

THE ELEPHANT MAN

by

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Based on The Elephant Man,
A Study in Human Dignity

by

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BLACK

FADE IN: ABSTRACT DREAM

CLOSE-UP of a gold framed miniature portrait of JOHN MERRICK'S MOTHER (tune or melody over her picture, heartbeat), which DISSOLVES TO CLOSE-UP of real Mother smiling A shadow comes over her face. CLOSE-UP of elephant ears, trunks, faces moving.

Dark, heavy feet stomping elephant trumpet, rearing up.

Powerful hit and the Mother falls. Darker. Trunk slides over Mother's face and breasts and stomach, leaving a moist trail.

MOTHER'S POV of elephant's mouth, eyes, skin. Mother's face twists and freezes in a blurred snap roll.

BLACK again. Knock, knock sound. Curtain opens to horrified faces.

CUT TO BLACK AND SILENCE

CIRCUS

FADE IN TO steam shooting out of a huge old half-rusted calliope. The music is very loud and raucous. Moving up and back we see the black awning entrance to the freak tent, where FREDERICK TREVES, Resident Surgeon and Lecturer on anatomy at the London Hospital, is standing with his back to us observing the posters of the freaks.

Coming along a muddy walkway at the side of the tent is Treves' wife, ANNE, and their two DAUGHTERS. The shrill over-whelming music seems to engulf her. She looks discomfited, vulnerable, and protective of her daughters. The girls, oblivious to any fear, are finishing their chocolate sweets.

CLOSE-UP of Treves looking at a poster.

He hears:

#1 DAUGHTER

Poppa!

Treves turns and looks down to a chocolate-covered face. He smiles at the children and Anne.

Anne sees the dirty faces and begins cleaning one of them. The other daughter looks into the freak tent.

#2 DAUGHTER

Poppa... may we go in there?

ANNE

Alright... Your turn.

She turns the girl away from the freak tent and begins cleaning her face.

Her kerchief pulls and distorts the little daughter's face. Suddenly the girl sees a ring of elephants in the distance.

#2 DAUGHTER

Oh,look M-ummy! Elephants!

ANNE

Oh, elephants! We'll go see them.

She stands.

ANNE

(to Treves)

You won't be long?

TREVES

I'll join you shortly.

She takes the children off toward the elephants.

Treves watches them go for a moment, then turns and we go with him into the dark freak tent. He pauses to pay admission at a small booth, then disappears within.

DARKNESS. We hear what could be the trumpeting of an elephant.

Treves parts the black canvas and enters the main part of the tent. Off to his left he sees a man wrapped in a black cape, holding a conch shell aloft and blowing powerfully into it. The tent is dimly lit with flickering oil lamps. People mill about through the weaving corridors. To Treves' right, he sees a sign reading, "The Deadly Fruit of the Original Sin," over a small, very dark corridor.

Treves enters the passage and disappears into the shadows.

The corridor has a series of flaps and turns to disorient the spectator. Treves carefully pushes his way through and arrives at the inner chamber.

In a roped-off space stands a small stage set at eye-level, with curtains on three sides. On the stage is a bell jar filled with grey-murky fluid lit from behind with casts an eerie glow in the chamber. Suspended in the fluid is the life-sized body of a baby-doll with the attached head of a large snake. At the join of head and body is a blob of unidentifiable organic matter. It is obviously phony, but the effect is still very disquieting. At the bottom of the jar, in the muck, sits an apple with two large bites out of it. Behind the jar is a painting on the order of a religious triptych, portraying Adam on one side, Eve on the other, and the tree flowering over the jar.

Treves' impassive face is bathed in the watery glow. He studies the strange object with a critical eye. In the passage we hear movement, and an OLDER GENTLEMAN enters. He seems visibly impressed with "The Deadly Fruit of the Original Sin."

OLDER MAN

A wicked birth...

After a moment, Treves quietly leaves the inner chamber.

As he pushes his way through the corridor, the noise grows and becomes a cacophony of strange sounds. He exits and hears a booming roar and the rush of air as a series of twelve candles, mounted in a row on a ten-foot stand, are blown out by "THE INCREDIBLE WIND-MAN." His BARKER steps up and talks to the people.

BARKER

Ladies and Gentlemen, his lungs are larger than this mammoth blacksmith's bellows. So great is his power of exhalation, rivaling even that of the Great North Wind, that he will now challenge two grown men to attempt to hold the bellows shut as he applies the mighty blast of his herculean breath! Are there any volunteers?

A few people raise their hands. The Barker scans the crowd and then points over the heads of the volunteers to TWO MEN toward the back.

BARKER

Ah! I see two likely lads! Come forward! Come forward! Pit your strength against the Mighty Wind-Man!

During the above, The Incredible Wind-Man removes his cape, revealing his great barrel chest and pot-belly supported by spindly, white, hairless legs. As the Barker sets the "Volunteers," the Wind-Man walks about the small platform, huffing and puffing and blowing on the conch shell.

The "Volunteers" set, the Wind-Man steps up to the end of the bellows, takes an enormous breath, and twirls his black handlebar moustache as a signal to the Barker.

BARKER

Gentlemen... Are you ready?

THE LADS

Yes we are... Right... etc.

BARKER

Ladies and Gentlemen!... Let the demonstration begin!!

The Wind-Man clamps his mouth to the bellows, and with great show begins to exhale, savagely stamping his feet. The Two Lads struggle obviously, and then pretend to be forced apart.

The Barker triumphantly lifts the WindMan's hand. The Wind-Man ceases to blow, removes his lips from the bellows and the Two Lads instantly collapse together on the floor.

BARKER

Ladies and Gentlemen!... "THE INCREDIBLE WIND-MAN!!!

The crowd cheers, while the Wind-Man puts the conch shell to his lips and proudly stamps his feet, circling about the Two Lads.

Amidst this applause, Treves smiles indulgently. He moves on, looking for something genuine.

TWO BOBBIES move through the crowd, intent upon a certain destination. Treves conveys a casual interest in them.

Treves moves on to A BEARDED LADY who combs her beard, busily chewing tobacco and spitting into a spittoon.

Treves continues to work his way through the crowd. Up ahead he sees the Bobbies.

BOBBIES

Make way! Make way!

They round a corner.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Oh yes they are, they're yours alright.

We hear the laughter of a crowd.

Treves moves closer to see a FAT LADY seated in a chair on the next platform. On each knee she holds a DWARF. They are dressed as babies. A SKELETON MAN stands beside her.

SKELETON MAN

I refuse to believe it! I will not accept it! Those babies are simply too ugly, they cannot be mine!

The crowd laughs uproariously.

SKELETON MAN

I don't want them! Get rid of them! I don't want to see them!

FAT LADY

Darling, don't be difficult! Let's take our sweet lovely children on an outing.

SKELETON MAN

We'll take these miserable whelps on an outing, alright! We'll take them to the zoo... WHERE THEY WILL STAY!

From the direction the Bobbies have gone, we hear several screams.

FAT LADY

(pausing at the screams)

Children save yourselves! Prevail upon your Pappa!

The two Dwarves get down from her knees and approach the Skeleton Man. They kneel and tug at his thin legs.

DWARVES

Poppa! Poppa! Poppa, please!

At this point, a FATHER holding his YOUNG SON in his arms passes by Treves. The Young Boy clutches his Father's neck in fear, hiding his face.

FATHER

(out loud, to no one in particular)
This is too much! They should not
allow it! They should not allow it!

Treves, very curious now, along with several others, make their way around the corner.

Before him, Treves sees an agitated crowd staring at something that from his point of view he cannot see. Brushing past him is a WOMAN pulling a small, confused and frightened LITTLE GIRL. Getting closer to the commotion, he sees four BOBBIES standing with a well-dressed alderman, arguing with the OWNER of this particular exhibit.

A distraught, almost hysterical WOMAN is ineffectually striking the Owner with her fists about his head and shoulders, crying weakly and incoherently.

WOMAN

Beast, Beast...

Treves is just about to see whatever it is that is causing the alarm, when one of the Bobbies says:

BOBBY

No! That's right out! Drop the
curtain!

As the curtain drops, Treves just glimpses baggy trouser cuffs and two horribly deformed, root-like feet. The distraught Woman has been pulled away from the Owner and is sobbing on a Bobby's shoulder.

OWNER

You can't do that! I've got my
rights!

ALDERMAN

I have the authority to close you
down, and I'm doing just that!

In the crowd, Treves notices a YOUNG BOY staring open-mouthed, blankly at the curtain. Treves pushes through the glut of people to join the Boy and get a better view. The curtain is actually a large canvas.

On it is a life-sized portrait, crudely painted, of a creature that could only be possible in a nightmare. It is the figure of a man turing into an elephant. The transformation, however, is not complete; there is still more of the man than beast. Palm trees in the background suggest the jungle habitat in which this Perverted object might have once roamed.

Filled with curiosity, Treves moves toward the curtain.

ALDERMAN

This exhibit degrades all who see
it, as well as the poor creature
himself.

OWNER

He's a freak! How else can he live?

ALDERMAN

Freaks are one thing. No one objects to freaks, but this is entirely different. This is monstrous, and ought not to be allowed. These officers will see to it that you are on your way as soon as possible. Good day.

The alderman turns and leaves the tent.

OWNER

(to himself)

...Movin' again!

He shakes his head in disgust.

Now at the canvas, Treves tries to lift the edge to get a peek inside the wagon, but the meaty hand of the Owner clamps down on his wrist.

OWNER

Have a care, gov'nor.

The two men look at each other for a solid moment.

TREVES

Forgive me...

Treves backs away and returns his gaze to the painted canvas.

FADE TO BLACK

OPERATING ROOM - THE LONDON HOSPITAL

We see a bellows pumping air into the open grate of a castiron stove. We hear moaning in the background. The coals flare to a fierce glow. From the mouth of the stove protrude the handles of several cauterizing irons, their heads imbedded in the coals. Up above the irons, Treves stands by a waist-high coerating table covered with black leather. His face is illuminated by an oil lantern held by a nurse.

The room is fairly dark owing to the oppressive overcast sky seen through two windows. There is also a large sink, a cupboard containing dressings, gags, manacles, emetics and other unattractive things, and two hard chairs.

TWO STUDENTS and two other DOCTORS, MR. FOX and MR. HILL, are present. The two Students are pulling with constant pressure on a rope tied to the patient's leg. Treves and Mr. Fox are working on a chest wound caused by a machine accident. There are gear-wheel marks getting progressively deeper as they near a great open gash. Mr. Hill places a cotton mask over the patient's nose and mouth and applies drops of chloroform. The patient struggles, but soon his moans subside and he is unconscious.

TREVES

How long has this man been here?

FOX

Three quarters of an hour.

TREVES

Mmmm. Hodges, Pierce come closer.
Mr. Hill, take hold of the rope
please. It's a machine accident.
I expect you'll be seeing a good
deal of this.

The two medical Students come forward. They stare uneasily at the gaping wound, which bubbles each time the man takes an agonized breath.

Treves and Fox quickly and expertly tend the wound as Hodges and Pierce look on.

TREVES

(of fhandedly)

Abominable things these machines.
One can't reason with them.

FOX

What a mess.

Treves now notices that the student's faces have gone a trifle ashen.

TREVES

What got you into medicine, Hodges?

HODGES

My father, sir. He's built quite a
successful practice. I home to take
it over one day.

TREVES

Is that your case as well, Pierce?

PIERCE

Yes sir. Though of course I do
have a great desire to help my
fellowman.

Treves smiles at them knowingly.

TREVES

Of course you do realize that medicine
has changed quite a bit since
your father's time. In those days
we didn't even wash our coats. In
fact, the sign of a truly accomplished
surgeon - was his black operatitg
coat, so stiff with dried blood
and pus that it could stand up by
itself in the corner. I've still
got mine upstairs... You don't mind
blood, do you?

HODGES & PIERCE

Oh no, sir. (etc.)

TREVES

Good, that's one thing we've always
plenty of.

HALLWAY

A hospital MESSENGER BOY, dressed in a blue uniform and a cap is making his way down the hall. He stops and looks into an operating room much like the one we have just seen.

Inside, the room is empty. The Boy closes the door and continues on to another operating room. The Doctors move with great urgency around the operating table. Blood is draining down into a white porcelain bowl. A Woman can be heard moaning. The Boy looks carefully, but finally closes the door and continues on his way.

TREVES' OPERATING ROOM

There is a hissing sound and steam from the cauterizing of the wound comes up obscuring part of Treves' face. The patient is being held down firmly by the other men.

The door opens and Treves looks up. The Boy pops his head in.

BOY
Excuse me, Mr. Treves, sir.

TREVES
Yes?

BOY
I found it.

TREVES
(studying the Boy carefully)
Did you see it?

The Boy shakes his head slowly, "No."

TREVES
I'll be with you in a moment ...

The Boy closes the door.

FOX
(quietly)
I say Freddie, what are you about?

TREVES
oh nothing... nothing of any great importance.

AERIAL SHOT from third floor of the London Hospital looking down on the hospital square.

Below, Treves is walking briskly across the square, through a gate and into the slums beyond.

The aerial shot is actually FOX'S POV, and now we see Fox filled with curiosity, watching the figure from a window.

Looking down from above and to the side of him, we follow Treves walking through a cobblestone street still wet from a recent rain, covered with horse manure and filth of all sorts. The air is smoky from meat burning fires. Rounding a corner, we see and approach the painted canvas sign of "The

Elephant Man" covering the front of a small, dingy shop. The door of the shop is windowless and padlocked. Treves walks into the picture, studies the whole scene for a moment, goes to the shoe door and finds that it is padlocked.

Treves tries to look under an edge of the canvas. To his left he sees a SZIALL BOY watching him intently.

TREVES

Do you know where the proprietor
is?

He holds a coin out. The Boy nods, snatches the coin and I disappears around the corner.

Treves turns back to the canvas.

A PUB

A noisy pub, long and narrow. Benches run the length of the back wall, with small tables up against them. Men are clustered around the bar, talking in groups.

We see the Boy standing at one of the tables talking to the Owner, greedily consuming his lunch as he listens. The Boy gestures outside.

OUTSIDE THE PUB

The Boy comes out the door, quickly followed by the Owner hurriedly putting on his coat, fumbling with a riding crop, the last of his sandwich stuffed in his mouth.

AT THE CORNER

The Boy and the Owner are carefully looking around the corner at Treves still in front of the portrait.

OWNER

He's not a peeler ...

BOY

No, I don't think so.

OWNER

No... I don't think so.

They walk into the street.

IN FRONT OF THE SHOP

The Owner and the Boy walk up to Treves.

TREVES

Are you the proprietor?

OWNER

And who might you be, sir?

TREVES

Just one of the curious. I'd like
to see it.

OWNER

I don't think so. No sir, we're closed.

Treves pulls a purse from his coat, extracts a coin and holds it out.

TREVES

I'd pay handsomely for a private showing. Are you the proprietor?

OWNER

Handsomely?... Who sent you?

TREVES

Pardon me?

OWNER

Never mind. I'm the owner.

He snatches the money.

INSIDE THE SHOP

Total darkness. We hear the sound of the padlock being removed. The door opens and light streams in. The canvas covering the windows at the front of the shop obscures all other light. The Owner enters, followed by Treves and the Boy. From his expression, as well as Treves', we can tell there must be an awful stench in the room. No one says a word. The Boy closes the door, while the owner lights a small gas light. We can now see the shop. It is empty, grey with dust, cold and dank. Some old tins and a few shriveled potatoes occupy a shelf. The far end of the shop is blocked off by a curtain suspended from a cord by a few rings.

The Owner approaches it.

OWNER

Here we are sir.

(ticking it off by rote)

Life is full of surprises. Ladies and gentlemen, consider the fate of this creature's poor mother. In the fourth month of her maternal condition, she was struck down by a wild elephant

(leering)

Struck down, if you take my meaning, on an uncharted African isle. The result is plain to see ladies and gentlemen... THE TERRIBLE ELEPHANT MAN!

The rings rattle back, and the curtain is drawn. We see a bent figure crouching on a stool, covered by a brown blanket. In front of it on a tripod is a large brick, heated from below by a bunsen burner. From the blanket protrudes a perfectly normal left arm and hand warming itself over the brick. It does not move when the curtain is drawn.

Treves steps closer. The Owner, watching his every move, turns-and smiles at him. He bangs his riding crop on the wall and yells to the crouched figure, as if speaking to a dog.

OWNER

Stand up!

The Boy, excited by his own fear, mimics the Owner.

BOY

Stand up!

The figure comes forward and lets the blanket fall to the ground and we see the ELEPHANT MAN himself.

Treves, his eyes wide with horror and wonder, his mouth frozen open, steps backward in an instinctive movement of self preservation.

The Owner laughs.

The Elephant Man is naked to the waist, his feet are bare and he wears a pair of worn trousers from a fat man's dress suit. He is a little below average height, and looks shorter from the bowing of his back. His head is enormous and misshapen, as big around as a man's waist. From his brow projects a huge boney mass, almost obscuring his right eye. His nose is a nose of flesh, recognizable only from its position.

From the upper jaw projects another mass of bone protruding from the mouth like a stump, turning the upper lip inside out, making a slobbering aperture. It almost gives the impression of a rudimentary trunk or tusk. On top of his head is a handful of lank, black hair. At the back of it hangs a bag of spongy skin, resembling cauliflower. These loathsome growths cover his back and hang down to the middle of his thighs. The right arm is enormous and shapeless, the hand like a knot of tuberous roots. His left arm is not only normal, but delicately shaped, with fine skin and a hand that any woman might envy. From his chest hangs another bag of flesh, like the dewlap of a lizard. His legs are also grossly deformed, his feet great stumps. Behind him, as painted in the portrait, are two crudely constructed palm trees.

The Owner harshly raps again.

OWNER

Turn around!

The Elephant Man begins to turn. The boy filled with malicious glee at seeing the monster obey, screams.

BOY

Turn around! Turn around!

The Elephant Man completes his turn and comes to rest.

We see a CLOSE-UP of the Elephant Man looking at Treves. His face is utterly devoid, and incapable, of expression.

We see the Elephant Man's eyes. He closes them.

OUTSIDE THE SHOP

The Owner is locking up.

Treves, facing the street, drinks in the fresh air. He is trying to forget his shock, put everything into focus.

He looks at the garrish portrait again.

Treves produces his purse.

The Owner, smelling money, turns.

Treves hands him several coins.

TREVES

So you'll bring him to me, tomorrow,
10:00 a.m.? Mr.... ?

OWNER

Bytes. Mr. Bytes. He'll be there.

TREVES

I'll send a cab. Here is my card.

Treves hands the Owner a card. The Owner, greasy and dirty, shakes Treves' hand and squeezes his arm.

OWNER

Now we got a deal... We understand
each other... guv. We understand
each other completely.

The Owner gives Treves the evil look of a conspirator.

Treves walks off, disoriented.

The Owner reads the card and smiles at Treves walking away down the street.

DISSOLVE TO OUTSIDE THE SHOP

A CABMAN is knocking on the door of the shop, staring at the portrait. The door opens, revealing a figure in a floor-length black cloak. On his head is an extremely large hat, cut to the lines of a yachting cap. A grey-flannel curtain hangs from the bottom of the cap all the way around, hiding his face. There is a horizontal slit in front for the eyes. On the figure's feet are large, bag-like slippers. The only part of the body seen at all is the left arm and hand, which protrudes from the cloak, holding a crude walking stick. The figure seems to loathe being in the open. We can just barely see in the darkness within the Owner standing to one side of the door, obviously enjoying the surprise on the Cabman's face. The Owner steps abruptly into his view.

OWNER

Don't just stand there. Help
him up.

The Cabman, does so, while a small, curious crowd forms. The Owner gives the Cabman the card. The Cabman jumps up onto the seat and off they go.

THE RECEIVING ROOM - LONDON HOSPITAL

The receiving room is a bare hall, painted stone color. It has rows of benches and a long desk where entries are made, and certificates and other papers are issued. It is a cold, harsh place.

CABMAN

Not at all, sir. My... pleasure.

He exits.

Treves turns and sees the Matron, staring.

TREVES

I'll be in my rooms, Mothershead.
I'm not to be disturbed.

She nods silently. Treves looks at the figure for a moment.

TREVES

Come with me, please.

He starts to go out of the room. The hooded figure just stands there, motionless.

We see the whole room, the people now silent. They all stare at the figure. No one makes a move.

MATRON

You heard the doctor... Go on.

Treves turns to look at the hooded figure who stands there a moment, then slowly shuffles after him. Mrs. Mothershead and the people in the room watch him go. When he is out of sight, they all begin to talk excitedly. Mothershead stands fixed and watches too, ignoring the noisy room.

TREVES' OFFICE

The door opens and Treves leads the hooded figure to a chair in front of his desk and helps him to sit down, furtively trying to look into the eye-slit of the mask. In the small room the smell of the Elephant Man is over whelming. Treves goes to the window and opens it. He nervously tries to compose himself, then turns to the hooded figure.

TREVES

My name is Frederick Treves... I am
a surgeon here at the London Hospital,
and I lecture in anatomy at the Medical
College... I would very much like
to examine you. 'Rould that be all
right?

The figure in the chair is still. Treves is at a loss. His sense of discomfort is growing. He looks at the floor for a moment, then locks his eyes on the figure's left arm.

TREVES

Ah... yes. Um, first I would
like to ask you a few questions,
would that be alright?

The figure does nothing. Treves sits down at his desk and picks up a pencil.

TREVES

Good. Now, let's see. Your
Owner... um, the man who...
who looks after you tells me
that you are English and your
name is John Merrick. Is that
correct?

The figure does nothing.

TREVES

Do you know where you were born?
Where you come from?

The figure does nothing.

TREVES

I tell you what, I'll ask you a
question, and you shake your head
like this for "no" and nod like this
for "yes", alright? Do you understand?

The figure following Treves' movements nods very slowly, "yes". Treves sighs
with relief.

TREVES

Are you in any pain?

The figure begins to babble incoherently. Treves, alarmed, interrupts.

TREVES

Um, no. Just nod your head like
this for "yes" and shake it like
this for "no". Now, are you in
any pain?

Again the figure, following Treves movements, shakes his head "no".

TREVES

Are your parents still alive?

The figure does nothing. Treves is quite nervous.

TREVES

Do you understand? Are they
dead? Your father...
your mother?

The figure begins to moan. There are two sharp raps at the door. The hooded
figure flinches.

The door opens and Fox pokes his head into the room.

FOX

Freddie, what you doing for... I
say do open a window in here or ...

He notices the hooded figure.

FOX

Oh, I'm dreadfully sorry, I had
no idea that... I say!

Treves quickly rises and pushes Fox out into the hallway, following him and
closing the door.

IN THE HALLWAY

Treves and Fox are standing outside the door to Treves' office.

FOX

Good Lord, Freddie! What have you got in there?

TREVES

You'll know presently. At the meeting of the society. But until then, I beg of you Fox, keep it to yourself.

FOX

Certainly, if you insist. You must have quite a find there.

TREVES

I don't know what I've got.

FOX

Nothing of any importance, eh?

Treves turns to go back in, then stops.

TREVES

I'll tell you this much, Fox, it's beyond anything you or I have ever dealt with. Keep it to yourself, please.

He goes back in, shutting the door.

TREVES' OFFICE

Treves turns the key in the door. He turns to the chair the figure had been occupying, but he is not there.

The figure is hiding in the corner, crouched behind a black frock operating coat, so stiff with dried blood and pus it stands up by itself.

Treves looks quickly around the room and finally' sees him. He looks at the figure for a moment.

TREVES

Come sit down.

The frightened figure just crouches there looking at him. Treves goes to him, pulls him up and over to the chair.

TREVES

Sit... down.

The figure sits. Treves pauses uncertainly.

TREVES

I think I'll examine you now. I'll save the questions for later... Will you take off your hat now, please?

The figure does nothing. Treves moves to him.

TREVES

Don't be frightened, I simply want
to look at you. Do you understand?

The figure leans back fearfully. From behind him we see just the top of his wide hooded head.

Treves, standing before him, lifts the hood up and back.

TREVES

(more to himself)

That's right, don't be frightened.
Don't be frightened.

A SMALL ROOM - LONDON HOSPITAL

We see two cameras set up, their OPERATORS next to them staring at something we cannot see. Treves stands beside them concentrating on the same sight. All three are speechless.

Treves suddenly remembers himself.

TREVES

Are you ready?

The Cameramen mumble, "Yes", and gratefully disappear beneath the black cloths of their cameras.

TREVES

Go ahead.

They trigger the flash powder. In the blinding flashes we briefly see the silhouette of a tremendously bulky figure, starting at the light.

DISSOLVE TO LECTURE HALL - PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

BRIGHT LIGHT

As we pull back and down in a slow spiral we see the light is coming through high windows. We now see several rows of distinguished doctors talking to each other in anticipation. As we continue to spiral down we see Treves before them at a podium. Behind him are two ASSISTANTS standing beside a curtained stall. Treves raps a pointer stick on the podium to bring the meeting to order. We move behind the stall as the Assistants part the curtains and we see the silhouette of the Elephant Man. The doctors talk among themselves quietly.

TREVES

He is English, he is twenty-one
years of age and his name is John
Merrick. Gentlemen, in the course
of my profession I have come upon
lamentable deformities of the face
due to injury or disease, as well as
mutilations and contortions of the
body, depending upon like causes; but,
at no time have I met with such a
degraded or perverted version of a
human being as this man. I wish to

(more)

TREVES (Cont'd)

draw your attention to the insidious conditions affecting this patient. Note, if you will, the extreme enlargement of the skull ... and upper limb, which is totally useless. The alarming curvature of the spine ... Turn him, please ...

TREVES (V.O.)

... the looseness of the skin, and the varying fibrous tumors that cover 90% of the body.

Treves' voice fades as we DISSOLVE TO the Doctors, who at first were rigid and flustered, and now bent forward, concentrating, obviously consumed with interest.

Spiraling down again we see Treves finishing his lecture.

TREVES

... And there is every indication that these afflictions have been in existence, and have progressed rapidly, since birth. The Patient also suffers from chronic bronchitis. As an interesting side-note, in spite of the afore-mentioned anomalies, the patient's genitals remain entirely intact and unaffected.

Treves nods to the Assistants and they go the Elephant Man. We see them in shadow untying the loose knot of the loin cloth.

CLOSE-UP of the shadow of the head of the Elephant Man. It goes up for a breath.

TREVES

So then, gentlemen, owing to this series of deformities: The congenital exostoses of the skull; extensive papillomatous growths and large pendulous masses in connection with the skin; the great enlargement of the right upper limb, involving all the bones; the massive distortion of the head and the extensive areas covered by papillomatous growth, the patient has been called, "The Elephant Man."

TREVES OFFICE

The Elephant Man (hereafter the E.M.) wearing his cloak, is seated by the desk. Treves stands behind him, measuring his head with calipers. 'He removes the calipers and notes the span, then sets them on the desk. He places the hood over the E.M.'s head. Treves sits at his desk and makes some final notes. He becomes more absorbed in his notes than in the E.M. The E.M. makes an unintelligible sound.

TREVES

Hmm?

The E.M. is silent. Treves, only now realizing that the E.M. has said something, looks up at him.

TREVES

Hmm?

The E.M. is silent. Treves passes it off as a sigh and turns back to his work.

TREVES

It's been a long day for everyone.

He closes his notebook and rises. He remembers something.

TREVES

Oh, yes, you'll need a cab. .
(to the E.M.)

Stay.

He exits. The E.M. is alone. He rises and shuffles slowly about, investigating the room. He goes to the desk and begins touching things, including the calipers. He notices the card Treves gave to the Owner tucked in the back pages. He pauses for a moment and then takes the card. His hand disappears into the cloak, and he moves back into the corner behind the stiff, black operating coat.

Treves re-enters.

TREVES

Come with me.

The E.M. takes up his stick and follows Treves out.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - THE LONDON HOSPITAL

We see Treves and Fox alone at a window. They are looking down on the hospital square Treves had previously crossed and see the E.M., lit by gaslight and moving to a waiting cab.

FOX

You never mentioned his mental state.

TREVES

He's imbecile, no doubt from birth.
He speaks, but... it's all gibberish.
No, the man's a homeless idiot...
(to himself)

I pray God he's an idiot.

The E.M., as he is getting into the cab, stops, turns and looks to the upper stories of the hospital. Treves and Fox are joined by three laughing colleagues who clap Treves on the back.

THE FIRST

Quite a coup, Freddie. You'll look splendid in the journal.

THE SECOND

Where ever did you find that creature?

From the upper story we watch the cab drive away.

THE THIRD (V.0.)

It's a pity.

FOX (V. 0.)

I pity the poor cab driver, myself.

From outside the window we see Treves surrounded by his laughing friends.

ENTRY HALL - TREVES' HOME

We see a door. It opens and Treves walks in. He shuts the door, locks it, goes to a coat rack on the wall and hangs up his overcoat and hat. He notices his reflection in a mirror and examines himself wearily. Anne's smiling reflection appears beside his.

ANNE

Did it go well, darling?

TREVES

Yes, very well, I think.
Are the girls in bed?

ANNE

Yes, and they send their kisses.
Would you like your sherry now?

TREVES

No, I think a whiskey.

We move past Anne's reflection to a CU of Treves.

WHITECHAPEL - NIGHT

We now see a bunsen burner roar of flame reflected in Bytes' eyes. Pulling back we see Bytes, quite drunk, sitting, cooking sausages over the hot brick. He takes another drink from his gin bottle. Up comes a wet belch and he takes another drink.

The E.M. is crouched against the wall with a bowl of potatoes and a cup of water in front of him. With his good hand, he is picking tiny pieces of potato and feeding himself. The eating is fairly loud and animal-like. The drinking is even worse.

The Boy is across the room asleep, wrapped in ragged little blankets.

The E.M. takes a drink of water, making a loud smacking, slurping sound. Bytes looks up from his cooking with a smouldering look, just waiting for him to make the sound again. He does and Bytes takes his crop and violently jabs him.

BYTES

Belt up, you misbegotten garbage.
(mumbling to himself)
How can I eat with that?

Bytes takes a mouthful of gin and mockingly slurps it mimicking the E.M.'s sound.

BYTES

(yelling)

How can I eat with THAT?

The E.M. picks and eats some more and then drinks again very tentatively. Because of his fear the water catches in his throat and he spits and coughs out onto the floor, gasping and wheezing for breath.

Bytes is up and whacks him with his riding crop.

BYTES

Out of my sight!

The E.M. struggles to get up, carrying his food.

BYTES

(not satisfied
with his speed)

NOW!

He jabs the E.M. again, spilling his potatoes and water onto the floor.

BYTES

You clumsy sod!

He pushes the E.M. again, then slips on the potatoes and falls heavily to the floor, crying out in shock. Then rage hits him. The E.M. backs up.

BYTES

YOU!

The Boy wakes up in fear. Bytes moves quickly toward the E.M. raising his crop. The E.M. stumbles and falls backward onto the floor. His head goes back and he begins gasping for air. Bytes yanks him up and hits him in the face with his riding crop. The force of the blow knocks a glob of spit into the air from the E.M.'s mouth. The E.M. gasps and wheezes horribly as Bytes hits him again and again.

From across the room.

BOY

Bytes! DON'T...

Bytes goes right on with the beating.

BYTES

This won't do, my lad. This
just won't do!

RECEIVING ROOM - LONDON HOSPITAL

We see the eyes of the Boy. As we pull back from them, they widen with recognition.

WIDE SHOT of the Receiving Room. Treves has entered and the Boy walks quickly up to him.

BOY
Our man is sick. Come right
away.

TREVES
What is it?

BOY
Like this.
(he breathes heavily
in and out to
demonstrate the E.M.'s
difficulty)

TREVES
I'll get my bag.

INSIDE THE SHOP

We hear the sound of wheezing coming from the E.M. who is sitting propped up against the stage, wrapped in a blanket. His head bent forward toward his knees. Bytes is going to the door as it opens and the Boy leads Treves in. Treves immediately goes to the E.M.

BYTES
What did you do to him? He's been
like this all night!

TREVES
What do you mean?

BYTES
He was fine when he left here, and
now look at him.

TREVES
I intend to.

Treves pulls the blanket away from the E.M. exposing several bruises and bloody cuts. Treves freezes at the sight and slowly turns to look at Bytes.

TREVES
What happened?

BYTES
He fell.
(guardedly)
He falls.

TREVES
He must have taken quite a fall.

He looks up at the riding crop in the hand of Bytes, then to the strangely nervous and silent Boy.

BYTES
He's a clumsy git. Never watches
where he is going.

TREVES

Why is he sitting up like this? He needs rest.

BYTES

That's the way he sleeps. If he lays down, he'll die.

(he points to his neck and leans his head back)

Head's too heavy.

Treves turns his attention to the E.M. He lifts his head higher and examines the E.M.'s eyes. The E.M., who had been oblivious up until this point, looks into Treves' eyes and recognizes him. With his good hand, he reaches up and touches Treves' arm almost as if appealing to him. Treves' eyes lock on his.

TREVES

This man belongs in hospital.

BYTES

(apprehensively)

Can't you fix him up here?
... He's my livelihood. Listen.

TREVES

You listen, you're not going to have much of a livelihood if this man dies. He's got the rale, he's very weak, and I don't know how much damage has been done by his "fall". Now stop wasting time and fetch a cab.

Bytes considers and then snaps his fingers at the Boy who runs out. He then breaks into an ingratiating grin and leans down over Treves who busily examines the wheezing E.M.

BYTES

I really appreciate this, guv. You know, there's lot of things that I can do for you. I move in the proper circles, for this type of thing...

(motioning toward the E.M.)

In fact, anything at all, if you take my meaning.

Treves, uncomfortable, rises. Bytes grips his hand and with the other gathers the material of his sleeve in a slow deliberate squeeze.

BYTES

I like doing business with you. You and I understand each other, completely. I know I can trust you. Can't I?

TREVES

(gazing at him levelly)

Everything will be seen to.

MORNING - AERIAL SHOT LOOKING DOWN ON HOSPITAL SQUARE

Through a window we see Treves and the E.M. walking through a back gate and across the square. MR. CARR GOMM, Hospital Chairman, turns and moves away from the window.

HALLWAY

NURSE NORA IRELAND is pushing a cart fiill of empty breakfast trays down the hall. She glances into the stairwell and sees Treves and the E.M. coming through the door. She continues on, startled by the sight of the mysterious hooded figure. At the end of the hall, she goes into the kitchen.

STAIRWAY

Treves and the E.M. are laboriously climbing a flight of stairs. The E.M. is puffing and wheezing with the effort. Treves supports him under his right arm.

KITCHEN

Nora enters with the cart and waits for it to be restocked. She leans out the door for another look, but the hall is empty. A Nurse ladles mush into bowls. There is a lot of activity in the kitchen. Nora takes the cart stacked with full trays and pushes it out the door and down the hallway.

HALLWAY

Treves and the E.M. cross the hallway and head up a narrow stairway towards the attic. There is a sign reading "Isolation".

Carr Gomm is leaning out the door to his office, unseen by Treves. He closes the door.

GENERAL WARD - LONDON HOSPITAL - MORNING

It is a long, high ceilinged room with large windows along one wall. Beds run the length of both sides of the room. It is a wcmans ward and nurses are serving the patients breakfast. Nora enters and nurses take trays from her cart. Nora's mind is on what she has just seen. We see Mothershead come in the door behind her.

MOTHERSHEAD

(startling Nora)

Nora! Mind your duties ... if
you don't concentrate dear, you'll
only make more work for the rest
of us. Now, get about your business.

(pauses, seeing Nora's collar)

... and OO get your collar straight,
dear.

NORA

(fumbling with her collar)

I'm so sorry, Mrs. Mothershead.

MOTHERSHEAD

Do get on with it, Nora.

Mothershead walks on, as Nora now very flustered, picks up a tray.

ISOLATION WARD

CU of a bottle of dark fluid and a bottle of light fluid. Treves mixes the two in a glass. We are in a small oddly shaped room off the attic ward. There is one tiny barred window located high up on the far wall. There is also a bed, two hard chairs and a table. The E.M. is sitting on the bed in shadow and his disguise is now hanging from a peg on the wall beside him. He is still wheezing and appears to be very weak. Treves serves the mixture to the E.M., who sputters and gags on it, but manages to get it down. Treves goes to the table and puts the two bottles in his bag. He goes to the door and turns to the E.M.

TREVES

I don't know if you will understand this, but you will never go back to that man again. You're safe now. No one will ever harm you. Do you understand?

The two men just look at each other.

KITCHEN - LONDON HOSPITAL

Treves enters the kitchen and nicks up a bowl. A NURSE ladles some porridge for him.

NURSE

Breakfasting with the patients this morning, Mr. Treves?

TREVES

It's for a patient.

Treves exits and the nurses admiringly watch him go.

FIRST FLOOR LANDING AND HALLWAY

Treves climbs the stairs onto the landing. Down the hall, Mr. Carr Gomm is walking toward his office. Treves tries not to be seen, but to no avail.

CARR

Mr. Treves, come over here a moment, won't you?

Treves hesitates, trying to hide the bowl, but gives up and goes down the hall to meet Carr Gomm.

CARR

Good morning, Treves.

TREVES

Good morning, sir.

CARR

(seeing the bowl)
You've acquired a taste for this?

TREVES

It's quite nutritious, sir.

CARR

Don't be mad. This muck can kill you.

Carr Gomm calls a Nurse from a nearby ward over. It is Nora. He takes the bowl from Treves and hands it to her.

CARR

Take this up, to to the man in the isolation ward when you have a moment, won't you?

NORA

(apprehensively)

Yes, sir.

TREVES

Don't be frightened. He won't hurt you.

CARR

Indeed!

He gestures toward his office door. As he and Treves enter the office, Nora looks apprehensively up the isolation ward stairs.

MR. CARR GOMM'S OFFICE

It is a small, elegantly furnished room with a large window. The two men sit, Carr Gomm behind his desk and Treves in a leather chair.

CARR

A hospital is no place for secrecy, Mr. Treves. Doctors spiring hooded figures about are liable to cause comment. Why wasn't this patient properly admitted, and why is he in isolation? is he contagious?

TREVES

No sir, he's got bronchitis and he's been badly beaten.

CARR

Why isn't he in the General Ward, then?

TREVES

Well sir, he's quite seriously deformed, and I fear the other patients would find him... rather shocking.

CARR

Deformed? Is that it. Then am I to assume that he is ultimately incurable?

TREVES

Yes sir.

CARR

What are your plans then, Treves...
You are aware that the London does
not accept incurables. The rules
are quite clear on that point.

TREVES

Yes, I'm well aware of that. But
this case is quite exceptional.

CARR

Oh, is he a friend of yours?

TREVES

No, more of an acquaintance.

ISOLATION WARD (A) AND STAIRWAY (B) CARR GOMM'S OFFICE (C)

- (A) The E.M. is asleep in his sleeping posture on the bed.
- (B) Nora, with the bowl, is climbing the stairs to the attic ward. She pauses in sight of the door and looks apprehensively at it. She begins to hum to give herself courage, and continues up the stairs.
- (A) The E.M. awakens, hears the footsteps, and now the humming, which grows in volume. He becomes fearful and reaches for his cloak. The humming stops. He freezes and listens.
- (C) Treves and Carr Gomm seated as before.

CARR

I certainly sympathize with your
problem, Treves... Why don't you
try the British Home, or the Royal
Hospital for Perhaps
they would have a place for him.

TREVES

Yes sir, I'll look into that.
(he rises)
Would you like to meet him sir?

- (B) Nora stands outside the door, listening. She is barely breathing.
- (A) The E.M., still listening, slowly lets his hand drop away from the cloak.
- (B) Nora opens the door.
- (A) The E.M. grabs for the cloak as the door swings open flooding him with light. We see him for the first time in his entirety. CU of Nora screaming and dropping the tray. CU of the caught E.M.
- (C) The shrill scream is heard from upstairs.

TREVES

Excuse me, sir.

Treves rushes out. Carr Gomm just sits for a moment, thinking.

CARR

The Elephant Man?

ISOLATION WARD LANDING

Treves, rushing up the stairs, reaches the landing. Nora is at the railing, crying. The door is open, the breakfast tray littering the floor. The E.M. is on the bed trying to squeeze into the corner. Treves quickly closes the door and tries to comfort Nora.

TREVES

I'm sorry, my dear, I should have warned you. I'm so terribly sorry, please forgive me. There, you're alright now. Go downstairs and please ask Mrs. Mothershead to come up. Tell her to knock on the door and wait for me. Alright?

NORA

Yes Sir. I'm sorry, Sir.

Drying her eyes, she goes downstairs.

ISOLATION WARD

Closing the door, Treves steps over the spilt breakfast and goes to the E.M.

TREVES

I'm very sorry about that. Are you resting well?

The E.M. makes a garbled sound.

Treves, alone with the E.M., once more finds himself becoming uncomfortable.

TREVES

Ah good. Well then... oh yes, we'll have to get you some more food. I'm sure you must be simply famished. Hmm?

The E.M. is silent.

TREVES

Of course you are. Now then, I think you'll be quite comfortable up here for awhile. I'll see to it you have everything you need, and, uh... yes.

Treves puts out a comforting hand to the E.M. who flinches back. The two men just look at each other.

GENERAL WARD

Several Nurses are taking bath things off a cart. At the other end of the room, Mothershead is talking to a patient. Nora enters and walks over to Mothershead. They talk, and Mothershead exits. Nora joins the other nurses.

OTHER NURSES

Did you see him?

NORA

Yes.

OTHER NURSES

What's wrong with him?

We see Nora's face. She is silent.

ISOLATION WARD LANDING

Mothershead knocks on the door. Treves opens it, comes out onto the landing and closes the door.

TREVES

Ah, Mothershead. How are you feeling today?

MOTHERSHEAD

(suspiciously)

Fine.

TREVES

Good. Excellent. Now then, Mrs. Mothershead, I want you to come into this room with me. Inside there is a man with a rather... unfortunate appearance.

MOTHERSHEAD

I've heard.

TREVES

Yes... Well, I want you to clear up a little mess, a breakfast tray was spilt. And bring up another breakfast. When you've done that, you and I shall give the man a bath. But, Mothershead, I'm counting on your many years of experience to get you through this, Above all, do not scream, do not cry out, or in any way show this man that you are frightened of him...

MOTHERSHEAD

Sir, you don't have to worry about me. I'm not the sort to cry out. Shall we go in?

TREVES

Yes... Yes, let's go in.

Treves opens the door.

ISOLATION WARD

Mothershead goes right to the mess.

TREVES

(to the E.M., hereafter Merrick)

I would like you to meet Mrs.
Mothershead - Mrs. Mothershead,
Mr. John Merrick.

Merrick looks up to Mothershead, then averts his eyes. He looks back at her and sees she has no difficulty being in his presence.

MOTHERSHEAD

How do you do?

ISOLATION WARD LANDING

At the door of Merrick's attic room stand two buckets of very dirty water. We hear footsteps coming up stairs and see a young porter carrying two buckets of clean, steaming water. He puts them down, knocks on the door, and takes the dirty water downstairs. The door opens, Mrs. Mothershead picks up the steaming buckets and takes them inside, shutting the door.

ISOLATION WARD

Merrick's seated in a tin bathtub trying to hide his nakedness. Mrs. Mothershead pours the water in. She scrubs his back with obvious distaste, but does her job. Months of filth and accumulated escesence are turning the bath water a murky black. As Mothershead scrubs, Merrick slowly leans forward in the bath, closing his eyes, apparently oblivious to his surroundings. Treves sits beside him.

TREVES

The disease is shocking.

Merrick's eyes flicker.

TREVES

I wonder how far it can go before
it...

Merrick flinches and pulls away.

MOTHERSHEAD

Sit still. Don't wiggle about
like a pup. I won't stand for
any foolishness.

Treves leans forward and looks at Merrick. Merrick grows still, his eyes closed, apparently in a reverie.

TREVES (V.O.)

It's pretty certain that if he
had the disease as a child, he was
abandoned. But in that case, he'd
have to have had care. The very
fact that he's alive bears that
out...

(cut to Treves)

But, where?

Merrick is listening.

MOTHERSHEAD

The workhouse.

TREVES

Yes! The workhouse!

At this word, Merrick begins to babble wildly. Obviously alarmed, he thrashes about in the tub, spilling water onto the floor. Treves, alarmed now himself, attempts to calm Merrick, who, still babbling, tries to rise from the tub. Mothershead clamps a hand on Merrick's left arm. At her touch, he is instantly subdued, at least physically. He sinks back into the tub and begins to weep. Treves and Mothershead are astounded by the tears rolling down Merrick's cheeks. They stand motionless looking down at the agonized, naked elephant man.

TREVES

(softly)

The workhouse.

FOLLOWING BUCKETS OF DIRTY WATER DOWN A HALLWAY

BACK ENTRANCE - ALLEY

The young PORTER is exiting with great difficulty through a large iron door carrying the two buckets. He sets one of the buckets down, takes the other and splashes it out into the alley. Some thick sludge dribbles from the empty bucket. Unseen by him, the NIGHT PORTER is standing just to the side and he now comes forward. The young Porter seems nervous in his presence.

The Night Porter looks at his spattered shoes, then up to the Young Porter.

NIGHT PORTER

What's all this, then?

YOUNG PORTER

Mr. Treves is scrubbing his Elephant Man.

NIGHT PORTER

Elephant Man?

YOUNG PORTER

Yeah... I hear it's a real horror. Even made Mothershead scream.

NIGHT PORTER

Friend of the night, eh? The Elephant Man. I think I'll have me a look at that.

Suddenly the Night Porter kicks the other bucket of filthy water violently, sending it splashing all over the young Porter.

NIGHT PORTER

Now, you need the scrubbing, ducks!

He lets his cigarette drop to the ground, then stamps and grinds it with his brass-heeled boot, all the while smiling. Then he turns on his heel and leaves.

CUT TO:

Dark clouds rolling through an evening sky.

ATTIC WARD

Through the high barred window, we see the dark sky. The E.M. is on his bed in his sleeping posture. A dim gaslight burns in the room.

CLOSE-UP of his head on the points of his knees. His breathing is more regular now.

A GENERAL WARD

Lights are being turned off.

ANOTHER WARD

Lights go off.

BACK ENTRANCE

Large iron door is closed.

HALLWAY

Half the lights go off.

HALLWAY

Nurses leave for their quarters - half the lights go off.

SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

We hear the slow metallic footfalls of the Night Porter's boots. He appears and walks into a darkened women's ward. The women are all asleep. Some coughing fitfully, others moaning quietly. The Night Porter walks down the aisle between the beds. We see several of the sleeping women as he passes them. Finally, he comes to a young beautiful woman, her eyes wide open, watching him with intense fear. On either side of her are two very ancient women, snoring deeply. The young woman has her arms tied, suspended in traction above her. The Night Porter moves to her, his shadow engulfing her. She starts to move, rattling the apparatus above her. The Porter puts a finger to his lips.

NIGHT PORTER

Hush, love, I told you before
one word from me, they'll toss
you back on the street, and then
those pretty little arms of yours
will never grow straight. Now
close your eyes.

She turns her head away, closing her eyes. He moves in.

CLOSE-UP of a gas light in a hallway. The leaping flame makes a low roar.

CUT TO ANOTHER HALLWAY

Somewhere a door is opened and the squeak sounds vaguely like the trumpeting of an elephant. We hear again the metallic footfalls of the Night Porter's boots, and he appears. He goes to the narrow stairway marked, "Isolation".

He stops and casually looks about. He takes a swig of his gin, then starts up the stairs.

ATTIC WARD

Merrick as before the light is very dim. We hear the echoing footfalls of the Night Porter coming up the stairs. Merrick's head immediately comes up from his knees. As it does, a small object falls from where his head rested. He picks it up and puts it in a pocket of his cloak. It is the portrait of the beautiful woman, which he saw in his dream.

Suddenly the door swings open and the Night Porter, bottle in hand, is standing there. He walks into the room and sees Merrick's shape on the bed.

NIGHT PORTER

Here he is, the old fiend of the night, the terror of the London. Let's have a look at you. Let's see what makes 'em scream...

He turns up the light and sees Merrick clearly. The Night Porter jumps back, awe struck.

NIGHT PORTER

Cor Blimey!

Merrick is trembling. The Night Porter, hardly able to believe his eyes, moves slowly toward Merrick. He is afraid but as he reaches the bed, Merrick flinches back. The Night Porter grins, his fear gone now. He is in control.

NIGHT PORTER

So this is the Elephant Man. I ain't never seen nothing like you before. What the bleedin' hell happened to you?

Merrick cowers as far away from the Night Porter as possible.

NIGHT PORTER

Oh... dumb, eh?

He takes a big swallow of the gin and smiles.

NIGHT PORTER

Good. I likes people what can keep quiet.

He offers Merrick his bottle with a swift, almost jabbing motion. Merrick pulls away from him.

NIGHT PORTER

Like a drink? Go on... Go on have some. No? You should try being more sociable, mate.

He tentatively presses the bottom of the bottle up against the hanging growth on Merrick's chest. Encouraged, he touches him with his fingers. Merrick makes a small whimpering sound.

NIGHT PORTER

(grinning)

You and I are going to be good friends, we are. And, I've got lots of friends who I know would like to meet you. And they will, mate... they will.

He moves to the door and turns. CLOSE-UP of Night Porter's face.

NIGHT PORTER

Welcome to the London.

He moves out the door and it closes. In the bed, Merrick looks at the door with terror as the heavy footfalls of the Night Porter recede down the stairs.

WHITECHAPEL ROAD

We see a horse's head in CU, snorting steam into the chill morning air. The horse is harnessed to a milk wagon parked in front of the London. Through the open back of the wagon we see the MILKMAN, and past him Treves, walking towards us.

MILKMAN

Here early again, eh Mr. Treves? If you don't mind my saying so, sir, with your early habits, you'd 'a made a fine milkman.

TREVES

Good morning, Charley. I'll keep that in mind!

Treves walks up the path into the hospital.

HALLWAY (MORNING)

Treves, carrying a bowl, crosses the upper hall and starts to the narrow stairway to the Isolation Ward. Over his shoulder we see him knock twice on the door. As the door swings open, the camera pushes past him and we see the room. The lamp is still burning, but Merrick is nowhere to be seen. Treves enters, looking about for him.

TREVES

Mr. Merrick?

There's movement in the corner beside the bed. Merrick rises slightly from the shadow. The light from the lamp hits his frightened eyes.

TREVES

...Good morning... John. I've brought your breakfast.

Treves is unsettled by the sight of Merrick cowering down on the floor. Merrick begins to babble. Treves enters the room, placing the bowl on the table and going to Merrick.

TREVES

What are you doing down there? Come up John, come up on the bed. The cold floor is bad for you. I won't hurt you, come on now...

He helps Merrick up onto the bed and goes back to the table for the bowl.

TREVES

You must eat. We must keep your strength...

He has turned back to the bed, but Merrick has slipped to the floor again, still trying to hide himself in the corner.

TREVES

... What on earth is the matter with you?

He puts the bowl down again and goes back to Merrick, who seems very upset at leaving his hiding place.

TREVES

Now please, John, you must do as I say. Come up from there.

He starts to help Merrick up, but Merrick just presses himself farther back in the corner, still babbling. There are two raps at the door. Treves goes to it and lets Motherhead in.

MOTHERSHEAD

Good morning, Mr. Treves. It'll be his bath-time soon. Has he eaten?

TREVES

Not quite yet, Mrs. Motherhead. There seems to be some difficulty this morning.

They both look at the bed. Merrick has almost disappeared under it.

MOTHERSHEAD

Won't come out, eh?

TREVES

No, he's very upset about something.

MOTHERSHEAD

Just being obstinate, sir. I'll handle it.

She goes to Merrick and takes hold of his left wrist.

MOTHERSHEAD

Alright, my son, none of this fuss. Come up from there, this instant.

She starts to force him up from the floor. Merrick is moaning now, still trying to get away.

TREVES

No! Don't pull at him like that.
We don't want to frighten him
more than he already is.

By this time Mothershead has almost got him back on the bed.

MOTHERSHEAD

Honestly, sir, you must be very
firm with this sort. Otherwise
they'd lay about on the floor
gibbering all day long. All he
understands is a good smack.

They help Merrick settle back on the pillow. Merrick is still making
desperate, unintelligible sounds.

TREVES

He's had his share of "smacks",
Mothershead. I expect that's what
drives him under the bed. We must
use patience and understanding
with this man.

MOTHERSHEAD

Perhaps you've got the time for
that, Mr. Treves, I certainly
don't. I've got an entire hospital
to look after, and you have
your real patients. Don't waste
your time with him sir, it's like
talking to a wall. I don't mean
to be harsh, but truthfully what
can you do for him? I'll be back
later for his bath. And Mr. Carr
Gomm would like to see you when you
have a moment. Good day sir.

She exits. Treves shuts the door behind her and turns back to the bed.

TREVES

(to himself)

What good am I to you...?

He goes to the bed and sits down in front of Merrick, angered by his own
seeming uselessness in the situation.

TREVES

... What is my purpose? ... It's
so important that I understand
you. I want to help you, I want
to be your doctor...

(directly to Merrick)

but I can't help you unless you
help me, unless I know what you
are feeling. I believe there's
something back there, there's
something you want to say, but
I've got to understand you. Do
you understand me?

Merrick hesitates, then starts babbling again.

TREVES

No! You are going to talk to me!
We are going to show them! We're
going to show them that you're not
a wall. We are going to talk! Do
you understand? Nod your head if
you understand me!

Slowly Merrick nods yes.

TREVES

You do understand me! You understand.
Now you're going to say it.
I've got to hear how you say
things. Now, very slowly, say
"yes."

Treves carefully mouths the word.

TREVES

"Yes."

Merrick is still hesitant, from years of fear, but his eyes betray a growing excitement. Slowly, he tries to talk, his voice a tremulous whisper.

MERRICK

Yyyy... Yyye... yyyess.

TREVES

(grabbing Merrick's arm)

Yes John!

Throughout their dialogue, Merrick is still very garbled, but he no longer babbles. He makes a great effort to speak slowly, to form words the way Treves forms them, to be understood.

MERRICK

...Yyes

TREVES

Yyyess.

MERRICK

Yyess.

TREVES

That's much better. I could
understand that "yes".

MERRICK

(pleased)

Yes!

TREVES

Very good! Oh yes! Now listen.
I'm going to say some things to
you and I want you to repeat them
... um... I want you to say them
back to me. Do you understand?
I'm going to say some things to you
and I want you to say them back to
me. Do you understand?

MERRICK

Yes.

TREVES

Excellent! Now, say ..."Hello"

MERRICK

Hello...

TREVES

My name is ...

MERRICK

My... name is...

TREVES

John Merrick.

MERRICK

John... Merrick

TREVES

Say "Merrick".

MERRICK

Merrick...

TREVES

Say "Mmmerrick."

MERRICK

Mmmerrick.

TREVES

Say "Mmmerrick."

MERRICK

Mmmerrick.

TREVES

Well, that's alright. I understand
you. Now, say the whole thing again,
Hello ...

MERRICK

(haltingly)

Hello... my name is...
John Merrick.

DISSOLVE TO HALLWAY

Mrs. Mothershead comes out of the kitchen with a supper tray and walks down the hall, passing the open ward door. We see nurses serving patients their supper. Nora comes out of the ward with a tray which she holds tightly against her. A bowl of soup is spilling on her apron. She catches up with Mothershead. They speak as they walk.

NORA

Oh, Mrs. Mothershead, please forgive my behavior yesterday. I'm sorry if you're having to do extra work on my account, It was just seeing it...

MOTHERSHEAD

Patients here are not "its". They are either "he's" or "she's", but that's alright, Ireland. This one's going to be more work for all of us. Good God girl! Mind your broth.

Mothershead continues on. Nora guiltily watches her go.

ISOLATION WARD

Treves and Merrick are absorbed in their work. A knock comes at the door.

TREVES

Come in.

Mothershead enters.

TREVES

Why, my dear Mrs. Mothershead, how good of you to join us. Mr. Merrick, will you please introduce yourself?

MERRICK

(hesitantly)

Hello, my name is John Merrick.

MOTHERSHEAD

Good Lord, Mr. Treves!

TREVES

(exuberantly)

We've made tremendous strides today, Mothershead. He listens and repeats with great attention, and this certainly isn't easy for him.

MOTHERSHEAD

Parrots can do as much, Mr. Treves. It's all very nice, but I don't see the point. You know they won't let him stay here.

TREVES

(lowering his voice)

I'm sure that if Mr. Merrick made a good impression on the hospital committee they'd see that he's the exception to their rule. Now I'm not expecting miracles. I'm not saying he'll be able to read or write, but I do think that I can get him to speak for himself. I'm going to arrange things with Carr Gomm right now.

(to Merrick)

That was very good, John, very good. That's all for today. We shall do some more tomorrow. Mothershead?

Mrs. Mothershead sets the tray down beside Merrick.

TREVES

I'll see you soon.

He and Mothershead exit. Merrick watches the door close. He sighs quietly, looks about, and sees the Bible on the bedside table. He picks it up and, gently runs his fingers over the cover.

RECEIVING ROOM - THE LONDON

There is total pandemonium in the receiving room. The room is filled with screaming men, women and children. Two drunken women have been fighting with broken bottles and are now covered with blood and cuts. The women are still hysterical, one minute they're sobbing, then in an instant screaming and intent upon fighting again. The crowd keeps them apart. Two Bobbies stand in the background making no move to intercede.

To the side we see Bytes watching everything. It is still too violent a scene for the Nurses to come to the women's aide and they stand up in the front of the room waiting. Bytes makes his way along the side of the crowd waiting for a chance to get behind the Nurses and on into the hospital. Now the women begin sobbing again and things quiet some. The Nurses come forward into the crowd. Bytes moves over closer to the hallways. When the Nurses have all gone into the crowd he seizes the chance and disappears into the hospital.

CUT TO:

Bytes appears and walks down hospital hallway looking about.

CARR GOMM'S OFFICE

The door opens and Treves enters.

CARR (V.O.)

Ah, Treves...

Treves sits in the armchair. Carr Gomm is sitting at his desk.

CARR

Have you contacted the British Rome and the Royal Hospital?

TREVES

Ah, no sir. I had planned to see them in the morning.

CARR

Good! How is the patient?

TREVES

He's doing very well. In fact that's why I came to see you. I think that if I were to present Mr. Merrick to the hospital committee, then they would have a chance to see for themselves not only the extraordinary nature of the disease, but of the man as well. If the committee had a chance to speak with him, hear him say a few words for himself, I'm sure they would see him as a patient, rather than as a violation of the rules.

CARR

A few words? I thought he was imbecile?

TREVES

Well sir, perhaps I should explain...

CARR

I really don't think that's necessary Treves. I'm quite sure the committee will be able to make an equitable decision on the merits of the case, such as they are.

TREVES

I don't agree. No one can make a reasonable decision about this man's future without at least meeting him. No doctor would presume to diagnose a patient he had never met.

CARR

No, Treves, it's out of the question. Now if it was up to me, I'd say "Certainly, let's meet the fellow, by all means," I'm sorry, I simply can't speak for the other members of the committee.

TREVES

Then will you meet him, as a representative of the committee.

CARR

Mr. Treves, it's out of the question. I want to hear as soon as possible what the other hospitals can do. I'm sorry.

HALLWAY - STAIRCASE - THE LONDON

We see Treves leave Carr Gomm's office and walk toward us to the stairwell. As Treves begins down the stairs, he sees Bytes on the next landing coming up. Bytes spots him and goes toward him.

BYTES

I want my man back.

TREVES

Just a moment, how did you get in here?

BYTES

Never mind that, I want my man!

TREVES

He's still very sick. Please come downstairs with me. I'll explain the situation.

BYTES

(shouting)

DON'T... Don't muck me about. You've had plenty of time to fix him up, and he's leaving with me, NOW. Do you understand me? Now, Mr. Treves. We had a bargain!

TREVES

You misunderstood. This man suffered a severe fall, if you take my meaning. He's my patient now and I must do what ...

BYTES

Pull the other one, why don't you! We made a deal!

TREVES

I know what you've done to him and he's never going back to that.

BYTES

He's a freak! That's how they live. We're partners, him and I, business partners. You're willfully deprivin' me of my livelihood!

TREVES

All you do is profit from another man's misery!

BYTES

You think you're better 'n me? YOU wanted the freak to show all your doctor chums and make a name for yourself , you guv. So I gave him to you. On trust, in the name of science! And now I want him back.

TREVES

You don't own this man!

BYTES

I want him back!

TREVES

So you can beat him? So you can starve him? A dog in the street would fare better with you!

BYTES

I've got my rights, damn you, and I'm going to the authorities!

CARR (V. 0.)

Well, go to the authorities ...

Now we see Carr Gomm standing above them, at the top of the stairs.

CARR

By all means do so. In fact, I'll fetch them myself. I'm quite sure they'd be very interested in your story, as well as ours.

Livid, Bytes looks from Carr Gomm to Treves, at a loss for words.

TREVES

Now I think we really do understand one another.

BYTES

(venomously)

Right... Right.

He backs slowly down to the landing eyeing Treves and Carr Gomm. At the landing he casually turns and disappears down more stairs. Treves turns and gazes at Carr Gomm.

CARR

Singularly unpleasant chap... uh... I don't suppose there would be any harm in my meeting your... patient, Mr. Treves.

TREVES

(gratefully)

Thank you very much Sir. Shall we say in a few days then?

CARR

Shall we say two o'clock tomorrow afternoon?

TREVES

(slightly taken aback)

Wh... whatever is most convenient for you, sir.

CARR

Two o'clock then... you know Treves
... It seems this acquaintance of
yours has become rather more than
just an acquaintance.

TREVES

... Yes, Sir.

They part company. We follow Treves down the stairs.

TREVES

(muttering)

Two O'clock?

Then we follow Carr Gomm to his office door. He stops short.

CARR

(mumbling out loud)

Elephant Man? I don't want to
meet an Elephant Man.

HALLWAYS - THE LONDON (NIGHT)

Again, the hospital is closing down for the night. Lights go off in each hallway. The staff is vacating the hospital. As the last light goes off, we hear the great iron door slam shut.

TREVES' HOUSE - BEDROOM (NIGHT)

Anne is at her dressing table, brushing out her hair. She is in a very flattering dressing gown, ready to turn in. We see her reflected in the mirror as well as Treves who is in his robe in the background seated at his side of their bed, deep in thought. Anne looks at Treves and smiles affectionately.

ANNE

(cooly)

Freddie?

Getting no response she renews her efforts.

ANNE

Freddie?... Freddie, don't look
so discouraged.

TREVES

I shouldn't be. We made great
progress today. I taught him to
repeat a few basic phrases. He did
rather well, too, but I had to lead
him every step of the way. Though
frankly, at times I was unsure of
who was leading whom.

ANNE

What do you mean?

TREVES

Well, I wasn't sure whether he was parroting me because that's all he was capable of, or whether he sensed that that's all I wanted to hear, and he was trying to please me.

ANNE

But I thought you said that he was rather... simple?

TREVES

He is. I mean, I've always thought he was. I think he must be. Is he simple? Or is that just something I've wished upon him to make things simpler for myself?

Anne puts down the brush and rises.

ANNE

Frederick, why are you so interested in this particular case?

TREVES

I don't know. I can't explain it. If this is an intelligent man, trapped in the body of a monster, then I'm under a moral obligation to help free that mind, free that spirit as best I can, to help him live as full and content a life as possible. But! If he's an imbecile, who's body I can't treat and who's mind I can't touch, well, then my obligation is discharged. They can put him where they will; he won't be bothered, I won't be bothered, and everyone's conscience can remain free and untroubled. And that is my dilemma ... what is in his mind?

Anne, sympathizing with his concerns goes to him and puts her arms around him.

ANNE

Perhaps you're just polishing a stone, endowing this Elephant Man with qualities he doesn't possess?

TREVES

(impatiently)

And what qualities are those? Intelligence or stupidity?

ANNE

(slightly hurt)

I'm sure I don't know, Freddie.

She releases Treves and lies down. Treves realizes that perhaps he has been unkind.

TREVES

I'm sorry... I don't know either.
I just don't know.

ANNE

Well, these things take time.

TREVES

I've only got until two o'clock
tomorrow afternoon, when Carr Gomm
meets him. Somehow, between now and
then I've got to make John Merrick
at least seem like an intelligent
man... Why am I fooling myself?
Nothing short of John delivering the
Sermon on the Mount is going to sway
Carr Gomm...

Anne sits back up and gently places her hand over Treves' mouth. As she does so she leans forward and turns out the light.

ISOLATION WARD

Merrick is propped up in bed. Suddenly the door bursts open. The Night Porter, an arm around a drunken giggling tart, stands in the doorway. As soon as the Charwoman sees Merrick, she screams as does Merrick, and she wriggles free, making for the stairs. The Night Porter watches her go and then turns to Merrick laughing noisily. He then pulls the door shut with a bang. Merrick, very frightened, crawls down into his hiding place.

BEDROOM (MORNING)

We see Anne alone in bed, asleep. Treves is finished dressing and leaves the room. The sound of the door closing awakens Anne. She looks around for Treves. A clock reads 5:30.

ISOLATION WARD

Merrick's disguise hangs on the wall.

MERRICK (V.O.)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall
not want, he maketh me to lie down
in green pastures; He leadeth me
beside still waters. He restoreth
my soul: He Guideth me in the
paths of righteousness...

TREVES

Righteousness ...

MERRICK (V.O.)

Righteousness for his namesake.

We now see Treves and Merrick

TREVES

Very good, very good. Now, when your visitor comes today I want you to say it exactly the way you said it just now. I will introduce him to you and you will say the words you've learned. If you have any trouble with any of the words, I'll help you. I'm sure you'll be just fine. If you do as well for him as you've done for me these last two days, then I'm sure our visitor will be very pleased. Now, let's go through the whole thing again, shall we? I will say "May I introduce you to Mr. Carr Gomm." And you will say...

MERRICK

Hello, my name is John Merrick. I am very pleased to meet you!

HALLWAY

Treves and Carr Gomm are speaking together as they walk along.

TREVES

It's only a physical problem. He has trouble with certain sounds because of the constrictive deformity of the mouth. But he can talk, and has a great eagerness to make contact with people who will let him. So if you have any difficulty understanding what he is saying, just tell me and I'll make it clear.

CARR

Speaking is one thing, Treves, but can the man comprehend?

Treves cannot easily answer this question.

TREVES

... As I said, it's only a physical problem... but I do feel that Mr. Merrick is very flattered that you're taking the time and trouble to meet him, and he's most anxious to make a good impression, so he might seem rather nervous.

CARR

He needn't. I have no desire to cause him any discomfort. Did you make those inquiries we spoke about?

TREVES

Yes, I spoke to both the British Home and Royal Hospital for Incurables. I'm afraid that they weren't very encouraging, but they said they'd bring it up at their next committee meeting, so we should have their answers shortly.

CARR

Fine, fine. You know, your dedication to this patient is an inspiring thing, Treves. But you must remember that this is a hospital, and there are many patients here. Patients who can be made well, and you owe them your first consideration. Just don't become so obsessed, old man, that you begin to neglect them.

Carr Gomm starts up the stairs. Treves remains behind, watching him for a moment, then follows.

ISOLATION WARD

Merrick is standing beside his disguise on its hook. He nervously smooths the cloak down, repositions the Bible on the bedside table and smooths the cloak again. He looks at the door, expecting it to open. It doesn't. His hands smooths the cloak over and over again. Voices can be heard outside the door. Merrick freezes.

There are two raps at the door. Merrick flinches, clutching the cloak. The raps are repeated. He pulls himself together and walks to the middle of the room. He takes a deep breath and closes his eyes.

MERRICK

Come in.

The door opens and Treves and Carr Gomm enter. Carr Gomm's eyes are riveted on Merrick, but he contains his shock.

Merrick is breathing unevenly, his eyes still closed. Treves goes to him and touches his shoulder. Merrick opens his eyes and looks up at Treves. Treves turns to Carr Gomm, as does Merrick. Carr Gomm lowers his eyes.

TREVES

John, may I introduce you to Sir. Carr Gomm.

MERRICK

Hello... my name is John Merrick. I am very pleased to meet you.

Carr Gomm, still shaken, instinctively offers his hand.

CARR

I'm very... pleased to meet you.

Before Carr Gomm can withdraw his hand, Merrick grasps it with his left hand. There is an uncomfortable silence. Merrick releases it. Carr Gomm, nervously clears his throat.

CARR

How are you feeling today?

MERRICK

I feel much better. Thank you for asking. And you?

CARR

I'm feeling very fit, thank you. How is your bronchitis?

MERRICK

I feel much better. Thank you.

CARR

Are you comfortable here?

MERRICK

Everyone has been very kind. I am extremely grateful.

TREVES

Mr. Merrick likes the food here. Don't you John?

MERRICK

Oh yes! It is much better than what I am used to.

CARR

Oh yes?

TREVES

(after a pause)

And what was that, John?

MERRICK

Potatoes...

There is another agonizing silence.

TREVES

(to Carr Gomm)

...Yes potatoes... but...

MERRICK

But the variety of food here is very pleasing... I commend you.

CARR

(after a pause)

I understand that you were beaten?

Merrick is at a loss. This is not part of the expected scenario.

DIERRICK

Oh no, everyone has been very kind.

CARR

No, I meant in your former situation.

Merrick doesn't seem to understand.

MERRICK

I'm feeling much better now ...

Carr Gomm stares levelly at Treves for a moment, then asks Merrick:

CARR

Tell me, how do you like Mr. Treves?
As a teacher?

Treves stiffens.

MERRICK

... I... everyone has been very
kind to me.

CARR

Of course. How long did you and Mr.
Treves prepare for this interview?

Merrick looks at Treves for guidance, but Treves cannot look him in the eye.

MERRICK

... everyone has been very kind.

CARR

Yes, of course... Well, it's been a
pleasure meeting you, Mr. Merrick.
Good day.

TREVES

(to John)

Thank you, John. You did very well.

Treves and Carr Gomm go out the door onto the landing. Merrick sees his
chance escaping him and tries to recapture their attention.

MERRICK

(his voice is gaining strength)
The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not
want. He maketh me to lie down in
green pastures...

(he continues through
the following
dialogue)

Treves and Carr Gomm are alone on the landing, speaking quietly.

CARR

It was a nice try, Treves, but the
man is so obviously mouthing your
words.

TREVES

Yes, I'm very sorry to have wasted
your time, sir. I just felt that
I had to do anything I could to
protect him.

CARR

I'm sorry too. He simply doesn't belong here. He's be much happier somewhere else, where he could be constantly looked after. Believe me, Frederick, it's better that it worked out this way. Good day.

Merrick has come to the end of what Treves taught him to say. He makes one last, desperate attempt to be heard.

Treves, disheartened, stands on the landing as Carr Gomm starts down the stairs.

MERRICK (V.0.)

(now full voice)

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me...

Treves is staring, open-mouthed, back into the room. Carr Gomm looks up at him.

CARR

What is it, Treves?

MERRICK (V.0.)

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, Thou anointest my head with oil...

TREVES

I didn't teach him that part!

Treves rushes back into the room, followed by Carr Gomm.

MERRICK

My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

There is a long silence as all three men stare at each other.

TREVES

How did you, know the rest? I never taught you the rest of it.

CARR

I don't understand.

TREVES

Tell me, John, how did you know the rest of the 23rd Psalm?

MERRICK

(hesitantly)

I... I used to read the Bible every day. I know it very well. The Bible, and the Book of Common Prayer. The 23rd Psalm is very beautiful.

ISOLATION WARD

A few minutes later. We hear voices inside the room.

CARR (V.O.)

It was a great pleasure to meet you, Mr. Merrick.

MERRICK

I am very pleased to meet you.

CARR

I hope we can talk together again sometime. Good day.

The door opens and Carr Gomm and Treves come out.

TREVES

(to Merrick)

I'll be right back.

He closes the door.

CARR

I want to see you in my office as soon as you're through up here. We've a good deal to discuss.

He starts down the stairs.

TREVES

Of course, sir. Thank you, thank you very much.

Carr Gomm stops on the stairs.

CARR

Treves. Well done.

TREVES

Not me, sir. Mr. Merrick. He succeeded in spite of my shortsightedness.

ISOLATION WARD

Merrick is on the bed, propped up by pillows. The door opens. Treves comes in, shuts the door and leans against it. They look at each other for a moment.

TREVES

Why did you let me go on like that, teaching you what you already knew? Why didn't you tell me you could read?

MERRICK

You did not ask me.

TREVES

I never thought to ask. How can you ever forgive me?

MERRICK

Oh, no do not say that. You have been so kind to me. I was afraid to say too much. People always want me to be quiet. You wanted me to speak, but I was afraid. Forgive me.

TREVES

We do have a lot to talk about, don't we?

CARR GOMM'S OFFICE

Carr Gomm is seated at the window, looking out silently. There is a knock at the door and Treves enters. He quietly closes the door and walks to the window. Carr Gomm never moves.

CARR

Can you imaaine what his life has been like?

TREVES

Yes, I think I can.

CARR

No you can't. You can't begin to know, no one can.

Carr Gomm suddenly stands and faces Treves.

CARR

You are quite right, Treves, this is an exceptional case. And I quite agree that the committee should see Mr. Merrick.

TREVES

I could easily arrange ...

CARR

No, not that way. Broadneck and the others don't like to deal with patients directly. It makes them queasy... Do you have any photographs of Mr. Merrick?

TREVES

Well, yes.

CARR

Excellent. We shall present them, along with the other particulars of the case to the committee. I want them to see, exactly, how horribly his body has been affected. You and I shall vouch for his inner qualities.

TREVES

Do you think they'll go along with us?

CARR

Of course they will. They're reasonable men.

ISOLATION WARD

Merrick is in bed, very tired. It's been an exhausting day. Suddenly the door opens and Mothershead comes into the room. Merrick looks up at her very apprehensively. She walks over to the bed, picks up the Bible from the table, opens it and hands it to Merrick.

MOTHERSHEAD

Read it.

Merrick looks down at the Bible.

MERRICK

Thou heardest my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, At my cry.

Mothershead backs slowly to the door, deeply disturbed. She stares at Merrick for a moment.

MOTHERSHEAD

Credit where credit is due.
You'll have the paper every morning at breakfast.

She quickly turns and exits. Merrick looks down at the Bible. It is open to "Lamentations".

HALLWAY - THE LONDON (NIGHT)

As before the lights are going off in one hallway after another. The hallways are empty, dark and silent. We hear the great iron door close with a bang.

ISOLATION WARD (NIGHT)

Merrick is in his bed as always. He holds the portrait of the beautiful woman, gazing at it longingly. He hears a door close far away in the silence of the hospital.

Suddenly we hear the heavy footfalls of the Night Porter's boots. As they get louder and louder we move slowly closer to Merrick's face.

The sound is very close now, and Merrick's eyes are visibly agitated. Finally, the door bursts open and the Night Porter is standing there. He stares malevolently at Merrick for a long moment and then walks to him menacingly.

NIGHT PORTER

I hear you have some trouble
sleepin'. .

He grabs Merrick fiercely by the hair and jerks his head back. Merrick immediately starts to wheeze and gasp.

NIGHT PORTER

Head's too heavy, eh?

He pulls Merrick all the way down onto the bed, so that he is prone, struggling for breath.

NIGHT PORTER

And I heard a nasty rumor about
you; I heard you can talk but
you can't, can you... can you
... can you? ...

MERRICK

(struggling)

Nocoo!

The Night Porter is at first surprised, and then pleased at the desperate sound.

NIGHT PORTER

No... No you can't! One word about
me out of that stinking cakehole...
Just ONE word, and you'll have no
trouble at sleepin'... no trouble at
all. You understand me? Do you!!

MERRICK

(croaking)

Yyyesss.

Satisfied, the Night Porter rights Merrick who is just able to catch his breath. The Night Porter smiles and pats Merrick on the shoulder.

NIGHT PORTER

There now, that's better, i'n'
it?

HALLWAY

Treves and Carr Gomm are on their way to the committee meeting, confident of their position. Treves is holding a folder, and Carr Gomm is looking at the photographs of Merrick.

CARR

As far as I can see, the only obstacle might be Broadneck. He has enormous influence over the others, very old school, not an easy man to impress. in any case, if worse does come to worse, we still have the British and Royal Homes to fall back on, don't we.

Treves is silent. They stop.

CARR

Don't we?

TREVES

No, we don't. Their committees have informed me that they're unwilling to take Mr. Merrick, even if they were supplied with funds. They don't want him.

CARR

Well, it's up to us then, isn't it?

They continue walking.

CARR

Don't worry Treves, we'll make them see it our way.

He looks at the pictures.

CARR

They've eyes, haven't they?

They go through a door marked "Committee Room".

COMMITTEE ROOM - THE LONDON HOSPITAL

We see a pair of hands. One of the photographs of Merrick is passed to them. They hold it for a moment, then lay it down flat on the table. One of the hands covers the photograph with a piece of paper.

TREVES (V.O.)

... Due to the progressive nature of the disease, I feel sure that the patient does not have much longer to live.

We pan up from the hands to see BROADNECK, his face pinched with disgust. He sniffs, and gazes coolly at Treves.

TREVES

Forgive the redundancy, gentlemen, but there is no other place for him. Both the Royal Hospital and the British Home have turned him down even if sufficient funds for his care were provided. The workhouse is certainly out of the question. The patient has an overwhelming fear of returning to the horrors of his past. His appearance is so disturbing that all shrink from him. He cannot, in justice to others, be put in the general ward of the workhouse. The police rightly prevent his being exhibited, and he is mobbed in the streets wherever he goes. What is to be done with him?

BROADNECK

I, for one, am sick and tired of this competitive freak-hunting by these overly ambitious young doctors, trying to make names for themselves. To parade then about in front of the pathological society is one thing, but to waste this committee's valuable time with requests for shelter for these abominations of nature is quite another.

TREVES

Gentlemen, John Merrick is not an animal, he is a man, fully aware of his condition. An intelligent, sensitive, literate man, with an intimate knowledge of the Bible. His horrible infirmities do not reduce him to anything less than what he is, a man; and it would be criminal if we of the London Hospital, his final refuge, the last place on earth where this man can find peace, were to cast him out.

Carr Gomm, from his chair on the committee, pounds his gavel.

CARR

Gentlemen, may I make a suggestion. There are two small rooms off Bedstead Square that are no longer in use and would be admirably suited to Mr. Merrick's needs. I also propose to write a letter to The Times, appealing to their readers for assistance. Knowing the generosity of the British public, I feel we would have little trouble in raising the funds for his maintenance. Indeed, this hospital's rules do preclude the admission of incurables, but if ever there was an exception to the rule, it is this patient. So therefore, I propose, if Mr. Treves is finished, that we put it to a vote. All those in favor of keeping Mr. Merrick here?

Carr Gomm and another committee member raise their hands. Broadneck is displeased.

BROADNECK

One moment,

(showing the picture of Merrick)
as far as I'm concerned this creature
has no business being in our hospital.
I think Mr. Carr Gomm's letter would
be an excellent idea,

(to Carr Gomm)

and when you appeal for funds, I think
you should appeal for a more appropriate
place for him as well. I agree
the British public is generous, and
I'm sure that somewhere the creature
will find a happy and permanent home,
but not here.

One of the committee members says "I quite agree". Carr Gomm scowls a bit.

CARR

I see. All, then, that move we keep
Mr. Merrick here?

Carr Gomm raises his hand. None of the others do. Treves and Carr Gomm exchange hopeless glances. Carr Gomm looks at the man who had originally raised his hand. He looks away, ashamed.

CARR

All those opposed?

Broadneck and the rest raise their hands.

CARR

I see.

BROADNECK

(triumphantly)

Well then. In the meantime, of
course, he needn't be turned out.
He may stay in the rooms off
Bedstead Square until such time as
more suitable arrangements can be
made, thus freeing the Isolation
Ward for more deserving patients.
Well then, Mr. Chairman, if there
is nothing further to discuss, I
move that we adjourn this meeting
and all go about our normal business.

Carr Gomm cannot conceal his contempt.

CARR

I second the motion gentlemen. This
meeting is adjourned.

The others cough their agreement and hurriedly leave the room. Treves walks over to the committee table and takes the paper off the photograph. He stares sadly at Merrick's picture.

CARR (V. 0.)

Somehow I don't think they quite understand.

THEATRE DRESSING ROOM

We see a very lovely WOMAN seated in a chair before a mirror. She is reading aloud from The Times. Her hair is being brushed by a YOUNG GIRL.

WOMAN

... terrible though his appearance is, so terrible indeed that women and nervous persons fly in terror from the sight of him, and that he is debarred from seeking to earn his livelihood in any ordinary way, yet he is superior in intelligence, can read and write, is quiet, gentle, not to say even refined in his mind.

She turns to the girl thoughtfully.

WOMAN

I'd very much like to meet that gentleman. He sounds almost Shakespearean.

DINING HALL - THE LONDON

The room is elegantly furnished and heavily carpeted. The walls are panelled in richly gleaming walnut with finely wrought brass lamps spaced regularly along their length. In the center of the room is a long oak table with a fine linen table cloth, around which sits a number of Doctors, among them, Fox. Some of them are still eating. A waiter is clearing away a few plates and several Doctors are helping themselves to port wine kept in decanters in the center of the table and to cigars in humidors. One of them is reading The Times. At one end of the table sits Treves, picking at his food.

#1 DOCTOR

"... in life until he came under the kind care of the nursing staff of the London Hospital and the surgeon who has befriended him..."

#2 DOCTOR

Good publicity for the Hospital, at any rate.

#3 DOCTOR

Treves comes off well too, eh Freddie?

#4 DOCTOR

It was pleasant of you to join us this evening, Frederick.

#2 DOCTOR

Your Elephant Man dining out this evening?

#4 DOCTOR

I understand the kitchen ran out of hay this morning.

The group laughs.

FOX
(slightly sourly)
Do continue reading, Mr. Stanley,
please.

#1 DOCTOR
"... it is a case of singular affliction
brought about through no fault
of himself; he can but hope for quiet
and privacy during a life which
Mr. Treves assures me is not likely to
be long,"

There is a short pause.

#4 DOCTOR
The Elephant Man. Makes you sound
rather more like a zoo-keeper than
a surgeon, Frederick.

The group again laughs. Treves clears his throat and rises.

TREVES
Excuse me gentlemen. I seem to have
lost my appetite. Good evening.

Treves leaves the room.

#4 DOCTOR
I say, what's he on about?

#3 DOCTOR
He's getting a bit of a swelled head,
if you ask me.

FOX
(coldly)
Well, no one did ask you Atkins.
Frederick Treves is not only the
most skillful surgical operator
here, he's also a humanitarian of
the highest order. You sound like
a pack of whining school boys with
your petty jealousies.

#3 DOCTOR
Look here, Fox, I simply said.

FOX
Oh belt up!

A deep silence falls over the Doctors.

BEDSTEAD SQUARE ROOMS (NIGHT)

We see a small, very dusty, dirty room, filled with boxes and bedsteads and
other things stored over the years. The one grimy window is locked shut.

The door opens and two middle-aged CHARWOMEN enter. They look around at the room with distaste and drop their mops and buckets.

1ST WOMAN

There are cleaner rooms in the gasworks.

She reaches into her apron pocket and pulls out a pint bottle of gin. She takes a drink and passes it to her friend.

1ST WOMAN

Who's all the fuss for, then?

2ND WOMAN

(wiping her mouth)

Don't you know? It's for that strange one.

1ST WOMAN

Mr. Treves' Elephant Man? I hear he's got a trunk.

2ND WOMAN

Right, right.

The 1st Woman takes the bottle and walks across the room. She forces open the balky window and sits on the sill.

2ND WOMAN

Blimey, now we're cleanin' up for circus animals!

The 1st Woman, laughing, takes another healthy swig from the bottle. We see past her through the window, the dark silhouette of the main spire of St. Philip's Cathedral against the sky.

It fills the screen. DISSOLVE TO:

ISOLATION WARD

Merrick sitting on his bed, hunched over in concentration reading an Illustrated London News. He is staring at a picture of the Eddystone Lighthouse.

MERRICK

(reading softly)

"A silent shaft of stone on a deserted promontory, the lonely Eddystone is a beacon of aid and comfort to mariners of all nations."

He looks at the picture silently. There is a knock at the door. Merrick says, "Come in". Treves enters, holding a book.

TREVES

Good evening. How are you feeling?

MERRICK

Good evening. Very well, thank you. And you?

TREVES

Very well, thank you. I have something for you, John. I'm sure you'll enjoy it, it's very popular.

He holds the book out to him. It's an "Alice In Wonderland".

MERRICK

(surprised)

Thank you ... so much ... oh it's beautiful!

He lovingly feels the leather binding and looks at Treves with speechless gratitude.

Merrick carefully opens the book to a colored frontpiece, the picture of Alice grown too large for a hallway, looking imploringly at the dwarfed White Rabbit. The caption reads "... curiouser and curiouser". He leafs through the pages looking at the other illustrations as Treves, delighted with the gift's effect, looks on.

TREVES

I came to tell you that I'll be here early tomorrow morning. We're moving you to your permanent home. I'm sure you'll be very happy there, John. So get a good night's rest, there'll be new people to meet tomorrow. Good night.

Treves smiles broadly and exits.

MERRICK

(weakly)

Good night.

Treves' words have disturbed Merrick. He sinks into the pillows, the book before him. We see the picture of the Mock Turtle perched upon his rock, great tears rolling down his cow-like face, as Alice and the Gryphon look on with intense sympathy. Merrick looks up at his disguise hanging on the wall.

THE PEACOCK PUB - WHITECHAPEL

The Night Porter enters and saunters over to the noisy crowd. As they welcome him, he slaps down The Times on the bar counter for all to see.

NIGHT PORTER

Here... listen to this. This is a letter to THE London Times from the guvnor of the hospital.

(starts to read)

There is now in a little room off one of our attic wards a man named John Merrick, so dreadful a sight that he is unable even to come out by daylight to the garden. He has been called The Elephant Man on account of his terrible deformity...

The Night Porter has the undivided attention of the people in the pub.

NIGHT PORTER

.. His appearance is so terrible
that woman and nervous persons fly
in terror at the sight of him.

(pauses)

... and guess who can get you tickets
to see him? Your own Sunny Jim!

YOUNG MAN IN CROWD

Let's go see him, then!

NIGHT PORTER

Keep your shirts on.

(shaking his finger at them)

...When the time is right.
Right now he's in the attic but
tomorrow they're movin' him into
Bedstead Square, right into my lap
... then... for the right price you'll
see something you'll never see again
in your life.

He lifts his glass to his lips. We move back to see Bytes' boys who, having
heard the Night Porter's words, slips unnoticed from the pub.

MERRICK

(wheezing)

Workhouse!

HALLWAY - MOVING DAY

Merrick, in his disguise, and Treves, one arm around him, are walking
together. Merrick seems very uneasy.

A Nurse, on duty early or late getting off, passes them. She stares at the
hooded figure. They continue on in silence.

BEDSTEAD SQUARE ROOM

The room is now spotless. It is furnished with a bed and the required
pillows, a small table and chair by the window, now curtained. Adjoining this
room is a smaller one which contains a bathtub.

Merrick enters and looks around, confused. Treves stands in the doorway.
Merrick turns to him.

TREVES

This is your new home, John.

Merrick pulls off his hood. His eyes are bewildered.

MERRICK

This... is my new home?

TREVES

Yes.

MERRICK

(incredulous)

The hospital?

TREVES

Of course! What did you think?

Merrick's eyes glisten with held back tears. He lowers them.

MERRICK

(almost sobbing)

How long will I stay here?

TREVES

I promise you. You will never see the inside of that horrible place again. You will never, ever go back to the workhouse... or that man. It's a splendid room, don't you think?

Merrick inspects his new home. He seems pleased-by the bathtub, by the table, by the window to the outside world.

Merrick pulls the curtain aside and opens the window. He looks out and then up with a small intake of breath. Before him, beyond the hospital fence, the spire of St. Phillips Cathedral stands resplendently in the morning light.

MERRICK

When I'm next moved may I go to a lighthouse?... or to a blind-asylum?

HALLWAY

We see Carr Gomm walking to his office. He is met at the door by an anxious Treves.

TREVES

Has the response picked up?

CARR

Frankly, Treves, it's not what I'd expected. A few small cheques. Well-wishers. Don't worry, these things undoubtedly take time.

TREVES

But he's so afraid he's going to be carted off. I've promised him that won't happen.

CARR

Well... I'll let you know if there's something in the afternoon post.

TREVES

Please do.

Carr Gomm goes back into his office and Treves walks off.

MERRICK'S ROOM (A WHILE LATER)

There is no one in the room. The bathroom door opens and Nora and another nurse enter, carrying buckets which they set down by the hall door. They straighten up and lean back against it.

Mrs. Mothershead enters from the bathroom, speaking over her shoulder to Merrick.

MOTHERSHEAD

Well, I think I can safely hand the duties over to you girls now. Mr. Merrick will require a bath every day... that way he won't pong quite so much. Nora, you can instruct Kathleen on the finer points of Mr. Merrick's bath. You'll be on your own tomorrow.

The girls try to keep bright faces.

MOTHERSHEAD

Don't look so glum girls. Such enthusiastic volunteers should be more cheerful.

Mothershead starts to exit.

MOTHERSHEAD

Oh, and girls, under no circumstances are there to be any mirrors brought into this room.

She exits.

KATHLEEN

He's... so ugly!

NORA

Ugly or not, you're going to help me.

Merrick quietly enters the room, dressed in a billowy white shirt and baggy black pants. The two nurses try to smile, but he cannot look at them.

NORA

Feeling better now, Mr. Merrick?

MERRICK

Yes,

Kathleen's eyes go wide at the sound.

NORA

You look very nice in your new clothes.

Merrick looks down at himself.

MERRICK

Thank you very much.

NORA

Well., if there is nothing more, I suppose we'll be leaving you now.

MERRICK

No, nothing.

The girls leave, taking the buckets.

Merrick, alone, walks about the room getting the feel of his new clothes. There is a knock at the door and Treves enters.

TREVES

You look splendid, John.

MERRICK

Thank you very much.

TREVES

When one is invited to tea, one must look one's best.

CUT TO:

ENTRY HALL AND SITTING ROOM - TREVES' HOME

The door opens. Merrick, disguised, enters, followed by Treves who closes it and hangs up Merrick's mask on the coat rack. The mirror has been removed, leaving a faint outline on the wall.

Merrick is enchanted by the house. Treves takes him by the arm and leads him into the sitting room. Anne appears at the top of the stairs.

TREVES (V.O.)

Make yourself comfortable, John.

Treves comes back to the foot of the stairs and smiles up at Anne.

TREVES

Come and meet our quest, my love.

Anne manages a smile, comes down the stairs and together they go into the sitting room.

Merrick is examining everything in the room. Nothing in this almost magical world escapes his attention. The furniture, the personal mementoes, particularly the pictures on the fireplace. He turns around when he hears them enter, lowering his eyes.

TREVES

John Merrick, I'd like you to meet my wife, Anne Treves.

Anne is startled, but conceals it very well.

ANNE

(smiling)

I'm very pleased to meet you, Mr. Merrick.

Anne extends her hand. John takes her hand and looks up very slowly meeting her eyes. Anne smiles.

MERRICK

I'm very...

Then, Merrick bursts into tears. Anne is at a loss as to what to do. Merrick takes his hand from hers and covers his eyes, weeping pitiously. Treves puts his hand on Merrick's shoulder.

TREVES

John... what's the matter? John
... why are you upset?

MERRICK

(sobbing)
I'm not used to such kindness.
from a beautiful woman.

Treves and Anne exchange worried looks.

ANNNE

Would you like a nice cup of tea,
Mr. Merrick?

MERRICK

(still sobbing)
Yes... thank you.

TREVES

Yes, a cup of tea would go nicely.

Anne goes now to get the tea.

TREVES

John... would you like to see the
rest of the house?

Merrick cannot answer through his sobs.

TREVES

Come with me, John. I'll show it
to you.

KITCHEN

Anne is composing herself by busily fixing the tea and cakes. She stops for a moment, takes a breath, and then resumes her activity.

DISSOLVE TO:

Treves and Merrick coming down the stairs. Merrick is calm now. They go into the sitting room, where Anne is just setting the tea tray out. Treves ushers Merrick to a highbacked sofa and sits him down. Merrick is very shy of Anne. Treves and Anne sit on the other side of the table.

ANNE

Mr. Merrick, sugar?

MERRICK

Yes please, two.

ANNE

One or two?

MERRICK

Two, please.

Anne serves the tea.

TREVES

John loves the house.

ANNE

Do you?

MERRICK

Oh yes. You have so many nice things, and so much room.

ANNE

Oh?

TREVES

Yes, we do have a lot of room. But you should see the place on weekends, when I see patients here. Sometimes there are so many, we have to set them down wherever we can. In fact, Mrs. Treves sometimes says that the only room she can call her own is the bedroom.

Treves and Anne laugh good-naturedly. Merrick's face, as always, is quite blank.

MERRICK

(earnestly)

Well, it's a lovely bedroom. What do you call that thing above the bed?

TREVES

That's a canopy, John.

MERRICK

Ohhh...

TREVES

How is your tea, John?

MERRICK

It's very good. I'm enjoying my visit with you very much. It's so very kind of you to have me as a guest in your home. I'm sorry I made a spectacle of myself.

TREVES

Not at all, John.

MERRICK

I love the way you've arranged your pictures on the mantelpiece. Is that the way it's done in most houses?

TREVES

Oh yes.

MERRICK

Who are they of?

TREVES

Oh, our relatives... the children.

MERRICK

The children! May I see?

TREVES

Of course.

Treves goes to the fireplace and takes down a few pictures. He hands a picture of the girls to Merrick.

MERRICK

(as if looking at an icon)

The Children. Where are your children

TREVES

Oh, they're gone for the day... with friends.

MERRICK

(the word gives him pleasure)

Friends. Ah yes, friends! How nice.

ANNE

And here is one of Frederick's mother.

MERRICK

How lovely.

TREVES

Yes.

ANNE

And here are my mother and father.

MERRICK

They have noble faces.

ANNE

(a cord is struck)

I've always thought that myself.

MERRICK

Oh, yes.

Merrick sets the picture down carefully.

MERRICK

(ever so timidly)

Would you... would you like to see my mother?

TREVES

(startled)

Your mother?

MERRICK

Here.

He reaches into his cloak and brings out the small portrait of the beautiful woman. Treves is absolutely amazed. Merrick gently hands the picture to Anne.

ANNE

Oh... why Mr. Merrick she's beautiful.

MERRICK

She has the face of an angel ...
She was an angel. She was so kind
... so kind to me. it's not her
fault, for in the fourth month of
her maternal condition she was knocked
down by an elephant. I'm sure I
must have been a great disappointment
to her.

ANNE

(visibly touched)

Oh no, Mr. Merrick. No. No son
as loving as you are could ever be
a disappointment.

MERRICK

If only I could find her. If only
she could see me now, here, with
such lovely kind friends. You, Mrs.
Treves, and you, Mr. Treves. Then
maybe she would love me as I am.
I've tried to hard to be good.

At this, Anne is so extremely touched that she begins to cry. She tries to hold it in, but to no avail. She reaches a hand out to Merrick and he takes it. He tries to comfort her.

MERRICK

Please... please...

But Anne goes on, as Treves, in wonder, watches her and Merrick locked together in the communication of intense sympathy.

REAR ENTRANCE - THE LONDON

Merrick, in the dimly lit rear hall, is huddled over a trash can tucked underneath a stairway. He pulls out a discarded drug box. He holds it closely to his chest and goes into his room.

MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick goes to his table and puts the box down. He hangs up his disguise, then goes back to the window and pulls the curtains aside. Moonlight bathes the table, illuminating the portrait of his Mother. John seats himself and sets the box in front of him. He reaches for a pencil, and then begins to draw windows on the front of the box.

OUTSIDE MERRICK'S ROOM (MORNING)

Nora is coming down the hall with a breakfast tray. She stops at Merrick's door and raises a hand to knock.

MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick, as before, is hunched over the table, pencil in hand. The sides of the box are covered with carefully drawn windows and archways.

There is a knock at the door and Merrick, startled, looks up. Nora enters and puts the tray on the table. She glances at the box.

NORA

Good morning, Mr. Merrick.

MERRICK

Good morning.

She turns and walks to the cabinet for linen and bath supplies. She opens it and takes out a clean towel and a blanket. She pauses, and turns to look back at the table.

Merrick is concentrated on his work. Nora, curious now, walks to the table. Merrick, conscious of her presence, leans back in his chair and looks up at her.

NORA

What is this that you're doing?

Merrick is silent.

NORA

(pointing at the box)

What is it?

Merrick points through the window.

NORA

What? Oh! I see! It's St. Phillips. Oh, of course. Why ... why that's very good, I mean you've gotten the windows and arches just right.

MERRICK

Yes.

NORA

But it's so good, I mean... it's so very good.

MERRICK

Thank you... very much.

NORA

Where did you get this box?

Merrick points out toward the hallway.

NORA

The hallway? Oh, the wastecan!

MRRRICK

I meant no harm, it was the only place where I could find cardboard. I thought it has been thrown away.

NORA

It's alright, it was thrown away. No one wants it. It's just that it's a little dirty, that's all.

She sets the towel and blanket down as she leans closer to Insect the box. She points to a circle drawn on top.

NORA

What's this?

MERRICK

The main spire.

NORA

The... oh, the spire! How silly of me, it's as plain as day... Mr. Merrick, where did you learn to do this?

MERRICK

... I learned a long time ago.

Nora looks at the box.

NORA

Oh, but how will you finish it? You haven't any more cardboard.

Merrick, at a loss, shrugs his shoulders. The movement makes Nora aware of his body, and he is the Elephant Man once again.

MERRICK

I'll have to find some more.

NORA

(uncomfortably)

Yes... well, good day, Mr.Merrick.

She quickly exits. Merrick watches her go and then turns back to his work. He sees the towel and the blanket. He turns quickly to call after Nora, but stops himself. Merrick takes up the towel and blanket, walks into the bathroom, and carefully drapes the towel over the back of the bath.

MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick is at his table working on his cathedral. There is a knock at the door.

MERRICK

Come in.

Treves enters.

TREVES

Good morning, John.

MERRICK

Good morning.

TREVES

John, there's someone here who would like to meet you. Would that be all-right?

Merrick is a trifle apprehensive, but he agrees. Treves ushers MRS. KENDAL through the door. At the sight of her, Merrick's eyes go wide.

TREVES

John, I'd like you to meet one of the brightest lights of the British stage, Mrs. Kendal. Mrs. Kendal, John Merrick.

KENDAL

Good day, Mr. Merrick.

MERRICK

Good day...!

KENDAL

I've brought you some things. I hope you'll like, Mr. Merrick. I hope you don't think it too forward.

MERRICK

Oh, no.

KENDAL

I knew you'd understand. Here.

She hands Merrick a nicely framed picture of herself. Merrick is speechless, overjoyed by the gift.

KENDAL

I want you to know that I don't go about giving my pictures to just anyone.

MERRICK

Oh, no. I would never think it! It's so beautiful. You are so... I'll give it a place of honor, here, next to my mother.

He places it, with great care, next to his mother's portrait.

KENDAL

She's very pretty, your mother.

MERRICK

Yes.

Treves smiles at them.

Merrick is a trifle nervous but Mrs. Kendal smiles at him and he relaxes a little.

MERRICK

Mr. Treves says that you are in the theatre. Do you live there?

KENDAL

Oh no, Mr. Merrick. I just work there.

MERRICK

Well, even to work there would be wonderful. Is it beautiful?

KENDAL

You've never been?

MERRICK

Alas, no.

KENDAL

Well you must go. It is one of the most beautiful places on earth. Of course, I'm rather partial.

MERRICK

Tell me about it, please!

KENDAL

It's very difficult to put into a nutshell, but I should say the theater is the shrine of the imagination, where one may suspend disbelief and travel anywhere in the world, to any time you desire. You may look over the shoulders of kings, unobserved, battle with ruthless tyrants, and marry the beautiful princess, all in the space of a few hours. Onstage you may be whoever you wish to be, do anything you please, and always, always live happily ever after. The theatre is all the brightest and best things of the world, Mr. Merrick. It is lights and music, gaiety and joy. It's... well, it's romance.

MERRICK

(the magic word)

Romance!

KENDAL

That's one thing the theatre has in great store. which reminds me. I have something else for you ...

She produces a beautiful leather-bound volume of Shakespeare's works. Merrick takes it with reverence and begins to leaf through it.

KENDAL

Have you read it?

MERRICK

No, but I certainly shall.

Merrick finds a place and begins to read.

MERRICK

Romeo and Juliet. I know of this...
"If I profane with my unworhiest
hand,
This holy shrine, the gentle fine
is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims,
ready stand,
To smooth that rough touch with a
tender kiss."

Merrick, embarrassed by these last words, starts to close the book.

Mrs. Kendal knows Juliet's lines by heart. She looks at Merrick for a moment, then replies tenderly.

KENDAL

Good pilgrim, you do wrong your
hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in
this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims
hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmer's
kiss.

Merrick pauses, looking at Kendal, then continues.

MERRICK

Have not saints lips, and holy
palmers too?

KENDAL

Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must
use in prayer.

MERRICK

O, then, dear saint, let lips do
what hands do.
They pray, grant thou, lest faith
turn to despair.

They both look at each other for a long, silent moment. Treves is touched and amazed.

KENDAL

Why, Mr. Merrick, you're not an
Elephant Man at all ...

MERRICK

Oh no ?

KENDAL

Oh no... no... you're a Romeo.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE PEACOCK - WHITECHAPEL

People are happily drinking and singing and laughing. Bytes and the boy are keeping a watchful eye on the Night Porter, who is making a deal with a couple of men at a table. They hand over a few coins and follow the Night Porter out of the pub. Bytes finishes his beer and thumps the glass down on the bar. He wipes his mouth with his sleeve and he and the boy casually follow the other three men out.

Bytes and the boy stand by the pub door, watching the men cross the street and go to the back gate of the hospital which the Night Porter unlocks, and leaves unlocked, but closed, behind them. They walk into Bedstead Square, laughing quietly.

Bytes crosses the street and goes to the gate. He walks along the iron fence and watches the Night Porter and his "customers". He stops and waits to see where they go.

The Night Porter stands the two men before a window and motions for them to wait. He goes through a door into the hospital. After a few moments the window opens wide, and there, neatly framed and silhouetted, stand Merrick and the Night Porter, gripping Merrick's neck. The two men outside start back in shock, but stand mesmerized by what they see. We hear the laughter of the Night Porter echo across the empty square.

Bytes smiles broadly and says softly to himself.

BYTES

So, there you are, my boy, my treasure.

A SITTING ROOM

We see a small circle of women having tea and gossip. One of their daughters, off to the side, is reading a newspaper society page.

GIRL

Mummy, listen to this!

MUMMY

Hush, Jennifer, can't you see Mummy's talking?

GIRL

But it's about Mrs. Kendal, mummy! The actress you go on so much about!

She has got the women's attention.

GIRL

"Mrs. Kendal, always at the forefront of fashion and form, was seen leaving The London the other afternoon. No, dear readers, the most facile actress of our day has not been taken ill, but rather said she was 'visiting a friend'. And who was the lucky recipient of this attention? Quick enquiries proved it to be none other than Mr. John Merrick, The Elephant Man, with whom our readers are undoubtedly familiar. After a chat of three-quarters of an hour, Mrs. Kendal was kind enough to leave Mr. Merrick with an autographed portrait of herself. Owing to a disfigurement of the most extreme nature, Mr. Merrick has never been properly presented to London society. But knowing that wherever Mrs. Kendal goes, others inevitably follow, the questions arises: Will London society present itself to him?"

LONDON HOSPITAL GATE

A carriage draws up in the street outside the hospital. A nicely dressed woman sticks her head out the window, looks around and scowls disappointedly.

Nearby is parked another carriage and driver.

WOMAN

(to her driver)

Parkins, whose carriage is that?

DRIVER

Well mum, that looks like Alexander, Lord Waddington's driver.

WOMAN

Lord and Lady Waddington! Well. drive back to the house.

(indicating her clothing)

I can't be seen in this.

They drive off.

Above Merrick's bookshelf we see a row of framed pictures of prettily smiling society women. Mrs. Kendal has started a fad. We pan slowly by them and down to Merrick's table where his Mother and Mrs. Kendal have their place of honor. The cathedral is also there. Beside it is a modest tea service.

We now see a GENTLEMAN standing behind a seated LADY. They hold teacups. They are both very attractive and empty-headed, and seem on the verge of screaming. They smile at Merrick who has been talking the whole while. Merrick holds an elegant, silvertipped walking stick across his lap, and admires a ring that only fits his little finger.

MERRICK

Thank you for your kind gifts. I
can't say enough about this ring.
And this walking stick is ever so
dashing. So much more elegant than
my old one. More tea?

The Lady and Gentleman nod nervously. John takes the teapot from the service
and refills their cups. The Lady's hand shakes, rattling the cup against the
saucer.

MERRICK

If you have a chill I can close the
window.

THE LADY

Oh no, no, no, I'm fine. Please...
I mean, thank you.

MERRICK

I don't get out as often as I'd like
to, for some people DO find my appearance
disturbing. Of course, I can't
fault them.

We see the smiling pictures.

MERRICK (V.0.)

People are often frightened by
what they don't understand.

We see the picture of Merrick's Mother.

MERRICK (V.0.)

And it is hard to understand, even
for myself, for you see, Mother
was so very beautiful.

We draw close to his Mother's picture.

MERRICK (V.0.)

How's your tea?

THE RECEIVING ROOM

Treves walks the Lord and Lady, their faces locked in terrible silence, to the
door. Mothershead, at her desk, watches them pass with great disapproval.

MOTHERSHEAD

(under her breath)

Watery headed bunch.

TREVES

I regret that I must leave you here,
m' Lord, m' Lady. Thank you so
much for coming. It was an act of
the greatest charity.

LADY WADDINGTON

Oh no, Mr. Treves, the pleasure was
all ours. Good day.

As they turn to go, their faces drop, their loathing undisguised. Treves closes the door. He goes to Mothershead.

TREVES

Incredible, isn't it? Well, I think John has had enough visitors for one day, Mothershead. I've got a lecture at the college, I'll be back this evening.

MOTHERSHEAD

Excuse me, sir. I'd like to have a word with you.

TREVES

Oh?... Well, quickly please, Mothershead, I'm overdue.

MOTHERSHEAD

I can't understand why you let those people go in there, sir.

TREVES

Now Mothershead, you have to understand that this is very good for John. He relishes contact with people outside the hospital..

MOTHERSHEAD

But you saw them, sir. They couldn't hide their disgust. They don't care anything for John, they're just trying to impress their friends.

TREVES

Aren't you being just a little harsh, Mothershead? You yourself hardly treated John with much loving kindness when he first arrived.

MOTHERSHEAD

I bathed him, didn't I? I fed him and cleaned up after him! If loving kindness can be called care and practical concern, then yes, I did treat him with loving kindness, and I'm not ashamed to say it.

TREVES

You're right, Mothershead, please forgive me... Of course, I appreciate everything you've done for John, and I'm glad that you are concerned about his welfare. But, I'm the physician in charge and I must do what I think best. I'm also very late, so please forgive me.

He starts to go. Mothershead steps in front of him, detaining him.

MOTHERSHEAD

If you ask me, sir, he's just
being stared at all over again.

MERRICK'S ROOM

We pan across Merrick's bookcase, now quite full, and we see a few titles:
"Moll Flanders", "Emma", "Jane Eyre", "Pamela", and then to Merrick. He and
Treves are reading poetry together.

MERRICK

When will the stream be weary
of flowing under my eye?
When will the wind be weary
of blowing over the sky?
When will the clouds be weary
of fleeting?
When will the heart be weary
of beating, and nature die?

TREVES

Never, oh! Never, nothing will die.
the stream flows
the wind blows
the heart beats
Nothing will die.

Merrick closes his book and sits silently for a moment.

MERRICK

Mr. Treves, there is something I've
been meaning to ask you for some
time ...

TREVES

Yes, John?

MERRICK

... Can you cure me?

Treves is taken aback. He considers, then says tentatively.

TREVES

No John, I can't. I can care for
you, but I can't cure you.

MERRICK

I thought as much.

Merrick rises. Treves ponders over what Merrick has just said. He looks at
Merrick and something very odd happens. Merrick is looking levelly at him.
For the first and only time, we see expression on his face. It is a calm,
knowing look, almost a benign smile. At that very moment there is a bright
flash of light behind Merrick's head, seemingly from the window. Treves
blinks, unable to comprehend what has just happened. When he looks again, the
moment has passed. Merrick, his back to Treves, moves to the bookcase to
replace the volume.

TREVES

John. . . ?

There's a knock at the door.

MERRICK

Come in.

Nora enters with a brown paper parcel tied with string. Merrick says nothing.

TREVES

Are you looking for me, Sister?

NORA

No sir, Mr. Merrick.
(to Merrick)
I have something for you.

She puts the parcel on the table and opens it. We see several squares of new cardboard, a cutting knife, a pastepot, and a few brushes and some paint.

NORA

I thought these things would be
helpful with your cathedral.

Merrick examines the materials with reverence, and thanks her profusely. Treves is moved and a little disconcerted. Merrick lays the things aside carefully and begins to pull the crude spires from the discarded box. Nora smiles at the busy Merrick and exits.

TREVES

The cathedral is coming along
nicely.

MERRICK

(bending over the model)
Yes, soon I will start the main
spire, but I must finish these
columns first, How kind of her!

Treves notices to his dismay that the growths on Merrick's head are larger. He finds it very difficult to disguise his concern.

TREVES

How blind of me. Is there anything
else, John, anything at all that I
could get for you?

MERRICK

Oh no! There is nothing! I have
everything, you have given me
everything I could possibly want.
I am happy every hour of the day. I
only wish there was something I could
give to you.

TREVES

Please John, it would give me so
much pleasure to give you something.
Something just for yourself. Isn't
there something you would like to
have?

Merrick is silent. He goes over to his cloak, reaches into it and pulls out a folded up advertisement. He hands it to Treves, who examines it closely. It is an advertisement for an-elegant gentleman's dressing bag, boasting ivory brushes, silver fittings and Moroccan silk lining.

TREVES

You want a dressing bag, John?

MERRICK

You don't think it's too gaudy,
do you?

HALLWAY

Mrs. Mothershead finds Treves walking slowly down the hall, looking at the ad.

MOTHERSHEAD

Mr. Treves, some more books
arrived for Mr. Merrick.

TREVES

Thank you, Mothershead. Have a
porter put them in my office.

MOTHERSHEAD

Yes sir.

(seeing the ad)

What's that?

TREVES

A dressing bag.

MOTHERSHEAD

Very smart indeed.

TREVES

Yes. John wants it.

MOTHERSHEAD

A dressing bag?

TREVES

You don't think it's too gaudy,
do you.

MOTHERSHEAD

Well...

TREVES

John thinks it's very dashing.
Something no gentleman should be
without. I'm inclined to . agree.

He walks off.

MOTHERSHEAD

A dressing bag?

MERRICK'S ROOM (DUSK)

Merrick is still at his cathedral working away. Suddenly, he looks up at the window and the Night Porter is standing there smiling wickedly, pointing a finger at him.

MERRICK

Night!

FADE TO BLACK

SITTING ROOM - TREVES' HOME

Treves is standing by a table on which are two stacks of books. Treves selects books from the stacks and puts them into a box. Treves looks troubled. He takes one from the pile and examines it. It's a copy of "Frankenstein".

TREVES

You stay with me.

ANNE

(calling from the next room)

Dinner will be served, shortly, dear.

Getting no response, she enters.

ANNE

More romances for John?

TREVES

(far away)

Hmmm?

ANNE

... Freddie! What's the matter?
You've been like this all evening.

TREVES

Oh... I've just been thinking
about something that man Bytes
said.

ANNE

Oh, Freddie. What could that
wretched vampire say to upset you?

TREVES

That I am very little different
from him.

ANNE

Oh that's absurd, Frederick.

ANNE

No, no Frederick, that's all wrong!
John is happier and more fulfilled
now than he has ever been in his
entire life. And, that is completely
due to you.

TREVES

But why did I do it? What was this all for? So John Merrick could live out his last days in peace and comfort? Or so I could become famous?

ANNE

Frederick, just what is it that you are saying?

TREVES

... Am I a good man or am I a bad man?

ANNE

Oh Frederick.

She holds him in her arms.

ANNE

You're a good man. A very good man.

We see from Treves' eyes that he is not reassured.

BASEMENT - THE LONDON

It is very dark. There is a dim red glow coming from the holes in a furnace door. We hear a door open and footsteps coming downstairs. A man comes into the basement carrying something large and black. He approaches the furnace and opens the door.

The man is Treves. He is holding the stiff black surgeon's coat of which he was once so proud. He looks at it for a moment, and then stuffs it into the furnace. Inside, the coat starts to smoke heavily, then bursts into flames.

Treves watches it burn, and then closes the door.

HALLWAY - THE LONDON HOSPITAL

We see Carr Gomm walking down the hall to his office. Broadneck appears, going the other way.

CARR

Ahh! Broadneck! You'll no doubt be pleased to know that we've received a smashing response to my letter. It's all very heartwarming, though several letters do mention how beastly it would be to part the poor fellow from Mr. Treves and the staff, but since the committee insists...

BROADNECK

(scowling)

Good day, Carr Gomm.

Broadneck walks on. Carr Gomm goes into his office.

CARR'S OFFICE

Mothershead is standing by the desk looking through a small stack of mail.

MOTHERSHEAD

Is this all there is for John?

CARR

I'm afraid so, Mrs. Mothershead.
Perhaps tomorrow.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY

We see in a pair of hands holding a buff colored envelope embossed with the Royal Seal. We follow the hands down the hall to a door where one of the hands knocks next to the "F.C. Carr Gomm" sign, then enters the office.

CARR'S OFFICE

Carr Gomm and Mothershead look up to see a porter with the buff envelope enter. Carr Gomm takes the letter and the porter exits. Carr Gomm opens the letter and reads, his expression changing from concern to delight.

MOTHERSHEAD

What is it? What is it?

Carr Gomm hands her the letter. Never having touched Royal stationary before, Mothershead handles it delicately. She begins to read.

COMMITTEE ROOM - THE LONDON

Broadneck and the other committee members are seated at their table, anxious to get the meeting underway. They talk among themselves.

The door opens and Carr Gomm and Treves enter. Treves seems quite nervous, but Carr Gomm is relaxed and smiling.

TREVES

Don't you think this is a bit premature?
We don't have the backing yet to ...

CARR

Steady on, Treves. Have a seat.

Treves sits and Carr Gomm takes his place at the head of the table and raps his gavel.

CARR

Gentlemen, I know we begin every meeting by reading the minutes, but in the interest of speed I think we should conclude a matter discussed previously, to wit, that of Mr. John Merrick, the Elephant Man...

Broadneck explodes to his feet. Carr Gomm smiles at Treves, who looks quite grim.

CARR

Mr. Broadneck?

BROADNECK

Mr. Chairman! I was under the distinct impression that we had concluded discussion of this disagreeable matter. Had we not ascertained that an Elephant Man is not acceptable as a patient? Have we not, very generously, allowed the creature to use two of our rooms until such time as he could be properly disposed of? Have we not...

CUT TO MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick is working on his cathedral, painting details with a very fine brush. As he lifts the brush from the paint jar, a drop falls on the table. Merrick carefully lays down the brush and wipes up the spilled paint with a cloth.

MERRICK

I must be more careful!

CUT TO COMMITTEE ROOM

BROADNECK

Which brings to mind my next point. The rules, gentlemen, the rules. In a society such as ours, it is of paramount importance that we not stray from the established order. Has that order not already been fearfully strained by allowing this ... this ... sideshow exhibit to take up residence, however temporary, in two very useful rooms, the purpose of which would be far better served in accomodating treatable patients, patients to whom this hospital was originally dedicated? I believe we have a duty...

Carr Gomm still smiles. Treves is about to spring to Merrick's defense, but Carr Gomm catches his eyes and motions for him to remain silent. Treves is perplexed. Carr Gomm checks his pocket watch.

CUT TO MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick as before, busily working away. We see a ladybug crawling slowly across the roof of the cathedral. Merrick notices it and watches for a moment, then reaches up and lays a finger alongside the bug. The bug crawls onto his finger and Merrick holds it closer to him.

MERRICK

... Ladybug, ladybug, fly away home... it's cloudy out, I know, but remember; behind the clouds there is always the sun.

CUT TO WHITECHAPEL ROAD

We see a Royal carriage glide to a stop in front of the hospital. A footman jumps down and opens the door. A very elegantly dressed woman begins to emerge.

CUT TO COMMITTEE ROOM

Broadneck is still talking.

BROADNECK

... In light of these facts, our course is clear. The question is not whether to accept this creature as a patient, the question is when will those rooms be vacated for use by better qualified, more deserving cases? I move that this Elephant Man be removed from the premises immediately. We have a sacred duty to cure the sick, not care for circus animals. That is my last word on the subject. Mr. Chairman, shall we vote?

Broadneck turns to Carr Gomm. Carr Gomm checks his watch and clears his throat.

CARR GOMM

I take it, Mr. Broadneck, that your mind is fixed on this matter?

Broadneck blusters with rage.

BROADNECK

Mr. Chairman! Don't you have ears? I am unalterably opposed to any...

Carr Gomm smiles and again checks his watch. Treves is very nervous.

CUT TO HALLWAY

We see two nurses, their backs to us, walking down the hall. They start to go in a doorway when they stop suddenly, very startled, and curtsey deeply. Mothershead comes into the hall, also curtseying madly. She is followed by the elegantly dressed woman, who is followed in turn by two footmen. They walk regally down the hall.

CUT TO COMMITTEE ROOM

BROADNECK

... No, my mind is made up on this, and I am resolved to stand firm. You shall not sway me. May we now vote, Mr. Chairman, at long last?

Carr Gomm checks his watch. The door to the room begins to open. He smiles.

CARR

Yes, I believe that time has come.

The two footmen enter the room.

1ST FOOTMAN

Gentlemen, Her Royal Highness
Alexandra, Princess of Wales.

The elegantly dressed woman enters. Everyone rises.

ALIX

Good morning, gentlemen. I hope
I am not interrupting?

CARR

Indeed not, your Highness. Your
presence is always greatly appreciated.
We were just about to put
the matter of Mr. Merrick to a vote.

(he turns to the other
committee members)

The Princess is very interested in
Mr. Merrick's fate.

ALIX

Indeed I am sir, as it the Queen.
I have a brief communication from
her Highness which she has requested
I read to you: To the Governing
Committee, London Hospital. I would
very much like to commend you for the
charitable face you have shown Mr.
John Merrick, the Elephant Man. It
is laudable that you have provided
one of England's most unfortunate sons
with a safe and tranquil harbour, a
home. For this immeasurable kindness,
as well as the many other acts of mercy
on behalf of the poor, of which Mr. Carr
Gomm has kept me informed, I gratefully
thank you. Signed Victoria, Empress of
India, Queen of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Ireland.

(looking straight at Broadneck)

I am sure you gentlemen may be counted
on to do the Christian thing.

Alix seats herself.

CARR

Thank you very much, your Highness,
you may be sure we shall.

Broadneck seems very unnerved.

CARR

Well then, I move that Mr. John Merrick be admitted to the London Hospital on a permanent basis, on condition that the Hospital shall receive a yearly payment equal to the cost of occupying one bed, and that the funds for his care shall be clearly separate from hospital funds. All those in favor.

Carr Gomm raises his hand. The other members, puzzled, look at Broadneck. Quite red in the face, Broadneck looks at Carr Gomm, then to Treves, then to the Princess. He seems to almost deflate, then slowly raises his hand. The other members, now thoroughly confused, raise their hands as well. Carr Gomm bangs his gavel, smiling broadly. Treves is almost beside himself with happiness, and the Princess is obviously very pleased.

CARR

The motion is carried.

Broadneck, humiliated, cannot look at anyone.

CARR

Well, now we may go about our normal business.

MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick is working on his cathedral. It is almost finished. He is detailing the spire, carefully painting in the stonework. There is a knock at the door.

MERRICK

Please, come in.

Treves enters carrying a wrapped parcel, followed by Carr Gomm, and Mothershead.

TREVES

(smiling broadly)

Good afternoon, John, Mr. Carr Gomm has something he would like to say to you.

Treves defers to Carr Gomm.

CARR

Mr. Merrick, it is my great pleasure to welcome you, officially to The London Hospital. The Governing Committee this morning voted unanimously to provide you these rooms on a permanent basis. This is your home now. I'm so very, very pleased for you.

Merrick is speechless. He just looks from Treves to Carr Gomm to Mothershead.

TREVES

So you see, John, there's no need
for a lighthouse. All your friends
are here.

MOTHERSHEAD

Welcome home, John.

Merrick finds it very difficult to speak.

MERRICK

... my... home?

TREVES

Yes, John.

MERRICK

You did this for me?

TREVES

Yes.

MERRICK

Please... please thank the governing
committee for me. I will do my
utmost to merit their kindness.

Merrick looks about him at his rooms. It's beginning to dawn on him that this
is indeed his, that at last he has a real home, a place of his own.

MERRICK

(trying the words on for size)

My home.

TREVES

There is one more thing, John.
Here.

Treves hands Merrick the package. Merrick carefully pulls off the wrapping
paper. Treves smiles. It's the dressing bag. Merrick is overjoyed with the
gift. He lovingly handles the articles, taking them in and out of their
compartments opening and closing the bag.

TREVES

Is it the one you wanted?

MERRICK

Oh, Mr. Treves. Mr. Treves.

TREVES

Are you sure? Because I can take
it back.

MERRICK

Mr. Treves. Thank you my...
friends.

NIGHT TIME SKY

Clouds billowing, moving swiftly.

MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick is alone, wearing his cloak and standing by the table, cradling the dressing bag. He takes each article out of the bag and lays it carefully on the table, all in very neat order. He stares at the elegant objects, then rearranges them.

Merrick picks up the toothbrush, examining it with a sort of reverence. He does the same with the ivory-handled razors and the comb.

THE PEACOCK - WHITECHAPEL

There's a good crowd in tonight; lots of drinking and shouting and glasses breaking. Several of the neighborhood "working girls" are having a bit of a rest, looking for a laugh. The Night Porter is rounding up customers, his pockets ringing with coins. People have their hands raised urging the Night Porter to take them along to see The Elephant Man. The Night Porter goes to a table where a MAN sits with two of the girls.

MAN

Here now, these lovely ladies
ain't never seen it!

NIGHT PORTER

(to Man)

You're on mate.

(to all the others)

Alright, alright, that's
enough for this performance.

The others all moan their disappointment.

NIGHT PORTER

Hang on, hang on, there's always
tomorrow night. Not to worry.

Bytes, sitting at his usual place at the bar, sees that tonight is his chance. The Night Porter rounds up his "customers", all twelve of them. Bytes saunters over to the Night Porter.

BYTES

Room for one more?

NIGHT PORTER

At the right price ...

Bytes drops several coins in the Night Porter's hand.

NIGHT PORTER

There's room.

BYTES

Well, let's be off then.

The whole group happily leaves the pub, several still holding their gin bottles. The Ladies are rather unstead on their feet. As they all leave, the Night Porter says:

NIGHT PORTER

Quietly now! Quietly! We don't
want to scare him.

(he laughs)

MERRICK'S ROOM

(Merrick as before) he reaches over to the picture of Mrs. Kendal and picks it up. We see his face reflected in the glass. Merrick sets the picture down on the table. He takes up one of the silver brushes and, using the picture as a mirror, neatly brushes his hair over his monstrous skull. He lays the brush down in its specific spot.

Merrick takes his ring and puts it on his left hand. He opens the cigarette case and stuffs one into his right hand. He takes up his walking stick, breathes deeply, then walks around the room in a slow circle. Merrick is transforming himself. Merrick comes back to the table and examines his reflection in the picture. With the ring, the stick, the cigarette and his neatly brushed hair, Merrick is the very image of a dashing young man about town. He inclines his head to the picture.

MERRICK

Hello, my name is John Merrick.
I am very, VERY pleased to meet
you!

At this moment the door bursts open. The Night Porter stands grinning.

NIGHT PORTER

Curtain time!!!

Merrick is frozen, caught. Seeing Merrick in his outfit, the Night Porter's jaw drops. They both stare at each other. The Night Porter begins to laugh hysterically. Merrick frantically begins to put away his dressing bag articles. When Merrick starts taking off his ring, the Night Porter comes over to him and grabs him by the cloak.

NIGHT PORTER

No, no! You look lovely. Don't
change a thing, darling. You look
like the bleedin' Prince of Wales.

The Night Porter drags him by the neck to the window. He throws the window open out in the square is the waiting audience.

NIGHT PORTER

My friends... The Elephant Man!

He strips off Merrick's cloak. The audience gasps. A few people who have been before laugh and clap.

MAN (w/the whores)

(laughing and clapping)

Horrible... I told you it was
horrible... just horrible.

He starts kissing each whore. The crowd is mesmerized. Bytes moves in behind the Man with the Whores.

BYTES

(to Man)

Perhaps the ladies would like
a closer look?

The Man begins to laugh. The Whores laugh drunkenly and halfheartedly resist being taken in to see The Elephant Man. As they are pushed through the door,

WHORES

Come on Jack... No... No, don't.
(laughter)

Etc.

The Whores reluctantly enter the room. The Night Porter laughs at their discomfort. The Man notices all of Merrick's pictures of women.

MAN

'Cor, he's a real ladies' man, come
on... give the ladies' man a kiss.

He lets one of the whores go and grabs the other one from behind at the wrists.

MAN

Come on, you'll give him a kiss.

WHORE

(still laughing but a trifle scared)
Come on, Jack.

The Night Porter has turned Merrick and is holding him for the approaching kiss. The crowd is egging them on. The man forces the Woman closer and closer and raises her arms to force her into an embrace. As Merrick and the Woman touch, being pressed together, the Woman begins to scream. The Night Porter, the Man and the crowd all laugh with glee. Merrick and the whore now have their faces pressed together. The Whore is screaming and Merrick is crying out and screaming too.

MAN

Here that's enough romance.
Now into bed.

Merrick and the Whore are pushed onto Merrick's bed. The Night Porter grabs the other Whore now. She begins screaming wildly.

NIGHT PORTER

A prince needs a harem!

He pushes the screaming Whore down onto Merrick. Her screaming face goes right into his. Merrick tries to move away and as he does his head goes too far back and his cried turn to horrible wheezing.

NIGHT PORTER

Mind his head... You'll kill him.

The crowd outside is trying to see in the window. Five or six more have gone into Merrick's room to see. All are laughing and screaming and trying to get a close look at The Elephant Man.

NIGHT PORTER

(yelling)

Quiet down. Quiet down. You'll
have the whole place down on us.

BYTES

(outside, yelling loudly)

Bring him. out then, so's we all
can see him.

Merrick recognizes his voice and looks frantically around for his former owner. The Night Porter pulls Merrick up by the window again. He then begins pushing the crowd out the door.

NIGHT PORTER

Everyone outside!!!

Suddenly one of the crowd outside reaches up and grabs Merrick's good hand and pulls him half out the window. Others follow suit and haul him all the way through. The cathedral falls to the floor, breaking into several pieces.

Because of the horror of touching him, the crowd outside lets Merrick fall to the ground.

The Night Porter whirls around and sees that Merrick is gone. He pushes the rest of the people outside and quickly goes to Merrick, lifting him to his feet.

Unseen by anyone, Bytes slips into Merrick's room. Merrick is now standing. The crowd moves in. The Night Porter is enjoying the festivities, but looks around nervously for trouble.

ONE MAN

Give 'im a drink.

The Man grabs Merrick and pours some gin into his mouth, then pushes him away. He's caught by another man, fed liquor and pushed away. He's pushed now from person to person faster and faster. Finally Merrick falls to the ground, dizzy and a bottle of gin on Merrick's head. He coughs and moans through the wheezing. The crowd is now strangely silent circling The Elephant Man like a pack of dogs closing in on a terrified rabbit. Suddenly Merrick starts to wail. The crowd joins in and they hoist him above their heads, screaming with laughter, around and around, joining him all the while.

Now we see a window reflecting the scene of terror. A curtain is pulled aside and we see through the reflection the face of the Young Porter, watching everything.

NIGHT PORTER (V.O. the reflection)

Here now... Here now... He's had
enough... show's over!

Merrick is lowered down into the crowd. it parts and the NightPorter emerges walking Merrick toward us to his room.

NIGHT PORTER

(to the crowd behind him)

Meet you at the Peacock.

ONE OF THE CROWD

Bring your friend.

NIGHT PORTER

(laughs drunkenly)

He's had 'is fill for one night.

The crowd moves through the iron gate of Bedstead Sauare. In the background we see Bytes' boy sitting on top of a wagon. The Night Porter takes Merrick into his room and puts him on the bed. He drunkenly stumbles about trying to out the room in order. He places the smashed hulk of the cathedral back up on its table, inadvertently leaving the spire and a few columns on the floor. He picks the cloak up and replaces it on the peg.

NIGHT PORTER

(to Merrick)

I did real well tonight.

He takes a purse full of coins out of his pocket. He removes one small coin and flips it on the floor in front of Merrick.

NIGHT PORTER

Here... buy yourself a sweet.

The Night Porter turns and leaves.

Merrick, alone now, hears the Night Porter's echoing footsteps and the distant sound of the gate being closed. There is a long silence as Merrick collects himself. He then leans back into his pillows with a deep sigh. His eyes close.

BYTES (V.O.)

My treasure...

Merrick's eyes flash open. We see Bytes coming toward him.

BYTES

Aren't you glad to see me?

MERRICK

Bytes!

Bytes lifts Merrick up off the bed. He reaches out for Merrick's cloak. We slowly PAN over all the smiling women's faces as we hear the following:

BYTES (V.O.)

Get into your cloak...

(rustling sound)

... now, your hood... do it!

MERRICK (V.O.)

... Alright.

Rustling sound. We now glide slowly on to Merrick's Mother's picture.

BYTES (V.O.)

Let's go.

Merrick's good hand comes into the frame trying to reach his mother's picture. He grabs at the table cloth and pulls.

Now we see Bytes gripping Merrick's arm and pulling. We see the picture fall to the ground with a THUD.

CUT TO:

In the sky the heavy clouds are moving.

CUT:

MERRICK'S ROOM (MORNING)

Morning sunlight on the floor of Merrick's room. We move slowly around, discovering the church spire, the columns, the penny and Merrick's mother's picture.

Over this, the sound of knocking on the door. Through the door, we hear Treves calling, "John?... John?" More knocking. The door opens.

TREVES

John?

Treves surveys the empty room. Quickly he goes into the side bathroom. He comes out with a very worried face. He goes to the cathedral model and is horrified by its condition. He finds the spire and then Merrick's Mother's picture. He quickly leaves the room and walks down the hall. The Young Porter, waiting in the hall, approaches Treves and stops him.

YOUNG PORTER

Mr. Treves?

Now we see Mrs. Mothershead entering Merrick's room surveying the same scene. Her face hardens as she sees the picture of Merrick's Mother.

MOTHERSHEAD

Good God... John?

Now we see Treves filled with anger. He's got the information from the Young Porter and bolts down the hall at full speed.

Mothershead, still in Merrick's room, now become activated with determination to get to the bottom of all this herself. She leaves the room. In the distance is Treves marching off. Closer to her is the Young Porter, looking worried. She calls him to her.

CLOSE-UP of Treves angrily walking.

CUT TO:

Mothershead leaves the Young Porter, furiously marching off in the same direction as Treves.

OPERATING THEATRE

The Night Porter is adding fresh coal to the operating room stove. The old coals were still quite hot and now smoke begins to rise. The Night Porter takes up the bellows and begins to pump the coals into a blaze.

The door bangs open and Treves is there, standing stock still, in a cold murderous rage.

TREVES

WHERE IS HE?

The Night Porter, frightened by Treves' intensity, begins to sputter.

TREVES

WHERE IS MR. MERRICK?

NIGHT PORTER

I... I don't know what you mean,
Sir.

Treves stalks over to him.

TREVES

Don't like to me. I know all about
it. You were SEEN. Where did you
take him?

NIGHT PORTER

Take him? Now wait... I didn't take
him anywhere. We were just having
some fun. We didn't hurt him... just
having a laugh, that's all.

TREVES

HE'S GONE!

NIGHT PORTER

When I left him, he was in his bed,
safe and sound.

TREVES

YOU BASTARD! You tortured him. YOU
TORTURED HIM, you bastard. WHERE is
HE?

NIGHT PORTER

(enraged)

YOU'RE NOT LISTENING TO ME! I
ain't done nothing wrong. People
pay to see your monster, Mr. Treves.
I just take the money.

TREVES

YOU'RE THE MONSTER! YOU'RE THE FREAK!
GET OUT! YOU'RE FINISHED!

Treves takes the Night Porter by the arm and begins to drag him out. The Night Porter throws his hand off violently, whirls around, his back to the door, and seizes the poker from the stove.

NIGHT PORTER

Have a care, Mr. Treves. I ain't
afraid of you! You and your bleedin'
Elephant Man! I'm glad what I did!
And you can't do nothing! Only
Mothershead can sack me.

Treves, blind with fury, tears the poker from the Night Porter's hand, and is on the verge of using it. Unbeknownst to them, Mothershead has storm into the room, just in time to hear the last of the Night Porter's speech. Without a break, she strides over to him and with a lightning movement, boxes him soundly on the ears. The blow is staggering and makes quite a formidable sound. The Night Porter falls to the floor, barely conscious.

MOTHERSHEAD

Done.

OUTSIDE THE SHOP (DAY)

Treves is standing in the street looking at the now bare shop front. He walks to the window and tries to clean a small circle in the glass. He peers in. From inside, through the smeared dirty window, we see Treves' distorted face.

CARR (V.O. throughout)

I'd like to think I felt no less for John than you, Treves, but face the facts, the man has disappeared, very likely to the continent. There's no question of your going after him, you're desperately needed here by your patients. Remember Treves, you did everything in your power... everything in your power.

FADE TO BLACK:

INSIDE A WAGON

A moving circle of light in blackness.

As we move closer to the light, it becomes distinguishable as a peephole in the side of a wagon. Through the peephole we see a dark overcast sky. It is dusk. We move even closer to the hole. Just beside it we see the head of a horse with blinders on moving alongside. We move closer still to see its rider, a policeman. He notices the peephole and leans forward in the saddle, looking in.

From outside, we see the peephole and an eye gazing out. The eye is replaced by a plug.

The policeman starts back and pulls up on the reins. As he falls behind we see the portrait of the E.M., from the front of the shop in London, on the back of the wagon. The policeman looks at the poster. The wagon moves on out of frame and the policeman slows his horse to a stop.

The wagon is being driven by Bytes. The boy sits beside him. Another policeman rides abreast of him. They ride a few yards more and then the policeman stops by a sign at the fork of the road, reading "AALST 30 km". "Brussels 80 km." The policeman gestures for Bytes to move on. The wagon continues down the road.

CUT TO:

Bytes and the boy are riding along the road. Bytes turns in his seat and opens a hatch in the roof. He looks down in.

Inside the wagon, lit by the last dregs of the sunset, is Merrick, huddled in his sleeping posture. He feels the light and looks up weakly, wheezing, obviously very sick. A small bowl of potatoes sets untouched beside him.

BYTES

Still haven't eaten, eh?

MERRICK

Bytes... please!

BYTES

Eat, my treasure, I want you
healthy.

He snaps the hatch shut and turns forward muttering to himself.

BYTES

I'm beginning to feel your weight.

FIELD & ROAD (MORNING)

We see a field with a road in the distance, leading to it. It is misty, the sun barely peeking through the rolling clouds above. on the road, the wagon is plodding toward us. At the bottom of the frame a FEMALE PINHEAD in a dress comes into view. She is watching the wagon. A DWARF comes into view beside her. She points to the wagon and she and the Dwarf excitedly confer. They turn back to watch its progress and the Dwarf reaches up and takes the Pinhead's hand.

We move back slowly to reveal a ring of circus wagons in the field.

ANOTHER DWARF comes up to the two other Freaks and watches the wagon. We pull back further to see a small circus. There are little stalls, and cages containing two mangey lions, some screeching spider monkeys and some squawking parrots. The circus is abustle in the drab grey field.

CLOSE-UP of the Pinhead jumping up and down in her excitement. There is a clap of thunder.

DISSOLVE TO:

A rainstorm over the freak show. We pass along the row of freak wagons. These freaks truly deserve the name. They are quite different from the rather domestic ones we saw in the circus in England. These are not fakes. A rope cordons us off from them.

The audience, which we see all around us, is enjoying the freaks, but there is a sense of vulgarity in their gaiety. They seem hard, and cold and jaded.

We move by pinheads, a Hermaphrodite and a Legless Wonder. Some Siamese Twins are playing cat's cradle. Past them runs a Dwarf with a plumed hat playing a small flute. Trailing behind him on a string is a small wooden ark on wheels. A lionfaced man is combing the hair that covers his face. A Rubber Man pulls the skin of his neck up over his face. There is a fairly big crowd standing around a Tall Man, affectionately rubbing the Small Parasitic Twin, growing out of his chest. The Barker-Owners compete with each other and the occasional thunder.

Finally we hear the patter of Bytes, telling of the horrible fate of John Merrick's Mother on that African Isle so many years ago. A very big crowd is listening to him. They are looking at the poster at the back of the wagon, waiting impatiently to see the Elephant Man.

BYTES

... The result is plain to see.
Ladies and Gentlemen... THE
TERRIBLE ELEPHANT MAN!

He raps twice with Merrick's silver-tipped walking stick and pulls the poster up. Merrick is standing unsteadily in the wagon. He is quite sick. The audience gasps and shudders. A few shrieks are heard. The Elephant Man is always the Elephant Man.

BYTES

Turn around!

Merrick slowly turns around, the audience gasping at the sight of the horrible tumors. Bytes raps the walking stick twice.

BYTES

Dance!

Merrick begins a series of awkward movements, his pained version of a dance. Without his walking stick it is very difficult for him, but he strives to do it. Some of the crowd laughs at this, others shudder at the strange sight. Suddenly Merrick falters and comes to a stop, breathing irregularly. Seeing this, Bytes goes to him and bringing the stick behind Merrick, out of view of the audience, jabs him savagely in the back.

BYTES

Dance!

Merrick groans with pain and some of the people in the first row flinch back. Merrick begins to dance again as people throw coins onto the stage, which the boy gathers and puts into a cap.

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

THE BACK OF THE WAGON - DAY

The poster is rolled up, Merrick on the floor of the wagon wheezing horribly. Beside him on the floor is a bowl of what looks to be slop and potatoes.

Bytes is standing at the back of the wagon looking down at Merrick. He picks up the bowl and jabs it at Merrick.

BYTES

Eat, my treasure.

Merrick looks wearily at the bowl but makes no move to accept it.

BYTES

(angry)

Eat. I said eat!

Merrick closes his eyes. This really enrages Bytes.

BYTES

Eat, damn you. EAT! EAT!

He jabs the bowl at Merrick, almost as if he'd shove it down his throat.

BYTES

I said EAT!!

At this last word he throws the contents of the bowl splattering in Merrick's face. He stands for a moment looking down at Merrick who has lapsed into a coughing fit.

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

SIDE OF THE WAGON - DAY

There is a small crowd gathered in a circle on the grass. Merrick stands amidst them on a small wooden stool, Bytes jabbing him from behind again. Merrick is making a strance moaning cry, slightly renaniscent of the trumpet of an elephant. The boy is passing amongst the people with a cap, collecting coins. Merrick lifts his face to the sky, the sound of his own misery mingling with his elephant call.

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

SMALL CIRCUS - NIGHT

We see the poster of the Elephant Man. Bytes stands before it saying the last of the patter.

BYTES

The result is plain to see. Ladies
and gentlemen... THE TERRIBLE
ELEPHANT MAN.

He raps twice with the walking stick and pulls the poster up.

Merrick is now extremely sick. He almost looks as if he is unable to stand. The audience, as always, is quite alarmed. Bytes smiles and comes forward.

BYTES

Turn around!

Merrick looks incapable of even this simple movement, but he slowly manages to turn. The crowd reacts to the horrible condition of Merrick's back and head. Bytes satisfied that the Elephant Man is having the proper effect, raps the walking stick again.

BYTES

Dance!

Merrick's eyes look painfully up to the heavens and he begins to shuffle clumsily about the platform. Without his stick this is very difficult for him, causing him great pain. It is a humiliating spectacle and the crowd unimpressed by the halting movements of the monster begins to heckle him. Bytes seeing that the dancing isn't being received well moves to place a stool next to Merrick.

BYTES

(rapping)

Up! Up!

Merrick, already exhausted by his little dance, wheezes and coughs, attempting to ascend the stool. It is useless, he is just too tired. Again the audience shouts its disavoroval, booing and hissing the Elephant Man. Bytes curses and

raps again, demanding obedience from Merrick who again bravely tries to mount the stool. He cannot do it!

Bytes, striving to save the moment and please the angry crowd, goes to Merrick and roughly helps him up. Merrick teeters precariously on the stool. Bytes raps the stick.

BYTES

Give the call of the elephant!

Merrick hesitates and Bytes bangs the stick on the wagon. The audience quiets down to hear the elephant call. Merrick senses this lull, but he is very frightened and sick. He lifts his head wearily and makes a few wavering cries that sound very little like an elephant.

BYTES

Louder!

Merrick tries again but there is no improvement. The crowd begins to jeer at Merrick, exhorting him to make the call of the elephant. Merrick is now almost swaying on the stool. He attempts to step down, but as he does it finally becomes too much for him and he collapses into a heap on the wagon floor. The crowd is no longer in the least bit challenged by this piteous mess and they break out into a vocal fury, throwing objects at the wagon.

Bytes is humiliated at first, and then is quickly angry. He turns to Merrick.

BYTES

Get up you miserable bastard!

But Merrick just lays there moaning and wheezing irregularly.

BYTES

I SAID, GET UP!

He jabs Merrick a few times with the silver-tipped walking-stick. The crowd jeers even louder still. There is a clap of thunder.

BYTES

(realizing it's no use)

I'm beatin' a dead horse.

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

SMALL CIRCLE OF WAGONS (NIGHT)

Bytes is seated by a campfire drinking from a bottle of wine. He is very drunk. From the wagon behind him we can hear Merrick coughing and wheezing. We also hear the boy, almost pleading with Merrick to stop coughing and to try to eat. As Bytes listens he gets angrier and angrier. Finally he rises clumsily to his feet and stumbles over to the back of the wagon.

BYTES

Another bleedin' heart!

The boy is crouched over Merrick, who looks little better than a corpse. Bytes points a menacing finger at Merrick.

BYTES

You sly bastard. You're doing this to spite me, aren't you!

BOY

Aw, Bytes, he's sick.

BYTES

He's doing it to spite me, I tell you, and it's got to stop!

BOY

He's sick, Bytes. He's going to die.

BYTES

(enraged)

If he does it's his own fault!
But I'm not burying that swollen bag of flesh.

He reaches in and grabs Merrick roughly by his arm, dragging him out of the wagon.

BOY

What are you going to do?

BYTES

I'll show you! I'll show you!

He drags Merrick across the way to a small monkey wagon. The boy follows, his face filled with sympathy for Merrick. Bytes opens the cage door and stuffs Merrick in as the monkeys scream.

BOY

Don't!

BYTES

Shut up!

He slams the door and latches it. Then he quickly turns, still in his rage, and starts for the wagon. As he passes the boy, the boy tries to stop him.

BOY

Bytes, please...

Bytes knocks the boy down with the back of his hand. He stalks to his wagon and climbs inside. After some muffled sound, Merrick's food bowl comes flying out. There are more muffled sounds as Merrick's stick, cloak and hood are also thrown out one by one.

BYTES

Out!

The boy looks to Merrick who is in a panic trying to keep himself away from the monkeys who scream loudly in all the excitement. We hear Bytes, cursing to himself, in the wagon. The boy, frightened, goes to the fire and pulls a blanket around him.

Merrick crawls to one corner of the cage away from the screaming monkeys. Suddenly one of the braver ones leaps at Merrick with a scream, biting him on the arm, and moving quickly away. Merrick yelps with pain and struggles to

move away. The other monkeys have gotten the idea now and they begin to move warily toward Merrick, screeching threateningly. Another leaps out and clings to Merrick's shoulder, biting and scratching furiously then he too jumps away. Merrick cries out.

Now the monkeys are getting braver and more and more of them lash out at Merrick with their paws. They jump onto him with savage screams, biting him on the head and neck and shoulders. Merrick's eyes search for escape. The monkeys come on and on without a break, screaming madly all the while.

With his good hand Merrick begins to pull himself up with the aid of a bar. The monkeys strive to pull him down. Merrick looks through the bars at the wagon and screams frantically.

MERRICK

Bytes! Bytes, please!!

But Bytes won't come. Something is happening inside Merrick. A wave of feeling is growing, coming from a place in him very deep down and far away. This feeling seems to give him strength and he is able to pull himself all the way up in spite of the hairy moving mass that now seems to cling to every part of his body.

The feeling is surging up inside Merrick making his body shake uncontrollably as if he were a volcano about to erupt. The monkeys keep on biting and screeching, pulling at him. Suddenly a formidable cry rings out of Merrick's mouth, with a power and assurance we have never heard from him before. He whirls about and cries out again a shattering "No", the force of which scatters most of the monkeys away from him onto the cage floor, dumbfounded. Merrick grabs a monkey who has managed to hang and throws it into the group of monkeys on the floor.

MERRICK

NO! I AM NOT AN ELEPHANT! I AM
NOT AN ANIMAL!! I AM A HUMAN BEING!
I... AM... A MAN! I AM A MAN!!

The monkeys have been shocked into silence, pushed into the other end of the cage. Merrick, perhaps as surprised as the monkeys, rests against the bars of the cage. The monkeys make no move toward him. They sit across the cage from Merrick silently watching him with fear.

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

THE SILENT FACES OF THE MONKEYS

We now see Merrick crouched in a corner of the cage in his sleeping position. We see the monkeys again, and hear whispering in the still night. CU of merrick's head resting on his knees. The whispering continues and a shadow falls across Merrick. Merrick begins to stir, his head comes up, and he looks around. The whispering stops.

We pull back to see some of the freaks from the circus gathered around the monkey cage in a small group. They are: 2 pinheads (male and female), the dwarf we saw earlier with the plumed hat and the ark on a string, another male dwarf, a female midget, a lion-faced man, and an armless wonder. The female pinhead reaches into the cage and pats Merrick's head.

PLUMED DWARF
You alright?

MERRICK
y-y-yes -

PLUMED DWARF
Want to come out?

MERRICK
You're English.

PLUMED DWARF
Of course! You want out?

MERRICK
Yes.

PLUMED DWARF
Won't be a moment.

He looks to the lion-faced man and speaks to him in a foreign tongue. The lion-faced man unlatches the cage door. Then, after further instruction, from the plumed dwarf, the freaks gently help Merrick out of the cage, closing the door behind him, The dwarf speaks to the others again and the lion-faced man and the armless wonder move to each side of Merrick. The lion-faced man pulls Merrick's right arm over his shoulder. Merrick puts his left arm around the armless wonder.

PLUMED DWARF
We've decided... You've got to get
away from here..

He and the other dwarf light two lanterns and they begin to move off.

The boy by the wagon has awakened. He sees the small caravan of freaks moving in the darkness, the light from the lanterns bobbing over the grass. His first instinct is to call for Bytes, which he almost does, but then he thinks better of it. He rises and goes to where Bytes threw Merrick's stick and disguise. He nicks them up and goes to the small band of strangely shaped beings. They stop and watch him warily.

BOY
(handing over the things)
Here... you'll need these.

Merrick looks the boy in the eye, and the boy holds his gaze.

PLUMED DWARF
Good of you, mate.

BOY
(to Merrick)
Good luck.

MERRICK
But...but...

BOY
I'll be alright.

The small band moves away through the wagons. The boy watches the lantern light reseeding in the darkness. He turns and looks to the wagon, the poster of the Elephant Man, and the dying fire. He moves to the fire quickly collecting a few blankets and belongings. Then taking one last look at the garrish poster just visible in the night, he runs off into the darkness.

CUT TO :

WOODS - NIGHT

We see the beams of the lanterns moving through the trees like will-o-the-wisps. They help Merrick along, the plumed Dwarf directing them from time to time. As they move along we see them pass a small still pond. In the moonlight we can see them reflected in the water: Merrick supported by the freak band, the small ark on a string, pulled along behind the plumed Dwarf.

CUT TO:

A DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

The intrepid freaks approach a bend in the road. They go around the corner and before them stands a small train station, a train sitting amongst the steam by a platform. The freaks stop just outside the light of the station and the plumed Dwarf's instruction get Merrick into his disguise. The female pinhead, who has carried his stick, hands it to Merrick, squeezing his hand.

MERRICK

Thank you, my friends.

The plumed Dwarf relays the message and the freaks respond to Merrick in their language.

PLUMED DWARF

I'll go in with you, you'll
need a ticket.

He turns and confers with the freaks who all rifle through their pockets and produce some coins. Then he and Merrick walk into the station, the freaks watching and waving.

ON THE PLATFORM

The train is about to leave. At a barrier two ticket collectors are taking tickets of a few last-minute passengers, who hurry off.

The Plumed Dwarf and Merrick appear and walk to the barrier. The Plumed Dwarf hands over the ticket.

PLUMED DWARF

I'm just going to help my friend
on board.

They walk off down the platform. The collectors stare after them.

The Plumed Dwarf, his arm around Merrick, is helping him down the platform, as fast as possible, his ark trailing behind him. As they pass the windows of the first-class carriages, we see the ornate interiors and the happy, handsome people on their plush seats.

The Plumed Dwarf finds an empty compartment and opens the door.

PLUMED DWARF

This'll do.

He looks down the platform. The Ticket Collectors are watching them with great interest.

Merrick climbs laboriously aboard.

The other people on board see Merrick, react, and move away from him as far as they can in the cramped, 3rd class carriage.

The Plumed Dwarf notices this and sniffs at the people with contempt.

PLUMED DWARF

I'm sorry I could only get you
a third class ticket, but it's
all we had.

MERRICK

Oh no, my friend ...

PLUMED DWARF

Say hello to London for me. I
miss her.

MERRICK

Oh, yes.

PLUMED DWARF

You know, I saw you once there,
in London. You're a great attraction.

He grins. The whistle blows and the train slowly begins to move off. The Plumed Dwarf still holding the door open, walks along with it.

PLUMED DWARF

Luck, my friend, luck. Who needs
it more than we?

Merrick nods "yes", and holds out his hand. The train is moving a little faster. The Plumed Dwarf grabs his hand and they shake.

He shuts the door. As the carriage passes, Merrick's mask is pressed up against the window. The Plumed Dwarf waves to him as the train moves away.

He looks at the train for a moment, then walks back down the platform.

THIRD CLASS CARRIAGE - INTERIOR

Merrick is in the corner, facing into the carriage. He looks slowly around. The other passengers have moved away, forming almost a moat of space around him. We see the whole carriage now; the cowering people and Merrick at the far end. Seeing their silent, horrified stares, he moves to the opposite seat, facing the back wall. Merrick looks around for a moment, then sees his reflection in the window. He stares at himself.

THIRD CLASS CARRIAGE

The carriage is dark now, and empty except for Merrick. He looks out the window at a sign above a station platform that says "Oostend", and at the few people still walking about.

OOSTENDE STATION PLATFORM (NIGHT)

We see the side of the carriage. Merrick, inside the darkened car, is not visible. A CONDUCTOR walks to the end of the carriage and turns a valve. He opens the door to Merrick's compartment.

CONDUCTOR

I'm sorry, you'll have to leave now.

Merrick is motionless, reluctant to leave the security of the darkness.

CONDUCTOR

This is the end of the line, you'll have to leave now.

Merrick pulls his walking stick from the darkness and plants it firmly on the floor with a loud THUD. The Conductor, expecting violence, draws back. A few people on the platform, who have stopped to watch this exchange, gasp.

Merrick rises with the help of his stick, and slowly descends from the carriage watched very carefully by the others. He looks around for a moment, then walks off down the platform. TWO YOUNG TOUGHS follow a little distance behind him, laughing and mimicking his uneven gait.

OOSTENDE QUAY (NIGHT)

We see a short line of people waiting to board a cross-channel steamer. The First-Mate is standing by the gangplank, smiling at the women passengers and making the most of his handsome face and crisp white uniform. He surveys the line, stops and smiles even more broadly. A very pretty Young Woman at the end of the line is smiling back.

We see the end of the quay disappearing into darkness towards the station. The rhythmic sound of Merrick's stick is heard as he slowly moves into the light.

The Woman, still smiling at the First-Mate, demurely lowers her eyes. Merrick appears behind her, breathing heavily from the long walk. The woman's face freezes. She turns her head, ever so slightly, and sees Merrick. Her face drops.

The First-Mate sees the Woman change, then sees Merrick. He walks out of frame. Merrick is still trying to catch his breath as the First-Mate walks up. The Woman looks up at the First-Mate imploringly.

FIRST-MATE

May I see your ticket?

Merrick, confused at first, produces his ticket from his cloak. The First-Mate examines it and hands it back.

FIRST-MATE

I'm sorry, there's no room for you on this ship, you'll have to wait for the next one, in the morning.

Merrick remains motionless.

FIRST-MATE

You heard me. There's no room.
Now be off with you.

He points down the quay. Merrick turns and walks away. The Woman smiles gratefully at the First-Mate, who tips his hat.

A WAREHOUSE PIER

TWO DRUNKS are sitting against the wall, drinking and singing. One of them gets up and walks out of frame.

Merrick peeks around a corner at the Drunk. They stare at each other for a long moment. Merrick disappears. The other Drunk comes back, sits down, and they both start singing again.

Merrick is in darkness, seated around the corner, tapping his left hand against his leg, keeping in time with the drunken music.

OOSTENDE QUAY (MORNING)

We see Merrick behind some crates, watching the ship. On the wharf a different First-Mate waits until the last of the morning passengers board the ship. He then nods to the Ticket Taker and ascends the gangplank, nodding to a crew man. On board, everyone prepares to get underway.

Merrick pitches forward from behind the crates, half running, half stumbling toward the Ticket Taker. The Ticket Taker, about to board the ship, drops the tickets on the ground and stoops to pick them up. As he collects the scattered tickets a hand comes into frame holding a ticket out to him. He reaches for it, and calls over his shoulder to the crewman at the plank.

TICKET TAKER

Wait! One more!

He turns back and finally takes a look at the late arrival.

TICKET TAKER

You'll have to hurr ...

His mouth drops. Merrick hurries past him. The crewman now also sees the passenger as he begins his clumsy ascent of the gangplank. The shrill ship's whistle blows.

ON BOARD

Merrick is crouched in a dark corner underneath a stairway, his head resting on the points of both knees, his arms clasped around them. He is asleep. A few drops of rain fall and hit his cap, then a few more and finally it begins to rain. He wakes up and looks around. He hears a voice.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

Look! It's Dover!

Through the stairs we see a young couple in the rain at the railing, arm in arm. The Young Woman points. The Young Man turns to her and smiles.

YOUNG MAN

Finally! Dover!

They laugh and hug each other and run inside out of the rain. Merrick's hand comes into the shot, grasping a stair and pulling himself up slowly. He rounds the stairs and walks onto the deck looking after the young couple.

Merrick walks to the railing and leans over it, oblivious of the rain. We see the cliffs of Dover.

DOCKSIDE - DOVER

The ship's gangplank leading down to a sea of umbrellas. Passengers one by one come down the plank and are swallowed by the crowd. On the dock amidst the umbrellas, we see Merrick. He looks around, then moves off into the crowd. The crowd moves past a sign saying, "To The Trains".

LONDON TRAIN - INTERIOR

Through a rain-streaked window we see rolling green countryside. We pull back to see an Elderly Man in a heavy black overcoat with a wide-brimmed rain hat eating an apple. Beside him his wife knits.

A few other people similarly clothed are sleeping. We PAN across them to see Merrick at the back of the car watching the Elderly Man eat.

LONDON TRAIN - EXTERIOR

The last car speeds down the track and disappears.

LIVERPOOL STREET STATION

Grey light filters through the windows in the high canopy ceiling over the trains in the station. The platforms below fill with people as trains arrive and depart. We now see the station with its newsstands, sweetstalls, shoeshiners, and passengers moving to and fro, carrying luggage and looking for their train.

A YOUNG BOY is seated on a pile of baggage looking very adult and bored. His MOTHER stands beside him, though we see only a portion of her billowy skirt. We hear her voice in rapid conversation with another Woman. The Young Boy scans the crowd looking for excitement. He sees something.

The Elderly Man we saw on the train and his wife are moving past the barrier. The Young Boy slowly pulls a peashooter from a pocket, puts a pea in his mouth, and raises the pipe to his lips. His Mother's hand shoots out and grabs it.

MOTHER'S VOICE

Little beast! I thought mummy
told you not to bring that horrid
thing. Can't you behave?

She continues her conversation. The Boy looks sour. Merrick is moving past the barrier. He stops to look around and plan his next move. The Boy sees him. ie tugs on his Mother's skirt.

BOY

Mummy! Mummy! Look at that man!
His head, it's huge! Mummy, why
is his head so big? Mummy? Mummy

MOTHER

Do be quiet Little Jim. Can't you see Mummy is speaking?

Merrick still looking around, suddenly turns in Little Jim's direction. He sees the Boy tugging at his Mother's skirt and pointing at him. He turns and walks in the opposite direction along a wall stacked with trunks and luggage, trying as best as he can to blend in. Little Jim gets up and moves after him.

Merrick continues along the wall. A few people give him a second look, but pass on. Little Jim comes up alongside him.

LITTLE JIM

Hey Mister, why is your head so big?

Merrick turns and looks at Little Jim. He looks quickly around. We see, across the station, an open archway leading out into a street. Merrick moves away from Little Jim out of frame. Little Jim watches him go.

LITTLE JIM

Mister!

Two other BOYS join Little Jim. The three of them watch the escaping Merrick, then move off after him. Merrick is frantically trying to make it to the archway. The three boys appear behind him and call out.

BOYS

Mister! Mister!

LITTLE JIM

Why don't you answer me?

One of the boys reaches down and snatches the hem of Merrick's cloak. He lifts it, trying to catch a glimpse of the mysterious stranger. Merrick pulls away and tries to go faster. Relishing the hunt, the boys follow him, taunting him all the way. As they approach the arch, Little Jim, determined now, steps in front of him cutting him off.

Merrick comes to an abrupt standstill, shrinking from the boy. Little Jim reaches up to the hood and grasps it firmly.

LITTLE JIM

Now I'll see you ...

He lifts the hood and then staggers back onto the floor in a spasm of fear. He lets out a shrill scream. Merrick turns wildly away, looking for another escape. Little Jim's Mother, hearing her son's cries, looks up immediately. She sees Merrick and the howling boy in the middle of the station.

MOTHER

My son! My son! Help!

Merrick, hearing this, looks in her direction and whirls away. He stumbles toward another archway exit. People, hearing the noise, watch him go. He knocks down a little girl in his flight and she, too, starts screaming. Through the archway comes a bobby. Jim's Mother, now with her son, calls to him.

MOTHER

Stop that man! Stop that man!

Merrick stops at the sight of the bobby. The bobby at the arch, now aware of the commotion, sees Merrick and walks quickly towards him.

Merrick changes course, but, a group of men, alerted by Jim's mother's screams, move forward together, cutting him off. They yell at him angrily. One of them darts toward him and grabs ahold of Merrick's hood. Merrick turns frantically away and as he does, the hood is pulled off him. The crowd shouts at him as he goes, following him in wary pursuit. He moves back past the children and Jim's Mother. They all scream and shield themselves from his approach. Another group of people move toward him blocking all escape. Behind him, he sees a door to a urinal. He moves through it followed by the crowd. We hear fearsome echoes inside.

Inside the urinal, the crowd presses Merrick toward a wall. They have become angry now. They shout and there is fear in their voices. They hem Merrick in. He looks around hoping for an opening. There is none.

He gives a strangled cry and collapses as the bobby pushes his way through the crowd.

Merrick puts his good hand over his good ear trying to block out the screams of the crowd.

MERRICK

(quietly to himself)

I am not an animal... I'm not...

I'm not,.. I am a man.

EXAMINING ROOM - LONDON HOSPITAL

A small room off the Receiving Room. In the center of the room is a low sofa covered with deeply stained, shiny black leather. On it lies a man, groaning softly. Treves is helping a Dresser bandage the man's leg.

Mrs. Mothershead appears at the doorway.

MOTHERSHEAD

There's a policeman to see you,
Sir.

The bobby from the Liverpool Street Station enters.

BOBBY

Are you Frederick Treves, sir?

TREVES

Yes.. .

The card changes hands.

THE URINAL

Treves enters and pushes through the crowd. He sees Merrick in a heap on the floor. The SERGEANT gets up to meet him in the middle of the room, but Treves keeps walking toward Merrick.

SERGEANT

You know this man, sir?

TREVES

Yes, he's... my friend.

Treves goes to Merrick who, just coming to, reaches out to him with his good hand. Treves pulls him up, his eyes brimming with tears. Merrick, too, is weeping. Treves embraces him.

MERRICK

Mr. Treves! Treves.

TREVES

John.... how can you ever forgive me?

HALLWAY

Treves, Carr Gomm and Mrs. Kendal are walking down a hallway engaged in conversation.

KENDAL

It's all arranged. I'll send over some evening gowns for the sisters that you select to accompany Mr. Merrick. You'll be using the Royal entrance and Princess Alexandra herself will be there to welcome him to her private box.

TREVES

I'm very grateful to you, Mrs. Kendal. This is just the thing to help him forget his ordeal. John will be very excited.

KENDAL

Well it is a miracle he ever got back. And, I'm sure, Mr. Treves, under your expert care, he'll have many happy years ahead.

TREVES

I fear not, Mrs. Kendal. Even in the short time he was gone the size of his head has increased rapidly ... as is his pain.

KENDAL

How awful for John.

TREVES

And yet, not once have any of us heard him complain.

KENDAL

Is he... dying then?

TREVES

Yes. There is nothing more frustrating, nothing that makes a physician feel more useless, than standing by watching his patient deteriorate. And when that patient is a friend, no... no, there's absolutely nothing I can do.

KENDAL

Well, it's all quite... I've never heard... It's quite...

TREVES

(understandingly)

Yes.

MERRICK'S ROOM - MORNING

Merrick stands before the row of smiling ladies on his wall. He surveys them lovingly for a long moment. He is holding in his hand a bundle of evening clothes, the handsome black bow tie lying on the new silk shirt.

MERRICK

You women are such strange and wonderful creatures... Alas, it seems to be my fate to fall in love with each and everyone of you. I especially wish you could all be with me tonight... I'm finally going to the theatre.

He stands for a moment, reluctant to leave their company. He goes to his bed placing the clothes upon it, and then to the cathedral, He compares it with St. Phillips outside. He picks up the main spire and gazes at it, but his mind is somewhere else.

MERRICK

... The theatre...

CUT TO:

THEATRE ROYAL - DRURY LANE

We see the whole theatre. It is very ornate. The orchestra is tuning up and the house is filled with elegant, well dressed, handsome people all happily chatting and calling to one another. We see young men and women flirting boldly and generally enjoying each other's company. In the Royal Box Mothershead and Nora in evening gowns sit up front relishing the spectacle. In the back of the box John sits between Treves and the Princess. He is dressed in his evening clothes, his cloak tied over his shoulders like a cape, but he does not wear his hood.

The Princess is explaining to Merrick the workings of a pair of opera glasses. He takes them and delightedly spies about the theatre.

John is breathless as the house lights dim and the curtain rises. Enter chorus.

CHORUS

O for a Muse of fire, that would
ascend
The brightest heaven of invention,
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!
Then should the warlike Harry, like
himself,
Assume the port of Mars; and at his
heels,
Leash'd in like hounds, should
famine, sword and fire
Crouch for employment. But
pardon, gentles all,
The flat unraised spirits that
have dar'd
On this unworthy scaffold to
bring forth
So great an object: can this
cockpit hold
The vasty fields of Rance? or may
we cram
Within this wooden O the
very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! since a crooked figure
may
Attest in little place a million;
And let us, ciphers to this great
account,
On your imaginary forces work.

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

Treves smiling at John. He exchanges knowing smiles with the Princess. John watches with the unconstrained delight of a child; but his rapture is even more intense and solemn. His attitude is one of wonder and awe, and he often leans forward, panting in his excitement. To John the characters are not actors in make-up and costume, but real people.

CUT TO:

Mrs. Kendal and an actor dressed as royalty doing the last scene of Henry the Fifth.

K. HEN

Fair Katharine, and most fair,
will you vouchsafe to teach a
soldier terms
Such as will enter at a lady's ear
And plead his love-suit to her
gentle heart?

KATH

Your majesty shall mock at me; I
cannot speak your England.

K. HEN

O fair Katharine, if you will love
me soundly with your French heart,
I will be glad to hear you confess
it brokenly with your English
tongue. Do you like me, Kate?

KATH

Pardonnez-moi, I cannot tell what
is "like me".

K. HEN

An angel is like you, Kate, and
you are like an angel.

KATH

O bon Dieu! les langues des
hommes sont pleines de traheries.

K. HEN

What say you, fair one? that the
tongues of men are full of deceits?

KATH

Oui, that tongues of men are
full of deceits.

K. HEN

I know no way to mince it in love,
but directly to say "I love you".
What! A speaker is but a prater;
a rhyme is but a ballad. A good
leg will fall; a straight back
will stoop; a black beard will turn
white; a curl'd pate will grow bald;
a fair face will wither; a full eye
will wax hollow; but a good heart,
Kate, is the sun and the moon, or
rather the sun and not the moon;
for it shines bright and never
changes, but keeps his course truly.

During the above, Merrick mouths the King's lines.

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

The Royal Box, the Princess and the two friends enjoying the
show.

CUT TO

THE STAGE

The chorus steps out to give the epiologue.

CHORUS

Thus far, with rough and all-
unable pen,
Our bending author hath pursued
the story,
In little room confining mighty
men,
Mangling by starts the full course
of their glory.
Small time, but in that small
most greatly liv'd
This star of England: Fortune
made his sword;
By which the world's best garden
he achiev'd.

During the above, the CAMERA moves in on John.

Amidst great applause the curtain rings down. Through the curtain comes Mrs. Kendal to renewed applause. She motions the audience to quiet down.

MRS. KENDAL

Thank you for your warm greeting.
Ladies and gentlemen, tonight's
performance was very special to me,
because it was very special to someone
else, a man who knows the theatre
and loves the theatre, and yet tonight
is the first time he's ever actually
been here. I would like to dedicate
... the whole company wishes to dedicate,
from their hearts, tonight's
performance to Mr. John Merrick, my
dear friend.

She gestures toward the Royal Box. There is modest applause as the audience rises and turns toward it. Merrick cannot be seen in the shadows, and the crowd cranes their necks trying to get a glimpse of him. We hear whispers of "Oh look! It's the Elephant Man! The Elephant Man!" run through the audience. Treves turns to John.

TREVES

Stand up, John. Let them see
you.

MERRICK

Oh no, I couldn't.

TREVES

It's for you, John. It's all
for you. Go ahead, let them
see you.

Merrick rises and comes forward to thunderous applause. The audience begins to rise and they clap their hands even louder.

Merrick is overcome by the applause. Tears run down his cheeks. Treves, Nora, Mothershead and the Princess, filled with pride, beam at John.

MERRICK
(quietly, to Treves)
I feel as if I've travelled my
whole life just to stand here.

CUT TO:

MERRICK'S ROOM

Merrick, in a night-shirt, is seated at his table working on his cathedral.
Treves is nearby.

MERRICK
Wasn't Mrs. Kendal wonderful? I
can't blame the King for wanting
to marry her.

Merrick closes his eyes and his head tilts forward slightly. It seems
unbearably large: too large for him to support.

TREVES
Will the cathedral be finished soon,
John?

MERRICK
Yes, very soon.

TREVES
Splendid. it's truly a masterpiece.
Well, I suppose I'll be
on my way now. I hoped you
enjoyed yourself this evening.

MERRICK
Oh yes! It was wonderful!

TREVES
I'm glad, John. Goodnight.

He turns and starts out the door.

MERRICK
Mr. Treves?

Treves comes back to Merrick.

TREVES
Yes John?

MERRICK
Mr. Treves, tell me... tell me
truly. Is it alright, did I make
any mistakes that you can see?

TREVES
(looking at the cathedral)
No, John, not one that I can see.

MERRICK
Then I shouldn't change anything?

TREVES

No, no, I wouldn't change a thing.

The two look at each other silently.

MERRICK

... I'll walk you to the door.

Merrick rises and goes with Treves to the door.

TREVES

Goodnight John. Sleep well.

MERRICK

You too, my friend. Goodnight.

Treves smiles at John then walks down the darkened hallway. Merrick watches him for a moment, then slowly shuts the door. We hear the distant echo of Treves footsteps. Merrick goes back to examine his cathedral, looking at it from different angles. He picks up a fine brush, dipping it into the paint, and makes a few final brush strokes.

He moves back into the middle of the room and gazes at it for a long time. He lowers the brush to his side.

MERRICK

It is finished.

The cathedral is a masterwork of detail and shading, as if it were St. Philips itself shrunk to a miniature. He goes to the table, dips the brush into the paint and carefully signs his name at the base of the main spire.

MERRICK

John... Merrick!

He sighs deeply, lays the brush down on the table and pushes the model towards the window. The movement causes him pain. He puts his left hand up and feels the back of his head. Merrick turns out the lamp and goes to his bed. He looks at the cathedral again, then around at his room. We see in the dim light his books, his gallery of smiling women, his dressing bag, his cloak and hood, and finally his mother's picture on the table. A slight breeze billows the curtains. We move in very close to them.

DISSOLVE TO:

High altitude... roiling clouds with lightning flashes and low thunder. The sky is in turmoil.

MERRICK (V.O.)

When will the stream be weary of
flowing under my eye?

Lightning flash... thunder roll. The clouds are mingling and scattering.

MERRICK (V.O.)

When will the wind be weary of
blowing over the sky?

The clouds erupt, pushed onward and onward... they slowly begin to calm as... they turn slowly into... elephants linked trunk to tail moving slowly away from us...

MERRICK (V.O.)

When will the clouds be weary
of fleeting?

The elephants are calmer than the skies we saw... they keep moving onward and onward ...

MERRICK (V.O.)

When will the heart be weary of
beating....

A lacy curtain has taken the place of the sky. The elephants seem to be moving on it... into the distance.

MERRICK (V.O.)

... and nature die?

Knock, knock sound. The curtain moves to one side wiping the elephants away with it. There is no terrified audience behind the curtain. There is only light and Merrick's Mother smiling a calm and benign smile.

JOHN'S MUM

Never, oh! Never, nothing will
die; the stream flows,
the wind blows, the cloud fleets, the
heart beats...

The light grows brighter and brighter until we cannot see John's Mother anymore. It almost blinds us.

JOHN'S MUM

Nothing will die.

WHITE OUT

CUT TO BLACK

THE END