

In an English age, an Englishman. A teacher and a doctor at the London. Two books published by my thirty-first year. A house. A wife who loves me, and my god, 100 guinea fees before I'm forty.

Consolation for what?

As of the year AD 1884, I, Freddie Treves, have excessive blessings. Or so it seems to me.

Blackout.

SCENE 2

ART IS AS NOTHING TO NATURE

Whitechapel Rd. A storefront. A large advertisement of a creature with an elephant's head. Ross, his manager.

Ross. Tuppence only, step in and see: This side of the grave, John Merrick has no hope nor expectation of relief. In every sense his situation is desperate. His physical agony is exceeded only by his mental anguish, a despised creature without consolation. Tuppence only, step in and see! To live with his physical hideousness, incapacitating deformities and unremitting pain is trial enough, but to be exposed to the cruelly lacerating expressions of horror and disgust by all who behold him—is even more difficult to bear. Tuppence only, step in and see! For in order to survive, Merrick forces himself to suffer these humiliations, I repeat, humiliations, in order to survive, thus he exposes himself to crowds who pay to gape and yawp at this freak of nature, the Elephant Man.

(Enter Treves who looks at advertisement.)

Ross. See Mother Nature uncorseted and in malignant rage! Tuppence.

TREVES. This sign's absurd. Half-elephant, half-man is not possible. Is he foreign?

Ross. Right, from Leicester. But nothing to fear.

TREVES. I'm at the London across the road. I would be curious to see him if there is some genuine disorder.

If he is a mass of papier-maché and paint however—

Ross. Then pay me nothing. Enter, sir. Merrick, stand up. Ya bloody donkey, up, up.

(They go in, then emerge. Treves pays.)

TREVES. I must examine him further at the hospital. Here is my card. I'm Treves. I will have a cab pick him up and return him. My card will gain him admittance.

Ross. Five bob he's yours for the day.

TREVES. I wish to examine him in the interests of science, you see.

Ross. Sir, I'm Ross. I look out for him, get him his living. Found him in Leicester workhouse. His own ma put him there age of three. Couldn't bear the sight, well you can see why. We—he and I—are in business. He is our capital, see. Go to a bank. Go anywhere. Want to borrow capital, you pay interest. Scientists even. He's good value though. You won't find another like him.

TREVES. Fair enough. *(He pays.)*

Ross. Right. Out here, Merrick. Ya bloody donkey, out!

Lights fade out.