

TEASER

EXT. BETHNAL GREEN, LONDON - NIGHT

Hopeless poverty stains the fabric of this borough. Down one squalid street, several silk weavers close up shop.

The only thing to alleviate this miserable life are the ale houses and pubs that populate the corners of each street.

Welcome to London, 1847.

EXT. TABBARD INN - NIGHT

The windows glow with a warm light, which peters out on the river of mud squelching through the street.

A DRUNK thrusts up against a PROSTITUTE. Nobody pays them any mind as others head in to buy a drink.

Above all the noise and clamor, a second-floor window with a solitary light that illuminates one room.

INT. TABBARD INN, LODGER'S ROOM - NIGHT

An oil lantern flickers on a wooden table, its reflection a ghostly visage on the window's warped glass.

Calm. Peaceful. Quiet --

SLAM: a LEATHER CARRY CASE lands on the table.

A small, haggard man, ERVIN blusters around the room. His eyes burn with weariness, belying his age of 32. He's bent over with PANIC and FEAR, the devil on his back.

He grabs his belongings from around the room. Throws them into the carry case.

He lifts up the mattress and pulls out reams of paper. We see flashes of what they contain:

Mechanical schematics... machinery layouts... anatomical drawings of human body parts...

One particular image: a figure suspended in the air. Holding him aloft, six mechanical cables IMPLANTED into his back.

Man and machine fused together...

Ervin folds them into a battered folio. Ties the string tight. Shoves it into his carry case.

He darts to the writing desk. Grabs the fountain pen just before it rolls off.

He SCRATCHES out a message. The ink flying across the paper. Sweat drips off his brow onto the page.

He folds the paper and secures it in an envelope. On the front he scrawls: "E.W." He shoves it into his coat pocket.

Suddenly: pain rips across his face. He doubles over and CLUTCHES his stomach.

He collapses to the floor, one hand reaches out. He tries to brace his fall.

He RETCHES.

ERVIN

...No, not yet.

He THROWS UP. But this is no ordinary vomit. What cascades out his mouth is a thick, oily, tar-like substance.

Ervin retches again. More of this putrid, black bile ejects from his mouth, his nose, even squeezing out his tear ducts.

Finally done, Ervin scuttles back. The tarry vomit sticks to his chin, his hands, his clothes.

He stares in horror at the congealed mess. It steams on the floor, a festering deposit from Hell itself.

FOOTSTEPS.

Coming up the stairs.

Ervin crawls to his feet. He snatches up his carry case just as the door to his room BURSTS open.

A BURLY MAN ducks into the room. He looks like an escaped gorilla, angry at the world. And all his rage is pointed right at Ervin.

A momentary stand off... Ervin glances around the room. The door is his only way out.

BURLY MAN

...Don't kick up a shine now.

Ervin CHARGES at the intruder. He swings the leather carry case at him. The Burly Man easily SWATS it away.

They FIGHT and TUSSELE and knock over the writing desk.

The Burly Man punches Ervin in the gut. Pushes him to the ground. He snatches the carry case from him.

He RIPS it open and throws out the contents. Grabs the leather folio filled with the schematics.

Suddenly, Ervin is a man possessed. He scratches at the Burly Man and pulls at the folio. It rips:

The sheets of paper EXPLODE everywhere.

Ervin keeps hitting: WHACK. WHACK. WHACKWHACK.

He snatches at the fluttering pages. Takes what he can.

The Burly Man grabs his ankle. Ervin KICKS. Gains a foothold. Struggles free of his grasp.

He scrunches what few schematics he has into his coat pocket.

The Burly Man stands. Rage extends him to full height, his head almost brushes the ceiling.

Ervin hesitates... There is no way past him...

He spins and LAUNCHES himself through the window.

SMASH.

A hail of glass shards twinkle in the lamplight.

The Burly Man is dumbfounded...

He just stands there as he processes what just happened...

The drapes over the window FLUTTER in the wind.

A woman SCREAMS from the darkness.

The Burly Man ambles towards the opening. He smiles as he imagines seeing Ervin's crumpled, bloodied body. He leans over to see the damage below --

His face drops. Anger brims over. He SPINS and runs out the room, as we look down to what he saw:

There's no sign of Ervin on the cobblestoned street below.

He survived the fall...

END OF TEASER