

RUNNING LONDON

Episode One

The Innovator's Dilemma

EXT. A BEACH IN SPAIN - DAY.

STAN GARRETT (40s), a once-muscular bloke now running to fat, pale as marble, stands in baggy swimming shorts on a deserted stretch of beach in Spain. He's tense, but trying not to show it.

He's keeping his eye on another man, TARBY (40s), a bald bronzed bruiser, who's splashing about in the sea a short distance away. But his phone distracts him -- he pulls it from his shorts to find a text from his wife, CYNTH.

CYNTH (TEXT)
You done it?

Stan replies.

STAN (TEXT)
Gearing up.

CYNTH (TEXT)
Just tell him ur finished.

Stan notices Tarby emerging from the sea. He pockets the phone.

As Tarby approaches, he reaches down inside his too-tight swimming trunks and starts rearranging his tackle.

TARBY
Bleedin' Speedos. Cock's too big for this palaver. But Alejandro insists.

Stan looks elsewhere, embarrassed. Tarby stands next to him, gazes at the view.

TARBY
Look. At. That. You wanna get out here mate.

STAN
Love to.

An awkward pause. Tarby looks at him, almost goading him.

STAN
Actually -- funny you say that -- I was thinking --

TARBY
State of you.

Tarby goes over to a cooler and reaches in. Stan eyes him, worried. Tarby pulls out suntan lotion, starts rubbing it onto Stan's back, much to Stan's embarrassment.

TARBY
Not sending my best man back all crisped up.

STAN
 Won't be hanging round long
 enough.

Tarby starts squeezing his shoulder a bit too hard.

TARBY
 This heat, you burn in minutes.

Stan starts to wince. Tarby rubs harder.

TARBY
 What you know about the
 transportation of ashes?

INT. SOUTH LONDON FLAT, LIVING ROOM - EVENING.

A nerdy looking black kid, KIERAN SHARP (16), sits on a sofa in a cramped flat, a rucksack at his feet. He gets a text.

LEON (TEXT)
Fuk u at?

Kieran just stares at it.

We hear voices beyond, arguing, a man and woman. Kieran gazes over to the source of the noise.

IN THE KITCHEN

SERENA SHARP (20), Kieran's sister, is in the middle of heated conversation with her boyfriend JAMIE (25), a middle-class white bleeding heart.

SERENA
 Stop being a prick.

JAMIE
 Oh good, we're going to have a
 civilised conversation about this.

SERENA
 Didn't have a choice.

JAMIE
 What about him? Have you asked
 what he wants?

SERENA
 What did you want at sixteen?

JAMIE
 (flippant)
 Subscription to the Economist.

SERENA
 He wakes up in a flat full of
 crackheads.

JAMIE
Don't be so melodramatic --

SERENA
Why are you being such a prick?

JAMIE
Again, I don't really think that's
an argument.

SERENA
Well you are --

JAMIE
I've got the FSA in Monday, I need
to work.

SERENA
Yeah, you worry about yourself
then.

This riles Jamie. He gets snotty.

JAMIE
Oh right, because I didn't get you
a job in my office, give you a
place to live --

SERENA
Keep your voice down.

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM

Kieran gets another text.

LEON (TEXT)
Do it or we fukin done.

Kieran puts the phone down. He glances over to the kitchen,
where Serena and Jamie are still arguing. Then he reaches into
his coat and pulls out a gun.

He looks at it. Looks back at the kitchen. Makes a decision.

IN THE KITCHEN

The argument continues.

SERENA
Am I supposed to be like, 'Ooh
Jamie, my saviour'?

JAMIE
No --

SERENA
Can't just leave him. Take me on,
you take him on.

JAMIE

What are you talking about? In three months, this is the first time I've even met him.

SERENA

I had to be sure.

JAMIE

About what?

Serena looks like she's said too much. She goes quiet.

JAMIE

Was this -- you have some sort of plan? Hook up with a nice white guy, then move the family in?

SERENA

Fuck you.

Serena storms off into the living room -- only to find it empty. Kieran is gone.

EXT. BEACH IN SPAIN - DAY.

Tarby continues to apply suncream to Stan.

TARBY

Got this spic, supplies me with death certificates. Certificates go to the boys, they fly out from various points in South America.

Tarby moves down Stan's back.

TARBY

Take the gear through customs in an urn. "Me old man kicked the bucket, I come out to pick up what's left of the poor bugger." They can't open it, legally, not even if you ask 'em to. They just want to see the paperwork.

Tarby moves lower down until he's perilously close to Stan's bum. Stan's getting ever more embarrassed.

TARBY

You can bring it on as bleedin' hand luggage. Take dad into the bogs and have a toot if you want. Each of 'em brings in a kilo --

STAN

A kilo?

TARBY

"Fat bastard. What did him in in the end." We start with four, five runs. Spread it out a bit. Six months, we can bring in 20 kilos.

STAN

Clever... Look mate --

TARBY

Clever? It's bloody amateur hour, what it is.

Tarby starts to massage Stan's thighs.

STAN

Can you just stop a sec --

TARBY

But what you gonna do? Every port's crawling. Only gonna get worse when we're out the E fucking U. Brexit cunts.

Stan can't take any more.

STAN

Tarby!

Tarby steps back.

TARBY

What?

STAN

(forcefully)
I'm finished.

TARBY

Finished?

STAN

...Yeah.

Tarby stares at him.

TARBY

Don't be daft. Haven't done your legs yet.

EXT. LONDON TUBE STATION - NIGHT.

Kieran exits the station, rucksack on his back, looking furtive. He pauses -- can he go through with this?

Then something occurs to him. He pulls his phone out. Opens up a webpage -- Reddit. Starts typing a message.

LEON (COMMENT)
*Found Zapdos in Carpenters Arms,
 Mile End!!! Totes random!!!*

He pockets the phone and heads off.

INT. TARBY'S VILLA - NIGHT.

Stan sits on a leather sofa. Opposite, slouched on a beanbag, is ALEJANDRO (19), a Spanish Adonis. He's got sunglasses on, but he's staring straight at Stan. Stan, unnerved, does his best not to meet his gaze.

Tarby emerges from the bathroom, freshly showered, towel round his ample waist. He's holding a bulging bag.

TARBY
 For Cynth. Bunch of designer gear
 I got off this bloke in town.
 There's kids' stuff in there too,
 take it back for Julie. And some
 video games for Sam. Grand Theft
 Wotsit.

STAN
 Nice of you.

TARBY
 You played it? You can torture a
 prozzy. Horrible really. No wonder
 kids are all mental these days.

Tarby looks over at Alejandro.

TARBY
 Go and make us a mojito will you
 Ally, there's a good boy.

As if in a teenage huff, Alejandro pulls himself up out of the beanbag and stalks out of the villa.

Tarby watches him go, then looks back at Stan, almost goading him.

STAN
 You ain't said anything. About...
 my proposal.

Tarby pointedly ignores this. Reaches into the bag.

TARBY
 Got something for you and all.

He pulls out an urn. He shows it to Stan, who doesn't know quite how to react.

TARBY
 Dummy run.

Tarby dips his finger into the urn, puts the bump of cocaine to his nose and snorts.

STAN

Mate --

TARBY

You wanna ride off into the sunset, you prove to me it's all working slick.

STAN

I ain't let you down once in twenty years.

TARBY

So don't start now.

A tense beat as they stare each other out. Then Tarby grins.

TARBY

I'll get the barby on.
(re: the cocaine)
And keep your bugle out. Fifty grand's worth there, and I wanna see every penny.

Tarby pats Stan on the cheek, and waltzes off.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - NIGHT.

Kieran makes his way down the street. Checks his phone again -- on the Reddit page there's a string of replies to his post.

He pockets the phone and keeps on, head down.

INT. CARPENTERS ARMS - NIGHT.

A grim East London boozier. A smattering of ghostly old DRUNKS sucking on bitter. Frank Sinatra plays over the speakers.

The barman, RONNIE (40s), a slab-headed bruiser you wouldn't mess with, wipes down the bar, checks his watch. He turns the music off.

RONNIE

Your carriages await, gents.

There is no acknowledgement of his pronouncement. Ronnie turns to the hi-fi and presses a button. Horrendous dance music pumps loudly from the speakers.

The clientele turn as one and make it clear they're not happy -- "Fuck off!" etc. Ronnie puts his finger to his ear -- 'can't hear you'.

EXT. CARPENTERS ARMS - CONTINUOUS.

Kieran approaches the pub. He stops, steels himself.

INT. CARPENTERS ARMS - CONTINUOUS.

Ronnie is at the hi-fi, raising the volume to encourage the last stragglers to leave. When the place is finally empty, he turns the music off and gets back to clearing up.

For a moment, all is calm. Then from behind we hear the doors open, and someone enter.

RONNIE
(without looking)
Tel, you're not sneaking another
one -- go 'ome.

There is no response. Ronnie turns, and is confronted with the sight of Kieran, standing in the middle of the room.

RONNIE
Think you're lost, mate.

KIERAN
Got a message. For the boss.

RONNIE
I am the boss.

KIERAN
The boss.

RONNIE
You deaf? Try the Birdcage, they
hire anyone.

KIERAN
Stan Garrett.

Ronnie pauses. Then he reaches under the bar and pulls out a gun. He keeps it out of sight of Kieran -- for now.

RONNIE
Never 'eard of him.

Kieran reaches into his coat pocket. As he does so, Ronnie points his gun at him.

RONNIE
Leave it.

KIERAN
E7 Bloods wanna talk.

RONNIE
Got a death wish?

Kieran continues to retrieve something from his pocket. Ronnie pulls back the trigger of the gun --

-- but before he can, a gaggle of TEENAGERS bursts into the pub, phones in their hands. They start to rush around the place, phones up, seeking the Pokemon character Kieran posted about on Reddit.

Ronnie swiftly hides his gun. Kieran pulls his from his jacket, holds it against his chest so Ronnie can see.

KIERAN
E7 Bloods, yeah? Tell your boss.

As Ronnie looks on, powerless, Kieran calmly exits the pub.

INT. SPANISH AIRPORT - DAY.

Stan stands in line at security. He's got a small case, and the urn tucked under his arm. He's trying his best not to look suspicious.

He approaches the conveyor belt, puts his case and the urn on. A SECURITY GUARD gestures to him for paperwork. He hands over the fake death certificate and his passport. The guard inspects it. A tense beat.

The guard nods to the FEMALE OFFICIAL seated at the x-ray machine, hands the passport and paperwork back to Stan.

Stan watches the urn disappear into the x-ray machine. He passes through the body scanner, all the time trying to keep his cool.

At the other side, he waits for the urn to emerge. Suddenly the Official exclaims in Spanish.

Stan almost jumps out of his skin. Fuck, he's been rumbled.

The Official calls the Guard over. They both lean over the x-ray video screen, converse in Spanish. The Guard looks over at Stan suspiciously, then gestures for him to come over.

Like he's being led to a firing squad, Stan walks over to the machine. The Guard asks for Stan's paperwork again, inspects it. He looks up at Stan, considers him.

SECURITY GUARD
Your father -- he --

He squints, points at his eye. This is not the question Stan was expecting.

STAN
What?

SECURITY GUARD

Glass eye?

The guard points to the screen. The x-ray of the urn shows, amidst the pile of cocaine, an eyeball.

Stan thinks on his feet.

STAN

Oh. Yeah.

The Official mistakes his panic for the anxiety of a man in mourning. She tries to sympathise in broken English.

FEMALE OFFICIAL

Sometimes -- not all burn...

Stan sees his way out. He starts nodding vigorously.

STAN

Oh yeah, yeah.

The Guard eyes him, not entirely convinced.

STAN

Lost it in the war. My old man.
Kraut got him with a --
(with a what?)
-- bayonet?

Stan mimes someone poking the Guard's eye out with a bayonet. The Official makes a sympathetic sad face. The Guard is not impressed.

But reluctantly he waves Stan through. The urn makes its way out of the machine. Stan grabs it and hurries off, on the verge of hyperventilating.

Stan reaches the safety of the terminal, throws himself down on a chair. As he does so, his phone rings. He answers. It's Tarby.

TARBY

(on phone)
You through?

STAN

Just about.

TARBY

(on phone)
Thought I'd keep you on your toes.

STAN

Very funny.

TARBY

(on phone)
Not a joke mate. It's a present.
(MORE)