

The Imbecile
an original screenplay by
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FADE IN:

1 EXT. BLEA TARN - DAY

1

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

1875

It is a beautiful late summer day. The sun shimmers off the tarn surface and flies buzz over the grass. SAMUEL, 13 stands on the banks of the tarn watching trout rise with his twin sister, HENRIETTA, 13.

He has a cane fishing rod, a small tackle box and a can with a screw top on a string. He sits down and unscrews the can. It is full of worms.

He takes out a large worm and impales it on his hook. He smiles. Henrietta cringes and looks away. He stands and pretends to swing the worm at her. She backs off a few paces with a grimace.

HENRIETTA

Stop messing about, Sam. You know
I hate worms.

He casts the line out into the tarn and watches the yellow painted float bobbing on the surface. He looks over to the far side of the tarn.

A farmer is mending a wire fence in the distance.

SAMUEL

See old Copeland over there?

HENRIETTA

Yeah...

SAMUEL

Well, he reckons something comes
in the night and takes his sheep.
That's why he keeps messing with
his fences.

HENRIETTA

A poacher?

SAMUEL

Some *thing*, I said.

HENRIETTA

What, like a fox?

SAMUEL

A fox can't take a sheep without
making a lot of noise and mess.

HENRIETTA
(pondering)
Maybe a beaver?

Samuel bursts out laughing. Henrietta looks bemused.

HENRIETTA (CONT'D)
What? What's wrong with that?

Samuel shakes his head.

SAMUEL
(condescending)
Beavers! Beavers live in America.

Henrietta picks up a stick and starts trying to whack flies in the grass.

HENRIETTA
Well what do you think it is then?

Samuel narrows his eyes a little.

SAMUEL
Well, I reckon it's a werewolf.

HENRIETTA
Louise Spencer says werewolves and vampires don't exist. They aren't like ghosts. They come from books.

SAMUEL
What does she know? Course they exist... I've seen one for myself anyway.

Henrietta looks agape and wide eyed. Samuel plays it cool and looks out over the water for a few seconds.

HENRIETTA
Samuel Miller you are lying. Tell me you are lying!

SAMUEL
I aren't no liar. It was last winter. When we had that really bad snow. Remember?

Henrietta drops the stick. She looks worried.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
It was getting late and father wanted some new logs on the fire for overnight... I went out to the logpile with the sack and a lamp.
(MORE)

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

The logs were covered in snow, so I took the axe out of the outhouse and used it to scrape the snow off the logs. I heard something moving around in the bushes behind the stable. The horse was all vexed.

Samuel pauses for effect.

HENRIETTA

Go on...

SAMUEL

I thought it might have been a horse thief so I lifted up the lamp and held up the axe. There was a low growl and I saw this dark shape like a big man slip through the bushes. There was a horrible smell too. Worse than the horse.

Henrietta's eyes are wide.

HENRIETTA

Did you tell father?

SAMUEL

Well look... Do you promise you can keep a secret?

HENRIETTA

Of course.

SAMUEL

Well promise then, on your mother's life.

HENRIETTA

I promise.

Samuel waits a few seconds.

SAMUEL

It has to be on your mother's life. It's what people say.

HENRIETTA

Look I promise. I don't want to promise on mother's life.

SAMUEL

Right. Well when I saw that werewolf I was proper terrified. So I kept my mouth shut. Anyway, father doesn't believe in all that so I didn't want him to take the belt to me for lying again.

HENRIETTA

Well you should tell Constable Pearson. It's his job to look out for prowlers and ne'er do wells.

SAMUEL

Aye... maybe. Maybe not. You know what adults are like. He'd maybe tell father and I'd get the belt anyway.

HENRIETTA

Maybe...

2 EXT. BLEA TARN FAR SIDE - DAY

2

COPELAND, 70 is fixing old wire fencing. He stops to wipe his brow of perspiration and stretch his back. He looks over to the other side of Blea Tarn and sees the Miller twins.

He hears a WHISTLING approaching behind him and looks around. Not too far away on the footpath, PEARSON, 50, the local policeman is walking toward him. Copeland holds his hand up. Pearson waves back.

COPELAND

Afternoon.

PEARSON

Afternoon, Copeland. Beautiful day again for September.

COPELAND

Aye it is. A bit warm for back breaking work mind you... but better than doing it in the pissing down rain.

PEARSON

You're right about that, Copeland.

Pearson takes off his hat and wafts his face with it, cooling down. He looks over the tarn and stretches his back.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

How's your brother, Copeland?
Last I heard, it was looking a bit grim.

COPELAND

(woefully)

Grim is about right. I don't think he's long for this earth frankly. He's been confined to bed for five weeks now... ebbing away.

PEARSON

I'm sorry to hear that, Copeland.
What's the quack had to say?

Copeland leans against the fence and shakes his head.

COPELAND

Well he's at a loss really. Says it's a pernicious malady of some sorts. He was out of sorts all through May and June now I think back... not himself at all. Off his ale and food... Foul smelling soft stools. You know when they get that pungent way, with no real shape?

PEARSON

It's a shame. It really is. You live in a close community like this all your life and you take it all for granted, like there'll never be change... Like it will always be just so...

COPELAND

Aye.

PEARSON

And then Him upstairs steps in to remind us we are mere mortals.

COPELAND

Well He works in mysterious ways, so they say. If you believe that stuff.

PEARSON

Aye, well it's a mystery to me right enough, Copeland.

COPELAND

Well, there's not a lot we can do about these things at the end of the day...

Both men look over the tarn in reflection and watch the Miller twins on the other side. Henrietta is jumping up and down excitedly.

COPELAND (CONT'D)

Look over there... the joys of youth

Samuel has hooked a fish and Henrietta is laughing. Samuel seems to be struggling with the rod which she finds even more funny.

A large fish rolls around churning up the surface in a bid for freedom.

SAMUEL
It's a damned pike!

HENRIETTA
A pike? Is that good?

SAMUEL
Aye! Bigger than brownies.

Samuel struggles a little longer with the fish and it appears to tire. He walks backward as he reels it in and pulls it flopping into the grass a few yards from the edge. Henrietta stands back.

HENRIETTA
It looks evil. Look at it's eye, staring at us. It wants to kill us.

SAMUEL
Don't be simple.

Samuel crouches over the pike and studies it. It's mouth opens and closes and it turns it's head up a little.

HENRIETTA
Throw it back in, Sam. I don't like it.

Samuel punches it hard in the head. It keeps moving so he punches it over and over again. It continues to spasm. A simple primeval organism hanging on to life. Samuel rains blows all over it.

HENRIETTA (CONT'D)
Sam? Throw it back, please.

The pike succumbs to the beating and stops twitching. They both stare at it for a few seconds.

SAMUEL
Too late. We'll take it home. We can eat it.

HENRIETTA
I'm not eating it! Anyway, how do you know you can eat it?

Samuel nods over in the direction of Copeland and Pearson.

SAMUEL
Copeland told me. He's got recipes from the old days.

HENRIETTA
Well, I'll not be eating it.

SAMUEL

Me and father will eat it then,
you see.

HENRIETTA

Well mother's never cooked pike
before so there's fat chance of
that. And look at it. She'll not
want to go near it.

Samuel takes a deep breath.

SAMUEL

Well I'll cook it then, stupid.

HENRIETTA

Don't call me stupid! Idiot!

SAMUEL

Shut up. We're taking it home
anyway.

4 EXT. BLEA TARN FAR SIDE - MOMENTS LATER

4

PEARSON

Looks like they've caught something.
A trout maybe. It's a good size
too.

In the distance Samuel holds up the fish. Copeland shakes his head.

COPELAND

The brownies in there only grow to
about eight inches. It'll be a
pike. Beautiful creatures pike.

PEARSON

I don't believe I've ever seen
one.

COPELAND

Well most people would argue that
they are horrible because they eat
the other fish. They're just trying
to survive, the way they evolved:
Perfectly set up for killing. If
we could see what horrors are going
on between different species right
here in this grass, we'd be proper
shocked. It's all about survival.
Survival of the fittest... and the
quick and the dead.

PEARSON

Right enough I suppose.

COPELAND

Well, that's what I read anyway.

5 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' KITCHEN - DAY

5

Samuel and Henrietta enter the back door of their large house (Holmfield) through the scullery and into the kitchen. HEATHER, 48 (their mother) is stood at the stove tending pots and MARJORIE, 64 (their grandmother and Heather's mother) is seated at the kitchen table shelling peas. Samuel proudly holds up the pike, suspended on a loop of string.

HENRIETTA

Look what Sam's got!

Heather and Marjorie stop what they are doing and stare at the fish.

HEATHER

Good Lord. What's that you have there, Samuel?

HENRIETTA

It's a spike!

SAMUEL

(smiling)

It's called a pike. I caught it up at Blea Tarn.

HENRIETTA

Ugly isn't it?

Heather stares at it in disgust. Marjorie makes a show of not looking at it after her initial curiosity.

HEATHER

It's an abomination.

SAMUEL

It's just a fish.

HEATHER

Blea Tarn? Isn't that up on the way to Side Pike? You shouldn't be up there. There's something not right about the place and it's riddled with pot holes and the like.

HENRIETTA

(disdainfully)

Well, he says him and father are going to eat it.

MARJORIE

It's as ugly as sin. Only a simpleton would eat such a thing.

HEATHER

(shouting)

Frederick. Come through to the kitchen and see what Samuel has brought home.

FREDERICK (O.S.)

Just a minute...

HEATHER

He'll not be eating that thing,
make no mistake.

MARJORIE

It shouldn't even be in the house.
Nothing good will come of it. You'll see.

Henrietta pokes Samuel in the back.

HENRIETTA

Told you so.

SAMUEL

It's just a fish!

We hear FREDERICK, 55 approach the kitchen. Good shoes on a stone floor. He enters the kitchen smoking a pipe.

Samuel hoists the fish as high as he can and beams at his father. Frederick clenches his teeth on the pipe stem.

FREDERICK

What in hell's name is that creature?

SAMUEL

A pike.

Heather and Marjorie look at each other with raised eyebrows.

FREDERICK

And tell me what such an evil looking beast is doing in my kitchen...

SAMUEL

I caught it up at Blea Tarn father.

FREDERICK

And...

SAMUEL

And I thought I'd bring it home.

ARTHUR, 16 (Samuel and Henrietta's brother) steps into the kitchen and stands to the side of Frederick.

FREDERICK

For what purpose?

Samuel looks deflated and holds the fish somewhat lower. He feels uncomfortable as he is familiar with the tone and content of his father's interrogations.

SAMUEL

Well I...

FREDERICK

Well what? What was the purpose
of bringing such a beast home?

SAMUEL

I don't really know father.

Frederick sticks out his chest and removes his pipe, pointing the stem at the fish. He readies himself for a speech. Samuel lowers the fish even further and his body language changes from pride to submission.

FREDERICK

Let me tell you about the pike...
The pike is neither good for sport
or the table. It is a lowly
predator that will bite anything
and eagerly supplement it's diet
with rats, toads, carrion and
floating dung. They are completely
inedible.

There is a moments silence which is customary after Frederick has made a speech or an enlightened observation. A little too quickly, Arthur chimes in with:

ARTHUR

(gleefully)

Haha! Samuel caught a pike! What
a cretin!

Frederick holds his pipe out to Marjorie.

FREDERICK

Without touching the stem, would
you hold this please?

Marjorie takes the bowl end of the pipe. Frederick quickly turns around and lands a violent and loud SMACK across Arthur's face. Arthur is knocked to the floor. The other's look on in silence. Arthur begins to stand again holding his face.

ARTHUR

(stammering)

I'm sorry.

Frederick grasps the wrist of the hand Arthur has covering his face and forces it down.

He back hands another violent SMACK across his face and pushes Arthur out of the kitchen.

FREDERICK

Get out of my sight. That's what you get for speaking out of turn.

Frederick takes his pipe back from Marjorie and relights it since it has gone out.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

You know sometimes I wonder how that buffoon possibly came from my loins.

Heather looks at Frederick and he stares back while sucking hard on the pipe.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

Anyway, where were we? Ah...the pike.

SAMUEL

I heard pike are edible.

Frederick stares at him.

FREDERICK

Really? And where did you hear this nonsense?

SAMUEL

Old Copeland says he has recipes for pike. He says the Elizabethan's used to eat lots of pike.

MARJORIE

No I'm sure your father is right and old Copeland shouldn't be filling your head with such tales.

FREDERICK

Copeland. An uneducated man who's days are spent molesting sheep and walking through faeces. The man is practically an imbecile.

SAMUEL

He says he has recipe's from the old days.

FREDERICK

He may well say that to a gullible fool like yourself. The truth however, is that he cannot read or write... so let that be the end of it and hold your tongue.

Samuel looks at the fish.

SAMUEL

Yes father.

FREDERICK

Go throw the fish in the brook at
the bottom of the lane before it
creates a miasma. Then you two
can help in the kitchen. I don't
expect to see you before dinner.

Henrietta and Samuel walk out of the back of the kitchen.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

That boy is going to bring shame
on this family one way or another.

MARJORIE

Frederick, you've said that about
all four of them at one time or
another. The boy is just exuberant.

FREDERICK

Exuberant? Is that what it is?
Nothing that can't be cured by the
sting of leather then.

6 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' DINING TABLE - MORNING

6

Heather, Marjorie, Frederick, Henrietta and JACOB, 17
(brother to the other children) are seated at the table
having breakfast. There are eggs, bacon, mushrooms, bread,
butter and tea. There are two empty places. Besides
Frederick there is a copy of the Kendal Mercury and his
ever present pipe and tobacco tin. After a few moments
Samuel enters the dining room.

SAMUEL

I'm sorry for being late. I was
washing.

FREDERICK

Apology accepted, Samuel. That's
a good reason to be a few minutes
late. Be seated and help yourself.

Samuel joins the table.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

Did you hear that, Jacob?

Jacob looks up from his plate, bemused.

JACOB

Hear what?

Marjorie, Heather and Frederick all look at each other
with a little disdain.

FREDERICK

For God's sake boy. Did you hear
what Samuel said?

JACOB

When?

MARJORIE

Just now, moments ago.

Frederick clips Jacob round the ear with his hand. Jacob recoils and looks angry. Frederick raises his hand again and Jacob composes himself.

HEATHER

Not at the table Frederick. Show some restraint, especially as this is only breakfast.

FREDERICK

I think the discipline in my house should be left to me. The boy is an ignorant dullard. I am trying to help him.

HENRIETTA

What's a dullard?

MARJORIE

Not now, Henrietta. Eat your eggs.

Frederick picks up his pipe and pokes Jacob in the cheek with the stem. Jacob eyes him with discontent.

FREDERICK

Samuel said he was late to breakfast because he had been washing.

JACOB

Yes. I heard that part.

FREDERICK

Washing... Do you know what that is, Jacob?

JACOB

Of course.

FREDERICK

And when did you last wash?

JACOB

Before breakfast, like Samuel.

FREDERICK

Hogwash boy. Lie to me again and I will put my belt to you. I will ask you again... When did you last wash?

JACOB

Tuesday.

Marjorie tuts and shakes her head.

HENRIETTA

(to Marjorie)

When did you last wash, Grandma?

Marjorie looks taken aback. Heather pokes Henrietta's shoulder.

HEATHER

Find your manners girl and be quiet.

FREDERICK

Tuesday. I thought as much. You reek like a lurker's nethers. Straight after breakfast I want you to wash yourself for a good while. With soap.

JACOB

Yes father.

FREDERICK

Good. And from now on nobody will sit at this table to breakfast without being washed first. You will notice that Arthur is confined to his room... he is not delayed, washing himself, so do not save him any food.

Frederick picks up the Kendal Mercury and reveals that there is an opened letter underneath. He partly unfolds the paper so he can read some of the headlines.

SAMUEL

Who is the letter from?

Frederick smacks down the paper.

FREDERICK

If you weren't sat over there boy I'd knock you off that chair for your insolence. This is a letter addressed to me.

HEATHER

Where are your manners?

SAMUEL

Sorry father.

Frederick picks up his pipe and lights it, taking a few puffs.

FREDERICK

The letter, is there for a reason.
I was about to announce the good
news that this is a letter from
your uncle Charles, confirming
that he will be paying us a long
overdue visit this weekend.

HENRIETTA

Marvelous!

Frederick looks at Samuel then Jacob. He pokes Jacob with the pipe stem.

JACOB

(unenthusiastically)

Hurrah.

Fred loudly SLAPS Jacob across the face. The others wince. Jacob stands up over Frederick and trembles with anger.

FREDERICK

Did I say you could leave the table
boy?

JACOB

No.

FREDERICK

(menacingly)

Then sit down. Now.

Jacob takes his seat again and bows his head.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

Uncle Charles is a very generous
family member and a successful
businessman. He deserves your
love and respect. What does he
deserve, Jacob?

JACOB

My love and respect.

FREDERICK

Excellent. And, Samuel, I take it
you are also looking forward to
uncle Charles' visit?

SAMUEL

I am father.

Frederick nods approvingly and cracks a rare smile around the table.

HEATHER

One of the reasons we live so
comfortably in such a large house...
(MORE)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

and eat good plentiful food, is due to the help and generosity of your uncle Charles. He has helped us along and has opened many doors for your father in his career in textiles.

Frederick glowers at his wife for a second or two.

FREDERICK

Well... That maybe a little too generous praise for uncle Charles with regards to his help with my career... But since he is your brother, I respect that you look up to him and perhaps put him on a pedestal. Nevertheless, uncle Charles is a generous family member, a successful businessman and we look forward to his stay with us.

7 EXT. BLEA TARN - AFTERNOON

7

It is a sunny afternoon and Samuel stands on the edge of the tarn. His float bobs away a few yards out in the water and his rod is propped up on a forked stick. He eats an apple and stares up into the sky where two buzzards circle high over a copse on the other side of the tarn. He shields his eyes from the glare of the sun.

COPELAND (O.S.)

Common Buzzards.

Samuel turns around with a start. Copeland is a few yards behind him, also staring into the sky with his hands behind his back.

SAMUEL

You gave me a fright! I didn't hear you creeping up.

COPELAND

Well I've always been light on my feet young Samuel. The buzzards will have seen me coming a mile away though.

Samuel smiles and looks up again.

COPELAND (CONT'D)

Buteo buteo. Latin name for the Common Buzzard.

SAMUEL

Really? Who told you that, Copeland?

COPELAND

Nobody. I read it in a book.

SAMUEL

I didn't know you could read...
Or write.

COPELAND

Well, I play my cards close to my
chest with some people.

Copeland winks at him. Samuel grins.

COPELAND (CONT'D)

You don't have to tell everyone
what's filling your sandwiches.

Copeland winks again.

SAMUEL

Sandwiches?

COPELAND

Sandwiches. Invented, it is said,
by John Montagu Sandwich, the fourth
earl of Sandwich.

SAMUEL

Did you read that too?

COPELAND

Aye. You know, sandwiches are
getting so popular now I'm surprised
someone doesn't invent sliced bread.
It would be the best thing since...

SAMUEL

Sliced bacon?

COPELAND

Probably. Why is it we have sliced
bacon but not sliced bread? It
puzzles me.

SAMUEL

You do a lot of thinking don't you
Copeland?

COPELAND

(thoughtfully)

I do. It keeps the mind agile.
Mind you, the wife says, 'Copeland,
there must be more to life than
wondering if there is more to life
than this.'

He winks at Samuel again.

COPELAND (CONT'D)
Your float has gone.

Samuel quickly grabs his rod off the stick and yanks the line. The float leaps out of the water with a clean hook.

Sam groans and throws the rod down into the grass.

SAMUEL
Stupid old rod.

Copeland pats him on the shoulder.

COPELAND
Your father used to say the same
thing... to the same rod.

Sam looks aghast for a second or two.

SAMUEL
Really?

COPELAND
Aye. That was your father's rod.
He was impatient and lacking the
touch, like yourself. He used to
come up here regular as a young
man. I never saw him catch a thing.
He may as well have used his lingam.

Sam bursts out laughing.

COPELAND (CONT'D)
It's true. He was hopeless. Always
talking about the huge trout he
caught the day you weren't around.
He had a magical habit of catching
monster trout when nobody was
there... if you understand me.

SAMUEL
Tall stories?

COPELAND
Probably. Anyway, I thought I'd
give you this...

He hands over a well looked after copy of Izaak Walton's 'Compleat Angler' from behind his back. Samuel's face lights up.

COPELAND (CONT'D)
Everything your father needed to
know is in that book.

SAMUEL
Thanks, Copeland!

COPELAND

My pleasure. I first cast a line
in Blea Tarn in eighteen hundred
and ten. George The Third was on
the throne back then. It feels
like a lifetime ago... and it was.

Samuel eagerly flicks through the book, absorbing the pictures.

COPELAND (CONT'D)

Come up here tomorrow, Samuel and
I'll give you my fishing tackle.

Samuel looks up from the book.

SAMUEL

I can't come tomorrow or the day
after. My uncle Charles is across
on a visit.

COPELAND

(thoughtfully)

Charles Burns?

SAMUEL

Aye. Do you know him?

COPELAND

Let's just say I remember him.
Before his father moved him away.
I'll see you Monday then?

SAMUEL

Aye. Monday. Are you sure you
don't want the fishing tackle
anymore?

Copeland nods slowly.

COPELAND

Aye. I'm pretty sure. I'm not
getting any younger. My brother
is on his deathbed and all my life
I just assumed there wouldn't be
much time between us.

SAMUEL

How do you mean?

COPELAND

Ah nothing. Just the ramblings of
an old fool. Let's bait that hook.

Samuel unscrews the worm can.

8 EXT. 'HOLMFIELD' - EVENING

8

A horse drawn carriage pulls up outside Holmfield. Frederick, Heather, Marjorie, Henrietta, Arthur and Samuel walk out of the house to greet CHARLES, 53. The carriage is driven by OSBORNE, 45.

HEATHER

(loudly)

Charles! How are you?

Osborne dismounts, ties up the reins and opens the carriage door. Charles steps out of the carriage with a hefty case. He sets it down on the ground and Heather walks up and hugs him. Charles grins over her shoulder.

CHARLES

It's been too long! Far too long.

Frederick waves from a few yards back and walks forward toward the carriage.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

How are you keeping, Frederick?
Well, I trust?

FREDERICK

Very well, Charles. Very well.

CHARLES

And I trust you are looking after
my precious sister?

HEATHER

Of course he is, Charles.

Charles and Heather stop hugging and Charles offers his hand to Frederick. They shake hands warmly.

FREDERICK

Good to see you again, Charles.

CHARLES

And you too my friend.

Charles waves to Marjorie. Marjorie cracks a smile and a wave back.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You're looking as robust as ever,
Mother. You are clearly in good
health.

MARJORIE

I can't complain, Charlie.

CHARLES

It's Charles, Mother. I'm not a
boy any more.

MARJORIE

Oh I know. Old habits die hard.

CHARLES

Indeed.

Charles looks over the children.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

My, how they grow. Last time I saw them they were waist high.

HEATHER

You ought to be glad you aren't feeding them, Charles.

CHARLES

Aye. You're not wrong. Where's the eldest... young Jacob?

FREDERICK

He's confined to his room until tomorrow.

CHARLES

Is he still a lying little toe rag?

FREDERICK

Something like that. He's the bane of my life, I swear. Never out of trouble and full of devilment.

CHARLES

Never underestimate the medicinal and correctional qualities of a good sound beating with leather.

FREDERICK

Exactly, Charles. I'm trying to get him a job but it's difficult to palm off an idiot on someone you know.

Charles and Frederick laugh. Frederick grabs the handle of Charles' case.

CHARLES

Aye, let's get indoors and crack open some liquor.

Frederick heaves the case up. It is visibly heavy and awkward.

FREDERICK

Good heavens! What the blazes have you got in here?

Charles taps his nose and winks. He turns to Osborne, takes out some money and hands it to him.

CHARLES

Thank you, Osborne. Come back for me at eleven on Sunday. There's plenty there for two nights at the Three Shires with plenty of food and ale. Make a pig of yourself.

OSBORNE

Thank you, Sir. I will.

CHARLES

Try not to get into any fights.

OSBORNE

You can rely on me, Sir.

CHARLES

Good man. There's a time and a place for violence, Osborne.

OSBORNE

Yes, Sir.

Osborne climbs aboard the carriage and sets off into town some five miles away.

CHARLES

He's very reliable is Osborne and very handy with his fists. He has what they call a propensity for violence. He's good for business.

Frederick smiles. They all head indoors.

9

INT. 'HOLMFIELD' SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

9

The clock reads eleven fifteen. Charles, Heather and Frederick are sat around a low table. There are a few liquor bottles on the table and a book of family photographs.

There are three absinthe glasses, some absinthe spoons, a bowl of sugar lumps and a jug of water. Charles pours three large measures of absinthe and sets up the spoons with sugar lumps.

He deftly pours the water over the sugar. Frederick and Heather watch the ritual closely.

CHARLES

Et viola! Trois autres absinthe.

HEATHER

You are clever, Charles. I should make this my last.

(MORE)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

My head feels a bit muddled and I
have to get everyone breakfast
first thing in the morning.

CHARLES

Nonsense! I only visit once in a
blue moon, so what the hell? Still
got the laudanum and mezcal to
polish off yet.

HEATHER

(grinning)

Aye, what the hell. Bugger the
breakfast.

Frederick looks aghast.

FREDERICK

I beg your pardon? You'll do no
such thing, woman.

CHARLES

She is jesting, Frederick! Relax
man. Breakfast will be served as
usual.

Charles winks and Frederick throws her a stern look.
Charles takes his glass of absinthe and gulps it down.
Heather does the same and shakes her shoulders. Her ample
breasts jiggle and Charles cannot help stare at her large
cleavage and the curve of her bosom. He looks at her like
a man looks at an attractive woman rather than a brother
looking at a sister.

Frederick pretends not to notice and necks his absinthe in
one go as a distraction. He coughs as the pungent liquor
slips down his neck. Heather and Charles laugh.

Charles sets up the glasses again and starts to fix three
more drinks with the spoons and sugar.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Tell me, have you been keeping up
on the Wainwright affair?

HEATHER

I don't really read the papers.
Frederick takes a local paper.

FREDERICK

Is that the Whitechapel murder?

CHARLES

The very same. A fellow called
Henry Wainwright. In Whitechapel
of all places.

FREDERICK

From what I've read the man sounds
like a proper fool.

HEATHER

Do tell, Charles. I love a good
crime yarn.

Charles finishes making the absinthes.

CHARLES

Well... this Henry Wainwright had
a double life apparently. He had
a wife and children but he also
had a concubine. He sired two
children with this concubine and
had her shacked up in a swanky
place in another district.

HEATHER

Intriguing. Was he well to do?

CHARLES

Well, he'd inherited a good business
from his father. A brush making
business, though he was a milliner
by trade. As you would imagine
though, running these two households
became a very costly business and
the concubine was one of those
nagging, suffocating types that
you have to continually wad. You
know the type?

FREDERICK

I've heard of such women. A kept
bangtail if you like.

Heather nods. Charles takes a large gulp of absinthe.

CHARLES

That's the type, Frederick. Well,
this concubine became such a scold
and a drain on resources, Henry
took her to the privacy of his
warehouse and shot her a few times.
Understandable you might think. A
man driven to his wit's end.
Apparently she had made the fatal
mistake of telling Henry she might
divulge their secret to his wife.

HEATHER

Even so, what a cold blooded
bastard.

Frederick raises his eyebrows at Heather and takes a slug
of absinthe.

CHARLES

It gets far, far more sinister.

HEATHER

Really? Good heavens no.

CHARLES

Wainwright buries the woman - called Harriet Lane - under the floorboards in his own warehouse. He then wrote a letter to the woman's father saying she was moving to France.

HEATHER

What a swine.

CHARLES

A swine indeed. And it gets better. There she lay for exactly a year up until a couple of weeks ago. It turns out that Wainwright faced bankruptcy and realised he would have to sell the warehouse.

FREDERICK

What a dilemma.

CHARLES

Well local people had complained of a ghastly aroma in the area for quite some time, so he knew the body would be detected fairly quickly once he vacated the premises. His only option was to exhume the body and move it to another burial site.

FREDERICK

And that's where he came unstuck.

CHARLES

He decided that the best way to move the body undetected was to hack it up into pieces...

HEATHER

God how gruesome.

CHARLES

Well I can't imagine anything more gruesome than hacking up a corpse that has been rotting down for a year. Anyway, that's what he did and he wrapped the body parts in canvas. His big mistake was to trust an old acquaintance to help him carry the parts to a new site.

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

The fellow he entrusted waited until Wainwright was out of sight and his curiosity got the better of him on account of the effluvium from the package. He opened the package... and the dead woman's head was staring out at him.

HEATHER

Good grief.

CHARLES

The poor man practically soiled himself and ran up the street to find some police. The game was up for Henry Wainwright. He'll no doubt be hung before the year is out.

FREDERICK

And rightly so.

CHARLES

It's almost a shame we have adopted William Marwood's long drop. He'll be dead in the blink of an eye.

HEATHER

How do you mean, Charles?

CHARLES

Well, the old way was the short drop. The condemned man, or woman for that matter, would die of strangulation. Prison staff and witnesses often complained how distressing this was to observe.

HEATHER

Well I can imagine. How horrible.

CHARLES

Indeed. Sometimes it would take several minutes of struggling before the prisoner expired. So William Marwood came up with the long drop and a formula to ensure almost instantaneous death. Basically the formula is twelve hundred and sixty foot pounds divided by the body weight. Save for a scant few decapitations, it works quite well. It's considered more humane than the short drop.

HEATHER

You've always had an unhealthy interest in the macabre, Charles. I don't know how you get to sleep at night.

CHARLES

I find such things fascinating, I must confess. I often wonder what goes through a man's mind when he is stood on that trap door with a sack on his head.

Heather shakes as if chilled.

HEATHER

Horrible. Gives me the willies.

10 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' SITTING ROOM - LATER

10

FREDERICK

Well, I know it has it's detractors but I think the death penalty is a good thing. It's a deterrent. I don't care how much crime there is, take away the death penalty and rape and murder would be rife.

Heather nods in agreement. Charles looks thoughtful.

CHARLES

Well, Frederick I agree that the death penalty should stay and that it is a good thing. It saves us money as taxpayers in the upkeep of criminals who have committed heinous crimes. Why should we accommodate and feed them?

HEATHER

I agree, Charles.

CHARLES

That said, I'm not sure the death penalty acts as much of a deterrent. You see a criminal is usually of a lower intellect or has a mania wherein he , or she for that matter, believes that they will be undetected and will get away with their crime. It is not within their powers of reasoning that they will be caught.

FREDERICK

You raise a good point.

CHARLES

As we have become more civilised, as a society, we have become more focused on the rights of the individual and on dignity. Executions are relatively private affairs these days. Gone are the days of the public execution. And with them, the deterrent.

Charles takes a long slug of his drink. Heather and Frederick look at each other.

FREDERICK

You may be right. The public spectacle of death would certainly leave an impression on me, I have to say.

HEATHER

I find the idea of going to watch such a thing quite ghoulish. Why would anyone want to see such a grotesque spectacle?

CHARLES

Two reasons. Firstly, people have always wanted to see justice carried out... and secondly, people cannot help themselves. Many will be haunted by what they saw for the rest of their lives but can only blame their own morbid curiosity. It's almost the same urge that drives the criminal. They know they shouldn't but they do it anyway. It's a form of temptation.

FREDERICK

Human nature.

Charles nods and stares into his drink.

CHARLES

We cannot deny what we are.

FREDERICK

So, Charles, if you were Prime Minister, would you bring back public execution?

CHARLES

Tough one. I would probably make them public to criminals and allow any interested parties to witness them for a handsome fee.

HEATHER

You can't be serious, Charles?

CHARLES

(wryly)

I'm a business man.

FREDERICK

Charles, you fox.

CHARLES

I was doing some business in a town called Halifax about two years ago. Dreadful place about sixty miles south. Have either of you heard of the Halifax Gibbet?

FREDERICK

I don't believe I have.

Heather shakes her head.

CHARLES

Well it was a device for public execution which predated the French guillotine by some considerable time.

HEATHER

All this talk of execution is making me feel quite depressed.

CHARLES

Hear me out, this is quite entertaining. Only recently, Sixty Nine, I believe, this ancient gibbet, or the base for it, was uncovered as part of the excavation of some waste ground along with two skeletons - the remains of the last two victims, Wilkinson and Mitchell. Now I found this fascinating...

HEATHER

As you would, Charles.

CHARLES

In 1617 a man called John Lacy managed to pull his head out of the way and make a run for it. As local law dictated, he made his way across a river boundary and became a free man. However, being rather dimwitted, seven years later, the allure of Halifax drew him back. He was recognised, arrested and executed.

FREDERICK

What a dolt.

CHARLES

Exactly. If proof be needed as to the stupidity of the criminal, we need look no further than John Lacy.

HEATHER

Maybe he went back for a reason?
Maybe he was set up... wronged?

FREDERICK

Either way, his stupidity was the doing of him.

CHARLES

The temptation maybe, to return to the scene of the crime, or his miraculous escape; a crime within itself.

HEATHER

Maybe his reason was revenge and it burned away within him until he could take no more. Maybe he had to abandon a loved one?

CHARLES

I looked into the matter and history does not tell us much beyond what I told you. A fascinating tale though... and as a matter of note, the gibbet was introduced as a deterrent and in a lawless place like West Yorkshire, only 53 people were publicly executed on the gibbet in three hundred and fifty years. Though sadly, it is a matter of record that most of those were executed for stealing cloth.

FREDERICK

Can you imagine that? That's barely a crime at all.

Charles finishes his drink.

CHARLES

I think I would quite fancy some laudanum.

HEATHER

I don't think we have any in the house, Charles.

CHARLES

Don't worry, I always have a good supply of laudanum in my baggage.

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Despite what some people say about
the tincture, I have quite a
penchant for it.

HEATHER

Can't it be quite habit forming?

CHARLES

Well, if it's good enough for Thomas
de Quincey, then it's good enough
for me.

11 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' DINING TABLE - EVENING

11

Marjorie, Frederick, Heather and Charles are sat at the dining table with a large spread of roast beef, various boiled vegetables, pickles etc. Also present are numerous bottles of red wine and sherry.

The clock reads six fifteen and Charles is clearly under the influence after an early and impressive start on the wine at lunchtime some hours before. He is still coherent and drinks with a huge capacity for alcohol.

CHARLES

Heather, I have to say, your cooking is just the ticket. First rate. I'm no cook myself and I tend to eat out far too often. I'm at The Drunken Duck just about every night but I rarely eat this well. Even when on business.

HEATHER

Well you should borrow one of my cookbooks, Charles. Start learning when you get back home.

CHARLES

There's an idea. The problem is, I'm basically a lazy person though.

MARJORIE

I'm sure you used to watch me roasting chicken and boiling ham.

CHARLES

Back in the day. That was a long time ago. Anyway, I may be too set in my ways to start with anything complicated.

HEATHER

There's nothing complicated about roasting meat.

FREDERICK

I recall I boiled some eggs once.

CHARLES

This is excellent.

He has a mouthful of roast beef and washes it down with a large gulp of red wine.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Where are the children anyway?

HEATHER

I fed them in the kitchen earlier while you were taking a nap. Jacob and Arthur will be up to no good with their friends up the village. Samuel and Henrietta might be up Blea Tarn. They spend a lot of time up there.

FREDERICK

As long as they are back by seven and don't bring trouble to my door.

CHARLES

Or the law.

FREDERICK

Aye, or the law.

HEATHER

Well they have been told to come and say good night before they retire to bed.

CHARLES

Splendid. I've not seen much of them since I got here.

MARJORIE

That's because you've been inebriated or asleep since the moment you arrived, Charlie.

Charles looks aghast and pours himself a large glass of red wine. He gives Marjorie a cold stare.

CHARLES

I am merely indulging in the generous fayre laid on by my sister and brother in law.

MARJORIE

Well don't go over indulging or they'll think their uncle is a lush.

Charles points his fork at Marjorie and glowers.

HEATHER

They are young and full of beans...
always out of the house up to
mischief.

MARJORIE

Youthful exuberance.

FREDERICK

Marjorie keeps mistaking foolishness
for exuberance.

CHARLES

It's just the way of children.
Better getting into scrapes outdoors
than sitting indoors all day like
those feeble inbred aristocracy
types, embroidering and playing
the harpsichord.

FREDERICK

You know, Charles, you have a way
with words. I agree.

Charles nods appreciatively. Frederick reaches for a bottle
to keep the wine glasses topped up.

CHARLES

Last time I was here, young Samuel
was showing a very keen interest
in angling.

HEATHER

Angling?

CHARLES

Fishing, Heather. The art of
catching freshwater fish.

HEATHER

Oh yes, he loves it. He's always
up at Blea Tarn. Like Frederick
when he was a youth. What was it
he caught the other day, Frederick?

FREDERICK

A pike.

CHARLES

A pike! Splendid. Real fighters
are pike. It's a shame they have
fallen out of favour with cooks.
They were a prized table fish all
over Europe.

FREDERICK

Maybe that's because they don't
have the delicacy of flavour and
(MORE)

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
 the beautiful appearance of a decent
 game fish like trout?

Charles swills wine and thinks for a moment.

CHARLES
 (diplomatically)
 This is quite true, Frederick.
 They are a dish in their own right,
 like bream. Fair play to young
 Samuel for catching one though.
 No fish catches itself, Frederick,
 as you well know.

FREDERICK
 Fair enough, Charles. You have
 the right of it.

Charles gesticulates with his fork.

CHARLES
 It's a difficult job fishing for
 the table when you can't see
 underwater. I have heard though
 that Izaak Walton's 'The Compleat
 Angler' is an exhaustive study on
 the art of angling. It would make
 the boy a good present.

FREDERICK
 I'd not thought of that. Good
 idea, Charles.

Heather and Charles smile at each other.

CHARLES
 In my youth I used to while away
 the hours on the banks of the
 Wharfe. It's a good way to grow
 up.

12 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

12

The clock reads ten past nine o'clock. Marjorie, Heather, Frederick and Charles are sat in the sitting room drinking brandy and chatting. Charles has a heroic measure in his glass.

CHARLES
 ... it was by far the most
 entertaining brawl I have ever
 witnessed. Now, I am not a violent
 person, as you well know but Osborne
 has a flair for it. That's why I
 employ him. Well, in close combat
 like that, Osborne comes into his
 own.

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

In a mere half a minute he had
broken four faces. You could hear
cheek bones breaking I tell you.
I just stood by and watched.

The door opens and the four children enter the room.

FREDERICK

All washed?

They all nod. Charles takes a gulp of brandy.

CHARLES

Now then children, before you retire
to bed, gather round this table.
I have some real British history
to show you. Real history. Not
that rubbish you read in books.

Charles has a leather bag by his feet. He takes out a bayonet and a black pocket watch and places them on the table.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Now I bet you are wondering what
these are?

Arthur and Jacob glance at each other and seem disinterested. Henrietta and Samuel stare at the objects in wonder.

HENRIETTA

A knife and a watch?

CHARLES

Very good, Henrietta. More
accurately though this is called a
bayonet.

SAMUEL

A real bayonet?

HENRIETTA

What's a bayonet?

CHARLES

A bayonet fixes to the end of a rifle... so when you get close enough to the enemy, or you run out of bullets, you kill them with the bayonet.

Henrietta looks at Samuel. Samuel is transfixed. Heather and Frederick look at each other a little nervously. Charles picks up the bayonet and hands it to Samuel.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Feel the craftsmanship in that.
Careful, it's very sharp.

Samuel holds it like a prize.

FREDERICK
Careful, Samuel.

CHARLES
That, Samuel, is an Enfield bayonet.
It was used in the Anglo Persian
War a few years ago, before you
were born though.

SAMUEL
It's amazing.

CHARLES
That bayonet has killed sixteen
Persians.

FREDERICK
Charles, really!

CHARLES
I swear on my mother's life.

MARJORIE
Charlie!

CHARLES
The man who took those to war owed
me money from a card game we had
in The Drunken Duck... So he gave
me the watch and the bayonet. He
was a hero. Sixteen Persians at
the battle of Khushab.

Heather claps her hands.

HEATHER
Right children, time for bed.

Samuel puts down the bayonet and touches the watch.

CHARLES
Bed time young Samuel. You can
look at that later.

FREDERICK
You heard your mother! Up to bed
and you can see uncle Charles at
breakfast.

The children say good night and retire to bed. Marjorie
stands up.

MARJORIE

I'll see that they all settle down
then I'll be in bed myself. Don't
want to spend all night being
lectured on killing Persians.
Good night.

Charles, Heather and Frederick laugh. Marjorie follows
the children out.

FREDERICK

Your mother has always been
outspoken, Charles.

CHARLES

I know. My father used to call
her, 'That irksome harridan.'

HEATHER

That's true. I'm amazed they ever
got married.

CHARLES

Well... that's open to debate.

Frederick casts Charles a cautionary glance. Charles takes
a gulp of brandy.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I mean, why ever did they?

Frederick takes out his pipe and tobacco and starts to
prepare a smoke. Charles watches the ritual a few seconds.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Mmmm. I rather fancy a glass or
two of tincture later. I've never
been one for a smoke but every man
has a vice. What do you say,
Frederick?

FREDERICK

I think you have the right of it,
Frederick.

13 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' SITTING ROOM - LATER

13

The clock chimes midnight. The room is dark save for one
oil lamp on the table with the bayonet, watch, half drunk
brandy and half a bottle of laudanum.

There is a note which reads: RETIRED TO BED. Charles is
waking from a deep drunken nap. His head is thrown back
in the chair and he is mumbling. As the clock finishes
chiming he wakes up and squints around the room. He sees
the clock and the note. He pours out some more brandy
into his glass and gulps the huge drink down. He coughs.

CHARLES

Jesus.

He picks up the laudanum, bayonet, watch and oil lamp and leaves the room very quietly.

14 INT. SAMUEL'S ROOM - LATER

14

Samuel is asleep. On a small bedside table there is the watch and the oil lamp. The watch reads quarter past midnight. Charles is sat on the bed. He coughs and Samuel awakens. He sees the watch and then sees Charles.

SAMUEL

Uncle Charles?

CHARLES

(gesturing)

Shhhhhh. Quiet.

Samuel stares at the watch and touches it.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

(quietly)

A hero's watch, Samuel. The world needs heroes. Real men.

Charles holds out the laudanum bottle.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Take a gulp.

Samuel takes a gulp and grimaces.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

A soldier's drink. Take a man's measure.

Samuel takes more gulps. It tastes bitter.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

When you are staring death in the face, it tastes sweet. They call it Dutch Courage. It makes a normal man a hero.

Samuel handles the watch and takes more gulps. He braves out the gagging reflex and the bitterness.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Dutch Courage allows a man to slit the throats of other men to save the lives of his friends... Allows a man to blow the heads off other men for the love of his country.

Samuel sees his reflection in the watch and stares into his own eyes.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
 Dutch Courage allows a man the
 strength to rip out the heart of
 his enemy and crush it in his fist.

Samuel takes another gulp of laudanum.

15 INT. SAMUEL'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

15

Samuel is drifting in and out of consciousness. Charles continues, watching Samuel. Samuel stares into the watch. It reads twenty past midnight.

CHARLES

(quietly)

The man who owned that watch rode with Major General James Outram. They were faced with eight thousand armed Persians. But the Persians didn't have the fire in their hearts and they were defeated. The sand underfoot was like tar, thick with their blood. Then Outram marched on Borazjan...

16 INT. SAMUEL'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

16

Samuel's eyes are wide open and his pupils are dilated. It is not obvious if he is conscious or not. He is still staring into the watch. It reads twenty two past midnight.

CHARLES

... advancing up the Shatt al Arab waterway to Mohammerah. Almost four thousand allies against thirteen thousand enemy.

17 INT. SAMUEL'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

17

Samuel awakens with Charles on top of him, sodomising him face down. Charles has his hand over Samuel's mouth. Samuel drifts between looking petrified and mesmerised. The bed rocks rythmically but quietly.

CHARLES

(whispering)

You dirty bastard... you dirty bastard.... you filthy, dirty bastard... dirty whore son bastard...

18 INT. SAMUEL'S ROOM - LATER

18

Samuel awakens on top of the bed and feels woozy and sick. He looks at the watch. It reads two fifteen in the morning. He realise he is naked from the waist down and in pain. He pulls a chamber pot from under the bed and vomits into it a few times. He puts on his pyjama bottoms and washes his mouth in a bowl of water on a table.

He takes gulps of water. He can hear Charles snoring in the next room.

19 INT. GUEST BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

19

The door opens quietly. Charles is snoring, comatose. He is fully clothed on the bed and an oil lamp is still burning on a bedside table.

Samuel shuts the door and creeps over to the bedside. Also on the table is what is left of the laudanum, the bayonet and a leather wallet which is open. Under the wallet are folded up photographs.

Samuel carefully lifts up the wallet and takes out banknotes and Charles' business cards. He pockets them and picks up the folded photographs. He has a quick glance by opening the corners. They are pornographic. He pockets them too and stares at Charles.

He picks up the bayonet and grasps it with both hands. He hovers the point over Charles' eye about an inch away and moves his body back so his arms are at full stretch. He slowly draws his arms above his head with the bayonet ready to drive it through Charles' head. He waits a few seconds.

SAMUEL
(quietly)
Dutch courage, Charlie...

Charles coughs in his sleep. Samuel drops the bayonet behind his head and it sticks vertically in the floorboards with a slight thump.

Someone else in the house coughs. In a quiet, quick, fluid movement, Samuel twists and pulls the bayonet from the floorboards, takes the oil lamp and hovers over Charles. He spits hard in his face. Charles moans.

Samuel quickly and quietly leaves the room closing the door behind him. He moves with stealth to his room, closes the door behind him and proceeds to quietly get dressed in his day clothes.

When dressed he sits on the bed with the watch in one hand and stares out of his bedroom window. He has the bayonet down his belt resting down the side of his thigh. He waits for daybreak.

20 EXT. BLEA TARN - AFTERNOON

20

Samuel has set up his rod on a stick. There are four brown trout next to his rod and tackle box that he has caught. Sam walks a few yards to an old wall that runs into the tarn.

He selects a good cavity in the wall about a yard from the shore and wraps the bayonet and watch in a leather cloth from the kitchen.

He hides the package in the hole in the wall.

Through part of the hole he can see a far off cottage.

He sees a man on horseback moving slowly in the distance.

He leaves the wall and returns to his rod. He reels in the line to see the bait has gone from the hook. He takes a worm from his worm can, baits the hook and casts his line. He admires the four trout and then remembers the money in his pockets. He takes out notes and holds them up to the sun.

He pockets the notes and then takes out the folded photographs from his other pocket. He unfolds them one by one. He is shocked. They show one group sex photograph with his mother with Pearson and his father with an unidentified woman and two other shots consisting of his mother and father with the mystery woman. The last shows his father and Pearson with the same woman in what will, in later years, be known as a 'Spit Roast' position. They are very explicit and taken in a sitting room rather than a bedroom. He can't quite believe what he is looking at.

He kicks the dead trout back into the tarn.

21 EXT. BLEA TARN FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

21

Frederick approaches on horseback. Samuel turns round while still holding the photographs. After a few seconds he sees it is his father. Within seconds his father is upon him.

He folds the photographs closed. Frederick towers over him on the horse.

FREDERICK
(angrily)
Where the hell have you been?

Samuel squints up at him.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Well? Answer me!

SAMUEL
Here.

Frederick dismounts. He has a thick ended carved walking stick. He points it at Samuel.

FREDERICK
Why weren't you at breakfast to see uncle Charles off? It was a shameful embarrassment to the family.

SAMUEL

Well, last night...

FREDERICK

(seething)

I'm talking about this morning
boy. Breakfast is always at eight.

Samuel hangs his head.

SAMUEL

Uncle Charles...

FREDERICK

(shouting)

Yes, uncle Charles! What's that
you have there?

Samuel's head slumps even lower. Frederick raps Samuel's hand with the stick and he drops the photographs in the grass. Frederick picks them up and looks through them with barely concealed rage. With all the force he can muster he smashes the heavy stick across Samuel's face.

Samuel is knocked to the floor with his cheek burst open. He moans and stars to crawl on his belly away from Frederick. Frederick folds up the photographs and puts them in a pocket.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

(whispering)

God damn you, Burns.

Samuel moans and rolls over. He is trying to say something.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

Thieving, sly little bastard.

Frederick strides over Samuel and starts to rain massive blows on his head and neck with the stick. With what strength Samuel has left he tries to pull himself into the tarn. Frederick delivers one final blow to the top of Samuel's head.

Samuel stops moving and blood flows into the shallow water of the tarn's edge.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

(shouting)

God damn it. Look what you made
me do boy.

Frederick watches the still body for a few seconds. He rolls Samuel over. There are no signs of life. Frederick scans the horizon in all directions to check for possible witnesses. He throws the rod as far out into the tarn as he can. Then the tackle box and the bait can. Frederick watches the tackle box bob and list on the surface.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
Sink God damn it.

Frederick goes through Samuel's pockets and finds the money from Charles' wallet.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
Oh Christ. Burns' money. Christ.

Frederick picks up Samuel and throws him over the horse. Blood pours from terrible head wounds. His head and face are misshapen and battered beyond recognition.

Frederick washes the end of his stick in the water and washes away a heavy bloodstain in the grass next to the water, with his hands.

He climbs on the horse and sets off across the fields with Samuel draped over the horse. He rides off toward Side Pike, a huge rocky outcrop a couple of miles away.

22 EXT. SIDE PIKE - LATER

22

Frederick arrives and dismounts. The side of his horse is stained with Samuel's blood. Frederick pushes Samuel off the horse and grabs his feet. He drags his body over to pothole entrance part obscured with vegetation. He muscles Samuel's body to the edge of the hole and heaves him in. There is a thud after the body drops inside. Frederick looks inside. It is black.

23 EXT. BLEA TARN - LATER

23

Copeland is stood in Samuel's fishing spot. He looks around in the grass. He bends to examine blood flecks. He stands and has a tear in his eye. He looks over the tarn and Samuel's fishing float still bobs on the surface a few yards out.

24 EXT. PEARSON'S HOUSE - LATER

24

Copeland knocks on the door. There is a single glass pane in the door roughly at head height. The glass is distorted with a convex pouring mark. After a few seconds Pearson open's the door.

PEARSON
Copeland.

COPELAND
I'm afraid I bring news of a despicable crime.

PEARSON
Then you had better come in.

25 EXT. SIDE PIKE - EVENING

25

Copeland and Pearson clamber up side pike. Copeland is in front. They come into the vicinity of the pothole. Copeland sees a patch of dried blood and points to it.

COPELAND

There. Blood.

Pearson looks at the patch.

PEARSON

With all respect, Copeland, we are out in the countryside. That could be the blood of a rabbit.

COPELAND

I saw it with my own eyes from the cottage. He brought him up here, over a horse. When he came back he was alone. It was somewhere around here I tell you.

PEARSON

Well there doesn't seem to be anything incriminating here... just some blood of some unknown origin.

Copeland looks around and sees the dark entrance to the pothole through the vegetation. He walks over to it and peers in.

COPELAND

Pearson! Here! Some kind of cavern.

Copeland leans inside.

COPELAND (CONT'D)

(echoing)

He could have dumped him in here.

Pearson walks up behind Copeland.

PEARSON

Can you see anything?

COPELAND

It's a bit dark. Wait until my eyes adjust.

Pearson pulls a revolver from inside his jacket and SHOOTS Copeland in the back of head. The bullet tears through his face. The gunshot reverberates loudly. Copeland stiffens and tries to speak. Pearson SHOOTS him again. Copeland drops into the darkness of the pothole.

Pearson turns and looks over the surrounding land. As an afterthought he opens his flies and urinates into the pothole.

26 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' DINING TABLE - EVENING

26

The whole Miller family are at the table about to start dinner. Ham, eggs and potatoes. Samuel's place is empty. Frederick looks around the table.

FREDERICK

I will say Grace.

Everyone bows their heads. Frederick closes his eyes. He reaches out and grasps Heather's hand on the table.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

Lord, thank you for this meal you have provided for us. Continue to look over us and protect us. Forgive us our sins and keep us on the straight and narrow. Amen.

HENRIETTA

That's not how it goes.

HEATHER

Watch your tongue girl.

FREDERICK

Let's eat.

Everyone helps themselves to food.

ARTHUR

So where is Samuel?

JACOB

In hot water.

FREDERICK

We don't know where he is. The young fool is a daydreamer. He is probably up at Blea Tarn talking to that Copeland fellow about fishing. You can't hear the bells up there. If he's not back by dark I will call by Pearson's and we will go looking for him.

JACOB

I bet he's run away.

HEATHER

Why do you say that?

JACOB

Well... I don't know.

FREDERICK

Shut up and eat. This is a matter
for adults.

Arthur pokes Jacob.

ARTHUR

Cretin.

Frederick stands and looks to Marjorie and Heather.

FREDERICK

I don't seem to have much of an
appetite. I apologies and the
food looks splendid as usual. I
will retire to the sitting room
and have a brandy and a pipe. I
have much on my mind.

Marjorie and Heather nod.

HEATHER

I will save some for you, Frederick.
On the stove.

Frederick walks past Jacob and SLAPS Arthur across the
face so hard he is momentarily dazed. A second later he
backhands him again across the other cheek, almost knocking
him off the chair.

FREDERICK

Cretin.

Frederick walks away and slams the door behind him.

27 INT. PEARSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

27

A table clock reads ten fifteen. Pearson is drunk. He is
sweaty and his shirt is completely unbuttoned. There is a
half empty whisky bottle on the table and the revolver
with four rounds.

Pearson puts the gun to his forehead (sideways), to cool
himself down.

PEARSON

Dear God, what an unholy mess.

There is a KNOCK at the front door. Pearson hides the
revolver in a drawer and moves to a position near the front
door but hidden from the glass window.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

Who is it?

FREDERICK (O.S.)

Frederick.

PEARSON

Right... Just wait a minute.

Pearson goes back to the drawer and gets the revolver. He quickly puts the four rounds in the cylinder and rotates it so a round is in the chamber. He sticks the revolver down the back of his belt, adjusting his shirt over the butt. He goes back to the front door, glances through the window and pauses for a few seconds. He rubs his face in his hands and composes himself.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Just in case.

He opens the door and lets Frederick in. They walk inside and stand in the middle of Pearson's small front room.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

Can I offer you a drink?

FREDERICK

I'm fine thanks... I'll get straight to the point... Samuel has, shall we say, 'gone missing.'

Pearson glances at the floor. He takes a large gulp of whisky. Sweat drips from his nose.

PEARSON

(anxiously)

This is a grim affair, Frederick. Me, you, Osborne, Burns... the Whore. You're losing control of it. We should have killed Burns thirteen years ago and you know it. You said no, Frederick. I had a gun two feet from him. You said no.

Frederick raise his hands. He's angry at the suggestion that Pearson thinks he is wrong. He struggles to come back with a retort.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Look where we are now! You're married to his sister!

Frederick stares at him for a few long seconds. It is as if they understand each other on an ethereal level.

FREDERICK

(with venom)

I thought he was a man of his God damned word...Burns still has the damned plates. Samuel had copies. He stole them from Burns.

PEARSON

(exasperated)

Double crossing pederast bastard.
Is the body still interred?

FREDERICK

(nodding)

I believe so...Osborne took care
of it and for his own insurance,
only he knows where the body is.

Pearson lets out a long deep breath.

PEARSON

Well... the Samuel situation...
People go missing right enough.
They set to sea... They set off
for new horizons. Sometimes they
are kidnapped or abducted for
ransom... Sometimes they are
involved in terrible accidents.
And sometimes they are done in.

The two men glare at each other. Pearson shakes his head.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

Look, there's something else...
Copeland has gone too.

FREDERICK

Gone? How do you mean, gone?

PEARSON

It's best you don't know. People
round these parts might assume
they have fled together... for
whatever reason.

Both men look at each other fully aware of the gravity of
the situation.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

I don't know about you but I'd
turn a gun on myself before I'd
hang.

Frederick stares at Pearson.

FREDERICK

Well let's do everything we have
to, to make sure it doesn't come
to that.

Pearson goes to a nearby drawer and unwraps a cloth. There
is another revolver inside. He checks the cylinder has
six rounds in it and hands it to Frederick.

PEARSON

Keep this on hand. Just in case
he sends Osborne.

Frederick weighs the revolver in his hand and nods at Pearson. He notices the name Sean Osborne engraved on the gun. He looks slightly puzzled.

PEARSON (CONT'D)

It's called planting evidence. It
helps with unsolved crime.

28 EXT. KENDAL CENTRE - NIGHT

28

A wretched figure limps and stumbles, moaning out of a dark alleyway.

He is uncoordinated as he makes his way across the road to a lamp post. He grabs onto the lamp post to hold himself up and in the light we see it is Samuel. He is battered and lacerated. His head and face are swollen and grotesque. He is caked in dried blood and his eyes seem almost black with bruising and the dilation of his pupils. He shakes as he holds on to the lamp post.

A DOGWALKER, 60, walks by with a dog on a string. The lamp post is the dog's usual toilet stop. The man holds the dog back and stares at Samuel.

DOGWALKER

You look like you need help. What's
happened to you?

Samuel acknowledges the man's presence and painfully turns to look at him. He forms a couple of incoherent words.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

DOGWALKER

What's your name?

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

DOGWALKER

Come with me. We'll get some help.

The man holds onto Samuel's wrist to lead him away but Samuel moans loudly and uses the last of his strength to grasp the lamp post and stay in its pool of light.

DOGWALKER (CONT'D)

Don't go anywhere. I'll get help.
There's a police station in the
next street.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

The man quickly makes his way up the street to get help.

29 INT. ASYLUM MEDICAL ROOM - DAY

29

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 25th 1875

Samuel is sedated and alone on a grubby hospital bed in a lunatic asylum medical room. The room is whitewashed but has various signs of historic violence here and there. There is a large window covered by a metal grill. Part of the window is smashed. There is very little medical equipment in the room. There is a high ceiling and the roof leaks. There are two copper pans on the floor that catch a loud drip every so often.

Samuel has thick webbing holding him down to the bed and he is wearing a one piece grubby white / grey gown that has blood and lots of excrement on the lower half. He has been washed and his head has been shaved, showing the full extent of his injuries. His worst visible injuries are a large compression to the skull and a damaged eye socket. Other than that his head is a mass of cuts and bruises. A syringe hangs out of his calf muscle.

A rat boldly walks across the floor, under his bed and disappears through a broken skirting board. We hear a piercing SCREAM echo from another part of the asylum. Samuel flinches and flexes against the webbing but he is still heavily sedated.

We hear VOICES nearby.

Two doctors enter the medical room wearing grubby white coats. All white coats in the asylum are stencilled across the back with the name: CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND LUNATIC ASYLUM.

O'HARE, 60 and WEST, 40. Both have stethoscopes round their necks. O'Hare's spectacles are slightly bent and one lens is missing. West carries a cricket bat.

WEST

So this is the latest inmate?

O'HARE

Arrived last night. Found in Kendal. As of yet, a bit of a mystery. Estimated age of fifteen. Registered as patient one hundred and seven.

WEST

He looks like he's been blown up.

O'HARE

A sorry state, indeed.
(MORE)

O'HARE (CONT'D)

Practically an imbecile but probably the victim of a rather vicious and heinous crime. Or a fall from a great height.

West points at the large amount of excrement on Samuel's gown.

WEST

Have his bowels given way due to the morphine?

O'HARE

That's not his faeces. It's someone else's. A fellow who died in the night from some malaise or other... The new laundry doesn't arrive until Friday.

WEST

Do you expect him to live?

O'HARE

Yes. He's lost all the blood he is going to lose. There's a couple of fractures to the skull, probably some brain damage. His pupils are permanently dilated... But nothing life threatening.

WEST

When he comes to, he might be able to tell us what happened to him.

O'HARE

I doubt it. Like I said, he's most likely brain damaged and he's also recently bitten off half his tongue.

WEST

A seizure perhaps? Violence?

O'HARE

His time in the outside world is in the past. It's not really relevant in here. We are simply charged with the task of stopping any one patient killing another. It's quite simple really.

West reflects for a few seconds.

WEST

Well, it sounds simple, in theory but its not that simple in practice is it?

O'Hare raises his eyebrows.

O'HARE
March was rather embarrassing.

West laughs.

WEST
March was a nightmare. Three patients and an orderly. Not to mention the injured.

O'HARE
Yes... I did feel a tad sheepish explaining that body count to the governors.

WADE, 55 enters the room behind O'Hare and West. He is dressed in a white coat and has a stethoscope. He walks past them and stands next to Samuel's bed. He looks closely at Samuel and lifts his eyelids. He stares into his eyes.

WADE
Mmm... a softening of the brain brought on by melancholy.

West and O'Hare look at each other.

O'HARE
Is that your diagnosis?

WADE
Well, it'll do for now. Who are you by the way?

O'HARE
Dr O'Hare.

WADE
Wade.

Wade looks closely at the lacerations and contusions on Samuel's head and face.

O'HARE
He was admitted last night. He was found in Kendal town centre, transfixed and in a state of lunacy.

WADE
And his physical injuries?

O'HARE
A mystery as yet but if I could be so bold as to put forward my own theory?

WADE
Feel free.

O'HARE

Well, he appears to have injuries which could be caused by a fall from a height... like a roof or a high window.

WADE

Possible. Though these upper body injuries look like someone has set about his head with great zeal and no small amount of relish.

O'HARE

Yes, that troubled me. Maybe he was beaten and thrown from a height?

WADE

Maybe. Have you taken a stool sample?

O'HARE

Not as yet... I'll be frank with you, I don't subscribe to the notion that a man's ailments can be divined by testing the shade and rigidity of his turd.

Wade looks indignant.

WADE

You'll be telling me you don't advocate leeching next!

O'HARE

No, on the contrary, leeching has been proven beyond all doubt to be a valid and important procedure. It's just that this is a state of the art, modern facility and we practice modern medicine and psychiatry.

WADE

What is your point?

O'HARE

Well, turd slicing harks back to the Middle Ages. It's quackery.

WADE

It's nothing of the sort you pompous ignoramus. Psychiatry is a poor cousin to phrenology. Fantasy at best. A school of thought expounded by spineless dandies.

West and O'Hare look at each other.

Wade drops his trousers to the floor, squats down and starts to evacuate his bowels. West strides forward and knocks Wade unconscious with the cricket bat. A wig flies off his head and his spectacles skid across the floor.

O'HARE

He had me foxed there for a minute.

O'Hare swaps his broken spectacles for Wade's good pair.

O'HARE (CONT'D)

Waste not, want not.

30 INT. ASYLUM OFFICE - DAY

30

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 25th 1876

O'Hare and West are relaxing in a rather Spartan office, smoking pipes. The office looks much like a cell. There are a few framed photographs on the walls. One is W G Grace. O'Hare is looking through a copy of The Lancet and West is reading the front page of a London newspaper.

WEST

Says here that the Sioux have beaten the Seventh Cavalry... at Little Bighorn. Two hundred and seventy cavalry slaughtered.

O'HARE

Violent place America. Not been the same since they killed their president.

WEST

The Americans just don't have the reserve that we British do. We don't go murdering our Prime Ministers.

O'HARE

With the exception of Spencer Perceval.

WEST

Aye, right enough. And the gunpowder plot.

There is a knock at the door.

O'HARE

Who is it?

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

I've got the leech collector here.

O'HARE

Right you are. Leave her outside.
I will be with her in a minute.

31 INT. OUTSIDE ASYLM OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

31

On the other side of O'Hare's locked office door stands the LEECH COLLECTOR, 40. She is a wiry, ill looking Scottish woman who is almost porcelain white but also covered in small pink and red 'Y' shaped incisions. Her eyes are sunken and she seems almost catatonic. Her hair is short for a woman and unkempt. Her lips look chapped.

At her feet is a large steel bucket with holes around the top and with a lid.

We hear a FIGHT break out, echoing from another part of the building. She cranes her neck to detect where the ruckus is coming from and looks more worried than she normally does.

We hear the reverberating sounds of someone getting a beating and someone SCREAMING.

Further up the corridor a naked man crawls across the floor sobbing. Two men in white coats calmly walk into the corridor, grab his feet and pull him up the length of the corridor to disappear through a door at the end. As they pull the man, one of the men turns and waves. The leech collector waves back.

32 INT. ASYLM OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

32

O'Hare opens the door. The leech collector enters the office and places the bucket on a table. She sits on rickety seat set aside for visitors. O'Hare grins at her.

O'HARE

May I say, you are looking as healthy as ever?

LEECH COLLECTOR

(flatly - Scottish accent)

Thank you, doctor.

O'HARE

Positively radiant. You exude a vitality that must be the envy of most of my patients.

LEECH COLLECTOR

People often remark on my alabaster skin tone. And the fineness of my hair.

WEST
(sarcastic)
Never underestimate the near
mystical properties of
Hirudo Medicinalis.

LEECH COLLECTOR
What does he say?

O'HARE
Someone's been reading their text
books: Hirudo Medicinalis... the
latin name for the medicinal leech.

The leech collector seems to take this in slowly with a confused look. It was a lot of information.

LEECH COLLECTOR
Right you are.

WEST
You learn something new every day.

O'Hare taps the bucket on the table. West carries on reading the newspaper.

O'HARE
So how is the leech collecting
business lately?

LEECH COLLECTOR
Very agreeable lately. There's
two hundred and sixteen in that
bucket. Some died. Its been a
good summer. Very balmy.

O'HARE
It has. We don't tend to like
summer in here. It's the fleas
and the insects. They are attracted
by the stench and spread malaise.
They favour faeces and open wounds.

O'Hare takes the lid off and peers inside.

O'HARE (CONT'D)
Magnificent specimens.

He reaches in and takes out a writhing handful. The leech collector smiles and O'Hare drops them back in.

LEECH COLLECTOR
Put the lid back. They will climb
the sides if they see light.

O'Hare replaces the lid.

O'HARE

So... payment. How would you like
paying for your labour?

LEECH COLLECTOR

Opium.

O'HARE

That's fine. Will you want a smoke
now?

She nods. O'Hare takes two opium pipes from his desk. He goes to a glass fronted cabinet full of pills, potions, tinctures and powders.

He takes a jar and shakes out large pellets of dried opium resin on the desk. He puts ten pellets in a small empty bottle for the leech collector and hands them to her with a pipe and a box of matches.

He shakes out a pellet for himself and goes back to the cabinet.

The leech collector puts a pellet in the pipe and lights it. She takes a long pull on the pipe. She holds in the smoke for as long as she can and exhales.

LEECH COLLECTOR

Have you got any chloral hydrate?

O'HARE

I have... Anything else?

LEECH COLLECTOR

Pure grain ethanol and maybe some
mandrake?

O'Hare grins.

O'HARE

Yes, I have those. Go easy on the
mandrake though. I've been reading
some worrying things about it.
It's effects are quite stupefying.

O'Hare takes out a large bottle of ethanol, some chloral hydrate and a jar with a dried mandrake root and puts them on the table.

The leech collector inhales long pulls on the pipe. O'Hare takes the matches and smokes a pellet himself.

LEECH COLLECTOR

The opium makes the leeches fall
off quicker than usual... maybe by
an hour sometimes.

O'HARE

Really? Fascinating... Maybe the opium goes into the blood? The blood rather than the brain... and the blood goes to the brain. What a curious thing.

LEECH COLLECTOR

I suppose.

She starts to relax heavily with the opium. O'Hare pulls on his pipe. He settles in his chair.

O'HARE

Very agreeable.

WEST

Remember we should check on hundred and seven soon.

The leech collector opens her jar of opium pellets and eats one.

O'HARE

Yes... I forgot. How long have the leeches been on?

WEST

No idea. A good while. Maybe an hour.

O'Hare and the leech collector smile at each other. They are now in a separate, stoned universe to West. O'Hare takes another huge blast on the pipe... and exhales.

O'HARE

God's own fuel.

He touches the leech collector's arm.

O'HARE (CONT'D)

Come with me. I want to show you something.

The leech collector is about to nod out. She takes another big pull on the pipe. She looks as ecstatic as is possible, given her features. She follows O'Hare out of the office and down the corridor. She still has the pipe. O'Hare leaves his in the office.

A rat traverses the corridor in the distance. They think nothing of it. The roof leaks here and there.

They come to a medical room. O'Hare unlocks the door.

for a towel or gown wrapped around his mid section. He has about fifty leeches attached to him, from his feet to his neck, some as thick as a man's thumb.

There is a leech bucket at the side of the bed.

Samuel groans and his breathing is laboured. He stares at them. His pupils are permanently dilated. Samuel and the leech collector seem to connect on a deeper level.

O'HARE

Patient one hundred and seven.

The leech collector walks over to Samuel and touches his cheek.

LEECH COLLECTOR

He has a killer's aura.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

O'HARE

He can't communicate very well.
He only has half a tongue and he
is an imbecile.

LEECH COLLECTOR

There are too many leeches on him.

O'HARE

Nonsense. His four humors are terribly out of kilter. This will redress the balance. For sound health, a person needs equilibrium of phlegm, blood, black bile and yellow bile. He was looking terribly pink around the upper body earlier... Too much blood.

LEECH COLLECTOR

Yes but there are too many leeches.
They will take half his blood.

One gorged leech detaches itself from Samuel's side. It drops onto the bed and the wound continues to ooze blood.

LEECH COLLECTOR (CONT'D)

There are too many.

O'HARE

It appears they are at their fill,
so they will be dropping off now
anyway.

LEECH COLLECTOR

But he will continue to bleed for
an hour or two.

O'HARE

Well, medicine isn't an exact science. We have to try new methods in order to push the boundaries of what we know. Along the way there will be casualties.

SAMUEL

(agitated)

<Incoherent>

O'Hare takes a rather fat leech between his thumb and forefinger and squeezes it.

LEECH COLLECTOR

Don't do that. It pushes their gut poisons back through the wound.

O'HARE

Whatever are you talking about?

LEECH COLLECTOR

Well, if a leech feeds on a diseased creature, like a sick old horse, or lies in a diseased pond then the sickness sits in its gut as a poison. Better it stays there.

O'Hare studies her intently.

O'HARE

What a fertile imagination you have. I never heard the like before.

LEECH COLLECTOR

It's true.

O'HARE

(inquisitively)

Surely... Oh, never mind.

The leech collector blows opium smoke in Samuel's face. Samuel flinches.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

LEECH COLLECTOR

Its good for you. These leeches will drop off.

O'Hare picks up the fat leech that is squirming on the bed and drops it into the leech bucket.

LEECH COLLECTOR (CONT'D)

Do you expect him to live?

O'HARE

It's out of my hands. I just do
what I think is best.

The leech collector puts the pipe stem in Samuel's mouth. He sucks in the smoke and coughs a little. She holds the pipe as he smokes.

LEECH COLLECTOR

He knows how to smoke. He is no
imbecile.

O'HARE

Well, I'll be the best judge of
that I think.

Samuel's black eyes fix on O'Hare in an expression somewhere between contempt and contentment.

LEECH COLLECTOR

(affectionately)

He's feeling the restorative powers
of the smoke already.

Samuel gazes at the leech collector an his eyelids begin to droop. After a short while he no longer inhales and closes his eyes.

34 INT. ASYLUM WARD - DAY

34

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 25th 1877

A small ward in the asylum. There are five beds against the back wall underneath large grilled windows. A few patients wander around, some are sat or laid on beds, some on chairs and some are sat on the floor. The room is whitewashed and the roof leaks a little. Maybe ten patients.

All wear the white gowns stencilled with the words:
CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND LUNATIC ASYLUM. All have shaved heads. It is mostly quiet.

Two burly orderlies, PATTERSON, 40 and BOOTH, 45 stand guard over a locked gate at the opposite side to the beds. They seem relaxed. Their role is supervisory.

Samuel is sat at a smallish old wooden table across from JOHN, 25. They are playing a curious card game. John has a severe tic which causes him to spasm quite regularly.

Samuel and John look at their cards. They have six each and the rest of the deck sits at the side. They stare at each other over the cards. Macho stuff.

John puts down three cards: Eight of diamonds, six of spades and seven of hearts.

Samuel stares at them and studies his hand. He puts down seven of spades, two of hearts and three of diamonds.

John stares at the two hands. Samuel stares at John.

JOHN

I win.

Samuel shakes his head and takes the cards. He puts down the second three of the six cards he had: Four of diamonds, jack of spades and nine of diamonds.

John looks smug and puts down the ace of spades, queen of diamonds and queen of hearts.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I win.

Samuel shakes his head. He taps the ace of spades.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Ace of spades. I win.

Samuel shakes his head. John spasms.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(agitated)

Aces are eleven, imbecile.

John takes the cards and returns them to the deck. He lets a card slip onto the floor and nods Samuel to retrieve it. Samuel bends below the table to get the card. John deals two fixed hands.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Your turn.

Samuel looks at his cards. He puts down three jacks. Two in red suits and one black. He stares at John defiantly and with a hint of smugness. John spasms enthusiastically, failing to mask his glee.

John puts down the queen of hearts, queen of diamonds and the ace of spades. It is the same hand as the last. He taps the ace of spades.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I win.

John laughs hysterically. Samuel stares at the ace.

Two cooks leave a trolley behind the locked gate with Patterson and Booth. On it there are a large aluminium bowl of potato and onion soup and woven basket full of thick bread slices. There is also a bell, a pile of wooden spoons and a stack of wooden bowls. Patterson unlocks the gate and wheels in the trolley. He picks up the bell and RINGS it.

PATTERSON

The banquet is here! To start and finish with today, we have potato and onion soup, prepared by our French chef, Michel.

The patients begin to gather around the trolley as Patterson serves up soup and Booth hands out bread.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)

I can assure you that Mr Booth has washed his hands before handling your bread gentlemen.

Soon all the patients are fed except one man, LEE, 40 who just lays on his bed. Booth notices him and nudges Patterson, gesturing over to Lee.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)

Lee! You not hungry?

John puts down his bowl and walks over to Lee. He smacks his face with the wooden spoon. There is no response.

JOHN

(loudly)

Phil Lee died. Can I have his soup?

Patterson walks over. He looks closely at Lee.

PATTERSON

Go back to your table, John. Lee is in a deep sleep.

John goes back to the table. Patterson waves to Booth and they exit the room locking the gate behind them.

35 INT. ASYLUM WARD - MOMENTS LATER

35

Patterson and Booth return with the trolley and O'Hare. Booth carries a fold up stretcher. O'Hare makes his way over to Samuel first and Samuel opens his mouth. O'Hare puts an opium pellet in his mouth, the size of a large pea.

O'HARE

Sorry I'm late. We have deliveries on Wednesdays.

O'Hare walks over to Lees bed and examines him for a few seconds. He SLAPS him hard across the face. No response.

Booth brings the stretcher and they lift Lee's body onto it.

O'HARE (CONT'D)

Could you all hurry with your food
as Mr Patterson is wanting to gather
up bowls.

JOHN

Is Lee dead?

O'HARE

Difficult to say. He is in a trance
like state called catalepsy. We
need to transfer him to a medical
room and do tests... So if you
could all put your bowls and spoons
back on the trolley, we can get on
with it.

36 INT. ASYLUM WARD - LATER

36

Patterson and Booth are now at the gate resuming their
roles as supervisors. Lunch is over and Lee's body has
been removed.

John and Samuel are playing their card game again. Samuel
studies his six cards and puts down two red kings and a
ten of clubs. John starts to twitch and puts down two red
eights and the ace of spades.

He bursts out laughing, stands up and lifts his gown. He
starts to masturbate. Patterson and Booth cannot quite
see what is going on as John has his back to them.

PATTERSON

What's going on over there, John?

Samuel bends down and quickly wrenches a leg off the old
table. The thick end is splintered with screws hanging
out.

As if playing cricket, Samuel CRACKS a huge blow across
John's face. Blood spatters everywhere and John falls in
a heap unconscious. As the other patients look on in
amazement, Samuel hits him one more time with a sickening
CRUNCH.

Slow to react, Patterson and Booth edge toward Samuel
cautiously. Booth rings a hand bell for assistance.

Samuel throws the table leg to one side and just stands
with his arms to his sides. Patterson and Booth take him
to the floor. The other patients clap.

37 INT. ASYLUM WARD - DAY

37

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 25th 1878

Same ward as previous. Perhaps ten patients. Two new orderlies guard the room gate from the other side. JENKINS, 55 and WATSON, 50.

Samuel is sat at a small table playing dominoes with THE HUNGARIAN, 40. The table now has brackets on the legs and is secured to the floor.

West lets himself through the gate with his own key. He walks over to Samuel and puts an opium pellet in front of him. Samuel puts it in his mouth. The Hungarian tugs at West's sleeve. West pulls away.

THE HUNGARIAN
A az agyban arcot.

WEST
In English please...

THE HUNGARIAN
The face in my bed.

WEST
What?

THE HUNGARIAN
I told you the other time. My bed
is haunted.

WEST
Nonsense.

THE HUNGARIAN
A szellem-bol egy halott ember!

WEST
What?

THE HUNGARIAN
A face in my bed. The spirit of a
dead man.

WEST
Do you want some time to yourself?

The Hungarian points to another patient.

THE HUNGARIAN
Him. Who is that?

Samuel and West look over to where he is pointing. WEIR, 45 leans against a wall.

WEST
That's Weir.

THE HUNGARIAN
Weir. He tell me a man die in my
bed. Then I find the face.

WEST

This is ridiculous.

THE HUNGARIAN

(loudly)

Weir!

WEIR

Is it dinner time?

THE HUNGARIAN

Who was the man who die in my bed?

WEIR

Philip Lee.

THE HUNGARIAN

Philip Lee die in my bed. It is
haunted and has his face in it.

WEST

Why am I wasting my time with this
drivel?

THE HUNGARIAN

I want another bed. The Hungarians
are a wary people. I want a new
bed.

WEST

Well I don't care. I have things
I need to do.

The Hungarian strides over to his bed and pulls the sheet
back. He points at the mattress.

THE HUNGARIAN

Come and look.

West reluctantly walks over and sees that there is a stain
in the middle of the mattress.

THE HUNGARIAN (CONT'D)

You see it?

WEST

That's just a urine stain. Not a
face.

WEIR

It's the face of Philip Lee.

WEST

Will you be quiet, Weir?

THE HUNGARIAN

Look... there is nose... eyes...
his mouth. Haunted.

WEST

Ridiculous. Lee soiled himself,
or maybe someone before Lee. It's
a urine stain.

THE HUNGARIAN

I ask you last time. Can I have a
new bed?

WEST

No.

The Hungarian lands a bone crushing right fist in West's face. His nose explodes. Barely able to coordinate, West staggers backwards. The Hungarian hits him again and West lands on his back on the dominoes table then rolls off onto the floor.

Jenkins rings the hand bell while Watson fumbles for the keys in his pocket.

JENKINS

Hurry up!

WATSON

I'm trying!

The Hungarian straddles West, grabs his head and hammers it into the hard floor with sickening rhythmic squelches. A pool of blood begins to appear and West's head starts to splash into it.

Samuel stands up and picks up the chair, raising it high above his head.

Jenkins grabs Watson's arm as the key is put in the lock.

JENKINS

Lets wait for help.

Samuel whips the chair down and breaks it over the Hungarian's back. He yells in agony and holds up his blood covered hands.

Samuel CRACKS what is left of the chair across the back of the Hungarian's head. He rolls off West's body and lies face up with his mouth open.

Samuel grabs one of the chair legs and forces the thinner end in the Hungarian's mouth, levers his head back and is on the point of ramming it right down his throat.

WEIR

Stop!

Samuel looks up at Weir.

WEIR (CONT'D)

If you do it, they'll poison you.

Samuel stares at him.

WEIR (CONT'D)

There's no need. He killed West.
They'll poison him.

Samuel removes the chair leg and stands. He turns to see Jenkins, Watson, Patterson and Booth swing the gate open. He drops the chair leg.

38 INT. ASYLUM SOLITARY CELL - DAY

38

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 25th 1879

A small isolation cell. A bed, a bucket, a table and chair. A leaky roof drips into a cracked chamber pot in the corner.

There is a grilled window. All you can see outside is a tree and more buildings.

Samuel is sat at the table with a large drawing pad and soft charcoals. There are a few drawings stuck on the walls. Some of these include a clock face a large house and a fish. He is drawing a horse.

There is a KNOCK on the metal door. A food hatch opens and a hand deposits two opium pellets on the small internal shelf. Samuel looks perplexed for a second or two.

He gets up and eats the pellets.

O'HARE (O.S.)

Food in about an hour.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

Samuel takes the pad and charcoal and sits on his bed waiting for the opium to wash over him.

39 INT. ASYLUM SOLITARY CELL - LATER

39

Samuel is on the nod on his bed with the pad on his chest. He has charcoaled his eye sockets jet black.

There is a KNOCK on the door and the food hatch opens. A tray is pushed in. A meal of boiled potatoes in a broth, with a thick slice of bread and a beaker of water. All served in wood utensils with a wooden spoon.

Samuel momentarily opens his eyes. He looks sideways at the food and nods off again. A drool of saliva runs over his chin.

The leak drips into the chamber pot.

40 INT. ASYLUM SOLITARY CELL - LATER

40

Samuel dozes and twitches. As he drifts back into consciousness, a drip in the chamber pot awakens him with a start.

He notices his food has moved to the table. He grabs the pad and the charcoal.

His brow furrows and he draws an accurate rendition of a pike. He tears off the sheet and draws a bayonet on the next sheet. He tears this off and then draws a face which has a strong resemblance to his father, Frederick Miller.

He stares at the three drawings for a few seconds and then he starts to rub and scratch his arms, neck and chest vigorously.

After a little while he examines his arms and chest. They are reddened and welted. He goes to the metal door and starts to bang on it. The banging echoes down the corridor.

41 INT. ASYLUM CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

41

O'Hare walks up to Samuel's cell door. Samuel is still banging.

O'HARE

I'm coming.

O'Hare opens the food hatch and looks in. Samuel is stood with his gown held up revealing his reddened flesh.

O'HARE (CONT'D)

An imbalance of the humors.

42 INT. ASYLUM MEDICAL ROOM - DAY

42

Samuel is strapped down to the bed with just the lower part of his body covered. He has about twenty fat leeches attached to his chest and arms. He is alone but we hear the muted backdrop of asylum madness echoing from every corner of the facility.

He calmly watches the leeches and then notices a rat patrolling the room. It sniffs around the leech bucket and then scurries off to the hole in the skirting board.

He probably likes it and calls after it.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

43 INT. ASYLUM OFFICE - DAY

43

O'Hare is relaxing in his office. He has his feet up on the desk. He has a newspaper, a small jar of opium pellets and his opium pipe.

He puts a pellet in the pipe and lights up. He spreads the newspaper out.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

O'HARE

Yes?

PATTERSON (O.S.)

There's been another death.

O'Hare pulls hard and deep on the pipe.

O'HARE

Anyone I know?

PATTERSON (O.S.)

A ward B patient. Name of
Pemberton.

O'HARE

Pemberton... I'm not sure. I'll
see him tomorrow... Violence or
natural?

PATTERSON

Violence.

O'HARE

Well... I'm busy. Move the corpse
to the morgue, I'll examine it
later.

PATTERSON

Right you are.

O'Hare slides back in his chair and takes a pull on the pipe. He stares at the ceiling and grins.

44 INT. ASYLUM MEDICAL ROOM - DAY

44

A large leech detaches from Samuel's chest. Though strapped down he is able to grab it and toss it near his mouth. He sucks it into his mouth and grimaces.

45 INT. ASYLUM SOLITARY CELL - DAY

45

Samuel is manhandled into his cell and layed on his bed by Patterson and Booth. O'Hare gives him an opium pellet. Samuel pushes it through his lips. The still oozing blood patches look like bullet wounds through his gown.

The three men leave and the door is locked. Samuel takes the pellet out of his mouth and coughs the fat leech into his hand with a face of disgust. The leech writhes up, aware it is now in a different environment.

He puts the leech in the chamber pot with the rain water and eats the pellet.

He looks through the grilled window at the tree. A splash of colour from another world.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

46 INT. ASYLUM SOLITARY CELL - EVENING

46

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 27th 1879

Samuel is looking out of the window. Daylight is fading a little and we hear ROOKS. The asylum seems to be at peace as it settles down for the evening. Samuel puts his charcoal in his gown pocket.

He lifts up his gown to reveal the bulging fat leech attached to his side, almost sated. He gently pulls at it and after a few seconds it falls off in his hand.

He holds the leech up in front of his face. It writhes about. He gags.

Samuel bites hard into the leech. It's blood gushes into his mouth and down his chin. He hides it's body under the chamber pot and starts banging heavily on the door. He moans as loud as he can.

A few moments later we hear footsteps outside the cell and the hatch opens. Patterson looks in and sees Samuel with blood pouring from his mouth and all over his hands.

Patterson rings a hand bell. Within seconds the door opens and Patterson is with O'Hare. Samuel falls to his knees and raises his hands as if for help.

O'HARE

Good lord.

PATTERSON

What's the matter with him?

O'Hare studies Samuel for a second or two.

O'HARE

It could be a split glossitis...
Or just haemoptysis. Help me get
him to the theatre.

O'Hare and Patterson each put an arm around Samuel and assist him up the corridor. He drags his feet and coughs blood as he goes.

47 INT. OPERATING THEATRE - EVENING

47

Patterson and O'Hare walk Samuel into the operating theatre.

There are large windows in the theatre which are not covered in grills. They let in plenty of light.

They sit him on the bed.

O'HARE
Get the ether, Patterson.

Patterson moves to a huge glass fronted cabinet which contains mainly surgical tools but also jars of liquid.

He opens the doors and reads the jars. O'Hare goes to a table at the other side of the room and opens a large medical book. It's pages are stained with the evidence of decades of botched operations. He licks his fingers as he flicks through the pages.

O'HARE (CONT'D)
There are some cloths over there somewhere. Please anaesthetise the patient.

Patterson takes a large bottle of ether from the cabinet and holds it in both hands. Samuel hops off the bed and quickly grabs a large shiny cleaver type instrument from the cabinet.

PATTERSON
Hey.

Samuel steps forward and swings the cleaver deep through Patterson's face side to side. Patterson drops the ether and it smashes on the floor.

O'Hare turns and Samuel vaults the bed. Patterson screams and drops to the floor.

O'HARE
Jesus, no!

O'Hare puts his arms up and Samuel's cleaver blow sinks into one of them. O'Hare yells in pain. Samuel swipes the cleaver across O'Hare's head causing a flesh wound but he loses his grip on the cleaver and it clatters off across the room.

Samuel punches O'Hare viciously in the face and grabs his stethoscope. He winds it tightly around O'Hare's throat, spits blood in his face and pulls him to the ground.

He throttles the life out of O'Hare. This takes a minute.

He stands to see Patterson is mortally wounded or already dead laying in the ether, blood and smashed glass.

He looks at both men and sees O'Hare is more his size, so he strips him of his trousers, shoes and socks and puts them on. In his white overcoat he finds a jar of opium pellets so he pockets them.

He turns his gown inside out and tucks it into the trousers.

He makes sure the door is locked from the inside and goes to one of the large windows. He peers out and is surprised that it opens quite normally. He sucks in the evening air and then escapes into the outside world.

48 EXT. COUNTRY LANE - NIGHT

48

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 28th 1879

In the moonlight, Samuel walks up a country lane.

He comes to a white painted milestone which reads: TO KENDAL 8 MILES.

He looks up the road and smiles. He urinates on the milestone and carries on walking into the night.

49 EXT. COUNTRY LANE CROSSROADS - LATER

49

As Samuel approaches a crossroads he sees a figure approaching from the other side in the gloom. Samuel stops. He is nervous. The figure keeps walking and sees Samuel.

The figure also stops and they study each other at a distance of around twenty yards. The figure is carrying a bag. He is a MOOCHER, 55, a wandering vagrant.

The moocher waves.

MOOCHER

Hello there.

Samuel waves back in a measured way.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Don't worry. I'm only walking.
In summer I walk mostly at night.

The moocher walks closer so they can plainly see each other.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

You look tired and hungry. Let's sit over here and I'll share what's in my bag.

Samuel nods and they sit at the side of the lane. The moocher takes out two apples, an earthenware flagon and some cheese. He breaks the cheese in two and gives Samuel half with an apple. Samuel eats immediately.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

I was right. You are hungry.

The moocher takes a long gulp from the flagon. He holds it out to Samuel and wipes his lips with the back of his hand.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Ale?

Samuel takes a gulp and grimaces. The moocher studies Samuel's features and scars. He looks at his shaved head and then his shoes and trousers.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Are you on the run from somewhere?

Samuel stares at him suspiciously.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Don't mind me. I'm on the run too. I have been for eighteen years.

Samuel swallows.

SAMUEL

<Incoherent>

He points at his half missing tongue.

MOOCHER

I see. Are you going anywhere in particular? I mean, do you know where you are going?

Samuel nods and stares at him. His dilated pupils, in the dim light, make his eyes look like polished jet.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Are you going somewhere to carry out revenge?

Samuel carries on eating and reaches for the ale flagon again. The moocher gestures him to drink freely.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Because, you've got that kind of aura about you... if you don't mind me saying?

Samuel gulps down ale. The moocher sighs and looks up to the stars.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

I killed a man once. Over a woman. Then I killed the woman. I've been on the run ever since.

Samuel stares at him intently.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

I regret killing the woman. I have carried that shame ever since. But the man deserved it. If I hang, it will be for the crime of killing the woman. Killing the man wasn't a crime. Not in my eyes, or the eyes of God.

The moocher takes the flagon and takes a gulp.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Are you going to kill someone friend?

Samuel nods slightly and thoughtfully.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Do they deserve it? Do they have it coming to them?

Samuel nods again.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Then that's justice. An eye for an eye. That's what it says in The Bible. Exodus 21:24. An eye for an eye. Do you read The Bible friend?

Samuel shakes his head.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Well there's no need. All you need to know is Exodus 21:24. An eye for an eye. The rest of it is poppycock written by fools.

Samuel nods.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)

Just have your revenge and know that justice is done. Don't get in the habit of killing though. Don't let it become your reason to live. There are those who deserve to die and those that don't... At the end of the day, we aren't accountable to other men and their laws. We are accountable to God. God knows who deserves to die and who doesn't.

Samuel takes some things from his (O'Hare's) trouser pockets. A jar full of opium pellets, a short pencil, a small notebook and some spectacles in a hard leather case.

Samuel takes out two opium pellets. He gives one to the moocher and pops the other in his mouth.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)
 I'll save mine for later. Thank
 you.

Samuel gives him the spectacles and he puts them on. He grins.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)
 That's better. Lost mine years
 ago, in a Welsh brothel.

The moocher looks up into the sky and he looks at the stars with a new clarity. He marvels at the expanse of it all and it's beauty. Samuel watches him.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)
 I often wonder what's out there.
 Are there other advanced worlds
 like this? Or worlds with creatures
 the likes we have never seen? Or
 is this it? Just our world. One
 civilised world in a vast heathen
 nothing.

50 EXT. COUNTRY LANE CROSSROADS - LATER

50

They take turns finishing what is left of the ale. Samuel takes the small notebook and presses the pencil on it ready to write. The moocher notices. He stands up.

MOOCHER
 I don't want to know anything about
 you friend. It's best that way.
 I don't want to know your name or
 your business.

Samuel stands and nods. He hands the empty flagon back. The moocher puts it in his bag and then extends a hand. They shake hands. The moocher points up the road.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)
 Well, I was going this way. I
 hope you find what you want going
 your way. The best of luck.

Samuel nods. The moocher walks a few yards then turns but continues walking backwards.

MOOCHER (CONT'D)
 I remembered one more Bible thing
 you need to know... Galations 6:7...
 'Do not be deceived. God cannot
 be mocked. A man reaps what he
 sows.'

Samuel watches him walk up the road. When he can no longer see him, he turns and walks to the middle of the crossroads. He stands there for a few seconds, then turns left.

51 EXT. BLEA TARN - NIGHT

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 29th 1879

Samuel stands at the edge of Blea Tarn. The moon sparkles across the surface. An owl silently flies overhead and HOOTS. Samuel watches it fly over the tarn to the copse on the other side.

He walks to the wall that runs into the tarn. He crouches behind the wall and moves his head around until he sees the illuminated oil lamps of the far off cottage through a cavity in the wall.

He reaches inside and rummages around until he finds his leather wrapped package. He pulls it out and unwraps the bayonet and the watch. He slides the bayonet under his belt and pockets the watch.

52 EXT. 'HOLMFIELD', LITTLE LANGDALE - NIGHT

52

Samuel enters the grounds of his former home through bushes at the rear of the house. He has charcoaled his eye sockets in black. One is large and round and the other is in the shape of the ace of spades. He has also blackened a large pair of lips over his own.

He sneaks to the rear of the outhouse where there is a woodpile and a single bit felling axe. He takes the axe and steps out of the shadows to survey the house. All the curtains are drawn and the ground floor is all lit.

He takes a deep breath and quietly opens the back door to the scullery. Empty. One door immediately in front leads to the hallway, the centre of the house. He passes through this and stands in the hallway. The hallway floor is an ornate mosaic design of stone tiles.

The doors to the dining room and sitting room are closed. He listens but all is quiet.

53 INT. 'HOLMFIELD' SITTING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

53

Marjorie is sat in a high backed chair in the corner. She was reading a book but has fallen asleep with her head back. She snores quietly.

The door knob silently turns and the door opens a foot. Samuel cranes his head round the door. His black eyes reflect the yellowy oil lamp light. He surveys the room and sees Marjorie.

He quietly enters the room and stands in front of her. As if splitting a log he swings the axe over his head and buries it deep into the top of Marjorie's skull. Her eyes open instantly. Samuel lets go of the handle and it remains roughly parallel to the floor. She makes no sound.

Marjorie shakes and her eyes close. The axe remains in her head.

Samuel looks at a clock on the fire mantle piece. It reads ten fifteen. He takes out his pocket watch and sets it to the correct time. He starts to wind it up...

Heather walks in with two saucers with cake slices on. She drops them and quickly reaches for a fire poker from the hearth. She swings it at Samuel and hits him hard in the ear.

Samuel drops the watch and quickly pulls the bayonet out of his belt and with an arcing blow thrusts it through her neck. In one side and out of the other. She drops the poker.

Heather staggers through the door and across the hall moaning.

HENRIETTA (O.S.)
Mother? Is that you?

Samuel picks up the watch and pockets it. He then grabs the axe handle and levers it out of Marjorie's skull. He follows Heather out of the room and across the hall. There is a lot of blood spatter across the hall.

Heather has made it into the dining room just inside the door, directly across the hall from the sitting room. She is on her hands and knees gasping and trembling.

Samuel buries the axe in her back twice and removes the bayonet. Heather is motionless. Samuel looks around the familiar dining room.

54 EXT. 'HOLMFIELD' OUTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

54

Frederick emerges from the outhouse carrying an oil lamp. He walks up to the back door noticing it is open. He notices the second scullery door is also open giving him a view into the hall. He sees the blood and heads left into the kitchen.

He dashes to a low cupboard and pulls out a stock pot with a CLANG. He takes off the lid and takes out a stashed revolver. He checks the cylinder. Six rounds.

He is trembling as he holds up the gun and creeps out of the rear kitchen door. He crosses a narrow corridor to the second dining room door.

On entering the dining room he sees Henrietta shaking in terror with her back against the wall at the other end (hall end) of the room.

FREDERICK

My God.

Frederick walks further into the room and sees Heather in a lake of blood.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
Henrietta? Speak to me...

Samuel steps from behind the door Frederick opened and plunges the bayonet into the back of his head. Frederick SCREAMS and fires off two SHOTS across the room toward Henrietta. Nothing is hit.

He staggers forward as Samuel pulls the bayonet out and then plunges it in his back. It stays there. In agony, Frederick spins round and fires four SHOTS at Samuel. Blanks. Samuel reaches to his side and picks up the axe.

He buries the axe in Frederick's rib cage and Frederick falls backward onto the dining table. The bayonet blade sticks up through his ribs.

In a frenzy, Samuel chops him in half with a few axe blows. Frederick's torso is on the table and his lower half is on the floor. He still grips the revolver.

Henrietta stares on wide eyed in silence. Too terrified to move. Overhead we hear wooden steps being descended.

Samuel looks up and hides behind the door.

Arthur walks into the dining room and is dumbstruck. He puts his hands over his mouth.

Samuel steps up behind him and with a badly aimed blow takes the back of Arthur's head off. Arthur drops to the floor.

Samuel finds Frederick's wallet in his jacket and puts it in his pocket.

Samuel then stares at Henrietta. She has her hands clasped in front of her, praying. Samuel puts the axe on the dining table and digs in his pocket. On the wall, in charcoal he writes: JACOB?

HENRIETTA
(stammering)
He was sent away.

Samuel pauses for reflection.

SAMUEL
<Incoherent>

Henrietta starts sobbing. Samuel writes on the wall: I LOVE YOU HENRIETTA

HENRIETTA
(hysterically)
Who are you?

Samuel writes: SAM.

Henrietta wails uncontrollably. Samuel picks up the axe and chops Frederick's head off. He picks it up by the hair and with the axe in the other hand walks past Henrietta, into the hall.

He drops the head and rests the axe against the wall as he pulls on a trench coat from a coat stand. He then picks up the head and the axe and calmly walks out of the back door through the scullery.

55 EXT. HOLMFIELD LANE - NIGHT

55

In the moonlight Samuel walks up the lane with the axe head swinging near the ground and carrying Frederick's head. There are village lights not far in the distance.

56 EXT. 'HOLMFIELD' - LATER

56

Henrietta runs out of Holmfield and up the lane into the night.

She fails to see the blood trail from Frederick's head and runs toward the village.

57 EXT. PEARSON'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

57

Samuel is outside Pearson's front door. He knocks on the door and holds Frederick's face up close to the window at arms length. With his other arm he holds the axe half way up the handle.

After a few seconds the lock turns. Pearson speaks as he pulls the door open.

PEARSON
Frederick! Come in and -

Samuel clubs Pearson in the face brutally hard with the back of the axe head. He falls backward and holds his head. Samuel strikes him again in the chest breaking his rib cage. Pearson rolls over. He starts to crawl into his front room. Samuel pushes the front door shut.

Samuel throws Frederick's head into the front room and notices Pearson has a revolver down the back of his belt.

Samuel pulls out the revolver puts down the axe and grabs the back of Pearson's head by the hair. He presses the gun barrel against the back of his head.

PEARSON (CONT'D)
Please God no. I don't know who
you are but -

SAMUEL
<Incoherent>

Samuel blasts six SHOTS through Pearson's head and the top of his skull comes away in his hand. He throws it aside and drops the gun. He picks up the axe.

Samuel sees a doorway to a kitchen. He walks in and starts looking for food.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Samuel quickly leaves the house through the back door.

HENRIETTA (O.S.)
(sobbing)
Mr Pearson! Are you there?

58 EXT. FIELDS - LATER

58

Samuel runs through a field. The lights of the village are behind him. He stops briefly to catch his breath and looks back. He rests the blood caked axe across his shoulders. Miles away in the distance he sees hamlets and villages. He heads off towards them.

59 EXT. THE DRUNKEN DUCK INN, AMBLESIDE - NIGHT

59

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SEPTEMBER 30th 1879

On the junction of two lanes sits The Drunken Duck Inn.

Samuel stands in the lane and looks at the building. It is all lit up and there are many customers inside. He opens his coat and takes out the pocket watch. It reads ten minutes to eleven o'clock. He puts the watch back. His axe hangs inside his coat suspended by an improvised ripped pocket. It is still dull with dried blood. He has washed the charcoal from his face.

He walks closer to the front of the inn and peers through the window from a couple of yards back. He walks down the side of the building in the shadows and emerges around the back where there is a dimly lit yard with outhouses and a good view into the rear of the bar area.

He sees Charles and Osborne at a table with three other people. THORNTON, 55, RON WYKE, 28 and MAVIS, 45. They all seem in high spirits. Samuel settles in the shadows for a wait.

60 EXT. THE DRUNKEN DUCK INN, BACKYARD - LATER

60

Samuel hears a door BANG open. He slips into the shadows as best he can. MELLOR, 50 comes rushing out of the inn and vomits convulsively through the air. Some splashes onto Samuel's feet.

Mellor drops to his hands and knees to heave into a grate. After a few heaves he wipes his mouth and gets back up.

He goes back in the inn and Samuel watches him through the windows.

Mellor walks across the bar room area, sits at the piano and proceeds to play.

61 EXT. THE DRUNKEN DUCK INN, BACKYARD - LATER

61

The back door BANGS again and two men stumble out to use the outhouse. Samuel hides again in the gloom. The two men are FISHER, 25 and Ron Wyke. They take up separate stalls in the outhouse.

RON WYKE

That Charlie Burns is a cheating bastard. I don't know how he does it but I know he does it.

FISHER

How do you mean, Ron?

RON WYKE

The cards. He's a sharp or something. I can't put my finger on it. I must have played him dozens of times and I keep playing these great hands and taking his money... then he seems to get me all greedy for it and then somehow, he ends up winning it all back.

FISHER

Well, Burns is a man of the world. Educated and such. Maybe he's just cleverer than you...? With the cards I mean...

RON WYKE

(agitated)

Are you looking for a good leathering? Burns isn't cleverer than me. He just knows different stuff. That's all. Sure, he can tell you a load of waffle you don't need to know... like how they make soap, or how nice it is to be able to read... but you ask him to shear a sheep and he'll be stood there like a retard.

FISHER

I meant he's probably a really good card player, Ron. That's all.

RON WYKE

Are you saying I'm a rubbish card player?

FISHER

No.... I'm just saying that if he always wins, then he's probably really good.

RON WYKE

I think he's a cheat. In fact, you've got me thinking... Maybe Burns thinks I'm stupid so he always puts one over me.

FISHER

Don't play him then, Ron if you think he cheats. It's simple.

RON WYKE

That's not the point though. If he's a dirty cheat, then he's making me look stupid... And he's robbing me blind.

FISHER

But you can't prove it, so just stop playing him.

RON WYKE

I feel like saying something to him. My blood's up now.

FISHER

Best just leave it, Ron.

RON WYKE

Look, that bastard has robbed me more times than I can recall. I'm going to have it out with him.

FISHER

If you say anything to Burns, Osborne will do you over something nasty.

RON WYKE

Osborne! Osborne's just Burns' tea boy.

FISHER

I heard he used to be a prize fighter and he looks after all Burns' dirty work.

RON WYKE

Well he looks a bit of a sap to me.

FISHER

Forget about it. You've had a few ales and you're liable to shoot your mouth off.

RON WYKE
(sardonically)

Aye. We've had a few ales and a good night. Best not ruin it. Best not upset the apple cart and let the thieving swine off.

The two men return to the bar room. Samuel moves out of the shadows and decides to watch from the front of the inn.

62 INT. THE DRUNKEN DUCK INN, BAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 62

Fisher and Ron Wyke walk past Charles' table to join Ron's brother, ROY WYKE, 32. Roy points to a round of drinks on the table.

CHARLES

Hey, Ron! You had enough of me robbing you yet, or do you want another game?

Ron stops and stares at Charles. Fisher tugs Ron's arm.

FISHER

He's just winding you up, Ron.

Charles cracks a big cheesy grin and winks at Ron.

RON WYKE

(sarcastically)

I can't afford it, Charlie.

CHARLES

Well, that's no problem, Ron. We can lend you some.

(at Osborne)

Can't we?

OSBORNE

(smugly)

We can lend you some, Ron. Give you a chance to win your money back after your unlucky streak.

Charles and Osborne smirk. Fisher nudges Ron.

FISHER

Come on. Let's have those ales with Roy.

CHARLES

You're not going to let that fool tell you what to do, Ron? That's not like you... being shoved around.

RON WYKE

I'm having a drink with my brother.

Ron throws Osborne and Charles a dirty look and leads Fisher away by the sleeve. They go and sit with Roy.

CHARLES

Well if you feel your luck changing any time soon, come and have another game. Though it is a man's game that requires some wits.

63 EXT. THE DRUNKEN DUCK INN - LATER

63

Samuel is almost nodding off watching the bar room from the opposite side of the lane. He tries to whistle quietly but his tongue injury makes it difficult.

Suddenly a muted bell RINGS and Samuel moves forward toward the inn to peer inside. He sees Charles, Osborne, Thornton and Mavis finish the dregs of their drinks and get ready to leave.

Samuel walks to the side of the inn and waits in the shadows for the group to emerge out of the front.

A few moments later the group of four emerge from the front door laughing. They cross the lane and set off right. They are still only yards from the door when the Wyke brothers and Fisher emerge from the inn. Samuel hangs back.

ROY WYKE

(loudly)

Hey, is that the card cheat you were telling me about, Ron?

Charles stops in his tracks. Osborne takes a couple of steps toward the Wyke brothers.

CHARLES

What are you saying?

RON WYKE

He's saying you fleeced me.

ROY WYKE

You're a card cheat Burns.

OSBORNE

Go home and get to your beds you idiots.

FISHER

He's right. Let's make our way home.

THORNTON

Save yourselves the trouble boys.

RON WYKE

Cheating bastard, Burns.

CHARLES

You'd better watch your mouth,
making accusations like that. I'm
known for sorting out my own affairs
rather than go down the legal route.

Roy takes a few paces forward and squares up. He takes off his jacket and throws it to the floor in anger.

ROY WYKE

(seething)

Well how about this for an idea?
You give my brother his money back
and we don't get the police.

Charles and Osborne snigger. Ron stands next to his brother.

CHARLES

The police? Do you think they are
going to take the word of a couple
of stupid turd kickers over the
word of a successful local
businessman?

Enraged, Roy strides forward to attack Charles. Osborne skillfully lands three hard punches about Roy's head and then throws him to the ground. Osborne puts his hands in his coat pockets. Roy struggles to get to his feet. Osborne puts his foot on him and pushes him over.

Ron stays where he is but plays the big man.

RON WYKE

I swear I'm going to kill you,
Osborne. Just wait and see!

OSBORNE

Well here I am. Kill me.

Roy gets to his feet. Ron points at Osborne to make his point. Osborne takes a hand out of his coat pocket and points at Ron wearing a thick leather glove.

RON WYKE

You're a dead man.

Osborne SHOOTS a gun concealed in the glove four times. The bullets blast into the Wyke brothers' legs. They fall in agony. Everyone except Burns is in shock.

CHARLES

You stay there boys and we'll walk
into Ambleside to inform the police.
What did it look like to you,
Osborne?

OSBORNE

That's a curious one. From where I was stood...
 (points)
 over there... It looked like two drunken brothers having a brawl with a gun. I overheard the *really* stupid looking one say he'd caught the other one taking his favourite sheep from behind.

CHARLES

That's exactly as I recall it too... And after realising their stupidity, they got their rat faced accomplice to throw the stolen gun in a field, somewhere around this inn. I do remember that rat like face. It gave me the jitters.

OSBORNE

I think you have the right of it.

Charles and his cohorts set off up the lane. Fisher runs off in the opposite direction. The Wyke brothers crawl toward the inn door. Patrons of the inn look through the windows but nobody ventures out.

Samuel waits until Charles' group are a good fifty yards away and then he sneaks from the shadows and starts to tail them.

64 EXT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE - LATER

64

From a safe distance behind, under the cover of darkness, Samuel observes Charles, Osborne, Thornton and Mavis arrive at a grand looking house with large front garden. Burns shows them all up the path and all four of them go into the house.

Samuel walks up to the gates. Room by room on the ground floor, lamps are lit. Samuel watches Charles light a couple of lamps and then get some glasses and a bottle from a cabinet. He sits down with Thornton and they pour drinks.

Samuel takes the axe from his coat. He further dulls it by spitting on it and rubbing in dirt.

65 EXT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE - LATER

65

Samuel continues to watch Charles and Thornton. They drink spirits heavily and laugh raucously. Samuel decides to investigate the rear of the house and carefully opens the gate.

He walks across the lawn and down the side of the house.

At the rear, yellow lamp light floods the yard and stable from another sitting room.

Samuel makes his way round the edge of the property to a position behind the empty stable.

He looks directly into the sitting room. Osborne and Mavis are drinking neat from a bottle. Osborne takes out his wallet and gives Mavis money. He sits down.

Samuel takes out the watch and uses the back as a crude mirror as he applies charcoal to his eye sockets and lips. A large black ace symbol over one eye.

66 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, SITTING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 66

Mavis takes the money and puts it in her handbag. Osborne opens his 'fall front' trousers, throws his head back and takes a long slug on a brandy bottle.

Mavis puts the bag on the table and turns to Osborne. She removes her drawers from under her skirt and also drops them on the table. She moves to Osborne and straddles him with her back to him. They start to have the sex that Osborne has paid for.

67 EXT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, STABLE YARD - MOMENTS LATER 67

Samuel watches for a few seconds as Mavis rides Osborne.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

68 EXT. BLEA TARN (1875) - DAY 68

Samuel (at 13) takes out the folded photographs from his pocket. He unfolds them one by one. They show one group sex photograph with his mother with Pearson and his father with a younger Mavis and two other shots consisting of his mother and father with Mavis. The last shows his father and Pearson with Mavis. They are very explicit and taken in the rear sitting room at Burns residence.

END FLASHBACK.

69 EXT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, STABLE YARD - MOMENTS LATER 69

Samuel continues to watch Mavis and Osborne. After a few seconds Mavis speeds up. Osborne grabs the arms of the chair and a few moments later they flop down the sides as Mavis becomes still. She turns and says something to Osborne, still straddling him. Osborne reaches for a cigar and lights one.

Mavis reaches for the brandy and takes a drink from the bottle. As she lowers the bottle she looks straight out of the window and points.

In silence she explains to Osborne that she has seen someone in the yard. Osborne stands up and leaves the room.

Samuel ducks into the empty stable. There are some rusting relics of tools hung on nails sticking out of a low roof beam. Rakes, sickles, flails and some gin traps. He bangs his head on them and they make discordant CHIMES.

He hears the back door CREAK open. He takes off his coat and takes out the axe. He hears a key turn in the lock.

OSBORNE (O.S.)

I've got a gun. That means you

haven't got a hope in hell.

(spins gun cylinder)

Cigar smoke wafts into the stable. Samuel looks at the axe. He deices it is too cumbersome against a firearm. He rests it on his coat and takes a sickle from the roof beam. It CLANGS.

OSBORNE (CONT'D)

Are you looking for a dead woman?

Is that why you're in my stable?

She was a miserable whore. The

Whore Of Babylon. And now her

curse has done for you.

70 EXT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, STABLE YARD - MOMENTS LATER

70

Osborne is about six yards from the stable, to one side. He has a cigar clenched in his teeth and the revolver pointing at the doorway. Mavis watches from the window.

Osborne waves her away but she stays put.

OSBORNE

You made a big mistake coming here.

You have only moments to live.

Your last memory will be Sean

Osborne spitting in your face.

Osborne takes out a gold pocket watch and glances at it.

OSBORNE (CONT'D)

Time of death, shortly after a
quarter to one in the morning.

Osborne walks slowly toward the stable door. He fires two SHOTS indiscriminately inside.

SAMUEL (O.S.)

<Cries out in pain>

Samuel is moaning like a wounded animal. Osborne stands close to the door.

Mavis bangs on the window. She has a lit oil lamp. She opens the window and places it on the ledge. Osborne walks cautiously over to get the lamp.

71 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, FRONT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

71

THORNTON

What the hell was that?

Charles takes a large drink from his glass.

CHARLES

Just Osborne out in the yard.
 He's always showing off with guns
 when there's a whore to impress.
 Killed one once apparently.

THORNTON

Well, these things happen.

CHARLES

Accident of course. I was away on
 business. Keighley, as I recall.
 Godforsaken place.

72 EXT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, STABLE YARD - MOMENTS LATER

72

Osborne approaches the entrance to the stable with the oil lamp held high and the revolver at arms length. Samuel's moans are getting lower and quieter. The lamp light illuminates the stable interior partially. Osborne bites down on the cigar and crosses the threshold.

He points the gun and fires two SHOTS into the dark back corners.

Samuel drops from the roof beam overhead and takes off Osborne's gun hand with the sickle. It falls to the ground and another SHOT is discharged. Osborne drops the oil lamp and bites through his cigar. He grips his bloody stump.

Without screaming Osborne reaches up for his own weapon and grabs a sickle handle. Samuel takes that hand off too. Osborne struggles to stay stood up and starts to tremble. His face contorts into a mask of utter hate.

He falls to his knees.

Samuel reaches up and grabs a large gin trap. He arms it with his foot on the floor. Osborne spits at him. It hits him in the face.

Samuel picks up the gin trap and brings it down hard on Osborne's head. The jaws and teeth lock around his head. Osborne screams in agony.

Samuel pries the revolver from the severed hand.

73 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, FRONT ROOM

73

Thornton and Charles are laughing very loudly. They compose themselves.

THORNTON

Speaking of such matters... I feel
the need for some buggery, quite
soon.

Charles pats his shoulder.

CHARLES

Then let me go upstairs and quickly
get things in order. Then there
will be the small matter of a
payment.

Thornton produces a small velvet bag and shakes it. The contents are metallic. He drops the bag on the table.

THORNTON

Up front, as usual.

CHARLES

Excellent. Excuse me for two
minutes while I make ready upstairs.

Charles leaves the room. The door BANGS shut behind him.

74 EXT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, STABLE YARD - MOMENTS LATER

74

Samuel is holding the smoking revolver. Osborne has a bloody hole through the heart. He falls over mortally wounded.

Samuel steps into the stable doorway. Mavis leans out of the open window and fires a SHOT from a small gun. It blasts into the stable wall. Samuel squeezes off a single SHOT and it hits Mavis square in the face. She drops dead in the house.

Samuel drops the gun and retrieves his coat. He hangs the sickle in the pocket loop on the inside, puts on the coat and picks up his axe.

He walks around to the front of the house. He looks through the front sitting room window. Thornton is alone for a few moments and then Charles appears.

75 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, FRONT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

75

Charles walks over to the table and places a bottle of cough syrup on it.

CHARLES

All ready upstairs. Use this as a lubricant.

Thornton holds it up.

THORNTON

Dr Holmes' Cough Linctus.

CHARLES

It contains a relaxant and a painkiller called heroin.

THORNTON

Heroin?

CHARLES

It's new.

THORNTON

Just the job.

CHARLES

Top of the stairs and then it's the third door along on the right.

THORNTON

Splendid.

Thornton stands and Charles offers him the bottle.

CHARLES

Take this with you.

Thornton leaves the room and Charles follows him out. Both take oil lamps. The room goes dark.

Samuel walks round to the back of the house and sees the upper floor has a room lit.

He walks to Osborne's body and rummages through his pockets. He finds the key to the back door and picks up Osborne's oil lamp. He walks to the back door and quietly lets himself in.

76 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, HALL - MOMENTS LATER

76

Samuel stands in Charles Burns' hall. All is quiet. The yellow light from the oil lamp reveals beautiful oak panelling, a mosaic floor, a crystal chandelier and fine oil paintings.

Samuel marvels at the paintings. He puts down the axe. It stands straight up with the head on the mosaic floor. He feels the texture of the paint on a portrait. He sniffs the canvas surface on another..

He hears a small noise upstairs and is reminded of the job in hand. He picks up the axe, shoulders it and looks for the stairs.

77 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, TOP OF STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

77

Samuel ascends the stairs slowly, seemingly materializing out of the floorboards and onto the upper floor.

In front, at the end of the landing, light spills under just one door.

Samuel walks up to the door and looks at the light on the floorboards. Movement inside the room is evident.

Samuel pushes the door with the axe. It slowly CREAKS open, revealing Charles sat on the toilet smoking an opium pipe. His trousers are on a peg. An oil lamp is hung over the toilet on the back wall.

The toilet is a wooden commode type with a bucket in the middle. Charles looks astonished but not terrified.

Samuel turns the axe round and lands a hard blow with the blunt side on Charles' forehead. Charles falls off the toilet and then struggles to pull himself up. He is on his hands and knees facing the toilet.

CHARLES

Please... no...

Charles grabs the toilet and starts to pull himself up. Samuel hits him on the back of the head with the blunt side of the axe again. Charles vomits into the bucket and moans deeply.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

(spitting blood)

Why? I beg you...

Samuel hits him in his lower back. Charles expels every breath from his body. He cant even scream. He just shakes.

Samuel raises the axe high and chops off Charles lower left leg. Charles lets out a piercing whine and his body stiffens in abject agony.

Samuel picks up his leg and brutally forces it up Charles' anus as far as it will go.

Charles screams into the bucket.

Samuel raises the axe and decapitates Charles. Charles' head drops into the bucket. Samuel quickly turns the head over and Charles blinks at him while being spattered with gouts of blood from his own neck.

Samuel takes out the pocket watch and holds it in Charles' face. Moments later Charles' head stops blinking.

Samuel puts the watch in his pocket and smashes the oil lamp in the bucket. Charles' head burns. Samuel leaves the room.

78 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, TOP OF STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

78

Samuel stands at the top of the stairs. The dimmest of moonlight from a small window gives shape to his surroundings.

He notices the thinnest strip of yellow light under a door a few yards away. He walks to the door, grabs the handle and opens the door.

In a fully padded room, lit by one oil lamp, Thornton is sodomising a manacled naked man. The man is manacled to a wooden post which is fixed from floor to ceiling. The man seems delirious. Thornton drinks from the bottle and is oblivious. He is also naked.

Samuel buries the axe deep into Thornton's skull. He levers out the axe head and Thornton falls to the side.

The manacled man turns to look at Samuel. It his is brother Jacob. Jacob doesn't recognise Samuel.

A tear rolls down Samuel's cheek.

He raises the axe and Jacob sobs holding up his hands. Samuel chops the manacle fixings out of the post. He stares at Jacob for a few seconds and leaves the room, taking the oil lamp.

79 INT. THE BURNS RESIDENCE, FRONT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 79

Samuel enters the front room and has a look around. There are paintings and photographs on the walls. He sees a box style camera on a chest of drawers. He takes it and makes his way out of the house.

He looks at the house and takes his jar of opium pellets out and takes one. He takes out the sickle and hangs it over the gate before walking down the lane into the night.

80 EXT. FIELDS - DAY 80

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

NOVEMBER 1st 1879

Samuel walks down an overgrown farm track. He carries the box camera.

He stops at an open gate.

He aims the camera at his face and presses the shutter.

He sits the camera on top of a gate post and carries on walking down the farm track toward a wood.

THE END

FADE OUT.

