

The Tell-Tale Bag

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FADE IN:

Black. The sound of a faint, steady rhythmic CREAKING.

The muffled distant SOUNDS of a busy city.

Insistent rhythmic MUSIC similar to Piero Piccioni's "Traffic Boom" plays throughout - faint in the background or as primary sound - but always an ever-steady rhythm.

EXT. CONCRETE SUBWAY. DAY

P.O.V. WALKER: He erratically walks through a long semi-lit graffiti covered circa 1970 concrete subway.

The same rhythmic CREAKING continues, inexplicably in synch with the MUSIC and the SWELL of the city.

P.O.V. WALKER: He continues to clumsily walk up the steps of the subway towards the exit, and looks up into the almost blinding light of the outside day.

The MUSIC and the SOUNDS of the city suddenly drop and are drowned out by the continuing CREAKING and WALKER's heavy BREATHING.

WALKER is a tall man in his early forties. Once thin, he is now starting to bald and develop a paunch. His suit is cheap, out of fashion and slightly too small for him (in all the wrong places).

WALKER is out of breath and badly struggling under the weight of his large, ugly, nondescript and dated sports bag. He continues up the steps...

EXT. BUSY CITY STREET. CONTINUOUS

WALKER's mobile RINGS.

He makes it up the last few steps before battling his coat pocket for his RINGING phone. His anger rising...

Finally he finds his mobile and answers it with an air of triumph.

He winces: it is a call he has been dreading. We only hear WALKER's side of the conversation.

WALKER
(shouting over noise)
Hi? John?
(listens)

Beat. WALKER struggles to hear him.

WALKER (CONT'D)
 No, I'm afraid not, mate - I can't
 make the game tonight...
 (listens)

Beat. He tries to laugh. It's a very pained laugh.

WALKER (CONT'D)
 HA... Well... No. I mean... Yes, I
 WAS going to come... I wanted to
 show you what an old pro could
 do...
 (listens)

Beat. He listens some more. He winces again - clearly not
 very pleased with what he's hearing.

WALKER (CONT'D)
 Yeah, well, I was in SUCH a rush
 this morning that I only went and
 forgot my kit bag, didn't I?
 (listens)

WALKER's body language is that of incompetent liar, but his
 voice is convincing until...

WALKER (CONT'D)
 No... WHAT CREAKING??

He stares accusingly at the strap of the large sports bag on
 his shoulder. It swings in time to the steady CREAKING sound.

WALKER (CONT'D)
 No - I can't hear any "creaking"
 either at this end, John... Must be
 interference... A bad line, maybe?

He holds the phone away from his mouth to desperately ape a
 bad signal.

WALKER (CONT'D)
 (quickly)
 Speak to you soon, John. Bye.

He hangs up and sighs, relieved - he's got away with it.

Beat.

A sudden CREAKING ruins his relief.

He stares accusingly at the strap of the large sports bag on
 his shoulder. It is swinging in time to the steady CREAKING
 sound.

EXT. BUSY CITY STREET. CONTINUOUS

P.O.V. WALKER: Dead ahead at the busy pavement.

WALKER sighs, readying himself.

He starts again - the MUSIC and city SOUNDS surround him.

Suddenly the CREAKING starts again - and steadily become louder as the MUSIC and city SOUNDS fade once more.

WALKER's stride becomes ever more erratic under the weight of the bag, which swings on his shoulder as he drags himself through the aggressive, unrelenting CROWD.

P.O.V. WALKER: Everyone he passes or bumps into from BUSINESSMEN to OLD WOMEN seems to stare at him angrily, even accusingly....

P.O.V. WALKER: Some appear to darkly MUTTER about him.

P.O.V. WALKER: An attractive YOUNG WOMAN seems to point and laugh at him.

WALKER's sweating, embarrassed face.

He shoots a blaming look at his bag.

P.O.V. WALKER: The bag strap swings awkwardly on his shoulder in time with the CREAKING.

WALKER becomes increasingly frustrated as he stumbles through the CROWD.

He suddenly stops dead on the pavement - to the HUFFING annoyance of a brutish LARGE MAN behind him.

WALKER looks up at the sky.

P.O.V. WALKER: The hot sun beating down on him.

WALKER realises the CREAKING has stopped. He pauses and sighs, relieved...

Beat.

But, he must continue. Instantly the CREAKING and MUSIC start up again.

Angered, he picks up his pace to try to desperately escape the terrible CREAKING...

EXT. VARIOUS BUSY STREETS. MONTAGE

The montage repeats, becoming faster and faster. The rhythm builds. The CREAKING becomes louder and faster:

- The sweating WALKER struggles on.

- The shifting, hate-filled CROWD.

- The wildly swinging bag.
- The sweating WALKER struggles on.
- The shifting, hate-filled CROWD.
- The wildly swinging bag.
- The sweating WALKER struggles on.
- The shifting, hate-filled CROWD.
- The wildly swinging bag.

EXT. NEAR TRAIN STATION. MOMENTS LATER

Finally, WALKER explodes with fury.

He throws the bag to the ground, raining down frenzied punches and kicks onto it.

He raggedly throws out his unused sports equipment onto the street until it's completely empty.

In a final moment of madness he violently rips off the offending bag strap with hateful glee.

WALKER abruptly comes to his senses with the bag strap in his clenched teeth, he looks down... The bag on the floor, decimated.

He looks up, shamefaced. Everyone nearby has turned to stare open-mouthed at the terrible spectacle.

One lone YOUNGER BUSINESSMAN (also with a sports bag) in the near distance is especially aghast.

Horribly resigned, WALKER recognises him...

WALKER
(breathless; wheeze)
John?

YOUNGER BUSINESSMAN/JOHN
(mouthing; astonished)
Walker?

The CREAKING has stopped.

The confused AUDIENCE (including JOHN, shaking his head) moves on.

A faint, twitching manic smile slowly appears on WALKER's face - peace at last!

WALKER moves his left leg off the bag and there is a sudden loud CREAK.

Appalled, he stares dumbfounded at his left knee and moves it once more - again a CREAK.

WALKER, resigned and broken, quizzically gazes straight at us.

BLACK.

The sound of WALKER collapsing in exhaustion. The MUSIC and city SOUNDS swell up again.

END CREDITS.

One last CREAK.

FADE OUT.