

EPISODE 206 - STAND AND DELIVER

The Tales of Sage and Savant
Season 2 Episode 6

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NARRATOR

Hello, hello? I assume that some of you can hear me. It has come to my attention that not all of the 21st Century audience can hear me outwith the boundaries of the scheduled broadcast. But I have to believe that some of you can. I have to believe that some of you bore witness to the torture perpetrated against my person, and that some of you can hear me now. When they hired me for this gig, they told me that I was the first, and the only agent to use the Telesensation equipment. Though they say the investigations are ongoing, I suspect that no-one here truly knows what has happened. If you ask me, it is obvious. Someone else has learned how to use the device. Someone else has been unofficially peering into the past. The question is why? I believe it is time I begin investigations of my own. I shall keep you posted as and when I discover anything. And now, to work. Computer open File Sage.0114.0767.Omega1

ACT ONE

FADE IN: MUSIC

NARRATOR

Greetings and welcome to the audio-aetheric transmission THE TALES OF SAGE AND SAVANT, a Twinstar production. This broadcast is brought to you on the first of each month from the Twinstar Studios in sunny Southern California. Our tale stars Eddie Louise as Doctor Petronella Sage, Chip Michael as Professor Erasmus Savant, Emily Riley Piatt as Mx Abigail Entwhistle, and myself, Justin Bremer as your humble Narrator. This month's program, entitled STAND AND DELIVER is sponsored by EDGE SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY PUBLISHING and features the music of THE COG IS DEAD. And now, without further ado, we bring you THE TALES OF SAGE AND SAVANT.

THEME SONG

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

When last we saw our heroes, they were newly baptized circus performers in the NE Camp Grand Southern Circus. As the weeks of performance passed our pair settled into a routine revolving around the rhythms of show-biz. Mornings are for checking props, mending costumes and leisurely breakfasts. Matinee performances help shake out the kinks and exercise the horses, but the real excitement begins after dark as the strings of newfangled electric bulbs blink into service and the entire carny grounds is transformed into something magical and mysterious.

SCENE: CIRCUS MIDWAY - A CLUSTER OF TENTS SURROUND THE BIGTOP, PATHWAYS CARVED OUT BY STRINGS OF ELECTRIC LIGHTS. BARKERS SHOUT FOR THEIR INDIVIDUAL ATTRACTIONS, THE SCENT OF POPCORN AND CANDIED APPLES FILLS THE AIR. THE CROWD MILLS FROM EXHIBIT TO EXHIBIT KILLING TIME UNTIL THE RINGMASTER SENDS THE COMMAND TO ENTER THE BIGTOP FOR THE MAIN SHOW.

SOUND: Carney music, crowd noises.

DR SAGE

New Year's Eve. Tonight will be our last show. I can hardly believe it.

PROF SAVANT

It feels fitting, somehow, to give one last performance and exit the stage with a bow.

DR SAGE

I will be glad to get back to my laboratory, though.

PROF SAVANT

{Sexily} Oh? And is there nothing here that you will miss?

DR SAGE

Well, of course. {Teasing} I will miss Buttercup, and Hiram, and Rosa of course. If I'm honest, I think I'll even miss Jenny.

PROF SAVANT

{Put out} I was insinuating something a little more personal. It feels as if we've gotten to know each other on a whole new level in these last three weeks...

DR SAGE

{Cutting him off} Erasmus, I don't want you to take this wrong, but we haven't, really. We were intimately acquainted with each other's intellect long before this, and as for the physical congress - well that hasn't been us - that is Tubbs and Hildy. Not that it hasn't been nice, mind you.

NARRATOR

And before the Professor can respond to this rather callous dismissal of his feelings the pair are called to the arena.

JENNY

C'mon you two lovebirds. Time to mount up.

SOUNDS: Echos of the parade and the Ringmaster's welcome from last ep - moving into soft, nostalgic, music

NARRATOR

And so the hours leading to midnight and their scheduled departure from the circus pass in a whirl of glitter and exuberance. Meanwhile, back in the laboratory, Abigail prepares for their return.

SCENE: LABORATORY - THE BODIES OF DOCTOR SAGE AND PROFESSOR SAVANT LIE ENCASED IN FARADAY ARMOR AND CRAP HELMETS ON PLATFORMS AT THE CENTER OF THE ROOM. AROUND THE DIAS, EQUIPMENT TICKS WITH CLOCKWORKS AND BUZZES WITH ELECTRICITY. ABIGAIL IS NOT AT THE DIALS, BUT RATHER IN THE CORNER OF THE VAST ROOM WHERE A GIANT TERRARIUM SITS, FILLED WITH ALL SORTS OF BIRDS, LIZARDS AND EXOTIC CREEPY CRAWLIES.

SOUND: Bird squawking

ABIGAIL

Hush, Montegue, be quite. I know you would like me to remove the mesh so you could just swoop down here and have poor Jimmy for lunch, but is never going to happen, so I would appreciate if you would leave off the squawking. There now, Jimmy, you don't need to fear Montegue. I'll keep you safe.

NARRATOR

This is interesting, Ladies and Gentlemen, as you know I can only experience Telesensation for those events around which I have preserved historical records. Those documents are what allow for visual targeting.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

I am currently looking at Abigail's monitoring logs and she clearly stated that she was running a systems diagnostic at this point.

ABIGAIL

And how's that little tum-tum Jimmy? Is the nasty scratch all healed? Oh yes! Yes it is! I told you that ointment would do the trick, didn't I?

NARRATOR

I'm sorry this offends my historian's ethics. I really have no problem with Abigail's love for creatures, but she should have had more respect for the accuracy of her logs than that. Let this be a lesson to you. You can never tell what person in the future may look to your records for enlightenment. You owe that person accuracy and honesty. We shall just have to skip ahead to the moment of our adventurer's recall.

SOUND: Music cue

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

I am relieved to tell you ladies and gentlemen, that as the hour of midnight approaches Mx. Entwhistle has recalled herself to her duties and has performed checks and such adjustments as required to the equipment and all is in readiness for the recall. I just realized that it might be a touch sad that Abigail is alone in the laboratory on New Year's Eve, but the girl seems happy and absorbed in her work. As the clock sweeps towards the witching hour, she happily begins a countdown of a different sort.

ABIGAIL

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1!

SOUND: Prayer Bowl and Chladne in HOME pitch

NARRATOR

The differences I have noted, dear audience, between awaking from a violent death and coming to consciousness from a more relaxed state include: a less elevated heart rate, no hyper-dilatation of pupils, and a more even respiratory response. This return is like an awakening after a long night's sleep.

ABIGAIL

Welcome home and Happy Hogmanay!

PROF SAVANT

{Yawn} Yes, welcome. Petra?

DR SAGE

I'm {Yawn} here, love. In your arms as always.

ABIGAIL

Love? Doctor are you feeling all right?

DR SAGE

I'm fine. Why do you ask?

ABIGAIL

Well, for a moment there you seemed quite... dreamy.

DR SAGE

I'm sure I don't know what you mean.

PROF SAVANT

It was just a passing phase, Abigail. Wasn't it Petra?

DR SAGE

Thank you, Erasmus. Yes. Just an effect of Transmigration. How is everything here?

SOUND: Unbuckling etc.

ABIGAIL

Well. The apparatus performed just as you designed. I shall be most interested to see the results of your testing tomorrow.

(MORE)

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Do you think you have experienced any notable level of muscular atrophy?

DR SAGE

I certainly feel weakened at the moment, but I cannot discern if that is the true state of my musculature, or if my body is totally normal and just a poor comparison to the athletic specimen I have been living inside of for the past month.

ABIGAIL

Athletic?

PROF SAVANT

Quite! We were circus performers and Petra was the lithe and limber assistant to my dashing marksman.

ABIGAIL

Exciting! Ohh! I almost forgot. I have champagne on ice to celebrate the New Year with you. Why don't you change out of your Farraday armor and you can tell me all about your adventures.

NARRATOR

The next two weeks fly by in a flurry of activity. Doctor Sage puts the Professor and her self through a number of agility trials - first to measure the loss of coordination their bodies experienced during the month away. After seeing those results, she insisted they both embrace a rigorous program of calisthenics. She cleared a corner near the dressing rooms and had cast iron weights installed, as well as a couple of outrageously expensive Zander Machines, those exciting new devices for physical health. Having lived with athletic agility, she was loathe to put up with the body of an academician.

SOUND: Weights rattling, groaning.

DR SAGE

That's it. One more. Yes, that's it, one more.

PROF SAVANT

But it never is.

DR SAGE

Never is what?

PROF SAVANT

One more. You say one more, I do one more, and then you say one more again. Patent false advertising!

DR SAGE

Come on, Erasmus. We can do one more.

PROF SAVANT

Are you even listening to me, Pet?

DR SAGE

Of course I'm listening, and you have one more repetition. Come on, now, you can do it.

NARRATOR

In the event, the Professor was spared an endless repetition of one more by the arrival of Mx. Entwhistle.

SOUND: Elevator arriving, rapid footsteps

ABIGAIL

Hello Doctor, Professor. Are you ready to suit up?

DR SAGE

Hello, Abigail. We are close. I'd really quite like to bathe before travel, tho. I've managed to get quite dewy. If that's all right?

ABIGAIL

It is your laboratory.

SOUND: Footsteps, distant water starts.

PROF SAVANT

Are you sure you don't want to come with us? The Auto-recall worked flawlessly this last time.

ABIGAIL

One perfect occurrence does not a pattern make. Let's see if we can duplicate that experiment a few times and then I'll consider it. It does seem like your experience in the circus was edifying.

PROF SAVANT

More than that - it was remarkable. We learned such amazing skills. We made friends with the most interesting people. It has taken all my willpower not to track down Hiram, or Rosa or Gus. They must all still be alive now.

ABIGAIL

But they wouldn't know you at all. They were friends with Tubbs and Hildy.

PROF SAVANT

I realize that. I confess, I am simply curious how our deaths effected them.

ABIGAIL

I suppose that is only natural. We all are curious to know how people might talk about us after we die.

PROF SAVANT

Though in this case, it wouldn't be me they are talking about. I suppose I am being foolish.

ABIGAIL

I don't think it is foolish. I do, however, feel that one of the dangers of this technology is that we might become cloudy over the boundaries of what happens to others and what happens to self.

PROF SAVANT

{to self} Such as the murky lines of sexual congress between transmigratonists?

ABIGAIL

{didn't quite hear} I beg your pardon?

PROF SAVANT

Oh don't mind me, Abigail. Like others of my ilk, I'm prone to talking to myself.

NARRATOR

To cover his embarrassment, the Professor makes his excuses and heads to the dressing room to don his Faraday armor. The Doctor emerges from her bath to do the same, and withing moments they are suited up and on the dais ready to travel once again into the unknown.

SOUND: All the usual buckling in, firing up sounds + Edison Device

DR SAGE

Laboratory Doctor Petronella Sage, King's College, 14th, January, 1895. For the first transmigration of the New Year I have set the trajectory to 1665. The improved pitching system has proven effective at time targeting and now I shall focus on attempting to pinpoint place. A close review of all data gathered thus far has revealed interesting pattern groupings in the Chladni sands. If the patterns contains wavy lines we have transmigrated to Europe. If straight edges, to the Americas, and in the one instance when the corners were employed we went to Africa. Pitch works to create the patterns, but so too vibration. Louder sounds produce greater vibrations. I can achieve a controllable volume by adding bows to the Chladni devices. If I am correct, then this transmigration will take us to Europe in 1665. Return chimes are set to ring in exactly one week.

SOUND: End Edison

DR SAGE (CONT'D)

There we are. Abigail is all in readiness?

ABIGAIL

Pitches set as per your earlier instructions. Plants watered. Animals fed. Yes, all is in readiness.

DR SAGE

Erasmus?

PROF SAVANT

I live for adventure with you, my dear.

SOUND: Usual Time Travel sounds

NARRATOR

Will the Doctor's calculations prove correct? Will they end up in 1660s Europe? We'll find out after this short musical break.

MUSICAL GUEST INTRO MUSIC

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And now dear friends we invite you to listen to the talented melodical expressions of THE COG IS DEAD.

MUSICAL GUEST

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And now, back to our story.

ACT TWO

INTRO MUSIC

SCENE: EXTERIOR, FOREST ALONG COACH ROAD TO VERSAILLES

SOUND: Echoing gunshot, Coach and four being spurred into run.

NARRATOR

The Doctor predicted they would transmigrate to Europe in the 1660s and she was correct. Specifically, they have landed in France in 1667. They are currently in the bodies of Highwaymen somewhere in the forest surrounding Versailles.

DR SAGE

Era... Oh my head!

PROF SAVANT

I think mine must hurt worse, Pet.

SOUND: rustling through the bush

DR SAGE

Oh! You have been shot!

PROF SAVANT

No, I think I was bashed on the head. It feels like it did at Auerstaadt.

DR SAGE

That will be because you were shot in the head again, by something that looks less than canon sized, thank goodness. Let's see, the bullet entered through the Temporal lobe {to self} how appropriate... And - oh good, it exited via the Parietal. Well, let me bind you up then. Once we have the bleeding stopped we can check to see if you've had any loss of function.

PROF SAVANT

Pet...

DR SAGE

Yes, Erasmus?

PROF SAVANT

It seems you are a man again.

DR SAGE

Oh! Am I? I hadn't noticed. I must be getting used to the feeling.

PROF SAVANT

Where are your injuries? Do I need to bind your wounds.

DR SAGE

That's funny! I am not injured, anywhere. Poison? No residue of bitterness or vomit. Disease? No, the linen is clean, the skin smells sweet...

PROF SAVANT

At first I did not know you were a man, because of the hair.

DR SAGE

The hair?

PROF SAVANT

Well, the wig actually. You are wearing the most remarkable long curly periwig.

DR SAGE

Huh! So I am.

PROF SAVANT

But then I noticed the great coat. And the close-kneed petticoat breeches. Odd thing that - petticoat used to apply to men's clothing - another word for waistcoat - but somehow it has come to be associated with women's clothing only.

DR SAGE

Yes, well, I am sure all this trivia about clothes is most interesting, but don't you think we should set about discovering where and who we are?

PROF SAVANT

I cannot tell you the Who - but I am certain by how we are dress that you succeeded in the when. We are certainly in the 1660s.

DR SAGE

It is most strange that I cannot discover how my body died. {pause} What did you say?

PROF SAVANT

I said nothing dear heart.

DR SAGE

No, you quite distinctly did. I heard you say "I'm not dead, yet," or something of that sort.

PROF SAVANT

I swear to you I said nothing. You must be hearing things.

SOUND: Coach, crashing through brush

JOHN

{Calling from other side of road}
Claude! Claude! Rafe! Boys, what happened?

PROF SAVANT

Well, now I know who we are. One of us must be Rafe and the other Claude.

NARRATOR

Before the Doctor could think of a witty retort, a rather large man, with a tangled black periwig, and a red bulbous nose crashed through the brush and landed on his knees next to the Professor.

JOHN

Rafe! You're shot! Is that why you let the coach go by? Claude? Are you hurt?

DR SAGE

Ummm... no. I'm fine, it seems.

JOHN

Now why are you talking Frenchy on me Claude. You know I never learned it.

DR SAGE

{to self} I'm speaking French? Why yes, I suppose I am. Does this body know English? {pause - to others} Who called me a boorish cad simply because I spoke in the wrong language?!?

PROF SAVANT

No one called you anything, Pet. Are you sure you are quite all right?

DR SAGE

I distinctly heard someone with a French accent call me a boorish cad in King's English.

JOHN

{wisely} Oh, I see what happened. You took one of your fits again, didn't you? You is always a bit muddled after your fits.

DR SAGE

Fits?

JOHN

You know the fits where you shake and tremble and yer eyes roll back and ye froth a bit? Fits.

DR SAGE

Oh, I'm epileptic? That would explain things, but epileptic fits are not usually fatal - unless the sufferer swallows their tongue and blocks the airway, but I show no signs of asphyxiation...

JOHN

What are ye on about, Claude?

DR SAGE

I'm sorry...

JOHN

John.

DR SAGE

John. I must have taken a fit and passed out. When I came to, I found Rafe here bleeding from a head wound. As you can see, I've patched it as best possible, but I think we should head for home and get him some proper medical care.

JOHN

But we're miles from Paris and we hain't got the loot you promised Francois. I don't think he'd be any too happy with you showing back up without what funds you owe.

DR SAGE

Who is Francois, again?

JOHN

This fit must have been a doozy - it has completely robbed you of your wits. Francois is the Earl of Sandwich's factor? The one sent to collect your debt? The whole reason you decided to take to the road here in France in the first place?

PROF SAVANT

Take to the road? Claude? Is he Claude Duval?

JOHN

Have you lost your mind man? Of course it is Claude.

PROF SAVANT

Ah, John. Yes. I know what we should do now. You, move down the road a bit and scout for the next coach. We'll stay here and get set for the attempt. Just give us the regular signal, right?

JOHN

{doubtful} All right.

PROF SAVANT

Umm... what is the regular signal?

JOHN

The white-throated sparrow, dummy.

SOUND: Whistles white-throated sparrow

PROF SAVANT
Right. Cheerio then.

SOUND: Crashing thru the underbrush as John leaves.

PROF SAVANT (CONT'D)
This is the most exciting of days
Petra! You will never guess who you
are!

DR SAGE
Claude?

PROF SAVANT
Not just any Claude - you are the
famous Claude Duval - the most
romantic, most charming, most
devastating highwayman in English
history.

DR SAGE
But John just said we are in
France. And I distinctly seem to be
able to speak French.

PROF SAVANT
But Duval was French. He came to
England in the employ of Stuart
loyalists who were exiled in France
during Cromwell's reign, but
returned upon the restoration of
the monarchy. There was a period of
time, when things became too hot
for Duval in England and he
returned to live in France. He
stayed in his native land for a
couple of years but then traveled
back to England and returned to his
thieving ways. He was eventually
arrested and executed... oh.

DR SAGE
Oh, what?

PROF SAVANT
Well, Duval was an immensely
romantic figure. Notorious for his
courtly manners and gracious
treatment of those he robbed. There
is one famous story of a knight and
his lady.

(MORE)

PROF SAVANT (CONT'D)

As the story goes, once the knight and lady realized they were about to be robbed, the lady, a young, sprightly creature pulled out a flageolet and began to play. Duval then pulled out a flageolet of his own to play the duet. Duval then asked the knight for permission to dance with the lady, which he graciously granted. As soon as the dance was over Duval waits on the lady back to the coach, without offering her the least affront. The knight then gave Duval the exorbitant sum of one hundred pounds which Duval received with good grace, and is purported to have said: "Sir, you are liberal, and shall have no cause to repent your being so. This hundred given so generously is better than ten times the sum taken by force. Your noble behaviour has excused you the other three hundred which you have in the coach with you. After this he very civilly wished them a good journey.

DR SAGE

My, that is romantic.

PROF SAVANT

He was quite the figure. People of the time would make up stories of encounters to garner fame for having been robbed by him.

DR SAGE

And so, the problem is I am a highwayman? Not sure how that differs from being a pirate.

PROF SAVANT

No, it is just that - The King himself attempted to intercede on the man's behalf, but the Magistrate would have none of it. His execution was a great public spectacle - Ladies turned out in their finery, men raised a glass in his honor. History is definitive on this - Claude Duval was executed in January 1670.

DR SAGE

And if my calculations were correct, we have arrived in 1665 and I will vacate this body in one week. I am not sure how it happened, Erasmus, but I think we may have just changed history. Well, that is a pickle.

SOUND: Bird call signal.

PROF SAVANT

Oh dear, that was the signal.

DR SAGE

I'm not quite sure how to do this highwayman bit.

PROF SAVANT

From what I've read it was mostly standing in the road to stop a coach and then bluffing one's way through the encounter.

DR SAGE

With courtly manners?

PROF SAVANT

In Claude Duval's case, yes. I have a sword and two loaded pistols at my belt. You seem to have two pistols as well. Unless it was you who shot me they are both probably ready to use. I suggest you step into the road and fire one pistol into the air to get their attention. I'll train my aim on the coachman, and you can take it from there.

DR SAGE

This is not a very good plan.

PROF SAVANT

We have no time for better.

SCENE: THEY LEAP OUT INTO THE DIRT OF THE ROAD, FACING DOWN THE ONCOMING COACH. SAGE STRIKES A VALIANT POSE AND LEVELS HER PISTOL AT THE COACHMAN. SAVANT STANDS TWO PACES BEHIND AND SLIGHTLY TO THE SIDE AND PUTS THE FOOTMEN IN HIS SIGHTS.

SOUND: scrambling through brush, approaching coach, gunshot, stopping coach.

DR SAGE

{False bravado} Well, good afternoon, Gentlemen. Would you be so kind as to disembark your conveyance so we might have a small chat?

MADEMOISELLE

Who iz it? Who dares to stop the coach of Louise de La Valliere? I have here, the child of the king. I will not be detained!

SOUND: Newborn baby cries

WEI BOYANG

There are no riches in this coach, save the fine golden embroidery you will find in my robe. May I step out so that you may assess its value?

SOUND: Coach door and creaking as he steps out.

DR SAGE

Madame de La Valliere, I should never be so cruel as to imperil you nor the precious child in your arms, you can be assured. If you will only be patient, we shall have you back on your way to Versailles without incident. {with out really looking at him} All right, China man. That robe does look quite heavy with gold, and totally inappropriate for this climate.

WEI BOYANG

I am a traveler in this land, yes.

PROF SAVANT

Wait. Wei Boyang? Is that you?

WEI BOYANG

I have been know by that name, yes.

PROF SAVANT

Wei Boyang, it is me - Professor Savant!

WEI BOYANG

Professor...?

PROF SAVANT

Savant. And this is Doctor Sage. Doctor Petronella Sage. We met you before, on your mountain in China and then I met you just last summer in Seneg... oh. Oh. That hasn't happened for you yet.

WEI BOYANG

I have not been in China for many years.

PROF SAVANT

This would have been many, many years ago. Do you remember the night you first drank the elixir. When you woke up, we were there. I was your acolyte and the Doctor was your dog, Ben-Ben.

WEI BOYANG

Ah. The Transmigrationists. I had come to believe I had imagined you.

PROF SAVANT

No. Well here we are. Still Transmigrating. Petra, you remember Wei Boyang?

DR SAGE

I don't remember him, and you are wasting time!

PROF SAVANT

Petra! Surely you remember the Chinese alchemist we met.

DR SAGE

Yes, I said! He is much smaller than I remember.

WEI BOYANG

And you are much larger. But I believe this is not a good time for a reunion.

DR SAGE

Oh, yes, the coach. Driver, if you will consent to leave the China man with us, you may drive on.

MADEMOISELLE

But Louis is expecting the Master at the banquet this evening.

(MORE)

MADemoiselle (CONT'D)

I cannot arrive at the palace
without the guest of honor.

DR SAGE

In that case, Wei Boyang, you will
just have to relinquish your gold,
and we will arrange to meet at a
later time.

WEI BOYANG

And if I give you this gold, I
shall have none to wear before the
king.

DR SAGE

You were prepared to surrender it
just a moment ago.

WEI BOYANG

That was when I thought I was
dealing with a ruthless highwayman.
I would have made the sacrifice to
protect mother and child. But now
that I know I am dealing with a
reasoned woman of science...

DR SAGE

Oh very well. When will you return
to Paris?

WEI BOYANG

In two days time.

DR SAGE

I shall watch for your coach then,
and we shall speak further.

WEI BOYANG

I will look forward to it with
great anticipation.

DR SAGE

Who said that?!

WEI BOYANG

Who said what, Doctor Sage?

DR SAGE

Who said I was being too soft?

PROF SAVANT

Petra, no one said any such thing. Let's let the Master go on his way and get you some hot coffee, or mulled wine, or whatever they use as a tonic in seventeenth century France.

DR SAGE

I'm sorry. You are right. {Calling}
Lay on Driver, to Versailles!

Sound: Creaking as Wei Boyang gets back in coach and hyah!
Coach moves off.

NARRATOR

And so, then non-larcenous Doctor allows the mysterious Chinese master to go on to his meeting with the Sun King. Will she have another chance to meet with him? And what are these voices she continues to hear? We'll find out after this brief word from our sponsor.

ADVERT

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Yes, dear friends, you heard it here. EDGE SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY PUBLISHING for STORIES THAT STEAL YOUR HEART. And now, back to our show.

ACT THREE

INTRO MUSIC

NARRATOR

When we left our doctor, she had embarked on the life of a highwayman, stopping coaches and pilfering from the occupants. Though this particular highwayman was most famous in England, he was French born and had returned to his native land when things had become too hot for him in England. By a strange twist of fate, the first coach she attempted to rob held the ancient Chinese alchemist, Wei Boyang. Two days later, as promised, the immortal came back through the forest in a coach bound for Paris. They robbed the other passenger of the coach and sent it on its way to Paris shy by one passenger. Having repaired to a nearby roadhouse, the trio fell deep into conversation.

SCENE: INT - FRENCH ROADHOUSE - DARK AND DIMLY LIT TAVERN MOSTLY EMPTY. A SURLY BARTENDER SITS LISTLESSLY ON A STOOL IN THE CORNER AND A LARGE HOUND LOUNGES ON THE HEARTH. THE ROOM IS MUSTY AND THE SAWDUST ON THE FLOOR IS SEVERAL WEEKS PAST THE NEED FOR CHANGING. SAVANT, SAGE AND WEI BOYANG SIT AT A SMALL TABLE IN THE CORNER, TANKARDS OF ALE IN FRONT OF THEM.

SOUND: Crackling fire, tankards on table, snoring.

DR SAGE

And so, I have been hearing voices, which has never happened before, but I have learned to suppress it and ignore it. But tell me about yourself. You have continued living life at a normal pace, but never getting any older?

WEI BOYANG

I do believe that I am aging, but the physical tissues of my body do not seem to reflect that process, you are correct.

PROF SAVANT

So, you did it. You achieved immortality. Why have you not bottled and sold your elixir? You would be richer than Midas by now.

WEI BOYANG

As you have experience first hand, the elixir more commonly produces death. Also, I have come to view the search of eternal life as foolish.

DR SAGE

I would not call you a fool.

WEI BOYANG

And why should you not? I am the only of my kind. Immortal and yet still earthbound. I outlive each and every friend I make. There is no lover, no child, no king that can stand by my side in life. All soon fall away. It is a lesson for we alchemists to learn. Not all that is possible to conceive is worthy of our study.

DR SAGE

I do not see the problem in studying a thing. As long as you are careful about what happens to the results of your studies.

WEI BOYANG

You believe you can control those that come after you? Those that would use your research for ill or as a way to grab power?

DR SAGE

Currently I keep all of my researches secret. I do not want the technology of Transmigration to escape into the world before I have examine all possible uses of it.

WEI BOYANG

There are two problems with that philosophy, Doctor.

(MORE)

WEI BOYANG (CONT'D)

First, secrets are rarely kept for long, and second we could spend every minute of our lives attempting to contemplate what others think and only accumulate a thimble-full of their actual intent. People are resourceful and inventive and as different as snowflakes. There will always be someone who thinks of the thing you cannot conceive.

NARRATOR

They argued the finer points of immortality in life and in one's work far into the night. In the morning Wei Boyang appeared in a fine French coat and periwig and announced his intention to join them as a highwayman.

WEI BOYANG

I have had no better chance to see such things from the vantage point of the brigand. It looks to be quite a dashing pursuit.

PROF SAVANT

Oh yes, it can be! The key to Claude Duval's popularity is his gallantry. Here come along and I'll demonstrate.

NARRATOR

For four days, the three of them terrorized the road to Versailles, retiring each night to the pub for philosophical discussions and scientific comparisons. At the end of the week as the moment of recall approached, Sage spoke with Wei Boyang...

DR SAGE

Teacher, will you live into my time?

WEI BOYANG

It is possible.

DR SAGE

Will you come to meet me in person. I mean in my own body?

WEI BOYANG

I do not know the wisdom of that request, but I do have some time to consider it.

DR SAGE

It's just, I should quite like showing you my laboratory, discussing my discoveries in a place where I have access to my logs and results.

WEI BOYANG

Being immortal does not give one the ability to see the future, Doctor. But should the time come, if I believe it is the right thing to do, then I shall surely come to see your magnificent laboratory.

NARRATOR

And so they drank ale and talked until the recall hour. They parted as friends do, with the hope of meeting each other again in the future. Will this come to pass for our heroes? We'll find out in the continuing story of THE TALES OF SAGE AND SAVANT.

END MUSIC STARTS

CREDITS

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The TALES OF SAGE AND SAVANT is a Twinstar production, brought to you on the first of each month from our Southern California studios.

Starring Eddie Louise as Sage, Chip Michael as Savant, Emily Riley Piatt as Abigail, and Justin Bremer as Narrator.

Soundtrack music, sound design and audio engineering by Chip Michael.

Special music in this episode was provided by THE COG IS DEAD. Check them out at WWW.THECOGISDEAD.COM.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

We would like to extend our gratitude to this month's sponsor EDGE SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY PUBLISHING.

Episode 206 STAND AND DELIVER was written by Eddie Louise. Are you interested in the historical and scientific information we included in this episode? Like us on Facebook or check out our website www.SageAndSavant.com to find the facts behind the fiction.

Finally, as always, we urge you to remember that: DEATH IS NO BARRIER TO SCIENCE.