

WALTER/MORGAN: Please prepare both; Morgan should have a Standard British Accent; Walter is American.

WALTER

After a year, Henry grew restless. He began traveling to London to start the first of his many adventures that would make him a wealthy man. Without him, I began to stew - so one day I decided to return to the city. I hadn't been there in over a year. I was terrified of what I might find. I was about to take myself to lunch when I ran into an old friend of ours. Peter West was his name. Dear Peter. Darling man, more clever than anyone I ever knew. And handsome as sin. I wouldn't have recognized him if he hadn't called out to me from across 5th Avenue. Peter had "the look," the telltale sign that someone was infected. His handsome face was sunken and sallow, his muscles had melted away. It was clear in one glance that he had it. He was also, I discovered, essentially homeless. His landlord evicted him. He had been estranged from his family for years. We took the next train uptown and phoned for a cab. The driver took one look at Peter and fled. We stood there, four miles from my house, with no other means to get there but our legs. The day was beautiful and Peter smiled as he breathed in the country air through his rattling lungs. The sun was setting as we approached the house, I could feel a release in Peter's body. I put him in one of the rooms upstairs. Peter spent the next five days slowly dying. I cleaned him as he fouled himself. I held him as he wept in grief. I comforted him as he screamed in pain. I had no idea I had such strength.

MORGAN

I had never been touched like that before. It unleashed a creative spring in me unlike any I had ever felt. Who knew that my creative forces were to be located just north of my buttocks? It was in that instant that I conceived the whole of *Maurice*. I wanted to capture what I saw that date, to write a simple love story about two ordinary affectionate men. I wanted it to be as revolutionary as Carpenter and Merrill's relationship. And it was imperative that it have a happy ending. The newspapers were filled with too many stories that ended with a young man dangling from a noose or being carted off to prison for his nature. I was determined to change that narrative, at least in fiction. Writing *Maurice* was the most terrifying and most exhilarating thing I had ever done. Hiding it from the world was the most shameful.