

TREATMENT

The Falcon, The Surgeon & The Lady Bird

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The Deadly Fruit of Original Sin

INTRODUCTION

Owning a spiritual mind allows me at least one qualification to write this fantasy fiction narrative, regarding the suspects in the hunt for Jack The Ripper as told in this screenplay. The reason behind this is the savage murders of the women whose only crime was to solicit themselves in the harshest of times in Whitechapel, during the autumn of 1888. There are many theories and suggestions surrounding the Ripper's true identity, yet none have any real substance, simply because of the ring of steel that has protected his identity for over a century. What makes this screenplay unique in comparison with other narratives is the characterizations and visualisations; for it is a kaleidoscope of imaginary incidents and circumstances that offers a profound, yet realistic notion, since each murder has been thoroughly researched with an open mind; considering the facts of each individual case without prejudice, or discrimination. This screenplay is written as a Victorian fantasy, but most scenes depict spiritual accounts of how decisions may have been actually reached. I have assiduously researched high profile figures - sometimes in abject torment, just to find a molecule of evidence behind that lust for blood perpetrated upon those cobblestone streets back in 1888. There was then, and still are many Victorian tenement blocks, dwellings and establishments in existence, such as drinking dens; The Old Brewery. The White Hart. The Ten Bells. The Hoop and Grapes, and a warren of cobbled alleyways, brick buildings and streets in which the sobriquet known as Jack the Ripper would have had to navigate with caution during those dark foggy hours back then. It is with those astral bodies of Victorians palpable above my head that I dare to enter into the world and mindset of Jack the Ripper and co.

Main characters:

The Falcon - Jack. (Joseph Merrick: Elephant Man)

The Surgeon - (Frederic Treves)

The Poet - (Thomas Hardy)

Twit (Detective Inspector Frederick George Abberline)

The Beast - (Isaac Angel)

The Giant (Sergeant Thomas Arnold)

The Gull (Sir William Gull)

Lady Birds, Bobtails & Blowers - (The victims)

INT. BEDSTEAD SQUARE - NIGHT

Situated behind the London Charity Hospital in Whitechapel, where lies Jack (aka The Elephant Man) He suffers continuous nightmares where he imagines himself as a Falcon as he surveys the sky at night, dressed in top hat and tails over a waistcoat of ever changing colours, and where he mimics the Surgeon as his protector with the red seal of the Royal College of Surgeons attached to a gold chain that hangs from his waistcoat, beneath a cloak with purple ribbed wings that houses sparkling surgical knives. In this opening dream sequence, it is the red seal that protects Jack's identity. Psychologically, this is Jack's ring of steel. It cannot be breached whilst he is the property of the Surgeon whether in reality, or fantasy.

Jack's happy place is an eyrie above the greengrocer's shop where he was once exhibited as a freak whilst held in captivity by his owner, chained to a cage with a sign written above his head entitled: The Deadly Fruit Of Original Sin. But Jack cannot distinguish fact from fiction, or whether his nightmares are real. This screenplay relies heavily upon that aspect, because of Jack's obsession with bestial novels, especially the demon in the novel Frankenstein to which he believes as fact, rather than fiction.

To quell his stench, Jack wears apricot perfume. And before each murder he drops oversized blackberries upon the streets of Whitechapel. They explode upon impact: This episode of events is due to a reversion in his psyche that he connects to the deadly fruit of original sin - the juice from the blackberries represents the blood and the sacrifice of each victim. And on this occasion the victim is an unsuspecting Lady Bird (Martha Tabram) who he follows when she leads a Lobster (soldier) into a back alley. However, the Lobster is no ordinary soldier. He is highly connected to the royal household, and when he senses an intruder in his midst, he fumes:

LOBSTER

I dislike the smell of apricot.

During this nightmare Jack bears witness to the murder of the Lady Bird. However, he makes himself complicit when he nests upon her cadaver. This scenario represents his longing for his Mother's womb.

INT. THE WHITE HART P.H - DAY

The Giant (Sergeant Arnold) is on the case of the murder of the Lady Bird. The Scot sets about searching for clues. It is soon brought to his attention by the Barman that an important witness to the murder may hold a vital clue. Pearly Poll is the other Lady Bird who can name the soldier that Martha Tabram led down Gunthorpe Alley to her death that night, since she was with them the night of her murder.

EXT. TOWER HILL BARRACKS - DAY

Witness Pearly Poll is reluctant to pick out the murdering Lobster at an ID parade. The problem being that every Lobster on the lineup has a carrot beard and sideburns.

PEARLY POLL

He looks like the one. It might
be him.

The reason for this is because the Giant informs her that the suspect has mighty connections to the royal household.

INT. ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

The Royal College Of Surgeons offers another ring of steel to the capture of the Ripper. Sir. William Gull is introduced as the messenger sent from the royal household to find Pearly Poll and silence her, before she leaks her story to the press. He is in the company of the Surgeon who is more than keen to carry out the job of finding her, since a promise of a position at the ducal palaces beckons, after the incumbent Sir. William Gull retires, due to illness. However, in return the Surgeon asks Gull for his support concerning a mediaeval society close to his heart. Sir. William agrees to give him a leg up, and so an iron fist bond is struck between them: The Surgeon must find and silence the whore. Gull will sanction his reinvented society as an offshoot of the Freemasons. The most important exchange comes from the mouth of Gull when he states to the Surgeon:

THE GULL

One good turn deserves another.

Scenes 6-20

The night of the dock fires and desperate blower Annie Nichols is thrown out of a doss house because she spent her doss money on alcohol which causes her to have to stay out later than usual. Her famous remark here;

THE BLOWER

Oh never mind. See what a jolly
bonnet I've got now.

Meanwhile at the hospital Jack strays from the gardens and onto the street where he spots her looking beautiful beneath a gas lamp. He envisages her as his Mother. This single event sends false messages to his mindset when he hears the berating voice of the Surgeon, encouraging him to go and get her.

THE SURGEON

Go and get her. Go before it's
too late. She's waiting for you,
Jack. Now hurry.

However, Jack refuses to listen to the voices inside his head and returns to Bedstead Square to sleep it off. At this point his nightmare scenario begins; Once again he spots the Beard on the banks of the river when he looks down at him as he takes his own life. And when the Blower enters the greengrocer's shop, she is confronted with her ultimate nightmare when Jack appears as the Falcon. He attempts to speak to her.

THE FALCON

I was hoping you wouldn't mind,
but I was watching you from where
I live. I thought you looked
beautiful under the gaslight. And
your bonnet suits you. You
reminded me of my Mother.

But she shuns him with the retort:

THE BLOWER

You're not that bleedin' elephant
freak everybody's talkin' 'bout,
are ya? Is it bizniz you want
then?

She pays a heavy price when he reflects upon his Mother's abandonment of him as a child and rips her up.

The following scenes move back and forth from Bedstead Square and the greengrocer's shop when the Surgeon discovers Jack missing from his room. And when he stumbles upon the Blower's cadaver his worst fears are realised. His instinct is to move her body to another place - Bucks Row is that place - a stone's throw from the hospital receiving room. He knows Jack murdered her, since the greengrocer's shop is Jack's "happy place." It is later reported that her attacker may be left-handed. And the knife used to rip her up, be blunt. Jack's own knife is blunt, due to his shaping of his model of St. Philips Church, which he can see from his window at Bedstead Square.

INT. BEDSTEAD SQUARE - DAY

In the following scene the Surgeon returns to question Jack in regard to the Blower's slaying. The mind games begin when Jack complains to the Surgeon about his vivid nightmares. The Surgeon, convinced that Jack struck down the whore inside the greengrocer's shop tests his psyche to the full when they converse about the novel Frankenstein.

THE SURGEON

You know, Switzerland is a very scenic country... very beautiful indeed. As is Iceland. Two of the most scenic places I have experienced in my short lifetime.

JACK

Oh, can we go there? I want to see Switzerland. Will you introduce me to Doctor Victor Frankenstein? Oh, how wonderful it would be to meet Doctor Frankenstein.

The Surgeon chuckles at the possibility of meeting a fictional character.

Scenes 22-25:

The cover-up begins with the murder of Bobtail (Annie Chapman) when the Surgeon sets off from his home during the early hours. On this day he cycles to work- his journey to Whitechapel as the crow flies.

He enters Commercial Street where the Bobtail solicits herself, unbeknown, Jack's nightmares continue and the omnipresent Falcon watches over him. The Bobtail spots the Surgeon and calls him over. He questions her concerning her name, since his job is to locate the witness Pearly Poll, as instructed at the behest of Her Majesty's physician. He feeds her blackberries, handpicked from Dorset, the same blackberries Jack fed to the blower woman Annie Nichols. He then mutilates her with medical precision, with the belief this murder will deflect accusation away from his patient and the hospital.

Scenes 26-29

These scenes move between the Surgeon's consulting room where he writes a hoax letter using pigs blood to the press agency. The White Hart pub is the setting when the detective inspector known as Twit, and the Giant enter to discuss the recent murders.

INT. CONSULTING ROOM - DAY

The scene is to show the bonded relationship between the Surgeon and the Poet when they recite a William Barnes poem from home.

THE SURGEON / POET

The Primrose in the sheäde do
 blow, the cowslip in the zun. The
 thyme upon the down do grow, the
 clote where streams do run. An'
 where do pretty maidens grow, an'
 blow, but where the tow'r. Do
 rise among the bricken tuns, in
 Blackwore by the Stour.

And the reinvention of a mediaeval society for Dorset men in London which begins with the arrival from Dorset of the Poet. Here the wheels are set in motion, before the game of cat and mouse ensues with the press. From his practice at the hospital the Surgeon writes letters written in blood to the press agency. During their hearty meeting the Surgeon confesses his sins and beliefs to his dear friend and confidant concerning the recent murders. He explains to the Poet how deeply involved he has become and why. Eventually the Poet who is in London to finish his novel warms to the idea of a game with the press and is determined to use these ghastly events to the advantage of the society as an initiation for pending members.

INT. BEDSTEAD SQUARE - DAY

Upon a return visit to Bedstead Square the Surgeon also confesses his sins to Jack and why he had to murder the Bobtail at Spitalfields. Jack, to his favour remains reticent. But the Surgeon continues to coerce his patient when he offers him a night out on the town, and to specifically play cat and mouse. A clue to his knowledge of Jack's hiding skills is when he remarks;

THE SURGEON

And let's face it, nobody can
hide in the dark as well as you,
can they?

He follows this up by coercing Jack to write a dictated letter upon a postcard to be sent to Mr. George Lusk - chairman of the Whitechapel Vigilance Committee.

Known at Scotland Yard as Twit (Detective Frederick Abberline) is a Dorset man himself and has been instructed by Scotland Yard to find the Ripper and bring him to justice. However, he has a keen interest in the nitric acid murder of Miriam Angel from the previous year. He is convinced there is a link between the Ripper and the previous nitric acid murder of mother-to-be Miriam Angel at the hands of Israel Lipski. It is after her husband Isaac's body is discovered on the banks of the Thames that he later visits the lodgings where she was murdered. However, to his surprise he stumbles across the Surgeon and the Poet who rents the room whilst he finishes his latest novel. It is upon this meeting that the Twit is propositioned by the Surgeon to the notion of becoming a member of the society for Dorset men in London.

Scene 31:

Blower woman - victim Catherine Eddows kicks up a stink when she is arrested for being drunk and disorderly as she attempts to stop the traffic by lying in the road. She screams blue murder as she is taken to the cells at Bishopsgate police Station.

INT. RECEIVING ROOM.

The Surgeon works a night shift where he is presented with a charred baby by a frantic Mother. The Twit calls in for a deliberate chat. The detective inspector questions the Surgeon regarding two hoax letters sent to the Central News Agency and George Lusk.

TWIT

I'd like to ask you why you posted hoax letters to the Central News Agency and Mister Lusk?

And...

TWIT

What game are you playing? And where did that half of kidney come from? I know it was your patient you got to write on that postcard. That From Hell scribble.

The Surgeon replies...

THE SURGEON

If you really must know, I took it from the lab. It was dissected by one of my students. I gave half to him, then sent the other half to the jokers at Fleet Street. What fools to believe they'd actually been sent a human kidney, Inspector.

Twit's accusations are truly significant, since the Surgeon in his arrogance believes he is above the law. He knows the inspector cannot act upon his convictions, due to the powers that be.

Scene 35:

The next victim is referred to as Maiden - (Elizabeth Stride) She meets the Poet outside The White Hart. He entices her to a quiet place at Dutfield Yard. Here, he furnishes her with a red rose. It is during his panic, after he hears a horse and cart closing in that he cuts her throat and makes haste, only for the Falcon to nest upon her cadaver.

Scenes 38-40

Shortly afterwards, Blower woman (Catherine Eddows) is discharged from the police station, only to discover her fate when the Falcon spots her at Mitre Square.

Scene 41-43:

Jack's nightmare scenario continues with his Mother. He sees her when he looks down upon the operating table and removes his own foetus as the voice of the Surgeon berates him.

THE SURGEON

They're coming for you, Jack. Go!
Go quickly! Fly! Fly!

A baying mob march forth with their torches aflame and their axes at the ready like the Surgeon envisaged during an earlier scene to protect his patient from suspicion.

Scene 44-56:

In these pivotal scenes the Surgeon and the Poet visit The Ten Bells drinking house in Spitafields where they come into direct contact with Pearly Poll as she sings to customers in exchange for an alcoholic beverage. They follow her when she is led by an admirer to her home. Upon this sighting of her the Surgeon contacts the Gull who instructs him to silence her at once. And with the job in hand the Surgeon disguises himself as a journalist for the medical journal - The Lancet. She wants money in return for her story. The Surgeon agrees and a time and date is arranged for them to meet.

The Surgeon then organises a gathering inside the greengrocer's shop where disgraced Dorset barrister Monty (Montagu John Druitt) is set to join the society. Monty is a highly unstable character, due to his known homosexuality.

The scene is then set for the silencing of Pearly Poll. The Surgeon meets with her as planned and cuts out her tongue, before Monty enters the scene and goes berserk upon her flesh. All the while the Falcon keeps guard upon the roof of her flat.

Scene 57-58

When Monty returns home from the slaying of Pearly poll in a state of psychosis. He apologises to his Mother as he enters the River Thames and takes his life.

Scene 59:

Jack's last nightmare scenario as he takes his last breath when the Surgeon calls time upon him as he enters his room and removes the pillows from beneath his head.

THE SURGEON

It's time, Jack. Please forgive me.

It was a BBC documentary that established Joseph Merrick could not have died the way first believed when he turned his head away from his pillows in an act of suicide, or accidental death. In the final scene I show him being murdered by his protector. The motive in my opinion is clear: His protector was forced to end his friendship with Joseph and start anew, beginning with his job at the ducal palaces.

Adieu.