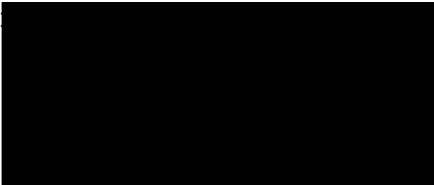


JAMES
by Felix Levinson

27 JULY - Shooting Script - with additional scenes

JAMES FILMS LTD



INT. JENNER'S STUDY - DAY

James and John step into the grand red-walled study.

Scattered books lay open on medical diagrams, specimen jars bulge with preserved creatures; there's a pinned butterfly collection, birds eggs, fossils and whale bones...

... and A MILKMAID sitting at the table, ashen and weak, her arm lying outstretched on the table, her hand blotched with large red blisters.

Silence - except her slightly wheezing breathing...

Jenner enters carrying a case, shuts the door behind him.

John immediately bows his head. James copies his father.

JENNER

Now the sun's finally arrived I should think there'll be a good few months' work for you out there, if you want it.

JOHN

Yes, sir. We're hard workers, sir.

Jenner sets the case down.

JENNER

(to James)
What is your name?

JAMES

(quietly)
James, sir.

JENNER

He's never had the smallpox?

JOHN

No, sir. Not James, sir.

JENNER

Your other children?

JOHN

My eldest, sir. Thomas. We lost him last year, sir.

James shifts his feet.

JENNER

My sincere sympathy. It is a lucky family indeed who have not fallen prey to the Speckled Monster.

JOHN

Yes, sir.

JENNER

Fortunately, I believe I have discovered a means to protect your son.

Jenner pats a chair at the table.

James looks at John who nods his head and James sits.

Jenner opens the case - full of shiny metal medical instruments.

James starts kicking his legs anxiously, banging the table...

JENNER (CONT'D)

There's really no need to be nervous.

Jenner picks up a lancet and goes over to the milkmaid.

JENNER (CONT'D)

This young lady caught the cowpox from milking her master's herd. These may look alarming, but they will soon disappear and she will be perfectly recovered. Better than recovered. Because through these pustules, God has gifted her perfect everlasting security from the smallpox!

Jenner scrapes out thick yellow pus from one of the sores in her hand.

JENNER (CONT'D)

And I wish to give this gift to your son.

Jenner looks to John who looks out to the garden, the full wheelbarrow where James left it.

He looks at James and back to Jenner.

JOHN

If you think it best, sir.

JENNER

Knowing the Speckled Monster can never touch him - imagine that weight lifted from your mind.

Jenner carefully places the lancet down and lays James's arm on the table, rolls up his sleeve.

He picks up a knife, huffs breath on it, gives it a wipe.

James looks at his father in alarm, his arm trembling furiously, making the table tremble too.

JENNER (CONT'D)

His arm must be still.

Jenner nods at John.

After a moment of hesitation John crosses the room and holds down James's arm, his rough hands pressing down hard onto James's skin.

James struggles but is powerless against him.

John leans his weight onto James's arm as Jenner cuts...

JENNER (CONT'D)

*His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour,*

Jenner puts down the knife, picks up the lancet, carefully inserts the pus into the cut - *sharp intake of breath from James.*

JENNER (CONT'D)

*The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.*

Jenner inspects his work closely and dresses the cut with a loose bandage.

He picks up the red flower and gives it to James.

JENNER (CONT'D)

Boil it in water. It'll help with the fever. You'll be as right as rain by Monday. Ready for work.

James looks at the Milkmaid who is pale and sweating.