

ALTERATIONS: An Extended Treatment.

Lance, thirties, walks down a busy city sidewalk. At first, only his dress shoes are seen. After a few moments, he is shown from behind. He wears a nice, conservative business suit and carries a briefcase. People passing him react to his appearance: People stare as they walk by, a woman looks up at him and gasps, a child points as his mom shushes and hurries him along, and a dog cowers from him. One startled woman drops her shopping bag by him, and as he bends down to help her with it, a gross bulging deformity is revealed above his right eye.

With a look that says he's used to this behavior, Lance shrugs, hands the shopping over and moves on. He looks sad and frustrated as he strides toward a building sign-posted as the SOUTH METRO-MEDICAL BUILDING. As he reaches the door, two girls approach from a different angle at the same time. He holds the door for them and watches them pass. Carroll, a pretty thirty, if she didn't have the hairy mole under her nose, passes with a sneer, followed by Jane, an incredibly pretty late twenties with beautiful long hair, who smiles a thank you. Lance is transfixed. He stands for a moment before following them in.

An inspirational poster on the wall of a white, clinical office extols the virtue of internal beauty, right beside a poster advertising half-price botox injections. Lance enters the plastic surgeon's waiting room, just as Carroll and Jane leave the receptionists desk. He smiles at Jane as he checks in, and the smile is returned. He sits down and looks around. A motley crew of absurdly deformed people surround him: A woman clearly addicted to surgical enhancement or a child with ridiculously protruding ears. Jane appears to be there for Carroll's support, as they hug and hold hands. Jane continues to make eyes at Lance and whisper at Carroll, who rolls her eyes. Lance is intrigued, but suspicious of Jane's looks. Getting frustrated, he walks to the aquarium.

Lance sees an incredibly ugly fish in the tank and starts making fish faces at it. Suddenly, he notices through the tank, that Jane is watching him from the other side. Embarrassed, he straightens up and looks at her. She reaches for the fish food and offers him a pinch. Smiling warily, he takes it and sprinkles some into the tank. Jane continues to look sweetly at Lance and he appears to get more comfortable being next to her. They both flirt with each other as they observe the fish. Lance leans in to get a better look at it, and accidentally hits his head on the side of the tank. Clearly in pain, he rubs his forehead.

Jane lovingly reaches up to touch the injury, but gets too close to Lance's deformity. Lance flinches and quickly

brushes her hand away. Reassuring him that it's ok, Jane caresses his forehead and Lance lets her; enjoying the soothing touch. They look into each other's eyes and are instantly in love. Carroll looks up from her magazine and shakes her head. Lance takes Jane's hand into his and kisses it. Jane smiles and coyly tucks her hair behind her ear, revealing a third, horribly grotesque cauliflower ear. Lance grimaces at the sight of it, turns and gags slightly. Mortified, Jane covers up the ear, pulls her hand away from Lance, and moves back to her seat, ignoring his protestations. As Lance takes his own seat, Jane whispers sadly to Carroll, who gives a Lance a dirty look. Jane does not seem angry, just sad. Lance looks around at the angry faces of the other patients. He tries to get Jane's attention again, but she's looking out the window, tearful.

Jane's name is called by a nurse to come see the doctor. In a defiant manner, Carroll grabs her by the hand and pulls her down the corridor to the doctor. Lance can only look helplessly. He looks around at the patients again and wrings his hands, frustrated.

That's it! He gets up and storms down the corridor that Jane went down. A nurse asks him where he's going. He ignores her and she tries to get in his way. He gently pushes her aside. A doctor steps out and Lance snatches the clipboard out of his hand. Reading the clipboard, oblivious to the shouts of the doctor and nurse, Lance searches the door numbers and stops at one.

He pushes open the door to reveal Carroll, sitting by Jane, whose third ear is being marked by a nurse. Lance looks at Jane intensely, then slowly backs up and gestures to the corridor. She turns to Carroll, who shakes her head. Jane turns back to Lance and slowly begins to smile. She gets up and walks out past Lance, and they walk down the corridor together. They walk fast, stealing glances at each other. Lance takes Jane's hand. They keep looking at each other, and begin to smile. Grinning, they pick up the pace and run out of the surgery together.