

FERNANDA: RADIO: Outcast is hair-brained, gunslinging podcast for mature audiences. Content warning: this episode contains depictions of violence, guns, and gunshots halfway through the episode that may be upsetting for some listeners. We encourage our listeners to prioritize their safety before venturing ahead. Thank you.

(theme music)

(Train bumping along on train tracks)

(Something -- a button -- clicking once, twice. A tape recorder? Cassette tape warbles. Static.)

(A man coughs)

(sfx note: the recording is tinny as the narration is given through a tape recorder)

CHARLES (narration): February two, eighteen-eighty-seven. For today, I am Charles Osgood. [beat] Last eve, I met the most curious individual in all of America. Yes, even more-so than I.

(Charles coughs exceedingly)

(Calming breath, then takes inhale on a cigar)

CHARLES (Narration): The mysterious woman commanded upon me this device. [beat] The Sonny Machine, I believe it is called. S-O-N-Y. I am to use this metal box as one might a diary. You merely press one button and then another, and then speak toward it as I am now. Truly, a wonder.

(He chuckles half-heartedly)

CHARLES (Narration): I confess, I think the woman may be some sort of angel or demonic being. She possessed a power - [beat] I question what I've - [beat] Nevermind that.

(Heels clicking on ground get closer)

CHARLES (Narration): A divine bargain was extended to me, and I've committed. Mm.

(Ice clattering in a glass)

TRAIN ATTENDANT: Mr. Matthews, your sweet tea.

CHARLES (thick Texas accent): I sure do 'preciate it, ma'am.

(Ice clattering in a glass)

(Heels clicking on ground get further away)

CHARLES (Narration, no accent): For today, I am also Mr. Matthews.

(Train horn blares in distance)

(Charles coughs)

CHARLES (Narration): Now I find myself riding this train route westward, for reasons obscure. I'm to disembark in some dust town. [beat] *Lone Flats*. The New Mexico territories.

(He sighs)

CHARLES (Narration): *Oh*, what are the chances I've consigned myself into the Devil's congress? [beat] Mmm-*well*, I suppose God has abandoned me, anyhow.

(Charles inhales on cigar, exhales)

CHARLES (Narration): Virginia must be one-hundred miles behind me. [beat] If I'm to make a diary of this *Sonny Machine*, I suppose I shall narrate from the beginning.

(Charles coughs, coughs, cough)

(Train becomes louder and then fades away into applause)

(Men chatting, clapping, laughing loudly)

(J.W. Powell laughs)

CHARLES (Narration): The gentleman with the obnoxious caw, that's J.W. Powell, the director for the Geological Survey. We were lounging in his Virginia mansion, passing the whiskey dry.

J.W. POWELL: Oh, *Mister President*, you cad!

CHARLES (Narration): Indeed! It was President Cleveland.

(Men chatting, clapping, laughing loudly)

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND: I said to her: Madam, I've not seen your missing calf. In fact, I've not seen higher than your ankle.

(Dandies laugh obnoxiously)

CHARLES (thick Texas accent): Hehehehe! Hoo, ain't heard that'n before!

CHARLES (Narration): In fact, I've heard that one far too many times.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND: Say, you seem a fresh face here. What was your name again, good sir?

CHARLES (thick Texas accent): Matthews. Roy Matthews, chairman for the Texas Cartographers Guild, headquartered out in Abilene. It's sure a pleasure, Mister President.

J.W. POWELL: Mr. Matthews is my expert guest for the evening. He wrote me directly, as a matter of fact, pledging his expertise in the Utah regions.

CHARLES (thick Texas accent): Yessir. When I heard Washington might be lookin' at a unified Utah for statehood, I figured, *shoot*, if my quiver ain't right and full.

(Charles coughs. The men say nothing.)

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND: I don't think I quite —

J.W. POWELL: *Apologies*, Mr. President. You know how those Texans can be. *Odd-spoken* and *gun-totin'* —

CHARLES (thick Texas accent): — and tobacco smokin'!

(The men and Charles laugh)

(Charles's laugh gets louder until-- cough, cough, cough)

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND: Well. That would explain that rough hack, sir. Go on. Squeeze it out.

(Men chuckle)

(Charles clears his throat)

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND: Now, Mr. Matthews, you said you're an expert in the regions of Utah?

J.W. POWELL: Yes, Roy! Do share with him your ventures across the high valley and your spars with the Mormon locals. Ohhh, how they've hoarded silver.

(Tinny recording: inhale and exhale on cigar)

CHARLES (Narration): Even the greatest of cons can become undone by the unexpected and the unknown. First came the unexpected.

(KNOCK - KNOCK - KNOCK - KNOCK - KNOCK)

(Shocked gasps echo)

(Door knocked open)

(Shocked gasps)

(Heavy footsteps approach)

J.W. POWELL: What in God's good name — !

(Heavy footsteps stop)

(Rifle is cranked)

(Pretentious gasps)

OFFENDED DANDY: *I say!*

CHARLES (Narration): Texans and their God-damned guns.

THE REAL ROY MATTHEWS: My name is Roy Matthews.

(Rifle fire)

(Guests shriek)

RANDOM DANDY: *Oh my god!*

(Heavy footsteps approach)

ROY MATTHEWS: And that hoodlum has stolen my name, my status, *and* my maps!

(Aghast gasps)

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND: This charge? Is this true?

J.W. POWELL: No, this can't be! I — you — Mister President I assure you that — I had no idea!

CHARLES (Narration): Well, they all turned to look at me, didn't they?

(Tinny recording: Charles laughs)

CHARLES (Narration): Fifteen dandies, the President of the God-damned United States, and a mustachioed Texan with a gun. How did this boor catch me? It was an immaculate con. There must have been [beat] yes, a set-up.

(Angry dandies mumble to each other)

(Heartbeat fades in)

ROY MATTHEWS: I see you lookin' at that door, thief. You take one false step and I'll blow your bowels to Tuscaloosa and back.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND: I'll pardon that crime on impact.

J.W. POWELL: Please, no blood on the Oushak rug. I just had it imported.

(Heartbeat thumping)

CHARLES (thick Texas accent): Gentleman, I can assure you —

ROY MATTHEWS: You can assure me nothin'.

(Heartbeat th-th-thumping, th-th-thumping)

CHARLES (thick Texas accent): Gen-

(Charles coughs)

ROY MATTHEWS: Mister President, Director Powell, folks

(Charles coughs)

(Heartbeat th-th-thumping, th-th-thumping)

ROY MATTHEWS: let me show y'all how we handle crooks down in Texas.

(Charles takes in a deep breath)

(Rifle fire!)

(People gasp at half-speed)

(Tick-tick-ticking! and Ring-ring-ringing)

(Time warbles, yawns, and slows down)

(...)

CHARLES (Narration): It's as they say: The moment before I died, I saw visions of a possible life, rendered into flashes of *sorrow* and *ecstasy*. I envisioned escaping this con-man's course, building a perfect blue home back in Utah, with a turret and piano. [beat] Yes, a loving family. Perhaps love.

(Inhale and exhale on a cigar)

CHARLES (Narration): My [beat] *circumstances* forbade me from either. Whispers became a tribunal and I was soon cast out into the roofless alleys. Have you heard this term: unconditional love? [beat] You should know that love is always conditional. But the bullet hovered before me. [beat] Moments before the strike. I could extend my index finger and poke it. It seemed that time had yawned. It seemed I would survive. But did I want to survive? It'd mean more deceptions, more fleeing between the alleys in a stolen coat, forever glancing over my shoulder. [beat] Each day is another name and another story. Twenty six years of surviving.

(Eerie mystical ambience)

(Heels approaching)

(A woman cackles)

EMI: Oh my *Gods*. You should see the look on your face.

(Heels approaching)

(Charles coughs)

CHARLES (Narration): Even now, with a full day's consideration, I cannot accurately detail this strange blonde woman. She seemed entirely not of this world.

(Clock ticking)

(Eerie mystical ambience)

EMI: I'd introduce myself but I really don't feel like it. Here, just take this, 'kay?

CHARLES (Narration): Despite her petite stature, the woman carried herself with Presidential gravitas. Perhaps it was the six-inch heels, no? Hm. She strutted around the parlor with a bedazzled pocket watch swinging from her hip. Had my wits been about me, I'd have asked her for the time, considering time had just been frozen. But my instincts told me to *keep quiet*. She stopped short before me and reached into a pink handbag.

(Zipper zipping open)

CHARLES (Narration): She unveiled a small metal box. A device I now refer to as the Sonny Machine.

EMI: I want to make a deal with you, Mister *Whatever-Your-Name-Is*. You see this shiny bullet here? The one that's like, two inches from entering your pink *mushy* little brain? Well, you can thank moi for that. See? We only just met and I'm already, like, your complete savior or whatever. But that can totally change. *So --*

(Charles coughs)

EMI: -- it's not really a deal I'm offering.

(Charles coughs)

(Emi chuckles)

EMI: Oh Gods, this place reeks. What year are we in, 900?

(Clock ticking)

(Eerie mystical ambience)

CHARLES: It — it is 1887, Mistress.

EMI: *Mistress?* Gross. Don't put on the airs for me, Mr. Runaway.

(Heels approaching)

EMI: *What?* You don't think I know everything about you? [laugh] You're totally wiggling out right now! It's très funny. You should see your face. Here, let me break it down super mega slowly and simple for you, 'kay?

(Heels approaching)

CHARLES (Narration): And here, this moment, I knew this woman was not of normal pulp.

EMI: You go by the name Charles Osgood. But I know your true name.

(Heels approaching)

EMI: And you're dying. Slowly, sure, but you're definitely dying.

(Charles coughs)

EMI: And each day it's going to get more and more painful, and super ugly, until you're 1887's biggest barf bag in all of America.

(Heels approaching)

EMI: You'll be totally bedridden, ralphing up blood and guts until — well, you get the picture, yeah?

(Charles coughs, gasps, catches his breath)

EMI: You've got no one to take care of you. No family to run to, right? Ugh, like, what a total shame. Poor you, all lonely and dying. Oh, but you've got big plans, Mr. Whoever-You-Think-You-Are. Big plans for a human, that is.

(She laughs)

(Heels approaching)

EMI: You'll never see them come to fruition. Not without moi, *me*, Emi, the most fabulous Goddess of Time and one of the ancient —

CHARLES: Y-you can help me to —

EMI: Don't interrupt me when I'm trying to, like, save your life or whatever. Got it?

CHARLES (Narration): And then she extended the Sonny Machine toward me.

EMI: Take this. You'll use it like a, uhm — do you have diaries in these days? Whatever. It's sort of like a diary.

(Charles coughs)

EMI: But no one wants to hear your personal little sob story.

(Heels approaching)

EMI: So this is more like a detective diary, 'kay? Because there's someone I need you to follow. Do this, and I'll keep you alive, or whatever. *Got it?*

(Train bumping along on train tracks)

(Inhale on a cigar)

CHARLES (Narration): I took the Sonny Machine from her hands. And I listened to her instructions. The mistress provided me a mission, a person I must locate and follow, even if it takes me across all of America. She provided me enough details to begin the journey. I'm to search for a woman "not of this world." That was the complete description. The mistress warned me that no matter where I am, however I might hide or try to disguise myself, if I choose to disobey her commands, the bullet will most certainly return for me. And I will die alone and forgotten.

(Exhale on a cigar turns into a long sigh)

CHARLES (Narration): Alone, I can do. But forgotten?

(Inhale on a cigar)

(Charles chuckles smugly)

CHARLES (Narration): *No!*

(Train bumping along on train tracks)

(Something -- a button -- clicking once, twice. A tape recorder? Cassette tape warbles. Static.)

(Click)

FERNANDA: RADIO: Outcast was created by María Fernanda Vidaurrazaga and JT Lachausse, and produced by Ann Hughes. Starring Daniel A. Stevens as Charles Osgood, Ann Hughes as the Train Attendant and Emi, Griffin Otto Deniger as J.W. Powell, and Ivory Amor D'Francisca as President Grover Cleveland. This episode was written by JT, directed by Fernanda. Dialogue editing by Ann, sound design by JT, and music by Samuel Kinsella. You can find us online at radiooutcast.com or follow us on Instagram at [radioutcastpod](https://www.instagram.com/radioutcastpod) and Twitter at [radio_outcast](https://twitter.com/radio_outcast). If you like what you hear please leave us a review on Apple podcasts or on Podchaser. If you'd like to help us grow, consider becoming a Patron at patreon.com/radio_outcast where for as little as one dollar a month you too could get a special shout-out at the end of our episodes like...

The clever one on the grift, Kyrie O

The best confidence artist this side of the Mississippi Stefani C
The one with the flim-flam, Gnome H
Patrick C, our noble gull-hunter
Alan L the best buncko artist one ever did know.
Daniel W, working the tat with those dice.
The one slowly ropin' in the marks, Tuvie
Our swindler on the sly Melissa L.
Sarah F, who legend says perfected the three-card-monte.
Rax W, whose famous snakeoil clears not only all your scars but also solves your lovelife for a pretty price.
Marcos L, the inside man behind the plan.
Patricia D, the clever quipper.
Cosuelo U the talented tactician --- hola, Ama, te quiero!
And of course, we can't forget Lisbeth V, so entertaining is her stratagem that you'll be thanking her even after you noticed your riches have vanished.

FERNANDA: To all of our patrons, thanks again. We appreciate you. And to everyone listening, safe travels.

(theme music)