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The Halloween Trilogy

An Alien Voices Production

**Script by
CECILIA FANNON and JOHN de LANCIE**

– Manuscript Version –

Mark of the Beast
Rudyard Kipling

The Canterville Ghost
Oscar Wilde

The Cask of Amontillado
Edgar Allan Poe



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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(THE HALLOWEEN TRILOGY—
Radio Play Manuscript)

ISBN: 0-87129-967-4

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The Halloween Trilogy

Three Radio Plays
For a flexible cast
(playing multiple roles, if desired)

VOICES (in order of speaking)

Mark of the Beast

Preacher
Hughes
Fleete
Strickland
Indian
Priest
Weiss
Speaker

The Canterville Ghost

Virginia
Father
Mother
Washington
Canterville
Mrs. Umney
Simon
Angel of Death

The Cask of Amontillado

Montresor
Boatman
Fortunato
Caramella

Mark of the Beast

Written by Cecelia Fannon and John de Lancie
An Alien Voices Production
Original story by Rudyard Kipling

INT. CHAPEL – ENGLAND – DAY

1

MUSIC: *Organ – Chapel.*

PREACHER

In the name of the Father...

SOUND: *Tling of Indian temple bell.*

...and of the Son...

SOUND: *Tling.*

...and of the Holy Ghost.

SOUND: *Tling tling tling.*

MUSIC: *“Wedding March.”*

INT. RECEPTION ROOM – ENGLAND – NIGHT

2

HUGHES (NARRATION)

We'd lost touch, Strickland and I,
after I'd left the regiment, so I was
surprised to receive an invitation to
his wedding. It was not until later
that evening at the banquet, however,
that the memories of our horrifying
experience together came flooding back.

WALLA: *Clinking glasses, laughing, hubbub.*

SOUND: *Steely schwing-schwing of a knife being
sharpened.*

At the center of the banquet table
was a roasted calf, its glazed eyes

(MORE)

retaining the last, anguished
recognition of its own demise.

ALL

(ad lib)

The groom gets first choice!, etc.

SOUND: *Schwing-schwing.*

HUGHES (N)

The chef placed a long sharp knife
'gainst the calf's neck and in a
single stroke...

SOUND: *Cut...head dropping onto platter.*

...the head fell neatly from the
torso, oozing rivulets of blood onto
the white tablecloth...and all the
while its sad eyes stared at me.

WALLA: *Oohs and ahs at the meat, polite clapping.*

It was then I felt Strickland's gaze
from across the room. His face was
ashen; his hands trembling. He had the
look of a man wrestling an inner
demon. Of course, I knew *just* what he
was thinking...the Monkey God, and how
its eyes glowed red in that split
second before the leper pounced...but
I'm getting ahead of my myself...

EXT. OFFICERS' CLUB – INDIA

3

MUSIC: *Men, drunk, singing "Auld Lang Syne," walking.*

HUGHES (N)

My story begins seven years ago in
the India – the Punjab. It was New
Year's Eve and we were pissed.
Strickland was a decent enough chap
but Fleete, an unassuming little man,
was a beastly drunk. Why we suffered
his company, I shall never know. That

(MORE)

night, that fateful night, we decided to take a shortcut through a hideous part of town populated by “untouchables.”

EXT. NIGHT – JUNGLE ROAD

4

SOUND: *Crickets, owls, etc.*

MUSIC: *Temple bells in the b.g. – chanting – distant.*

FLEETE

Great gods. The Hindu stink is everywhere! It's a running sewer. Listen to that caterwauling.

SOUND: *Wailing.*

What say we go unwind some turbans, rub a few bald heads?

STRICKLAND

Not a good idea, Fleete. It's a special night for them...something about their Monkey God.

SOUND: *Beggar in background. Ta-din-ta-ki-ta.*

FLEETE

Where's your backbone, man, your British pride? Secret midnight ceremonies to Monkey Gods! It's the 19th century, for Godsakes!

INDIAN

Baksheesh, sahib, baksheesh!

FLEETE

Oh, push off, you ignorant mongoose!

SOUND: *Slapping the beggar.*

STRICKLAND

Easy on, Fleete! Let's go back to my place and sleep it off.

FLEETE

...first I'm going to give them an offering they won't forget...

HUGHES (N)

The temple, fifty yards away...

SOUND: Priest chanting.

...was a ruin of stone columns open to the moonlight and the jungle.

FLEETE

Out of the way, priestie, I got an offering to make...

STRICKLAND

Fleete, come back here, now!

HUGHES (N)

Fleete knocked the priest aside and marched up to a large altar in the middle of the temple where sat a great stone monkey.

SOUND: Monkey gibber; chanting; temple bells.

MUSIC: Chanting.

The ceremony was already in progress. The zealots were the most wretched human beings imaginable, yet their chanting...their chanting was hypnotic. Of course Fleete was oblivious to anything but his own rage.

FLEETE

Look at yourselves! Grown men in diapers, bowing before a stone monkey! Makes me sick!

STRICKLAND

Fleete!...

FLEETE

...Bugger off!

STRICKLAND

...You're acting the great White Hunter...

FLEETE

Capital idea!

SOUND: A pistol being cocked.

STRICKLAND

What are you doing!?!

SOUND: Single pistol shot: mad screeching of monkeys, a rustling of branches.

Oh, my God!

HUGHES (N)

Fleete had shot one of the little baby monkeys preening itself at the base of the sacred idol. Pieces of monkey brain splattered the congregation. Before Fleete could cock his pistol again, the priest wrestled it from him...

PRIEST

You have defiled temple, offended the Monkey God. Go!

FLEETE

No one tells me what to do!

STRICKLAND

Fleete...Stop!!

SOUND: Fleete's feet padding up steps.

HUGHES (N)

...then that fool bounded up the altar steps, took the lit cigar from his mouth and snuffed it out – right in

(MORE)

The Canterville Ghost

Written by Cecelia Fannon and John de Lancie
An Alien Voices Production
Original Story by Oscar Wilde

MUSIC: Continuous.

VIRGINIA (NARRATION)

My experience of ghosts is not wispy-haired phantoms, withered of limb and toothless. Oh, no! The ghost I once knew was tall, dark, and handsome! A dashing figure to a young girl of seventeen.

SOUND: Tlot-tlot of horse hooves; carriage wheels.

We'd come from the hustle and bustle of New York City – to the lush, idyllic countryside of England. Father had purchased a wonderful estate just outside of London. My younger brother and I were enthralled at the prospect of having stables and a lake, but most of all we were enthralled at...

INT. CARRIAGE

1

SOUND: Carriage, horse, etc.

FATHER

All right, everyone, you can open your eyes...

VIRGINIA

Oh, Father, it's beautiful! It's the most beautiful castle I've ever seen.

MOTHER

It's enchanting, Hiram.

WASHINGTON

I want to explore it!

FATHER

You can explore everything in the morning. It's past bedtime – for both of you.

VIRGINIA

I'm not a little girl, Father.

FATHER

You'll always be *my* little girl, darling.

VIRGINIA

(groans)

MOTHER

What your father meant to say is that you're a lovely young woman, and you need your sleep, didn't you, darling?

FATHER

Thank you, Lucretia. You say just what I mean.

(Rapidly)

Now listen, everyone, before we get out of the carriage...I just want to tell you I got Canterville Castle for a song because the place is haunted...by a ghost! So there!

SOUND: Hoot of an owl.

WASHINGTON

A ghost! Hooray!

MOTHER

Shush. Quiet, Washington.

VIRGINIA (N)

It seemed all so romantic and even though I knew Father was teasing, I found myself wishing there might really be a ghost.

EXT. CASTLE — NIGHT

2

SOUND: Horse and carriage come to a stop.

VIRGINIA (N)

As the carriage came to a stop, an elderly gentleman stepped out to greet us...

CANTERVILLE

Welcome to Canterville Chase. Here's the deed. You now have full possession of the castle...lock, stock and...ghost.

FATHER

(laughs)

My dear man, if we find a ghost, I'll whisk him back to the States and put him on tour with P.T. Barnum.

VIRGINIA (N)

Just then, Mrs. Umney, a cheerful, bustling woman, came out to fetch us.

SOUND: Footsteps on gravel.

MRS. UMNEY

Well bless me now, you've all arrived, safe and sound! Come in, come in! I've supper waiting and your beds have been turned down.

MOTHER

Thank you. You must be the housekeeper.

MRS. UMNEY

Yes, Mum, the only 'ousekeeper. No one else'll stay. Castle's 'aunted, as you've 'eard, I'm sure. Come in, Come in.

SOUND: Distant rumble of thunder.

VIRGINIA (N)

Mrs. Umney had prepared a delightful supper in the library. But just as we sat down, Mother noticed a large spot on the carpet next to the fireplace.

INT. LIBRARY

3

MOTHER

Oh, my — what's that?

MRS. UMNEY

(ominous)

That!? Well...well...It'll be blood, Mum. Eleanore de Canterville, kilt dead on that spot by 'er 'usband Simon in 1575.

MOTHER

Well, that'll never do! Can't have bloodstains on the carpet.

WASHINGTON

Mother! I can get the stain out.

MOTHER

Really!?

WASHINGTON

And in a jiff, too, with Pinkerton's Agitating Detergent.

FATHER

Good thinking, my boy. Be prepared, is what I say!

VIRGINIA (N)

Just as Washington finished scrubbing away the spot...

WASHINGTON

There, Mother — just like new!!

VIRGINIA (N)

A most unusual thing happened...

SOUND: Loud peal of thunder.

MRS. UMNEY
(screams)

SOUND: Mrs. Umney falls to the floor.

MOTHER
Mrs. Umney seems to have fainted.

FATHER
What a shame! And I was about to offer her a raise.

(Whispering in her ear)
How does twenty additional pounds a year sound, Mrs. Umney?

MRS.UMNEY
(coming to abruptly)
Oh, that would be lovely, sir. What with the ghost and all. Well, I best push off. Don't like staying in the house past eight o'clock. Remember, prop a big chair 'gainst your door 'afore you go to sleep. I'll be back in the mornin'. And thank you, sir, for the raise.

VIRGINIA (N)
Later that night...

SOUND: Thunder, chains, howling/snoring.

INT. HIRAM'S BEDROOM – NIGHT

4

MOTHER
Hiram, you're snoring again.

FATHER
(waking)
What! What did you say?

MOTHER
Dream more quietly, darling.

The Cask of Amontillado

Written by Cecelia Fannon and John de Lancie
An Alien Voices Production
Original story by Edgar Allan Poe

SOUND: A heartbeat, faint at first, then much louder.

MONTRESOR (NARRATION)

Revenge! Sweeter than wine, more alluring than gold, more consoling than love. Vengeance will be mine this very night! Vengeance against someone I hate, hate, hate with every fiber of my being, who has heaped ruin on my family and impoverished the great Venetian house of Montresor come to an end; and every offense, humiliation, and outrage I have registered in my memory's ledger will be accounted for by that most depraved liar and cheat, that foulest fool, that despicable...AAhhh...I will have him, tonight!

EXT. THE CANAL – NIGHT

1

SOUND: The dull slap of oars on water.

MONTRESOR

Boatman, please hurry! I am already late meeting my dear friend, Signor Fortunato!

SOUND: Water against boat, pole hitting sides.

BOATMAN

Fortunato?! The jolliest wine merchant in Venice? Not an hour ago, I ferried him to San Polo!

MONTRESOR

Ha-HA! What good fortune indeed! Is he not a wonderful fellow?

BOATMAN

Si si si, signore. He is the most generous of men. This evening he paid me a fistful of gold! My family prays for him daily! He is an angel.

MONTRESOR

(aside)

An angel! Not quite yet.

BOATMAN

Your stop, signore. Campo San Polo.

SOUND: *Jangle of coins from a sack.*

MONTRESOR

Here's something for your labors, signore.

BOATMAN

Grazie! May the Lord keep your soul safe!

SOUND: *Footsteps on cobbles.*

MONTRESOR (N)

(to himself)

The Lord can keep my soul as long as he pleases. I have no need of it.

SOUND: *Giggling and low murmurs.*

Ah-hah! Look who approaches, and with one of the most painted whores in the city!

(To Fortunato)

Fortunato, is that you? What a clever costume – the fool!

FORTUNATO

Montresor! What a surprise. Caramella, may I present my friend.

CARAMELLA

Buona sera, signore.

MONTRESOR

(correcting)

Ah-ah-ah!...your great, dear friend.

FORTUNATO

Yes, true. We have done much business in the past.

(To Caramella)

Our grandfathers worked together. I worked with Montresor's father...and also did some business with his son ...and his wife.

MONTRESOR

Alas, my dearest wife.

FORTUNATO

(interrupting)

Oh yes, it is so sad, Signor Montresor's wife is dead.

(With a laugh)

And, now that I think of it, so is his entire family!

CARAMELLA

(mockingly)

Oh dear...I will pray for them!

FORTUNATO

You are the kindest woman in Venice, Caramella! Am I not fortunate, Montresor?

WALLA: Caramella bursts into giggles.

MONTRESOR

Indeed! That is to say...in all but one matter...Oh, if only I had known you would be here tonight...you see, several casks of amontillado have recently come into my possession...

FORTUNATO

Amontillado!? How could you afford such luxury?

MONTRESOR

(ignoring)

...and wishing to verify the sherry's purity well...naturally, I *would* have approached you first, but you are always so busy. So, I'm on my way this night to find Luchesi.

FORTUNATO

(coughs/laughs)

Luchesi! He couldn't tell amontillado from canal water! *I* am the man with the golden tongue, the greatest vendor of wines in Venice!

MONTRESOR

Well do I know! But I could not think of interrupting your revels.

FORTUNATO

Nonsense, my friend! We will go straightaway. Where do you store the amontillado?

MONTRESOR

At my palazzo.

FORTUNATO

(coughs)

To your vaults then, without delay!

CARAMELLA

But you said we'd go dancing!

MONTRESOR

Yes, Fortunato, this beautiful lady mustn't be disappointed...and I fear the dampness might affect your lungs.

FORTUNATO

No, no! The amontillado will warm my bellows! Avanti! Wait for me at the bridge, Caramella.

CARAMELLA

Si, si, mi amore!

FORTUNATO

Avanti!!

SOUND: *Their retreating footsteps; ad lib goodbyes.*

MUSIC: *Lonely, sonorous violin over.*

MONTRESOR (N)

I made sure nobody followed as we hastened to my palazzo. All the while, I felt a giddy urge to push the damnable Fortunato into the canal... but drowning a man who cannot swim would hardly be as pleasurable as what I had in store for him. A mere drowning could not avenge my father's death...my *father*, whose heart stopped when the heartless Fortunato tore up the deed to our winery, and spat in his face. The iniquity! At last, we arrived at my home.

SOUND: *Keys and great door opening.*

I fumbled with the keys – such was my state, and as the great door opened...

INT. THE VAULT

2

SOUND: *Series of rusty bolts, key fumbling in a lock, a latch giving way; keys dropping to stone; Fortunato gasps.*

FORTUNATO

Dear Lord! What is that pestilent smell? I don't think I can bear it!