

House Of Myrmidon Presents

The Trail Of Five-Ton Mary

An original script by Graham Thomas

OVER BLACK

BOATMAN

My name is Boatman. And I will tell you about Five-Ton Mary. But, as it is to me, so shall it be to you. By that I mean a dream. I recall it all only as a dream. And when one does that, they recite not the events in order, but how the mind recalls them.

EXT. PLATEAU OF EVERYTHINGNESS -- TWILIGHT

Silhouetted hands pass great wooden beams to and fro. A structure is being erected. Its design, its purpose and its architect are unknown.

EXT. THE GREAT CRATER -- DAY

The sun shines brightly. The clay bedded crater has walls at least 50 ft high..

A DROPLET OF WATER HITS THE GROUND. As soon as it hits the ground, the water transforms into an ant and scuttles into a crack in the clay.

Another droplet. Another ant

WE HEAR THE GROANS OF A MAN UNDER STRAIN. We move up. The ant-sweat is falling off the brow of a great STRONGMAN. He is wearing the garb of a circus performer and he is bent double.

We move further up. Upon his back is a water tower. We move further up until we come to the reservoir on top

FLOATING ON HIS BACK IS BOATMAN. A middle-aged man in a green frock coat, shirt and ragged trousers. He effortlessly glides around the water on his back.

BOATMAN

How long has it been Arcadian? How long between jobs?

ARCADIAN

Two years Boatman. Two years as the world spins.

BOATMAN

Two years travelling between minds. I remember we'd only travel 2 hours before we'd find a sleeper to entertain.

ARCADIAN

Aye. There were times long ago now it seems.

BOATMAN

(to himself)
Two years...nobody dreams anymore.

SOBER JENNY (o/s)
MURDER! TREACHERY!

Arcadian looks up. The water tower rocks.

OVER THE BROW OF THE CRATER WADDLES SOBER JENNY. She waddles because she is encased inside a hug barrel. Head poking out the top, arms freed to the elbows flailing, legs freed to the thighs scrabbling for balance.

SOBER JENNY
MURDER! JUSTICE! OH FATEFUL NIGHT!
VENGEFUL SUN! MURDER! FIVE-TON MARY!

Arcadian stands in shock he is at least 12 feet tall. The water tower tips.

It crashes to the floor. The water immediately turns into a sea of ants as the scurry about.

BOATMAN LANDS ON HIS BACK AND ROCKS FROM SIDE TO SIDE. We can see that his back, freed from the strictures of his jacket via a hand made slit resembles that of a hull of a boat.

BOATMAN
ARCADIAN! Help me please! I'm beached!

Arcadian helps Boatman to his feet and dusts him off.

Sober Jenny trips and rolls the rest of the way down the crater.

SOBER JENNY
MUR--OH!--MURD--AARGH!

She gets to her feet and staggers over, slightly dizzy from her tumble.

SOBER JENNY
COME! COME QUICK! OH THE HORROR!

Arcadian and Boatman look at each other in bemusement

SOBER JENNY
Arcadian, throw me back! Boatman come
along! I beg you!

ARCADIAN
Very well

Arcadian picks up Sober Jenny, stretches out and hurls her, barrel and all up into the air like an American football.

WE FOLLOW SOBER JENNY AS SHE ARCS INTO THE SKY. She clears the crater before reaching the zenith of her arc.

Below her we see carriages, carts, and trucks - a caravan of travellers. A CIRCUS! To the east lies a great hanger.

ON THE GROUND. Three workers rush through a crowd carrying a rolled up carpet on their shoulders.

WITH SOBER JENNY AS SHE PASSES A MAN STANDING STILL IN THE AIR -
FEATHER PETE.

SOBER JENNY
Feather Pete, they are coming!

Sober Jenny begins her descent.

SOBER JENNY
INCOMING!

Below her the three men open a huge blue sheet with a red spiral
on it.

Sober Jenny comes crashing into it, the blanket breaking her fall
wonderfully.

SOBER JENNY
GET ME OUT! GET ME OUT!

The four men unwrap her and right her.

SOBER JENNY
They are coming. Feather Pete found
them.

WE HEAR A SCRAPE AND CLANG. THEN ANOTHER. Sober Jenny turns.

Two great anvils are moving by themselves across the floor.
No..wait. Not by themselves. They are attached to ropes, pulled
taught into the sky.

Everybody looks up. The ropes are tied to Feather Pete's ankles,
anchoring him to the ground.

SOBER JENNY
FEATHER PETE! ARE THEY COMING?

FEATHER PETE
Yes, for all my grief I cannot lie!
They are coming.

Sober Jenny pushes her way through the throngs of travellers,
workers and circus performers until she comes to a clearing.

IN THE CENTRE LIES A DEAD GIRL, CRUSHED FLAT. Almost comical.

SOBER JENNY
Have you woken Ringmaster?

WORKER
Not yet.

SOBER JENNY
NOT YET! MURDER! CONSPIRACY!
COLLUSION!

WE HEAR A WAIL.

WORKER
He's up.

Boatman, Arcadian and Feather Pete have reached the congregation.

WORKER 2

Look, they're here. No need to wake
Ringmaster, no need!

BOATMAN

What happened here?

FEATHER PETE

My heart is broke, my anchors keep my
pain in this world. A murder dear
Boatman!

ARCADIAN

Murder? Amongst us? Amongst the
Dreamers? Impossible?

WORKER 3

The dreamers! The impossible! Brothers
they are! Murder!

THE WAIL RETURNS. The congregation turn to a tiny caravan, not big
enough to hold a turtle. It rattles and the obvious sound of
somebody falling out of bed emanates from it...closely followed by
two jingles.

RINGMASTER (o/s)

WELL NOW I'M AWAKE! BRANDY! IN A
BUTTER CUP!

BOATMAN

Great! He's up!

SOBER JENNY

JUSTICE DALI! JUSTICE! COME SEE
MURDER!

RINGMASTER (o/s)

Murder! Possible, very possible. Like
fingernails.

SOBER JENNY

Five-Ton Mary did it!

The door to the caravan flings open. A fully-grown contortionist
unfolds from it. He stands up, hair slicked back, massive
moustache (with two bells tied to it). He is wearing a smoking
jacket and flippers. RINGMASTER SALVADOR DALI marches forward.

SALVADOR DALI

MURDER? Never! Where is she now?
Maybe!

SOBER JENNY

MURDER I SAY! HANG HER! KILL HER!
JUSTICE!

SALVADOR DALI

Hang? No! Or Yes! Maybe! Where are my
bells?

A Worker mimes cleaning his moustache. Dali follows his mime and finds his bells.

SALVADOR DALI
JUSTICE! JUSTICE FOR CADENCE HERE!
JUSTICE

The crowd cheer! Riled up and ready for blood.

BOATMAN
Wait! Justice you cry! People,
friends! This is madness! Hysteria!

SALVADOR DALI
Mmm..a compelling argument!

SOBER JENNY
MURDER! SICK FILTH! WIPE THIS PLACE OF
HER MEMORY! FIVE-TON MARY MUST DIE!

SALVADOR DALI
Where is she?

WORKER
Consigned to the hanger Ringmaster.

SALVADOR DALI
It seems we need justice for all!
Especially for poor flattened Cadence!

The crowd cheers.

SUDDENLY A GUNSHOT RINGS OUT. The crowd look to the east - the source of the noise. A silhouetted man stands on the brow of a hill.

THE COLOUR-HAND
PEOPLE BEHOLD!

SALVADOR DALI
Who? Where?

A wind whips through the plain. The Colour-Hand materialises behind the crowd.

THE COLOUR-HAND
(whispering)
People behold.

They turn to him. He is wearing a dark suit and a dusty black coat. He has a necklace of carved wooden elephants that hangs low around his waist. His wide brimmed hat hides his face.

SALVADOR DALI
AAAH! TAXMAN!

The crowd gasp!

SALVADOR DALI
Don't move! He can't see you if you
don't move!

BOATMAN

He is no Taxman...are you?

The Colour-hand laughs and shakes his hand.

BOATMAN

Who are you?

The Colour-Hand holds up his right hand. He has a circle of red paint on the back of it.

SOBER JENNY

A colour-hand! A judge!

THE COLOUR-HAND

You summoned me.

BOATMAN

No...no we...

THE COLOUR-HAND

Then why am I here?

Sober Jenny flings her self to his feet...well, as much as her barrel prison will allow her to do.

SOBER JENNY

Yes! There has been a murder! Judge Mary! Cast her down.

BOATMAN

That is not justice!

THE COLOUR-HAND

You are right! Hull-Back, this is not justice. Where is the defendant?

The congregation point to the hanger lying to the east.

INT. HANGER -- MOMENTS LATER

The doors are pulled open. The Colour-Hand stands in the doorway peering into the darkness. We can hear shuffling and sense movement in the darkness but we cannot make out Five-Ton Mary.

The Colour-hand removes his hat. We see his eyes - ruby pinpricks. He smiles and closes the hanger doors.

EXT. HANGER -- CONTINUOUS

The Colour-hand turns to the congregation.

SALVADOR DALI

Well, Judge? What see you? What words will you utter? Could it be, could it be?

SOBER JENNY

Yes! Tell us! Tell us that justice is to be served!

THE CROWD
TELL US! TELL US! JUST US! JUST US !
JUSTICE! JUSTICE!

The Colour-Hand silences the crowd with a concise gesture.

THE COLOUR-HAND
I see know what we are dealing
with...and in my opinion, you are
cursed!

The crowd gasp.

THE COLOUR-HAND
Cursed to wonder these lands, unable
to perform dreams, unable to enter the
minds of the sleepers. Cursed to walk
until every thing is faded. This world
will be your oubliette!

The crowd begin to wail and cry.

THE COLOUR-HAND
Unless...yes! Unless!

SOBER JENNY
Unless what! There is a way? Tell us,
be our salvation!

THE COLOUR-HAND
Are you willing to trust in me? To go
where I go, but under blindfold? To
build what I build without question
for your faith is put in your God?

SOBER JENNY
We are, we will...we do!

THE CROWD
YES!

THE COLOUR-HAND
A march, a pledge of trust and then a
trail! You will come with me to my
land, there you witness justice!

BOATMAN
We cannot pay you...nor do I trust
you.

THE COLOUR-HAND
Fear not hull-back. Money is not
important to me - for payment I seek
only what you will give me.

BOATMAN
And what is that?

THE COLOUR-HAND

I seek to take away you hysteria! That
I can keep, I have ways. You're panic
will leave you!

SOBER JENNY

A bargain! I say a bargain!

Boatman motions to appeal

THE CROWD

BARGAIN! A DEAL HAS BEEN MADE, WHAT
SAY YOU RINGMASTER?

Ringmaster Dali looks at The Colour-hand, his ruby eyes dancing.

SALVADOR DALI

He speaks of dreams, taken but not
forgotten, of curses and redemption.
Of oubliette and remembrance. He can
rekindle all the dreams! A deal!

The crowd cheer, Boatman looks to the ground. Arcadian puts his
hand on his shoulder.

THE COLOUR-HAND

To the PLATEAU OF EVERYTHINGNESS!

SALVADOR DALI

SADDLE THE DEAD-PIGS FOR A FLOGGING!

EXT. PLAINS -- TWILIGHT

The caravan marches across the baron world. The great hanger is
being rolled on great logs. Workers busy around it like ants.

Ringmaster Dali sits on a wicker chair, fanning himself with a
record. He is blindfolded.

His chair sways 200ft in the air. A single beam of bamboo connects
it to the saddle of two Dead-Pigs - great Triceratops, tethered
and bridled bear the weight of Dali's grand chair. The wail and
trudge as they drag a trailer over loaded with boxes.

SALVADOR DALI (v/o)

A chance? Maybe? 2 years out here? My
children my loves so lost and wasted -
a circus wasted because nobody dreams.
The Colour-Hand will save us...but
what price? I'll pay anything,
anything I have for the chance to be
who we are.

The Colour-Hand walks alone out front. His shadow so long in the
twilight that the preceding circus is encompassed in it.

We move through those walking. They are all blindfolded. We come
to Boatman.

BOATMAN (v/o)

I knew we were marching to our doom.
But inside, I wanted so much the

chance to leave this place. To find a
mind to enter so that we could
perform. To my eternal shame, inside I
had already forsaken Mary for it.

We move to Sober Jenny.

SOBER JENNY (v/o)

My desire for vengeance wears my soul
thin...has this world got to me? Or am
I reacting with truth? The truth that
justice must be upheld no matter what.
Especially in times like these!

We float up to Feather Pete

FEATHER PETE (v/o)

What madness has taken me that I yearn
so to float away, to leave the horrors
of my land and seek peace elsewhere!
To leave behind what I know, to be
free of fear and pain? Such a thing is
no crime, but crime I have witnessed.
The cries of Sober Jenny pierce my
heart still. Oh! The pain. Compelling
she was, rousing! She swept our pain
along and championed our cause...

We float down to The Colour-Hand.

THE COLOUR-HAND

(to himself)

The fools. Each an innocent and each
the more guilty. The fear in them is
sustenance! Soon my task will be done
and they shall weep for what they have
asked for. They shall sit on the floor
and sob and their ant-tears will not
look back. The fools.

EXT. PLATEAU OF EVERYTHINGNESS -- NIGHT

The five moons look down with sad eyes as the procession march
solemnly onward.

BOATMAN (v/o)

And so we came to the end of our
journey. Arcadian who can count by the
stars cited that our march had lasted
a month. We cared not, it was just a
reminder that time existed...it was an
inconvenient surprise as we new it
meant one thing...it meant this

EXT. OPEN COURT. -- NIGHT

A small campfire licks the night. The congregation sit around it.
The Colour-Hand paces around the outside. He his rubbing his
necklace absentmindedly.

THE COLOUR-HAND

Ladies and Gentle-freaks...you say
murder befell you. You say injustice
and treachery were afoot. And you seek
justice. What justice can be served to
you?

Sober Jenny goes to turn.

THE COLOUR-HAND

Do not answer Sober Jenny Instigator
of Hysteria. We know what you would
have. Sleep my friends, my children.
But sleep with your eyes open. You
have spent your days, your lives in
search of others' dreams...let one
come to you. When you wake you will
pass you judgment.

The Colour-Hand throws a pellet into the fire. A BLINDING FLASH OF
MULTI-COLOURS. EVERYBODY SLUMPS DOWN ASLEEP.

EXT. GRASSLAND -- EVENING

DALI stands in the plains. A wasp lands on him. He inspects it and
eats it.

He looks to the sky. A tiger is leaping down upon him from the
heavens. DALI OPENS HIS MOUTH. A JAVELIN EXTENDS OUT. The turns
into mirror and shatters on the tip of the javelin.

We follow a sharp of the mirror. It falls to the ground.

A hand picks it up. BOATMAN STANDS FACING IT. He is floating in a
womb

He opens his mouth. He can breathe. He cartwheels around in the
amniotic fluid. His back is the normal shape.

He swims up to the edge of the sack, using the edge of the mirror
he slices it. The fluid drains in reverse: bottom upwards.

BOATMAN climbs out of the womb.

INT. LIBRARY -- CONTINUOUS

Sober Jenny stands on the edge of a giant bookcase. She is
clutching her side. She reaches pulls at her skin. She pushes her
hand inside. She winces in pain as she pulls out a shard of
mirror. She looks at herself. An elephant stares back.

Sober Jenny turns and falls backwards off the shelf

As she tumbles, the background melts away.

A great splash. Sober Jenny is swimming in tar. Slowly, slowly she
sucked under.

The tar thickens until it is solid. We move back to reveal a great
anchor. Giant ropes suspend caravans, animals and carts. Feather
Peter walks around the base of the anvil. He is carrying a giant
butterfly net.

He begins to leap about trying to catch the floating circus.
Everything is clearly out of his reach.

He sits on the floor and looks up at the sky

Slowly the clouds merge to form a mirror image of his face. Soon
the reflection is in perfect clarity.

He reaches up and taps the sky. It is now only a few inches about
his face.

He taps it again. THE MIRROR SHATTERS. The shards fly up into the
heavens.

Feather Pete closes his eyes. When he reopens them, an elephant is
standing over him.

THE COLOUR-HAND (v/o)
Rise children. But continue to sleep

EXT. OPEN COURT. -- CONTINUOUS

The sleeping congregation stand up in a trance.

THE COLOUR-HAND
Build what you will.

The sleepwalking crowd wonder off into the night.

The Colour-Hand, left alone, begins to dance and weave around the
fire, his hands changing the flames as if he were conducting a
symphony.

We hear the sounds of wood being cut and hammering.

EXT. PLATEAU OF EVERYTHINGNESS - DAWN

The circus of dreamers is building a great wooden structure.

BOATMAN (v/o)
Still in our dreams we built. Our
hands moving out of synchronisation
with our hearts. It was chaos of
organs - a silent war in our bodies.
And we built and we built.

EXT. PLATEAU OF EVERYTHINGNESS -- MORNING

The congregation lie like sleeping lions exhausted. Occasionally
twitching from their dreams.

The structure they have built is covered by a giant curtain

The Colour-Hand walks amongst them.

THE COLOUR-HAND
The verdict is to be delivered.
Prepare Five-Ton Mary.

The congregation stand and walk towards the hanger.

THE COLOUR-HAND
(to himself)
I must prepare

EXT. PLATEAU OF EVERYTHINGNESS -- NIGHT

The congregation stand still asleep. Two lime-lamps project big beams over a massive stage. The Colour-Hand stands in the centre

THE COLOUR-HAND
Ladies and Gentlefreaks! Awaken!
Behold what you have done!

He throws another pellet onto the table. A blinding flash awakens the congregation

THE COLOUR-HAND
Ladies and Gentlemen. You dreamt,
vividly and for many star-turns. Not
ever your Arcadian can say how long.
But your judgement has come

The crows are bemused.

SALVADOR DALI
This is no dream? If I think that then
it is so...logic? Was that logic that
appeared just then?

SOBER JENNY
What trail? What verdict? What is
this?

THE COLOUR-HAND
I have taken your hysteria! Your pain!
As payment for my services as a
Colour-Hand!

BOATMAN
Release us!

THE COLOUR-HAND
You are free! Free as you wanted!

SOBER JENNY
Wait...where's Mary?

FEATHER PETE
I remember! Something happened. We
cast out someone...for something they
did...without reason. Or at least
without fairness

SOBER JENNY
I remember too...but what she did I
cannot.

THE COLOUR-HAND
It was murder!

SOBER JENNY

No - I remember it now! It was an accident! A terrible accident! Oh what have I done?

THE COLOUR-HAND

It is too late! Judgement has past and now I collect my payment

The Colour-Hand drops the curtain

THE COLOUR-HAND

BEHOLD WHAT YOUR HYSTERIA DID!

FIVE TON-MARY IS AN ELEPHANT AND SHE IS STRUNG UP ON A GIANT GALLOWES. SHE IS BALANCED ON A GIANT BALL. THE NOOSE SLACK.

The crowd wails.

The Colour-Hand pulls a lever. A giant pole with a huge shoe swings down and kicks the ball away. MARY THE ELEPHANT FALLS AND DANGLES UNTIL SHE DIES

The crowd screams.

THE COLOUR-HAND

I took your anger and left you grief!
A bargain I would say...wouldn't you?

A wind whips through the Plateau and The Colour-Hand is gone.

SOBER JENNY

What have we done! Mary! My love!
Mary!

Sober Jenny runs off into the distance wailing and screaming.

One by one, over-come with grief the congregation solemnly lie down.

One by one, their tears turn to ants. The gather by the bodies, lift them up and carry them off into the distance.

Ringmaster Dali walks up to Mary. He runs his hand over her

SALVADOR DALI

That was logic in my head. And it bred the end. No more dreams. Not for Mary. For me? Even less.

He turns to face out from the stage. He raises his arms.

SALVADOR DALI

So dream! And if you dream to eat a wasp...you will wake to see a darling swinging from a gallows of your own making!

Salvador Dali falls forward face-first into on of the lime-lamps. It sparks and shatters. Shards of mirrored glass fly into the air.

Salvador Dali's body disappears.

Only Boatman and Feather Pete remain. They look at each other

FEATHER PETE

Please.

Boatman nods. With his pocketknife he cuts the ropes anchoring Feather Pete to the ground.

Feather Pete begins to rise

FEATHER PETE

Goodbye my dear Boatman. I go to my hell.

Feather Pete floats into the night sky.

Boatman stands and looks at Mary.

BOATMAN

And so here I am. And there you hang.
Mary, my love, we suffered the
hysteria. A madness took us and you
said not a word and took our pain. My
heart is split asunder..and so I to go
my death. The dreams I gave offer me
no redemption. I will wait for my end
to come. It is what justice is.

Boatman raises his arms and falls onto his back, beaching himself.

EXT. RIDGE -- NIGHT

The Colour-Hand stands looking over the valley below. Mary swings gently in the night breeze.

In his hands he is carving a new elephant for his necklace.

He turns and walks over the ridge. We move up to reveal countless gallows stretched out before him.

Each one has an elephant swinging from it.

FADE OUT: