

GASLIGHT

By
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Ring around the rosie,
A pocket full of posies,
Ashes! Ashes!
We all fall down!

-Unknown
Following the Great Plague of London, 1665

G A S L I G H T

FADE IN:

EXT. NORTH SEA -- NIGHT

Gale force winds shoot horizontal sheets of icy rain across an impossibly large sea squall.

SUPER-TITLE: "NORTH SEA, THE COAST OF ENGLAND, 1899."

Pulling through the tempest, a BARQUENTINE RUSSIAN IMMIGRATION SHIP wrestles over and under enormous swells of churning ocean water.

BOOM!

A hot fork of blue lightning stabs at the vessel's violently flapping canvas sails, igniting them in a flash of brilliant sparks.

EXT. CROW'S NEST, SHIP -- NIGHT

Perched above the vessel's decks, a SAILOR watches as tall curtains of orange flame quickly climb up the sails toward him.

Out of options, he thrusts himself from the nest, plunging down through the flames and into the briny depths.

EXT. DECK -- NIGHT

It's pandemonium.

Tall black waves of salt water crash into the ship from every direction, heaving silver fish tangled in kelp over the splintered wooden deck.

A square-jawed FIRST MATE barks in Russian at FOUR DRENCHED SAILORS scrambling to man the sails, but it's no use.

Filled with worry, the First Mate quickly turns to enter the ship.

INT. VARIOUS CORRIDORS -- CONTINUOUS

The man sops his way through the creaky flooded hallways, slipping over the floors on his way to the CAPTAIN'S CABIN.

The First Mate quickly enters -

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN -- NIGHT

A gas lamp weakly flickers light over a lacquered desk spread with MARITIME CHARTS, NAVIGATIONAL INSTRUMENTS and an opened SHIP'S LOG -

Which the CAPTAIN's lifeless body is hunched over, quill still in hand.

Disturbed, the First Mate pulls the Captain's stiff, glass-eyed body from the desk, regarding what he finds in stunned horror -

The Captain's remains have been gruesomely slashed to marbled ribbons of red and yellow flesh.

Shaken, the First Mate immediately removes a RIFLE hung over the desk.

INT. VARIOUS CORRIDORS -- CONTINUOUS

Weapon pointed, the First Mate quickly searches the dim, water-soaked hallways for the Captain's killer.

After a few tense moments, the First Mate sees an ominous SHADOW play over a far wall. He sprints toward it, rounding a corner to LOCKED DOUBLE-DOORS.

He quickly unseals the doors, revealing...

INT. SHIP'S HOLD -- CONTINUOUS

...a wet, murky, cavernous space filled with scores of sickly, boil-covered IMMIGRANTS.

A few drowned, bloated corpses slide across the floors as the ship continues wobbling back and forth.

The First Mate shakily points his rifle about, SCREAMING.

FIRST MATE
(in Russian)
Someone has murdered the Captain!
(cocking his gun)
Whomever's responsible is to make himself known at once!

Teeth chattering, he passes over the sallow, wrinkled faces of peasants desperately clawing at his clothing, pleading their innocence.

Just then -

The double doors at the other end of the hold SLAM SHUT!
(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stunned, the First Mate's weapon slips from his hands, disappearing into the inky water.

He slowly turns to face the doors, when -

A PHANTOM silhouetted in shadow slinks out of the darkness toward him.

The First Mate's eyes widen in terror at the sight of the wraith, mouth quivering. He stumbles back, attempting to SCREAM, just as -

A SPLATTER of dark blood splashes across his face!

The immigrants watch on in horror, as long shadows cast by the phantasm descend upon the sailor's felled remains.

Another shock of blue lighting gives way to an ear-splitting clap of THUNDER.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON (AERIAL) -- EARLY MORNING

Long sheets of rain soak an industrialized sprawl of gargoyle guarded belfries and crumbling rooftops.

Pockets of dense, choking fog creep across BIG BEN's glowing clock-face, filtered through thousands of amber gas lamps flickering at street level.

Just beyond the city, VARIOUS SHIPS bob and sway, lurching across the chilly water toward the rotten wooden docks of the city's harbor.

Somewhere in the distance, a CHURCH BELL tolls.

SUPER-TITLE: "LONDON, ENGLAND."

EXT. ALLEYWAY, EAST END -- EARLY MORNING

The sun's yet to rise. It's misting, dew clinging to everything it touches.

Half a dozen burly METROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICERS in long, wool trench coats and black custodian helmets anxiously guard a BODY covered in a sheet.

A stout LEADER OFFICER swats at a MOSQUITO, nervously removing a pocket watch from his vest.

The Lead Officer snaps the timepiece closed, the CLATTERING of horse hooves signaling the arrival of a POLICE CARRIAGE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out steps CHIEF INSPECTOR DONALD "MONSTER HUNTER" SWANSON (30s). A serious man in a bowler hat, vest and waistcoat. A thin scar runs vertically down one eye.

A hush breaks out across the other officers.

The Lead Officer goes to meet Swanson, a bit intimidated.

LEAD OFFICER
Chief Inspector Swanson. How good of you to come.

The two men walk toward the crime scene.

SWANSON
I understand you asked for me specifically?

LEAD OFFICER
Seemed prudent - you being the closest to solvin' the Whitechapel murders. Given what my men've discovered, there can be little doubt of the Ripper's return.

SWANSON
(skeptically)
A bit premature, wouldn't you say?

The Lead Officer nods ahead.

LEAD OFFICER
Found the poor thing in the alleyway not an hour ago. Was walking home from church.

The two men approach the BODY covered in a sheet.

A pair of officers slide the cloth away.

LEAD OFFICER
Gruesome, this one is.

A beautiful, maroon-haired woman with smooth creamy skin has been murdered.

Her clothes torn and muddied. Corpse wilted. Two large, symmetrically CIRCULAR WOUNDS bore deep into her neck.

Swanson leans down, looking her over.

His eyes dart across her frame, soaking in every detail. He notices roughly pressed GOLD COINS spilled around her body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LEAD OFFICER
Not a pence was purloined, sir.

Swanson inspects one of the coins.

SWANSON
This isn't local currency.

Swanson's distracted by the other officers, who have begun swatting at a swarm of MOSQUITOS.

He feels one BUZZ at his ear slaps it, looking down to the corpse.

SWANSON
Unusual. No mosquitos on the body.

Swanson peers into a corner of the alley. A few yards from the corpse, a much smaller OBJECT is covered in another sheet.

SWANSON
What's over there?

The Lead Officer swallows hard, crossing himself.

LEAD OFFICER
Work of the devil, you ask me.

Swanson goes to the object and pulls the sheet from it, uncovering a grisly sight.

A large, brass-topped MASON JAR filled to the brim with congealed blood lies beneath it. Hundreds of mosquitos desperately attempt to puncture its crystalline outsides.

Swanson bats at the jar, momentarily dispersing the insects long enough to read a HANDWRITTEN LABEL stretched across it: "LUCILLE WESTENRA."

The other officers look on in disgust.

Swanson lifts the jar to his face, which warps behind the receptacle.

SWANSON
Not a drop spilled.

Two PHOTOGRAPHERS unexpectedly break through the men. Photographic flash powder EXPLODES illuminating the disturbing scene in a halo of white light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

One of the photographers bolts away into an adjacent alleyway.

Swanson immediately shouts to the other officers.

SWANSON
Don't let them leave!

He turns to the Lead Officer.

SWANSON
See to it the body is taken to St.
Mary's with haste.

Swanson climbs the stairs to his police carriage, turning to the Lead Officer.

SWANSON
And Constable, do your part to see
the other officers keep quiet.

LEAD OFFICER
Understood.

SWANSON
Scotland Yard will be in touch.

The Lead Officer and his men watch as Swanson's police carriage pulls away.

A loud CRACK of lightning fractures the sky, giving way to another deluge of rain.

CUT TO:

SUPER-TITLE: "GASLIGHT."

CUT TO:

EXT. CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT -- MORNING

An ornate brick building overlooking the Thames River.

Swanson ascends the stone steps leading up the edifice, past a bronze plaque: "SCOTLAND YARD: CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT."

INT. SWANSON'S OFFICE -- LATER

An elegant study wrapped in cherry mahogany and neatly organized book cases.

Swanson is at his desk detailing several beautiful INK DRAWINGS he's rendered of the earlier murder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He begins dictating to a polished silver GRAMOPHONE.

SWANSON

April 20th, 1899. Body discovered
this morning. East End. Victim:
Lucille Westenra. Age: 25.

Swanson finishes sketching an ILLUSTRATION of the
receptacle filled with blood.

SWANSON

Mason jar containing victim's
entire blood supply placed beside
body.

Swanson views another rendering he's completed of Lucy
Westenra's neck.

SWANSON

Dual puncture wounds on neck
possible site of blood loss.
Method of vital fluid extraction:
To Be Determined.

There's a loud KNOCK at the door. Swanson switches off
his gramophone.

SWANSON

Come in.

In enters a large, thick chopped man in a bowler hat,
COMMISSIONER EDWARD BRADFORD (50s). He doesn't look
happy.

SWANSON

Morning, Commissioner Bradford.
How are we today?

The man's fatty jowls hang over his tight collar,
undulating as he speaks.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

Been bloody better.

Bradford slams a copy of the TIMES LONDON onto Swanson's
desk.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

Will be in the rest of the
tabloids by sunset.

Swanson pulls the newspaper to his face, taking in the
headline: "JACK'S BACK?: GHASTLY MURDER IN EAST END
RAISES QUESTIONS."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The front page sports a harsh black and white ambrotype of the murder.

Busy, Swanson dips a steel tip pen into an inkwell and continues illustrating.

Bradford removes a clay pipe from his vest and strikes a match.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

You mind?

SWANSON

By all means.

Bradford draws heavily on the pipe, exhaling a long plume of smoke. Relief washes over him.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

You're the best we've got old boy.
New century coming. Yard needs
more men like you.

Swanson keeps drawing, half listening.

SWANSON

Something on your mind,
Commissioner?

Bradford takes another long pull from his pipe, hesitant.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

I want you to speak with him.

SWANSON

Who?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

Patient 1167.

Swanson's pen stops, spurting a jet of ink across his sketch.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

He's the closest thing we've got
to whatever's out there.

SWANSON

You can't be serious?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

I understand what you went
through. The sacrifices. God
knows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Swanson's tone becomes gravely serious.

SWANSON
No you don't, Edward.

Bradford exhales a breath of smoke.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Maybe you're right. I'll give it
to Abberline, then. Next best.

He heads for the door.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
'Course we all remember how he
bungled the Sweeny Todd inquiry.
No matter. Just means more
killin' for whoever did this.

Swanson raises a hand in protest.

SWANSON
Stop.

Bradford keeps his back turned, expectantly biting down
on the bit of his pipe.

SWANSON
Where's he being kept now?

CUT TO:

EXT. CARFAX ABBEY -- AFTERNOON

Swanson's police carriage pulls past a spiked metal gate
to the face of an expansive, imposing VICTORIAN MANSION.

A NURSE wearing a lace white gown, apron and cap
approaches from its entrance.

NURSE
Afternoon, Chief Inspector. I'll
take you to Dr. Seward at once.

INT. CARFAX ABBEY -- CONTINUOUS

The manor's opulent interior belies its harsh outsides.

Fine floral wallpaper over which Romantic oil paintings
have been hung. Ornate tapestries sitting beneath lush,
velvety chaise lounges. A fire roaring at one end.

Swanson follows the nurse, confused.

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CONTINUED:

SWANSON
This is the asylum?

NURSE
Heavens no, sir. The sanitarium
sits below doctor's quarters.

They turn a corner, coming to the face of a large
lacquered door: "OFFICE OF - DR. JOHN SEWARD, M.D."

The nurse opens the door...

INT. SEWARD'S OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

...interrupting DR. JOHN SEWARD (30s), tall and sickly -
clothed in an open dress shirt with its sleeves rolled.

He's in a state of pure ecstasy. A clear rubber
tourniquet is tied around the doctor's arm. Milky, used
bottles of MORPHINE and spent needles clutter his desk.

The doctor quickly pulls down his sleeves.

DR. SEWARD
Bollocks, I said I'd not wanted to
be disturbed!

He rises to his feet, slicking back his hair, regaining
his composure at the sight of Inspector Swanson. Seward
has a condescending, haughty way about him.

DR. SEWARD
Apologies. You must be the great
Inspector Swanson.

SWANSON
Chief Inspector.

Seward looks miffed.

DR. SEWARD
My mistake. Please, have a seat.

Seward clears the detritus from his desk and motions for
the nurse to leave, ushering Swanson to a chair.

SWANSON
How much did Commissioner Bradford
explain to you about my visit?

DR. SEWARD
Just that you had urgent business
with a patient of mine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON
You don't read the papers?

DR. SEWARD
I'm afraid my occupation leaves me
little time for extracurriculars.

SWANSON
A woman named Lucille Westenra was
murdered early this morning.

Seward falls back in his chair, emotional.

DR. SEWARD
Lucy?

SWANSON
You knew her?

Seward contemplates the news, wild swings of emotion
flooding his morphine wracked body.

DR. SEWARD
Ages ago. We were to be wed.

SWANSON
I'm sorry for your loss.

DR. SEWARD
Ships passing in the night. Part
of life's mysteries I suppose.

Seward snaps to attention.

DR. SEWARD
And to whom will the pleasure of
your company be received this day?

SWANSON
Patient 1167.

Seward sinks back into his chair.

DR. SEWARD
I'm afraid you're wasting your
time, Chief Inspector. Lunatic's
barely spoken since arriving here.

SWANSON
I've been asked by my superiors to
make an attempt at questioning
him. A formality. I'm sure you
understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. SEWARD
Surely you've a better use of your
time?

Swanson rises to his feet, buttoning his jacket.

SWANSON
Orders are orders I'm afraid.

Seward begrudgingly throws on a white doctor's coat.

DR. SEWARD
Follow me then.

INT. ASYLUM CORRIDOR -- UNDERGROUND -- CONTINUOUS

The two men descend the spiral stone bowels of the asylum, the flicker of gaslight dancing across each brick.

Swanson removes a silver finish pistol from his vest, carefully checking it. Satisfied, he tucks the weapon back into his coat.

SWANSON
It's my understanding 1167 has
been incarcerated at numerous
facilities. How long has he been
here?

DR. SEWARD
We inherited him two years ago
from another hospital. One ill-
equipped to deal with such a
prolific serial murderer. Seven
he slaughtered, I believe it was.

SWANSON
Eight.

DR. SEWARD
At any rate, our own attempts to
rehabilitate him ceased after the
first month of his stay with us.

SWANSON
For what reason?

DR. SEWARD
The patient severely injured one
of our orderlies.

SWANSON
How?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. SEWARD

Using a dagger he'd fashioned from
 stone chips collected in his cell.
 Severed the poor man's hands clean
 off. Sharpened stone cuts through
 bone like butter, I'm afraid.

INT. EXPERIMENTATION PEN -- LOWER LEVEL -- CONTINUOUS

A grimier area of cracked ivory tiling. Grit weeping from the walls. A series of bundled lanterns sway overhead like hellish chandeliers.

The two men move beside a

LONG CORRIDOR

of rusted metal bars, behind which an experiment is being prepared.

Swanson stops for a moment to watch.

A series of large muscular ORDERLIES finish connecting electrified leads to a riveted copper DUNK TANK filled with water.

Suspended in chains above the tank is a raving psychotic, R.N. RENFIELD (50s), bound tightly in a straightjacket.

RENFIELD

Dr. Seward, the master of all life
 is at hand!

Renfield turns to the guards, wild-eyed.

RENFIELD

I'm no lunatic you fools! I'm a
 sane man fighting for his soul!

Seward moves to Swanson's side from behind the bars.

SEWARD

Name is R.N. Renfield. Once a
 successful solicitor in the firm
 of Hawkins and Thompkins.
 Returned from business abroad.
 Suffered a complete mental
 breakdown. Zoophagous maniac.

SWANSON

Come again?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEWARD

Has a proclivity for eating live animals. Rats. Birds. Anything. Claims to absorb their life essence.

The orderlies shove a bit into Renfield's mouth to stop his ravings. They look to Seward, who gives his nod of approval.

Renfield is lowered into the tank, his body instantly convulsing, mouth frothing. Tiny brilliant fingers of electricity dance across his body through the water.

SWANSON

Good God, man. Is that really necessary?

Seward grins, receiving a chilling satisfaction from the man's suffering.

SEWARD

In this case, psychopharmacological remedies for his condition have been thoroughly explored, I assure you. Such is the peculiarity of the homicidal mind.

Seward continues walking.

SEWARD

Follow me. I keep your man in here.

Swanson lingers before following.

INT. PRISONER GALLERY -- LOWEST LEVEL -- CONTINUOUS

The two men enter into a circular padded dungeon lit by fluttering torches. Lining the walls are a series of darkened cages. One lunatic to each.

Seward points ahead.

SEWARD

1167 is in that one. I have other business to attend to above ground. I predict your interactions will be brief.

Seward claps his hands together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEWARD
See you shortly then.

Swanson nervously watches Seward go - beads of sweat at his temples.

He pulls in a deep breath, then approaches the cell holding Patient 1167.

Swanson squints, hoping to make something out.

SWANSON
Hello?

Nothing.

Just the DRIP-DROP-DRIP of water echoing across the walls and chains CLINKING and CLANKING as they swing overhead.

Swanson leans in closer.

SEWARD
Jack?

Something stirs inside the cell. A large, shadowy figure rises to its feet. A gravelly voice calls out.

VOICE (O.S.)
Boss?

The hulk of a man inside the cell steps from shadow into light, revealing himself in full glory -

PATIENT 1167 A/K/A JACK THE RIPPER (40s). Ice blue eyes. Two-hundred and fifty pounds of shirtless, greasy muscle. Thick body hair connects to a bushy handlebar mustache.

Jack's hand-carved the words "RIPPER" dozens of times across his entire body. Swanson nods to the marks.

SWANSON
Those are new.

JACK
Not much else to do 'round here.

Jack smiles, revealing a mouth filled with rotted teeth, a few of which have been capped in silver.

JACK
You look fatter.

The glimmer of Swanson's metal POLICE BADGE reflects in Jack's eye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

Made you a Chief then, have they?
Glad I could help with that.

SWANSON

There's been a murder. More
likely to follow. We need your
help to avoid further bloodshed.

Jack's incredulous.

JACK

My help?

He erupts with overly gratuitous, uncontrollable
laughter. Swanson waits for him to finish.

SWANSON

My superiors believe you may be
able to offer some perspec -

Jack suddenly launches a ball of mucous into Swanson's
face.

JACK

There's my bloody perspective.

Swanson removes a handkerchief from his vest pocket and
wipes away the gob of sputum.

The interview is over.

Swanson turns and walks away.

The other inmates begin screaming, cackling around him.
Caged wild animals hooting and hollering.

Jack hangs over his cell bars, smiling as he watches
Swanson go.

JACK

That all then, Chief Inspector?

EXT. CARFAX ABBEY -- MOMENTS LATER

Dr. Seward shows Inspector Swanson down the stairs to a
police carriage, a nurse trailing them.

DR. SEWARD

Again, my apologies we couldn't be
of more help. I should think your
failure to reach Patient 1167 will
not reflect poorly on your
standing as Chief Inspector.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. SEWARD (CONT'D)

(smugly)

You are, after all, not a physician.

Swanson pulls himself into the carriage.

SWANSON

Thank you for your time, doctor.

INSIDE THE CARRIAGE

Swanson's tough exterior momentarily cracks. His hands are trembling.

He loosens his tie, sinking into his seat, exhaling a mouthful of stress before addressing the coachman.

SWANSON

Take me to the morgue.

CUT TO:

EXT. ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL -- LATE AFTERNOON

A dark shelf of bruised storm clouds tumbles toward the city. A fiery setting sun momentarily pierces the storm, shooting pins of golden light onto the building.

INT. MORGUE, ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL -- LATE AFTERNOON

Lucille Westenra's body rests across a raised slab of stone, a bed of melting ice sparkling beneath it. Her once supple skin is now weirdly wrinkled and sagging.

Inspector Swanson is debating with the coroner, a puffy beet-red drunkard, DR. THOMPSON MOORS (60s). A PRIEST stands in the shadows observing.

DR. MOORS

(sternly)

As I explained earlier, Inspector, the body has been totally drained of its blood. Therefore, her certificate of death shall read "Death by Exsanguination." I've no reason to debate with you ulterior modes of expiration.

SWANSON

A debate is not what interests me, Dr. Moors.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON (CONT'D)

I'd like to know what pathological clues there may be to explain how the blood was pulled from her body. Not a single drop spilled during the process.

Swanson points to the victim's neck. Concentric lesions of purple and blue surround two gory wounds.

SWANSON

And what about the unusual nature of the bruising?

Moors waves Swanson off.

DR. MOORS

Hemorrhaging likely the result of whatever weapon her attacker used. Nothing more.

Swanson seems skeptical. He points to the victim's head. Her once lustrous red hair has faded a silvery grey. Large chunks have fallen out.

SWANSON

Another thing strikes me as odd, doctor. Is it usual for a body to decompose this way so quickly after death?

He nods to the ice.

SWANSON

Despite it being so well preserved.

DR. MOORS

(annoyed)

Inspector Swanson, there is nothing usual about the process of death. Inanimate bodies continue to grow hair and nails long after expiration. Such mysteries confound our understanding. Rest assured, these events are hardly cause for concern.

Moors checks his watch impatiently, then quickly signs a DEATH CERTIFICATE he gives to the priest.

DR. MOORS

It's late. I've a social function to attend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He turns to the priest.

DR. MOORS

You may take receipt of the body
for burial. Do give our
condolences to the bereaved.

Dr. Moors moves to the exit. He removes a polished flask from his jacket and throws back a shot of scotch.

DR. MOORS

A pleasant night.

EXT. ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL -- MOMENTS LATER

The sun has just set. Long sheets of rain spill down from clouds twisting overhead.

The priest closes the doors to his FUNERAL CARRIAGE, a COFFIN visible inside. He hoists himself on top of the coach when Swanson approaches him.

PRIEST

Off to North Hampton, then.
Parents'll be happy to see her
brought home.

SWANSON

Take care. The roads will be
dangerous from the storm.

He points to the coffin.

SWANSON

We don't want two bodies ending up
in there.

The priest hesitates for a moment, unsettled.

PRIEST

Bothered me back there - seeing
the girl like that.

SWANSON

Work of the devil, right?

PRIEST

In the bible, Cain slaughtered
Abel with an animal's jaw bone.
Jael drove a tent peg into
Sisera's brain while he slept.
The good book is very clear about
one thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON
What's that, Father?

PRIEST
Man's a savage animal. You know this better than most. When it comes to finding a killer, the only devil's in the details.

He contemplatively looks off into the rain, pulling up his coat collar.

PRIEST
Find whoever did this, Inspector.
God demands it.

The priest draws back on the reins and his horses break into a trot, pulling the carriage into the stormy night.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF LONDON -- NIGHT

A monumental Gothic structure of spires and brick arches. A bell tower tolls. Wet leaves scurry across the lawn.

INT. MEDICAL GALLERY, UNIVERSITY -- NIGHT

A sparsely attended multilevel lecture hall of columns and cracked marble lit by gas lamps and melting candles.

Sitting at its lowest level is a morgue slab over which a BODY covered in a sheet rests. Hand drawn MEDICAL SKETCHES line the walls.

A blonde, bespectacled woman in a doctor's coat, DR. FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE (30s), addresses a GROUP OF STUDENTS. She's calm, intelligent and precise.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Those few of you who regularly attend my lectures know, cholera has been of significant concern this year.

Dr. Nightingale throws a sheet back to reveal a diseased body dissected to illustrate its inner workings.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
In this case, contaminated water transmitted the disease to the patient. Ironic, in that this particular individual died of severe dehydration.

She gestures to the body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Note the sunken eyes and decreased skin turgor.

(a beat)

Prevention is the key to halting the spread of illness. Prior to becoming a physician, I -

Stifled laughter from above. The titters belong to a fresh faced, arrogant pupil, TIMOTHY JOHNS (20s).

DR. NIGHTINGALE

I've yet to impress you, Mr. Johns? Perhaps you think my being a female physician somehow disqualifies me from making any meaningful contribution to the advancement of medical science?

JOHNS

There's a reason so few of us attend your lectures, Nurse Nightingale.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

(surprised)

Nurse Nightingale? Not doctor. Nurse.

The students go quiet.

Inspector Swanson cracks open a door unnoticed, watching from the shadows.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Please continue, Mr. Johns.

JOHNS

Your exploits as a nurse hardly qualify you to -

DR. NIGHTINGALE

I've tended to wounded on the battlefield. Seen the horrors of war. Men lying in uniforms, stiff with gore and covered with filth to a degree and of a kind no one in this room could comprehend. As such, the General Medical Council of London has licensed me a medical practitioner.

(looking up)

What credentials do you hold, Mr. Johns?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. NIGHTINGALE (CONT'D)

Other than being an under
educated, overprivileged boy of
little sophistication.

Johns storms off, red-faced and fuming.

Nightingale looks to the rest of her students, smiling.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Class dismissed.

The hall empties quickly. Swanson steps into the light, smirking.

SWANSON

Same old Lady of the Lamp -
Florence Nightingale.

Nightingale turns to see Swanson. There's an excitement in her eyes. A sparkle that suggests a past romantic history existing between the two.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Donald? My God, it's been...

SWANSON

Too long. May I walk you home?

CUT TO:

INT. BELFRY -- NIGHT

A cobwebbed space over which enormous IRON BELLS hang. Thin slits of moonlight filter through wood planks onto groups of leathery bats twitching from the ceiling.

Bent over a desk is a DARK FIGURE dressed in a long, coal black highwayman coat. His face is hidden by an upturned double collar and the shadow of a broad slouch hat.

Unfurled across the desk are water stained MARITIME CHARTS made of parchment. Two empty GLASS MASON JARS sit atop them.

Using hands wrapped in bronze-tipped leather gloves, the man finishes cleaning the jars to a spit polish shine, carefully gluing separate blank labels to each.

He plunges a brown feather quill into an inkwell, hastily scrawling two names across each label in delicate cursive: "JONATHAN HARKER" & "WILHELMINA HARKER."

The man sets the jars down, admiring his work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He opens a cracked leather medical bag revealing a bronze geared DEVICE of pipes, cogs and rubber tubing.

He places the two jars inside the bag and snaps it closed.

A cold gust of wind whips through the belfry, the bats hanging above screeching in protest as they scatter in every direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOHO SQUARE, WEST END -- LATER, CONTINUOUS

A street lined with canvas tents and bustling storefronts. Display cases filled with costume jewelry, bushels of day old fruit, fresh meat dangling from hooks.

The thick crowd of shoppers undulates down the street, haggling prices, admiring the sights, etc.

Swanson walks by Nightingale's side as they both weave through the crowd.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

My flat's not far from here. Pain in my ass to have to walk through this mess every night.

SWANSON

Dangerous too. Red-light's not far from here.

Nightingale tightens up.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Nothing I can't handle.

They continue moving.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

So - to what do I owe the pleasure of your company, Chief Inspector?

SWANSON

I wondered if you might consider helping with a case of mine. Sensitive matter.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Straight to business then. Is it the Leech Killer? I'm sure I read.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON
 Another phantom roving London's
 shadows.

Nightingale considers his proposal.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 In what capacity did you need my
 help?

SWANSON
 Consulting physician, of course.
 The coroner's a useless drunkard.

Nightingale laughs.

SWANSON
 Would be a change of pace.
 Something to break up the monotony
 of instructing, what was it,
 "Undereducated, overprivileged
 little boys."

Nightingale gives him a soft smile.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 I could use a change of pace.

SWANSON
 Then it's settled.

Interrupting them is an opulently dressed PROMOTER in
 grease paint and a top hat.

He screams to the crowd with an American accent,
 dispensing garishly colored PAPER BILLS filled with
 clowns and acrobats.

PROMOTER
 Come one! Come all! Behold, what
 you'll surely agree is the
 Greatest Show on Earth!

The man darts in front of Swanson, handing him a flyer:
"THE BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS! HIPPODROME IN HYDE PARK!"

PROMOTER
 Only six pence buys you eyefuls of
 entertainment! Dancing elephants
 shipped from the shores of the
 Orient! Roaring tigers captured
 from half the world away! All
 this and more for the gentleman...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He looks to Nightingale.

PROMOTER
...and his ravishing young lady.

The showman takes Nightingale's hand to plant a kiss.
She pulls back uncomfortably.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Piss off.

Swanson waves off the theatrical huckster, laughing.

SWANSON
You heard her.

The actor moves past the couple, dissolving into the endless crowd where he continues his show.

EXT. RED-LIGHT DISTRICT, SOHO -- MOMENTS LATER

Ruby red lanterns glow through a swirling fog.

The same promoter's distant calls echo further down the street of squalid BROTHELS and packed TAVERNS.

A raven-haired woman with emerald eyes, WILHELMINA HARKER (20s), approaches the face of an Oriental opium den. Her dress fluttering in and out of rising gutter steam.

EXT. THE MIDNIGHT OIL -- NIGHT

A traditionally robed ASIAN MAN with a Fu Manchu sits between two bronzed Chinese guardian lions. He puffs on a long, grandiloquent silver and ivory opium pipe.

Wilhelmina cautiously approaches him.

WILHELMINA
Excuse me. I'm looking for my husband.

The man stays silent, eyes glazed, pupils fully dilated. Fingers of dense vapor creep up from his lips.

WILHELMINA
Jonathan Harker's his name. I'm his wife, Wilhelmina.

She's distracted by shadows floating over the jade tinted windows of the building.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILHELMINA

Is he inside? I've something
urgent to discuss with him. A
friend of ours has met a terrible
end.

The watchman stoically sits on his stool in a drug induced haze.

She moves past him, through a set of beaded curtains.

INT. THE MIDNIGHT OIL -- CONTINUOUS

Dim and shadowy. All shiny lacquer, teal and bronze. Hand-dipped orange wax candles melting inside chinaballs. Chimes softly TINKLING.

Rows of low cots sit adorned with silken oriental pillows. On each table, a bulbous assembly of glass globes sit atop a gas burner.

An eclectic group of stoned addicts draw rich grey smoke from the bulbs using serpentine tubes.

Wilhelmina moves through the beds, coughing, barely able to see as she whispers for her husband.

Following a short search, she finds JONATHAN HARKER (30s) slumped over in a shadowy corner.

Eyes closed. Mouth agape. His flesh tinged a sickly yellow.

WILHELMINA

Jonathan!?!?

She rushes to his side.

WILHELMINA

Jonathan, wake up!

She desperately pulls the scruff of his checkered coat collar. His head falls to one side, revealing two concentric wounds bore deep inside his neck.

Wilhelmina's eyes fill with shimmering tears at the sight of her lifeless, dead husband.

She wipes them from her face, noticing an object sitting comfortably ensconced in his lap - a MASON JAR filled with dark fluid.

Her eyes narrow. She pulls the jar from his hands, twisting it to view the label: "JONATHAN HARKER."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A candle behind the jar illuminates its syrupy scarlet contents.

Wilhelmina GASPS in stunned terror!

The receptacle falls through her fingers, shattering onto the floor, glossing everything it touches in thick red blood.

She stumbles backward into the smoky haze, hyperventilating.

Opiated customers continue their routine in unconscious silence.

A DARK FIGURE slowly rises from one of the cots behind her.

Oblivious, she quickly turns, face blanching at the sight of him in shadow.

In an instant, the figure unexpectedly lunges toward her, sharp shadows descending.

She draws in a large breath, preparing to scream, when -

The wraith quickly stabs into her jugular with a concealed object, interrupting her mid-shout. Her voice bubbles to a gurgle. Eyes rolling milk white.

EXT. RED-LIGHT DISTRICT, SOHO -- MOMENTS LATER

Swanson and Nightingale are approaching the grungy edge of the quarter.

A blood curdling SCREAM from ahead. Loud, hysterical SHOUTS.

VOICE (O.S.)
Murder! There's been a murder!

Swanson removes a silver-finished REVOLVER from his vest and turns to Nightingale.

SWANSON
Stay here.

He bolts into a sprint, weaving past throngs of people to the face of

THE MIDNIGHT OIL

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

where an uneasy CROWD of onlookers has gathered. All lower class - the ladies in corsets and the gentlemen in their waistcoats and tattered top hats.

Swanson pushes past them.

SWANSON
Out of the bloody way!

He moves through beaded curtains into the den.

INT. THE MIDNIGHT OIL -- CONTINUOUS

A ghostly haze hangs in the stagnant air. The room has been abandoned. Wisps of delicate smoke twist from deserted pipes.

Swanson points his weapon into the shadows.

He moves to a far corner. Jonathan and Wilhelmina Harker are slumped over. Dead. Two gleaming BLOOD JARS beside them - one shattered.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

There is someone above him. Swanson tilts his gun to the ceiling following along as it creaks.

He moves to stairs set into the far wall. A sign above them in ebullient blue font: "THE BLUE LAGOON."

INT. THE BLUE LAGOON -- CONTINUOUS

A brothel wrapped in Far Eastern tapestries and dimmed sapphire gas lamps.

Swanson moves down a long hallway lined with varnished doors. All of them closed and locked. MUFFLED MOANS of ecstasy echo down the vestibule.

There is a shattered lamp at the end of the hallway.

Swanson kicks down the door it belongs to, gun pointed.

INT. CHAMBER ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The lights are out. A solitary streak of silvery moonlight cuts through the darkness.

The stylus of a GRAMOPHONE eerily stutters at the end of a spinning turntable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A Chinese PROSTITUTE in a glittery indigo and gold Cheongsam shivers uncontrollably near her bed. Covers pulled to eyes glazed with terror.

Swanson puts a finger to his lips.

He looks to her closet door and moves to it, gun cocked.

He throws the door open, preparing to fire. Nothing but a tangle of corsets and laced gowns.

The terrified harlot whimpers beside him.

Swanson hears the CLANKING of a crystal chandelier overhead. He follows the woman's eyes and turns to fire.

The KILLER unexpectedly swings from the ceiling!

The material of his coal black coat unfurls like wrinkled bat wings.

Two muddied boots SLAM into the Inspector's chest, shooting him back through a cloud of gunpowder and into a plate glass window.

OUTSIDE

Glass rains down to the street. Swanson struggles to grip the brick ledge of razor sharp shards slicing through his fingers.

Shocked GASPS break out from the crowd below. Swanson doesn't dare look down.

His hand slips.

VOICE (O.S.)
He's about to fall!

Swanson's grip further loosens. His eyes tighten, sharp glass slicing into his fingers as he accepts his fate.

Suddenly, two burly JOHNS in suspenders pop their heads out of what remains of the window above him. They carefully pull the Inspector to safety.

INSIDE

The men lay Swanson's bruised body onto a bed.

A medical bag at her side, Nightingale rushes into the room along with several CONSTABLES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Donald! Are you okay?

She opens her bag and quickly begins tending to his injuries with a pad of silken gauze.

SWANSON
I'm fine.

Her hand cups his cheek.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Next time, look before you leap.

Swanson smiles.

SWANSON
Was never very good at that.

INT. THE MIDNIGHT OIL -- LATER, CONTINUOUS

A half dozen Bobbies guard the door. PHOTOGRAPHERS and JOURNALISTS stumble over one, desperate to get a glimpse inside.

Swanson and Nightingale inspect the Harkers' dead bodies. Nightingale taps a gloved finger to the wounds on Jonathan Harker's neck.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
These are most unusual.

SWANSON
Have you seen anything like it?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Actually, yes. Not the puncture wounds mind you. The bruising.

SWANSON
What causes it?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Suction. Indigenous tribes sometimes use something called "Banki" in an attempt to cure the sick. Involves lighting a flame beneath a glass and using the suction to "pull" disease from a patient's body.

SWANSON
Banki? Sounds like superstitious hogwash.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nightingale lifts up one of the BLOOD JARS.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
This is rather curious as well.

SWANSON
Blood supply of the victims.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Doesn't look like it.

SWANSON
How do you mean?

Nightingale twists the jar to the light. Clumps of congealed blood settle to its bottom.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
It's blood to be sure. But this is heavy with disease.

She nods over to the bodies.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Aside from being dead, this couple looks healthy. The blood in these jars belongs to someone very ill.

SWANSON
Whose is it then?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
You tell me, Chief Inspector.

Nightingale removes a HYPODERMIC NEEDLE from her bag. She points to the jar.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Mind if I take a sample for analysis?

SWANSON
By all means.

An anxious Bobbie approaches Swanson.

BOBBIE
Sorry to interrupt, Chief Inspector.

He hands over a tattered piece of PARCHMENT filled with detailed drawings of a colossal MOUNTAIN RANGE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SWANSON

What's this?

BOBBIE

Taken from the Chinaman guarding the door, sir. Said Jonathan Harker traded it to him for a night's smoke. Claimed it to be some sort of treasure map.

Swanson further examines the map. Inscribed in faded ink across it: "THE BORGO PASS."

SWANSON

Thank you, Constable.

EXT. THE MIDNIGHT OIL -- CONTINUOUS

Large collections of ONLOOKERS scream and shout.

Inspector Swanson and Dr. Nightingale exit the den.

Flash powder EXPLODES all around them from accordion style cameras. Reporters swarm from every direction.

A CINEMATOGRAPHER cranking a MOVIE CAMERA cries out.

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Sucked the blood right out of 'em has he, Chief Inspector? Like a leech? That Florence Nightingale with you?

Swanson shoves the Tri-Lens film camera from his face.

A POLICE CARRIAGE clatters before them.

Swanson leads Nightingale

INSIDE THE CARRIAGE

where the two quickly settle in.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Where are we going?

SWANSON

Taking you home.

Nightingale protests.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

But I've work to do. The blood we've recovered must be tested.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON

I need you rested doctor. For the dark days ahead.

Swanson looks out the window into the cold, starless night. A thin band of gold sunlight rises, spreading across the horizon.

EXT. ST. JOHN'S WOOD -- EARLY MORNING

Foggy and quiet. Gothic, pointed flats carved from marble and limestone. Regent's Canal flowing beneath a cobblestone bridge.

INT. SWANSON'S STUDY -- EARLY MORNING

The Inspector sits sleeping in a burgundy leather desk chair. Cluttered bookshelves and stacks of papers surround him.

His eyes flutter. He mumbles. An intense dream unfolds.

BEGIN MONTAGE -- SWANSON'S NIGHTMARE

(The images come in erratic bursts. Speeding up and slowly down alternately. In Swanson's POV.)

- Walking down a long dark tunnel.
- A moonlit man in a top hat and trench coat stands over the body of a fallen young prostitute slashed to pieces. Blood spreading at his feet.
- A gleaming knife pulls out of the woman.
- Entrails spill onto the cobblestone.

SWANSON (V.O.)

(reverberating)

Emily, no!

- The man in the top hat steps into gaslight. Jack the Ripper. His face is splattered with blood.
- Swanson cocks his revolver to fire.
- The Ripper appears feet from Swanson's face. He slashes his blue steel blade across it.
- Swanson fires his weapon.
- A sepia cloud of gun powder sweeps across the cobblestone. It clears away. Jack the Ripper is on the ground, wounded.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

- A ruby bolt of lightning rips across the night sky and a torrent of bloody rain erupts from overhead.
- The sanguine rain floods the entire alley washing everything away in an overwhelming rush of fluid crimson.
- Swanson's screams echo down the alley at the tsunami of blood racing toward him, its contents roiling with scores of decomposed corpses.

BACK TO SCENE

Swanson leaps from his chair SHOUTING.

SWANSON
Emily!

He takes a moment to calm himself, wiping clean his sweaty brow.

Swanson's reflection plays across a sepia PHOTOGRAPH of a beautiful YOUNG WOMAN with dark hair, his sister, EMILY SWANSON (19) - the woman from his nightmare.

Swanson's eyes shut tight and he falls back into his chair, exhausted.

EXT. PYKE'S CINEMATOGRAPH THEATRE -- AFTERNOON

An extravagantly ornamented French-Baroque palace of curved gold and square limestone.

INT. THEATRE -- AFTERNOON

Clusters of anxious enthusiasts watch as grainy moving images stutter across a screen.

Swanson takes a seat at the back of the theatre.

BEGIN NEWSREEL

- TRUMPET FANFARE. A title card: "CINEMATOGRAPH NEWS PRESENTS 'NEWS OF LONDON.'"
- A SINISTER ORGAN plays. A headline sputters into view: "WORSE THAN WHITECHAPEL: 'LEECH' BLEEDS LONDON!"
- In black and silver tones, a terrified crowd undulates in front of The Midnight Oil.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
"Murder in Red-Light."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

- Inspector Swanson and Dr. Nightingale exit the opium den, reporters overwhelming them.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 "Inspector Donald 'Monster Hunter'
 Swanson and 'Lady of the Lamp' Dr.
 Florence Nightingale at the scene
 of London's latest Leech murder."

- Outside The Midnight Oil, several Constables load two body bags into a funeral carriage.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 "The body count continues to
 rise."

- At St. Mary Hospital Dr. Moors is pontificating, surrounded by sickly bed-ridden patients.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 "Meanwhile, coroner Dr. Thompson
 Moors of St. Mary's Hospital
 voices concern about the killer's
 methods spreading illness across
 London."

- A teeming mass of people choke London's streets.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 "As worries continue to mount, the
 question on everyone's minds is:
 Will 'Monster Hunter' Swanson
 apprehend the Leech Killer? Or,
 will the madman slip through his
 fingers just as Jack the Ripper
 did?"

- From the rooftops, a shaky angle of the city twinkles before the grainy picture burns out and dies.

END NEWSREEL

Patrons begin leaving. A CONSTABLE finds Swanson sitting at the back.

CONSTABLE
 Sorry to bother you, sir. I've
 come bearin' word from Carfax
 Abbey. Sent me to find you
 straight away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The Constable hands Swanson a wax sealed ENVELOPE. Typed font reads: "OF URGENT IMPORTANCE. 1167 WISHES TO DISCUSS YOUR CASE. SIGNED DR. SEWARD."

CUT TO:

INT. PRISONER GALLERY - DAY

Back turned, Jack is doing pull ups from a copper water pipe hung above his cell. The veins of his hulking arms throb to keep his violent blood pumping.

Swanson enters. He passes a cell holding R.N. Renfield, who is hopelessly mumbling to himself.

RENFIELD

Won't be long now... Won't be
long now... Won't be long now...

Swanson stops short of Jack's cell. Out of spitting distance.

Jack drops from the ceiling. He turns to Swanson, dripping with salty sweat.

JACK

Glad you could make it, Boss.
(re: his distance)
No need to be shy. I don't bite.

He winks.

JACK

Not too hard anyway.

SWANSON

Eight butchered women would
disagree - my sister included.

JACK

Aw, gettin' personal on me then?

He lifts two crossed fingers.

JACK

On my best manners. Swear it on
me murdered mum.

He explodes with unhinged laughter. Swanson stays put.

Jack nods to the small glass cuts on Swanson's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

Leechy give you those? Give me
the chance and I'd fillet the
bloomin' bastard myself.

Jack smiles, pulling a finger down his own eye.

JACK

No one cuts Boss but 'ole Jackie
boy.

SWANSON

What do you want?

JACK

Thought we'd have some tea. Chat
about your case over biscuits.
Double event this time. What a
gruesome wag.

SWANSON

How do you know about the
killings?

Jack's eyes go wild. He flicks his tongue excitedly
across his gleaming silver teeth.

JACK

Walls'll talk, you got the time to
listen. Heard they're sayin' he's
worse than me.

(winking)

We'll put that to the test, won't
we?

Jack licks his cracked lips.

JACK

So - hear you got a lady workin'
with you. Dr. Nightinfail was it?

(scoffing)

Tramps as docs. Bint meat's for
cuttin' not teachin'. Am I right,
Boss?

Swanson turns to leave.

JACK

Just havin' a bit of fun with you.
You're the only friend've mine
'aint maggot meal. Not yet,
anyhow.

Jack smiles with a mouth full of excitement.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

You must know, not a soul walkin'
 London's foggy boulevards can help
 you, Boss.

Swanson faces Jack.

JACK

Not like me. Huntin' mankind
 ain't like animals. Most
 dangerous beast treadin' the
 Almighty's green earth. Hell of a
 grim sense of humor on the Creator
 - puttin' us in charge.

Jack's amused. Swanson doesn't look impressed.

JACK

What's the matter, Boss? 'Aint it
 funny? Typhoid and swans comin'
 from the same God?

SWANSON

You're wasting my time.

Swanson turns to leave one last time.

JACK

He ain't from 'round here. Your
 blood sucker.

Swanson swivels to face Jack.

SWANSON

What makes you so sure?

JACK

We're both from the same place.

SWANSON

Where's that?

JACK

Hell.

Jack runs his thick fingers across the bars of his cell.

JACK

I used to pass time workin' over
 at the wharf as a youngin'.
 Guttin' fish 'aint all together
 different from harpies, if you get
 my meanin'. Both're slippery and
 stinky.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JACK (CONT'D)

Anyhow, wasn't a wakin' hour I
didn't see them ships come to
port.

SWANSON

Immigration ships?

JACK

That's right. All of 'em carryin'
bleedin' Apes, Chinks and
Shylocks. 'Aint proper. Mixin'
dark blood with the pure folk.
Not in my city.

SWANSON

You think he's from abroad?

JACK

Why not? Heard the 'lil sponger's
got a sickness too.

SWANSON

Other than being psychotic?

JACK

Body's dyin' of somethin' fresh.
How long you think a bloke could
keep that a proper secret?

SWANSON

With the outbreaks of cholera
we've had in London lately? Not
long.

The Inspector's eyes narrow. He considers Jack's point
for a moment, then begins to leave.

Jack turns, resuming his pull ups. He shouts back to
Swanson.

JACK

Visit again, Boss. 'Fraid I can't
make housecalls these days.
Leech'll give you plenty more to
play with. As sure as I'll never
see the pearly gates of heaven.

EXT. MAYFAIR DISTRICT -- DAY

Loud and bustling. Dozens of horse-drawn carriages trot
past sleepy brick flats spewing thick veins of coal
smoke.

INT. NIGHTINGALE'S FLAT -- DAY

A breeze flutters through delicate lace curtains. Opened MEDICAL TEXTS litter the surface of a heavily varnished desk.

A MICROSCOPE sits beside Nightingale, who is preparing a glass slide. Using a syringe, she squirts a dot of dark blood onto a rectangle of glass.

She places the blood sample on the microscope's stage, removes her glasses and takes a look.

Her fingers adjust the rack and pinion, finding focus.

She recoils at what she sees in stunned disbelief.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Good God.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUCKINGHAM PALACE -- DAY

A newly built neoclassical mansion of golden bath stone arches. Three floors with two flanking service wings.

ROYAL GUARDS in their scarlet coats and bearskin caps patrol the magnificent grounds of endless green grass and red rose bushes.

A POLICE CARRIAGE pulls to its entrance.

Out steps Commissioner Bradford puffing his pipe. An escort leads him inside.

INT. MUSIC ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

A hall of sparkling ivory and gold leaf filled to the brim with a panoply of riches. Large pools of light stream from story high gilt-bronze glass windows.

QUEEN ALEXANDRINA VICTORIA (80) sits playing BEETHOVEN'S "PATHETIQUE" at a luxuriously decadent mahogany piano. A starburst of jewels twinkle across her frail body.

Commissioner Bradford kneels. He waits for her to finish.

She turns to face him, awaiting a reaction - her aged eyes glazed blue with cataracts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Beautifully rendered, your
Majesty.

QUEEN VICTORIA
One of the few things God's left
me.

She sniffs the air.

QUEEN VICTORIA
Still puffing that dreadful pipe
of yours, Commissioner Bradford?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
'Fraid so.

QUEEN VICTORIA
Please, rise to your feet.

She reaches for Bradford. They lock arms. The Queen
draws up her long crushed velvet robes.

QUEEN VICTORIA
Walk with me.

The couple tours the grand hall.

QUEEN VICTORIA
How is your family?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Growing by the year, your Majesty.

They come to a wall lavishly appointed with REMBRANDT and
VERMEER oil paintings.

QUEEN VICTORIA
The paintings are beautiful,
aren't they? I can no longer see
them, but my memory of each
remains intact. Sometimes I
wonder if they are as splendid and
rich as I remember them. That is
the role of our monarchy,
Commissioner. To maintain the
memory of a Great Britain. One of
a nation strong and stoic. Full
of possibility. A beacon unto the
world.

The Queen stops. She turns to the Commissioner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

QUEEN VICTORIA

London's streets cannot afford to continue to run with blood. Not if we are to maintain that memory. I stand here to impress upon you the importance of apprehending this...

(struggling for words)

...ghastly grotesque.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD

I understand, your Majesty. Scotland Yard will not fail you.

QUEEN VICTORIA

See to it your man apprehends him with haste.

Bradford nervously stares at London out of the colossal glass windows of the hall, jowls tensing.

EXT. WEST INDIA DOCKS -- LATE AFTERNOON, CONTINUOUS

Slack tidal waters heave gently under a blanket of heavy mist.

A rickety marina dotted with the pointed masts of dozens of ships. Frothy, polluted salt water laps the barnacled supports of the dock.

FISH-MONGERS with cleavers hack at wriggling fish, spilling guts across the planks beneath their feet.

Swanson walks toward a bearded man chewing the bit of a hand carved wooden pipe - the HARBOR MASTER.

The man is reading a fresh copy of the TIMES LONDON. The headline reads: "LEECH BAFFLES YARD!"

Swanson clears his throat. The Harbor Master looks up from his paper, startled.

HARBOR MASTER

Didn't realize it was you, Chief Inspector.

SWANSON

I'm here to inquire as to whether you've noticed anything unusual at the docks of late.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARBOR MASTER

How do you mean? The other day, a fishmonger towed in a bloody squid the size of -

SWANSON

(interrupting)

What I'm about to share with you is strictly confidential. By penalty of lifelong imprisonment. Do you understand?

The man puts down his pipe. His tone becomes more serious.

HARBOR MASTER

Anything to help, sir.

SWANSON

I have cause to believe the killer you've read about may have come from abroad. Have you had any problems recently with immigration vessels coming to port?

The man picks up his pipe and strikes a match. He takes a deep pull and begins puffing.

HARBOR MASTER

Follow me.

They weave through the

WHARF

past sailors unloading spice carts, fisherman gathering bait, etc.

HARBOR MASTER

Had a ship try to dock but a week ago. Russian. Filled to the brim it was. Men, women and children.

The two men enter a larger covered

DRY DOCK

loaded with the destroyed remains of VARIOUS SHIPS. Wooden corpses of once mighty vessels. Each creaking as they float in a mire of muddy water.

HARBOR MASTER

All aboard looked to be gravely ill. Refused quarantine.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARBOR MASTER (CONT'D)

Had to turn them away. Same night, ship crashed on the rocks. No survivors. Hoped to send correspondence to any family. Never found a passenger list.

They stop at the smashed stern of a large BARQUENTINE SHIP. Its canvas sails and halyard ropes still weakly fluttering in the breeze.

HARBOR MASTER

Had her towed to the docks.

Swanson moves around the ship to its masthead. Baroque, cracked gold lettering reads: "THE DEMETER."

SWANSON

Did the captain of the ship mention anything before you turned him away?

The Harbor Master hands Swanson a water stained CAPTAIN'S LOGBOOK.

HARBOR MASTER

You best read this.

Swanson begins reading from its crinkled pages.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- The Demeter sails through a sleet-driven wind, over and under the white tipped waves of an impossibly large squall.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

Captain's Log. The Demeter. 15th March, 1899. We set sail at noon into a storm that seemed to come out of nowhere, carrying us out to see.

- Enormous waves batter the bow, hot forks of blue lightning relentlessly stab at the mast.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

Second mate found dead.

- A crew member discovers the Second Mate splayed out across his cabin, throat torn, wide splatters of blood drip from the mahogany paneling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CAPTAIN (V.O.)
Nearing Gibraltar. Storm continues. Crew uneasy. Passengers falling ill. Fever has begun to spread.

- Dozens of passengers hack and shiver in the water soaked cargo hold, small open lesions dotting their pale skin.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)
Unrest among passengers. They believe someone or something is aboard the ship with us. Living in the shadows. A phantom.

- A sharp silhouette of a man with clawed fingers creeps over the ship's lantern lit sails.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)
Turned away from port of London. Outlook grim.

- The ship limps down the foggy coast, a large rogue wave throws it into a series of jagged rocks, crushing its wooden outsides to splinters.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)
God help us.

- Underwater, dozens of immigrant bodies float with the current, long shafts of moonlight filtering above them to the briny depths.

BACK TO SCENE

HARBOR MASTER
Probably just fever playing with his mind, you think?

Swanson pulls his head from the ship's log. He notices Commissioner Bradford at the entrance.

SWANSON
That'll be all.

Swanson goes to meet Bradford

OUTSIDE

and the two walk further down the docks away from the shore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Just came from Buckingham.

SWANSON
That right? How was her Majesty?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Concerned. We need a suspect,
Swanson.

SWANSON
We're drawing nearer to one. The
murderer snuck aboard a Russian
ship carrying immigrants. "The
Demeter."

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
You retrieved a name?

SWANSON
I will soon. He's sick. Won't be
long before someone comes forward.

Bradford puts a hand to Swanson's chest. In it is a red
leather LEDGER.

SWANSON
What's this?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Datebook. Found it on Jonathan
Harker's body.

Swanson quickly flips through its contents.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Mr. Harker was meetin' with a
friend of yours.

SWANSON
Who's that?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Dr. Seward. With some regularity.
I suggest you return to Carfax.
Have a chat. Maybe go below.
Long as you're there.

Desperate SHOUTS suddenly break from a nearby TRAWLING
SHIP preparing to dock.

Swanson and the Commissioner run to the

TRAWLER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

which has something large caught in its wool fishing nets.

Wheels with broken spokes, a passenger seat and a sealed COFFIN - the remains of a FUNERAL CARRIAGE.

Swanson moves to get a closer look at the contents. A bloated grey BODY bobs helplessly tangled in the meshwork.

It's the PREACHER Swanson met at the morgue. His throat has been torn into a sinewy open maw.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Two FISHERMAN with crowbars pry open the closed CASKET.

Out pours seaweed and squirming crab.

Swanson and Commissioner Bradford peer inside.

Lucille Westenra's body is no where to be found.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CARRIAGE -- AFTERNOON

Swanson thumbs through Harker's datebook. He flips to its front.

The top of a calendar page reads: "1899 - JAN 15TH - MET WITH RENFIELD, SEWARD, HOLMWOOD AND MORRIS REGARDING BUKOVINA."

Swanson lowers the book from his face in puzzlement.

CUT TO:

INT. CARFAX ASYLUM -- UNDERGROUND -- CONTINUOUS

SCREAMING inmates are being rounded up and straight jacketed by orderlies wielding high powered WATER HOSES.

Seward has a handkerchief at his mouth. Swanson follows him through the wet stone dungeon of the sanitarium and its many corridors.

SWANSON

What's happened, doctor?

DR. SEWARD

Mr. Renfield convinced the others to begin eating rats. Disease spreads quickly underground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON

It's come to my attention one of the victims, Jonathan Harker, was an acquaintance of Renfield's.

DR. SEWARD

Prior to losing his mind, Mr. Renfield found employment as a solicitor at Harker's same firm.

SWANSON

Harker's date book mentioned a meeting they had only days before Renfield was committed. It concerned a place called Bukovina. Are you familiar?

Dr. Seward's eyes narrow with concern.

DR. SEWARD

Should I be?

SWANSON

It's deep in the Carpathian wilderness. At the very heart of Romania.

DR. SEWARD

Inspector, if you've a point to make beyond a geography lesson, I'd appreciate you coming to it.

SWANSON

Harker had a map on his person the night of his murder. A map he told a Chinaman held the location of an enormous fortune.

DR. SEWARD

I'll repeat myself. If you've a point to -

SWANSON

My point is, Harker's date book references you too attended the Bukovina meeting.

Dr. Seward stops walking, annoyed. Swanson looks him square in the eyes.

SWANSON

Is there anything you'd care to share regarding what was discussed?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. SEWARD

Our meeting concerned the acquisition of land abroad. Nothing more. After all, the men were dually licensed solicitors. Jonathan Harker since became a hopeless opium addict. I should very much think tales of mysterious countries and lost treasure are merely the deranged ramblings of a desperate man.

They walk to the gate leading to the prisoner gallery.

DR. SEWARD

Have you finished your interrogation of me, Chief Inspector?

SWANSON

For now.

Swanson moves into the

PRISONER GALLERY

and passes Renfield's cell.

Renfield has been strung up by the long sleeves of his soiled straight jacket. A leather BRANK tightly wrapped around his head and a silver bit shoved down his throat.

JACK (O.S.)

Seems he's been rather naughty.

Swanson walks to

JACK'S CELL

where the hulking behemoth sits waiting in the shadows.

JACK

Evening, Boss.

Jack sniffs the air.

JACK

Come from the wharf then, have we?

SWANSON

You were right. He hid aboard an immigration ship. Seems he infected the entire crew.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Jack leaps from shadow into light. A psychotic twinkle in his eye. His face covered in purple bruises.

JACK

Our collaboration's already bore fruit then, has it? Rotten as it is.

SWANSON

Who gave you those bruises?

JACK

Result of the good doctor's more adventurous methods.

Jack puts a meaty finger to his temple.

JACK

Where were we then? Ah, yes, Leechy pullin' his blood debt from those poor souls.

SWANSON

What do you mean, blood debt?

Jack smiles knowingly. Swanson leans closer.

SWANSON

Go on.

JACK

You've somethin' to trade me then have you, Boss?

SWANSON

Looking for absolution, Jack?

JACK

Absolutely not. I want a chat with your second half. The tastier one.

Jack smacks his lips.

JACK

The doctor.

SWANSON

That's ludicrous. I'd never allow it.

Jack returns to the murky shadows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JACK

Pity. See you in hell then, Chief Inspector.

Swanson becomes upset, his steeling demeanor momentarily pierced.

SWANSON

You'll rot in here first, Jack.
New century coming. What mechanical tortures do you imagine Dr. Seward will have dreamt up by the time you're gumming porridge and soiling pants?

JACK

You're frustratin' me, Boss.

Jack's voice quiets to a whisper.

JACK

Them letters I sent you. Back when I was earnin' my trade name. Tried to write 'em in different ink first. Saved some of the proper red stuff I bled from a cunny in a ginger beer bottle to write with. Went thick as glue, it did. Useless. Tasteless. So I sent you her face by post instead.

Jack leans into the light, eyes ablaze with rage. Foam collecting at his mouth.

JACK

Frustration's what got me collectin' pieces of those sluts to begin with!

Swanson remains stoic.

Jack nods to Swanson's long eye scar.

JACK

Branded. Like cattle. Leechy'll do the same. We'll all be flatmates in the pit, you think? Seward as well? Dr. Doper. He's got secrets worth killin' for.

Dr. Seward enters through a creaky metal gate. Jack calms down, slinking back into the shadows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JACK
Speak of the devil.

Seward turns to Swanson, rubbing his clothed arm uncomfortably.

DR. SEWARD
You've a visitor above ground.

Seward leads Swanson away. Jack's shouts echo across the gallery.

JACK
Not a word more from me, Boss.
Not without an even trade.

EXT. CARFAX ABBEY -- MOMENTS LATER

Dr. Nightingale waits patiently by a POLICE CARRIAGE. A young NURSE in a white uniform leads Swanson from the entrance.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Commissioner Bradford said I'd
find you here. We're late for our
appointment.

SWANSON
Oh?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Found some unusual anomalies in
that sample I took from The
Midnight Oil. There's a Dutch
professor at Oxford who -

The nurse at Swanson's side can hardly contain her excitement. She turns to Nightingale.

NURSE
Sorry to interrupt. Wanted to
thank Dr. Nightingale. For
representin' fellow sisters of the
gown such as meself.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
You flatter me.

Nightingale removes a RED-CROSS LAPEL from her coat and pins it to the nurse's gown. The woman blushes and curtsies, rushing to return to the manor.

Nightingale turns to Swanson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's distracted by a window above the manor. Curtains part. Dr. Seward peeks out from behind them, watching.

SWANSON

Let's go.

They both pull themselves into the carriage. The COACH DRIVER snaps his creaky leather reins and they trot off.

INT. SWANSON'S CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Swanson and Nightingale face each other. Swanson appears distracted, the gears of his mind twirling.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Pence for your thoughts?

SWANSON

He's hiding something.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Who?

SWANSON

Seward, the asylum's director.

He's knows more than he's let on.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Who have you been visiting at that dreadful place?

Swanson looks out the carriage window, into the gangrene sky.

SWANSON

This professor we're visiting,
what can you tell me about him?

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Works at Oxford. Specializes in eccentric disease. He's a sort of metaphysical physician.

SWANSON

You have confidence in his abilities?

DR. NIGHTINGALE

He's second to none. Hematology is his speciality.

SWANSON

Hema-what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. NIGHTINGALE
He's a blood doctor.

Dr. Nightingale sweeps a bit of dust from her dress.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Funny, isn't it?

SWANSON
What's that?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Never imagined we would be working
together. Not after things ended
between us so...
(finding the words)
...abruptly.

SWANSON
You departed to protect the world.
I stayed to protect London.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Must you always deliver such a
clinical assessment of things?

He smiles.

SWANSON
As a doctor, it surprises me you'd
be uncomfortable with such an
approach.

Nightingale falls back into her seat, exasperated.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Useless.

EXT. OXFORD UNIVERSITY -- LATE AFTERNOON

A Ruskinian Gothic cathedral of steep needle spires
surrounded by trembling shrubbery.

Swanson and Nightingale pass the school's blue and brass
seal: "DOMINUS ILLUMINATIO MEA (THE LORD IS MY LIGHT)."

They continue past the lush contents of Oxford's WALLED
GARDEN to a red-brick silo strangled by twisting thorns
of ivy.

INT. LAB -- CONTINUOUS

Hundreds of GLASS RECEPTACLES filled with every conceivable shade of smooth vermillion blood are stacked across the annular space to the ceiling.

Complex CHEMISTRY SETS filled with colored liquids, DISTILLING COLUMNS and CONDENSERS. Detailed MEDICAL ILLUSTRATIONS of cross-sectioned human anatomy.

At the room's center stands DR. ABRAHAM VAN HELSING (50s), an eccentric, live wire of a man with a trimmed goatee wearing an olive frock coat.

Across his face are oversized spectacles with extra lenses of various magnification.

Van Helsing is bent over a MONSTROUS MAN seated shirtless on a wooden stool. The man's back is turned.

Swanson and Nightingale quietly enter, watching the doctor as he works.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
(whispering)
Fascinating.

Van Helsing uses a caliper to measure the grossly asymmetrical appendages of the man. The doctor speaks with a Dutch accent.

DR. VAN HELSING
Impressive. A clear reduction in their size since we began. Your current line of treatment shall continue as scheduled.

Nightingale accidentally thumps into a table, unsettling some equipment with a loud CLANK.

Van Helsing lifts the lenses of his spectacles, squinting.

DR. VAN HELSING
Who goes there?

Swanson and Nightingale step forward.

SWANSON
Chief Inspector Swanson and Dr. Nightingale. We had hoped to ask you a few questions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. NIGHTINGALE
We have an appointment.

DR. VAN HELSING
You're late.

Van Helsing looks down to his patient.

DR. VAN HELSING
You may dress now, Mr. Merrick.

The patient twists to look at Swanson and Nightingale, his features clarifying. He is London's infamous, severely deformed JOSEPH MERRICK A/K/A THE ELEPHANT MAN.

SWANSON
We'll wait.

INT. VAN HELSING'S OFFICE -- LATER, CONTINUOUS

The Professor buzzes about his various experiments. He sips a steaming cup of amber tea, absentmindedly sketching impressions on a sheet of paper.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Thank you for meeting with us, Dr. Van Helsing. We understand you're very busy.

DR. VAN HELSING
I understand you came from Carfax Abbey.

Swanson attempts to hide his surprise.

SWANSON
That's correct.

DR. VAN HELSING
Dr. Seward was an old pupil of mine. He studied here at Oxford.

Van Helsing continues writing.

DR. VAN HELSING
Your telegram piqued my interest.
Something about an illness unknown to all medical theory?

Nightingale hands Dr. Van Helsing a small GLASS VIAL filled with blood.

Swanson moves before a series of deformed animals suspended in formaldehyde jars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON

Judging by the company you keep,
I'd think you some sort of monster
hunter.

Van Helsing releases a loud chortle.

DR. VAN HELSING

You've had your head in too many
penny dreadfuls, Chief Inspector.
I deal in the exploration of the
unexplained. Biological and
hypothetical. The monsters I
fight float on the air. Silent
wraiths who can hardly be seen.

Van Helsing holds the vial between his fingers.

DR. VAN HELSING

Shall we view your sample?

MOMENTS LATER

The group enters into a

LIBRARY ROOM

converted into an additional lab space. An enormous iron
and brass MICROSCOPE takes up nearly the entire interior.

Across the walls a series of different sized sterling
silver MIRRORS have been affixed.

DR. VAN HELSING

And what is it you'd hoped to
learn?

Van Helsing holds a fresh BLOOD SLIDE trapped between two
panes of glass.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Anything you can teach us.

Van Helsing places the sample onto the machine's stage.

DR. VAN HELSING

From where did you say this sample
was retrieved?

SWANSON

A murder suspect.

Van Helsing peers into the microscope's eye piece. His
normally squinted eyes expand in stunned horror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

His teacup falls to the floor, shattering into a thousand porcelain shards.

DR. VAN HELSING
God help us all.

Swanson and Nightingale shoot concerned looks to one another.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
What is it, doctor?

Van Helsing falls back into his chair filled with mixed emotions. He quickly twirls a lever.

An aperture pours golden sunlight from the ceiling onto the microscope's stage.

The visual contents of the blood slide bounce across the mirrors of the room like laser light, reflecting and magnifying then clarifying across a far wall.

RED BLOOD CELLS elegantly drift over the bookcases. Each of them sickled shaped, withered and rotted.

DR. VAN HELSING
Before you dances the monster that could topple London.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Have you ever seen such a thing?

Van Helsing strokes his chin with worry.

DR. VAN HELSING
Once before.

He rises to his feet.

DR. VAN HELSING
Come with me. Both of you.

INT. ANTECHAMBER -- UNDERGROUND -- MOMENTS LATER

A dim and dusty Medieval vestibule of crumbling stone and mortar.

Van Helsing leads Swanson and Nightingale by blazing torch.

SWANSON
Where are we going?

They stop at the face of a rusted iron

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VAULT DOOR

protected by crossed cylindrical bronze bolts.

DR. VAN HELSING

To protect research which demands
more perilous investigative
methods.

Van Helsing tends to the combination lock.

The metal bolts release and the bulky door creaks open.

INT. SECRET LAB -- UNDERGROUND -- CONTINUOUS

Musty, humid and cavernous. An extensive range of vaulted brick passages snaked with leaky lead piping and thick steel girders.

Various pieces of LAB EQUIPMENT ring a pool of clear turquoise water. Above the water various IRON CAGES filled with STRANGE ANIMALS have been hung.

SWANSON

What is this place?

Van Helsing turns a knob. With a GENTLE HISS a bank of gaslights along the wall flares to life, illuminating the space.

DR. VAN HELSING

Collapsed railway tunnels built
for the Queen's London
Underground.

Van Helsing moves to a large TERRESTRIAL GLOBE hewn from stone and brass. He rotates the sphere in search of a location.

DR. VAN HELSING

As a younger man, I travelled the globe in search of new disease. One such expedition brought me through the wildest and least known portions of Europe.

He points to a nearly blank section of the globe.

DR. VAN HELSING

At the intersection of Moldavia
and Bukovina.

Swanson's ears perk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He and Nightingale look to the map carved with dense forests. Arced in cursive across its surface:
"TRANSYLVANIAN WILDERNESS."

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

(Each image appears faded and desaturated. A moving memory blanched by time.)

- A younger Van Helsing carries a torch though an eastern European hamlet, glass-eyed villagers disappearing into their dwellings at the sight of him.

DR. VAN HELSING (V.O.)
*Villagers filled with fanciful
tales led me to a crumbling castle
perched atop a steep cliff.*

- Van Helsing carefully approaches the crumbling mouth of a decaying grey castle cloaked in fog.

DR. VAN HELSING (V.O.)
*Inside, lay an unimaginable
horror.*

- Inside the grand halls of the castle, Van Helsing tends to a pale, wrinkled, sickly old man dressed in velvety black robes with a widow's peak of silver hair.

DR. VAN HELSING (V.O.)
*Something that was once a man. An
elderly Romanian nobleman. A
descendant of the Sacred Order of
the Dragon. Vladimir Tepes III.*

- An oil portrait of the diseased man as a youth stares into Van Helsing by candlelight.

DR. VAN HELSING (V.O.)
*A leprous mystic if ever I saw
one. He'd been confined to his
castle after contracting illness
from a flying rodent.*

- A woolly bat flaps its grotesquely large black wings, spreading shadow across the grand halls of the castle.

DR. VAN HELSING (V.O.)
*Despite being a man of
considerable wealth, he'd been
unable to purchase a means to cure
himself.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

- The old man stands before a subterranean vault filled with roughly pressed gold coins and sparkling gems.

DR. VAN HELSING (V.O.)
*Tepes' condition left him with
 something I call "hemolytic
 anemia."*

- Millions of healthy red blood cells drift through an ocean of plasma, quickly wilting purple and green before dissolving away.

BACK TO SCENE

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 He needed blood.

DR. VAN HELSING
 Fresh blood. Nightly. His own supply dying by the day. Sadly, I was not armed with the knowledge or means to cure him. I did however manage to procure a sample of his vital fluids in the hope of one day treating him.

Van Helsing twirls around.

DR. VAN HELSING
 What you see around you is my attempt to remain vigilant, should his affliction ever spread beyond Romania. Now I fear that dark day is upon us.

An unnatural SHRIEK sounds from above. The group looks to the ceiling.

Van Helsing uses a long IRON CLAMP to pull one of the cages from the ceiling.

Inside SCREECHES a hairless, pink skinned animal covered in lesions.

SWANSON
 What the bloody hell is that?

DR. VAN HELSING
 What was lately a rodent. I've infected it with Tepes' disease.

Dr. Nightingale moves close. The animal opens its scarlet eyes and lunges for her ruddy face, claws slashing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. VAN HELSING
It wishes to feed.

Van Helsing motions Swanson and Nightingale to another
BRICK CHAMBER MENAGERIE

Inside, dozens of additional cages are filled with all
manner of grotesquely malformed animals.

Bats. Wolves. Dogs. Pale, crimson eyed, hairless, boil
covered and MOANING.

DR. VAN HELSING
All of them do.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Good Lord.

SWANSON
What have you been able to learn
from all this, doctor?

Van Helsing unfurls the fingers of his hand.

DR. VAN HELSING
One: Subjects develop extreme
allergies to sunlight shortly
after exposure.
(gesturing around)
It's why these experiments must be
conducted below ground. Two: An
infected body hibernates if an
alternate source of blood is not
consumed once daily. Three: No
conventional method of treatment
can reverse the affects of the
disease once a subject has become
infected.

Van Helsing removes a short cigar from his vest pocket.

DR. VAN HELSING
If a human carrier is indeed in
London, this unspeakable horror
has already begun to spread. Make
plans to leave the city
immediately.

He strikes a match onto a brick wall and lights tip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DR. VAN HELSING
Or all you hold dear will burn
along with it.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHGATE CEMETERY -- AFTERNOON

A HOSPITAL CARRIAGE threads itself through a labyrinth of plant overgrowth, trotting past large ANGELIC BUSTS and chipped GRAVESTONES.

The coach rests itself ahead of a stone HOLDING CRYPT. TWO MORTUARY ATTENDANTS disembark wielding hot torches.

INT. CRYPT -- CONTINUOUS

The two haggard attendants glide down dark corridors, searching walls lined with cobwebbed caskets.

ATTENDANT #1
We're to transport Jonathan and
Wilhelmina Harker to St. Mary's
for autopsy.

Attendant #2 finds something.

ATTENDANT #2
Here they are.

Both men carefully slide TWO WOODEN CASKETS to the floor - one headpiece carved with "J. HARKER" the other "W. HARKER."

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The caskets are on the floor, where the men make a shocking discovery -

The lids of the caskets have been crushed to wooden splinters - their contents are empty.

ATTENDANT #2
Where's the bodies?

Attendant #1 looks upset.

ATTENDANT #1
Another bleedin' grave robbing.
(storming off)
That's the fourth one this month!

Attendant #2 is about to follow his partner, when he hears something down the other end of the crypt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Swallowing hard, he pulls a torch ahead, expecting the worst.

After a few moments of anxious anticipation -

A small rat scurries out of the shadows.

ATTENDANT #1 (O.S.)
You coming, then?

ATTENDANT #2
I'm coming.

The attendant quickly leaves the crypt, too busy to notice -

Two sets of REFLECTIVE GREEN HUMAN EYES calmly blinking at the other end of the corridor, each pair watching the attendant leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOTANICAL GARDENS, OXFORD -- DUSK, CONTINUOUS

Swanson and Nightingale stroll through the magnificently lush garden of harlequin flowers and stone statues. A shimmering silver pond of lily-pads ripples beside them.

SWANSON
Bit of an alarmist, that Van Helsing is.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
It helps to be prepared. There can be little doubt the sample we provided contains the disease in question.

Dr. Nightingale moves to a blossoming rose. She pulls its cardinal bulb to her nose, inadvertently pricking her finger on a thorn.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Now I've done it.

Swanson uses a handkerchief to tend her bleeding finger. She pulls close to him.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
What an unexpectedly pleasant reversal.

Swanson shakes off Nightingale's advances. She pulls away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON

Dr. Seward met one of the victims about acquiring land in Bukovina. The same place Van Helsing mentioned treating that noble.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

You're implying a frail man of ill health is the one responsible for throwing you from a building?

Swanson's brow furrows with frustration.

SWANSON

This case has become something of a jigsaw. Not all the pieces fit.

Swanson removes Harker's DATEBOOK from his pocket. He flips to the appropriate page and hands it to Nightingale.

SWANSON

Look at this.

Something dawns on Nightingale.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

It appears several men attended this meeting. Seward. Renfield. Holmwood. Morris. Did you mention any of these names to Dr. Seward when you met?

SWANSON

It wasn't my intention to alert Dr. Seward of my suspicions of the other men. They're all somehow connected to what's been happening. I'm sure of it.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Holmwood. Where have I heard that name?

SWANSON

Sir Arthur Holmwood. One of London's wealthiest industrialist.

Nightingale unexpectedly pulls two TICKETS from the datebook. Inked across each in winding calligraphic font: "LE DAMNATION DE FAUST: LYCEUM THEATRE."

She presents the tickets to Swanson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Perhaps additional clues could be
gathered by walking the path of
our victims?

Swanson rubs the tickets between his fingers, ruminating.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Would you like to attend the opera
as my guest, Chief Inspector?
Courtesy of the late Jonathan
Harker.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S CELL, CARFAX SANITARIUM -- NIGHT

Jack is strapped into a spiked Medieval CHAIR OF TORTURE. A rusted iron MASK OF INFAMY is cinched tightly around his face.

Hefty orderlies wielding ELECTRIC PROD POLES hover behind Dr. Seward, who stands on the other side of protective cell bars.

Seward speaks in a jittery voice. He's sweating and disheveled.

DR. SEWARD
You've an iron constitution, Jack.
Such an awful lot of
correspondence you've had with the
Chief Inspector. If you remember,
our agreement was that you'd lead
him along a predetermined path.
Now I find you twisting down a
trail of your own design. What is
it you had hoped to gain from all
this? Your name in the TIMES
again? A transfer from these, our
lovely accommodations?

Jack stays silent.

Seward moves toward the bars, agitated.

DR. SEWARD
Answer me, Goddamn you!

Jack sniffs the air. A glinting silver smile breaks from behind his mask.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

I imagine your friends must smell
almost as badly as you do by now.
The corpsies. How long 'till
Leechy drains you too, doctor?
Tick-tock... Tick-tock... Tick-
tock...

Dr. Seward nervously wipes his sweaty brow.

DR. SEWARD

Far longer than I expect you to
survive in this place.

Seward nods to his orderlies. Two of them plunge
electric prod poles through the cell bars into Jack.

Shocks of electricity SURGE through Jack. He convulses
uncontrollably. Long runnels of blood slide from the
spikes of the torture chair, over its cast iron supports.

Even Seward has difficulty watching.

The orderlies finish. Wisps of acrid smoke crawl from
Jack's blood drenched shoulders.

DR. SEWARD

All men can be broken. Even
animals such as yourself.
Strength of will be damned.
Continue as you have, and I will
see to it the paltry existence
you've clung to here, is shattered
beyond recognition. Perhaps you
can discuss the benefits of such
an approach with your neighbor,
Mr. Renfield?

Jack's torturers are too pre-occupied to see his fingers
slide over and remove a loose spike on his chair.

DR. SEWARD

You should have gathered by now,
he too has been made to see the
light.

Seward looks to his men.

DR. SEWARD

Prepare to go again.

CUT TO:

EXT. COVENT GARDEN DISTRICT -- NIGHT

A moody, cramped thoroughfare of slouching SHACKS. HOMELESS fight with thick flocks of pigeons for crumbs.

The white stone columns of the LYCEUM THEATRE loom in the distance.

A prune-faced OLD GYPSY with blind pallid eyes sits before a cart piled high with trinkets.

Chained beside her are two barking GREY WOLVES. Both occasionally snap at a swarm of velvety orange BUTTERFLIES floating about her cart.

A DARK FIGURE steps out of the shadows, his face obscured by the upturned collar of his highwayman coat and hat.

He approaches the woman. Her snapping wolves instantly calm, crouching in hushed deference to the presence before them.

The gypsy smiles, speaking in a thick Romanian accent.

GYPSY

They like you.

The Dark Figure runs gloved leather hands across her cart of trinkets, searching for something. The sharpened bronze tips of his fingers CLINKING and CLANKING.

The old woman inhales a lungful of air, recognizing a smell.

GYPSY

(in Romanian)

It isn't often I come across a fellow Romanian.

She pulls a potted plant from behind her cart and twists off a sprig of soft grey herbs.

GYPSY

Transylvanian sage. From the old country. Stowed away some seeds when I came to this place.

A butterfly lands onto the sprig and begins feeding. The woman smiles.

GYPSY

The butterflies eat it. Take some.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The shadowy man finds what he's looking for and removes it from her cart. A bulbous GLASS JAR.

The Dark Figure awkwardly grabs the sprig from the woman's hand, crushing the butterfly in the process.

The woman continues to smile, oblivious to the danger.

The Dark Figure fills the gypsy's empty palm with an obscene amount of sparkling GOLD COINS - the same found on Lucille Westernra's drained corpse.

A clap of thunder RUMBLES from afar. Sheets of rain spill from above.

The gypsy sniffs the air once again, her brow wrinkling with worry.

The Dark Figure has disappeared - along with her animals.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET, LYCEUM THEATRE -- NIGHT

BOBBIES wielding wooden rifles and lacquered batons have gathered in a ring around Inspector Swanson and Dr. Nightingale - both of whom are elegantly dressed.

SWANSON

Be on high alert.

A thick-set BOBBIE tips his hat up with a nightstick, befuddled.

BOBBIE

Why here, Chief Inspector?

SWANSON

Our victims appear to have travelled in the same social circles. Until the performance ends, each of you is to rove the grounds on active patrol.

EXT. LYCEUM THEATRE -- NIGHT

A tall structure of fluted Doric columns and chiseled friezes.

Crowds of WEALTHY PATRONS pack into the entrance. Men in their waistcoats and brass topped canes - women in their laced corsets and frilled gowns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A large art nouveau BANNER hangs above them. Across it, a black-caped SATYR descends onto FAUST, its tattered cloak twisting in the wind.

INT. THEATER -- CONTINUOUS

A grand, gilded hall of brilliant gold leaf and rich maroon. THREE TIERS of packed seating surround the floor illuminated by dozens of quivering amber gas lamps.

AT THE BOTTOM TIER

Swanson and Nightingale take their seats among eager attendees. Swanson hands over a pair of shiny OPERA BINOCULARS.

SWANSON

Watch for anything unusual.

Nightingale looks over Swanson, admiring his appearance.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

You look nice, Donald.

SWANSON

Try to remember why we're here.

Nightingale takes the binoculars, disappointed.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Yes, of course. Couldn't have anyone mistaking us for a couple.

Swanson's demeanor softens.

SWANSON

I'm sorry. You look beautiful, Florence. It's an honor to have you by my side.

Her cheeks rose over with flattery.

AT THE TOP TIER

A private VIEWING BOX has been cleared empty.

Inside, a HANDSOME ARISTOCRAT in a tall top hat and crisp tailcoat sits alone. At the exit far behind him, twin INDIAN BODYGUARDS in leaf green turbans stand guard.

AT THE BOTTOM TIER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gas lamps gently dim. The velvet curtains draping the stage draw back. Berlioz's dark opera "LE DAMNATION DE FAUST" begins.

Nightingale lifts binoculars to her face, excitedly watching

THROUGH MAGNIFIED LENSES

as DEMON CREATURES cavort across the stage. BLACK BIRDS on wires descend, flapping over a hellish landscape. A single shaft of light beats down on a solitary FAUST.

Swanson scans the crowd with a watchful eye, searching for anything suspicious.

INSIDE THE VIEWING BOX

The Indian bodyguards sense something. Their eyes narrow. A DARK SHAPE floats in and out of shadow.

Both men split from each other.

They quietly unsheathe jeweled scabbards from their belts, heads swiveling about. Each attempts to locate the wraith at separate sides of the room.

The FIRST GUARD lifts his knife above his head and plunges it into a shadow moving across a far wall.

The scabbard's blade lodges firmly in the stone, hopelessly skewering something furry. A runnel of blood trickles from leathery wings belonging to -

A BAT.

The first guard looks to his brother across the viewing box. Both men's faces wrinkle with confusion.

The opera's thunderous music crescendos with OMINOUS TONES.

Suddenly, two GREY WOLVES leap from the shadows of the viewing box, jaws thick with drool, yellow eyes ablaze.

The animals' knife-sharp jaws tear into both bodyguards' necks, simultaneously unleashing geysers of blood that violently splatter over the walls.

As the wolves feast on their fallen prey, a DARK FIGURE emerges from the seats behind the aristocrat. The LEECH KILLER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He plunges a thick, DUAL PRONGED NEEDLE into the man's jugular.

The Killer quickly connects the needle to a length of tubing secured to a brass BLOOD TRANSFUSION APPARATUS at his feet. The same machine seen earlier in the belfry.

Screwed to the base of the apparatus is an empty GLASS MASON JAR labeled: "ARTHUR HOLMWOOD."

The Killer activates the device. The internal gears WHIRL and SPUTTER to life.

The aristocrat's eyes instantly white over. Rich, dark blood pulls from the man's neck through the tubing into the machine.

The Killer connects a separate length of tubing to another dual pronged needle affixed to the same apparatus.

He momentarily hesitates, then jabs the needle into his own jugular.

The Killer proceeds to give himself a full blood transfusion using Holmwood's vital fluids.

The Killer's diseased blood slowly fills the empty mason jar as the process completes itself.

AT THE BOTTOM TIER

Nightingale is scanning the crowd with her opera glasses.

THROUGH MAGNIFIED LENSES

She tilts up to a private VIEWING BOX. Inside, Holmwood is writhing in shadow, mouth foaming, body violently convulsing.

Glasses in hand, Nightingale leaps from her seat, SCREAMING, pointing to the ceiling.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
The Leech! He's up there!

The violins of the orchestra awkwardly SCREECH to a halt.

Swanson quickly pulls a silver finished pistol from his vest and unloads into Holmwood's viewing box with a PING-PANG-PONG.

INSIDE THE VIEWING BOX

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Swanson's bullets SKITTER around the Killer, shattering wooden moulding to splinters.

A half dozen BOBBIES rush into the viewing box from the exit, rifles drawn.

The Killer is hopelessly cornered.

He quickly grabs the transfusion apparatus and leaps from the bannister!

Coat unfurling, he plummets to the

BOTTOM TIER

onto the proscenium. COSTUMED PERFORMERS scatter past the amber glow of footlights to avoid him.

Bobbies from above wildly fire rounds down to the stage, inadvertently exploding the fiery contents of several gas lamps hung above it.

Hell is unleashed upon the hall.

A spit of fire sprays over the Killer's head and across the stage, igniting sets and props in a curtain of brilliant orange flame.

Several members of the audience are doused with fire in the process.

Filled with terror, the entire auditorium stampedes to the exits.

The crowd pulls Swanson and Nightingale away from the stage.

Swanson desperately attempts to shoot his weapon into the flaming proscenium, but it's no use.

Waves of undulating flame overwhelm the platform, spilling into the orchestra pit and climbing up the tall curtains to the domed ceiling.

The Killer has vanished.

CUT TO:

EXT. LYCEUM THEATRE -- LATER, MORNING

Members of the LONDON FIRE BRIGADE blast streams of cool water from their red spoked carriages over the charred black remains of the theater.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A soot covered Swanson and Nightingale stand beside an AMBULANCE CARRIAGE reined to a Clydesdale.

Swanson is putting the finishing touches on an INK RENDERING of the Killer dressed in a highwayman's coat and hat.

He hands the drawing to a Bobbie.

SWANSON

See to it this makes its way to press.

Swanson and Nightingale move to a CORPSE covered in sheet sitting just ahead of the carriage.

Swanson nods for another Bobbie to remove the sheet.

Beneath it is the terribly burned, melted remains of SIR ARTHUR HOLMWOOD (40s). His skeletal face scorched and twisted in an expression of utter terror.

The Bobbie is overwhelmed by the stench. He drops the sheet, hurling behind the carriage.

Swanson and Nightingale each cover their mouths with rags.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Who was the victim?

SWANSON

Sir Arthur Holmwood.

A glint on Holmwood's burnt neck catches Swanson's eye.

He kneels down to get a better look and pulls a DUAL PRONGED NEEDLE from the man's charred nape.

SWANSON

What's this?

He hands the metallic object to Nightingale.

She carefully inspects it in her hand, slowly realizing what it is.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

A transfusion needle. The same used to treat wounded on the battlefield.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SWANSON

Let us remember, I'm not medically inclined.

She moves close to Swanson, excitement in her voice.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Don't you see? The puncture wounds. The suction. That's what he's been doing.

It dawns on Swanson as well.

SWANSON

Ridding his body of sickness.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Giving himself transfusions using the victim's blood. It's quick. It's quiet. Really, quite brilliant.

The beet red coroner, Dr. Moors, waddles out of a HOSPITAL CARRIAGE and over to the group. He continues gulping for air, out of breath.

DR. MOORS

I came as quickly as I could. The morgue is full. St. Mary's has been overrun with sickness. It's like nothing I've ever seen.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

How do you mean, doctor?

DR. MOORS

A group of passengers riding the London Underground were attacked. Some diseased psychotics living beneath the stations. The bite wounds are beyond comprehension.

Dr. Moors throws back a shot of whisky from his flask.

Nightingale looks to Swanson, worried.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

It's beginning. Just as Dr. Van Helsing warned. We must find the original carrier. He's the key to this all.

A POLICE CARRIAGE trots up to the theater's remains.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Out steps Commissioner Bradford. Flanking him are several MILITARY SOLDIERS on horseback, with their pressed khaki uniforms and ivory Pith helmets.

The Commissioner is fuming.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Jesus Christ, Swanson! You burned
the Goddamn theater to the ground!

Swanson nods to the soldiers.

SWANSON
Who are these men?

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Sir Holmwood was a friend of the
Queen's. Her Majesty's declared
the Royal Army's to take control
of the investigation.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
That's preposterous. We are on
the verge of apprehending this
wraith. Now is not the time to -

The Commissioner stabs a finger into Nightingale's shoulder.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
You forget your place, madam.

Nightingale firmly steps forward.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
And where exactly is that,
Commissioner?

The air charges with tension.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Go home. Both of you.

The Commissioner turns to Swanson.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Scotland Yard has failed London.

A cluster of salivating NEWS REPORTERS swarm the area. Their flash powder SPARKS. Strobes of white light shock the scene.

Commissioner Bradford immediately goes to meet them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Nightingale looks on, disappointed.

Swanson's eyes narrow. He scratches the scar across his eye. A plan begins forming.

SWANSON

Come with me.

He takes Nightingale by the hand and the two get into a POLICE CARRIAGE.

INT. SWANSON'S CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Swanson and Nightingale face each other, braced against the sway of the moving coach.

SWANSON

You wanted to know what I've been doing at Carfax - who I've been seeing?

Swanson looks out the window, into the rising sun.

SWANSON

The man who hacked those women to pieces ten years ago. The one who killed Emily. The Leather Apron of Whitechapel.

Nightingale falls back into her seat, hands rising to her mouth in shock.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

My God, Donald. Jack the Ripper?
You caught him?

SWANSON

Years ago. He's been helping me with this case.

Dr. Nightingale falls back into her seat, stunned and disturbed.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

I'm so sorry. What he did to Emily was...

(finding the words)

...unspeakable. Confronting him must be a horror in and of itself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON

He's stopped cooperating. We're so close to discovering who this cutthroat is, I'd hoped to speak with him one last time.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Then we should proceed to Carfax Abbey with haste. Justice demands it.

SWANSON

He'll only speak with you.

Nightingale blanches.

SWANSON

He's been reading the papers. He knows you're working the case with me. I understand if you -

Nightingale steels herself.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

I'll do it. I'll talk to him. If that's what it takes to finish this.

SWANSON

He's dangerous Florence. A pure psychotic. Are you sure?

DR. NIGHTINGALE

What choice do we have?

Swanson smiles proudly. He opens a window and shouts to the coachman.

SWANSON

To Carfax Abbey!

CUT TO:

INT. CARFAX ABBEY -- AFTERNOON, CONTINUOUS

Swanson and Nightingale quickly move through the handsomely decorated mansion. Several NURSES hover about them in protest.

NURSE

As I said before, Dr. Seward instructed us that no one is to have further contact with Patient 1167.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON
 Where is the good doctor?

NURSE
 Visiting a friend in Hyde Park.

They continue walking. A young NURSE turns to Nightingale, pleading.

NURSE
 Please, Dr. Nightingale - try to understand. Dr. Seward will have us all put out on the streets if we let you -

Nightingale stops, firmly rebuking the women.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 We'll all be dead if you don't let me down there.

A hush falls over the room. Nightingale notices the RED CROSS LAPEL she pinned to the Nurse's gown earlier.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 Do your part in helping contribute to the cause. London's survival hangs in the balance.

The other nurses look to one another, shamed. The young Nurse straightens up.

NURSE
 I'll have the orderlies prepare the patient for you at once, doctor.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 Very good.

Swanson smirks, proud of his partner.

CUT TO:

INT. ASYLUM CORRIDOR -- UNDERGROUND -- CONTINUOUS

Swanson and Nightingale descend the spiral stone staircase, passing flickering torches.

SWANSON
 Seward has been feeding Jack information. We need to know why. What is he hiding?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 I'll do my best.

They move to the rusty iron door of a BOILER ROOM.

SWANSON
 I had the orderlies secure Jack as
 an extra precaution.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 You aren't coming?

SWANSON
 I don't want our history clouding
 the issue.

Swanson puts a hand on Nightingale's shoulder.

SWANSON
 You'll do fine. No one is
 stronger than you. Just don't let
 him get inside your head.

Nightingale exhales a breath of stress.

SWANSON
 I'll be here, waiting.

Nightingale turns to the door and pounds its outsides.

An ORDERLY creaks open the metal door.

INT. BOILER ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

A basement snaked with leaking pipes. Drips of water SIZZLE atop iron BOILERS roaring with flame, their grated cores tossing glowing orange embers across the room.

Jack stands cuffed at the center of the space illuminated by flickering firelight. A demon in waiting.

Around his neck is a thick IRON COLLAR. Three lengths of linked chain have been fastened to it from supports on the ceiling, each held taut by three muscular ORDERLIES.

The door locks behind Nightingale. She slowly steps toward Jack, the heels of her laced boots CLICKING across the stone floor.

Jack looks up, eyes wild.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 My name is Dr. Florence
 Nightingale.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. NIGHTINGALE (CONT'D)
 I've come to speak with you
 regarding the Leech Killer.

Jack stays silent.

Nightingale nervously continues.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 Jack, a sickness brought ashore by
 our killer has begun to spread
 across the city. I'm afraid we're
 a bit short on time.

Jack looks her up and down, smacking his lips. He speaks in a rich, gravely voice.

JACK
 Short on time. Just like them
 eight greasy ladies I cut to
 sleep.

She makes an attempt to ignore Jack.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 I understand you've had some time
 to think on this case. What
 conclusions have you drawn?

Jack chuckles to himself.

JACK
 About Dr. Van Helsing? Lord
 Holmwood?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 (surprised)
 You've been well informed.

JACK
 "Well informed."

Jack loudly chortles.

JACK
 Clever 'lil tramp.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 You know who he is, don't you?
 The Leech.

Jack smiles a mouthful of silver.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

Yes, Leechy. Had my suspicions
for some time.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Who's been murdering these people,
Jack?

JACK

'Aint it obvious?

DR. NIGHTINGALE

How do you mean?

JACK

Who's got a mind full of screws?
Knows all the corpsies? Who has
the gold to make 'em disappear?

Jack leans forward, chains CLINKING.

JACK

The inmate runnin' the asylum.

Nightingale's initially puzzled by the reference.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Dr. Seward? Impossible.

JACK

Bloke's doped to the gills with
that milk of his. The doc. Lost
the plot, he has.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

The killer is a dying man. His
blood has been thoroughly analyz-

JACK

(interrupting)

You've seen that mansion above
this funny farm? All queered up
with fancy trinkets. Whoever has
the gold, makes the rules. How
hard you think it'd be to plant
the rare red stuff into them jars
Leechy leaves you? That
Lowlander, Van Helsing - he taught
Seward. What sort of things he
teach him, you think?

Nightingale pulls back, considering things. The
orderlies shift uncomfortably.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

(The images come in quick hazy bursts. In Nightingale's POV.)

- Nightingale accidentally interrupts Dr. Seward in his study, she sees infected injection marks dotting the collapsed veins of the doctor's arms.

DR. NIGHTINGALE (V.O.)
*I'm here for Chief Inspector
 Swanson. We've an appointment at
 Oxford.*

- Nightingale enters Dr. Van Helsing's lab, gleaming blood jars ring the walls.

DR. VAN HELSING (V.O.)
*The monsters I fight float on the
 air. Silent wraiths who can
 hardly be seen.*

- Nightingale talks to Swanson in a rocking police carriage, Carfax Asylum slowly disappears behind them.

SWANSON (V.O.)
*Seward is hiding something. He
 knows more than he lets on...*

BACK TO SCENE

Jack's tone intensifies. Foam spittle ejects from his rotted mouth.

JACK
 Them doctors've got you and Boss
 chasin' a goose like a couple of
 fuckin' prats. It's been a proper
 good time watchin' you both run
 the merry-go-round together.
 Truly, it has.

Nightingale takes a step back.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 Why would he kill his own friends?

JACK
 Same reason I hacked all them
 cunnies to bits. Swanson's whore
 of a sister included.

Jack leans close, voice hushing to a whisper. His eyes twinkle with psychotic intensity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JACK

It was fun.

(NOTE: The following happens in the span of a few short moments.)

In a burst of feral energy, Jack unexpectedly EXPLODES from his supports!

The chains wrapping him go slack to the floor. The bolts of his neck collar pop open.

Clutching a homemade KNIFE crafted from the loose torture chair spike, he leaps at the three orderlies.

Swanson can be heard desperately pounding at the locked boiler room door, SCREAMING.

With sickening predatory precision, Jack dispenses with each orderly.

He spills the first guard's wriggling entrails across the floor.

He cuts the second guard's throat so deep, the man's head is nearly severed.

He throws the front half of the third guard into an open boiler, cremating his upper torso to cinders.

Now splashed with blood, Jack turns his focus to Nightingale - whose knees shake so violently she can hardly stand.

Jack slinks over to her, circling his prey. He moves close. Smears of the dead men's blood wipe across Nightingale's delicate clothing.

Jack begins unbuttoning Nightingale's jacket, exposing her breasts. Shimmering tears streak down her cheeks. Her pillow lips tremble as she whimpers helplessly.

Swanson's SCREAMING intensifies in the background.

Jack moves inches from Nightingale's face, sniffing the blonde locks of her fragrant hair. He closes his eyes, savoring the scent.

Jack moves close to Nightingale's ear. Goosebumps break across her neck as he prepares to speak - mouth glistening with dark drips of blood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JACK
(whispering)
Brave 'lil bitch.

Jack stretches out his arm for her to see. Eight long TALLY MARKS have been carefully slashed across it.

He takes the rusted tip of his knife and carves a ninth deep into the flesh of his arm.

JACK
You can be my number nine, love.

Jack's slimy tongue slides across Nightingale's cheeks, tasting her salty tears.

He lifts his rusted knife above his head, preparing to plunge it into Nightingale's back, when -

BLAM! A bullet suddenly rips through Jack's shoulder, throwing him to the ground.

Wisps of smoke crawl from the barrel of Swanson's freshly discharged pistol - the now smashed boiler room door liberated from its supports.

The first of several orderlies wielding ELECTRIC PROD POLES rush into the room. They immediately plunge the poles into Jack, electrocuting him into submission.

Jack laughs uncontrollably.

JACK
You're in too deep, Boss!
London'll burn 'cause of you!

Swanson dashes to Nightingale's side, slipping across the blood soaked floor.

He covers her with his jacket and leads her from the room, Jack's ravings echoing behind them.

JACK
She'll burn!

CUT TO:

INT. SWANSON'S CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Swanson and Nightingale brace against the shake of the fast moving coach.

The Inspector stares

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OUTSIDE THE CARRIAGE WINDOW

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

- Across the upper level brick flats, wives nervously pull windows closed and blow out candles.
- On the street, an old couple holding suitcases clutches at a Constable's waistcoat pleading for a way out of the city.
- Down a line of shops, a rowdy crowd has gathered in front of an apothecary, a freshly painted sign nailed to its outside reading: "ANTISEPTIC SOLUTION SOLD OUT!"

BACK TO SCENE

INSIDE THE CARRIAGE

Swanson looks to Nightingale, who remains silently brooding.

The Inspector watches her finish buttoning up a freshly cleaned white NURSE'S UNIFORM borrowed from the asylum.

SWANSON

I'm sorry, Florence.

Nightingale stays silent for a moment, then turns to him.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

It's not you I'm angry with,
Donald.

He moves close, taking up her trembling hands, gently cupping them with his.

SWANSON

You looked the devil in the eye back there and lived to tell the tale. If ever there was a moment to be proud, it is this day.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

We laugh at children. How they claim fear of creatures prowling the night. Of all the places I've been. The things I've seen. I never could have imagined a more horrible nightmare made real.

Nightingale peers through the window as the sun prepares to set on mighty London.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 Monsters really do exist.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS, HYDE PARK -- NIGHT

Loud bursts of colorful FIREWORKS detonate over the swaying elms of Hyde Park.

Beyond the trees lay an expansive, crowded CIRCUS GROUNDS of carnival lights and attractions.

HUNDREDS OF PATRONS pack the area passing glittery women atop leathery elephants and garish clowns dripping with grease paint.

Dr. Seward struggles to weave through the crowd. He looks pale and nervous, dabbing his sweaty forehead with a soaked handkerchief.

DR. SEWARD
 Out of my bloody way.

Seward gets to the tent face of a large, Western-themed attraction: "BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST!"

INT. BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST - CONTINUOUS

A dusty dirt floor is ringed by hundreds of anxious onlookers.

At the center of the ring, a war-weary Native-American in feathers and beads stands alone clutching a tomahawk.

He is the famous Native-American CHIEF SITTING BULL (60s).

The crowd hushes.

SITTING BULL
 (shouting)
 It is through this mysterious power that we too have our being, and we therefore yield to our neighbors, even to our animal neighbors, the same right as ourselves to inhabit this vast land.

A magical explosion of smoke sweeps across the ring. The Chief disappears, and in his place, TWENTY-BRAVES on horseback appear SCREAMING battle cries.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The crowd erupts with clapping.

Seward peers through the smoke. He makes eye contact with a COWBOY across the other side of the ring and goes to meet him

BEHIND THE TENT

where a series of smaller canvas TEEPEES sit.

The two men enter inside one of the dwellings.

INT. TEPEE -- NIGHT

Seward addresses the cowboy, a handsome man dressed in a ten-gallon hat and a long leather duster - QUINCY P. MORRIS (40s).

DR. SEWARD

Quincy, I've come to warn you.

Morris pours two tall glasses of amber whiskey.

His thorny handlebar moustache twitches as he speaks with the thick twang of an American accent.

MORRIS

Good to see you too, Doc. Been a while.

Morris gulps down one of the glasses, unfazed. He offers the other to Seward.

DR. SEWARD

No, I never drink.

Morris happily gulps it down.

MORRIS

What do you want?

DR. SEWARD

Have you not read the papers?

MORRIS

I don't read.

DR. SEWARD

What happened in Romania...

Someone... Some thing has come seeking retribution for what we've done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Morris goes to pour himself another glass, but Seward moves to block him.

DR. SEWARD
They are all dead. Lucy. The Harkers. Even, Holmwood. We're next.

Morris becomes upset, already feeling the effects of his drink.

MORRIS
So be it. Anything that happens, we deserve for what we done.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS -- MOMENTS LATER

Swanson and Nightingale are flanked by Bobbies trailing red-furred BLOOD HOUNDS.

SWANSON
Dr. Jack Seward is our suspect. His intended target: Gunslinger Quincy P. Morris.

Swanson and Nightingale take hold of a blood hound of their own.

Nightingale pulls a bloodied handkerchief and holds it to the animal's snout.

The animal points its slobbery nose to the ground, leading the couple past juggling CLOWNS, roaring TIGERS, Arabian SWORDSMEN, and flaming FIRE-BREATHERS.

Eventually, the pair comes to the face of

MORRIS' TEPEE

The hound BARKS uncontrollably, its target acquired.

Swanson cocks his pistol and shouts out.

SWANSON
Dr. Seward, we know you're in there.

A few moments pass, when -

Dr. Seward emerges from the tent, hands raised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. SEWARD

What the devil do you think you're
doing, sir?

SWANSON

Arresting you for the murders of
Lucy Westenra, Jonathan and Mina
Harker, Arthur Holmwood, and, what
I gather may be Quincy P. Morr -

Suddenly, Morris steps out of the tent behind him,
confused.

MORRIS

What is all this?

Dr. Seward chuckles to himself, smug and confident as
ever.

DR. SEWARD

Surely you don't think me the
killer?

Morris impatiently turns to Seward.

MORRIS

I've got a show to prepare for.
Nice seein' you, as always.

He gives Nightingale a once over, then tips his hat to
the others before moving back into his tent.

Swanson cocks back his pistol. Seward moves close to
him.

DR. SEWARD

Chief Inspector, you made the
awful mistake of letting Jack into
your head. He's replaced your
good sense with warped fantasies
and hollow suppositions. Isn't
his motivation for leading you to
me, obvious? I thought better of
you.

Swanson fills with anger.

SWANSON

You're hiding something, doctor.
I know about Transylvania. The
nobleman. The riches Harker
claimed were there. What
happened?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SWANSON (CONT'D)

Who is this phantom draining each
of you? What've you done to him?

Seward stays silent.

SWANSON

I've half a mind to soften you in
the Yard's cells until you've
explained yourself, sir.

DR. SEWARD

On what evidence? You threaten,
and bluster without cause, Chief
Inspector.

Glass SHATTERING suddenly sounds from inside Morris'
tent.

Nightingale's hound begins barking uncontrollably.

Swanson calls out.

SWANSON

Morris?

No answer.

Swanson moves Seward aside. He cocks his pistol and
slowly enters

INSIDE THE TEPEE

regarding what he sees in stunned horror.

Morris is seated in a chair, eyes rolled white, a broken
whisky bottle at his feet. Two circular wounds bore deep
into his neck. Dead.

A gleaming blood jar sits by his side labeled: "QUINCY
P. MORRIS."

SWANSON

Morris is dead!

Nightingale bursts into the tent.

A few small clouds of steam rise from a SEWER CAP at the
center of the floor.

SWANSON

Down there.

Swanson and Nightingale quickly move back the iron cover.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Nightingale grabs a lantern and the pair descend into...

INT. SEWERS -- CONTINUOUS

...a foggy maze of arch stone passageways slathered with muck and teeming with rats and cockroaches. A trickle of water cuts through.

Long beams of soft colored carnival light filter down from sewer caps lining the ceiling.

Swanson pulls his silver finished pistol, twisting in every direction in search of movement.

Nightingale lifts her lantern ahead.

A group of shadows play across the far end of the tunnel. Soft whispers echo from afar.

Nightingale quietly points forward.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

There.

The pair splashes across the tunnel towards the shadows.

Nightingale loses her footing and trips. She tries to wipe sludge stains off her bleach white nurse uniform.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Disgustingly awful.

Swanson goes to help her. Something catches his eye -

The bony face of a rotting SKELETON dressed in a corset and gown lay at their feet.

He takes Nightingale's lantern and moves it forward.

Dozens of richly clothed skeletal remains litter the floor of the sewer.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

What did this?

They continue moving down the damp corridor, around the bend of the sewer to a

DRAINING CHAMBER

where liquid waste has collected in a large circular pool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Swanson lifts the lantern high, face blanching at the teeming masses before them.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Oh my God.

Dozens upon dozens of INFECTED LONDONERS are hunched over the freshly slain bodies of carnival attendees.

Each hairless, pustule covered leper feasts upon the severed jugular of a glass-eyed victim.

SWANSON

Let's get the hell out of here.

Swanson heaves the lantern at the lepers, igniting the entire chamber in a burst of brilliant orange flame.

MOMENTS LATER - DOWN THE SEWER CORRIDOR

Swanson and Nightingale run, huffing and puffing lung fulls of rotten air.

Wild, pale-skinned, crimson-eyed lepers sprint through the glowing fire behind them, desperate for blood.

Swanson sees light ahead of a section of the tunnel.

Suddenly, a group of equally deranged infected appear there as well.

The lepers close in from both sides of the corridor, swarming the couple from every direction.

Swanson desperately fires into the crowd.

A few lepers are felled, SCREAMING as they crumple to the ground in heaps.

Several of them each begin oddly smoking.

Swanson looks to his pistol with confusion.

Throngs of infected inadvertently push him into a dark opening.

Nightingale turns, watching Swanson descend through the darkness as lepers close in from all sides.

INT. DRAIN PIPE -- CONTINUOUS

Swanson spirals down, coasting on a slick film of water and sewage, rapidly gaining velocity.

INT. SUBWAY STATION, LONDON UNDERGROUND -- CONTINUOUS

Swanson slides out the end of the drain pipe and lands on the wet concrete floor.

Nightingale climbs out of the drain pipe behind him.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

What in God's name was all that!?!?

SWANSON

You tell me, doctor.

Swanson continues searching for any signs of the Killer across the underground subway station.

A path of TRAIN TRACKS cuts through a long stone tunnel. Passengers clutching tickets eagerly wait for a RAIL CAR to arrive.

The rail car comes screeching across the tracks to a stop directly in front of them. Swanson watches as passengers begin loading into it.

Out of the corner of his eye, a DARK FIGURE appears to leap onto the train car from above.

SWANSON

He's boarded the train.

Swanson grabs Nightingale by the hand and pulls her into the car.

INT. RAIL CAR -- CONTINUOUS

A richly decadent Victorian train car filled with velvet sofas, silk curtains and crystal chandeliers.

The train car lurches forward. The chandeliers CLANK overhead.

A few female passengers look on at Nightingale's soiled clothing in disgust.

Swanson searches the crowd. He sees the muddy tip of a broad slouch hat at the far end of the train car.

BLAM! He fires a warning shot into the air.

Startled passengers part ahead of him, revealing -

The LEECH KILLER heaving for breath, his deep crimson eyes staring over a black collar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Swanson cocks his silver pistol and takes aim.

SWANSON

Stop right there. Or I'll shoot
you dead where you stand.

The Killer shouts out in an deep, thick Romanian accent.

KILLER

You have no bullets left to shoot
me with.

Swanson keeps his gun pointed.

KILLER

Besides - what will you do? Let
the woman die?

The Killer tilts his head to Swanson's feet, coat
dramatically billowing from behind.

Nightingale has collapsed. Two small runnels of blood
trickle from her neck. She's been bitten.

Swanson hesitates, slowly kneeling. Nightingale looks
up, reaching for him, helpless.

INSERT CUT: SWANSON'S BLOODY SISTER EMILY REACHES FOR
HIM THROUGH THE DARKNESS.

The rail car arrives at its next stop.

Frightened passengers quickly exit.

Swanson looks up -

The Killer has vanished from sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON (AERIAL) -- NIGHT

The moon floats across the sky like a blue glass
cataract, shooting silver light onto the quiet streets
below.

A storm builds from afar. Hot arcs of white lighting
stab the horizon, giving way to a deep RUMBLE of thunder.

Sewer caps across the city suddenly lift, one by one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out of the darkness, HUNDREDS UPON HUNDREDS of lepers slowly flood the street, silent phantoms spreading across the city like a living plague.

CUT TO:

INT. ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

Rows of nervous family members. NURSES and NUNS buzz about doling out steaming cups of tea.

Among those waiting, Swanson anxiously tugs at the chain of his pocket watch.

Dr. Van Helsing bursts forth from the entrance, out of breath, a MEDICAL BAG at his side. He shouts out to Swanson.

DR. VAN HELSING
Chief Inspector! We've no time to be lost!

INT. CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Swanson and Van Helsing quickly move past overcrowded rooms filled with sick, pale, boil-ridden patients.

DR. VAN HELSING
I came as soon as I received your wire. Where is she? How long since she was bitten?

SWANSON
An hour. Maybe less.

They stop at the opening to a patient's room.

The beet red drunkard, Dr. Moors stumbles out of the entrance, flask in hand.

Terribly savage SCREAMS come from behind him. Moors raises his flask to toast the two men.

DR. MOORS
Good luck.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Cream lace curtains elegantly flutter past an open window sill.

Several nurses are bent over a bed holding Dr. Nightingale. Her skin is milk-white and glistening with beads of sweat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She struggles in terrible pain, purple veins throbbing.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Help me! God help me!

Swanson and Van Helsing rush to her side.

Van Helsing sets his bag down and quickly checks Nightingales' eyes. They have clouded over solid red.

He gingerly places a hand across her forehead, quickly drawing it back.

DR. VAN HELSING
We must administer a solution at once.

Swanson looks to Van Helsing, confused.

SWANSON
I thought you said there was no cure?

DR. VAN HELSING
You didn't think I'd entrust the result of years of research to a couple I'd just met?

Van Helsing removes from his bag a GLASS VIAL filled with silver crystals suspended in a clear liquid.

DR. VAN HELSING
Her blood boils. Each drop dying by the minute.

Van Helsing screws the vial onto a hypodermic needle.

SWANSON
What is that?

DR. VAN HELSING
A concoction of my own making.
Silver nitrate solution.

Nightingale's back arcs in a burst of agony.

DR. VAN HELSING
The cells of this disease react unfavorably to silver. But, we must be cautious. If hemolysis occurs on the serum, her healthy blood cells will explode.

Swanson turns to Van Helsing, concern in his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SWANSON
You've tried this before then?

DR. VAN HELSING
On animals. Goats. Sheep.

Van Helsing squirts the solution from the tip of a long gleaming needle.

SWANSON
Will it hurt?

He prepares to plunge it into Nightingale's jugular.

DR. VAN HELSING
Incomprehensibly so.

He jams the needle into her neck and squeezes the plunger.

Nightingale's resulting SCREAMS are so terrifying, the other nurses immediately flee the room.

She struggles against the cure, writhing and kicking.

DR. VAN HELSING
Grab hold of her!

Swanson and Van Helsing brace against Nightingale to calm her.

Her veins raise, each coursing with silver nitrate. Fine wisps of smoke crawl from the surface of her sizzling skin.

Then, Nightingale begins settling, gasping for breath.

Swanson moves close, lovingly squeezing Nightingale's hand tight against his.

SWANSON
I'm here Florence. I'm here...

Van Helsing is distracted by the distant sound of building chaos.

DR. VAN HELSING
Hold her close, Chief Inspector.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Van Helsing is at the window sill clutching a golden CRUCIFIX. Across his eyes dance long tendrils of rising flame.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. VAN HELSING
God save the Queen. It has begun.

Swanson kisses Nightingale on the forehead, then moves to Van Helsing's side.

SWANSON
Watch Dr. Nightingale.

He hands Van Helsing a wax sealed ENVELOPE.

SWANSON
When she wakes, give this to her.

DR. VAN HELSING
Where will you go?

SWANSON
Carfax Abbey.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

London is burning. Carriages have overturned.
Storefronts are shattered.

Throngs of terrified citizens scatter across the streets,
diseased, ravenous lepers in fast pursuit.

A fork of lightning stabs BIG BEN'S spire, giving way to a torrent of rain.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSIC ROOM, BUCKINGHAM PALACE -- NIGHT

Queen Victoria sits at her piano by candlelight, solemnly tapping at the ivory keys alone, unable to see London burning ahead of the story-high windows before her.

A shimmering tear falls from her wrinkled face, delicate orange flames reflecting across it.

A ROYAL GUARD adorned with medals approaches her.

ROYAL GUARD
It's time, your Majesty.

EXT. BUCKINGHAM PALACE -- MOMENTS LATER

Scores more ROYAL GUARDS on horseback encircle the Queen's STATE COACH of teak wood gilded in gold leaf.

A group of subjects holding umbrellas lead the Queen to her carriage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She nods to the highly decorated COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of the British Military approaching the carriage flanked by groups of heavily armed SOLDIERS.

QUEEN VICTORIA

I will to you the authority to
take control of our city,
Commander. God be with you.

The Commander watches eight horses break into a trot, pulling the reflective coach away from the palace to safety.

Behind the Commander, additional soldiers wheel MAXIM MACHINE GUNS out of several ammunition-filled WAR WAGONS gathered in front of the palace.

COMMANDER

We will not fail you, your
Highness.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARFAX ABBEY -- NIGHT

A watery blanket of rain soaks everything it touches.

The imposing manor sits dark and dormant. Its windows are shattered. Gas lamps no longer hiss with flame.

Swanson and a half dozen BOBBIES wielding rifles on horseback arrive. They quickly kick down the front door.

INT. CARFAX ABBEY -- CONTINUOUS

It's deathly quiet save for the sound of rain and thunder building outside.

Each of the men hold glowing gas lamps to their faces, weaving through the mansion.

The interior has been ransacked. Paintings hang crooked. Walls are smashed. The once roaring fireplace weakly pulses with dying embers.

A hot shock of lighting suddenly illuminates the room.

Bloodied, mutilated NURSE CORPSES litter the floor, their limp bodies already buzzing with flies.

Swanson kneels to a nurse's corpse. Her neck has been slashed to the spine. A lump crawls into his throat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON
Knife wounds. All of them.

The men come to Dr. Seward's office door. Swanson slowly creaks it open.

INT. SEWARD'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

A harsh wind whips through the darkened doctor's office, swirling papers across the room. Someone is seated in the doctor's chair, his back turned.

Swanson carefully turns the chair.

In it sits the rasping, terribly slashed body of Dr. Seward. His shirt is soaked in blood. A broken off morphine needle juts from his withered arm.

The men quickly circle the doctor.

Red spit bubbles at Seward's mouth as he attempts to speak.

DR. SEWARD
(weakly)
Those grotesques. They
overwhelmed the manor.

The other officers hush. Swanson moves close.

SWANSON
Where is Jack, Doctor Seward?

DR. SEWARD
Gone.

Swanson's eyes widen with uneasy realization. He begins dabbing the doctor's forehead with a white silk handkerchief.

SWANSON
Help us save the city.

DR. SEWARD
It's too late.

SWANSON
(angry)
It's not too late, Goddamn you!
Tell me who's responsible for this
madness. Make peace with your
creator.

Seward motions Swanson closer, whispering at his ear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

(Each morphine induced hallucination appears warped and distorted, twisting in on itself and reversing. Voices echo alternately and quickly clarify.)

- R.N. Renfield walks into Jonathan Harker's office beaming, a tattered map in his hands. He flips a roughly pressed gold coin onto Harker's desk.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)

A year ago, R.N. Renfield approached Jonathan Harker with a treasure map he'd acquired while abroad.

- Harker sits with Dr. Seward in a less opulent Carfax Abbey. Lucy Westenra stands behind Seward, hand at his shoulder. Harker hands over the map.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)

We decided to organize an expedition.

- In a dimly lit pub, Harker, Seward, Holmwood and Morris raise frothy beer glasses to the ceiling.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)

Harker provided the map. Holmwood funded the voyage. Morris offered protection.

- Renfield watches outside the pub as the men celebrate.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)

Renfield discovered our plot and became enraged.

- Renfield foams at the mouth, red faced, screaming at Jonathan Harker on the steps of his flat. Mina Harker nervously watches from parted curtains.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)

So I had him committed to my asylum.

- Muscled orderlies pull a straightjacket onto Renfield and drag him kicking and screaming into the dark corridors of the asylum.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)

After several weeks journey, we came to a crumbling castle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

- Holding torches, the group approaches the snowy mouth of a stone fortress.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)
A weak old nobleman lay inside. A leprous wretch villagers called "Dracula."

- Morris slams the butt of his rifle against Vlad Tepes III's face, splashing dark blood and white teeth across the marble floor.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)
The bowels of his castle held unimaginable riches.

- The group enters a subterranean vault of ruined statues and overturned trunks filled with sparkling gold coins and twinkling gems.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)
We filled our coaches...

- Harker, Seward and Holmwood finish loading the last of the gleaming treasure into an overstuffed carriage. Morris approaches the castle with a roaring torch.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)
...and burned the castle...

- The lantern-lit carriage filled with treasure pulls away, the castle behind it now consumed in flame.

DR. SEWARD (V.O.)
...with the old man still dying inside.

- Tepes III's melted body dissolves in flame, his horrific screams echoing through the blazing inferno.

BACK TO SCENE

Seward gasps for breath. Swanson looks on, confused.

SWANSON
If you killed him, who is seeking retribution against you?

Seward pulls Swanson close.

DR. SEWARD
His steward.

Swanson glances to the other Bobbies, concerned.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. SEWARD
A soldier in the Romanian army.
His half-brother.

Seward clenches Swanson's collar tight, his dying words a final, pain-filled gasp.

DR. SEWARD
Graf Orlok. Nosferatu.

Seward goes slack. His eyes glaze over. Dead.

Swanson steps back, mind racing. A BOBBIE nervously speaks.

BOBBIE
What now, Chief Inspector?

Swanson scans across the room to an open window. Foggy London burns bright in the distance.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- A group of soldiers hastily crank a loud warning siren atop a water tower overlooking the city, its alarm ringing across the rain drenched metropolis.
- Ships overflowing with wealthy passengers struggle to pull from London's docks, a riot of blood-thirsty lepers overwhelming each.
- Downtown, masses of people from all classes scream as they attempt to escape the blazing city, carriages overturning, horses running free.
- Billowing newspapers float through the broken, flaming city. Swanson's sketch of the Leech Killer is accompanied by a headline: "LEECH BURNS LONDON!"
- Thousands of infected lepers glide through the maze of flaming buildings, savagely biting at the necks of men and women helpless to defend themselves.
- A group of Bobbies fire wildly at an infected crowd gathered around them. The crimson-eyed savages overwhelm them in one push.
- From war wagons the Commander of the Army signals his men to begin firing into crowds, their maxim machine guns tearing leper flesh to bloodied bits of red meat.
- A leper ferociously laps at a geyser of blood flowing from the open throat of an elegantly dressed woman, hundreds more infected rising from the sewers behind him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

END MONTAGE

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- LATER, NIGHT

The building has been abandoned. Gas lamps sputter winks of light across the room.

Nightingale lies in a hospital bed, recovering.

Van Helsing sits by her bedside, puffing hot the cherry of his cigar while he keeps an anxious vigil.

Nightingale flinches, and blinks her eyes groggily as she slowly awakes.

DR. VAN HELSING
How do you feel?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Dreadfully awful. What...
happened?

DR. VAN HELSING
You were infected by illness
coughed forth from the darkest
corners of Europe. The city has
since been overwhelmed by it.

Nightingale anxiously lifts herself up.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Where's Donald... Chief Inspector
Swanson...?

DR. VAN HELSING
Gone. To Carfax Abbey. He
instructed me to give you this.

Van Helsing hands over a wax sealed ENVELOPED.

Nightingale opens it. In quickly scrawled font, a note reads: "LEAVE THE CITY. NEVER LOOK BACK. YOURS ALWAYS,
DONALD."

DR. VAN HELSING
He loves you, I think. Meanwhile,
we sit here fiddling while Rome
burns.

Nightingale rises to her feet. She begins pulling on clothing behind a DRESSING SCREEN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. VAN HELSING
We will need to leave London at
once. I'm afraid the city is all
but lost.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
You are mistaken, doctor.

Nightingale steps from behind the screen, fully dressed.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
You cured me, which means there is
still hope.

Nightingale looks to Van Helsing's MEDICAL BAG opened at
the floor.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
How much more do you have?

DR. VAN HELSING
Enough. But we lack a proper
method of distribution.

Nightingale's gaze is drawn by the flutter of a gas lamp.
A thought strikes her mind.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
On the contrary.

She tosses Swanson's letter into the lamp and watches it
curl black with flame.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Come with me, doctor.

DR. VAN HELSING
Where?

DR. NIGHTINGALE
To Carfax Abbey.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS, LONDON -- CONTINUOUS

Nightingale and Van Helsing each race by horseback
through the bloody chaos of London's streets, dodging
lepers hunched over feeding on pale corpses.

An injured CONSTABLE waiving a NEWSPAPER leaps in front
of the pair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONSTABLE
 (hysterical)
 I've seen him! I swear it! God
 help us all!

The Constable points to the ILLUSTRATION of the Leech
 Killer on the front page of the TIMES LONDON.

CONSTABLE
 That black devil went into the
 clock tower!

DR. VAN HELSING
 Are you sure of it?

Nightingale looks to Van Helsing, wary.

DR. VAN HELSING
 We've no time.

Nightingale extends a hand down to the police man, skirt
 dramatically flowing in the storm.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
 Get on!

CUT TO:

EXT. CARFAX ABBEY -- NIGHT

A battalion of BRITISH SOLDIERS led by square jawed
 COLONEL BRYAN MAHON (40s), approach the grounds on
 horseback.

Commissioner Bradford and SCOTLAND YARD INVESTIGATORS
 ride at their side.

They all quickly dismount and rush inside.

INT. SEWARD'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Swanson and his men are interrupted by the soldiers.
 Colonel Mahon and Commissioner Bradford step forth.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
 I've come to evacuate you from the
 city.

SWANSON
 Jack's escaped. The Leech killer
 is a Transylvanian soldier named
 Graf Orlok.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
It's out of my hands, Donald.

COLONEL MAHON
London's been placed on mandatory
quarantine by authority of Queen
Victoria. If dying is what you
wish, remain here.

He looks to the other Bobbies.

COLONEL MAHON
Any among you hoping to see
another sunrise will come with us.

Van Helsing and Nightingale suddenly rush into the room
out of breath, the bloodied Constable at their side.

Swanson turns to Nightingale.

SWANSON
What are you doing here, Florence?

Nightingale removes from Van Helsing's bag, a large GLASS
CYLINDER filled with silver shards suspended in liquid.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
It's not too late to save London.

Commissioner Bradford bristles.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Have you not seen what's become of
the city?

DR. VAN HELSING
How long until this madness
spreads beyond London? One night
more and there may not be an
England left to defend.

Nightingale turns to the Swanson.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Dr. Van Helsing's cure works, as
evidenced by my own recovery. We
need only mingle it with the coal
at the Metropolitan Gasworks
facility. Enough of his compound
will spread across the city
through London's gaslight network,
to cure most everyone infected.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SWANSON
Will that actually work?

Van Helsing lights up a fresh cigar.

DR. VAN HELSING
What other alternative do you propose?

Swanson steps toward Colonel Mahon.

SWANSON
How many men could you afford to spare, Colonel?

COLONEL MAHON
However many are required to take back control of London.

Van Helsing pushes forward the bloodied Constable.

DR. VAN HELSING
There's more. This gentleman claims to know the location of the killer's inner sanctum.

SWANSON
Where is he, Constable?

The Constable points a broken finger through an open window - the needle spires atop the glowing face of BIG BEN illuminated by the fire below.

CONSTABLE
The clock tower.

A soldier tosses a rifle to Swanson.

SWANSON
London's defense now falls to us.

The Inspector quickly checks the barrel, then snaps it shut.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS, LONDON -- CONTINUOUS

Bits of ash aimlessly drift past smashed storefronts and bloodied lepers like apocalyptic snow.

Colonel Mahon leads a CARAVAN of quickly moving horses and WAR WAGONS weaving through the burning city, a tattered UNION JACK flapping in the breeze.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIERS wielding high-powered MAXIM MACHINE GUNS mow a path ahead of the caravan, tearing apart diseased LEPERS with a steady stream of silvery ammunition.

Behind the wagon, Swanson, Nightingale, Van Helsing and the others gallop at full speed atop muscled steeds - dodging felled bodies and spent brass shell casings.

The group comes to a fork in the road. Nightingale, Van Helsing and a UNIT OF SOLDIERS divert toward the METROPOLITAN GAS WORKS facility.

Swanson, Commissioner Bradford and SCOTLAND YARD INVESTIGATORS push on toward BIG BEN.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOF, BIG BEN CLOCK TOWER -- NIGHT

The Killer crouches at the edge of an eave overlooking London, his black highwayman coat beating in the rainy tempest.

A beautifully catastrophic, vertiginous panorama of the smoldering city lay ahead of the steeples.

His scarlet eyes narrow to thin slits, observing
BELOW

as Swanson and his cavalcade of investigators arrive at the base of the clock tower.

EXT. TOWER BASE -- NIGHT

Swanson and his men reach the entrance. They all dismount, rifles and pistols at the ready.

The Commissioner signals for several men to stay behind.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
We'll ensure the bleedin' parasite
doesn't attempt an escape.

The Commissioner shouts out.

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
Tonight, we prove Scotland Yard's
worth!

They all raise rifles to the sky. The Commissioner turns to Swanson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMMISSIONER BRADFORD
For England.

SWANSON
Yes sir.

Swanson throws his weight at the door, smashing open its supports.

He and FIVE MEN swarm into the tower.

INT. STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

A tall wooden staircase twists to the BELFRY.

The group carefully ascends the stairs, howling winds and torrential rain battering the spire from outside. A deep rumble of THUNDER booms overhead.

Suddenly, a maelstrom of screeching BATS explodes from the ceiling. Teeming hordes fill the air, tearing at the men's skin and clothes.

SWANSON
(screaming)
Push through them!

The group fights through the flapping, squawking mass of wings and fangs.

INT. BELFRY -- NIGHT

A shadowy space of arched metal ceilings and cranking gears.

BIG BEN'S enormous, bronze-webbed CLOCK FACE ticks away, the city burning bright through its opaque center.

Several stories-high IRON BELLS hang from above, their knotted ropes twirling. Runnels of cold rainwater splash from the ceiling into puddles on the floor.

Swanson and his men enter out of the staircase, weapons pointed.

They quickly search the belfry before coming to the CLOCK FACE

where the LEECH KILLER stands silhouetted, back turned overlooking the city.

Swanson moves ahead, rifle aimed at the Killer's back. He shouts out with steely conviction.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON
 (echoing)
 Graf Orlok of Transylvania! We
 have you surrounded!

The Killer calls out in a thick Romanian accent.

KILLER
 You have come to escort me to the
 gates of hell?

He slowly discards a tattered highwayman coat and hat, which falls to the floor like a second skin. Neck craning, he reveals himself to the men.

A jolt of white lighting illuminates the Killer's naked upper torso and hideous visage -

GRAF ORLOK A/K/A NOSFERATU (40s), a living nightmare. Bald headed with deep, blood-red eyes. A sinewy muscled frame of deformed flesh covered in open lesions. Two large, rodent-like front teeth hang over his bottom lip.

The men swallow hard, each cocking their weapons.

Swanson remains steadfast.

SWANSON
 On your knees.

Orlok raises his leather gloved hands, each finger tipped with razor sharp bronze nails.

ORLOK
 Look around you, my friends.

The blazing fire engulfing London radiates behind him.

ORLOK
 Hell has come to London.

CUT TO:

EXT. METROPOLITAN GASWORKS -- NIGHT

Tall towers spew black clouds of coal smoke twisting into the stormy sky.

Nightingale, Van Helsing and a group of ARMED SOLDIERS led by Colonel Mahon gallop by horseback past the opened front gate.

They slow near the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FACTORY

where flickering gas jets illuminate the CORPSES of several FACTORY WORKERS lying strewn about, necks torn.

COLONEL MAHON
Keep a watchful eye.

They pass through the factory's doors.

INT. FACTORY -- NIGHT

Gas lamps illuminate an expansive network of IRON PIPES, steaming ENGINES, pumping PISTONS and roaring FURNACES.

DOZENS OF LEPERS feed on the FACTORY WORKERS by gaslight. Splashes of dark blood gloss equipment where the men once worked.

Nightingale, Van Helsing and the others slink behind a CONDENSER.

UP AHEAD

A series of huge metal COAL BINS sit.

The coal inside a bin sifts downward, falling between TWO ROLLING MASHERS which pulverize it into tiny pieces. The resulting gas is sucked into large iron pipes.

AT THE CONDENSER

Nightingale points forward, whispering.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
There. The mixers.

Colonel Mahon turns to his soldiers.

COLONEL MAHON
We'll create a phalanx formation around the doctors. Lay to the ground anything that moves outside of it.

The sweaty soldiers encircle Nightingale and Van Helsing. They all quietly cock their weapons.

Colonel Mahon prepares to signal.

COLONEL MAHON
Go!

The group carefully enters onto the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FACTORY FLOOR

toward the mixers.

Salivating, wild-eyed infected swarm from every direction, more leaping out from steaming machinery.

The soldiers unload their weapons at anything that moves. Rifles loudly CRACKING in precise synchronicity.

A ballet of carnage ensues.

Bullets fly through hot clouds of gunpowder, tearing gory holes through anything caught in the cross-fire.

Several lepers manage to penetrate the firing phalanx, overtaking a few soldiers, pinning them to the ground and feasting on their opened jugulars.

The circle of soldiers surrounding the doctors tightens, slowly shrinking.

CUT TO:

INT. BELFRY -- NIGHT

Swanson and his men still have their weapons locked on Orlok.

SWANSON

This madness ends tonight.

Orlok knowingly smirks.

ORLOK

You are more right than you know.

He purses diseased lips releasing a shrill high-pitched WHISTLE.

Two yellow-eyed gypsy WOLVES leap from the shadows, fur matted, pink gums foaming.

They viciously attack, SMASHING two men to the ground, burying their razor-sharp muzzles into warm flesh.

The other men quickly react, spraying bullets at Orlok.

He somersaults around the shadows, dodging the rounds with fluid, effortless grace.

Several stray shots SHATTER the glass clock face behind the wraith, inviting the raging thunderstorm into the belfry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the icy winds of the storm soak the space, Orlok dispenses with the remaining THREE MEN.

With his bronze claws, he lacerates the first man's neck, splitting it like ribbons of marbled meat.

He plunges two fingers into the second man's face, skewering his eyeballs. Tears of thick blood disgorge from the man's empty eye sockets as he howls in pain.

Orlok lunges at the third man, gnashing his yellow teeth. He tears a gaping wound into the man's throbbing throat lapping fresh blood from an open vein before discarding the remains down the staircase.

A SHOCK of lightning illuminates the wide mouthed, bug eyed corpses of Scotland Yard's elite at Orlok's feet.

He turns, face splattered with blood. The wolves trot to his side, bits of flesh and smatters of blood caught in their grey coats.

Orlok's scarlet eyes dart about as he searches the belfry for Swanson.

He enters a

MAZE OF CLOCK GEARS

each oily cog CRANKING away with a TICK. TICK. TICK. TICK.

Orlok calls out to the shadows, voice echoing.

ORLOK

London cannot escape her destiny -
and neither can you, my friend.

Orlok SCREECHES his talons across the grimy metal of a rotating cog, brilliant orange SPARKS arcing away from their glimmering tips.

CUT TO:

INT. FACTORY -- NIGHT

Dozens more bloodied lepers have gathered around the group, fingers reaching, mouths parched and sticky.

Only Colonel Mahon, Nightingale, Van Helsing and one soldier remain.

The grated STAIRS leading to the UPPER DECK above the COAL BINS is just within reach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Colonel Mahon smashes the butt of his rifle against a gas VALVE, breaking it off. GAS FUMES hiss out in an invisible stream.

The lepers have had enough. Colonel Mahon can see it in their eyes.

In a flash, the infected blitz the group.

Colonel Mahon tosses his weapon and unsheathes his SWORD, hacking and stabbing, screaming to the others.

COLONEL MAHON
Go! You're London's only hope
now!

The lepers quickly overwhelm the Colonel, tearing at his uniform and eating into him like a pack of ravening wolves.

His sword comes down across a pipe, shooting a spark into the gas jet.

A wall of flame spurts from the pipe, incinerating Colonel Mahon and the lepers feasting on him.

The soldier, Nightingale and Van Helsing sprint to the STAIRS.

Those not incinerated, leap through the wall of flame chasing them

UP THE STAIRS

making quick work of the soldier bringing up the rear, engulfing his corpse in a wave of gore.

Van Helsing immediately takes up the soldier's RIFLE.

Nightingale and Van Helsing are only a few yards from the COAL BINS, more lepers racing behind them.

Van Helsing stops, shouting out to Nightingale.

DR. VAN HELSING
Get to the crushers! We must not fail!

Van Helsing wildly fires SPARKING bursts of ammunition into the surge of infected hurtling toward them.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOCK MAZE -- CONTINUOUS

Orlok continues searching the twisting labyrinth of shadowy rotating cogs.

He calls out through bloody teeth.

ORLOK

Surely you understand my own desire for vengeance, Donald Swanson. Just as London's "Ripper" took a sister from you, those I slaughtered took a brother from me. You and I are not so different. We both understand the meaning of loss. Of pain.

Orlok's pinched ears perk. He hears something and peers across the room.

ORLOK

And what must be done to those who stand in our way.

Swanson's BOWLER HAT peeks out from atop one of the gears.

A devious smile curls from Orlok's lips. He crouches, slowly slinking near the hat, preparing to pounce - his savage wolves snarling beside him.

Suddenly, Swanson unexpectedly darts from behind Orlok, a massive STEEL WRENCH in his hands.

Orlok's wolves immediately dive in their master's defense.

In a flash, Swanson slams his wrench over the first wolf's head, splitting the animal's soft skull to bits of bone and brain.

Swanson kicks the second wolf into a series of nearby twirling gears.

The square teeth of the cogs act as a meat grinder, churning the wolf's yelping body into a mass of flesh and fur.

Orlok's eyes widen with unfettered rage.

He races toward Swanson and the men clash, bronze nails SPARKING against the metal of Swanson's wrench.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The two enemies dig into one another, stumbling back into the

BELFRY

Orlok swipes across Swanson's face, slicing three extremely deep gashes into the sinewy muscle of his cheek. Blood pours from the open wound.

The wrench falls from Swanson's hands, CLANGING to the floor.

Orlok leaps atop his prey, SLAMMING Swanson onto the ground as a vein of white lighting crawls across the stormy sky behind them.

CUT TO:

INT. FACTORY -- NIGHT

Van Helsing and Nightingale continue fighting for their own lives.

CLICK. Van Helsing's rifle runs out of ammunition.

The wild lepers dig in, preparing to finish the job.

Nightingale removes the SILVER NITRATE from a medical bag and plunges it down one of the COAL BINS.

TWO ROLLING MASHERS shatter the glass receptacle soaking the chalky black coal with lustrous solution.

A thick swirl of SILVER GAS shoots from the bottom of the crusher and is immediately sucked into the gas pipes.

The GAS LAMPS inside the factory extinguish and the open GAS VALVE fires a steady stream of vapor into the building.

A silvery cloud of fumes creep into every corner of the darkened building.

Nightingale and Van Helsing watch on, as the silver mist overwhelms the infected - their arms and legs flailing wildly in the building fog.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- Each and every gas lamp is summarily snuffed out across London. The entire city goes dark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

- Plumes of silver gas prowl through the moonlit cobblestone streets, past shops, pubs and theaters filled with infected.
- Shimmering vapor overwhelms a group of lepers feeding on nuns at the steps of a church. Once exposed, they all collapse to the ground.
- The gas twists through the rainy docks. Infected fall from dozens of ships' masts, plunging into the icy water below.
- Parked atop a grassy escarpment overlooking the city, the Queen smiles inside her golden carriage. Royal Guards watch the cure spread, cheering.
- At street level, the fog clears past the muddied boots of Britain's Commander-In-Chief, felled infected laying in droves ahead of him.
- Soldiers slowly pull through the city, rifles drawn, searching for any remnants of the diseased.
- Clusters of healthy Londoners slowly emerge from buildings, spreading out into the streets with caution.

END MONTAGE.

CUT TO:

INT. BELFRY -- NIGHT

A distant grumble of thunder shakes the belfry, the storm finally pulling away from the horizon.

In shock, Swanson falls in and out of consciousness. His eyes white, body wracked with pain.

Orlok slides his pustule covered tongue across Swanson's bleeding face, savoring each drop of precious blood.

Then, there's a CLICK.

Orlok looks down. Swanson has his silver finished pistol dug into his ribs.

Small wisps of smoke crawl from the leper's pale flesh. His eyes widen in stunned realization.

Swanson pulls the trigger. The hammer CLACKS.

No shots are fired. He is out of bullets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out of desperate exhaustion, Swanson continues thumbing back the hammer and pulling the trigger.

Orlok lets out a deep bellow of laughter.

ORLOK

Every life must have its end. Now comes yours.

He throws his head back, sharp teeth widening.

ORLOK

The blood is the life.

Orlok prepares to tear through Swanson's neck, eyes blazing with demoniac fury, when -

JACK THE RIPPER SUDDENLY BURSTS FORTH FROM THE SHADOWS!

His steely blue blade catches the light just before it plunges into Orlok's belly.

The two killers roll around the belfry, stopping just beneath a cluster of enormous IRON BELS hanging overhead.

Jack constricts Orlok's head in a tight-fitting choke hold. The leper scratches and claws, slicing thin red cuts across The Ripper's glistening bicep.

Jack laughs off Orlok's struggles, enjoying the confrontation. He further tightens his hold.

JACK

Ugly 'lil rat, ain't ya?

Both men stand just ahead of BIG BEN's shattered clock face.

A cool wind whips across the city, clearing away some of the silver fog from London's steeples.

Jack twists the knife out of Orlok's belly, pointing the blood splashed blade across the landscape.

JACK

She's mine. All of her. And I aim to keep you from forgettin'.

Jack wraps Orlok's head in the ropes fluttering above.

ORLOK

There will always be more. Be done with it. Send me to hell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Orlok rasps, runnels of black blood flowing from his sickening maw.

Jack puts his blade to the leper's throat, relishing the moment.

JACK

(winking)

Don't forget to tell 'em, Jack
sent ya.

With a powerful swipe, Jack pulls his knife along Orlok's neck, instantly severing it from the base of his spine.

The leper's head falls to the floor, rolling toward Swanson's feet.

The slack from the rope gives out, and the enormous IRON BELLS overhead VIBRATE with a deafening, ear-splitting DONG!

First beams of sunlight shine through BIG BEN's open face, silhouetting Jack the Ripper along with the blood dripping from his gleaming blue knife.

Jack slowly cranes his neck around, carefully studying Swanson's collapsed body. Thinking. Looking down to his sparkling blade with hesitation.

The bell continues tolling. DONG! DONG! DONG!

What to do...

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The golden sun has risen into the soft pink sky, burning off the fog enveloping the city.

Commissioner Bradford and his men weave through the belfry, weapons drawn.

They move around a corner, gasping at what they see.

Swanson's body lay across the floor, Orlok's severed head at his feet.

The men rush over to Swanson.

Nightingale suddenly stumbles into the room, covered in coal soot. She breaks through the group and kneels.

Shimmering tears fall from her eyes, each one plopping onto Swanson's slashed vest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Then, Swanson's eyes slowly flit open. He takes up her hand and squeezes tight.

A wide grin breaks across Nightingale's lips. She lovingly strokes his hair, eyes flooded.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

It's over.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON, ENGLAND (AERIAL) -- DAY

Wooden scaffolding spirals around the outsides of nearly every building across London - BIG BEN's shattered face repaired to its former glory.

EXT. MARYLEBONE TRAIN STATION -- DAY

Diesel LOCOMOTIVES chug forward, belching black clouds of smoke into the clear blue sky.

Passengers eagerly await incoming trains, clutching tickets, flipping through the TIMES LONDON. A headline reads: "LONDON LIMPS BACK: CITY ON THE MEND!"

Chief Inspector Swanson is sitting on a bench, three stitched scars slashed across his face.

He sketches a traditional stipple DRAWING of Graf Orlok in profile, when Dr. Nightingale approaches him - bags at her side.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

The train will be leaving any moment.

SWANSON

Off to save the world?

Nightingale gives him a bittersweet smile.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

London's streets are not the only refuge for monsters. It must be confirmed Orlok's sickness died with him.

SWANSON

I understand.

DR. NIGHTINGALE

Are you sure you won't come with us?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SWANSON
I belong here.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Prowling London's shadows.

Nightingale looks on, taking in a last glimpse of mighty London.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Do you ever think about where he
may be - Jack?

SWANSON
Every waking hour.

Nightingale's train WHISTLES steam. Dr. Van Helsing appears out of a car window, waiving he to join him.

DR. NIGHTINGALE
Donald, before I go, there's
something I want to tell you.
When I saw you lying there in the
belfry, covered in blood, I -

Swanson pulls Nightingale's face to his, kissing her deeply. After a few passionate moments, he draws back.

SWANSON
Be careful, Florence.

Invigorated and grinning, Nightingale yanks up her bags and slowly boards the train.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Swanson watches the locomotive pull away from London.

A BOBBIE approaches him with a wax sealed ENVELOPE. A postmark stamped across it reads: "GENEVA, SW."

He curiously removes a letter from it.

Elegant RED INK twists across the parchment page.

Swanson's eyes go wide as he begins reading...

(MOZART'S "REQUIEM" slowly fades up, building with each line read.)

BEGIN MONTAGE:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

- It's a frosty blue night in Geneva. Delicate flakes of snow drift aimlessly across the needle spires of the city, the purple Swiss Alps anchored in the distance.

JACK (V.O.)

*Dear Boss. I'm writin' from this,
the 20th of centuries...*

- Jack, along with his psychotic assistant, R.N. Renfield, moves inside a suit shop tended by a bespectacled tailor.

JACK (V.O.)

*...hoping those scars of yours
have started their healin'.*

- The couturier carefully measures Jack's hulking proportions in front of a series of silver mirrors, Renfield eagerly watching.

JACK (V.O.)

The ones people can see, anyway.

- Inside the same shop, Jack walks across a collection of fine leather gloves. He takes his time pulling several creaking pairs across his thick fingers.

JACK (V.O.)

*Know that I have no plans to add
to 'em. Long as you leave me be.*

- Jack tries on a series of black hats, first a bowler, then a smoking cap. Renfield approaches him with a tall, silk top hat.

JACK (V.O.)

*Remember, our history together'll
always be one written in blood.*

- Jack moves back into the tailor's sparkling mirrors, fully dressed in his classic black and white suit, trench coat and top hat. He smiles, proudly beaming.

JACK (V.O.)

*And never forget, we're all just
shadows in a fog.*

- Jack and Renfield patiently stand in front of a red-brick building illuminated by gas light. Jack's hulking body obscures a plaque covering the building's snow dusted outsides.

JACK (V.O.)

Yours truly, Jack the Ripper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

- Renfield watches a beautiful woman slowly move into a darkened alley alone. He nods to Jack, whose mouth gradually twists into a smirk of silver.

JACK (V.O.)

*P.S. Good news. Managed to find
a proper job with a decent bloke.
An undertaker. Finally found a
use for my talents, if you get my
meanin'...*

- Cape fluttering, Jack glides across the snow toward the dark alley, dramatically revealing the iron plaque behind him: "LEICHENHALLE DESSEN (MORTUARY OF) - DR. VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN, M.D."

BACK TO SCENE

AT THE TRAIN STATION

Swanson smudges his finger across Jack's letter, its bloody red ink smearing over the page.

The Chief Inspector considers boarding a train for GENEVA. He stares across the tracks to a busy TICKET COUNTER, jaw clenched. Mind racing.

MOZART'S "REQUIEM" crescendoes with thunderously EPIC NOTES, just as he sets out for the ticket counter...

TO BLACK.

THE END