

Murder of Crows

By

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EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - MORNING - ESTABLISHING

A small village endorsed by a neat sign declaring "WELCOME TO THE VILLAGE OF DUMAURIER", surrounded by farms, countryside and Eastwind Wood.

In the heart of the village sits; a convenience store cum post office named, "BELTRAN'S BODEGA", a public house called the "THE HITCH & COCK", a small police station and an even smaller church, set back and nondescript so as not to cause offence.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - BIRD WATCHING SHED - MORNING

DAPHNE HUNTER(30's), slim, attractive in a rugged sort of way, sits, sipping from a mug of coffee, dressed in her pyjamas and a three-quarter length wax jacket.

Her birdwatching rig consists of a pair of binoculars, a high-powered telescope and a professional DSLR camera, all on stands pointing through a slim rectangular window that leads out onto an expanse of fields, farms and wildlife heaven.

She places her coffee mug alongside a baby monitor on a small table next to her and peers through the binoculars.

INSERT BINOCULARS:

A farm, sheep, spring lambs. She looks higher and sees a murder of crows circling. She hones in on what they are circling above and sees a dead lamb. The rest of the sheep are keeping their distance.

BACK TO SCENE.

Daphne recoils and takes a moment to compose herself. She attaches a high-powered zoom lens to the DSLR and looks through the viewfinder.

INSERT VIEWFINDER:

One of the crows is completely white. It appears to be leading the others.

She takes pictures as the White Crow caws orders. Groups of crows land on the ground and form a barrier around the dead lamb.

White Crow lands directly on the lamb and struts around while the rest of the crows watch on.

White Crow looks right at Daphne and then pecks out each of the lamb's eyes, swallowing them down whole. He caws several times and, as though this was the cue they'd been waiting for, the other crows swoop in, scavenging whatever flesh they can in a piranha-like frenzy.

She takes several pictures and then

BACK TO SCENE.

the baby monitor kicks into life.

The sound of an eight year old child waking up, getting out of bed, closing the door, heading for the bathroom.

Daphne downs her coffee, removes the memory card from the camera and heads through her extensive

EXT. GARDEN - MORNING

pausing briefly to breathe in the crisp spring air before entering her

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

She places bread in the toaster and readies a bowl of cereal just in time as FINLAY(8), intelligent, appears in the doorway rubbing his eyes and yawning.

DAPHNE

Come on then. You've got half an hour before school.

Finlay rubs at his face exasperatedly.

FINLAY

I feel sick though.

Daphne shakes her head in disbelief and checks his forehead with the back of her hand.

DAPHNE

Finlay. What have I said to you about telling lies?

FINLAY

That the monster under my bed will get bigger and bigger till it's big enough to eat me.

Daphne chuckles.

DAPHNE
That was two years ago.

 FINLAY
You warn me about lying with a lie.

 DAPHNE
You were much younger then. That
isn't the point. The point is,
you're well enough for school, end
of conversation.

 FINLAY
But mom!

 DAPHNE
Eat your breakfast.

Finlay carries his breakfast into the LIVING ROOM while
Daphne finishes the toast and pours herself another coffee.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Finlay is munching his way through the cereal while seated
at the dining table.

Lots of pictures of Daphne and Finlay together adorn the
walls. A couple of other pictures of GRANDPARENTS with
Finlay.

Daphne places the toast next to him and swigs from her
coffee, stares at him, frowning. He looks up, finished with
the cereal.

 FINLAY
What?

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - POLICE STATION - DAY

SERGEANT NATHAN HOCKENS (40), tall, righteous, steps inside
the

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

and the reverberations of somebody's snoring.

At the RECEPTION DESK, sits ANDREA (20's), a civilian
worker, a set of headphones on and asleep. Although the
snoring is not coming from her.

Nathan gently removes the headphones, causing Andrea to wake up instantly.

ANDREA

Sorry sir, I...

NATHAN

Don't worry about it. He's fast asleep anyway. Thanks for covering. You can go home now.

ANDREA

Thank you.

She hugs him and grabs her stuff.

NATHAN

You should be fine until tomorrow morning, come in then.

Andrea raises her hand in thanks on her way out.

Nathan takes a bunch of keys from behind the desk and makes his way to the

CELL BLOCK

consisting of just two cells. He drops the flap on one of them and looks into the

CELL

Lying on the bench is SEBASTIEN SWANSON (50's) lifelong drink and drug addict, homeless, stinky, not a care in the world. He turns and looks back.

SEBASTIEN

Do you mind? I'm trying to sleep.

NATHAN

Sorry, Sebastien. Time for you to go home.

Nathan unlocks the door and walks in.

SEBASTIEN

This is my home.

NATHAN

Not anymore it isn't. Come on, got to have you out.

Sebastien struggles to sit up while moaning and grumbling.

SEBASTIEN

Some hotel this is. Any breakfast?

NATHAN

I'll get you something in a second.
You can take a shower too.

Nathan moves out of the doorway to let Sebastien through.

NATHAN

Best I can do, I'm afraid.

INT. ALAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

ALAN CARTWRIGHT(20's), dishevelled and a taste for the good life, is rudely awoken to crows cawing just outside his bedroom window. He groans and grabs an air rifle sitting next to the bed.

He makes sure it is loaded, then opens the window, takes aim and fires. The cawing is cut short and a crow falls to the ground, dead.

He places the gun next to the window, stretches and opens the wardrobe. Inside is a police constable uniform. He takes it out.

EXT. ST ALBERT'S PRIMARY - PLAYGROUND - DAY

Daphne drops Finlay off, waving goodbye to the TEACHER and walking away.

EXT. ST ALBERT'S PRIMARY - CAR PARK - DAY

Daphne climbs into her

INT. DAPHNE'S CAR - DAY

and takes a look at the DSLR on the seat next to her, scanning through the pictures, looking specially at White Crow.

EXT. ALAN'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Alan groans, noticing that his car is covered in bird droppings. Several crows perched on the roof of his house caw down at him. He looks up at them.

ALAN

This is only going to make me
target you more you know. Stupid
bloody birds.

They caw at him louder and spread their wings threateningly.

ALAN

Yeah, just try it and I'll break
your little necks.

Alan climbs into his

INT. ALAN'S CAR - DAY

and uses the windscreen wash but only succeeds in smearing the droppings across the windscreen. He uses more and more wash, eventually cleaning the screen enough so that he can drive.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - DAY

A typical country pub, a small BAR AREA, slightly larger LOUNGE with a pool table.

BAR AREA

Chalked on the menu alongside other delights such as "PIE & MASH" is the "CHEF'S SPECIAL: CROW PIE".

EVAN TANDY(40's), feeling his age, pours himself a stiff scotch, knocks it back, pours another and does the same.

VERONICA TANDY(40's), tart, new tits, stands in the doorway of the BAR, dressed in a revealing nightdress, looking at him, disgust spread across her, suspiciously plump, limps.

He glances at her side on, not quite the nerve to look her full in the face. She shakes her head and turns away from him, bending over, revealing more than she should, to check the glasses.

Evan places a hand near her behind, not daring to touch all the way. Then she stands, he moves his hand away quickly. She looks at him suspiciously. He pours himself another scotch.

A knock from the REAR DOOR.

They both move to get it but Veronica pushes him out of the way, walking into the

HALLWAY

and opening the REAR DOOR. Veronica smiles when she sees who it is and makes a show of attempting to cover her 'modesty'.

VERONICA

Well, good morning Taylor.

TAYLOR(40's), tall, rugged, a poacher and small-time criminal openly leers over Veronica's assets.

TAYLOR

G'morning, Veronica. It's your husband I have business with.

EVAN

Excuse me.

Evan pushes past Veronica into the

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - BACK YARD - DAY

and closes the door, shutting her in.

He turns to Taylor and smiles.

EVAN

Pokes her nose into everything,
that one.

Taylor recoils as Evan's breath assails his nostrils.

TAYLOR

I have some specials for you. In
the wagon.

Taylor leads Evan through the BACK GATE and out onto the

CAR PARK

where he has parked his wagon. He opens the rear doors and points inside.

Evan pokes his head around and does a rough count.

EVAN
How many is that?

TAYLOR
Thirteen.

EVAN
Thirteen? What am I going to do
with thirteen of them? They're just
not that popular, Taylor.

TAYLOR
Tell you what. I'll knock a quid
off each one.

Evan shakes his head, still not convinced.

TAYLOR
Make chicken curry, nobody will
know the difference.

Evan looks in again at the thirteen, freshly shot, crows.

EVAN
Knock one-fifty off and I can work
with that.

TAYLOR
I'll do one-twenty and I'm not
dropping another penny.

Evan sighs.

EVAN
OK, deal.

INT. BELTRAN'S BODEGA - SHOP AREA - DAY

BELTRAN TANDY(50's), half Spanish, slightly overweight,
waves goodbye to his wife, SUZANNE(40's) as she leaves.

BELTRAN
Don't forget to pick up the sugar,
we're also quite low on pickled
eggs.

Beltran watches her leave the shop and climb into the brand new four-by-four. Raises his hand as she drives away. He then opens up a laptop.

ALAN(OS)
They're saying it can make you
blind.

Beltran slams the laptop shut and looks up guiltily.

Alan, now in police uniform, stands the other side of the counter, reading from a newspaper.

ALAN
Smoking. Apparently you're twice as
likely to go blind in old age if
you smoke.

Alan closes the newspaper and places it on the counter.

ALAN
I'll have twenty Raven, please.

Beltran places the laptop down and lifts up the shutters, removing a black box of cigarettes, placing them on top of the newspaper.

Alan scours the alcohol sitting behind Beltran.

BELTRAN
How are you this morning, Alan?

ALAN
Let's not start playing jovial
shopkeeper right after I catch you
looking at porn.

Beltran reddens.

BELTRAN
I wasn't...

Alan places a finger to his lips.

ALAN
It's OK. I know.

Alan winks.

ALAN
I know.

BELTRAN

Are you looking for anything else?

Alan points to a small, black-labelled bottle of scotch. Beltran places it on the counter, next to the cigarettes and newspaper.

ALAN

We all have our little secrets.

Alan winks and takes the items, walking out without paying.

INT. DAPHNE'S CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

Daphne pulls off a road and onto a tight GRAVEL PATH, passing a sign crudely declaring, "BODMIN FARM".

She drives along for a while, eventually pulling into the YARD, where a four-by-four and a scrambler motorbike are parked.

EXT. BODMIN FARM - YARD - DAY

JIM BODMIN(60's), weathered, heavy smoker, tosses a cigarette butt onto the ground and stamps it out as Daphne approaches him. He notices the DSLR strapped to her neck.

JIM

You with the press?

Daphne laughs and shakes her head reassuringly.

DAPHNE

No. I'm Daphne. Daphne Hunter. We moved here about a year ago.

Jim nods.

JIM

I've seen yer about. What can I do yer for?

Daphne readies her camera and walks around to show him the screen.

DAPHNE

I'm an amateur ornithologist and I sell the best shots to wildlife magazines and things like that.

JIM
Pay well?

DAPHNE
Fairly well yes.

She points at the screen, flicking through images of White Crow.

DAPHNE
I took these earlier.

Jim eyes the pictures.

JIM
Yer, they happen.

DAPHNE
I know, but it is this that concerned me.

Daphne flicks through the images showing the attack on the lamb. Jim's face wrinkles with concern.

JIM
One of mine?

DAPHNE
That's why I'm here.

JIM
Bloody hell. Come with me.

Jim jumps into his

INT. FOUR-BY-FOUR - DAY

and waits for Daphne to get into the passenger seat before pulling away.

He drives along a narrow dirt road, passing crop fields, heading towards the field holding his sheep.

JIM
It's rare they attack sheep. Takes a special type of crow.

DAPHNE
There was a lot of them in the attack.

Jim chuckles.

JIM

Take it from me. I've been battling those bastards for forty-five years. Usually smart enough not to attack livestock.

DAPHNE

Then what makes them do it?

JIM

A leader, all bravado and no brains. We've had culls before, looks like another one is due. Seems that every now and then they forget who's in charge.

Jim stops the four-by-four and climbs out.

EXT. SHEEP FIELD - GATE - DAY

Jim waits for Daphne before opening the gate and letting her through.

SHEEP FIELD

He secures the gate, then leads her across the field.

JIM

Yer, I can smell it already.

Jim breaks into a run, Daphne does likewise.

Jim pulls up and places out a hand, warding her off as he stands over the dead lamb.

JIM

Oh my God, they've picked it clean.

Daphne leans over for a closer look.

Very few shreds of meat are left on the carcass and bits of wool and blood are everywhere.

Daphne places a hand to her nose to cover the stench.

JIM

I've never seen it as bad as this, but I haven't been up here the past couple of days, the wife is... ill. Must be that, they've had the time.

Jim looks around for the perpetrators, tears in his eyes.

JIM
Bastards.

DAPHNE
Isn't there anything you can do? I mean aside from killing... culling them?

JIM
Taking pictures is different to understanding why animals do the things they do.

DAPHNE
I'll admit that I don't know much about crows exactly.

JIM
Scarecrows don't work, the bastards recognise faces and quickly figure out that the scarecrow isn't real, if they even think it is in the first place.

Daphne takes out her phone and googles.

JIM
The only way they learn is through the odd cull.

Daphne taps at the phone.

DAPHNE
Bloody reception.

JIM
It's a welcome problem around here. The fewer of those phone masts there are the better.

Daphne puts her phone away.

DAPHNE
Do you have an old gun?

JIM
Why?

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Alan walks in smiling. Nathan barely looks up as he finishes off some paperwork.

ALAN
No Andrea today?

NATHAN
She covered for you last night.
Where were you?

ALAN
Sorry, I didn't get the text till
this morning.

NATHAN
And the reason you're late now?

ALAN
Nathan, Nat'...

NATHAN
We're at work, it's Sergeant.

Alan smirks.

NATHAN
Have you been drinking?

ALAN
Just a little hung over after last
night.

NATHAN
Right... well no car for you today,
you can take the bike.

ALAN
What? Ride around the village?

NATHAN
It'll be good for you.

ALAN
Is this some type of punishment for
missing your text message.

NATHAN
Stop being ridiculous.

Nathan checks his watch.

NATHAN
I'd get started if I were you.

Alan scowls.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - DAY

Evan sits behind the bar drinking scotch, peering at the door as though waiting for a customer.

He gulps back his scotch and stands, having to steady himself against the bar. He walks, unsteadily into the

HALLWAY

and opens the REAR DOOR, stepping outside.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - BACK YARD

He looks down at the pile of dead crows and grabs the legs so that he has them all in two hands, macabrely dangling from his fingers.

He carries them over to the SLAUGHTER SHED, but noises from inside give him pause. His eyebrows narrow and he stealthily approaches a SPYHOLE. He takes a deep breath and pushes his eye against it.

INT. SLAUGHTER SHED - DAY

Flies buzzing around scraps of old crow flesh, carcasses. A long table, a bloody saw, hammer, chopping knife, black feathers.

Veronica is bent over the table while Taylor pumps vigorously in and out of her. Taylor turns, looks directly at the spyhole and grins maliciously as though he knows he is being watched.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - BACK YARD

Evan recoils, dropping one of the crows outside the shed as he hurries into the pub.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - HALLWAY - DAY

Evan closes the rear door and leans his back against it. He then realises that he still has the crows in his hand and drops them on the floor.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Alan removes the chain from the police issue bike and looks up to see several crows looking down at him while perched on the station's roof.

ALAN

Do you know why they bother to lock
up the bike?

He waits a moment or two, then realises he is being foolish and awkwardly rides away.

The crows watch him go for a while, then take flight... following him.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - DAY

The canopy is dense, light hits the ground sporadically as Sebastien clumps his way along, out of breath and sweating, it is with a certain amount of relief he comes upon the

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

containing his dirty, pitched tent, a camping stove, chair and litter strewn across the ground.

Cawing makes him look up and he sees that the branches of the trees are covered in crows.

He hurries into the tent and emerges clutching an old, ready-loaded, crossbow.

SEBASTIEN

What are you all looking at?

He fires, the bolt pierces one of the birds and the rest of the crows, in that particular tree, instantaneously caw and flutter into the air, ensuing a cacophony of sound and movement that flusters Sebastien. He drops the crossbow and falls to his knees whilst shielding his face with his arm.

EXT. BODMIN FARM - SHEEP FIELD - DAY

Daphne hurries to keep pace with Jim as he strides across the field on the way back to the four-by-four.

 DAPHNE
So what now?

 JIM
Once a group like this is about it
spreads through the rest of the
population. They all start getting
brave.

 DAPHNE
Is it just the lambs?

 JIM
Nope. They'll take whole sheep too.

 DAPHNE
My God, sheep are...

 JIM
Yeah I know. Makes yer think
doesn't it.

Jim reaches the four-by-four and looks up at the sky.

 JIM
That group has followed us all the
way across the field.

Daphne laughs.

 DAPHNE
You think they know?

 JIM
I know they do.

Daphne frowns and, despite herself, glances up at the
circling crows.

Jim climbs into the

INT. FOUR-BY-FOUR - DAY

and waits for Daphne to get in before starting the engine.
Jim pulls away and drives along the lane.

DAPHNE

So how will you set about culling them?

JIM

Hit them at their nests, kill the adults, any hatchlings will die of starvation.

DAPHNE

Their nests in the woods?

JIM

Eastwind Wood, yes. Should solve the problem.

INT. BELTRAN'S BODEGA - SHOP AREA - DAY

Beltran turns off the laptop and looks around the shop, he sighs. He gets up and walks through to the

BACK OF THE SHOP

and opens the back door where he has a dog chained up in the

BACK YARD

He pets the dog and unchains it. He hears noises from inside the shop.

BELTRAN

That you Suzanne?

SUZANNE(OS)

Yes.

BELTRAN

I'm taking the dog for a walk.

SUZANNE(OS)

OK.

Beltran uses the chain as a makeshift lead and takes the dog through the BACK GATE.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - DAY

Beltran walks around to the front of his shop and waves to Suzanne. She waves back. He turns away, a smile on his face, and walks the dog out of the village.

INT. BELTRAN'S BODEGA - SHOP AREA - DAY

Suzanne potters around for a while before getting bored waiting for somebody to come in. She spots Beltran's laptop and, after hesitating a couple of times, opens it. She opens the browser and clicks internet history. She clicks one of the links and the screen is filled with pornographic images. She recoils in horror and slams the laptop shut.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY

Alan rides past Beltran and taps him on the back of the head, laughing as he races away.

BELTRAN
(mumbling)
Bastard.

Beltran looks at the sky and notices a group of crows circling him and another group circling Alan as he rides away. He shakes off the strangeness of it all and carries on with the walk.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - BACK YARD

Veronica follows Taylor out of the SLAUGHTER SHED, he securing his trousers. He smirks upon noticing a dead crow near the spyhole.

VERONICA
I'll call you.

TAYLOR
I know you will.

Taylor lets himself out of the BACK GATE.

Veronica takes a moment to straighten herself out before walking into the

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - HALLWAY - DAY

where she notices the crows on the floor. She walks into the

BAR AREA

and takes a look around. She walks back into the

HALLWAY

and looks up the STAIRS.

VERONICA

Evan! You up there?

She listens, then walks up the STAIRS and stops outside their BEDROOM on the LANDING. Sobs can be heard coming from inside. She taps on the door and slowly pushes it open.

BEDROOM

Evan is lying on the bed with the duvet pulled up over his head.

Veronica stands in the doorway and scowls.

VERONICA

You're pathetic. Look at the state of you.

Evan whips the cover from his head.

EVAN

I saw you, Vee. In the shed.

VERONICA

Get off on it did you?

EVAN

I've had enough.

Evan gets off the bed. Veronica chuckles goadingly.

VERONICA

You going to hit me?

Evan pushes past her onto the

LANDING

She follows him down the STAIRS.

VERONICA

Why don't you hit me, you know you
want to. Go on, hit me.

EVAN

Manage the bar for a few hours
please.

VERONICA

I'm not managing nothing. That's
your job.

Evan sighs, digs deep and contains himself. He walks
outside.

VERONICA

That's it, run away just like you
always do.

She hears a car door slam and the screech of tyres.

VERONICA

Bleedin' pisshead, I hope you get
done for speeding 'n all.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Daphne's car drives along, smoke comes from under the
bonnet, the hazards come on. The car pulls to a stop and
Daphne climbs out, shaking her head.

She opens the bonnet and the smoke hurls itself into the
air. Daphne steps back, choking.

DAPHNE

Great.

She looks up and down the road and seeing no sign of anyone
she grabs her camera from the car and walks away.

High above her head, a murder of crows circle, watching.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - CLEARING - DAY

Sebastien sits down chuckling while plucking the crow's feathers.

Crows covering the trees around him sit and watch in complete silence.

SEBASTIEN

A constant supply of food.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - CAR PARK - DAY

A car skids to a stop and Evan jumps out, a bottle of scotch in his hands. He staggers towards the woods, sobbing.

EVAN

Filthy bitch.

He falls into the

EASTWIND WOOD

and lies on the ground looking up into the trees. A smile suddenly spreads across his face as he notices the tree full of crows. He sits up and swigs from the bottle, his vision blurring.

EVAN

So this is where, where you all
hide out, eh. My little darlings.
Much better than those stupid
bloody chickens... eh?

The crows stare at him silently. His eyebrows furrow but doesn't compute the weirdness, he dismisses it, takes another swig and climbs to his feet. He takes a moment to steady himself before setting off into the trees and it isn't long until

EVAN

Slut!

he is sobbing again.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Daphne pauses to catch her breath and notices Alan cycling towards her. She continues walking and stops when he does. He smiles at her charmingly.

ALAN

I don't believe we've had the good fortune to meet yet.

Daphne smiles back, politely.

DAPHNE

Daphne. I live...

ALAN

Yes, I know. Hardly a big place.

DAPHNE

I suppose not.

ALAN

I'm Alan. What brings you here. You like walking?

DAPHNE

No. Car broke down. I was just on my way to the police station actually, so you may have just saved me a journey.

ALAN

Always happy to help a beautiful lady in distress.

DAPHNE

I've come from Bodmin Farm. A lamb was killed and eaten by crows.

ALAN

Bloody hell!

Alan looks up at an ever growing murder of crows hovering above their heads.

DAPHNE

Yes. He's talking about a cull? Is that actually legal?

ALAN

He can do what he likes. No law against killing crows that I know of, but you'd better check with the sergeant to be sure.

DAPHNE

Thanks.

ALAN

No problem.

He turns on his sweetest smile. She's appreciative but non-committal. She walks away.

DAPHNE

Well, bye then.

ALAN

How far is your car?

DAPHNE

About half a mile that way.

ALAN

Tell you what. Why don't you take the bike, I'll take a look at your car and then drive it back to the village when I'm done?

He gets off the bike, hands it to her.

DAPHNE

You sound very sure you can fix it.

ALAN

I'm Mr Reliable.

He winks. She chuckles, stand-offishly.

DAPHNE

I'm sure you are. OK. Thank you.

ALAN

Maybe you can pay me back with dinner some time?

DAPHNE

Bye, Alan.

Alan watches as she rides away and then is hit with the sudden realisation that he has to walk half a mile.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY

Beltran walks along with the dog when something makes him look into the sky. The murder following him has now grown exponentially, to the degree where it appears there is a dark cloud above his head. He pauses to take a good look, eyes furrowing as he tries to fathom it.

White Crow circles above and caws loudly, over and over again. A crow separates from the mass and dive-bombs Beltran, pecking him on the head, drawing blood. Beltran yells out in pain and swipes at empty air with his hand.

White Crow continues cawing and this time several crows break from the mass and dive-bomb Beltran. This time he spots them coming and manages to bat one or two away, but the other three flap around his head, pecking at it.

More crows break from the mass, forty or fifty strong and swoop at high speed.

Beltran lets go of the lead and the dog runs for it. The crows change direction and go for the dog. Beltran falls to the ground delicately assessing the wounds on his head.

The dog runs and then attempts to fight. It takes down one crow, savaging it on the ground but is bombarded so badly that it attempts to run again. Crows swarm all over it, eventually bringing it down.

Beltran watches helplessly. White Crow lands next to him giving him a start. White Crow caws.

Beltran scrambles to his feet.

White Crow caws again. Beltran looks up and sees more crows circling. He remembers that his own life could be in danger. He looks White Crow in the eye as he stands slowly and then runs.

The crows feed on the dog. White Crow watches Beltran escape.

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Daphne walks in as Nathan fills out some paperwork without looking up.

NATHAN
Can I help you?

DAPHNE

I hope so.

Nathan looks up and and pauses, smiles. Daphne reciprocates.

DAPHNE

I'm Daphne, I live...

NATHAN

Yes. It's a...

DAPHNE

Seems like everyone knows all about me and I know nothing about them.

NATHAN

I was going to say, it's a small village. Folks get to talking. I'm Nathan.

DAPHNE

The Sergeant.

NATHAN

So you do know something.

DAPHNE

I'm a quick learner.

NATHAN

What can I help you with?

DAPHNE

It's about the crows.

NATHAN

I've noticed there are a lot more of them about, but not much I can do about that.

He smiles.

DAPHNE

This is a little more serious. They killed a lamb on Bodmin farm.

NATHAN

It's rare but does happen from time to time.

DAPHNE

Jim, the farmer.

NATHAN

Yes, I know Jim. He's a good man.

DAPHNE

He wants to organise a cull on the birds and I'm wondering if that is really necessary.

NATHAN

Jim's a better man than me to decide these things. There is no law against killing crows. In fact they're a bit of a delicacy in this village.

DAPHNE

I suppose I need to shake the city girl out of me.

NATHAN

I'm sure you'll get there.

Daphne makes to leave and hesitates as she remembers something.

DAPHNE

Oh, the other police officer, Alan?

Nathan nods.

DAPHNE

My car broke down and he kindly borrowed me his bike. It's outside.

NATHAN

Very gallant of him.

DAPHNE

I suspect his gallantry is generated from the trouser area.

NATHAN

Ah, I see you got to know him quite well.

DAPHNE

Well I was in his presence for at least five minutes.

They share a chuckle.

The MAIN DOOR flies open and Beltran falls onto the floor, panting, covered in minor injuries from the attack.

BELTRAN

They got him. They killed him.

Beltran cannot contain his tears as Nathan hurries over to him.

NATHAN

What happened?

BELTRAN

They killed him, started eating him.

NATHAN

Calm down, Beltran. Who's done what?

Beltran takes a second to thoroughly compose himself.

BELTRAN

Bruno, they ate Bruno. The crows. The crows attacked us and they ate him.

He breaks down again.

BELTRAN

There was nothing I could do. Nothing. I'm sorry, Bruno, so sorry.

Daphne and Nathan exchange a glance.

DAPHNE

Do you need a hospital? Do you feel dizzy?

BELTRAN

No, I feel fine. Please, I had to leave him. I had to...

Daphne consoles him.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Alan pulls up outside just as Daphne, Nathan and Beltran leave the station. He jumps out of the car, grinning.

ALAN

Told you I'd fix it.

NATHAN

There's been an incident, man the station till I get back.

ALAN

Oh, well that's just great. The moment there's an incident and I have to man the station.

DAPHNE

Thank you for fixing the car, let me know how much.

ALAN

Don't mention it. Maybe you could pay me back with dinner some time.

Daphne glances over at Nathan who is letting Beltran into the back seat of the station's only police car, then back to Alan.

DAPHNE

Look. You and me will never happen. You're a nice guy...

ALAN

Yeah, whatever.

Alan walks into the police station.

NATHAN

Don't worry about him, he always sulks when he doesn't get his own way.

DAPHNE

Probably taken from his mother too early.

NATHAN

Or too late.

DAPHNE

Is it OK if I come along?

NATHAN

Well, I shouldn't really...

DAPHNE

OK, I wouldn't want to...

NATHAN

But I can't see the harm. You'll have to sit in the back.

DAPHNE

I haven't been in the back of one of these for years.

Nathan lets her into the back of the car.

NATHAN

I'm afraid to ask.

DAPHNE

Oh, nothing too dramatic I can assure you.

Nathan climbs into the car and starts the engine.

Suzanne runs over from the Bodega and taps on the window. Nathan winds it down to speak to her.

SUZANNE

What's going on? Who's that woman in the back with my husband?

Suzanne peers in through the window, at Beltran.

SUZANNE

I looked at the laptop Beltran.

BELTRAN

They ate Bruno, Suzanne.

Suzanne looks at him strangely, notices the blood on his head.

SUZANNE

Bruno? What have you done to Bruno?

BELTRAN

Me? I haven't done anything!

NATHAN

Please, Mrs Tandy. Let me investigate what has happened and we'll be back in an hour to inform you, is that OK?

Suzanne nods numbly and watches as Nathan drives away. She bites at her nails and heads slowly over to the BODEGA.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - DAY

Evan wakes up to the sound of whistling and running water not far from him. He turns his head, groaning with a hangover, and sees

Taylor a few yards away urinating with his back to him. Taylor finishes, makes a show of shaking it, conceals himself then turns to face, Evan.

TAYLOR
You should be careful falling
asleep in the woods on your own.

EVAN
You're a bastard.

Taylor smirks and walks over to him, bending low so as to look him in the eye.

TAYLOR
I save your marriage.

EVAN
How do you figure that one out?

TAYLOR
Well, I look at it like this. Your
wife is the sort that needs to get
it hard and have money so she can
live in a certain lifestyle.

Taylor stops to light a cigarette.

TAYLOR
I provide one half of that equation
and you provide the other. Three
peas in a pod.

EVAN
There's nothing wrong with our sex
life.

TAYLOR
No, I'm sure you hammer that little
pecker of yours in and out like a
rabbit on viagra. Doesn't mean
she's enjoying it, doesnt mean she
isn't staring at the ceiling,
yawning and thinking to herself, I
wish he'd just hurry up and come!

EVAN
You bastard.

Evan struggles to his feet.

TAYLOR
Don't feel bad, Evan. All women are like that, which is why I don't have one.

EVAN
No, you just share other people's.

TAYLOR
Better than they being my responsibility. I don't want your woman, Evan. I just want sex with her now and again. If I don't do it, she'll find somebody else.

Taylor draws deeply on the cigarette and tosses it onto the ground, stubs it out with his boot.

TAYLOR
Better the devil you know, eh.

The crows watch silently as Evan staggers away.

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Alan looks up from his phone as Suzanne walks in, puts on his charming smile, despite Suzanne clearly being in distress.

ALAN
Are you OK?

He moves around to comfort her.

ALAN
Come on, I'll take you through to one of our interview rooms and make you a nice cup of tea.

SUZANNE
I want to know who that woman was that was in the car with my husband.

Alan leads her into an

INTERVIEW ROOM

and seats her down at the table.

ALAN

It's not for me to pass judgements
but she did make a pass at me
almost as soon as she'd met me.

Suzanne looks at him in shock.

ALAN

But of course I had to let her
down.

SUZANNE

He hardly ever touches me these
days and I found him looking at
porn.

ALAN

Ah. I'll just get you that tea.
Sugar?

SUZANNE

No thanks.

Nathan smiles and leaves the room.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY

Nathan lets Daphne and Beltran out of the car. Bruno's
skeletal corpse is thirty or so yards away. Beltran gasps at
the sight and then looks up.

NATHAN

You two please stay here.

BELTRAN

They're in the sky.

Daphne and Nathan look into the sky.

DAPHNE

So strange.

NATHAN

Wait in the car if you're worried.
I just didn't want to lock you in.
Please, feel free.

Beltran nods and climbs into the back of the car.

Nathan looks at Daphne.

DAPHNE

I'm fine.

Daphne watches Nathan head towards the corpse for a while and follows after him.

Nathan examines Bruno's skeletal remains. The corpse has been almost picked clean. A puzzled look crosses his face and he looks into the sky.

Several murders of crows hover over their heads.

Daphne strains her eyes and picks out White Crow amongst one of the murders.

DAPHNE

There it is.

Nathan turns, surprised she hadn't waited near the car.

NATHAN

What?

She points.

DAPHNE

That murder there, the white crow.
I think that is the leader.

Nathan strains his eyes into the sky.

White Crow looks back.

Nathan looks at Bruno's skeletal corpse.

NATHAN

Looks like we need a cull and quickly. I've never seen them have the audacity to kill a dog, let alone pick it clean in less than an hour. Unheard of.

DAPHNE

You think it's possible they could attack humans?

NATHAN

They attacked Beltran, more than likely to get at the dog, but yes, I'd say that with this current group it's possible.

DAPHNE

Children?

NATHAN

Now there's no need to be panicking. I'm sure it would be very, very unlikely and only occur in an event like poor Beltran's.

DAPHNE

I'm sure you are right.

Daphne looks unassuredly up at the sky.

NATHAN

I'll call a meeting. We'll start the cull tonight.

DAPHNE

Tonight?

NATHAN

We encourage everyone with a gun to participate. One night is usually enough. If it's one thing that's true about crows, they're bloody smart. Only something that is stupid would hang around and risk being shot by a hundred shotguns.

Nathan opens the door for Daphne to climb inside the car.

NATHAN

You can join in if you like. I have a spare gun.

Daphne shakes her head and sits down in the car. Nathan leans on the door.

DAPHNE

No. I have my son and... killing things is not really for me. I understand that it has to be done. I'd just rather not be involved.

NATHAN

I understand. Thanks for your support, though. If it's any consolation I'm not into killing things either. The main thing is scaring them. I won't be aiming at anything.

DAPHNE
Oh, I didn't mean...

Nathan closes the door.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - DAY

Evan staggers in. Veronica scowls at him from behind the bar.

VERONICA
Drinking and driving again, I see.
One of these days you're going to
kill yourself, or somebody else.

EVAN
Yeah, you'd like that wouldn't ya,
you dirty bitch.

VERONICA
Uhm!

She points at a couple of ELDERLY customers sitting at one of the tables.

Evan grins at them drunkenly.

EVAN
'scuse me. I didn't mean to spoil
your drink.

ELDERLY1
Don't mind us. It's better than
sitting at home watching the telly.

They raise their beers to him and take a large sup.

Evan turns back to the bitch, who is polishing her nails.

EVAN
I'm going to bed... for a lie down.

VERONICA
Off to cry yourself to sleep.

Evan staggers past her.

VERONICA
There's a meeting in here tonight,
something about a cull on the
crows.

Evan sobers up somewhat.

VERONICA

I thought that would wake you up.

EVAN

That's not good.

VERONICA

Why not? You get to collect all the dead ones.

EVAN

Half of them so full of lead they'd be impossible to eat, the rest not faring much better. Then the crows are scared away altogether. They're smart.

Evan taps at his temple.

EVAN

It'll take them years to come back.

Evan pours himself a drink and knocks it straight back. Veronica pulls a disgusted face.

VERONICA

An alcoholic running a pub.

EVAN

It's a part of the job description. You're quick enough spending the money from the proceeds.

VERONICA

What proceeds? You barely pull a decent wage from this place after you've drunk it dry.

The Elderly customers sup from their beers and watch, avidly.

EVAN

You ungrateful bitch.

VERONICA

What do I have to be grateful for? Look at the state of ya.

Evan struggles for a while, detaching the large, but half-full, bottle of Scotch from the optics behind the bar. He eventually manages it and, with a look of triumph on his face, storms past Veronica.

EVAN

Wake me up when the meeting starts.

Veronica gives him the finger.

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Alan straightens out his uniform while Suzanne looks dishevelled as she walks out of the building. Alan coughs and looks for some paperwork to do.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Suzanne tidies her hair as Nathan pulls up and gets out of the police car. She throws Beltran a dirty look and strides over to the Bodega.

Nathan smiles at Beltran.

NATHAN

Looks like you've got some explaining to do.

Daphne looks up at the sky, several murders hover silently above their heads.

DAPHNE

They're like a dark ominous cloud.

BELTRAN

They're mad at us.

Nathan chuckles.

NATHAN

Come on now. This isn't a horror film. We'll do what needs doing tonight.

BELTRAN

I've lived here all of my life, just like you. I've never seen nor heard of an attack on a dog like that before. Not like that.

DAPHNE

I suppose there has to be a first time for everything.

EXT. BODMIN FARM - SHEEP FIELD - DAY

Two shotguns lay on the ground. A large stake hammered into the earth, adorning it a realistic looking scarecrow.

Jim steps back to admire his handiwork. The scarecrow is made from straw with a hemp sack for a head, a crude face drawn upon it in make-up, dressed in a lumberjack shirt, an old pair of jeans that are tied at the bottom, and a floppy hat.

Jim picks up one of the shotguns and positions it on the scarecrow so that it points at the sky.

Jim looks up smugly.

The crows that were circling fly away, giving the field a completely crow-free air space.

Jim picks up his own shotgun and heads away.

EXT. ST ALBERT'S PRIMARY - CAR PARK - DAY

Daphne reaches her car and opens the passenger door for Finlay to get in, but his attention is taken with the crows circling in the sky.

 DAPHNE
Finlay. Come on.

 FINLAY
Why are there so many birds?

 DAPHNE
There just are, now come on.

 FINLAY
Look mommy. There's a white one!

Daphne looks up.

White Crow circles above them.

Daphne looks concerned.

 DAPHNE
Just get in the car, Finlay.

Finlay ignores her, looking into the sky, mouth agape.

DAPHNE

Now!

She physically pushes him into the car

FINLAY

Mom!

and slams the door shut. She keeps her eye on the sky as she climbs into the

INT. DAPHNE'S CAR - DAY

closes the door and breathes a sigh of relief. She looks in the rear-view mirror at Finlay on the back seat.

DAPHNE

Always listen to me, OK? Never
hesitate.

Finlay nods.

DAPHNE

Good. Now do your belt up. Quick
tea tonight. We're going out.

With another glance at the sky, Daphne starts the engine and drives out of the car park.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Veronica is doing a valiant job serving at the bar as the entire village have turned up.

Nathan and Alan are setting up the microphone and speaker.

NATHAN

Amazing what a good shooting can do
for a pub's business.

Nathan raises his eyes towards the mobs of people. Alan nods his head.

ALAN

They'd turn out for public hangings
this lot.

Suzanne and Beltran are dressed-up, having all the air of a couple rekindling their romance after an argument. There is a rose in front of her and a pitcher of champagne on the table. He being extra tentative, pouring for her, making sure she is well topped up.

All eyes fall on Daphne as she walks in with Finlay. She smiles awkwardly and pushes Finlay ahead of her to the bar.

Veronica looks her up and down and nods her head.

DAPHNE

Do you have any hot drinks?

Veronica looks perplexed, but recovers swiftly.

VERONICA

Coffee?

DAPHNE

Yes please. Could I have two lumps of sugar?

Veronica makes to walk away.

DAPHNE

and a cordial drink... for my son?

VERONICA

Blackcurrant?

DAPHNE

Thank you.

Veronica turns away to fetch the drinks.

Nathan approaches Daphne at the bar while she rummages around for her purse.

NATHAN

I didn't think this was your thing.

DAPHNE

It isn't. But I thought I'd take the opportunity to show my face... and my support.

NATHAN

Well thanks for coming.

Alan sets the microphone on a stand while jealously looking over at Nathan and Daphne.

Veronica hands the drinks over the bar. Nathan takes them while Daphne pays.

NATHAN

Our table has seats. Want to sit with us?

Daphne nods and follows him to a table near the microphone stand.

Taylor enters carrying several shotguns.

TAYLOR
I got a few spares if anyone wants
them.

A few VILLAGERS form a line.

TAYLOR
Twenty quid for rental of a gun and
three quid a bullet.

Taylor sells his wares and heads over to the bar, a twenty in his hand, grinning at Veronica. She wiggles her chest and looks across the bar, notices

Evan put in an appearance. He looks at her and Taylor, scowls, then turns away to pour himself a drink.

Taylor leans across the bar for a quiet word with her.

TAYLOR
Don't you worry about him. We had
words.

VERONICA
What kind of words.

Taylor winks and chuckles.

Nathan coughs into the microphone and this is amplified around the bar, grabbing instant attention.

NATHAN
I see that it works. Thank you all
for coming. It's great to see such
a turn out and the village pulling
together.

TAYLOR
Just get on with it!

Chuckles of agreement from a small, but significant portion of the community.

NATHAN
Thanks Taylor, just making sure
everyone is ready for the night. I
also hope that all of those guns
are legal.

TAYLOR

They're all above board you can rest assured of that.

NATHAN

Safety is paramount. If you've never shot a gun before, please refrain from doing so tonight. For everyone else, remember this isn't exactly a cull.

Murmurs from around the pub.

NATHAN

So aim high, not at the birds. Crows cannot see as well in the dark, inevitably several will be hit. This will scare them away and our livestock, crops...

Nathan nods in recognition at Beltran and Suzanne.

NATHAN

even domestic pets, will be safe for a few years.

Murmurs of content around the bar.

NATHAN

Gentlemen... and ladies... let's get the job done.

Nathan approaches Daphne.

NATHAN

I'll see you later.

DAPHNE

Why are you doing this in the dark?

NATHAN

Crows are clever. If they see us coming with guns they could just fly away and then come back after we have gone. We've got to outsmart them.

DAPHNE

Sounds logical I suppose.

NATHAN

We do what works.

She smiles and watches him walk out with the rest of the SHOOTERS. The only people remaining aside from herself and Finlay is Evan and Veronica.

Daphne finishes her coffee and waits patiently for Finlay to finish his cordial.

DAPHNE

I suppose we better get you home.
Been a long day.

Daphne grabs her bag and takes Finlay's hand.

DAPHNE

Thank you so much for the hot
drink. Very kind of you.

Veronica scowls and watches them leave.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - CAR PARK - NIGHT

Several cars pull up and the villagers climb out, many with torches or lights attached to hats.

Taylor and Jim take the lead heading straight into the woods. Nathan and Alan follow up behind.

NATHAN

Taylor, wait there.

TAYLOR

This aint a police matter,
Sergeant. I'm the professional
here.

JIM

I'm qualified too.

TAYLOR

That you are Jim.

They head into the

WOODS

shining beams of light into the trees.

Crows stare back at them, covering every inch of branch.

ALAN
There's millions of them.

NATHAN
This isn't normal.

TAYLOR
Not something I've ever seen
before. Not saying it doesn't
happen regularly in other parts of
the world, I've just never seen it.

JIM
I've never seen anything like this.

ALAN
They're in every tree.

TAYLOR
We better get to work then. Ready?

JIM
We should make a single line, two
arm lengths away from each other.

NATHAN
OK everybody. Listen up!

Nathan waits until he has everyone's attention.

NATHAN
Single file, two arm lengths apart.
Please take careful aim before
discharging your guns. Do not cross
into anyone's path, careful steps,
careful shots.

Everybody spreads out as suggested.

Nathan waits until they are in position.

NATHAN
On my word...

Taylor fires into the trees and grins at Nathan. Nathan
shakes his head as all the Villagers fire.

Crows panic and crash into each other as they try to escape,
others drop to the ground instantly after being shot, others
fly high into the air, escaping in all directions.

NATHAN

And step!

The Villagers step forward.

NATHAN

Fire!

Crows caw in alarm as pellets rip through wings and bury into flesh.

NATHAN

And step!

The Villagers step forward and reload.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - FINLAY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daphne tucks Finlay up in bed as the sound of gunshots emanate from Eastwind Wood.

FINLAY

What's that noise?

DAPHNE

Just fireworks, somebody is having a party.

FINLAY

Are they shooting the crows?

Daphne chuckles and ruffles his head.

DAPHNE

I'm sorry. I keep forgetting you're all grown up now.

She pauses, looks him in the eye.

DAPHNE

Yes, they are.

Finlay shivers.

FINLAY

They're just birds.

Daphne sighs.

DAPHNE

We're not from around here, we don't understand why they need to

DAPHNE
do the things they do. But they're
all good people, so we have to
trust they're doing the right
thing.

She kisses his forehead.

 DAPHNE
Would you like a DVD on? It'll help
drown out the noise.

Finlay nods his head and she places a DVD in the recorder.

 DAPHNE
Don't forget you have school
tomorrow.

Daphne leaves the room and switches out the light.

Finlay watches the DVD, ignoring the gunfire.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - NIGHT

The Villagers step forward.

 NATHAN
Fire!

They fire, taking another step away from the carnage behind
them where thousands of dead crows litter the ground.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Veronica looks around the empty bar.

 VERONICA
Well, that was fun while it lasted.

Evan swoons up to her, feeling amorous.

 EVAN
I suppose we should call it an
early night.

Veronica considers the suggestion, briefly.

 VERONICA
I suppose there isn't anything
better to do. You lock up, I'll
wait for you upstairs.

Evan's face lifts gratefully. She brushes it off with a look of disgust and heads off upstairs.

Evan takes a reflective moment before taking a quick drink to steady his nerves and locking up.

He heads behind the bar and, just before switching out the lights, he has one final shot of scotch.

INT. BELTRAN'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Beltran is finishing off his dinner when Suzanne walks in, dressed in sexy lingerie. Beltran coughs, almost choking.

She smiles at him,. coyly.

SUZANNE

You find this attractive?

Beltran stands and kisses her passionately. She takes his hand and leads him upstairs.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Evan grunts and groans on top of Veronica for a while, eventually giving up and rolling off her.

EVAN

I'm sorry.

She sighs and stares at the ceiling.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Daphne sits on the settee, curled up with a glass of wine, watching a DVD that has just ended. She switches off the TV using a remote and places her glass safely, albeit rather unsteadily, on the coffee table.

She glances at a clock that reads "22:30" and strains her ears, listening for gunfire. All is quiet.

She hits the lights and heads UPSTAIRS, looking in on

FINLAY'S BEDROOM

where she turns off the TV and watches him sleep for a while before kissing him goodnight.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - CAR PARK - NIGHT

The Villagers return to their cars, some of them driving away.

Nathan, Taylor, Jim and Alan stand around for a chat.

TAYLOR

I can sort out the clean up if you like.

NATHAN

What will you do with them?

TAYLOR

Does it matter? If you must know, I'll sell what I can and burn the rest.

ALAN

Won't be much call for crow around here.

TAYLOR

Not around here. Plenty in the other villages though as all the crows seem to have landed on us this year.

NATHAN

If it gets too much for you let us know and we'll pull together. Get it sorted.

JIM

I have some land you can use to burn the bodies.

ALAN

Do you think they'll come back?

JIM

Not for a few years they won't.

ALAN

It's going to be weird not being woken up by them in the morning.

NATHAN

Well I dread to think what else is going to get you to work.

ALAN

I'll be there bright and early.

NATHAN

Yeah, we'll see about that.

JIM

(to Taylor)

Need a lift home?

TAYLOR

No. I'm going to collect my guns and walk.

ALAN

I don't know how you find your way. It's pitch black.

TAYLOR

Eyesight is just one of my keen senses.

Taylor winks and walks away to collect his guns.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - MORNING

Everything is completely quiet, no birds are singing and none can be found throughout the village, farms nor Eastwind Wood.

EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Nathan opens up the doors and glances over at Beltran who is whistling while polishing the outside windows of the Bodega.

NATHAN

Good night, Beltran?

Beltran beams at him.

BELTRAN

Amazing.

Alan arrives, much to Nathan's shock.

NATHAN

My God, that shoot last night must
have done you the world of good.

Alan winks.

ALAN

You'll make a bumpkin of me yet.

Alan grins at Beltran, who is now far less cheerful, and
walks into the Bodega.

Beltran watches nervously through the window. Nathan walks
into the station.

INT. BELTRAN'S BODEGA - SHOP AREA - MORNING

Alan selects a sandwich, bag of crisps and a chocolate bar
before heading to the counter.

Suzanne stares at him, coldly. He turns on his smile.

ALAN

Throw us twenty Raven down on there
for us as well, love.

He winks, she reaches behind the shutter and places the
cigarettes onto the counter.

SUZANNE

That's seven-sixty.

Alan picks up the items.

ALAN

I'll pay you later, darling.

SUZANNE

Don't you darling me. I love my
husband, what happened between us
will never happen again.

Alan chuckles smugly.

ALAN

You know you can't resist me.

SUZANNE

I'm really trying my best to remain
calm, but if you ever come near me
again I will rip your balls off and
feed them to the new dog we'll be
getting.

Alan glances nervously at Beltran who pretends to polish the window.

SUZANNE

It's not him you have to worry
about, it's me. Are we clear?

Alan nods, numbly.

SUZANNE

Good. Now that'll be seven-sixty.

Alan hands her a ten pound note and walks out without waiting for change. Suzanne places it in the till and smiles at Beltran, who smiles back.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - BIRD WATCHING SHED -
MORNING

Daphne looks through the binoculars while sipping from a cup of coffee.

INSERT BINOCULARS:

She scans the land for birds and doesn't find any.

BACK TO SCENE.

She takes a sip of her coffee and opens up a laptop, she types in.

INSERT LAPTOP SCREEN:

"All the birds have gone" and hits search.

BACK TO SCENE.

She shakes her head, unhappy with the search results and tries another set of keywords, again she is left without an answer.

She takes another look through her binoculars.

INSERT BINOCULARS:

Nothing, not a single bird can be seen.

BACK TO SCENE.

Daphne steps back, mildly annoyed.

DAPHNE
Not even a pigeon, come on.

She takes her laptop and heads out of the shed.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - BACK YARD - MORNING

Veronica, dressed up, looking tarty, waits by the SLAUGHTER SHED and texts a message.

INSERT PHONE SCREEN:

"WHERE R U?"

BACK TO SCENE.

She waits, impatiently. Finally her phone beeps and she reads the message, raising her eyes to the sky.

VERONICA
Bastard!

She storms towards the pub.

EXT. BODMIN FARM - SHEEP FIELD - MORNING

Jim shields his eyes and looks around at the bird-free skies. He then removes the gun from the scarecrow and tramples across the field.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - MORNING

Andrea hurries along on foot, breathing in and out heavily. She glances at her watch then pushes herself to walk even faster.

Darkness falls over her. She frowns and, expecting to see a rain cloud, looks up.

The sky has gone black, amidst the blackness she makes out something white, getting larger and larger as it descends.

Then she hears it, a loud cawing from the sky as White Crow leads thousands of crows towards her head.

She screams, raises her hands to her head and runs.

The Crows descend on her rapidly, she has only gone a few steps when White Crow arrives at the forefront of the attack, flapping about her face and pecking at her head.

She falls to the ground, trying to fight them off, as more and more crows surround her.

After a while her body stops moving aside from twitching when flesh is ripped off by the crows. Her eyes stare blankly ahead. White Crow pecks one out.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Daphne ushers Finlay into her

INT. DAPHNE'S CAR - MORNING

starts the engine and drives away.

FINLAY

So the crows won't come back now?

DAPHNE

I don't think any birds will ever again. We may have to move.

FINLAY

Honestly?

Daphne chuckles.

DAPHNE

No, I'm just being silly. I suppose frightening the crows away frightened every other bird for a while too. They'll come back.

FINLAY

When?

DAPHNE

Soon.

A dark cloud passes over the car. Daphne looks up and instantly pulls the car to a stop. Finlay looks up at the sky.

FINLAY

It's just the birds coming back, like you said.

DAPHNE

Stay in the car.

FINLAY
Where are they going?

DAPHNE
To Eastwind.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - CLEARING - MORNING

Sebastien climbs out of his tent and smells the crisp morning air. Several dead crows, with flies buzzing around them are hanging from a tree. He selects one and sets to plucking it.

Everything goes dark and the wind picks up. He looks around and then is hit with a cacophony of sound as the crows land in the trees around him.

He drops the crow he is plucking and watches, open-mouthed, as every branch in every tree is covered in crows. Then they go ominously silent.

SEBASTIEN
Why have you all come back?

White Crow lands on the ground next to him. Sebastien wrinkles his brow. White Crow caws and flaps his wings. Sebastien chuckles.

SEBASTIEN
Ohhh. You want to fight do you
little fella? You wait there, I got
something for you.

Sebastien reaches into the tent and pulls out his crossbow, turns to White Crow, grinning while he loads it.

White Crow waits for the crossbow to be almost loaded then caws loudly.

Crows descend from the trees in their hundreds, enveloping Sebastien, he drops to his knees.

More cawing from White Crow and the crows separate from Sebastien who is now crying, blood streaming down his face.

SEBASTIEN
I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Please give
me another chance.

White Crow flutters near his head and pecks at one of his eyes. Sebastien screams and flails but White Crow evades him, managing to peck at his other eye.

SEBASTIEN
I'm sorry for eating you! I'm sorry
for eating you!

Sebastien curls up in a ball, screaming while trying to protect his face. White Crow flutters about him, pecking at his head.

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Alan walks in and Nathan shakes his head in disappointment.

NATHAN
I saw you walk into the shop half
an hour ago, where have you been?

ALAN
Just went for a walk, clear my
head.

NATHAN
This is a real job, you know.

ALAN
I'm sorry, I won't do it again.

Nathan nods, not wanting to push it.

NATHAN
You heard from Andrea?

ALAN
No. Maybe she's taking another day
off.

NATHAN
Not really like her. I've been
trying to contact her mobile but
you know what the signal is like
around here.

ALAN
There's a signal?

They both chuckle.

NATHAN
Just pop around there, look in on
her.

Alan raises his eyes to the ceiling.

ALAN
You're the boss.

NATHAN
Report back to me as soon as you
get back.

Alan salutes.

INT. DAPHNE'S CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

Daphne races along country lanes with one eye on the sky.

FINLAY
Am I still going to school, mommy?

DAPHNE
No baby, you're not going to school
today.

Finlay fist-pumps the victory.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - DAY

Veronica and Evan refuse to look at each other as they set up for the day. She polishing the bar and he the tables and floor.

She eyes the bottle Scotch scornfully.

VERONICA
I see you've been at the scotch.

He continues cleaning without meeting her eye.

EVAN
It's my Scotch, I'll drink as much
as I like.

She watches him for a while, looking at the back of his head, a serpent waiting to strike at the jugular.

VERONICA
Maybe it would help your
performance if you cut down.

Evan throws down his cleaning implements.

EVAN
Don't you dare blame it on the
drink. If it wasn't for the drink
we wouldn't be married.

Evan storms past her and heads upstairs. She chuckles to herself and continues cleaning.

VERONICA

I'll just continue running your
business for you, you ungrateful
bastard!

Her voice cracks and she almost breaks, but swallows it, contains it in a lump in her throat. She's not going to cry.

STAIRS

Evan hesitates, considers going back down, but then continues up.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Daphne pulls up and jumps out of the car, opening the back door for Finlay.

DAPHNE

Hurry. Come on.

She glances up at a clear sky while Finlay clambers out of the car as though he has all the time in the world.

Daphne leads him into the

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

where Nathan is on the desk. He looks at her and smiles, then frowns questioningly once he notices Finlay.

DAPHNE

They're back.

NATHAN

What?

DAPHNE

The crows. Thousands, perhaps
millions. I saw them.

FINLAY

I saw them too.

Nathan smiles at Finlay and extends his hand for him to shake.

NATHAN
Hi Finlay, I'm Nathan.

Finlay takes it, acting like a man.

FINLAY
Nice to meet you.

DAPHNE
Nathan, this looks serious.

NATHAN
So the cull didn't work. We'll go
out again or find another method.

Daphne shakes her head, unhappy with his answer.

EXT. BODMIN FARM - SHEEP FIELD - DAY

Jim sprints towards them as his sheep are enveloped by thousands of crows. He stops, panting for breath, making sure he is in range. He fires.

Crows drop dead to the ground, others soar into the sky, others continue eating the sheep alive, ignoring the gunshot.

Jim fires again and again with the same results. Then he looks up and sees White Crow.

JIM
I see you, you bastard!

White Crow dive-bombs along with crows too numerous to count. Jim fires into the cloud but it has little use. He retreats, first stepping, then jogging, then running backwards, firing into the sky.

White Crow dodges each gunshot, hanging back as numerous others fall to the splatter of pellets. He caws several times and other murders join his.

Jim panics at the blanket of blackness flapping towards him, the deafening cawing of the crows louder than he can scream. So he lets it out, he turns his back and runs for his life, screaming in terror.

Several crows beat and peck at his head. He drops his gun and uses his hands, snatching them out of the sky and tossing them to the ground.

He makes it to the four-by-four and jumps inside

INT. FOUR-BY-FOUR - DAY

slams the door shut. Panting, catching his breath.

A crow smashes against the windscreen, smearing it with blood.

Jim jumps to attention and fumbles for the keys in his jacket pocket, dropping them on the floor, he reaches down to retrieve them.

Another crow hits the windscreen, and another, and another

Jim places the keys in the ignition, turns the engine, it fails. Turns it again... it growls into life. He spins away and races along the COUNTRY LANE towards home.

He looks out of the windows and

EXT. COUNTRY FIELDS - DAY

everywhere is covered in crows.

Several murders attack electricity pylons, bringing down the wires, despite suffering many casualties.

INT. FOUR-BY-FOUR - TRAVELLING - DAY

Jim almost loses control, he brakes, switches gear, and straightens out.

Crows thump against the roof of the car and then it goes quiet.

Crows hover above, seemingly no longer prepared to be suicidal.

He slows down as he approaches his HOUSE, keeping an eye on the murders above.

His windscreen cracks as something hits it. He looks at it puzzled, then a stone bounces off the windscreen and he realises that

EXT. BODMIN FARM - YARD - DAY

the crows are dropping stones.

White Crow holds a rock, half the size of his body, takes careful aim and lets go.

The rock smashes into the windscreen, cracking it completely.

Jim clambers out, covering his head, runs to the house as rocks rain all around him, one of them catching his arm, slightly fracturing it.

Jim gets inside the

INT. JIM'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Inside are pictures of Jim and his pretty wife from years gone by, no children, and none recent.

Jim opens the gun cabinet and removes two shotguns, three hunting rifles and two handguns, placing them into a bag. He takes ammunition from a drawer under the cabinet and

he walks UPSTAIRS and into his

WIFE'S BEDROOM

His WIFE is lying in bed, tubes coming out of her, a heart monitor beeping away. She looks older than him, extremely frail, she reaches out her hand, barely able to lift it from the bed.

He places the bag down and takes her hand, kneeling at the bed.

Crows thump at the windows, and the tap-tap of small stones threatening to crack the glass. They scramble across the roof, taking out tiles.

Jim picks up a photo album from near the bed and finds a narrow seat next to her, opening it up. He helps hold her head so that she can better see the pictures.

INSERT PHOTO ALBUM:

Their wedding day, he in a smart suit her in a beautiful white dress.

The reception afterward and the first dance, looking deep into each others eyes.

BACK TO SCENE.

Jim continues flicking through the album.

JIM
Remember.

He kisses her on the forehead as the bedroom window cracks.

JIM
Soul mates... from the moment we
met.

He turns another page.

JIM
I know you always wanted children
and you thought it bothered me that
we didn't have them.

He strokes at her hair as the ceiling above his head cracks.
The crows are in the loft.

JIM
But you were all I ever wanted. I
didn't need anybody else, not even
children.

He turns another page.

JIM
It's always been about you. Without
you there is no point to anything.

Jim wipes tears from his eyes and swallows a wayward sob.

JIM
Look at me. I always said I'd never
do that, didn't I. I know you
understand though, darling. Nobody
knows me better than you.

Jim stands and prepares a syringe of morphine, opening two
packets.

A small hole appears in the window and a crow gets stuck,
ripping itself to shreds, cawing like mad.

Jim inserts the syringe into her line and plunges in the
contents. He reaches over, kisses her.

JIM
Goodnight darling.

Jim's Wife falls into a deep sleep. Jim picks up the guns
and aims one at his Wife's head.

JIM
I'll see you soon.

Jim fires just as the window explodes and several crows fly in. He walks calmly out of the bedroom, closing the door as the room fills with crows.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE - LANDING - DAY

Jim hesitates with a hand on the door handle. Swallows back the tears and walks down the STAIRS, into the

KITCHEN

where he calmly pours himself a glass of water and drinks it while crows launch themselves at the window.

Jim places the glass in the sink and then moves to the LARDER where he retrieves a flame thrower. He throws the bag of guns over his shoulder and torches the kitchen, moving backwards into the

HALLWAY

keeping it going till he makes it to the FRONT DOOR, letting go of the pressure. The flame shrinks to a few inches and flickers at the end of the nozzle as he takes one last look at his home.

He opens the FRONT DOOR and steps into the

EXT. BODMIN FARM - YARD - DAY

Crows cover the sky, making it much darker than normal. Upon seeing Jim they caw loudly in alarm and a murder swoops towards him.

He waits for the right moment and then lets them have the flame thrower, incinerating many of them and severely injuring others.

The crows hang back, flying above him warily.

Jim turns down the flame thrower and places the bag of guns into the back of his FOUR-BY-FOUR. He takes one last look at the sky before climbing into the FOUR-BY-FOUR and wheelspinning away.

As he races along the COUNTRY LANE he watches his house burn in the rearview mirror, a tear falling down his cheek.

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Daphne looks out of the window at the clear sky while Finlay occupies himself reading a school book.

Nathan arrives to stand behind her, places a reassuring hand on her shoulder.

NATHAN

Just go home. I can stop by later
if you like?

She looks at him, questioningly.

NATHAN

Just to see if you're OK.

She smiles and turns to look at the clear sky.

DAPHNE

Of course.

NATHAN

So, about seven. Would that be OK?

She meets his eye.

DAPHNE

That would be great, Nathan.

Nathan can't keep the look of pleasure from his face as Daphne takes Finlay out of the station.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Daphne takes a good look at the sky in all directions.

FINLAY

They're just birds, Mommy.

She opens the car door and waits for Finlay to climb in.

DAPHNE

I know.

INT. DAPHNE'S CAR - DAY

Daphne shuts the door and puts on her seatbelt.

FINLAY

Am I going to school?

DAPHNE

No, we're going home.

FINLAY

Can I play the Xbox?

Daphne chuckles.

DAPHNE

Yes, after your homework.

Daphne starts the engine and drives away.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY

Alan pulls the car to a stop and gets out. Ahead, lying just off the road, is Andrea's body, although he can't quite make it out. He takes a few steps closer and sees that several crows are surrounding the body.

The crows see him coming and back away a few steps, staring at him.

Alan gasps in horror once he realises that the heap is Andrea, missing her eyes. He looks around, scanning for evidence. Then gets on his radio.

ALAN

You there?

NATHAN(OS)

What's up, Alan?

ALAN

It's Andrea, I think there's been a hit and run... or something.

Silence.

ALAN

Did you copy that?

NATHAN(OS)

Andrea is hurt?

ALAN

She's dead. I just found her. The birds have had a go at her, maybe some other animals too.

Silence.

ALAN
Nat'?

NATHAN(OS)
Birds?

ALAN
Crows by the looks of it. They've
had her eyes already.

The sky darkens and Alan looks up.

ALAN
Bloody hell.

NATHAN(OS)
What is it?

ALAN
Birds, millions of them.

NATHAN(OS)
Get out of there, Alan.

ALAN
They're just birds.

NATHAN(OS)
That's an order, Alan.

The reception disappears.

ALAN
Nat'? Nathan? Are you there, Sarge?

Nathan takes out his mobile phone. No reception. Nathan makes to walk away but is stopped dead in his tracks as White Crow lands in front of him, feathers smeared in blood.

ALAN
What's happened to you?

Twenty, or so, crows land directly behind White Crow.

Nathan smiles at them lopsidedly and turns to find

Another twenty or so crows blocking him from walking in that direction too. He turns back to look at White Crow. Frowns. He glances over at

Andrea's corpse where several crows are pecking at her flesh.

He puts two and two together and makes a run for the car.

White Crow caws loudly over and over again.

Alan, already out of breath during his panicked run, voices his exertions, running for his life.

The first crow hits him in the back of the head, causing him to fall against the car. He turns and pulls out his pepper spray just in time to spray a couple of crows as they attack. They fall to the ground, cawing loudly.

Alan gets to his feet and stamps on a crow's head. He climbs into the car and spins away.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Daphne pulls into the driveway and climbs out of the car. In the distance she can see various murders of crows circling in the sky.

Finlay gets out and he sees them too.

FINLAY

Why are there so many?

DAPHNE

I wish I knew.

They stand and watch in awe for a while then Daphne pushes him into the house.

DAPHNE

Come on. You've got that homework to do.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Daphne waits for Finlay to walk in before shutting the door and bolting it.

Finlay heads straight upstairs.

DAPHNE

Don't forget lunch at eleven-thirty.

FINLAY

I won't.

Then he is gone.

Daphne watches the empty space for a second or two and moves into the

LIVING ROOM

where she pours herself a stiff gin. She stands pondering for a time before walking into the

HALLWAY

and peering up the STAIRS.

 DAPHNE

 I'm just going out to do some
 watching. OK?

 FINLAY(OS)

 OK.

Daphne heads into the

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

finishes her gin and places the glass on the ground just outside the BIRD WATCHING SHED. She opens the rickety door and steps inside.

INT. BIRD WATCHING SHED - DAY

She checks all of the equipment and undoes the netting covering the rectangular window before getting behind the DSLR, pointing it at the sky.

INSERT CAMERA LENS:

Crows fly in various flocks, hovering above the ground as though patrolling it.

BACK TO SCENE.

She takes several shots and takes a rest, stretching her back, before leaning back in.

INSERT CAMERA LENS:

A murder hovers low over an animal of some kind. They drop several rocks, even two birds helping to carry a much larger stone, before swooping as one, crippling the animal and killing it. It's a dog.

BACK TO SCENE.

Daphne recoils in shock and takes a moment to compose herself before taking another look.

INSERT CAMERA LENS:

Murders in the distance swoop on varying things.

A murder flies towards her, alerted by the camera flash.

BACK TO SCENE.

Daphne moves away from the camera and looks up into the sky through the slot.

The murder flies intently towards her.

She takes the memory card out of the camera and is about to head out when there is a large thud on the roof above her head.

A crow smashes into the rectangular window and she hurries to secure the netting. Not long after securing it crows land the other side of the slot and peck at the netting.

Daphne makes a dash for the door and runs out into the

EXT. BACK GARDEN - DAY

The crows see her attempt to escape and caw loudly in warning.

Daphne dodges a hail of stones and rocks, several of them hitting but none seriously. As she makes it to the BACK DOOR a stone hits her forehead, draws blood, dazes her. She falls against the door handle, pushing the door open and rolling into the

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

She regains her composure and manages to kick the door shut just as a crow attempts to fly in.

Daphne clambers to her feet and heads into the

HALLWAY

she pauses at the bottom of the STAIRS.

DAPHNE

Finlay!

Finlay cries out in distress. The sound of breaking glass.

DAPHNE

Finlay!

She scrambles up the STAIRS, falling half-way and banging her chin off an upper step in her haste. She recovers and makes it onto the

LANDING

barely hesitating before kicking the door off its hinges and running, like a wild animal ready for war, into

FINLAY'S BEDROOM.

Finlay is hiding under bed covers.

A crow is caught awkwardly in the broken window shredding its wings. Daphne rips it all the way through and wrings its neck.

Finlay stares at her in shock.

DAPHNE

Down stairs, now.

Finlay nods and scrambles off the bed. Daphne follows him out of the room onto the

LANDING

and shuts the door behind them.

FINLAY

What are we going to do?

Daphne composes herself.

DAPHNE

Stay alive. Come on.

Daphne takes his hand and leads him down the STAIRS.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Alan and Jim skid up at almost the same time and climb out of their vehicles. They both have the same horrified, ashen look. They look at each other and then head inside.

INT. POLICE STATION - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Nathan is waiting for them.

NATHAN

All the radios are down.

ALAN

What do you mean? The internet and everything?

NATHAN

It's all mobile networks and they've taken out the masts.

JIM

They've been planning this for years.

Nathan and Alan stare at him, not knowing what to say.

JIM

Don't underestimate them. taking out the phone masts was quite deliberate.

ALAN

They've got the roads pretty much covered.

JIM

This is revenge. They're not going to stop until we're all dead.

NATHAN

Get everybody you can into The Hitch and Cock. I'll meet you there later.

ALAN

Where are you going?

NATHAN

I'm going to fetch Daphne. It's my fault she went home.

ALAN
I'll come with you.

NATHAN
No. You make sure everybody gets
into the Hitch.

Nathan heads out.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - DAY

Crows litter the trees, below them sits a large BARN.

INT. BARN - DAY

An open plan space with two long tables at a ninety degree angle in one corner. On the tables are lots of guns and ammunition-making equipment. Other weapons lie around, crossbows, swords, knives, blunt instruments, garden tools.

In another corner, Taylor sits on a camp bed sucking the meat from a crow's leg. He tosses the bone into a bin, sighs and walks over to the tables. He collects guns and bullets, placing them into a bag, holding a sawn-off shotgun back.

He picks up the sawn-off and with a final look around the place he heads outside.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - OUTSIDE THE BARN - DAY

Crows caw warnings as Taylor climbs aboard a motorbike with saddlebags.

He starts the engine and revs it loudly, laughing as the crows flap up out of the trees, before riding away.

He rides along a crude PATH and is attacked by a group of crows, flying at his face. He aims the sawn-off and blasts them out of the air, whooping like a cowboy.

He almost loses control of the bike but regains it just in time to take out another attack to his left. He tucks the sawn-off into his belt and accelerates. Crows bounce off him unable to keep up well enough for a proper attack.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - DAY

Jim grabs the flame thrower out of the four-by-four. Alan looks at it jealously.

ALAN
Is that for me?

JIM
It's for anyone that's qualified to use it. Are you qualified?

Alan looks indecisive.

JIM
Thought not.

Jim takes a look around.

JIM
Right then, you take the Bodega and I'll alert...

ALAN
I'd rather you take the Bodega. Anyway, I'm the guy in charge here.

JIM
You're in charge of being a police officer and making sure no crimes happen. When it comes to killing murderous crows you don't have a rank.

Alan stares at him in shock.

JIM
My wife died tonight because of these bastards and if you think for one second I'm going to let an idiot like you take charge you're very much mistaken. Now... get over to the Bodega.

Alan swallows and heads over to the Bodega.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Daphne fills a bag full of food items and takes a knife from the rack.

Finlay stands near the doorway, watching her.

FINLAY
Can I have a knife too?

DAPHNE
No!

Daphne hesitates, contemplating his question properly.

DAPHNE
No. No, you could hurt yourself.
(mumbling to herself)
What am I thinking?

Daphne snatches up the bag and stops as a crow smashes into the kitchen window. She takes Finlay's hand.

DAPHNE
We're going to the car.

Finlay nods. They head into the

HALLWAY

and open the FRONT DOOR leaving it wide open as they run out onto the

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Crows are perched all over the car and several murders swoop on them.

DAPHNE
Back into the house!

FINLAY
Mom!

DAPHNE
Into the house. Now!

She pushes him back into the

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

and slams the FRONT DOOR shut just as several crows slam into the other side.

They head into the

LIVING ROOM

where they can here a ping... ping... ping sound coming from the window.

Daphne walks to the window and looks out.

Crows are flying above, dropping stones at varying angles so that they bounce off the glass, causing it to vibrate.

FINLAY

What are they doing?

One of the panes suddenly shatters, causing Daphne to yell out in surprise. Finlay runs off upstairs.

DAPHNE

Finlay!

Crows flutter in, disorientated. Daphne snatches one out of the air and punches it into the wall. Another crow lands on the back of her head, she grabs it in both hands and rips off the wings.

DAPHNE

Finlay!

She runs into the

HALLWAY

closing the living room door tight behind her.

DAPHNE

Finlay!

A cry from upstairs, the flutter of wings, the caw of crows.

Daphne takes the stairs two at a time, reaches the

LANDING

and stops to listen again.

Finlay cries out. She turns.

The BATHROOM.

She tries the handle. Bolted. With a Valkyrie-like battle cry she kicks open the door and steps inside.

BATHROOM

Finlay is on the floor fighting off two crows.

Daphne looks around and settles on an aerosol. She picks it up.

DAPHNE

Cover your eyes and mouth!

Finlay does as he is told and Daphne sprays the crows. They flap around disorientated. Daphne grabs Finlay and pulls him onto the

LANDING

slamming the door.

FINLAY

There's nowhere to go.

Daphne stares at him, panting. Then they hear it, a beep, beep, beep of a car horn.

DAPHNE

Come on.

The sound of gunshots, the murderous caw of crows, as they run down the STAIRS.

FINLAY

Who is it?

Daphne reaches the FRONT DOOR and pushes Finlay outside.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

several crows lie dead or bleeding to death on the ground. Crows cover the whole outside of the house and others fly overhead not daring to attack just yet.

Nathan smiles broadly when he sees Daphne.

NATHAN

Thank God.

DAPHNE

Let's not thank him yet.

Daphne climbs into the driving seat of

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

and waits for Finlay to get in the back. Nathan climbs into the passenger seat.

NATHAN
You're driving?

DAPHNE
Finlay is my responsibility.

Nathan shrugs and closes the door.

Daphne starts the engine and pulls away.

DAPHNE
Seatbelt.

FINLAY
But mom!

DAPHNE
Seatbelt, Finlay!

Finlay buckles up. She looks askance at Nathan.

DAPHNE
You too.

NATHAN
Is your driving that bad?

DAPHNE
You should set an example.

Nathan turns his head slightly in Finlay's direction, nods slightly in acknowledgement and does up his seatbelt.

DAPHNE
Thank you Sergeant.

NATHAN
You can call me Nathan.

DAPHNE
I know.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - DAY

The bar is full of CUSTOMERS brought in by Jim and Nathan that Veronica is busy serving.

Evan offers a toast to a stuffed crow sat next to him.

EVAN

Thank you. One way or another you
put money in my pocket and I
appreciate that.

Evan knocks back his drink.

EVAN

I appreciate that a lot.

He kisses the crow.

A couple of CUSTOMERS take exception.

CUSTOMER1

What's wrong with that man?

CUSTOMER2

Twisted. Not right in the head,
mate.

Jim takes a hold of Evan's arm.

JIM

Come on mate. You need to shake off
the drink. We've got a long night
ahead.

Evan is too drunk to fight him off so allows himself to be
dragged behind the bar.

Veronica eyes Jim.

VERONICA

Just take him upstairs love. Wait
around for five if you like and
I'll be up to relieve ya.

She cackles.

VERONICA

Oh, that sounds like...

Jim turns away and carries Evan up the stairs.

Alan is standing at the bar with Beltran and Suzanne,
looking apologetic.

ALAN

Look, you two... I've been an
arsehole. I just want you both to
know that I won't be like that any
more. I'm truly, truly sorry.

He smiles sheepishly and walks away.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

Jim lays Evan onto the bed and looks at him pityingly.

JIM

You've got to pull yourself
together, mate.

Evan groans and flops out his arms, completely devoid of the
will to move.

JIM

Although I can see why you're like
this with that bitch of a wife of
yours down stairs.

Jim helps straighten him out on the bed.

JIM

Oh well. Not for me to get
involved.

Jim turns to leave and bumps into Veronica. She pushes
herself against him.

VERONICA

Seems he's asleep.

JIM

Seems that wouldn't bother you
either way, missus. Maybe you
should offer the same to your
husband.

Jim walks past her.

VERONICA

He's useless!

Jim leaves the room without acknowledging her. She flounces
onto the bed next to Evan.

VERONICA
Bloody useless.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Taylor skids the bike to a stop and pulls two handguns from the waistband of his trousers and fires at some chasing crows. They disperse and he grunts satisfactorily before nonchalantly reloading the sawn-off.

The sky is covered in crows, cawing.

He points the sawn-off at the sky.

TAYLOR
Come on! I dare ya.

He looks at the outside of the house, many of the windows are broken and the FRONT DOOR is wide open. He steps, cautiously, inside.

INT. RESIDENTIAL HOUSE - DARKENED HALLWAY - DAY

His feet crunch on broken glass as he steps inside. He flips the light switch but there is no power.

TAYLOR
Hello-o? I'm here to help if anyone
needs it.

Taylor heads into the

LIVING ROOM

where the TV is on and two mugs of coffee sit untouched on a table. He spots a pile of money on the mantelpiece and pockets it before walking into the

HALLWAY

and poking his head up the stairs.

TAYLOR
Hello? Is anyone there?

The sound of fluttering of wings. Taylor steps cautiously up the STAIRS, stopping on the

LANDING

outside the MAIN BEDROOM. More fluttering of wings from inside the room. Taylor readies his gun and kicks it open, stepping inside, gun aimed, ready to kill.

BEDROOM

Two dead bodies, a middle aged MALE and FEMALE, are lying on the bed, side-by-side, holding each others hands tightly. Much of their flesh has been pecked off and their eyeballs are missing.

Several crows sit on the window ledge watching him. Taylor aims his gun at them and they fly away quickly. He searches the bedroom, pocketing some loose cash and jewellery before moving back onto the

LANDING

and the fluttering of wings from behind the door of the SECOND BEDROOM.

Taylor prepares himself, kicks the door open and takes aim... directly into the face of a little girl, named EMILY (8). They eye each other for a second or two.

TAYLOR

That your mom and dad in there?

She nods.

TAYLOR

You know they're gone?

She nods again.

TAYLOR

You want to get out of here?

She nods.

TAYLOR

Then follow me.

He reaches out his hand for her to take. She looks at it, deciding whether to trust him or not, then she takes it.

INT. POLICE CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

The speedometer touches sixty as crows plummet at the car windows, drop stones and make a mess of bird droppings all over it. Daphne switches on the windscreen wipers and tries to wash it away but it doesn't help much.

NATHAN

Look out!

In the road ahead is a stationary tractor, the DRIVER dead at the wheel.

Daphne narrowly glances it as she hurtles past. Everyone breathes a sigh of relief.

A few hundred yards ahead are the shops and the Hitch & Cock. As though sensing their imminent escape the crows step up the pace, more kamikaze missions, more droppings, more stones and rocks.

A rock shatters the windscreen and Daphne loses control of the car, as she tries to regain control a crow flies into the exhaust pipe, the engine dies and she loses control completely. The car hits a

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - DAY

bump in the road and flips into the air, spinning several times before landing in a smoking heap on its roof outside The Hitch & Cock.

Jim and Alan arrive at the main door of THE HITCH & COCK and stare at the car in disbelief as murders of crows fly in to finish them off.

Jim runs back inside. Alan follows him.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

Daphne comes to first, the air bag saving her. Nathan is hanging through the windscreen, she looks back and sees Finlay, not moving.

She undoes the seatbelt. A crow lands on the lip of the upturned roof and caws at her, blood flecked over its beak. She punches it, knocking it out of the car.

DAPHNE

Finlay! Wake up! Wake up!

Finlay stirs, she turns in her seat so as to reach him better, fiddles with his belt.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - DAY

A small electrical fire starts in the car. The crows stand off, watching what is going on, timing their next move. Then they attack as one. Thousands swoop towards the car.

The growl of a motorbike engine followed by several gunshots. The squawk of crows, caught by surprise, falling from the air.

Taylor climbs off the bike and takes aim at the air, blasting a few more crows. Emily gets off the back of the bike.

TAYLOR
Into the pub. Go!

Jim, carrying the flame-thrower, and Alan, armed with a shotgun, alongside several other VILLAGERS both armed and unarmed, hurry out to help.

The crows attack again, hitting the Villagers despite the hail of bullets.

Emily runs towards the door, a couple of crows attack her back. Taylor drops his guns to help, grabbing one in each hand and smashing them together.

Emily continues on and makes it to the safety of the pub.

Taylor is hit in the shoulder by a stray bullet, the impact knocking him onto the ground. Crows swarm him. He fights them off.

Jim ushers the Villagers back.

JIM
Hang back here, keep us covered.
Shoot in the air!

Jim turns up the nozzle on the flame thrower then incinerates an entire murder of crows in one go.

The Villagers hang back as instructed, firing at the air.

Alan hurries to help Daphne while Jim moves slowly towards Taylor, incinerating crows in his wake.

Taylor manages to scramble to his feet, crows covering almost his entire body.

TAYLOR

Hit me!

Jim takes aim, hesitates.

TAYLOR

Just do it!

Jim fires a short burst of flame at Taylor, the crows squawk and fly away from him. Taylor breathes a sigh of relief and, covered in wounds while slightly smoking, he picks up his guns.

TAYLOR

I owe you one, old man.

JIM

Well how's about you stop poaching
off my land.

Taylor chuckles.

TAYLOR

Sounds good to me.

Alan pulls Finlay out of the car while Daphne crawls out on her own. Nathan still isn't moving.

Taylor and Jim help pull Nathan out carrying him into the pub while the Villagers keep them covered.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - DAY

Everyone gets inside and the doors are firmly closed. Nathan and Finlay are laid out on the floor. Finlay coming to in Daphne's arms.

ALAN

What the hell is going on?

He pulls out his mobile phone. No signal.

ALAN

Has anyone got a signal?

TAYLOR

You won't get one.

Everyone stops to look at him, many check their own phones automatically.

TAYLOR

They took out the phone masts. Some electricity pylons too. I'm surprised this place still has power. Many homes out there haven't got any.

ALAN

What about people? Anybody left?

TAYLOR

I had a look at what I could. Lot of people killed I can tell you that. Seems that what's here is all there is, cos what aint is too risky to save now.

Alan looks around the pub.

ALAN

Why are we so isolated? This is ridiculous!

Finlay wakes up and sees Daphne smiling at him. He smiles back, and then remembers.

FINLAY

It's real, isn't it, mom.

Daphne nods her head.

DAPHNE

Don't worry. We're safe in here. Can you stand up?

Finlay nods and struggles to his feet.

Nathan comes to at the same time. He sits up, ushering people away.

NATHAN

I'm fine. Just a little nauseous... but I'm fine.

Daphne smiles.

DAPHNE

Glad to see you're OK.

Nathan struggles to his feet and rubs at his sore head.

NATHAN
Next time, I drive.

Taylor helps steady Nathan.

NATHAN
I see you're fine.

TAYLOR
Just a few birds. Nothing to worry
about.

Taylor lights a cigarette.

NATHAN
Keep the smoke away from the
children.

Taylor looks over at Finlay and Emily who, along with a few other kids, have made their own corner of the bar, some even laid down makeshift bedding from clothes and jackets.

Nathan heads over to Alan who is knocking back shot after shot at the bar.

NATHAN
Hold off on those.

ALAN
I can't get her face out of my
head. They took her eyes.

NATHAN
I need you to stay focused. We're
not out of the shit yet.

ALAN
We've got no communication,
nothing.

NATHAN
Which is why...

ALAN
Which is why what, Sarge?

People in the bar stop to watch what is going on. Taylor chuckles and stubs out his cigarette on the floor. Veronica eyes him lustily. Jim notices.

NATHAN
Calm yourself down. We need time to
think.

ALAN

Think about what? We're all going to die, that's all there is to think about.

Finlay gasps and is comforted by Daphne while everyone looks at Alan, making him feel guilty.

NATHAN

Now sit down. I'll get you a coffee.

Alan nods and takes a seat.

NATHAN

Large, strong coffee, please Veronica, and one for me too. Thank you.

Nathan turns to address the rest of the pub.

NATHAN

Now, just because we're in a pub doesn't mean we have to drink ourselves into a stupour. I know everyone is scared, but we all need time to think. Plan what we're going to do.

TAYLOR

Well we aint got long. They know we're holed up in here, it won't take long for them to finish off the rest of the village and then come here.

DAPHNE

Please!

TAYLOR

We have to face it... the children too. They need to be prepared.

DAPHNE

Prepared for what?

TAYLOR

You've seen what they've done.

JIM

Enough!

Taylor looks him in the eye.

TAYLOR

So what are we going to do about
it, old man?

JIM

Talking about what we're going to
do about it is one thing,
deliberately frightening a child is
another.

Taylor looks as though he is about to say something else
when stones suddenly hit off the windows like a persistent
rain. One or two of the windows shatter.

People panic.

Daphne huddles the children together.

DAPHNE

Everyone stay here.

The children scream as crows flutter through the broken
windows, they swarm one VILLAGER who screams trying to fight
them off.

NATHAN

Everyone upstairs, now!

People jump over the bar to get to the door and it's a tight
squeeze.

NATHAN

Children first!

More screams as Villagers are attacked and brought down by
crows. Some of the Villagers fight back, killing several
crows.

Daphne ushers the children past the
barely-holding-it-together Villagers.

DAPHNE

All of you, run upstairs.

Finlay and the other children run for it, making it through
the door. Impatient Villagers following quickly after them.

Jim stands guard at the door behind the bar while Villagers
run past him. Suzanne and Beltran nod thanks at Jim as they
pass.

Nathan, Alan and Taylor are busy ripping crows from VICTIMS
backs. Jim sees more and more crows flying in.

JIM

Come on! We can't do any more for them.

Jim readies his flame thrower as Nathan, Alan and Taylor realise they can do no more to help. Nathan eyes the flamethrower.

NATHAN

What are you going to do?

JIM

What needs to be done.

Nathan nods and snatches a crow away from his head. Jim stands to one side to let them past and then unleashes the flamethrower, torching everything, Villagers and crows alike.

He switches the burst off and then on again, not wanting to set fire to the whole bar.

Nathan, Taylor and Alan watch from the doorway.

TAYLOR

Now that's a cold heartless man.
Where's his wife, by the way?

They look at each other and then back at Jim who unleashes yet more fury on the crows.

NATHAN

You two get some water. I'll check upstairs.

Nathan walks up the STAIRS and into the

LIVING ROOM

where twenty Villagers including Beltran, Suzanne, Evan, Veronica, Daphne and Finlay are huddled together with the children.

Screams can be heard coming from downstairs.

DAPHNE

What's going on?

NATHAN

We've got a handle on it.

DAPHNE

The screaming... it's just too much.

Then the screaming stops. Silence. The sound of taps being run into buckets.

Veronica can take no more, she shoulders her way through the Villagers and heads down the STAIRS into the

BAR AREA

where she gasps in shock. Everything has been burned or severely scorched. Scorched bodies of Villagers lie around here and there, the odd brave crow pecking at the flesh.

Daphne and Nathan arrive behind her.

DAPHNE

Oh my God. You're a maniac!

Jim looks at her.

JIM

Just doing what needs to be done.

DAPHNE

The people?

Jim looks away and drags a Villager's body towards the MAIN DOORS.

NATHAN

Jim!

JIM

If we don't get these out of here they're going to start stinking. We also need to board the whole place up. Now you going to help or not?

Taylor steps smugly past Nathan and helps Jim drag the body outside.

Nathan and Alan move around the bar and take hold of a body.

ALAN

I can't believe I'm doing this.

NATHAN

Just don't think about it.

Daphne takes a deep breath and steps into the bar, she takes a hold of a corpse's arm. Nathan arrives to help her.

NATHAN

You don't need to help.

DAPHNE

I'm a lot tougher than you think.

Nathan nods and they drag the body outside.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - DAY

The sky is getting darker as crows, in their thousands, circle above while others roost on every ledge in the village. Others are pecking at the bodies of the Villagers that have been set into a pile.

Daphne and Nathan drag the body to the pile and the crows fly away.

NATHAN

What's causing this?

DAPHNE

Apparently they have a new leader.

NATHAN

What?

DAPHNE

Hitler managed to change the views of millions of Germans. That's what is happening here.

NATHAN

All of this is down to one crow?

They head back into the pub.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - DAY

Jim, Taylor and a couple of Villagers are busy knocking down the bar. Others are using the wood to secure the windows.

The children are also helping to carry pieces of wood, hold and pass tools.

Veronica doesn't look too happy and pulls Taylor to one side.

VERONICA
Was all this really necessary?

TAYLOR
Do you want to die? Eaten alive by
crows?

Veronica shakes her head nervously and Taylor turns away...
then turns back again, a blue, diamond-shaped, tablet in his
hand. Veronica eyes it.

TAYLOR
You know what that is?

She nods. Taylor hands it to her.

TAYLOR
I've always got plenty.

Taylor winks and turns back to destroying the bar.

Then the lights go out, but there is still enough daylight
so they can see each other.

JIM
Veronica!

VERONICA
Yes.

JIM
We need candles?

Veronica nods and heads UPSTAIRS.

The Villagers refrain from covering any more windows.

ALAN
So what are we going to do when the
candles run out? What about when
the food runs out?

JIM
It's not going to come to that.

ALAN
Why isn't it? What are you talking
about?

NATHAN
Jim?

Veronica returns with the candles.

JIM

Get back to covering the windows.
We got upstairs to do yet.

TAYLOR

I'll get started up there.

Beltran and Suzanne hover at the door looking at each other,
waiting for the right moment to say what they have to say.

BELTRAN

There's plenty of food in the
Bodega. We want to go and raid it.

JIM

Too dangerous.

BELTRAN

It's virtually next door. We've
just been dragging bodies outside.

DAPHNE

Those bodies will be devoured in
minutes. It's too late now.

JIM

They've looted your shop already.

BELTRAN

There will still be things in the
storeroom. Only one way in, through
a heavy door, and I have the key.

SUZANNE

Not just food, we have other
supplies too.

BELTRAN

Candles, nails, screws... besides,
we've already made up our minds.
We're not asking for anyone's
permission.

MAIN BEDROOM

Evan wakes and listens to all the noise for a while, rubs at
his head and groans with the effects of a hangover. He gets
up and walks onto the

LANDING

stopping to listen to the chatter from the LIVING ROOM
before going downstairs and into the

BAR AREA

He's flabbergasted at the sight.

EVAN

What's? What's?

Veronica soothes him.

VERONICA

The crows attacked us.

EVAN

Crows did all this!

VERONICA

Well...

JIM

Evan, we haven't got time for your
bullshit. Veronica, take him
somewhere and get him sober.

VERONICA

Get yourself upstairs. I'll make
you some coffee.

Evan, open-mouthed, is pushed UPSTAIRS.

LANDING

Evan heads into the LIVING ROOM while Veronica walks into
the KITCHEN.

LIVING ROOM

Evan takes a seat on the settee, staring at the walls.

KITCHEN

Veronica makes coffee while Taylor finishes boarding up the
window.

TAYLOR
That should keep them out.

VERONICA
Don't you want me any more?

Taylor picks up his tools and some more boards, ready to board the next room.

TAYLOR
You give your man that little pill.

VERONICA
He'd never take pills.

TAYLOR
He'd never have to know.

Veronica looks at the blue pill in her hand. Taylor winks and heads out of the kitchen.

LIVING ROOM

Evan sighs and stands up, walks onto the

LANDING

and sees Taylor walk out of the KITCHEN. Taylor holds up the boards.

TAYLOR
I'll do your bedroom next.

Evan walks into the

MAIN BEDROOM

Taylor follows him in.

TAYLOR
Look, Evan.

EVAN
I don't have anything to say to you.

Evan grabs a handheld games console out of a draw alongside a set of headphones.

EVAN

I'll tell you one thing though.
She'd never leave me for the likes
of you, never.

Evan walks out.

BAR AREA

Nathan, Alan and Jim block the doors, preventing Beltran and Suzanne from leaving.

SUZANNE

Please, just let us do our bit.

Jim nods at them.

JIM

OK, go.

NATHAN

Hold up. Nobody is going anywhere.
We should hold this place until
rescue comes.

TAYLOR

And if it doesn't come and we run
out of supplies, what then?

NATHAN

We've boarded the place up. Getting
in will be hard.

TAYLOR

So we starve to death?

Beltran and Suzanne head out of the doors. Nathan looks as though he wants to physically stop them but contains himself.

TAYLOR

They'll be fine.

Daphne watches from the MAIN DOOR as Suzanne and Beltran creep stealthily to the Bodega.

JIM

Now, I was in a bit of a panic when
I left the house, else I'd have had
the forethought to grab a few
refills for the flame thrower. Guns
are OK, but with their numbers they

JIM
can flank our bullets, sacrificing
a few along the way and get to us.

DAPHNE
What are you talking about?

JIM
Unless you know of anywhere else
that has some refills?

DAPHNE
Jim, we need you here. Going back
to your farm would be a suicide
mission.

JIM
If we're going to fight back rather
than just sit here and wait to die,
we need those refills.

TAYLOR
I'm down for that.

Jim nods while Taylor looks around at the rest of the
Villagers.

TAYLOR
Anyone else?

NATHAN
I agree with Daphne. We should
defend our position here.

JIM
And how do you propose we do that?
We need fire.

NATHAN
I believe we can hold them for so
long with what we have.

JIM
So do I. It's what happens after so
long is done that worries me.

TAYLOR
Nobody else wants to help?

NATHAN
It's suicide! We're better off
staying here.

TAYLOR
Don't be ashamed, Nat'. Nothing
wrong with being scared.

Alan looks stressed.

ALAN
What do you expect? It's suicide
out there.

Taylor scowls in his face.

TAYLOR
For a little man like yourself it
would be, yes. For a man like me

Taylor pumps his shotgun.

TAYLOR
it's a casual stroll in the park.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

Crows cover every ledge and appear to be sleeping as Beltran makes it to the BODEGA, shaky hands putting the key in the lock. Suzanne gives him a reassuring look and he calms himself. The key slides in nicely and he quietly turns it, aware of every sound, every creak as he slowly pushes open the door.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Candles light the room, light flickering off the haphazardly-boarded windows.

Evan smiles sheepishly as he accepts the coffee from Veronica.

EVAN
I'm sorry, V'.

Veronica sits on the edge of the bed and rubs his forehead, lovingly.

VERONICA
You just get that down ya.

Evan takes a large gulp of coffee.

EVAN

I'm going to calm down a bit... on the drink.

She kisses his forehead.

VERONICA

I know you will.

EVAN

What's going on down there now?

VERONICA

They're all getting excited about the birds. All the windows are boarded up.

EVAN

It'll be over soon and we'll have something else to worry about.

VERONICA

I'll get you something to eat.

She leaves the room. Evan sighs satisfactorily and takes another large gulp of coffee.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Daphne urges Suzanne and Beltran on as they run, giggling like children, back inside the pub, carrying several bags full of food and other supplies.

Taylor snatches a packet of cigarettes.

TAYLOR

As they're free.

Several Villagers help themselves.

SUZANNE

We don't mind doing another trip later.

BELTRAN

Seemed simple enough to me.

TAYLOR

There you go, Sergeant. Jim and I will be fine.

BELTRAN
Where you going?

JIM
To my farm. We need refills for the
fight back.

Jim shows him the flame thrower.

BELTRAN
You need another hand?

SUZANNE
Beltran! I don't think that...

BELTRAN
Come on, Suzanne, you saw them out
there. We'll be back before you
know it.

TAYLOR
He'll be fine. Can ride with me on
the back of my bike.

JIM
We're going on foot.

Taylor laughs.

TAYLOR
I'm going on my bike.

JIM
Why make things worse? Just stay
here then.

TAYLOR
You can't tell me what to do.

Jim points a gun at him. Taylor laughs.

TAYLOR
You'll shoot me?

JIM
If I did it to my wife I can sure
as anything do it to you too.

A few gasps of shock.

TAYLOR
Walking is insane. How we supposed
to carry the fuel back?

JIM
You have hands and legs don't ya?

TAYLOR
Hands I may need to defend myself
from crows. A car or similar
motorised vehicle seems the best
option.

JIM
Too risky, not there and back. One
of us can use my bike to get the
supplies back.

TAYLOR
And what about the other two? Left
to fight it off on foot?

JIM
You can take the bike if you like.

TAYLOR
Tell you what, I'll do this alone.

Taylor walks towards the MAIN DOORS.

JIM
Taylor!

Taylor ignores him and walks outside.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - NIGHT

Daphne, Nathan and Jim are first to the doors and see Taylor
get on his bike.

Taylor looks at them and grins before turning the engine
over and revving the engine loudly, putting the light on
full beam.

TAYLOR
I'll be back before you know it.

Taylor rides away.

The crows stir.

DAPHNE
It looks like he's made the choice
for us.

JIM
The only choice he's made is how
he's going to die. I'm still going.

Jim walks back inside. Daphne and Nathan follow him.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Jim looks around at the shocked faces.

JIM
Nothing has changed. I'm still
going.

Jim looks at Beltran who nods his head.

BELTRAN
I'm still in.

SUZANNE
I'll come too.

BELTRAN
No, Suzanne.

JIM
I'm sorry Suzanne, but you'll only
slow us down.

SUZANNE
Right... because I'm a woman.

JIM
Yes.

SUZANNE
Beltran, I don't want you to go.

Beltran hugs her.

BELTRAN
It's OK. It doesn't look like the
crows are willing to attack at
night.

SUZANNE
Then why can't I come?

BELTRAN
We'll be quicker without you.

JIM
I'd like to get there and back
before morning.

DAPHNE
Are you sure you know what you're
doing?

JIM
In a few hours you'll be thanking
me.

DAPHNE
I hope so.

Jim nods and places the flame thrower over his shoulders.

Nigel and Beltran arm themselves with shotguns and plenty of
ammunition.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Taylor rides fast, head down as though to help with
aerodynamics. He dares a glance at the sky.

Several murders hover silently overhead.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

Evan stands and is about to pour himself a drink when he
gets an erection. He feels it on the outside of his
trousers, then puts his hand down his trousers.

EVAN
Oh my God. Veronica! Vee!

Veronica hurries into the room.

VERONICA
What is it?

Evan drops his trousers. Veronica bites at her bottom lip.

VERONICA
Oh, Evan.

EVAN
Get on the bed. I'm not sure how
long this will last.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

Jim and Beltran move stealthily, ever wary of the crows sleeping all around them. The sky is clear.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Taylor spots the LANE leading to BODMIN FARM and turns onto it.

LANE

Glances up and sees the crows still following him then, as he looks back to the road, a crow swoops into his face, blinding him, he shouts in surprise. The crow flaps its wings, cawing. He tries to throw it off with one hand but it pecks at his eyeball, ripping a tiny piece from it.

The bike folds underneath him and Taylor skids along with it, the road biting into his flesh. He comes to a stop, lying there, still breathing. The crow that attacked him not too far away, struggling with broken wings and legs.

Taylor groans as he slowly regains consciousness. He can't move, too many bones broken. He focuses on White Crow who is now standing next to his face, looking into his eyes, studying him. Taylor spits, hitting white crow in the head with saliva.

White Crow caws angrily and pecks at Taylor's eyes. More crows land and envelop Taylor. All he can do is scream.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Taylor's screams are carried on the wind as Jim and Beltran jog along.

BELTRAN

That has to be Taylor.

JIM

We keep moving.

Beltran looks worriedly at the sky. It is clear.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Finlay sips from a large glass of cola. Daphne ruffles his head.

DAPHNE

Don't worry, we'll be fine.

Finlay nods. Nathan approaches them.

NATHAN

I'm sure this will be over soon.

FINLAY

Mommy, I'm really tired.

NATHAN

Come on, mate.

Finlay looks to Daphne and she nods, indicating that it is OK. Finlay walks with Nathan to the corner where several beds have been made into the CHILDREN'S SECTION.

Finlay has a six by three foot space. Several jackets, cushions from upstairs and even clothes are used as makeshift beds.

Finlay climbs into his bed and lies down.

FINLAY

Is it really going to be OK?

Daphne stands a short distance behind, watching them with a smile on her face.

Nathan crouches next to him and rubs his head.

NATHAN

We'll be safe in here for tonight.
You get some sleep.

Finlay nods.

FINLAY

I'll try.

NATHAN

We'll both be just over there.

Nathan turns and sees Daphne staring at him. They share a smile and Nathan walks over to her.

NATHAN
Seems like a nice lad.

DAPHNE
He's great. He's my rock, he really is.

NATHAN
Drink?

DAPHNE
OK, why not.

Nathan walks behind the bar.

NATHAN
Preference?

DAPHNE
I'll have a neat gin.

Nathan smiles, sets a glass under the gin optic and

DAPHNE
Double.

pushes it twice. He hands her the glass and helps himself to some scotch.

Alan staggers drunkenly over, spoiling their moment.

ALAN
Seems our patrons have disappeared somewhere.

He pours himself a scotch.

ALAN
And if the noises from the bedroom are anything to go by, they're not going to reappear any time soon.

Alan giggles, knocks the scotch back and pours himself another.

NATHAN
You should calm down. We need you sober.

Alan looks at him, then looks at her, hiccups rudely then walks away to bother Suzanne who pushes him away.

Nathan shakes his head.

NATHAN
Sorry about that.

DAPHNE
He looks a bit of a handful.

NATHAN
He's more than a handful.

They share a chuckle.

NATHAN
So what about you?

She looks at him coyly.

NATHAN
Is there a Mr Hunter somewhere?

DAPHNE
No. Well... yes. We're separated.
He left me for another woman. I
can't even say she was younger or
prettier... we fell out of love, he
found somebody else, then left.

NATHAN
Does he still see...

Nathan looks over at Finlay who has finally drifted off to sleep.

DAPHNE
Oh... no. He's not Finlay's father.
I haven't always been sensible.
Finlay is the product of an earlier
relationship, in as much as a
relationship can last one night.

NATHAN
Ah.

DAPHNE
Yes... I'm tainted.

NATHAN
I certainly wouldn't call you
tainted.

Daphne throws back the gin and offers the glass to Nathan.

DAPHNE
One for the road.

Nathan grins and pours her another gin.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - NIGHT

Jim and Beltran come upon the bike and Taylor's corpse.

Beltran heaves and throws up while Jim and Nigel cover their noses.

Jim looks up.

The sky is clear.

Then the noise of thousands of crows cawing all at once comes from EASTWIND WOOD, a few miles away.

BELTRAN
Oh my God, they're going to kill
us, they're going to kill us.

Jim slaps him in the face.

JIM
They were disturbed by this idiot.
Now shut up and let them go back to
sleep.

The logic hits Beltran like a freight train, instantly calming him. He nods his head. Jim holds his stare for a while then pats him on the shoulder.

JIM
Not far now. Let's get 'er done.

They continue onwards. Jim soon breaks into a jog and Beltran struggles to match his pace.

EXT. EASTWIND WOOD - NIGHT

White Crow flies around the trees cawing up support. Soon tens of thousands of crows obliterate all light from the moon.

They congregate, then after some cawing from White Crow, they move in two large masses. One heads towards Dumaaurier Village while the other heads to Bodmin Farm.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Daphne and Nathan are now quite close but Nathan is distracted by something in the corner of his eye.

NATHAN
Sorry about this.

Daphne looks puzzled and watches as he stands and heads over to Alan who is still bothering Suzanne.

NATHAN
Come on mate. You've had enough.

ALAN
I'm not at work, you don't tell me
what to do.

Nathan places his hands on his shoulders.

NATHAN
Come on.

Alan takes offence and throws a punch. Nathan dodges and pushes Alan, who overbalances and falls onto the floor, too drunk to even attempt to stand up.

NATHAN
Come on mate.

Nathan drags Alan over to one of the beds and, with the help of some others, manage to get him in.

Nathan looks around and notices that many of the other Villagers are a little worse for wear too.

DAPHNE
For some it's a coping mechanism.

NATHAN
Well let's just hope they don't
have to react.

DAPHNE
We're safe in here... aren't we?

NATHAN
I'm pretty sure we have all the
weak spots covered.

Daphne takes a hold of his arm.

DAPHNE
I'm glad you stayed.

NATHAN
I had to.

DAPHNE
Do you think they'll make it?

NATHAN
I hope so.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica climaxes and rolls off. Evan rolls on top of her, she tries to push him away.

VERONICA
I can't take any more, Evan. Just stop.

EVAN
Just once more.

VERONICA
No!

She pushes against his chest, giggling. Then her face changes, eyes raising to the ceiling.

VERONICA
Did you hear that?

Evan strains his ears.

EVAN
It's probably started raining or something.

VERONICA
No... it sounded like... like...

A scrabbling sound from above. Evan hears it too this time and they both think the same thing at the same time, hurrying off the bed to get dressed.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A roof slate slides down and crashes onto the floor. Crows peck their way through the felt and enter the loft cavity.

EXT. BODMIN FARM - YARD - NIGHT

Jim opens the SHED DOOR and lets Beltran walk in first.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Jim switches on the light, no power. He fumbles into the dark and finds a torch that he switches on and flashes around the area, revealing neat tool-lined shelves. In one corner are several refills for the flame thrower.

JIM
Grab them all. I think things may
get a little dicey from here on
out.

Jim peers outside the shed and looks up at the sky. It is now completely covered in crows.

JIM
It doesn't look like he's here.

BELTRAN
Who?

JIM
The White Crow.

BELTRAN
Well that's a good thing, maybe
they won't attack without him
around.

JIM
If he isn't here... then where is
he?

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

White Crow circles above watching as the crows break into THE HITCH & COCK.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Evan and Veronica rush in, panicked.

VERONICA
They're in the roof!

Nathan and Daphne are lying huddled together. Daphne looks puzzled.

DAPHNE
In the roof?

EVAN
We can hear them.

Daphne climbs to her feet and hurries to the doorway that leads upstairs. She glances over at Finlay who is sleeping soundly. Nathan arrives, a reassuring hand on her shoulder.

DAPHNE
We'll have to secure the door.

NATHAN
Let me just go up and check first.

Suzanne arrives, slightly drunk.

SUZANNE
What's going on? I can't sleep.

Daphne strokes Suzanne's arm reassuringly.

NATHAN
They may have gotten into the loft.

Suzanne gasps.

NATHAN
I'm just going up to check.

SUZANNE
I'll come with you.

NATHAN
There's no need.

SUZANNE
I know that, silly.

She barges past him and walks into the HALLWAY, starting up the STAIRS.

NATHAN
You OK here?

Daphne glances over at Finlay then back again, nods her head, smiles.

DAPHNE
I'll be fine.

Daphne heads over to Finlay while Nathan follows Suzanne up the STAIRS.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

White Crow circles close to the rooftop as crows pour into the LOFT.

INT. BODMIN FARM - SHED - NIGHT

Jim closes the door and turns to Nigel and Beltran.

JIM
OK, you take the bike.

BELTRAN
Can't we both fit?

JIM
Nope, just one.

BELTRAN
It's your bike.

Jim throws the keys. Beltran catches them instinctively.

BELTRAN
Let's toss for it.

JIM
No time to think about this. It's time to be getting back.

Jim kicks open the DOOR and steps outside.

EXT. BODMIN FARM - YARD - NIGHT

Jim aims his gun at the sky. Thousands of crows hover silently overhead

JIM

Well come on then, we haven't got
all day.

Beltran joins him at his side, carrying the fuel tanks and
flame thrower. He swallows hard.

JIM

Well get on with it then.

Beltran climbs on to the scrambler, starts the engine, revs
it. He looks back at Jim.

BELTRAN

What will you do?

JIM

I'll take Taylor's bike. Now go!

Beltran nods then accelerates away.

The crows caw loudly, some of them break from the others to
chase Beltran.

Jim fires into the sky as he runs after Beltran.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Beltran skids around the corner as crows assail him from
behind, bouncing off his head and back. He going too fast
for them to find purchase with their talons.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

Nathan and Suzanne are joined by Evan and Veronica. All of
them listen and hear the scrabbling and cawing from the
ceiling. Also a distinct scratching sound.

Nathan follows the scratching to a specific part of the
ceiling where a small crack has developed, and is getting
larger.

NATHAN

They're breaking in.

EVAN

They have access to the whole roof.

They walk onto the

LANDING

where, on the ceiling, are hundreds of similar cracks.

EVAN

Oh my God.

VERONICA

Evan.

Veronica holds onto Evan tightly.

NATHAN

Downstairs, now. Now!

Nathan ushers everyone down the STAIRS and into the

BAR AREA

closing the DOOR behind them.

Daphne is waiting for him. He looks at her and shakes his head.

DAPHNE

Jim will be back soon.

NATHAN

You know that isn't likely.

Daphne looks over at Finlay.

DAPHNE

I have to cling to the hope that we're going to survive this.

NATHAN

I know. I'm sorry.

DAPHNE

Oh don't be sorry. You do whatever it takes to get you through this. Don't mind me.

NATHAN

I can't help it.

DAPHNE

Not really the time for romance.

NATHAN

Later?

DAPHNE

Good to hear you believe there will be one.

NATHAN

We need to be prepared for what's coming.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

White Crow circles above, cawing orders, watching as the whole roof section of The Hitch & Cock is removed. The ceiling has also been removed, giving a clear view into the upstairs sections.

A murder flies in clutching several containers of petroleum and hovers over The Hitch & Coeventuallyck, more crows fly in and pierce the containers. Petroleum pours into The Hitch & Cock upper floors and the boarding covering the windows on the lower floor.

Several murders fly into

INT. BELTRAN'S BODEGA - SHOP AREA - NIGHT

and grab disposable lighters alongside matches, then fly out again.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

Crows drop the lighters and matches onto the ground from great heights. The matches don't do anything aside from crash land, and so do most of the lighters. The odd lighter sparks as it hits the ground. Eventually, one of the lighters sparks, hitting a match, causing a flame that spreads along the fumes.

The bed in the MAIN BEDROOM of THE HITCH & COCK catches fire.

More lighters drop, bouncing off the boards, none of them yet causing a spark sufficient for a fire.

As the lighters land uselessly on the ground, crows retrieve and recycle them.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Jim picks up Taylor's bike, and revs the engine a few times, trying to get it to start.

Crows close in, swooping at great speed. The engine kicks into life and he accelerates away as several crows smash into the ground behind him.

Jim picks up speed as items from the Bodega land all around him, including nails and screws. He rides over a bunch of nails and his wheel blows sending the bike into a skid. He rolls off it, legs broken, shotgun too far for his hand to reach. He groans resignedly.

Crows fly in and lift him into the air.

JIM
Just kill me.

The crows carry him towards Dumaaurier Village.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

White Crow notices Beltran riding towards the Village and caws loudly. Several murders move to intercept.

INT. THE HITCH & COCK - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Smoke pours in through the door and more leaks through the boarded-up windows.

Alan comes to as Daphne steps past him.

ALAN
What's going on?

NATHAN
They're smoking us out.

Alan looks at him in horror.

ALAN
The crows?

Nathan nods.

NATHAN
We need an exit strategy.

Alan grabs a gun and the rest of the Villagers similarly arm themselves.

Daphne strokes at Finlay's head and his eyes flicker open. He yawns, stretches and sits up.

FINLAY
What time is it?

He notices the concern on Daphne's face, then looks around and sees everyone else looking worried. Then he spots the smoke.

DAPHNE
We're going to have to make a run
for it soon, OK?

FINLAY
Why?

He looks at the smoke again. Daphne nods her head.

DAPHNE
When we go, I'll protect you for as
long as I can...

FINLAY
No! No, mom.

Finlay's eyes well up. She holds him.

DAPHNE
You have to be strong. No matter
what happens you keep running and
don't look back, no matter what you
hear.

Finlay, terrified, swallows down his fear and manages to nod his head. She kisses him.

Emily wakes up and takes Finlay's hand.

DAPHNE
You just have to be a soldier.

FINLAY
Like on my game?

DAPHNE
Yes, just like on your game.

Smoke gets thicker and thicker, one of the boards on the windows now so burned a small hole has appeared, fire licking inside.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - NIGHT

Beltran rides, screaming as crows attack, in.

White Crow caws and the murder carrying Jim drop him from a couple of hundred feet. He falls screaming then lands with a sickening squelch right in front of

Nigel's bike. The bike flips and Nigel flies over the handlebars, the flame thrower still strapped to him, the fuel refills land not far from the bike.

EXT. THE HITCH & COCK - NIGHT

Suzanne is one of the first people at the MAIN DOOR as they make their bid to escape, but they stop once they see

Beltran, too weak to crawl, whistling from a punctured lung, is surrounded by crows. White Crow struts around in front of his face then pecks at his eyeball. Beltran tries to fight him off but is too weak to move. White Crow tugs at the eyeball creating small rips that seep blood. White Crow caws, then flies into the air, leaving Nigel to be eaten by the other crows.

Suzanne runs out and drops to her knees next to her husband's body, screaming. She throws her head into the air as though to ask God why. White Crow lands on her face, neatly pecks out one of her eyes. More crows swoop in and soon she is enveloped.

Alan sees his chance and runs. Others follow him.

Daphne looks to Nathan, who nods.

NATHAN
I'll catch up.

DAPHNE
Run like a soldier, Finlay. Run!

Finlay puts on a brave face and runs for it, while holding Emily's hand. Daphne follows him. He looks back to make sure she is there then redoubles his speed.

DAPHNE
Good boy, keep running!

Nathan takes aim with his shotgun and fires. The crows enveloping Suzanne disperse. Her face has been mostly eaten, she's barely alive, he fires again, killing her.

Villagers scream as they are set upon by crows. Others keep running.

Finlay runs past the motorbike and trips over one of the refills, landing on his back. Emily falls to and sits next to him.

FINLAY
It's hurt, mommy.

Daphne eyes the refills and Nigel's half devoured corpse, still wearing the flame thrower. She picks up a refill.

DAPHNE
Don't move.

She runs to Nigel's body.

Nathan arrives and looks with concern at Finlay's leg before turning and firing into the sky, obliterating several crows. This buys him some time and he bends to Finlay.

NATHAN
You OK?

FINLAY
My foot.

Nathan spots Alan.

NATHAN
Alan!

Alan looks at him, sees Finlay on the floor, and turns away, leaving them.

Evan and Veronica stand next to Nathan, both armed with shotguns, firing at the sky.

White Crow circles overhead, cawing orders. A murder swoops in on

Alan, catching him just before he leaves the Village. He screams terribly as he is lifted into the air, crows eating his face. He screams for a few seconds before falling silent, his body dropped unceremoniously from the sky and smashing into the ground.

White Crow hovers, watching the carnage. He focuses on Finlay and swoops, cawing for support as he goes.

Daphne reaches Nigel's body and fires her shotgun, dispersing a number of crows that were feeding on it. She struggles with the straps.

White Crow leads the attack, several hundred crows following behind as Nathan, Evan and Veronica discharge their guns.

Tens of crows are obliterated but many more get through.

Nathan, Evan and Veronica are left fighting hand to hand, while Finlay can only sit helplessly and watch.

White Crow lands calmly in front of Finlay and watches him for a few seconds while carnage is all around them. White Crow takes his time, keeping his distance, waiting for the right moment to strike.

Daphne removes the strap and sighs with relief. She lifts it from under Nigel's corpse and is attacked by several crows, hitting her head, aiming for her eyes. She bats them off and reaches for the shotgun, fires it just in time to kill a few more crows intent on her head. She turns back to the flame thrower and finally lifts it completely free of the body. Shakily she inserts the refill.

Nathan, Evan and Veronica fall to the ground, screaming, fighting for their lives, just like many others.

White Crow flutters around, easily evading Finlay's strikes, then he goes for Finlay's face. Finlay is caught by surprise but manages to bat him away. White Crow comes in again.

A murder swoops on Daphne, coming in fast while she

struggles with the refill. She finally manages to slot it in. She switches it on, turns and fires a huge stretch of flame, incinerating the entire murder.

She turns to look at Finlay, sees him in danger and White Crow at a suitable distance away for her to fire safely. She takes her chance, and unleashes the flame.

White Crow instinctively senses something is wrong, tries to get out of the way but its wing is caught. It flies into the air, tumbles, off balance, loses it, falls to the ground, twisting, cawing weakly.

Daphne approaches with the shotgun and fires, obliterating White Crow.

Crows in the air caw loudly and as word gets around that White Crow is dead.

Crows that were attacking, suddenly stop. Flying up into the air.

The Villagers that are still alive, including Nathan, Evan and Veronica look warily up at the sky, all of them with varying injuries, mainly the odd missing eye, in serious cases, two.

The crows circle for a while, as though ensuring White Crow is dead, then they fly away, leaving the sky completely clear just as daylight creeps in.

EXT. DUMAURIER VILLAGE - MORNING

Police, Fire, Ambulance crews and the PRESS crowd into the village.

Nathan, missing an eye, smiles at Daphne and Finlay as he is wheeled into an ambulance.

FINLAY

Is it really over, mommy?

DAPHNE

It's over.

She looks him assuredly in the eye.

DAPHNE

It's really over.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

It's a sunny day, lots of people.

Lot of SEAGULLS flying overhead.

Daphne, Nathan and Finlay have just bought an ice cream each. There's a scream from someone up ahead, the flapping of wings as a seagull flies away. A man in a wheelchair clutching at his face, one of his eyes removed.

More screams from the beach as seagulls attack in large numbers.

FADE OUT.