

April 31th, 1851

The day before the opening ceremony of the Great Exhibition, I spent all day cleaning up the Crystal Palace. It was long and hard, this task was not easy. The manager of the Crystal Palace wants everything to be stainless. He wants each of the inventions to be cleaned up, to be shiny, to look perfect. I have accomplished my task, I'm satisfied. When I was cleaning, I saw something weird though, I remembered it was like a fountain, it was beautiful but quite mysterious. There was something about it. Something odd. Something that made me uneasy. I had the impression that I had already seen that fountain. It was really creepy.

I decided to have a closer look at this fountain. It had aroused my curiosity. When the night fell, I decided to leave my apartment, to go back to the Crystal Palace's exhibition hall. I took the keys, a flashlight and my dog, Spooky. I walked slowly, because even with my oil lamp, I could not see very well. I have long sought the mysterious fountain. It obsessed me. Soon, I found it, in the night, it was even more eerie, but somehow, it no longer interested me. It had lost all of its appeal. Its beauty, its shininess, had faded with the deep darkness of the night. Disappointed, I decided to leave the place to discover, before everyone, the inventions presented the following day. For once, I would be privileged! After a long wandering I decided to go home.

Now I'm back. On my sofa. Thinking.

I don't understand the point of these inventions. I was all for this era of new technology. I was thrilled about the exhibition, about this job, but should the world evolve? Seeing these inventions give me a blurry vision of the future, of Progress. Where is all this taking us?

What will our future be? What lies ahead? We don't even know our past. How could we know.

I feel nervous now thinking of all this. I'm feeling bad actually. I'd rather sleep. Tomorrow is the Grand Opening.

May 1st, 1851

Today, the Crystal Palace opens its door. All the works on display is resplendent and carefully presented. I have spent more than 3 days taking care of each invention. I know each of these inventions. Every button, every lever.

Now this was it; I approached the great golden doors, hesitantly. I couldn't wait to see the upper class. The elite of this world. I took a deep breath and opened the doors to the public. A silence settled, eyes were wide open, and gradually, discussions began. I saw the first reactions and heard the first opinions and, little by little, the Crystal Palace was filled with wonder. I was surprised by the kindness of the visitors. Usually they never said hello, they are too snobbish for that. Today almost all the spectators greeted me, or at least took notice of me, and I was surprised at the visitors' respect for inventions.

But of course, that couldn't last. I was hanging out in the hall, when a fat lady told me I should not be here, I was badly dressed, I was too poor for this place. Then she left. I was absolutely furious; she treated me like a homeless pauper. Damn it!

I hated this day; I think I hate them all. This morning, people were kind to me. For a short time I thought that they would inspire me, but it's all fake. They're all well-dressed, they have manners, they speak very quietly. They don't smile much. They all look-alike actually. Empty shells. Everything I hate. That woman showed no emotions. She was frightful. She insulted me. I'm still furious. That's why I hate these people. They think they are superior to us. They are so stupid! Of course this is not the first time. I should have known. What did I expect.

I don't want to open the doors to the Crystal Palace tomorrow. Please save me. I don't want to see them. Snooty, uptight, austere. They disgust me. They make me feel invisible. Or worse.

May 2nd, 1851

Today nobody said hello. Some people had come with children. Dreadful. They ran in all directions, and one of them played with a ball. It frightened me as he drew his ball into a statue that it touched. I thought the statue would fall, I would lose my job, this

was it. I ran to catch it. Just on time. I picked up the ball and threw it in the trash, the child pulled out his tongue and he left. I had to be attentive to all visitors and anticipate their moves even if there were other agents making sure no one was harmful to their wonderful inventions.

At this moment I saw a lot of marks on the floor. Like paws. Someone must have brought their dog although it is forbidden in the Palace. I decided to make a quick walk around the Crystal Palace to find the culprit. But I didn't. I just had to clean now.

Shortly after this, the exhibition closed its doors it was the end of the day. Well, the end of the day for them, not for me. When all of the people left the Crystal Palace, I was shocked at the state of the place. Everything was dirty. People had no respect! I had to spend the whole night cleaning the premises. People of the upper class disgust me. Isn't it funny to see how clean and fancy they can look but how messy they can leave a place?! What a masquerade.

I'm tired, I want the exhibition to end. These people make me mad.

May 3rd, 1851

I did not sleep last night, I was too tired. But I have to go back there. I will stay away from people today. I'll ignore them, like they do with me. I'll be transparent. Invisible. They despise me. I despise them too.

I saw another "fat lady", she came straight to me. I looked straight into her eyes. I knew I shouldn't. She approached and she snapped that the place needed cleaning because someone had been sick. I didn't answer. Ignored her. Be transparent. But I still went to check and clean. Transparent doesn't mean I won't do my job.

Then a man approached me. So much for being transparent! He said he was sorry, his son had been sick and caused the mess. He invited me to go around the exhibition. I had to accept, but I was suspicious. I spent a few hours with this man. Very interesting man I must say. He knew many of the inventors and gave me more details about these machines I thought I knew so well. But I knew little! He even introduced me to some people of the upper class. I didn't really know what to say to them. I must have looked like an idiot.

This encounter was... disturbing. I thought I hated them. I just had to be transparent, it was simple. But now they start being gentle, smart and kind with people like me. Well, some of them are like that. So now I suppose I like them. I must admit I liked being with them today. But not all, not the fat lady, I still hate her.

Do you think I'm getting mad? Huh?

September 1st, 1851

It's been a long time since I last wrote you, I did not have time to write, I've been very busy. You remember this man who had taken me around the exhibition, his name is George Mulligan, and I think he is my friend. I have seen George and his friends many times around, and each time, I was like them. They were just richer, and smarter than me, but I was like them. They were kind with me, shared a bit of their knowledge, and vision of the world, the future, they treat me as their equal. George says that one day we will be able to travel through time ! And one of them said that we came from monkeys ! Monkeys ! Crazy ideas, huh ? Anyway, I started reading a lot of books, not to look too much like an idiot. Well, I'm still the housekeeper of the Crystal Palace. And I still am nobody to many of them. But I'm not alone anymore.

I know I hated this exhibition at first. And also the people who went there, but I have learnt a lot, and I think I have changed.

In fact, I am not transparent. And I was not mad.