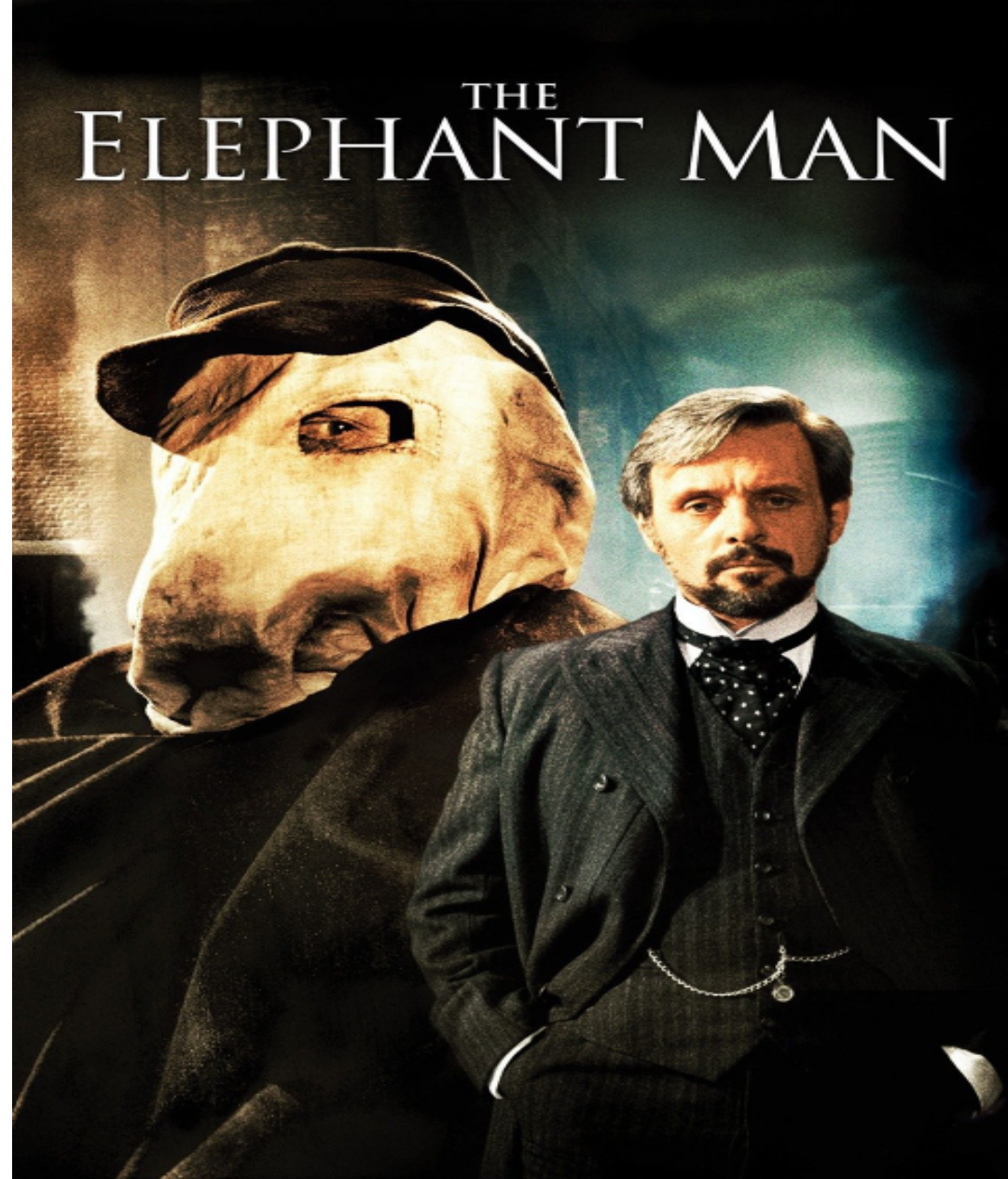


Chapter . 3

An Important Visitor

OXFORD
BOOKWORMS



Before Reading

Choose the correct item related to the picture.

- The woman is Merrick's friend.
- The woman is Dr. Treves's friend.
- Merrick fell in love with her.
- She is a famous nurse in the hospital.
- The woman is Merrick's mother.



A beautiful young woman came to the hospital and shook Merrick's hand.



shake hands



present



cup of tea



queen

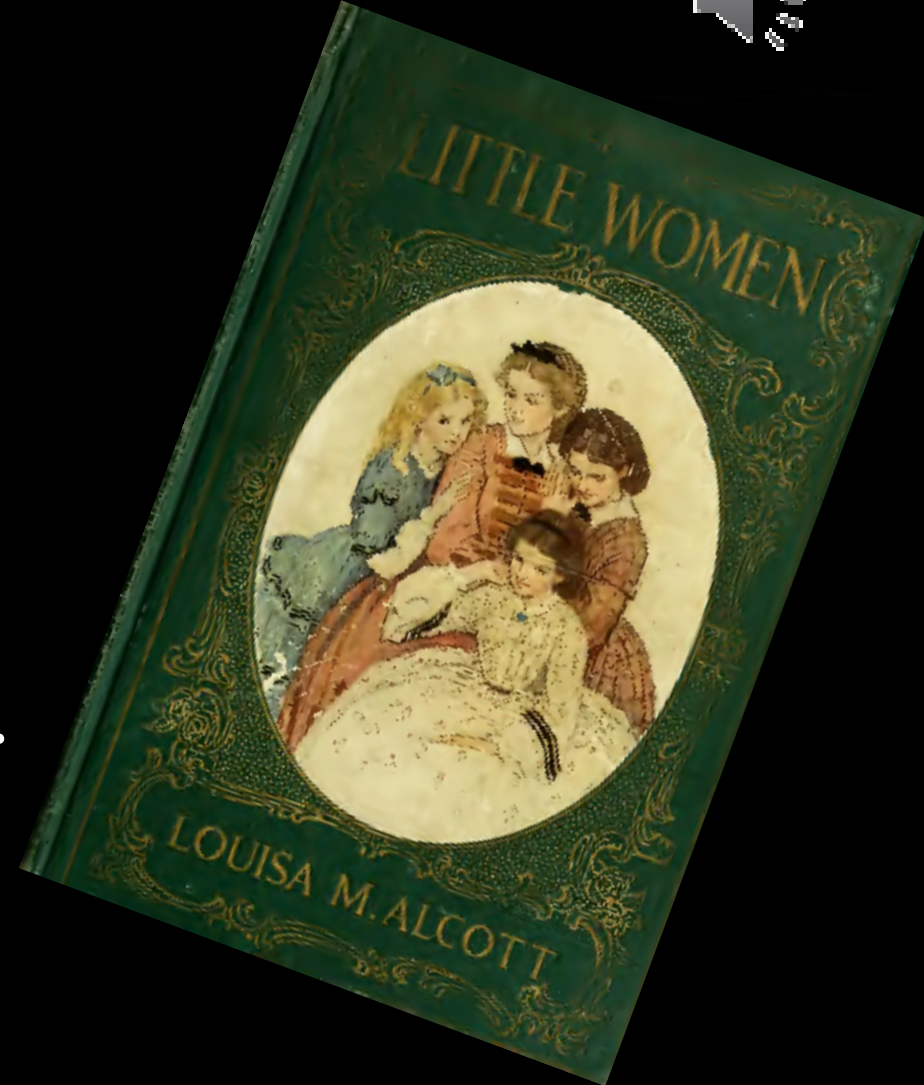


A close-up photograph of a person's legs, specifically the knees. The person is wearing light-colored shorts. Both hands are placed on the right knee, suggesting pain or discomfort. The background is a plain, light gray.

knees



I did not want Merrick to live by himself, like a man in a lighthouse. He read his books, and talked to me, but I wanted him to talk to more people. And I wanted him to talk to women. Merrick read about women in his books, but he did. not often talk to women. He met the nurses every day, but they did not talk to him very much. For them, he was always a creature, not a man.





One day, one of my friends, a beautiful young woman, came to the hospital. I told her about Merrick, and took her to his room. She opened the door, and smiled at him. 'Good morning, Mr Merrick,' she said. Then she shook his hand. Merrick looked at her for a minute with his mouth open. Then he sat down on his bed, with his head in his hand, and cried. He cried for nearly five minutes. The tears ran down his face, between his fingers, and onto the floor. My friend sat on the bed beside him and put her hand on his arm. She said nothing, but she smiled at him and shook his hand again before she left.

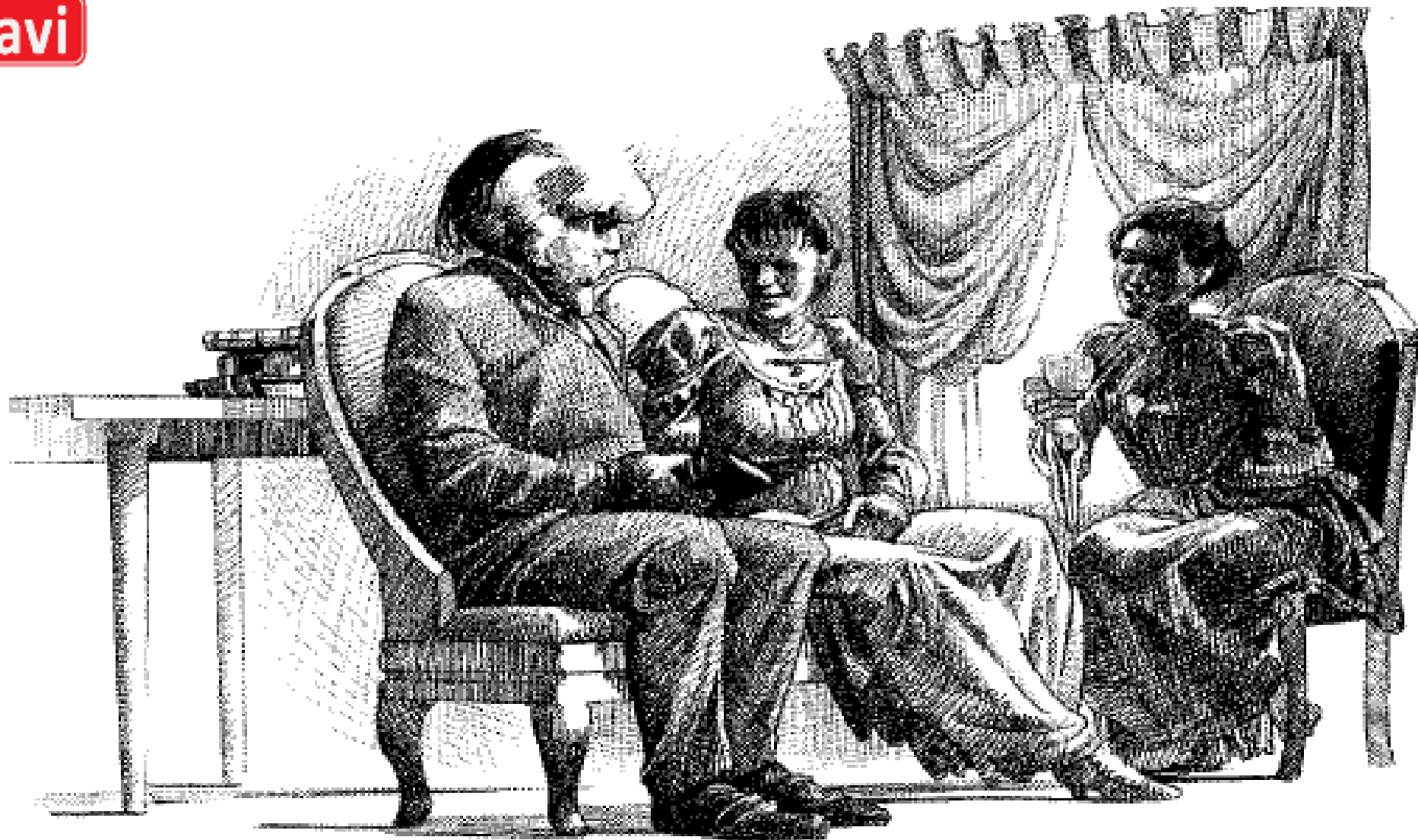


A beautiful young woman came to the hospital and shook Merrick's hand.



'Dr Treves,' he said to me that night.
'That lady was wonderful! My mother
smiled at me once, many years ago, but
no women smile at me now. But this
lady smiled at me too, and she shook
my hand! A beautiful lady smiled at me
and shook my hand!'





For the first time in his life, Merrick had some friends.



My young lady friend came again the next week, and talked to Merrick for half an hour. The week after that, she came again with a friend. They gave him some books, and had a cup of tea with him. It was wonderful for him. For the first time in his life, he had some friends. He was a very happy man. He sat in his room, and read his books, and said no more about living on a lighthouse.



People began to read about Merrick in the newspapers, so he had a lot of visitors. Everybody wanted to see him. A lot of important ladies and gentlemen visited him. They smiled at him, shook his hand, and gave him books. Merrick liked talking to these people, and he began to forget about his ugly body.

His visitors never laughed at him.

He began to feel like a man, not a creature.

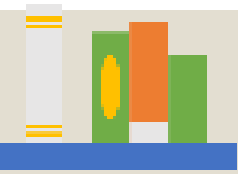




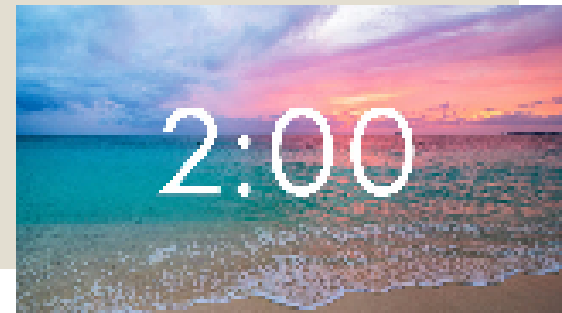
One wonderful day, a very important lady came to the hospital to visit him. I met the lady, and took her to his room. Then I opened the door, and smiled at him.

'Good morning, Joseph, I said. 'There is a new visitor to see you today. A very famous lady.'

While Reading



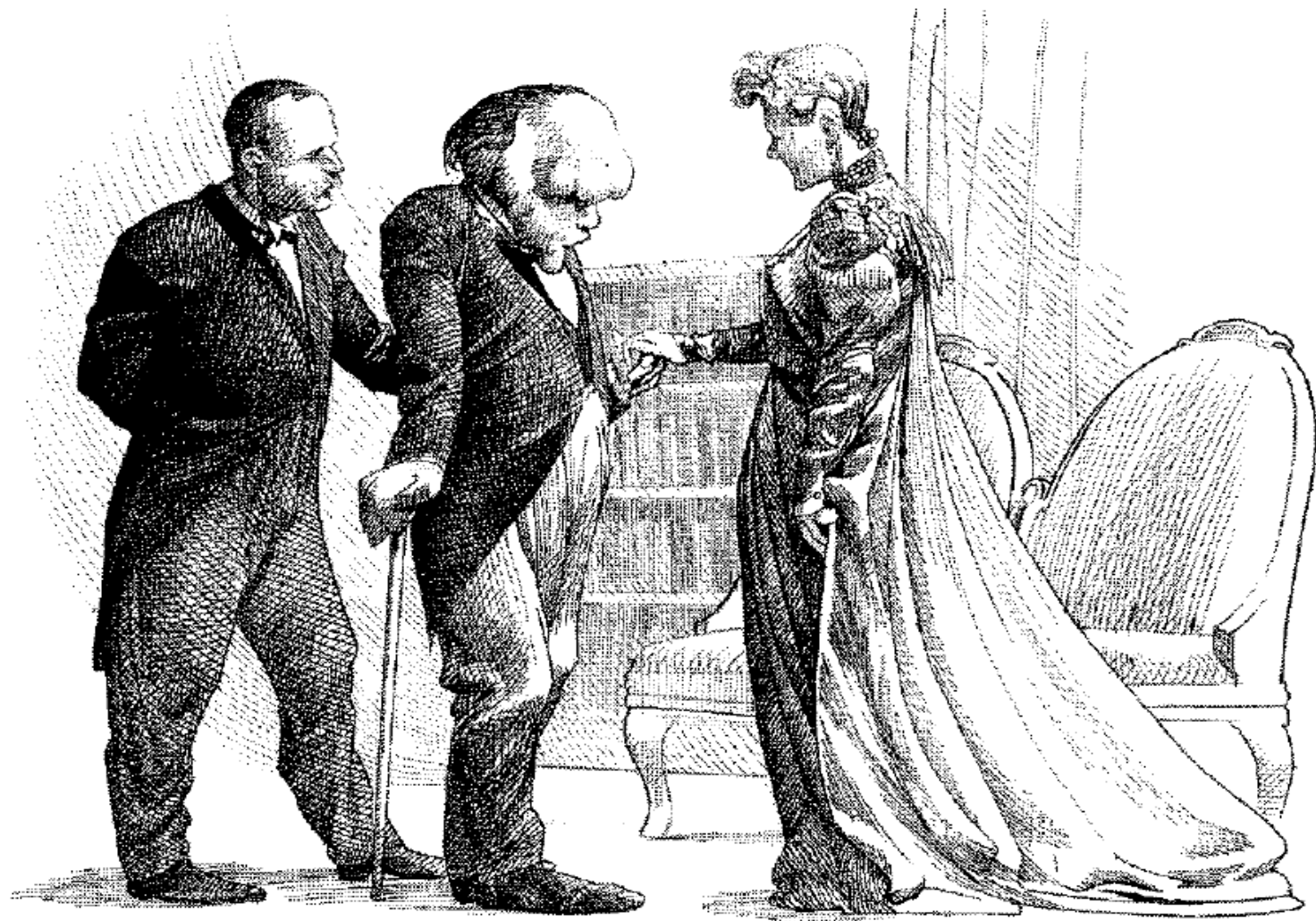
- Why did not Dr. Treves want Merrick to live by himself, like a man in a lighthouse ?
- Why did Merrick begin to feel like a man, not a creature?
- Who was the important lady?





Merrick stood up beside his table. He did not smile, because his face could not smile, but his eyes looked happy. 'That's good,' he said. 'Who is it?' I moved away from the door, and the visitor walked in. 'Your Majesty, this is Joseph Merrick,' I said. 'Joseph, this is Her Majesty, Queen Alexandra, the Queen of England.'





*'Joseph, this is Her Majesty Queen Alexandra,
the Queen of England.'*



Queen Alexandra smiled at him.

‘How do you do, Mr Merrick,’ she said.

‘I’m very pleased to meet you.’ Then she shook his hand. Merrick did not move. For nearly half a minute he stood and looked at her with his mouth open. Then he spoke, in his strange, slow voice.





‘How... how do you do, Your Majesty,’ he said. But I don't think the Queen understood him, because he tried to get down on his knees at the same time. It was very difficult for him, because of his enormous legs.



**'No, please, Mr. Merrick, do get up,' said the Queen.
'I would like to talk to you. Can we sit at your table?'
'Yes yes, of course,' he said. They sat at the table.
She took his left hand, the good hand, in hers.
She looked at the hand carefully, and then smiled at
Merrick again.**



'I often read about you in the newspapers, 'she said.'You are a very interesting man, Mr Merrick. You have a very difficult life, but people say you're happy. Is it true? Are you happy now?' 'Oh, yes, Your Majesty, yes!' said Merrick. 'I'm a very happy man! I have a home here now, and friends, and my books. I'm happy every hour of the day' 'What a wonderful story!' she said.





'I'm very pleased to hear it. Now, tell me about your reading. I see you have a lot of books here.'

'Oh, yes, Your Majesty. I love my books,' said Merrick. And for nearly half an hour they sat and talked about books. The Queen gave him a little book, and some red flowers, before she left.



While Reading

Role play the conversation between Queen Alexandra and Merrick then change the roles.

Q: How do you do, Mr Merrick. I'm very pleased to meet you.

M: How... how do you do, Your Majesty .

Q: No, please, Mr Merrick, do get up. I would like to talk to you. Can we sit at your table ?

M: Yes yes, of course.

Q: I often read about you in the newspapers. You are a very interesting man, Mr Merrick. You have a very difficult life, but people say you're happy. Is it true? Are you happy now?

M: Oh, yes, Your Majesty, yes. I'm a very happy man! I have a home here now, and friends, and my books. I'm happy every hour of the day.

Q: What a wonderful story. I'm very pleased to hear it. Now, tell me about your reading. I see you have a lot of books here.

M: Oh, yes, Your Majesty. I love my books.



After her visit, Merrick began to sing. He could not sing easily, of course, because of his mouth, but all that day there was a strange, happy noise in his room. He looked at the flowers carefully, and put them on his table. He had many visits from the Queen, and at Christmas she sent him a Christmas card.





Dear Joseph,

Windsor Castle

20th December

1888

Here is a small Christmas present for you. I think it looks like me, doesn't it? I do like visiting you very much, and I am going to come to the hospital again in the New Year.

Happy Christmas!

Your friend,

Alexandra



The present was a picture of Queen Alexandra, with her name on it. Merrick cried over it, and put it carefully by the bed in his room. Then he sat down and wrote a letter to the Queen. It was the first letter of his life.



The London Hospital
23rd December 1888



My dear Queen,

Thank you very, very much for your wonderful card and the beautiful picture. It is the best thing in my room, the very best, the most beautiful thing I have. This is the first Christmas in my life, and my first Christmas present. Perhaps I had a Christmas with my mother once, but I do not remember it. I have my mother's picture too, and she is beautiful, like you. But now I know many famous ladies and kind people like Dr Treves, and I am a very happy man. I am happy too because I am going to see you in the New Year.

Happy Christmas to you, my dear friend.

With all my love,

Joseph Merrick

After Reading

Share your idea about the pictures . What happened in each one?

