OUR MAN IN PATHOLOGY

INT. PATHOLOGY LAB - EVENING

DR PHILLIPS, a slim-built pathologist in his late forties pulls on a pair of surgical gloves.

The CHIEF INSPECTOR enters. He is overweight, approaching retirement age, and glum looking.

A DEAD BODY lies on the post-mortem table, partially covered by a sheet.

DR PHILLIPS
(grimly)
Chief Inspector.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
Dr Phillips. You had enough time to examine the body?

DR PHILLIPS
Hmm? Oh, yes. Yes I have.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
And?

DR PHILLIPS
Not a lot to go on, I'm afraid. It's a strange one. A real puzzler.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
How so?

DR PHILLIPS
Well, I mean, where to start? For one thing we can't tell if it's male or female.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
What?

DR PHILLIPS
We have no idea if it's male or female. The body.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
(hesitantly)
It's male.

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DR PHILLIPS
Are you sure? How on Earth can you tell?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
Well the beard there's my first clue.

DR PHILLIPS
Great Scott. Incredible. Hah! Good work, Chief Inspector. How on Earth did you figure that--

CHIEF INSPECTOR
Anything else you can tell me?

DR PHILLIPS
Yes. Down to business. I'm afraid it gets stranger still.

He pulls the sheet further down.

DR PHILLIPS
Notice the abdomen? No visible scarring, correct?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
Right...

DR PHILLIPS
Now look at these.

Dr Phillips holds some x-ray plates up to the light.

DR PHILLIPS
I took some routine x-rays earlier this afternoon.
(beat)
Notice anything strange?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
I wouldn't know what I'm looking for.

DR PHILLIPS
Allow me to spell it out for you then, Chief Inspector. This individual, this *man,* if indeed that's what he is, has somehow - and without a single mark being left on his body - had his uterus completely removed.

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There is a moment of hesitant silence.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
His uterus?

DR PHILLIPS
And, indeed, his entire womb!

CHIEF INSPECTOR
But ... He hasn't got a womb.

DR PHILLIPS
Remarkable, isn't it?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
No, I mean ... He's a man.
He's never had a womb.

DR PHILLIPS
And the uterus?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
He won't have had a uterus
either.

Some confused silence.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
What I'm saying is, I mean, no-
one will have removed his womb
and uterus because he didn't
have one to remove in the first
place.

DR PHILLIPS
Ah!

CHIEF INSPECTOR
You see?

DR PHILLIPS
So he has some kind of genetic
abnormality?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
No! He's a man! Why would a
man have female reproductive
organs?

DR PHILLIPS
Well why wouldn't he?

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CHIEF INSPECTOR
(shouting)
Because he's a man!
(beat; irritated)
Anything else?

DR PHILLIPS
I'm glad you asked. Tell me, Chief Inspector, have you ever in your life seen anything quite like ...

He lifts the sheet, letting the Chief Inspector peek underneath.

DR PHILLIPS
This?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
(flatly)
It's a penis.

DR PHILLIPS
Well I know that's a penis, Chief Inspector! I didn't do five years of medical training to not know a penis when I see one! I mean I've got one of those myself!

CHIEF INSPECTOR
What then?

DR PHILLIPS
I was referring to this. It appears to be a small growth or skin sack of some description attached to the base of the penis, containing what feels like two spherical ...

CHIEF INSPECTOR
(sighing)
Those are testicles.

DR PHILLIPS
Testicles?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
That's right.

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DR PHILLIPS
Might ... Might they be a clue of some kind?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
I doubt it.
(beat)
Look, is there anything you can tell me at all? What about time of death?

DR PHILLIPS
Sorry, time of ...?

CHIEF INSPECTOR
Time of death. What time do you think he died?

DR PHILLIPS
Died?!

CHIEF INSPECTOR
Yes, when--

DR PHILLIPS
Died?? He's dead? You mean to say all this time I've been touching a ... Oh my God!

The Chief Inspector opens the door.

CHIEF INSPECTOR
This is ridiculous.

DR PHILLIPS
Oh my God!

Chief Inspector exits.

DR PHILLIPS
I think I'm going to be sick.

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