HOW THE MARQUIS GOT HIS COAT BACK

By

NEIL GAIMAN

Dramatised by

DIRK MAGGS

Draft 6.0

(IN STUDIO)

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EXT. LONDON STREET. EVENING

(REPRISE OF FINAL SCENE IN ‘NEVERWHERE’ ...)

FX: NIGHT SKYLINE. THE SOUND OF BRICKWORK RECONFIGURING INTO A DOORWAY.

    MARQUIS
    You knocked?
    RICHARD
    Marquis!

    MARQUIS
    Well? Are you coming?
    RICHARD
    Is it dangerous?

    MARQUIS
    In ways you couldn’t possibly imagine.

THEY LAUGH

    MARQUIS (CONT’D)
    Let’s go!

FX: RICHARD STEPS INSIDE.

INT. CHAMBER, ECHOEY

FX: BRICKWORK CLOSES. DRIPPING. BIG BEN, EVER SO DISTANT.

    RICHARD
    Where’s Door?
    MARQUIS
    I am alone.

    RICHARD
    You did that with the bricks? On your own?

    MARQUIS
    I’ve picked up a thing or two about making things open.

    RICHARD
    Er - sure. So, where are we going?

    MARQUIS
    We?

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN    Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
RICHARD
You said, “Let’s go”.

MARQUIS
It was a figure of speech. You made the choice. The rest is up to you.

A BEAT. RICHARD TAKES A DEEP BREATH. HE FEELS ... HAPPY.

RICHARD
I couldn’t live up there. I couldn’t function. Couldn’t give a toss about securities, or spreadsheets, or stock options. Not after being down here, and meeting Door, and you, and us defeating Islington ... You told me London Below was for the people who fell through the cracks in the world ... and I’ve become one.

MARQUIS
You are Richard Macduff, Warrior who Felled The Beast. The Earl gave you the Freedom of the Underside.

RICHARD
(new resolve)
Yes. I belong here. In the sewers and the magic and the dark. I will find Door. We have unfinished business –

MARQUIS
- Ye-es, that’s the impression I got.

RICHARD
- There will be adventures, and quests, and - What happened to your voice?

MARQUIS
Well, having one’s throat cut has its consequences. Though I’m told I sound like my younger self.

RICHARD
But something else is different about you ... Oh - you haven’t got your coat.

MARQUIS
(Richard is on thin ice)
No. It was stripped from my corpse and sold. I was robbed of my life by Croup ad Vandemar and of my coat by the Sewer People. I am peeved about it, and not a little discommoded.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
A BEAT

RICHARD
(chuckle)
Y’know -

MARQUIS
What?

RICHARD
- that poncho looks more like -

MARQUIS
(jumping in)
- it look likes a blanket. Because I am
wearing a blanket. With a hole cut in it.
By the Temple and the Arch, I am the
Marquis de Carabas and I am wearing a
blanket with a hole in it and it does not
make me happy!

A BEAT, AS THE ECHOES FROM THE OUTBURST EVAPORATE.

RICHARD
So ... where is it? The coat?

MARQUIS
I don’t know. But I will, once I’ve found
where tonight’s Floating Market is being
held.

RICHARD
Ah. Right. Sorry, can’t help you there.
But maybe you can tell me how to get to
the House Without Doors.

MARQUIS
I’m not a Tour Guide. You’ll have to find
the Lady Door yourself. But remember what
you have learned about London Below.
Don’t trust anybody, don’t accept any
gifts, and Mind The Gap.

RICHARD
I remember.

MARQUIS
Fare well, Richard.

A SWIFT, FIRM HANDSHAKE.

RICHARD
(exiting one way)
Good luck, Marquis.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN    Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MARQUIS
(exiting the other)
I prefer to rely on subterfuge and bribery.

GRAMS: MAIN SIG

VOICE

EXT. ROOFTOP, ST PAULS

FX: BIRDS CHITTER AS OLD BAILEY FEEDS THEM.

OLD BAILEY
All right all right, form an orderly queue ... You Starlings! Behave!

FX: ROOK CAWS

OLD BAILEY (CONT’D)
And none of your beak, old man rook. Bugger off back to the Tower and do yer job, they feed you well enough there.

FX: ROOK CAWS AGAIN

OLD BAILEY (CONT’D)
You’re only here for the jokes? I’ll tell you a joke. Fresh Rook Pie! Ha! Laugh at that, pal. Eh? Who’s that?

FX: MARQUIS FOOTSTEPS, OFF

MARQUIS
Old Bailey.

OLD BAILEY
Oh, here comes trouble. I saved yer life din’t I Marquis? What more d’ye want? Can’t you leave me in peace to feed my birds?

MARQUIS
I need information.

OLD BAILEY
Information. Roof-maps? History? Secret and mysterious knowledge? If I don’t knows it, it’s probbly better forgot.
MARQUIS
Just tonight’s Floating Market. Where it’s being held. That’s all.

OLD BAILEY
That’s all? It’ll still cost yer. Tell you what, I’ll throw in a joke, make it worth yer while. Now, there’s this bloke -

MARQUIS
Old Bailey. You are not, intrinsically, one of those people put in the world to tell jokes.

OLD BAILEY
Eh?

MARQUIS
A shaggy dog story ending in a weak pun is not a joke.

OLD BAILEY
I’ve never told a joke to a dog in my life.

FX: ROOK CAWS

OLD BAILEY (CONT’D)
Thank you, Mr Rook.

MARQUIS
What did he say?

OLD BAILEY
He says my jokes is deep and philosophical paribles of deep and penetrating insights into what it means to be human. Not that he knows a flipping thing about humans. Now, stop me if you’ve heard this one before -

MARQUIS
- I’ve heard them all before. Listen. It is the market day after the worst week of my life and things do not seem to be getting any better.

OLD BAILEY
You’re alive, in’t yer? Thanks to me.

MARQUIS
And I have thanked you.
OLD BAILEY
Well, that’s got to help, innit?

MARQUIS
True. But there are definite downsides to having been recently dead, especially with regard to missing property. So. The Floating Market?

OLD BAILEY
Who are you looking for, then?

MARQUIS

OLD BAILEY
Yer coat. Hm. Fine feathers do not make fine birds, do they lads?

FX: CHORUS OF AGREEMENT FROM ASSEMBLED FEATHERED BRETHREN

OLD BAILEY (CONT’D)
It’s just a coat.

MARQUIS
It’s not “just a coat”. It is beautiful. It is remarkable. It is unique. It has thirty pockets, seven of which are obvious, nineteen of which are hidden, and four of which are more or less impossible to find – even, on occasion, for me myself. It has magnificent sleeves, an imposing collar, and a slit up the back. It is the colour of a wet street at midnight, and, more important than any of these things, it has Style.

A BEAT

OLD BAILEY
Well, you can get another can’t yer? Clothes do make the man, as people say.

MARQUIS
And mostly they are wrong. But as a boy, when I put that coat on for the very first time, and stared at myself in a looking-glass, I became a man. No mere youth, no simple sneak-thief and favour-trader. Although it was too large for me, it reminded me of an illustration from a book I once saw, of a miller’s cat standing on its two hind legs.

(MORE)

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN    Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
A jaunty cat wearing a fine coat and big, proud boots. It gave me my name -

OLD BAILEY  
- Marquis de Carabas?

MARQUIS  
- At your service.

OLD BAILEY  
Look, I’m busy. I’ve got the starlings to feed up Cheapside and they’re regular gannets. For starlings.

MARQUIS  
What I am telling you is that coat is irreplaceable. Now. I can repay you for any information - once I have got my coat back.

OLD BAILEY  
(sigh)  
Well it’s hardly a sekrit. Tonight the Market’s being held in that Tate Gallery.

MARQUIS  
Ah. At last.  
(going off)  
Thank you.

OLD BAILEY  
(calls after him)  
I’ll be along there later meself. Oh, if yer hungry, the food court’s in the Pre-Raphaelite Room. Horrible bunch of daubs. Give me a nice watercolour by John James Audubon. That’s art, that is. Eh? Tchah, he’s gone.

INT. TATE GALLERY  

FX: MARKET IN FULL SWING.

MARKET BARKER  
Roll up Roll up for the finest Floating Market ever put on at the Tate! Welcome to the gallery, all you Bravos, Carneys, Velvets and Sewer Folk! Try the wares, barter your goods, look at the poncey pictures, make merry, you whey-faced Underdwellers! Roll up! Roll up!

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
JEWELLERY HAWKER
(off)
Jewellery! Finest polished transistors!
Circuit Board bangles! Satellite dish
Salvers!

BOOK HAWKER
(off)
Books! Almanacs, Atlases, Apocryphas and
Concordances!

CLOTHES HAWKER
(off)
Clothes! Jerkins, Tabards, fine chain
mail. Cloaks, bodices and shifts!

TATTOOIST
(off)
Tattoos! Show yer fealty. Baronial,
Colonial, Matrimonial, be known where ‘er
you voyage.

FLOATING DENTIST
(off)
Get yer teef drilled here! Extractions -
get one, have one free! Fillings what
don’t drop out! Here we are - ooh, that’s
nasty - where’s my pliers - right - hold
steady - (effort) - uhhh -

FX: SNAPPING SOUND

PATIENT
- Arrrgh!

HAMMERSMITH
(off)
Horses shoed! Manacles forged! Shackles
riveted! Come to Hammersmith and I’ll
bang it up in no time!

FOCUS IN ON THE SEWER PERSON DUNNIKIN, WHO IS HOLDING UP
VARIOUS UNSAVOURY ITEMS OF SALVAGE FROM HIS STALL.

DUNNIKIN
(yell)
Come on, Ladies and Gents, what am I bid
for this dead cat? Lovely bit of moggy
fur to trim yer robes. Be the talk of the
Floating Market, lady, eh? What? Don’t
wander off!
(voice down)
Stuck up cow. Bloody Velvets.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MARQUIS
As I was saying -

DUNNIKIN
- You still ‘ere?

MARQUIS
Yes. I’ll start again. You sold my corpse. These things happen. You also sold my possessions. I want them back. I’ll pay.

DUNNIKIN
Sold them. Just like we sold you. Can’t go getting things back that you sold. Not good business.

MARQUIS
We are talking about my coat. And I fully intend to have it back.

DUNNIKIN
‘Course you do. ‘Scuse me.

FX: DUNNIKIN SORTING THROUGH JUNK ON THE STALL.

DUNNIKIN (CONT’D)
(yell)
Get yer previously loved goods ‘ere! Straight from the sewers!

MARQUIS
To whom did you sell it?

DUNNIKIN
(threat)
I’m busy. I really have to get on.

MARQUIS
I can get you perfumes. Glorious, magnificent, odiferous perfumes. You know you want them.

DUNNIKIN
No, I don’t.

MARQUIS
Believe me, Sewer Dweller: You Want Them.

DUNNIKIN
Like you’re wanting your throat cut again Marquis?

DUNNIKIN MAKES SKRRRKKKK! NOISE - FINGER ACROSS THROAT

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MARQUIS
As gestures go, that one was in appallingly bad taste.

DUNNIKIN
Croup and Vandemar may be gone, and your neck may be healing, but knives is everywhere. Sharp knives, used for dark business, dumped into my sewers, still with a nice edge. Like this one, here.

FX: KNIFE DRAWN

MARQUIS
That was Vandemar’s.

DUNNIKIN
Well, he don’t need it where ‘e went. A good evening to you, Marquis.

MARQUIS
(sighs)
Very well. Which way is the food court?

DUNNIKIN
Through there, in the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition. Bunch of fairy nonsense.

MARQUIS
And a good evening to you.

WE TRACK WITH THE MARQUIS AS HE MOVES ON THROUGH THE MARKET

DUNNIKIN
(off)
Come and get your heart’s desire – plucked fresh from the sewers ...

POKEFINGER
(calls, as Marquis passes)
Evening, Marquis. Have you tried one of my exceedingly good sausages? Still one or two left.

MARQUIS
I tried one last year, Mr Pokefinger, and I have a firm policy of never intentionally making the same mistake twice.

POKEFINGER
(passing into background)
Please yourself ...
... which is a policy I do subscribe to. Goodbye.

MUSHROOM MAN
(calling as Marquis approaches)
The Mushroom. The Mushroom On Toast. Raw the Mushroom.

MARQUIS
Ah, the Mushroom People. Well met. I'll have some of The Mushroom On Toast.

MUSHROOM WOMAN
You looks hungry, sir. I’ll cut a thick slice of puffball for yer.

MARQUIS
And I want it cooked properly all the way through.

MUSHROOM WOMAN
Be brave. Eat it raw. Join us.

MARQUIS
I have already had dealings with the Mushroom raw. We came to an understanding.

MUSHROOM WOMAN
As you will.

MUSHROOM MAN
Mushroom tea, sir?

MARQUIS
Yes, why not.

FX: TEA Poured, UNDER:

MUSHROOM MAN
May I be so bold as to ask if you're de Carabas? The fixer?

MARQUIS
I am the Marquis de Carabas.

MUSHROOM WOMAN
(off)
The Market’s afire with talk about you.

MARQUIS
So it should be, ma’am.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MUSHROOM MAN
I hear you're looking for your coat. I was there when the Sewer Folk sold it. Start of the last Market it was. On HMS Belfast. I saw who bought it, too.

MARQUIS
And ... what would you want for the information?

MUSHROOM WOMAN
(off, scornful)
What indeed.

MUSHROOM MAN
Go serve the customers, Chanterelle. (CLOSE) There's a girl I like as won't give me the time of day.

MARQUIS
A Mushroom girl?

MUSHROOM MAN
Would I were so lucky. If we were as one both in love and in the body of the Mushroom, I wouldn't have nothing to worry about. No.

FX: PLINK!

MUSHROOM MAN (CONT’D)
Oop. Sorry, let me fish that one out for you. I must harvest this clump under me nose, they're dropping everywhere.

MARQUIS
Ye-es. I’ll do without the tea.

MUSHROOM MAN
Now this girl. She's one of the Raven's Court. But she eats here sometimes. And we talk. Just like you and I are talking now. Over a cup of mushroom tea.

MARQUIS
And yet she does not return your ardour. How strange. What do you want me to do about it?

FX: MAN PULLS SANDWICH-BAGGED LETTER OUT OF POCKET
MUSHROOM MAN
I wrote her a letter. More of a pome, you might say, although I'm not much of a poet. To tell her how I feels about her. But I don't know that she'd read it, if I gived it to her. Then I saw you, and I thought, if it was you as was to give it to her, with all your fine words and your fancy flourishes...

MARQUIS
With my help, she would read it and then be more inclined to listen to your suit.

MUSHROOM MAN
This old thing? ‘S’just a duffel coat.

FX: PLATE PUT DOWN, WITH CUTLERY.

MUSHROOM WOMAN
Here’s yer Mushroom on toast. Sit you down at our trestle, sir. Look, there’s a nice Burne-Jones opposite, to gaze upon while you eat. Bon appetit.

FX: MARQUIS SITS. MUSHROOM POKED, WITH A FORK.

MARQUIS
Are you sure this is cooked all the way through?

MUSHROOM WOMAN
‘Course it is.

MARQUIS
No active spores?

MUSHROOM WOMAN
Why would you worry about a bit of fungus?

MARQUIS
I’m too selfish for symbiosis.

MUSHROOM WOMAN
Try a bite. Its delicious.

FX: MARQUIS CUTS A SLICE AND EATS.

MARQUIS
(mouth full)
You’re quite right.
(swallows)
(MORE)

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN   Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
Ah. Swallowing’s still rather painful ...
Not your fault.

MUSHROOM MAN
So what about it, sir?

MARQUIS
(while eating)
All you want is for me to make sure she
reads your missive of yearning?

MUSHROOM MAN
My letter? My pome?

MARQUIS
I do.

MUSHROOM MAN
Well, yes. And I want you to be there
with her, to make sure she doesn't put it
away unread, and I want you to bring her
answer back to me.

MARQUIS
(finishing his food)
Well. You’re not an unhandsome fellow,
with those remarkably blue eyes. Washed
and cleaned up and significantly less
fungal, you could be a catch. I’ll do it.

MUSHROOM MAN
Thank you. Now. I put the letter in a
sandwich bag. So it doesn't get wet on
the way.

MARQUIS
Very wise. Now, tell me: who bought my
coat?

MUSHROOM MAN
Not yet, Mister jumps-the-gun.

MARQUIS
It is getting very tiresome waiting for
straightforward answers to perfectly
simple questions.

MUSHROOM MAN
Ah, but you haven’t asked the important
one. About my true love.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MARQUIS
(sigh)
Tell me of this vision, this paragon,
this confection of femininity.

MUSHROOM MAN
Her name is Drusilla. You'll know her
because she is the most beautiful woman
in all of the Raven's Court.

MARQUIS
Hm. Beauty is traditionally in the eye of
the beholder. Give me more to go on.

MUSHROOM MAN
I told you. Her name’s Drusilla. There's
only one. And she has a big red birthmark
on the back of her hand that looks like a
star.

MARQUIS
It seems an unlikely love-pairing. One of
the Mushroom's folk, in love with a lady
of the Raven's Court. What makes you
think she’ll give up her life for your
damp cellars and fungoid crevices?

MUSHROOM MAN
She liked the colour of my eyes. I know
she’ll love me once she’s read my poem.
We’re on?

MARQUIS
We’re on. Now. Tell me.

MUSHROOM MAN
The cove as bought your coat carried a
stick.

MARQUIS
Lots of people carry sticks.

MUSHROOM MAN
This one had a crook on the end. Looked a
bit like a frog, he did. Short one. Bit
fat. Hair the colour of gravel. Needed a
coat and took a shine to yours.

MARQUIS
(rising)
Useful information. I shall certainly
pass your ardour and felicitations on to
the fair Drusilla.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN   Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MUSHROOM MAN
Don’t forget the letter, de Carabas.

FX: LETTER HANDED OVER.

MARQUIS
(walking off)
I’d forget my head if it hadn’t been re-attached.

INT. TATE GALLERY

FX: QUIETER AREA. HUBBUB, OFF.

OLD BAILEY
(off, getting nearer)
‘Old Bailey’s Birds And Information’. Get yer birds ‘ere. Rooks, ravens, starlings. Fine wise birds, tasty birds. If you don’t need a bird I got maps, booklets, brochures notes and mottoes. Enquire within upon everything ... Ah, there you is, Marquis. Did you find what yer lookin’ for?

MARQUIS
Not precisely.

OLD BAILEY
That’s the Market for yer. Risky business, asking for things at the Market.

MARQUIS
If I take risks, They are calculated risks.

OLD BAILEY
You can’t trust just anybody. Not ‘ere.

MARQUIS
I never trust anyone.

OLD BAILEY
Not even family?

MARQUIS
Least of all family - is bad for business and could set an unfortunate precedent. I reserve the entirety of my trust for myself.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN   Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
OLD BAILEY
Well. Glad we’ve sorted that out.

MARQUIS
However.

OLD BAILEY
- Or p’raps we haven’t -

MARQUIS
I’m informed by the sewer folk that my coat was last seen in the possession of a person carrying a stick with a crook on the end.

OLD BAILEY
Well, there’s only two sorts of people who carry crooks: bishops and shepherds.

MARQUIS
Quite.

OLD BAILEY
Why would someone from Bishopsgate need a coat? The bishops have no need of ‘em. They’ve robes, y’know - nice, white, bishoppish robes.

MARQUIS
A Bishop’s crook is decorative, non-functional, purely symbolic. I’m not scared of the bishops. The sewer folk aren’t scared of bishops.

OLD BAILEY
Did yer sewer person seem ... edgy?

MARQUIS
A little. He certainly wasn’t helpful.

OLD BAILEY
There’s a surprise.

MARQUIS
I suppose I could visit Bishopsgate, spend a pleasant handful of days establishing that my coat is not there.

OLD BAILEY
You think it was a shepherd what took it.

MARQUIS
I do.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
OLD BAILEY
So do I. But that’s a whole other murder of crows, that is. You’re talking about a trip to Shepherds Bush.

MARQUIS
It’ll be a tricky negotiation. I have nothing that the shepherds would want.

OLD BAILEY
Say as I shouldn’t, but you’re not in the peak of health either, Marquis.

MARQUIS
Even in possession of my coat and with a small army at my beck and call, I still would not want to encounter the shepherds.

OLD BAILEY
So you’ll give up on the coat.

MARQUIS
I certainly will not.

OLD BAILEY
Wait a minute, wait a minute. It’s not just the coat, is it?

MARQUIS
You’re rambling.

OLD BAILEY
(dawning realisation)
There’s something in one of those hidden pockets, i’ll be bound. Something particular. Special. Something ... worth a lot.

MARQUIS
It was a gift. Well, almost.

OLD BAILEY
What is it? Maybe I’ve seen it.

MARQUIS
A magnifying glass. A marvellous piece of work - ornate, gilt, with a chain and tiny cherubs and gargoyles. The lens has the unusual property of rendering transparent anything you look at through it.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN   Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
OLD BAILEY
Wait a minute. Victoria had one like that.

MARQUIS
I do not know where she obtained it. But it became mine.

OLD BAILEY
You pilfered it from Victoria!

MARQUIS
I appropriated it as compensation for a payment which was not entirely what we had agreed, given the difficulty with which I earned it.

OLD BAILEY
So before that, you pilfered something for her ... something Important.

MARQUIS
And with an extremely dangerous owner.

OLD BAILEY
Ahh. I thought that was just stories. The diary?

MARQUIS
I was young, and foolish.

OLD BAILEY
You stole the Elephant’s Diary. From the Elephant?

MARQUIS
There is only one Elephant. Obtaining his diary was not easy, nor was escaping the Elephant and the Castle once it had been obtained. I deserved proper recompense. And now I have lost my coat, and must put myself in harm’s way to recover it.

OLD BAILEY
You’ll need a Bonded Guide to take you to Shepherds Bush.

MARQUIS
Are they here?

OLD BAILEY
‘Course. Their pen’s through there.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN     Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MARQUIS
You know the damnable thing about this business?

OLD BAILEY
Go on.

MARQUIS
Out of all the hidden pockets on that coat, for the life of me I can’t remember which of them I put Victoria’s magnifying glass in.

INT. TUNNEL

FX: DISTANT TUBE TRAIN ANNOUNCEMENT. TWO SETS OF FOOTSTEPS.

KNIBBS
So where do you want to go first, again? Shepherd’s Bush, or Raven’s Court?

MARQUIS
What’s your name?

KNIBBS
Knibbs.

MARQUIS
The visit to Raven’s Court is a formality, Knibbs. It is merely to deliver a letter. To someone named Drusilla.

KNIBBS
A love letter?

MARQUIS
I believe so. Why do you ask?

KNIBBS
I have heard that the fair Drusilla is most wickedly beautiful, and she has the unfortunate habit of reshaping those who displease her into birds of prey. You must love her very much, to be writing letters to her.

MARQUIS
I am afraid I have never encountered the young lady. The letter is not from me. And it doesn’t matter which we visit first.
KNIBBS
You know, just in case something
dreadfully unfortunate happens to you
when you get to the shepherds, we should
probably do Raven's Court first. So the
fair Drusilla gets her letter. I’m not
saying that something horrible will
happen to you, mind. Just that it’s
better to be safe than, y’know, dead.

THEY WALK ON, FOR A FEW STEPS.

MARQUIS
Raven's Court it is, then.

KNIBBS
Right you are, sir.

MARQUIS
You sure this is the way?

KNIBBS
The paths of London Below aren’t like
London Above: they rely to no small
extent on things like belief and opinion
and tradition as much as upon the
realities of maps.

MARQUIS
I know.

KNIBBS
You're de Carabas, aren't you? You’re
famous. You know how to get places. What
exactly do you need a guide for?

MARQUIS
Two heads are better than one. So are two
sets of eyes.

KNIBBS
Didn’t you used to have a posh coat? I’ve
heard stories of you in a coat.

MARQUIS
I did. Yes.

KNIBBS
So why are you wearing that horrible old
blanket?

MARQUIS
It’s a pon -
MARQUIS STOPS. KNIBBS STOPS.

MARQUIS (CONT’D)
Oh, I've changed my mind. We're going to Shepherd's Bush first.

KNIBBS
Fair enough. Easy to take you one place as another. I'll wait for you outside the shepherds' trading post, mind.

MARQUIS
Very wise, girl.

KNIBBS
My name's Knibbs. Not girl. Here, up these steps and through this door -

FX: THEY CLIMB STEPS AND KNIBBS THROWS OPEN AN OLD WOODEN DOOR.

INT. THE BANKS OF MORTLAKE, NIGHT.

FX: LAKE LAPPING. HUGE ECHOEY SPACE.

MARQUIS
So. Mortlake. The Lake Of The Dead.

KNIBBS
I'll light a candle.

FX: MATCH STRUCK

KNIBBS (CONT’D)
Shouldn’t take long to summon a boatman.

BOATMAN
(off)
Light there?

KNIBBS
Boat here. Paying customer.

FX: OARS IN ROWLOCKS, SPLASHING, APPROACHING.

BOATMAN
(closer)
In you jump sir. Mind you don’t make yer blanket wet.

MARQUIS
Poncho.
BOATMAN
Very nice, sir. Fashionable, without over-emphasis on anything approaching style.

KNIBBS
Shut up. Take us to the Tyburn Ferry. And no funny business.

BOATMAN
Ain’t nothing funny about the Tyburn.

FX: OARS, ROWLOCKS, SPLASHING, UNDER:

KNIBBS
Do you want to know why I become a guide? It's an interesting story.

MARQUIS
Not particularly.

FX: THE BOAT FADES INTO DISTANCE, KNIBBS PRATTLING ON:

KNIBBS
The thing about being a proper guide is that you're bonded. So people know you won't steer them wrong. You lead them wrong, you'll never work as a guide again. That's why we're bonded.

MARQUIS
I know ...

INT. TYBURN FERRY

FX: UNDERGROUND RIVER RUNNING PAST. DISTANT BUSY ATMOS, HUBBUB OF PEOPLE ON FAR SHORE.

FX: CLOSE BY, THE MARQUIS AND KNIBBS ALIGHT FROM BOAT..

BOATMAN
Tyburn Ferry. Shepherd’s Trading Post on the far shore. That’ll be a groat and three farthings, sir.

FX: FOUR LARGE, THREE SMALL COINS DROPPED IN PALM.

MARQUIS
There.

BOATMAN
Much obliged, sir.

FX: BOAT ROWS OFF, UNDER:

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
KNIBBS
(still talking)
And then I got bonded. In Bond Street.
Look - here’s my chain.

MARQUIS
(trying to ignore her)
I don’t see the ferryman.

KNIBBS
He’ll be here soon enough. You keep an
eye out for him in that direction, and
halloo when you sees him. I’ll keep
looking over here. One way or another,
we’ll spot him.

MARQUIS
Hm.

KNIBBS
Now before I was a guide, when -

MARQUIS
(snaps)
You know, two heads are only better than
one if the other head keeps its mouth
shut and does not spend an hour telling
my head things it already knows.

KNIBBS
Yeah ... Anyway, when I was just little,
my people trained me up for this. They
said it was the only way that honour
could ever be satisfied -

MARQUIS
Look, can you just ... Wait a moment.
Something’s off here. Who are your
people, Knibbs? Where do you come from?

KNIBBS
Somewhere you ain’t welcome any more. I
was born and bred to give my fealty and
loyalty to the Elephant and the Castle.

MARQUIS
So - so - this is - Unf!

FX: HE IS STRUCK ON THE HEAD. HE COLLAPSES TO THE GROUND.

ELEPHANT
A Trap.

MARQUIS GROANS, UNCONSCIOUS.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
KNIBBS
Did I do well, Elephant?

ELEPHANT
Tolerably well indeed, Knibbs.

INT. PUMP ROOM, LONDON SEWERS

FX: WATER DRIPPING. CONCRETE WALLS. PUDDLES ON THE FLOOR.

FX: CHAINS AND SHACKLES TYING THE MARQUIS TO A POLE.

THE MARQUIS GROANS.

ELEPHANT
Oh, don't be silly, de Carabas. I don’t believe you’re still out. I’ve got big ears. I can hear your heart beat. Open your eyes properly, you weasel. Face me like a man.

MARQUIS
Why, this is indeed an honour, dear Elephant. You really didn't have to arrange to meet me like this. Why the merest inkling that your prominence might have had even the teeniest desire to see me would have -

ELEPHANT
Sent you scurrying off in the other direction as fast as your spindly little legs could carry you.

MARQUIS
Not at all. Quite the opposite. Words cannot actually describe how much pleasure I take in your pachydermic presence. Might I suggest that you untie me, and allow me to greet you, man to, man to elephant?

ELEPHANT
I don't think so, given all the trouble I've been through to make this happen. You know, I swore when I found out what you had done that I would make you scream and beg for mercy. And I swore I'd say no, to giving you mercy, when you begged for it.

MARQUIS
You could say yes, instead.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
ELEPHANT
I couldn't say yes. Hospitality abused. I never forget. These old tusks wouldn't be the colour of rust if I didn't settle old scores. You stole my diary.

MARQUIS
I was young. Commissions were scarce. Come on. This whole spending years training up a guide to betray me just on the off chance I'd come along and hire her. Isn't that a bit of an overreaction?

ELEPHANT
Not if you know me. If you know me, it's pretty mild. I did lots of other things to find you too.

MARQUIS
Perhaps if you would just unchain me from this pole - unh!

FX: THE ELEPHANT PUSHES HIM BACK WITH HIS TRUNK.

ELEPHANT
Beg for mercy.

MARQUIS
Oh, absolutely. Mercy! I beg! I plead! Show me mercy - the finest of all gifts. It befits you, mighty Elephant, as lord of your own demesne, to be merciful to one who is not even fit to wipe the dust from your excellent, tree-like, teak-coloured toes -

ELEPHANT
Did you know that everything you say sounds sarcastic?

MARQUIS
I didn't. I apologise. I meant every single word of it.

ELEPHANT
Scream.

MARQUIS
You know I've only just recovered from having my throat c-

ELEPHANT
Scream!
THE MARQUIS SCREAMS, AS LONG AND PITEOUSLY AS HE CAN.

\[ \text{MARQUIS} \]
\[ \text{Aaaaaaarrrrrrrrhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh} \]
\[ \text{hhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh}! \]

A BEAT.

\[ \text{ELEPHANT} \]
\[ \text{You even scream sarcastically.} \]

\[ \text{FX: THE ELEPHANT MOVES OVER TO FAR WALL.} \]

\[ \text{FX: A RUSTY OLD WHEEL IS TURNED. A FLOW OF SLUDGY WATER} \]
\[ \text{STARTS TO FILL THE ROOM, UNDER:} \]

\[ \text{MARQUIS} \]
\[ \text{Um - what would that stopcock be} \]
\[ \text{discharging into this room?} \]

\[ \text{ELEPHANT} \]
\[ \text{Drainage overflow.} \]

\[ \text{MARQUIS} \]
\[ \text{Ah.} \]

\[ \text{ELEPHANT} \]
\[ \text{Now. Thing is, I do my homework. You keep} \]
\[ \text{your life well-hidden, de Carabas. You} \]
\[ \text{have done all these years, since you and} \]
\[ \text{I first crossed paths. No point in even} \]
\[ \text{trying anything as long as you had your} \]
\[ \text{life elsewhere. I've had people all over} \]
\[ \text{London Below: people you've eaten with,} \]
\[ \text{people you've slept with or laughed with} \]
\[ \text{or wound up naked in the clock tower of} \]
\[ \text{Big Ben with, but there was never any} \]
\[ \text{point in taking it further, not as long} \]
\[ \text{as your life was still carefully tucked} \]
\[ \text{out of harm’s way. Until last week, when} \]
\[ \text{the word under the street was that your} \]
\[ \text{life was out of its box. And that was} \]
\[ \text{when I put the word out, that I'd give} \]
\[ \text{the freedom of the Castle to the first} \]
\[ \text{person to let me see -} \]

\[ \text{MARQUIS} \]
\[ \text{- See me scream for mercy. You said.} \]

\[ \text{ELEPHANT} \]
\[ \text{You interrupted me. I was going to say, I} \]
\[ \text{was going to give the freedom of the} \]
\[ \text{Castle to the first person to let me see} \]
\[ \text{your dead -} \]

\[ \text{(MORE)} \]

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN   Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
HOW THE MARQUIS GOT HIS COAT BACK 28.

ELEPHANT (CONT'D)
(effort)
- body.

FX: WHEEL WRENCHED OPEN MORE. THE WATER IS NOW A TORRENT.

MARQUIS
I ought to warn you. There is a curse on the hand of anyone who kills me.

ELEPHANT
I’ll take the curse. Although you’re probably making it up, as usual. Now. You’ll like the next bit. This room fills with water, and then you drown. Then I let the water out, and I come in, and I laugh. A lot.

FX: THE ELEPHANT MAKES A TRUMPETING NOISE – HIS LAUGH.

MARQUIS
You’re wrong. I don’t like that bit. At all.

ELEPHANT
Farewell, Marquis.

FX: HEAVY FEET ON IRON STAIRS. A HEAVY STEEL DOOR OPENED AND SHUT.

FX: THE WATER KEEPS POURING IN. THE MARQUIS IS NOW SLOSHING ABOUT. IT’S UP TO HIS KNEES AND RISING.

MARQUIS
(to self, breathless)
No coat. Just when I need it most. No, Think ... think. These shackles are chained to an extremely rusty pole. Lift the pole, free the chain, turn off the water, pick the locks in the shackles, escape the room, evade the Elephant and any assorted thugs -- Pick the lock? No coat – No lock picks. Water’s up to my waist.

(with efforts)
All right. First things first - lift the pole out from its socket in the floor and - lift it - from the socket - uhhh.

(giving up)
Well, that’s not working. I’m going to die. And I’m talking to myself.

PEREGRINE
Not necessarily.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MARQUIS
Who’s there? Come round to where I can see you.

PEREGRINE

FX: LOCKS PICKED IN SHACKLES.

PEREGRINE (CONT’D)
There.

MARQUIS
By the Temple and the Arch. It’s you.

PEREGRINE
I heard you were having a spot of bother.

MARQUIS
No. No bother. I'm fine.

PEREGRINE
You aren't. I just rescued you.

MARQUIS
Where's the Elephant?

PEREGRINE
On the other side of that door, with a number of the people working for him. The doors lock automatically when the hall is filled with water. He needed to be certain that he wouldn't be trapped in here with you. It was what I was counting on.

MARQUIS
Counting on?

PEREGRINE
Of course. I'd been following them for several hours. Ever since I heard that you'd gone off with one of the Elephant's hirelings. I thought, bad move, I thought. He'll be needing a hand with that.

MARQUIS
You heard - ?

PEREGRINE
Look. You don't think I was going to let anything happen to my little brother, did you?
MARQUIS
I was fine. I had it all under control.
Shall we turn the water off?

PEREGRINE
And alert the Elephant to your salvation?
No. I have a crowbar.

MARQUIS
For what?

PEREGRINE
Get Ready. I think this should be our quickest way out of here.

MARQUIS
What is it?

FX: HEAVY METAL COVER LIFTED OUT OF ITS FRAME, UNDER:

PEREGRINE
It's the -
   (effort)
- drain.

MARQUIS
Bu - whurggghhhhh -

PEREGRINE
Whee --!

FX: ALMIGHTY SUCKING WHIRLPOOL DRAGS THEM BOTH INTO THE DRAIN.

INT. SEWERS.

FX: QUIET, ALMOST TRANQUIL, SOME DRIPPING SOUNDS. THEN -

FX: WHOOSH! OF WATER AND THE MARQUIS AND PEREGRINE ARE FLUSHED OUT ONTO A METAL GRATE.

PEREGRINE
(breathless)
There ...

MARQUIS
(breathless)
Foof ...

PEREGRINE
Fun, eh?
MARQUIS
Not really. Did I hear you shouting
‘Whee’?

PEREGRINE
Of course. Weren’t you?

FX: THEY STAGGER UPRIGHT, DRIPPING

PEREGRINE (CONT’D)
I hear that Upworlders pay good money for
that kind of thing at carnivals.

MARQUIS
At least they can be certain they will
survive it.

PEREGRINE
Cheer up, brother. I just saved your
life.

MARQUIS
Hm. What are you calling yourself these
days?

PEREGRINE
Still the same. I don't change.

MARQUIS
It's not your real name. ‘Peregrine’.

PEREGRINE
It'll do. It marks my territory and my
intentions. You're still calling yourself
a Marquis, then?

MARQUIS
I am, because I say I am.

PEREGRINE
Your choice.

MARQUIS
Oh yes it is. When one creates oneself
from scratch one needs a model of some
kind, something to aim towards or head
away from - all the things one wants to
be, or intentionally not be. I knew who I
did not want to be, when I was a boy. I
definitely did not want to be like you. I
did not want to be like anyone at all. I
wanted to be elegant, elusive, brilliant
and, above all things, unique.
PEREGRINE

Just like me.

MARQUIS

Will you be here long?

PEREGRINE

No, I’ve saved your life for today. Stay out of trouble. You don’t even have to thank me.

MARQUIS

Thank you, Peregrine. And good bye.

PEREGRINE

(going off)

Adieu, brother ...

(coming back)

Oh! Your coat. Word about the city is that it wound up in Shepherd's Bush. That’s all I know.

MARQUIS

Oh, really? Oh I nearly forgot -

FX: PATTING SODDEN POCKETS, UNDER:

MARQUIS (CONT’D)

Letter ... letter -

FX: LETTER IN SANDWICH BAG PRODUCED.

MARQUIS (CONT’D)

- Still here. And still dry in its bag.

FX: STARTS STUFFING LETTER BACK IN POCKET.

PEREGRINE

A letter?

MARQUIS

Er - yes. I have a letter to deliver.

PEREGRINE

From whom?

MARQUIS

A lad. From the Mushroom People.

PEREGRINE

Why would a Mushroom Lad use you to deliver a letter? To whom is it addressed?
MARQUIS
A certain Drusilla. A member of Raven’s Court.

PEREGRINE
How will you find her?

MARQUIS
She has a star on her hand.

PEREGRINE
A maiden who would give up her life at Raven’s Court to live with a Mushroom person? What kind of letter would persuade her to do that?

MARQUIS
I don’t know. Unless – No. No Idea.

PEREGRINE
Look. Advice. Mean this most sincerely. I know you don’t like advice. Forget the letter. And the coat.

MARQUIS
A shepherd has my coat.

PEREGRINE
Listen. I met a former shepherd, on the run. I helped him to freedom across the Tyburn River. He had a short but happy life as a camp entertainer for that Roman Legion who wait on the far side for orders that never come.

MARQUIS
And this is useful information – how?

PEREGRINE
He told me this: The shepherds never make you do anything. They just take your natural impulses and desires and they push them, reinforce them, so you act quite naturally, only you act in the ways that they want.

MARQUIS
What are you saying, Peregrine?

PEREGRINE
Let it go. Just get a new coat. Honest.

Peregrine starts to walk off up the tunnel.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
Fare well, brother.

Well then.

Well. Adieu.

Very little time left before the Elephant discovers a room empty of water and a corpse and comes looking for me. So. What is my fallback plan? I always have a fallback plan.

I don’t have a fallback plan. Not even a normal, boring, obvious plan that I could abandon as soon as things got tricky.

I don’t even have a real plan, one that I would not even let myself know about, for when the original plan and the fallback plan both go south.

I just have a Want. I am Planless and I have a Want, which is the worst position to be in. My Want is to have my Coat Back. And I hate my brother for rescuing me.

Ah. There you are.

Elephant! Right. I expect you’re wondering how I’m here -
ELEPHANT
There you are.

MARQUIS
Yes, I escaped -

ELEPHANT
I’m glad you’re here.

MARQUIS
Well, of course you are, you’ve caught me.

ELEPHANT
Walk with us.

MARQUIS
What are you talking about? Why aren’t you killing me?

FX: MORE FEET APPROACH, CLOSING IN

SHEEP DOG MAN
Hallo friend. We’re glad you’re here.

OTHERS
(off)
Hallo friend/Good day/Glad you’re here.

MARQUIS
Who are you people?

SHEEP DOG MAN
I’m Shep. Are you on your own?

MARQUIS
Always. It’s where I live.

SHEEP DOG MAN
Don’t you miss company?

MARQUIS
At times I do. Yes, I miss company at times. What’s wrong with the Ele -

SHEEP DOG MAN
- Walk with us a spell. Go on.

ELEPHANT
Walk with us.

MARQUIS
I’ll walk with you, Elephant.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
SHEEP DOG MAN
This way, everyone. We’re glad you are here.

MARQUIS
Yes.

FX: THEY WALK.

WOMAN
(happy sigh)
I’m glad you’re here.

MAN
I’m glad you’re here.

MARQUIS
I’m glad I’m here, too.

ALL
I’m glad I’m here.

MAN
It’s good to be together. There’s safety in numbers.

MARQUIS
Yes, safety in numbers.

WOMAN
It’s so good that we’re all travelling the same way together.

MARQUIS
We’re all travelling the same way together.

ELEPHANT
There’s safety in numbers.

MARQUIS
It’s good to be together.

ELEPHANT
Indeed it is. It’s good to be together.

MARQUIS
Indeed. You look familiar.

ELEPHANT
I’m glad you’re here.
MARQUIS
I’m glad you’re here. You have a trunk, and tusks. You are big, and ugly, and you smell ... It’s good.

ELEPHANT
Yes. It’s good to be together.

WOMAN
It’s good to be together.

MARQUIS
It is.

SHEEP DOG MAN
(entirely reasonably)
We never want to fall out of step, do we?

WOMAN
Of course we don’t.

ALL
We never want to fall out of step.

SHEEP DOG MAN
That’s good. Out of step is out of mind.

MARQUIS
Out of step is out of mind. How could I have missed knowing something so obvious, so basic?

SHEEP DOG MAN
Keep walking. We are almost there ...

FADE OUT

INT. SHEPHERDS BUSH PITS, DAYS LATER

FX: DISTANT FIRES BURNING, LOW INDISTINCT HUBBUB OF VOICES AND MOVEMENT.

SHEEP DOG MAN
More bodies to render here.

MARQUIS
More bodies to render here, Elephant.

ELEPHANT
More bodies to render.

MARQUIS
We have a job to do. A real job.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
SHEEP DOG MAN
You do indeed. You dispose of those members of the flock who can no longer move or serve, once anything that might be of use has been removed and reused.

ELEPHANT
They no longer serve.

MARQUIS
We remove that which is of use.

ELEPHANT
Hair, and tallow-fat, and all.

MARQUIS
Drag the rest to the pit and drop it in.

ELEPHANT
Then start again.

SHEEP DOG MAN
(moving off)
Very good. Carry on.

FX: THE MARQUIS AND ELEPHANT CHEERFULLY DRAGGING BODIES, HACKING OFF LIMBS, TOSSING WHAT’S LEFT INTO THE PIT.

FX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

PEREGRINE
Hey.

MARQUIS
Stand aside, friend. I need to strip this body.

PEREGRINE
(sighs, impatiently)
I followed you. I know you didn't want me to. But, well, needs must.

MARQUIS
I do not know what you are talking about, friend. Excuse me. I have to process my quota.

PEREGRINE
I've got an escape plan, as soon as I can wake you up. Please wake up.

MARQUIS
I am awake. Why do you think I am asleep? Now please go.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
PEREGRINE
I’m not going without you.

MARQUIS
I must be here. Those in the flock who have been unproductive must be dismembered. It’s good to work.

ELEPHANT
(background, hacking off a limb)
It’s good to work.

PEREGRINE
Come on. This way.

MARQUIS
You cannot go that way. You will fall in the Pit. The pit goes down a long way.

ELEPHANT
(moving off)
The pit goes down a long way. I will get more bodies.

PEREGRINE
Right, come on -

FX: KERFUFFLE IN FOREGROUND AS PEREGRINE TIES MARQUIS’S HANDS AND DRAGS HIM AWAY.

MARQUIS
(polite)
What are you doing?

PEREGRINE
(low, urgent)
Binding your hands and getting you out of here.

MARQUIS
Why? I will be out of step with the flock.

PEREGRINE
It's me, Peregrine. Your brother. You've been captured by the shepherds. We have to get you to safety.

MARQUIS
There is obviously some sort of mistake here. I must be in step with the flock.
SHEEP DOG MAN
(off, to ELEPHANT)
Where’s your flockmate?

ELEPHANT
(off)
He went over there, Shep.

FX: HIGH PITCHED ‘YIP-YIP-YIP’ CALLS & HOWLS, OFF – SHEEP DOGS CORRALLING THEIR FLOCK.

PEREGRINE
Uh-oh. Keep moving.

MARQUIS
But I don’t want to. I want them to come and find me and sort this all out. There is obviously some sort of mistake going on. I want to work.

FX: MANY FEET IN PURSUIT, EXCITED HUBBUB, CATCHING UP:

SHEEP DOG MAN
(running up)
You. Stop.

PEREGRINE
(pinioned)
Lud’s gate!

SHEEP DOG MAN
Untie that one.

FX: MARQUIS UNTIED

MARQUIS
Thank you. I can go back to work.

SHEEP DOG MAN
No, no no. Both of you will be brought before The Shepherd.

FX: THEY MOVE OFF. HUBBUB FROM EXCITED THRONG.

INT. GREAT SHEPHERD’S QUARTERS

FX: FIRE CRACKLING. WRITING ON PARCHMENT. HEAVY KNOCKS ON WOODEN DOOR.

THE SHEPHERD
Enter.

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN   Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
FX: DOOR OPENS. MARQUIS, PEREGRINE & ELEPHANT PUSHED IN BY SHEEP DOG MAN AND TWO COMPANIONS. THEY GROWL AND MUTTER UNDER THE ENSUING CONVERSATION IN A DOGGY WAY.

FX: WRITING CONTINUES

SHEPHERD
What is it? I’m busy.

SHEEP DOG MAN
A stray lamb, Shepherd. And his predator.
Also his flockmate.

ELEPHANT
I must work. I am out of step.

SHEEP DOG MAN
Be quiet.

SHEPHERD
(still writing)
Why? Why do you all bother me with this nonsense?

PEREGRINE
Because you gave orders that if ever I were ever to be apprehended within the bounds of the Shepherds' Bush, I was to be brought to you to dispose of personally. These sheep dogs of yours have obliged.

FX: WRITING STOPS. SCRAPE OF A CHAIR.

SHEPHERD
Ah. Now I see. Hand me my crook.

SHEEP DOG MAN
Here, master.

FX: CROOK HANDED OVER.

SHEPHERD
(approaches)
Peregrine? I had heard that you had gone into retirement. Become a monk or something. I never dreamed you'd dare to come back. And who is this stray lamb - ?

MARQUIS
(awestruck)
Master ...
SHEPHERD
Ah. And now I see. Who would have thought it? He is here already. And already one of ours? The Marquis de Carabas. You know, Peregrine, I had been looking forward to ripping out your tongue, to grinding your fingers away while you watched, but think how much more delightful it would be if the last thing you ever saw was your own brother, one of our flock, as the instrument of your doom.

MARQUIS
(now querulous)
Master ... ?

SHEPHERD
Yes, child?

MARQUIS
Your coat.

SHEPHERD
What of it?

MARQUIS
(a speech in which Paterson effortlessly morphs from abject servitude into barely suppressed rage)
It’s not just a coat. It is beautiful. It is remarkable. It is unique. It has thirty pockets, seven of which are obvious, nineteen of which are hidden, and four of which are more or less impossible to find. It has magnificent sleeves, an imposing collar, and a slit up the back. It is elegant. It is beautiful. It is the colour of a wet street at midnight.

SHEPHERD
Indeed.

MARQUIS
Um ... But -

SHEPHERD
But - ?

MARQUIS
I’m afraid I need to be getting along. Can we hurry this up?
SHEPHERD
Hurry up? Why?

MARQUIS
I'm late. For something that's very important.

SHEPHERD
You've left the flock, de Carabas.

MARQUIS
It would appear so. Hello Peregrine.

PEREGRINE
Welcome back.

MARQUIS
Wonderful to see you looking so sprightly. And the Elephant. How delightful. The gang's all here.

ELEPHANT
I am loyal to the flock.

MARQUIS
Ah, bless. Wonderful meeting you, Shepherd. Delightful to spend a little time as one of your little band of serious thinkers. But I really must be tootling off now. Important diplomatic mission. Letter to deliver. You know how it is.

PEREGRINE
My brother, I'm not sure that you understand the gravity of the situation here.

MARQUIS
Oh, I do, I do. And I'm sure these nice people will let me head out of here, leaving you behind. It's you they want, not me. And I have something extremely important to deliver.

PEREGRINE
I can handle this.

SHEPHERD
(to PEREGRINE)
You have to be quiet now. I am talking.
(to MARQUIS)
Something important to deliver? What exactly are we talking about here?
MARQUIS
I am afraid I cannot possibly tell you that. You are, after all, not the intended recipient of this particular diplomatic communique.

SHEPHERD
Why not? What's it say? Who's it for?

MARQUIS
Only the threat of death could force me even to show it to you.

SHEPHERD
Well, that's easy. I threaten you with death. That's in addition to the death sentence you're already under as an apostate member of the flock. And as for laughing boy here, your brother, he's tried to steal a member of the flock. That's a death sentence too, in addition to everything else we're planning to do to him.

PEREGRINE
Can I say something?

SHEPHERD
No. And, I know I should have asked before, but what in the Auld Witch's name is this?

ELEPHANT
I am a loyal member of the flock. I have remained loyal and in step even when this one did not.

SHEPHERD
And the flock is grateful for all your hard work. I've never seen anything like you before, and if I never see another one again it'll be too soon. Probably best if you die too.

ELEPHANT
But I am of the flock.

SHEPHERD
Better safe than sorry.
(to MARQUIS)
Well? Where is this important letter? Under this blanket?

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN   Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
MARQUIS
Poncho. It is beneath, inside my shirt. I must repeat that it is the most significant document that I have ever been charged to deliver. I must ask you not to look at it. For your own safety.

SHEPHERD
Hm. Come here.

FX: SHIRT RIPPED OPEN. BUTTONS FLY OFF.

SHEPHERD (CONT’D)
There is a plastic bag.

MARQUIS
For its protection, being so precious.

SHEPHERD
Ah, let me see.

FX: SANDWICH BAG LETTER REMOVED BY SHEPHERD

MARQUIS
This is most unfortunate. I must protest.

SHEPHERD
But you must be curious as to its contents.

MARQUIS
Indeed ... Er - I trust you will read it aloud to us before we die.

SHEPHERD
I may ...

MARQUIS
But whether or not you read it to us, I can promise that Peregrine and I will be holding our breath. Won’t we, Peregrine?

PEREGRINE
Eh? Er - yes, yes.

FX: SANDWICH BAG OPENED, LETTER REMOVED AND OPENED.

SHEPHERD
(coughing)
There’s enough dust in it to grow a cellar full of mushrooms.
(reads)
“My darling beautiful Drusilla.
(MORE)

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
THE SHEPHERD STARTS COUGHING AGAIN, ALSO THE SHEEP DOG MAN AND HIS COMPATRIOTS.

MARQUIS
(low, tight lipped)
Walk backwards, Peregrine. Away from the spores. Don’t breathe in. Hold your breath.

PEREGRINE
(tight lipped)
Yes. Yes. Stop talking and hold yours.

FX: THEY SHUFFLE BACKWARDS WHILE THE COUGHING CONTINUES.

SHEEP DOG MAN
(coughing)
What is it, Master?

SHEPHERD
I -- I -- (coughs)

PEREGRINE
(out of oxygen)
Is this far enough -- ?

MARQUIS
(huge whooping exhale-inhale)
Yes, I think so.

PEREGRINE
What’s going on? What is all that about?

MARQUIS
Our way out of this room, and our way out of Shepherd's Bush, if I am not mistaken. As I so rarely am. Would you mind unbinding my wrists?

FX: WRISTS UNTIED, UNDER:

PEREGRINE
Of course. The Shepherd - he seems transfixed. And the sheep dog ... people.

MARQUIS
Thank you. Yes, I was right about that letter.
SHEPHERD
(off)
It is the call.

SHEEP DOG MAN
(off)
It is the call, Master.

SHEEP DOG MEN
(off)
It is the call.

SHEPHERD
(off)
We must follow.

SHEEP DOG MAN
(off)
I will follow ...

SHEEP DOG MEN
(off)
We will follow ...

THE NEXT CONVERSATION LOW, IN FOREGROUND:

PEREGRINE
Where are they going?

ELEPHANT
I'm going to kill somebody. As soon as I figure out who.

MARQUIS
Think, dear Elephant. You mean whom. And I can assure you that you aren't going to kill anybody, not as long as you was to get home to the Castle safely.

ELEPHANT
I'm definitely going to kill you.

MARQUIS
You are going to force me to say pshaw. Or fiddlesticks. Until now I have never had the slightest moment of yearning to say fiddlesticks. But I can feel it, right now, welling up inside me.

ELEPHANT
What, by the Temple and the Arch, has got into you?
MARQUIS
Wrong question. But I shall ask the right question on your behalf. The question is actually what hasn't got into the three of us? It hasn’t got into Peregrine and me because we were holding our breath - it hasn’t got into you because, I don't know, probably because you're an elephant, with nice thick skin, more likely because you were breathing through your trunk, which is down at ground level. But what has got into our captors? And the answer is, what hasn't got into us would be the selfsame spores that have got into our revered Shepherd and his pseudo-canine companions.

PEREGRINE
Spores of the Mushroom? The Mushroom People's the Mushroom?

MARQUIS
Indeed. Spores of that selfsame mushroom. Spores sent to beguile and rob the senses of logic. To inexorably draw the recipient back to the Mushroom.

ELEPHANT
Well, saw my tusks off and call 'em poached.

MARQUIS
You see, dear Elephant, if you attempt to kill me, or to kill Peregrine, you will not only fail but you will doom us all. Whereas, if you shut up and we all do our best to look as if we are still part of the flock, then we have a chance. The spores will be threading their way into their brains now. And any moment now the Mushroom will begin calling them home. All we have to do is follow.

ELEPHANT
Then what are we waiting for.

MARQUIS
Oh, a minor thing, the least of details - but I think our tormentor will be suggestible enough for this to work - (VOICE UP) Shepherd?
SHEPHERD
(off)
Ye-es?

MARQUIS
I’ll have my coat back now.

INT. TUNNELS

FX: THE SHEPHERD FOLLOWED BY HIS FLOCK AND SHEEP DOG MEN WALKS PAST US, FOLLOWED BY THE MARQUIS, PEREGRINE AND THE ELEPHANT.

PEREGRINE
The Shepherd seems entirely biddable. He handed over your Coat without demur, brother. I could never have imagined we could escape so easily.

MARQUIS
It is not unusual in Shepherds Bush to see a shepherd and part of his flock moving from place to place accompanied by several of the fiercest sheepdogs.

PEREGRINE
Thy were human, once?

MARQUIS
I assume so.

FX: THE SOUND OF A RIVER GROWS, UNDER:

ELEPHANT
None of the greater flock have paid us any mind.

PEREGRINE
If they are aware that the influence of the shepherds has waned a little, one assumes they will patiently wait for another shepherd to come and to take care of them and to keep them safe.

FX: THE COMPANY HALTS UP AHEAD ON THE RIVER BANK.

ELEPHANT
They’re stopping. What is this place?

PEREGRINE
We are at the banks of the Kilburn.
ELEPHANT
What happens now?

SHEPHERD
(off)
Forward.

SHEEP DOG MEN
(off)
We follow the shepherd.

FX: THE SHEPHERD LEADS THE SHEEP DOG MEN INTO THE WATER.

PEREGRINE
I’m not wading in there after them.

MARQUIS
No need. We are free to leave. There is nothing in the Shepherd and his dog men’s heads at this moment but a need to get to the Mushroom, to taste its flesh once more, to let it live inside them, to serve it, and to serve it well. In exchange, the mushroom will fix all the things about themselves that they hate: it will make their interior lives much happier and more interesting.

ELEPHANT
Should’ve let me kill ’em.

MARQUIS
No point. Not even for revenge. The people who captured us don’t exist any longer.

ELEPHANT
(sighs through his trunk)
Talking about revenge, who the hell did you steal my diary for anyway?

MARQUIS
Victoria.

ELEPHANT
Victoria? Not actually on my list of potential thieves. She's a deep one.

MARQUIS
I'll not argue with that. Also, she failed to pay me the entire amount agreed. I wound up obtaining my own lagniappe to make up the deficit. I think I remember which pocket I put it in, too.
FX: MARQUIS RUMMAGING IN POCKETS

ELEPHANT
A lanny- what?

PEREGRINE
A little extra something. A gratuity.

MARQUIS
Here.

FX: TINKLING OF A LITTLE CHAIN, UNDER:

PEREGRINE
A magnifying glass.

MARQUIS
It was Victoria’s. I believe you can use it to see through solid things. Perhaps this could be considered a small payment against my debt to you, Elephant?

FX: MAGNIFYING GLASS HANDED OVER.

ELEPHANT
Hmm. Let me see ... Oh. Oh, fine, very fine.

MARQUIS
Are we ... square?

ELEPHANT
I suppose that saving my life outranks stealing my diary. And while I wouldn't have needed saving if I hadn't followed you down the drain, further recriminations are pointless. Consider your life your own once more.

MARQUIS
Thank you. Now. Peregrine. Do you know where next month’s Floating Market is being held?

PEREGRINE
I’ve heard it will be Derry and Toms’ Roof Garden.

ELEPHANT
There’s been no Derry and Toms’ since 1973.
PEREGRINE
Time and space and London Below have their own uncomfortable arrangement upon that matter.

MARQUIS
Elephant. I look forward to visiting you in the Castle someday.

ELEPHANT
Don't push your luck, mate.

MARQUIS
I won't.

ELEPHANT
And - oh. Where's your brother gone?

MARQUIS
Oh, he does that. Slips away. Very irritating. But so must I.

(going off)
Adieu to you.

ELEPHANT
And to you. And Marquis?

MARQUIS
(off, pauses)
Yes?

ELEPHANT
That coat does look superb.

EXT. DERRY & TOMS' ROOF GARDEN

FX: CITY SKYLINE. HUBBUB. MUSIC.

MARKET BARKER
Roll up Roll up for the finest Floating Market ever put on at Derry and Toms! Welcome to the roof garden, all you Bravos, Carneys, Velvets and Sewer Folk! Try the wares, barter your goods, pick up some tie-dyes and cheesecloths, make merry, you Underdwellers! Roll up! Roll up!

VINYL HAWKER
(off)
Vinyl records! Classics and Reissues! Nary a scratch!

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN  Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
BOOK HAWKER
(off)
Books! Almanacs, Atlases, Apocryphas and Concordances!

CLOTHES HAWKER
(off)
Clothes! Loon Pants, Biba tops, kinky boots and paisley shirts!

OLD BAILEY
(emerging from the throng)
‘Old Bailey’s Birds And Information’! Get yer birds ‘ere. Fine wise birds, tasty birds. And new in stock - Jokes! Old Bailey’s guaranteed-to-wet-yerself droll stories and amusements. You’ll larf fit to bust -

MARQUIS
(approaching)
I can assure you, they won’t.

OLD BAILEY
The Marquis, by the Temple and the Arch. A fortnight back I heard you’d been gawn and made into a sheep. But there you are, large as life and dressed to the nines. A little bird tells me that your brother had a hand in your salvation.

MARQUIS
Oh, I expect my brother whispered that in the ear of your little bird. Peregrine likes to claim credit when he’s done little to deserve it.

OLD BAILEY
Not fond of your brother, are you.

MARQUIS
He and I have nothing in common.

OLD BAILEY
Strange, that. Because what I hear coming out of his mouth one month, I hear coming out of yours the next.

MARQUIS
Tread lightly, Old Bailey ...

OLD BAILEY
You two are like a man staring at hiself in a looking glass.

(MORE)

From the story by NEIL GAIMAN Dramatised by DIRK MAGGS
Each one complains about what he sees, but when the first sneezes, the second starts to sniffle.

MARQUIS
Oh, spare me.

OLD BAILEY
I like his name though.

MARQUIS
Peregrine.

OLD BAILEY
Fine bird, that. Though, there’s one thing you’ve got that he hasn’t.

MARQUIS
Pray proceed.

OLD BAILEY
The coat. I see you’ve got it back. Very smart.

MARQUIS
Yes, I am fully restored. I am the Marquis de Carabas again. And a force to be reckoned with.

OLD BAILEY
Well you might like to reckon with the young woman I met earlier – looking for you. One of those floaty mystical types. You can’t miss her. She’s got a Owl perched on her.

MARQUIS
Sadly, I’m in something of a hurry. Deals to make, revenge to extract, the usual. I’m only here to talk to the young chap whose letter I had to deliver. Can you direct me to the Mushroom stall?

OLD BAILEY
Well I can, but I don’t know about a young fella. There’s a rum looking bugger serving today. Short, fat and frog-looking. Hair a sort of gravel colour.

MARQUIS
Really? Hm. Thank you, Old Bailey.

OLD BAILEY
Sure you don’t want to buy a joke?
MARQUIS
(moving off)
I’d rather be hacking up bodies in Shepherds’ Bush.

OLD BAILEY
Tch. All coat and no sense of humour, that one.

MIX BACKGROUND TO FOOD MARKET.

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
(fades in - calling)
Partake of the mushroom! Taste the joy of the fungus! Become one with the host!

MARQUIS
Slice of the Mushroom, well-grilled, please.

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
Coming right up, sir. Anything else?

MARQUIS
No, that’s all ... Do you know me?

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
I am afraid not. But I must say, that is a most beautiful coat.

MARQUIS
Thank you. Where is the young fellow who used to work here? Remarkably blue eyes, about so tall?

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
Ah. You mean Vince? That is a most curious story, sir. Somebody told the fair Drusilla, of the Court of the Raven, that the lad had had designs upon her, and had - you may not credit it, but I am assured that it is so - apparently sent her a letter filled with spores with the intention of making her his bride in the Mushroom.

MARQUIS
Hm. Did she take well to the news?

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
I do not believe that she did, sir. I do not believe that she did.

(MORE)
She and several of her sisters were waiting for Vince, and they all caught up with us on our way to the Market. She told him they had matters to discuss, of an intimate nature. He seemed delighted by this news, and went off with her, to find out what these matters were ...

FLASHBACK: INT. DERRY & TOMS, QUIET AREA

DRUSILLA
So ... you are here, Vince.

VINCE
Ooh - um - Drusilla ...

DRUSILLA
You and I have matters to discuss ... of an intimate nature.

VINCE
(I’m in!)
Then - you read my letter?

DRUSILLA
I ... received the ... message it bore.

VINCE
Ah ... well, that’s wonderful.

DRUSILLA
And I understand it carried more than just your sentiments. I know what was in it, Vince.

VINCE
I only want to be with you, fair Drusilla. To be with you - Forever.

DRUSILLA
“For ever”. Well, that can definitely be arranged ...

FLASHBACK OUT

EXT. DERRY & TOMS’ ROOF GARDEN

FX: CITY SKYLINE. HUBBUB. MUSIC.
MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
I have been waiting for him to arrive at the market and come and work all evening, but I no longer believe he will be coming.

MARQUIS
How remarkable. I’ll er - have that to go.

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
Of course sir, I’ll wrap it.

FX: FOOD WRAPPED IN PAPER, UNDER:

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
(CONT’D)
That is a very fine coat. It seems to me that I might have had one like it, in a former life.

MARQUIS
I do not doubt it. But this particular coat? It is most definitely mine.

FX: PARCEL HANDED OVER

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
Here you are, sir.

MARQUIS
Thank you Shep - Er - goodbye ...

FX: MARQUIS WALKS OFF, WE ARE WITH HIM

MUSHROOM MAN/SHEPHERD
(receding)
Goodbye.

MARQUIS
... Shepherd.

DRUSILLA
Excuse me. Old Bailey pointed you out to me.

MARQUIS
He did - ? Oh.

DRUSILLA
You know me, don’t you?
MARQUIS
I recognise the birthmark like a five-pointed star on the back of your hand. A certain, floatiness - ? - to the gown. It leads me to believe you are of Ravens Court, and your name is -

DRUSILLA
Drusilla.

MARQUIS
What remarkably blue eyes your owl has.

DRUSILLA
Yes. I think ... I owe you ... a favour.

MARQUIS
(departing)
All in due course, dear lady ... 

DRUSILLA
Wait -

FX: THE MARKET HUBBUB RISES TO MASK HIS DEPARTURE.

DRUSILLA (CONT'D)
Old Bailey?

OLD BAILEY
(approach)
What is it, youngster?

DRUSILLA
I went to thank him - and he just disappeared.

OLD BAILEY
Oh, he does that, the Marquis. Slips away. Very irritating. 
(going off)
Nice owl, by the way. Remarkably blue eyes.

THE END