

# TasGothic\_2016\_Dump Birds

Object: Ibis    Character: Racist    Phrase: "...it won't end..."

Fade in:

Scrolling Text

“The White Ibis is found across Australia but is considered a vagrant bird in Tasmania. As European culture filled its world with garbage, it moved from beaches, watercourses and marshes and lives by scavenging from rubbish dumps and garbage bins. Often called the dump bird, the White Ibis is culled when it's a nuisance.”

Dissolve to:

RUGGED TASMANIAN MOUNTAINS: Moving aerial shot

Dissolve to:

REMOTE BEACH FRINGED WITH CLIFF:

Zoom to:

White Ibis picking its way along the shore line, fossicking for food.

Pan to:

ADOLESCENT ABORIGINAL FEMALE, watching Ibis.

ADOLESCENT ABORIGINAL FEMALE

(In language with English subtitles)

I've never seen a bird like that.

What is it?

ABORIGINAL ELDER

(looks worried)

ADOLESCENT ABORIGINAL FEMALE

(In language with English subtitles)

What does it mean?

Dissolve to:

ALISON'S ROOM: contemporary female teenager's room with photo of White Ibis on wall.

VOICE

(from radio)

....and here's a blast from the past with Madonna...

MUSIC

(from radio)

*Girls Just Want to Have Fun*

Zoom to:

PHOTOGRAPH OF WHITE IBIS ON BEACH.

Cut to moving POV:

POV moves out from bedroom, along hall to mother's bedroom.

MOTHER'S BEDROOM. Mother, late 30's, fading beauty masked by makeup, talking to daughter (Alison).

MOTHER

Where are you going?

ALISON  
Just out with Shaun. Nowhere special.

MOTHER  
Think about what I said.

ALISON  
I will.

MOTHER  
It's good money. You need to work.

INTERCUT SMS TO ALISON'S PHONE

Where the fuck are you?

ALISON  
Gotta go. Bye Mum.

MOTHER  
Go out the back door. You know I don't like you using the front if you're not working.

ALISON  
Sure mum.

Cut to:

FRONT OF ALISON'S HOME:

Mother visible in upstairs window putting on make-up framed by discrete red light. Alison exits front door and runs across street to waiting car where SHAUN, a 20-something male, waits impatiently.

SHAUN  
What took you so long?

ALISON  
Nothing.

Cut to:

INSIDE CAR:

Driving. Darkness falls. Car stops in front of run down convict era structure being redeveloped. Scaffolding enshrouds it. A locked chain wire gate is visible.

SHAUN  
They say it's haunted

ALISON  
Maybe.

SHAUN  
It might be dangerous.

ALISON  
Pussy.

Cut to:

INSIDE BUILDING BEING RENOVATED:

Shaun and Alison walk along a corridor with stone walls. They go down stairs.

ALISON  
You Dad doesn't mind you being on his dig site?

SHAUN  
What he doesn't know doesn't hurt him.

ALISON  
Where is it?

SHAUN

Down here.

Cut to:

OUTSIDE UNDERGROUND ROOM

Shaun and Alison come to large old door with a drop latch on the outside. Shaun opens it.

SHAUN

Here.

Enter room. Dirty stone walls. Thick dirt over stone floor. A hatch obviously recently uncovered opens into the earth.

SHAUN

They found it when they were surveying for new foundations. It smells funny.

They go to the edge. An aluminium ladder leads down.

SHAUN

They say this was a basement to a knockshop. Just like your mum's..... dates back to the 1820's... used to be brothels and taverns all along the waterfront. They say there was a murder every two days.

Alison moves to edge of hole and looks cautiously down. Shaun grabs her from behind and gropes her.

ALISON

Hey!

SHAUN

We could have some fun....

Shaun grabs her again. Alison pushes him away.

ALISON

That's not funny Shaun.

SHAUN

I wasn't being funny.

Shaun grabs her again. Alison pushes him away.

ALISON

I wouldn't sleep with you if you paid me.

SHAUN

Maybe I will. They say you're going to work for your mum. I just want to be first....

They struggle. Alison pushes him away. Shaun trips over a wheelbarrow and falls face first into the dirt. Shaun gets to his feet. Turns, leaves room. Slams door.

Cut to:

OUTSIDE UNDERGROUND ROOM

SHAUN  
(through latched door)  
We'll see who the pussy is.  
(Turns and walks away)

ALISON  
(calling)  
.... Shaun?....

Shaun keeps walking, laughing.

Dissolve to.

THE BEACH

Four men in 18th century sealing boat row to the beach.

SEALER 1  
Stop worrying...they're just animals.  
SEALER 2  
You want to fuck an animal?  
SEALER 3  
I'll fuck you if you don't shut up.

Laughter, the sound of oars and waves on the beach.

Dinghy scrapes onto beach. Men jump from boat.

Cut to:

Zoom to:

IBIS FOSSICKING ALONG BEACH.

Voices. Sounds of screams. Gunshots.

SEALER 1  
I want this one. She too young to have the pox.  
SEALER 2  
She will after you're done with her.  
(laughter)

Dissolve to:

UNDERGROUND ROOM

Alison is looking around the room by the light from her phone.

ALISON  
Shit.

Alison looks at the solid wood door.

ALISON  
Shit.

Alison sees the tip of the ladder poking out of the hole into the floor.

ALISON  
I'm not going down there. I'm getting out.

Alison looks at the door, studying it, remembering what it looked like from outside.

Cut to:

DOOR FROM OUTSIDE UNDERGROUND ROOM

Zoom to:

Drop latch.

Cut to:

UNDERGROUND ROOM

Alison bites her lip. Alison takes off her shirt. Alison takes off her bra. She worries at the bottom edge of her bra until it frays, pulls the metal underwire out, moves to the door, inserts the looped metal into the crack between the door and its frame, pulls upward, loses her grip on the slippery metal, wraps her fingers with the ruined bra for a better grip, pulls up, latch opens, door opens slightly.

VOICE  
(softly)

.....see me...

ALISON

Who's there?

VOICE

....please....

Alison looks wildly around the room. Sees nothing, throws the door open, rushes out.

DOOR OUTSIDE UNDERGROUND ROOM

Alison slams door shut, stares at it, steps back, hands shaking as she puts shirt on.

VOICE  
(fainter)

...please help me...

ALISON

.Fuck

Alison cautiously opens door, looks in, sees nothing, enters.

Cut to:

UNDERGROUND ROOM

Alison, looks to the tip of the ladder protruding from the earth.

ALISON

No way

She moves to the ladder, looks down into darkness.

ALISON

Fuck that.

VOICE

.....help me....

Cut to:

SMALL UNDERGROUND ROOM

Alison climbs down ladder, shines light from phone, sees nothing.

VOICE

...It won't end.... help me....

Alison looks again, moves to depression of disturbed earth, a skull is visible.

VOICE

....Free me...

ALISON

(confused and frightened)

How?

VOICE

...touch me...

Alison slowly approaches it, reaches down, hesitates for long moments, touches it.

Fade to black.

MALE VOICE 1

I'll give you a hunting dog for her.

SEALER 1

Fuck off.

MALE VOICE 1

And a pouch of tobacco.

SEALER 1

(pauses)

Deal.

Fade in to

SMALL UNDERGROUND ROOM

A tallow lamp now swings from a hook in the ceiling. A timber ladder has replaced the aluminium one. A young Aboriginal woman sits where the skull was. SEALER 1 From the boat climbs down. The girl cringes back. (Alison watches invisibly.)

SEALER 1

Time to go. They won't hurt you.

Cut to

MONTAGE: Many men's faces, the girl crying, dirt being thrown over her face as she lies in the grave.

Cut to

THE BEACH: The Ibis picks its way along the beach to sounds of mourning.

Fade out

Fade in

FRONT OF ALISON'S HOME:

Alison (dishevelled, dirty and braless) walks towards the front door. A group of men watch her.

ONE OF MEN

Hey darlin'. You free or just negotiable?

ANOHER MAN

How do you make a whore moan? Don't pay her.

(laughter)

THIRD MAN

What do you call a whore's child? Whore-able.

(laughter)

Alison lets herself in the front door.

Cut to

MOTHER'S BEDROOM.

Mother has her back to Alison and is engrossed in txtng on her phone.

MOTHER

I told you not to use the front door if you're not working.

(pause)

MOTHER

That Shaun's a nice lad. Karen saw him last week, said he's fine.

(pause)

Silent tears run down Alison's face.

MOTHER

When *are* you going to start working? Now you're putting out, you might as well get paid for it.

Alison doesn't answer and leaves. Her mother hasn't looked up from her phone or seen her.

Cut to

ALISON'S ROOM

Alison closes the door. Leans against it. Breaks and cries brokenly.

Zoom to

IBIS PICTURE

Camera zooms to picture and it comes alive. Ibis is walking through a garbage tip, fossicking.

Fade to black.

End.