

"HARE & HOUNDS"

ARCHIE BARKER

EXT. YORKSHIRE MOOR. DUSK 19:00

Wednesday evening. Establishing shot with the facade of a Bran castle-esque pub towering above the spectator, encompassing almost half the frame. The bold, sharply serif-ed "HARE & HOUNDS" sign lit with poorly amped lightbulbs; flickering under a dark, cloud blanketed sky. The rain this far above the valley falls at almost 90° before making its way down streams that have formed on the lane running parallel to the pub. Wind whips along the bricked walls, WHISTLING eerily, and causing an unlatched porch door to be swung back and forth relentlessly BANGING against its frame. There are no signs of civilisation anywhere around, just grass and heather. While life is scarce in this barren landscape, we now start to hear (fade in) faint chatter of voices from inside...

INT. PUB KITCHEN. DUSK 19:00

The scene opens with a boy, 15 years old, vigorously scrubbing a frying pan in a sea of silver appliances. With sweat dripping off his forehead, his clothes sodden. This is **JOE**. The frying pans once black, carbonised surface has been cleaned to match the silver of its surroundings, yet scratched through so that the surface is now rough to touch. Although **JOE** has internalised the constant WHIR of ovens and sudden BEEPS of appliances, their sounds dominate the soundscape of the kitchen. A stew is bubbling on the hob, close to overflowing.

Enter **RICK**

RICK, the chef, barges through the door with a SLAM but moves at a slow, measured pace. He is a man of small stature, his width almost matching his height. He is wearing chef whites, with various sauce stains splattered all over, like an abstract expressionist's mixing palette. His checkerboard trousers hang unsettlingly below the waistline, the bottoms drape along the floor as he walks; now ragged and darkened with dirt. The crocs he wears unashamedly fail to mask the stench of his gangrenous, un-socked feet. He barely glances at **JOE**, staring transfixed at his cracked iPhone,

abhorrent tinny music BLASTING out of it. He walks past and tastes the stew with the mixing spoon, tossing it back into the mix.

RICK

(Eyes closed with a slight smile)

Sweet Navajo! Just like Uncle Charlie makes it. You wanna taste?

(He speaks with a broad Scouse accent)

He extends the wooden spoon out towards **JOE**, sauce dripping off onto the grey laminate floor. **JOE** gives a distasteful smile, like it's happened a thousand times before.

RICK

(Tutting and shaking his head)

No no no, I'm keeping my food clean.

(He taps his forefinger on the right side of his nose, chuckling to himself. He turns his back to **JOE**)

You take the bins out like I told you?

JOE

(Not pausing from washing up)

Not yet.

Enter **BILLY**

BILLY, the manager, enters and stands in the entrance, leaning with one arm on the doorframe.

BILLY

See the game? Last night?

RICK

I did. (Laughing in awe) Thierry Henry, made Savage look like a right carthorse, didn't he?

(Both laugh)

All over your head hey **JOE** (chuckling)

They both look at **JOE** like hyenas to a wounded gazelle.as he continues to wash up.

RICK turns back to **BILLY** pointing his forefinger

RICK

Ah, almost forgot the rice! Got some pricey wild rice in for you tonight.

With a skip in his step he turns and *leaves* out to the back room.

JOE turns to the **BILLY**.

JOE

The flies got to the last batch of stew, just saw in the back. He said it'd be fine to eat but I just thought you should know. I got rid of it.

BILLY

(Disgustedly)

You get rid of it?!(Nods) Good, Thanks **JOE**.

BILLY returns to the front of house

JOE looks over his shoulder to the back, then turns back to carry on washing up.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF SCENE ONE

INT. PUB FOH - NIGHT 20:00

SCENE TWO begins with a close-up of the rice being poured into a strainer, steaming up the camera lens to *transition* to **JOE** wiping the sweat beading on his forehead.

We are now in the pub's front of house. The main hall is dressed in low-key lighting to hide the patches of mould scattered on the ceilings, poorly fashioned with cheap, translucent paint. The imparity of the Edwardian furniture mixed with the more modern elements such as the squirrel-cage lightbulbs is brutally noticeable to a critical eye.

BILLY is sat on his phone waiting for his long-awaited food.

JOE is at the bar, collecting glasses, every clink of a glass sending spikes of rage down his spine.

BILLY

Pour us a pint o' Stella would you JOE? Been gasping.

With a slight nod, **JOE** pulls a pint glass from underneath the counter. He then, with a pause of thought, reaches into his right pocket (close-up) to pull out a tub of pills marked "WARNING CAUSE HALLUCINATIONS - PRESCRIPTION ONLY". He glances up to **BILLY**, to see that he's still on his phone, dead-faced. He then continues on, dropping two in the pint glass at first, and then one more, then another three. He then pulls the pint on top of the pills and, with a swirl of the glass, hands it to **BILLY** without a thanks.

JOE then returns to the bar and starts to wipe down surfaces in a repetitive cyclical motion; all the while watching **BILLY** with one eye. **BILLY** downs half the pint and simultaneously they both let out a sigh of relief.

RICK

(Humming Hound Dog - Elvis Presley)

Et voila, my sir

RICK lays the plate of food out in front of **BILLY**. He doesn't look up.

BILLY

(Still chewing on his pint)

Cheers pal

BILLY takes a water spotted fork and starts to shovel mouthfuls down like a hog, taking breaks to supple the pint which is now inches from empty. He now looks into the pint with a troubled look. (Focus pull to **JOE**) **JOE**'s face drops as he looks on powerless. **RICK** then pulls a hair from the glass and flicks it onto the floorboards. **JOE** quietly exhales with relief.

BILLY is halfway through a mouthful when he pulls the same troubled look from pulls out of his mouth a white wriggling maggot. With unconfined shock he looks down at the rest of his food to see that instead of rice is now maggots crawling amongst moulding, dry stew. He immediately pushes the table away from him with a SHRIEK, sending his pint

flying off the table (cut-in, slow motion) with a loud SMASH.

BILLY

(mumbling)

(spits out a huge mouthful of maggots, SPLAT on the floor)

Get out here!

BILLY stands up, stumbling like a dazed boxer.

RICK comes through the kitchen door (SLAM) his black silhouette stark against the harsh white light of the kitchen. Legs apart. He rushes over to **BILLY**, who is cowering over his front side in terror, his eyes wide and bloodshot. Cut to a point of view shot from **BILLY** reality distorting into shapes and spirals.

BILLY

(waving his forefinger aimlessly in the direction of the plate)

(blubbering with swollen cheeks)

The food!!

RICK

(looks at the plate)

There's nothing wrong with the food!

RICK, defending his cooking, strides over with confidence and proceeds to shovel the maggots on the plate down his gullet; giving off a gut-wrenching sound of SQUELCHING and CRUNCHING, all the while moaning and eye-rolling. **BILLY** looks on in shock as he continues eating the rotten food, the sound of the chewing ringing through his ears. He then turns away and vomits all over the floor, green and lumpy.

BILLY

(BELLOWING)

YOU'RE FIRED!! Now call me a fucking ambulance!

(continues to hurl on the floor, the liquid
draining down through the floorboards to the crawl
space underneath)

*Meanwhile, **JOE** already has his coat on and starts
to the front door (tracking).*

FINAL SHOT is of **JOE** (mid shot) from behind, He
looks left across the road, then walks across

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END