

Episode 208 A MOST SHOCKING AND UNNATURAL EVENT

The Tales of Sage and Savant
Season 2 Episode 8

Created by

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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. Special guests in this episode are Della Rose and Richard Norton. This month's program, entitled A MOST SHOCKING AND UNNATURAL EVENT is sponsored by WORLD WEAVER PRESS and features the music of NEW ORLEANS STEAM COG ORCHESTRA. 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 had pulled themselves out of the ruins of rail bridge and the detritus of stymied declarations of love. The reality of their untenable position made them a little skittish with each other at first, but the naturally optimistic side of the Professor's personality soon leapt to work, and he set about, doing the exact thing he promised - changing the culture at King's. Savant has begun a charm offensive - targeting the heads of all departments about removing the strictures against married women as fellows, lecturers and Professors. The Literature department was the first, and he was delighted to have success with Doctor Johnstone.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Now he has isolated Provost
Cunningham in the men's gymnasium
to see what might be done about the
Physical Sciences.

SCENE: AT THE GYMNASIUM - A LONG GLASS ROOFED BUILDING ON THE
SOUTH LAWN OF THE COLLEGE. WITHIN IS AN OVAL TRACK FOR
FOOTRACES AND ON THE CENTER ISLAND A SERIES OF EXERCISE
MACHINES AND FREE WEIGHTS. CUNNINGHAM, DRESSED IN A FORM-
FITTING SLEEVELESS SET OF EXERCISE PLUS-FOURS IS AT WORK WITH
A SET OF TEN POUND DUMBBELLS.

SOUND: Weights and huffing and puffing

PROF SAVANT

My! That is a robust form of
calisthenics!

CUNNINGHAM

Hello, Professor Savant. Not
calisthenics; weight-lifting. As
practiced by the ancient Greeks.
Soon to be featured in that
pinnacle of athleticism, the
Olympics.

PROF SAVANT

The Olympics? But that is ancient
Greece. Are you planning to time
travel?

CUNNINGHAM

Don't be ridiculous; time travel is
a fairy tale. I happen to be good
friends with William Penny Brooks
and in his latest letter he has
assured me that we will see a
revival of the glorious athletic
tradition within little more than a
year.

PROF SAVANT

A modern Olympics, fascinating.
Care if I join you?

CUNNINGHAM

Delighted, but if this is your
first time lifting you might wish
to start with the five pound
weights. It can be quite taxing.

SOUND: Second set of weights now.

PROF SAVANT

Gracious! That feels good.

CUNNINGHAM

Yes, those Greek men did not receive bodies worthy of being carved in marble from the Gods - they worked for that fine musculature.

PROF SAVANT

I see and are you desirous of being carved in marble?

CUNNINGHAM

{Laughing} Oh, no. Though I wouldn't mind being the one doing the carving.

PROF SAVANT

Why Mx Cunningham, do you have aspirations of being a sculptor?

CUNNINGHAM

No. I would have liked, once upon a time, to consider a life as an artist, a painter specifically, but it wasn't in the cards.

PROF SAVANT

Why ever not?

CUNNINGHAM

{Mimicking his mother} Cunningham's do NOT lower themselves to the trades. {Back to his own voice} The sad fact is, most painters must make their living doing something else than painting canvases - either that or be prepared to live in the depths of poverty. And that was a fate my parents were unwilling to consider. So, I went to medical school. It turns out, I have no stomach for blood but a great talent for administration so here I am, first Provost of the Physical Science wing to not have a Dr. by my name. Ah, well.

PROF SAVANT

Speaking of Doctors - I should like to talk to you about the contribution and consideration of our Doctors of the fairer sex.

CUNNINGHAM

{Suspicious} What about them?

PROF SAVANT

Well, you see, it has recently come to my attention that it is hazardous to the career of a female Doctor to enter the matrimonial state.

CUNNINGHAM

Pish-posh. No woman wishes to continue her medical practice after marriage; it goes against the natural order. Once a girl is married, her thoughts turn to children and home.

SOUND: abrupt set down of weights

PROF SAVANT

That is a rather short-sighted view. We men seem to be able to marry and maintain our ambitions.

CUNNINGHAM

Of course,

SOUND: More gentle set down of weights

CUNNINGHAM (CONT'D)

Men are more intellectually advanced creatures - we can manage the demands of married life and work life with more facility. Women become distracted by those self-same demands.

PROF SAVANT

Did you ever consider this might be because the majority of work in maintaining the family home is foisted onto the woman?

CUNNINGHAM

Now you are speaking rubbish. The roles consequent to each party of wedlock are determined by the natural gifts granted to each. History itself proves this. To men the hunt, to women the hearth.

PROF SAVANT

I am quite sure...

CUNNINGHAM

{Cutting him off} I should love to stay and debate you on this old chap, but I have a Provost Committee meeting and really cannot be late. We shall have to take this up at another time. Keep up the weightlifting - it does wonders for the constitution.

NARRATOR

And with that Cunningham dashes the Professor's hopes. Sage had warned him that Cunningham was intractable but Savant was not conceding the race yet. He would just have to find another opportunity to convince the Provost that marriage should not be a barrier to science. Meanwhile, back in the laboratory a contest of an entirely different shape was underway.

SCENE: LABORATORY READING ROOM. THE DOCTOR AND ABIGAIL SIT AT A TABLE SPREAD FOR TEA. THE DOCTOR WEARS FARADAY ARMOUR. ABIGAIL IS IN HER UNIFORM.

DR SAGE

I understand your reservations, Abigail, but we have proven the auto-recall system works and there are three levels of fail-safes on the equipment. I also know that your first trip through time and space was very traumatic. But now that we have solved the problem of recall, there does not have to be trauma and there is such a lot to be experienced out in the world. Entire lives that we can sample.

ABIGAIL

{Laughing} I find that a bit rich, considering you have recently returned from the worst railway disaster in recent time.

DR SAGE

I will grant you that - but before that we had a most pleasant month in the circus. I would never trade the one for fear of the other.

ABIGAIL

The days in the circus did seem quite exciting, but how can you determine where we might end up? We are just now beginning to be able to accurately pinpoint a time. We still have no guarantee of circumstance.

DR SAGE

I put it to you this way, Abigail. Most lives are untouched by violence. In fact, the life you entered in Pompeii was relatively safe from the scourge but by the volcano itself. I believe, thanks to pre-scheduled recall that more and more of our travels shall be like that, without the need for death to end them. Tell me honestly, if you had met Hilaria, spent three days with her, and left before the volcano erupted, would you not have greatly enjoyed that time?

SOUND: Elevator arriving, doors opening, footsteps

ABIGAIL

Well, yes... Oh, hullo Professor.

DR SAGE

Hello, Erasmus.

PROF SAVANT

Hello, ladies. This looks like a serious discussion.

DR SAGE

I am trying to convince Abigail to Transmigrate with us. I have already set up the third platform.

PROF SAVANT

Yes, do come along, Abigail. It should be jolly fun to have all three of us out and about for once.

ABIGAIL

I don't wish to disappoint you, Professor...

PROF SAVANT

Well that's settled then, isn't it? Where are we headed today, Petra dear?

DR SAGE

I had thought we would try North America mid-century. There are few active wars and great prosperity. I believe that will offer the maximum chance of finding an adventure that does not involve tragedy.

ABIGAIL

Well, don't forget that for three of us to travel, there must be three bodies to transmigrate into.

DR SAGE

I have thought of that. The Faraday armor now has new stomach guards with ferrimagnetic properties in an Archimedean spiral design. Now, when the electricity reaches our suited bodies, the stomach plates will act as electro-dynamic resonators - ensuring we all stay close together. If my theories prove out, we will never have to worry about being separated in space again.

PROF SAVANT

Please say you will come along, Abigail. I promise to look after you.

ABIGAIL

Well, it does seem like this make solve one of the major problems...

DR SAGE

Good. It is settled then. Abigail here is your Farraday armor, Erasmus, your's is on the hook in the dressing room. I shall get the technical set-up completed whilst you two dress.

ABIGAIL

But... {peters out when she realizes that no one is listening}
SIGH

Sound: Electrics warming up as usual, flipped switches, engaged Edison device

DR SAGE

Laboratory of Doctor Petronella Sage, King's College, 3rd March, 1895. Chladni pitch at E-flat 4 and Harmonics in the XXX mode. The Lateral Flexion Amplitude Delineator which will be referred to as the el-Fad in all further notes is engaged and targeted for North America, Summer, 1848. I have added electro-dynamic resonators based on Archimedean spirals to all three Farraday suits, which should serve to keep us together at arrival point. Laboratory assistant Abigail Entwhistle will join Professor Erasmus Savant and I on this Transmigration. I have set recall for two days hence in order to sooth Mx Entwhistle's apprehensions. The automatic laboratory systems will serve - if they don't after three days we will know they have failed and make other arrangements for getting home.

SOUND: Edison off

ABIGAIL

What other arrangements?!?!?

DR SAGE

Now, Abigail. Don't go getting cold feet on me now.

ABIGAIL

That is easy for you to say!

PROF SAVANT

Buck up, girl. Petra has seen me
home safe time after time and that
is even when we got separated in
Senegal. Now that she has figured
out how to keep us together we are
in for a jolly holiday!

SOUND: All the usual buckling in, firing up sounds and
travelling sounds

NARRATOR

And so, against her better
judgement, Abigail takes her place
on the slab next to our two
adventurers and together they make
the leap through time and space.
What adventures will they have?
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 delightful
syncopated rhythms of NEW ORLEANS
STEAM COG ORCHESTRA.

MUSICAL GUEST

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And now, back to our story.

ACT TWO

INTRO MUSIC

NARRATOR

I am delighted to inform you that the new resonators worked exactly as the Doctor theorized and kept the travelers close together. In fact they have awoken on the bodies of three siblings, in the prime of their lives - which unfortunately were cut short by the discover of a cave with the unfortunate quality of being a home to a natural gas seep. This undiscovered geological phenomena was safely sealed behind a rhododendron hell and had lain undisturbed until our three young explorers, looking for a touch of adventure before the eldest of them got married crawled into it. Unfortunately, the gas seep concealed at the back of the cavern insured that the rocky cathedral was entirely filled with methane. Methane, being an odorless inert gas had caused asphyxiation in the three explorers before they were more than two or three steps within the cave. This led to a rough awakening.

SCENE: INSIDE A SMALL CAVERN FRONTED BY A RHODODENDRON HELL. THREE FEMALE BODIES, CLOSELY GROUPED IN AGE, ALL WITH BLACK HAIR AND BROAD CHEEKBONES LIE IN THE SAND.

SOUND: Lots of coughing

DR SAGE

Hold your breath and follow me!

NARRATOR

Realizing that her body was experiencing asphyxiation but there was no obstruction in the throat gave Sage the notion that the cause must be an inhalant. Gesturing to the other two to follow, the Doctor crawled for the light filtering in from the cave entrance. Once they are all outside the cave under the hell, she attempts to explain.

SOUND: More coughing

DR SAGE

Gas. There must have been some type of gas... we need to move out farther, get fresh air.

SOUND: Crawling through bushes

NARRATOR

In the excitement I have failed to tell you one very important fact...

SCENE: OUTDOORS IN A FOREST. MIDDAY.

PROF SAVANT

Oh! My goodness. This is new!

NARRATOR

When the three reach the edge of the rhododendrons and stand up they get the first good look at each other. Abigail is in the body of a young girl, fifteen years old, with broad cheeks and a smile to match. Sage is in a girl with the same facial features, but must be a few years older because rather than plaits her hair is caught back from her face and swept up in a ribbon. The final member of the party...

PROF SAVANT

I'm a girl!

NARRATOR

...is the Professor, an identical copy of the others, only a year or so older and firmly in the realm of womanhood. It is this girl that is soon to be married.

PROF SAVANT

I am, am I not - a girl? Only I seem to be a bit top heavy, and there is an awful lot of hair on my head if I am not.

DR SAGE

No, you are correct. You seem to be in the body of a young woman - around twenty years of age I would say - wouldn't you, Abigail?

ABIGAIL

Yes, I suppose - around my age -
although I seem to be a bit on the
childish side just now.

DR SAGE

Well there is no way for us to find
out who we are from the
rhododendrons and there does not
seem to be anyone else around. Does
anyone have anything on their
person - in a pocket? A reticule?

PROF SAVANT

I seem to have something tucked in
my corset... women's bodies are so
squishy. Oh how handy is that for
hiding things away.

NARRATOR

The Professor pulls forth a folded
sheet of fine linen writing paper.
He unfolds it to read:

PROF SAVANT

Robert and Esther McIntire kindly
request your presence at the
nuptials of their eldest daughter
Charlotte to Master Johnathon
Graham, esq on the 20th of July,
1848 at the Wesleyan Methodist
Chapel in Seneca Falls. Ceremony at
5:00 PM followed by dinner and
dancing. Please RSVP to Lennox
House.

DR SAGE

Well there, see - we have a name -
we are the McIntire sisters. A
place, Seneca Falls. And a date
July 1848. I'd say we'd be well
served by finding a road, yes?

PROF SAVANT

How do you propose we do that.
There is a cave behind us, true but
forest in all other directions.

ABIGAIL

We follow the trail the girls left
on their way into the cave,
obviously.

PROF SAVANT

Trail? I'm afraid it is not obvious to me.

ABIGAIL

There, see where the ferns are beaten down? And here, do you see the scuff marks?

SOUND: Walking through the forest

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

We might as well have signposts. These girls definitely did not have wood craft.

DR SAGE

You are certainly revealing a new facet of your talents, Abigail. How do you come by these skills?

ABIGAIL

My father is quite the deerstalker and every Autumn he takes me with him to procure a buck or two. I've been reading trail sign since I was wee.

NARRATOR

Abigail led them confidently through the woods following signs that the other two could not see. They had been walking for about ten minutes when...

PROF SAVANT

Um... ladies?

DR SAGE

What is it, Erasmus?

PROF SAVANT

Something is wrong in my belly - my lower belly.

DR SAGE

{Concerned} Describe.

PROF SAVANT

Well, there is a kind of a pressure - it is a little bit uncomfortable, and then a strange twitching of some interior muscles...

DR SAGE
Do you need to urinate?

PROF SAVANT
I don't know, Maybe?

DR SAGE
Well, why don't you try that first.

NARRATOR
Excusing himself, the Professor moves off a ways into the forest and finds a likely spot behind a giant fern. Ten minutes later he returns.

DR SAGE
Is everything all right.

PROF SAVANT
{softly - embarrassed} Yes.

DR SAGE
Erasmus?

PROF SAVANT
{Louder} It is fine, I just peed on my shoes.

SOUND: Abigail and Sage laugh

DR SAGE
You did, did you? I'm sorry.

ABIGAIL
It is not easy learning how to squat.

PROF SAVANT
Girls have to squat even when they... oh, of course. I just hadn't thought of it before.

DR SAGE
Oh, my dear friend, I doubt this is the only thing you will encounter that is different about being a girl.

PROF SAVANT
I shall bear up - after all, you have managed in masculine bodies more than once.

NARRATOR

The ladies say nothing more about it, not wishing to torture the poor man. Before long they have attained the road and a busy road it is. Wagons and carriages of all sort make their way northwards, rising clouds of dust in the hot afternoon sun. The girls run up next to a carriage to ask where everyone is going.

SOUND: Carriage slowing.

DR SAGE

Hello. I'm Miss McIntire. Might I inquire where everyone is going this fine day?

HERBERT BAKER

Goody day to you, Miss. Herbert Baker, reporter for the National Reformer, at your service. We are all going to Seneca Falls for the Women's Rights Convention of course. Are you girls from around here?

ABIGAIL

Yes, it seems that we are.

HERBERT BAKER

Well climb aboard and I'll give you a ride into town.

NARRATOR

The travelers climbed into the carriage and rode the rest of the way to town in comfort, if it can be said that the jolting, jarring ride of a hard leather covered seat suspended over iron-bound wooden wheels is comfortable. Along the way, Herbert Baker informed the girls of his reasoning for travelling to Seneca Falls from Syracuse.

HERBERT BAKER

Over the next two days Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott will host a Convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of woman.

PROF SAVANT

{Squeals with delight - then covers his mouth}

HERBERT BAKER

Yes, I know - it is very exciting. Although the first day is reserved for women attendees only, I am hoping to be allowed to sit in the back and record the speeches for my newspaper. The second day they plan to open the floor to men as well as women. It should be an historic occasion.

PROF SAVANT

Oh, it is! I mean it will be.

NARRATOR

Doctor Sage shot a warning glance at the Professor. He seemed likely to burst into a historian's soliloquy over the news that he would be in Seneca Falls for the famous convention. Luckily, he managed to hold his enthusiasm and they soon arrived in downtown Seneca Falls. The town was small and quaint as most American villages of the era were. A few clapboard houses, a scattering of brick buildings along the main thoroughfare, a church or two, a bank and a general store. The only thing remarkable about the village at all was that so many people were arriving for the conference. Fearing their reporter might ask questions they couldn't answer, Doctor Sage asked the coachman to let them out at the first corner.

SOUND: Carriage stopping.

ABIGAIL

Goodbye Mx Baker, goodbye.

DR SAGE

Perhaps we will see you at the convention.

NARRATOR

They watched the carriage move down the main street, one of dozens of vehicles jockeying for position in the suddenly crowded street.

PROF SAVANT

Ladies, do you have any idea how momentous it is that we are here, now?

DR SAGE

I think so, yes. Is this not when Stanton presents her Declaration of Sentiments?

ABIGAIL

Oh, right. We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal. I didn't realize that it had happened so long ago. When are we again?

PROF SAVANT

16th of July, 1848. Oh, come, we must get to the Methodist chapel before all the good seats are taken. I hope they'll let me in, even if it is to just sit at the back with Mx Baker.

DR SAGE

Erasmus?

PROF SAVANT

Yes?

DR SAGE

You won't have to sit at the back, Erasmus.

PROF SAVANT

But Mr Baker said that today was only for the women, and that if they let the men in at all it would only be to... oh!

DR SAGE

Yes, oh.

PROF SAVANT

Abigail, I am a woman!

ABIGAIL

We had noticed.

PROF SAVANT

This means I can fully participate in the conference which kicked off the whole of the suffragettes movement here in the Americas. This is so exciting!

NARRATOR

We will leave our travelers as they find their way into the conference and pause for a word from our sponsor.

ADVERT

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Yes, dear friends, you heard it here. WORLD WEAVER PRESS believes in challenging genre boundaries and engaging the fundamental human drive to tell stories. And now, back to our show.

ACT THREE

INTRO MUSIC

SCENE: INSIDE THE METHODIST CHURCH WHICH IS PACKED WITH WOMEN OF ALL AGES.

NARRATOR

The atmosphere in the hall was electric. Three hundred people had come to hear the speeches. Elizabeth Cady Stanton took the stage and called the conference to order.

EC STANTON

Welcome gentlepersons on behalf of myself, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and my co-chairs, Lucretia Coffin Moss and Martha Coffin Wright. We are assembled to protest against a form of government, existing without the consent of the governed—to declare our right to be free as man is free, to be represented in the government which we are taxed to support, to have such disgraceful laws as give man the power to chastise and imprison his wife, to take the wages which she earns, the property which she inherits, and, in case of separation, the children of her love.

Sound: Applause and women's cheers

EC STANTON (CONT'D)

In progress towards these complaints, we have prepared a Declaration of Rights and Sentiments. Would you hear it?

Sound: more applause throughout

EC STANTON (CONT'D)

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course. We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these rights, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

NARRATOR

The Declaration of Sentiments is truly a remarkable document written to reflect Thomas Jefferson's original American Declaration of Independence. Through the rest of the day the women in attendance discussed and debated the list of sentiments:

EC STANTON

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpation on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world

DR SAGE

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

ABIGAIL

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

EC STANTON

He has made her morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master—the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

PROF SAVANT

He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction, which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

NARRATOR

After the nineteen Sentiments were read out the conventioners discussed a list of 11 resolutions. These resolutions called on Americans to regard any laws that placed women in an inferior position to men as having "no force or authority." They resolved for women to have equal rights within the church and equal access to jobs. Most of the social and moral rights were accepted at face value, but the call for voting rights was a bridge too far for some convention attendees, including, in fact, Mrs Stanton's own husband. The evening wound up with a speech by Lucretia Mott of which the National Reformer said:

HERBERT BAKER

One of the most eloquent, logical, and philosophical discourses which we ever listened to.

NARRATOR

As the convention was breaking apart for the night and our heroes were beginning to wonder where they might sleep they were approached by a strange man. He was rather short, round faced and of jocular disposition.

MCINTIRE

There you are my dears! Is this not the most exciting day! I do believe Mrs Mott outdid herself tonight! Such wonderful speeches! Such a bright future ahead for you my darlings.

ABIGAIL

Father?

MCINTIRE

Yes, Darling Jenny?

ABIGAIL

Never mind. I was just checking.

NARRATOR

And so with little fanfare they were taken home, fed a good supper of lamb and fresh produce and put to bed with admonishments to get a good night's sleep because tomorrow they would hear the great Fredrick Douglas speak. The second day of the convention was even more packed than the first as now men were allowed to join. The Declaration of Sentiments was read again, and was unanimously approved. One Hundred people stepped forth to sign it, 38 women and 32 men. At the afternoon session, the eleven resolutions were read again, and each one was voted on individually. The only one that was materially questioned was the ninth, the one Stanton had added regarding women's right to vote. It read:

EC STANTON

Resolved, that it is the duty of
the women of this country to secure
to themselves their sacred right to
the elective franchise.

NARRATOR

After much back and forth
Frederick Douglass, the great
Statesman rose.

ABIGAIL

I can't see.

PROF SAVANT

Here, Jenny Darling, you stand
here, I'll move back. I am the
tallest and can see just fine from
back here.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

I could not accept the right to
vote myself as a black man if woman
could not also claim that right.
The world would be a better place
if women were involved in the
political sphere. In this denial of
the right to participate in
government, not merely the
degradation of woman and the
perpetuation of a great injustice
happens, but the maiming and
repudiation of one-half of the
moral and intellectual power of the
government of the world.

SOUND: Applause and jeers

GRAHAM

{in hissed undertone so as not to
make a scene} Lottie? Lottie!
Charlotte!

PROF SAVANT

Charlotte, that's me.

GRAHAM

Yes, Charlotte. Come along now.

PROF SAVANT

But Mx Douglass is speaking!

GRAHAM

That is exactly why you must come along. No wife of mine will give credence to his sort.

PROF SAVANT

His sort? What do you mean his sort?

GRAHAM

The Abolitionist sort. The suffragist sort. The Negro sort. I won't ask you again, come on.

PROF SAVANT

I will not. I am going to stay here at the convention and listen to the speeches of whomever I want.

GRAHAM

Lottie McIntire you mind me.

NARRATOR

Abigail and Sage are so caught up in the enthusiasm for Mx Douglass' speech that they don't notice the contretemps happening behind them.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

In respect to political rights, we hold woman to be justly entitled to all we claim for man. We go farther, and express our conviction that all political rights which it is expedient for man to exercise, it is equally so for women. All that distinguishes man as an intelligent and accountable being, is equally true of woman; and if that government is only just which governs by the free consent of the governed, there can be no reason in the world for denying to woman the exercise of the elective franchise, or a hand in making and administering the laws of the land. Our doctrine is, that "Right is of no sex."

SOUND: Wild applause

GRAHAM

Now you come away with me Lottie - this instant!

NARRATOR

He takes our Professor's slender arm in an iron grip, and drags her out of the hall and into the darkened street.

SCENE: STREET IN FRONT OF THE CHURCH

PROF SAVANT

{Struggling} I don't want to go with you.

SOUND: Slap

PROF SAVANT (CONT'D)

{In horror} Ouch!

GRAHAM

I told you to mind me. You are going to have to learn your place, Charlotte McIntire.

PROF SAVANT

My place should be where I want it to be, just as Mrs. Stanton says!

GRAHAM

I warned your Father that this was no place for well brought up young women and I was right!

NARRATOR

Before the Doctor and her young assistant even realize the Professor is not in the hall, Graham has clapped his hand over her mouth and dragged her away from the lights at the center of town. The Professor is not yet aware that he has any real thing to fear in this instance. He is thinking like a man, that once they are away from the noise and excitement, they will face each other and talk this through eye to eye. For his part, young Graham has left the territory of reasonable thought. His lizard brain is in control; his thoughts consumed with ownership, and respect for his station, and lust for dominance. Graham pulls her to a dark and unused corner of the tack room in the livery stable.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The air is full of the wholesome scents of hay and horses and shit. As the door closed behind him in the gloom Savant begins to realize the true danger she is in.

PROF SAVANT

Jonathan. This is no way to treat your affianced wife. If we are to marry in two days we must reach an understanding of how we comport ourselves in private.

GRAHAM

IF we are to marry? Make no mistake you empty-headed thing. We are as good as married already. Your father would never break the marriage contract no matter how he coddles you. He would lose the farm, and then what of your sisters?

PROF SAVANT

You wouldn't?!? Why would you do such a horrible thing?

GRAHAM

It is business. Business I might add that your father was most anxious to enter into.

PROF SAVANT

My father would never treat me as property. He is there in the hall, cheering and supporting those women and that negro you are so disparaging of. When I tell him of how you have treated me this evening, he will call off the wedding and see you run out of town on a rail!

NARRATOR

It was a brave and foolish thing to say, no matter the truth of it. Erasmus has inadvertently laid out the road map for the next terrible minutes. For if she is correct that her Father would rather be bankrupt than see his daughter in a faithless marriage, Graham has lost his leverage.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

In 1849 there is still one way that a man can insure he maintains control of such a situation. He removes his belt.

PROF SAVANT

What are you doing?

GRAHAM

{Icy cool} Insuring that we will be married in two days as planned.

PROF SAVANT

I would rather die than marry a specimen such as yourself, Jonathan Graham!

GRAHAM

As if you had a choice in the matter.

SOUND: Scream, cut off by hand over mouth

NARRATOR

I. It's... Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize. I do realize it is my duty to describe the scene... There are some scenes that are too violating, too barbaric to bear description. Suffice it to say that consent was neither sought nor given which is the most heinous crime that can be perpetrated against an individual. Time distends and warps as it will in such times of trauma and the Professor loses track of himself until the morning when the chimes call him home.

TIME TRAVEL MUSIC

SCENE: LABORATORY THE TRAVELERS RETURN AWAKENING ON THEIR SLABS

DR SAGE

Erasmus, oh thank goodness? Where were you last night, we lost track of you in the crush!

ABIGAIL

Yes, wasn't it glorious?! All the speeches, all the hope for the future! These are the titans that paved our way, Petronella.

DR SAGE

I must confess to being quite moved myself. Certainly I am renewed in my dedication to my work. Erasmus, are you not thrilled? What an opportunity to see that convention in person. I am sure you will write a glorious paper on it!

NARRATOR

So caught up in their shared enthusiasm, the ladies do not notice that the Professor does not follow them to the changing rooms. By the time they return to the lounge, freshly scrubbed and looking for a pot of tea he has slipped away.

DR SAGE

Erasmus?...

NARRATOR

What the Professor did not say was that great moments of history are often recorded as veils across personal tragedies. If we truly understood the personal cost of public advances, would we be so blithe? History is made of blood and bone and the crushed spirits of millions. What would happen if Transmigration gave us a window into the souls of others? Would mankind cease its barbarous behaviors? Can we learn to not distrust the other, to not grasp for more than what is offered, to truly value each and every human life? It is with hope that this can be true that I leave you, dear listeners. Please think on these things until we meet again for 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. Special guests this month were Della Rose as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Richard Norton as Herbert Baker, of the National Reformer.

Richard joins us from the podcast - AT THE END OF THE LINE - a Rail tour of Post-apocalyptic England. Find it on iTunes, Google Play or your podcast app.

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

Special music in this episode was provided by NEW ORLEANS STEAM COG ORCHESTRA. Check them out at www.steamcog.com.

We would like to extend our gratitude to this month's sponsor World Weaver Press.

Episode 208 A MOST SHOCKING AND UNNATURAL EVENT 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.