

JACK

A Psychological Thriller

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Time Period:

Present. Whitechapel Publishing Corporation.

Synopsis: A group of modern businesswomen find themselves stalked by a terror long thought to be dead. Is it truly the ghost of the past, alive and killing once more? What kind of dark secrets are at play?

Cast Of Characters (Order of Appearance):

Undertaker(s) – Victorian. Lower class. Silent and hardened. Two actors may be used.

The Figure – Tall and imposing. Dressed in shabby, black Victorian clothing.

Kate Edards – A jolly tattooed woman of about 35. She sings often.

Lizzie Strigley – An alcoholic secretary. She looks shabby and is emotionally fragile.

Angela Champlan – Early 40s. Soft of looks and speech. Mother of 3.

Marybeth Nichel – Rather bony, short greying hair. Older. Snobby.

Michelle Taberum – A plump, serious looking woman with dark hair.

Reporter – Preferred Pre-recorded. May be performed live if unobtrusive.

Mary Jo Kellton – 25. Tall, red-blonde hair, green eyes. Pretty and detached. Well to do.

Charles/Chuck Warren – Former military man who is currently a police detective. Rigid.

Edward Reese* – Lead detective of the Whitechapel Cases. Humble and personable.

Jacob Kellton – Mary Jo’s estranged husband. Balding, and out of Mary Jo’s league.

Tomas Openshaw – An ambitious young surgeon. To the point, yet not inconsiderate.

*Note: Edward Reese can be cast as a female if desired. In this instance, the character’s name shall be Eden Reese.

Music Notes: Various sections of Bach’s “Suite for Cello no. 1 in G Major” are used throughout this show. For the sake of brevity, the individual movements will only be referred to by their distinguishing titles (i.e. “Prelude”, “Minuet”).

Costuming Note: As the play progresses, as to reflect the descent into madness, Victorian-type elements should be subtly introduced in the wardrobes.

Note on Characters: Each character in *Jack*, with the exception of Jacob Kellton and Reporter, represents a very real person from whom the character was based. A list of each character paired with whom they were based upon is provided below.

Mary Jo Kellton: Mary Jane Kelly Michelle Taberum: Martha Tabram Marybeth Nichel: Mary Ann Nichols Angela Champlan: Annie Chapman Lizzie Strigley: Elizabeth Stride	Kate Edards: Catherine Eddowes Edward Reese: Edmund Reid Tomas Openshaw: Thomas Openshaw Chuck Warren: Charles Warren The Figure: Jack the Ripper
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Prologue: Indistinct Place and time

(“In Noctem” plays in near blackness. Chairs lie strewn about the stage. We see indistinct masses on the floor, covered in bloodstained cloth. The Figure stands directly center behind the only upright chair. He is unmoving and statue-like, emitting a dark, menacing aura. An undertaker enters, dressed in ratty black clothes, reminiscent of a funeral. He walks through the masses, until he reaches a larger lump slightly right of center. He turns it over with his foot, revealing the body of what looks to be a bloodied prostitute in a dingy Victorian era dress with a few modern flares. Latin chanting starts in the song. The masses throw off the bloodstain cloths covering them. The women proceed to exit in a dirge-like manner, after first upturning their respective chairs. First Kate and Lizzie, then Angela and, finally Marybeth. The music suddenly cuts once those four have exited.)

Scene I: August 7th, Outside of Whitechapel Publishing Corporation, around 2 a.m.

(A brief, still silence. The undertaker opens a door SL, revealing a mean-looking modern businesswoman, Michelle Taberum. There’s a tiny head movement from the Figure; the first movement of any kind that we’ve seen. As suddenly as the music stopped, it resumes, though this time Music “Prelude”. Michelle begins to cross stage. The Figure moves from center, following Michelle slowly and methodically, though remaining in the shadows, unseen. She stops, takes out her cell phone to make a call. The Figure also stops.)

Michelle: It’s Michelle. Meet me in 15 minutes at Gunthorpe Street. Yes, I have the key.

(She hangs up the phone. The Figure reaches into his pocket and extracts a rough knife. Michelle continues to travel toward SR but now senses the man who has been following her. She is frozen in terror as The Figure advances from behind. She makes a sudden violent movement, attempting to attack. The Figure catches her wrist and twists it violently inward, snapping her wrist. He forces her toward the ground. She continues to struggle, but he quickly subdues her. He takes the knife and stabs her lower torso and chest area. The Figure gets up and looks at her seemingly dead body. She feebly moves. He reaches down, and stabs her repeatedly in the neck. No more movement. He throws one of the bloody sheets over her and walks away. The music begins to cut out through patches of static. The undertaker drags the body off as static fades into a radio newscast in progress.)

Scene II: August 8th, Police Headquarters, early evening

Reporter: We return to our main story tonight: The brutal murder of Michelle Taberum. She was reportedly stabbed outside of Whitechapel Publishing Corporation. No suspect...

(Lights up. Kate, Marybeth, Mary Jo, and Angela anxiously wait, dressed in business attire. Mary Jo sees Det. Warren enter and hurriedly turns off the radio. He approaches them.)

Charles: *(to Marybeth)* If you would, please come with me.

Marybeth: I most certainly will not! First you blockade us from entering our workplace, and now we’re to be interrogated? No, thank you!

Mary Jo: (*Scathingly*) Marybeth! (*to Detective Warren*) You have to understand, this is really, well, unusual and we're a bit on edge is all.

Charles: Forgive me, but there are far more important matters at hand than your comfort.

Mary Jo: That's not what I meant!

Angela: Maybe we should just drop it.

Mary Jo: I will not drop it. Sir, I fully realize that you are busy, but I want answers! (*Det. Reese Enters*) We've stayed here this long of our own volition, but enough is enough. We haven't even been told anything about what's going on. (*Firmly*) We will not go anywhere with anyone until you tell us why we were brought here to begin with!

Charles: Remember to whom you are talking –

Edward: Stand down, Chucky.

Charles: Charles would do.

(*Detective Warren begrudgingly leaves*)

Edward: (*To the women*) Hello, I'm Detective Edward Reese, lead investigator on this case. I'm sorry for any inconvenience that this has caused. I'm sure you have many questions, and I will try and answer them the best I can.

Kate: No problem! I think all we really want to know is why we were brought here.

Edward: The answer to that is rather more complex than you'd imagine. I suppose it would be best to start with the basics. Last night, between 2:00 and 3:30 a.m., a woman was murdered outside the offices of Whitechapel Publishing Corporation.

Mary Jo: Wait, did you just say murder?

Edward: That is correct.

Marybeth: Pardon me, but I still don't understand what a random murder has to do with myself. (*An awkward beat, then as an afterthought*) Or any of us for that matter.

Edward: The victim, according to the data we've gathered thus far, was a colleague of yours. A Miss Michelle Taberum.

Angela: (*Horried*) Oh, God

Kate: Michelle's dead?

Marybeth: (*Panicked*) Are we safe?

Mary Jo: Then it's true what they're saying on the news?

Edward: I'm afraid so.

Marybeth: We're not suspects, are we?

Edward: No. Not at all. Well, not yet at least. (*awkward beat*) Sorry. The reason you ladies, as well as your friend Miss Strigley, were brought into the station is for some questioning regarding Michelle. Here, let's sit down. (*He pulls up a chair and sits*) Did Miss Taberum have any enemies that you know of, either at work or otherwise?

Mary Jo: I wouldn't exactly describe her as sweet or warm, but no. She got her job done and kept mostly to herself.

Kate: She may've been a bit prickly. Still, I don't think she had a mean bone in her body.

Edward: Anyone in her personal life?

Marybeth: (*gossipy*) Not that it probably matters, but I did hear that she liked to flit about. Lots of side action.

Angela: What a terrible thing to say!

Mary Jo: That's only a rumor and you know that!

Edward: Regardless, no potential lead should be left unchecked when it comes to a murder investigation. If you would come with me, Miss Nichel?

Marybeth: If I must.

(Marybeth leaves with Detective Reese. Lights black. Brief bloody images of Michelle flash)

Scene III: August 30th, Offices of Whitechapel Publishing Corporation, daytime

(Mary Jo and Kate sit at separate desks, editing novel transcripts. Lizzie sits across from them, lazily writing in an address book. Marybeth storms in.)

Marybeth: (*to Lizzie*) Elizabeth! Have you scheduled Rachel's training yet?

Lizzie: Was that this week? I forgot.

Marybeth: Of course you forgot. Such incompetence.

(Marybeth storms off. Lizzie flips her off. Then, guiltily, she begins to cry silently to herself. Angela enters, carrying Xeroxes, sees Lizzie crying, and quizzically looks to Mary Jo.)

Mary Jo: Marybeth is such a goddamn bitch sometimes. You'd think that she'd be happy now that she's got Michelle's old job.

Kate: (*going to Lizzie*) She has no right to treat people the way she does. I'm sure she's probably just tense because of the date she has tonight.

Mary Jo: Who's the unlucky victim?

Angela: Some young guy. I think his name was Joe or something. They were going to go to Buckeye's pub.

Lizzie: (*having pulled herself together*) At least someone's moving on with life. (*Mary Jo's cellphone rings*) I can't stop thinking about what happened to Michelle.

Mary Jo: (*Checking phone*) I should answer this. (*She answers it aside*) Hello, Jacob, honey. You're going to be late for dinner? Ok. Should I wait for you? No? Okay. Love you.

Kate: (*As Mary Jo walks back over to the others*) You know what doesn't make sense? Why was she even here at 2:00 am? Working?

Mary Jo: Do you mean Michelle?

Lizzie: Don't you find it peculiar that she just happened to be here that late?

Mary Jo: Yeah... She must have had her reasons...

Marybeth: (*offstage*) Elizabeth! I need you to make some copies. NOW!!

(*Lizzie exits and they all go about their work. Lights fade down. Mary Jo and Kate Exit.*)

Scene IV-a: August 31st, Outside of Buckeye's Pub, around 3 a.m.

(*Lighting shift. The Figure enters, making his way toward center. He hears Marybeth and Jacob coming, and slips into the blackness of the night, watching. Marybeth, in date night attire enters, followed by Jacob. Both are drunk. Ambient music from the pub spills over*)

Jacob: Are you sure you don't want to stay the night?

Marybeth: A lady does not "stay the night".

Jacob: (*playfully mocking*) I thought that a lady would never date another woman's suitor.

Marybeth: (*Slyly*) A lady may do as she pleases.

(*They passionately kiss. The Figure pulls out the jagged knife*)

Jacob: So, next Thursday?

Marybeth: Of course. Goodnight, love.

(*The music suddenly cuts. Another kiss. Jacob exits. Music "Allemande" begins playing. Marybeth stands for a brief moment, love-struck. The Figure comes out of the shadows and advances toward Marybeth. She starts to walk in the opposite direction from that which Jacob exited. The Figure is now directly behind Marybeth and grabs her shoulder gently.*)

Marybeth: (*while slowly turning around*) You cannot persuade me, Jacob –

(*She sees it is not Jacob. A brief terrified moment. The Figure slits her throat. She falls to the ground. He glares at her body, somewhat amused. He kneels over the body slitting her throat again, for good measure. Satisfied, he makes violent incisions into her abdomen.*)

Scene IV-b: August 31st, Morgue, Police Headquarters

(*Other side of stage. Dr Openshaw and Det Reese look at a file, deep in conversation.*)

Edward: And you're completely positive about this?

Tomas: Yes. Completely.

Edward: This is your first major case. You're sure that you're not *sensationalizing* the data?

Tomas: (*somewhat offended*) I may be green, but I know what I'm doing. You see this wound pattern, here? It is strikingly similar to those seen in an ongoing case from earlier

this month. I would dare to say this is the work of the same person and, quite frankly, I'd say who ever is doing this is getting better at it.

Edward: Anything else that you can see from the bodies?

Tomas: One. Both the women seemed to be posed in a sexual nature at the crime scene?

Edward: Correct.

Tomas: I ran rape kits in both cases. While trauma was present in both cases, absolutely no foreign DNA could be found on either victim. I don't think physical assault is the goal.

Edward: You think it's meant to shame the women?

Tomas: I'm only speculating, but I would.

(Music cuts out, if not already completed. The Figure backs away from the body, but lingers forebodingly)

Edward: One last question. You say he's evolving. Where in this evolution is he?

Tomas: *(gravely)* Early, for sure. These surface mutilations are only the beginning.

(The Figure exits. The undertaker drags the body offstage)

Edward: *(after a moment)* This conversation stays between us. If your theory is correct, and we do have a full-blown serial killer on our hands, the worst thing we could do is insight a public panic. If the press catches wind of this, we'll have a riot on our hands.

(Lights dim to black)

Scene V: August 30th, Offices of Whitechapel Publishing Corporation, around 6 p.m.

(Mary Jo, Kate, Angela, and Lizzie sit at their desks. They are working)

Kate: I guess Marybeth had a fun night. Didn't even bother to show up today.

Mary Jo: Apparently Queen Marybeth is too important to grace us with her presence.

(They all laugh. Detective Warren enters. They all stop laughing)

Lizzie: Good evening, Detective Warren. To what do we owe this visit?

Charles: *(Directly)* The body of Marybeth Nichel was found today at 5am.

(All visibly react except Mary Jo)

Mary Jo: She was murdered, wasn't she?

Charles: Yes.

Mary Jo: *(as statements)* So, someone is hunting us then. One of us is next.

Charles: No official stance exists at the present moment.

Mary Jo: Cut out the damn formality! If someone is out trying to kill me, I want to know. It can't be coincidence that two people from this office have been killed in the past month.

Charles: *(Ignoring her)* We will be in contact with you for questioning.

(He exits)

Mary Jo: *(as he's leaving)* Damn it! Answer me!

(When he's gone, Lizzie reaches into her drawer, grabs a flask from her purse and begins to drink. Kate goes to comfort Lizzie by singing to her, though Kate is also clearly scared. Perhaps most potently, Angela has sunk to the floor and is somewhat frenzied.)

Mary Jo: *(Going to comfort Angela)* We'll get through this. Calm down.

Angela: *(impassioned)* I can't. Work was the last safe place for me! Now, anywhere I go I have to worry about being killed. *(Rubbing a bruise on her forearm)* Everywhere.

Mary Jo: *(pointing to the bruise)* What is that?

Angela: Nothing.

Mary Jo: Dan's been hitting you again.

Angela: He didn't mean to! I riled him up!

Mary Jo: Angela, don't make excuses for him. And your kids? *(Silence, then horrified)* You said you'd never let him touch them again.

Angela: *(sad, angry)* You've no right to meddle into my life! Give your help where it's wanted!

(Angela storms off. Kate and Lizzie overheard the latter part of the conversation)

Kate: You know that she won't leave him. She loves him.

Mary Jo: Even when the man she loves is a wife beating pedophile!

Lizzie: Stop it! We don't need to be at each other's throats too.

Kate: She has a point. We need to look out for each other.

Mary Jo: *(Giving up)* Fine. We are sticking together. If anything feels even remotely wrong, we call one another, no questions asked. Deal?

Kate & Lizzie: Deal.

(Kate, Lizzie, and Mary Jo Exit. Slight shift to dim blue light. Something feels off about it)

Scene VI-a: September 8th, the backyard of Angela Champlan's House, 4:15 a.m.

(Angela stands, dressed in an old fashion nightgown. Crickets chirp. Nursing a fresh bruise she brushes her hair. The Figure enters. Music "Courante" plays, softly at first but increasing in volume gradually. She reads the letter in her hands, conflicted. The figure advances forward.)

Angela: (*Uncertainly to herself*) I'm leaving, Dan. I'm taking the kids with me.

(*Music suddenly stops. The Figure stops, waiting a moment, then begins to walk away*)

Angela: I can't...

(*Angela tears up the letter. The music suddenly resumes, doubled in intensity. The Figure bounds toward her. Hearing noise behind her, she turns to see The Figure. He tries to slash her through but she catches his hand, throwing it off. She tries to run into her home, but The Figure catches her by the hair and pulls back. She attempts to elbow The Figure in the stomach. He catches her hand, throws it aside. From behind, he wraps his non-knife arm around her torso. Angela tries to free herself, to no avail. He slowly and sadistically slits her throat. She goes limp. He releases her slowly toward the ground, then begins to make incisions into the lower abdomen. Lights shift as the music quiets to a faint underscore*)

Scene VI-b: September 8th, Morgue, Police Headquarters

(*Other side of the stage. The Figure continues mutilating the body in the near darkness. Tomas, Edward, and Charles are deep in argument. An evidence table lies before them. On the table are various crime scene photos, a bloody neckerchief, and the torn up letter*)

Charles: (*furious*) This is what you've been doing?! We have a dangerous murderer on the loose and you spend your time concocting asinine theories about ancient serial killers!

Edward: Open your mind! The facts line up more than you'd care to admit.

Tomas: From a medical standpoint, I'm inclined to agree with Detective Reese. The similarities are striking.

Charles: Do you hear yourself? Jack the Ripper?

Edward: At least someone who believes he is.

Charles: This is delusional! (*to Tomas*) And you're the fool to buy into it! We have three dead women and you're both too busy with conspiracy theories to care!

Tomas: With all due respect, the Modus Operandi is too precise and specific to be a run of the mill copycat. The assailant, whoever he may be, must be an expert on The Ripper. Honestly, it's a bit admirable how meticulous this murderer is.

Edward: Listen. Everything lines up! The wound placements, the time frame, the escalation.

Charles: (*after a frustrated beat*) Think what you want. Their blood is on your hands now.

(*The Figure stands, placing a bloody sheet over the body, as Charles exits. The Figure takes the knife with him as he slowly backs away. Edward shakes his head, going to leave.*)

Tomas: (*as Edward goes to leave*) Something's still bothering me. (*Edward stops*). This group of women is his target. But why these women? And to what purpose?

(*Edward thinks for a second. The undertaker now enters and drags off Angela's body. Edward looks first to Tomas, then to the evidence table*)

Edward: (*dawning, he rushes toward the table*) Their secrets.

Scene VII-a: September 15th, Police Headquarters, around 5 p.m.

(*Lighting shift. Detective Reese, Mary Jo, Lizzie, and Kate sit at a table. Something feels wrong about Kate, Mary Jo, and Lizzie's clothing. Pieces of Victorian clothing are now mixed with their modern clothes. A palpable tension is in the air*)

Mary Jo: (*enraged*) We have a psychopath trying to kill us particularly, and you've waited until now to tell us?!

Kate: Angela would still be alive!

Edward: I understand your frustrations. Up until now, there were not enough connecting factors between the murders, aside from the brutality exhibited in the MO, to truly classify them as the work of a single killer.

Lizzie: (*Utterly terrified*) And now there are?

Edward: Yes. We believe each of the victims had a secret that was the reason why they were murdered. On the night of her murder, Michelle Taberum's credit card records indicate that she had a hotel reservation, with similar reservations at the beginning of every month for the past year. For Marybeth Nichel, multiple accounts place her as having been on a date directly before her murder. Furthermore, personal friends have insinuated that her current relationship was with a married man. Finally, this letter was recovered at the scene of Angela Champlan's Murder, which indicates that she was planning on leaving her husband. The male counterparts, with the exception of Miss Nichel's date who remains unidentified, have credible alibis for the nights in question, leading us to believe that someone knew these women's secrets and killed them for it.

Lizzie: (*getting up to leave, emotional*) We're not safe anywhere.

Edward: I promise, we're investigating every-

Lizzie: No! Until this lunatic is found we are not safe, so don't even dare to say otherwise!

(*Lizzie storms out*)

Kate: I'm sorry. I'll go get her.

(*Kate leaves. Lights go down.*)

Scene VII-b: September 15th, Outside Police Headquarters, early evening

(*Lizzie sits on a bench, crying and drinking out of a small hip flask. Kate enters and sits.*)

Kate: You said you were going to stop drinking. (*beat*) What was that all about? Are you okay? (*Puts her hand on Lizzie's shoulder. Lizzie quickly shrugs it off*) Lizzie, talk to me!

Lizzie: (*quietly*) It's over. We're done.

Kate: (*reassuring*) That guy won't –

Lizzie: That's not what I meant. We are done.

Kate: What? Lizzie...

Lizzie: Did you not hear what that man said?! This killer is hunting us because of our secrets. What else would you call us?

Kate: You're not a secret! I've told you this before. Once my divorce is finalized, everyone can know about us.

Lizzie: Until then, I'm not safe being with you.

Kate: Liz, you are safe with me. *(She kisses Lizzie)* Besides, I was thinking it might be time for a change in scenery. I handed in my two-weeks. I have 2 tickets on a one-way flight to New York. One of them is yours if you want.

Lizzie: For the last time: We. Are. Done! I can't do it anymore. Not with what's going on.

(There is a tense silence between the two. After a while Kate gets up)

Kate: *(to Lizzie)* Fine. If you change your mind, the offer still stands. Just let me know.

(Kate Exits. Liz looks back, wanting to say something. She returns to drinking and crying)

Scene VIII-a: September 30th, Outside Whitechapel Publishing Corporation, 12:30 a.m.

(Lizzie stands CS. She has a ratty overcoat on and a small piece of luggage next to her. She takes out her phone to make a call. She gets put through to voice mail)

Lizzie: Kate, I was wrong. I want to go with you to New York tomorrow. I love you. Please, forgive me. I just finished getting all my things from the office and I'd like to be with you right now. I'm so scared. I'm sorry. Please, just come and get me.

(She waits. After a brief period, The Figure appears. Music "Sarabande" begins to play quietly, as if from a distance. The Figure approaches.)

Lizzie: *(Hearing something)* Who's there? *(A pause)* Kate?

(The Figure advances. Lizzie turns and sees the Figure. The music is suddenly blaringly loud. Lizzie screams. The Figure quickly withdraws his knife and takes Lizzie by the throat)

Kate: *(offstage)* Lizzie!!

(Kate enters as The Figure slits Lizzie's throat. The Figure looks up to see Kate standing there. The music comes to an abrupt stop for a brief moment. The stage is terrifyingly still. Then, all at once, the music starts up again and Kate runs out, The Figure giving chase to her. The lights fade and for a brief moment the world is music and darkness.)

Scene VIII-b: September 30th, the Locale of Whitechapel Publishing Company, 1 a.m.

(Kate reemerges. The music stops. She is panicked, out of breath. She looks madly at her surroundings. Certain that she is alone, she sings to herself)

Kate: *(sung, as the undertaker drags Lizzie off)* Sing a song, a song of life. Lived without regret. Tell the ones, the ones I loved. I never will forget. *(Spoken, grieving)* Lizzie!

(Music “Minuet 1” begins. As with Lizzie, it is soft and distant at first. The Figure emerges. He walks toward Kate, deliberate and slow. He is behind her. She becomes aware of his presence too late. A type of acceptance reads on Kate’s face as she realizes the inevitable.)

Kate: *(somewhat bitter)* Was one not enough? *(To him, fearlessly)* Let me be with Lizzie.

(He slits her throat. She falls backward. The music is now loud as The Figure savagely begins to mutilate the body. The lights go to a deep, blood red, then to dim yellow)

Scene IX-a: October 16th, Inside Police Headquarters, Night

(Detective Reese and Dr. Openshaw stand, worried looks on both faces. A bloody sheet covers Kate’s body. The Figure picks up a wooden box, identical to the box in Openshaw’s hands. The Figure looks inside and exits. Something is off with the clothing that Openshaw and Detective Reese are wearing, which are now a combination of Victorian and modern.)

Edward: *(Holding up a parchment letter)* You personally received this at your home?

Tomas: And this. *(Presenting a small wooden box)* It’s consistent with the missing left kidney.

(The undertaker enters, and drags Kate’s body offstage)

Edward: *(quietly)* She tried to call me.

Tomas: Pardon?

Edward: Kate Edards. She tried to call me that night. I didn’t have my phone on me. I could have saved her.

Tomas: She died instantly. There’s nothing you could’ve done.

Edward: *(bitter anger)* I could’ve caught the bastard who’s doing this. *(Collecting himself)* The time for any sort of secrecy is over. I’m telling her everything.

Tomas: You can be fired for that, you know.

Edward: *(earnest)* If it prevents another death, I don’t care.

(They share a look of mutual understanding and trust. Lights Shift)

Scene IX-b: October 17th, Police Headquarters, Daytime

(Mary Jo, Dr. Openshaw, and Detective Reese sit at a table)

Mary Jo: So, you’re trying to say that Jack the Ripper is trying to kill me?

Edward: No, only someone who thinks he’s Jack the Ripper.

Mary Jo: You do realize that’s insane?

Tomas: I assure you, I thought the same until too many facts fell into place that could not be attributed to mere coincidence.

Mary Jo: I want to know everything then. If I truly am next, I have a right to know.

Edward: Fair enough. The killer seems to be choosing certain points in each month to commit the murders. While unimpressive on its own, the fact that this killer has chosen the exact dates on which the original ‘Ripper’ murders were committed seems to solidify that bond.

Mary Jo: And the next murder date is?

Tomas: November 9th. Now, a series of specific dates still doesn’t mean anything. However, each murder thus far has nearly duplicated a specific ‘Ripper’ murder, down to the order. Michelle Taberum suffered 39 stab wounds throughout her body. Though not explicitly tied to Jack the Ripper, this is consistent with a murder directly before the ‘Ripper’ killings that many believe may’ve been the Ripper. Next was Marybeth Nichel, whose throat was slit, left to right, twice, and abdomen mutilated. Then Angela Champlan, who throat was also slit, left to right, and also suffered abdominal mutilation. Upon further examination, it was found that the killer removed a portion of her uterus. Lastly, we have the “double event” of Lizzie Strigley and Kate Edards. Lizzie’s death was quick and to the point: a single slash to her neck. Kate was not quite so lucky. She had the same slit throat and abdominal mutilation as the others, however, the killer also mutilated her face and removed parts of her nose, ear and left kidney from the scene.

(Mary Jo looks sickened by what she’s heard. Detective Reese goes to comfort her)

Edward: We understand if you need a moment.

Mary Jo: *(shaken)* No. I’m fine. Anything else?

Tomas: All the women were posed in a sexually exposing manner, post-mortem. However, no sexual assault was evident. This leads us to believe the killer is shaming the women, sexually.

Edward: *(tentatively)* We’ve also been receiving letters. With the latest letter, *(he hesitates)* half of the missing kidney.

Mary Jo: *(almost afraid to ask)* Only half?

Tomas: Yes. The letter states the killer, if taken at his word, consumed the other half.

Mary Jo: Oh god! I can’t escape this, can I?

Edward: We will do everything in our power to make sure you do not end up like your friends. For starters, I personally will be keeping surveillance on the Whitechapel Publishing Corporation office building, as well as yourself.

Mary Jo: Thank you -

Edward: *(Interrupting)* However, the best way for us to truly protect you is to figure out why he would want to kill you. If you have been hiding anything thus far, it would serve you best to tell us now. Whatever it is would not leave this room.

Mary Jo: I'm sorry to disappoint, but there really is nothing I have to hide. I've told you everything that could possibly be important about me. (*Getting up to leave*) Now, if you don't mind, I really need to be going.

Edward: (*As she leaves*) Mary, be careful. We will catch this guy.

Scene X: November 8th, Offices of Whitechapel Publishing Corporation, late nighttime

(Lights shift. Music "Minuet 2". Chairs are upturned throughout, a la Prologue. Mary Jo enters and sits in the center chair. Following the undertaker, Michelle, Marybeth, Angela, Lizzie, and Kate enter, dressed a la Prologue, with bloody neckerchiefs. Slightly behind, The Figure enters. Not in line with the others, he walks directly behind Mary Jo. The volume increases. The women face upstage. He stops as the music cuts out completely.)

Figure: Hello.

Mary Jo: (*contemptuous*) You're a day early, aren't you?

Figure: I thought you'd be glad to see me.

Mary Jo: What sort of sick game are you playing at?

Figure: Yours, of course.

Mary Jo: What?

Figure: You brought me here. This is, as they say, your party.

Mary Jo: Who are you?

Figure: How nice. I'm surprised you don't recognize an old friend.

Mary Jo: God dammit! Answer me straight.

Figure: But I have. Haven't I? (*a beat*) No use hiding things. You know me.

Mary Jo: I've never seen you before in my life.

Figure: That much is true. My form is fleeting, but I've always been there.

Mary Jo: Stop trying to play tricks with my mind! If you're going to kill me, kill me now!

Figure: (*loudly*) Your mind? I am your mind! (*quietly*) Deep down, in that dark corner you never dared to explore. That is my domain. I'm nothing more than a product of your darkest fantasies. I'm what you wish you could be.

Mary Jo: No. Whatever you're getting at, I would never kill my friends.

Figure: (*amused*) Oh. I hardly believe that. You can't hide your thoughts from me. They deserved to die. Each one of them, whores. Every one, a pathetic excuse for a woman.

Mary Jo: Stop it.

Figure: Do you feel sorry now? Somehow, I don't buy it. You loved killing each of them. You relished watching the life drain from behind their eyes.

Mary Jo: (*less certain*) Stop saying that! You did those things.

Figure: You and I are one. You're simply too afraid to see it. (*A palpable silence*) So be it.

(Music “Gigue” suddenly begins. Static crackles throughout; a whirlwind of sound.)

Figure: (*sadistically*) Michelle Taberum. Hypocritical slut who would sleep with anyone who threw affection her way.

Michelle: (*turning around, confused, overlaps*) Mary Jo? I thought you went home –

Figure: Marybeth Nichel. Adulterous liar who could not be anything further from a Lady.

Marybeth: (*Turning around, startled, overlaps*) Mary Jo, I was breaking it off –

Figure: Angela Champlan. A selfishly ignorant woman who refused to protect her children.

Angela: (*turning around, warning, overlaps*) Don’t do this, Mary Jo –

Figure: Lizzie Strigley. Drunken old hag, so desperate to be loved she’d latch onto the first scrap of it.

Lizzie: (*turning around, pleading, overlaps*) Please, Mary Jo –

Figure: Kate Edards. A foolishly optimistic dyke.

Kate: (*turning around, bitter, overlaps*) Just do it, Mary Jo.

Figure: You saw through their ruses and exposed them for the liars they were. You made sure they couldn’t deceive anyone again.

Mary Jo: (*through tears*) I didn’t. I couldn’t...

(The bodies of the slain women move forward as the cacophony of sound abruptly stops.)

Figure: (*in the clear*) Are you sure?

Mary Jo: (*beat*) No.

Figure: (*satisfied*) There we go. You can end this.

Mary Jo: (*Bursting*) Just kill me!

Figure: (*Venomously*) Accept it. I am you. You’re already drowning in their blood. Take the knife. Embrace it. Free your true self.

Mary Jo: Please –

Figure: Become Jack.

(She takes the knife. Music “In Noctem (Instrumental)” plays. Her look slowly becomes hardened and menacing. The dead women travel to where they began the play, lying on the floor in the position they died in. The Figure stands behind the chair, as in the beginning)

Edward: (*from offstage, banging on the door*) Mary Jo? Mary Jo! Let me in! Mary Jo?!

(Slowly the lights dim until there is only light on Mary Jo and the Figure. Lights and music die off until all is silent darkness.)

END OF SHOW