused her to look up at Dr. Fox. His eyes and the tip of his stethoscope glowed bright red in the darkness. Where his eyes focused on her abdomen, she felt heat. It was startling so she moved her eyes hands to that spot. Dr. Snail reached over to move her hands back. "Do not interfere with the examination."

The heat became intense inside her. She had an ironic thought. The good news is that feeling of being carved from inside out went away. Now I'm on fire instead.

All three doctors began to hum. Sadie's mind was telling her to be reassured, but her skin prickled in fear. Definitely creepy, she thought.

The fire seemed to drain away and she felt like was riding on an ocean of pain waves. It seemed like it went on for hours. Any time she asked how much longer, Dr. Snail would say, "It will be done by midnight hour." Since they started at eleven, it seemed improbable, but she was in no shape to argue.

At least Dr. Fox looked over to Dr. Snail and said, "The exam is finished."

Dr. Snail nodded then said to me "Dr. Raven will begin the treatment now."

The wavering between bird and woman ended, and Dr. Raven fully took on her avian self. Her wings stretched out to touch the walls across the width of the room. Dr. Raven reached out a talon scalpel and struck Sadie's belly, splitting it open. She had no time to move away. She screamed.

Dr. Raven's beak came down quickly and poked into her, pecking. Then suddenly her beak pulled out a filmy layer and a lump of pulsing skin. The avian demon deftly wrapped the filmy layer around the lump. Then with her beak, she tossed the bundle in the air. And swallowed it.

"My baby!" Sadie shouted.

"Sh, Sh, Sh." said Dr. Fox. "He's not gone. He's big and made well. He was not suited to your world. He couldn't survive here. Like the others you would lose him if you tried to do things the human way. You were wise to call us."

Dr. Snail added, "We are healing him. Changing him to make him strong so he can live in both our worlds."

Dr. Raven moved behind her and climbed upon the bed. The demon arranged the sheets and blankets with claws and beak to make a nest. She settled herself into the nest and pulled Sadie back against her. Her great wings came forward to surround Sadie, as if to warm her and comfort her. And all the doctors began to chant susurrations, "sh, sh, sh," in a rhythmic pattern.

Sadie still felt pain, but strangely each time it ebbed as demons seemed to absorb it. Sadie saw colors pulsating each time the pain departed.

All the doctors looked pleased by this. Dr. Fox's face widened with a toothy smile. Not a pretty sight.

Sadie passed in and out of consciousness as time passed. She heard humming and faint musical chimes. A warmth seemed to surround her.

Suddenly she was seized by a great cramp. She felt the need to push.

All three doctors chanted in a language she didn't understand but Sadie's mind said, "push, push, push." So, she did.

The bed shook. Dr. Bird shuddered. An aqua blue egg appeared between Sadie's legs. It was translucent with an inner light, and she could see her child's silhouette inside. He was perfectly formed, but a bit on the demon side. Mostly human but with little hoofie-woofies and budding horns under curling hair.

"Is he cured?" she cried. "How do I get him out?"

"You do not get him out," stated Dr. Fox sternly. "Dr. Raven will take him home, and she will hatch him".

Dr. Snail nodded. "Do not despair. He was not meant to live in your world. We have saved his life so he can live in ours."

Dr. Fox added, "You should be proud. We will train him, and your son will be a doctor".

No way, Sadie thought. I'm not a witch for nothing. There is no way they can take my child back to their realm.

Sadie had to move fast. As they moved to take the egg, she held to it tightly. She pulled out the three crystals from a pouch around her neck and pronounced the words she'd memorized.

She threw the crystals forward. With a bright flash and an odor of sulfur, they absorbed the three doctors. She could see their tiny struggling forms trapped inside.

She laughed as she flung the crystals back onto the pentagram. All that time playing Pokémon has finally paid off.

Landing inside the star, the crystals released their prisoners. All three demons looked shocked and angry as they emerged to full size, but they were held inside the pentagram.

Sadie cried, "Take the crystals as payment and be gone. I banish you to your realm."

And just like that they were gone. Sadie sighed in relief. At that moment, her demon lover popped back into the room.

Sadie was so glad to have him back, she began to ramble as she held him tight, "Suspiciously you missed all the excitement. Though I can't blame you. They were pretty scary. And I have to thank you for the obstetrician recommendation. Our child will be able to live in both worlds now."

He drew close and curled around Sadie and the bright blue egg. As the adrenalin drained away a dismaying thought occurred to her.

"Darling Beezelbrain, do you have any idea how long we will need to sit on this egg until our son hatches?"



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