

The Hike

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Version 3

Obsidian Elephant Productions

EXT. WOODS. DAY

A young woman, VERONICA, stands idle in a dense wooded area reading a news article on her phone.

The Headline: "SYRIAN FLU QUARANTINE FINALLY ENDED"

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

Both women have rucksacks and are wearing active-wear. They are alone, and appear to be quite far into the woods.

ALESHA (O.S.)
I hope you're still keeping an eye out.

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

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

Veronica still does not hear Alesha.

ALESHA
...Veronica?

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

ALESHA (cont'd)
Veronica!

Veronica startles, she turns and gives Alesha a dopey look. Alesha smirks at the gormless look on Veronica's face.

ALESHA (cont'd)
I wish you'd have told me you were going to be on your phone all day. I wouldn't have brought you on this beautiful nature walk.

Veronica smirks.

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

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

Veronica give a sarcastic glance of the surrounding woodland. There is not a soul anywhere in sight.

VERONICA
I think you're good.

ALESHA
All right, smart arse.

Alesha and Veronica walk along the path.

ALESHA (cont'd)
What was so interesting you had to
abandon your lookout?

Veronica shrugs.

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

ALESHA
Ugh, finally! 12 weeks of isolation and
I'm about to go stark crazy.

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

ALESHA
Those were super hygienic too.

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

ALESHA
What the plague?

Alesha waggles her fingers at Veronica like a ghoul, which
irritates her.

VERONICA
Stop calling it that!

Alesha stops dead.

ALESHA
All right, jeez. You're so sensitive.

VERONICA
My aunt died, Alesha. And you were on a
respirator for 2 weeks. It's not funny.

Veronica storms off and Alesha treks after her sheepishly,
gradually catching back up as they walk in silence.

ALESHA
Wanna hear something creepy?

Veronica rolls her eyes.

VERONICA
Sure.

ALESHA

Apparently a bunch of bodies were strung up on the front of trains at a station on Cumbria the other week.

VERONICA

What, no they weren't.

Alesha nods insistently.

ALESHA

Uh huh, I read it on the police blotter when I was researching a story. They'd all been slashed and pinned up stigmata style.

Alesha mimes puncturing her own palms.

ALESHA (cont'd)

They're saying it's some "End of Days" cult.

VERONICA

There's no way, it would have made the news. You're screwing with me.

Alesha shrugs coyly.

ALESHA

I don't know, people have gotten a bit kooky since the pla-

Veronica glares at her.

ALESHA (cont'd)

The thing that shall not be named.

Veronica rolls her eyes and Alesha grins, following after her.

VERONICA

Literally, that's the last thing we need. A fucking psycho cult.

(miming)

Oh, everything's already terrible, have some torment and destruction too!

Alesha stops suddenly, leaving Veronica walking on alone.

VERONICA (cont'd)

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

Veronica finally notices Alesha has stopped and turns around.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Hey, meerkat, let's get going, I wanna get back before it gets too dark.

Alesha stares out into the woodland, she is frowning.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Yo - earth to Alesha!

ALESHA
We're going the wrong way.

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

VERONICA
(muttered)
Not this again.
(out loud)
Does Christopher Columbus not like this route?

Alesha pulls a face at Veronica.

ALESHA
The route we wanted goes past the Bird Lodge. Do you see a Bird Lodge?

Veronica squints into the woodland, she is thinking.

VERONICA
It's probably just up ahead.

ALESHA
We've been walking for 40 minutes, we should have gone past it by now.
(beat)
Check the map.

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

VERONICA
It's not loading.

ALESHA
No, use the actual map.

Veronica hesitates.

VERONICA
I'm sure its up ahead. We haven't done this trail for a whil-

ALESHA
(curt)
I'd feel better if we could just look at the trail map.

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

VERONICA
It's right at the bottom of my bag-

ALESHA
Get the map, Ronnie!

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

VERONICA
I hate you right now.

Alesha becomes impatient with Veronica who is making a meal of the situation. A woman screams somewhere in the woods.

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

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

Alesha points into the woods.

ALESHA
It came from over that way.

Veronica grabs her rucksack and they run towards the scream. They run for a while until they come into a clearing.

They find a torn rucksack with it's contents strewn across the ground. Veronica approaches it but Alesha grabs her urgently.

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

Alesha points out an open bear trap and Veronica jerks back. There's blood and drag marks leading off into the woods.

VERONICA
Is that what I think it is?

Alesha surveys the area but there is no one around. Veronica is visibly freaked out.

ALESHA
(flippant)
It must be hunting season.

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

ALESHA
Well, people are arseholes.

VERONICA
That woman must have got caught in it.

Alesha crouches down and studies the blood in the bear trap.

ALESHA

It definitely caught something...

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

Veronica bobs around anxiously.

VERONICA

We should head back.

Twigs snap and Alesha holds her hand up to silence Veronica as she listens. She looks around, but there is no one.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Please, I really want to go.

Alesha eyes the blood-trail thoughtfully.

ALESHA

What if someone needs help?

Veronica is hesitant.

VERONICA

We can call the police when we get back to the car.

ALESHA

It might be too late by then.

The woman's scream echoes around the woods. She sounds like she is fighting against something.

Veronica flinches, glancing around in panic.

VERONICA

Fuck this, I'm heading back.

Alesha looks poised for action, ready to lay some smack down. Veronica turns and sees Alesha staring out into the woods.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Alesha, come on!

Alesha listens closely to the surrounding area, then darts off into the woods. Veronica jerks after her but then freezes.

VERONICA (cont'd)

No!

She doesn't want to follow, but doesn't want to be abandoned either. After a few moments Veronica darts off after Alesha.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Come back. We're going to get lost!

The woman screams again, it comes from every direction.

Veronica hears twigs snap and picks up speed, sprinting after Alesha she grabs her arm and yanks her back.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Stop! Stop it! This isn't funny.

Alesha stops, she looks weirdly exhilarated.

ALESHA
I want to help that woman.

Alesha tries to run off again, but Veronica drags her back more roughly.

VERONICA
You're acting crazy. We have to go back and report it to the police.

ALESHA
We don't have time for that. She could have been raped or murdered by then. Probably both!

Alesha is grinning, it freaks Veronica out.

VERONICA
We can't help if we go running off and getting ourselves lost! We need to work out where we are first and make a plan.

Alesha rolls her eyes as Veronica places her rucksack down, treating Alesha like a wild animal she's afraid to spook.

Veronica digs their map and a compass from her rucksack.

VERONICA (cont'd)
(reading map)
Okay. So, there's the Bird Lodge... You were right, we must have accidentally taken this route here.

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

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

They hear a strange whistling noise and Veronica drops the map in fright.

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

Alesha cocks her head.

ALESHA
What was what?

VERONICA
Don't tell me you didn't hear that.

Veronica surveys the woodland.

VERONICA (cont'd)
Someone's whistling.

Alesha glances around indifferently. More WHISTLING bird-call, closer this time.

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

ALESHA
I don't hear anything.

ALESHA (cont'd)
It's just birds.

Veronica stares at Alesha like - "wtf is wrong with you".

The woman screams again, far away and pitiful. Veronica goes rigid looking all around for the source.

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

ALESHA (cont'd)
Come on!

Veronica drops her open rucksack and the contents spill out.

VERONICA
Wait!

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

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

Veronica zips her rucksack and stands up to follow...

...only to find that Alesha has vanished.

VERONICA
Alesha!

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

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

Veronica tries to shove her things back into her bag while holding back tears, she wants to keep her head.

A rustling nearby alerts Veronica but she can't see anyone. She stares into the under-brush, unsure what to do.

More whistling, now from the other direction, she's being surrounded, but Veronica still can't see anyone.

Twigs snap nearby and her body goes rigid with fear. Then, Alesha screams from across the woodland.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Alesha!

Veronica sprints towards the scream. She is chased by something, whistling after her, but still unseen.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Leave me alone!

(beat)

Alesha! Where are you?!

Veronica falls face down in a clearing and it goes silent. She slowly gets up, her nose bleeding.

Inches from her face there is a bloody bear trap, petrified and winded she rolls onto her back.

In her fuzzy vision, she sees a body hanging from a tree. Veronica screams and scrambles backwards.

She puts her hand into something warm and wet, when she pulls it up her hand is covered in blood.

She looks down to see a pile of human entrails sitting in a pile on the ground.

Veronica freezes, she stares at the entrails with glassy-eyed terror.

Hearing rustling in the woods, Veronica comes back online and rushes to her feet and sprints off.

The whistling begins again, but there are now tens of voices. People dressed in black start surrounding her.

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

Their faces are painted like skulls and they wear a hospital hygiene mask with skull teeth painted onto it.

Alesha appears and easily walks to the centre of the group.

VERONICA (cont'd)

Alesha, what is this?

Alesha grins at Veronica as she is handed a mask. Then, the circle breaks apart offering Veronica an escape route.

Veronica gives Alesha a questioning look.

ALESHA

Quick! We'll give you a head start.

Veronica looks truly horrified as she sprints into the woods.

Alesha steps into the centre of the circle and pulls a bloodied knife out from behind her back.

She grips the knife in anticipation as Veronica flees.

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