

The Elephant Man

Bernard Pomerance

Frederick Treves

(Frederick Treves is a surgeon and a doctor who brings John Merrick, the Elephant Man, to the hospital after viewing him in a freak show and after Ross, his manager, abandons him. He appears to genuinely care about Merrick. Treves is a Victorian gentleman in his mid to late 30's.)

The most striking feature about him was his enormous head. Its circumference was about that of a man's waist. From the brow there projected a huge bony mass like a loaf, while from the back of his head hung a bag of spongy fungous-looking skin. On the top of the skull were a few long lank hairs. The osseous growth on the forehead, about the size of a tangerine, almost occluded one eye. From the upper jaw there projected another mass of bone. It protruded from the mouth like a pink stump, turning the upper lip inside out, and making the mouth a wide slobbering aperture. The deformities rendered the face utterly incapable of the expression of any emotion whatsoever. The back was horrible because from it hung huge sack-like masses of flesh. The right arm was enormous size and shapeless. The right hand was large and clumsy - a fin or paddle rather than a hand. No distinction existed between the palm and back, the thumb was like a radish, the fingers like thick tuberous roots. The other arm was remarkable by contrast. It was not only normal, but was moreover a delicately shaped limb covered with a fine skin and provided with a beautiful hand which any woman might have envied. From the chest hung a bag of the same repulsive flesh. The lower limbs had the characters of the deformed arm. There arose from the fungous skin growths a very sickening stench which was hard to tolerate. To add a further burden to his trouble, the wretched man when a boy developed hip disease which left him permanently lame, so that he could only walk with a stick. Please. He was thus denied all means of escape from his tormentors.