

THE SPOTTED MAN

by WALTER WYKES

CHARACTERS

EUGENE
NURSE
DR. FLIM
DR. FLAM
THE SPECIALIST
VOICE

SETTING

An examining room.

NOTE: The Nurse, Dr. Flim & Dr. Flam should all be played by the same actress.

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *The Spotted Man* is subject to a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth), and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright convention and the Universal Copyright Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including professional and amateur stage performing, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound taping, all other forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as information storage and retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages, are strictly reserved.

Inquiries concerning all rights should be addressed to the author at sandmaster@aol.com

Copyright © 2007 by Walter Wykes

THE SPOTTED MAN

[An examining room—very sterile. Enter EUGENE, a harmless-looking man covered with spots. A NURSE follows behind him.]

NURSE

Have a seat.

[EUGENE sits on a rolling stool. The NURSE stops suddenly and glares at him. Silence. EUGENE begins to fidget.]

EUGENE

I ... I'm sorry, is something—

NURSE

Not there!

EUGENE

What?

NURSE

Not there!

EUGENE

Not ... not here?

NURSE

No!

EUGENE

Where?

NURSE

There!

[She points to the examining table.]

EUGENE

Oh! Right! Sorry!

NURSE

This is the DOCTOR'S stool!

EUGENE

I'm sorry. I ... I didn't realize.

[EUGENE moves to the examining table. The NURSE produces a sterilized rag and a spray bottle. She sanitizes the stool thoroughly.]

NURSE

As if you'd never been inside a doctor's office! As if you didn't know how things work!

[The NURSE continues to glare as she scrubs the stool furiously.]

EUGENE

You're right. I ... I should have known better than to sit on his—

NURSE

Her!

EUGENE

—her stool. I apologize. I ... I don't know what came over me.

NURSE

[Finishing.]

There.

EUGENE

Listen ... I ... ahh ... I hesitate to ask this, but—

NURSE

What?

EUGENE

Well ... I ... I know this may not be precisely the right moment to ... I mean, I know you're very busy, and this may sound a bit childish, but ... well, I was wondering if it might be possible for my wife to wait in here with me. In the examining room.

NURSE

Your wife?

EUGENE

That's right.

NURSE

In here?

EUGENE

I know! It's ridiculous! A grown man! It's just that ... well ... I'm a little nervous, and she ... well ... she tends to have a calming effect on me. She's like a human sedative!

[Pause—the NURSE glares at him.]

Anyway, she's in the lobby. If you could just send her in, I'd ... I'd really appreciate it.

[Pause—the NURSE glares at him.]

Thank you.

[Pause—the NURSE glares at him.]

She's wearing a green dress with flowers and a little hat that—

NURSE

You'll have to ask the doctor.

EUGENE

What?

NURSE

The doctor! The doctor! You'll have to ask the doctor!

EUGENE

You ... you can't just send her in?

NURSE

No, I'm afraid not. I can give you a little morphine if you like?

EUGENE

Morphine?

NURSE

That's right.

EUGENE

You can give me morphine, but you can't fetch my wife from the lobby?

NURSE

We have our rules.

[She produces a thermometer.]

I'm going to take your temperature now.

*[EUGENE sticks his tongue out. The NURSE glares at him.
EUGENE begins to fidget.]*

EUGENE

What?

NURSE

I'm going to take your *temperature*.

EUGENE

Right ...

*[Again, EUGENE sticks his tongue out. The NURSE throws her
hands in the air.]*

What? I don't understand.

NURSE

Your pants! Your pants! Drop your pants!

EUGENE

My pants? Why should I—

NURSE

I'm going to take your TEMPERATURE!

EUGENE

My ... OH!!! You know what ... I ... I'd really prefer the other end if you don't mind.

NURSE

Fine. But it's not nearly as precise!

*[She inserts the thermometer into his mouth and picks up his
chart.]*

Now. What's the problem?

EUGENE

[Astonished.]

What's the problem?

NURSE

That's right. What's the problem? Why are you here? For what reason have you come to us? You did come for a reason—didn't you?

EUGENE

Look at me!

[She looks at him without much interest.]

NURSE

I'm a medical assistant—not a trained physician. It would be best if you just told me what was wrong.

EUGENE

I've got spots!

NURSE

Spots?

EUGENE

Yes! Spots!

NURSE

[Writing in his chart.]

And these “spots” ... where are they located?

EUGENE

*[Astonished.]**Where are they located?*

NURSE

That's right.

EUGENE

They're everywhere!

NURSE

Everywhere?

EUGENE

Everywhere! My entire body is covered with spots!

[The NURSE makes a few more notes on EUGENE's chart. The thermometer beeps. She checks it.]

NURSE

[Suspicious.]

Hmmm ...

What? EUGENE

Oh ... nothing. *[Evasive.]* NURSE

Nothing? What do you mean nothing? What was the “Hmmm ...” for? EUGENE

The “Hmmm?” NURSE

That’s right! The “Hmmm!” You said “Hmmm!” Don’t try to deny it! EUGENE

I’m not denying anything. NURSE

What was it for? EUGENE

The “Hmmm?” NURSE

Yes! “The Hmmm!” EUGENE

Well ... you have to admit it’s a bit suspicious. NURSE

What’s suspicious? EUGENE

You claim to be sick—and yet you have no temperature. NURSE

Do I have to have a temperature? EUGENE

Well ... no, you don’t *have* to. NURSE

EUGENE

Aren't there plenty of sick people out there with no temperature at all?

NURSE

That's true, but—

EUGENE

But what?

NURSE

Well, it's just that, if you were to show a bit of a temperature, it would make things a lot easier on us. A good fever is always a sure sign that something's wrong. You don't want to make my job any more difficult than it has to be—do you?

EUGENE

No, no, of course not.

NURSE

I didn't think so. Now, why don't we give it another shot? Maybe if we try the other end this time...

EUGENE

What?! No!

NURSE

Why not? What are you trying to hide?

EUGENE

What am I trying to HIDE?! What am I ... I'm not trying to HIDE anything! Look at me!

[EUGENE tears off his shirt.]

Look! My entire body is covered with spots! Spots of every conceivable shape and size! Big spots! Small spots! Short spots! Tall spots! I have a spot the shape of Italy on my back! And another one ... I ... I know it sounds crazy, but ... I'd swear it's the virgin Mary!

NURSE

Where?

EUGENE

On my ... ahh ... on my ...

NURSE

Your what?

EUGENE

I'm not comfortable talking about this with you! I'd like to see the doctor!

NURSE

Are you sure you're not just trying to score some morphine?

EUGENE

No! No, I'm not trying to score some morphine! I didn't even mention morphine! I don't want morphine! The morphine was your idea! I'm a very sick man! There is something horribly, horribly wrong with me, and I've come to you for help! Can't you just help me?! Isn't that why you're here?! To help people who are sick?!

[The NURSE glares at EUGENE for a moment—then makes some notes in his chart.]

What ... ahh ... what are you writing?

NURSE

[A vengeful tone in her voice.]

Nothing.

[She continues to write.]

EUGENE

That's an awful long "nothing."

[The NURSE scribbles violently in EUGENE's chart.]

You know, I ... I can't help but feel we've gotten off on the wrong foot somehow. I'd like to apologize if I've offended you in any way or ... or made your job more difficult. That was certainly not my intent. It's just that I ... I'm very concerned about these spots! I'm not normally like this. Normally, I'm very relaxed. Very laid back. Really! Water off the back—all that! You can ask my wife, she'll tell you. But these spots ... they ... they've gotten under my skin! It's almost ... I know this may sound a little crazy ... but it's almost like they're alive! Like they've got a mind of their own! They come and go as they please, pop up in the most inconvenient places, torment me for a while, make little pictures, signs, sometimes they almost seem to spell out words! And then they vanish without a trace! As if they were never there at all! For weeks, my wife didn't believe me! She thought I'd gone insane! Every time I tried to show her, they'd disappear! But as soon as she turned her back, they'd rear their ugly little heads! Twice as many as before! It's like they're toying with me! Little microscopic invaders playing games with my mind!

NURSE

Put this on. The doctor will be with you shortly.
[She hands him a hospital gown.]

EUGENE

Thank you.
[He begins to undress.]

Listen, I ... I don't want you to think I expect special treatment just because of the severity of my condition, but if you could ask the doctor about my wife—

NURSE

What are you doing?!

EUGENE

I ... I'm changing. You said to put this—

NURSE

Wait until I leave the room!

EUGENE

Oh! Right! Sorry! I'm sorry!
[The NURSE exits, hanging EUGENE's chart on the door.]
You've been very helpful! Thank you! Thank you very much!
[EUGENE closes the door. He continues to undress, hiding behind the examining table in case someone should enter unexpectedly. After a moment, he emerges in his hospital gown. DR. FLIM enters. She looks exactly like the NURSE, although her uniform is entirely different.]

DR. FLIM

Hello, I'm Dr. Flim.

EUGENE

Hello—
[Turning to see her.]
Wait a minute ... you're not the doctor!

DR. FLIM

What do you mean? Of course I'm the doctor.

EUGENE

But ... when you were here before—

DR. FLIM

When I was here before? But I've only just stepped into the room.

EUGENE

You took my temperature!

DR. FLIM

No ...

EUGENE

Yes! You wanted to try the other end!

DR. FLIM

Oh!

[She laughs.]

No, that was the nurse—Margo.

EUGENE

Margo?

DR. FLIM

That's right.

EUGENE

Are you twins?

DR. FLIM

Twins? Not at all.

EUGENE

But you look just like her!

DR. FLIM

Oh, don't be ridiculous. We look nothing alike. She's much more attractive. Now, let's get down to business, shall we?

[She reads EUGENE's chart.]

Hmmm ...

[She nods, suppresses a laugh.]

Well ... all right. I suppose I should have a look then, shouldn't I?

[EUGENE offers her his arm. DR. FLIM seems confused.]

What's this?

EUGENE
What do you mean?

DR. FLIM
What do you mean what do I mean?

EUGENE
You said you wanted to have a look.

DR. FLIM
Right.

EUGENE
Here it is.

DR. FLIM
This is your arm.

EUGENE
I know.

DR. FLIM
What does your arm have to do with ... oh! I see! Actually, the idea that hand size is corollary—it's a myth, propagated, I should think, by men with large hands. Perhaps I should have a look at the actual member.

EUGENE
What?

DR. FLIM
The member. You know.

EUGENE
I don't understand.

DR. FLIM
It says here that you have a small member.

EUGENE
A small member?

DR. FLIM

That's right. That you're suffering from feelings of inadequacy caused by the size of your "freakishly small member." "Almost microscopic," it says. I'm sure that's an exaggeration.

EUGENE

[Horried.]

No! I mean, yes! Yes! It is an exaggeration! I mean, it's not an exaggeration because I never said that at all! It's not true! Any of it!

DR. FLIM

No?

EUGENE

No!

DR. FLIM

You don't have a small member?

EUGENE

Not small! I mean, maybe not large, but ... at least average! I have a very average member! I mean, it's certainly not a problem!

DR. FLIM

Hmmm ... I wonder why she would have written that?

EUGENE

I have no idea! I mean, all right, I'll be honest—I did get the impression she didn't like me very much.

DR. FLIM

Well, I'm sure she wouldn't allow that to interfere with her professional evaluation. Perhaps she misunderstood.

EUGENE

I don't see how that's possible.

DR. FLIM

So there's no problem with your—

EUGENE

No! None whatsoever!

DR. FLIM

Would you like me to take a look—just in case?

EUGENE

I don't think that's necessary.

DR. FLIM

Just a quick peek? For good measure?

EUGENE

Really—I'm fine.

DR. FLIM

All right. What's the problem then?

EUGENE

Spots. I've got spots.

DR. FLIM

On your—

EUGENE

Everywhere! And they itch! They're very itchy! At night I have to wear a muzzle!

[Again, EUGENE offers his arm. DR. FLIM studies it carefully.]

DR. FLIM

Do you have a temperature?

EUGENE

No. No temperature.

DR. FLIM

Hmmm ...

EUGENE

What? Is it bad?

[DR. FLIM continues to study EUGENE.]

Am I going to die? Oh god! I'm going to die—right?! I read in the paper about a flesh-eating virus that devoured a man in a matter of hours, and I knew, somewhere inside, I knew that if something like that really existed, I was bound to catch it! This is just my luck!

DR. FLIM

I'll be honest with you—I've never seen anything like this before. It's a bit unusual. It could be stress-related. Or some sort of terrorist plague.

EUGENE

Terrorist plague?!

DR. FLIM

Probably stress.

EUGENE

You said terrorist plague!

DR. FLIM

I was only joking. I'm sure it's nothing a little rest and relaxation won't cure.

EUGENE

So it is stress then?

DR. FLIM

That would be my guess. We'll run a few tests just to be sure. I'll have Margo take some blood. I'm also going to have my partner take a look, if you don't mind. But I'm sure it's nothing to worry about.

EUGENE

But ... the thing is ... my main source of stress is these spots! Before the spots, I had very little stress! No stress at all, really! Normally, I'm very relaxed! Water off the back—all that! You can ask my wife if you don't—oh! I almost forgot! Did Margo ask about my wife?

DR. FLIM

No. Does she have spots too?

EUGENE

No, I asked if it might be possible for her to wait in here with me. In the examining room.

DR. FLIM

She didn't mention that.

EUGENE

It's just that I'm a little nervous, you know, and she tends to have a—

DR. FLIM

I should think that would be fine.

EUGENE

She's in the lobby. She's wearing a green dress with flowers and a little hat that—

DR. FLIM

I'll have Margo fetch her for you.

EUGENE

Thank you.

[DR. FLIM nods and exits. EUGENE sits for a moment, looks at his watch, then picks up a magazine and begins to read. After a moment, the NURSE enters, glaring. She slams the door behind her and locks it. In her hands, she holds a needle and syringe.]

NURSE

What is WRONG with you?! Are you trying to get me FIRED?!

EUGENE

What? I ... no!

NURSE

How could you question my authority like that?!

EUGENE

I ... I didn't mean to—

NURSE

Do you think this job means nothing to me?! Do you think I won't fight to protect it?!

[She approaches him with the needle and syringe.]

EUGENE

[Rising.]

Okay, maybe I should—

NURSE

SIT!

[EUGENE sits.]

Give me your arm!

EUGENE

I don't know if that's such a—

NURSE

Your ARM!

[Reluctantly, he complies. She ties a rubber tourniquet around his arm and roughly inserts the needle.]

EUGENE

Ow! Ow! Careful with that thing!

[The syringe begins to fill with blood.]

NURSE

You realize with one little twist of this needle I could tear your vein in half?

EUGENE

Please don't.

NURSE

Or I could reverse the flow—send an air bubble straight to your brain—no one would ever suspect it was anything but a terrible accident.

EUGENE

Help!

NURSE

Shut up!

EUGENE

All right!

NURSE

Listen to me when I'm talking!

EUGENE

I'm listening!

NURSE

I don't think you are!

EUGENE

I am! I swear! See!

[He listens.]

NURSE

I don't like to be reprimanded! That bitch questioned my integrity! Do you know what that's like?! To have your integrity questioned?!

EUGENE

Yes! Yes! It happens to me all the time!

NURSE

Don't make fun of me!

EUGENE

I'm not!

NURSE

Why couldn't you just play along?!

EUGENE

She ... she wanted to see my member!

NURSE

She threatened me with my JOB! My LIVELIHOOD!

EUGENE

I'm sorry! I don't know what I was thinking! It won't happen again!

[The NURSE studies EUGENE for a moment.]

NURSE

All right ... I'm going to let you live.

EUGENE

Thank you! Thank you!

NURSE

But you owe me.

[She removes the needle from EUGENE'S arm.]

EUGENE

How much blood did you take? I feel faint.

NURSE

Don't be such a baby.

[She applies a bandage.]

There—all better.

EUGENE
It still hurts.

NURSE
Do you want me to kiss it?

EUGENE
No.

NURSE
Well, don't say I didn't offer.
[She gathers the blood samples and turns to go.]

EUGENE
Oh, by the way, the doctor said my wife could come back.

NURSE
[Sharply.]
I know what the doctor said.

EUGENE
All right. I'm just—
[The NURSE exits. Almost immediately, DR. FLAM enters. She looks exactly like DR. FLIM except that she wears a brightly-colored clown wig.]

DR. FLAM
Hello. I'm Dr. Flam.

EUGENE
You mean Flim.

DR. FLAM
No, Flam.

EUGENE
But before you—

DR. FLAM
Before?

EUGENE
Yes. When you were here before—

DR. FLAM

Oh, that was Dr. Flim—my partner. She asked me to take a look at you.

EUGENE

Oh. You look exactly alike. I mean, except for the wig.

DR. FLAM

What wig?

EUGENE

That one. The one you're wearing.

DR. FLAM

This is my natural hair. Do you like it?

EUGENE

It's ... it's lovely.

DR. FLAM

Well, let's take a look.

[EUGENE offers his arm.]

Hmmm ... just as I suspected.

EUGENE

What is it?

DR. FLAM

I have no idea. But I suspected as much, so it's really no surprise. What you need is a specialist.

EUGENE

A specialist?

DR. FLAM

That's right. Someone who's devoted his life to studying this sort of thing. And I know just the man. He's a genius. A real giant among men. His knowledge of spots is encyclopedic—almost inhuman. Godlike, if you will. They say he's even performed a few miracles. Miracle cures, you know. He will, no doubt, diagnose your illness in the blink of an eye.

EUGENE

When can I see him?

DR. FLAM

Never. He's booked for years in advance, decades—well into the next millennium.

[EUGENE is speechless. She laughs.]

I'm kidding! He's one floor up. I'll see if he can swing down and take a look.

EUGENE

Thank you! Thank you! That would be great!

[She nods and moves to the door.]

Oh! There's one more thing. The nurse was supposed to send my wife in.

DR. FLAM

Margo? She's completely incompetent. A real nutcase. We only keep her on because Dr. Flim has a thing for her.

EUGENE

Do you think you could send her back?

DR. FLAM

Margo?

EUGENE

No—my wife.

DR. FLAM

Of course. Where is she?

EUGENE

The lobby.

DR. FLAM

[With a grimace.]

Oooh ... that's too bad.

EUGENE

What do you mean?

[Pause.]

What? What is it?!

[Pause.]

DR. FLAM

Well ... I probably shouldn't tell you this, but ... the lobby is under quarantine. There's been some kind of outbreak.

EUGENE

An outbreak?! What ... what kind of outbreak?!

DR. FLAM

We don't have all the details yet.

EUGENE

Is it serious?!

DR. FLAM

Something about a plague.

EUGENE

A plague?! In the lobby?! My god!

DR. FLAM

I'm sure it's nothing to worry about.

[EUGENE moves to the door. She blocks his path.]

Where do you think you're going?

EUGENE

I have to see my wife.

DR. FLAM

Sir, you need to sit down and let the professionals handle this.

EUGENE

But—

DR. FLAM

I'm sure your wife is fine. So far it's just the old and very young who are actually dying. And a few sickly teenagers. Your wife isn't a teenager, is she?

EUGENE

No.

DR. FLAM

Then you have nothing to worry about. Just have a seat while I place that call to the Specialist, and I'll have someone check on your wife. All right?

EUGENE

[Hesitates.]

Okay. Thank you.

[DR. FLAM exits. EUGENE sits in dazed silence. A moment later, DR. FLIM returns wearing a hospital mask.]

DR. FLIM

It doesn't exist!

EUGENE

What?

DR. FLIM

Your disease! I've been through all the medical books! Every database! It just doesn't exist! There's no such thing!

EUGENE

But ... surely in one of your textbooks ... somewhere ... I mean, there ... there must be some reference! I can't be the first person ever to have this problem!

DR. FLIM

Every plague starts with one person.

EUGENE

This is just my luck!

DR. FLIM

One little mutated cell. One bad seed.

EUGENE

Wait—you're ... you're saying the plague in the lobby, the quarantine, it's ... it's all my fault?!

DR. FLIM

It's not just the lobby. The whole building's under quarantine.

EUGENE

The whole building? Good lord! And ... people are actually dying?!

DR. FLIM

They're dropping like flies.

EUGENE

What about the Specialist? Has he come yet?

DR. FLIM

What specialist?

EUGENE

The Specialist. One floor up. The one Dr. Flam—

DR. FLIM

Him? Ha! He's a quack! Some guy she used to bone in college!

EUGENE

But ... she said he was a genius.

DR. FLIM

Pfff!

EUGENE

She said he could perform miracles.

DR. FLIM

He's a drooling idiot!

EUGENE

So, he ... he's not ...

DR. FLIM

He's not even certified.

EUGENE

Then ... there's no hope.

DR. FLIM

Not really.

EUGENE

We're all going to die.

DR. FLIM

That's the most likely outcome. Yes.

EUGENE

And it's all my fault.

DR. FLIM

No, no, not at all.

[Pause.]

Okay, yes it is. I can't lie.

EUGENE

I want to see my wife.

DR. FLIM

I told Margo to send her back. Hasn't she come?

EUGENE

No.

DR. FLIM

That woman! If she wasn't so damned attractive, I'd fire her on the spot!

[DR. FLIM exits. A moment later, the NURSE bursts into the room.]

NURSE

Is it true?! Have they sent for the Specialist?!

EUGENE

Well ... yes.

NURSE

Finally! After all these years!

EUGENE

But ... Dr. Flim said he's a quack.

NURSE

She's jealous!

EUGENE

He isn't even certified.

NURSE

They're ALL jealous! He's so far beyond them, they can't comprehend his tiniest thought! And you! You're responsible for bringing him here! I could kiss you! I could do more than that, if you'd like!

[She tries to kiss him.]

EUGENE

What ... what are you doing?!

NURSE

Don't you find me attractive? Don't you want me—sexually, I mean?

EUGENE

Well, I ...

NURSE

What about these? Do you like these?

[She shows EUGENE her breasts.]

EUGENE

Well, I ... they're ... they're very ... ahh ... nice, but—

NURSE

Nice?

EUGENE

Yes.

NURSE

Just nice?

EUGENE

I ... I really don't—

NURSE

You want to touch them?

EUGENE

What?

NURSE

Go ahead. No one's watching. The world's coming to an end. You might as well.

EUGENE

Shouldn't you be working? I mean, I'm sure they need your help—with the building under quarantine and all.

NURSE

Oh, it's not just the building. The whole city's under quarantine.

EUGENE

The whole city?!

NURSE

That's right. And it won't stop there. The country. The world. Society's falling apart—civilization as we know it. It's unraveling. The thread has been pulled. Everyone's dying. Survivors are running for the hills. Hiding in caves. There's no food. People are eating their own children.

EUGENE

My God!

NURSE

We're going the way of the dinosaurs. It was only a matter of time.

EUGENE

I want to see my wife! Right now! The doctor told you to send her back!

NURSE

How can you think of your wife at a time like this?

EUGENE

Who else should I think of?

NURSE

[Covering her breasts.]

Oh, fine.

EUGENE

She's wearing a—

NURSE

I know! I know! A green dress with flowers!

EUGENE

And a hat that—

[The NURSE exits in a huff and returns a moment later, wearing a hat and a green dress with flowers.]

NURSE

Hello, darling.

[She kisses him.]

EUGENE

What ... what are you doing?! Why are you wearing my wife's clothes?!

NURSE

Sweetheart—what are you talking about? Don't you know your own wife?

EUGENE

You're not my wife!

NURSE

Of course I am. Those spots must have gone to your brain.

EUGENE

[Shaking her violently.]

No! No! I'm not crazy! Where is she?! What have you done with her?!

NURSE

Sweetheart, I—

EUGENE

What have you done with my wife?!

NURSE

Why don't we just go home and—

EUGENE

TELL ME!!!

[Pause.]

NURSE

All right, fine. Have it your way.

[She removes the hat.]

She's dead.

EUGENE

What? You're ... you're lying!

NURSE

No, she was one of the first to go.

[EUGENE releases her. He backs away.]

EUGENE

This can't be happening.

NURSE

She was weak—no will to live.

EUGENE

I want to see the body.

NURSE

Too late. It's already been burned—to stop the spread of the disease, you know.

EUGENE

Oh God! What have I done! I've killed my own wife! I've given her my disease!

NURSE

Don't be such a crybaby! My god! Here you are, at the end of the world, with a drop-dead gorgeous horny nurse practically throwing herself at you—some men would consider this a fantasy come true.

EUGENE

But my wife—

NURSE

Shut up about your wife! Stop living in the past!

EUGENE

How can you—

NURSE

For god's sake! Take me!

EUGENE

But—

NURSE

Take me! Right here! On this table! Give *me* your disease!

EUGENE

You ... you want my disease?

NURSE

Yes! I want it! I want to taste death! I want to feel its weight pressing down on me—the weight of a dying man! I want to hear its soft whisper! Its anguished cry! I want to take it inside me like a child! Nurture it! Let it grow! Let it feed on me like a sack of rice! And then, finally, open myself up ... unleash it upon the world ... a great sweaty monster of spotted flesh and stinking bodies!

EUGENE

You're insane!

[She kisses EUGENE. He struggles, but she clings to him passionately. There is a clawing sound at the door.]

EUGENE

What's that?

NURSE

Nothing! Kiss me!

[Again, a clawing sound at the door. EUGENE pulls away.]

EUGENE

It might be the Specialist! Maybe there's still time!

[EUGENE opens the door, and THE SPECIALIST lumbers into the room. He is a sub-human creature, a throwback to the age of the Neanderthal, an idiot-retard who cannot speak but only drools and grunts. He is dressed, however, like a distinguished physician.]

This ... this can't be him!

[The SPECIALIST grunts.]

NURSE

Of course it is! Who else would it be?

[She takes the SPECIALIST by the arm and leads him to the rolling stool. He sits, as if upon a throne, and grunts his approval.]

EUGENE

What's wrong with him?

[To the SPECIALIST.]

Have you been in some kind of accident?

NURSE

Don't talk to him that way! He's a genius!

[She strokes the SPECIALIST'S hair. He grunts with pleasure.]

Oh, look—he likes that!

EUGENE

He ... he can't really be the great doctor—can he? The pinnacle of man's learning? Is it possible this is all we amount to?

[To the SPECIALIST.]

Can you understand me? Are you insane? Or ... no! Perhaps ... perhaps I'm insane! That's it! You're speaking normally, but I can't understand because I've finally lost my mind! Or ... or perhaps we're both insane! Both trying desperately to communicate but—

[The SPECIALIST sniffs under the NURSE's skirt.]

NURSE

Oh! You're so naughty!

[The SPECIALIST and the NURSE perform the carnal act.]

EUGENE

What are you doing? Don't do that!

NURSE

Yes! Oh, yes! I can feel your enlightenment pouring into me! Your knowledge!

EUGENE

Stop it! Stop! For god's sake, she's ... she's wearing my wife's dress!

[EUGENE picks up the doctor's stool and brandishes it like a weapon.]

I won't allow this! I forbid you to continue! Do you hear me?! Stop! I ... I said stop!

[The SPECIALIST grunts in ecstasy. EUGENE begins to pummel him with the chair.]

NURSE

What are you doing?! Don't hurt him! Leave him alone!

[There is a struggle, but soon the SPECIALIST lies dead.]

EUGENE throws the chair to the ground.]

What have you done?! He was our only hope!

[She lunges at EUGENE and begins to pound him with her fists.]

EUGENE

Don't! Please! I ... I don't want to hurt you!

NURSE
Help! Murder!

EUGENE
Shhh! Be quiet!

NURSE
Murder!

[EUGENE grabs her by the throat. He holds the NURSE until she, too, lies motionless. EUGENE hovers over her for a moment, breathing heavily—then backs away, horrified.]

EUGENE
Oh God!

[There is a knock at the door. EUGENE freezes, tries to regain his composure.]

Who ... who is it? Who's there?

VOICE
[Offstage.]
The Specialist.
[Blackout.]

* * *