

THE BIRDS RETURN

Written by

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FADE IN

Waves slowly crash against the white sand beach at Myrtle Beach State Park. Children and adults play in the surf while other children build sand castles. Others are collecting seashells. On the nearby fishing pier, anglers lower and raise their lines.

EXT. LENA'S PATIO-DAY

LENA, forty-something, attractive, long raven hair, is sitting at her patio table sipping her morning coffee. Her neighbor, CHARLOTTE, elderly, wearing gardening clothing and a straw hat. Charlotte sees Lena and waves.

CHARLOTTE

Thought I'd get a jump on the heat  
we're supposed to get later today.

She wipes some sweat from her brow.

LENA

(smiling) I don't blame you. Your  
garden looks amazing. I'm planning  
to head to the beach later and take  
advantage of the natural air  
conditioning.

CHARLOTTE

Just make sure you use plenty of  
sunblock. Being close to the ocean  
is deceptive. It's nice and  
pleasant because of the cool breeze  
from the waves, but that sun is  
still fierce. Today would be a  
better day. Tomorrow starts Bike  
Week and you know how the roads are  
then.

LENA

(nodding) Absolutely. The sun can be  
brutal, even when it feels cool by  
the water. Thanks for the reminder,  
Charlotte. Enjoy your gardening.

Lena rises and enters her house carrying her coffee cup.

INT. LENA'S BEDROOM-DAY

Lena slips into her modest two-piece swimsuit, carefully making sure she would not have to shave her legs before venturing out.

She tied her shoulder length raven colored hair into a hair tie. As she adjusted the straps of her suit. She looks at a picture on her table of her late husband in police uniform.

LENA

I hear you Danny. Do the lifeguards  
at the beach go around and check to  
see if ladies have shaved their  
legs?

She kisses the photo and puts it back on the nightstand. Lena gives herself a final look in the mirror. She grabs her beach bag, filled with essentials including a book, sunblock, and a towel, and her new camera, and heads out the door to her Corvette. She lowers the convertible top.

EXT. PARKING LOT- STATE PARK-DAY

Lena grabs her beach bag and finds her favorite spot on the beach. The sun is bright and the sugar-white sand and teal sea glisten under the sun. She lays out her blanket and sits down. Children and adults play in the sea and sand. Fishermen can be seen on the pier. Out to sea, a couple were parasailing while one member of the boat towing them, took pictures. A family passes by waving on the back of a banana boat ride.

LENA

You would have loved it here today,  
Danny. 'Your beach' is absolutely  
beautiful.

She grabs her camera and begins to take picture of her surroundings, especially the shorebirds. As she adjusts her camera, a sudden, sharp cry pierces the air. Four gulls flying together head towards the roof of the snake bar. She adjusts her camera and notices a massive flock of gulls. Their behavior seems off-aggressive, almost predatory.

Before she can react, the gulls descend with terrifying speed. The nearest tourist, a young child collecting seashells, screams as the birds attack. Their beaks and talons tearing into him. Blood drips onto the white sand. A mother runs to give him aid, and the gulls descend on her with a fury attacking her face and hair. Lena sees a lifeguard and shouts to him.

LENA (CONT'D)

Over there!

He runs to assist and the gulls attacked him. scratching and clawing his chest and back. Chaos erupts as people run in every direction, seeking cover. Lena fumbles for her phone to call for help, but the gulls were relentless.

9-1-1 OPERATOR  
9-1-1, what is your emergency.

LENA  
I'm at the Myrtle Beach State Park.  
Flocks of birds are attacking  
everyone. We need police, fire, and  
paramedics here now.

9-1-1 OPERATOR  
Mame, can you stay on the line  
please.

Lena hangs up, needing to seek shelter. She runs to the  
fishing pier.

Sunbathers desperately wield their umbrellas to defend  
themselves, but the gulls' talons shred through the fabric,  
tearing into flesh with horrifying precision. Screams fill  
the air as others try to shield themselves with blankets and  
towels, only to have the savage birds rip through the flimsy  
barriers, claws sinking into their soft flesh. She looks back  
to the parasailers who are being dive-bombed by the gulls. A  
quick glance at the banana boat reveals only one child  
clinging to the ride. The ocean behind it was stained with a  
thick, dark trail of blood. A gull strikes Lena in the head  
and she goes down. ALEX, forty-something, muscular man runs  
to Lena covered in blood.

ALEX  
How are you doing?

Lena looks at his injuries.

LENA  
About as good as you.

She faints.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

Lena is brought back to consciousness by the murmur of hushed  
conversations taking place in the hospital ward. The stark  
fluorescent lights overhead makes her wince as she slowly  
opens her eyes. A soft knock on the door draws her attention,  
and she saw Alex standing there.

ALEX  
How are you feeling?

LENA  
Hello. I believe I owe you a thank  
you for rescuing me from the beach.  
(MORE)

LENA (CONT'D)

To answer your question, I feel sore, but I will live. I feel so sorry for the other victims. Do we know if there have been any casualties?

Alex's expression darkens.

ALEX

Numbers are still coming in on television and social media. Sadly, there are over thirty deaths and a rising number of injured. I spoke to the doctor, and he said you'll be free to leave soon. Hope you don't mind that I asked.

Lena shakes her head slightly.

LENA

Not a problem. Did they give you my prognosis?

ALEX

Yes, in fact. I told them I was your brother, so they gave up the information. You will be leaving within the hour.

LENA

So, Alex. Have the experts already chimed in on what caused the birds to attack?

Alex sighs, running a hand through his blond hair.

ALEX

There are a lot of theories, but no concrete answers yet. Some say it could be environmental changes, others think it might be a disease or some sort of chemical exposure. Others think the gulls got blinded by the sunlight bouncing off the ocean and dived for safety cause the assault. It's all speculation at this point.

LENA

I knew those environmental wackos would blame everything on 'climate change,' and I don't buy the theory about the gulls being blinded either.

(MORE)

LENA (CONT'D)

I can't quite put my finger on it, but there was something off about the weather. Maybe it was a slight shift, I don't know. Everything happened so quickly.

(pause)

LENA (CONT'D)

What do you do for a living, Alex?

ALEX

I am professor of marine biology. I teach right here at the University of South Carolina.

LENA

That's where I saw you before. You were on television being interviewed a few years ago about the formation of riptides, or something like that, right?

ALEX

Yes, that was me.

LENA

Were you at the beach today for work or pleasure?

ALEX

No, today was actually my day off. I love the ocean and just wanted to catch some rays. And then, well, you know what happened.

They share a brief period of silence, the weight of the day's horrors settle between them. Lena's doctor arrives confirming the news Alex had already delivered: she was cleared for discharge. Alex steps out of the room to give her some privacy to dress.

Once she opens the door to leave, Alex gently stopped her.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Lena, you forgot your beach bag.

LENA

Oh my God. Thanks Alex. That has my wallet and camera, and all the essential items I left on the beach. How did it get here?

Alex smiles.

LENA (CONT'D)

Thanks again for everything. I don't know how to repay you.

ALEX

I know this is a little forward of me, but I was wondering if I could see you in a few days? You mentioned a slight change in the weather before the birds attacked. I felt it too, but I can't quite explain it.

Lena pauses, noticing the intensity in his gaze. There was something about Alex that made her heart skip a beat, despite the chaos they had just endured.

LENA

(smiling) Tell you what. Give me a couple of days to process everything that's happened. Then, we can pick a nice restaurant and continue to get to know each other. How does that sound? Here is my phone number.

Lena hands him a piece of paper after writing down her number. Alex's face lights up.

INT. LENA'S BEACHFRONT HOME-DAY

Lena brews a fresh pot of coffee and turns on Newsmax for the latest updates about the bird attack. The host initially recaps the events as she had witnessed them. It wasn't until the 'experts' chime in that opinions on the cause began to flood in.

UNKNOWN TV MALE QUEST

It is my belief that the gulls were not attacking per se, but rather, a sheen on the water, possibly caused by an excessive amount of sunscreen and tanning oil, confused them. This made the gulls start searching for a place to land, leading to the encounter with beachgoers.

LENA

Sure, idiot. Sunscreen residue caused the birds to simultaneously attack.

## UNKNOWN FEMALE GUEST

I think it's due to the increased use of drones on the beach. The noise and movements of drones could have agitated the birds, making them behave aggressively. And, of course you have an increase in air traffic this time of the year.

## SECOND UNKNOWN MALE GUEST

It's quite clear that the gulls mistook the bright-colored beach towels and umbrellas for food sources. The vivid colors probably triggered their predatory instincts.

## SECOND UNKNOWN FEMALE GUEST

I have reason to believe that the alignment of the planets caused a shift in the Earth's magnetic field, disorienting the gulls. This cosmic anomaly led to their unusual behavior.

Lena laughs and turns the channel to Fox News. A female ornithologist is introduced by the host.

## FEMALE ORNITHOLOGIST

The birds are likely reacting to the rise in beachside barbecues. The smell of grilled food could have driven them into a frenzy, as they competed for scraps.

The male host had a hard time containing himself as he introduced his final host. A male with male-pattern baldness where a pink and yellow polka dot tie.

## UNKNOWN MALE GUEST

I suspect that this is part of a secret government experiment to control wildlife behavior. These attacks are just a test run for something much larger.

Lena sips her coffee and chuckles at the absurdity. Lena craves a hot shower and a chance to catch up on her pleasure reading.



## INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Late that evening, while lying in bed, her cellphone rings, startling her awake. She glances at the Caller ID and sees Alex Sousa's name. She answers.

LENA

Is this the same Alex Sousa who  
rescued a damsel in distress today?

ALEX

The very same. I couldn't wait the  
obligatory two days before calling.  
How are you holding up now that  
you're back home?

LEN

Actually, I feel pretty good. The  
scratches are already starting to  
itch, which is a good sign. I'll  
have some bruising, though. How  
about you?

ALEX

Pretty much the same. One of the  
gulls got me good on the chest, and  
that's what hurts the most. The  
doctor said I'll probably have  
scars there and on my back. Thank  
goodness they didn't go for my  
face. So, I know it's early, but  
are you free for dinner tomorrow  
night? I was thinking we could go  
to Sea Captain's House, unless you  
have a different place in mind.

LENA

I love the Sea Captain's House.  
What time should I meet you there?

ALEX

Oh, I'm an early eater. How about 5  
pm? I'll call and make  
reservations. Do you prefer dining  
outside or inside? Outside, we'll  
have the noise from the waterpark,  
but I enjoy watching the kids have  
fun.

LENA

Outside sounds great. By the way,  
Alex, do you know if any agency has  
collected the gulls that were  
killed or injured today?

ALEX

Yes, actually. I have several of the dead gulls in my lab at the university. We're scheduled to perform necropsies first thing tomorrow morning. Are you thinking the attack might have a biological cause?

LENA

I don't know, but it seems strange for birds to suddenly become so aggressive without a reason. Could it be some kind of virus or toxin they were exposed to?

ALEX

It's definitely a possibility. We're planning to run a full spectrum of tests to see if there's any unusual pathology. If there's something affecting the gulls, we need to know what it is to prevent further incidents.

LENA

Keep me posted on what you find. This whole thing is just so bizarre. I can't shake the feeling that there's more to this than meets the eye.

EXT. BOAT RAMP PARKING LOT-DAY

HALEY, eight-years-old brimming with excitement eagerly tugs at her mother's hand as she walks with her dad toward the waiting Dolphin Magic tour boat. She's wearing her bathing suit under her coverall.

HALEY

Hurry, Mom!

Haley's mom tries to match her daughter's enthusiasm, quickening her pace while carrying a newborn Monica in her arms.

HALEY'S DAD

We'll get there in plenty of time, my daughter.

EXT. DECK OF DOLPHIN MAGIC-DAY

They board the boat. Dashes to the front, while her parents settled into the canopy seats with the newborn. The boat prepares to sail out of the harbor.

INT. MARINE BIOLOGY LAB-DAY

BRENDA, twenty-something, long blond hair, wearing lab coat, greets Alex as he enters the lab.

BRENDA

Good morning, Professor Sousa.

ALEX

Good morning, Brenda. Do you have the gulls ready for examination?

BRENDA

Yes, we have three to necropsy. Do you have any idea why they attacked you and the others on the beach?

ALEX

First, young lady, you will be performing the necropsy while I watch. As my top graduate student, it's time to -he made air quotes 'get down and dirty.' Secondly, with the numerous experts spouting their theories, I think it was caused by aliens.

Brenda laughs and shakes her head.

BRENDA

Aliens, huh? Well, it would make for an interesting scientific paper.

They walk to the examination table where the gulls are laid out.

ALEX

With all the bizarre theories floating around, that one might actually make the most sense. Let's see what the necropsy reveals.

Brenda begins to suit up, donning gloves, a surgical mask, and protective eyewear. The table, illuminated by a bright overhead surgical lamp. She turns on the recording device.

BRENDA  
Alright, let's get started.

She carefully makes the first incision, her movements precise and deliberate. Alex watches closely, offering guidance as needed.

ALEX  
Make sure to note any  
abnormalities, no matter how small.  
We're looking for anything unusual.

Alex continues to observe.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
By the way did you hear the latest  
theory? Someone suggested it was  
all a result of the gulls getting  
high on discarded marijuana edibles  
littered on the beach.

BRENDA  
(laughs) That's a new one. If only  
our findings were that simple.

Clock on the wall shows 2 hours run time.

ALEX  
Good job, Brenda. Now make sure you  
send off their blood samples to the  
lab. Since we didn't find anything  
conclusive from the necropsy, let's  
hope something shows up in their  
toxicology.

Alex and Brenda remove their protective clothing.

BRENDA  
I really hope something shows up,  
since we didn't find anything. It  
has to be something that all the  
gulls were exposed to.

ALEX  
I agree. We need to find some  
common factor. Now we just have to  
wait for the results and compare  
them with what other institutions  
have found from their exams.

BRENDA

It's just so frustrating. These gulls attacked so many people, and we have nothing to show for it yet. We need answers.

ALEX

I know it's tough, but this is part of the process. Science can be slow, but it's thorough. We'll get to the bottom of this.

BRENDA

I'll get these sent out immediately. Hopefully, the lab can expedite the toxicology tests. The sooner we get results, the better.

EXT. DOLPHIN MAGIC BOAT-DAY

The boat's captain makes an announcement.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, we will be leaving the pier shortly, so please make sure that all items in your possession are secured. We anticipate some crosswinds as soon as we clear the harbor.

Haley jumped up and down in excitement, knowing the tour was about to begin. She follows everyone else's lead, and waves at the crowd left behind on the dock.

HALEY

Look, Mom!

She points towards the wooden rail of the pier where three black crows were perched. They seem to be engaged in a lively conversation, cawing and pecking at each other.

HALEY'S MOM

They look like they're having their own little adventure.

The boat picks up speed, and the gentle breeze turns into a more pronounced wind. Haley's hair whips around her face, but she doesn't mind. Haley turns to her dad.

HALEY

Those crows seem so curious. Do you think they're watching us?

HALEY'S DAD

Maybe they are. Maybe they're  
wondering where we're going.

As the boat moves further from the dock, the crows take to flight, circling above as if to see the tourists off on their adventure. The captain's makes another announcement.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, please hold  
on to the railings as we hit open  
water. The waves can be a bit  
rough, but it's all part of the  
fun.

Haley grips the railing tightly, her eyes scan the horizon for the first sign of dolphins.

HALEY

Mom, Dad, look! There are five  
dolphins!

Several other children rush to the side of the boat where Haley stands, eager to see the dolphins race alongside the Dolphin Magic boat.

HALEY (CONT'D)

I've been on the boat before. That  
one is Fred, and that one over  
there is his girlfriend, Amy.

Her parents watch in amusement, proud of their daughter's enthusiasm and storytelling. Laughter and excited chatter fills the air as the dolphins perform their aquatic ballet, leaping and diving in perfect harmony with the boat's movement.

HALEY (CONT'D)

See that one. His name is George  
and he is the quickest one.

Unnoticed by all, a massive flock of crows begin to gather behind them, their numbers growing with each passing second. They circle ominously, their dark forms stark against the bright sky. The crows' cawing, once distant and faint, grows louder and more menacing. The sound goes unheard amidst the boat's excitement.

Haley's mother, senses something off, turns briefly and catches a glimpse of the dark cloud forming in the boat's wake.

HALEY'S MOM

What's that?

She squints to see more clearly. A particularly acrobatic dolphin captures her attention, and she turns back to watch, dismissing her unease. The crows, now a mass of black wings and beady eyes, begin to close in. Their cawing reach a fever pitch, a shrill, dissonant chorus.

HALEY'S DAD

What the heck is that sound? Do you hear that?

His question was drowned out by the children's cheers as another dolphin breaches the surface. A shadow passes over them, blocking out the sun for a brief moment, that the first cries of alarm ring out. The crows, having surrounded the boat, dive towards the unsuspecting passengers, their sharp beaks and talons gleaming.

HALEY

(Screaming) Mom! Dad!

The first crow swoops low, narrowly missing her head. Panic spreads like wildfire as the joyful tour turns into a nightmare.

Her parents grab her, shielding her with their bodies as chaos erupts. The boat rocks violently as people scramble for cover, the air fills with the sounds of flapping wings and terrified screams. The canopy offers little protection as the first wave of the attack shreds the cloth cover.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

Everyone, get inside!

The crows attack with a fury that seems almost supernatural. Their beady eyes glint with malice as they swoop down, claws outstretched, slashing at anything in their path. People scream and duck, trying to protect themselves and their loved ones from the onslaught.

HALEY

(Screaming) Daddy! Mommy!

One man stumbles backward, clutching his face as blood streams down from a gash inflicted by a crow's sharp beak. A woman nearby swats frantically at the air, her screams pierce through the cacophony as she tries to fend off the relentless birds. The crows were everywhere, a swirling mass of black feathers and vicious intent.

HALEY'S DAD

Stay down, Haley! Cover your head and face.

Haley's mother clutches her newborn tightly as she crouches low. The newborn wails, adding to the chaos, and her mother tries to soothe her while keeping an eye on the swarming crows.

HALEY'S MOM  
We need to get inside!

Her husband makes it to her position swatting birds as he does.

The captain and crew fight to regain control of the situation, but the crows are relentless. One crew member, armed with a mop, swings wildly at the birds, managing to knock a few away before being overwhelmed. Another tries to use a fire extinguisher to create a barrier of foam, but the crows easily dodge and continue their assault. Haley spots one of her friends she meant on the cruise, who is trying to shield herself. Haley breaks away from her father and grabs her friend.

HALEY  
Emily, hold my hand!

The crows seem to sense the movement and redirected their attack towards the fleeing children. Haley feels a sharp pain as a crow's talons rakes across her arm, but she doesn't stop. She drags Emily inside, slamming the door shut behind them.

HALEY (CONT'D)  
You'll be okay now, Emily.

Passengers who have managed to escape the initial assault were now crowded together, panic and bleeding from various wounds. The boat rocks violently as more people shove their way inside, seeking refuge from the relentless crows.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)  
Everyone stay calm! We are heading  
back to shore immediately.

As the boat turns, the crows outside continue their vicious assault. The sound of their cawing and the beating of their wings is deafening. Those still on deck fight desperately to hold them off, using anything they can find as weapons.

INT. CABIN AREA-DAY

The inside cabin area is packed. Haley's dad look down at his newborn and wife.



HALEY'S DAD  
How's the baby doing?

HALEY'S MOM  
She pale and I think in shock. We  
need to get her to a hospital as  
soon as possible.

As the boat speeds back towards the safety of the harbor, the crows' attacks begin to lessen, though they still circle menacingly above. Haley sits with her family, holding her arm where the crow had scratched her. She looks at her parents, at the other passengers, and then back at the sky, where the crows still loom like a dark omen.

HALEY'S DAD  
We're almost back to the dock.

Through the window, Haley's dad could see the aftermath on the deck. Several bodies lay motionless, covered with tarps. The tarps were already soaking through with blood, dark stains spreading across the canvas. The deck itself was a scene of horror, awash with blood that mixes with the spray of the ocean waves, creating a gruesome, crimson tide.

HALEY  
Daddy, why did the birds do that?

HALEY'S DAD  
I don't know, sweetheart. I don't  
know.

Emergency vehicles and flashing lights offer a semblance of hope. Paramedics stand ready with stretchers, and police officers try to organize the chaotic scene. The crew begins to assist the most severely injured passengers, guiding them toward the waiting medical teams.

EXT. LENA'S PATIO-DAY

Lena is eating a light lunch and is lost in thought.

LENA (V.O.)  
Get a hold of yourself. It's not  
really a date with Alex. I wonder  
what sexy outfit would be perfect  
for the seashore restaurant?

She was brought back to reality when her cellphone vibrates on her wrought iron patio table. Caller ID said it was Alex.

LENA  
Deciding to cancel our dinner?

ALEX

Cancel? Not a chance. I was just calling to make sure you haven't changed your mind.

LENA

Not at all. I've been looking forward to it.

ALEX

Good to hear. By the way, did you hear the news? There's been another bird strike on a dolphin tour ship.

LENA

Another one? What happened?

ALEX

Seems like a similar attack to the first one. I thought you might want to know, considering everything that's been going on.

LENA

Thanks for letting me know. I'm going to turn on the news now. We'll talk more about it tonight.

ALEX

Definitely. See you at five.

LENA

See you then.

Lena turns on her television set. The screen flickers to life, displaying a harrowing scene that made her stomach churn. Passengers are disembarking from the Dolphin Magic, their faces pale with shock and horror. The newscaster's voice trembled as she reports the grim details.

FEMALE REPORTER

.....seven dead, including two children.

Lena's hand flies to her mouth, bile rising in her throat.

EXT. SEA CAPTAIN'S PARKING LOT-NIGHT

Lena glances in her Corvette's rearview mirror and meticulously adjusts her makeup.

Satisfied with her reflection, she steps out of the car and cautiously looks both ways before crossing Ocean Blvd. towards the Sea Captain's restaurant. The moment she steps inside, she spots Alex standing by a table, a huge grin lighting up his face.

ALEX

You look fantastic, Dr. Lena Lawrence.

LENA

Boy, someone has been doing some Internet searches (smiles).

Almost immediately, a waitress arrives to take their drink orders.

ALEX

Dr. Lena Lawrence, winner of the Bergstrom Award from the Association of Field Ornithologists, the Chandler Robbins Award from the American Birding Association, and the Brewster Award from the American Ornithologists' Union. Quite impressive.

LENA

I see you've done your homework.

ALEX

I had to. I'm sitting across from one of the most accomplished ornithologists in the country. It's not every day you get to have dinner with someone so distinguished.

LENA

Well, it's not every day I get to have dinner with an award-winning marine biologist.

ALEX

Touché. You have been doing your due diligence also I see. But tonight, I'm just Alex, and you're just Lena. Deal?

LENA

Deal.

ALEX

So, tell me, Lena, why did you resign from the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife? Your articles have appeared in nearly every scientific journal I've read.

LENA

I don't know if your research mentioned that I lost my husband several months ago.

ALEX

Yes, I read that. I'm sorry for your loss.

LENA

Thank you. Danny, my husband, was a retired police officer and educator. We moved here from Waco, California after I earned my Ph.D. He suffered from severe bouts of arthritis and asthma, but he never let that interfere with enjoying his retirement. I was twenty years his junior, and we balanced our life at the beach with my job at the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Whenever I was away for any extended period, he would arrange fishing outings or simply soak up the sun. It worked out great for our relationship.

(Pause)

LENA (CONT'D)

Danny was my rock. He supported my career wholeheartedly, even when it meant long hours and frequent travels. His resilience and positive attitude were truly inspiring. Despite his health issues, he found joy in the simple pleasures of life, and he made sure we cherished every moment together.

ALEX

He sounds like an amazing person.

LENA

He was," Lena agreed, a gentle smile playing on her lips.

(MORE)

LENA (CONT'D)

Leaving the Department of Fish and Wildlife was one of the hardest decisions I've ever made, but after Danny passed, I realized I needed a change. I wanted to focus on my research and photography, things that Danny always encouraged me to pursue.

(Deep breath)

LENA (CONT'D)

And now, being back here, I feel like I'm rediscovering my passion for nature and wildlife. It's therapeutic in a way, helping me heal and move forward.

Alex reaches across the table and grabs Lena's hand.

ALEX

I'm glad you're finding your path again, Lena. And I'm honored to be a part of this journey with you.

LENA

Thank you, Alex. It means a lot to me.

As their food orders arrive, the two sampled their dishes and compliment how good it tastes.

ALEX

This is delicious. The prawns are great.

LENA

I've eaten here many times and never been disappointed. So, can you tell me what your research with the gulls found?

ALEX

Honestly, not much. The necropsies didn't reveal anything conclusive so far. No unusual toxins, no obvious signs of disease. It's frustrating.

LENA

I'm sorry, Alex. I know how much you were hoping to find some answers.

ALEX

Yeah, I just feel so helpless.  
These attacks are escalating, and  
people are getting scared. I want  
to help, but right now, I'm coming  
up empty-handed.

LENA

You're doing everything you can.  
Sometimes these things take time.  
Nature can be unpredictable and  
mysterious. We'll figure this out  
together.

ALEX

Thanks, Lena. Your support means a  
lot.

ELDERLY WOMAN

(Slurred) Excuse me, but I couldn't  
help overhearing your conversation  
about the bird attacks. I recognize  
you. You're Dr. Lena Lawrence, the  
ornithologist, aren't you?

LENA

Yes, I am.

ELDERLY WOMAN

I thought so. I've read your work.  
Very impressive.

LENA

Thank you.

ELDERLY WOMAN

I have a theory about these bird  
attacks. It's the carbon dioxide  
emissions from all those bikers  
during Bike Week. It's throwing off  
the birds' natural behavior, making  
them aggressive. It's simple  
chemistry, really.

Alex raises an eyebrow, trying to suppress a smile.

ALEX

Carbon dioxide from the bikers?

ELDERLY WOMAN

Yes, exactly! You see, all those  
motorcycles, they release CO2. They  
race up and down the Strand,  
gunning their bikes.

(MORE)

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)

It's messing with the birds' instincts. They're getting confused, agitated. It's a disaster waiting to happen.

Lena exchanges a glance with Alex, both of them struggle to maintain a polite demeanor.

LENA

That's an interesting theory. We'll certainly consider all possibilities in our research.

ELDERLY WOMAN

You do that, dear. And remember, sometimes the simplest explanations are the most accurate.

She gives a knowing nod before stumbling slightly as she returns to her table and finishes her drink.

ALEX

(Whispering) Carbon dioxide from bikers. That's a new one.

LENA

Well, at least she's passionate about finding answers.

They share a laugh, the unexpected interruption lightens the mood.

As they wait for their dessert, Alex's cellphone rings, its shrill tone cuts through their conversation. He quickly grabs it.

ALEX

Sorry about that, I thought I had it on vibrate.

He glances at the screen but does not recognize the number.

ALEX (CONT'D)

This is Alex (pause). Yes, this is Professor Sousa. Yes, I understand. Tomorrow at 10 in the morning. I will be in attendance.

He ends the call and puts his phone away. His mind clearly occupied with the unexpected interruption. Lena watches him with a curious tilt of her head.

LENA

Everything okay?

ALEX

That was the Dean of the biological division from the university. The state has scheduled an emergency meeting tomorrow morning. It's about the bird attacks.

LENA

Do they have new information?

ALEX

I'm not sure. But it sounds important. They've asked all relevant faculty and researchers to be there. I think they're trying to consolidate all the data we've collected so far and come up with a coordinated response.

LENA

It makes sense. This situation is escalating, and we need all the expertise we can get to figure out what's happening.

ALEX

I just hope we can find something concrete soon. People are getting scared, and the media frenzy isn't helping.

Their dessert arrives, and Lena reaches out to squeeze his hand reassuringly.

LENA

We'll get through this, Alex. We have to keep pushing forward, no matter how frustrating it gets.

Alex smiles.

ALEX

Lena, I would love for you to go with me. I mean, I can attest that there is no one on our university staff that comes close to your expertise in birds.

Lena looks thoughtful, her fingers lightly tap the table.

LENA

Are you sure? I wouldn't want to intrude.



ALEX

Absolutely. Your insights could be invaluable. Plus, having you there would make a big difference. The faculty respects your work immensely.

Lena hesitates for a moment.

LENA

Alright, I'll go with you. If my experience can help shed light on this mystery, I'm more than willing to contribute. Let's hope we can piece together something useful. These attacks are more than just a local issue—they're a puzzle that needs solving.

EXT. DECK OF REAL DEAL - DAY

The bottom trawler fishing boat Real Deal was starting to pull in her haul for the day. The sun was beginning its descent, casting a golden glow over the rippling water.

CAPTAIN MIKE— sixty-something, beard, mustache, fishing clothes, and his son JUSTINE, twenty-something, manned their stations as the winch begins to pull in their 60-foot trawl.

CAPTAIN MIKE

Let's hope we do better today with our bottom trawling than yesterday's midwater.

He squints against the glare of the sea.

CAPTAIN MIKE (CONT'D)

Wasn't worth the fuel cost with what we netted. Damn government keeps jacking up the prices.

JUSTINE

Yeah, Dad. At this rate, we'll be lucky to break even. The fish just aren't as plentiful as they used to be.

As the net surfaces, heavy with the day's catch, a sudden shadow passes overhead, momentarily blocking out the sun. Captain Mike looks up, a frown creasing his weathered brow.

CAPTAIN MIKE

Did you see that?

Justine glances skyward, his expression puzzled.

JUSTINE

Probably just a cloud or a big  
bird.

They continue to haul in the net, the shadow reappears, this time accompanied by an eerie, unsettling silence. The usual cacophony of seabirds has ceased, replaced by an ominous stillness.

CAPTAIN MIKE

Something's not right.

Without warning, a deafening screech pierces the air as massive flock of birds descend upon the Real Deal. They swarm the boat in a frenzied attack, pecking and clawing at anything and anyone in their path. Feathers fly, mingling with the frantic shouts of Justine and his dad as they try to fend off the relentless assault.

CAPTAIN MIKE (CONT'D)

Justine, get down!

The young man drops to the deck, covering his head as the birds continue their vicious onslaught. The net, now forgotten, swings precariously as the boat rocks under the weight of the avian attackers. Captain Mike struggles to regain control, his voice hoarse from shouting commands.

CAPTAIN MIKE (CONT'D)

We need to get out of here! Start  
the engines, now!.

He grabs the ships radio mic.

CAPTAIN MIKE (CONT'D)

Mayday, Mayday. This is the Real  
Deal. We are under attack from a  
bunch of birds. This is not a joke.

Justine scrambles to his feet, dodging the attacking birds as he makes his way to the controls. With a jolt, the Real Deal's engines roar to life, and the boat lurches forward. Captain Mike sets a course for the entrance of the nearest harbor. The birds continue their onslaught, smashing the boat's windows and attacking Mike and his son with relentless fury.

RADIO LOUDSPEAKER (V.O.)

Real Deal, this is the Coast Guard  
out of Georgetown harbor. What is  
your status?

No answer.

RADIO LOUDSPEAKER (V.O.)

I repeat. Real Deal, this is the  
Coast Guard. We have received your  
Mayday. What is your position?

Again, no response.

COAST GUARD BOATSMAN

Got them, Sir. They appear to be  
heading towards the harbor at full  
speed.

COMMANDER SULLIVAN, using his binoculars, Is able to locate  
the trawler heading directly to the Myrtle Beach harbor. From  
his vantage point, he could not see anyone on board. He looks  
ahead of the path the trawler was taking.

COMMANDER SULLIVAN

They're headed straight for the  
rocks.

The Real Deal races towards the harbor, its speed unchecked.  
Captain Mike and Justine, are now semi-conscious.

CAPTAIN MIKE

Brace yourself!

The Real Deal slams into the rocks with a catastrophic force.  
The impact triggers an explosion, flames erupting from the  
boat as it is torn apart by the collision. Debris and smoke  
fills the air, the violent explosion echo across the harbor.

The Coast Guard boat speeds towards the wreckage, arriving  
just in time to pull the bodies of Captain Mike and his son,  
Justine, from the water. The sight was horrific; their bodies  
bear gruesome mutilations, deep gashes and wounds inflicted  
by the vicious birds.

COMMANDER SULLIVAN

This wasn't just an accident. Those  
birds... they did this.

He looks to the sky as sees the flock return deeper to sea.

EXT. INT. LENA'S BEACHFRONT HOME-DAY

Alex arrives at Lena's beachfront home and marvels at the  
size and location. He knocks on the front door. Lena answers.

ALEX  
Beautiful home.

LENA  
Thank you. Come in, I just need to  
give my cat some food since I have  
no idea how long this day will be.

As Alex steps inside, his eyes were immediately drawn to the  
floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.

ALEX  
My God. Look at this million dollar  
view.

Lena returns from the kitchen.

LENA  
Okay, I think I'm ready. So, you  
like the view?

ALEX  
The view is breathtaking. And I see  
you have a private entrance to the  
beach. Nice.

Lena blushes - her cheeks turn a delicate shade of pink.

She grabs her bag and the two of them left her residence,  
walking towards Alex's vehicle parked in the driveway.

INT. ALEX'S CAR-DAY

ALEX  
Long drive ahead of us. I thought  
we could make a quick stop at a  
drive-through and get something to  
eat and drink on the way. How does  
that sound?

LENA  
That sounds perfect. I could use  
some coffee to wake me up.

They both put their seatbelts as Alex starts up the car.

ALEX  
Have you lived here long?

LENA  
About five years. We moved here  
after I got my position with the  
U.S.

(MORE)

LENA (CONT'D)

Department of Fish and Wildlife.  
It's a bit of a drive, but waking  
up to the sound of the waves and  
that view makes it worth it.

ALEX

I can see why. It's like a little  
slice of paradise.

LENA

It is. Especially on days when I  
need to clear my head. The ocean  
has a way of putting things into  
perspective.

ALEX

Do you have any expectations for  
today?

LENA

I'm not sure. I just hope we can  
start piecing together some  
answers. The attacks are getting  
worse, and we need to find a  
solution soon.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PARKING LOT-DAY

Alex and Lena arrive on the University of South Carolina  
campus with twenty minutes to spare. The atmosphere was tense  
as they pulled into the bustling parking lot outside the  
biological studies building.

ALEX

We made good time. Looks like a full  
house with the number of cars in  
the parking lot.

INT. BIOLOGICAL STUDIES BUILDING -DAY

The two enter. Their footsteps echo in the corridor. Outside  
the largest lecture hall, a welcome desk has been hastily set  
up. Behind it, Brenda is busy arranging name tags and  
distributing conference materials.

BRENDA

Hello, Dr. Sousa.

She glanced at Lena curiously while affixing Alex's adhesive  
name tag.

BRENDA (CONT'D)  
Who's this with you?

ALEX  
Good morning, Brenda. I'd like to introduce Dr. Lawrence. She'll be attending the conference with me. Seems you had to get up bright and early to be roped into receptionist duty.

He turns to Lena.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
This is my brightest graduate assistant, Brenda. Someday soon you will be reading her thoughts in scientific journals.

BRENDA  
Nice to meet you, Dr. Lawrence.

She fills out Lena's name tag.

BRENDA (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I got the call late last night from the Dean's office asking if I could assist. The campus is buzzing today. Are you aware that the governor is here too?

LENA  
I knew this was important, but I didn't realize it had reached that level.

BRENDA  
Oh, it has. The governor, experts from various fields, and even some military personnel are here. It's all hands-on deck. They're taking these bird attacks very seriously. Did you hear about the fishing trawler boat that attacked today?

ALEX  
No, we didn't. What happened?

BRENDA  
According to the Coast Guard, the boat was swarmed by a flock of birds.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)

The captain and his son were killed as they desperately tried to navigate back to the Myrtle Beach harbor. With no one left to control the vessel, it collided with the artificial jetty and exploded.

Alex and Lena exchanges a glances.

ALEX

Well, let's not keep them waiting.

BRENDA

Wait. Dr. Lawrence, if you could write down your name and email address. They are putting together a global email system and need everyone's email address if you don't mind.

Lena fills out the form and the two head to the lecture hall. Brenda calls out.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Alex, I put down your university email address.

He gives her the thumbs up.

INT. LARGE LECTURE HALL-DAY

Inside, the room is filled with a low hum of conversation, a mix of concerned murmurs and urgent discussions. Experts from ornithology, environmental science, and public safety were gathered, their faces etched with worry. At the front of the room, a large screen displayed a map of the region with red markers indicating the locations of the recent bird attacks.

They both recognize the governor and take a seat after waving at several other attendees.

GOVERNOR

Ladies and gentlemen, if we could get started.

The small talk among the attendees quickly subsided, and all eyes turned to the front of the room.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to attend this urgent meeting.

(MORE)

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

We are facing an unprecedented crisis, and your expertise is crucial in helping us understand and address the situation.

(Pause)

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

We've gathered here today because of the alarming bird attacks that have escalated over the past few days. Each of you brings a wealth of knowledge in your respective fields, and we hope you can shed some light on what is causing these attacks.

He nods to a man standing by a whiteboard at the side of the room. The lights dim.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

I'd like to introduce Dr. Mitchell from the Environmental Sciences Department who will now present some of the prevailing theories we've gathered so far.

DR. MITCHELL, sixty-something, academician, steps forward, his expression serious as he picks up a marker. He quickly begins to sketch diagrams and notes on the whiteboard.

DR. MITCHELL

We're considering several hypotheses. First, there's the possibility of a sudden shift in migratory patterns due to climate change, causing these birds to behave aggressively as they compete for resources.

Lena leans into Alex and whispers.

LENA

Oh, great. Here we go again with the climate change narrative. First, it was global warming, and when that didn't fit their narrative, they switched to climate change.

Alex nods in agreement.

ALEX

It's always about the money.



Dr. Mitchell draws a rough map showing changes in migratory routes.

DR. MITCHELL

Secondly, we have reports suggesting that some of the birds might be suffering from a new strain of avian flu, which could be affecting their neurological functions and leading to this erratic behavior.

(Pause)

DR. MITCHELL (CONT'D)

These are just preliminary theories, and we need comprehensive data to confirm any of them. Your insights and expertise are vital in helping us understand and combat this threat

He turns back to the governor who returns so the podium.

GOVERNOR

We're in uncharted territory, and we need to work together.

Alex raises his hand and gets the governor's attention.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Yes, please stand and give everyone your name and background. If everyone else who would like to contribute could do the same, that will be appreciated.

ALEX

Thank you, Governor. I'm Dr. Alex Souza, a professor of marine biology here at the university. I brought with me today, Dr. Lena Lawrence, a renowned ornithologist. She and I were attacked at the state park in Myrtle Beach, and together we have come up with some possible theories, but none of them are concrete.

Gasps are heard in the audience.

GOVERNOR

This is just a brainstorming session, Dr. Souza, so please share the theories you and Dr. Lawrence have formulated.

ALEX

Certainly. We've considered several potential causes for these bird attacks, ranging from the extreme to the more logical.

He glances at Lena, who nods, signaling her support.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Firstly, we've thought about migratory patterns. Something could be disrupting their traditional routes, causing stress and aggressive behavior.

Lena takes a deep breath and stands before adding.

LENA

We've also considered environmental toxins. Pollutants or chemicals in the water or air might be affecting the birds' neurological functions, leading to erratic and violent behavior.

ALEX

There's also the possibility of disease. A new strain of avian flu or another pathogen could be altering their behavior. I recently complete several necropsies of some of the gulls that attacked us. We did not find anything but are waiting for toxicology reports.

LENA

Another theory is electromagnetic interference. Birds rely on the Earth's magnetic fields for navigation. Increased use of wireless technology or changes in solar activity could be disorienting them.

ALEX

We also discussed more extreme possibilities.

Alex looks around the room.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Some have speculated about government experiments or secret military projects gone wrong. While it sounds far-fetched, we can't entirely rule out human interference.

Small talk breaks out in the audience, causing the Governor hammer his gavel to regain silence.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Lastly, there's the idea of a coordinated attack. Birds are highly intelligent and capable of complex social behaviors. It's possible they're responding collectively to a perceived threat, though what that threat is remains unclear.

The room is silent as the weight of the theories are being processed. The governor looks thoughtful.

GOVERNOR

Thank you, Dr. Souza and Dr. Lawrence. These are all valuable insights. We need to explore each of these avenues thoroughly. Anyone else who has theories or data, please share them now.

A hand shoots up in the air from a uniformed military officer.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Yes, Sir.

COLONEL FRANK BRADLEY

I'm Colonel Frank Bradley of the United States Air Force. I want to reassure Drs. Sousa and Lawrence, as well as everyone here, that the military is not conducting nor involved in any experiments that would cause birds to attack civilians. I was stationed at the former Air Force base in Myrtle Beach, now Market Common, until it closed in 1993.

(MORE)

COLONEL FRANK BRADLEY (CONT'D)

During my tenure, we did not conduct any experiments that could, in any way, contribute to the assaults happening now.

GOVERNOR

Thank you, Colonel. Our intention here is not to place blame on any agency. We are focused on gathering potential causes that could help us find a resolution to this crisis.

He pauses and looks around at the gathered experts and officials.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Fourth of July is just around the corner, and we are expecting hundreds of thousands of people to flock to the Grand Strand to enjoy the beaches and amusement parks. The economic and social impact of this holiday is significant for our community.

The room is silent, the weight of the governor's words hang in the air.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Given the recent attacks, we face a very real threat. Another bird attack during the celebrations could lead to widespread panic and potentially catastrophic consequences.

Dr. Mitchell, who has been taking notes on the whiteboard, steps forward again.

DR. MITCHELL

Governor, we must also consider the possibility of a coordinated effort to manage public safety. Increased patrols, early warning systems, and public awareness campaigns could mitigate the risk.

Lena leans closer to Alex and whispers.

LENA

He's right. We need to prepare the public without causing unnecessary alarm.

Alex nods and raises his hand before standing.

GOVERNOR

Doctor Sousa.

ALEX

Governor, if I may, Dr. Lawrence and I have been compiling data on bird movements and behaviors. We believe that setting up monitoring stations along key areas of the coast could provide early detection of unusual bird activity. This would give us a chance to respond before an attack happens.

Lena whispers.

LENA

We did?

GOVERNOR

That sounds like a sensible precaution. Let's discuss the logistics of implementing these monitoring stations. In the meantime, we must also consider how to communicate the potential risks to the public without inciting panic.

A hand goes up from the back of the room, and the governor nods to the individual.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Yes, go ahead please.

CHIEF HARPER

I'm Chief Harper of the Myrtle Beach Police Department. We're ready to deploy additional resources to ensure public safety. Our officers can assist with monitoring and response efforts.

GOVERNOR

Thank you, Chief Harper. Your support and the support of all first responders is invaluable. Let's coordinate efforts to maximize our coverage and response capabilities.

(Pause)

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Let's work together to develop a comprehensive plan. Time is of the essence, and we need to be ready for any eventuality. I appreciate your dedication and expertise. Together, we will find a way to protect our community. I will have my office create a global email system where each of us can add newly gained information that we can share with the group. Thank you for attending.

As they make their way out of the lecture hall's exit, Lena lightly punches Alex on his shoulder.

LENA

You didn't tell me I would have to speak. You almost gave me a panic attack.

Alex chuckles, mocking the rubbing of his shoulder.

ALEX

You handled it like a pro, Dr. Lawrence. Besides, I thought you liked surprises.

LENA

Surprises, yes. Public speaking, not so much. Next time, a little heads-up would be appreciated.

Alex grins.

ALEX

I'll make a note of that. But admit it, you enjoyed putting those theories out there. It's not every day you get to suggest aliens might be controlling birds.

Lena smiles.

LENA

True. Though I think the migratory patterns theory holds more water. But who knows? Maybe we'll uncover something even crazier.

They reach Alex's car. He turns towards her.

ALEX

Are you hungry? I know a great Mexican restaurant nearby.

LENA

Starving. But first, since we're here, can you show me where you work?

ALEX

Sure.

They reverse direction and head towards his office.

INT. ALEX'S OFFICE -DAY

They enter and Alex is . They reversed direction and headed towards his office and is embarrassed about how dirty his office is.

ALEX

This is my office. Sorry it's such a mess. Brenda and I spent a lot of time conducting necropsies, so I never got around to cleaning my desk.

LENA

Not a problem. It looks like the workspace of someone who's deeply engrossed in their research. Where's your lab?

ALEX

This way.

He leads her out of the office and down a long, dimly lit hallway. They pass several doors before stopping at one marked 'Laboratory' and walk in.

INT. LABORATORY -DAY

LENA

Wow! It looks like a coroner's lab. Surgical lamp, voice recording, the whole setup. I'm impressed.

ALEX

Thanks. We try to keep it well-stocked and ready for any situation.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

We do a lot of detailed work here, especially when it comes to examining sea life incidents.

LENA

This must be where you've been analyzing the birds from the recent attacks.

ALEX

Exactly. We've been working round the clock to find any clues. So far, the results have been inconclusive, but we're not giving up.

LENA

I can see you're passionate about this. It's inspiring. Well, now that I've seen where the magic happens, how about that Mexican restaurant? I'm starving.

ALEX

Absolutely. Let's get out of here and grab some food. We've earned it.

INT. ALEX'S CAR-DAY

ALEX

El Salto is one of the best-kept secrets here in Columbia. Wait until you taste their food.

LENA

I could sure go for a margarita.

ALEX

First thing I'll order for us once we get there. So, what did you think of the gathering of eagles?

Lena chuckles at the metaphor.

LENA

Well, my first thought is that Colonel Bradley is a bit thin-skinned. I didn't hear Dr. Mitchell make any direct accusations against the military. But, to be honest, you and I pretty much came up with the same theories on our own.



ALEX  
(Flirting) Great minds think alike.

LENA  
Yeah, I guess we make a pretty good team.

ALEX  
Definitely. And who knows? Maybe solving this mystery together will become our thing.

LENA  
(Flirting) Our thing, huh? I could get used to that.

INT. EL SALTO RESTAURANT-DAY

They enter the restaurant and Alex is immediately greeted by the manager, PABLO, fifty-something, portly.

PABLO  
Professor Sousa, how good to see you! You were not here last week. And who is this lovely señorita?

ALEX  
Pablo, this is Dr. Lena Lawrence.

PABLO  
Oh, beautiful and intelligent too. Welcome! The professor is one of our regulars. He will show you many delicious items on our menu. Perhaps a margarita, no? Maria, please find a nice table for the professor and his guest.

MARIA, twenty-something, long black hair, hearing Mexican dress escorts them to a table.

LENA  
Gee, your fame knows no bounds.

MARIA  
Two margaritas coming up.

She hands Lena a menu but not Alex.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
I know what you will be ordering Professor.

ALEX

Thank you, Maria.

He turns to Lena.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You'll notice the menu is a bit sparse. I've never understood why they don't just give us a single piece of paper listing everything. Anyway, they do have a cheeseburger for those who aren't fans of Mexican food. But you really can't go wrong with the tacos, burritos, Enchiladas Yolandas, or the Chile Colorado. Just a heads-up, though--the portions are huge.

Maria returns with two large margaritas whose brims were laced with salt and a large bowl of chips and fresh salsa. Lena quickly grabs a chip and dips it into the salsa.

LENA

Oh, my God. This is so good. Do you make your own chips?

MARIA

(Proudly) Yes, we make our own chips and flour or corn tortillas. My father insists that it must be authentic, right, professor?

ALEX

No doubt about it, Maria. You know what I want. What would you suggest to Lena?

MARIA

Oh, our chicken burrito is very tender, but we also have shredded beef if you like. The steak is also very tender in our Chile Colorado.

LENA

Well, Maria, I'll go with your first suggestion - the chicken burrito. I hope it is not too spicy.

MARIA

No, Senorita. You get a choice. Mild or spicy like the professor likes.

LENA  
Let's make mine mild.

Maria smiles and turns, taking the menu with her.

LENA (CONT'D)  
This is really a nice place. So, I  
assume you come here often?

ALEX  
I have to admit that I come here  
probably once a week. I've tried  
everything on the menu, including  
the cheeseburger. Wait until you  
see the size of your chicken  
burrito.

LENA  
Well, I hope they offer doggie  
bags. I told you my husband was a  
police officer and educator before  
he died four months ago, making me  
a widow. Care to share?

Alex clears his throat and takes a sip of his drink to wash  
down the remains of a chip.

ALEX  
Sorry about that. Went down the  
wrong pipe. I'm divorced and,  
unfortunately, have no children. I  
met my wife during graduate school.  
She was a political science major  
and leaned towards the progressive  
side, which was quite different  
from my views. Anyway, we married  
young, and our careers took us in  
different directions. She lives in  
Boston now, and although our  
divorce was amicable, we don't keep  
in touch.

(Silence)

ALEX (CONT'D)  
I never asked you. Do you and Danny  
have children?

Lena takes a sip of her margarita before answering.

LENA  
We had a son, but he was stillborn.  
We tried again, but I had  
miscarriages.  
(MORE)

LENA (CONT'D)

We wanted kids but decided that maybe God didn't want us to. We considered adoption, but then Danny got injured on the job and had to retire from the police department. That was his whole life, so we had to deal with his depression until he began teaching at-risk incarcerated juveniles and adults. By the time I hit forty, we decided to just live our lives to the fullest.

ALEX

Sorry, I can feel your sadness. Perhaps we should change the subject. Can I suggest homemade churros with a cup of Mexican coffee?

LENA

That sounds great, but you will need to get me a doggie bag. I don't think I've ever seen so much food in my life.

They both laugh as Alex motions for Maria's attention. The gentle hum of chatter is abruptly interrupted by a cacophony of screeching from outside. Startled, Lena looks towards the large windows that provide a view of the patio and the street beyond.

LENA (CONT'D)

What's happening?

Alex stands up, moving towards the window to get a better look.

ALEX

I'm not sure. Stay here.

Maria, who has is in the middle of taking another table's order, freezes as the screeching grows louder. Patrons begin to rise from their seats, curiosity quickly turns into fear as the sound intensifies.

Then, without warning, a dark mass of birds swarm towards the windows. The glass rattles violently as the birds collide with it, their beaks and claws scraping and pecking furiously. The once orderly dining room descends into chaos. Plates shatter, and chairs are overturned as people scramble to find cover.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Get down!

He grabs Lena's hand and pulls her under the sturdy wooden table. Maria and a few other customers follow suit, ducking under whatever cover they can find.

Through the gaps in the tablecloth, Lena can see feathers and beaks slashing through the air. The birds seem relentless, their numbers grow as more join the frenzied attack. A particularly large bird, with a sharp, hooked beak, manages to break through a small section of the window, sending shards of glass scattering across the floor.

ALEX (CONT'D)

We need to get out of here.

Maria huddles next to them, and nods in agreement.

MARIA

(Shouting) There's a back door in the kitchen. If we can make it there, we might be able to escape.

Alex peeks out from under the table and assesses the situation.

ALEX

Alright, on my count, we run for the kitchen. Stay low and move quickly. Three... two... one... go!

They burst out from under the table, keeping as low as possible. The birds continue their relentless assault.

MARIA

This way!

As they near the kitchen, a few birds swoop down, one managing to latch onto a woman's scalp, tearing at her hair and flesh. Her screams fill the room as blood streams down her face.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I need to find my father.

A man near the bar wasn't so lucky. A bird's beak gouges his eye, causing him to fall to the ground writhing in pain. Blood pools around him as he screams for help, but the birds continue their attack, tearing at his face and neck until his cries were silenced. They make it to the kitchen.

ALEX

Maria, stay here. I'll go check on your father.

Maria nods while Lena pulls out her phone.

LENA

I'll call for help. In the meantime, we need to stay put and hope the birds don't break through.

Alex cautiously makes his way around the kitchen to the door leading to the dining area. The door is jammed, so he had to apply his weight to get it to budge. With a heavy creak, it finally gives way. The sight that meets his eyes is horrific.

Carnage is everywhere. On the ground, several crows are viciously pecking at the face of Pablo. Their beaks tearing into his flesh with brutal efficiency. His eyes have been gouged out, and his face was a mess of blood and exposed bone. He turns back towards the kitchen.

ALEX

I'm sorry, Maria. Your father is in heaven.

Maria screams and breaks into tears as Lena comforts her. Sirens fill the air as they start to make their way to the parking lot.

EXT. RESTAURANT'S PARKING LOT-DAY

As soon as they step outside, they stop in shock. Carnage was everywhere. Bodies lay strewn across the ground, covered in blood and torn flesh. Cars had shattered windows, and feathers are scattered like a macabre confetti. Car alarms blare. The other store fronts have sustained the same or more damage. It looks like a war zone.

ALEX

Let's walk slowly to the car. We don't want to upset them.

The birds were perched on every possible building, lining the rooftops, streetlights, and trees, their eyes fix on the chaos below as if waiting for a signal to start their next attack. Different species of birds—crows, seagulls, hawks—were all gathered together, an unnatural and terrifying assembly.

LENA

This can't be. It is highly unlikely that different species of birds flock together.

The sirens grow louder as emergency vehicles approach, but the birds remain eerily still, their collective gaze making the scene even more unnerving.

ALEX

We need to keep moving. Once we get to the car we get out of here before they start again.

LENA

Those sirens and emergency lights are just going to aggravate the birds. They need to shut them off.

As they reach the car, Alex quickly unlocks it and ushers Lena and Maria inside. As he is about to close the door, a sudden movement catches his eye. The birds are stirring, their wings flapping as if ready to take flight. The first bird swoops down, followed by another, and another, until the sky darkens with the mass of descending creatures.

ALEX

We're okay. They are reacting to the sounds of the sirens and bright lights. There is nothing we can do about it. Go! Go!

He slams the door shut and starts the engine. The car speeds out of the parking lot. The birds chase after them, their beaks pecking at the windows and claws scratching the roof. Maria begins to scream.

Lena looks back in horror as they drive away.

LENA

They're attacking again. We need to find somewhere safe, somewhere they can't reach us.

Alex looks for a safe place as he drives.

ALEX

There! The old library! It's got thick walls and small windows. We should be safe there!

Alex enters the library parking lot. They exit the vehicle.

INT. OLD LIBRARY-DAY

They enter.

ALEX

Hurry!

The sound of the birds outside is muffled, but they could still hear the occasional thud of a bird hitting the small windows.

ALEX (CONT'D)

We should head to the basement.  
It's more secure down there, and  
there are no windows.

INT. BASEMENT-DAY

They make their way down the narrow staircase to the basement. The air is cooler, and the thick walls provide a sense of safety. The basement is filled with old books and storage boxes, creating a maze of potential hiding spots.

Alex and Lena check their phone for any updates.

ALEX

The news is filled with reports of  
bird attacks happening all over the  
city. It seemed like nowhere is  
safe from the relentless onslaught.

LENA

We need to stay quiet and wait this  
out. Hopefully, the authorities  
will figure out what's causing this  
and put an end to it.

Maria gets next to Lena who puts her arm around her. Maria, in shock, falls asleep next to Lena, who is being embraced by Alex. As time passes, the noise outside gradually subsides. Alex listens intently, and after a long silence, he gently stirs Lena.

ALEX

I think it's safe to go upstairs.  
You two stay here.

His voice startles Maria, who wakes up screaming, her eyes wide with terror.



LENA

It's okay, Maria. We are safe. Alex is going upstairs to make sure the bird attack is over.

INT. MAIN FLOOR OF LIBRARY-DAY

Alex carefully makes his way up the narrow staircase. When he reaches the top, he pauses, listening for any sign of the birds. The quiet is almost deafening. He enters the main floor.

Bookshelves are toppled, and books lay scattered everywhere. Broken glass from the small windows glitters like shards of ice on the floor, mixed with feathers and blood.

ALEX

(To self) So far, so good.

He opens the entrance door and looks outside.

The birds have vanished leaving behind a scene of carnage. Outside, the streets are littered with the bodies of both birds and humans. Alex walks a few steps further. He sees neighbors peeking out from their homes, their faces etched with fear and confusion. He returns to get Maria and Lena.

INT. LIBRARY BASEMENT-DAY

ALEX

It's... it's over, at least for now. The birds are gone, but the town... it's a mess.

Lena hugs Maria tightly, trying to offer comfort. The enter his car where he turns on the radio.

INT. ALEX'S CAR-DAY

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Reports are coming in from all over Columbia. Authorities are urging everyone to stay indoors and avoid any areas with large concentrations of birds. Emergency services are overwhelmed, and it's unclear how long these attacks will continue.

ALEX

They're not saying anything about Myrtle Beach.

LENA

Maybe we should head towards my house and hold up there. It might be safer, at least until we figure out what's going on.

She turns to Maria.

LENA (CONT'D)

Is that alright with you, Maria?

MARIA

Yes, that sounds good. I just... I just want to be somewhere safe.

ALEX

Alright. Lena's house it is. Let's get moving before anything changes.

Lena tries to keep the conversation light, sharing stories about her home and the surrounding area.

LENA

It's a quiet neighborhood, not far from the beach. My neighbors are good people. Hopefully, they're all safe.

Maria remains silent, staring out the window. They reach Lena's house. Alex parks his car making sure it is safe outside. No birds could be seen.

ALEX

Let's get inside quickly. We'll barricade the doors and windows, especially that whole wall of windows that face the Atlantic.

They hurry out of the car and into the house.

INT. LENA'S BEACHFRONT HOME-DAY

Once inside, they set to work securing the property. Alex moves furniture against the doors while Lena and Maria check the windows, making sure everything was locked and reinforced.

ALEX

That bay window is going to be a problem.

LENA

My husband has a lot of plywood in the garage. That should help.

As they work, Lena's cat, Banshee, bounds up to them, seeking affection and wagging her tail, offering a brief moment of levity. Maria manages a small smile as she pets her, grateful for the distraction.

Alex returns with several sheets of plywood.

ALEX

Glad you had all that plywood in the garage. It will make my job a lot easier.

LENA

My husband always wanted to be prepared. Guess that was the cop in him. With the threat of hurricanes each year, he kept the garage filled with not only plywood, but in the large cabinet in the garage, there is enough food and water for two months plus a first aid kit.

ALEX

Smart man.

With the house secure, they gather in the living room, each taking a deep breath. For now, they are safe.

ALEX (CONT'D)

We'll stay here until we have a better idea of what's going. We can take shifts keeping watch.

Maria again falls asleep on the couch with Banshee curled up next to her.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Poor kid. Pablo told me that he hoped someday to leave the restaurant to her when he retired. She attends the university and was taking business courses in advance.

For some unexplained reason, Lena decides to check the photos she had taken at the beach the day of the attack. She makes her way through the pictures, initially not noticing anything, yet something urges her to check them again.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Found something?

LENA

Yes.

Alex leans into Lena and looks at the photos.

LENA (CONT'D)

Look at this. In the beginning, there are just a few birds, three or four. But then more and more start to appear, all converging on the same spot. It's like the first birds were marking a location or sending a signal.

ALEX

That's strange. It's almost like they're coordinating somehow. But what does it mean?

LENA

I'm not sure. It's definitely not normal behavior. Birds don't usually flock like this unless there's a specific reason. And, at the restaurant, as I said, it is highly unlikely that so many different bird species would come together, much less, organize a simultaneous attack.

Maria, who wakes up and has been listening quietly, leans in to look at the photos as well.

MARIA

Could it be some sort of signal or instinct we don't understand?

LENA

Maybe. But whatever it is, it's causing them to gather in large numbers and become aggressive. We need to figure out why.

ALEX

We'll keep an eye out and see if we can learn more. For now, we should stay vigilant and be prepared for anything. If you lead me to the kitchen, perhaps I can whip up something to eat.

Lena smiles, trying to lighten the mood.

LENA

That's alright, Alex. I think Maria and I can handle it. What do you think, Maria?

MARIA

Sure, as long as we're not making Mexican food. I've had enough of that for one day!

LENA

Agreed. Let's see what we can come up with. How about we try our hand at some classic American comfort food? Maybe a hearty stew or some grilled cheese sandwiches?

MARIA

Now you're talking! A grilled cheese sounds perfect.

Alex grins, appreciating the moment of normalcy.

ALEX

Alright, you two take the lead. I'll keep watch and make sure our feathered friends don't surprise us again.

Lena and Maria head to the kitchen. They rummage through the pantry and refrigerator, finding the ingredients they need. Lena turns on the stove and starts buttering the bread for the sandwiches.

LENA

You know, I used to make grilled cheese all the time when I was a kid. It was my go-to snack after school.

MARIA

(Smiling) Same here. My mom would always add a little bit of garlic powder to the butter. It made them taste amazing.

LENA

Let's try that.

She reaches for the spice rack.

LENA (CONT'D)

A little extra flavor can't hurt. Does your mother work at the restaurant also?

MARIA

No, she died when I was only four years old. My dad had to raise me on his own.

LENA

A little extra flavor can't hurt.

She starts to cry causing Lena to give her a warm hug until she calms down.

INT. GRAND ROOM-DAY

The three gather in the grand room looking at the boarded up bay window.

MARIA

Maybe we should start a fire in the fireplace so the birds don't come down the chimney.

Lena and Alex turn and look at the fireplace.

ALEX

Great idea, Maria. That is a stop we did not target as a potential access point.

LENA

There's some fire logs in the garage Alex. My husband always liked to have a fire going over the holidays regardless of how hot it was outside. Said it goes with the season.

Lena and Maria busy themselves with preparing the fireplace. They arrange some kindling and logs, making sure everything is set up perfectly. Lena finds a box of matches and, with a sense of anticipation, strikes one against the box, lighting the kindling.

With the fire started the three sit facing it.

MARIA

This feels nice. Like we're reclaiming a bit of our lives, even if just for a moment.

LENA

It does. And it's a reminder that even in the darkest times, we can find light and comfort.

She looks at Banshee who is almost asleep on Maria's lap.

LENA (CONT'D)

Looks like you have a new friend.

Maria smiles as she pets the cat. They sit in silence for a while, each lost in their thoughts, but united by the flickering flames.

ALEX

Lena, in all of your research, have you ever heard of birds attacking like this?

LENA

Yes, actually. There was an incident in Bodega Bay, California, back in the early 1960s. It was the inspiration for Alfred Hitchcock's film, 'The Birds.' The movie dramatized the events, but it was based on real bird attacks that occurred in the area.

MARIA

What happened there?

LENA

In the film, the bird attacks began subtly at first. A few birds would behave aggressively, pecking at windows or attacking isolated individuals. But soon, the attacks escalated. Birds started swarming in large numbers, targeting people with a ferocity that was both inexplicable and terrifying.

MARIA

Like here?

LENA

Yes. The most famous scene from the movie involves a schoolhouse.

(MORE)

LENA (CONT'D)

The children are trapped inside as hundreds of birds, mostly crows and seagulls, gather outside. When they try to escape, the birds attack en masse, causing chaos and injuries. The townspeople are caught off guard, unable to comprehend why the birds are behaving this way.

ALEX

That sounds disturbingly familiar.

LENA

It does. In reality, the events in Bodega Bay were a bit different. There were reports of birds crashing into buildings and attacking people. Ornithologists later suggested that the birds might have been disoriented by toxic algae in the water, which affected their nervous systems. But in the film, Hitchcock left the cause of the attacks ambiguous, adding to the horror and suspense.

MARIA

So, again, what we're experiencing now... could it be something similar?

LENA

It's possible. There could be an environmental factor we're not aware of yet. But the scale and coordination of these attacks... it's unprecedented. It feels almost orchestrated, like the birds are following some unseen command.

ALEX

If that's the case, we need to find out what's driving them and how to stop it. The people in Bodega Bay were caught off guard, but maybe we can learn from their experience.

LENA

Absolutely. We need to stay alert and gather as much information as we can. Every detail could be crucial in understanding and surviving these attacks.

Silence returns to the room.



ALEX

Lena, I hope my question doesn't upset you, but did your husband have guns in the house? I'm asking in case somehow the birds breach your home.

LENA

Yes, in fact, he has a slew of weapons that he stored in a safe in his home office.

She stands up and gesture for them to follow her.

LENA (CONT'D)

Come on, I'll show you.

INT. HOME OFFICE -DAY

They follow Lena up the stairs to the second floor of the house. She leads them to a door that opens to a meticulously organized home office. Bookshelves lined the walls, filled with manuals, trophies, and various memorabilia from her husband's career in law enforcement and hunting.

LENA

My husband won many state championships when he was on the police department in California. But, as you are about to see, it didn't stop there.

Lena walks over to a large cabinet in the corner of the room. She carefully enters a combination into the lock of the gun safe. With a soft click, the door swings open, revealing an arsenal of handguns, rifles, shotguns, and boxes of ammunition.

ALEX

Wow. Your husband was well-prepared.

LENA

He always believed in being ready for any situation. With the threat of hurricanes and living in a somewhat remote area, he wanted to make sure we could protect ourselves if necessary. Plus, with the state of our country, he always felt the threat of a civil war.

Maria steps closer, examining the variety of weapons.

MARIA

This is incredible. I'm glad to know we have this kind of backup. But, Lena, do you know how to use all of these?

LENA

(Smiling)Yes, Danny made sure I knew how to handle each one. We spent plenty of weekends at the shooting range. He wanted me to be as comfortable with them as he was.

Alex picks up a shotgun, and checks its weight.

ALEX

This could definitely come in handy if those birds find a way inside. But let's hope it doesn't come to that.Let's pick up a few weapons and ammo and bring a few of these downstairs, just in case. They won't be doing us any good up here.

Lena turns to Maria.

LENA

Have you ever shot a gun before Maria?

MARIA

Actually, my father thought along the same lines as your husband about the possibility of a civil war an all. He used to take me to an indoor shooting range three or four times a year. I even have a concealed weapon's permit although most of the time I forget to bring my gun with me.

ALEX

Which of these would you be most comfortable with?

She points to a Sig Sauer 9mm.

MARIA

That's the exact model of the gun I'm familiar with.

ALEX

Great. You take that and a box of ammo. And you, Lena?

LENA

I'm very comfortable with this  
Smith and Wesson 45.

She picks up the semi-auto and a box of ammo.

ALEX

Okay, my turn. I'm going to take  
this beauty, a semi-automatic  
shotgun and a few boxes of shells.

They carried the guns downstairs to the grand room.

INT. GRAND ROOM-DAY

They place their weapons and ammunition on the dining table.

LENA

We'll be ready for whatever comes.  
I never thought Danny's obsessions  
with guns would come in handy. We  
won't let those birds take us by  
surprise again.

Lena turns on her television set. The screen flickers to  
life, and a news anchor's voice fills the room.

NEWS ANCHOR

...the birds seem to have left the  
Columbia region and  
dispersed...just a moment...I'm  
getting word that the North Myrtle  
Beach area is noticing a gathering  
of birds out in the ocean. It  
appears...

Suddenly, the broadcast ends abruptly, the screen goes to  
static. The room falls into an uneasy silence as Lena, Alex,  
and Maria stare at each other.

ALEX

They must have hit some  
transmission towers. Try your  
cellphones.

Maria and Lena grab their phones, quickly check for a signal.

LENA

No signal.

MARIA

Me either.

Alex checks his phone.

ALEX  
Nothing. We're cut off.

LENA  
It's sure getting dark. Looks like storm clouds are coming in and we are in for a thunderstorm.

She gets up and walks to the boarded up bay window and looks through a crack.

ALEX  
Wait. Listen.

They hear faint rustling and pecking of birds outside.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
We need to stay calm. Panicking won't help us. We should double-check our defenses. Make sure everything is secure.

MARIA  
(Trembling) What if they get in?

Lena places a reassuring hand on Maria's shoulder.

LENA  
We'll be ready. We have the weapons, and we have each other. We need to stay vigilant.

The three move around the house, checking the barricades and reinforcing where necessary. Outside, the sound of the birds grow louder, more insistent, as if they know their prey was within reach.

Alex whispers to Lena.

ALEX  
We can't stay here forever. We need a plan to get out, to find help.

LENA  
I know. But first, we need to survive the night.

The lights and power go out in the house. Lena quickly found candles and lite them. The flickering candlelight cast eerie shadows, and the constant noise of the birds outside was a relentless reminder of the danger lurking just beyond their fragile sanctuary.

MARIA

Do you think anyone else made it?

ALEX

I hope so. We can't be the only ones.

LENA

I'm worried about my neighbor. She's elderly and lives alone.

ALEX

We need to hold on to that hope. Tomorrow, we find a way out. If I get a chance I will check on your neighbor and bring her over here. But for now, we stay alert and stay together.

The three huddle closer, weapons at the ready, as the night wears on.

INT.PILOT CABIN GRAND STRAND AIRLINES 226-NIGHT

Captain BILL MASON- black, fifty-something, and Co-pilot SID WILLIAMS, white-late forties, ready for their approach to Myrtle Beach International airport.

TOWER (V.O.)

Grand Strand Airlines 226, this is the tower. Please hold your position at the outer marker. I have one flight ahead of you preparing for decent.

CAPTAIN MASON

Roger that tower, Grand Strand Airlines 226.

He turns to Williams.

CAPTAIN MASON (CONT'D)

So, Sid, got any plans for your holdover in Myrtle Beach?

CO-PILOT WILLIAMS

Not really. I promised my ten-year-old daughter that I'd go to the Pirate Dinner Show and pick up some of their dried soup mix. You ever had it?

CAPTAIN MASON

Actually, I did. My wife and I took a flight out here last year, and we both went to see the Pirate show for the first time. That soup is amazing. I had no idea you could buy it.

CO-PILOT WILLIAMS

Yeah, you can get it in the gift shop. My wife's got me on a mission—she also wants me to pick up a Pirate hat for our two-year-old son's bedroom. Apparently, it's all part of some grand pirate-themed decor she's planning.

Mason laughs.

CAPTAIN MASON

Ah, the things we do for our kids. Last time I was here, I ended up buying a whole pirate costume for my nephew. He wore it for weeks, insisted on being called Captain Jack.

CO-PILOT WILLIAMS

Kids and their imaginations. It's the best, isn't it? My daughter's already planning our next trip to Myrtle Beach. She wants to visit the aquarium and see the dolphins and also that place that has all the alligators.

CAPTAIN MASON

Sounds like a great trip. My kids are grown now, but I remember those days. Every layover was an adventure, and I'd bring back the craziest souvenirs.

CO-PILOT WILLIAMS

I guess some things never change. Even in the skies, we're always on the lookout for the next adventure.

INT. GRAND ROOM-NIGHT

The house is shrouded in darkness, the only light comes from the flickering candles and the dying fire.

Alex gets up and places a few more logs on the embers. The sound of the birds outside have finally died down, giving them a brief respite.

ALEX

Lena, you mentioned your husband had a bunch of survival stuff in the garage. Do you know if there's a radio out there?

LENA

Probably. He kept batteries charging for flashlights, extra candles, a water purifying system, and all that food that's supposed to last for years. It's all in the garage on the far wall. I can show you where.

ALEX

No, you stay here with Maria. I'll check it out.

With a nod, Lena hands him a flashlight.

LENA

Be careful.

ALEX

Always.

INT. GARAGE-NIGHT

He opens the door to the garage and was met with silence. He sweeps the flashlight around, relieved to see no signs of bird intrusion. He sees Lena's Corvette.

ALEX

(To self) Nice car.

He reaches the cabinet, he finds it unlocked. He opens it and immediately spots what he is looking for: a Dynamo Emergency Multi-Band Radio. He pulls it out, examining it with a growing sense of relief.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(To self) Fantastic. Hand-crank generator and solar panel, NOAA weather band, AM/FM, 1.5-inch speaker, telescope antenna, USB output jack for charging devices, and a mini USB input jack with a cord. It has everything.

INT.GRAND ROOM-NIGHT

Alex re-enters the grand room with the radio.

ALEX

The garage is secure. I didn't hear any noise outside.

He turns towards Lena.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Damn, your husband has everything out there. This baby will keep us informed about what's going on outside.

LENA

Thank you, Alex. This will make a huge difference.

MARIA

Yeah, we'll finally know what's happening out there.

Alex sits the radio down on the table and begins cranking the generator. The small speaker crackles to life, and they all gather around, listening intently as the emergency broadcast begins to relay information about the ongoing bird attacks.

EXT.INT. GRAND STRAND AIRLINE-NIGHT

Grand Strand Airlines 226 continues to circle the airport. The hum of the jets fill the plane.

In coach, 12-year-old CLAIRE is nervously gripping the armrests. Sitting next to her is a slightly obese black woman, MRS. JENKINS, seventy-something. She notices Claire's nervousness.

MRS. JENKINS

Honey, you need to relax. Ain't nothing going to happen. Just think of it like a merry-go-round in the sky.

CLAIRE

I just hate flying, especially with all these bird attacks on the news.

MRS. JENKINS

Birds? Girl, please. We got the best pilots in the world. We'll be fine.



Her conversation is interrupted by a sudden jolt. The plane shakes violently as a flock of birds strikes the left wing. Panic spreads throughout the cabin as the pilot's voice came over the intercom.

INTERCOM (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. We've encountered some...unexpected turbulence. Please remain calm and stay seated with your seatbelts fastened.

The plane shakes again, and Mrs. Jenkins's eyes widened. She mutters to herself

MRS. JENKINS

Oh, hell no.

Birds continue to slam into the plane, damaging two of its engines. The emergency lights flicker on as the oxygen masks drop from the ceiling. Screams fill the cabin.

INT. COCKPIT-NIGHT

CAPTAIN MASON

Mayday, mayday! We're declaring an emergency. Tower, we will be attempting an emergency landing. Please clear a runway.

The birds began breaching the windows, their beaks and claws ripping through the glass. Mrs. Jenkins looks at Claire who is terrified.

MRS. JENKINS

You need that air mask on, honey.  
Leet me help you.

She places the oxygen mask on Claire. A few birds make it into the coach area. She then stands up. She opens an overhead compartment and pulls out a large suitcase. A window across from her breaks open and a bird was nearly inside the cabin.

MRS. JENKINS (CONT'D)

Oh, no you don't. Not today, Satan.

She begins swatting at the birds with impressive vigor. Feathers fly as she bats away each intruder.

CLAIRE

Mrs. Jenson, be carefully.

MRS. JENKINS  
Careful? Child these birds ain't  
got nothing on me.

The plane makes a shaky but ultimately successful landing. Relief washes over the passengers, who cheer and clap. Those seated near Mrs. Jenkins give her a round of applause for her valiant effort in fending off the birds attempting to enter the cabin.

MRS. JENKINS (CONT'D)  
Huh. All that work has made me  
hungry.

The coach fills with nervous laughter. As the plane taxis down the runway, a flock of birds descend on a refueling truck parked near the runway. The impact was immediate and catastrophic. The truck explodes, sending flames and thick black smoke billowing into the air. Panic spreads among the passengers as the intercom crackles to life once more.

CAPTAIN MASON (V.O.)  
Brace for impact!

The pilot expertly swerves to avoid the flaming wreckage, but the situation was far from over. The explosion attracts more birds, which circle higher above before sweeping down in a coordinated attack on the plane and the ground crew desperately trying to clear the area.

CAPTAIN MASON (V.O.)  
Please remain in your seats until  
the plane comes to a complete stop.

Inside the terminal, travelers watch in horror as the events unfold on the runway. The sight of the explosion and the attacking birds sends waves of panic through the crowd. The birds, embolden by their numbers and the chaos outside, turn their attention to the terminal itself.

The first wave of birds smash into the large viewing windows, shattering the glass. Shards and blood fly everywhere, the once serene airport now a scene of utter carnage. A traveler calls out.

ANONYMOUS TRAVELER  
Get down! They're coming in!

Screams fill the air as the birds burst through the broken windows, attacking anyone in their path. Bodies fall as the vicious creatures peck and claw at them, the highly polished floor quickly becomes slick with blood and littered with feathers.

SECOND ANONYMOUS TRAVELER  
Run! We have to get out of here.

The birds show no mercy. Their relentless assault overwhelms the security personnel and passengers alike. Amid the chaos, some try to find shelter behind kiosks and counters, while others make a desperate dash for the exits.

INT. GRAND STRAND AIRLINE-NIGHT

Mrs. Jenkins uses her body to cover Claire, but there are no birds alive in the plane which is now parked at the terminal.

MRS. JENKINS  
You don't worry none. Mrs. Jenkins  
won't let anyone hurt you. You  
hear?

EXT. MYRTLE BEACH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT-NIGHT

Outside the airport terminal, the flames from the refueling truck continue to rage, casting an eerie glow over the airport. The birds, drawn to the heat and light, swarm in greater numbers. The ground crew, struggle to extinguish the fire, find themselves under constant attack, their efforts hindered by the aggressive avian onslaught. One of the ground crew member calls into his radio.

ANONYMOUS GROUND CREW MEMBER  
We need backup! We can't contain  
this on our own!

INT. MYRTLE BEACH AIRPORT TERMINAL-NIGHT

Inside the terminal, the situation is equally dire. People who had initially sought refuge now find themselves trapped, the birds' numbers increasing with every passing moment. A group of survivors huddle together, their faces pale with fear and determination. One of them, a burly man with a makeshift weapon, takes charge.

BURLY MAN  
We need to stick together. We fight  
our way to the exits. Move fast and  
don't stop.

They moved as a unit, swatting at the birds with anything they could find—bags, jackets, even pieces of broken glass. The birds, though relentless, begin to thin out slightly, allowing brief moments of respite.

A woman with a child cries out.

WOMAN WITH CHILD

Please, help us! My daughter's  
hurt!

The burly man and another traveler help the woman and her child, creating a protective barrier around them as they make their way toward the exit. Reaching the terminal exits, the group finds the doors jammed, bodies are piled up against them from the panicked rush. With a concerted effort, they push through, breaking free into the open air.

Security guards and Airport Police began firing their weapons, but the birds were relentless.

SECURITY GUARD

Fall back! We can't hold them.

EXT. TARMAC-NIGHT

The runway is still ablaze, the plane now surrounded by emergency vehicles trying to control the fire and fend off the birds. The survivors run toward the emergency responders, their ordeal far from over but their spirits bolstered by the taste of freedom.

A first responder cradles a baby and her mother.

FIRST RESPONDER

You're safe now. We're going to  
take care of you.

INT.GRAND ROOM-NIGHT

Alex cranks the radio and finds a station that provides a strong reception. The three begin listening to the detail broadcast of the events occurring at the airport.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The situation at the Myrtle Beach  
International Airport is dire. We  
encourage everyone to stay inside  
and secure you home.

Lena turns to Alex and Maria.

LENA

We need to be ready. If they are  
attacking the airport, they'll come  
for us next.

They three re-examine the barricades they had erected preparing for the worse. Alex adds another log to the fireplace as Lena and Maria start new candles.

MARIA

Do you think they will come for us tonight?

ALEX

I don't know, but we need to be ready.

LENA

(Smiling) Now you sound like my husband.

As the tension in the room mounts, Alex realizes they need a distraction, something to ease their collective anxiety.

ALEX

So, Maria, who's your favorite business professor?

Maria's face lights up with a rare smile.

MARIA

That's an easy one. Professor Salcedo, and not just because he's Latino.

ALEX

I know Professor Salcedo. I've actually had lunch with him at your restaurant before.

MARIA

He goes out of his way to make sure his students understand complex material and loves to joke to get his points across. Most of the students love him, and his classes fill up fast.

LENA

How long before you graduate?

Maria tries to reply but her voice wavers, tears welling up in her eyes.

MARIA

This was supposed to be my last semester. In fact, I was reviewing my notes in advance for finals next week. Now, who knows.

She begins to cry harder, the weight of recent events crashing down on her.

MARIA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)  
My dad was planning a huge party,  
inviting all my friends and  
relatives, but now...

Lena moves closer and hugs Maria, her voice gentle and reassuring.

LENA  
We'll get out of this, Maria. And  
when we do, if you'll allow me, I'd  
love to host your party here, at my  
place.

Maria looks up, surprised.

MARIA  
Oh, your place is so beautiful. I'd  
be afraid of something getting  
damaged.

LENA  
That's what insurance is for. So,  
it's settled. We'll have your  
graduation party here. And maybe we  
can even get Alex to help us  
celebrate.

Alex grins, eager to lighten the mood.

ALEX  
Without a doubt. And if you want a  
BBQ, being from Kansas, I think I  
can handle burning a brisket,  
hamburgers, and hot dogs.

The tension in the room eases as everyone laughs.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
So, Maria, what's your major focus  
in business?

MARIA  
I'm concentrating on international  
business. I've always wanted to  
work with different cultures and  
maybe even travel the world.

ALEX  
That sounds amazing. Have you had a  
chance to travel much yet?

MARIA

Not really. Just a few places in the U.S. But I've been saving up for a trip to Europe after graduation. It was supposed to be my big adventure.

LENA

Europe, huh? Any specific countries in mind?

MARIA

Definitely Spain and Italy. I've always been fascinated by their history and culture. Plus, I hear the food is incredible.

LENA

You'll love it. I visited Spain a few years ago, and it was unforgettable. The architecture, the music, the people—it's like stepping into a different world.

ALEX

And I can give you a few tips on Italy. My brother spent a year there for work, and he's got some great recommendations for places to eat and sights to see.

MARIA

I'll definitely take you up on that. It's nice to think about the future, you know? It makes everything we're going through a bit more bearable.

As the first light of dawn begins to creep through the boarded-up windows, the group feels a sense of renewed determination. They had survived another night, and their bond had grown stronger.

Lena looks around at her makeshift family, feeling a surge of protectiveness. Silence fills the room

MARIA (CONT'D)

Thank you. Thank you both for everything. I don't know what I'd do without you two.

Lena reaches out, squeezing Maria's hand.

LENA

We're in this together, Maria. All the way.

The soft glow of morning light filters through the cracks in the boarded-up windows, casting a warm, golden hue over the room.

ALEX

Listen.

LENA

I don't hear anything.

ALEX

That's the problem.

Alex rises to his feet and grabs his shotgun. The sudden movement jolts Maria and Lena into action, their nerves on edge.

Alex moves cautiously toward the large bay window, where the plywood covering had small cracks between several boards. He peers through the gaps.

Alex's eyes widen in shock as he looks outside. The skies are black with flocks of birds circling overhead, their numbers seemingly endless.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Oh, my God.

Lena and Maria join him, their faces pale as they take in the sight. The birds move in a coordinated, almost hypnotic pattern, a dark cloud that blots out the early morning sun.

MARIA

(Whispering) There must be thousands of them.

LENA

What are they waiting for?

ALEX

I don't know, but we need to be ready for anything.

LENA

We should check the barricades, make sure everything is secure.



ALEX

Good idea. Maria, stay close to us.  
We don't know what's going to  
happen next.

They moved through the house, checking the windows and doors, reinforcing any weak spots they found. They gather their supplies, making sure everything was within easy reach. Weapons are checked and rechecked, flashlights tested, and a plan of action discussed. The sound of the birds outside grow louder.

Still no attack. They return to the fireplace.

MARIA

Lena, I know from his visits to our restaurant, that Alex is a marine biologist. What is your Ph.D. in?

LENA

Well, actually I initially thought I was going to be a business major like you. But, I've always had a love for birds. When I was your age, I raised parakeets, and finches, as well as canaries. I even had a green wing Macaw. I thought about studying to become a veterinarian but then I met my husband and we got married. So, long story short, I completed by Ph.D. in ornithology.

The birds' screeches grow louder. They can hear the relentless pecking and scratching at the plywood, the creatures outside determined to break through. Maria clings to Lena's arm, her eyes wide with fear.

ALEX

Stay close to the fire. If they breach the boards, we need to be ready.

Lena nods, her grip tightens around a heavy flashlight she holds and her handgun.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Maria, stay here. We'll need all the light we can get.

Maria goes to light more candles in the room. The house shudders as a particularly strong gust of wind created by the birds hits it, and with it comes a new wave of bird attacks. The relentless pecking grows louder, more aggressive.

The plywood covering the windows began to splinter under the onslaught.

LENA

Alex, over here!

Lena points to a window where the wood was starting to give way. Alex rushes over, hammer in hand, just as the first bird's beak pierces through a small crack.

The room fills with the sound of hammering and frantic wing flaps. Alex nails one board back into place, but another bird finds a weak spot and forces its way inside, its beady eyes gleam with malevolence.

ALEX

Get it off!

The bird pecks at his hands. Blood oozes from several small wounds, but he doesn't stop. Lena grabs a nearby blanket and throws it over the bird, trapping it momentarily before bashing it against the floor.

Maria shines the flashlight towards another breach.

LENA

They're getting through! We need more wood!

ALEX

"There's no time. We have to hold them off with what we have.

Alex sees a China hutch.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Let's see if the three of us can drag that over here.

With a lot of effort, the China hutch now reinforces the plywood.

Maria lets out a scream as a bird flies at her from another cracked window. Lena lunges, swinging the flashlight like a club, knocking the bird to the ground where it flaps helplessly. Maria points her gun at it and fires, killing the gull.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Nice shot.

The pecking grows more frantic, and the plywood starts to buckle. Alex replaces one board only to have another section give way. His hands are raw and bleeding.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Okay. You're right Lena. We need more plywood and nails. Let me see if the garage is still secure.

INT. GARAGE-NIGHT

He slowly opens the door from the kitchen to the garage and illuminates the interior with his flashlight. He does not see any birds but could hear them trying to break the glass portion of the garage door. He quickly grabs some nails and puts them in his pant's pocket and grabbed four more sheets of plywood and retreats back to the house.

INT. GRAND ROOM-NIGHT

Lena's flashlight flickers, casting eerie shadows as birds force their way through the gaps. Feathers and beaks thrust into the room, each bird more determined than the last. One bird manages to peck through a piece of plywood, showering them with debris.

MARIA

They're coming through that hole over there.

Lena, instead of firing her gun, picks up the fireplace shovel and begins beating those birds that had invaded the front room. Seeing this, Maria picks up a fire log and starts doing the same as Alex goes from window to window reinforcing them.

MARIA (CONT'D)

They're everywhere!

LENA

Stay calm. We can still make it through this.

A loud crash echoes through the house as a large section of plywood gives way. A flood of birds pour in. Alex swings his hammer, each strike a futile attempt to keep them at bay. His hands are slick with blood, and he can feel his strength waning.

LENA (CONT'D)

We can't hold them off forever. What are we going to do?

Lena looks at Alex. He wipes the blood from his hands, his face grim.

ALEX

We survive. Whatever it takes.

Suddenly, there is silence, broken only by the occasional call from the flock outside. The relentless assault has ceased. The living room floor is strewn with dead birds, feathers, and blood

ALEX (CONT'D)

We need to eat, rehydrate and rest.  
We don't know when they'll come  
back, but we need to be ready.

Lena nods.

LENA

Let's go to the kitchen but stay  
close together. Strength in  
numbers. Maria and I can make some  
more sandwiches and there is soda  
in the refrigerator.

After sandwiches are made, and with soda cans in hand, they  
to back to the living room.

LENA (CONT'D)

Alex, let me see your hands.

Alex hesitates for a moment, then extends his hands, palms  
up. The deep wounds from the birds' relentless pecking were  
raw and bloody.

LENA (CONT'D)

You have some deep wounds on both  
of them. Maria, get the first aid  
kit.

Maria brings the first aid kit to Lena.

LENA (CONT'D)

Hold still. This might sting a  
little.

Lena works on his wounds. Alex winces as the antiseptic  
stung, but he didn't pull away.

Their eyes meet as she works, a silent understanding passing  
between them. In the midst of chaos and fear, they had found  
a connection.

LENA (CONT'D)

Let's hope none of these get infected. We need you in fighting shape.

ALEX

Thank you, Lena. For everything.

Lena puts the first aid kit aside and sits down next to Alex, their shoulders touching. The silence stretches out, but it was a comfortable silence.

Maria breaks the silence, her voice barely above a whisper.

MARIA

Do you think they will come back?

Lena puts a comforting hand on her shoulder.

LENA

We have to assume they will. But we'll be ready.

Alex leans back, closing his eyes for a moment. He can hear the faint rustling of feathers outside. He turns on the portable radio, the static crackling to life. He adjusts the dial, tuning into the emergency broadcast frequency.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...widespread attacks up and down the Grand Strand," the announcer's voice was tense, filled with urgency. "We have confirmed reports of violent bird assaults from Holden Beach to Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, and Huntington Beach State Park. The birds are swarming in unprecedented numbers, causing chaos and panic.

Alex exchanges a worried glance with Lena and Maria. The scope of the disaster is far beyond their immediate surroundings.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The situation at Murrell's Inlet is dire. Witnesses report flocks of birds attacking boats and beachfront properties, similar scenes unfolding in Pawley's Island.

(MORE)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Emergency services are overwhelmed,  
and residents are advised to stay  
indoors and secure their homes as  
best as they can.

The radio buzzes with snippets of frantic calls from  
civilians, their voices a mix of fear and disbelief.

RADIO (V.O.)

They're everywhere! We're trapped  
inside our house in North Myrtle  
Beach. The birds are breaking  
through the windows!

Another caller from Huntington Beach State Park describes a  
horrific scene.

RADIO (V.O.)

They're attacking anyone outside.  
We saw a group of people trying to  
reach their cars, but the birds  
came out of nowhere. It's like  
something out of a nightmare!

Lena's grip tightens on Alex's arm.

LENA

This is worse than I thought.

Alex nods.

ALEX

The entire Grand Strand is under  
siege.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Authorities are advising all  
residents to shelter in place. Do  
not attempt to travel unless  
absolutely necessary. Keep all  
windows and doors secured, and  
remain indoors until further  
notice. This is an unprecedented  
event, and we will provide updates  
as we receive them.

MARIA

They're everywhere. What are we  
going to do?

ALEX

We stay strong. We protect each other and do whatever it takes to survive. We'll take turns keeping watch. We need to stay alert.

LENA

I'll take the first watch. You and Maria try to get some rest.

Alex nods, too tired to argue. He shifts slightly, trying to find a comfortable position on the couch. Maria curls up next to him, her eyes heavy with fatigue.

The occasional call from the flock outside seems to grow more distant.

(Passage of time)

Lena's body shakes as she wake up, angry at herself for falling asleep while on watch. She stretches, her muscles aching from the tension, and sees Alex sound asleep on the couch, Maria resting with her head on his shoulder. Banshee is curled up again on Maria's lap.

She glances up the stairs realizing that the second floor had not been checked by Alex after the last bird attack. Not wanting to wake them, she quietly grabs her gun and flashlight and slowly makes her way upstairs.

INT.UPSTAIRS-NIGHT

She reaches the first of the five bedrooms and slowly opens the door just enough to see inside with her flashlight but still keep the door between her and whatever might be inside. The room was secure.

She pushes the door open in a similar manner to the first one, but this time she hears a slight noise from the far wall. She enters the room.

Suddenly, birds burst from the shadows, their wings flapping furiously as they launched themselves at her. Lena screams, raising her arms to protect her face. She swings the flashlight wildly, trying to fend off the attackers, but in the chaos, her gun slips from her other hand and clatters to the floor. Alex and Maria hear her screams and wake up.

The birds peck and claw at her, their beaks sharp and relentless. She falls to the ground, desperately trying to shield herself with her arms, but the birds were relentless, attacking any exposed skin they could find.

LENA  
(Screaming) Alex! Maria! Help me!

Alex finds Lena lying unconscious on the floor, blood seeping from multiple wounds. The sight sent a jolt of fear through him. Birds were aggressively chipping away at the bedroom door, their beaks determined to complete the assault on Lena.

ALEX  
Maria. Help me pull Lena out of the room.

They drag her out and shut the door behind them as the birds continue to attack.

MARIA  
Oh my God! Is she...?

ALEX  
She's alive. We need to get her downstairs to stop the bleeding.

INT. GRAND ROOM-NIGHT

Alex gently lifts Lena into his arms, her limp body feeling unnervingly light. With Maria leading the way, he carries her back downstairs and lays her on the couch. Maria hurries to grab the first aid kit, her hands trembling as she opened it.

MARIA  
The wound on her forehead is the worse. At least they didn't get her eyes. I'll go get some water.

Alex nods, looking down at Lena's pale face.

ALEX  
Hang on, Lena. I've got you.

With Lena unconscious but stable, Alex and Maria fortifies their defenses, using every piece of furniture and material they can find to reinforce the barricades. The birds' attacks ebb and flow, but the barricades held.

(Time passes)

Maria wakes from her cat nap. Her eyes blink sleepily as she adjusts to the dim light in the room. She sees Alex sitting beside Lena, gently applying a cold compress to her forehead.

MARIA  
You really like her, don't you?



ALEX

Yeah. I really do. Amazing how all this death and destruction brought her to me.

MARIA

She's lucky to have you.

ALEX

No. I'm the lucky one. She's... she's incredible. Strong, brave, and smart. I've never met anyone like her.

MARIA

You should tell her when she wakes up.

ALEX

I don't know if this is the right time with everything that's happening...

Maria reaches out and touches his arm.

MARIA

Alex, life is unpredictable. If you have feelings for her, she deserves to know. And you need to tell her.

ALEX

You're right. When she wakes up, I'll tell her.

As dawn approaches, the assault of the birds finally begin to retreat. Through a crack in the plywood, Alex can see their numbers thinning as the first light of daybreak breaks through the horizon.

MARIA

When do you think we'll get the all-clear from whoever is in charge?

Alex sighs, running a hand through his hair.

ALEX

I have a feeling everyone will have to make that decision on their own with the lines of communication down.

Lena begins to stir, her hands flailing weakly as if trying to fend off invisible attackers.

LENA  
(Screaming) No, no...

Maria and Alex move quickly to her side, gently holding her down and offering soothing words.

ALEX

Lena, it's okay. You're safe now. He brushes back a strand of her hair.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
The birds are gone for now. You're safe.

Maria holds her hand.

MARIA  
We're here with you. Just try to relax.

Gradually, Lena's thrashing subsides. She opens her eyes, blinking against the dim light. She looks at Alex and Maria, still in shock but begins to process her surroundings.

LENA  
(Urgently)What about my neighbor?  
She's in her early nineties. We need to check on her.

Lena attempts to sit up, but Alex gently restrains her, placing a hand on her shoulder.

ALEX  
You're in no condition to move right now.I'll go check on her. You need to rest and heal.

Lena's eyes fills with worry.

LENA  
Her name is Mrs. Anderson.  
Charlotte. She lives next door.  
Please, Alex, make sure she's okay.

At this, Maria's face turns pale.

MARIA  
Alex, you can't leave us.What if the birds come back? We need you here.

Alex places a reassuring hand on Maria's shoulder.

ALEX

I know it's scary, Maria, but Lena's neighbor is alone and probably terrified. She can't defend herself. I'll be quick, and you'll be safe here with Lena.

MARIA

But what if something happens to you?

ALEX

I'll be careful. We can't just leave her to fend for herself. I need you to be strong for Lena while I'm gone. Can you do that? If something happens, fire off a shot and I will quickly return.

Maria takes a deep breath and nods slowly.

MARIA

Okay. But please, be careful.

Alex grabs his flashlight and his semi-auto shotgun. He takes a deep breath before leaving.

ALEX

I'll be quick.

He pulls off part of the plywood barricade that covers the front door and sees the grounds between Lena's house and her neighbors clear of birds. With one last glance at Lena and Maria, Alex heads towards the door.

EXT. YARD AREA BETWEEN LENA'S HOUSE AND NEIGHBOR-DAY

Alex hears distant calls of retreating birds. He quickens his pace and reaches Charlotte's house. The front seems secure. Windows are not broken. He knocks on the front door.

ALEX

Charlotte? It's Alex, Lena's friend. Are you okay?

No answer. He pounds on the door again.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Charlotte? It's Alex, Lena's friend. Are you okay?

He uses the stock of his shotgun and with a few hard strikes, breaks the small glass panel next to the doorknob.

## INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE-DAY

Reaching through carefully to avoid the jagged edges, he unlocks the door and steps inside.

The front room looks undisturbed.

ALEX

Charlotte. Are you okay? I'm Lena's friend, Alex.

He moves through the house methodically, checking each room. The kitchen is neat, dishes drying on the rack. The hallway is lined with framed photographs of a life well-lived—birthdays, weddings, family gatherings.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Charlotte!

Alex finds the master bedroom door slightly ajar. He pushes it open, his flashlight revealing a neatly made bed. The room was empty. He turns to leave, he notices a faint, foul odor wafting from a closed door to his right. The bathroom.

## INT. BATHROOM-DAY

He pushes the door open, and the sight that greets him freezes him in place. Charlotte lays slumped against the bathtub. Her lifeless stares blankly at the ceiling. The room was splattered with blood, her face a gruesome testament to the birds' savage attack. Her eyes had been mercilessly pecked out, leaving raw, gaping wounds.

Alex's stomach churns as he fights back the urge to vomit.

Standing up, he takes a final look around the bathroom, noting the broken window above the bathtub. The birds' entry point. He grabs a towel and places it over Charlotte's head.

## INT. GRAND ROOM-DAY

Alex re-enters Lena's house. He finds Lena and Maria waiting, their faces etched with concern.

LENA

How is Charlotte?

ALEX

(Hesitates) I'm sorry, but she didn't make it. The birds got to her.

Lena's face crumples with sorrow, and Maria covers her mouth, stifling a sob.

Lena falls back into a state of unconsciousness.

ALEX (CONT'D)

We need to get Lena to a hospital. The birds were gone when I went next door. Now might be the right time to leave the residence. We can't take Lena's car since it is a convertible and a two-seater. We'll take mine. It seems to not be of interest to the birds.

As he spoke, Maria's gaze drifts to the crack in the plywood. Something catches her eye—a lone seagull flying in the distance. She tracks its path, her eyes narrowing in suspicion. As the gull flies closer, she follows its trajectory, her breath catches in her throat.

MARIA

Alex. Look.

Alex walks over to see what had caught Maria's attention. The lone seagull is not alone. As it lands on the fence, it becomes clear that the entire area is teeming with birds. Hundreds of them perched on fences, roofs, and the ground, their eyes fixed on the house.

ALEX

Oh my God.

MARIA

We can't leave now. They're waiting for us.

ALEX

We'll have to wait. We need to stay strong and be ready for whatever comes next.

The birds did not attack only increasing in number.

(Time passes)

ALEX (CONT'D)

We can't stay here much longer. If I can drive my car closer to the front door, we should be able to slowly get into the car and leave the area.

MARIA

But won't the birds attack as soon as they see us, or when you start up the engine?

ALEX

It's a chance we'll have to take. Lena's losing too much blood. We need to get her to a hospital. First, I'll move the car. When I return, together we'll try to awaken Lena and, with our support, we can walk her to the car.

Maria swallows hard and nods reluctantly. Alex takes a deep breath and moves to the door, peeking through the crack in the plywood. The birds are still there, hundreds of them, perched silently and watching.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Here we go.

EXT. LENA'S DRIVEWAY-DAY

Slowly, he unlocks the door, removes the plywood, and slips outside, his movements slow and deliberate. The birds watch but do not move. Alex creeps towards his car parked a short distance away.

He reaches the car. His hands trembling as he unlocks it. A crow peeks at his ankle. He slowly pushes it away and enters his car. He took a moment to steady himself before turning the key in the ignition. The engine roars to life, shattering the eerie silence. Instantly, the birds stir. Their eyes fix on the source of the noise.

Alex put the car in gear and drive slowly towards the house. The birds slowly move out of the path of the tires. The birds follow his every move, their wings rustling ominously. He pulls up as close to the front door as possible and turns off the engine making his way back to the house.

INT. GRAND ROOM-DAY

MARIA

You made it.

Alex nods.

ALEX

The car is right outside. We need to move quickly and carefully.

Together, they approach Lena. Alex gently shakes her shoulder.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Lena, we need you to wake up. We're going to get you to the hospital.

Lena's eyes flutter open, and she looks at them with a dazed expression.

LENA

Alex... Maria... what's happening?

She starts again swatting at invisible birds.

MARIA

It's okay. It's okay. We're getting you out of here. Can you stand?

With their help, Lena manages to sit up, her movements slow and pained. Alex and Maria each take one of her arms, supporting her as they guide her to the door. Alex peers through the crack again, the birds are still watching.

Alex looks at Maria.

ALEX

Ready?

She nods.

Alex opens the door slowly, the creak of the hinges sounding impossibly loud. They steps outside, moving towards the car in slow steps. The birds remain still, their eyes following every movement.

Lena sees the birds and starts to scream.

LENA

No, no. I'm not going out there.

Alex and Maria calm her down again and continue their walk to the car.

As they reach the car, Alex opens the back door, and they carefully help Lena inside. Just as they close the door, a lone seagull lets out a piercing cry, breaking the fragile peace. The birds erupt into a frenzied flurry of wings and screeches, launching themselves at the car with terrifying speed.

ALEX

Get in!

He shoves Maria towards the passenger side. Alex dives into the driver's seat, slamming the door shut just as a bird crashed into the window, its beak cracking the glass. Blood sprayed as the bird was injured by the impact, its body twitching on the ground.

Alex starts the engine, the roar barely audible over the deafening sound of hundreds of birds attacking the car. They peck and claw at the windows, their beaks breaking through the glass and tearing at the metal. The car rocks under the weight of the relentless assault.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Hold on!

He floors the gas pedal. The car lurches forward, birds clinging to the sides and roof. Feathers and blood smear across the windows as the creatures are thrown off by the sudden acceleration. Alex swerves, trying to shake off the remaining birds, but they are persistent, their beaks pound against the glass.

MARIA

Alex, hurry!

As they approach the edge of town, the flock begins to thin out, the birds gradually giving up the chase.

Alex doesn't slow down until they are miles away, the silence of the open road a stark contrast to the chaos they had just escaped.

Maria looks back at Lena, who is pale but alive.

ALEX

We did it. We're safe. Let's head to the nearest hospital.

FADE OUT









(CONT'D)