



Of course, I realize that death is neither an illness, nor a bodily indisposition. However, it could be considered their most extreme consequence and ultimate goal, thus in this sense it is uncontrovertibly—and inextricably—linked with them. Did I say inextricably? No! And no again! I personally witnessed how Dr. Monardes, with the help of the healing power of tobacco, resurrected a man from the dead, just as in biblical times the ancient Jew Lazarus was resurrected. This took place in the village of Casas Viejas, (the more recent case, that is), where we had been called to save a man suffering from sharp pains in the stomach accompanied by a fever. When we arrived—which given the roads in Andalusia took a fair bit of time—he was no longer suffering from anything, but rather lying there stiff, stark and yellow on a wooden bed. The man was dead.

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"This man is dead," said Dr. Monardes. "How long has he been this way?"

Amidst the general wailing, we finally received the answer that he had been that way for only a short while. Then Dr. Monardes took a cigarella out of his inside pocket, bit off the tip, looked around, and, not seeing a more suitable receptacle, spit it onto the floor (this was a typical village home), after which he lit it with much puffing.

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He inhaled on the cigarella two or three times, blowing the smoke from his nostrils like a fire-breathing rhinoceros, two thick streams of smoke rose from either side of his face and for a moment he reminded me of a mythical bull with horns of smoke, at which point he leaned over, pressed his lips tightly to those of the dead man, and began exhaling tobacco smoke into them.

"Guimarães," the doctor cried shortly in a husky voice, his eyes watering, shouting over the cigarella's crackling. "Come here and pulpate!"

In this situation, "pulpate" means to press on the stomach. And that is what I did. When the doctor blew smoke into the man's mouth, I would wait a moment and pulpate. We only needed to do this a few times, perhaps five at the most. After which the doctor abruptly drew back with impressive agility and raised the man's head with his hand, such that for a moment it was level with mine, facing towards me as I bent over him. The man opened his eyes. What eyes! Although I only saw them for a moment, I will never forget them! Glassy eyes, huge and round as a

fish's, with a very strange emotion written in them: some mixture of horror and utter confusion. I suspect that this is how a person coming back from the dead looks. He positively cannot figure out what is going on. But all this lasted only an instant, like I said, because in the following moment Dr. Monardes turned the man's head, deftly tucking it under his elbow. Then I, led by lucky intuition, pulpated him one last time. Lucky intuition is so called, since it shows up in the details, which no one could possibly teach you, so tiny and insignificant are they on the one hand, yet so often decisive on the other. And suddenly the glassy-eyed man took a breath with whistling lungs and proceeded to vomit. He continued to vomit as the doctor held his head to the side with one hand, while handing me the crackling and already half-extinguished cigarella. I took it, inhaled a final drag and dropped it into the glass of pereira where it went out with a loud hiss. I thought to myself: "If you are dead, it will raise you from the grave, if you are alive, it will send you there." Of course, that was a completely unfounded outburst of superstition, stimulated by the powerful and exotic qualities of that vigorous substance.

The man was saved! He soon came to his senses, his breathing normalized and he even answered questions by nodding his head.

[. . .]

"Señor," I said. "We just raised a man from the dead! We saved him!"

"Well, he'll die again," Dr. Monardes smiled. "Only some other time."

How modesty adorns a man! You'll never catch Dr. Monardes getting puffed up over his unbelievable achievements, you'll never see him wallowing in self-satisfaction like a pig in the mud. No, he is always disciplined, business-like, with brisk, energetic movements, careful, on his guard, concentrated yet calm at the same time. An inimitable physician! What luck I had to stumble across such a teacher. And so on. ■