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Every character has his attribute, a kind of colored shadow that appears whenever the person appears. Integrate a list of these colored shadows into the list of characters in your copy of the book.

#### JANE TOPPING

### Outside Bleak House: A Transcript of Sorts

(Red on black)

London.

Westminster Bridge, policeman in the fog directing traffic, headlights though fog on a busy road, fog lamp beams, two women hurry arms linked one covers her mouth with her scarf, more headlights on a bus a man walks next to the vehicle he is wearing a uniform, a man with a baton stands in front of a double decker on its way to Kew Green, a mannequin wears a mask above signage which reads BE PREPARED, an etching of an alley, The Houses of Parliament glowing golden, two people walk over that bridge again, on the film set they are using dry ice, through the curtain we can see the distant car, James Fox looks at Sarah Miles' legs, a tree, a depleted forest, the horizon, he is squinting over your shoulder, an etching of a brothel scene, two cars from the '50s, James Fox watches Dirk Bogart as he polishes the circular mirror, The Underground, Elizabeth Stride - victim of the Ripper, Queen Victoria, the foggy road again, Martin Amis is staring at the camera wearing a tartan scarf and a black jacket smoking a cigarette at his most beautiful, the employee guides the bus to Purley, The Sex Pistols (pre-Vicious), a monument I do not recognise (the man on the horse holds something above his head), two men talk in the street, collecting potatoes in a sack, a light bulb above his head Will Self in his studio with those famous Post-it notes, the etching looks like the ghost of a woman, street lights, burned bodies, Ivor Novello stares at the camera his mouth covered by a scarf, a uniformed child holding a teddy bear waves from a boat, Paul Simonon is about to smash his guitar September 21st 1979, a policeman in a mask, seen from above the whole crowd is wearing gas masks, a political meeting, a pig above Battersea Power Station, a woman stares at you from the garden (long dark hair and flowing white dress), a bus stop, Beer Street and Gin Lane, the moldering remains of a monster, fire burns behind the heads of the riot police, David Bowie, a man clings to a pole as the building burns, reflected in the circular mirror he pushes her up against the wall his hand in her hair and his face pressed to her temple, Harrods food court, injured man, Basil Rathbone, the final denouement, underground map, Wendy Craig is Susan, riot police watch a burning building, Jack Goodman is dead, The Fog, a triffid, Charles Dickens, Peeping Tom, The French House, two etched figures, the triffid's view, the investigators, a burning building, Cillian Murphy in scrubs on a deserted Westminster Bridge, Mary Poppins, unknown female victim, Amy Winehouse, a man has fallen on the escalator, a spade, a bearded man with red glowing eyes, a smashed window, Iolanthe, the man on the escalator is terrified, the bearded man is strangling a woman, the woman presses the door closed against the fog, a woman is about to scream, chased by zombies, in the dream the surviving friend is a vampire.

(Red on black)

*Have I read the little book wot you left?*

*No, I an't read the little book wot you left.*

Four identical pairs of lips appear at the first chord. There is a round of applause from the gathered audience.

They start to cheer as the first notes are heard and a female voice introduces the band.

The lips are at rest. Serious. With no hint of a smile.

The lips are hovering in slow motion (think of a mute version the actress in Not I, but these lips are paler, more natural looking). They resemble rosebuds. Honestly, they look as perfect and as delicate as rosebuds.

The camera slowly pans back and the four pairs of lips become more defined. They are intoxicating. You have never looked at someone's lips for this long in your life. Never really studied them. Wanted to kiss them of course.

Panning back again, the camera reveals four perfect chins, the exquisite tip of a four perfect noses. Each of the eight cheeks are pinched pink with a blushing glow. They are the epitome of youth and innocence. These clichés have never felt more real, more true, than they do to you right now. This emerging face is of the woman you have been searching for all your life.

A final pull back of the camera and she is looking at you. Directly at you. Her eyes can only be described as languid (yes really, like deep, dark pools). And infused with a sadness that you can feel, even through the screen. Four times over. You look from one face to the next face to the next face to the next identical face. Her long dark hair is worn in ringlets, pulled back with a dark blue bow. Then you notice that her shirt is made of a fabric that reminds you of childhood holidays in France.

Montre moi ton visage sings the voice.

(Red on black)

*Shall I ever forget*

*the manner in which*

*those handsome proud eyes*

*seemed to spring out of their languor*

*and to hold mine!*