

THE S.T.A.R.S PROJECT

By

Lee Andrew Taylor

based on: The S.T.A.R.S PROJECT NOVEL  
by Lee Andrew Taylor

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FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING SHOT - Bird's eye view of farmland moving towards small village.

CUT TO:

A VILLAGE Sign on main road reads WELCOME TO AARONSVILLE.

INT. LABORATORY - EARLY MORNING

Security guard, TROY BENTNER, (30), stalky, angry face, makes rounds. Stops at a door labeled, S.T.A.R.S AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY, swipes his security card and.

He nods at another GUARD.

GUARD  
Morning, Troy.

TROY  
Bloody early in the morning.  
(beat)  
I hate this shift.

Troy approaches another door, swipes his card again and enters. Rat cages stretch across the next room.

TROY (CONT'D)  
Ello, you little vermin.

He raps his nightstick on a couple of cages. The rats squeal, clawing at the cage rather than running to the other side.

TROY (CONT'D)  
Fight while you can.  
(beat)  
Sooner or later you're dead.

He approaches a large glass cage against the wall in the middle of the room in which an over-sized rat, CHESTER, a foot long with brown and white hair, and one ear half torn off, watches him. He knocks heavily several times on the glass. Chester stays still.

TROY (CONT'D)  
Chester! Who are you staring at?  
(beat)  
When they destroy you all I hope you're the first.  
(beat)

TROY (CONT'D)  
I'll ask to do the job personally.

Troy LAUGHS.

He leaves the room, turning off the lights. CRASH, SQUEAL, after a (beat) hinges SQUEAK one after the next. More SQUEALS, tiny feet PATTERN.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER SAME MORNING

A single farmhouse, surrounded by fields and a vegetable garden.

RAYMOND PALMER, (60), chubby, rises to a rooster CROWING. His wife, NORMA, (57), thin, slowly rises next to him.

NORMA  
Are you cooking breakfast?

RAYMOND  
When don't I?

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Raymond shuffles into an old looking kitchen. Photos of the farmhouse with family members from decades ago hang on the wall.

He fills the coffee pot from the sink before looking out the window to see cabbage leaves from the vegetable garden rustle.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)  
Damn rabbits.

He exits the back door.

EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Raymond picks leaves to inspect them. Looking at the 30x20 foot vegetable garden.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)  
Those ain't rabbit bites.  
(beat)  
What the hell?

He watches leaves rustle some yards ahead of him then turns at a PING, PING, PING behind him. He sees Norma knocking on the bedroom window, calling and pointing ahead of him in the garden.

He turns back as a cat leaps out of the leaves, running past him.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)  
(shaken)  
Tiddles!

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Norma is staring out the window.

NORMA  
(shouting)  
Raymond!

She sees a swarm of rats in the garden, approaching Raymond. Her chest heaves in and out, frozen in fear.

FLASHBACK:

Of bullies dragging a young, school-aged Norma to a broom closet. They push her in, locking the door behind her. Several rats scurry around her, nipping at her shins, drawing blood. She SCREAMS for help, and the JANITOR finally unlocks the door. She races out of the closet crying while the janitor slaps at the rats with a broom.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Raymond watches Norma and shakes his head.

He turns to return to the house when a rat scurries on his boot. He shakes it off.

RAYMOND  
Say little fella. You might be  
worth something at the university.

He hurries to the house.

CUT TO:

Raymond returning to the outside with a bin. He lays it on its side in front of the kitchen window before throwing a wedge of cheese inside.

He hurries back inside the house.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Raymond watches from the kitchen window as the rat scurries in the bin. He hurries back outside with the bin lid.

EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Raymond draws the lid to the bin, but GASPS when he sees several rats inside.

A rat leaps on his face, tearing off a strip of skin before it lands. The others race from the bin nipping at Raymond's ankles and shins.

CLOSEUP:

Of Raymond SCREAMING.

He runs to the side of the house, reaching for a rake, but the rats follow and attack. Raymond falls and SCREAMS louder.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Norma shakes as she hears Raymond's screams. She remains by the window, unable to move.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Raymond pulls a rat off his stomach, but it tears flesh away. Another rat gouges his chin.

Raymond rolls onto his stomach. He tries to get on his hands and knees but another rat tears his pinky off.

CLOSEUP:

Of Raymond's pinky finger lying on the ground. Blood seeps from it as a rat picks it up in its teeth and runs off.

CUT TO:

Raymond slowly crawling away, heading towards the back door.

CLOSEUP:

Of the corner of the house. Raymond's legs are visible. They start to convulse then stop.

SQUEALS grow louder, joined by NIBBLING.

INT. BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Norma hesitantly opens the back door.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She slowly nears Raymond.

NORMA  
Raymond!

She bends to check him, but his stomach rises and falls, growing red from inside.

A rat rips through his stomach and latches onto Norma's neck. She rips it off and stumbles to the door. The rats attack and she falls halfway inside the doorway.

The rats converge on her inside the door, her legs twitching outside.

INT. FARMHOUSE OF SEAN RILEY - CONTINUOUS

SEAN RILEY, (45), athletic build, finishes breakfast in his kitchen. He places the plate and cutlery into the sink.

CUT TO:

CHRIS BLOOMFIELD, (24), tall, thin, straggly, KNOCKING on the kitchen door before entering.

CHRIS  
Sorry I'm late.  
(beat)  
Baby kept me up all night.

SEAN  
Better late than never.

Sean washes up the plate and cutlery.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Grab some breakfast, then get on your rounds.

Sean leaves the room.

Chris rushes down a cup of coffee and snacks on things from the refrigerator, then follows Sean out.

EXT. FARM - CONTINUOUS

Chris passes a barn with dairy cows inside and reaches his delivery truck. He loads crates of milk onto it and drives off.

EXT/INT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Sean drives his tractor to a potato field. He stops to watch crows ahead circling something. He frowns at a scarecrow and shakes his head.

He dismounts the tractor, approaching the scarecrow to find his dog lying bloody in the field.

SEAN

Oh, Trigger, old boy.

He stumbles back to the tractor to lean against it, but a rat scurries on it, then another, then more before a rat bites Sean's scalp.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Bloody vermin!

He throws the rat, but the others swarm on him. He climbs on the tractor driving away, but runs over Trigger in his haste. He fights off rats one-handed, losing the fight. He leaps off the tractor to make a run for it, but can't outrun them. He falls flat.

CLOSEUP:

Of a rat tearing off Sean's lower lip. Sean crawls several feet through the field until the rats cover him.

ANGLE ON CROWS

Crows circle in the sky while Sean SCREAMS and rats SQUEAL. In a (beat) Sean is silent.

INT. LABORATORY - LATER SAME MORNING

Troy glares at SERGEANT ADAM SAYER (40), muscular, handsome, while Adam questions him. CONSTABLE BRENDAN SAYER (22), short, high IQ, Adam's nephew, stands next to Adam surveying the lab.

ADAM

(nodding at shattered case)

All these wire cages, why was one in a glass case?

TROY

That was Chester. He was special, so the nerds said; huge, missing half a' ear, burnt off when he run into a Bunsen burner trying to escape; and they say he's intelligent...

BRENDAN

Rats are highly intelligent.

TROY

Not like Chester. The nerds done so many experiments on him; you ever lose chess to a rat? I have.

(to self)

Too many times.

BRENDAN

(to Adam)

Inside job? No sign of forced entry but the window.

ADAM

Right, no locks picked, no ID's reported stolen yet. Why would someone steal rats aside from their healing values?

PROFESSOR (OS)

For their enhanced value.

Adam and Brendan turn to the PROFESSOR, the dean of the university, with balding gray hair in a crisp brown three-piece suit.

ADAM

Their chess skills?

PROFESSOR

STARS has made an astounding amount of

(beat)

alterations to these specimens, especially Chester.

BRENDAN

(to Adam)

Scientific Testing Aimed at a Rat's Survival.



ADAM

The buggers have saved mankind more than once from new viruses and biological threats.

PROFESSOR

I'd prefer monkeys if STARS hadn't offered the university so much to set up shop here. Increased intelligence, intuitive learning, increased strength, that's just the results I've learned about.

TROY

Who knows what else them buggers might be capable of?

The professor rolls his eyes.

ADAM

Do you have a surveillance tape?

TROY

We don't have cameras.

PROFESSOR

STARS didn't pay us that well. The lab has two checkpoints, that should have been enough!

ADAM

Thank you. We'll be in touch.

INT. PRECINCT - LATER SAME MORNING

Adam types the report, Brendan sitting next to his desk.

BRENDAN

What you thinking?

ADAM

That the guard was full of shit.

BRENDAN

My thoughts precisely. How could that many rodents disappear without a trace?

Adam prints the report and stuffs it in a folder.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

What now?

ADAM

Now we investigate.

INT. GENERAL STORE - SAME MORNING

PETER ADAMS (37), tall, long hair in a ponytail, enters with COURTNEY (12), his daughter. Courtney wanders and browses while Peter approaches the counter.

PETER

Hey, John, you okay?

Owner, JOHN DAVIS (38), stocky, watches the shop with an anxious expression.

JOHN

Huh? Oh, hey, Pete.

(nodding at Courtney)

She's growing fast.

PETER

She sure is. Got a good head on her shoulders. Hope she makes a good career for herself after school.

COURTNEY

I heard that.

JOHN

I'm fine, Pete, just I keep hearing scratching from the stockroom, off and on for the last hour. Took a quick peek but didn't see anything.

PETER

I can come back later and help you take a better look.

Courtney joins them at the counter with a pile of junk food.

PETER (CONT'D)

We don't need most of that.

COURTNEY

Daaad! I'm hungry.

John smirks at Peter.

JOHN

Your move.

Peter takes most of the items off the counter. Courtney tries to stop him and he drops them.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, mate, I'll get it later.

Courtney takes the items Peter left on the counter and storms out while Peter pays John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Wow, she's got one on her today.

PETER

She's just pissed 'cuz I've got another long haul tomorrow night, and it's her birthday. I tried swapping, no takers.

JOHN

Tough. Good luck, mate.

PETER

(shrugging)

So goes it. I'll see you later.

EXT. SEAN'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

The milk van pulls into Sean's farm and parks next to the cow barn. Chris gets out and passes the cows, which are startled.

CHRIS

Hey, girls, you don't need to be frightened of me.

He catches a glimpse of something scurry away from the back of the barn.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Fucking vermin!

INT/EXT. GREENHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Chris approaches the greenhouse adjacent and greets MARIE NOBLE (27), thin, blond hair.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
You seen Sean?

MARIE  
No. I assumed he's in the fields.

CHRIS  
He's normally back by now.

MARIE  
True. Probably back any minute now.  
Anything wrong?

CHRIS  
It can wait.

MARIE  
What is it?

CHRIS  
Have you seen any rodents?

MARIE  
Sure, field mice all the time.

CHRIS  
No, I saw something bigger in the  
barn. I'll look for holes and board  
'em up after I check in on the  
family.

Marie watches Chris walk away to his car and drive off. She turns to the fields and spies crows circling in the sky, so investigates.

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Marie finds Sean's tractor and the keys still in the ignition. She stands on the tractor which spooks the birds, and several from the flock fly at her, nearly knocking her off the tractor. They hit the tractor and fall to the ground.

CLOSEUP OF GROUND:

Rats hurry from the crops, dragging the crows away. Marie dismounts the tractor and grimaces at tiny trails of crows' blood trailing into the crops. She eyes the flock in the air again and approaches the spot they circle. She SCREAMS to see Sean's mangled dog and hurries back to the tractor.

CLOSEUP OF BOTTOM OF TRACTOR:

Marie raises one foot on the tractor, but as she lifts her second leg rats race from under the tractor leaping, just missing her foot. Marie drives away as the swarm of rats hiding under the tractor scurry away into the crops. Marie is unaware.

INT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Troy sits at Adam's desk looking annoyed to be there. Brendan stands over Troy as the phone RINGS.

ADAM

This is Sergeant Sayer, how can I help you?

MARIE (V.O.)

There's been a death at the Riley farm!

ADAM

A murder?

MARIE

No, I don't know. Sean's dog is dead.

ADAM

Marie? Is that why you called the police?

MARIE

Sean's missing.

ADAM

Since when?

MARIE

This morning.

ADAM

I can't file a missing person's report for forty-eight hours.

MARIE

Can you send someone over? I'm getting spooked!

ADAM

I'll see what I can do.

BRENDAN  
(grinning)  
Are we going to see Marie?

ADAM  
(chuckling)  
If you want to on your time.  
Shift's over. Louise and Jack can  
sort this one out.

LOUISE BROWSER(19), short, red hair, nose ring, enters.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
Speak of the she-devil, morning  
Lou.

JACK FOSTER (50), graying hair, wiry, follows Louise.

JACK  
Why are you looking at us like  
that, Adam?

ADAM  
Just got a call. You're going to  
the Riley farm.

LOUISE  
Not Riley, he's always too fucking  
nice.

ADAM  
He won't be today. He's gone  
missing. Marie from the farm just  
phoned. His dog's dead and she's  
worried Sean's gone off to find a  
killer.

LOUISE  
(excitedly)  
A killer?

ADAM  
He probably ran it over himself, so  
just go remove the dog and see if  
you can find Sean?

JACK  
Fine.

EXT. SEAN'S FARM - LATER SAME MORNING

Marie greets Jack and Louise as they get out of their patrol car and reach the edge of the field.

MARIE  
He's not returned still.

JACK  
We'll find him. Don't you worry.

Marie leads them into the field.

MARIE  
I saw blood.

JACK  
Probably the dog's.

LOUISE  
Show us where you found it.

Marie leads them to where she found the dog, but she looks anxiously across the blood-caked ground.

JACK  
What's wrong?

MARIE  
It's gone! It was right here.

JACK  
Maybe it survived and hobbled away.

Marie CRIES. Louise takes a step towards her, rolls her eyes, and backs off. Jack SIGHS and holds Marie.

JACK (CONT'D)  
It'll be okay, Marie. We'll get to the bottom of this.

LOUISE  
What now?

JACK  
(shrugging)  
Look around. Follow that trail.

Louise nods, grinning at the caked blood. She follows the trail but it ends about twelve more feet into the field.

LOUISE  
Surely he would have left a trail.

JACK  
(grinning)  
Well done, Miss Sherlock Holmes.

LOUISE  
So where is he?

MARIE  
That's what I hope you find  
out. Do you want a drink and then  
search?

JACK  
Yes, let's have a brew and a good  
think on it before we search the  
farm.

They follow Marie out of the field.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

John fidgets behind the counter and then checks his watch.  
He turns to TESS (65), short, wrinkled, gray hair in a tight  
bun, tidying shelves.

JOHN  
Could you keep an eye out while I  
check the stockroom? If you need me  
just shout.

TESS  
Sakes, John, I clean and tend your  
house and help around here, I'll be  
alright. Don't be long. My show's  
almost on.

She replaces John behind the counter.

INT. STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

John opens the door which CREAKS, the sliver of light behind  
him casting part of his shadow through the doorway. He stops  
inside the door when he hears SCRATCHING, so bends down and  
inspects boxes that have been chipped at the corners.

JOHN  
(to self)  
For all I fucking paid that  
exterminator!



He hears SCRATCHING again behind the boxes, so grabs a broom and whacks a box. Nothing. He moves a couple of boxes.

CLOSEUP OF FLOOR:

A dead mouse lays in half in a pool of blood.

John moves more boxes and finds two more halved mice.

JOHN  
Holy shit!

TESS (OS)  
Language, John. Are you okay?

JOHN  
I'm fine, but we've got mice again,  
had mice.

TESS  
Don't let them get out!

JOHN  
They won't.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

John returns to the front counter.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
You didn't get a cat, did you?

Tess shakes her head.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I can't have another infestation  
like last year!

TESS  
Oh dear, you'll sort it out, John.  
In the meantime it's just between  
you and me.

JOHN  
Thanks, Tess. Take some groceries  
home, on me.

TESS  
Oh, maybe just some tea and  
biscuits for my show.

Tess takes tea and biscuits off a shelf, and several other boxes and tins and exits. John waits for her to leave then dials the phone.

PETER (VO)  
Hello?

JOHN  
You busy, mate?

PETER  
Nah, Courtney's just gone to her mum's. See you in five.

John hangs up and smiles nervously at a CUSTOMER who enters.

TIME LAPSE SEVERAL MINUTES

John neatly arranges packages on a shelf, eyeing the back of the store as Peter enters.

PETER (CONT'D)  
What's the emergency?

John COUGHS, nodding at the customer. The customer finishes browsing, nods to them and leaves.

PETER (CONT'D)  
What's going on?

JOHN  
I've heard more scratching.

PETER  
Sorry, mate, mouse problem?

JOHN  
(shaking his head)  
Take a look in back.

Peter hurries to the stockroom. In a (beat) he returns.

PETER  
Fucking hell, you coulda' told me you got a cat.

JOHN  
I don't.

PETER  
Then what the fuck did that?

JOHN

That's what we need to find out.  
Have you seen Ted lately?

PETER

I spoke to him a few weeks ago,  
why?

JOHN

Didn't he train to be a vermin  
catcher?

PETER

(laughing)

Yep, the pudgy bloke did, got his  
certificate and everything.

JOHN

You think he'd come over from the  
city? Local guy was a waste of my  
money, and if word gets out of  
another infestation.

PETER

Will he come for you? No. I don't  
think he's forgotten what a bully  
you were in school. For me, maybe.  
I'll call him.

JOHN

Thanks, mate. Bloody vermin!

INT. TESS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tess settles into her armchair in front of the TV, a table  
of tea and biscuits and snacks to her side. She reads an  
ornate clock on the wall which displays high noon as Women  
on the TV in b.g. discuss men.

TESS

They are ruddy useless!

A faint WHUMP sounds from the rear of the house. Tess LAUGHS  
at her show. Another WHUMP.

EXT. BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Several rats, brown, gray, black and an albino take turns  
diving at the back door, at the same spot in the bottom  
until they knock a hole through it. One after the next they  
squeeze through the hole.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The albino squeezes through first and runs across the floor into the refrigerator door. The other rats soon follow and scurry across the floor looking for food. Tess opens the door and enters, but freezes when she sees the albino with pink eyes dazed in front of the fridge.

TESS

What's going on out here?

A brown rat scurries from the side and climbs up Tess' leg, over her dress and up her arm. She SCREAMS when it bites her cheek. The other rats attack her legs and she falls. Tess drags herself towards the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She claws her way to her fireplace SCREAMING, trailing blood. She reaches for a poker and knocks it out of the stand.

CLOSEUP OF TESS' NECK:

A rat crawls to her shoulder, biting her neck deep enough that it CRACKS. Tess stops, paralyzed, one finger on the poker. Her eyes darting from one rat to another as they circle her head.

CLOSEUP OF TESS' FACE:

A tear rolls from the corner of her eye down her cheek.

POV TESS' POV

A black rat CHATTERS inches from Tess' face before charging.

INT. SEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jack, Louise and Marie sit at the table with tea set. Louise can't sit still.

LOUISE

I'll have another look around.

JACK

You do that. I'll call Harvey and fill him in.

Louise exits.

JACK (CONT'D)  
(into shoulder radio)  
This is Jack looking for Harvey,  
over.

EXT. COW SHED - CONTINUOUS

Louise stops at a cow and pets it.

LOUISE  
Hello, girl. You're very lucky not  
to be human. I hope I come back as  
a cow. All you do is eat, shit and  
make milk.

She leaves the cow and stops at the side of the shed. Broken  
planks from the wall shake like something just passed them,  
so she slowly approaches.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jack watches Marie washing the dishes.

JACK  
The inspector's on his way.  
(beat)  
So, what have you got in the  
greenhouse this year.

Marie turns from the sink.

MARIE  
Sean wanted to try tomatoes,  
cucumbers, herbs. Plus, my  
cannabis.

Jack tenses until Marie grins.

JACK  
Right, well, I'll just be ready to  
greet the boss when he arrives.

Jack exits. Marie CHUCKLES.

EXT. COW SHED - CONTINUOUS

Louise reaches the hole in the shed and sees nothing, but  
something rattles debris at the corner of the shed as she  
approaches.

EXT. ROAD NEAR FARM - CONTINUOUS

A car drives up the road, approaching the barn.

CUT TO CAR

HARVEY NICKELS (60), balding brunette crew-cut, wrinkled, grabs his radio.

HARVEY

Arriving now, there you are, Jack.

He returns the radio, waves at Jack and drives towards the milk truck.

POV JACK'S POV

A handful of rats rush to Harvey's car. Harvey swerves, smashes into the police car and then hits the milk truck.

JACK

What the?!

Jack hurries to the car. Harvey is dazed, bleeding from his head. The rats climb on the car.

JACK (CONT'D)

Harv, you okay?

Harvey nods.

JACK (CONT'D)

I can't get to you. You've got some rats on your car.

HARVEY

Rats?

JACK

Yes, rats!

Louise comes back around the barn and joins Jack. Marie hurries to them from the house.

LOUISE

What's going on?

JACK

(to Marie)

Go on back in the house while we handle this.

Marie hurries to the house.

JACK (CONT'D)  
(raising his baton)  
Well, get ready!

Louise raises her baton. A rat stops scratching the roof of the car, looks at them and charges, but when it's within reach Jack swings and knocks it against the car windshield. The windshield CRACKS and pieces fall out.

CUT TO CAR

Harvey watches the crack.

HARVEY  
Oh.

The rats charge Jack and Louise, but Louise swings and knocks them away. Several rats crawl through the holes in the windshield, so Harvey leaps out the door and kicks it closed, but a couple of rats escape the car. He knocks one off him with his baton, crawls away from the car and kicks the other rat away. The rats outside the car run away into the field.

LOUISE  
(to Harvey)  
Are you okay?

Jack and Louise help Harvey to his feet.

HARVEY  
I'm fine, just fine.

JACK  
What's going on here? Why did they attack us?

HARVEY  
I have no idea, but I'll find out.

LOUISE  
What do we do with the buggers in your car?

HARVEY  
Give me a minute.

He walks to the house.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Marie hurries out the door.

MARIE

Did you sort them out?

The officers look at each other and force a chuckle.

HARVEY

More or less. I'll call pest control. We've got to trap those suckers.

LOUISE

(to Jack)

You think they attacked Sean's dog?

JACK

Maybe Sean ran it over escaping from those things.

HARVEY

Either way, we need them alive.

Harvey reaches for Jack's shoulder radio.

HARVEY (CONT'D)

Dispatch, send pest control to the Riley farm.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

John watches Peter hurry in but frowns to see him alone.

JOHN

Where's Ted?

PETER

Be patient, mate. He's driving from the city.

JOHN

Did you tell him I asked for his help?

PETER

I mentioned you. Look, this is your chance to put things right after all these years.



JOHN

I know.

(beat)

You know I'm not a bad person,  
right, mate?

Peter nods.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I

(beat)

We were

(beat)

(gives up)

You fancy a cup?

PETER

Go on. I'll watch the shop. It's  
not like I don't know where  
everything is.

JOHN

(grinning)

I might've moved some things  
around.

PETER

I doubt that. You're too fucking  
lazy.

John nods and LAUGHS while he exits to the back. Peter  
stands behind the counter. A YOUNG WOMAN (20s) enters the  
shop, finds her groceries and approaches the counter.

YOUNG WOMAN

Where's John?

PETER

Having a nap.

JOHN (OS)

I heard that! I'll be right out.

YOUNG WOMAN

You stay where you are. Peter's  
better looking than you and he's  
giving me twenty percent off.

John hurries back, tea spilling from cups on a tray in his  
hands.

JOHN

You really think he's better looking?

YOUNG WOMAN

(laughing)

I thought you'd be more upset about the twenty percent.

JOHN

I was so stunned about him being better looking that I didn't hear the rest.

YOUNG WOMAN

John, you're a funny man.

JOHN

Admit I'm more handsome and I'll definitely give you ten percent off.

YOUNG WOMAN

Deal.

John rings up her items and she winks as she leaves. Peter sips his tea.

PETER

You should've seen your face.

The men chuckle and sip their tea as TED (38), balding, slightly heavy, enters.

TED

Is someone going to make me a cuppa tea?

John stares at Ted and opens his mouth, but is lost for words.

TED (CONT'D)

It's okay, I forgive you. Years ago, and water under the bridge.

John fights tears and hugs Ted. Peter exits to the back.

JOHN

I'm glad you came.

TED

Me too, mate.

Peter returns with a cup of tea for Ted.

PETER  
Drink this before someone cries.  
You guys sort it out then?

TED  
Yup.  
(nodding to shop rear)  
That where your problem is?

JOHN  
Yeah.

John leads them to the back room.

INT. STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ted sips his tea while inspecting the sliced mice.

TED  
Is this all you found?

JOHN  
(nodding)  
I've only checked this room.

TED  
You got a cat?

JOHN  
Not that I'm aware of.

Ted bends over for a closer look.

TED  
Teeth and claw marks are too small  
for a cat anyway, probably more  
than one as well.

JOHN  
Like what?

TED  
Not sure, but it was fast. A cat  
plays with its prey.

PETER  
So what do we do now?

TED  
I'll lay traps. They'll be back.

JOHN  
They, you think you know what did  
this?

TED  
Oh yeah, but you won't believe me.

JOHN  
Why not?

TED  
I think you've been invaded by  
rats, and they're hungry.

JOHN  
And you can't kill them since the  
town needs them for testing.

TED  
I could be wrong. The town hasn't  
seen rats outside that lab at the  
university in years, but I've got  
no-kill traps just in case.

JOHN  
Right, I'll leave you to it then.

TED  
Keep the room closed after I set  
the traps, and call me if you catch  
anything. I'm staying at Pete's for  
now.

John shakes Ted's hand.

JOHN  
Thanks, mate.

TED  
Don't worry. We'll sort it out.

INT. SEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Marie and her guests wait at the table.

HARVEY  
Pest control should be here any  
minute.

EXT. FARM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

A van labeled AARONSVILLE PEST drives up the path leading to the farm.

CUT TO VAN:

WORKER nods to ASSISTANT.

WORKER

There's the inspector's car. He wasn't lying about crashing it.

The van stops next to Harvey's car. Worker gets out, walks to the rear of the van, puts on thick rubber gloves and pulls out a trap. Assistant joins him.

WORKER

Harvey said there were a couple of rats in the car.

ASSISTANT

(nodding at windshield)  
Probably escaped by now.

WORKER

Only one way to find out.

He peers into the driver side window.

WORKER (CONT'D)

I don't see anything.

ASSISTANT

Maybe under the seat?

Worker slowly opens the door, but when nothing happens he sets the trap.

WORKER

We'll wait in the van and see if they return.

ASSISTANT

Why would they come back?

WORKER

You don't know much about rats yet, do you? The food in the trap.

They take several steps to their van when they freeze and watch the ground. They're surrounded by rats.

ASSISTANT

Who doesn't know about rats? I thought he said a couple.

WORKER

He did. It doesn't matter now, does it?

The assistant runs for the van but rats charge from under Harvey's car and descend on him, followed by the remaining rats. They climb up his legs and bite him from his legs to his back. He falls and crawls under the van, but the worker remains frozen. Harvey hurries from the house followed by Louise and Jack.

HARVEY

(to Worker)

Help him!

Louise and Jack draw their batons while Harvey takes out a taser from inside his jacket.

LOUISE

Cool.

HARVEY

Cool, indeed.

Harvey aims at the closest rat, but before he can fire the taser rats break from the pack and attack him. His arm jerks back and he accidentally fires the taser at the worker, who convulses and drops to his knees. The rats dodge Harvey as he swings his baton and now attack the worker. Louise and Harvey swing at them but they're too fast. The worker looks at Harvey pleadingly as rats tear flesh from his face and limbs. He dies. Harvey fires his taser at the worker and the rats on him twitch and fall dead.

HARVEY (CONT'D)

(to Louise and Jack)

Get back to the house!

Louise and Jack run, Harvey close behind.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They hurry inside and Harvey SLAMS the door.

HARVEY (CONT'D)

Grab that table, tip it over and barricade the door.

MARIE  
Barricade from what?

HARVEY  
Marie, close all the blinds in the house.

LOUISE  
How long are we going to stay inside?

HARVEY  
(nodding at door)  
Why don't you go ask them?

Harvey sits on the floor, with his back firmly against the table.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
Give me a minute to think of something.

Louise and Jack join him and wait, listening to SCRATCHING at the door.

INT. CHRIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Chris paces back and forth, RACHEL HAYDOCK, (23), his girlfriend, watches him.

RACHEL  
Don't wake the baby.

CHRIS  
Sorry, Rach. I'm worried about Sean. I thought he'd call by now. I didn't see him when I went to do rounds. I haven't seen him all morning.

RACHEL  
And?

CHRIS  
Marie never called either.

Rachel frowns at Marie's name.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
Calm down, love, she was going to pass on Sean a message when she saw him.

RACHEL

Message about what, how big your cock is? I know she wants it. So does Sean for that matter.

CHRIS

Sean's not gay.

RACHEL

Don't you remember last Christmas? He was checking out your rump while you put the star up.

CHRIS

You're joking!

RACHEL

(shaking her head)

I overheard him tell someone he wanted to deliver a special gift up your chimney, so to speak.

CHRIS

Who was this someone?

RACHEL

I don't remember.

Chris raises an eyebrow.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Okay, maybe I made up that thing about Sean, but it's no secret Marie likes you.

Chris embraces Rachel.

CHRIS

Everyone likes me, but I like you. I've liked you from the first moment I saw you. I wouldn't have had a baby with you if I wanted other women!

RACHEL

Make sure Marie knows that then. Promise me you'll tell her to back off.

CHRIS

She hasn't said or done anything to back off from. Please, put your knives away.



ROSE (baby), CRIES in B.G.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
Why don't you get some rest, I'll  
look after Rose.

RACHEL  
It's the least you can do, sex  
fiend.

Rachel exits. Chris smirks while he exits, but returns in a  
(beat) with Rose in his arms. He seats her in her highchair  
and feeds her a bottle, while reaching behind him for the  
phone on the wall. He dials at the same time.

CHRIS  
(waiting)  
Come on, Sean, pick up.

INT. KITCHEN OF SEAN'S FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Harvey stares at Louise while Sean's cell RINGS (OS). Marie  
has joined them at the table.

HARVEY  
(whispering)  
Can you hear that?

LOUISE  
(whispering)  
I can.

MARIE  
That's Sean's phone.

She runs out of the kitchen and returns on Sean's cell.

CHRIS (VO)  
Sean! About time, mate. Did you get  
my message about a rodent in the  
cowshed?

MARIE  
(whispering)  
Chris, this is Marie. Sean's gone  
missing. There's definitely  
rodents.

CHRIS (VO)  
Why are you whispering? Don't joke  
with me, where's Sean?

MARIE

I haven't seen him. I found Trigger messed up, so I hurried back here on the tractor.

CHRIS (VO)

You drove the tractor? Impressive.

HARVEY

((holding hand out)

May I?

Marie gives him the phone.

HARVEY (CONT'D)

Chris, listen, this is Inspector Nickels. We haven't found Sean yet. What did you see this morning?

CHRIS (VO)

Nothing, maybe a mouse, maybe more than one.

HARVEY

That's all?

CHRIS (VO)

That's all.

HARVEY

Thanks. I'll let you know when I have news about Sean.

He disconnects.

HARVEY (CONT'D)

You hear that?

MARIE

I don't hear anything.

HARVEY

Exactly. Maybe they've left for now. Time to call for backup.

MARIE

Are you calling the Army?

HARVEY

Not quite. Adam won't be happy about returning, but I'm not happy either.

MARIE  
You're calling one officer?

HARVEY  
One good officer.

MARIE  
We need a lot of men with a lot of weapons.

HARVEY  
Who do I call, the Army? And what do I tell them, we're surrounded by man-eating rats and how's your aim? Lots of luck if you want to make that call.

Harvey dials.

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Phone RINGS and wakes up Adam. He closes his eyes but the phone won't stop, so he slowly answers.

ADAM  
Hello?

HARVEY (VO)  
Adam, we need you!

ADAM  
Where?

HARVEY (VO)  
The Riley farm.

ADAM  
You want me to come out now?

HARVEY (VO)  
Yes now! Did I wake you?

ADAM  
I wasn't sleeping. I don't need sleep.

HARVEY (VO)  
That's why I called you. Listen, when you get here be careful.

ADAM  
Of what, cows?

HARVEY (VO)  
Much worse than cows. Bring  
Brendan. Suit up, full riot gear.

Adam sits up.

ADAM  
Really?

HARVEY (VO)  
Really. Watch for rats.

ADAM  
Rats? You've got to be joking?

HARVEY (VO)  
It's no joke. Those rats from the  
university are here and they've  
killed two men that we know of.

ADAM  
Do you think they escaped or were  
stolen?

HARVEY (VO)  
I don't think that matters right  
now. They've got us trapped.

ADAM  
Trapped like-

HARVEY (VO)  
-Don't. Hurry.

ADAM  
We're on our way. Stay put.

HARVEY (VO)  
Very funny.

MARIE  
Still glad you called Adam?

Harvey glares at Marie.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

John tidies the counter while a couple of customers browse. He strolls to the side near the backroom when he hears, SCRATCH, SCRATCH, so paints a grin on his face when the customers approach the register. He quickly rings up their items one after the next and bids them good day, then grabs his phone and dials.

JOHN  
Pete, tell Ted to come quick.  
They're back.

John paces while he waits, stepping towards the back, returning to the front.

TIME LAPSE TEN MINUTES

Ted and Peter enter.

JOHN  
About bloody time!

TED  
Have you been in?

JOHN  
Nope.

TED  
Then how do you--

SCRATCH, SCRATCH. Ted tiptoes towards the back, motioning them to follow.

INT. OUTSIDE OF STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ted opens the door but frowns to find none of his traps were touched.

JOHN  
You okay?

Ted nods, enters the room and closes the door on them.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
(to Peter)  
Fancy a cup?

PETER  
John, you know how to charm a guy.

They leave the back hall.

INT. STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ted examines the room, frustrated. He takes standard mouse traps from his jacket pockets and inspects the floor, until he finds a hole in the wall.

TED

Ah-ha.

He rests on his knees, puts the traps down and looks in the hole. He takes out a flashlight and a small telescoping mirror from his pocket, lays flat on the floor and feeds the mirror into the hole.

POV TED'S POV

Rodent droppings in the hole are reflected in the mirror, so Ted gets back on his knees.

TED

Shit!

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

John and Peter have tea while watching customers come and go, not buying much.

PETER

I've never seen this many customers.

JOHN

I should have asked if Ted could park out back.

PETER

Well, their business will put a little cash in the till.

JOHN

Very little.

PETER

Do you think Ted's really forgotten the past?

JOHN

Nope, just being nice.

PETER

Yup. At least he came.

INT. STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ted looks in the hole again.

POV INTO HOLE

Fur is reflected in the mirror, then vanishes to the left in the hole. Ted stands and clears boxes from the wall on the left, finds another hole, larger than the first and big enough for his hand. He lies flat and sticks a trap deep in the hole, reaching deeper, deeper, but a rat lunges from the first hole and bites deep into his calf.

TED

Fuck!

John and Peter storm into the room.

JOHN

What happened?

Ted turns back to inspect a huge, bloody tear in his pants.

TED

I've been bit!

PETER

(laughing)

I thought you were a pro.

TED

I am! First fucking time ever.

JOHN

Did you see what it was?

TED

No. It felt bigger than a mouse,  
I'll tell you that.

(nodding at hole)

How long's that been there?

JOHN

Dunno. I haven't moved those boxes  
in a few months, so could be that  
long.

TED

You could have a whole family  
living in there by now.

JOHN

Not good. Do you want the first aid kit?

TED

Thanks, and I should go for a tetanus shot.

John gives Ted the first-aid kit, and he tapes gauze to his wound.

TED (CONT'D)

I'll pop a few more traps around before I leave.

JOHN

Thanks, mate. Do what you can.

Ted nods as John and Peter leave again. Ted lays on the floor again, lying on his side to see the other hole. He reaches for another trap, but when he faces the hole in front of him Chester lunges and bites his nose. Ted SCREAMS, while he kneels holding his nose. He watches Chester watching him. Chester steps forward and eats a piece of Ted's nose off the floor. Chester SQUEALS and more rats swarm from the holes and attack Ted.

John and Peter burst in.

JOHN

What the F?!

Peter runs to Ted and pulls a rat off his throat, but no sooner does he throw it against the wall it charges again. The rats peck at Peter when he tries to pull them off Ted.

CLOSEUP: TED'S FACE

A rat tears flesh off his face, as John grabs a broom against the wall and tries to swat the rats off Ted.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We need to get out of here!

Peter helps Ted up while John swats rats, and they pull Ted from the room. Chester SQUEALS, so the rats stop attacking and join in watching the humans leave.



## INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

John and Peter help Ted into the main store, but freeze when they see Chester and the rats lined up in front of the door staring at them.

PETER

Bloody hell, they must have tunnels.

JOHN

I've never seen rats do this. Go!

John leads Peter and Ted back down the back hall.

## INT. KITCHENETTE - CONTINUOUS

John, Peter and Ted squeeze into the tiny kitchenette, and John closes the door as rats launch. WHUMP, THUMP, the rats hurl themselves against the door.

PETER

It's just a matter of time 'til they get in!

JOHN

Then we'll find a way to stop them.

They tend to Ted's wounds while he slumps against the counter.

## EXT. SEAN'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

A patrol car stops at the entrance. Adam and Brendan get out to survey Harvey's car smashed into the milk truck.

BRENDAN

Was Harvey drunk?

ADAM

I told you, he said something about rats.

BRENDAN

Where are they?

ADAM

That's what we're here for. He said they should be close.

BRENDAN

Are you saying we have to check the car?

ADAM

You can stay here if you want, read a comic, but I've got a job to do. They're counting on us, including that girl you fancy.

BRENDAN

We can't leave her with rats running around.

ADAM

(grinning)

No, not your sweetheart.

BRENDAN

Shut up.

Adam opens the trunk and begins unloading tactical gear.

A few minutes pass by -

Adam and Brendan approach Harvey's car but cringe to see the pest control men, their faces torn off, bodies slashed and bloody. One of them is dead, but the other MOANS. Brendan vomits on the lawn, but as Adam begins to approach him they hear, THUMP, from the shed. They hurry to the shed to see a cow kicking a hole in the wall, pacing back and forth in its stall. A rat scurries beneath its legs. Brendan leaps towards the rat swinging his baton, but lands in fresh cow droppings. Adam helps him up.

ADAM

Did you get it?

BRENDAN

(wiping manure off)

No, but I think I scared it off.

ADAM

You smell scary. Let me check on them at the house.

Adam dials his phone.

INT. SEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Harvey's phone rings. He answers.

HARVEY  
Adam, where are you?

ADAM (V.O.)  
Just outside, at the shed.

HARVEY  
Have you seen any of the fucking  
little monsters?

ADAM (V.O.)  
One, we're looking.

HARVEY  
They're cunning, so don't let your  
guard down.

MARIE  
I can't stay here any longer!

Marie runs in the living room.

HARVEY  
Adam, hurry.

Harvey follows Marie.

EXT. SEAN'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

Adam leads Jamie cautiously towards the house, but they turn back to hear a blood-curdling MOAN.

CLOSEUP: PEST CONTROL WORKER

A swarm of rats converge on the workers, and the worker that's barely alive struggles to raise an arm towards Adam and Brendan. He collapses while the rats finish him off.

BRENDAN  
Jesus!

Some of the swarm breaks off towards Adam and Brendan.

ADAM  
Run!

Adam and Brendan swing at the rats, leaving a trail of dying, bloody rats behind while they run towards the house.

INT. SEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Louise braces against the table while hearing THUMP at the door.

ADAM (OS)  
Open up!

LOUISE  
Chief inspector?

Harvey returns to the kitchen.

HARVEY  
What's up?

LOUISE  
Adam's outside. So are the rats!

HARVEY  
Help me.

Harvey reaches for the table and Louise helps him pull it away from the door. He opens the door and Adam and Brendan fall inside. Louise swings her baton at the invading rats while Harvey ZAPS one, then another with his taser. Brendan crawls to the counter reaching for a knife, but Marie enters the kitchen, grabs the knife and stabs a rat clinging to Brendan's leg.

BRENDAN  
Thank you.

Adam helps Louise and Harvey close the door and push the table back, while outside rats SCRATCH and THUMP against the door. Marie CRIES at the dead rat on the floor, so Harvey finds a bag under a cabinet and stuffs the rat inside. He then hurries towards the other room with it.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Harvey tosses the bag out the window, but as he begins to turn stops when he sees rats recover the bag. They then bury the dead rat.

HARVEY  
(to self)  
Burying the dead.  
(thinking)  
Like soldiers in war!

He begins to return downstairs when his phone rings.

HARVEY  
Inspector Nickels, what?

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
Chief, we got a report of a man in  
town attacked by rats.

HARVEY  
Who's responded?

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
No one else is available, sir.

HARVEY  
I'm in a situation. Call  
Wellbridge, ask them to send units.  
They owe us. Hurry!

Harvey hurries downstairs.

INT. SEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Harvey stuffs his phone away.

JACK  
Everything okay?

HARVEY  
Rats attacked someone in town.

He surveys the group: Brendan holding a SOBBING Marie, Adam leaning on his helmet on the counter catching his breath, Louise pacing back and forth, catatonic.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
(to self)  
We're in it now.

INT. KITCHENETTE - CONTINUOUS

John and Peter try to keep Ted conscious.

PETER  
Do you hear them?

JOHN  
No.

PETER  
Think they're gone?

JOHN  
No.

PETER  
Shit.

JOHN  
I know.

PETER  
Did you lock the store?

JOHN  
No. Shit.

PETER  
Maybe they found someone out there?

JOHN  
Shit. I've got to check.

PETER  
I'm not going out there!

John grabs Peter.

JOHN  
I will not have a customer eaten by  
rats in my store!

PETER  
Maybe it's a trap.

JOHN  
Do you think they're that clever?

PETER  
They were lab rats. Who knows what  
they mighta' done to them.

JOHN  
Given them smarts? We shouldn't be  
scared of a few rats!

Peter nods at Ted nearly passed out.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
Hello-oo?

John and Peter stare at each other.

JOHN  
(to woman)  
Get out, now!

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

The woman stands just inside the doorway.

WOMAN  
Oh, John, you and your jokes.

She frowns at three rats on the counter.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
John, you could stand to clean the  
place a bit.

JOHN (V.O.)  
I mean it!

The woman stares at them as the rats stand on their hind  
legs.

WOMAN  
What?

CLOSEUP: WOMAN

Chester appears on the back of her shoulder and sinks his  
teeth into her. She runs forward, but more rats trip her.  
She falls, hits her head on the counter and passes out on  
the floor.

INT. KITCHENETTE - CONTINUOUS

John and Peter look at each other when they hear a THUMP  
(O.S.)

PETER  
Do you think she escaped?

JOHN  
Time will tell. If we hear sirens,  
I guess so. If not, we need to be  
ready for when they come for us.

PETER  
Try the police again.

John dials his phone.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
 Aaronsville P.D., how may I assist  
 you?

JOHN  
 This is John, at the shop again.  
 Look, we need help now!

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
 I'll patch you through to the  
 chief.

John waits a (beat).

HARVEY (V.O.)  
 John?

JOHN  
 When are you coming?

HARVEY (V.O.)  
 I can't get to you right now.

JOHN  
 Why not?

HARVEY (V.O.)  
 Because I'm trapped myself.

JOHN  
 Bloody hell.  
 (to Peter)  
 They're pinned down too.

Peter takes the phone.

PETER  
 Ted's hurt bad. We need someone  
 here now before we're all dead!

HARVEY (V.O.)  
 Hold tight. I'm working on it. Try  
 me in ten minutes.

PETER  
 (annoyed)  
 Don't worry.

They hear SCRATCHING at the door again so look around the cramped kitchenette for weapons. Peter finds a fire extinguisher under the counter.



JOHN  
What about me?

Peter hands him a wooden ladle. John drops the ladle and finds dull butter knives in a drawer.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Better than nothing.

Ted revives and GROANS, spitting blood. They listen to SCRATCHES at the bottom of the door.

PETER  
Watch him.

Claws scratch a hole in the bottom of the door. John helps Ted into a space under the sink as a rat pokes its head through the hole. Peter smashes it with the extinguisher but more rats scurry through the hole. One bites John's thigh and he throws it off. Another bites his calf. Peter swings at them and kicks out before finally blocking the hole with the extinguisher. Rats attack Ted. John tosses Peter a knife as he tries attacking the rats, but they're too fast.

TED  
Turn the water on.

John looks at the sink, then a toaster on the counter.

JOHN  
No, mate.

TED  
Do it.

John turns the water on, and while they fight the rats the sink overflows.

PETER  
(to Ted)  
Thank you, mate.

Ted nods and forces a grin. John and Peter climb on the counter while Ted reaches for the toaster cord, pulling it to the floor. He shakes while the toaster ZAPS. Several rats shake and collapse, but some escape back out the hole. John leaps over the floor and through the kitchenette door, and Peter joins him.

INT. OUTSIDE KITCHENETTE - CONTINUOUS

John and Peter rise in the hall grinning and SHOUTING, as John turns to the kitchenette.

JOHN  
Thanks, Ted.

INT. SEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The group fans out, checking out the windows.

HARVEY  
Check all sides.

Marie, Brendan, Harvey, and Adam leave for the living room.

INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marie and Adam check out the windows, leaving Harvey and Brendan to aim for the stairs.

ADAM  
You've got an admirer.

MARIE  
Oh, I'm sorry, Adam, you're a little old for me.

ADAM  
Not me, Brendan. You like him too, don't you?

MARIE  
Don't we have work to do?

ADAM  
I suppose we do.

Marie turns away from Adam and smiles.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jack looks out the window while Louise paces.

JACK  
Some of them are leaving, but I can't see where.

LOUISE

I hate being trapped! I've got to get out!

Louise pulls the table from the door. Jack tries to stop her, but she knocks him down and runs outside. Adam hurries to the kitchen a moment too late.

ADAM

What happened?

JACK

(nodding at open door)

Louise.

Adam hurries to the door.

POV ADAM'S POV

A dozen rats hurry towards the door, so Adam slams it and hurries to the living room doorway.

ADAM

Harvey, Louise ran out! Can you see her?

HARVEY (O.S.)

No!

BRENDAN (O.S.)

I've got her! She's going around the side. Why?

ADAM

Who cares why? Brendan, come on!

INT. SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brendan puts his helmet on and climbs out a window.

EXT. AWNING - CONTINUOUS

Brendan approaches the edge of the awning and climbs down onto Sean's Conservatory to the side.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Louise cautiously proceeds, but hears CHATTER and hurries to an outhouse. Brendan passes the outhouse and hurries towards the shed.

INT. SHED - CONTINUOUS

Brendan enters, raises his helmet, and calms the MOOING COWS.

BRENDAN  
It's okay, girls.

He hears CHATTER near the cows and approaches a pile of hay. He jabs his baton into it and rats scurry away from him. He falls backward and gulps, then rises again.

INT./EXT. OUTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Louise opens the door, and in a (beat) runs towards the car and truck. She hears CHATTER and turns to see a swarm of rats chasing her. She leaps on Harvey's car as a rat hops, just missing her. She climbs from the car to the roof of the delivery truck, looking over the side to see rats surrounding her. She SCREAMS. Brendan hurries out of the shed, but stops when he sees Louise surrounded by the rats.

BRENDAN  
What are you doing?

LOUISE  
Surviving! Get inside!

BRENDAN  
No.

He lowers his helmet and charges the rats.

CLOSEUP OF TRUCK:

Brendan flattens a couple of rats between his shield and the side of the truck, their eyes popping and blood oozing from their mouths.

BRENDAN  
Get your arse down now!

He runs from the truck and leads the rats away. Louise climbs down, but a rat springs from inside the truck and sinks its teeth into her arm. She rips it away. She throws it and hurries back towards the house, cradling her wound when she hears more CHATTER.

She turns to see another swarm running towards her from the shed. She tries to run faster but they gain on her, and, as one of them leaps she hears a ZAP. She sees Adam to her side suited in his riot gear tasing the rat.

CLOSEUP OF RAT ON GROUND:

Adam stomps its head flat.

ADAM  
Get inside!

Adam joins Brendan in fighting off the swarm. They swat some away before Adam grabs Brendan's arm.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
Come on!

They run back to the house and pound on the kitchen door, while the rats get closer.

BRENDAN  
Hurry!

The door opens and they dive in, but as it is SLAMMED shut the rats leap at it and bounce off.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

Peter and John exit the store with dazed faces. They are surrounded by bystanders, as John examines his wound and relaxes. Peter sits on the curb and CRIES.

COURTNEY  
Dad!

Courtney pushes through the crowd to Peter. He rises and they embrace.

PETER  
Why aren't you with your mother?

COURTNEY  
I heard talk and had to come.

John watches patrolmen approach, dressed in gray uniforms but not Aaronsville P.D. uniforms. STEVE JOHNSON (40), tall, broad shoulders, approaches John with CARL THOMAS (22), rookie, RAY TURNER (30), veteran, and ALICE PRICE (27), slim brunette.

STEVE  
What happened?

JOHN  
We were attacked by rats.

The crowd MURMURS.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Wellbridge police, right?

STEVE  
Assisting, yes.

ALICE  
Anyone still inside?

John frowns and nods. Carl and Ray enter the store.

PETER  
(to Courtney)  
Thanks for coming.

COURTNEY  
Of course, dad.  
(winking)  
You don't think I'd let anything happen to you with my birthday coming up?

John and Peter smirk at each other and Peter leads Courtney away.

ALICE  
(calling in to Carl and Ray)  
Anything?

She approaches the entrance when they don't respond.

ALICE (CONT'D)  
If you're trying to be funny-

Ray runs out SCREAMING with a rat against his throat, but stops when he sees everyone staring at him. He drops the dead rat and CHUCKLES.

STEVE  
That wasn't funny.

RAY  
Sorry, sarge. Nine dead rats  
inside, an old lady and a  
middle-aged man.

The crowd GASPS as Carl exits the store.

CARL  
(to Steve)  
You don't want to go in there.

STEVE  
Cordon off this area and get these  
people back!  
(to Alice)  
Watch the store 'til the para's  
arrive.

Steve dials his phone.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
(to Harvey)  
Two dead here.

HARVEY (V.O.)  
What have you got for firepower?

STEVE  
Nothing, but if this is a rat  
problem I could get some nets.

HARVEY  
Listen, mate, these suckers will  
chew through nets. Have you got  
anything with you?

STEVE  
Our batons.

HARVEY  
They'll help. Ask around for  
anything you can use, like a  
shield.

STEVE  
Right, I'm on my way.

HARVEY  
Negative, we'll figure it out here.  
Stay there and keep the citizens  
safe.

STEVE  
Jesus, safe from rats?

HARVEY  
Safe from rats.

Steve hangs up and turns to the crowd.

STEVE  
(shouting)  
For your own safety, go home! Get  
off the streets!

INT. CHRIS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rachel wakes up as Chris, distressed, enters the room.

RACHEL  
How's the baby?

CHRIS  
The baby's fine.

Chris sits on the bed. Rachel rubs his arm.

RACHEL  
It's Sean, isn't it? Have you heard  
from him?

CHRIS  
Nope. No one has. This is weird.

RACHEL  
You've got that look on your face.

CHRIS  
What look?

RACHEL  
That look like you're about to go  
hunting for him, even though you  
shouldn't. So go.

Chris kisses Rachel.

CHRIS  
Thanks, love. I won't be long.

RACHEL  
I'm holding you to that.

Chris races away.



INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

Carl and Ray return from the back hall to John and Alice, who are standing just inside the store.

CARL  
(to Alice)  
We moved the woman into the kitchen, but I'm not sure we should have.

ALICE  
It's fine. Thank you.

Steve enters.

RAY  
(to John)  
Do you have any weapons?

JOHN  
Other than toy swords, no. It's not a gun shop.

STEVE  
We need to find weapons.

MANDY PALMER (20s) bursts in.

MANDY  
I think my parents are missing. I've been calling them all morning.

CARL  
Where do they live?

MANDY  
Millmoor Cottage, down the road, they own the vegetable farm. I'm supposed to help today but my ex didn't show to pick up our boys.

CARL  
Not picking up a phone doesn't mean anything.

MANDY  
My father's always by the phone. Please, I'm  
(beat)  
too scared to go alone.

STEVE  
 (to Carl)  
 I think we can manage a while  
 without you.

JOHN  
 Do you want me to watch the boys,  
 Mandy?

MANDY  
 Would you, John? Thank you.

Mandy exits, followed by Carl and John.

EXT. MANDY'S YARD - CONTINUOUS

Mandy reaches her house down the street from the store. Her sons, TREY (7), and NATHAN (8), meet them.

JOHN  
 Hey, boys! I'm going to watch you a  
 while.

TREY  
 Yay!

MANDY  
 Behave for John.

Mandy kisses her sons and leaves with Carl.

NATHAN  
 Can we go to Pete's?

TREY  
 He's got great games!

JOHN  
 Let's see if he's home.

EXT./INT. PETER'S HOUSE - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Peter nods to John, Trey and Nathan at his front door.

PETER  
 Bring the little rascals in.

They enter. Trey and Nathan meet Courtney in the living room and turn on video games. John stops Peter in the hall.

JOHN

Hey, mate, I'm sorry about Ted.

PETER

It's not your fault. You couldn't have known.

COURTNEY (O.S.)

Everything alright?

PETER

All good. Who wants chocolate biscuits?

The children CHEER. Peter and John head to the kitchen.

EXT. MANDY'S PARENTS' FARM - CONTINUOUS

Carl and Mandy arrive at the farmhouse. Mandy CALLS, no reply.

CARL

I'll check the back.

Carl walks away while Mandy approaches the front door. She KNOCKS, but again there's no reply, so she enters.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mandy slowly enters.

MANDY

Mum, dad?

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She enters the room and lets Carl in through the back door.

MANDY (CONT'D)

Nothing.

CARL

Maybe they're outside.

MANDY

Maybe, but they would have seen us.

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Mandy and Carl enter the field. Carl examines crops and finds tooth marks.

CARL  
Your parents had visitors.

MANDY  
(whispering)  
Rats?

Carl exits to the other side of the house.

CLOSEUP: SIDEWALK

Blood stains the sidewalk. Carl kneels to examine and discovers two human fingers. He tosses them into a drain and returns to Mandy, but rats come from deeper in the field and surround them, except the path back to the house. Mandy GASPS.

CARL  
Easy, we'll just -

He grabs Mandy's hand to run back in the house, but Mandy is paralyzed with fear and his grip slips. As he reaches the back door he turns to see the rats attack Mandy.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mandy SCREAMS (OS) as Carl SLAMS the door closed. He watches through the window as the rats climb Mandy's body, biting her all over. He faces away, leaning on the door and kicking it with his heel.

CARL (CONT'D)  
Fuck. Fuck!

He hears SCRATCHING at the door, so grabs a carving knife off the kitchen counter.

CARL (CONT'D)  
Come on you bastards!

He runs from the door and watches the rats chew a hole through the bottom. The first rat enters but stops.

CARL (CONT'D)  
Come on! What are you waiting for?!

A rat climbs on Carl's shoulder from behind and bites him.

CARL (CONT'D)

Fuck!

He jabs at the rat but it dodges, and Carl stabs himself in the neck. He falls and more rats attack him, biting his scalp and drawing blood.

POV CARL'S POV

The room turns red, as rats attack his body and charge his face. A rat bites Carl's tongue but he bites it back, kills it and spits it out. He crawls to his knees, but the rat waiting at the door charges and bites the back of his neck. Carl drops flat and the rats cover him CHATTERING.

EXT. SEAN'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

A car drives up and stops just before a gate in the fence at the edge of Sean's farm. Chris gets out, hops the fence and enters a cornfield, the house and shed ahead in the distance.

CHRIS  
(shouting)  
Sean?!

He stops short after several steps and stares at the ground.

CLOSEUP: TRIGGER'S BODY

Flies buzz around Trigger's bloody, mangled, eaten body.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
(louder)  
Sean?!

Chris hurries deeper into the field but stops and tenses when he sees stalks RUSTLE, low, not the wind. Something CHATTERS. He relaxes when he sees several field mice, but tenses again when a huge rat pounces on a mouse. Chris SCREAMS When another rat pounces and plays tug-of-war with the mouse. He runs from the field, dives over the fence and hurries in his car, but turns to the field and sees rats tugging on a piece of bloody clothing. He realizes...

CHRIS  
(to self)  
That's Sean's jacket!

He bolts from the car SCREAMING and charges the rats. They run away. Chris turns to his left and sees a boot, and something MOANS from behind his car as he slowly returns to it.

CLOSEUP: OPPOSITE SIDE OF CAR

Sean tries to drag himself up against the car, his face torn and chewed away, exposing bone and just a bloody muscle remaining. He collapses and DIES.

CHRIS  
Oh Jesus, boss!

Chris begins to approach Sean's body when a rat scurries out from under the car and leaps at his leg. He SCREAMS and punches the rat off his leg, but several more rats appear from the field CHATTERING. Chris runs to the car, leaps in, starts it up and crashes it through the gate.

INT. SEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jack watches Chris drive towards the farmhouse.

JACK  
Harvey, we have a visitor!

Harvey joins him at the window.

HARVEY  
Who is that?

JACK  
(squinting)  
The milkman.

MARIE  
Chris is here?

Chris stops in front of the house and runs to the door.

CHRIS (OS)  
Let me in!

Harvey and Marie push the table away and Chris bursts in, slamming the door behind him.

MARIE  
Sit down, Chris.

Chris sits against the table on its side, catching his breath.

HARVEY  
What are you doing here?

CHRIS

This place has a rat problem; a bad one. They killed Sean.

JACK

How do you know?

CHRIS

Go to the top of the cornfield then tell me I'm wrong.

HARVEY

How many rats did you see?

CHRIS

Ten, maybe more.

LOUISE

If they're in the field then we should get the hell out now!

ADAM

Chris has a car!

CHRIS

I've got a mini, mate. We won't all fit.

BRENDAN

We have to!

MARIE

Maybe squeeze three in front, four in back.

HARVEY

No maybe about it. I'm not leavin' anyone.

LOUISE

Who's first?

Chris rises and jingles his keys. Harvey opens the door and Chris cautiously exits.

EXT./INT. CHRIS' CAR - CONTINUOUS

They hurry to the car in a tight, single file, watching in every direction. Chris dives in the driver's side while Louise and Marie run around to the passenger side. Brendan and Jack hop in the back while Adam, followed by Harvey cram into the other side. Chris starts the car and drives, but a (beat) later the car wobbles.

CHRIS  
The bloody rats must have chewed  
the tyres!

He slowly drives towards Adam's car, as Adam looks out the rear window to see rats run from the field towards them.

ADAM  
Can you make it to my car?

CHRIS  
Just maybe.

Tyres EXPLODE.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
No!

Harvey looks out the rear window at the rats nearly on the car.

CLOSEUP: OF HARVEY FROWNING:

HARVEY  
Brace yourselves!

The rats cover the car, clawing, scratching, CHATTERING.

HARVEY  
(to Adam and Brendan)  
Clear a path!

Adam nods before he and Brendan dive out of the car, batting rats away with their batons until they scurry away. Harvey rolls down a window.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
Where'd they go?

POV: HARVEY'S POV

A rat dives at his face, but Adam swats it to the ground just before it reaches him.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
Is everyone ready?

CLOSEUP: INT. CAR

Everyone stares silently at Harvey like he's crazy.



LOUISE  
Let's do this!

They burst from Chris' car and run to the patrol car, but the rats return. Adam and Brendan stop and swing at them.

ADAM  
Save yourselves!

The others reach the patrol car and leap in, but Harvey waits outside and tries to taser a rat. When the swarm hears the ZAP! they freeze.

HARVEY  
(to Adam)  
Come on!

Adam and Brendan hurry in the car, with Adam in the driver's seat, but the rats line up next to the car and watch Harvey.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
Start the bloody thing!

Adam starts the car. Harvey dives in and they speed away, but the rats just watch them leave.

INT. PRECINCT - LATER SAME DAY

Harvey frantically reads a computer screen while everyone rests.

ADAM  
What are you looking for?

HARVEY  
Anything that might tell me why those rats are roaming the countryside instead of locked in their lab.

ADAM  
I assumed they'd been stolen.

HARVEY  
These rats saved lives before, but now they're taking people. Why? I think we need to visit that lab again.

JACK  
So, who's going?

HARVEY  
Adam and I.

LOUISE  
What do we do, chief?

CHRIS  
I've got to check on my family.

HARVEY  
(nodding)  
Take Marie with you.  
(to Louise)  
Stay here and stay alert.

LOUISE  
Ten-four. Be careful.

Chris, Marie, Harvey and Adam leave. Louise exits down the hall, with Brendan and Jack following.

INT. BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Louise stops in the doorway when she sees Ray and Steve making coffee.

LOUISE  
Can I help you?

STEVE  
(shaking his head)  
We're good. Care for a cup?

LOUISE  
Who are you?

STEVE  
I'm Steve, and this is Ray. We're from Wellbridge.

LOUISE  
We didn't ask you here to drink our coffee.

STEVE  
We found two bodies in the store.  
Got someone there now.

RAY  
Hear you've got a bit of a rat problem.

JACK  
Something like that.

STEVE  
We'll do what we can. We're going  
out soon, but still haven't heard  
back from one of our men.

LOUISE  
Where?

STEVE  
The Palmer farm.

LOUISE  
We'll go. You stay in case the  
chief calls for backup. Sorry about  
earlier. Maybe I will have a cup  
before we go.

Steve grins and hands Louise his cup.

INT. LABORATORY - SHORTLY AFTER, SAME DAY

Harvey and Adam approach a guard at a desk who wears a name  
tag on his shirt, WILLARD, 20s, lanky.

ADAM  
Troy on?

WILLARD  
Not for an hour.

HARVEY  
Got a contact for him?

The phone on the desk RINGS.

WILLARD  
(into phone)  
Mm-hm.  
(listening)  
Will do.  
(to Harvey and Adam)  
Wait here, please.

He nods at chairs across the hall from him, but Harvey and  
Adam don't reach the chairs before VICTORIA HODGSON arrives,  
30, tall, shoulder-length brunette hair, tight black skirt  
with low-cut white blouse. Harvey and Adam can't take their  
eyes off her.

VICTORIA

Thank you for waiting, gentlemen.

She shakes Harvey's hand, then Adam's.

CLOSEUP: OF VICTORIA'S RIGHT HAND

She has a small tattoo of the pound sign on the side of her hand.

ADAM

Nice tattoo.

VICTORIA

Thanks.

She quickly withdraws her hand.

HARVEY

Can I trouble you for a tour?

VICTORIA

(forcing a smile)

No trouble, officer.

She leads them into the main lab, their eyes on her more than the lab. Harvey stops at a cage of baby rats.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

We have to separate them from the adults. They've been attacking them; the oddest thing.

ADAM

We've seen odder lately.

VICTORIA

It just began happening a few weeks ago. When they're out of infancy we can return them to the adult population with no attacks.

HARVEY

Why do you suppose that is?

VICTORIA

(shrugging)

The professor should have some insights, if he chooses to share them.

ADAM

He better. We're here on official business.

Victoria nods before leading them to metal bins containing a mushy substance.

VICTORIA

This is where we mix their food.

ADAM

It looks like meat.

VICTORIA

Another one for the professor.

HARVEY

Have there been any threats against the lab?

VICTORIA

Threats?

HARVEY

Anyone who doesn't approve of the experiments?

VICTORIA

Someone who doesn't approve of progress?

HARVEY

Someone who doesn't approve of caged rats. They're out now, roaming around and biting people.

VICTORIA

(softly)

Biting people? No, they wouldn't.

ADAM

They are.

The professor joins them.

PROFESSOR

(to Adam)

Back again?

HARVEY

I'm Chief Nickels. We have a few more questions for Troy.

PROFESSOR

Do you think he's involved? I wouldn't be surprised.

HARVEY

We just have a few questions for him. That's quite an accusation against one of your own guards.

PROFESSOR

That man is a fucking nightmare, and always in trouble.

ADAM

How?

PROFESSOR

Let's start with drunk on the job.

VICTORIA

It was a birthday party for me.

PROFESSOR

Then let's add tardy regularly, and abusive to the specimens. I wouldn't doubt if he had a hand in their disappearance.

HARVEY

They haven't disappeared! Have you seen any news reports?

PROFESSOR

I have, but my specimens are not killers.

HARVEY

I've seen what they can do, so do you know how to catch them?

PROFESSOR

I imagine you'll dispose of them if you catch them.

VICTORIA

Nets. We have custom wire nets in case one got loose in the lab.

ADAM

Thank you. We need them.

PROFESSOR  
 You will need the very large one.  
 The city keeps those off site.

HARVEY  
 Then make the call.

EXT. MANDY'S PARENTS' FARM - CONTINUOUS

Louise and Jack pull up and get out of the car.

LOUISE  
 This doesn't feel right. Check the  
 back.

Jack nods and walks away, looking at the drain in the yard.

CLOSEUP: OF DRAIN

Bloody fingers lie across the drain. Jack gulps and  
 approaches the back door.

INT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Louise enters the front door, goes into the living room and  
 finds patches of blood. Jack meets her from the back hall  
 and SIGHS.

JACK  
 Find anyone?

LOUISE  
 No one, nothing, but that doesn't  
 look good.

JACK  
 Maybe Steve's man got them out?

LOUISE  
 He would have reported back.

JACK  
 I'll check upstairs.

Jack approaches the stairs.

LOUISE  
 (into shoulder radio)  
 Any news?

STEVE (VO)  
Negative.

LOUISE  
(to Jack)  
Nothing.  
(waiting for response)  
Jack?

INT. MANDY'S PARENTS' SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Louise hurries up the stairs to find Jack exiting a room like he's seen a ghost.

JACK  
You don't want to go in there.

Louise passes Jack and enters the room. She GASPS after seeing a severed male head.

JACK (CONT'D)  
I think we found Steve's man.

Louise backs out of the room, horrified, and runs down the stairs.

JACK (CONT'D)  
We have to call this in!

Jack follows Louise down the stairs.

EXT. MANDY'S PARENTS' FARM - CONTINUOUS

Jack stops when he sees Louise's back to him. She's staring at their car.

JACK (CONT'D)  
What?

Louise turns to Jack, more horrified than before, revealing Carl's body in front of their car.

LOUISE  
(into her radio)  
HQ, we've found-

JACK  
Look out!

He pushes Louise to the side and swings his baton at a lone rat running from the car. Jack chases the rat around the house.



STEVE (VO)  
Repeat? Over.

LOUISE  
We found your man.  
(beat)  
I'm sorry.

STEVE (VO)  
I see, and the owners?

Jack returns and grabs Louise's arm.

JACK  
Get in the house!

Louise watches a swarm of rats run from the side of the house towards them.

LOUISE  
What about the car?

JACK  
No time!

Jack and Louise swing at the closest rats until they reach the door.

INT. FARM - CONTINUOUS

They hurry inside and slam the door closed, as rats leap and bounce off it.

INT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Steve stares at the radio.

STEVE  
Come in? Come in!

BRENDAN  
We've got to go!

RAY  
(to Steve)  
How's the boy in charge of me?

BRENDAN  
Our precinct, so I'm ranking officer and I know the town.

ALICE  
 (fighting tears)  
 Let's fuck up these things!

BRENDAN  
 (to Alice)  
 You and Ray stay here, wait for  
 Harvey and keep an eye on the town.

RAY  
 You're the boss.

EXT. MANDY'S PARENTS' FARM - LATER SAME EVENING

The patrol car stops at the edge of the lot, and Steve and  
 Brendan get out. Steve takes riot gear out of the trunk,  
 fitted with spikes on the wrists and ankles. He suits up.

BRENDAN  
 You boys don't mess around.

STEVE  
 (nodding)  
 Our town can get a little rowdy.

Several rats leap at them, but Steve slices them into pieces  
 with his spikes.

BRENDAN  
 So can ours.

He taps Steve's shoulder, and he turns from the trunk to see  
 several rats sitting patiently watching them.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)  
 What do we do?

STEVE  
 Tell Jack we're going to provide  
 cover while they evacuate.

BRENDAN  
 (into shoulder radio)  
 Jack, mate, we're here, over.

JACK (V.O.)  
 About bloody time!

LOUISE (V.O.)  
 I've got to get out of here!

INT/EXT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Louise opens the door for Brendan, but two rats scurry in and run towards Jack.

                  LOUISE (CONT'D)  
          Get away from him!

Louise finds a knife on the floor and pins one rat to it, but the other rat runs away. They see Steve outside swinging at rats while they dodge him.

                  BRENDAN  
          (to Louise)  
          Come on!

While Jack and Louise join Brendan, the rat returns and leaps on Louise from behind. It tears hair off her scalp. She SCREAMS as Jack bats the rat away.

                  JACK  
          You okay?

                  LOUISE  
          (checking her head)  
          What you think?!

EXT. FARM - CONTINUOUS

They hurry out the door. Jack raises his baton to swing at the remaining rat, but Steve grabs his arm.

                  STEVE  
          We need one alive!

He jabs the rat in the leg with his spiked wrist, but Jack grabs it by the tail and swings it against the side of the house. Its neck CRACKS.

                  STEVE (CONT'D)  
          That's on you if Harvey finds out  
          you killed our specimen.

                  JACK  
          He can dock me.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Harvey and Adam watch Troy enter, his shirt tail dangling outside his slacks, hair unkempt.

TROY  
(to Adam)  
Back again? Find out who stole the rats?

ADAM  
They weren't stolen after all. They somehow escaped.

TROY  
You'd think someone woulda' noticed a pack of rats running loose.

Harvey steps close to Troy.

HARVEY  
We did! You call yourself a guard. Why didn't you know about it?

TROY  
(shrugging)  
You hear about this thing called personal time?

ADAM  
Easy; where were you before they disappeared?

TROY  
Doing my rounds.

PROFESSOR  
Barely. I watch the tapes.

HARVEY  
Can I see them?

PROFESSOR  
This way.

The professor leads Harvey out of the lab room.

ADAM  
(to Troy)  
What can you tell me about the large rat?

Victoria interrupts.

VICTORIA  
He's smart, for a rat; and  
impervious to the experiments.

ADAM  
What kind of experiments?

VICTORIA  
(hesitating)  
Electroshock, submersion, testing  
their limits. Some didn't survive,  
but Chester endured every test like  
he was just biding his time.  
(pausing)  
Who wants coffee?

Victoria hurries away.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The professor plays a surveillance video for Harvey. In the  
video Troy walks his rounds.

PROFESSOR  
He was telling the truth, for once.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Adam examines beneath a desk, and waves his hand underneath.

ADAM  
(to self)  
There's a draft.

He gets on his knees and looks beneath the table.

VICTORIA (O.S.)  
One lump, or two?

Adam rises and bumps his head on the table. He kneels  
waist-high in front of Victoria, but can't take his eyes off  
her legs until she GIGGLES.

ADAM  
(rubbing his head)  
One lump, and one in my coffee,  
thanks.

Troy SNICKERS.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
What's behind this desk?

VICTORIA  
(giggling again)  
A wall.

Adam nods to Troy as he rises on one side of the table. They move it to reveal a vent.

ADAM  
That's it.

Adam catches Victoria grinning at him approvingly, and she hands him his coffee.

VICTORIA  
You've earned this.

ADAM  
This all I've earned?

VICTORIA  
For now.

Harvey and the professor enter the lab.

HARVEY  
(to Adam)  
Troy didn't see anything.

TROY  
Told you so.

HARVEY  
(observing Adam and Victoria)  
Are we interrupting anything?

ADAM  
Chief, look at this.

HARVEY  
(cautious)  
What?

Adam nods at a hole in the vent. Harvey relaxes and examines it.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
There's tooth marks around this hole.

PROFESSOR

That can't be. They're just rats.

Victoria raises an eyebrow at Adam, as he shines his torch into the hole to catch a glimpse of piping.

ADAM

Where do the pipes run?

PROFESSOR

Beyond the farmland.

Harvey and Adam nod to each other.

INT. CHRIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Rachel watches Marie while warming a baby bottle in a pot on the stove.

RACHEL

(whispering to Chris)  
She's here because?

CHRIS

Don't start. Sean's dead.

RACHEL

Do they have a suspect?

CHRIS

Several, rats.

RACHEL

(to Marie)  
I'm sorry about Sean.

Marie don't reply. They hear SCRATCHING at the back door, so Marie leaps from her seat and runs behind Chris.

CHRIS

(to Rachel)  
Check on the baby!

Rachel hurries out of the kitchen as the bottom of the door CRACKS. Chester pushes through, and Marie SCREAMS as Chris throws the pot of water at Chester. Chester SQUEALS, but runs to Chris, nearly uninjured.

MARIE

That didn't even phase it!

Chris grabs a chair and keeps Chester at bay.

CHRIS  
Get upstairs!

Marie runs out of the room.

INT. CHRIS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rachel holds Rose. Marie follows her into the bedroom and SLAMS the door, but Rachel hands Rose to Marie.

RACHEL  
I have to help him.

MARIE  
Don't leave me!

RACHEL  
We'll both be back.

Rachel exits.

INT. CHRIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Chris kicks Chester across the floor, stunning it. Several more rats crawl through the door, so Rachel grabs a broom and swats them away.

CHRIS  
I said stay upstairs!

Chester lunges and bites Chris' leg. He SCREAMS! Rachel swats Chester and the other rats surround her, while Chris pushes Chester off with the chair.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
Go!

Rats chase Rachel out of the kitchen, as Chris lifts the chair and brings it down on Chester. A chair leg stabs Chester's head.

INT. CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rachel stops in the living room, swatting at the rats while they encircle her just out of reach of her broom.

RACHEL  
Chris!

CLOSEUP: OF A RAT



The rat leans back on its hind legs, preparing to pounce, but as it begins to leap, a knife lands in its back and it collapses.

CLOSEUP: DOORWAY

With leg bleeding, Chris stands in the doorway holding several kitchen knives.

CHRIS  
Follow me honey, and stay close.

Rose CRIES (OS), so they turn to see Marie holding Rose on the stairway.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
Back upstairs, now!

Rachel swats rats out of her way and reaches the stairs. She turns to see them block Chris' way, so throws him the broom.

RACHEL  
(to Chris)  
Hurry!

She takes Marie and Rose back upstairs as Chris snaps the broom off the handle and stabs a rat. Something SQUEALS. Chris turns to see Chester, with a huge gash in its head standing in the doorway. Chris pushes the dead rat off the broomstick with his foot and aims it at Chester.

CHRIS  
Alright then big fella!

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

The phone RINGS and the professor answers.

PROFESSOR  
Yes?  
(listening)  
Good.  
(to Harvey)  
The nets are here.

HARVEY  
Have them sent to the Riley farm,  
that's where most of the rats are  
now.

PROFESSOR  
 (into phone)  
 Take them to the Riley farm. I am  
 going there now so follow me.

The professor, Harvey and Adam hurry out, as Victoria and Troy watch them leave.

VICTORIA  
 Do you think they'll catch them?

TROY  
 If you asked me earlier I'd have  
 said yes.

EXT. SEAN'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

A patrol car drives onto the farm and stops.

INT/EXT. PATROL CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ray and Alice turn to each other, unsure. They watch through the rear windshield as a patrol car and a van approaches. They recognize Adam and Harvey in front of the car, but can't see who's in back. They watch Adam gesture, as if throwing a net.

RAY  
 What's he going on about?

ALICE  
 I don't know. Just nod.

Adam gets out in full riot gear.

ADAM  
 Ready?

Ray and Alice exit their car after they finish gearing up. Ray nods at KELVIN, 40, van driver, wearing a municipal jumpsuit, and Walter, as they unfurl the net from the back of the van.

RAY  
 Are you sure that'll hold them?

KELVIN  
 Don't worry about a thing.  
 (to Walter)  
 Did you tell 'em about the glue?

WALTER  
Net's lined with a residue, like a  
glue to keep 'em in.

HARVEY  
Lay it near the house.

KELVIN  
Yeh, the food source.  
(chuckles at the group)  
The other food source.

INT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Jack reads his monitor when the phone RINGS.

JACK  
Police.

CHRIS (VO)  
Help!

JACK  
Chris? Where are you?

CHRIS  
Hiding in a cubby under my stairs.  
They're chewing their way in!

JACK  
We're on our way!  
(to Louise)  
We need to suit up and get Chris!

INT. CHRIS' HALL - CONTINUOUS

Chris pushes his feet against the small door in the cubby,  
as SCRATCHING and CHATTER is heard coming from the other  
side.

CHRIS  
(shouting)  
You're not getting in!

INT. CHRIS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marie presses her ear to the door.

MARIE

He's alive. We have to help him!

RACHEL

(cradling Rose)

He said stay here.

SIREN in b.g.

EXT./INT. STEVE'S PATROL CAR - CONTINUOUS

Patrol car flies down the street. Steve speeds while Louise and Jack fight to keep their balance in the back.

STEVE

You guys ready?

LOUISE

When my head stops spinning.

EXT. CHRIS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Steve SCREECHES to a stop in front of Chris' house. They leap out of the patrol car to hear Chris SCREAM (OS).

JACK

We're too late!

Louise charges the front door and shoves it open, but a rat leaps at her. She manages to swat it away with her baton before rushing inside with Steve and Jack.

INT. CHRIS' KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Louise enters the doorway to find Chris swinging a vacuum cleaner tube at rats. He slams one to the floor and Louise finishes it, slamming her baton on it's head inches from Chris.

CHRIS

Jesus!

LOUISE

You're welcome.

Rats scurry at them from the hall. Steve and Jack follow, clubbing them from behind, but Jack trips and falls. More rats descend on him but Chris, Louise and Steve hesitate hitting them on Jack.

JACK

Do it!

They swing at the rats, but they won't run as Jack's blood stains their tongues. Chris turns the vacuum on. He aims it at a rat, but all the rats SQUEAL and run.

CHRIS

They're scared of my cleaner?

They hear THUMPS on the stairs.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Oh, God, the girls!

STEVE

We need a plan!

CHRIS

Save the girls, that's the plan!

INT. CHRIS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marie opens the door.

MARIE

They're here. We're safe!

RACHEL

Honey, no!

Rats leap at Marie, as Chris and the police reach the room too late.

CHRIS

Marie!

CLOSEUP: MARIE'S FACE

Chester tears into her jugular, blood gushes, while another rat rips flesh off her face. Marie drops to her knees SCREAMING before seizing up and becoming lifeless.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

(to Rachel)

Come on!

Rachel runs to him but trips and falls, as Rose tumbles to the floor between Rachel and the rats. A rat begins to scurry to Rose.

CLOSEUP: OF RAT

A spiked gauntlet lands heavily on the rat, nailing it to the floor. Steve yanks his gauntlet from the floor, admiring it.

STEVE  
One more for me!

Rachel gathers Rose up, kissing her over and over. She joins Chris and hugs him tight.

LOUISE  
Where'd the rats go?

JACK  
Downstairs.

STEVE  
Follow me and stay close. I hope Adam's close to catching some.

EXT/INT. SEAN'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

Adam and Harvey walk the rear of the yard while Walter and Alice appear in windows inside. Ray and Kelvin sit in the patrol car with the doors open and the RADIO on loud. Kelvin turns it off.

KELVIN  
We have to hear them.

Ray turns the radio back on but Kelvin reaches for the knob. Ray slaps his hand away.

KELVIN (CONT'D)  
Sound makes them run, idiot.

RAY  
(shouting)  
They're not here!

Harvey hurries over.

HARVEY  
What's going on?

Ray exits the car.

RAY  
This wanker won't let me play the radio.

HARVEY

Play the radio? We're not on vacation! I've heard about you.

RAY

What about me?

HARVEY

You're an imbecile, always in trouble and can't obey orders! Did I skip anything?

RAY

Sure, the part about me banging your wife.

Harvey loses his temper and punches Ray. Everyone but Walter joins them and Adam pulls Harvey back.

ADAM

Take it easy, Chief.

RAY

You all saw that, a superior assaulted me!

ADAM

I saw nothing.

Everyone shakes their heads, and Ray glares at them before walking away.

HARVEY

You've got a job to do.

RAY

(mumbling)

So does your wife.

He continues leaving.

HARVEY

Show's over. If we don't see anything soon we'll set up in another location.

Everyone disburses but Adam.

ADAM

You okay?

HARVEY

Sure, not like any of us are on edge or anything!

INT. PETER'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trey, Nathan and Courtney sit on the sofa watching RATATOUILLE, while Peter and John sit in armchairs either side. A plate CRASHES (OS) in the kitchen so Peter hurries out of the room to check.

JOHN

Everything okay?

PETER (OS)

Fine. Courtney, your cat made a mess.

COURTNEY

Twinkle's been outside all day.

EXT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Two cars stop in front of the police station. Jack gets out of the first and points.

JACK

Look!

ANGLE ON OTHER END OF STREET

A swarm of rats run back and forth as Louise pulls Jack to the station. Steve escorts Chris, Rachel and the baby, while calling Adam.

STEVE

Adam, catch any of them? Over.

ADAM (V.O.)

Not yet, why?

STEVE

They're here too! I have no idea if we can fight them off!

ADAM (V.O.)

If we don't find any here soon then we'll be back. Sit tight.



STEVE

Right.  
 (to Jack and Louise)  
 You come with me.

CHRIS

What about us?

STEVE

Stay here. Block the windows,  
 secure the doors and we might just  
 make it.

INT. PETER'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Peter settles in his chair when they hear another CRASH from the kitchen. Both men hurry to the kitchen.

ANGLE ON KITCHEN FLOOR

A mug rack lies on the floor with shattered mugs around it. John's eyes widen.

JOHN

They're here.

PETER

(whispering)  
 What do we do?

JOHN

Get the kids to safety.

PETER

(nodding)  
 Kids, who's up for a game of hide  
 and seek? Upstairs.

COURTNEY (O.S.)

What?

PETER

Go on kids, go now!

The kids FOOTSTEPS trail up the stairs as Peter and John search the kitchen. They both nod at the pet door as the flap swings back and forth.

COURTNEY (O.S.)

Dad, are we playing?

PETER  
Hide! We'll be right up.

He opens a cupboard door and jumps when the cat darts past him. Courtney bursts in the room.

COURTNEY  
I can't find them anywhere!

PETER  
Who?

COURTNEY  
The boys.

Peter and John run from the kitchen, while Courtney reaches for the cat. It HISSES then runs out the pet door.

INT. - PETER'S SECOND FLOOR HALL - CONTINUOUS

Peter and John search room to room, but don't find the boys. Peter opens the last door and motions John.

PETER  
Bloody hell!

ANGLE ON OPEN DOOR

The window is wide open, the curtain blowing in a breeze. John runs down the hall and down the stairs.

INT. PETER'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Courtney approaches the pet door as the cat tentatively crawls half way through, but it SHRIEKS.

COURTNEY  
Hey girl, what's wrong?

Courtney pulls the cat through the pet door but SCREAMS after finding only the front half of its body. John runs in and sees the cat's body.

JOHN  
Go upstairs, now!

Courtney rises and runs across the room, but a dozen rats run through the pet door. John grabs Courtney and runs.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Troy finishes cleaning broken glass while Victoria rummages in the professor's office.

INT. PROFESSOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Victoria examines the desk and unlocks a drawer, but GASPS when she takes a pair of panties from it.

VICTORIA  
(to self)  
These are mine! The Bugger has gone  
through my locker.

She quits checking the desk and begins searching a file cabinet. She finds a box in the back of the bottom drawer, slightly larger than a shoe box, so brings it to the desk and sits. She opens it and takes out a lab coat.

ANGLE ON LAB COAT

The name tag reads Edward Munsun. Victoria notices blood splatters on the bottom corner of the coat, so checks the box again and withdraws a carving knife.

VICTORIA  
That's the cafeteria chef's knife.  
He said it was stolen.

TROY (O.S.)  
Should I be worried what you're  
doing in there?

VICTORIA  
No.

Victoria notices a business card on the desk.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)  
The Sergeant.

She dials the phone number on the card.

ADAM (V.O.)  
Sergeant Sayer, may I help you?

VICTORIA  
Adam, it's Victoria.

ADAM  
 (voice warming)  
 This is a nice surprise.

VICTORIA  
 Can you come to the lab?

ADAM  
 I'm almost done here, sure.

Victoria hangs up, puts the coat back in the box and leaves to join Troy.

EXT. SEAN'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

Harvey shakes his head, motioning to Kelvin and group.

HARVEY  
 It's not working, take it down!

They collect the netting and return it to the van.

ADAM  
 I'm going to follow another lead.

HARVEY  
 (smirking)  
 Following someone alright.

Adam leaves as Ray and Alice fight about wrapping the net.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
 If you two can finish your lovers  
 tiff.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Trey and Nathan hurry down the road towards the general store.

TREY  
 Didn't they close the store?

NATHAN  
 (jingling keys)  
 I took these off John.

TREY  
 You know that's stealing, don't  
 you?

NATHAN

You wanna' see what's inside or  
not?

EXT./INT. STORE - CONTINUOUS

Nathan unlocks the door and they hurry in, but they stop a moment at dried blood on the floor. Nathan closes the door.

ANGLE ON OUTSIDE DOOR

Several rats scurry to the door sniffing, as Nathan leads Trey further inside.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Brendan continues rounds with Steve, Louise and Jack.

LOUISE

Look!

Louise points up the street to the rats sniffing the store door.

JACK

Watch them until Harvey arrives  
with the net. We'll check around  
town for more.

Louise nods as Jack and Brendan hurry away.

INT. STORE - CONTINUOUS

Trey and Nathan pass the counter to the back, but stop at a loud BANG.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Brendan stop when they see John frantically waving from a bedroom window.

JOHN

We've got rats! And the boys are  
missing!

BRENDAN

(to Jack)  
You look for the boys.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Peter leans out the window

PETER  
Wait, I'm coming!

COURTNEY  
Daddy, you can't!

PETER  
I'll be back. Lock yourself in the closet.

He hugs Courtney tight and helps her in the closet, then he and John climb out the window.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Peter and John meet Jack.

JACK  
You got anything to fight with?

JOHN  
(frowning)  
My faith in the Lord.

JACK  
We might need to find you something more.

INT. STORE - CONTINUOUS

Trey and Nathan stop, and turn to the door when they hear SCRATCHING. They run back to the:

CUT TO:

INT. STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

They hurry inside the room but forget to close the door. They hear a CRACK from the other room, and in a (beat) a rat scurries past the stockroom doorway. Trey opens his mouth to scream, but Nathan covers it as their eyes widen to see five more rats scurry past the door. Chester appears in the doorway and stares at them a (beat), so Trey climbs a storage rack behind him. Nathan follows.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Steve and Louise watch more rats swarm in front of the store, in one place as if standing guard.

STEVE

That doesn't look right. Why aren't they going in? It's like they're  
(beat)  
planning something.

Jack, John and Peter arrive.

JACK

Two kids are missing, you see anything?

Steve nods at the store front.

STEVE

I hope to God they're not in there.

LOUISE

We need to check.

PETER

We'll have to go 'round back. I know a secret entrance in the field down the road. It was built during the war or something.

STEVE

Right, someone has to stay here and watch the front. How fast can you run?

PETER

Pretty fast if I need to.

STEVE

Great, you just volunteered to lure the rats away. We'll find the entrance in the field.

LOUISE

Where's Brendan?

JACK

He ran in Peter's house. We hurried back here.

LOUISE  
Damn it! I'm going to get him.

JACK  
Bring him and the girls back to the  
station.

Louise nods and runs away. Jack, Steve and John hurry away,  
leaving Peter alone near the front.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Adam meets Victoria and Troy.

VICTORIA  
(to Troy)  
Isn't it time for rounds?

Troy eyes her suspiciously, but nods and reluctantly leaves.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)  
(to Adam)  
Something happened to one of the  
scientists, Ed Munsun.

ADAM  
How do you know?

INT. PROFESSOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Victoria takes Adam to the professor's office and shows him  
the box. She takes the lab coat from it.

VICTORIA  
I know something happened, please  
check?

ADAM  
What do you know about Ed?

VICTORIA  
He was here a few months, but we  
haven't seen him the last two. The  
professor said he sacked him, which  
seemed odd due to Ed's  
breakthrough.

Victoria frowns. Adam grips her arm for comfort and they  
both acknowledge a spark. Adam steps closer.



ADAM  
Breakthrough?

Victoria steps closer to Adam.

VICTORIA  
That's all I heard, top secret  
stuff.

ADAM  
(grinning)  
Real undercover stuff?

VICTORIA  
Yeah.

Adam kisses Victoria, long, passionately.

Victoria turns Adam and pushes him against the wall. She continues kissing him as they roll against the wall, tumble into the file cabinet and nearly knock it over. They stop.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
What just happened?

VICTORIA  
The inevitable.

Adam eyes the cabinet.

ADAM  
I can't believe I'm saying this,  
but hold that thought.

He studies a hole behind the cabinet.

VICTORIA  
(waving her nose)  
What's that stench?

Adam reaches inside the hole and withdraws a severed human head. It's decomposing, as maggots crawl in the nose and eyes. Victoria SCREAMS, hugging Adam after he drops the head. Troy hurries in.

TROY  
What's wrong?  
(seeing head)  
Poor Edward. I thought he got  
sacked.

ADAM  
Tell me everything you know about  
Edward and the professor.

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Peter watches the rats nervously.

PETER  
Hey, I'm over here!

The rats ignore him. He picks up a rock and throws it at them, but it hits the store window instead and it SHATTERS.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Shit!

The rats turn, see him, and chase.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Shit!

Peter runs.

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Steve, Jack and John enter the field. They find the tunnel and tentatively descend.

INT. TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Steve turns on his flashlight.

STEVE  
Fuck, it's dark in here.

JACK  
Then let's get out quick.

They proceed.

EXT. PETER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Louise arrives to see Brendan helping Courtney out the second floor window, so runs to the house and helps Courtney to the ground. Courtney SCREAMS as rats attack Brendan.

LOUISE  
                  (to Courtney)  
          Wait here!

Louise runs to the house.

ANGLE ON: PET DOOR

Louise frowns at blood smearing the pet door. She bursts through the door and draws a taser.

INT. FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Louise reaches the stairs, but has to dodge two rats when they leap off the stairs at her. She takes a step, but freezes after seeing several more on the stairs. She aims her taser, but the rats behind her leap on her back. The rats on the stairs charge, so Louise runs backward and hits the wall with all her strength. The rats on her back fall to the ground bleeding out. She ZAPS the closest rat charging from the stairs and the rest scurry back up. Louise follows.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Louise reaches the window a second too late to catch Brendan, who falls to the ground, landing head first.

                  LOUISE  
          No!

Courtney SOBS below. Rats on the awning turn to face Louise, but she runs.

EXT. YARD - CONTINUOUS

Louise runs out the back door and falls next to Brendan, cradling him.

                  LOUISE  
          No!  
                  (whispering)  
          Wake up.

                  COURTNEY  
                  (sobbing)  
          He's gone.

Louise holds Brendan tight until she hears CHATTER. Rats scurry out the pet door, so Louise leaps up and grabs Courtney's hand.

LOUISE

We've got to get to the station!

They run, but the rats stop at Brendan's body.

INT. TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Steve leads the men to a staircase.

JACK

I've never seen a trapdoor in your stockroom.

JOHN

It's the old stockroom. It was too small to use really.

John pushes the door open and ascends first.

INT. STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

John enters the room, followed closely by Steve and Jack with tasers and batons in hand. They hear CHATTER, so Steve shines his flashlight in the direction of the noise, but all they see is a shadow. He swings a baton at the floor in front of him as Jack kicks a rat that scurries to him.

STEVE

We've got to find the boys!

JOHN

If they're even here.

He approaches the door.

NATHAN (OS)

Help!

JACK

They're here!

John finds a shovel leaning against the wall, and they exit.

INT. NEW STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

John enters the next room to find the boys clutching the top of the storage shelf, and kicking at rats below leaping at them.

JOHN  
Are you hurt?

NATHAN  
No.

John steps towards them, but a rat leaps at him. He swings, knocking it away, and continues swinging the shovel to clear a path through the rats for the boys.

JOHN  
Go now!

The boys climb down the shelves and run out of the room.

INT. BACK HALL - CONTINUOUS

The boys run to Steve and Jack.

STEVE  
Get them to the station!

Jack leads the boys to the front of the store, as Steve looks in the stockroom.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Hold on, John!

INT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Chris, Rachel holding Rose, Jack, Courtney, Louise, Nathan and Trey sit in the main room waiting.

CHRIS  
We should go back.

JACK  
We need to reach the inspector.

He reaches for his radio.

JACK (CONT'D)  
(into radio)  
Inspector? This is Jack at the precinct. Where are you? Over.

HARVEY (V.O.)  
Closing in on town. Stay put. Over.

They turn at a KNOCK on the front door. Jack opens the door and Steve tumbles in.

JACK  
Where's John?

Steve, catching his breath shakes his head. Jack helps him up, getting short of breath himself.

LOUISE  
(to Jack)  
You need some rest.

JACK  
I'm fine.

Rachel approaches. Her eyes lock with Jack's for a (beat), then she hurries away.

LOUISE  
Did you two?

JACK  
No!

Chris follows Rachel out of the room, and they are overheard arguing in muffled voices (OS).

LOUISE  
Did you?

JACK  
The baby  
(beat)

Louise brings her hand to her mouth as Steve stares after Rachel. Harvey hurries in with the professor, followed by Ray. Louise, Jack and Steve abruptly face Harvey.

LOUISE  
What did we miss?

HARVEY  
What did I miss?

RAY  
I need a coffee!

Ray brushes past Steve, who is holding a map. Steve approaches Harvey.

STEVE

What little I know of your town, if we split into groups I think we can herd the rats here.

He points to a spot on the map. Alice joins them.

ALICE

Why there?

STEVE

It's the least populated.

Chris re-enters, resolved.

CHRIS

Do I get a weapon?

HARVEY

We all do.

PROFESSOR

My rats won't hurt me.

HARVEY

They won't hurt you. They'll rip your ever-lovin' throat out and feed on you like someone rang the dinner bell.

The professor shrugs as the group gear up and exit the precinct.

EXT. RECTORY - LATER SAME DAY

Jack and Chris approach the rectory down the street from the precinct, a modest church adjacent. They watch each other a couple of times, but don't speak. Jack rings the BELL. In a (beat) MICHAEL (65), the town reverend, tall, thin, white hair, thick spectacles, answers.

JACK

Hello, reverend, may we come in?

MICHAEL

Jack, nice to see you. I hope all's well.

Michael opens the door, and Jack and Chris follow him in.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARTHA (66), Michael's wife, short and thin, graying, nods to them. ISAAC (22) and Mary (19), son and daughter, turn for a (beat) then resume watching TV.

MARTHA  
(cheerfully)  
Company. I'll put on a spot of tea.

Martha exits.

CHRIS  
We need the church.

MICHAEL  
Yes, everyone needs the church.

Martha returns.

MARTHA  
Would you prefer crackers, or  
scones?

JACK  
No, reverend, the escaped rats, we  
need to bring everyone to the  
church for their safety.

Isaac and Mary turn, eyes wide. Martha's jaw drops.

MARTHA  
I'll put a rush on that tea.

Martha exits.

MICHAEL  
I heard stories, but I didn't know  
it's as bad as all that! I'll fetch  
the keys.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Ray and Alice hurry along the sidewalk.

ALICE  
It's like those rats are talking to  
each other.

RAY  
My arse!

He looks up the sidewalk.



RAY (CONT'D)  
There's one now!

He runs.

ALICE  
Don't kill it!

She catches up to Ray a few buildings ahead.

RAY  
Lost it.

TRAPPED WOMAN (OS)  
Help us!

ANGLE ON: TREE

A woman some yards ahead waves to Ray and Alice from a tree branch. One shoe lays on the sidewalk below her. Ray and Alice approach her.

ALICE  
Us? Who else is with you?

TRAPPED WOMAN  
My boyfriend ran off when rats chased him.

They help her out of the tree.

RAY  
Get to the church. We'll find your boyfriend.

The woman nods and runs away, as Ray and Alice turn in the other direction. They stop when they hear her SCREAM, and turn back to find her.

CUT TO: WOMAN

Four rats surround the woman and attack.

CLOSEUP:

Two rats tear her neck open and blood gushes from the wound.

Alice SCREAMS, but The rats continue feeding. She shines her LIGHT at them, and they SQUEAL and scurry away. Alice and Ray run to the woman, but she's still bleeding out. Alice reaches for her shoulder radio.

ALICE  
Steve, copy? Where are you? Over.

LOUISE (V.O.)  
We're at Chris' house. Over.

ALICE  
We'll rendezvous after we look for  
someone.

EXT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

A car SCREECHES to a halt and Adam leaps out. Kelvin comes out of the precinct and joins him.

ADAM  
Where's the professor?

KELVIN  
Gone with Harvey to round up the  
townsfolk for the church. I'm  
setting up the nets.

ADAM  
(sarcastically)  
How's that going so far?

Adam leaves his car and hurries down the street.

INT. CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Louise and Steve scour the room.

STEVE  
You sure they're still here?

LOUISE  
Not so sure now.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Steve follows Louise up the stairs to the hall. Louise enters a room then returns.

LOUISE  
It's like they knew we'd come.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Michael leads his family, Jack and Chris into the church, but Jack and Chris turn to leave.

MICHAEL  
Where are you going?

JACK  
To fetch the people.

MICHAEL  
Stay safe.

Jack and Chris leave.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Chris reach a row of houses, and hear a SQUEAL.

JACK  
We have to lure it to the net.

Jack shines a LIGHT at some trash cans, and a rat SQUEALS and runs from the cans up his leg. Chris throws his baton at Jack, but Jack ducks and hits the rat with his baton. It runs away.

JACK (CONT'D)  
What was that?

CHRIS  
You're lucky I missed!

JACK  
It was just a fling! She wanted a child with you. Listen, you can thrash me after we save the town, okay?

CHRIS  
(relaxing)  
I might.

EXT. ANOTHER SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Harvey glares at the professor as they walk door to door. The professor walks slowly, so Harvey nudges him.

HARVEY  
Move it, now!

They reach a house and Harvey knocks. The husband answers.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, but for your own safety  
you must evacuate to the church,  
now.

The man ushers his family out the door and they hurry down the sidewalk, but rats attack the man and he SCREAMS. Harvey fights them off with his baton, but the professor just watches. There are too many rats, so Harvey jabs the man with his taser and shocks them all off. He realizes the man is dead and so turns to the mum.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
To the church!

The woman corrals her children as she SOBS and runs to the church. Adam hurries to Harvey.

ADAM  
Where is the little shit?!

Professor joins them.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
(to Professor)  
I want a word with you, you sick  
fuck!

Adam punches him before Harvey pulls Adam away.

ADAM  
(to professor)  
Want to tell him what you did, or  
shall I?

HARVEY  
(glaring at the professor)  
What's he talking about?

The woman ahead SCREAMS, so Adam, Harvey and the professor turn to see a horde of rats scurry across the street.

HARVEY (CONT'D)  
(screaming)  
To the church, now!

Harvey runs to the family while Adam grabs the professor's arm, dragging him behind.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Michael holds the door open, waving them in as the rats close in. Harvey grabs his taser while pushing the family through the door. Adam joins him, but Walter breaks from Adam and runs away.

ADAM  
Fucking chicken!

HARVEY  
We're gonna' need him!

Adam reluctantly chases the professor, but a (beat) later the rats reach the church and several leap at Harvey. He waves his baton at them but some bite his legs. He SCREAMS. He stumbles and a rat leaps at his face, but a SHOTGUN BLAST disintegrates the rat in front of him. Harvey turns, nursing his right ear.

ANGLE ON CHURCH DOOR

Michael stands in the doorway lowering his shotgun.

MICHAEL  
Get in here!

Harvey staggers inside the church just before the rats regroup.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Adam chases the professor several yards ahead.

ADAM  
I'll arrest you, you son of a  
bitch!

Adam hears CHATTER and looks over his shoulder.

CLOSEUP: SIDEWALK

Another swarm chases Adam.

He speeds his pace but they're too fast, and several catch up and leap on his chest. They try to bite him, but can't through his gear. The precinct ahead draws closer as more rats attack him. They bite his legs and Adam falls, but a van flies into the sidewalk just ahead of him. The headlights make the rats flee and Kelvin sticks his head out the window.

KELVIN

Get in!

Adam hurries to the van but Kelvin peels away before Adam closes the door.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Adam slams his door closed and catches his breath.

ADAM

How did you know to find me?

KELVIN

The professor.

EXT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

The van stops next to the professor, who is watching the net stretch across the street. Adam leaps out of the van and charges him.

ADAM

Does the name Ed Munsun mean anything?

PROFESSOR

We were working on a special project but he kept pushing me! It was an accident!

ADAM

With the knife?

PROFESSOR

We had a fight and he fell on it, I swear!

ADAM

The meat in the lab, that was  
(beat)

The rats swarm and attack the professor, tearing his flesh over and over until he stumbles into the net. He dies, bleeding out, but the rats leap off him before they get stuck in the net. Adam steps towards the net.

KELVIN

He's gone!

Kelvin pulls Adam inside the station.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Chris and Jack patrol a street.

CHRIS

Isn't this the street that Harvey's  
meant to be checking out?

Jack doesn't reply. They approach a house and Jack KNOCKS on the door, but the swarm scurries to them, so they break the door in.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They rush inside and shut the door.

JACK (CONT'D)

Get ready!

CHRIS

How? I'm just a milkman!

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter the room and watch the windows.

JACK

Oh, God.

Several rats SHATTER the window and leap in to swarm Jack. He falls to the ground motionless.

CHRIS

Get off him!

He raises his baton, but stops when he notices Jack isn't moving. He swats one off Jack's leg and the rest chase him out of the living room.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Chris runs into the room and SLAMS the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack rises and reaches for his taser, but it's fallen off his belt. He checks the rats scratching through the kitchen door then drops on all fours, searching. He recovers his taser under an end table and hurries to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Chris stands on the table swinging his baton at the rats.

JACK  
(grinning)  
Want a hand?

CHRIS  
Yes!

Jack swings his baton and fires his taser at rats, clearing a path for Chris. Chris leaps off the table but falls on top of Jack. He rises and begins to help Jack, but the rats swarm Jack in a (beat), and he's covered and SCREAMING. Chris pulls his arm, but Jack convulses and falls limp. Chris backs away and runs.

INT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Adam sits at his desk on the phone, while Rachel eavesdrops nearby.

ADAM  
Sit tight, Harvey.  
(listening)  
Yup, gone. He was a dick anyway.

Adam hangs up.

RACHEL  
How's Chris?

Adam shrugs.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Louise, Alice, Steve and Ray continue rounds.

LOUISE  
Last street?

ALICE  
I hope so.

STEVE  
Why the church?

Steve ponders a moment.



RAY  
 (chuckling)  
 Pray for help?

STEVE  
 Shush!

He hurries ahead to the side of a house, and the others join him to find a YOUNG WOMAN lying on the ground.

ALICE  
 Are you hurt?

LOUISE  
 Are you alone?

She and Alice hurry to the house.

ALICE  
 (to woman)  
 We'll be right back!

Steve and Ray run to the back.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They meet in the hall.

RAY  
 No one's here.

A THUMP booms from upstairs so they race up and see a bloodied body in the hall. Louise advances but a SCREAM is heard coming from outside, so they hurry back out.

RETURN TO:

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They find the woman outside covered in blood. She's dead. Ray walks away.

ALICE  
 Where are you going?

RAY  
 To church!

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Troy paces back and forth, glaring at Victoria.

TROY  
You don't have to be here.

VICTORIA  
There's no way I'm going out there,  
and we haven't heard from Adam yet.

TROY  
Oh, first name basis, hm? What  
were you two up to anyway?

VICTORIA  
Shouldn't you be checking where  
they escaped from? Maybe do your  
job?

TROY  
You're scared of your own lab rats.

VICTORIA  
We all should be. We never should  
have let the professor go that far!

TROY  
Too late for that now.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Someone KNOCKS on the door. Michael opens it and Chris  
stumbles inside.

HARVEY  
Where's Jack?

Chris shakes his head as the church lights go OFF. Citizens  
SCREAM and begin running for the door.

MICHAEL  
Now, now, probably just a short.  
This old building.

Martha LIGHTS a candle from the altar.

MARTHA  
(shouting)  
Please, help me.

The residents relax, and a few of them join her. An OLDER WOMAN LIGHTS a candle in a stand, but a rat on the stand pounces on her face, tearing her nose off. Blood spurts and She SCREAMS. Michael pulls the rat off her but it bites his hand. He SCREAMS.

HARVEY  
What happened?

MICHAEL  
Keep my flock safe!

Residents run for the door, but freeze when they see a swarm of rats blocking the door, advancing. A YOUNG GIRL shouts and points to the back.

YOUNG GIRL  
This way!

ALICE  
We can't fight them all!

MICHAEL  
Martha?

Ray holds a candle out towards the door and sees rats gnawing Chris' body.

CLOSEUP: CONFESSIONAL

An OLD MAN hides in a confessional, but in a (beat) he SCREAMS and the white curtain inside turns red.

Parishioners run towards the back, SCREAMING.

CUT TO: REAR OF CHURCH:

Parishioners run out a side door and are greeted by Adam in full riot gear.

ADAM  
Go to the precinct! You'll be safe there.

Adam pushes past them inside and finds Harvey.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
I thought you could use help.

HARVEY  
You thought right.

Martha stumbles back inside.

MARTHA

Michael?

Michael kneels at the altar, praying...

MICHAEL

Our father, who art in heaven.

The rats draw closer.

MARTHA

Michael!

She runs towards him, but rats attack her.

ADAM

Get those two!

Louise and Alice retrieve Michael and Martha. They drag them away while swatting rats off Martha. The police exit through the back.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Let's burn these bastards!

He throws a candle at the confessional, as Harvey throws a candle on the cloth draped over the altar. They throw extra candles in front of the hall and run out the back. Alice runs out last but flames catch her clothes. She SCREAMS as she runs.

CUT TO FRONT OF CHURCH:

Adam and Harvey watch the police lead the people to the precinct, then face the church which quickly ignites.

INT. PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Rachel watches the church burn from a window, as Adam enters.

RACHEL

Where's Chris?!

Adam shakes his head, so Rachel runs out towards the church.

ADAM

Rachel, don't!

EXT. OUTSIDE PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Adam follows Rachel and grabs her hand.

A car stops short in front of the precinct and Victoria rushes out to Adam. She holds him tight after he releases Rachel. Rachel frowns and returns inside the station, where her baby CRIES (OS).

VICTORIA  
I saw the flames.

ADAM  
(fighting tears)  
I'm so glad you're safe!

VICTORIA  
(grinning)  
I see that, tough guy.

Ray leads Alice outside. She's badly burned.

RAY  
You're not okay to help, baby girl.

ALICE  
Baby girl?

RAY  
That's as close as I get to I love you.

Alice grins but collapses, motionless. Courtney runs from the precinct.

COURTNEY  
Is dad here?

Adam looks at her, stunned. Peter turns a corner and joins them, and Courtney hugs him hard.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)  
Where'd you go?!

PETER  
Let's just say I was practicing for a marathon.

Residents join them to watch the church crumble.

VICTORIA  
Do you think they were all inside?

ADAM

I hope so.

He kisses Victoria.

EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

Firemen finish extinguishing the remnants of the fire.

EXT. PALMER FARM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSEUP: SEWAGE PIPE

Chester, injured but alive, lays close to a pregnant rat.

FADE OUT: