

## **CHARACTERS**

(In Order of Appearance)

EDWARD PRENDICK  
MONTGOMERY  
M'LING  
CAPTAIN DAVIS  
DR. MOREAU

## **BEAST PEOPLE**

The PUMA	
PARDUS,	The Leopard
ERICIUS,	The Hog
LOBO,	The Wolf
SAYER OF THE LAW,	The Satyr
SIMIAE,	The Ape
URSUS,	The Bear
TIGRIS,	The Tiger
RISUS,	The Hyena

## **CASTING NOTES**

This script allows for doubling where necessary. All characters in this play, including principles, are gender neutral.

TIME:	Ambiguous
SETTING:	The Ipecacuanha, a cargo ship A Small Island in the Pacific Ocean



ACT I  
SCENE 1

*(IN BLACK. A thunderous crash and a cacophony of chaos overwhelm the stage for a moment before transforming into wild animal noises that fade to silence. EDWARD PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

The incident of the Lady Vain was well-reported. I heard all about it sinking in the Pacific upon my return to England. I need not have, however, for the simple fact that I was there. Despite reports that there were no survivors, I stand here as evidence to the contrary. But I am inclined to think that it was not for my good fortune. The story I am about to relate exists in my mind as the single greatest horror that I have ever experienced. To begin with, there were two other survivors beside myself, and though it isn't clear exactly when the madness struck, I'm certain their lives could have been saved if not for the senseless violence that transpired on the lifeboat. When Montgomery found me, I was the only soul aboard the blood-stained craft.

*(Fade to black.)*

SCENE 2

*(Lights up over PRENDICK lying on a small cot. He is delirious and exhausted. MONTGOMERY sits beside him, dabbing his lips with a damp cloth from a bowl of water. A murmur of animal noises as MONTGOMERY checks PRENDICK'S vitals. PRENDICK wakes up.)*

MONTGOMERY

Easy now. You'll be okay. How do you feel?

PRENDICK

*(Dry-mouthed)*

Thirsty.

*(MONTGOMERY dabs PRENDICK'S lips again.)*

MONTGOMERY

You were asleep for thirty hours. You're lucky we found you.

PRENDICK

Where am I?

MONTGOMERY

You're on a shitty rust bucket called the Ipecacuanha.

PRENDICK

Where are we going?

MONTGOMERY

Hawaii, but they have to drop me off, first.

PRENDICK

Where?

MONTGOMERY

It's just a tiny island that doesn't even have a name. Just some coordinates on a map. That's how we like it.

*(Dabs PRENDICK'S lips again.)*

You were dangerously dehydrated when we picked you up. I had to start an I.V. You were an awful mess, too. Looked like you'd been vomiting.

PRENDICK

I had to drink sea water to survive after the canteens went empty.

MONTGOMERY

You could've killed yourself. You're more stable now, though. Thanks to me. More water?

PRENDICK

*(Pulls at a bandage on his arm)*

What's this?

MONTGOMERY

You were running a fever. I gave you antibiotics to help fight infections and something to help you sleep.

PRENDICK

Who are you?

MONTGOMERY

My name is Montgomery. You?

PRENDICK

Edward Prendick.

MONTGOMERY

Nice to meet you.

PRENDICK

Are you a doctor?

MONTGOMERY

Yes I am, Ed. Mind if I call you Ed? Don't worry. You're in good hands. Were you alone on the lifeboat?

PRENDICK

No.

MONTGOMERY

I thought so. There was a lot of blood. Too much for one person. Days old, too. What happened?

PRENDICK

I was aboard the Lady Vain when she sank. The other two killed each other over the last canteen of fresh water.

MONTGOMERY

You didn't fight?

PRENDICK

I did. I tried. I wasn't a very good match.

MONTGOMERY

Yet, you're the only one left. It's funny how it all shakes out.

PRENDICK

I didn't kill them.

MONTGOMERY

I didn't say you did. Drink more water.

*(PRENDICK drinks. Animal noises grow louder – a calamity.)*

PRENDICK

What is that? Are there animals on the ship?

MONTGOMERY

Mine.

PRENDICK

What are they for?

MONTGOMERY

Research.

PRENDICK

You work with animal?

MONTGOMERY

That's right. Are you English?

PRENDICK

Yes.

MONTGOMERY

I practiced medicine in England for a while. That's where I met my boss, Dr. Moreau. I'm from the States originally, but I like to travel. Now, here I am.

*(Pause)*

How long have you been at sea after the whatchacallit sank?

PRENDICK

The Lady Vain?

MONTGOMERY

Right.

PRENDICK

Several days, I think. Perhaps a week. I really don't know. It all runs together.

MONTGOMERY

How did she go down?

PRENDICK

I was in my cabin when the alarm sounded. From what I could gather we struck something that tore a gash along the hull. She sank in minutes.

MONTGOMERY

Poor bastards never had a chance, huh?

PRENDICK

I suppose not.

MONTGOMERY

And it was just the three of you in the lifeboat?

PRENDICK

Yes.

MONTGOMERY

How did they die?

PRENDICK

They fell overboard ... Into the sea.

MONTGOMERY

As they ...

PRENDICK

Fought.

MONTGOMERY

That doesn't explain the blood, Ed.

PRENDICK

One of us had a knife. We turned on each other so quickly. What they did to each other ... What I did ... It scares me to death.

MONTGOMERY

Hey, look we're all just animals trying to survive, man. Am I right?

PRENDICK

It didn't have to happen that way. We could have helped each other.

*(Pause)*

How long before we reach the island?

MONTGOMERY

Shouldn't be long if the weather's good. I was lost at sea for a month after a hurricane trashed our navigation. We drifted sixty degrees north. We had our own ship then. It got smashed up pretty badly and we didn't have the supplies to repair it. Now, we hire whoever we can get.

PRENDICK

I'd like to speak to the captain whenever I could and thank him for taking me along.

MONTGOMERY

I advise you to keep your distance from him.

PRENDICK

Why?

MONTGOMERY

As far as he's concerned, you're just a stowaway. I had to beg him to pick you up.

PRENDICK

Terrific.

MONTGOMERY

But, hey. Maybe he'll take you as far as Hawaii. Or you can come to the island with me.

PRENDICK

I'm sure your boss, Doctor ... er ...

MONTGOMERY

Moreau.



PRENDICK

I'm sure I'd only be in his way. In what sort of research did you say he was engaged?

MONTGOMERY

I didn't. He specializes in biology, biochemistry, and zoology. It's complicated.

*(Awkward silence. The animal noises continue.)*

PRENDICK

What kind of animals are you taking with you?

MONTGOMERY

All kinds. It's a real menagerie.

PRENDICK

What do you do with them?

MONTGOMERY

Sleep. You're still not a hundred percent yet. Would you like a sedative?

PRENDICK

I'll be alright.

MONTGOMERY

Suit yourself. We'll get some solid food in you later tonight. Do you like swordfish and boar?

PRENDICK

Anything sounds good right now. I'm starving.

MONTGOMERY

Dr. Moreau insists we stick to strict vegetarian diet on the island. But we're not on the island now, are we? Sleep. We'll feed you tonight and tomorrow we'll take you topside for some fresh air.

DAVIS

*(Off)*

Get the hell back there, you ungodly monster. Go on! Out of my sight!

*(M'LING stumbles in, practically thrown,  
and falls at MONTGOMERY'S feet. CAPTAIN  
DAVIS enters, hurling a book at M'LING.)*

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling? Captain Davis, what happened?

DAVIS

Keep that damn thing away from my crew.

M'LING

*(Clutching his book and pulling a hood over  
his head)*

I meant no harm, boss. Really, I was only reading.

DAVIS

He was at the bow distracting my men. I told you when you're on my ship your people don't mingle with mine.

MONTGOMERY

Your crew have been accosting my assistant since he came aboard. We discussed this.

DAVIS

It's bad enough that I have to contend with those damn animals making noise at all hours of the night and their stink. And what am I going to do about the mess?

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling will take care of the animals. That's his job.

DAVIS

He damn well better. My crew isn't responsible for your people or your cargo. Damn beasts. I was crazy to take this charter.

MONTGOMERY

But you did and I pay you for safe passage. That includes the animals and M'Ling.

DAVIS

If he comes near any of my crew again, I'll slit his goddamn throat. Do you hear me?

MONTGOMERY

And if you or any member of your crew lays a hand on him, I'll put a bullet between your eyes.

*(MONTGOMERY flashes his gun.)*

DAVIS

Crazy goddamn sawbones. As if all this isn't enough, I let you convince me to bring aboard that stowaway.

MONTGOMERY

What choice did I have? He would have died.

DAVIS

That's not my problem. I run a respectable ship and look what you done to it. It's all gone to shit because of you people and the animals and their mess. What's a doctor need with all these animals anyway?

MONTGOMERY

Drop it right there, Davis. Not another word.

DAVIS

I heard stories about what you do on that island and that doctor what's-his-name ... Why no one will give you passage. Monsters.

MONTGOMERY

I said enough!

DAVIS

*(To PRENDICK)*

You better watch this one, stowaway. You go to that island. You may never come back.

MONTGOMERY

I won't tell you again!

DAVIS

That's all I'm saying. The sooner you're all off my ship, the better.

*(DAVIS exits.)*

PRENDICK

What was all that about?

MONTGOMERY

Nothing. Too much salt water in his blood.

*(To M'LING)*

You alright?

M'LING

He broke my book.

MONTGOMERY

I'm sorry about that. Did they hurt you?

M'LING

They pushed me and set their dogs on me. Dragged me back here.

MONTGOMERY

*(Sits on PRENDICK'S cot. M'LING rests his head on MONTGOMERY'S knee like a loyal dog.)*

They won't do that again. I promise.

*(Patting M'LING'S head)*

Why were you up there anyway? You know I want you below deck with the animals. They're your responsibility.

M'LING

I'm sorry. I just wanted to read, and the noise distracted me. Better light up there, too. I am sorry.

MONTGOMERY

It's okay, boy.

M'LING

*(Clutches book and weeps)*

*He ... he broke my book.*

MONTGOMERY

I'll fix it when we get home. Now, go back with the animals.

*(MONTGOMERY scratches behind M'LING'S ear  
and ushers him to the door. M'LING exits.)*

PRENDICK

Who was that?

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling is my assistant. Closest thing I got to a friend.

PRENDICK

What's wrong with him?

MONTGOMERY

Nothing. Why?

PRENDICK

It's just ... Well, I thought ...

*(Pause)*

My mistake.

MONTGOMERY

Yes, it was.

*(MONTGOMERY exits. The animal noises  
persist.)*

### SCENE 3

*(PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

I had never heard such a wailing in all my life. The cries of those animals were enough to put me off my supper that night. If not to keep up my strength I'd have not eaten at all. The curious case of Mr. Montgomery and the way he evaded my questions about Dr. Moreau's research put my stomach in knots. I slept but not well. Nightmares plagued me about what happened on the lifeboat. I could not understand Montgomery's fascination about what transpired between myself and the other survivors. But to satisfy some curiosity I will put the facts before you plainly.

After this, I beg you, in the name of human decency, not to press me for any further explanations.

*(Pause)*

A man, in his life, is forced to certain lengths of which he is not particularly proud. We were adrift for several days and spoke very little. After the first four days, our food was gone and there wasn't much water left. As we grew more haggard with the sun pitiless against us, our minds gave birth to strange and horrific thoughts that we dared only project with our eyes. Eventually, one man tried to strike a bargain with me that ensured we would eat for the next few days. I refused. The idea went against nature. He tried the same deal with the other passenger who also refused. From then on, we remained apart from each other. I kept a pocketknife ready at all times. Day six, the two men fought for the last canteen of water. I tried to stop them by appealing to their better nature but our time at sea degraded them into savages. I drove my knife into one of their legs, trying to subdue him and end the struggle. but I was thrown back to my corner where I stayed and watched both men slaughter each other until they toppled overboard. The soft blue water turned to a murky crimson. Then, the sharks came and picked off their remains. In the heat with no fresh water left, I was resigned to my fate and even thought about jumping into the water until Montgomery found me alone and unconscious. No matter how bizarre an experience it was, I was not prepared for what waited for me on the island.

*(Blackout.)*

#### SCENE 4

*(Lights up on PRENDICK and MONTGOMERY the following evening. They are seated on the stern of the ship and looking up at the stars.)*

#### MONTGOMERY

The captain tells me we're close to the island. He seemed happy about it. Couldn't wait to tell me. He hates the livestock.

PRENDICK

I can't say that I blame him.

MONTGOMERY

You'll be home before you know it. And the world will just keep spinning like none of this ever happened.

PRENDICK

I can't wait to be back in England.

MONTGOMERY

At least you have something to return to. A home. A life. A perfectly normal life. Friends and family. I threw it all away ten years ago when I ...

*(A long pause. MONTGOMERY drinks from a flask.)*

PRENDICK

Montgomery?

MONTGOMERY

The truth is there's nothing for me on the island. There's nothing for me anywhere. Just the animals, the lab, and all those specimen bottles.

PRENDICK

And M'Ling.

MONTGOMERY

Yes, M'Ling.

*(MONTGOMERY passes the flask to PRENDICK.)*

PRENDICK

No, thank you. I suppose I should thank you for saving my life.

MONTGOMERY

You needed help. If I'd been bored that day, then who knows where you'd be right now. You're just lucky that a ship was passing by with a doctor onboard.

PRENDICK

Well, thank you anyway.

MONTGOMERY

It's chance, goddamnit. Just like everything else in life. Chance sank your ship and put you in a lifeboat with two other men. Chance killed them and let you live. Chance made me an outcast all because of one bad night ten years ago.

PRENDICK

What happened?

MONTGOMERY

Nothing. Forget it. The animals are quiet tonight.

PRENDICK

Yes, they are. Maybe that means it'll be a good night for all of us.

MONTGOMERY

*(Drinks; looking up at the sky)*

Damn what a sight. You don't get a sky like that in London. Makes a man feel small and superfluous. You think anybody's up there on one of those stars looking back at us?

PRENDICK

I don't know. Maybe.

MONTGOMERY

Do you believe in God, Ed?

PRENDICK

I suppose I do.

MONTGOMERY

Do you think a man has the right to change the laws of nature in the name of progress ... whatever the hell he calls it?

PRENDICK

No. I guess I don't.



MONTGOMERY

I've seen a lot of things these past ten years that negate everything I ever thought to be true about nature. I've come to accept that God may not exist. But there's a paradox in that because I feel damned. Can there be damnation without God?

PRENDICK

I don't know. I'm not sure that's for me to say.

MONTGOMERY

I think I'll go to bed. Don't stay out too late. There's a lot of ocean to get lost in and the men on this ship won't hesitate to throw your ass overboard. Goodnight.

*(MONTGOMERY exits.)*

PRENDICK

*(Uneasy)*

Goodnight.

*(Fade to black.)*

## SCENE 5

*(PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

I took Montgomery's advice and immediately returned to my cabin. That night I had more very unpleasant dreams. The waning moon rose late, and its light cast a ghostly white beam through my window making an ominous shape on the planks beside my cot. Then, the stag hounds woke and howled so I scarcely slept until dawn.

*(Lights rise. A loud crash and the sound of crates and boxes being tossed carelessly about. PRENDICK crosses up as MONTGOMERY enters.)*

What is it?

MONTGOMERY

Land. We arrived a day early. Come on. Let's go before Davis gets any more violent.

*(DAVIS enters.)*

DAVIS

*(Calling off)*

Off with it all, boys! Every last damn bit of it! I want the decks clean of the whole mess!

MONTGOMERY

Captain, can you please stress to your men to be careful with my cargo? Some of it is very fragile.

DAVIS

To hell with you and your cargo. First you bring these animals on my ship, and they make a mess of the whole damn thing. Not to mention keeping me and my men up half the goddamn nights with their howling and God-awful racket. Then, this stowaway who gets a free ride out of me.

PRENDICK

Captain, please consider my passage to Hawaii.

DAVIS

No more free rides, Mr. Stowaway. This is where you get off.

PRENDICK

But you don't understand. I can't stay here. I need to get home. I'll pay for the passage, Captain Davis. Name your price.

DAVIS

Expensive. I take all payments up front and in full.

PRENDICK

I can pay you when we reach Hawaii.

DAVIS

If you don't have the money now, you don't travel.

PRENDICK  
Captain Davis, please be reasonable.

MONTGOMERY  
You're wasting your breath, Ed.

PRENDICK  
Let me handle this.

MONTGOMERY  
He isn't going to listen to you no matter what you say.

PRENDICK  
Montgomery, please.

MONTGOMERY  
Have it your way. But I'm telling you it's a waste of time. I'll be on the barge. Whatever you do, decide fast. We're leaving as soon as the last of the cargo is loaded.

*(MONTGOMERY exits.)*

DAVIS  
Good riddance.

PRENDICK  
Captain Davis, I'm imploring you to listen to me.

DAVIS  
You're getting off this ship if I have to throw your ass overboard myself. Take Mr. Montgomery's hospitality while it lasts because that's the best deal you're going to get. Your only options are the island or the sea. Now, choose.

PRENDICK  
Very well. I'm sorry we couldn't come to an understanding.

DAVIS

*(Shouts off)*

Double time, boys! I want the decks clean. Anything left on board after an hour goes into the ocean and swims to shore or drowns. I don't care which.

*(DAVIS exits as lights fade to black.)*

SCENE 6

*(PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

I reluctantly joined Montgomery and his assistant on the cargo barge to the island. From the stern, I watched the Ipecacuanha disappear in the distance. My heart sank and stomach curdled at the idea that my only opportunity for salvation had abandoned me. From that point on my story graduated from merely inconvenient to utterly bizarre.

*(Lights up. FIGURES covered head-to-toe in white linen carry crates and boxes across the stage. Literally, every inch of their bodies is covered. Their heads and faces are shrouded by cheesecloth and pith helmets. They move clumsily. MONTGOMERY and M'LING enters. PRENDICK meets them.)*

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling, make sure they handle the cargo with care. Check everything over thoroughly and see that nothing was damaged by Davis's crew. Make sure the livestock is okay.

M'LING

Yes, Boss.

MONTGOMERY

*(Swigs from flask and shares with M'LING.)*

Attaboy.

*(M'LING drinks and gives the flask back; exits.)*

PRENDICK

I can't thank you enough, Montgomery. Again. This isn't the most ideal situation for either of us, I know. Believe me, I'd much rather not be here.

*(A few OTHERS are fascinated and curious about PRENDICK, leering at him, pointing, and mumbling incoherently to each other. PRENDICK feels them watching.)*

Montgomery?

MONTGOMERY

Hm?

PRENDICK

What are they doing?

MONTGOMERY

You're new here. You startle them.

PRENDICK

I'm sorry.

MONTGOMERY

Don't be. They're practically idiots. They frighten easily.

PRENDICK

Am I in ...

MONTGOMERY

... Danger?

*(PRENDICK nods sheepishly. MONTGOMERY snickers.)*

They're harmless. Just don't stare back.

PRENDICK

Why? If they're harmless ...

MONTGOMERY

If you look them in the eye, they'll see you as their equal. Don't acknowledge them at all and they'll think you're above them.

PRENDICK

Do I want them to think that?

MONTGOMERY

Yes. There are a few things you need to know before we reach the compound. Never leave alone -- especially at night. It's very dangerous. For your own safety, and I cannot stress this enough, keep to the main yard on the southeast side. Do not enter the laboratory. Keep to your quarters, the main hall, and the dining room. Do that and you'll be fine. Also, there's an extensive library on the compound. Moreau is an avid reader. I doubt he'll mind you using it. There's not much else to do here.

PRENDICK

Is this a research facility or a prison?

MONTGOMERY

Moreau's work is delicate. We have to keep everything on lockdown. As far as the island itself, there are a lot of dangerous species in the jungle. We have two trucks to take the cargo back you'll ride with me.

*(Indicates the OTHERS.)*

Unless you'd like to get acquainted.

PRENDICK

No. I'll ride with you.

MONTGOMERY

*(Laughs)*

I thought so.

*(To OTHERS)*

Bug off!

*(They scatter quickly and exit as M'LING returns.)*

M'LING

Cargo is all good, boss. Nothing damaged. Some of the animals were a little stirred up, but I sedated them.

MONTGOMERY

Good, M'Ling. Have the others load the trucks. Dry supplies and equipment in the first truck with me. Livestock in the second.

*(MONTGOMERY pats M'LING on the head like a dog. M'LING exits.)*

PRENDICK

Practically idiots?

MONTGOMERY

Some less than others. M'Ling is good with the animals. He bonds with them, and they react well to him. He's useful in the lab, too. He's a good tech.

PRENDICK

Where exactly is this island located in the Pacific?

MONTGOMERY

It's too small to appear on any map. We like it that way. It keeps away the curious.

PRENDICK

How do ships find you?

MONTGOMERY

We call with coordinates when we need supplies.

PRENDICK

How long does it take ships to reach the island?

MONTGOMERY

It depends on where they're coming from and what sort of weather we're having.

PRENDICK

Can I use the radio?

MONTGOMERY

That can be arranged. It's short range. You'll have better luck if a ship happens to pass by.

PRENDICK

Do they pass frequently?

MONTGOMERY

Not often, but they come.

PRENDICK

The sooner the better.

MONTGOMERY

Alright, everybody! Let's get rolling. We can't keep the good doctor waiting. I want to make it back before sundown.

*(MONTGOMERY exits. Lights fade over PRENDICK.)*

## SCENE 7

*(THE COMPOUND. MONTGOMERY, PRENDICK, and M'LING enter. M'LING sits somewhere and reads.)*

MONTGOMERY

Welcome to our little paradise.

PRENDICK

When can I use the radio?

MONTGOMERY

Soon. Just sit tight for now. I hope you enjoyed the swordfish and boar. It's the last taste of meat you'll have for a while. Would you excuse me for a moment?

PRENDICK

No! Wait a damn minute. You said I could use the radio. How long am I expected to wait?

MONTGOMERY

All good things in time. Now please, I'm expected. Just wait here. M'Ling will keep you company.

*(MONTGOMERY exits. PRENDICK glances at M'LING who is engrossed in his book.)*



PRENDICK

*(Resigning)*

Um ... Hello.

M'LING

*(Doesn't look away from his book.)*

Hello.

PRENDICK

This is quite the place.

M'LING

*(Continues reading)*

Yes, quite.

PRENDICK

It wasn't really what I expected. But then I guess I didn't really know what to expect.

*(Pause)*

You're really enjoying that book. What is it?

M'LING

The Sea Wolf.

PRENDICK

Jack London. That's a good choice. I read it when I was younger.

M'LING

Don't spoil it.

PRENDICK

I wouldn't dream of it.

M'LING

I read Frankenstein last week.

PRENDICK

You like to read.

M'LING

Robinson Crusoe before that.

PREDICK

Impressive.

M'LING

I read every day. Montgomery taught me. Doctor Moreau insisted.

PRENDICK

Maybe you can show me the library.

M'LING

Yes. Many books. I read one every week.

PRENDICK

*(Sits a short distance from M'LING)*

The spine is still torn.

M'LING

Montgomery will fix it. Montgomery always fixes things.

PRENDICK

He seems to care very much about you. I'm sorry that the men on the boat were so cruel.

M'LING

They treat me that way because I am different.

PRENDICK

There's nothing wrong with being different.

M'LING

That is what Montgomery says. But still, they treat me like it is wrong. I do as they do. I walk on two legs like them and have five fingers like them. But it is not enough. I read my books and learned the law. But still they try to hurt me. Why? Out there is cruel. They do not know the law.

PRENDICK

*(Sympathetic)*

They know it. Some people choose to ignore it. They think they can live by their own rules and answer to no one but themselves.

M'LING

Punishment comes swift to those who do not know the law and obey. You will learn the law if you stay.

PRENDICK

What?

*(DR. MOREAU and MONTGOMERY enter.)*

DR. MOREAU

Mr. Prendick, is it?

PRENDICK

*(Startled, stands)*

Yes. Edward Prendick.

DR. MOREAU

Montgomery told me about your predicament. Most unfortunate.

PRENDICK

Yes. It is. I was told I could use your radio.

DR. MOREAU

I trust that Montgomery told you about the conditions of the island.

PRENDICK

Yes, he did.

DR. MOREAU

And did he explain the rules of the compound?

PRENDICK

Well, yes but ...

DR. MOREAU

Then you must understand that considering the circumstances it is quite impossible at the moment.

PRENDICK

But how will I call? How will I get home?

DR. MOREAU

Montgomery is aware of your situation and will address it as soon as possible. At the moment I need him with me. The work we are doing here is far more important than you can possibly understand. I haven't time to explain now. It is very unfortunate that you landed in our lap like you did. I feel I must inform you that we don't receive ships here very often. Perhaps once a year or so.

PRENDICK

I can't stay here that long. That's absurd!

DR. MOREAU

I assure you they do come. When one does, you are free to go since you are an uninvited guest. However, I do feel that your safety is my responsibility. M'Ling, please prepare a room for Mr. Prendick and see to his every comfort.

M'LING

Yes, Doctor.

DR. MOREAU

Now, Montgomery, I'm itching to get to work with the new specimens you brought me. Has everything been brought to the lab?

MONTGOMERY

The boys are putting everything away now.

DR. MOREAU

wonderful. Incidentally, Mr. Prendick, Montgomery tells me that you are an educated man. Do you know anything about genetics or biology? Biochemistry perhaps?

PRENDICK

No, I don't.

DR. MOREAU

That's a shame. As it happens, we are biologists here. This is a sort of biological research station. Perhaps your time here will not be ill-spent if we can

inspire you to understand what we're trying to accomplish.

PRENDICK

I have asked Montgomery to elaborate but he's been reluctant.

DR. MOREAU

Secrecy is essential I'm afraid. You are, as I have stated, uninvited. But it does seem rather unavoidable now.

PRENDICK

I think I understand you.

DR. MOREAU

Good. If you'll excuse me then I have my research. Montgomery?

*(DR. MOREAU crosses to exit.)*

MONTGOMERY

I'll be right behind you.

DR. MOREAU

And Mr. Prendick.

PRENDICK

Yes?

DR. MOREAU

*(Void of hospitality)*

Welcome to the island.

*(DR. MOREAU exits.)*

MONTGOMERY

He's not usually that cordial. There's an extra bunk in the room next to mine. It isn't much but you should be comfortable. M'Ling will show you the way.

PRENDICK

What about the radio? You said ...

MONTGOMERY

Yes, I'm really sorry about that. I'll call later after I'm finished in the lab. You might as well settle in. Like the doctor said, it may be a while.

PRENDICK

I haven't got a year, Montgomery.

MONTGOMERY

And we haven't got anything else.

*(MONTGOMERY exits.)*

M'LING

I can take you to your room now. It is a nice room, very comfortable. I sleep there sometimes when Montgomery wants to be alone.

*(Lights fade as they exit.)*

END OF ACT I

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

*(Lights up on a small cot. M'LING and PRENDICK enter.)*

M'LING

You will like this room very much. It is close to Montgomery. I will visit with books for you to read. There are so many books. Would you like me to name them for you?

PRENDICK

That's all right, M'Ling.

M'LING

Very well. Do you like this room?

PRENDICK

It's a good room. Thank you.

M'LING

I can bring you food. Would you like food?

PRENDICK

I'm not hungry. I think I'd just like to lie down for now.

*(PRENDICK sits on the cot. It's uncomfortable.)*

M'LING

Do you like it?

PRENDICK

*(He doesn't)*

It's fine.

*(Pause; M'LING lingers)*

I've had a long day. I think I'll rest.

M'LING

Yes, rest. Rest is good. Rest will help you feel better. I will leave you to rest, then?

PRENDICK

Please.

M'LING

Rest well, Mr. Prendick.

(As M'LING exits, a thought occurs to  
PRENDICK.)

PRENDICK

M'Ling?

M'LING

*(Eager to please)*

Mr. Prendick?

PRENDICK

How long have you lived here?

M'LING

I was born here.

PRENDICK

I got the impression that it was only the three of you  
alone on the island. I didn't realize it was  
inhabited before that.

M'LING

And the animals.

PRENDICK

Yes, of course, the animals too.

M'LING

The others also. They were born here too.

PRENDICK

The others. Your people. The natives? What do they  
call this island?

M'LING

We call it home.



PRENDICK

It must have a name. How did your people get here? How long have they lived here?

M'LING

Some were already here. Others Montgomery brought from somewhere else.

PRENDICK

So, some of them aren't native?

M'LING

They were born here, like me.

PRENDICK

I don't understand, M'LING. you said Montgomery brought them. How could they be born here and brought? Where are they from originally? What nationality are they?

M'LING

We are men.

PRENDICK

Uh huh. I see. Thank you. One more thing before you go. Can you remove your hood, please?

*(M'LING does. His hair is long and matted everywhere. His skin is patchy with some areas lighter than others. His nose is short, dark, and stubby, scars around the eyes and mouth indicate that he has had extensive reconstructive surgery at some point. His upper lip is practically nonexistent. In short, M'LING roughly resembles a dog with human features. PRENDICK is surprised by M'LING'S appearance.)*

You can go now.

*(Pause; And then an animalistic cry is heard off.)*

Moreau ...

*(Fade to black.)*

SCENE 2

*(In black, the cries of an animal can still be heard; louder than before. Lights up on PRENDICK lying in his cot, trying to muffle the noises with a thin uncomfortable pillow. MONTGOMERY stumbles in; mildly intoxicated. He sits at the foot of PRENDICK'S cot.)*

PRENDICK

That damn beast has been crying since we got here.

MONTGOMERY

The Puma from yesterday. We've been stuck in the lab working on it all damn day.

PRENDICK

It's suffering, man! What are you doing to it? Why don't you put it out of its misery?

MONTGOMERY

You're wound up, Ed. Have a drink with me.

PRENDICK

No.

MONTGOMERY

One drink. It'll relax your nerves.

PRENDICK

I don't drink.

MONTGOMERY

Oh, an abstainer. I wish I had been. Had I stayed away from this stuff maybe things could have been different. Maybe I wouldn't be here. But what use is locking a door once the cat is out of the house? One bad night is all it takes. I was lucky when Moreau found me. He helped me get off a bad charge, brought me here, and gave me work. Put my talents to use. I'm pretty good with the scalpel, you know.

PRENDICK

Moreau ...

MONTGOMERY

What about him?

PRENDICK

Something has been bothering me ever since you first mentioned his name -- ever since I met him. I couldn't figure it out, but I knew that I had heard that name before.

MONTGOMERY

You don't say ...

PRENDICK

And then I saw your assistant's face.

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling?

PRENDICK

He said he was born here but he doesn't know the name of the island. I have traveled all over the world and visited plenty of islands in the Pacific. I have never seen anything, or anyone like him.

MONTGOMERY

He's a rare breed.

PRENDICK

Yeah, and then there's the Islanders. Where are they? Other than the few people who met us on the beach yesterday, I haven't seen any natives. M'Ling said that you brought people here. But, when you found me, there were only animals with you on the Ipecacuanha.

MONTGOMERY

So?

PRENDICK

So where are all the people? Where are M'Ling's people? He said he was born here. He must have a family. Where are they?

MONTGOMERY

Maybe they left.

PRENDICK

I rather doubt that. What race is he? Can you tell me that?

MONTGOMERY

Well, how the hell should I know?

PRENDICK

You said yourself he's the closest thing you have to a real friend. You don't know where your own friend comes from?

MONTGOMERY

Does it matter?

PRENDICK

What happened to his face?

MONTGOMERY

Happened?

PRENDICK

He's always wearing that hood and has his face buried in a book. I asked him to take the hood off earlier and he's covered with scars. It's like his face was all rearranged. Was he hurt or in an accident?

MONTGOMERY

Yes! He had an accident -- awful, awful thing. I had to fix him.

PRENDICK

What kind of accident?

MONTGOMERY

You ask a lot of questions, you know that? Is that what happened to the other men in the lifeboat? Did you question them to death? Did they kill themselves to get away from your constant complaining? What exactly do you do out there in the world?

PRENDICK

I'm a lawyer.

MONTGOMERY

Well, that explains that. Maybe you should have a drink. It might loosen you up a bit and do us both a favor.

PRENDICK

I don't want a drink. I want to go home.

*(The PUMA cries again.)*

That has been going on all night. It's keeping me awake. It's driving me crazy. I can't take it anymore. You have a radio. You could have called at any time for someone to pick me up. But you didn't! You're keeping me here against my will.

*(The PUMA cries.)*

WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING TO THAT THING?!

MONTGOMERY

I should have left you where I found you. I knew bringing you here was a mistake. Truth is I was just like you when I first came here. Full of questions and anxiety. I couldn't accept it in the beginning, either. But the more I drank the better I felt. Moreau doesn't like it. He says it makes me sloppy and I don't need it. He told me I'd feel differently after a while -- after my first ...

*(MONTGOMERY stops talking abruptly and drinks.)*

PRENDICK

First what?

MONTGOMERY

Nothing. Never mind. Damn it, forget it.

PRENDICK

I remember Moreau and I know why he left England.

MONTGOMERY

You don't understand. "Give him time," I said. "He'll come around." But Moreau knew you wouldn't understand.

*(Drinks)*

God damn him. Damn us all and damn this island. It's not their fault that they are the way they are. They don't know what's happening to them. I used to be afraid of them. Now, I think they're afraid of me. I don't know when it all changed.

*(Pause)*

Did you figure it out, yet? Whether or not you believe in a God? I do. And when I meet him, I'll have a lot to answer for. Yes Sir. He's going to pick me up off this rock and drop me at his feet. What will I have to say for myself, then? I was only doing what I was told.

*(MONTGOMERY pause; drinks. The PUMA cries.)*

PRENDICK

My God, it's as if all the world's suffering has found a voice.

MONTGOMERY

Yea. It's only after suffering finds a voice that pity troubles us. You should sleep now. You'll need your strength.

*(MONTGOMERY exits. PRENDICK lies back down on the cot and tried to muffle his ears again as the PUMA continues to cry. PRENDICK, unable to bear it any longer, throws the pillow and paces. He crosses to exit, hesitates a second or two, and then moves forward.)*

*(Lights rise over the compound as PRENDICK steps into the yard. The PUMA'S cries are much louder now.)*

DR. MOREAU

*(Recording)*

Peeling back the flesh around the nose and upper lip exposes the bone beneath. Reconstruction of the bone below allows the skull to take a more human appearance. This is accomplished by delicately filing either side of the nasal region. Remove a chunk of

cheek flesh and close it together before flapping the flesh down allows the skin to lay tightly over the reconstructed face of the skull...

*(The recording fades away. A light slowly illuminates DR. MOREAU'S laboratory at the EXTREME OPPOSITE CORNER of the stage. Here, DR. MOREAU Operates on the PUMA, who is half bandaged up and spotted all over with blood. It is a horrific sight. PRENDICK continues to step closer to the laboratory until he can see clearly inside. He does not notice M'LING has entered with a small stack of books and spots PRENDICK.)*

M'LING

*(Crosses to PRENDICK)*

I found some books you might like.

*(PRENDICK recoils and lets out an audible gasp, crashing into M'LING. The books scatter. DR. MOREAU Looks up from the PUMA.)*

DR. MOREAU

Who's there? Montgomery?

M'LING

Mr. Prendick. I am so sorry. I didn't mean to frighten you.

PRENDICK

Shut up! Be quiet.

*(DR. MOREAU enters the yard. MONTGOMERY staggers in.)*

DR. MOREAU

Prendick, you fool!

MONTGOMERY

What's happening?

*(PRENDICK Stumbles downstage where he collapses to his knees and screams.)*

DR. MOREAU

Damn him. He could have ruined an entire night's work!

*(MONTGOMERY helps PRENDICK up.)*

PRENDICK

Don't touch me! Get away from me! Stay back, all of you!

MONTGOMERY

Calm down, Ed. Just calm down.

PRENDICK

You're not scientists! Your sadists!

*(PRENDICK runs off.)*

DR. MOREAU

Prendick, stop! It's the middle of the goddamn night. He'll be lost.

MONTGOMERY

We have to go after him before he finds the others.

DR. MOREAU

A whole night's work ruined.

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling ...

*(M'LING is gone.)*

M'Ling?

*(Blackout.)*

### SCENE 3

*(Lights up on the jungle at night. PRENDICK races in, breathless and horrified. He is awash in greens, blues, pinks, and purples. As he catches his breath and takes hold of his senses, the serene sounds of a brook mingle with*



*chirping crickets, birdsong, and other tropical ambiance.*

*Lights rise extreme-downright at the foot of the stage, where an anthropomorphic creature bearing the features of a LEOPARD crouches down, pantomimes drinking from the water. PRENDICK Stiffens and watches the creature keenly. He steps to one side and then another, trying to escape without drawing its attention.*

*Suddenly, PARDUS THE LEOPARD MAN darts upright, primitively wiping its chin. It holds something small and white in one hand. PARDUS tilts its head to one side, hears something. PRENDICK stops, then takes another step. PARDUS turns, catches PRENDICK in its sights and snarls at him. PRENDICK is petrified. PARDUS lunges, throws the small white thing at PRENDICK, and charges off. PRENDICK picks up the thing. It is a dead, half-eaten rabbit.)*

VOICES

*(Which startle PRENDICK; he drops the rabbit.)*

His is the lightning flash.

His is the Thunderclap.

*(Lights up on TWO BEAST PEOPLE; ERICIUS THE HOG-BEAST and LOBO THE WOLF engaged in conversation. They sway together.)*

ERICIUS

His is the deep salt sea.

LOBO

His is the moon and stars in the sky.

ERICIUS

His are the tears that weep from above.

*(They begin leaping, a primitive tribal dance lacking any sort of rhythm as they continue chanting.)*

LOBO

His is the burning flame!

ERICIUS

His is the storming wind!

*(LOBO leaps high, losing control and lands clumsily on all-fours. ERICIUS stops and stares grimly.)*

Not to go on all-fours.

LOBO

*(Struggling to stand upright)*

That is the law.

ERICIUS

Are we not men?

LOBO

We are men.

*(ERICIUS notices PRENDICK watching and returns his gaze.)*

ERICIUS

Another comes.

LOBO

*(Looks at PRENDICK)*

Another five-man.

ERICIUS

From the house of pain.

*(As they approach PRENDICK, M'LING enters.)*

M'LING

Mr. Prendick! I have found you. Dr. Moreau and Montgomery will be so happy when they see you. They have been searching.

LOBO

He comes from the house of pain.

M'LING

No. Not from the house of pain.

ERICIUS

He must know the law.

LOBO

He must learn the words.

ERICIUS

He must meet the Sayer of the Law.

M'LING

No.

LOBO

He is a five-man.

ERICIUS

A five-man like us.

LOBO

He must come. We will take him to Sayer of the Law.

PRENDICK

M'Ling?

*(ERICIUS and LOBO drag PRENDICK off. M'LING follows. A brief pause. PARDUS enters, crouching and walking on all fours. It picks up the dead rabbit, sniffing and biting at it, looks off in PRENDICK'S direction; sniffs at the air and growls as lights fade to black.)*

#### SCENE 4

*(Light flashes quickly over THE SAYER OF THE LAW, who stands atop a stone pulpit at center stage. The light fades and the stage is black.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

*(In black)*

What is the law?

*(Another flash of light fills the entire stage, revealing the BEAST PEOPLE.)*

BEAST PEOPLE

*(Unison)*

Not to go on all-fours.

SAYER OF THE LAW

*(In black)*

What is the law?

*(Another flash.)*

BEAST PEOPLE

*(Unison)*

Not to chase other men.

SAYER OF THE LAW

*(In Black)*

What is the law?

*(Another flash.)*

BEAST PEOPLE

Not to taste flesh or fish.

SAYER OF THE LAW

*(In black)*

What ... is ... the law?

*(Another flash.)*

BEAST PEOPLE

Not to spill blood.

*(The stage goes dark and then lights slowly rise as ...)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

Not to spill blood. We are men. The Hand That Makes has made us so. His is the hand that creates. His is the hand that heals, and the hand punishes, for whosoever breaks the law shall suffer their sins in the house of pain. Are we not men?

BEAST PEOPLE

We are men!

*(ERICIUS and LOBO lead PRENDICK in. M'LING follows.)*

ERICIUS

A five-man comes to learn the words.

URSUS

A new five-man from the house of pain?

LOBO

We bring him to the Sayer of the Law.

SAYER OF THE LAW

I will see him.

*(Descends pulpit)*

Step forward, Five-Man. Let me have a look at you.

*(SAYER OF THE LAW crosses to PRENDICK as he is pushed forward through the crowd of BEAST PEOPLE.)*

M'LING

*(Forcing his way to the front.)*

He did not come from the house of pain.

*(A murmur from the BEAST PEOPLE.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

Not from the house of pain?

M'LING

He comes from the deep salt sea. Keeper of the Beast People brought him.

SAYER OF THE LAW

*(Quells BEAST PEOPLE chatter; inspects PRENDICK'S hands)*

Your hands are perfect. A perfect five-man. M'LING is right. You did not come from the house of pain.

PRENDICK

*(Stunned)*

What is that? Five-Man. What does it mean?

*(SAYER OF THE LAW shows PRENDICK his left hand. It is a misshapen hoof with only two stubby digits. Then, he shows his right hand, which has five humanoid fingers.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

Not all here are fortunate to wear the sign of man. Five fingers makes us man. We all aspire to be what the Hand That Makes wants us to be. But he didn't make you did he, Five-Man from the Sea? You are something else. All the same; if you are here, you must learn the word of the law.

SIMIAE

Not to go on all-fours.

SAYER OF THE LAW

That is the law. Say it, Five-Man from the Sea. What is the law?

BEAST PEOPLE

*(Unison)*

Not to hunt other men.

SAYER OF THE LAW

What is the law?

BEAST PEOPLE

*(Unison)*

Not to eat flesh or fish.

*(PRENDICK watches, mystified, as the BEAST PEOPLE work into an energetic frenzy.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

What is the law? Say it, Five-Man from the Sea.

BEAST PEOPLE

Not to spill blood.

SAYER OF THE LAW

Are we not men?

BEAST PEOPLE

We are men!

SAYER OF THE LAW

His is the hand that makes us what we are, and we are men. His is the heeling hand, the punishment and suffering. His is the hand that graces us with life and gives us voice and the words of the law. Those who break the law shall receive their punishment in the house of pain.

LOBO

The house of pain.

SIMIAE

None escape.

BEAST PEOPLE

*(Unison)*

None escape.

SAYER OF THE LAW

For everyone, the want is bad. Sooner or later, we all want to indulge the need to go against the law. But we must fight that urge. Swift is the punishment for those who break the law. What you want, Five-Man from the Sea, we do not know. Some want to tear with teeth and claw at the roots and snuff the earth like animals. Others want to tear flesh from bone and suck up drink. These are evil acts – not the acts of men. Are we not men?

BEAST PEOPLE

We are men!

*(The BEAST PEOPLE jump and dance primitively.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

Say the words. WHAT IS THE LAW?

*(A loud, sharp crack like thunder cuts through the ritual. The BEAST PEOPLE stop*

*and go silent. The crowd breaks off as DR. MOREAU and MONTGOMERY enter. MONTGOMERY holsters his gun. DR. MOREAU carries a bullwhip. M'LING rushes to MONTGOMERY'S side.)*

The Hand That Makes.

BEAST PEOPLE

He comes.  
His is the hand that punishes.  
His is the healing hand.  
His is the thunder crash.  
His is the lightning strike.  
None escape.  
His is the house of pain.

DR. MOREAU

*(Cracks the whip)*

Silence!

*(They obey.)*

Prendick, come here at once.

PRENDICK

*(doesn't move)*

I won't go back to that place. I won't let you do to me what you've done to them. I would rather you kill me now than be tortured.

DR. MOREAU

Why would I want to torture you?

PRENDICK

I saw what you did to that poor creature in your laboratory. Your ... house of pain, is it?

BEAST PEOPLE

None escape ...

DR. MOREAU

Quiet. Prendick, please listen to me now.

PRENDICK

I won't. I won't become like them. They were men once. Weren't they? What are they? What did you do to them?



*(To the BEAST PEOPLE)*

Listen to me, all of you! Can't you see? These men who have taken you, broken and mutilated you; enslaved you and poisoned your minds, they fear you!

MONTGOMERY  
Christ, Ed.

DR. MOREAU  
Don't say another word.

PRENDICK  
You could be free! Why do you fear them? You are many. They are only two. They are not gods to be worshipped. They are flesh and blood like you and me.

DR. MOREAU  
Damn it, Prendick. Not another word, do you hear?  
*(PRENDICK stops, tired and breathless.)*  
Listen to me for a moment. Latin, yes? Bad, schoolboy's Latin, but try to understand. Hi non sunt homines, sunt animalia qui nos habemus ... I can explain everything after you come back to the compound.

PRENDICK  
I want a weapon for my protection.

DR. MOREAU  
Montgomery, give him a gun.

MONTGOMERY  
You can't be serious.

DR. MOREAU  
Give it to him!  
*(MONTGOMERY reluctantly complies.)*  
Is that better?

*(PRENDICK brandishes the gun at the BEAST PEOPLE who cower from him.)*

MONTGOMERY  
Damn it, Ed. Don't be stupid.

PRENDICK  
One of them attacked me.

DR. MOREAU

Attacked you? Which one?

PRENDICK

*(Scans crowd)*

I ... don't see the creature here.

DR. MOREAU

Well, are you hurt? Have you suffered any injuries? Show me.

PRENDICK

Did you bring me here deliberately? Am I to be another of your perverted experiments? One of these things?

*(Turns the gun on himself)*

I'll kill myself before I let you.

DR. MOREAU

Think pragmatically. You've been sedated under lock and key for days. Don't you think, if we brought you here for some nefarious purpose, that we would have done something by now? Come to your senses. Keep the gun if you like. We take it. come back to the compound and I'll explain everything.

*(Pause; PRENDICK concedes. he, MONTGOMERY, and M'LING exits.)*

DR. MOREAU

An entire day wasted.

*(DR. MOREAU exits. Lights fade over SAYER OF THE LAW and the BEAST PEOPLE, but the pulpit remains lit where RISUS THE HYENA appears.)*

RISUS

We are many.

*(Blackout.)*

SCENE 5

*(Lights up on DR. MOREAU'S laboratory where the PUMA is covered by a sheet. DR. MOREAU and PRENDICK enter.)*

DR. MOREAU

You are the most dictatorial guest that I have ever entertained. I'm warning you. This is the last thing I do to oblige you. The next time you threaten suicide, you're on your own.

*(Pause)*

It was bound to happen. You're curious. Curiosity is why we do what we do here.

PRENDICK

All of this for curiosity's sake, Doctor?

DR. MOREAU

Curiosity is the driving force that propels us forward into the unknown. It's the first step toward discovery.

PRENDICK

What kind of discovery turns human beings into monsters?

DR. MOREAU

They're not human. They never were.

*(DR. MOREAU draws back the sheet and reveals the PUMA bandaged, blood-sodden, and in a state somewhere between sedation and suffering.)*

PRENDICK

My God ... what have you done to it? You mutilated it.

DR. MOREAU

Spare me your childish horrors. Montgomery was just like you in the beginning. He didn't have the stomach for this sort of work. But I won him over and I hope to persuade you, too. The creatures you saw today and this one here are animals subjected to surgery and

genetic alteration to make them appear and behave human.

PRENDICK

You're making monsters. Unnatural abominations!

DR. MOREAU

I never considered the ethics and morality that trouble you. The study of nature makes mankind as remorseless as nature itself. With that in mind I moved forward in my research. I asked questions and obtained answers that led to even more questions. Was this possible? Was that? You cannot imagine what these intellectual desires mean to a scientific investigator. This thing you see before you is no longer an animal. It is a puzzle that I intend to solve.

PRENDICK

How can you justify the pain you caused? The only thing that might excuse this torture is some sensible application. I don't see one.

DR. MOREAU

Pain, Mr. Prendick?

*(Cuts his hand with a scalpel.)*

Do you see this? Pain is such a little obstacle. There can be no progress as long as it troubles us.

PRENDICK

Where is your sympathy?

DR. MOREAU

A laboratory is no place for sympathy. My only concern is when a creature stops being one thing and becomes something else entirely. I began twenty years ago vivisecting a dog and grafting pig and cheetah flesh to its back just to see how the cells would adapt. One night a journalist stole my notes and published them with pictures of the flayed animal. She destroyed my life's work. After that I left England and came here with Montgomery. He was a doctor like me. I thought he would understand. We started fresh with a new specimen and worked tirelessly. A little surgery on the body. We altered its brain chemistry

and taught it to be civilized. But no matter how much surgery or education, they always reverted into some bastardized version of their former selves.

PRENDICK

You were turning them into something they were never meant to be. Nature is only trying to correct what you've done to them.

DR. MOREAU

We went on again and again and again. More animals. More surgery. More brain work. And then, the first success. We made a creature that could walk and talk and think. I studied it for weeks. Every time it faltered, I brought it back and worked on it some more. Only when I was completely satisfied, did I move on to the next. I build one after another and before I knew it, they created a society. But we needed a way to control them. So, we created the law. But the stubborn beast in them always taunted me.

PRENDICK

How did you make them talk?

DR. MOREAU

That was one of our more creative endeavors. The greatest difference between humanity and all other living things is in the larynx and the ability to transform thoughts into words.

PRENDICK

Perhaps that isn't the greatest difference.

DR. MOREAU

Even so, all creatures communicate with each other; be it the whale song or a lion's roar. Even domesticated animals derive meaning from our simple commands and gestures. Surgery to the throat allowed me to alter their vocal cords. In the humanizing process, I changed the brain chemistry. It isn't simply the outer form of the animal that I can change but also their minds and even their consciousness. After we made a few more humanoid creatures we dared to make something ... else.

PRENDICK

Yes?

DR. MOREAU

It was purely experimental and engineered from the genetic code of several different species. It was a limbless, horrible thing that slithered on the ground like a serpent. It was fast and very strong. It escaped and killed some of my earlier creations. We hunted it and Montgomery shot it. That's when I clung to the human model. Can you imagine anything more perfect or beautiful than mankind? I can't. In fact, you met our greatest success to date.

PRENDICK

M'Ling.

DR. MOREAU

He is better than any other creature on this island in both form and intellect. He is free thinking, reasoning, and rational. Montgomery took great pride in him. He spent a year teaching him English, mathematics, and the alphabet. He taught him to read and write. M'Ling was quick to learn and finds tremendous joy in his books. He frequently visits our modest library in search of intellectual stimulation. There has not been one before or since that even comes close. But I haven't given up.

PRENDICK

This is insane.

DR. MOREAU

Don't you see? M'Ling proves it is possible.

PRENDICK

Possible or not, what gives you the right?

DR. MOREAU

Because I see their souls. They're odd, yes. But they strive to become more — better! They have learned things here. They build their huts, gather food, and even couple and breed. We started with only twenty or so. Now, there are more than eighty complex creatures that express emotions like vanity, joy, and fear. That

is what keeps me going. That is what gives me hope for the Puma. The pain she endures now is insignificant compared to everything she'll gain when she leaves this laboratory.

PRENDICK

Your house of pain?

DR. MOREAU

I never liked that moniker. They created it. They fear this place. They fear me.

PRENDICK

Because you punish them for being what they are and threaten to do harm unless they bow down and worship you.

DR. MOREAU

No! I never said I was their God. They respect Montgomery, though. They like him and I believe he likes them, too. Though he'd never admit it. He spends enough time with them. He's always visiting the huts doing God knows what and satisfying certain needs.

PRENDICK

Needs?

DR. MOREAU

Montgomery does what he likes. He's his own man. As long as it doesn't undermine my work, I don't interfere.

PRENDICK

*(Disgust)*

Cover it. I don't want to hear any more.

*(PRENDICK gives DR. MOREAU his gun.)*

DR. MOREAU

Keep it if it helps you feel safe. You've had two very eventful days and, as it is, wasted the best part of mine with your confounded panic. Go on back to your room, now and remember, I'm relying on your discretion.

PRENDICK

Who am I going to tell?

*(PRENDICK exits. DR. MOREAU operates on the PUMA as lights fade over the laboratory. In the yard, PRENDICK hears the PUMA cry.)*

*(Blackout.)*

SCENE 6

*(PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

I returned to my room and stared into the blackness out the window. I was so weary that I couldn't think beyond the moment I left Moreau's laboratory. At last, succumbing to exhaustion, I fell asleep. I woke early the next morning. Moreau's explanation of the beast people, vivisection, genetic tampering, and even Montgomery's unusual familiarities with them only increased my need to escape.

*(Lights rise on PRENDICK'S room. MONTGOMERY enters with a satchel slung over his shoulder. M'LING follows carrying a covered plate of food and his books.)*

M'LING

Good morning, Mr. Prendick.

PRENDICK

It's quiet today.

MONTGOMERY

Moreau is giving the puma time to heal. We brought you breakfast.

PRENDICK

What is it?



M'LING  
(*Gives PRENDICK the dish*)  
Roasted rabbit and herb vegetables.

(*M'LING sits on the floor; reads*)

MONTGOMERY  
M'Ling helped prepare it.

PRENDICK  
(*Disgusted by the food*)  
Isn't this against your law?

M'LING  
Not to eat flesh or fish.

MONTGOMERY  
We can make an exception for our guest of honor.  
It'll be our little secret.

PRENDICK  
I'm having trouble processing all of this, Montgomery.

MONTGOMERY  
I know it's overwhelming, but you'll get used to it.

PRENDICK  
I don't want to get used to it. I want to go home.  
Nothing here makes sense. He said they're animals.  
Just ... animals. But they speak. I asked how. He  
explained, but I didn't understand. They seem so  
civilized, but they're just manufactured savages.  
Mockeries of man – aren't they? What keeps them from  
turning on each other? Or you and Moreau?

MONTGOMERY  
We've implanted certain ideas in their minds that tell  
them some things are impossible or not to be done.

PRENDICK  
Hypnosis?

MONTGOMERY  
Call it what you like. We wipe their minds and  
restrict what they eat. Hence, vegetarianism. They

can't have meat. It would be a catastrophe. But the law loses power on feline breeds at night because of their crepuscular tendencies. They get brave after dark and do things that they wouldn't during the day. We don't know how to circumvent that, yet.

PRENDICK

Some things just can't be changed. What do you do with the ones you can't tame?

MONTGOMERY

They go to the house of pain.

PRENDICK

No amount of surgery can cut out their instincts. As men of science, you must know that. Moreau also said they breed.

MONTGOMERY

The offspring generally don't survive. They don't inherit the acquired human traits and just come out half-breeds. Moreau uses the ones that live for his experiments. We're going to the colony this morning if you'd like to join us. We'll leave when you're finished eating.

PRENDICK

I'm not very hungry and I'd rather stay here.

MONTGOMERY

You can't shut yourself in. This isn't a prison.

PRENDICK

You promised I could use the radio when we arrived and then I learned I could be trapped here for a year. The doors are locked everywhere I go and there is no sign of civilization in sight. What part of that doesn't sound like a prison to you?

MONTGOMERY

Bring your gun. Maybe we'll do some hunting along the way.

*(Lights shift to ...)*

SCENE 7

*(... The colony where the majority of BEAST PEOPLE linger around SAYER OF THE LAW. PARDUS THE LEOPARD and RISUS THE HYENA keep together away from the others and avoid the humans. MONTGOMERY, M'LING, and PRENDICK enter.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

*(Salutation)*

Keeper of the Beat People!

MONTGOMERY

We bring medicine and more of more spiced water.

SAYER OF THE LAW

His is a kind hand.

*(SIMIAE THE APE, URSUS THE BEAR, and BUBULUS THE BULL cross to PRENDICK; scrutinizing him.)*

SIMIAE

Five-Man from the Sea.

URSUS

He does not come from the house of pain.

BUBULUS

He was not made here, they say.

PRENDICK

Montgomery?

URSUS

He is not like us.

MONTGOMERY

That's right. The Five-Man from the Sea is a new master.

SIMIAE

He did not learn the law.

BUBULUS

He does not know the words.

MONTGOMERY

He knows the law. And he'll enforce it.

*(To ALL)*

Listing to me. From now on when you see the Five-Man from the Sea, you think of me and pay him the same respect. That is the law.

*(Pause)*

Say it!

BEAST PEOPLE

That is the law.

MONTGOMERY

Good.

*(Hands M'LING the whip)*

Line them up.

*(From his satchel, MONTGOMERY prepares a syringe and a row of small medicine bottles. He also lays out cotton swabs, iodine, a bottle of whiskey and a shot glass.)*

M'LING

*(Cracks whip; BEAST PEOPLE startle)*

Stand fast. Line up.

*(The BEAST PEOPLE form a line and MONTGOMERY inoculates them. Then, M'LING rewards them with a shot of whiskey.)*

PRENDICK

You give them alcohol?

MONTGOMERY

It's like a lollipop at the doctor's office. It takes the edge off while we inoculate them.

PRENDICK

What is it?

MONTGOMERY

Whiskey.

PRENDICK

The injections.

MONTGOMERY

It helps slow reversion. We also give them psychotropics to suppress their wild urges. The whiskey is my idea.

PRENDICK

Does Moreau approve of your lollipop treatment?

MONTGOMERY

*(Takes a shot from M'LING and drinks.)*

He doesn't know about it. Want one?

PRENDICK

No.

MONTGOMERY

That's right. You're an abstainer.

PRENDICK

What is reversion like?

MONTGOMERY

It effects their minds first. They lose the ability to reason and speak. Then their instincts take over. They run on four legs, hunt, and give in to primal urges; even kill.

*(RISUS tries to take snatch the whiskey bottle from M'LING.)*

M'LING

No! stay away. Stand down!

*(M'LING cracks the whip. RISUS snaps at M'LING.)*

MONTGOMERY

Risus! You had yours. Go on with the others.

*(RISUS disobeys. MONTGOMERY pulls his gun.)*

I said go on, now. Or it's the house of pain for you.

BEAST PEOPLE

The house of pain.  
None escape.

MONTGOMERY

You hear that?

RISUS

None escape. That is the law.

MONTGOMERY

That's right. You don't want that, do you?

RISUS

No ... no more pain.

*(MONTGOMERY waves at M'LING. He lowers the whip.)*

MONTGOMERY

Off you go, then. Good boy.

*(RISUS goes back to his spot away from the others.)*

PRENDICK

That's a feisty one.

MONTGOMERY

Risus had more treatments than any of them. He's problematic.

PRENDICK

You have a good rapport with them. They seem to respect you.

MONTGOMERY

*(Holsters gun)*

You have to show them who's boss.

*(The inoculations continue.)*

PRENDICK

No, you sympathize with them. Moreau even thinks you care about them. Even relate to them.

MONTGOMERY

So, what if I do? They're here against their will. Someone has to ...

*(M'LING catches a scent in the air and follows it. He finds something on the ground far away from the group.)*

What have you got there, M'Ling?

*(M'LING picks up a mutilated rabbit corpse.)*

Oh my God! Give it to me.

*(Snatches the rabbit from M'LING, who licks the blood from his fingers. MONTGOMERY slaps his hands away.)*

Quit that!

*(M'LING whimpers.)*

PRENDICK

It's a rabbit.

MONTGOMERY

Its spine has been torn out.

PRENDICK

Not torn. Look. Bitten. I saw something like this yesterday. It was another rabbit with its head ripped off.

MONTGOMERY

Not to eat flesh or fish.

PRENDICK

That's not all. I saw one of your creatures on all-fours and drinking from a stream.

MONTGOMERY

Not to suck up drink.

PRENDICK

Montgomery, that thing was carrying the dead rabbit.

MONTGOMERY

Would you know it if you saw it again?

PRENDICK

Yes. It was one of the felines. A leopard, I think.

MONTGOMERY

Damn it, Pardus. We have to tell Moreau. Come on.  
We're done here anyway.

*(Packs the rabbit in his satchel)*

M'Ling!

*(They exit. PARDUS comes down and looks off after them, sniffing the air, as lights fade.)*

## SCENE 8

*(In black, a horn sounds. Lights rise on the colony. DR. MOREAU stands on the stone pulpit wielding a whip. MONTGOMERY, PRENDICK, and M'LING are below. The BEAST PEOPLE enter from all directions.)*

MONTGOMERY

Do you recognize any of them?

PRENDICK

No.

DR. MOREAU

I count four more this time.

BEAST PEOPLE

The Hand That Makes.

His is the healing hand.

His is the lighting flash.

His is the thunderclap.

His is the deep salt sea.

His is the hand that hurts.

His is the hands that punishes.

MONTGOMERY

I don't know how this happened.



DR. MOREAU

*(Scolding)*

Carelessness, no doubt. You think I don't know that you've been hunting those damn rabbits. You were probably seen.

*(Cracks whip)*

Sayer of the law!

SAYER OF THE LAW

I am here, Hand That Makes.

DR. MOREAU

*(Reprimanding)*

Step forward. Speak the words. What is the law?

SAYER OF THE LAW

Not to go on all-fours.

DR. MOREAU

And what is the law?

SAYER OF THE LAW

Not to hunt other men.

DR. MOREAU

*(Descends pulpit)*

Keep going.

SAYER OF THE LAW

Not to eat flesh or fish.

DR. MOREAU

Yes?

SAYER OF THE LAW

Not to spill blood.

DR. MOREAU

Stop!

*(Weaves through BEAST PEOPLE)*

That law has been broken. Someone here has spilled blood.

SAYER OF THE LAW

Evil are those who break the law.

BEAST PEOPLE  
*(Overlapping)*

Evil.  
None Escape.  
Not to spill blood.  
Not to taste flesh.  
We are men.

DR. MOREAU  
Who is it? Who among you has killed?

SAYER OF THE LAW  
Those who break the law must atone. Those who taste  
blood must go to the house of pain.

DR. MOREAU  
Come forward and face your punishment.

SAYER OF THE LAW  
None escape the house of pain. None escape  
punishment.

BEAST PEOPLE  
*(Overlapping)*  
The house of pain.  
None escape.

*(The BEAST PEOPLE separate as DR. MOREAU  
cuts through the crowd, leaving PARDUS  
standing along. RISUS is nearby.)*

PRENDICK  
There. That's the one. He jumped at me that night in  
the jungle.

SAYER OF THE LAW  
Evil is he who breaks the law.

BEAST PEOPLE  
None escape.

DR. MOREAU  
Whoever breaks the law ...

SAYER OF THE LAW  
... goes to the house of pain.

BEAST PEOPLE  
To the house of pain.  
Evil.  
His is the hand that punishes.

SAYER OF THE LAW  
For some, the want is bad.

BEAST PEOPLE  
Not to spill blood.  
Not to taste flesh.  
Back to the house of pain.

DR. MOREAU  
*(Stops; looming over PARDUS.)*  
Hello, my friend.  
*(Strokes PARDUS' face)*  
Do you hear?

PARDUS  
No. No more pain.

DR. MOREAU  
I'm sorry, child. The law must be upheld.

*(DR. MOREAU steps away.)*

BEAST PEOPLE  
*(Persecuting PARDUS)*  
Evil.  
Are we not men?  
Not to go on all-fours.  
*(PARDUS works up a frenzy. PRENDICK  
nervously draws his gun.)*  
Evil are they who break the law.  
His is the hand that punishes!  
Back to the house of pain!

*(PARDUS lunges on all-fours at DR. MOREAU.  
He raises his whip as a gunshot rings out  
and PARDUS falls dead at DR. MOREAU'S feet.)*

*Silence; ALL turn to PRENDICK, still aiming his gun.)*

DR. MOREAU

Damn you, Prendick. I wanted him alive!

MONTGOMERY

*(Takes PRENDICK'S gun)*

Do you have any idea what you've just done?

PRENDICK

It was impulse. The heat of the moment. I thought he  
...

*(The BEAST PEOPLE surround PARDUS' lifeless body. RISUS mournfully crouches beside PARDUS. He glares at PRENDICK hatefully.)*

DR. MOREAU

My children, Pardus broke the law and punishment came swiftly. His suffering is over, and his pain has ended. Let this be a warning to all who may dare to break the law.

SAYER OF THE LAW

His is a righteous hand. None escape punishment.

DR. MOREAU

Montgomery. Have the body cast into the sea. The usual burial.

MONTGOMERY

Right.

*(Breaks up the swarm of mourners.)*

Clear out. Everybody back. M'Ling, grab an arm. Ericius and Lobo, give us a hand. Grab his legs. You too, Ed.

PRENDICK

I'm sorry.

MONTGOMERY

Help M'Ling with his arms. Everybody lift!

*(They carry PARDUS off. Lights fade on  
RISUS as the BEAST PEOPLE exit.)*

END OF ACT II

ACT III  
SCENE 1

*(In black. A rabble.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

What is the law?

BEAST PEOPLE

Not to spill blood!

SAYER OF THE LAW

We are MEN!

BEAST PEOPLE

To the house of pain!

Punishment to those who break the law!

*(Lights up on PRENDICK'S room. He lies restlessly in his cot and tries to block the noise. MONTGOMERY enters.)*

MONTGOMERY

They're restless tonight. I never heard them like this before.

*(Lights up on DR. MOREAU in the yard, carrying his whip. SAYER OF THE LAW leads the BEAST PEOPLE on.)*

DR. MOREAU

What are you doing here? Why have you come?

MONTGOMERY

*(Watching from door)*

I know a lynch mob when I see one.

SAYER OF THE LAW

Hand That Makes. Forgive us. We come for the Five-Man from the Sea.

DR. MOREAU

Why?

SAYER OF THE LAW

He has broken the law. He has spilled blood. He must go to the house of pain.

DR. MOREAU

Montgomery!

MONTGOMERY

(To PRENDICK)

Stay put.

(MONTGOMERY enters the yard. PRENDICK goes to the door and watches.)

SAYER OF THE LAW

You must bring him to us at once.

DR. MOREAU

It is not for you to command me. The Five-Man from the Sea is under my protection.

SAYER OF THE LAW

Punishment must come swift. He must feel the hand that hurts. Law commands it.

MONTGOMERY

No. His is the fire that kills, and his punishment moves swiftest of all. The law was broken, and the Five-Man from the Sea enforced it as I told you he would.

SAYER OF THE LAW

The Fire that Kills.

BEAST PEOPLE

The fire that kills.

MONTGOMERY

That's right.

SAYER OF THE LAW

But the law must be obeyed. Not to spill blood. Not to kill other men. That is that law.

MONTGOMERY

Not to disobey your masters.

DR. MOREAU

Enough! The Five-Man from the Sea broke the law and will be punished. On that, you have my word. But not now, and not this way. Not like this. Now, stand down. All of you. Go back to the colony or you will all face my wrath in the house of pain.

*(Cracks whip)*

Go!

*(MONTGOMERY draws his gun.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

The fire that kills.

DR. MOREAU

Go! Back to your huts!

*(The BEAST PEOPLE retreat as PRENDICK enters the yard. RISUS stands alone, glaring venomously at PRENDICK in the doorway. DR. MOREAU cracks his whip, scaring RISUS away.)*

MONTGOMERY

That was a close one.

DR. MOREAU

*(To PRENDICK)*

Do you see what you've caused, you fool?

*(To MONTGOMERY)*

Take M'Ling and lock down the compound. Make sure nothing can get in.

*(DR. MOREAU exits.)*

MONTGOMERY

What are we in for now?

*(Blackout.)*



## SCENE 2

*(PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

I began to see the viler aspects of Moreau's cruelty. I never considered the suffering of these creatures after their torment in the house of pain. Before their metamorphosis they were only animals acting on instincts. Now, they were horrible mock-humanoid caricatures living in mortal fear of senseless pain and tethered to life by a haphazard law they never understood. Their existence began in agony and Moreau's madness forced them to struggle, blunder, and suffer until they died. In the days that followed the leopard thing's death, I went to the beaches in search of passing ships while Montgomery fell deeper into whiskey and Moreau dove into his research. And then, there came an unimaginable catastrophe.

*(Lights up on the compound. M'LING sits alone, reading. PRENDICK steps up as DR. MOREAU enters and crosses to the laboratory.)*

DR. MOREAU

*(Mocking)*

Prendick. Spot any ships today?

*(DR. MOREAU enters the laboratory, which remains dark.)*

PRENDICK

*(Ignores DR. MOREAU; crosses to M'LING.)*

What are you reading today?

*(M'LING shows PRENDICK the book's spine.)*

Milton. Fine choice.

*(The PUMA cries.)*

Moreau is at it again. He's been tormenting that one for a while. Does it normally take this long?

*(M'LING continues reading; doesn't respond)*

I'm sorry for what happened ... I didn't mean ...

M'LING

I know you didn't.

*(A loud crash from the laboratory and the PUMA growls angrily.)*

DR. MOREAU

*(Off)*

Damn it, Montgomery, hold her steady.

MONTGOMERY

*(Off)*

Her straps broke! Watch out. She's free!

*(M'LING springs up, alarmed. PRENDICK spins around as the PUMA barrels frantically from the laboratory and wildly collides with him. They topple to the ground. The PUMA flails madly on top of PRENDICK. DR. MOREAU and MONTGOMERY follow. MONTGOMERY aims his gun at the PUMA.)*

DR. MOREAU

No! Don't shoot her.

*(The PUMA escapes up. PRENDICK stands, clutching his arm.)*

MONTGOMERY

Ed, are you okay?

PRENDICK

*(In pain)*

My arm.

MONTGOMERY

Let me see.

*(PRENDICK winces when MONTGOMERY touches him.)*

It's broken. M'Ling, bring my kit.

*(M'LING exits.)*

DR. MOREAU

She escaped. The damn thing scaled the gate. I have to follow her before she's lost for good.

MONTGOMERY

I'll go with you.

DR. MOREAU

No time. See to him.

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling can take care of his arm.

DR. MOREAU

Stay here. I can't have her more frightened than she already is. I'll take one of the trucks, sedate her, and drive her back.

MONTGOMERY

Take a rifle just in case.

DR. MOREAU

No need.

*(DR. MOREAU exits as M'LING returns with the first aid kit. MONTGOMERY sets PRENDICK'S arm and offers something for the pain.)*

MONTGOMERY

The bastard is going to get himself killed. Things haven't been right out there since ...

*(Pause)*

I have to go. He may need me.

PRENDICK

She ran right through me like I wasn't even there. What happened?

MONTGOMERY

Her sedative worn off. She's a strong one. She tore right through her straps. You still have a gun?

PRENDICK

Under my pillow.

MONTGOMERY

You should be safe until we come back.

PRENDICK

You can't leave me alone.

MONTGOMERY

You'll be fine inside the compound. We'll lock the gate behind us. I can't leave him out there. It's too dangerous right now. Come on, M'Ling.

*(MONTGOMERY and M'LING exit. PRENDICK goes to his room and retrieves his gun.)*

*(Blackout.)*

### SCENE 3

*(Lights up on the compound. PRENDICK paces. A gunshot off sends him racing up and looking for some sign of life. BEAT. Another gunshot and then another. PRENDICK, filled with anxiety, rushes downstage and stops center — he realizes that he has nowhere to go.)*

MONTGOMERY

*(Off)*

Hurry, M'Ling! Get inside!

*(M'LING enters. A loud slam and then MONTGOMERY enters.)*

PRENDICK

Any sign of him?

MONTGOMERY

Damn it, they've all gone mad. Has Moreau returned?

PRENDICK

No. You didn't find him?

MONTGOMERY

No. My God!

PRENDICK

What's happening? What were those gunshots? What were you shooting at?

MONTGOMERY

M'Ling, fetch something to drink.

*(M'LING obeys.)*

PRENDICK

Montgomery, what's going on?

MONTGOMERY

It's madness out there. I don't know what the hell happened but they're out of control. Something has them all worked up.

*(M'LING returns with a whiskey bottle. MONTGOMERY drinks. He sits and stares forward blankly. PRENDICK shakes him out of it.)*

PRENDICK

For God's sake, tell me what you saw!

MONTGOMERY

The truck was abandoned about a quarter of a mile north crashed into some trees. Moreau and the puma were nowhere to be found. We went to the colony to see if he went there. It was absolute bedlam. I never saw them like this before.

PRENDICK

What about the gunfire?

MONTGOMERY

The beasts were out of control. They attacked us. I had to put two of them down. God help me.

PRENDICK

What does it all mean?

*(MONTGOMERY shakes his head and drinks.*

*PRENDICK takes MONTGOMERY'S bottle.)*

Something serious must have happened to Moreau or he'd have returned by now. We owe it to him to find out.

*(Crashing off.)*

MONTGOMERY

What the hell now?

*(SAYER OF THE LAW enters, leading the BEAST PEOPLE. They carry something, like a mummy, wrapped in a large dirty cloth. Stopping downstage center, they place the bundle on the ground and step away.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

The Hand That Makes is dead.

MONTGOMERY

*(Shock)*

How?

SIMIAE

The bleeding beast opened his throat.

ERICIUS

Opened his veins.

SIMIAE

There was an outpouring of blood.

LOBO

The struggle was swift.

SIMIAE

They both fell dead.

MONTGOMERY

The puma is dead, too?

ERICIUS

Both are dead.

*(MONTGOMERY kneels beside the bundle and opens the cloth. His reaction confirms that it is DR. MOREAU.)*

SIMIAE

What will happen, now?

LOBO

Is there still law?

BUBULUS

Is it still to be as it was before without the Hand  
That Makes?

SAYER OF THE LAW

Some have already taken to the old ways; not the ways  
of man. Not the ways of the law. They chase other  
men, spill blood, and taste flesh. This is not our  
way. We love the law and wish to obey. But what will  
be without The Hand That Makes? They must know.

PRENDICK

*(Quietly)*

Montgomery?

MONTGOMERY

Hm?

PRENDICK

They're relying on you, now. Answer them.

*(MONTGOMERY doesn't respond.)*

Children of the law! The Hand That Makes is not dead.  
This is only a mortal shell. It is frail and  
temporary. He has no more need for this vessel. He  
changed and transcended to a higher place where he  
looks down upon you from above. Montgomery, tell  
them.

MONTGOMERY

What?

PRENDICK

Tell them Moreau is not dead.

MONTGOMERY

Oh. He's ... not ...

PRENDICK

You may never see him, but he sees you. Listen, now.  
Listen and soon you will hear his voice.

*(PRENDICK rushes into the house of pain and plays a recording at full volume. DR. MOREAU'S whip hangs near the door. He takes it.)*

DR. MOREAU

*(Recording)*

... Using small stitches will help diminish excessive scarring. Rearrangement of the shoulder blades and collar bone is tricky but possible. Removal of vertebrae throughout the spine will inevitably shorten the subject's stature but makes standing upright much easier.

PRENDICK

*(Returns to the yard)*

Do you hear? His voice comes down from above. It comes from the trees and on the wind.

SAYER OF THE LAW

The Hand That Makes. He lives.

BEAST PEOPLE

*(Overlapping; a pseudo-religious experience. Some fall to their knees while others raise their hands high above.)*

His is the lightning flash.  
His is the thunder crash.  
His is the moon and stars.  
His is the deep salt sea.  
His is the weeping sky.  
His is the storming wind.  
His is the raging quake below.

PRENDICK

*(Fires into the sky; all go silent)*

The Hand That Makes sends the fire that kills. The law lives. Speak the words and fear it. Evil are those who break the law. Punishment will find them. You saw it when you found the puma and when the leopard man met his end. Go back to the colony and



tell them all that harsh punishment awaits those who break the law.

*(Cracks whip. The BEAST PEOPLE recoil.)*

Tell them The Hand That Makes is watching them from above.

*(Cracks whip again)*

His is the lightning strike and the thunder crash.  
His is also the fire that kills. Obey the law. Say the words. None escape!

*(PRENDICK cracks the whip again.)*

SAYER OF THE LAW

The law lives. So says the Five-Man from the Sea. We will tell the others.

*(The BEAST PEOPLE retreat; exit.)*

MONTGOMERY

He's dead. That bastard is really dead. He left me alone. What the hell am I going to do now? How will I go on?

PRENDICK

Will you pull yourself together?

MONTGOMERY

I'm not like you Prendick. There's nothing for me out there. This is where I belong. and it's all gone to shit, now. I never expected the sonofabitch to die. Oh God, ten long years wasted on this damn island. I never had any sort of life. All that time grinding away at medicine and succumbing to an ugly vice. One bad night — I didn't know any better. No life at all. What was it all for?

PRENDICK

The thing we have to worry about now is how to get off this island.

MONTGOMERY

What good will that do us? We have no ship, no boat.

PRENDICK

We'll call someone on the radio.

MONTGOMERY

The radio's busted.

PRENDICK

Busted?

MONTGOMERY

Afraid so.

PRENDICK

For how long?

MONTGOMERY

A while.

PRENDICK

Before you brought me here?

MONTGOMERY

Yes.

PRENDICK

You've been lying to me all this time!

MONTGOMERY

Yea, sorry.

PRENDICK

Sonofabitch! You bastard! Why did you bring me here?

MONTGOMERY

I was bored and lonely. Haven't had anyone to talk to but the animals. Moreau isn't much for conversation, and I don't like to read.

PRENDICK

To hell with all that! What are we going to do now?

MONTGOMERY

Have a drink.

PRENDICK

Now isn't the time.

MONTGOMERY

Nothing else to do.

*(Sits beside DR. MOREAU'S body)*

The damn fool should have listened to me. What are we going to do with him, Ed? We can't just leave him here to have his bones picked clean by vultures.

PRENDICK

I can't carry him with a broken arm. But maybe we can cart him down to the shore.

MONTGOMERY

No. I won't just throw him into the ocean like some flotsam. He deserves better.

PRENDICK

We'll build a fire and burn him. Then we'll bury the remains. But, Montgomery, we have greater problems than that. What will happen to the beast people now that he's gone?

MONTGOMERY

Reversion. They'll become wild, blood-lusting beasts impossible to control. What a waste. Most of them wouldn't be here if it wasn't for me.

PRENDICK

Forget about them, they're just animals.

MONTGOMERY

That's all you think of them. What would you do? Kill them! That's your humanity for you. You destroy what you don't understand.

*(Takes whiskey bottle)*

Who knows how it's going to end?

*(Crosses to M'LING)*

M'Ling, old friend. You're the only thing here that ever really gave a damn about me. Drink with me. We're mourning after all.

PRENDICK

*(Snatches the bottle away)*

I can't let you do that.

MONTGOMERY

Give it back.

PRENDICK

No. I won't let you give alcohol to that ... beast!

MONTGOMERY

Beast? You're the beast! How many dogs do you know who can quote Shakespeare? M'Ling is no common animal. He's a step up the evolutionary ladder and a far cry better than you! You'd kill him too, given the chance. Wouldn't you?

PRENDICK

Now you sound like Moreau. You let him make a monster of you, too. Maybe you do belong here with them. But I don't.

MONTGOMERY

You priggish little coward. We're at the end of things here. I may even blow my brains out by morning, but first I'm going to celebrate.

*(Threatens PRENDICK with gun.)*

Now, give me back my bottle.

PRENDICK

Do what you like.

*(PRENDICK returns the whiskey to MONTGOMERY and exits. MONTGOMERY and M'LING sit together and drink.)*

M'LING

Is it true what you told Mr. Prendick about the others - they'll go mad?

MONTGOMERY

That's not your concern. Just drink your whiskey.

M'LING

What will happen to me?

MONTGOMERY

You're going to be fine, M'Ling. You have my word. Come. Let's have a stroll in the moonlight.

*(MONTGOMERY and M'LING exit as PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

Montgomery was gone for an hour or so before I could hear a distant cacophony coming from the colony. I could see the glow of a bonfire from the compound gate. The silhouettes of the beast people danced around it like tiny ants.

*(Lights up on the opposite side of the stage. BEAST PEOPLE dance around MONTGOMERY as he drinks. It is tribal. They chant and sing dissonant and arhythmic tones. The more MONTGOMERY drinks, the more he gets into it.)*

MONTGOMERY

That's right, you brutes! Drink up and be merry! Dance like there's no tomorrow! Damn me for a genius. Moreau never thought of this! It's the last touch!

*(Pours whiskey into his hand and touches M'LING's forehead – a mock-baptism.)*

You're all men, now!

*(Blackout over the colony.)*

PRENDICK

And then, celebration turned to calamity. I heard a gunshot...

*(Gunshot)*

... and Montgomery shouting.

*(Lights up over MONTGOMERY and the BEAST PEOPLE – mayhem.)*

MONTGOMERY

Back, you bastards! Stay back! Stand down or so help me God, I'll kill every last one of you!

*(Blackout as the BEAST PEOPLE close on MONTGOMERY.)*

PRENDICK

And then the most horrific scream...

*(A bloodcurdling scream and then lights up on ...)*

MONTGOMERY

*(... and M'LING mobbed by the BEAST PEOPLE)*

Prendick!

*(Blackout on MONTGOMERY.)*

PRENDICK

I grabbed my gun and ran for the colony as fast as I could.

*(Lights transition to ...)*

#### SCENE 4

*(The colony where MONTGOMERY lies in a pool of his own blood. SAYER OF THE LAW is also dead along with two others and M'LING.)*

MONTGOMERY

*(Gasping)*

This bastard of a world... A mess...

PRENDICK

*(Tries to suppress the bleeding.)*

Don't speak. Can you make it back to the compound?  
Can you stand up?

MONTGOMERY

*(Wheezing)*

This is it. Where's my...?

*(Reaching for something)*

Give me ... will you?

*(Points to the bottle of whiskey. PRENDICK gives it to him. He cradles it like a security blanket.)*

Ten long years. What a ... waste.

*(MONTGOMERY dies. PRENDICK stands as the BEAST PEOPLE come out. Suddenly a hand*

*grabs his leg. M'LING springs to life.  
The BEAST PEOPLE close in around them.  
PRENDICK draws his gun.)*

PRENDICK

The first one to get too close dies.

*(RISUS emerges from the crowd, challenging  
PRENDICK'S threat. PRENDICK draws the  
hammer back. The click stops RISUS in his  
tracks.)*

RISUS

No masters now. No more house of pain or whips. No  
law. We are many, Five-Man from the Sea. So, who are  
you that we should be afraid?

*(As RISUS advances threateningly, M'LING  
lunges for him and they struggle. For a  
brief moment it appears that M'LING can  
take him, but RISUS quickly gets the upper  
hand, subdues M'LING, and kills him.  
PRENDICK stands, terrified but finds his  
nerve and shoots RISUS. RISUS staggers  
back, steps again. PRENDICK shoots. RISUS  
stops. PRENDICK shoots again and RISUS  
collapses. The BEAST PEOPLE back off.  
One-by-one they fall to their knees.)*

BEAST PEOPLE

*(Overlapping)*

The fire that kills.  
The hand that punishes.  
An unforgiving hand.  
None escape.

*(As the BEAST PEOPLE prostrate themselves,  
PRENDICK darts off.)*

*(Blackout.)*

## SCENE 5

*(PRENDICK appears.)*

PRENDICK

I saw the change come over the beast people that Montgomery and Moreau had described.

*(As he speaks, the BEAST PEOPLE are lit in silhouette. They walk and stumble. Speak, then stutter. They claw and sniff the ground. They tackle and wrestle each other. They do all the things that animals do; everything the law forbade.)*

Their borrowed humanity had slipped away. Their gift of speech was replaced by course grunts, barks, and growls. Scraps of clothing fell away to reveal reddish, scar-ridden flesh and patches of long matted hair — the remnants of Moreau's damnation. The reversion had consumed the beast people until they were nothing more than misshapen caricatures, neither beast nor man.

*(Blackout on BEAST PEOPLE.)*

The compound fell to ruin, and I built a small hut on the beach where I watched and hoped for any sign of salvation. I'd occasionally spot one of the former five-men leering at me from the trees. I could not tell if they were compelled by fear or curiosity, but they never came any closer. Eventually they stopped coming and I began to feel like the only human being on earth until I spotted something in the sea. It was a small boat carrying two men. The strong tide brought them in quickly. I ran to the shoreline to meet them, finally believing my nightmare was over. But they were dead — sundried and dehydrated. The boat was still in good condition. I threw the husks from their seats, pushed the boat into the water and rowed as hard as I could. Escape had come at last, and the island shrank behind me. After three days of floating aimlessly, a passing ship picked me up and took me back to civilization. I'd been among Moreau's beasts so long that humanity became strange to me.

*(HUMAN BEINGS lit in silhouette pass behind PRENDICK. They exhibit slight animal traits — slouching as they walk, their faces contorting to something almost*



*simian. They move unnaturally. Perhaps, grunting or snapping at each other.*

*Sometimes, they notice PRENDICK and sniff the air, trying to catch a whiff of him.)*

I look at humanity now and go in fear. I see the beast surging up and some degradation waiting to consume them.

*(Blackout on HUMAN BEINGS.)*

They say that terror is a disease, and I don't expect the terror of the island will ever leave me. I withdrew from the world in a lonely country cottage with a modest book collection and a loyal dog at my side. I rejoice in the quiet solitude of rolling green hills and star-speckled skies where my mind occasionally drifts back to a small island in the middle of the Pacific.

(CURTAIN)