



FACES – Audio Version

By Stephen Duckham

A SMITH SCRIPT

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FACES

A Play by

STEPHEN DUCKHAM

Inspired by a short story by
Charles Dickens

(Audio Version)

CHARACTERS

LANDLORD/LANDLADY)
OLD SANDY	An old Yorkshire Farmer) 2020
HENRY STANDING	An American tourist)
CLARA	A Victorian Lady)
ANTHONY CHASE	A Victorian Gentleman)
BAPTISTA	An Italian manservant) 1852
GIOVANNA	An Italian maidservant)
SIGNOR DELLOMBRA	An Italian Nobleman)

Please note: All sound effects are shown in RED

If the Landlady character is used, she should have the name Mary Daily.

Scene - The Fennimore Inn. A secluded hostelry in a remote part of the Yorkshire Moors. Present day.

[Opening music blends into the sound of a fierce wind outside. The sound of glasses being collected. LANDLORD and OLD SANDY are the only people there.]

LANDLORD Wind's blowing wild tonight, Sandy.

SANDY Ay, there's a storm approaching.

LANDLORD Want another, or are you heading off home?

SANDY I've not long been here. I'll have another.

LANDLORD *[Chuckles.]* Storm won't keep you from your nightly tipple! Although there's no one here for you to talk to tonight.

SANDY There will be. Wind tells me a visitor be comin'.

LANDLORD *[Another chuckle.]* If you say so.

[We hear glasses being moved to the bar. Suddenly the sound of the main door being flung open. HENRY, an American enters.]

HENRY My God, what a night!

LANDLORD Here, let me help you.

[The sound of the door being shut.]

HENRY Thank you. The wind wrenched the door right outa my hand.

LANDLORD No harm done. It's a tough old door!

HENRY I was out walking and the wind started up so damn quickly.

LANDLORD It does that on the Moors. Many a traveller is taken by surprise.

HENRY Well, I certainly was.

LANDLORD Can I get you anything?

HENRY Scotch on the rocks, please.

[The sound of scotch being poured. Suddenly a clap of thunder.]

LANDLORD There's your storm, Sandy.

SANDY Ay.

HENRY Good evening.

SANDY Evenin'.

LANDLORD Are you on holiday in these parts?

HENRY Just for a few days. I'm over here on business in London, but wanted to visit this part of the UK. My family ancestors hale from this part of Yorkshire.

LANDOLORD Really? It's a lovely part of the country.

HENRY Sure is.

LANDLORD There you are. Two fifty-five, please.

HENRY Thanks. *[Another clap of thunder.]* Gee, this weather could wake the dead.

SANDY Not wake the dead. It'll just stir the spirits into walkin'.

HENRY Spirits?

LANDLORD Now Sandy. *[To HENRY.]* Don't mind Old Sandy. He likes to tell tales of what was supposed to have happened around these parts.

SANDY Not tales. Truth.

HENRY I'm not sure I believe in ghosts.

[Another clap of thunder.]

SANDY Thunder and lightning. Tells you things.

HENRY What things?

SANDY When a friend is coming to visit you unexpectedly.

HENRY *[Humouring SANDY.]* OK.....

SANDY Without his own knowledge, he sends an invisible messenger, to put the idea of him into your head.

LANDLORD Don't let him hinder you with his tales...

HENRY It's OK. I'm intrigued.

SANDY You walk along a crowded street where you live and see the face of a passing stranger who looks like your friend. Then another face passes who looks like him. So, you begin to have a strange foreknowledge that presently you'll meet your friend - which you do, though you believed him to be out of town. What do you call that?

HENRY Well I guess it's not that uncommon to see a resemblance.

SANDY Uncommon? No, it's not uncommon. It's as common as apples on the trees of the old Manor House. And that reminds me..

LANDLORD *[Under his breath.]* Oh, here we go....

SANDY What of the old lady who lived at the Manor House?

- HENRY *[Slightly caught up in Sandy's tale.]* What about her?
- SANDY One night, while playing bridge after dinner, she suddenly shrieks and leaps up from the table; white showing through her rouged cheeks. "My sister in France is dead! I saw her face in the playing card and felt her cold touch on my back," she says. And minutes later a messenger comes to tell her that what she had seen and felt was true. Now what do you think of that?
- HENRY Well, that is pretty weird.
- LANDLORD Old wives' tale, I call it! *[HE laughs.]*
- SANDY You can laugh, John Daily, but it's true, I tell yer.
- HENRY I guess in these wild parts all sorts of stories have been handed down.
- SANDY Ay. But none so strange as the one of an English gentleman's daughter.
- HENRY Oh? What happened to her?
- SANDY She ran away from her home here.
- HENRY When was this?
- SANDY Spring of 1852. The girl had quarrelled with her parents over the man she wanted to marry. A gentleman called Anthony Chase. Her parents forbade her to see him. They wanted her married to the son of the Lord of the Manor. She rebelled and, on a night like this one, left the family home. Her parents were distraught with grief and it is said because of her actions, she, and all of her descendants, were cursed by the spirits of her family.
- LANDLORD *[Placing a glass in front of SANDY.]* Here you are, old man. Quench your thirst with *this* spirit; and don't bother our visitor.
- HENRY It's OK. I'd like to hear the story.
- [More thunder claps.]*
- SANDY As I said, it was a night such as this one. The young girl had run away to London to be with Anthony, and next day they eloped to Italy where they were married in secret.
- [Soft Italian Music comes in as the story is retold with characters.]*

Scene – Outside an Italian Villa - 1852

- ANTHONY Clara my darling, I hope you are as happy as I am.
- CLARA Oh Anthony, I couldn't be anything else. And just look at this beautiful house
- ANTHONY I have taken it for three months, so we can rest in the hot weather, and when you need anything, we are only a short distance from Genoa.