

EXT. WOODS. DAY

A young woman, VERONICA, stands idle in a DENSE WOODED AREA reading a news article on her MOBILE PHONE.

The Headline: "SYRIAN FLU QUARANTINE FINALLY ENDED"

Nearby, another young woman, ALESHA, pees behind a tree.

Both women have RUCKSACKS and are wearing active-wear.

They are alone, and appear to be quite far into the woods.

ALESHA (O.S.)
Are you still keeping an eye out?

Too engrossed in the news article, Veronica does not hear her.

ALESHA (O.S.) (cont'd)
Ronnie...?

Veronica still does not hear Alesha.

ALESHA
...Veronica?

Alesha sighs loudly. She shakes herself off and leaves the under-brush to re-joins Veronica on the path.

ALESHA (cont'd)
Veronica?!

Veronica startles, she turns and gives Alesha a dopey look.

VERONICA
Huh?

Alesha smirks at the gormless look on Veronica's face.

ALESHA
Do you ever get off your phone?

VERONICA
Am I meant to just twiddle my thumbs
while you take a piss?

ALESHA
You're meant to be looking out for me.

Veronica give a sarcastic smirk as she surveys the surrounding woodland. There is not a soul anywhere in sight.

VERONICA
I think you're good.

ALESHA
All right, smart arse.

Alesha and Veronica walk along the path.

ALESHA (cont'd)
What were you reading, anything interesting?

Veronica shrugs.

VERONICA
Just an update about the flu. They've ended the quarantine.

ALESHA
Finally! What was that? 12 weeks or something.

VERONICA
Yeah, it'll be nice to travel on the tube without the bloody spot-checks.

ALESHA
I know, I bet those were hygienic.

VERONICA
I literally never thought I'd see anything like that in my life-time.

ALESHA
(mocking)
What a plague?

Veronica gives Alesha a derisive look.

VERONICA
I wouldn't call it a plague.

ALESHA
I would - considering how many people have died.
(morbidly excited)
Oh! Speaking of - did hear about those murders at Paddington Station?

VERONICA
What - no?

ALESHA
A bunch of bodies were strung up on the front of trains.

VERONICA
What?!

ALESHA
Yeah, they'd all been, like, slashed and pinned up stigmata style.

Alesha mimes puncturing her own palms.

VERONICA

Oh my god, that's so fucked up! Do they know who did it?

Alesha shrugs.

ALESHA

I don't think so. I read that there's some kind of 'end of days' cult-

VERONICA

-What, because of the flu epidemic?

ALESHA

I guess so.

VERONICA

Why do they think there's a cult?

ALESHA

Because apparently there's been similar stuff happening around the country. Weird murders and stuff.

VERONICA

Oh my god. What is wrong with people?

ALESHA

(mocking)

We have recently had a plague.

VERONICA

It was the flu!

ALESHA

Yeah, killer flu!

Veronica rolls her eyes.

Alesha stops suddenly, leaving Veronica walking on alone.

VERONICA

God, it's like any excuse to go savage and people'll take it...

Veronica finally notices Alesha has stopped and turns around.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Are you ok?

Alesha stares out into the woodland, she is frowning.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Alesha?

ALESHA

Are you sure we're going the right way?

Veronica turns and looks at the trail for a few moments.

VERONICA
I think so, why?

ALESHA
Shouldn't we have come across the Bird
Lodge by now?

Veronica squints into the woodland, she is thinking.

VERONICA
It's probably just up ahead.

ALESHA
Can you check on your phone?

Veronica pulls up MAPS on her phone but there is no signal.

VERONICA
Ugh, it's not loading.

ALESHA
You brought a map, didn't you?

Veronica doesn't want to look for their paper map.

VERONICA
Really?

ALESHA
I'm telling you, it doesn't look right.

Veronica really doesn't want to dig for the map.

VERONICA
We haven't done this trail in over a
year. You can't possibly remember it
that well-

ALESHA
(interrupting)
-Can we just check the map, please? For
peace of mind.

Veronica sighs as she begrudgingly kneels down and starts riffling through her rucksack.

VERONICA
It's right at the bottom of my bag,
though.

Alesha becomes impatient with Veronica who is making a meal of the situation.

Then, a woman SCREAMS somewhere across the woodland.

Veronica snaps to her feet in alarm as the two of them whip in the direction of the scream.

VERONICA (cont'd)
What the hell was that?

Alesha points into the woods.

ALESHA
It came from over that way.

Veronica grabs her rucksack and they run towards the scream.

They run for a while until they come into a clearing.

They find a TORN RUCKSACK with it's contents strewn across the ground.

Veronica walks towards the rucksack but Alesha grabs her urgently.

ALESHA (cont'd)
Whoa, whoa, wait!

Alesha points out an open BEAR TRAP and Veronica jerks in horror.

There is BLOOD on the ground and DRAG MARKS leading off into the woods.

VERONICA
Is that what I think it is?

Alesha surveys the area but there is no one around.

Veronica is visibly freaked out but tries to downplay it.

VERONICA (cont'd)
They must be hunting?

ALESHA
With a bear trap? Those aren't even legal here.

VERONICA
Well they caught something with it..

Alesha crouches down and studies the bear trap.

ALESHA
What do we do?

Then, Alesha goes over to the ripped rucksack and studies it. It looks to have been attacked with a knife.

VERONICA
We should head back.

Twigs SNAP nearby but there is no-one in sight.

ALESHA
We can't leave.

Alesha eyes the blood-trail thoughtfully.

ALESHA (cont'd)
Someone needs help.

Veronica is hesitant.

VERONICA
Well, then let's go back to the car
park and call the Rangers.

ALESHA
What if it's too late by then?

The woman SCREAMS again but the direction is unclear. She sounds like she is fighting against something.

Veronica flinches, she is terrified, glancing around in all directions.

VERONICA
We need to go back, Alesha.

Alesha looks poised for action, ready to lay some smack down.

ALESHA
We have to help.

Alesha listens closely to the surrounding area, then she darts off into the woods.

Veronica jerks to follow but then freezes in place, rethinking it.

VERONICA
Alesha! No!

She doesn't want to follow, but doesn't want to be abandoned.

After a few moments Veronica starts after Alesha.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Alesha! Come back. We're going to get
separated!

The woman SCREAMS again, it comes from every direction.

Veronica hears twigs SNAP and she picks up speed. She sprints after Alesha and grabs her arm.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Stop! Stop.

Alesha stops but looks impatient.

VERONICA (cont'd)
We need to work out where we are before
we go running off into the woods.

ALESHA
We don't have time for that. What if
she's being raped?

VERONICA
We can't help if we get ourselves lost!

Alesha relents, waiting silently as Veronica digs a MAP and a COMPASS from her rucksack.

VERONICA (cont'd)
(Referring to the MAP)
Ok. So, that there is the Bird Lodge...

I think you're right, we must have
accidentally taken this route here.

She runs her finger over the map for Alesha's benefit.

Veronica stands up and uses the COMPASS to orient herself
along with the map.

VERONICA (cont'd)
We must be around here.

Veronica holds the map for Alesha to see it.

Then, she hears a strange WHISTLING noise. She freezes.

VERONICA (cont'd)
(whispering)
What was that?

ALESHA
What?

VERONICA
Someone's whistling.

Alesha looks around trying to listen but hears nothing.

More WHISTLING bird-call, closer this time.

VERONICA (cont'd)
There! Can't you hear it?

ALESHA
That's just birds.

The woman SCREAMS again, far away and pitiful.

Alesha goes rigid, listening for the direction of the noise.

Then, she snaps to her feet and grabs Veronica's wrist.
Veronica resists as Alesha tries to drag her along.

ALESHA (cont'd)
Come on!

Veronica drops her open rucksack and the contents spill out.

VERONICA
Wait!

Veronica rips her arm out of Alesha's grip and starts stuffing everything back into her rucksack.

ALESHA (O.S.)
(faraway)
Ronnie, come on!

Veronica zips her rucksack and stands up to follow when-
-Alesha has disappeared into the woods.

VERONICA
Alesha?

Veronica paces back and forth scanning the trees but but she can't see Alesha anywhere.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Alesha!
(beat)
Shit.

There is a RUSTLING nearby but Veronica can't see the source.
She stares into the under-brush cautiously, unsure what to do.
She hears WHISTLING in the other direction, as if she is being surrounded, but Veronica still can't see anyone.
Twigs SNAP nearby and her body goes rigid with fear.
Then, Alesha SCREAMS from across the woodland.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Alesha!?

Veronica immediately sprints towards the scream.
She can hear RUSTLING and WHISTLING behind but keeps running.
Veronica must stop to catch her breath. The woods are silent.
Veronica knows she is lost and Alesha is nowhere around.
Veronica grabs her phone and raises it above her head-

-There is no signal.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Seriously!?

Veronica paces back and forth trying to see around the trees.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Alesha?

Alesha SCREAMS ones last long blood-curdling time.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Alesha!!

Veronica runs towards the scream and eventually finds herself in another clearing.

She comes to a staggering stop when she sees Alesha's rucksack strewn across the ground.

Veronica investigates the area and finds an activated BEAR TRAP.

There is blood everywhere and drag marks leading off into the trees.

Veronica follows the trail when she sees something slick and shiny piled within the leaves behind a tree.

She approaches the bloody pile and stares down at it, she looks deeply disturbed. It is a pile of FRESH INNARDS.

Something has been gutted here but there is no body in sight.

Someone WHISTLES nearby and Veronica whips around.

More people WHISTLE all around her and Veronica doesn't know what way to turn.

Twigs SNAP and a MASKED FIGURE appears behind Veronica.

Their face has been painted like a skull and they wear a hospital hygiene mask with skull teeth painted onto it.

Veronica gasps. Twigs SNAP as more masked figures surround her.

Veronica tries to escape but she is blocked at every turn.

Then, the circle breaks apart offering her an escape route.

Veronica gives them all a questioning look.

RINGLEADER
Quick! We'll give you a head start.

Veronica looks truly horrified as she sprints into the woods.

The Ringleader steps into the centre of the circle.

They pull a bloodied knife out from behind their back.

They are wearing a RED WRISTBAND with a QUARANTINE SYMBOL.

Their hand grips the knife handle in anticipation as Veronica disappears into the woods.