

The Society Of Birdwatchers

Written by

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Based on Characters from:
S.O.B.s [Short Film]

2019 Numera Films Limited

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SUPER:

Rule No. 1

Always wear a mask while bird-watching (The best way to find birds is to be like a bird).

INSERT:

A Cardinal mask is lowered onto Lauren's face.

SUPER:

Rule No. 2

Stay on the family property.

INSERT:

A pair of feet running through the grass spring upward to jump over a fence.

SUPER:

Rule No. 3

Leave the bird seed for the birds.

INSERT:

Bird seed is poured into a bag. A hand reaches to grab some but it's SLAPPED away.

1 INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

1

A shrine dedicated to chess club trophies and dodge-ball tournaments is collecting deserved dust on an average shelf in a middle class home.

A mouth moves close to the well-worn golden head of a baseball player and blows. The mouth moves in and gives the trophy a kiss.

A feather duster sweeps the shelf.

Golden beams of sunlight bathe the interior.

SUPER: The Society of Birdwatchers.

A 35mm camera CLICKS.

BOBBY (20) is standing with a neatly tucked dress shirt and a tin lunchbox in hand.

BOBBY'S MOTHER

Oh...! Just look at you. First day of university. I can't believe how fast the time has gone.

BOBBY'S FATHER looks sternly but warmly at Bobby and wags a finger.

BOBBY'S FATHER

Remember Bobby. Join. A. Club. Your mother and I are more than glad you're staying at home...

BOBBY'S FATHER puts his arm around BOBBY'S MOTHER, feather duster in hand, and they both nod at Bobby.

BOBBY'S FATHER CONT'D

Not staying in a dorm has it's perks but you won't make any friends unless you join a club. Trust me. That's where I met yer mum.

A photo on the wall of a university club, Bobby's Mother is clearly with a different, taller, and perhaps more handsome guy at the time.

BOBBY'S FATHER CONT'D

Okay now c'mon, we wouldn't want you to be late.

2 EXT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - MORNING

2

BOBBY stands on his porch. He looks behind him. His parents can't see him anymore.

He pulls his tucked shirt out of his pants, loosens his tie, rolls up his sleeves and puts on a pair of large headphones.

BOBBY walks straight for the sidewalk.

A newspaper hits him right in the face.

A wide shot as a PAPER BOY flies past on his bicycle.

3 EXT. UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE - MORNING

3

BOBBY walks underneath a banner that says "Welcome Freshmen".

An A-frame sign on the side of the pathway towards the main campus building reads "Club Week", Bobby walks past without paying it any mind.

Up ahead a few loose papers blow around a barren school yard. The aftermath of club week means that crumpled cups, discarded pamphlets and only a few students are wandering around between early morning classes.

A single table with a homemade trifold remains. It's displaying the title "Join the S.O.B. Club!". It looks polished and has a neatly organized stack of pamphlets along with an entire taxidermy bird.

AUGUSTUS (24) is standing beside CROW (24), a person in a carefully crafted crow mask with a white collared shirt tucked into ratty black jeans; his signature look.

Augustus is wearing a blue button up shirt with a yellow sweater tied around his neck and neatly combed hair, more aggressively steps in and slaps a club pamphlet on Bobby's chest.

AUGUSTUS

Take a gander at this young lad!

Bobby barely looks sideways.

He grabs the pamphlet from Augustus and without saying anything continues walking. Music BLARING from his headphones.

He gives the pamphlet a quick once over before letting it fall to the ground carelessly some distance away from the tri-fold and Augustus.

AUGUSTUS

(faltering)

I uh. What in the heavens.

A hand reaches down and picks up the pamphlet.

LAUREN (25) looks at the flyer, then up towards Augustus. She has a brightly colored t-shirt and bleached jeans with her hair tied back. She cups a hand to her mouth and calls back.

LAUREN

Weak salesmanship.

AUGUSTUS

Well you're a tad late. It was nothing

short of calamity out here Lauren.

Lauren glances around the empty space.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

Why don't you give it the old college try. Recruiting, I mean.

Lauren raises an eyebrow.

She wheels around to pursue Bobby.

Augustus and Crow watch from beside their tri-fold. We watch from their point of view.

Lauren taps Bobby on the shoulder. This time he turns.

Lauren says something inaudible to him and this time Bobby grabs the pamphlet, crumples it into a ball, and throws it away.

Lauren stops; stunned.

Augustus gives her a slow nod and a thumbs down sign.

HARD CUT

4 EXT. UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE - MORNING

4

Lauren is back in front of the tri-fold. Crow is starting to pack away the trifold.

LAUREN

Shut up. I tried.

AUGUSTUS

You should try handing out pamphlets sometime, it's good fun.

LAUREN

I'm sure it is. Promising numbers though?

AUGUSTUS

We haven't met our recruitment quota. Unfortunately I'm finding the youth of today a bit more abrasive than past years. Seems like they don't quite share our sensibilities.

LAUREN

Most people here are exactly as old as you are Augustus.

CROW

That kid looked like he was twelve.

AUGUSTUS

We'll be overrun soon. By infants.

LAUREN

I was hoping you were going to say new recruits.

CROW

(downtrodden)

As soon as people start taking an interest in bird watching I guess.

LAUREN

Did you at least have a bit of fun Crow? Not too hot out?

CROW

(Shrugs)

I've had it worse.

AUGUSTUS

What are you up to Lauren?

LAUREN

Going to class. Or, a special lecture actually. You know the faculty can disband a club based on below average academic standing.

CROW

Augustus and I take wood-working. Oh, also there's cartography next semester.

AUGUSTUS

Nice. Also if you stop taking courses they make you pay off your student loans.

LAUREN

Oh shit, really?

AUGUSTUS

Yes, it's the worst. Hey, you actually

enjoy being on campus. How about you take our leftover pamphlets around campus with you today.

LAUREN

Don't expect me to meet the quota.

AUGUSTUS

You know if you were as confident pitching The S.O.B. to freshman as you are speaking up in your classes this recruitment crisis would be solved by sun down. I'm going to make some more pamphlets. Here.

Augustus dumps the remaining pamphlets into Laurens hand. They fall everywhere.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

I thought you'd, you know, grab those. Sorry, let me assist with this.

5 INT. LECTURE HALL

5

LAUREN sits in a sea of orange, empty seats. She is sketching a sparrow and occasionally glancing up. The margins of the page are crammed with notes. The header on her page says "A Lecture on Extinct Aviary Species".

Behind her a boy, WESLEY (23) is observing her from a distance. He has short curly hair and wears a clean t-shirt with a track jacket.

Lauren turns around. Wesley is startled and looks embarrassed.

He drops some notes.

Lauren turns back and stifles a laugh.

A stereotypical PROFESSOR type, bearded, with a tweed jacket is at the front of the hall and CLEARS HIS THROAT.

There's a stack of paper in front of him and to his left is an overhead projector displaying the image of a white bird with a blue head and sharp red eyes. To the professor's right is a skeleton of a swan-sized bird.

The professor slowly turns over the final page, having finished his lecture, and takes off his glasses. He looks to Lauren.

PROFESSOR
That was my life's work.

Lauren waits for a response but the lecture hall is deadily silent.

LAUREN
I'm sorry.

The professor grabs the sheet off the overhead projector and turns it off.

The few students attending leave the lecture hall.

LAUREN CONT'D
Have you considered doing an outdoors talk?

The professor doesn't turn to look at Lauren.

PROFESSOR
What?

LAUREN
You know like the park rangers do at campgrounds in the summer time. I think people enjoy the outdoors for this kind of thing more than a lecture hall.

PROFESSOR
And so why are you here.

LAUREN
I thoroughly enjoyed your lecture, I'm also part of the S.O.B.. I'm saying if you're interested in increasing attendance maybe a different venue would... help your cause. No offence of course.

The Professor leaves without saying anything.

Lauren sits by herself a moment, very small in a wide shot of the hall.

6 EXT. UNIVERSITY PARKING LOT

6

LAUREN, among other students, exits the stone walls of the university. She glances across the parking lot.

WESLEY exits as well, heading in Lauren's direction.

Lauren looks hopeful and raises her hand to catch his attention but a group of leather clad students, *The Crows*, pass in front Lauren.

They pass and Lauren searches for Wesley but cannot find him. She's disappointed.

7 EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - DAY

7

LAUREN drives her car down an unused highway.

She pulls into a driveway and parks beside a couple of bikes.

The trunk of her car pops open and she moves to retrieve a bright red cardinal mask, a pair of binoculars and a birdwatching book.

WRITER'S NOTE: WHEN A CHARACTER IS WEARING A MASK IT WILL BE NOTED BESIDE THE CHARACTER'S NAME IN PARENTHESES. FOR EXMAPLE "LAUREN" IS NOT WEARING A MASK WHEREAS "LAUREN (CARDINAL)" WOULD BE SEEN ON SCREEN WEARING A CARDINAL MASK.

8 EXT. A FOREST FENCE GATE - DAY

8

LAUREN, wearing her cardinal mask, walks down the middle of a fenced path. At the end of the path is a small wooden tower beside a very non-menacing gate.

EMILY, a girl wearing a wilderness patrol outfit and more noticeably sporting a giant woodpecker head appears suddenly from within the tower and hangs out the side.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)
(loud & boisterously)
At last! You're the last one here.
Anything to declare..!?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
I'm not entering a country Emily.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)
But you could pretend. It could be fun...!

9 EXT. PATH TO THE CABIN - LATE DAY

9

LAUREN and EMILY approach the cabin together, a centrally located building in a clear field surrounded by trees.

There's an archery target, easel, and a pile of chopped fire wood surrounding the building as well as a long picnic bench directly in front of the cabin looking not unlike "The Last Supper".

Sitting at the table are most of The Society of Birdwatchers.

GARRY wearing a PIGEON mask, green vest and brown pants with lots of pockets.

ERIN wearing a SPARROW mask, a comfortable looking sweater and jean shorts.

AUGUSTUS wearing an EAGLE mask and rugby sweater.

BARTHOLOMEW wearing an OWL mask button up shirt and a backpack.

CROW, unsurprisingly, wearing a CROW mask. All the masks completely cover each persons head and are clearly the products of people very passionate about the birds they each depict.

Everyone at the table is mostly cutting and drawing while Augustus sits slightly off to the side, folding pieces of paper.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

I don't know what to say.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Since freshmen week was a bust I've got an elaborate plan that will turn things around.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Does it include a lot of manual labour?

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)

So much. So much manual labour.

ERIN (SPARROW)

(sarcastic)

It's for the good of the club, remember.

GARRY (PIGEON)

Not that we're complaining!

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
 Well it is for the good of the club!
 You all are just being poor sports.

Lauren adds her pamphlets to the pile of finished pamphlets.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 Sorry.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
 I would have thought we'd do better
 than that. But no matter, there's a
 freshmen welcoming party or something
 tonight.

Augustus gestures in confusion as if he doesn't understand
 what a party is.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)
 These hand-crafted pamphlets will be
 sure to win over any party goers.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 Don't we have a colour copier in the
 cabin?

The masked members snap their heads to look at Augustus.

10 INT. CABIN - EVENING

10

AUGUSTUS sits beside a copying machine grabbing and folding
 paper as it's copied. His eagle mask sits beside him.

The interior is a single large room made of dark wood with a
 staircase at the back. The staircase leads to an upper
 catwalk-like ring around the room lined with doors to more
 rooms. There is a central table that LAUREN is leaning
 against and is covered in miscellaneous bird watching
 supplies.

AUGUSTUS
 I was just trying to make it a team
 effort. I think this party is a fool
 proof plan.

LAUREN
 Ya but a freshman party? Isn't that a
 little bit outside our target
 demographic?

Lauren grabs a completed pamphlet.

AUGUSTUS

Grim times call for grim measures.

LAUREN

These turned out really good actually.

AUGUSTUS

Erin did the drawings, they're spot on.

LAUREN looks over a pamphlet promoting The Society of Birdwatchers. There are hand drawn birds in most of them as well as some photos.

GARRY (PIGEON)

I took some of the photos, see?

GARRY comes up behind Lauren and points on the pamphlet. He takes his pigeon mask off.

LAUREN

Very nice.

AUGUSTUS

Do you have space for all these in your bag?

Lauren looks to the large completed stack of pamphlets.

Garry steps backwards dramatically to avoid the conversation.

LAUREN

I would, uh, rather not go. I already tried handing them out. Doesn't anyone else want to go?

GARRY (O.S.)

I already said no.

AUGUSTUS

We need you to persuade some of the youth Lauren. I will be attending and so is Erin. Plus... a party is a party.

Augustus can't even seem to convince himself to go.

LAUREN

I don't like parties.

AUGUSTUS

Right.

LAUREN

(interrupted)

C'mon, they're loud, dark, and I
always feel like I have to...

11 INT. SOMEONE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

11

LAUREN is standing in a corner with AUGUSTUS.

AUGUSTUS

(yelling)

SEE THIS ISN'T HALF BAD.

LAUREN

SURE.

ERIN is in the middle of the room reverse pick-pocketing a bunch of pamphlets to freshmen.

Lauren looks around seeing a group of people playing card games in a corner among them is the boy from the school parking lot; WESLEY.

Something like *Forever Young* by *Alphaville* is playing.

Lauren looks excited but nervous.

Wesley turns to see Lauren.

They share a look.

Wesley does a slight gesture with his head towards the kitchen.

Lauren works to brush aside her nerves and does a small quick nod.

LAUREN

I'M GOING TO GET A DRINK.

Lauren heads towards the kitchen of the house, she pushes past party goers.

Augustus scans the party and sees *The Crows*, the leather clad students doing keg stand.

His brow furrows and he moves to find Erin.

AUGUSTUS
 ERIN, I REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE
 HAVE TO LEAVE THIS PARTY.

He points towards *The Crows*. A CROW CAW pierces through the party music.

Erin nods.

12 INT. SOMEONE'S KITCHEN

12

LAUREN stands amidst a sea of drinks.

She's startled from behind.

WESLEY
 (calmly)
 Hello.

LAUREN
 (a bit too condescending)
 Aren't you a bit old to be at a
 freshmen party?

WESLEY
 (startled and confused)
 Uh, I'm sorry.

Wesley starts to slide away.

Lauren speaks up a little louder than she intended.

LAUREN
 HEY.

She nods with her head for him to come back over.

LAUREN
 Relax, I'm messing with you.

Wesley stares ahead.

WESLEY
 Sorry, I didn't want to assume.

Both of them are awkwardly deep in thought, trying to find something to say to each other.

WESLEY (CONT'D)
 I'm in your biology class, I don't
 know if you remember.

LAUREN

Yea, yes of course.

WESLEY

Doesn't that make you a little old to be at a freshman party?

LAUREN

(smiling)

I'm just here recruiting for a club.

WESLEY

Wow that sounds really shitty. I'm sorry.

LAUREN

It's a good club, I just don't like...

WESLEY

(interrupting)

Are you trying to recruit me? Trust me, I know all the tactics. Feel free to use them on the 'freshies'. Oh. So long as it's not the S.O.B.s.

LAUREN

What? The Society of Birdwatchers?

WESLEY

Ya uh, they're posh. I've heard.

Wesley is out of his depth and not ready to dig into the club.

LAUREN

You've heard?

WESLEY

Ya other people have mentioned. I don't really know. Sorry, I'm nervous.

There's a pause. Lauren slowly moves her hand over to hold Wesley's.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Wanna dance?

A third hand is placed on top, it belongs to Erin.

ERIN

Hello, I'm afraid this party isn't

quite up to Augustus's standards.

LAUREN
Are you two leaving?

ERIN
As soon as I finish my drink.

Lauren glances at Wesley.

LAUREN
Tell Augustus I can get us to the quota.

ERIN
Seriously?

LAUREN
Yes, I promise. You can probably move your hand now.

ERIN
All right, see ya soon!

Erin leaves. Lauren and Wesley sit for a moment.

CUT TO

13 INT. HOUSE PARTY BEDROOM - NIGHT

13

LAUREN and WESLEY are lying in bed together.

Lauren looks around at posters and various knick-knacks.

LAUREN
Who's room is this?

WESLEY
Mine. You thought?

LAUREN
(continuing the sentence)
That we went into a random room. I was feeling rebellious for a minute there.

WESLEY
Sorry to break the illusion. My club wanted a place to hang out with some of the new kids.

LAUREN

So you are interested in clubs.

WESLEY

I cut myself off after joining club number seven.

LAUREN

Holy shit. So you're too interested in clubs.

WESLEY

(jokingly)

Definitely, but I'm not joining whatever one you're trying to sell. I think I got caught up in all the tri-folds and lost my mind a little bit.

LAUREN

I think club week is starting to grow on me too.

WESLEY

I'm sure you've got to get at least a few recruits tonight though. You did promise that strange person earlier.

LAUREN

Don't remind me. I hate parties.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I better see you in biology.

WESLEY

Are you kidding me? I wouldn't skip it now.

Lauren rolls off the bed.

14 EXT. FOREST - MORNING

14

LAUREN, in a cardinal mask is crouched behind a log.

Beside her an eagle head, AUGUSTUS, pops up.

They both lift up some binoculars.

They adjust focus to get a better look.

A pause.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Wow.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Great feather density for a Magpie.
Are you getting this?

Augustus blindly swats behind searching for CROW.

CROW

Yea, wouldn't miss it.

Crow is jotting down some information in a little notebook packed to the margin with notes and doodles.

He smoothly brings up a pair of binoculars with one hand peers through and then turns back to his notebook.

Augustus takes out his own notes which consist of a carefully designed hand out with a variety of fill-in-the-blank sections printed on a thick card stock.

He makes a couple ticks.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Lauren? You're not taking notes?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

I met a guy.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

(sarcastically)

No way. And he stole your notebook?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

That's not what I said at all.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

(laughs)

Obviously, wait, he was attending that party wasn't he? Erin said you were staying to hand out pamphlets.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

I mean, yes. He's nice. Also he's in my biology class.

CROW

Wait is this *the* guy?

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

The guy?

CROW

The guy, the only guy she's ever mentioned to us.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

I like him.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Hang on, have you ever talked to him before?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

No but he recognized me.

CROW

Ooo.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Ooo. That doesn't bode well, given the information this may have just been a one time event.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

No way, he definitely...

Lauren trails off.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Shit. Why would you say that!

CROW

For all we know maybe he's thinking you thought it was only a one time event.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Sorry. I'm just trying to save you from unnecessary heartbreak in your very near future.

Lauren playfully tosses her backpack at Augustus.

It explodes into a flurry of pamphlets.

Lauren is mortified.

15 EXT. CABIN FRONT - MORNING

15

CROW is sitting down neatly folding a pile of pamphlets.

AUGUSTUS is pacing the deck, LAUREN leans against the cabin wall looking sheepish.

AUGUSTUS

Did you hand out any pamphlets?

LAUREN

The party didn't have the right atmosphere.

AUGUSTUS

You're certainly right about that.

A crow CAWS in the distance.

CROW

Not even that guy?

LAUREN

He wasn't interested, said we were all too posh.

Augustus shrugs.

AUGUSTUS

I'll be the first to admit the general atmosphere around here can be a bit stuffy but that can't be helped. You know what. We'll be okay without the recruits. In fact, I just got a letter from the faculty.

There's a pause.

Augustus stands tall, waiting for someone.

AUGUSTUS

(under his breath)

Crow. Come on.

CROW

Damn it, sorry, I forgot the cue.

Crow makes a distinct BIRD CALL.

Abruptly the door behind them opens and BARTHOLOMEW steps out wearing a bird mask and holding a cup of coffee.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
Top of the morning to you!

AUGUSTUS
You're up early for a night owl.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
I'm a morning person.

AUGUSTUS
Oh, sorry I just kind of assumed
because, you know.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
It's cool.

Bartholomew raises his coffee to drink but it hits his mask.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
Shit.

He takes his mask off.

The other Society members have gathered around the deck.

LAUREN
Hi Garry. Hi Erin.

ERIN
Howdy.

Garry salutes.

In the distance EMILY is running from the gate.

The S.O.B. wait.

And wait.

And wait.

LAUREN
Do you want to maybe explain what
we're...

AUGUSTUS
Nah, we can wait.

Emily runs.

The S.O.B.s wait.

Emily arrives.

AUGUSTUS

Alright! Hi everyone, happy Saturday.
We have just received, yesterday, this
letter from the *faculty*. Ahem.

He looks around at everyone, raising his eye brows.

Augustus produces a letter.

AUGUSTUS

Again, from the faculty so, kind of an
important document here. "Dear Society
of Birdwatchers, After careful
consideration we, the faculty, deem it
both unnecessary as well as
financially irresponsible to be
running two clubs dedicated to the
observation of birds and we request
you make adjustments in order to
continue operating. The letter has
been duplicated and sent to *The Crows*.
P.S. We suggest, in addition, the
possibility of combining clubs. Should
no change be exhibited we will be
forced to disband both groups."

Augustus slowly trails off, folds the letter and puts it in
his pocket.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Definitely should have pre-read that.

Augustus quickly turns and enters the cabin.

GARRY

They didn't even call it bird
watching.

Lauren quickly follows Augustus into the cabin.

16 INT. CABIN - MORNING

16

AUGUSTUS is more quickly pacing inside the cabin.

AUGUSTUS

Are you shitting me? What gives them
the right.

LAUREN

Can I see the letter.

Augustus rips it out of his pocket and shoves it towards Lauren.

AUGUSTUS

We're miles more refined than those idiot crows, hell I'm not even sure they watch birds.

Crow slowly walks into the room.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

If the faculty knew what happened.

Augustus points at Crow.

Lauren steps in and pushes his hand down.

LAUREN

We've already been down that road okay. The school made their decision.

AUGUSTUS

The wrong one. Not even a suspension for Christ's sake. That can't be legal.

LAUREN

At the very least it's not moral but we can't fix that. We can fix this.

She waves the letter.

AUGUSTUS

Well we're not joining up with The Crows that's for damn sure.

CROW

(quietly)

We could work something out.

AUGUSTUS

No, Crow, come on we can't. I won't do that to you, it's not fair.

LAUREN

He's right. There's got to be another solution. My biology prof. is a member of the faculty, I can see if there's

something he can do.

17 INT. LECTURE HALL

17

The hall is sparsely filled with different pockets of students clumping together in established cliques.

LAUREN scribbles more notes about birds in her book with the heading "BIOLOGY 304".

WESLEY hops over the seats behind her and into a chair.

WESLEY

Sup, keener.

He slaps down a book filled with equally complex notes.

WESLEY

Just kidding.

LAUREN

Oh, pfft, these aren't mine. I hired these genius freshman to do all my class work.

WESLEY

Decent. For them that is.

LAUREN

It would be, I'm a bit too detailed otherwise I might give that a shot.

WESLEY

I would like to know how you've got pages of notes done before the professor even shows up.

LAUREN

It's for my club.

WESLEY

Ah, you're pretty dedicated to that. What is it anyways, you never said?

LAUREN

I thought you weren't interested.

WESLEY

Not interested in joining but I can't say I'm not curious.

Wesley peers over at Lauren's notes.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

You do seem to have an affinity for birds.

LAUREN

I remember seeing you at that lecture as well. I have a suspicion you have an affinity for them as well.

Lauren closes her notebook slowly.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I want to write for a magazine or something one day. Maybe a small home grown nature focused monthly.

WESLEY

Sorry, I don't want to pry.

LAUREN

(coyly)

Just making sure you don't cheat.

WESLEY

Well, it must be nice to have your future all figured out. Take me with you?

LAUREN

Are you serious?

WESLEY

Sure, why not, I like you Lauren.

LAUREN

I like you too.

They stay at each other for a moment, unsure of what to do.

They shake hands.

18 INT. LECTURE HALL

18

LAUREN approaches the PROFESSOR at the end of class.

The other students exit.

WESLEY is packing up his things.

LAUREN
Hello, Professor?

PROFESSOR
Hi Lauren. Any suggestions for this lecture? Perhaps it would have been more coherent if I had it held in a tree?

LAUREN
No sir. And, I do apologize for the other day.

Lauren pauses and breathes in deeply trying to appear extra professional.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
As a member of the faculty I wanted to ask you a club related question.

PROFESSOR
Okay.

Lauren quickly glances over to Wesley.

LAUREN
I'm a member of The Society of Birdwatchers. We just got a...

PROFESSOR
...letter from the faculty and we've deemed the two bird watching clubs...

He gesticulates.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
... To be redundant and an unfruitful waste of school resources. It went something like that right?

LAUREN
That was basically it. What do you mean unfruitful?

The Professor presses his hands together.

PROFESSOR
Yes. Lauren, we have dozens of clubs, almost all of which are not only larger than the S.O.B.s, bad acronym by the way, or *The Crows* but the key

is they also provide something meaningful to our campus. The television studio broadcasts in the cafeteria, the baking club puts on fundraisers to raise awareness for various causes, the chess club represents us on a national stage.

LAUREN

I understand.

PROFESSOR

I'm glad. Unless you're able to contribute something meaningful to our campus the faculty won't see any reason to support the clubs. It's as simple as that I'm afraid.

The Professor turns around and leaves, the lecture hall is empty.

19 EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - DAY

19

LAUREN is by the trunk of her car staring at her carefully prepared bird watching items.

She grabs her mask and puts it on.

20 EXT. A FOREST FENCE GATE - DAY

20

LAUREN passes through the gate.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)

Identification...?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

It's Garry.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)

Proceed!

She stops for a moment.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)

Hey, wait!

21 EXT. PATH TO THE CABIN - DAY

21

LAUREN walks towards the cabin. A piece of wood flies past her face.

Lauren freezes.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Wow.

BARTHOLOMEW is chopping wood. He stands still.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)

Shit, sorry Lauren.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

It's okay.

Lauren continues towards the cabin. Crow is rocking back and forth in a chair on the deck.

CROW

So did you solve everything for us or what?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Get this, the solution is easy; we gotta do something.

CROW

What?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Apparently the faculty doesn't think we're doing enough for the school.

CROW

Better tell that to Augustus.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Why's that?

CROW

(Sighs)

He's trying to organize a Birdmonton tournament with Richard. A sort of winner takes all kind of deal.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Oh great.

Lauren walks to the door. Crow opens a book.

CROW

Best of luck.

22 INT. CABIN

22

LAUREN walks into the main room of the cabin, she glances around to see the central table covered in drawings of birds.

ERIN pops out behind Lauren. She takes off her cardinal mask.

LAUREN

Hi Erin.

ERIN

Howdy. So which do you like best?

LAUREN

They're all really good. Where's Augustus?

Up on the second floor AUGUSTUS is passing between rooms.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

The eagle is best.

LAUREN

What?

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

The eagle painting. It's the best one.

LAUREN

Augustus, we need to...

Lauren is about to say something else but Augustus slips into a room and closes the door.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

...talk.

Lauren moves to go after him but Erin stops her.

ERIN

I'm putting together a portfolio for art school.

Lauren checks in to the conversation and picks up a picture.

LAUREN

These are excellent. I think you're a shoe in.

ERIN

Score. Garry is developing some

photos, wanna watch?

Lauren looks up towards the room Augustus entered.

23 INT. DARKROOM - DARK

23

ERIN and LAUREN stand behind GARRY who is enlarging some photos.

He lifts up a print.

GARRY

This one is out of focus but that's okay.

Erin and Lauren tilt their heads.

LAUREN

I think you're holding it upside down.

Garry tilts his head.

GARRY

Oh yea.

ERIN

Lauren, is the club getting shut down?

LAUREN

I don't know

GARRY

We're worried.

ERIN

Augustus has a plan though right?

LAUREN

I'm not sure he does. Something like a plan but not a real plan. I have a real plan.

24 INT. CABIN

24

The S.O.B.s are gathered around the table munching on trail mix.

The sound of CRUNCHING is deafening.

AUGUSTUS

So I've got something like a plan.

Hey, that's not birdseed is it?

EMILY

It's trail mix.

AUGUSTUS realizes everyone is eating some.

AUGUSTUS

Where did this all come from? Never mind that, in order to solve this whole looming club shut down I have called a game for of Birdmonton with *The Crows*.

ERIN

How is Birdmonton going to save the club?

BARTHOLOMEW

We haven't played in months, my swinging arm is probably pretty rusty.

LAUREN

Augustus I talked to my Professor, I know what we can do.

AUGUSTUS

Is it something we can do within the next 24 hours?

LAUREN

Not exactly.

AUGUSTUS

(dismissive)

Well in that case I've already made the appropriate field bookings for Birdmonton. The faculty said in their letter that it was unnecessary to have two clubs. If there was just one this wouldn't be an issue. So, we're going to play *The Crows*, beat them, and then they'll be forced to disband their club.

LAUREN

And if we lose?

AUGUSTUS

We won't. But say we did we would, you know, be forced to disband instead.

LAUREN

We're betting the future of the club
on a single game of Birdmonton?

The club MURMURS with shared concern.

AUGUSTUS

Best of three.

The club MURMURS indicating this is much better idea.

25 INT. CABIN - DAY

25

A VHS tape with a label reading "Birdmonton Rules - In Case
You Ever Forget" is put into a player.

26 EXT. NEAR THE BIRDMONTON PLAY AREA - DAY

26

BARTHOLOMEW has set up an old camcorder and is standing in
front of it with a small microphone. ERIN stands behind
camera with a script in hand.

What follows is the narration for a "how to video" on
Birdmonton.

BARTHOLOMEW

Hey everyone so um. Ya. My name is
Bartholomew, long name, I know. And
you! You're someone who wants to know
how to play Birdmonton. Well, boy oh
boy let me tell you it's a tricky game
and I don't want you to get confused
so let me give you the basic rules.

Bartholomew looks off camera for a minute.

BARTHOLOMEW

HEY! WE CAN HEAR YOU EATING TRAIL MIX
OFF CAMERA.

Bartholomew picks up a racket and shows it off to the camera.

BARTHOLOMEW

This. Is a racket. You could use a
badminton racket, a tennis racket, a
racquetball racket, heck, maybe even a
ping pong paddle.

There's some MUFFLED DIALOGUE from Erin off camera.

BARTHOLOMEW

No? You don't think so? I swear that one time Crow was using a ping pong paddle. Well it was a really small racket in that case. Can I see the script?

HARD CUT

27 EXT. FOREST - DAY

27

BARTHOLOMEW

So listen, the point of the game. Well the set up for the game. You've got two teams okay, kinda like baseball. The goal of the game is to hit the opposing bird with the bird ball without them seeing you. If they see you BAM.

He swings the racket and hits the camera.

HARD CUT AS IF NOTHING HAPPENED

BARTHOLOMEW (CONT'D)

They can deflect the ball. Now, there are three kind of deflections in Birdmonton. Direct, indirect and intentionally indirect. Got it? Great. If you end up with the bird ball and you're on the strike team you just gotta go for another throw but if you get the ball on the rebound team, so long as it's intentionally indirect, now you have to get the bird ball back to the back base before those bad birds bop your brain.

A long pause.

BARTHOLOMEW

Alright that's part one. Flip over the tape, oh, that's just cassettes right. Next tape will be on scoring, score rings, and HEY GET OUT OF THE SHOT.

28 EXT. CABIN FRONT - DAY

28

AUGUSTUS and LAUREN are having a heated, inaudible talk.

29 EXT. BIRDMONTON FIELD - DAY

29

The Society of Birdwatchers have arrived at the Birdmonton space which is really just a baseball diamond backing onto a forest.

The S.O.B. are wearing masks and prepping for the game looking not unlike *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* by Georges Seurat.

Lauren is doing some stretches with Crow on a bench while they wait for the other team to arrive.

CROW

I tried to talk him out of it.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Same, I swear, I was getting to him. I have a bad feeling about this whole thing.

CROW

(strongly hinting)

Oh. Yes. Shockingly me too, which is why... maybe the third time is a charm.

Crow points towards Augustus with the beak of his mask.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Three times is a lot. I mean I wouldn't mind playing Birdmonton.

Crow does his best to look stern while wearing a mask.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Ugh, I'll talk to him.

Lauren turns to talk to Augustus just as a blue truck rolls up to the diamond.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Shit, that's suspiciously convenient.

CROW

They do tend to have incredible timing.

The truck grinds to a halt in a cloud of dust and half a dozen of *The Crows* hop out of the back and approach the field.

As they approach it's clear they're all wearing paper mache crow masks with abysmal craftsmanship in comparison to the Society.

Augustus moves towards the oncoming gang.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Richard. What the hell are you doing.

RICHARD

Augustus. Eagle boy. Nothing obviously, we're just here to play a fun little bit of Birdmonton like you asked.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Don't play dumb. I'm referencing your masks. It's disrespectful and you know it.

RICHARD

Oh, I'm sorry, didn't mean to hurt the birds feelings.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

You know what I'm talking about. What is your endgame here? Throwing us off?

Richard steps closer to Augustus.

RICHARD

Look bud. You asked us to come play some Birdmonton so here we are, ready to play some Birdmonton. We're totally chill if you just want to forfeit though. Oh wait, this isn't just a regular, friendly game of Birdmonton though, is it?

Richard pulls out a letter from the faculty out of his leather jacket pocket.

Augustus glances back at Crow, Lauren approaches.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Dick, just take the masks off.

RICHARD

(sarcastic)

Awe but we made them ourselves.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
Take them off.

RICHARD
No.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
Fine.

Augustus and Lauren turn and walk back towards the Society.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
You had better prepare your murder.

RICHARD
(taken aback)
What? Lauren, we're not going to
murder anyone.

Lauren stops and turns around.

She starts approaching Richard in order to explain.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
No I meant because you're a group
of...

RICHARD
Oh. Right! Yea crows. Totally, because
we're all together in a *flock* or
whatever.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
That is what I was implying.

Augustus walks back to The S.O.B..

He passes by Crow.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
(To Lauren)
Let's kick their asses.

Lauren walks over to Crow.

Crow lowers his head and the begins talking, too quiet for
anyone to hear.

Augustus joins the conversation.

Augustus pats Crow on the shoulder and then turns to the

Society.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Alright, winner takes all, sort of.

You already know what's at stake.

Let's do this.

HARD CUT TO

30 EXT. BIRDMONTON FIELD 30

MONTAGE

The game of Birdmonton begins.

Armed with rackets the Society runs past the boundary of the baseball diamond and into the forest.

Augustus takes an extra beat to point his racket at Richard.

The Society disappears past the outfield and into the trees.

The Crows slam a black flag into the baseball diamond.

Richard pours out a bag of brightly coloured balls.

31 EXT. FOREST - DAY 31

Lauren tears through the brush.

32 EXT. BIRDMONTON FIELD - DAY 32

The Crows charge out of the baseball diamond into the forest, brightly coloured balls in hand.

33 EXT. FOREST - DAY 33

GARRY moves quietly through the underbrush.

A ball WHISTLES through the trees and hits his mask.

He's knocked over. There's harsh LAUGHTER heard in the trees.

34 EXT. FOREST - DAY 34

ERIN and EMILY are running through the forest.

A CROW baseball slides and trips ERIN.

Emily stops a few paces away and listens to the surroundings.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)
Fowl play!

There's a NOISE from the trees behind her.

Emily whips around and swings her racket deflecting a ball into the underbrush.

ERIN (SPARROW)
3 O'clock!

Emily turns again and swings again.

The ball is deflected again but this time Erin catches it.

ERIN (SPARROW)
Yes!

She gets up and starts running again.

A CROW runs past Emily and shoulder checks her.

35 EXT. FOREST - DAY

35

BARTHOLOMEW disappears around a tree.

RICHARD grips a ball.

LAUREN slides under a log.

Silence.

Lauren slowly peaks her head up from behind a bush.

Across from her, hiding among some other trees she see's what looks like Richard's crow mask.

She notes that something is wrong, the mask is oddly still.

The thought is interrupted by a SNAP to her left.

Augustus moves slowly through the brush. He takes note of the crow mask, facing the other direction.

Lauren slinks down, out of view.

LAUREN
(whispering)
Augustus!

Augustus moves closer to take a look, racket in hand when

suddenly Richard CRASHES in, mask off, and tackles Augustus to the ground, Augustus's eagle mask goes flying.

AUGUSTUS
You're violating the rules!

RICHARD
This is a made up game.

AUGUSTUS
All games are made up games!

Richard takes his game ball and hits Augustus in the head with it.

RICHARD
Well. You've been bopped.

Augustus shoves Richard off of him.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
And I'm pretty sure I made most of the rules anyways!

Richard quickly gets up and moves to take another kick at Augustus but Lauren grabs him from behind and shoves him backwards.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
STOP IT. Both of you are acting like children.

Augustus and Richard avoid looking at each other.

RICHARD
Why do you hang out with this guy Lauren?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
Maybe because he treats me and his friends like real people. Mask or not.

RICHARD
Mm, how could I forget. It's still silly.

Richard snatches his crow mask from the bushes.

Lauren turns her cardinal masked head and looks at Augustus.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 Now let's stop this stupid game and
 start booking the Birdmonton field
 like regular people. You know, for
 Birdmonton. Not for brawls.

RICHARD
 Fine.

Richard starts to limp through the forest.

AUGUSTUS
 Stay off our property!

RICHARD
 Well. Keep away from our trailers!

AUGUSTUS
 We've got a cabin, who cares!

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 Useless.

36 EXT. BIRDMONTON FIELD - DAY

36

RICHARD emerges from the tree line.

LAUREN and AUGUSTUS follow behind.

Richard punts his crow mask.

RICHARD
 Pack it up gang. We're done here.

The Crows start to make their way back to the truck.

ERIN (SPARROW)
 Did we win?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 No one won Erin. It's going to be a
 draw.

The Crows start to board the truck.

RICHARD
 Have a nice life losers!

Richard slams the drivers side door shut and starts the
 engine.

Lauren scoffs and turns back to the society.

On the truck a member of *The Crows* removes his mask revealing himself to be WESLEY.

Wesley looks at the floor of the truck.

Lauren catches a brief glimpse of Wesley before the truck rounds a corner. He does not see her.

She removes her mask and stares in disbelief.

37 INT. DINER - DAY

37

LAUREN and WESLEY are sitting at a diner.

Wesley is enjoying his food while Lauren is nervously playing with hers.

She is creating a small catapult out of cutlery and loading it with a piece of french fry. Wesley watches intently.

WESLEY

Are you going to eat anything?

Ready to fire, Lauren looks up to Wesley and aims at him.

The smirk leaves Wesley's face and he gives Lauren a stern glare.

Lauren shifts her aim slightly the catapult and fires.

It bounces off the head of a nearby PATRON who turns to Wesley.

WESLEY

Ma'am. I am so sorry.

A look of concern suddenly crosses Lauren's face.

Wesley turns back to Lauren and gives another look.

Lauren quickly puts on a smile.

LAUREN

I've got a question.

WESLEY

I will answer it if you promise to not get me kicked out of this place.

LAUREN

No promises. I've just been thinking about the S.O.B.s.

Wesley munches on some french fries.

WESLEY

Why's that? I heard they got shut down.

LAUREN

Pretty sure that's a rumour. What do you have against them?

WESLEY

Um, nothing I guess. I've just heard a lot about how they're exclusive...

LAUREN

Elitist, posh, yea I've heard that as well.

WESLEY

What are you getting at?

LAUREN

I've got an affinity for birds. I thought it would be nice to go and watch them. We could maybe do it together?

WESLEY

So you're thinking of joining the S.O.B.s? They actually just watch birds all day?

LAUREN

So I'm told. Isn't that what...

Lauren catches herself.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I mean there's The Crows as well but I'm not sure I'd like wearing a leather jacket all summer.

WESLEY

I don't think they watch birds either.

Lauren raises an eyebrow.

WESLEY (CONT'D)
It's just something I've heard.

Lauren prepares her food catapult again.

LAUREN
You've sure heard a lot of things.

WESLEY
(nervous)
Yes. Please. Please don't.

38 EXT. DINER - DAY

38

LAUREN is laughing as she exits the diner with WESLEY.

WESLEY
I liked that place! Too bad I'll never
get the chance to go back.

Wesley wags a finger at Lauren.

LAUREN
(jokingly)
I didn't think the eggs were that good
personally.

They near Lauren's car.

She enters.

Wesley makes his way to the rear.

WESLEY
Can I put my bag in the trunk?

Lauren pops the trunk open.

She suddenly freezes remembering the contents.

The trunk shuts.

She sits staring forwards as Wesley sits down beside her.

There's a pause.

WESLEY
There's a cardinal mask in your trunk.

Lauren stares forward.

LAUREN

Yes. There was probably one back there.

WESLEY

So. Uh, yea.

Lauren takes a big breath out.

LAUREN

I'm in The Society of Birdwatchers.

WESLEY

Naturally. You could have told me instead of giving me the third degree.

LAUREN

I was trying to be cool.

WESLEY

I mean it's fine. I like birds too.

Wesley shrugs.

LAUREN

How do you feel about Birdmonton.

WESLEY

It's alright we just had a sort of rough... oh.

Lauren looks at Wesley in disbelief.

LAUREN

Why on earth would you choose *The Crows* over the S.O.B.?

WESLEY

I wanted to be in *one* of the bird-watching clubs, you know, increase my roster and their signup process didn't require me to memorize a bunch of rules.

LAUREN

Right, I get it.

They sit in silence for a moment.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I'll drive you home.

39 EXT. CABIN FRONT - LATE DAY

39

We see *The Crow's* trailers through binocular lenses.

On the deck of the cabin, AUGUSTUS peers, his gaze unflinching.

Behind him Lauren leans out the cabin door.

LAUREN

Is he plotting anything sinister.

Augustus sighs.

AUGUSTUS

No. Only their standard anti-aviary nonsense.

Augustus spits in their direction.

LAUREN

You gotta ignore them Augustus. Look at me.

AUGUSTUS

What is it?

LAUREN

There's no way the faculty is going to choose them over us.

AUGUSTUS

How do you know though?

LAUREN

Because that isn't what the letter said, that's just how you interpreted it. You saw what you wanted to see in it but what it's really saying is that they're going to shut both clubs down.

AUGUSTUS

Preposterous.

LAUREN

I promise it's true. Read the letter again. Also I was trying to tell you earlier but I talked to my prof and he said the same thing. We need a plan and I've got one.

She pops back inside.

Augustus doesn't move.

She pops back out.

LAUREN

We are having a meeting. Did you not see everyone walk inside? C'mon.

40 INT. CABIN - LATE DAY

40

AUGUSTUS slowly enters the cabin, keeping to the walls.

Lauren is at the head of the table.

LAUREN

So obviously that game didn't quite work out the way we intended but that doesn't matter, we don't need to beat The Crows in a game of Birdmonton to show them we're the best birdwatchers.

EMILY

We just need to watch more birds!

BARTHOLOMEW

Do they even watch birds?

ERIN

How would we be able to prove that?

EMILY

I mean I keep a tally of birds I've seen in my notebook.

An insert of a notebook page that's otherwise blank except for a corner crammed with dash marks.

ERIN

You could literally just write anything in there though.

Emily gasps as if that is an impossible action.

LAUREN

Not quite but you're on the right track. They need *hard evidence*. We need to *show* the faculty what we do and what we learn here at the club.

Lauren searches around the table and lands on Garry.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Garry, you take great photographs.
Augustus, you're a whiz at maps and
tracking.

Garry smiles and puffs his chest.

Augustus crosses his arms but is clearly listening.

ERIN

I've done some pretty good bird
paintings.

CROW

I conduct a lot of experiments. And
Lauren, you've written some great bird
articles.

Lauren nods, appreciative. She looks around the table for any
one that was left out.

LAUREN

And Emily you've got organizational
skills to keep track of all of this.
We create value all the time as part
of the club and if we show that to the
faculty there's no way they'd disband
the S.O.B..

The club members look hopeful.

BARTHOLOMEW

Our club acronym still stands for son
of a bitch.

Everyone turns to Bartholomew.

BARTHOLOMEW

Sorry I thought these were like
suggestions to make the club better.

41 EXT. FOREST - DAY

41

LAUREN and CROW are watching a bird from a vantage point in
the forest.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

It's more of a "cruck" than a "crawk".

CROW
Cruck! Cruck!

A raven CALLS from within the trees.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
It's a bit more raspy even. I'll write
that down.

CROW
What's the other one though? Not the
cruck or the crawk.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
The *tawk*, it's kind of metallic
sounding.

Lauren scribbles some notes.

42 EXT. FENCE LINE - DAY

42

GARRY, EMILY, and BARTHOLOMEW are trying to pose for a
photograph.

They stand a fair distance apart and have to yell in order to
be properly heard.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
MY LEFT OR YOUR LEFT?

GARRY (PIGEON)
YOUR LEFT.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)
AND THEN LIKE. WHERE IS THE TEXT
GOING?

Emily does a large gesture.

GARRY (PIGEON)
DON'T POINT AT IT. WE'LL ADD IT LATER.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
I THINK WE JUST WANT TO KNOW WHERE IT
IS, IN THE PHOTO.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)
YA THEN WE COULD PLAY WITH THE SPACE
YOU KNOW.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)

YA.

Garry ponders this for a moment.

GARRY (PIGEON)

SURE, OKAY SO EMILY YOU'RE GOING TO
WANT TO COME A FEW PACES TOWARDS ME.

43 EXT. FOREST HILLSIDE - SUNSET

43

ERIN and AUGUSTUS are sitting together as the sun sets.

Augustus is using some measurement tools to draw out a map of the area. Their masks sit beside them.

Erin is dipping into some paints and is recreating the landscape on a canvas.

They sit in silence for a while.

AUGUSTUS

I feel as though the faculty won't properly appreciate this piece.

ERIN

Well think of it like an investment. I guess. We'll do more stuff together. I'll paint more paintings and you'll do more maps.

AUGUSTUS

Sure, I keep feeling as if we're doing this because we owe them some sort of debt. Which is false of course. Why can't we just be The Society of Birdwatchers?

Erin and Augustus sit still for a moment.

Erin dips her brush and starts painting again.

44 INT. DIVE BAR - EVENING

44

EMILY and one of *The Crows* are standing by a calendar labeled "Birdmonton" trying to work out practice dates.

A dimly lit bar seats the rest of the Crows, dressed in their standard dark clothes and leather jackets.

RICHARD
A pint please!

The bartender hands RICHARD a large glass of beer.

RICHARD
Hold the coaster.

Richard holds the glass up and looks down the bar.

RICHARD
Cheers!

THE CROWS
Cheers!

Richard takes a sip and passes it down the line.

Each of *The Crows* takes a drink until it reaches the end of the line, empty.

WESLEY enters the bar in a hurry and drops a load of books on the bar.

WESLEY
Sorry I thought you'd be at the trailers.

He looks down the bar at the unusually merry *Crows*.

WESLEY (CONT'D)
Are we celebrating something?

RICHARD
Of course man, the end of the club!

Everyone cheers.

Richard settles in and leans closer to Wesley.

RICHARD
Listen we've done well for ourselves, there's no way the faculty is going to keep us around. That Birdmorton game was really our only shot. Good thing Augustus is so insecure or else it never would have happened.

WESLEY
Right.

RICHARD

Way I see it we've milked the school
for all it's worth. Time to relax.

Wesley looks across the bar and sees EMILY at the calendar
discussing Birdmonton schedules with a crow.

WESLEY

Excuse me.

Wesley makes his way over to the calendar.

He puts his hand on *The Crow* and politely moves him aside.

WESLEY

Hey, I got this.

EMILY

Um. Okay. Hi.

WESLEY

So I have a question.

Wesley looks to make sure *The Crow* is out of ear shot.

He's not.

Wesley gestures again for him to leave.

WESLEY

Buzz off.

The Crow raises his hands in surrender and returns to the
bar.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

What do you have to do to join the
Society of Birdwatchers?

EMILY

You're a Crow?

WESLEY

Currently.

EMILY

Impossible then.

She shrugs.

WESLEY
Just like that?

EMILY
I'm sorry. It wouldn't fly.

WESLEY
Understood, forget about me.

He moves to leave hurriedly.

Richard watches Wesley leave the bar.

Wesley waves.

WESLEY
SORRY GOTTA GO STUDY!

Richard sees this then looks to Emily.

He pulls the nearest Crow over.

RICHARD
Get a pair of binoculars from the
binocular store or wherever you buy
binoculars. We need someone to keep an
eye on the Society.

45 EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - DAY

45

LAUREN, is standing on the edge of the highway.

WESLEY drives up in a car and turns off the engine.

Lauren walks up to the side of the vehicle.

LAUREN
I thought you were picking me up?

WESLEY
Not really. I was hoping you might be
able to show me what the Society is
all about.

Lauren stares deeply into Wesley eyes trying to find some
hidden meaning.

LAUREN
Really. What about *The Crows*, I
thought they were the better club.

WESLEY

No. No I just said that I didn't like the S.O.B.s.

LAUREN

Do you really though or were you just told that you shouldn't?

Wesley moves his back pack in the front seat and reveals a smashed paper mache crow head.

Lauren looks up to Wesley.

WESLEY

Joining the crows was a mistake, and I'm sorry I was rude to you about The Society.

LAUREN

So you don't hate us!

WESLEY

I don't hate you. And I'm not sure what I think about the Society.

LAUREN

And you don't like the Crows.

WESLEY

I *honestly* just like birds, that's why I joined a club in the first place but the more I hang around them the more I realize *The Crows* just sit around and brood.

CUT TO

46	INT. HARDWARE STORE	46
	<i>The Crows</i> purchase a mailbox.	
47	EXT. TRAILER CAMPGROUND - DAY	47
	<i>The Crows</i> smash the newly purchased mailbox.	
	<i>The Crows</i> bake a cake.	
	<i>The Crows</i> smash the cake with a shovel.	
	<i>The Crows</i> carefully string up a piñata.	

The Crows swing a bat and the piñata explodes with confetti.

48 EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - DAY

48

WESLEY

Mostly it's a lot of smashing things.

LAUREN

Wow. That sucks.

WESLEY

I know right.

He pauses for a moment.

WESLEY CONT'D

Can you teach me how to watch a bird?

Lauren makes a choice.

LAUREN

Does anyone else know you're a Crow?

WESLEY

The Woodpecker, as of like, 20 minutes ago. Don't ask.

LAUREN

Shit. We *do* have pretty strict rules.

WESLEY

Posh. Sorry.

LAUREN

(playful)

Shut up. We can do it. But we'll have to be careful.

49 EXT. FENCE LINE - DAY

49

LAUREN and WESLEY sneak towards the entrance gate.

EMILY is perched in the watchtower SINGING.

They move through the tall grass towards the fence.

Lauren easily sneaks through the barbed wire.

Wesley tries to sneak through but falls.

They both look up to see if they've been noticed.

Emily continues singing.

They sneak forward.

WESLEY
(Whispers)
You have a gate?

LAUREN
(Whispers)
Um, yes, that right there.

WESLEY
(Whispers)
That's what I mean.

LAUREN
(Whispers)
What?

WESLEY
(Whispers)
Posh.

Lauren jokingly throws a branch.

It misses Wesley and lands in the forest making a loud CRACK.

Emily continues singing.

50 EXT. CABIN FIELD - DAY

50

LAUREN hands WESLEY a pamphlet.

WESLEY
You know that these were all over my
house the day after the party.

LAUREN
It'll help. As you may have heard we
have three really important rules. The
first rule is always leave your mask
on while you're birdwatching.

WESLEY
Right cause everyone knows...

LAUREN & WESLEY
The best way to find birds is to be
like a bird.

WESLEY

I may have read through one of the pamphlets.

LAUREN

Perfect, so you must know that the more you look like a bird the better.

51 EXT. A DIFFERENT FENCE - DAY

51

LAUREN

The second rule is that we stay on Augustus' family property.

WESLEY

Well, it's pretty big.

A shot of a hand drawn map of the property. There's a small area marked as *The Crows* trailer park.

52 EXT. BEHIND THE CABIN - DAY

52

LAUREN

The third rule is that we leave the bird seed for the birds.

WESLEY

That's the third most important rule?

LAUREN

No, it's just third on the list. It goes on from there but those are the only ones we're required to memorize.

Wesley considers this.

LAUREN

Also our biggest expense is bird seed so it helps keep costs down.

There are VOICES from inside the cabin.

BARTHOLOMEW exits from the back of the cabin.

Lauren and Wesley both duck.

Bartholomew walks past and clearly sees Lauren.

BARTHOLOMEW

Hey Lauren. What are you doing in the woodpile?

LAUREN

Great question Bartholomew. I lost something.

BARTHOLOMEW

But you're lying on your back?

LAUREN

Yea. I gave up so now I'm just feeling sorry for myself.

BARTHOLOMEW

Right. Well, I hope you find what you're looking for.

LAUREN

Thanks.

Bartholomew grabs some wood and walks away.

Wesley sits up from behind a completely different wood pile.

WESLEY

I think I should go.

53 EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - LATE DAY

53

WESLEY

If I actually wanted to join. Is there a way that I could?

LAUREN

I can talk to Augustus and Crow. I'm sure they would understand. And if they don't it's not like *The Crows* are going to be around much longer anyways. That's not offensive right?

WESLEY

It's not.

LAUREN

I'll see you soon then.

WESLEY

Obviously.

They stand awkwardly for a moment.

They shake hands again.

54 EXT. FOREST - DAY

54

LAUREN is making her way back to the club.

Birds dart through the trees.

Some distance away there's a strange CALL.

Lauren's head snaps in that direction and she whips out a pair of binoculars.

There appears to be nothing in the trees.

The trees rustle, this time Lauren is looking but it's too far away to see anything clearly.

Lauren moves towards the movement slowly clutching her binoculars.

She comes to the edge of a small clearing.

To her left she notes something stuck in a tree.

Upon investigation it appears to be a white feather with a blue tip.

Instinctively Lauren reaches for her notebook to start writing when the sound of a BIRD LANDING behind her draws her attention.

She freezes in place and silently raises her binoculars while both turning and crouching; an experienced bird watcher maneuver.

She settles and her eyes rest on a swan sized bird with a bright blue head and beady red eyes perched on a log stump beautifully back lit by the setting sun.

In awe of the large bird Lauren puts down her binoculars.

She sits in silence and shares a moment alone with the bird.

Feeling sufficiently calm she takes out a pen.

The bird flies off.

Lauren exhales, clearly disappointed, she focuses past the stump.

A pair of binoculars stares back at her.

They belong to A CROW.

Both Lauren and the crow jerk to their feet and face each other, unsure of what to do.

The Crow darts into the forest.

Lauren turns and runs.

MONTAGE BEGINS

55 EXT. FOREST 55

The crow crashes through the forest.

56 EXT. FOREST 56

Lauren jumps through the trees.

57 EXT. FOREST 57

The crow jump over a fence.

She lands and continues running.

58 EXT. FOREST 58

Lauren skids onto the main path leading towards the cabin.

59 EXT. TRAILER CAMPGROUND 59

The crow runs into the clubs headquarters.

It's empty except for a few pieces of trash strewn about.

A sign reads "I'd rather be drinking".

The crow dashes off again.

END MONTAGE

60 INT. CABIN - SUNSET 60

LAUREN smashes through the front cabin doors coming face to face with BARTHOLOMEW.

She takes note having nearly knocked the door of it's hinges.

LAUREN

That was a bit more extreme than I had intended.

BARTHOLOMEW
What's the big deal?

Lauren moves through the cabin to some shelving.

LAUREN
One second, I'll show you.

CROW appears above and starts to make his way down.

CROW
What are you looking for Lauren?

LAUREN
A bird watching guide.

CROW
Oh, I've got one in my bag, let me...

LAUREN
No, no sorry, not a recent one. It
needs to be outdated.

ERIN and GARRY enter.

ERIN
What's the kerfuffle?

LAUREN
Hang on everyone!

Lauren pulls a book from out of a bookshelf, wheels around and slams it down on the table. It explodes in a cloud of dust.

Everyone coughs.

ERIN
What the heck. How is there so much
dust on that thing.

LAUREN
I went to a lecture series on rare and
extinct species of birds and I was in
the forest and I swear that I saw it
sitting in the birch stump just now.

Lauren settles on a page and points. The bird is on the page.

The society crowds in looking not unlike *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* by Rembrandt with everyone staring at

the once thought to be extinct bird.

LAUREN

That's it.

GARRY

You're sure?

LAUREN

Yes. Crow do you know what this could mean for the club? If we were the ones who discovered an extinct bird living here in our forest...

ERIN

It would save the club!

LAUREN

There's one problem though.

Abruptly , EMILY bursts into the cabin.

EMILY

Augustus!

She takes note of everyone.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Oh hey, what's everyone doing here?

AUGUSTUS appears above.

AUGUSTUS

Did someone call a meeting?

EMILY

Honestly I'm not sure, but I did just see a crow on our property.

ERIN

Also Lauren was telling us about one problem.

LAUREN

That was the problem.

AUGUSTUS

What?

Augustus starts to make his way to the main floor.

LAUREN

I saw the crow out in the woods. We both saw the bird at the same time. Emily's timing was just suspiciously convenient.

AUGUSTUS

Bastards, The Crows that is.

LAUREN

We just need to properly document it, it is on our property after all.

AUGUSTUS

What's to say they won't come back now. This is an opportunity, I doubt they'll just ignore it. We need to shut them down.

LAUREN

We don't need to talk to them. We just need proof.

A feather falls between Augustus and Lauren and lands on the book.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

The feather.

CROW

You found a feather?

Lauren frantically searches her pockets.

LAUREN

I saw one but then I saw *The Crow* and I must have left it.

AUGUSTUS

Grab the flashlights.

61 EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT

61

Flashlight beams search the darkened forest, peering into every nook and under every log.

LAUREN stands with her light pointed at the birch stump, kicking herself for not grabbing the feather before.

EMILY walks by.

EMILY
I checked there already.

62 INT. DIVE BAR - EVENING

62

WESLEY sits at the bar.

A drink is handed to him.

He takes a sip and then passes it on.

RICHARD sits at the end of the bar.

A crow, BLAIR, runs in very much out of breath.

RICHARD
Hey, you missed first call, if that happens one more time...

BLAIR
You asked me to spy on the society.

Blair takes a seat.

RICHARD
Oh right, sorry.

Blair takes out a white feather with a blue tip and presents it to Richard.

RICHARD
What is that?

BLAIR
I found this incredibly rare bird in the forest. If we can find it again there's no way the faculty will say no to us, we'll be guaranteed a club spot.

Richard takes the feather.

RICHARD
Holy shit. Is it that rare?

BLAIR
I looked it up on the world wide web. The bird is practically extinct. I'm telling you: life pass for the club.

RICHARD
Where can we find it?

BLAIR
It was on this old birch stump.

RICHARD
The old birch stump? That's in S.O.B. territory?!

There are general MURMURS from *The Crows* about The Stump.

BLAIR
Sorry.

RICHARD
If I know Augustus I'll be hearing about this.

A phone RINGS.

RICHARD
(to Blair)
Ugh. I'm pissed at you. I'm really glad you found this but I'm pissed.

Richard SLAMS his hand on the bar.

The BARTENDER comes out and presents a phone to Richard.

BARTENDER
Some dude on the phone is saying he's an eagle wants to talk to the guy buying drinks at the bar.

Richard grabs the phone.

RICHARD
(casually)
Yellow?

There's a lot of YELLING coming from the other end.

Richard listens for a while before responding.

RICHARD
Fine.

Richard hands the phone back to the bartender.

RICHARD

Alright everyone, let's get this murder on the road.

The bartender looks mortified.

RICHARD

Oh, no, not like that. It's cause we're a bunch of crows. I get that we're also people and not crows but it's kinda what what we call ourselves these days. Like a nickname. I know it's a bit confusing. When a group of crows is together you can call them a murder, you know?

Richard starts to slowly back away.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Okay. I'm going to leave now. Sorry. We're not going to kill anyone. Promise. Sorry.

The bartender still looks petrified.

Richard jogs back cash in hand.

RICHARD

Sorry, forgot about this.

63 EXT. DIRT ROAD FOREST CLEARING - MORNING

63

The Society of Birdwatchers stands, in a line, facing a small road.

A truck comes down the road piled high with crows.

LAUREN

We're keeping this interaction brief correct?

AUGUSTUS

Depends what words Richard has to spew out of his garbage mouth. I'll remain diligent.

The truck pulls to a stop and the engine is cut.

LAUREN

(Aggressively whispering)

DO NOT TRY TO SPITE HIM WITH THE WHOLE

EXTINCT BIRD THING.

RICHARD hops out within earshot so the best Lauren can do is glare at Augustus, trying to make sure he received the message.

RICHARD
Hey Augustus, how are things?

AUGUSTUS
You were seen on our property Richard.

RICHARD
And I do apologize for that.

AUGUSTUS
Really? Who was it? I want to know.

Lauren shoots Augustus a look then turns to see Blair step forward.

Wesley is in line with him, a little further back.

AUGUSTUS
It's come to our attention that there was a bird sighting on our property.

RICHARD
Yes, it was Blair who saw it.

Lauren looks at Wesley and gives a half smile.

CROW
Lauren is looking at that crow like they're in love.

AUGUSTUS
It's a good thing that couldn't possibly be the case. Alright look, we've decided since the bird was seen on our property that we'll take on the duty of properly documenting it and presenting our findings to the faculty as is our way. Just wanted you to be made aware.

RICHARD
You have proof?

AUGUSTUS
Do you?

Richard reveals the feather.

LAUREN
(Masking concern)
That's nowhere near proper
documentation. They'll never accept
that.

RICHARD
We'll see.

AUGUSTUS
Don't be an idiot, you know she's
right.

RICHARD
Fine.

AUGUSTUS
Fine.

Lauren rolls her eyes.

RICHARD
Well. We've got a bird to find.

AUGUSTUS
So long as your investigation only
takes place on your side of the fence.

RICHARD
Of course. Best of luck to you and
your costumed friends.

Richard turns his back and starts walking towards the truck.
He waves the crows along.

Augustus looks ready to fight and takes a single aggressive
step towards Richard but Lauren trips him and he falls face
first into the dirt.

Augustus GROANS.

LAUREN
I think it's time for everyone to get
the hell out of here.

Richard looks back and scoffs before walking to the truck.

Wesley looks apologetic. Lauren tries to communicate that
it's okay.

The society turns and leaves.

Crow stays behind with Lauren.

Augustus is still laying in the dirt.

LAUREN

Can you breath like that?

AUGUSTUS

Well enough.

LAUREN

You have to stop going after him like that.

AUGUSTUS

I hate him.

LAUREN

I hate him too, but I don't try to start a brawl with him every time I see him.

AUGUSTUS

He never learned his lesson.

LAUREN

He will, maybe not right now and maybe not even when his club gets disbanded but at some point he's going to realize he was an asshole.

She stops briefly and glances backwards towards Crow

LAUREN (CONT'D)

But you were never the person he was after.

Augustus rolls over, sits up and looks at Crow.

AUGUSTUS

Someone needs to stand up to him.

CROW

I appreciate it, I do. You've already done so much on my behalf.

Augustus is helped up by Lauren. Augustus walks over to Crow and talks in an hushed voice too quiet to hear.

Lauren watches.

WESLEY (V.O.)

Why does Augustus hate Richard so much?

LAUREN (V.O.)

Surprisingly they actually started The Crows together.

BEGIN FLASHBACK MONTAGE

64 EXT. RIVERSIDE - DAY

64

LAUREN is skipping rocks.

WESLEY is sitting on the shore and watching.

LAUREN

A lot of people don't remember but the Society of Birdwatchers is relatively new to campus. I helped found the original crows with Augustus, Crow, and Richard.

65 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE

65

Flashback: AUGUSTUS, LAUREN, CROW, and RICHARD excitedly fill out some paperwork in a faculty office.

66 EXT. RIVERSIDE - DAY

66

WESLEY

You're kidding. Why crows though?

LAUREN

We were more moody back then I guess. Also crows are really cool birds. The club got pretty popular, everyone kind of started doing their own thing which is when Crow started his trials.

67 EXT. FOREST - DAY

67

Flashback: Crow looks around and see's members of the old SOBs playing board games, polishing binoculars, making out and enjoying the sunshine.

LAUREN (V.O.)

Crows are smarter than a lot of people realize. They use tools and they're

also able to recognize faces. The nearby crows had this old gnarly spot in the forest they used to like to hang out in. Crow came up with this idea that the crows in the forest could make friends and enemies.

68 EXT. GNARLY FOREST - DAY

68

Flashback: CROW enters a barren section of forest. Crows can be heard CAWING from above.

Crow caws back and starts causing a ruckus disturbing the ground and shaking branches.

Crow picks a necklace out of a bird nest.

LAUREN (V.O.)

To prove it he would go in there and make all kinds of noise, ruckus, you know, and leave. Sometimes he would climb up to their nests and steal shiny objects they'd collected. That was part one. Then he made this big crow head and would go back and help calm the crows down, tidy things up, gift them shiny objects.

Crow, mask on, peacefully enters the forest and starts to tidy up the forest floor.

He presents a gift of bottle caps, rings, and tin foil then slinks away into the forest.

69 EXT. RIVERSIDE - DAY

69

LAUREN

It wasn't long before he had a hard time going in the without his mask on and it got so bad that if he wasn't wearing it he wouldn't be able to watch the crows at all. He even started getting attacked randomly in the forest by the birds. He hasn't taken the mask off since.

Lauren pauses for a moment and takes some extra time thumbing the smooth stone in her hand.

She throws it in.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

That's when Richard turned into an asshole. As the club got more popular so did he. And I'll be honest, it wasn't easy hanging around Crow. These masks are pretty unwieldy and it got him into some awkward situations. People started making fun of Crow. First it was behind his back and then to his face. Richard ignored it for a while but by the end he started encouraging people to make fun of Crow for wearing his mask. Kids would bully him, throw stuff at him. You know, there's a lot of blind spots in those things. We tried talking to Richard but he wouldn't apologize, he wouldn't stop unless Crow took off the mask. The taunting was just insane at that point and Crow had had enough. He couldn't handle it anymore.

Lauren wells up.

She looks towards the water and throws another rock so Wesley doesn't notice.

WESLEY

So where do you and Augustus come in.

Lauren face turns to a warm smile.

70 EXT. TRAILER CAMPGROUND - DAY

70

Flashback: RICHARD is sitting by a smoldering camp fire using a knife to flick wood shavings into the embers.

LAUREN and AUGUSTUS enter, cardinal and eagle masks in hand.

RICHARD

What on earth are you doing with those?

LAUREN

We just wanted to say that we're leaving the club.

RICHARD

Ha. Good riddance.

Richard continues staring into the coals, avoiding eye

contact.

Augustus tries to catch his gaze but fails.

Lauren leaves, angry but Augustus lingers a while longer.

71 EXT. GNARLY FOREST

71

Flashback: CROW is sitting against a tree watching the crows move in the branches above.

Something catches his attention and he turns to see LAUREN and AUGUSTUS standing with newly fashioned bird masks.

Crow slowly stands.

CROW

Lauren, Augustus? What are you doing?

LAUREN

We're going to go bird watching, want to come?

Crow walks forward and gives them both a hug.

72 EXT. RIVERSIDE - DAY

72

LAUREN

And that was the beginning of the S.O.B.s. We made the handbook and rules to make sure nothing like what happened to Crow would happen to anyone else. Augustus took the split pretty hard, he and Richard had been friends forever. I think a lot of the old rules were made just to spite him. They've just never stopped fighting.

Wesley sighs.

WESLEY

I'm sorry you had to go through all that.

LAUREN

Really I'm just thankful Crow is okay. And it was for the best, I love the Society.

WESLEY

And you love cardinals?

LAUREN
Obviously. You want to join the
society; what bird would you pick?

WESLEY
I'm really into *anas platyrhynchos*.

Lauren turns and laughs.

LAUREN
You like ducks?

WESLEY
Mallard ducks if you want to be
specific. It doesn't sound quite as
interesting when you say it like that.

LAUREN
No it's amazing. That's great, I guess
I didn't picture you as a duck person
is all.

She looks at him for a moment.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
Well I'd love to go watch ducks with
you Wesley.

WESLEY
I'd love that too. The Crows still
have the feather though?

Lauren thinks about this for a moment.

LAUREN
It'll take more than a feather for The
Crows to take down the society.

73 INT. CABIN - DAY

73

The S.O.B.s grab supplies.

A pair of binoculars is polished.

Pencils are sharpened.

Film is loaded.

A bird whistle is washed.

A sandwich is made.

A compass doesn't face north.

Pause.

A hand flicks it and it orients properly.

A map is laid out.

A finger traces flight patterns.

A bird whistle is BLOWN.

The Society, minus Lauren, sits around the main table with AUGUSTUS at the head.

There's a lot of chatter among the group.

AUGUSTUS

Alright everyone, this is serious,
leave talking about your weekend plans
until we're finished the meeting.

ERIN mouths the word "bagels" to GARRY. These are big plans.

He nods.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

Where is Lauren?

LAUREN enters.

LAUREN

Here, I'm here!

AUGUSTUS

Perfect. Tell us what you know about
this bird.

74 EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

74

WESLEY walks into the trailer park. A few of The Crows are throwing darts at a tree.

RICHARD kicks open the door to his trailer and jogs into the center of the camp.

RICHARD

Alright Crows, girder up your loins.
It's time.

A SCREAM from off to the side.

RICHARD
What the hell.

BLAIR
Sorry! It was an accident.

A crow is holding his arm and a dart is sticking out.
He falls down.

ANOTHER CROW
He's blind!

RICHARD
Chill out. Get up.

The crow is helped up.

RICHARD
Alright now remember, we need three things, a photograph. A sample, which we have, and some written documentation or whatever. If I'm remembering correctly someone at some point had a Polaroid or something? Is that true?

The crows look around, unsure.

RICHARD
Seriously? What about an actual camera? Forget it, I know that the Polaroid is somewhere. Find it first, and then let's go.

The crows all scurry off to various locations around the camp.

WESLEY
What's happening?

RICHARD
Pay attention bird brain. We're looking for a Polaroid, have you seen it?

WESLEY
I didn't know that we had one.

RICHARD
I swear I saw it like last week on a

picnic bench or something.

WESLEY

Have we ever taken photos of birds?

RICHARD

Of crows you mean? Sure, there's plenty of things to see when you're taking photos of crows. Loads. Super interesting stuff. Why?

WESLEY

Just curious about the club, about any, you know, history.

RICHARD

What history? Nobody cares about that. No one asks, I don't know.

ANOTHER CROW (O.S.)

Found it!

CUT TO

75 EXT. SHED - DAY

75

A crow is standing at attention over a rotting wooden box.

WESLEY and RICHARD peer over.

ANOTHER CROW

It's in there.

RICHARD

Grab it.

ANOTHER CROW

It's moldy.

RICHARD

Don't be a bitch.

Richard grabs the camera and wipes some dirt off it.

He grabs some Polaroid film and RIPS it open.

The camera CLICKS open.

Richard slides in the cartridge as if he's loading a gun.

RICHARD
Let's find this bird.

Richard leaves. Wesley stares into the box and reaches inside.

He takes out a badly damaged Polaroid.

In the distance Richard is BARKING orders at the crows.

Wesley brushes off the photo revealing Richard standing with Lauren and Crow without their masks on. There's some text written that says "Augustus took this".

76 EXT. FOREST - DAY

76

The Society walks together in a line, masks on.

They instinctively move off the path and into the bushes and pull out their binoculars.

There are no birds so they continue onward.

CROW
Hey speaking of weekend plans how is that whole relationship thing going.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
Um, good, it's been going really well.

CROW
Well enough that he'd join the club? I'd like to at least meet the guy.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
I don't know, he's a bit shy. But I did hear that he likes ducks.

CROW
That's a new one. We haven't had a duck enthusiast yet.

77 EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

77

The crow's vehicle pulls to a stop.

The tailgate pops open and everyone piles out.

WESLEY
What happens if we run into the Society?

RICHARD
 Unlikely, they won't go past their
 fences.

CUT TO

78 EXT. FENCE LINE - DAY

78

LAUREN stands at the edge of the fence staring into the distance at a mountain. Behind her, BARTHOLOMEW and ERIN emerge from the trees.

ERIN (SPARROW)
 I can't find anything.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 I know, me neither.

Bartholomew steps closer.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
 You're not thinking what I'm thinking?
 Are you?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 Do we have an option?

ERIN (SPARROW)
 Well there's always other options.

BARTHOLOMEW (OWL)
 Could we even do it?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 Like physically? Or morally?

Lauren hops the fence and slowly stands as if expecting something to attack her.

Nothing.

ERIN (SPARROW)
 You know you've been on that side of
 the fence before.

Lauren notes the society's gatehouse to her right.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
 I've just never done it while
 birdwatching before.

She looks around.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
I don't like it, I'm coming back over.

AUGUSTUS and the rest of society emerge from the trees.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
Why are you over there?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
I think the bird is over there. I was thinking, for all the time we spend in our forest you'd think we would have seen the bird earlier. I think it must have got lost, all the land around here is the same right. Trees and streams, same temperature, same geography right? I'm thinking it probably came from somewhere different.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
The mountain. It must have blown off the mountain.

Augustus, with incredible agility, hops the fence.

CROW
I'll bet the crows are out there.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
They couldn't find the bird if it landed right in front of them.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)
I mean, that is what happened earlier.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
Yes that was suspiciously convenient hey? Whatever, Crow, are you in?

CROW
I'm in.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)
To the mountains!

The Society is piled high with equipment, prepared for the

mountain trek.

They continue forward and come across the crows truck parked on the side of the dirt path.

LAUREN approaches and looks around. Nothing.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Richard!

CROW

Did they leave the keys in the ignition?

Lauren shoots Crow a look.

CROW

What, it could be funny.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

(astutely)

It would be kind of funny.

GARRY is sitting in the truck now.

GARRY (PIGEON)

No keys.

EMILY (WOODPECKER)

They've got a lot of bird seed back here.

RICHARD and the crows emerge suddenly from the trees.

RICHARD

Well, well, well, well. Looks like you finally got brave Augustus.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Looks like you've been doing a lot of guess work.

RICHARD

And I'm not telling you anything about it! Hey, get out of our truck!

Garry hops out. Richard's tone changes.

RICHARD

Of course, if you had any insights I wouldn't be opposed to a casual chat.

Crow steps in.

CROW

Come off it, you've got nothing and we aren't helping you.

RICHARD

You're a touch bitter. This could be enough to keep both our clubs going.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

I don't think our club mandates align anymore Richard. See you later.

The society turns to walk away.

They walk for a bit but Augustus signals them to stop.

The crows are right behind them, following.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Buzz off.

RICHARD

What can I say? We're scavengers.

CROW

Don't you have any academic integrity?

RICHARD

We're not in your special forest anymore. I have as much a right to be here as anyone.

Augustus angrily turns and continues walking.

Everyone follows. Lauren falls back a couple paces and finds herself, purposefully, beside Wesley.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

How's it going? Why are you here? I thought you quit?

WESLEY

I want to see the bird, did you talk to them about me joining the club?

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

I've been working on it. You here in a leather jacket might make things tricky.

WESLEY

Oh, and here, look at this.

Wesley shows Lauren the Polaroid.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Holy smokes, where did you find this?

WESLEY

Some old rotting trunk.

LAUREN

Talk about a throwback. Wait a minute, don't tell me...

Lauren looks back at Richard, astonished.

The Polaroid camera is bouncing off his leg.

LAUREN (CARDINAL)

Are you serious? He's going to try documenting this bird with a Polaroid camera?

Augustus throws up a hand signal.

AUGUSTUS (EAGLE)

Let's suit up.

The Society drops their bags and removes their masks. They start grabbing mountaineering equipment and heavy sweaters.

Crow struggles to get his on over his mask and Emily helps him.

The crows stand around looking lost.

WESLEY

Is all that really necessary?

LAUREN

Trust me, you'll see. Here, I've got an extra sweater.

Wesley grabs it, he hesitates and looks at Lauren.

WESLEY

I filled out a club application form.

LAUREN

Wait, really? That's great. I promise

I'll talk to them soon... I. Why are you laughing?

WESLEY

Have you seen yourself? It looks like you're about to pass out from heat exhaustion.

LAUREN

I'm telling you the mountains get really...

HARD CUT TO

80 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE BUT HIGHER UP - DAY

80

The weather has turned, winds howl. A light snow whips around The Society who are all well bundled up.

RICHARD is trying to shield his face with his leather jacket.

BLAIR

Maybe we should turn back?

RICHARD

Don't be a fool. We aren't going back.

ANOTHER CROW

Richard it's really cold here.

ANOTHER ANOTHER CROW

My toes are getting numb.

BLAIR

I think my water skin is becoming a slushee.

ANOTHER CROW

Let's go back!

Richard wheels around.

RICHARD

Fine! If you can't handle it anymore go back!

They start to turn.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

And if you do- it better be to get your things from the trailer park.

BLAIR
 (surprised)
 You can't be serious?

RICHARD
 Do I look like I'm joking?

ANOTHER CROW
 Honestly I can't tell.

RICHARD
 Well I'm being *super* serious trust me.

BLAIR
 I don't think we can keep going,
 someone is going to get hurt. Sorry
 Richard.

A few of the crows start to head back down the mountain.

RICHARD
 Anyone else?

No one moves.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 Good.

Augustus gives Richard a look.

He continues up the mountain.

81 EXT. NEAR A WATERFALL

81

The weather has turned around for the better and the group stops once again.

Some of the society grab food, others grab binoculars and notebooks.

GARRY is preparing his camera.

LAUREN
 (To Wesley)
 Now *that's* a camera.

RICHARD is cutting some wood.

EMILY
 Is that a spear?

RICHARD
None of your business.

EMILY
Just cut towards your chum not your
thumb.

RICHARD
What?

EMILY
You're cutting it wrong. Go the other
direction.

Richard grumbles.

AUGUSTUS
Listen, tag along if you want but you
need to do your best not to disturb
any of the birds or this is will all
be a waste of time.

RICHARD
Well, I'm pretty used to doing nothing
so it shouldn't be a problem.

Richard kicks back and looks relaxed.

Augustus gives him a moment of attention but turns away.

Richard looks smug.

Augustus notices Lauren and Wesley together.

He approaches.

AUGUSTUS
You all ready Lauren?

Lauren holds up binoculars and looks directly at Augustus.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)
Sorry I don't know who you are. What's
your name?

WESLEY
It's Wesley, nice to meet you.

AUGUSTUS
How long have you known each other?

WESLEY

We have biology together.

Augustus gives Lauren a knowing look.

AUGUSTUS

Interesting. Anything else you want to tell us?

Lauren hesitates, looks at Wesley and then back to Augustus.

LAUREN

We're dating.

AUGUSTUS

That's against the rules.

Richard glances over, listening in.

LAUREN

To be fair I didn't know he was a crow until just recently.

WESLEY

Hang on you've got restrictions on dating?

AUGUSTUS

It's in the rule book.

LAUREN

We do really only talk about the first three rules.

WESLEY

That's crazy, how do you enforce that?

Richard, without getting up, calls over.

RICHARD

It's called micro-managing Wesley.

AUGUSTUS

What did you say?

Richard stands to his feet and slowly moves over.

RICHARD

Oh. Micro-managing. I just find it funny that I'm the bad guy when you're trying to dictate every aspect of the

your club member's lives.

AUGUSTUS
That's not what it's about!

RICHARD
(patronizing)
Oh sure! I've read your pamphlet.
Seems pretty messed up to me.

AUGUSTUS
(looking defeated)
You think I think it's okay to tell
people who they can date?

RICHARD
I think you think you think you do.

LAUREN
They aren't his rules! They're our
rules!

RICHARD
They're still rules. At least *The
Crows* let people do what they want!

LAUREN
THAT IS A LIE. You don't get it
Richard!

RICHARD
Get *what*?

Lauren stares at Richard hoping something will click. It
doesn't.

LAUREN
YOU'RE THE REASON WE WROTE THE RULES.
We didn't write them so we could feel
all *high and mighty*! We wrote them to
stop people like *YOU* from joining!

She looks over to Crow.

LAUREN
We did it to protect our friends from
getting hurt.

Lauren focuses in on Richard.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

And we were friends Richard. We were all friends and you fucked that up! It took a lot of hard work but now we have it good again and there's no way we're letting you screw that up.

Augustus looks at Lauren and comes to a realization.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Now look at you! You just sent your only friends home so that you can get a couple bucks each year from a club scholarship? Maybe you need to go home too.

RICHARD

I'm sorry Lauren.

LAUREN

I've never been the one you needed to apologize to.

Richard looks to Crow.

He pauses. Crow cuts in.

CROW

Before you decide to say anything just know that I can never be friends with you again.

Richard pauses.

He fidgets as if trying to get better footing.

He turns and walks down the mountain.

Everyone watches him go.

The rest of *The Crows* also follow him back.

Augustus turns to Crow and Lauren.

AUGUSTUS

See that's what I've telling you! Don't you want to just, tackle him or something.

LAUREN

I think I'm over it.

CROW
I'm over it if you're over it.

Crow freezes in place.

LAUREN
What?

CROW
Turn around very slowly.

They don't turn.

AUGUSTUS
There's a bear behind me isn't there.

WESLEY
Holy shit. Also no, it's not a bear.

Lauren turns around.

The large swan like bird is perched on a branch nearby.

CROW
I think it was attracted by the
yelling.

AUGUSTUS
Garry, your camera!

GARRY
Getting it out currently.

AUGUSTUS
(hushed)
Everyone stay still.

The bird is somehow spooked and flies up the waterfall.

LAUREN
Let's go.

The group slinks up the waterfall.

82 EXT. TOP OF THE WATERFALL

82

The land opens up.

GARRY crests the hill and holds up a long zoom lens.

GARRY

I think that's his nest.

ERIN

I thought this was a pigeon. That's huge!

BARTHOLOMEW

A *giant* pigeon.

There is an oddly shaped ball of twigs perched high up in a tree.

CROW

I can't see anything.

LAUREN

This is a bad angle, we need to get higher.

Beside them RICHARD suddenly appears and begins running towards a nearby tree.

He laughs and sprints towards the bird.

Garry grips his camera and follows.

AUGUSTUS

Garry slow down!

GARRY

(calling back)

I've got the camera don't I?

Richard straddles the tree. He gets up the first few branches and quickly makes his way up the tree.

He is well off the ground.

Garry starts climbing as well.

RICHARD

If you know what's good for you you'll stay put.

Garry tests a lower branch.

It breaks and falls.

RICHARD

Ha! Watch your footing.

He carefully climbs higher.

Despite the thinning branches he's able to keep going.

Richard finally reaches a vantage point and starts trying to bring his polaroid into a reasonable position.

The other society members make it to the base of the tree.

LAUREN

Richard get down! You don't know what you're doing.

RICHARD

And he does?

Garry climbs past Richard, higher into the tree. As he does he nods at Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Screw you.

Garry tests a branch.

It CREAKS and there's a small crack.

He tries another. This one is stable.

GARRY

Guys I can see it! It's right there in the nest!

AUGUSTUS

Excellent, watch yourself.

Richard is still fumbling with his camera.

He looks up to Garry.

Garry adjusts his settings and inches closer onto the branch.

It bends.

Garry steadies himself.

He hold up the camera.

CLICK.

GARRY

Got it.

He moves back towards the trunk.

Richards hand reaches up and grabs the branch Garry is standing on.

RICHARD
My turn for a photo.

GARRY
Richard that branch isn't...

The branch snaps.

Garry falls and grabs another branch. It breaks in his hand.

Richard loses his grip on the tree and falls backwards.

They crash through a couple more branches before hitting the ground.

Everyone rushes to the base of the tree.

AUGUSTUS
Garry!

LAUREN
Lay him out. Check on Richard.

CROW
Is he breathing?

ERIN
Holy shit. Call an ambulance.

83 EXT. DIRT FOREST ROAD - DAY

83

An ambulance tears through the trees, branches whipping back and forth.

The S.O.B. stands awkwardly as the ambulance disappears into a cloud of dust.

84 EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

84

The S.O.B. stands in front of a grave.

The tombstone looks disturbingly new compared to the surrounding statues.

CROW steps forward and places his mask down beside the gravestone.

LAUREN
Are you sure?

CROW
He was a crow at heart.

AUGUSTUS
He doesn't deserve your mask.

CROW
I know, but I can make another one.

Garry hobbles forward on a pair of crutches. He faces the grave and takes out a polaroid photo.

He passes it to Lauren who places it down in front of the grave.

The group exits the graveyard.

85 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

85

The Society heads toward the PROFESSORS office.

LAUREN holds a binder of their findings.

Lauren, CROW, and AUGUSTUS turn to face the group.

WESLEY
Good luck.

Everyone nods.

The three turn to face the door.

CROW
Together?

LAUREN
What does that mean?

AUGUSTUS
Like you want us to all grab the door at the same time?

CROW
Ok sorry, sorry it was a dumb idea go ahead Lauren.

Lauren opens the door.

86 INT. PROFESSORS OFFICE - DAY

86

Opposite LAUREN, CROW, and AUGUSTUS, in front of his desk stands the PROFESSOR and beside him another older man; the FACULTY HEAD.

Something about the room appears familiar.

They notice the decor.

The walls and all the desk space is lined with and covered by drawings and paintings, essays, research notes, photographs, taxidermy and maps, all from the S.O.B., all about birds.

Lauren smiles.

PROFESSOR

Hello again. I'm glad you could make it.

LAUREN

I uh, I don't know what to say.

PROFESSOR

It's fine work, all of it. I thought I'd hang onto it while we decide what should be done with it all. What do you have there?

LAUREN

It's our findings on the bird.

FACULTY HEAD

Is that the one Garry photographed?

AUGUSTUS

Yes sir, he wanted to dedicate his findings to our entire club.

FACULTY HEAD

That's very nice.

PROFESSOR

Apologies, this is Jack Rustoff. He's been working with me on deciding the future of The Society of Birdwatchers.

FACULTY HEAD

(bluntly)

Your club is being permanently shut down. Unfortunately it's my duty to

tell you that the school can no longer provide support for this endeavor.

AUGUSTUS

What about the crows?

FACULTY HEAD

They voluntarily shut their club down just the other day.

LAUREN

But the letter said one club would get to stay? What about our findings? They're groundbreaking.

FACULTY HEAD

I'm sure they will be and I congratulate you for that. However, we can't ignore that someone, a student no less, died outside of school property on your club's watch. I'm afraid the decision is final. I'm deeply sorry for the loss of your friend.

AUGUSTUS

I'm not really sure that he... thank you.

The Faculty Head does a strange sympathy nod as though he is unaware of how to communicate with anyone younger than him.

He exits the room.

PROFESSOR

He's right you know these findings are groundbreaking. The release is going to be career launching, you'd be able to move on from the club and all this right away after you graduate. Lauren, I'm assuming you would be the one to write it.

Lauren looks to her friends.

LAUREN

I'm not sure I want to move away from all this quite yet.

Augustus smiles.

PROFESSOR

If you don't write it we'll pass it off to this years top student in the writing club. We'll make sure the club remains credited but your individual names will be left off the discover, is that okay?

LAUREN

Ya, whatever, do that.

They exit.

87 END VOICE OVER

87

The following voice over is meant to run over the remaining scenes until the "award ceremony".

BOBBY (V.O.)

The Akri Pigeon was, for the past decade, thought to be an extinct super giant species of pigeon but thanks to the final efforts of a campus bird watching club, the bird has risen from the ashes and made its way onto the endangered species list. The Akri Pigeon was known, while at peak population, to thrive in small isolated groups. These pigeons didn't migrate far from their birth places and had no known migration patterns. Instead these pigeons would intentionally seek out environments that contained everything necessary for their survival. There have been rare documented cases, including this recent finding of the Akri Pigeon of the pigeons intentionally leaving their breeding grounds only to return, in some cases years later, to their home. In a world where we take so much for granted, I think it's important to remind ourselves, even if it's decades later, that if we're having trouble finding a place to go, or a place to belong, its worth taking a look back at where we came from.

88 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

88

LAUREN, CROW, and AUGUSTUS exit the professors office.

Lauren shrugs and shakes her head. There's a small smile on her face.

The society walks back down the hallway.

89 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 89

LAUREN looks out the car window. The reflection changes from blue skies to green trees.

The car pulls over on the side of the highway. The society clambers out and heads off into the forest.

90 EXT. FOREST - DAY 90

The society walks towards the cabin.

91 EXT. FENCE LINE - DAY 91

The society passes by the gatehouse and onto the property.

92 INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY 92

BOBBY puts down his paper onto a lectern.

He looks up and smiles.

The PROFESSOR steps in to shake his hand.

Cameras flash.

He smiles.

He's handed a plaque for his writing achievements.

END MONTAGE

93 EXT. CABIN FIELD - DAY 93

The S.O.B. gathers in front of the cabin.

AUGUSTUS puts his hands on his hips and smiles.

LAUREN

What?

AUGUSTUS

Just thinking about something you said to Richard on the mountain. We have birds and we have each-other.

Augustus looks over Lauren.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)
We have it good.

CUT TO BLACK