

Owls on the Nightbus

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EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The night is cold and windy. There are dark clouds rumbling with electricity.

There is a lone farmhouse in a clearing in a wooded area. Surrounding it are tall trees and overgrown foliage.

There is a blue light strobing from one of the ground level windows.

(INSERT)

1949

INT. FARMHOUSE-BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

We see a room filled with scientific equipment; test tubes bubble, burners heat oils and colourful liquids, electric buzz from electrodes and computers hum loudly in the corner of the room...

An old man with a monacle makes notes on a clipboard. He is dressed in a stained lab-coat.

On the far wall above his work station there is a red flag with a swastika inside a white circle.

Lightning strikes.

INT. FARMHOUSE-BASEMENT - LATER

A beep sounds from a terminal on the other side of the room. The nazi scientist rushes over and checks readings on the dials there.

Lightning is striking more frequently now.

The scientist's eyes are alight with excitement as his experiment reaches a climax.

He turns to his left; there is a lead box emitting a green glow that can be seen through a glass viewing window. A gyro begins to speed up with kinetic energy and a whirring sound fills the room.

The scientist runs to the other side of the room and pulls a switch...

The room explodes with electricity and the whirring steadies out to a constant high pitch.

The lead box begins to rattle and the light from within pulses brighter...

SCIENTIST

Ja... Ja...

Canisters of butane and diesel standing on one side of the room begin to vibrate and a few fall over. The heat and energy is making them unstable; the scientist is too preoccupied with his experiment to notice.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Then the place erupts with an explosion. Half the farmhouse explodes its contents in one direction. Fire reaches up, escaping its confines in a big ball of heat and smoke.

From a tree far away an owl watches. In it's eyes we see a fireball reach up into the sky.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

A bus sits parked at a bus stop. The destination on the top of the bus is "Austin: Texas".

The bus driver is standing outside the bus having a smoke.

(INSERT)

Present Day

People begin to arrive with their baggage in tow.

The first to arrive is an old woman with a young girl. The young girl is about 16 or 17 and is dressed very conservatively. The old woman walks with her back straight and her head held high. She has her hair tied in a very tight bun.

They pass a group of teenagers sitting on a wall, smoking and messing around.

OLD WOMAN

Pay them no mind. When we get to St

(MORE)

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)

Josephine's reform school in Austin you'll soon learn not to hang around those sexual perverts. Young boys are all alike. Only one thing on their minds. You're parents wanted better for you. You will not disgrace them by getting mixed up with the likes of them.

The young girl keeps her head down and doesn't dare look at the boys.

They arrive at the bus and leave their bags at the baggage loading bay. The bus driver is still finishing his cigarette when the old woman clears her throat loudly.

The bus driver unhurriedly pulls on his cigarette one last time, then drops it and squashes it with his heel. He slowly walks over to the old woman and bends down to pick up her luggage.

OLD WOMAN

I hope you won't be stopping every half hour to sustain that habit.

Without waiting for a reply she walks away and boards the bus.

The bus driver sighs and mutters something inaudible under his breath.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The old woman takes the seat closest the front.

OLD WOMAN

Only scruffs and drug dealers sit in the back.

The young girl nods timidly and sits quietly.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The next two people to get onto the bus are a young horny couple who are eloping. They enter the bus and make their way straight to the back of the bus. The guy makes a whooping noise.

They settle in the back and begin making out.

The young girl with the old woman subtly turns her head to hear them talking between themselves...

GUY

Ohh, Baby. This is gonna be great.
I can't wait to put distance
between us and your parents.

The old woman notices the young girl craning her head around.

OLD WOMAN

Pay them no mind. God will judge
them.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The next person to arrive is a middle-aged man in a cheap suit carrying a suitcase. He looks as though he has slept in his clothes. He takes a seat in the middle of the bus. He puts the briefcase on his lap. His leg begins to jitter up and down.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The next person to enter the bus is a girl dressed in a leather skirt, fishnet stockings and boots. She is listening to music through a pair of big headphones, the sound loud enough so that everyone can hear.

As she passes the young girl the young girl looks her up and down then looks away shyly.

The rock-chick noticed the look and smirks. She takes a seat a few rows behind the young girl and the old woman.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The next person to enter the bus is a young black guy. He looks out of place, scared, lost. He makes his way down the aisle and takes a seat toward the back of the bus.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The next person to enter the bus is a tall man carrying a large amount of pamphlets in one hand and a briefcase in the

other. He has a large crucifix around his neck on the outside of his suit-shirt. He stops a moment and looks up and down the bus...

He notices the young black guy towards the back and makes his way towards him.

He greets everybody as he makes his way down the aisle.

CRUCIFIX
Mornin'... Mornin'...

Crucifix gives rock-chick a longer look as he passes. She pretends not to notice him staring.

Crucifix takes the seat in front of the young black guy. He turns in his seat and gives the young black guy a shit-eating grin...

CRUCIFIX
Hey, you seem like a nice boy. I
got a little something here to show
you...

The young black guy doesn't say anything. He squirms in his seat and looks around for help.

CRUCIFIX
Now... What would you say if I said
you could eat what you like and not
get fat... Drink what you like and
not get a hangover... Have sex and
not get an STD...?
Well, in paradise all these things
are true.
Do you believe our Lord God woke up
one day and created the world, just
by snapping his fingers...?

Crucifix snaps his fingers, startling the young black guy.

CRUCIFIX
I tell ya'... I've seen it,
Brother. I've seen Heaven. Here in
my heart. One day Jesus came down
and took a seat, front row centre,
to my life.
If you have Jesus in your heart-

ROCK-CHICK
Give it a rest. He ain't
interested.

CRUCIFIX

Hey, I'm just trying to enlighten
the boy. Ain't nobody getting hurt
here.

ROCK-CHICK

I'm hurting just having to hear
that.

CRUCIFIX

Alright, fine.
(to the black guy)
We'll talk later.

The young black guy just nods his head.

EXT. BUS STOP - LATER

The bus driver is about finished with another cigarette. He
checks his watch; it's almost 10:00am. He looks around and
doesn't see anyone else.

He grinds the cigarette butt under his heel and pulls
himself into the bus.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

It's about time.

The bus driver nods his head and climbs into the driver's
seat.

The engine starts and the general mood lifts.

The driver puts the bus into first gear and they pull away
slowly.

EXT. BUS STOP - CONTINUOUS

As the bus gets clear of the station a figure comes running
out of the ticket gate. It is a young boy of about 20. He
has a duffle bag in one hand and a guitar case in the other.

He runs after the bus, shouting.

YOUNG BOY

Hey, wait! Wait up...

(MORE)

YOUNG BOY (CONT'D)

Wait...

The bus driver doesn't notice him.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The middle-aged man looks out, sees the boy running up alongside the bus, and turns to the bus driver.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Leave him. If he can't get here on time then he deserves to be left behind.

ROCK-CHICK

We can't just leave him. What if that was you out there?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

It wouldn't be. I was here on time.

ROCK-CHICK

What's the rush, tight-wad. It's not going to slow us down by more than ten seconds.

The middle-aged man stands up in a confrontational manner.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Don't you dare let him on here-

Rock-chick turns to him sharply.

ROCK-CHICK

Or what?!

They stare each other down but the middle-aged man doesn't say anything.

ROCK-CHICK

Didn't think so.

She goes to the front of the bus and bangs on the driver's window.

ROCK-CHICK

Driver!
Stop the bus.

The driver turns to look and then sees the boy running alongside the bus. He stops the bus with a hiss of the brakes.

The door opens. The young boy appears at the door, out of breath.

YOUNG BOY
Thank you. I didn't think you were
gonna stop.

ROCK-CHICK
We almost didn't.

She looks back to see that the middle-aged man has sat back down and is sulking.

The boy grabs a hold of Rock-chick's outstretched hand and she helps him up the steps.

The boy nods his head at everyone, sheepishly.

YOUNG BOY
Hi. Sorry.

The middle-aged man harrumphs.

ROCK-CHICK
That's okay. No biggie.

She bangs on the driver's window.

ROCK-CHICK
I think that's all of us now.

The driver puts the bus in gear again and they pull away.

The young boy puts his hand out to Rock-chick.

YOUNG BOY
My name's Jim.

Rock-chick looks at his hand.

ROCK-CHICK
Steph.

They shake hands.

INT. BUS - LATER

STEPH
But if Jimmy Hendrix wasn't
left-handed, would he still be the
most awesome guitar player ever...?
I mean, if he was right-handed,
(MORE)

STEPH (CONT'D)

would he have sucked...?
And Kurt Cobain...?
Would they still be alive today if
they weren't left-handed...?

JIM

Do you play?

STEPH

No. But I can play tic-tac-toe on
the recorder. Plus, I'm
right-handed, so no hope there.
What do you play?

JIM

My own stuff mostly. I do the
acoustic circuits around town. I'm
on my way to Austin to audition for
the show "Wow-That's-Good."

STEPH

Wow. Are you that good? To get on
the show, I mean...?

JIM

Yeah, I can handle myself.

STEPH

Prove it. Give us a tune.

JIM

What... Now?

STEPH

Yeah, now. I'll be the judge of
whether you're good enough to be on
that show.

JIM

I don't know.

STEPH

(to everyone on the bus)
Who wants Jim here to play us a
song?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

I don't.

STEPH

Yeah, but you don't count.
Anyone...?

CRUCIFIX

I wouldn't mind. As long as it's
upbeat and don't have no cussing or
blasphemy.

STEPH

Go on, Jim.

GUY

Go on, Jimmy.

Jim takes his guitar out. He picks at the strings, testing
the tuning.

He stops, takes a breath, clears his throat, then he begins
playing...

The song is light and happy, but the lyrics are serious and
thoughtful.

Everyone takes something personal from the song. Some of
them tap their feet to the rhythm.

The young girl with the old woman turns an ear to listen.
The old woman notices.

OLD WOMAN

Don't you get taken in by that
devil's music. That's how the Pied
Piper lured those children away
from God's path.

Jim finishes the song. Everyone, except the middle-aged man,
claps their hands in applause.

STEPH

That was really good. What's it
about?

JIM

Life. Love, loss... It's really
about everything.

STEPH

That was really good. I think
you'll win at "Wow-That's-Good."
you have my vote.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A rich fat man sits at his large oak desk.

His intercom sounds.

VOICE

There's a... Man here to see you.

FAT MAN

Send him in.

The door opens on the other side of the fat man's office and a tall Mexican man in cowboy boots enters.

FAT MAN

Come in, come in.

I need you to sort out a problem.

The Mexican nods.

FAT MAN

Someone's got information that I don't want seen outside this building.

I want him alive. And if he's dead, I want his body and anything else he's carrying with him. Especially anything he's carrying with him.

The Mexican has a stoney expression on his face. The fat man leans over and picks up a bag from the floor.

FAT MAN

Take this.

He pushes it at the Mexican. Inside the Mexican finds a wad of money, a cell phone and a beacon tracker.

FAT MAN

Half now, the rest on delivery. There's a bonus if he's still alive. The phone is untraceable, if you need to call. I stress the word "need". The tracker is set to his frequency.

The Mexican gives the fat man a look.

FAT MAN

Don't look at me like that. All employees that work in The Cellar have hone inside 'em. It's my insurance policy.

The Mexican closes the case, stands up and walks to the door.

FAT MAN

And none of what happened last
time. I don't wanna hear about this
one on the news.
Nice and quiet.

The Mexican nods, then leaves.

FAT MAN

Asshole.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - LATER

The bus is making its way out of town now, approaching open roads. Some passengers have taken out books to read, video games to play and others just look out the window at the world passing by them.

JIM

So... Where are you headed?

STEPH

Away. I do that sometimes. When things get too real at home, I just... Poof! Regroup is what I think they call it.

JIM

Wow. I don't know if I could just break away like that. I mean, I think about just walking out on my job sometimes when it gets to me, and family piss me off to no end... But I respect people who can disappear for a while. Where's your first stop?

STEPH

A few days in Austin, then...
Wherever.

JIM

You wanna be my plus one at the show on Saturday?

STEPH

You goat another ticket?

JIM

It's for, like, family and such.

(MORE)

JIM (CONT'D)

Moral support.

STEPH

Well... sure. Will I be on TV?

JIM

If all goes well... Or very badly!

STEPH

Cool.

JIM

Cool.

At the front of the bus the old woman starts talking to the young girl, but loud enough so that everyone can hear...

OLD WOMAN

Young people nowadays. Acting like grown-ups when they don't know any better. In my day there were rules to dating. Sex nowadays is just a pastime, not a commitment. Strict discipline is what young people need.

CRUCIFIX

Now hold on there. It's nice to see young folks enjoying each other's company. Not all that hollerin' and waving knives around.

OLD WOMAN

You will mind your manners, Sir. Eavesdropping on a private conversation.

CRUCIFIX

Now, now. No need to get riled up. I was just sayin' they ain't hurtin' nobody.

OLD WOMAN

You, Sir, will mind yourself. There are fertile minds here, and I will not let the Devil's influence corrupt her.

CRUCIFIX

Now listen here. I got no problem with you, so you don't have to make a problem with me. All's I'm sayin'

(MORE)

CRUCIFIX (CONT'D)

is to lay off these two here and
keep your opinions to yourself.

OLD WOMAN

Well, you should be ashamed to call
yourself a member of His flock.
Wearing that cross like Judas
Iscariot.

CRUCIFIX

Now don't you bring my faith into
question here. I'm as close to God
as any man.

OLD WOMAN

I see you... Selling religion like
it was a used car. I know you
people.

CRUCIFIX

You don't know me, Lady.

OLD WOMAN

I know your kind, Sir, and I will
not-

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Would everyone please SHUT THE FUCK
UP!

Everyone turns in surprise. The middle-aged man's face has
gone red.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Christ. It's like being on a school
bus. I don't give a shit about
who's the better religious nut. I
don't give a shit who's right and
who's wrong. All I care about is
getting to where I'm going with the
least amount of back-seat arguing.

The old woman puts her hands over the young girl's ears.

OLD WOMAN

You watch your language around-

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Just shut the fuck up. She's not
gonna break.

OLD WOMAN

Well, I never.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

And you never will again. So get over it.

There is a moment where everyone is quiet. Then applause erupts, and a lone wolf-whistle from the guy in the back. The old woman turns away, embarrassed.

STEPH

Way to go, tight-wad.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Shut up. That wasn't me standing up for you. I just want a quiet ride with the least amount of hassle.

STEPH

Jeez... What a tight-wad.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - LATER

We see the bus station that the bus had left from earlier today. Everything is quiet and tranquil.

Then there is a roaring sound that is getting louder. Suddenly a car speeds past.

INT. MEXICAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

We see the Mexican driving in his car. On his knuckles is written "BAST ARDO".

The engine roars louder as the Mexican pushes his foot down.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - THAT MOMENT

The middle-aged man clutches his bag tightly. He has a worried look on his face and sweat builds on his temple.

Meanwhile, at the back of the bus, the guy gives the girl he is with a look. She nods reluctantly. They look around to see if anyone is looking back at them; all heads are facing forward. The girl gets up casually and enters the toilet cubicle.

Then the guy gets up and casually and goes in after her.

The bus driver has noticed that they have both gone into the

bathroom together.

INT. TOILET CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS

The couple start by kissing. He gropes the girl, grabbing handfuls of her flesh. He unbuttons her dress, exposing her breasts. Then he begins unbuckling his belt.

INT. BUT - CONTINUOUS

The bus driver pulls out a little TV set and turns it on. The picture that comes up is a shot of the toilet cubicle. He watches as the guy drops his pants and pushes the girl over.

As the bus driver's attention is taken away from the road he veers off slightly to the right. He notices in time and swerves the bus gradually back into the middle of the road.

None of the passengers seem to have noticed.

The driver's eyes are drawn back to the TV set.

While he's watching he misses their exit and the bus continues down a long road that disappears at the horizon.

Nobody has noticed.

CUT TO:

INT. MEXICAN'S CAR - LATER

The Mexican is behind the wheel of his car, cruising fast down long roads. He weaves around slow cars efficiently.

On the seat next to the Mexican is the scanner, beeping intermittently.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - LATER

The girl comes out of the toilet cubicle. She looks around coyly. The only person to look back is the young black guy. He sees her and then quickly turns back around.

The girl beckons for the guy to come out. He steps out of the cubicle casually, his face flushed.

When they sit down the girl notices the bus driver looking

at her in his rear-view mirror.

He nods his head.

INT. BUT - LATER

Steph looks out the window and sees a sign that reads,
"Checkpoint 50m."

She turns to Jim.

STEPH

Where are we?

Jim looks out the window, then looks back at Steph.

JIM

This doesn't look like the right
road.

Steph gets up from her seat and approaches the driver.

STEPH

Hey. I think we took a wrong turn
somewhere.

DRIVER

Please take your seat, Ma'am.

STEPH

No. I think we're on the wrong
road.

DRIVER

Ma'am, I'm gonna have to ask you to
take your seat.

OLD WOMAN

Are we lost?!

DRIVER

We are not lost...

The driver looks out the window; they are no longer on a
main road. They seem to be travelling down a dirt road in a
forested area.

DRIVER

This does look different.

STEPH

Don't you have a Sat-nav?

DRIVER
Please, Ma'am. I'm gonna have to ask-

STEPH
Do you have a Sat-nav?!

DRIVER
No. But-

STEPH
Great.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
Are we lost?

DRIVER
Please, can everyone remain calm. We seem to have got off the main road. We'll just turn around and-

There is a loud BANG!

The bus begins to swerve and the driver struggles to keep control.

The passengers are thrown around in the cabin. One of the windows break and baggage falls from the overhead holders.

The bus hits the side of the road and comes to a stop with a thump.

After a few moments, when the dust has settled, people begin to recover. Someone is screaming. Steph slowly gets up, pissed off.

STEPH
Fucking fantastic!

The driver stumbles out of his seat and makes his way down the aisle.

DRIVER
Is everybody okay?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
No thanks to you.

GUY
Someone... Help!

Steph and Crucifix run over to the back of the bus. Crucifix has blood trickling down the side of his head.

Jim slowly gets up, rubbing his head and squinting.

JIM
What the fuck hit me?!

Steph and Crucifix get to the back of the bus. The girl had gone through the window when they were thrown around. She has severe lacerations on the top half of her body. Steph kneels down next to the girl. The guy is pacing, distraught, not knowing what to do.

GUY
Please... Help her.

STEPH
(to Crucifix)
Get some towels... And the first
aid kit.
(to the Guy)
Hold here... To slow the blood.

She puts the Guy's hand over the worst looking wound where the blood is flowing out freely.

Crucifix steps past the bus driver to get towels. The bus driver's eyes go wide when he sees all the blood. The colour drains from his face and he runs out of the bus.

Crucifix comes back with the towels and the first aid kit.

Steph takes them and begins tying off each bad wound.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus driver is dry heaving down the front of the bus.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Steph removes bandages from the first aid kit and wraps up the wounds.

When she's done with that she stands up.

STEPH
(to Crucifix)
Seal up the rest of her wounds with
whatever's left in there.

CRUCIFIX
Where are you going?

Steph storms off down the aisle and exits the bus.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Steph sees the bus driver on his haunches near the back of the bus. He's smoking a cigarette with shaky hands.

STEPH
You ASSHOLE!

She storms over to him. He stands up when he sees her. She knocks the cigarette out of his hand and grabs him by the collar.

STEPH
Where the fuck did you learn to
drive... Off a fucking cereal box?!
If that girl dies you're gonna be
in a world of hurt.

The young black guy arrives and pulls Steph off of the driver and pushes her away. She stands panting. She looks around to see that everyone is watching them.

She turns back to the driver.

STEPH
Where's your CB?

The bus driver shakes his head.

Steph is still panting and stares the driver down.

STEPH
Where's your CB, you fat fuck?!

DRIVER
There isn't one.

STEPH
The next words out of your mouth
better be "I will personally save
that girl's life" or I'm going to
drop kick your fucking face.

The bus driver shakes his head and his lip quivers.

DRIVER
Th... There...

He breaks down and cries.

STEPH
Fucking great.
Anybody got a phone I can use?

Jim comes down the stairs of the bus holding out his phone.

JIM
Here's mine.

Steph starts dialling numbers but the phone just beeps at her...

There is no signal where they are. She holds the phone up to the sky.

STEPH
C'mon, c'mon...

The phone continues to beep.

STEPH
Fuck.
Great. Anybody got a better phone?

The middle-aged man comes out shaking his phone.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
Piece of shit.

STEPH
That answers that question. Well...
Let's get the spare out and fix
this thing ourselves so we can get
the fuck out of here.

The bus driver shakes his head again, his eyes wide. He begins to blubber.

STEPH
You're gonna tell me there's no
spare, right?

DRIVER
I-it w-w-was flat from the l-last
time a tire bl-bl-bl-

She lunges at the driver again.

STEPH
You piece of shit!

Jim steps out holding Steph away from the cowering driver.

JIM

Stop it. We need to stay calm.
 What's done is done. We can't
 change what has already happened.
 But right now we need to make a
 plan to get out of this. That girl
 needs medical help. If she doesn't
 get any she might die. I know
 you're upset, Steph, but I need you
 calm right now so we can sort this
 out.

Now... What do we have? Phones
 don't seem to work. We have no
 radio.

(to the driver)

When was the last car you saw?

DRIVER

About a half hour ago... Something
 like that.

JIM

Okay. So that's about... Twenty
 miles.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Jesus. That'll take all day to
 walk.

STEPH

And she'll likely die on a trip
 that long.

JIM

No, only one of us goes and gets
 help. If we keep her still and give
 her plenty of liquids she should
 survive long enough till we get
 rescued. One of us will hike back
 and find some sort of civilization,
 call for help and send an
 ambulance.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

And who's gonna take a walk in this
 heat?

DRIVER

I'll go.

STEPH

Oh, no, no, no... I'm not putting

(MORE)

STEPH (CONT'D)

my trust in this piece of shit
again-

JIM

Steph! This is his chance to redeem
himself. He knows that if he
doesn't get help, then she might
die. I don't think he wants that on
his conscience.
Do you...

Jim looks at the tatty name-badge sewn into the breast of
the bus driver's shirt.

JIM

...Charles...?

CHARLES

N-no.

JIM

Good. Is there anybody opposed to
this idea?

Everyone looks down or away. Steph doesn't say anything, but
she's trying hard not to.

JIM

Then we're settled. Let's get you
ready, then.

Jim leads Charles to the steps of the bus and turns to face
the crowd of people.

JIM

Everybody!
We need to ration liquids and any
food that we have. Empty your bags
and suitcases and lay anything you
have out. If we're gonna be here
for any length of time then we
better see what we have to survive.

Jim takes Charles inside.

People start unloading their bags from the baggage
compartment.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Jim enters the bus with Charles. Still sitting in the front

seats are the old woman and the young girl.

OLD WOMAN

A fine mess you've got us into.

CHARLES

I'm sorry.

The old woman shakes her head and tuts.

OLD WOMAN

Sorry won't make this right.

JIM

Jesus, Lady. He said he was sorry.

OLD WOMAN

Don't sass me, Boy. And watch your blasphemy.

JIM

Whatever.

Charles removes his jacket and ties it around his waist. He grabs the keys, his wallet, his cap and a half drunk bottle of soda.

He turns to face Jim.

CHARLES

All set.

JIM

Do you have a notepad?

CHARLES

What for?

JIM

So you can make a map of the direction you take so you can make your way back.

CHARLES

Oh, yeah.

Charles turns around and searches for a notepad and pen.

JIM

Do you have a spare set of keys?

CHARLES

No. Should I leave them?

JIM

Yeah, I think you should. Just in case we need to lock the doors.

CHARLES

Do you think it was my fault?

JIM

I think... If you don't want these people to sue -- or lynch you -- then you better find help fast. Now, come on. Time's a wasting. It'll be dark in four or five hours.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Jim and Charles exit the bus.

On the ground there are bags that have been opened and contents are being removed.

Jim grabs a packet of sweets and a bottle of water, and gives them to Charles.

JIM

Now... Charles here is going to get help. It shouldn't take more than a few hours to flag down a passing car and get a lift and call for someone to come and fetch us. All this needs to be rationed carefully among us until someone comes.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

If someone comes.

JIM

When! Charles isn't gonna let us down. There are lives at stake here.

The guy sticks his head out of the bus window.

GUY

If no one shows up by morning... I'm coming to get you, Charlie. If Barbara dies... I'm coming to get you.

JIM
Charles won't let us down.

GUY
You better hope he does.

Charles looks around at all the people staring at him. He swallows hard.

JIM
Now go.

Charles walks in the direction they came. Everyone is silent as they watch him leave. When he gets twenty feet away he turns to look over his shoulder; everyone is still watching him. He turns and quickens his pace.

Jim turns to the people there.

JIM
Okay, who wants to be in charge of the food?

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - LATER

Charles is walking under the baking sun. He is sweating profusely. He has unbuttoned his shirt and has it draped over his head.

He hasn't seen any cars yet.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - THAT MOMENT

Jim goes to the back of the bus where the guy is sitting next to Barbara. She is moaning softly, a pained expression on her face.

Steph is trying to get her to drink some water. She holds her head, but a lot of the water spills back out of her mouth.

Steph turns to see Jim behind her. She stands. Jim leads her away a bit.

JIM
How's she doing?

STEPH
Not good. The wounds are tied off,
but they won't stop bleeding. She's
(MORE)

STEPH (CONT'D)

lost a lot of blood and the shock
isn't helping either.

JIM

Okay. Let me know if things get
worse.

Steph nods but she is unsure.

Jim looks over at the guy. He's holding her head and dabbing
her forehead with a towel.

JIM

How's he holding up?

STEPH

He'll be fine. As long as we get
rescued... And fast.

JIM

It'll be okay.

Steph turns to him. She shrugs.

STEPH

Yeah. I'm sure it will.

Then there is a commotion coming from outside the bus. Jim
looks out the window and sees Crucifix holding the young
black guy and the middle-aged man apart. They are arguing.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

I saw him. Check his pockets. Just
check his pockets.

Jim steps off the bus and goes over to them.

JIM

What's going on here?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

I saw him take a chocolate bar.

JIM

All right, all right. Calm down.
(to the black guy)
Did you take a chocolate bar?

The young black guy shakes his head.

JIM
 (to Crucifix)
 Did you see anything?

CRUCIFIX
 No. I just stumbled onto these two
 at each other's throats.

JIM
 (to middle-aged man)
 What did you see?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
 I was over there, rationing off the
 water into those bottles, when I
 saw him take one of the chocolate
 bars.

JIM
 Where did he put it?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
 What...?

JIM
 Where did he put it?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
 I don't know. One of his pockets.

JIM
 Which one?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
 One of them. Check them all.

Jim turns to the young black guy.

JIM
 Would you mind if I checked your
 pockets?

The young black guy shakes his head, no.

JIM
 (to middle-aged man)
 If I don't find anything you're
 gonna have to apologise to...
 (to black guy)
 What's your name?

The young black guy pulls out a brightly coloured notepad.
 It's got his name on the front. Jim reads it.

BEN

JIM

Ben.

The young black guy nods his head. The Middle-aged man begins to look worried.

Jim starts patting Ben down, checking his pockets. He finds a swiss army knife, some change, but ticket, a pen and some ID.

Jim turns to the middle-aged man.

JIM

That's it.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Bullshit. Where did you stash it,
you little shit?
In your shoe, up your ass...?!

JIM

Hey. He hasn't got it. Now you need
to apologise.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

(to Jim)

I ain't apologising. He's hiding it
somewhere, the little fuck.

(to Ben)

Where did you hide it?

JIM

Mister... If you don't calm down
right now I'll have to make you
calm down.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

You're all the same. Got each
other's backs and sucking each
other's dicks. I'll show you. I'll
find out where he's hiding it and
I'll show you.

He turns away and steps back onto the bus.

JIM

Jesus. What the fuck brought that
on?

CRUCIFIX

The man is clearly under a lot of
(MORE)

CRUCIFIX (CONT'D)

pressure. I don't think Jesus would find it very comfortable in his heart.

JIM

So... Ben. Can you not talk?

Ben shakes his head.

JIM

Are you deaf as well?

Ben shakes his head.

JIM

Okay. Do you want to be in charge of the food and drink rationing?

He nods his head slowly. He looks in the direction of the middle-aged man.

JIM

It's okay. He'll calm down.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - LATER

All Charles can see ahead of him is a long empty road. His pace has slowed but he is still moving.

Then, on the horizon, he sees an approaching car. He picks up his pace, shambling in a half-jog.

The engine sound gets louder as the car gets closer.

When the car is moments away Charles begins to flap his arms.

The car doesn't slow down. It's as if the driver hasn't seen him yet. Charles flaps wildly, shouting.

CHARLES

Hey! Stop! We need help!

The car swerves slightly to avoid Charles. It speeds past him leaving a cloud of dust. Charles glimpses a determined, mean looking Mexican man behind the wheel.

Charles stops, his hands on his knees as he catches his breath.

INT. MEXICAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The Mexican looks at Charles in his rear-view mirror. His eyes go back to the road and he speeds up.

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Charles stands up, staring after the car for a few moments.

He decides that the Mexican will find the bus, and he will either stop or carry on, so Charles continues to walk in the direction he was going.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS - THAT MOMENT

Jim is standing in the bus doorway. Everyone is gathered around, either in the bus or next to it.

JIM

Okay, everyone!
I need volunteers to collect
firewood. It's going to be dark
soon and we need to get a fire
going to generate some smoke so
anyone passing will see us. We need
lots, so able-bodied people.
I elect myself.

CRUCIFIX

I'll go with you. Help pass the
time.

The young girl turns to the old woman.

YOUNG GIRL

Can I go?

OLD WOMAN

I will not let you go into the dark
woods with two men. This is highly
improper of a young lady.

YOUNG GIRL

But if it will help us get rescued
sooner-

OLD WOMAN

My dear... You don't know them.
They could be psychopaths... Or

(MORE)

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
psychotic murderers.

CRUCIFIX
Hey! I take offence to that.

The old woman turns sternly toward Crucifix.

OLD WOMAN
You! You stay out of this. You're all alike. With your penises and violent videogames.

YOUNG GIRL
Do you know what, Grandma... Your son would be disgusted by the way you treat me.

OLD WOMAN
Mary-Anne?!

MARY-ANNE
He would be mortified that you're sending me to a convent school because I'm such an embarrassment to you.

OLD WOMAN
Now you listen here-

MARY-ANNE
No. You listen... We could die out here. Dead. Like your son. Did you picture his pasty face when they lowered him in the dirt? We could end up like that if we don't help ourselves get out of this.

OLD WOMAN
Mary-Anne! You stop this right n-

MARY-ANNE
My mother hated you. I hate you. I bet your son hated you too. He was just too scared of disappointing you.

OLD WOMAN
Do what you like, then. See if I care what happens to you.

MARY-ANNE
I will. And when we get out of this things are gonna change.

Mary-Anne stands her ground. Reluctantly the old woman turns and climbs the steps of the bus. She takes her seat at the front of the bus and doesn't look at Mary-Anne.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - LATER

Jim, Mary-Anne and Crucifix are trundling through the woods looking for firewood. Mary-Anne is ahead of them, determined to show up her grandmother.

CRUCIFIX

What do you think our chances are,
Jimmy?

JIM

I just don't know. I haven't heard
a car for most of the afternoon, so
I don't know where we are.
Charles hasn't come back so we must
be a long way off course.

CRUCIFIX

He'll do right by us. He may be
scared but the fear of damnation is
worse.

Mary-Anne comes running up to them with a collection of twigs.

MARY-ANNE

Any of these any good?

JIM

Let's see here...

Jim pulls some out of Mary-Anne's hands.

JIM

This one's no good. Still moist.
This might do, though. Is there
more of this?

MARY-ANNE

Yeah. There's a fallen down tree
over there.

CRUCIFIX

Well, let's grab us a bunch and
light us a fire.

They walk in the direction Mary-Anne came from.

CRUCIFIX
Mary-Anne, right?

MARY-ANNE
Yeah.

CRUCIFIX
I know it's none of my business,
but that old lady sure knos how to
push buttons.

MARY-ANNE
Yeah. That's my Grandma. She was
better when I was younger, but
since my parents split up she's
been a bitch to me. I'm just a
disappointment to her 'cause I'm so
much like my mother.

CRUCIFIX
Now, I'm sure she loves you in her
own way.

MARY-ANNE
You don't know my Grandma.

CRUCIFIX
I know people. All they need is
time and patience. And Jesus in
their hearts.

MARY-ANNE
I think Jesus has taken up enough
space in her heart for anyone else
to find a seat.

They arrive at the fallen down tree that Mary-Anne found. It
looks dark and ominous. Branches reach out in all directions
like groping hands. Through the middle there is a dark hole;
anything could be lurking in there.

Jim shivers.

JIM
Alright. Let's try and cut off as
many of these as we can carry and
get back.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS - THAT MOMENT

Ben is rationing off the food and water and making notes of

how much they have and how much to share out.

Then he hears a car approaching. He looks in the distance and sees a dirt cloud being kicked up by a car.

He runs into the bus.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Ben gets Steph's attention.

STEPH
What is it?

Ben makes an impression of holding a steering wheel and points up the road.

Steph looks out the window and sees the approaching car.

STEPH
Oh, my god. There's a car coming!

Everyone rushes over to the window to look. Steph runs down the central aisle and exits the bus.

The middle-aged man looks out the window, a smile on his face. But then his expression changes to fear. He recognises the car.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Everyone is gathering; a welcoming party. Steph stands in front, waiting.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The middle-aged man tries to swallow but his throat has become really dry. Barbara's boyfriend is looking out the window further along the bus. He is relieved.

GUY
Looks like Chucks came through
after all.

The middle-aged man slowly moves away from the window. He grabs his briefcase off the seat and makes his way briskly to the door of the bus.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The middle-aged man sneaks out the door of the bus while everyone is distracted.

He runs into the woods.

Everyone waits patiently, the car now almost there.

The car slows down, but not slow enough to stop. People standing in the road step out of the way. Steph waits till the last minute before moving out of the way.

The car passes them. The old woman shouts. Ben is almost run over.

The car does a 180, throwing dust into the air, and comes to rest a yard in front of the bus.

The Mexican jumps out of the car and goes to the trunk.

Steph runs over to him.

STEPH

Hey, Mister. We got an injured girl here. She needs-

The Mexican opens the trunk and Steph sees a collection of guns in there.

The Mexican removes a shotgun from the trunk and walks in the direction that the middle-aged man went.

OLD WOMAN

What's going on?

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - THAT MOMENT

The middle-aged man is running through thick forest, dodging trees, tripping over branches and getting stuck in mud patches.

Meanwhile, the Mexican is closing in. He cocks a shell into his shotgun's chamber.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS - THAT MOMENT

The guy has exited the bus. He looks in the direction that

the Mexican had gone.

He goes to the Mexican's car.

STEPH
What are you doing?

GUY
I need to get Barbara to a
hospital.

STEPH
You can't just steal the man's car!
He's got a gun!

The guy reaches for the car-door and pulls at the handle. A mist comes out of the door panel and sprays the guy in the eyes.

He screams.

Ben runs over to help. When he steps into the mist his eyes begin to burn so he pulls his shirt over his mouth. He grabs the guy by his collar and drags him back.

Ben gasps for air when they are clear of the car. He shakes his finger at the people standing there and points at the car.

STEPH
Who the fuck is this guy?

From the forest they hear a shotgun blast.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS BEFORE

Jim, Crucifix and Mary-Anne are carrying armfuls of wood.

CRUCIFIX
Which is why I'm on the road. Jesus
came to me in a dream. He said,
"Kyle... leave the sins of your
father, leave this place of wicked
men and spread the word-"

Jim sees something in the distance and Crucifix stops talking when Jim points in that direction.

Hidden among the trees is what looks like an old fort covered in ivy.

Kyle squints his eyes.

KYLE

Looks like a "Dubya-Dubya-Two"
fort.

JIM

Seems a weird place to have
something like that, out here in
the middle of America and out here
in the middle of the woods.

KYLE

Coulda been a stronghold-

Kyle is interrupted by a shotgun blast. All three of them
look in the direction of the bus.

JIM

What the fuck was that?

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The Mexican drags the middle-aged man out of the woods
toward the car.

STEPH

Hey. We got two injured people
here. You can't just leave us.

Steph sees a shotgun blast wound on the middle-aged man's
side. He is still holding onto his briefcase, begging to be
let go but not putting up a fight.

STEPH

Hey!
I'm talking to you.

The Mexican points the gun at the people who are standing
there. Most of them flinch, but Steph holds her ground.

STEPH

You don't scare me.

OLD WOMAN

Don't encourage him. He's a maniac.

The Mexican moves toward his car. Steph steps forward.

MEXICAN

He is all I want. Don't get in my
way.

Steph sees Kyle sneaking out of the woods out of the Mexican's view of sight. Steph keeps the Mexican distracted.

STEPH

Please...
Just call an ambulance. Don't leave
us like this. You can have whatever
you want. Please.

When Kyle is moments away Steph steps up close to the Mexican.

STEPH

You must have some compassion.
Please.

Then Kyle jumps out and hits the Mexican across the back of his head and knocks him out.

The Mexican drops to the ground.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS - LATER-DUSK

The Mexican is tied up to the side of the bus with fabric bonds. Mary-Anne is tying off the last one.

Jim, Kyle and Ben are trying to break into the car but it is booby-trapped.

Kyle attempts something and a burst of flames comes out of the door panel nearly setting them all on fire.

STEPH

Careful, Jim.

JIM

This isn't working.

MARY-ANNE

I found a phone.

They run over to her. She opens the phone and tries to dial an emergency number but the phone won't accept numbers. She then opens the contact list and there is only one number listed there.

Mary-Anne presses the call button...

After a few rings a voice answers.

FAT MAN

Is it done?

MARY-ANNE
Hello? We need help.

FAT MAN
Who is this?

MARY-ANNE
We're stranded on the side of the
road in the middle of nowhere.
You're friend-

FAT MAN
Where's the Mexican?

Mary-Anne looks scared.

Jim takes the phone off of her.

JIM
Hello. Who am I speaking to?

FAT MAN
Never you mind, Son. What have you
done with the Mexican? Where's
Clarke?

JIM
Sir. We have your Mexican friend
here.

FAT MAN
Put him on the phone.

JIM
He's... Not available to talk right
now.

FAT MAN
Listen here, you little shit. Do
you know who you're messing with?

JIM
Sir. I don't know who you are, and
frankly I don't care. We have a
seriously injured girl here. We
have very little food and water,
and it would be really helpful if
you could call an ambulance. Or
mountain rescue or something.
Please, we don't care what you
want. You can have whatever you
want, just, please, help us.

Moments pass where Jim waits for a reply. Jim can hear the Fat Man sucking things through his teeth, thinking.

FAT MAN
Is Clarke there? The squirrely guy
with a briefcase?

JIM
Yeah. He's been shot, but he's
conscious.

FAT MAN
Put him on.

Jim hands Clarke the phone.

JIM
He wants to talk to you.

Clarke shakes his head violently.

Jim pushes the phone at him.

JIM
You are gonna ask him for help. And
you're gonna do whatever he says.
No one here cares what you did.
Right now you're gonna do the right
thing and the right thing is by us,
not yourself.

He nods and reluctantly takes the phone.

CLARKE
Hello...? Yes... I know... But-...
Yes, Sir...

Kyle pulls Jim aside and whispers to him.

KYLE
What do we do if they don't help
us? What do we do if they leave us
out here?

JIM
We keep trying to get into the car,
I guess.

EXT. BUS - LATER

The blue in the sky slowly turns orange as the sun

disappears behind the horizon.

Everyone is gathered outside. Jim is giving a speech.

JIM

Okay. So Clarke has spoken to his boss who is sending someone out to help us. But they probably won't be here until tomorrow.

GUY

Jesus Christ.
What about Barbara?

JIM

We'll just have to keep her comfortable till this guy gets here.
The main concern now is food and water. We have some, but not a lot. We could try and hunt something to cook for tonight, but it's gonna be dark soon. Does anybody have any experience at hunting? We have the shotgun and a pistol.

Ben raises his hand and steps forward. He pulls out his notepad and writes something down.

He hands his notepad to Jim.

JIM

Ben here has volunteered himself to try and catch something. I want somebody to go with him.

Ben waves and shakes his head "no".

JIM

Okay. Ben will go on his own. Kyle and I will build a fire. Maybe someone will see the smoke or flames.
Any questions?

OLD WOMAN

(pointing at the Mexican)
What happens when he wakes up?

JIM

We'll ask him how to get into the car so we can get out of here.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - THAT MOMENT

Charles is sitting at the side of the road smoking a cigarette. It is beginning to get cold now and Charles has put his shirt back on.

In the distance Charles sees where the woods end and past that he sees car lights crossing the horizon. He laughs to himself, relieved. He stands up and continues to walk.

After a few steps he hears a loud HOOT!

He turns, startled. The sound was familiar, but there was something sinister in it.

He begins walking a bit faster.

There is another HOOT! Louder this time.

He looks into the blackness of the woods and sees something flutter.

Charles begins to walk faster.

There is another HOOT!

Charles breaks into a run.

He is almost at the edge of the woods.

He trips and falls.

There is a fluttering of wings, a beak, teeth, blood and then screaming.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS - NIGHT

Jim, Steph, Kyle, Mary-Anne and the old woman are sitting around the large campfire that Jim and Kyle have built.

Jim is picking away at his guitar, not really playing anything.

KYLE

Play us a tune there, Son.
Something cheery.

Jim strums a few chords, deciding what to play.

He begins playing something that everybody recognises.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Inside the bus there is Clarke lying on his side across a few seats. In the back is the guy and Barbara. Barbara is moaning softly.

Clarke is becoming agitated by the disturbance.

CLARKE

Can you please shut her up.

GUY

Fuck you, Man. She's dying.

CLARKE

Yeah, well, I've got holes in me and they're starting to itch.

GUY

Go scratch 'em outside.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The mood is a little bit better. Jim's song has made everyone forget about things for the moment.

Then there is a loud HOOT!

Jim stops playing. Everyone turns to look in the direction the noise came from. The flames from the fire make the shadows dance in the trees. Everyone stares intently into the darkness.

MEXICAN

Diablo, Buho.

The old woman, startled, lets out a strangled scream.

Mary-Anne puts her hand on the old woman's shoulder.

MARY-ANNE

Hush.

MEXICAN

They is the Night Demons. This place is Evil. I have heard stories.

OLD WOMAN

What are you talking about? It was
(MORE)

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)

just an owl... Wasn't it?

KYLE

Ain't no owl I ever heard. That sounded angry.

MEXICAN

They are hungry. They can smell the blood. See your heartbeat through the darkness. Sense your fear.

Everyone looks around at each other uncomfortably.

OLD WOMAN

Stop it. Stop it right now, prisoner. You should be ashamed of yourself trying to scare these people when they're already scared.

MARY-ANNE

Hush, Grandma. I wanna hear this.

MEXICAN

When I was Pito... My momma tell me stories of Diablo Buho. They wait for night. Always listening for prey. When they come they come quick. But they feed on the fear first. Right now they watch, wait, make scared... So when they kill us... It taste better.

Kyle looks at Jim, confused.

KYLE

I'm sorry... what?

MEXICAN

De Owls!

From the forest comes another loud HOOT!

They all look in that direction. They see nothing for a few moments...

Then a huge Owl flies out of the trees. It's wingspan is up to two meters long, its body the size of a cocker-spaniel, it has black feathers and large red eyes.

Steph grabs the gun that is lying on the ground beside her and Jim. She fires every round but none of the bullets hit.

The Owl swoops down and grabs the old woman by her shoulders

with its huge black talons. The old woman screams.

Jim is holding his guitar like a bat, ready to swing if it comes close to him.

Mary-Anne is stood inches away from the old woman, unable to move, just staring, uncomprehending, wide-eyed.

The Owl drags the old woman across the fire and into the trees on the other side.

For a moment everyone doesn't move, then everyone is running in all directions, confused, scared.

Jim drops his guitar and runs for the bus. He grabs Mary-Anne who is still unable to move.

JIM

Come on. There's nothing you can do
for her now.
Everyone! Onto the bus!

Everybody heads for the bus.

The Mexican struggles with his bonds; everyone runs past him, ignoring his pleas.

MEXICAN

Untie me. Do not leave me here.

People file onto the bus quickly.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Clarke and the guy at the back are sitting up, fear and concern on their faces.

CLARKE

What was that thing?

JIM

Is everybody here?

Kyle is the last person to enter the bus; he closes the door behind him.

Everyone looks around, counting heads. Mary-Anne is in shock, her grandmother's blood splashed on her.

MARY-ANNE

What about the Mexican?

Everyone rushes to the windows on that side of the bus and look out to see the Mexican struggling with his bonds.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

MEXICAN

Putá.

The Mexican relaxes and manoeuvres his body, twisting it into a foetal position. His tied hands reach back for his ankle. He reaches into his boot and pulls out an all-purpose-knife.

He quickly cuts through his bonds.

Once freed, he quickly and quietly creeps toward his car.

Everyone watches from the windows of the bus.

The Mexican hears a flutter of feathers and the sound of bones breaking. He stops, listening, waiting...

He slowly creeps on.

When he's at his car he opens the trunk.

Then an Owl comes out of nowhere, bearing down on the Mexican.

MARY-ANNE

Lookout!

The Mexican faces the Owl, unable to move, it's so quick he barely has time to react.

The Mexican stares it down as it approaches...

BANG!

The Owl is hit square on its side by a shotgun blast. It bounds off into a bush.

Ben comes running out of the tree-line, dropping his catch of rabbits and small birds. He cocks a smoking shell out of the chamber and loads another.

The Mexican turns to look at Ben, relief on his face.

The Mexican's expression changes to fear as Ben raises the gun and points it in the Mexican's direction.

The Mexican closes his eyes... Ben fires...

BANG!

Behind the Mexican another Owl goes down. The Mexican opens his eyes and realises that he's not been shot. Ben runs toward the Mexican scanning around for more Owls.

The Mexican grabs more guns out of the trunk of his car and then they head for the bus.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Mary-Anne goes to the door with Jim right behind her.

STEPH

Don't let those things in.

Mary-Anne waits until both Ben and the Mexican are at the door before she opens it. They enter the bus, breathing heavily.

Clarke shifts away further back. No one says anything for a few moments as Ben and the Mexican catch their breath.

MEXICAN

We are in lots o trouble, people.

JIM

What are those things?

MEXICAN

Diablo Buho.

KYLE

What is that?

MEXICAN

Devil's of the forest. Demon Owls.

STEPH

I don't understand... How can those be owls. They wer huge, and crazy. Owls don't do that.

MEXICAN

They are not ordinary owls. They are touched by Satan.

STEPH

Where did they come from?

MEXICAN

Nobody knows. One day, years ago...

(MORE)

MEXICAN (CONT'D)

People just disappear. They warn people not to go into the woods. But people are stupid.

STEPH

Will we be safe in here?

MEXICAN

Maybe. IF the windows don't give too easily.

CLARKE

And if they do... Can you stop them?

MEXICAN

I don't know.

GUY

This is all that driver's fault. If he didn't drift off and take us the wrong way then none of this would be happening.

JIM

Charles has apologised for that. And blaming him won't help us n-

Jim realises that Charles is out there.

JIM

Oh, shit. He's out there.

MEXICAN

Then he is probably dead.

GUY

Great. Fucker gets us lost and gets himself dead. What a fuckup.

STEPH

Show some sympathy.

GUY

Sympathy...? For him...? He's the reason we're out here. He's the reason Barbara is dying. He's the reason we're all gonna die out here.

Everyone is looking at the guy as he delivers his rant and during his rant Steph notices the window that was broken. The sheet they put over the window billows in a breeze.

STEPH

That window.

The guy turns and sees the window, the fabric billowing.

Then an Owl comes gliding through the blackness outside toward the window. The guy runs to the window in order to save Barbara from an attack. The guy reaches up and grabs a suitcase, but by the time the guy reaches the window the Owl pushes through and grabs the guy. He gets pulled out of the window. The Owl tries to pull the guy out of the window but he is stuck on the window edge. All the while the Owl is peck at the guys head, breaking through his skull.

Ben opens a window further down. He fires a few rounds at the Owl. It stops pecking at the guy and gives off a screech.

Steph and Kyle pull the guy back into the bus. He falls onto the ground, dead. Blood spurts from clawed-through arteries. The Owl has come in with him; its wings flutter, its body convulsing.

Ben comes and hits the Owl a few times with the butt of the shotgun.

Everyone watches, breathing heavily, unable to look away.

MEXICAN

Somebody... Barricade that window.

Jim and Steph run to the window.

Mary-Anne rises from her seat and stalks closer to the Owl. She grimaces at the look of the Owl. Its face is close to human. Inside its bludgeoned half-open beak Mary-Anne can see human-like teeth and inside its red eye is a human-like blue eye.

Mary-Anne creeps closer, close enough to touch the Owl.

It flinches...

She screams.

FADE TO:

INT. BUS - LATER

Ben watches from the bus's window, watching the fire slowly dying down and the darkness creeping in.

The Mexican is watching out the window on the other side of the bus.

The guys body has been covered up in the back. Everyone is in shock.

STEPH

What do we do?

JIM

I don't know.

STEPH

I mean... Are we safe? Can we wait it out till morning? Will they still be here by morning?

JIM

I just don't know.

KYLE

They only came at us once it got dark. So my reckoning is that they're nocturnal.

JIM

Yeah, but... Will they burn up in sunlight like vampires? C'mon. This is real life. And they're owls. Owls come out in daylight.

STEPH

Those don't look like owls to me. They're monsters. Giant leathery vultures. Did you see their eyes?

KYLE

I know what they are... They're a test. From God.

CLARKE

Here we go.

KYLE

Demons sent to earth to test our faith. Tear us from God's path-

CLARKE

Wooden stakes, silver bullets, mumbo jumbo.

(points at the Owl)

This one's dead and it was killed with regular bullets. So if I'm not

(MORE)

CLARKE (CONT'D)

mistaken, we've got a chance. The cavalry will be here by morning. All we need to do is wait out the night and we'll be picked up in the morning.

MEXICAN

You call the police?

JIM

Your boss. We called him from your phone.

MEXICAN

Ohhh, that's not good.

JIM

It's okay. Clarke spoke to him. They're coming to help us-

MEXICAN

The Fat Man... He doesn't help unless he get something in return.

Everyone looks at Clarke uncomfortably.

JIM

(to Clarke)

What exactly did he say?

CLARKE

He said we should wait. They'll be here by morning.

MEXICAN

The Fat Man don't forgive. I know. When he want someone gone he send me.

CLARKE

Oh, shit.

JIM

Christ. What did you do?

CLARKE

(clutching his briefcase)

Oh, shit. It's nothing-

Barbara begins to choke loudly.

STEPH

Jim. We're losing her.

Jim, Kyle and Mary-Anne rush over to the back of the bus where Steph is kneeling over Barbara. Barbara is bleeding heavily, the colour has drained from her face.

STEPH

I need more water.

JIM

Fuck. It's outside in the baggage compartment.

Steph begins to become hysterical.

STEPH

Shit. What do we do? What do I do?
I don't know what I'm doing. This
is so fucked.

Jim holds her to calm her down.

Kyle kneels down next to Barbara. He crosses his chest and begins reciting the last rights.

Everyone is quiet, looking down or away. The Mexican crosses his heart.

Mary-Anne is crying.

Barbara's breathing slows. It hitches in her throat and her eyes twitch weakly.

Kyle continues with the prayer.

Eventually Barbara dies.

Steph cries into Jim's shoulder.

Everyone is quiet for a few moments.

Then Ben taps on the glass with his gun, breaking the silence. The Mexican runs over the seat to look. There is movement outside; the Owls are swooping down and fighting over the rabbits and small birds that Ben had dropped earlier. Their flapping and fighting is blowing the fire out.

JIM

Are they doing that on purpose?

Ben shrugs.

Kyle covers Barbara with her coat, and crosses his heart. He stands and comes to the window where everyone is watching.

KYLE

What are they doing?

JIM

Making it difficult for us to see out there.

They continue to watch. Steph turns to Kyle.

STEPH

(to Kyle)

That you for that. It was beautiful.

KYLE

She got off easy. We're not out of the worst yet. There are still trials to overcome.

JIM

(to the Mexican)

What weapons do you have in your car?

MARY-ANNE

We can't go out there!

JIM

I don't think we have a choice. If the Owls don't get us, then the Fat Man will. We need to try and make a run for it. If we make it to the car there's enough space for all of us.

MEXICAN

If we leave, the Fat Man will find us.

He looks at Clarke. Everyone follows his gaze...

CLARKE

What.

MEXICAN

You have a tracking machine inside you.

CLARKE

What...?!

MEXICAN

This how I found you.

He feels around his body.

CLARKE
Where inside me?

MEXICAN
Under your skin.

JIM
Oh, my god.

CLARKE
Can we take it out? We can take it
out... Don't leave me. You can turn
it off or something...

The Mexican thinks for a moment, then stands up.

MEXICAN
I'll need some towels.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The Mexican is feeling around under Clark's skin trying to find the tracking device. Clarke is very apprehensive, flinching every few moments.

MEXICAN
Trust me. I used to be a surgeon.

CLARKE
Makes you a more efficient killer,
right?

The Mexican nods his head. He continues to search for a hard lump just underneath the skin. Then he finds it in the middle of Clarke's back, between his shoulder blades.

KYLE
Just out of reach of your itchin'
hand.

CLARKE
Can you get it out?

MEXICAN
Won't be a problem getting it out.
What do we have for stitching?

MARY-ANNE
My grandma has a darning kit in her
(MORE)

MARY-ANNE (CONT'D)

handbag.

Mary-Anne's lip quivers a bit at the end of the sentence.

MEXICAN

That will do.

Mary-Anne turns away to retrieve the darning kit.

MEXICAN

Any alcohol?

Kyle looks sheepish. He pulls a flask out of the inside pocket of his jacket.

KYLE

I have whisky...?

He hands the flask to the Mexican.

MEXICAN

Okay. I also need someone with steady hands and won't pass out.

Mary-Anne returns with the darning kit.

MARY-ANNE

I'll do it.

JIM

Are you sure, Honey?

MARY-ANNE

I just want to help.

MEXICAN

Okay with me.

The Mexican hands the flask to Clarke.

MEXICAN

You want to drink some of this before we start.

Clarke lifts the flask and drinks, a grimace on his face.

The Mexican pulls out his utility knife.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Clarke is being operated on on one side of the bus. He struggles, moaning and taking sharp intakes of air between

gritted teeth.

Jim is talking to Ben on the other side of the bus.

JIM

What do you think our chances are?

Ben shrugs, then lifts his hands and closes his thumb and fingers into a circle. Nil.

Jim just nods solemnly.

JIM

Where did you learn to shoot? Your dad?

Ben nods reluctantly, then shrugs.

JIM

Well, I'm glad someone on this bus knows how to handle a gun. I'd probably shoot myself.

Ben hand the gun to Jim. He shows Jim how to hold it by lacing Jim's hands in the correct positions on the barrell and the stock.

JIM

Is the safety on?

Ben nods. He pulls out his notepad and writes something down. Jim looks down the barrel out the window and finds a target.

Ben shows Jim the notepad:

"Squeeze, don't pull the trigger."

Jim looks out the window, sees some movement in a tree far away. He breathes slowly, slowly increasing pressure on the trigger.

Then he makes an explosion noise under his breath.

MEXICAN

Got it!

Jim and Ben look around to see the Mexican lift a little device up and into the air. It's the size of a tube of lipstick.

Everyone comes over to look at it.

KYLE

Ain't never gonna forget this trip.

The Mexican pours whisky over the open wound on Clarke's back and he gives off a piercing scream.

INT. BUS - LATER

Clarke is now fixed up. Everyone is sitting close to the front of the bus. Jim stands in front of them.

JIM

Alright. This is the plan. Me, Kyle and Jesus will go out to the car, grab more weapons, then Jesus will drive the car to the bus doorway. Everyone files in, then we get the hell out of Dodge. Questions?

Ben signs that he would like to volunteer for the mission.

JIM

No. You're gonna stay here and protect the bus. If we don't make it, then this is the Alamo.

STEPH

I don't like that analogy. It's too... Final.

JIM

It's the Alamo or the Eagle's Nest. Take your pick. I'm not gonna sugar-coat this. We might not survive the night. There's a slim chance we might, but I've made my peace in the event that we all die here. But I'd rather die fighting. We have two excellent shooters, a practical and plausible means of escape, a man of God to show us the way... And Jesus himself, if even that's not enough.

KYLE

That's blasphemous, but I like your spirit.

JIM

Now, we're gonna have to work together here. Get each other's backs. If anyone doesn't feel they have the beans to go all the way, then speak now.

Everyone looks around the bus at each other. Clarke is pale and sweating, but focused; he is playing with the tracking device in his hands. Ben, Jesus, Kyle and Mary-Anne look ready and pumped. Steph looks concerned.

JIM

Once we start there's no going back. Everybody in?

Jim hovers his hand in the centre of everyone. Ben puts his hand on top of Jim's. Then Mary-Anne puts her hand on top of Ben's. Jesus puts his hand on top of Mary-Anne's.

They all look at Clarke. He slowly puts a shaky hand on top of Jesus' hand.

JIM

No backing out.

CLARKE

We've come this far.

Everyone looks at Steph. She looks very concerned.

STEPH

What if this doesn't work?

JIM

The only alternative is waiting for the Fat Man to pick you up in the morning. Supposing he comes at all. And supposing he lets you go.

She looks green. She turns her head, sees the two bodies at the back of the bus hidden under a thin blanket. She swallows hard, then puts her hand on the pile.

Kyle immediately puts his hand on top of everyone's and begins praying.

KYLE

Our Father, who art in Heaven, H-

CLARKE

What are you doing?

KYLE
It's the Lord's Prayer.

Clarke looks around at everyone's serious faces.

JIM
Can't hurt.

Kyle continues with the prayer.

KYLE
Our Father, who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name...

EXT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

All three men stalk out of the bus, trying to keep quiet. They jump at every noise, training their guns in all directions, ready for anything.

There is a rustling coming from their left... An Owl comes swooping out!

All the men fire, standing in a line, facing the Owl.

Ben fires from the window of the bus.

The Owl avoids all fire and swoops down and catches Kyle in the neck. He falls back onto the ground. He reaches for his neck, blood pools around his hand.

The Owl disappears back into the darkness.

Jim swings his gun around his shoulder and kneels down next to Kyle.

JIM
(to Jesus)
Help me get him to the car.

Jesus grabs Kyle by the shoulders and drags him to the car.

KYLE
Leave me...

JIM
We're not leaving anyone.

Jesus drops him when they get to the car. He turns and opens the rear door.

JESUS
Put him in.

JIM
Where are you going?

JESUS
Get more guns.

Jesus goes to the trunk of the car and opens it.

Jim puts Kyle into the backseat of the car.

When he turns, Jesus is standing by the trunk of the car, laden with weapons. Big guns, flamethrower, a machete strapped to his leg...

JESUS
(to Jim)
Take these people out of here.

Jesus turns around, looking into the trees...

JESUS
(shouting in Spanish)
Vengan pos ustedes, los buhos
muertos perra!

Jim watches Jesus for a few moments, mesmerised. Then he snaps out of it and closes the door behind Kyle. Jim jumps into the driver's seat, closes the door and revs the engine. He pulls away.

Jesus approaches the wall of trees, shouting profanities. Then an Owl comes through the foliage; it's headed straight for Jesus.

He pulls a trigger and a tongue of flame leaps out of the flamethrower, dousing the Owl in fire. It hurtles toward Jesus, like a bat-out-of-hell. He fires from the gun in his other hand, a semi-automatic rifle. Bullets pummel the Owl until it loses momentum and lands at Jesus' feet, dead.

There is a shout from the bus as Clarke, Steph and Mary-Anne applaud. Ben pumps his fists into the air, a massive grin on his face.

But before Jesus can get too excited another Owl comes out of the trees. This one is quicker; it flies out and heads straight for Jesus. He raises the flamethrower and a flame spews out of it in the direction of the Owl...

But this Owl banks lefts and narrowly misses being burned.

Jesus spins, following the Owl, the flamethrower still triggered. An arc of flame swoops across the tree line and sets some of them on fire.

Jim is at the bus now. He pulls up just next to the door. He jumps out and runs around to the bus door and pries it open.

Everyone files toward the door. Ben stays sentry at the window, his gun trained.

Jesus is firing randomly at any movement he sees.

JESUS

Put a Buho!

He spews an arc of flame toward the treeline, blanketing the whole area with fire.

Steph, Mary-Anne and Clarke file out of the bus and climb into the car. Mary-Anne climbs in first, taking the backseat by the window. Kyle is lying down in the footwell in the backseat. Clarke climbs in behind her after Mary-Anne, still clutching his briefcase.

Steph makes her way to the passenger side door.

JIM

Come on, Ben.

Ben retracts his gun from the window and makes his way down the length of the bus to the door.

JIM

Jesus! We're ready to go.

Still firing, Jesus walks backwards.

Then, an Owl comes swooping out of the treeline to Jesus' left. Jim sees it but Jesus doesn't.

JIM

Jesus! On your left!

Jesus turns in slow motion. The fire doesn't move quick enough. The Owl bears down on him, close now...

Glass breaks behind Jim's head; Ben breaks through the bus window with the barrel of his gun. He fires, round after round, but the Owl is too quick for him.

The Owl hits Jesus in the side of the head. He goes down. The Owl disappears in the line of trees.

Mary-Anne, her face squashed against the car window,

screams...

MARY-ANNE

Noooo...!

Mary-anne opens the car door and runs to Jesus.

Steph tries to grab Mary-Anne as she runs past.

STEPH

Mary-Anne! No!

But she's already gone. Clarke quickly closes the car door behind her.

CLARKE

What are we waiting for?

Nobody answers him.

Mary-Anne kneels down next to Jesus. He's knocked out. She cradles his head, slapping his face.

MARY-ANNE

Wake up, wake up...

Then, an Owl comes out of the trees, flying low to the ground. Mary-Anne hears it.

(Epic slowmo hero shot) she grabs the semi-automatic lying next to Jesus. She spins around with it, cocks it, and begins spraying bullets at the Owl. It tries to dodge but Mary-Anne is a sure shot and follows it close.

MARY-ANNE

Fucker!

Bullets rip through its feathers and down to its flesh making its face a pulpy mess.

Finally, the Owl falls to the ground in front of Mary-Anne, lifeless.

She looks down and sees that Jesus has come to and is looking the dead Owl in its pulpy mess of a face. He turns to look at Mary-Anne.

JESUS

Dios mio!

Ben comes running down the length of the bus to the door. As he steps out to get into the car, an Owl comes swooping down and grabs him by his shoulder and carries him off into the trees.

Jim jumps out of the car but the only thing he can do is watch as the Owl drags Ben off.

JIM
Ben!! Fuck!

STEPH
Come on, Jim. We can't help him now.

Clarke, anxious to leave, jumps into the drivers seat. It takes him a moment to reconsider what he's doing... Then he shuts the door behind Jim and locks the doors.

Jim turns around.

JIM
Clarke. What are you doing? Open the door.

Clarke revs the engine, struggles with the clutch and gearstick.

JIM
Clarke. You can't leave us here.

Clarke doesn't look at Jim or Steph, just begins moving the car forwards.

STEPH
Clarke, you asshoole. Open the goddamn doors.

They run alongside the car, banging on the windows.

CLARKE
(to himself)
Getting the fuck out of here.

He speeds off and drives down the road back the way they came, the headlights of the car disappearing into the darkness.

Steph begins to cry, her eyes welling up and her lips quivering.

Jesus and Mary-Anne arrive back, Mary-Anne helping Jesus to walk.

MARY-ANNE
What the fuck. What about us?

STEPH
That f-fucking Clarke.

JIM
Everyone... Back on the bus.

Jim stands guard, keeping an eye out. Everyone files back into the bus, disheartened.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Jim enters the bus last and closes the door behind himself.

STEPH
Alright. What now?

Jim doesn't say anything, just stares at nothing, thinking.

STEPH
Come on.

JIM
I don't know.

STEPH
Well, think of something!

JIM
I don't know!
That was the only idea I had.

MARY-ANNE
We could stay here till morning.
We'll just tell the Fat Man that
Clarke fucked off with the car.

JESUS
I don't think it's that easy. I
don't think we'll last till
morning.

Mary-Anne follows his gaze... Inside the treeline there are about 40 pairs of red eyes watching them. They blink in and out.

STEPH
Fuck.

JESUS
We need to move. Find another place
to stay will morning. Somewhere
(MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

safe. Strong.

Jim has a thought, his eyes become wide.

STEPH

We're out in the middle of nowhere.
Where do you intend us to go?!

JESUS

If we stay, we are dead.

STEPH

And if we go out there, we are
dead.

JIM

(interrupting)

When Kyle, Mary-Anne and I were out
there collecting wood we saw an old
fort in a clearing about two miles
from here.

STEPH

Great. Only two miles...?! We'll
just hitch a taxi shall we...?!

JIM

Shit.

Jesus looks around at the bus controls.

JESUS

We will use the bus.

STEPH

The bus is fucked.

JESUS

She will still drive. It is only
the wheel that is flat. It will be
bumpy, but we can use her to find
this place.

Steph looks at Jesus unbelievably, then she turns to Jim
for his opinion.

STEPH

Jim?

JIM

I think it'll work. I can't think
of anything else.

CUT TO:

EXT. JESUS' CAR - THAT MOMENT

Clarke is driving quite erratically, swerving this way and that down the dirt road. His excitement is obvious.

He has the tracker in his hand. He considers keeping it for a moment, then opens the window and throws the tracker out and into the darkness instead.

CLARKE

Whoo-hoo...

In the back seat Kyle is woken up. He looks around groggily, being thrown around. He looks around but doesn't see anyone except the back of Clarke's head.

KYLE

What's going on?

Clarke is startled. He spins around with frightened wide eyes.

CLARKE

What the fu-

Kyle looks past Clarke out the windshield and sees a line of trees that they are headed straight for.

KYLE

Look out!

Clarke turns just in time to see the trees before they hit them.

The car gets swallowed by the thick brush and hits one of the trees head-on. Clarke isn't wearing a seatbelt and is thrown from the car, forcing the windshield out and hitting the tree himself. His head is ripped from his body.

Kyle is thrown around but gets stuck in the gap by the footwell in the back.

All is still for a while, the only sound is the ticking of the cooling engine and a hiss of steam.

Then there is a sound in the distance, HOOT!

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - THAT MOMENT

Jesus is behind the wheel of the idling bus, Mary-Anne is

keeping watch on one side, Jim is keeping watch on the other side and Steph is down the front next to Jesus. Each are carrying guns.

Jesus revs the engine a few times.

JESUS
We are ready?

He looks around. No one speaks but each of them nod their heads when he looks at them.

He turns to face the front.

JESUS
Santa Maria.

The bus begins to jerk as it pulls itself out of the ground. With the flat tire it shifts dramatically each way, swaying wildly.

Jim, Steph and Mary-Anne are thrown around, steadying themselves by holding onto whatever is nearby.

Jesus gets the bus facing the right direction and they ride becomes smoother. Everyone is relieved, but their fear keeps them focussed.

Steph looks out the front windscreen and sees hundreds of eyes reflecting the bus's headlights back at them. She looks worried.

CUT TO:

EXT. KYLE AT THE CRASH-SIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Kyle comes to. He grabs the back of the seat in front of him and pulls himself up. The bleeding on his neck has slowed and coagulated into a grotesque mess.

He is mumbling Psalms under his breath.

KYLE
...He leads me beside quiet
waters...

He tries the door... It's jammed shut.

He tries the other side... It won't budge.

He looks out at the body of Clarke. He realises he has to climb out the windshield and climb over Clarke's headless corpse.

He creeps slowly over the seats, careful where he places his feet.

KYLE

In the Lord put I my trust. How say
ye to my soul. Flee as a bird to
Your mountain.

Kyle can hear a sound as he gets closer to the opening. It's a grating sound like a dog gnawing a bone, followed by a squelchy sound.

He peers past Clarke's body... The headlight illuminate the verge and far down the slope Kyle can see an Owl playing with something. It dances around this object, making a yipping sound and its wings flapping sporadically.

Kyle realises what the Owl is playing with and a retch bubbles up from his stomach and burns his throat. He tries to keep quiet but the burp comes out of his mouth and he emits an uncontrollable sound.

The Owl stops playing with Clarke's head and looks up at Kyle.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - THAT MOMENT

Jesus, Jim, Steph and Mary-Anne continue their journey to the Fort.

An Owl comes out of the darkness on the right side and Jim fires his gun at it. It backs off and swoops back into the darkness.

JIM

Can you see it yet?

STEPH

Not yet. How far was it?

JIM

Just keep your eyes open. We must
be coming up on it soon-

Steph points excitedly.

STEPH

There it is.

Everyone looks out the windscreen and they see the brick structure in the bus's headlights.

They all cheer and sigh with relief.

Nobody notices the three Owls making their way through the darkness on the left hand side...

They hit the side of the bus with such force that, with the bus being lopsided already, it topples and falls onto its side.

Mary-Anne, Steph and Jim go sprawling. Jesus gets thrown sideways and cracks his head on the window.

Nobody moves for a few moments.

The sound of wings flapping increases outside the bus as the Owls circle and fill the night sky, hungry for blood.

After the dust has settled, Jim rises groggily. He looks around, momentarily forgetting where he is. Steph is lying on her side three seats away from him; her eyes are open. She watches Jim, her expression confused and scared. She doesn't move.

JIM

Are you okay?

Jim's voice is far away, even to him.

Steph just stares at him, frozen.

Jim looks around and sees his gun lying on the ground. He grabs it and makes his way to the front of the bus.

JIM

Where's Mary-Anne?

Steph's mouth moves but no words come out.

JIM

We need to move, Steph. Come on.

Jim hooks his arm under Steph and pulls her up. She is in shock.

JIM

Where's your gun?

He looks around, still holding onto Steph so she doesn't fall over.

Steph notices something moving at the back of the bus. It's an Owl pushing its way through an open window. She lets out a scream.

Jim is disoriented. He fumbles with his gun, but drops it. The Owl takes a moment to look at them, then makes a screech. it pushes itself into the bus and begins to close in on Steph and Jim.

Steph continues to scream, unable to move. Jim struggles to pick up the gun.

The Owl lets off another screech and prepares to leap...

Then there is a blast at the side of Jim's head.

BOOM!

Jim instinctively flinches and pushes Steph out of the way, covering her.

The Owl is stunned, taking the hit to its front.

Mary-Anne steps out from one of the seats, her shotgun raised, and fires again.

The Owl takes another hit.

She fires again.

The Owl lets off a bubbly growl and shrinks back.

Mary-Anne keeps firing until it doesn't move.

Jim looks up at her; she has a pissed off expression on her face.

MARY-ANNE

These motherfucking Owls are really
pissing me off.

Then another Owl sticks its head through the window.

MARY-ANNE

We need to move.

Mary-Anne turns and runs down the length of the bus towards the front.

MARY-ANNE

Come on!

Jim grabs Steph and pulls her towards him. They follow Mary-Anne.

Mary-Anne shoots out the bus's windscreen, shattering it. Jesus is standing there, holding his head. There is blood all down the side of his face. He has a look of awe on his

face. Mary-Anne grabs him and pulls him to follow her. She kicks out the windscreen and they both jump out, following the bus's headlights to the Fort.

Jim grabs the flamethrower that Jesus left at the driver's seat. He spins around, Steph on his arm.

Behind them, two Owls are in the bus, a third one just pushing its way in.

JIM
Steph. Light it.

Steph looks at him for a moment, trying to compute what he is asking her. She looks down at the flamethrower. On the side, just at the barrel, there is a push switch that ignites the pilot light.

The first Owl has just stepped over its dad friend and is coming toward them, its teeth bared.

JIM
Do it.

Steph smiles out of the corner of her mouth. She flips the switch... The flame ignites... Jim grins... He pulls the trigger... Fire leaps out of the barrel... Everything burns.

The Owls screech, engulfed in flames. The one half in the window backs out, a burning beacon on top of the bus. It flutters off trying to beat the flames off.

Jim and Steph turn and jump out of the bus.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Jim stops and walks backwards. He plunges more flames into the bus's cavity. He looks maniacal in the firelight, determination on his face. Destroying the bus is therapeutic.

The flamethrower runs out of fuel and spurts its last. Jim shakes it, but that's all its got.

STEPH
Come on, Jim.

Steph is standing behind him, waiting, anxious to go. Jim drops the flamethrower, turns, grabs Steph's hand and they race to the Fort.

The bus burns bright and big behind them, still they can hear the screeching Owls trapped inside.

Steph and Jim get to the Fort. It is a flat round brick building smoothed over with concrete, with peep holes big enough to fit the barrel of a gun through.

They circle round and find Mary-Anne and Jesus at the doorway, which is just a hole with a flimsy wooden door that Mary-Anne has kicked in.

Mary-Anne stands in the doorway beckoning Jim and Steph to come in.

MARY-ANNE

Come on.

INT. FORT - CONTINUOUS

Steph and Jim fall onto the ground breathing heavily. Jim rolls onto his back and lets out a relieved laugh.

Mary-Anne puts her arms around Jesus and squeezes him tight. He holds her, his hand cradling her head.

Then there is an explosion. A loud cracking BOOM! From outside. Mary-Anne, Jesus and Steph get up quickly and look out of the peep holes. Jim just lies back, exhausted.

The bus's gas tank has exploded sending a cloud of smoke upward. There are a number of Owls which have been set alight by the blast flying away into the night like Chinese lanterns.

They look on in awe, speechless.

Then Mary-Anne turns to Jim.

MARY-ANNE

Way to go, Rambo.

Jim doesn't say anything, just smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. KYLE AT THE CRASH-SITE - MOMENTS BEFORE

Kyle moves back into the car. The Owl keeps its eyes on him, moving slowly toward him.

Kyle begins saying the Lord's Prayer again, the words falling out of his mouth in a rush.

KYLE

The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want
 he layeth me to lie in green pastures
 and deliver us from evil oh sweet
 Jesus-

Kyle can't take his eyes off of it, preparing himself for the attack.

The Owl reaches the hood of the car and climbs up, crushing glass under its feet. It emits a long growling screech.

They they hear a sound, like a normal owl.

Hoo-Hoo!

The Owl stops and looks to the side where the sound came from. It stops growling and turns in that direction, curious.

Hoo-Hoo!

It has forgotten about Kyle. It jumps off the hood of the car. It makes a purring sound.

Kyle watches it saunter off.

Then there is a BANG!

Kyle flinches.

After a few moments Ben comes out of the bank of trees, covered in blood, a gun in each hand.

KYLE

Oh, my Lord. Aren't you a sight for
 sore eyes.

Ben cocks another shell into the chamber and smiles.

That's when they hear an explosion deep in the woods. They look in that direction.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT - MOMENTS LATER

STEPH

Are we safe?

They look at their surroundings; the room isn't tall enough for Jesus to stand upright; the rotund floor is ten foot across and there are peep holes every meter. On one side there is a spiral staircase that leads downwards; the door

is only made of flimsy wooden panels with a bar across it to hold it in place.

JESUS

I don't think that door will keep them out.

Mary-Anne looks down the steps using the torch on the end of her gun. The steps go down quite far into deep dark blackness. Jesus appears next to her and looks down.

JESUS

I think we should go down.

STEPH

Are you crazy? We don't know where it goes.

MARY-ANNE

It is further away from those things.

STEPH

After all that you want to go exploring-

JESUS

That door will not hold.

STEPH

There is three hours till daylight. Will it hold for three hours?

JESUS

I don't know. Probably not.

STEPH

Then there is a-

MARY-ANNE

Shhh...

They hear something land on top of the Fort. They hear a shuffling and a tapping noise.

It moves slowly across the roof in the direction of the door. All four of them follow the sound looking up.

Then a shadow passes over the peepholes causing the light from the burning bus to flicker.

The air catches in Steph's throat. Everyone spins around, distracted by the shadow.

Then they hear a loud thud against the door and a red eye between the slats.

Steph lets out a muffled scream.

Mary-Anne, Jesus and Jim point their guns at the door. There is no sound for a few moments... Everyone stands watching the door, waiting, ready for anything.

Then another thud, then another, and another... The door bulges inward with every hit. The bar rattles looser. They can see talons, beaks and beady red eyes through the gaps in the slats.

The Owls make horrible screeching sounds.

MARY-ANNE
Down the stairs!

INT. FOR/STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Mary-Anne is first down the stairs, running carefully but quickly. Then Steph follows, then Jim and Jesus last.

They can hear the Owls banging on the door above them, still not broken through yet.

They move quickly, spinning deeper into the ground.

STEPH
Oh, my god! What the fuck is that
smell?!

JESUS
Guano.

MARY-ANNE
Shit.

Then they hear a crash above them as the Owls burst through the door.

The sound of wings beating echoes down the staircase.

JESUS
They're coming!

Their pace quickens.

INT. FORT/PASSAGE - CONTINUOUS

They reach the bottom of the stairs and enter a long passageway. At the other end of it is a metal door with a wheel lock. Along the ground there is a thick black gooey substance. Steph slips in it and almost falls on her ass.

Jesus is keeping an eye out behind them. The sound of them approaching is getting louder.

They reach the door at the end of the passageway; it is rusted over.

Mary-Anne grabs the handle and tries to pull it, but it is stuck. She gives it a few more tugs and only budes it a millimetre.

JIM.

Let me.

Steph grabs Jim's arm, concern and fear on her face.

STEPH

Wait. We don't know what's on the other side of here.

JIM

If you wanna stay here and wait, be my guest.

Steph lets go of his arm and nods.

Jim grabs the door and gives it a few tugs and it moves further, but is still too small a gap for them to fit through.

JIM

Jesus. Give me a hand.

Jesus steps around Steph and hands her his gun.

Jim and Jesus grab hold of the door.

JIM

Ready? We pull in three... Two... One... Pull!

They pull at the door together. It moves slowly over the ground making a squeaking, grating sound on the concrete.

They prise it open enough to fit a person through. They file through the door, squeezing through the gap. Mary-Anne first, then Steph, then Jim.

Jesus sees the Owls at the bottom of the stairs now.

JESUS

Move!

Jesus begins firing behind him; Jim turns to look and sees the Owls leaping over the dead Owls, closing in on them.

JIM

Quickly, Jesus.

Jesus stops firing and enters the room.

INT. FORT/ROOM - CONTINUOUS

STEPH

Oh, my god! That smell!

Steph covers her mouth and begins to retch. Jim and Jesus begin to cough.

MARY-ANNE

Everyone... Grab the door and pull!

Mary-Anne, Steph, Jim and Jesus put their fingers in any part of the door they can and begin pulling it closed.

Just outside the door the Owls approach, leaping over the dead ones. There is a loud cacophonous noise filling the corridor echoes of screeches and hoots.

The door closes, slowly.

Jim can see the red eyes, the saliva dripping from their beaks, their teeth gnashing, as they come closer, closer...

JIM

Come on! Pull harder!

They all pull harder, exerting themselves. The door edges closed faster...

Then, just as one of the Owls reaches out its taloned leg, the door slams shut, severing its leg off. It flops around on the ground, twitching as if alive.

Steph screams.

Jesus kicks the leg to the other side of the room.

INT. FORT/ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They all try to catch their breaths without breathing through their noses. Jim is bent over double, his eyes closed. Mary-Anne and Steph are on their haunches leaning against the wall. Jesus is the only one standing, holding his shoulder.

Behind them they can hear occasional bangs as the Owls hit the door.

The floor is covered in a layer of crusty guano. In some places it is still gooey.

STEPH
Are we safe now...?

Jim looks up to see Jesus scanning the room with the torch at the end of his gun.

There are lots of objects on tables, glass that is making the light split and dance in prisms all around the walls. They see big cupboards with old computer equipment, gizmo's and cog machines.

Jesus' light lands on the wall above the table where they all see an old tattered Nazi flag.

The air catches in Mary-Anne's throat. Steph begins to hyperventilate.

STEPH
What does it mean?

No one says anything.

STEPH
Jim...?

Then they hear something fall and break in the gloom down the hallway off to their left. There are army-barrack style rooms, six along the sides and one at the end.

Steph lets out a stifled squeal.

Then they hear a shuffling, gurgling sound.

MARY-ANNE
What the fuck was that?

JIM
Maybe it's another survivor.

JESUS
It is not.

MARY-ANNE

How do you know?

JESUS

Whatever it is, it is not human.

None of them have noticed that it has gotten quiet all of a sudden.

They all look down the hallway, unable to move. Steph begins to cry.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - THAT MOMENT

Kyle has his arm around Ben's shoulders. They trundle through the forest, heading for the burning bus.

Kyle stumbles and falls to his knees. Ben tries to pull him up.

KYLE

I'm okay. Just give me a minute.
I'm so tired.

Ben stands up and looks around the woods. He doesn't hear anything, other than the swell of Owl screeches a far way off.

KYLE

Do you think we can make it out of here?

Ben doesn't say anything for a few moments, then shrugs his shoulders. Kyle lowers his head.

KYLE

Yeah, my thoughts too.

They are quiet for a few moments.

Kyle readies himself to continue on and begins to rise. Ben puts his hand on Kyle's shoulder and pushes him back down.

KYLE

Wha-

Ben puts his finger to his lips. Sssshhh...

They look into the forest, through the trees and towards the burning bus.

KYLE
(whispering)
What is it?

Ben puts his hand up to his ear, then spins it off into the air shaking his head.

Kyle listens... The noises have stopped and it is eerily quiet.

KYLE
(whispering)
What does it mean?

Ben shakes his head.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/ROOM - THAT MOMENT

They all stand huddled together, peering into the darkness.

JIM
Well, we're gonna have to go down there.

STEPH
But, why?

JIM
We have to see what's down there. Find out if it's dangerous. If it is, we kill it. If not, then we wait till morning. Those Owls won't make it through that door, so we'll be safe. As long as what's down there isn't gonna eat our brains while we rest.

STEPH
Damn it, Jim. Why do you have to be right.

JIM
Come on. It's probably nothing.

Steph looks up, not entirely reassured.

INT. FORT/ROOM/CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Jim and Mary-Anne walk slowly down the corridor, guns up and

ready.

There are three rooms on each side, living quarters for when the Fort was in use. They are doorless holes. The only one with a door is the one at the end of the corridor, which is slightly ajar.

The first two rooms are empty, Jim looking in the one on the left, Mary-Anne the one on the right. There is a thick layer of guano on the floor in both rooms.

They move to the next rooms along...

They point their guns into the gloom... there is nothing in these two rooms either.

They move to the next rooms along.

The shuffling sound is getting louder, and below that they can hear a low squealing sound, like kittens mewling. Jim's hand is unsteady, Mary-Anne's is steady.

They look into the the last rooms along...

MARY-ANNE

(whispering)

Nothing.

Jim can see something moving along the floor at the back of the room, snakelike, a lump of goo, a low sound coming from it.

JIM

I think I got something.

Mary-Anne comes to his side, trains her light down at the thing. She moves her light around the room and sees more gooey things moving around.

Mary-anne enters the room, walking toward the thing on the floor, no bigger than a mouse. She lifts her foot and places it onto the thing, bringing her weight down slowly. There is a crunch and a black liquid spurts out the sides.

Then the things all around on the walls give out a screech!

Mary-Anne looks to her left and sees a baby Owl face coming out of a membranous cocoon. Its eyes are a yellow-red, big and angry. Mary-Anne can see its little beak with teeth behind it, opening in a screeching grimace.

She brings the butt of her gun up and rams it into the baby Owl's face. It explodes with a squish.

They they hear a loud SCREECH! coming from the room at the end of the corridor. It is a guttural sound unlike the Owl screeches, more angry, more... Human.

Steph lets out a stifled scream. Jesus grabs her and puts his hand over her mouth.

Mary-Anne and Jim come out of the room. They look up the corridor and see Jesus holding Steph quiet. They turn to look towards the door there, slightly ajar, a weird dull light coming through the crack.

JIM

What the fuck was that?

Mary-Anne shrugs.

MARY-ANNE

The Queen.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - THAT MOMENT

Kyle and Ben have made it to the burning bus. It is only a skeleton, burned and black, some of it still on fire.

KYLE

Jesus in Heaven.

Ben looks into the husk and can see two burned bodies; Barbara and the guy. No sign of anyone else.

KYLE

Where do you think they got to?

Ben looks around and sees the Fort. He points to it.

KYLE

Praise the Lord! Me 'n Jim saw that earlier, when we were collecting firewood. That boy sure knows what he's doing.

They start walking towards the Fort.

The closer they get to the Fort the louder they can hear a strange sound.

Then they hear a deep muffled screech coming from the Fort. Ben grabs Kyle by the shoulder and pulls him back.

KYLE

What's the-

He drags Kyle back to the bus where they hide behind it.

KYLE
(whispering)
What was that?

Ben puts his hand to his ear. Kyle listens, then hears the rising sound.

KYLE
My God. Sounds like the doors to
Hell have finally opened.

When the sound hits a crescendo they see a flock of Owls come out of the Fort, swirling in a beautiful, hive-mind shape into the night.

When the last of the Owls have exited, Ben and Kyle stand up.

KYLE
Where do you think they're going
now? And why did they leave in such
a hurry?

Ben shrugs.

They make their way to the Fort, carefully, keeping an eye on the skies.

INT. FORT - CONTINUOUS

Ben enters the Fort combat style, quick movements, his eyes moving rapidly around the room... there is nothing there.

He beckons Kyle to enter. They look around the room and Kyle sees the staircase that leads downwards.

KYLE
Here.

They look down into the darkness. There is no sound, only a disconcerting echoey emptiness.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/ROOM/CORRIDOR

Everyone has pulled out all their weapons and laid them out on the ground. Jesus has the most with a semi-automatic rifle, two handguns and four grenades. Jim has a shotgun and a handgun. Mary-Anne has her semi-automatic and two

grenades.

JIM
Wish I still had the flame-thrower.

INT. FORT/ROOM/CORRIDOR

Jim and Mary-Anne stand in front of the door, guns at the ready. Jim is holding the shotgun, Mary-Anne is holding the semi-automatic.

On either side of them, Steph and Jesus are holding two grenades each.

Jim pulls out a flare and ignites it.

JIM
Everybody ready?

Jesus nods immediately, Steph nods reluctantly, Mary-Anne just smiles.

MARY-ANNE
Let's bake this mother!

Jim nods at Jesus.

Jesus pushes the door open.

Jim throws the flare into the room.

INT. FORT/MONSTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jim and Mary-Anne enter the room, spreading the light from their torches across the room, ready to fire at anything that moves...

There is no sudden movements.

This room is bigger, the walls alive with the movement of small mouse sized Owls, stirring in their cocoons. The walls themselves are coated in an elaborate slimy nest-like structure, black and green and white.

In the middle of the room, right in front of the flare, stands a figure, human-like, but deformed in an aggressive way. Like the Elephant Man on Steroids.

It shuffles away from the light, keeping an eye on Jim and Mary-Anne.

MARY-ANNE
What in Jesus' name...?

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/STAIRCASE - THAT MOMENT

Ben is leading the way down the steps, Kyle follows close behind.

KYLE
My God. What is that smell?

Ben doesn't acknowledge his comment, he just continues on.

INT. FORT/PASSAGE - CONTINUOUS

In the passageway leading into the room Steph, Jim, Mary-Anne and Jesus are, there is a stirring of many little mouse sized things.

Kyle bends down to see one of them peek its head out of its cocoon, showing its beak and teeth.

Kyle stares at it, disgusted.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/MONSTER ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Nobody moves. The creature watches them. The room feels alive with squelching movement.

And then the creature speaks, a deep, gargling voice that they can feel as well as hear.

MONSTER
(in German)
Who are you...?

Jim looks at Mary-Anne. She looks back and shrugs.

JESUS
(in German)
We have come from above.

Everybody looks around at Jesus.

JESUS
My uncle is German.

MONSTER
(in German)
Why have you come here...?

JESUS
(in German)
We are lost. We want to go home.

MONSTER
(in German)
You have come into my home, you
have disturbed my family.

JIM
What's he saying?

JESUS
He says we have disturbed his
family.

JIM
His family?

All the little Owls begin to exit their cocoons, stretching out and mewling little screeches.

The room begins to change shape as they fall out and crawl across the floor towards Jim and Mary-Anne.

MONSTER
(in German)
You cannot leave.

Jim and Mary-Anne begin to shoot at the walls and floor, stifling the advance, but there are so many of them that they're not doing much damage.

The Monster screeches in a loud, protective bellow of fear and hate, which encourages more of the little Owls to advance.

The Monster falls to the back of the room, behind his army of baby Owls.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/PASSAGE - THAT MOMENT

Ben and Kyle hear the loud bellow from the Monster. The walls vibrate with the sound. Then they hear gunfire.

There is a moment when Ben turns to see Kyle looking back at him, scared, then the walls and floor begin to move with the

little Owls coming out of their cocoons.

Kyle instinctively stamps his foot down and begins trampling them. Ben begins firing at them, kicking them away and stamping on them.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/MONSTER ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Jim and Mary-Anne are continuing to fire, but the advance isn't slowing.

Mary-Anne turns her head and shouts to Jesus and Steph.

MARY-ANNE

Grenades!

Steph fumbles with her grenades, preparing them. Jesus has his ready to pull the pins and throw.

MARY-ANNE

Jim!
Retreat!

Jim and Mary-Anne move backwards.

INT. FORT/ROOM/CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

When they reach the door Jesus and Steph pull the pins and roll the grenades in.

Jim grabs the door and pulls it shut.

JIM

Run!

Everybody turns and runs from the Monster Room.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/MONSTER ROOM - THAT MOMENT

The Monster sees the round things roll into the room. It knows what they are and scrambles toward the back of the room.

There is an ammunition shute that leads to the outside.

It grabs onto the walls and pulls itself up the shute.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/ROOM/CORRIDOR - THAT MOMENT

Jim, Steph, Mary-Anne and Jesus make it to the door that leads out. They can hear gunfire coming from the other side.

Jim and Mary-Anne push on the door; it squeak open slowly.

STEPH

Don't shoot! Whoever's out there!

INT. FORT/PASSAGE - CONTINUOUS

The door opens fully and they can see Ben and Kyle shooting, stamping and squashing the baby Owls.

They enter the passageway, then quickly turn around to shut the wheel-lock door.

JIM

Push!

Jim and Mary-Anne push on the door. It moves slowly. Ben sees them struggling and rushes over and pushes with them.

Then the grenades go off...

The whole place shakes with the force.

An explosion erupts from that room with the screeches of baby Owls howling.

Fire burns down the corridor, into the room they've just come from.

Once they get the door closes, but before they can lock it, the explosion reaches them. The door is forced open, sending Jim, Ben and Mary-Anne flying down the passageway.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - THAT MOMENT

The ground shakes, sending trees rocking back and forth. In the distance a spout spits out a stream of flame into the night, setting alight some unfortunate Owls who happen to be circling the area.

And if you look carefully you can see a large shape exiting through the spout, through the flames.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT/PASSAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Jim comes to. His ears are ringing from the explosion. Blood drips down his face from an open wound on his head. He is covered in dust and grime.

It takes him a moment to remember where he is. He shakes the dust off of himself and scrambles towards where Steph and Mary-Anne fell.

Ben is already on his feet and is helping Jesus up.

Jim finds Steph and lifts her up. She is shell-shocked, catatonic. She doesn't react to what Jim is saying to her. Jim gets her up, putting her arm around his shoulders and hoisting her up.

Mary-Anne is already down the passageway, ushering everyone to move.

Jim walks past Ben who is looking down. Jim follows his gaze and sees Kyle. He's not moving; his face is frozen in a grimace, covered in blood.

Ben leans down and closes Kyle's eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone exits the Fort. They step out into the night, the sky beginning to fill with morning light. Everything is quiet.

Jim sets Steph down on the ground next to the Fort. Jesus sits down next to her.

Jim goes over to Mary-Anne who is standing guard, scanning the area.

JIM

Anything?

MARY-ANNE

Nothing yet.

They stand there, looking into the forest, not saying anything for a few moments.

JIM

What was that thing?

MARY-ANNE

Diablo Buho. Some sort of forest

(MORE)

MARY-ANNE (CONT'D)

devil.

JIM

I think it used to be human. It had a face. Like, maybe, some sort of experiment gone wrong.

MARY-ANNE

It doesn't matter. It's dead now.

Jim doesn't say anything for a few moments.

JIM

And the Owls...?
Do you think they've gone into hiding because the sun is coming up?

MARY-ANNE

I think we've just destroyed their lair.

JIM

It looked more like a nest than a lair. I think they'll be out there, sleeping in trees, caves... Dark places.

MARY-ANNE

Then it's our duty to find them and make them see the light.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD/FOREST - LATER

A black Cadillac makes its way down a dirt road surrounded by thick forest. There are two big men in the car.

INT. BLACK CADILLAC - CONTINUOUS

The Fat Man has a gizmo in his hand that is following Clarke's tracker. He looks around at the forest, confused as to why they are out in the middle of nowhere.

One of his bodyguards is driving. He is a big meat-head with massive hands.

The tracking gizmo makes a sound. The Fat Man looks at it. It shows that they have passed a point where they need to go right, into the forest.

FAT MAN

Stop here.

The Meat-Head stops the car and pulls it over onto the verge.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

They get out of the car and look around. There is nothing out here.

MEAT-HEAD

Where to, Boss?

The Fat Man consults his machine. He points into the forest.

FAT MAN

That way.

Ten yards.

The Meat-Head opens the trunk and grabs a few guns. A sawed-off shotgun and a few handguns.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - THAT MOMENT

The sun is slowly creeping its way up into the sky. It is a half-circle on the horizon.

The forest is quiet. There is a fine mist on the ground slowly dissipating in the sunshine.

In the distance we hear a gunshot, then a cheer.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Mary-Anne is in a tree. Jim, Ben, Jesus and Steph are standing at the foot of the tree, looking up. Mary-Anne pulls something out of a hole in the tree and drops it onto the ground. It is an Owl, bloodied and full of holes.

Mary-Anne looks around from her perch and scans the area. She sees something blinking in the light in the distance.

She climbs down from the tree, jumping the last few feet. Everyone is standing around the dead Owl, just staring at it.

JIM
Nice shooting.

MARY-ANNE
Thanks.

JIM
Where to now?

MARY-ANNE
I saw something in the distance.
(pointing)
That way.

STEPH
Something... Like a way out of
here?

MARY-ANNE
Something shiny.

Jesus' eyes light up.

JESUS
Let's go.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

The Fat Man and Meat-Head are trundling through the forest,
Meat-Head in front with his gun trained.

There is nothing out here.

The Fat Man is becoming more and more pissed off.

The gizmo begins to beep excitedly.

Meat-Head stops and turns around. The Fat Man looks around
on the ground and sees the Tracker. He bends down and picks
it up. The beeping is now a deafening whine.

He turns the gizmo off.

FAT MAN
Motherfucker!

MEAT-HEAD
What now, Boss?

FAT MAN
That little fuck-wit! I bet it was
that fucking Mexican Prick. You
(MORE)

FAT MAN (CONT'D)

can't trust nobody these days,
Jackson. Everybody and their
granmother's-

JACKSON

Do you mean Jesus, Boss?

FAT MAN

What?!

Jackson realises that he should've kept his mouth shut.

JACKSON

The Mexican, Boss... His name is
Jesus.

The Fat Man looks at Jackson like his head has opened and a
pigeon has crawled out.

There is an uncomfortable few moments of silence where the
Fat Man looks at Jackson.

FAT MAN

What in the fuck do I care what his
name is?!

JACKSON

Sorry, Boss.

They continue to argue, the Fat Man becoming more enraged
with every second spent with Jackson.

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The Monster has been disturbed by the noise caused by the
Fat Man and Jackson. It is wounded and tired, but still
enraged by the intrusion of the group into its nest.

It looks up from its hiding place and sees the two men
through a small opening in the ground. They are standing
very close to the thin ground canopy of its hiding place.
One wrong move and they could fall in.

The Monster sits, waiting, listening...

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The Fat Man is still laying into Jackson, calling him an
idiot and that he is only a meat-head bodyguard.

Jackson puts his hands up, surrendering.

JACKSON

I'm not arguing with you, Boss. I was just saying.

FAT MAN

Yeah...? Well, when I want any information from your fat head I'll send the request with a side of mashed potatoes.

The Fat Man turns and walks away from Jackson.

Jackson stands there for a few moments, churning the last comment around in his head, tasting the insult.

JACKSON

(under his breath)

Maybe I'll send you a reply with a five course meal.

Jackson smiles smugly at his own joke.

He shakes his head and attempts to follow the Fat Man, but he steps down on the ground that gives out from under him.

He falls into a hole.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS EARLIER

Jim, Steph, Mary-Anne, Ben and Jesus arrive at the location where Clarke and Kyle ended up. Jesus's car's front end is still wrapped around a tree. Clarke's head is missing from his body which is still lying on the bonnet.

JESUS

Put a.

STEPH

What do we do now?

Jesus goes to his car to inspect the damage. He tries to open the driver's side door but it won't open.

He climbs on the hood and slips into the driver's seat from the hole where the windscreen used to be. He turns the key in the ignition, but the car doesn't even make a noise. Just a click.

He punches the steering-wheel.

STEPH

Just fucking great. What do we do
now?

Jesus turns and notices Clarke's briefcase sat in the
footwell of the passenger side. His eyes become sly.

Then there is gunfire in the distance.

A BOOM! followed by a couple of POPS!

MARY-ANNE

Oh, my god. What was that?

STEPH

That means there's people. Mabye
hunters.

Jesus grabs the briefcase and forces it further into the
footwell so it is less visible.

He exits the car.

JESUS

It is the Fat Man.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - THAT MOMENT

The Fat Man is moving quickly away from the hole in the
ground that Jackson fell into. He stumbles and falls a few
times, looking back to make sure that nothing is following
him.

We hear screams of Jackson being mauled by the Monster. He
lets off a couple of POPS! from his handgun, but the effort
is futile.

The Fat Man arrives at the car, falls over the hood. There
is a death scream that vibrates the air.

The Monster has killed Jackson.

The Fat Man falls to the ground and scrambles to open the
car door... It is locked.

He scrambles to the other side... Also locked.

He sits on the ground, leaning against the car, out of
breath, scared.

Suddenly he gets up and runs into the forest, away from the
car, away from the Monster.

He keeps looking back to make sure he is not being followed.

Then he runs into something sturdy. He falls back onto his ass and begins to crawl backwards. He looks up and sees that he has run straight into Ben.

FAT MAN

Oh, my god.

Behind Ben the others step out and stand in front of the Fat Man. He recognises Jesus.

FAT MAN

Oh, thank god.
There's... Something...

JIM

Take a deep breath.

The Fat Man calms down, his breathing slows.

FAT MAN

There's something... Back there. A monster.

Mary-Anne cocks her shotgun.

MARY-ANNE

I got this.

Jesus puts his arm out to stop Mary-Anne. He looks at her and shakes his head. She stops, then looks down at the Fat Man. The look in his eyes says it's not just one of those Owls.

MARY-ANNE

How big was this monster?

FAT MAN

Bigger than Jackson. My bodyguard.
And he's six foot. He just fell in.
A big hole in the ground. It just
gave way and he... Fell.
Oh, god.

His face pales.

STEPH

It's still alive.

JIM

(to the Fat Man)
Was it like an underground cave?

The Fat Man half shrugs, half nods.

JIM
Then we have it trapped.

MARY-ANNE
How do you figure that?

JIM
It's gotta be. We destroyed its
nest so it needed to find somewhere
to hide during the day.
We have it trapped.

There is a silent affirmation that passes between Jim and
Mary-Anne.

MARY-ANNE
Let's finish this.

JIM
(to Jesus)
What do we have left in the way of
weapons?

JIM
It's not gonna be enough.

The Fat Man's eyes lighten up.

FAT MAN
Jackson has an arsenal in the back
of the Caddy.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

Jesus and Ben creep up to the Cadillac. Mary-Anne, Steph,
Jim and the Fat Man are crouched down in the bank of trees
on the opposite side of the road.

They can hear the sound of bones crunching and flesh
tearing.

Jesus opens the trunk. Inside they find many weapons. Ben
signals the rest to approach. Jim and Mary-Anne rise and
creep over to join Jesus and Ben.

FAT MAN
Are you not going with your
friends?

STEPH

I think I'll set this one out.

The Fat Man just nods and turns back to watch what happens next.

EXT. FOREST-HOLE - MOMENTS LATER

Mary-Anne and Ben lead the way, Jim and Jesus keeping an eye on their flanks. They are armed to the teeth, with bullet straps wrapped around themselves, magazines in every pocket, guns in each hand and in their belts...

The forest is mostly quiet except for the sound of the wind in the trees.

In the distance they hear an Owl, HOOT! possibly warning the Monster. All of them look around wildly, unsure of where the sound came from.

After a few moments Mary-Anne motions for them to continue.

They approach the hole in the ground. There is a severed hand, still holding a handgun, lying on the edge of the pit. Jim eyes it with a grimace on his face.

Mary-Anne makes her way to the other side of the hole, Ben follows. They spread out, circling, taking a point at the four corners.

The hold is dark but shallow. They don't see any movement down there. Mary-Anne lights up a flare and throws it into the hole...

INT. HOLE - CONTINUOUS

A bright red thing lands in the Monster's hole. It doesn't like the heat and the light. It retreats deeper into its hole, carrying the remainder of Jackson's carcass with it.

EXT. FOREST-HOLE - CONTINUOUS

The flare illuminates the hole, but they don't see anything in it. At the side where Jesus is standing there is a tunnel that leads away from the hole.

MARY-ANNE
(pointing)
(MORE)

MARY-ANNE (CONT'D)

It must have gone down there.

JIM

Couldn't we just throw a bunch of grenades down there?

JESUS

No telling how far in that tunnel goes. We might just close up this side of the tunnel and it'll come out another hole somewhere else.

MARY-ANNE

We end this here.

Jim nods.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLE - MOMENTS LATER

Mary-Anne lands on the hole floor. She steps in a blood pool.

MARY-ANNE

Ewg...

She scans the tunnel entrance. It is tall enough for a person to walk down hunched.

Behind her Ben lands inside the hole, followed by Jesus, then Jim.

Mary-Anne ignites another flare and throws it in. It illuminates the walls of the tunnel as it travels down. Shadows dance along the walls.

The flare lands about twenty feet in, but the tunnel goes further than that. They still don't see the Monster.

Mary-Anne turns to see the ghostly faces of her team staring back at her.

MARY-ANNE

You all with me?

Jesus nods. She looks at Ben; he cocks his gun and nods. She looks at Jim.

JIM

This ends here.

Mary-Anne nods and smiles. Then turns and enters the tunnel. The boys follow close behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS BEFORE

The Fat Man and Steph are watching as Mary-Anne, Jesus, Ben and Jim jump into the hole. Steph emits a small whimper as Jim jumps in last.

The Fat Man notices her compassion for Jim.

FAT MAN

That your boyfriend?

Steph looks at him, surprised and a bit sheepish. She looks back toward the hole.

STEPH

Yeah, I guess so.

FAT MAN

Young love, eh.

Steph just smiles not wanting to talk to the Fat Man.

FAT MAN

So, uh, what happened to Clarke?

STEPH

Back that way. He... Lost his head.

FAT MAN

Like... Crazy?

STEPH

No. Like it got ripped from his body.

The Fat Man nods.

FAT MAN

Was his briefcase with his body?

Steph looks at him for a few moments, trying to work out the relevance of whether there was a briefcase at the scene or not.

STEPH

I didn't see one.

FAT MAN

You sure?

STEPH

I don't understand. What does it

(MORE)

STEPH (CONT'D)

matter?

The Fat Man looks away quickly.

FAT MAN

It's just got... Some things in it
I need.

They sit there for a few moments longer, not saying anything. Then the Fat Man turns to Steph more determined.

FAT MAN

Are you sure you didn't see a
briefcase there? It's silver.

STEPH

(annoyed)

Listen here, Mister. I didn't see
your briefcase. It's probably still
on the bus.

The Fat Man huffs and turns back, annoyed.

Then he stands up.

STEPH

Where are you going?

FAT MAN

I'm going to find my briefcase.

STEPH

You can't go out there on your own.
You don't know where it is.

FAT MAN

Oh, I'm not.

The Fat Man pulls a gun out of a holster inside his jacket pocket and points it at Steph. She looks at the gun with her mouth half open, shocked.

The Fat Man grins and motions for her to lead the way.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL - THAT MOMENT

Mary-Anne is leading the way into the cave which is dark and humid. Drops of condensation fall from the ceiling causing a mix of echoey clinks. The light at the end of her rifle cuts a beam of light into the darkness.

They pass the flare Mary-Anne threw in moments before. She

leaves it there, stepping over it.

Mary-Anne pulls another flare from her belt and ignites it. Everything turns red. She throws it down the tunnel. It bounces on the floor for a few feet then disappears into a dip. It clatters somewhere below.

She turns and sees the faces of the guys behind her. They all have expressions of fear and determination.

They continue on.

INT. CAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

They arrive at the dip which drops off ten feet down and turns into a cavern as big as a church.

Mary-Anne trains her light around. The walls and ceiling are covered in a reflective ore which illuminates the cavern in twinkling lights. Everyone is awe-struck.

Jesus looks down and his eyes go wide.

JESUS

Look!

Below them the flare is burning away in between a big nest of little Owl cocoons. The floor is covered in them.

On the other side of the cavern the Monster roars. The team look and train their lights on it. It is covered in blood and gore from its recent kill.

MONSTER

(in German)

Why do you follow me?

JESUS

(in German)

We are Death. You are not welcome in this world. You are an abomination and must be stopped.

MONSTER

(in German)

I am not the Monster. You come into my house when you are not welcome, so you must die.

The Monster makes a death howl. The whole place begins to vibrate and the walls and floor begin to move.

The little Owls begin to come out of their cocoons.

MARY-ANNE

Fire!

The team fire at will!

Bullets burst from the team standing in the cave opening igniting the cavern with strobe bursts of light. On the floor and walls little Owl bodies burst and explode, their screeching filling the cacophony.

The Monster howls again in pain and anger.

Ben and Jesus aim their guns at the Monster; its flesh is hard and deflects a lot of the bullets.

Mary-Anne pumps a shell into a rocket launcher. She aims it at the Monster.

MARY-ANNE

Fire in the hole!

She fires.

The rocket flies across the large open cavern and hits the wall behind the Monster. The Monster is launched off its pedestal. Rock and debris fly into the air.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - THAT MOMENT

Steph and the Fat Man look back where they have come from. The echo of an explosion still lingers on the air.

FAT MAN

What the fuck.

While he is distracted Steph does a roundhouse kick and knocks the gun out of the Fat Man's hand. He turns, surprised. Then Steph pushes the palm of her hand up and into the Fat Man's face, breaking his nose. He falls back onto his ass, trying to hold back the blood spurting from his face.

Steph grabs the gun off the ground and points it at the Fat Man.

STEPH

Now listen to me, you fat fuck.
What's in the briefcase? Huh?
What's so important that you've

(MORE)

STEPH (CONT'D)
gone to all this trouble to get?

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERN - THAT MOMENT

The Monster has got back up and is advancing on the team. Even with its awkward shape it is quite nimble and fast. All weapons follow its route, but it's not enough to slow it down.

The Monster is almost upon them and Mary-Anne realises that it's not stopping.

MARY-ANNE
Get down!

The Monster leaps into the air. Jesus, Mary-Anne and Jim are already prepared for the attack. But Ben is slow in getting out the way.

The Monster lands on the ledge in front of Ben; a big hulking humanoid Monster at least two feet taller than Ben. Ben looks up into its face, tries to swing his gun around, but isn't fast enough.

The Monster turns swipes at him and sends him flying off the ledge. He lands in a nest of little Owls. They easily overpower his weakened body and begin sinking their beaks into him.

The Monster turns on the rest of the team crouched down on the ledge, but Mary-Anne and Jesus are fast and begin shooting upward into its bulk.

MARY-ANNE
Step back, Bitch!

The Monster takes the hits and is forced backwards. It falls off the ledge and bounds away.

Jim looks down and sees Ben being swallowed by the little Owls. Ben looks up at his friends, a pained expression on his face. He reaches down and uplls the pins out of four grenades strapped to his belt before he is enveloped completely. He gestures for them to go.

Jim realises what he is doing.

JIM
Everybody out! Now!

He grabs Mary-Anne's belt and tugs her back. She is still

shooting at the Monster. Jesus falls in next to Jim and they all retreat, quickly. Mary-Anne pumps rocket after rocket and fires them into the cavern blindly.

INT. TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

As they run they begin pulling grenades off their belts, pulling the pins out and throwing them back into the cavern. After the first few, Ben's grenades explode, sending a shockwave through the tunnel, followed by a fireball and an inhuman screech-roar.

Mary-Anne is thrown into Jim and Jesus, pushing them all to the ground.

The tunnel begins to shake all around them. Dust falls from the ceiling.

Jim comes to and shakes the dust out of his hair. He sees the tunnel all around him shaking and realises it's going to collapse. He pushes at Mary-Anne who is on top of him. She begins to stir.

JIM

We need to move!

Mary-Anne looks up and sees the ceiling cracking and breaking apart.

She turns to Jesus and shakes him.

MARY-ANNE

Jesus! Get up! We need to move!

Jesus doesn't move.

Mary-Anne looks at Jim, pleading.

MARY-ANNE

He's not moving.

Jim gets up unsteadily. He grabs Jesus by his wrists and begins draggin him out of the collapsing tunnel.

Mary-Anne runs alongside him and grabs one of Jesus's wrists, helping Jim drag him out.

As they're moving, they hear the cavern ceiling break; light shoots down the tunnel and they hear shrieks and little Owl screams.

They move faster as they can see the end of the tunnel has

begun collapsing and a rush of dust chases them.

INT. HOLE - CONTINUOUS

Jim and Mary-Anne exit the tunnel together, dragging Jesus after them, and fall onto the ground, exhausted. Just as they get Jesus's body out of the tunnel it collapses, sending a landslide of dirt and sand into the hole.

Mary-Anne and Jim sit there for a moment, breathing heavily. Unable to move, relieved, tired.

Then Mary-Anne gets up and kneels down next to Jesus and puts her ear to his chest.

She looks up at Jim again, pleading, her eyes tearing.

MARY-ANNE

He's not breathing, but I can hear
a weak heartbeat. Do something,
Jim. He's all I've got left.

Jim gets up and kneels down next to Jesus. He puts his ear to his chest and hears the irregular weak heartbeat. He's still alive, just not breathing.

Jim brings his fist down on Jesus's chest. His head just lolls to the side. Jim puts his ear to Jesus's mouth... He's still not breathing.

Mary-Anne is crying now.

Jim clenches his fist together, raises them up in the air, brings them down with force onto Jesus's chest...

Jesus coughs a big breath of air out of his lungs. Mary-Anne squeals with joy. Jesus leans onto his side and takes a deep breath and coughs some more.

He leans back and lies on his back. He looks up to see Jim and Mary-Anne looking down at him. Mary-Anne is teary-eyed and happy. Jim is relieved.

Jesus lays there, his breathing returning to normal. Mary-Anne puts her arms around Jesus.

Nobody says anything for a few moments.

Then they hear Steph's voice above them. She is standing at the edge of the hole, holding a gun on the Fat Man.

STEPH

Hey!
What the fuck did you guys do?
There's a big hole in the ground.

The Fat Man has blood all down his front.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Mary-Anne, Jim, Steph, Jesus and the Fat Man are standing at the edge of a massive hole in the ground. Where the cavern has collapsed it has left a hole about half the length of a football field. Large clumps of dirt, rocks, grass, trees, all swallowed into the hole, with sheer rock walls all around.

Nothing was moving down there, but Mary-Anne wasn't convinced they had killed all of the little Owls.

She turns to Jesus.

MARY-ANNE

Was there a flame-thrower in the trunk?

JESUS

You want to burn it?

She nods.

MARY-ANNE

Then i'll be sure it's gone.

Jesus nods his head.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

Mary-Anne is standing at the edge of the hole. She throws in the remaining grenades, scattering them randomly in the hole. Then she ignites the flame-thrower's pilot light...

She sends a stream of fire into the hole. She begins to make her way around the hole...

Everyone is standing a ways back from the hole, letting Mary-Anne enjoy her catharsis.

As she makes her way around the hole, filling it with fire, the grenades explode from the heat. The ground shakes, bits of trees, dirt and fire leap into the air.

And there is a small whine that sounds like the remaining Owls are burning to death.

The faces of everyone looking on are a mix of emotions. Steph is crying, Jim is empathetic, Jesus is proud and the Fat Man just looks confused and sick.

Eventually Mary-Anne makes it back around to where she started.

She throws the flame-thrower off her back and into the hole. It explodes sending a big fireball into the air. She pulls the semi-automatic, cocks a rocket into its chamber, and fires.

It explodes on the other side of the hole, sending debris into the air. She cocks another rocket into the chamber and fires again. Then another, and another...

She emits a strangled, half-crying wail; fear, pain, hate, regret, joy, everything building up into this release. When she runs out of rockets, she begins to fire bullets into the mess.

When she is out of bullets there is only the click of the hammer hitting nothing.

Mary-Anne drops gun. She stands there, her head lowered, tears streaming down her face.

Jesus steps forward. He puts his hand on Mary-Anne's shoulder. She turns and embraces him.

He holds her tight, both of them standing there, a furnace of flames silhouetting them.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - LATER

They all arrive at Jesus's car that Clarke had crashed. Jesus and Mary-Anne are walking in front. Followed by the Fat Man. Then Jim and Steph, hand in hand.

Jesus walks briskly to his car. He leans in and grabs the briefcase from the footwell.

He returns to the group with it. The Fat Man's face alights.

Jesus begins to hand it over to the Fat Man... Then pulls it away at the last minute. The Fat Man's expression changes suddenly to anger.

JESUS

This is the thing you wanted?
What's inside it?

FAT MAN

That's none of your business.

STEPH

I think we can make it our
business.

She pulls back the hammer on her gun.

FAT MAN

You bitch.

JIM

Hey! Watch your mouth.

FAT MAN

Whatever's inside there is of no
concern to any of you. This is
ridiculous. There's nothing of
value to any of you.

Jesus shakes the briefcase. Things inside clatter around.

JESUS

What kind of information is in
here?

FAT MAN

Information?

JESUS

Yes. When you asked me to retrieve
this you said it was information
you didn't want to get out.

The Fat Man sizes up what Jesus is insinuating.

FAT MAN

If it's blackmail you're thinking
of then you're shit out of luck.
There's nothing like that in there.

JESUS

So if we burn it then it'll all be
over. We all win.

FAT MAN

No, no, no, no...

JESUS
So there is something of value in
here?

FAT MAN
Alright, alright.

The Fat Man reaches toward the briefcase. Jesus pulls it
away.

FAT MAN
Come on. Stop fucking around.

Jesus balances it on his open palms. The Fat Man begins
running his fingers on the combination locks.

The briefcase opens with a jerk of the lid. Everyone looks
in.

(POV looking out of the briefcase)

Steph's face is alight with wonder. Jim's expression is
confusion. Mary-Anne's mouth is open in a wide grin. The Fat
Man has a frown on his face.

Jesus's face comes into shot. The corners of his mouth run
up in a smile.

MARY-ANNE
Is that what I think it is-

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - LATER

The Cadillac that the Fat Man and Jackson arrived in spins
its wheels on the gravel road, sending stones and dust
flying.

It's tyres take hold and it steadies itself on the road,
fishtailing slightly.

They zoom off down the road, the faint sound of laughing can
be heard trailing along after it.

The camera cranes upwards.

The car is a speck in the distance.

The camera arrives at a branch and stops.

A squirrel appears along its length, scurrying along, its
tail jerking. It watches as the car disappears. Then another
squirrel appears and perches next to the first one. Then

another squirrel arrives. And another. And more arrive until the branch is full of them.

Then there is the sound of an Owl...

HOOT!

All the squirrels scramble to get away.

CUT TO BLACK:

HOOT!

THE END