

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:28,620

Can witch doctors, hex, or bewitch their enemies to death?

2

00:00:28,620 --> 00:00:32,620

What really killed this man in Oklahoma City?

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00:00:32,620 --> 00:00:38,220

His death certificate says he died of asthma, but his doctor believes the real cause was

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00:00:38,220 --> 00:00:40,420

more sinister.

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00:00:40,420 --> 00:00:42,580

Was he killed by a curse?

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00:00:42,580 --> 00:00:45,500

Literally scared to death?

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00:00:45,500 --> 00:00:50,740

Mistress from the files of Arthur C. Clarke, scientist, writer, and visionary, the scientist

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00:00:50,740 --> 00:00:56,140

who invented the communication satellite, the author of 2010, and now in retreat in

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00:00:56,140 --> 00:01:03,140

Sri Lanka, the visionary who ponders the riddles of this and other worlds.

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00:01:26,140 --> 00:01:41,700

These are devil dancers from Sri Lanka, which you will find in many other parts of the world.

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00:01:41,700 --> 00:01:48,500

Their rituals were designed centuries ago to drive out demons and overcome spells.

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00:01:48,500 --> 00:01:53,420

Although devil dancing is a popular tourist attraction, it would be a mistake to regard

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00:01:53,420 --> 00:01:57,660

it as a quaint survival from a superstitious past.

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00:01:57,660 --> 00:02:00,980

Millions still believe in it.

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00:02:00,980 --> 00:02:11,660

In the jungle in Sri Lanka, belief in the magic that kills is very much alive.

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00:02:11,660 --> 00:02:16,780

The sinister spells are cast in a mountain cave.

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00:02:17,780 --> 00:02:24,260

With drumbeat and fire, the devil dancer calls on a demon to help him lay a curse on his

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00:02:24,260 --> 00:02:30,260

enemy.

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00:02:30,260 --> 00:02:36,220

To make sure the victim dies, the spell demands a human skull, freshly dug from the village

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00:02:36,220 --> 00:02:37,220

graveyard.

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00:02:37,220 --> 00:02:42,940

If this bait works, the dancer is possessed by the demon, which demands mesmerized cockerels

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00:02:42,940 --> 00:02:44,940

as a sacrifice.

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00:02:44,940 --> 00:03:03,300

When the rites are over, ashes from the ceremonial fire must be hidden near the enemy's home.

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00:03:03,300 --> 00:03:12,140

There they'll be left to work their murderous magic.

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00:03:12,140 --> 00:03:16,660

Taking an evil spell calls for equally elaborate ceremonies.

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00:03:16,660 --> 00:03:20,540

This woman believes she has been bewitched.

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00:03:20,540 --> 00:03:25,460

Paralyzed with fear, she's brought for exorcism.

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00:03:42,140 --> 00:04:04,140

The devil dancer's job is to entice the demon from the woman's body.

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00:04:04,140 --> 00:04:19,380

Then the senior sorcerer, or Katadia, catches the demon on a thread and imprisons it in

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00:04:19,380 --> 00:04:29,380

a bottle.

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00:04:29,380 --> 00:04:33,460

He promises that the spell will be lifted when the bottles consigned to the depths of

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00:04:33,460 --> 00:04:47,340

the Indian Ocean.

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00:04:47,340 --> 00:04:52,300

In Burma in World War II, West African troops amazed their officers with stories of the

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00:04:52,300 --> 00:04:54,220

power of the juju.

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00:04:54,220 --> 00:05:00,460

One officer, a captain, remembers a case that ended as predicted in death, Alf Lewis.

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00:05:00,460 --> 00:05:05,540

A soldier had gone to see the colonel, asked for an interview, and asked to be sent back

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00:05:05,540 --> 00:05:08,540

to West Africa next day.

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00:05:08,540 --> 00:05:14,580

He had to be in his village in West Africa next day because a juju was going there, and

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00:05:14,580 --> 00:05:17,260

he had to be in his hut when he came.

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00:05:17,260 --> 00:05:22,420

The colonel said it was impossible, he couldn't be gone back to West Africa at that time.

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00:05:22,420 --> 00:05:30,620

The man said, if I no go to juju, juju go down to me, I go die.

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00:05:30,620 --> 00:05:39,140

The man had said to someone, one of his friends, that he would die next day, at midday.

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00:05:39,140 --> 00:05:44,980

He was in the admissions tent, and he was lying on a stretch of bed.

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00:05:44,980 --> 00:05:50,300

Young champ, perfectly fair to partner, just lying there, eyes open, looking at the tent

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00:05:50,700 --> 00:05:54,060

ceiling, the roof.

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00:05:54,060 --> 00:05:55,900

The major said, what do you think about him?

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00:05:55,900 --> 00:06:00,900

Well, I'd had some experience in the RMC before I was commissioned in the military hospital,

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00:06:00,900 --> 00:06:07,900

and so I had a look at him, and his pulse was normal, respiration, breathing was all right,

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00:06:07,900 --> 00:06:09,420

temperature, no temperature.

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00:06:09,420 --> 00:06:14,340

Just lying there quietly, looking at, wouldn't answer any questions, wouldn't talk.

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00:06:14,340 --> 00:06:20,620

The following day, about half past twelve, so the phone rang, and I picked it up, and

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00:06:20,620 --> 00:06:22,100

it was the major from the field ambulance.

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00:06:22,100 --> 00:06:26,260

He said, do you remember that chap we saw yesterday?

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00:06:26,260 --> 00:06:31,900

I said yes, he said, well, he's slipped away on time, stuffed as well as long.

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00:06:31,900 --> 00:06:34,660

Died, closed his eyes, died.

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00:06:34,660 --> 00:06:42,380

He apparently just stopped breathing, closed his eyes, and died.

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00:06:42,380 --> 00:06:48,340

It sounds fantastic, yet there is chilling evidence, gathered by doctors and psychiatrists,

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00:06:48,340 --> 00:06:54,860

and published in respected medical journals, that magic does work sometimes.

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00:06:54,860 --> 00:06:58,380

Spells can bring illness, and even death.

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00:06:58,380 --> 00:07:05,500

And this happens not only in the East, or the lands of Voodoo, but throughout the world.

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00:07:05,500 --> 00:07:10,580

In America, for instance, this family drug store is well-stocked with the weird potions

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00:07:10,580 --> 00:07:20,220

and powders, prescribed by the local form of Voodoo.

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00:07:20,220 --> 00:07:25,580

Plenty of products to ward off evil spirits, at least amongst the goods for sale over the

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00:07:25,580 --> 00:07:31,500

counter.

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00:07:31,500 --> 00:07:36,460

In this part of the world, Voodoo is called root medicine, because the people believe that

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00:07:36,460 --> 00:07:44,260

some plants have magical power in their roots.

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00:07:44,260 --> 00:07:47,300

The city's doctors have to take root medicine seriously.

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00:07:47,300 --> 00:07:50,140

Dr. Ramsey Millett Jr.

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00:07:50,140 --> 00:07:59,980

If I wanted someone to really suffer and die, and I knew this person believed in this, then

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00:07:59,980 --> 00:08:08,540

I would knowingly put in a black root bag a mixture of different things, which will

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00:08:08,540 --> 00:08:13,140

ensure that this person will suffer and die.

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00:08:13,140 --> 00:08:18,300

The first thing I would do would be to put a root in there, then the next thing I would

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00:08:18,300 --> 00:08:29,460

do is write that person's name down, down nine times, on virgin parchment paper, with

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00:08:29,460 --> 00:08:33,860

dragon blood ink, put it in there along with the root.

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00:08:33,860 --> 00:08:42,380

Then I would get some graveyard dust from a grave of some dude or dootess who has committed

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00:08:42,380 --> 00:08:43,380

horrendous crimes.

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00:08:43,380 --> 00:08:50,460

In other words, this has to be a very bad person, whom some people say is like a devil.

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00:08:50,460 --> 00:08:53,460

And again, you put this in the root bag.

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00:08:53,460 --> 00:08:55,180

That's the essential ingredient in that.

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00:08:55,500 --> 00:09:02,140

If possible, again put hair from the intended victim.

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00:09:02,140 --> 00:09:03,620

They're hair.

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00:09:03,620 --> 00:09:07,220

Again their fingernails.

83

00:09:07,220 --> 00:09:12,620

Again some feathers, if possible from a buzzard.

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00:09:12,620 --> 00:09:13,920

A vulture there.

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00:09:13,920 --> 00:09:18,860

If you want to make them suffer, in addition to just dying slowly, if you want to make

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00:09:18,860 --> 00:09:23,700

them have sharp pains, it's best to cut a undershirt, a part of the undershirt, right

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00:09:23,700 --> 00:09:24,700

over the heart.

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00:09:24,700 --> 00:09:27,300

And this will give them pains in the heart.

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00:09:27,300 --> 00:09:31,100

Put a needle in it.

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00:09:31,100 --> 00:09:34,540

Put it inside the root bag.

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00:09:34,540 --> 00:09:41,780

And again tie up this root bag and plant it someplace on the person's property or as

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00:09:41,780 --> 00:09:45,260

close to that person as you possibly can get.

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00:09:45,260 --> 00:09:50,220

Root medicine flourishes, especially on the island south of Charleston.

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00:09:51,220 --> 00:09:56,660

Traditionally, people who believe they've been hexed come to this graveyard and ask

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00:09:56,660 --> 00:10:05,140

the spirits of the dead to help lift the spell.

96

00:10:05,140 --> 00:10:08,020

Caretaker Ben Parker knows the ritual.

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00:10:08,020 --> 00:10:12,420

The spirit must be paid with half a pint of whiskey and nine cents.

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00:10:12,420 --> 00:10:16,860

If I got a bad spell, I come right here.

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00:10:16,860 --> 00:10:18,660

I dig a hole in it.

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00:10:18,660 --> 00:10:19,740

And I'll call it.

101

00:10:19,740 --> 00:10:22,020

You can see the name on it.

102

00:10:22,020 --> 00:10:25,020

So you call them by the name.

103

00:10:25,020 --> 00:10:26,020

Lydia Brown.

104

00:10:26,020 --> 00:10:28,900

Then you say Lydia Brown.

105

00:10:28,900 --> 00:10:30,820

I have a bad spell on you.

106

00:10:30,820 --> 00:10:31,980

I want you to take it off.

107

00:10:31,980 --> 00:10:32,980

I'm paying you.

108

00:10:32,980 --> 00:10:34,340

I don't want you to do it for nothing.

109

00:10:34,340 --> 00:10:36,900

I'm paying you to do this for me.

110

00:10:36,900 --> 00:10:39,500

Then you dig a hole.

111

00:10:39,500 --> 00:10:44,660

Pour half a pint of whiskey and nine cents in there and cover it back up.

112

00:10:44,660 --> 00:10:49,820

After a lifetime on Edisto Island, Ben Parker knows the recipes of Root medicine and sometimes

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00:10:49,820 --> 00:10:51,780

his neighbors consult him.

114

00:10:51,780 --> 00:10:58,820

What other things would they use for a death spell?

115

00:10:58,820 --> 00:11:08,140

You can take a rattlesnake, kill a rattlesnake and drag it through your yard and I can kill

116

00:11:08,140 --> 00:11:10,660

it all of your people in your house.

117

00:11:10,660 --> 00:11:13,660

And that would be like a very evil spell.

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00:11:13,660 --> 00:11:18,380

Yeah, that's a death spell.

119

00:11:18,380 --> 00:11:22,340

Ben specializes in protecting houses against harmful influences.

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00:11:22,340 --> 00:11:31,500

He shares Nora Estevez how to use household ammonia to ward off the magic of evil roots.

121

00:11:31,500 --> 00:11:36,660

When you put this around, I just want to make sure what will you be protecting me from.

122

00:11:36,660 --> 00:11:42,700

When you put this around, this will protect you from people putting anything around here

123

00:11:42,700 --> 00:11:56,540

for you to pick up and if anything here, it'll eat it up.

124

00:11:56,540 --> 00:12:02,460

Here in South Carolina Root medicine creates serious difficulties for conventional doctors.

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00:12:02,460 --> 00:12:04,980

Psychiatrist Mike Lampkin works on the islands.

126

00:12:04,980 --> 00:12:08,100

He's expert at spotting the signs.

127

00:12:08,100 --> 00:12:09,900

For example, I hear.

128

00:12:09,900 --> 00:12:16,100

Now you notice this house over here that's got the dark blue trim around the windows

129

00:12:16,100 --> 00:12:24,020

and around the door and how the posts are painted up along the front porch.

130

00:12:24,020 --> 00:12:31,260

That blue protects the dwellers of that home from the evil spirits or from a root being

131

00:12:31,260 --> 00:12:47,420

applied to them.

132

00:12:47,420 --> 00:12:52,100

Dr. Lampkin regularly has to sort out the consequences of root medicine.

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00:12:52,100 --> 00:12:56,780

Today he's been called to a patient who's convinced she's under an evil spell.

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00:12:56,780 --> 00:13:01,180

Lampkin has learned from experience that he must pretend to be a root doctor himself

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00:13:01,180 --> 00:13:03,580

to have any chance of success.

136

00:13:03,580 --> 00:13:11,020

I have to transform myself from the pseudo sophisticated psychiatrist into the very,

137

00:13:11,020 --> 00:13:19,220

very omnipotent and all-knowing root doctor.

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00:13:19,220 --> 00:13:22,300

The de-hexing session has all the trappings of root medicine.

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00:13:22,300 --> 00:13:25,900

Do you know the name of the person who has placed the root on you?

140

00:13:26,900 --> 00:13:29,460

I don't wish to know the name.

141

00:13:29,460 --> 00:13:35,020

He gives her harmless drugs which cause hot flushes and tomorrow will turn her urine bright

142

00:13:35,020 --> 00:13:43,140

green, signs that the evil spirits are leaving her body.

143

00:13:43,140 --> 00:13:48,220

With this elaborate ceremonial, Lampkin hopes to convince the woman that he is a very powerful

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00:13:48,220 --> 00:13:50,380

root doctor.

145

00:13:50,380 --> 00:13:56,140

When I draw near unto the sick man, when I examine the muscles of the sick man, when

146

00:13:56,140 --> 00:14:01,900

I compose his limbs, when I sprinkle the water of awe on the sick man, when I subdue the

147

00:14:01,900 --> 00:14:03,980

sick man.

148

00:14:03,980 --> 00:14:09,300

Both Lampkin and his patient wear blue glasses, the traditional protection against evil spirits.

149

00:14:09,300 --> 00:14:15,140

You have three scents from your husband, four from you.

150

00:14:15,140 --> 00:14:18,620

And you place the three scents from your husband on this side of the plate and the four from

151

00:14:18,620 --> 00:14:21,100

you on that side.

152

00:14:21,100 --> 00:14:27,820

Finally, when he's convinced the patient believes in his powers, Mike Lampkin gets her to help

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00:14:27,820 --> 00:14:29,540

him cast out the spell.

154

00:14:29,540 --> 00:14:40,020

Though he says it's all a charade, Lampkin's de-hexing usually works.

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00:14:40,020 --> 00:14:43,140

You must tell no one what has taken place here.

156

00:14:43,140 --> 00:14:47,740

You may tell your husband that the problems have been taken care of.

157

00:14:47,740 --> 00:14:52,980

I want you to keep this jar with you hidden for three days.

158

00:14:52,980 --> 00:14:59,860

On the third day, find a creek or river, toss this into it on the outgoing tide, toss it

159

00:14:59,860 --> 00:15:02,020

over your left shoulder.

160

00:15:02,020 --> 00:15:08,340

That will complete the process.

161

00:15:08,340 --> 00:15:11,540

But can roots affect even skeptical people?

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00:15:11,540 --> 00:15:14,500

G. Gatti Dowling is a rational man.

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00:15:14,500 --> 00:15:17,380

He's one of South Carolina's leading lawyers.

164

00:15:17,380 --> 00:15:18,380

OK.

165

00:15:18,380 --> 00:15:23,620

Thank you.

166

00:15:23,620 --> 00:15:26,580

And bake me three copies of that too.

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00:15:26,580 --> 00:15:30,580

Thank you.

168

00:15:30,580 --> 00:15:34,700

Yet he's convinced that an evil spell was put on his family.

169

00:15:34,700 --> 00:15:37,460

It all began the day he sacked the maid.

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00:15:37,820 --> 00:15:46,140

The daytime cook had gone in to clean up the room that Lucille, who had been our maid,

171

00:15:46,140 --> 00:15:53,140

had left and had found something in there that she called a root made up of two needles

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00:15:53,140 --> 00:15:57,500

going one way and one the other and wrapped around with black thread and stuck into the

173

00:15:57,500 --> 00:16:01,260

head of the mattress where Lucille had been sleeping.

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00:16:01,260 --> 00:16:03,380

And I pulled it up.

175

00:16:03,380 --> 00:16:08,140

And when I did, I walked back towards the kitchen and Liza saw me with a root in my

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00:16:08,140 --> 00:16:13,260

hand and she went hysterical again and ran out into the yard again.

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00:16:13,260 --> 00:16:17,380

Soon it seemed that the evil magic of the islands had invaded his home.

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00:16:17,380 --> 00:16:23,500

My older son stopped breathing and was in a life-threatening situation.

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00:16:23,500 --> 00:16:27,940

I was in a very life-threatening situation with a rupture of appendix.

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00:16:27,940 --> 00:16:35,820

My small son came down with a double dose of measles and chickenpox.

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00:16:35,820 --> 00:16:40,220

And my wife, she had this adult case of chickenpox.

182

00:16:40,220 --> 00:16:44,620

Let's say that the evidence adds up.

183

00:16:44,620 --> 00:16:50,540

I was thinking in terms of whether a jury would decide that I had had the root put on

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00:16:50,540 --> 00:16:54,180

me and I would really have to conclude that they would.

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00:16:54,180 --> 00:17:03,300

There's no doubt that people can lose the will to live, often through sheer fright induced

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00:17:03,300 --> 00:17:08,060

by spells, despite the best efforts of the doctors to save them.

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00:17:08,060 --> 00:17:15,420

In 1965, the British Medical Journal reported several well-authenticated cases of this amazing

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00:17:15,420 --> 00:17:16,420

phenomenon.

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00:17:16,420 --> 00:17:21,340

The members of the British Medical Association who wrote the letters still dine out on the

190

00:17:21,340 --> 00:17:24,420

stories.

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00:17:24,420 --> 00:17:30,620

I have seen people in South London who were under the influence of a hex, the practice

192

00:17:30,620 --> 00:17:35,180

witchcraft, and they knew that they had been hexed.

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00:17:35,180 --> 00:17:42,260

And they would show evidence of psychosomatic illnesses like asthma or skin irritations and

194

00:17:42,260 --> 00:17:43,260

so on.

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00:17:43,260 --> 00:17:49,700

I had an extraordinary experience at the end of the war because a woman came into hospital

196

00:17:49,700 --> 00:17:52,380

and I was asked to see her.

197

00:17:52,380 --> 00:17:57,540

And she said she had been, I forget whether it was hex or the witch, and that she was

198

00:17:57,540 --> 00:17:59,540

going to die.

199

00:17:59,540 --> 00:18:00,700

And she did die.

200

00:18:00,700 --> 00:18:07,420

She sat up in bed staring ahead, eating nothing, nothing happening.

201

00:18:07,420 --> 00:18:10,540

She was literally frozen with fright.

202

00:18:10,540 --> 00:18:12,660

And she died in three days.

203

00:18:12,660 --> 00:18:18,940

When I was a house surgeon and one of the teaching hospitals in Montreal in 1935, I had a patient

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00:18:19,940 --> 00:18:23,060

who had had an operation on her kidney.

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00:18:23,060 --> 00:18:26,700

She had a perfectly reasonable post-operative course.

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00:18:26,700 --> 00:18:31,580

About a week after the operation, the nurse came in one evening and said, would you like

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00:18:31,580 --> 00:18:35,940

to look at the menu for breakfast in order what you would like?

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00:18:35,940 --> 00:18:37,500

She said, oh, no, it's no use.

209

00:18:37,500 --> 00:18:40,700

She said, I'll be dead before breakfast time.

210

00:18:40,700 --> 00:18:42,140

Well, I was sent for.

211

00:18:42,140 --> 00:18:47,780

And she was so certain of this that I did something I had never done before and didn't

212

00:18:47,820 --> 00:18:48,820

do after.

213

00:18:48,820 --> 00:18:54,220

I sent for the head of the department who came in and he met the professor of medicine on

214

00:18:54,220 --> 00:18:56,820

the steps and he brought him in too.

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00:18:56,820 --> 00:19:00,340

And they both checked this woman all over as thoroughly as they could.

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00:19:00,340 --> 00:19:03,300

They reassured us all.

217

00:19:03,300 --> 00:19:07,620

And we all went to bed reasonably happy, I think.

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00:19:07,620 --> 00:19:14,020

The next morning, the nurse woke this patient up, washed her as usual, gave her the breakfast

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00:19:14,060 --> 00:19:19,060

menu, went out of the room for four or five minutes, came back and found her lying dead.

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00:19:19,060 --> 00:19:26,060

I think most of us can understand someone becoming really quite sick because of fear

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00:19:26,340 --> 00:19:29,860

or anxiety or a conviction that they've had a spell put on them.

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00:19:29,860 --> 00:19:34,020

But the actual process of dying is difficult to understand.

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00:19:34,020 --> 00:19:41,020

And the patients who did die, the ones that I looked into, there was no cause of death,

224

00:19:41,140 --> 00:19:45,260

no real identifiable cause of death.

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00:19:45,260 --> 00:19:50,420

But psychiatrist Dr. Roland Littlewood has studied Vuru and believes there may be a medical

226

00:19:50,420 --> 00:19:53,340

explanation for these strange deaths.

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00:19:53,340 --> 00:19:57,660

We have some evidence which comes from post mortems carried out in West Africa on people

228

00:19:57,660 --> 00:20:00,300

who died after having been cursed.

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00:20:00,300 --> 00:20:04,220

The adrenal glands, which are two little glands near your kidney, produce adrenaline, which

230

00:20:04,220 --> 00:20:08,380

is necessary to keep your blood pressure up a whole lot of other things in your body.

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00:20:08,380 --> 00:20:13,300

Now you get a surge of adrenaline into your bloodstream at crises, at times when you have

232

00:20:13,300 --> 00:20:15,740

to fight, times when you have to run away.

233

00:20:15,740 --> 00:20:20,780

Now it seems that in these particular individuals, after they've been cursed, the adrenal glands

234

00:20:20,780 --> 00:20:25,260

are completely drained of adrenaline, as if it had all been used up in one surge.

235

00:20:25,260 --> 00:20:31,860

As it was used up, the blood pressure then drops dramatically and the person dies.

236

00:20:31,860 --> 00:20:34,660

Is that what happened in Oklahoma?

237

00:20:34,660 --> 00:20:42,140

Here in the Odd Fellows Cemetery lies businessman Finis P. Ernest.

238

00:20:42,140 --> 00:20:52,140

He died at the Veterans Administration Hospital, Oklahoma City, in 1960.

239

00:20:52,140 --> 00:20:56,940

It's a long way from the lands of Rudu, yet Ernest's doctor, James Mathis, believes his

240

00:20:56,940 --> 00:21:03,860

patient was killed by a curse and that his death certificate gives only part of the story.

241

00:21:03,860 --> 00:21:08,700

Mathis suffered from asthma and visits to his mother seemed to trigger the attacks, as

242

00:21:08,700 --> 00:21:13,140

Mathis realized after lying him out of hospital one weekend.

243

00:21:13,140 --> 00:21:16,660

This was the first hint that we had that perhaps we were dealing with something a little bit

244

00:21:16,660 --> 00:21:19,300

more than just ordinary asthma.

245

00:21:19,300 --> 00:21:24,700

So a week later on August the 17th, we gave him the same sort of pass, but this time with

246

00:21:24,700 --> 00:21:25,700

some different instructions.

247

00:21:25,700 --> 00:21:28,940

We said, please do not visit your mother.

248

00:21:28,940 --> 00:21:29,940

Go in the opposite direction.

249

00:21:29,940 --> 00:21:34,660

Go to a motel and if I recall correctly, he actually went back to the place where he

250

00:21:34,660 --> 00:21:38,940

was born, a little town west of here about 150 miles.

251

00:21:38,940 --> 00:21:43,900

Came back at late Sunday evening with a story from his wife, Perkley, no wheezing, not a

252

00:21:43,900 --> 00:21:45,900

shred of difficulty.

253

00:21:45,900 --> 00:21:51,220

Well, this sort of trinket we thought and in his own mind he began to see that something

254

00:21:51,220 --> 00:21:54,060

was wrong, but perhaps he didn't get the physiology exactly correct.

255

00:21:54,060 --> 00:21:57,700

He said, it looks like I'm allergic to my mother, unquote.

256

00:22:00,940 --> 00:22:09,780

Phineas Ernest had been running a busy nightclub in downtown Ponca City, but by 1960 he was

257

00:22:09,780 --> 00:22:12,100

bored and decided to sell up.

258

00:22:12,100 --> 00:22:16,580

His mother was the partner in the business and she was furious.

259

00:22:16,580 --> 00:22:22,540

This man's mother was looked upon by him as infallible.

260

00:22:22,540 --> 00:22:26,540

He pointed out to me time and time again that mother had never been wrong.

261

00:22:26,540 --> 00:22:28,780

Sometimes she had predicted something, it came true.

262

00:22:28,780 --> 00:22:31,340

For example, she had predicted that his first marriage would fail.

263

00:22:31,340 --> 00:22:32,340

It failed.

264

00:22:32,340 --> 00:22:33,980

She predicted his second marriage would fail.

265

00:22:33,980 --> 00:22:34,980

It failed.

266

00:22:34,980 --> 00:22:36,820

She predicted his third marriage would be successful.

267

00:22:36,820 --> 00:22:38,940

It was successful.

268

00:22:38,940 --> 00:22:41,180

The business was the key.

269

00:22:41,180 --> 00:22:45,980

When he mentioned selling it, sometimes about a year or a year and a half before the final

270

00:22:45,980 --> 00:22:50,020

outcome, she adamantly said no in no way.

271

00:22:50,020 --> 00:22:54,220

And her words, according to him, were, something dire will happen to you.

272

00:22:54,220 --> 00:22:59,740

The memory of their last weekend together is cherished by his widow, Josephine.

273

00:22:59,740 --> 00:23:07,060

This last weekend that I had with him at the downtown Ponca in the motel, and we just had

274

00:23:07,060 --> 00:23:08,700

a marvelous time.

275

00:23:08,700 --> 00:23:13,340

And he just seemed like he could never be ill again.

276

00:23:13,340 --> 00:23:17,820

He, until he decided that maybe we'd better go by and see his mother.

277

00:23:17,820 --> 00:23:18,820

We did.

278

00:23:18,820 --> 00:23:24,500

After we went by to see his mother, it wasn't, but a few minutes till he started having

279

00:23:24,500 --> 00:23:27,500

this breathlessness, and I knew it was a Simon attack.

280

00:23:27,500 --> 00:23:34,180

And I had to hurriedly call the hospital and tell him that I was afraid that he was having

281

00:23:34,180 --> 00:23:37,020

another attack, and we'd be bringing him in.

282

00:23:37,020 --> 00:23:42,380

Once over the attack, Ernest told Mathis he was going ahead with the nightclub sale.

283

00:23:42,380 --> 00:23:46,380

After our session at 5.30, he called his mother and said, in essence, the doctor and I have

284

00:23:46,460 --> 00:23:50,260

talked this over, and I have decided to reinvest my money.

285

00:23:50,260 --> 00:23:53,020

And he was going to reinvest this money in a business that did not need money.

286

00:23:53,020 --> 00:23:56,740

And he said, we will not need your advice.

287

00:23:56,740 --> 00:24:00,460

She listened to him politely, apparently, and said, son, have I ever been wrong?

288

00:24:00,460 --> 00:24:02,460

And he said, no.

289

00:24:02,460 --> 00:24:04,820

And she said, what did I tell you?

290

00:24:04,820 --> 00:24:08,500

And he said, you said something dire would happen to me.

291

00:24:08,500 --> 00:24:10,140

She said, it will.

292

00:24:10,140 --> 00:24:11,620

It will.

293

00:24:11,620 --> 00:24:16,300

When the hour finished, Ernest was dead.

294

00:24:16,300 --> 00:24:24,020

I really believe that that last call, telephone call, conversation with his mother contributed

295

00:24:24,020 --> 00:24:26,660

directly to his death.

296

00:24:26,660 --> 00:24:32,340

Autopsy showed no heart attack, no stroke, no usual causes of death.

297

00:24:32,340 --> 00:24:37,780

That's why we call it a sophisticated version of voodoo death.

298

00:24:37,780 --> 00:24:43,420

These stories prove the extraordinary, even fatal, power that the mind can have over the

299

00:24:43,420 --> 00:24:44,820

body.

300

00:24:44,820 --> 00:24:51,060

After listening to the doctors, I'm convinced that people can be literally scared to death.

301

00:24:51,060 --> 00:24:56,540

Yet I don't believe that spells work unless the victim knows that he's a target.

302

00:24:56,540 --> 00:25:02,100

For what kills is not any occult power of the witch doctor, but the victim's own belief

303

00:25:02,100 --> 00:25:03,900

that he is doomed.

304

00:25:03,900 --> 00:25:09,100

This destructive influence of the mind over the body could become a power for good.

305

00:25:09,100 --> 00:25:14,660

Doctors have always known what a crucial role a patient's psychological state has on the

306

00:25:14,660 --> 00:25:17,180

progress of his disease.

307

00:25:17,180 --> 00:25:23,900

These dark tales of fear and death could lead to new techniques for harnessing the mind

308

00:25:23,900 --> 00:25:26,180

not to kill, but to cure.

309

00:26:03,900 --> 00:26:06,260

Magic and mind over matter.