

THE LAST NIGHT

By Matthew Nsubuga

Author:
Robert Louis Stevenson

Based on:
The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

FADE IN:

INT. HOME -- EVENING

Smoke rises from from a fire place. The camera pans the living room.

A man is revealed sitting across the fireplace.

CLOSE UP: MAN'S FACE

He is Mr. UTTERSON. His face is rugged and distant. He has a lean body and dreary eyes. He stares at the fireplace, with a glass of wine in his hand.

Suddenly there's a knock on the door. He gets up and opens the door.

Standing just outside is POOLE, small and weary.

UTTERSON

Bless me Poole, what brings you here?

Utterson scans Poole.

UTTERSON

What ails you? Is the doctor ill?

POOLE

Mr. Utterson, there is something wrong.

Utterson opens his arms.

UTTERSON

Take a seat. Here is a glass of wine for you.

Poole walks in defeated; his coat soaked by the rain. Poole sits down by the fire place. He sips on the wine which was given to him.

Utterson joins him.

UTTERSON

Now, take your time, and tell me plainly what you want.

POOLE

You know the Doctor's ways, sir. And how he shuts himself up. Well,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

POOLE (cont'd)
he's shut up again in the cabinet.
Mr. Utterson, sir, I'm afraid.

UTTERSON
(concerned)
Be explicit, what are you afraid?

Poole doesn't look Utterson in the face. He stares into the fire.

POOLE
I have been afraid for about a
week. I can bare it no more.
(pause)
I can bare it no more.

UTTERSON
(upbeat)
Come. I see you have some good
reason, Poole. I see there is
something seriously amiss. Try to
tell me what it is.

Poole raises his head and looks Utterson in the eye.

POOLE
I think there has been serious foul
play.

Utterson stands up in shock, he holds his mouth with both hands.

UTTERSON
(cry)
Foul play. What foul play? What
does the man mean?

POOLE
I daren't say, sir. But will you
come along with me and see for
yourself?

Utterson quickly grabs his hat and his coat, then starts for the door. Poole's relief lights up the whole room.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

It's wild, cold and deserted, typical of the season. The wind blows against Utterson and Poole as they walk, making it difficult from them to speak.

Poole keeps two steps behind Utterson, buried in his coat.

EXT. MANSION -- NIGHT

ESTABLISHING SHOT: OF THE MANSION

It's tall and seems endless. As owls sing, only silence comes from the house.

Utterson approaches the gates, followed by Poole.

POOLE

Well sir, here we are. And God grant there be nothing wrong.

Utterson looks up at the tall intimidating gates.

UTTERSON

Amen Poole.

Poole presses the buzzer. A dampen voice answers.

VOICE

Is that you Mr. Poole?

POOLE

It's alright, open the gates.

The gates creek open like doors from a haunted house.

INT. MANSION -- HALL -- NIGHT

Utterson and Poole enter the solitude hall. Men and women stand huddled and disturbed like a flock of sheep.

A women opens her arms and releases a gruesome smile.

WOMEN

Bless God! It's Mr. Utterson.

Utterson steps back defensively.

UTTERSON

What, what? Are you all here? Very irregular, very unseemly; your master would be far from pleased.

The camera pans the maids and servants. All with doomed faces and vulnerable eyes.

POOLE

They're all afraid sir.

(CONTINUED)

A long silence convulses the room ,until a maid lets go of her emotions. She weeps loud and noisily; to the annoyance of Poole.

POOLE
(nervous)
Hold your tongue.

Poole's hand's shake, he doesn't notice it.

POOLE
And now.

Poole turns to the small knife boy. The boys clothes are ragged and worn out. He looks like he has just been trodden on.

POOLE
Reach me the candle, and we'll get
this through hands at once.
(to Utterson)
Please, follow me.

EXT./INT. BACK GARDEN -- NIGHT

The garden is clean cut and professional. A camera tracks Utterson and Poole as they walk.

POOLE
Now sir. You come as gently as you
can. I want you to here, and I
don't want you to be heard. And see
here, sir, if by any chance he was
to ask you in, don't go.

These words echoes into Utterson's ears sending a chill down his spine.

INT. MANSION -- STAIRS -- NIGHT

Poole and Utterson arrive outside the room. Poole sets the candle onto the floor.

He knocks uncertainly.

POOLE
(shouts)
Mr. Utterson, sir, asking to see
you.

A voice answers from within.

(CONTINUED)

VOICE

Tell him I can not see anyone.

POOLE

(relieved)

Thank you sir.

Poole releases a smile towards Utterson of contempt. Then picks up the candle and leads the way out.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Utterson and Poole stand side by side. Utterson has his hands in his pockets, whilst Poole stares non stop at the ground.

POOLE

Sir.

Poole looks Utterson in the eye.

POOLE

Was that my master's voice?

UTTERSON

(concerned)

It seemed changed.

POOLE

Changed? Well yes, I think so. And who's in there instead of him, and why it stays there is a thing which cries to heaven, Mr. Utterson!

Utterson bites at his fingers nervously.

UTTERSON

This is a very strange tale, Poole, this is rather a wild tale my man.

(beat)

Suppose it were as you suppose. Supposing Dr. Jekyll to have been well, murdered, that would induce the murderer to stay? That won't hold water; it doesn't commend itself reason.

Poole shakes his head.

POOLE

I've seen him.

(CONTINUED)

UTTERSON
(surprised)
Seen him? Well?

POOLE
That's it. It was this way. I came suddenly into the theatre from the garden. And there he was at the far end of the room digging among crates.

Utterson's face screws with disbelief.

POOLE
Sir, if that were my master, why has he a mask upon his face? If that was my master why did he cry out like a rat, and run from me?

UTTERSON
Poole, if you say that, it will become my duty to make certain. I shall consider it my duty to break in that door.

Poole smiles and shakes Utterson's hand.

POOLE
Ah, Mr. Utterson, that's talking.

UTTERSON
And whatever comes of it, I shall make it my business you are no loser.

POOLE
There is an axe in the theatre and you might take the kitchen poker for yourself.

Utterson goes and picks up the weighty instrument and takes control of it.

UTTERSON
(looking up)
You know, Poole, that you and I are about to place ourselves in a position of some peril.

POOLE
You may say so, sir, indeed.

(CONTINUED)

UTTERSON
Call Bradshaw.

Bradshaw appears from the Kitchen door, nervous and tense.

POOLE
He's here.

UTTERSON
(to Bradshaw)
Pull yourself together, Bradshaw.
Poole, here, and I are going to
force our way into the cabinet.
Less anything really be amiss, you
and the boy must go round the
corner with a pair of good sticks.
We give you ten minutes, get to
your stations.

As Bradshaw leaves, Utterson looks at his watch.

POOLE
And now, Poole, let us get to ours.

Utterson takes the poker under his arm, and leads the way
out of the kitchen.

INT. MANSION -- CABINET DOOR -- TEN MINUTES LATER

A small candle lights a dimmed hallway. Poole wields an axe
whilst Utterson holds a Poker.

UTTERSON
(into the door)
Jekyll! I demand to see you. If not
by fair means, then by foul.

VOICE
Utterson, for God sake, have mercy.

UTTERSON
Ah that's not Jekyll's voice, its
Hyde's. Down with the door, Poole.

Poole swings the axe over his shoulder, shaking the building.
The sheer force dismantles the door.

After the dust settles, they siege the room. But they stop,
flat footed. They stand still and peer in. A damp fire
glows. Ordered papers lie on a table with all sorts of
chemicals and drugs.

(CONTINUED)

Right in the middle lies a body of a man still moving and twitching. They step closer to it, then turn it over. In front of them is the face of Edward Hyde. His clothes are too big for him. His face still twitches but all life is gone.

UTTERSON

We have come too late, whether to save or punish. Hyde is gone to his account; and it only remains for us to find the body of your master.

FADE OUT

THE END