

TEASER

INT. DARK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

ARIS (20s, cynic), is LEISURLY walking with their fists in their pocket, as VARIAN (20s, prestigious), desperately sprints for an exit. He is exhausted and frantic, now hiding behind a stack of wooden crates, a knife shaking in hand. For all his talk, he's never used it once in his life.

FOCUS ON: Pendant tucked away in Varian's other hand.

ARIS

(monologing out loud)

The patrons of the tavern are an indulgent crowd, parading their smiles on the street. Their stories spill out with a single drink.

It's a dead end.

In the distance, laughter and music plays from a luxurious manor. Outside, dozens of PERFECTLY-KEPT bodies line the passageway. No one would be coming for them now.

ARIS

Still, I will be whatever they want me to be. It is customary, being a keeper of so many secrets.

Amused, Aris stomps loudly into the clearing, looking around to see any signs of his startled accomplice. Varian holds his breath, tears in his eyes. He looks around for any possible out.

ARIS

(lowered voice)

But what do you suppose when you slip up, when someone gets too close? When you cannot even keep one truth through your labyrinth of lies?

They make eye contact. Aris smiles. Checkmate.

ARIS

(outloud)  
This cyclical, endless performance. Contingent on the roles this mendacious world---these people--- have given us. Just to keep itself inebriated enough to function. A game they try to convince, that if you just play it with the right hand, you will eventually win.

Varian pulls at a linen, where the stack of wooden crates rest, and runs. The wood splinters with fine winery and glass, blocking the path behind them. Aris, subtly annoyed, manages to parkour over the mess, and scans for signs of the boy.

ARIS  
You know, I always hated your kind the most.

He addresses the clearing.

ARIS  
Masquerading as 'good people'. Pretending to give a damn about it all. Waiting to watch others fall.  
(Beat)  
But let us make one thing clear.

Abruptly, Varian TACKLES Aris, and the two brawl. It's clearly a losing game, as Aris begins to STRANGLE them to death. Varian writhes beneath him.

ARIS  
(guttarally)  
You are shit. I am shit. We are all pieces of shit. And one day, we will pay the price for it.

He says it as if he's trying to convince himself.

Debris of glass is scattered around them. At the last second, Varian manages to slash a shard across Aris's face, catching him off guard. The killer is more surprised and vexed to the stains on his clothes than to any actual damage.

Varian takes their knife and STABS Aris right in the chest. Then again. And again.

Aris falls lifelessly to the floor.

Varian, in horror and panic, stands completely frozen for a moment. Turning, he heaves on the ground, wild and frenzied. He considers checking the corpses for any signs of life, before staggering back to his feet.

VARIAN

(shaking, calling out)

H-hey...I-i-is anyone here? I-i-is  
anyone still a-alive?

He concludes it is far too late. Varian begins lurching hurriedly in search of any point of contact.

VARIAN

(shouting and trembling)

H-hello? C-c-can anyone h-hear me?

The Manor was nearby. Surely, someone must be on the streets.

VARIAN

Somebody help, please!

He is about to escape the passageway when--a blade slices into his heel. He crumples to the floor.

ARIS

You really are no different than them.

He attempts to crawl away, turning to see Aris with the knife EXTRACTED in his hand. Despite his blood-stained clothes, the wound is completely closed.

VARIAN

(in complete shock)

No...no-no-NO! Please!

Aris takes a booklet out of his pocket, and draws a red line across.

OVER BLACK:

UNCANNY SOUND.

Title Card: Fallen

END OF TEASER

## ACT 1

INT. BEDROOM - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

VARIAN (V.O.)  
I am the loneliest person you will  
ever meet.

We see the young man writing quickly in fine ink, seated at a wooden desk. His hand flicks meticulously as he tries to write.

We see him set down the papers, seal them in an envelope, and stash it away in a drawer.

He reaches for his satchel, takes one last look at his orderly and pristine room, before closing the door.

CUT TO:

INT. FLOATING WHARF - DAWN

VARIAN(20s, obscure), rushes discreetly through a slumbering, dreary city. There are overgrown flowers and vines that overtake it, and crumbling, marble architecture.

VARIAN (V.O.)  
I can tell you almost anything; my mind is the archive of nearly every consequential reading. I can chart the stars and create wonders from earth and tar. I can tell you a being's intentions and heart within two minutes of talk.

FOCUS ON: Pouch of coins in his hand.

VARIAN (V.O.)  
I carry whispers that only the wind and I know, and I preserve them in a sanction that no being can unfold. There is scarcely a person to share anything with at all.

The markets would open soon. He tries to conceal his awe of the passerbys, dressed in worn-out, grey clothing.

VARIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
That feeling...it never leaves. It follows me, it reminds me, in every slither of the dark. In nearly every passing conversation. In every waking thought: I do not belong.

He tries not to draw too much attention to himself, but his curious demeanor and embroidered cloak immediately catches the jaded eyes of early passerbys.

VARIAN (V.O.)  
Is there someone out there? Do you feel these things too? Are you like me; calling upon the dark for things in which we cannot yet see? Does this lack make you feel so empty? Are you variegated with superficiality?

At last he arrives at the dock and is preceded by a FERRYMAN (unknown entity), garbed from head to toe entirely in all black.

Varian signs to them.

VARIAN  
(In sign language)  
Hello, are you headed for Meliora?

FERRYMAN  
(In sign language)  
FOR A PRICE.

Varian clatters the coins before him clumsily. The Ferryman simply observes.

VARIAN  
(nervous)  
I-is it not enough?

FERRYMAN  
(nonchalant, but weary)  
YOU CANNOT TRAVEL BY COIN, BOY.

VARIAN  
(slightly embarrassed)  
R-right. Excuse me.

Varian pulls out a PENDANT, it looks as though a star pulled from the sky.

The Ferryman lingers, before turning and reaching for his oar. Varian quickly places it back into his satchel. They would be departing.

FERRYMAN  
REVEAL YOURSELF.

Varian hesitates for a moment, almost unnaturally.

VARIAN  
...Varian. Varian Dupont.

VARIAN (V.O.)  
I want to believe that there's  
more to life than this. There must  
be. There must be someone,  
something, out there.

He steps onto the gondola, with an empty urgency rather than anticipated enchantment. He looks back at the city briefly.

VARIAN (V.O.)  
That's why I have to go.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. UNDERGROUND CITY TAVERN - DAY

ALAISTER (60s, jaded), the taverner, walks into the establishment hurriedly. She notes the small pocket of tired patrons conversing.

ALAISTER  
(grumbling)  
Der hasn't been any food let  
through the borda' in days. At  
this rate, we'll all starve to  
death.

Aris stands behind the counter, polishing cups.

ARIS  
(smiling)

I am optimistic we will, my lady.  
Seems the Surface will not be  
reconsidering anytime soon.

ALAISTER

Why can't those 'bastards just get  
a life and let us live our own?

ARIS

Such things are beyond human  
comprehension.

ALAISTER

(slightly annoyed)

You're always a treat to talk to.

ARIS

I do my best, my lady.

ALAISTER

Why don'tcha go make ya'self  
useful and check inventory? Only a  
matta' of time 'till this place  
turns to a rehab facility.

Aris sets down the cup. As if it were brand new.

ARIS

Certainly.

Out back, there are stacks of crates filled with liquor.  
Aris writes, taking out the same notebook we saw before.

NOX

(nonchalant)

So, we're all royally fucked.

NOX (late 20s, apathetic) approaches, and Aris smoothly puts  
the booklet away.

Nox notices anyways.

ARIS

(seemingly delighted)

It would appear so. Not fit to  
live on the surface, and yet too  
good to live in this hellhole. I  
only can imagine where they want  
to ship us off to next.

Nox reaches for a bottle, opens it, and takes a swig. Their eyes are blood-shot. Certified insomniac.

NOX  
(cutting)  
You missed a spot.

Nox nods at a half-broken wine bottle.

Silence.

ARIS  
Well, it appears I have.

NOX  
Look, I don't care what you get up to on your nightshift. But if you start making me clean up after your messes---

ARIS  
You need not worry, friend.  
I assure you, it was a mere miscalculation. Certainly.

NOX  
We're not friends. And of course it had to be the fine wine. Just do your damn job.

ALAISTER  
Somethin' ya'll wanna fess up?

The two immediately go quiet.

ALAISTER  
Well?

ARIS  
Why yes, my lady. You see, our good friend, Nox, has been drinking themselves--

NOx  
I swear to fucking god.  
You're the reason our stores are bloody empty--

ALAISTER

Ya know what? I don't care. I have  
a new assignment for the two of  
ya. You'll be going to the  
Surface.

The two gawk at her.

ARIS  
I beg your pardon?

ALAISTER  
The Masked Festival. It's  
happening tonight. You two will be  
serving for the Brigade.

NOX  
Hell no.

ALAISTER  
I wasn't asking.

NOX  
Never said you were.

ALAISTER  
Well, if you both want to keep  
your 'jobs,' I'd say you better be  
fitted and out the door by this  
afternoon. This might be our only  
chance at an upperhand from the  
inside.

ARIS  
My lady, in all do respect, even  
if we were to entertain the  
surface, how on earth do you  
suppose we get there?

ALAISTER  
The same way you managed to chase  
off a boy--a noble, least to  
say--and cost us an entire  
inventory of wine the other night.

More silence.

ARIS  
(cautiously)  
Very well.

ALAISTER

Good. It's decided then.

INT. DARK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A PERSON(20s, unknown), reaches out their hand and wields the Pendant we saw Varian carry from before.

Their right arm is missing, replaced with a machinery.

Varian lays inches away from them, marvelling at both the mysterious person and the magical energy summoned. Aris remains completely unfazed, as though he was expecting this sudden intrusion.

ARIS

(sarcastically)

My, my. Our esteemed guest.

The Person does not say a word, but wields a flame in their hand. Threatening.

ARIS

You know, as much as a good host I pride myself as, I would rather not cause a scene. Blood is not an easy one to remove, I would know.

Varian and Aris both eye the pendant, now claimed in the person's hands.

ARIS

Give it here. Or perhaps, the Surface would care to learn about yet another magic wielder?

VARIAN

(Aghast)

M-my pendant...

The person turns to Varian, inclining their head for him to run. He lingers for a moment, before staggering off.

ARIS

So be it.

SCREAMING.

END.