

Man or Mouse

FADE IN

EXT. THE SWAN, PUB - NIGHT

BRIZZER, 17, unkempt, hoodie, but with innocent, interested eyes, approaches the entrance as --

-- a MAN, cut-up, covered in BLOOD, shards of glass stuck in his face, wanders out, groaning.

He bumps into Brizzer, pushing past.

Brizzer steps aside, enters the pub.

INT. THE SWAN - NIGHT

The aftermath of a bar fight.

The Landlady, DEBS, 50, heavy make-up, fake-tan, buxom, mops up broken glass, blood and lager.

Two men, DOGFACE, thick set, heavily tattooed, and TRIPPY, small, wirey, Irish, try to fix a broken table.

BRIZZER steps up to the bar.

JIM, 45, huge, greying stubble, facial scar, an 'old boy' gangster, approaches, licking a bleeding hand, eyes BLAZING.

BRIZZER

Alright, Jim. What happened here?

JIM

Never fuckin' mind what happened here. I'm a man down for tonight. Are you in?

BRIZZER

Who me?

JIM

No, Bill 'n' Ben the fuckin' flowerpot men, of course fuckin' you!

Jim leans his face into Brizzer's ear.

JIM (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Gotta serve someone up.

Jim stands up straight, offers his bleeding hand to Brizzer, who takes it.

BRIZZER

Wicked.

They shake.

Jim squeezes, firm and strong.

It hurts Brizzer, but he won't let it show.

Jim lets go.

Brizzer's POV - he looks down and sees

-- Jim's BLOOD on his hand --

He wipes it in his jeans.

Jim puts his long black coat and trilby on
and goes to leave.

As he gets to the door, he turns to Brizzer.

JIM

Fuck me about and *you're dead*.

Jim goes.

Debs sweeps up the broken, bloody glass.

Dogface SLAMS the table leg on the bar.

DOGFACE

Fuck this!

TRIPPY

(to Debs)

Sorry about the furniture, like.

DEBS

Go on, fuck off. Filth might be
here any minute.

Trippy flicks his scarf at Brizzer.

TRIPPY

Oi, you fancy a kebab?

BRIZZER

Uh...yeah, why not.

Dogface fires a poisonous glance at Brizzer.

EXT. HIGH STREET - NIGHT

Hectic, early Saturday evening. People going out.

Dogface, Trippy walk along the pavement, Brizzer in the middle.

TRIPPY

Did you see the state of the cunt?

DOGFACE

Prick deserved it. You don't call Big Jim 'B.J'. Everycunt knows that.

BRIZZER

Who was it?

Suddenly Dogface GRABS Brizzer by the neck and PINS him against a wall.

DOGFACE

What's it gotta fucking do with you?

BRIZZER

(scared)
Nothing.

Dogface holds him for a few seconds, staring into his eyes.

TRIPPY

Dog, would you let him go!

Dogface lets him go.

DOGFACE

What'd Jim say to you anyway?

BRIZZER

Asked me if I wanted to work.

DOGFACE

When?

BRIZZER

Tonight.

DOGFACE

And you said?

BRIZZER

Yeah.

Dogface snorts phlegm and phlobs it on the ground.

EXT. KEBAB SHOP - NIGHT

An Indian boy, 14, sits outside, holding a paper cup with a few coins in it.

Dogface, Trippy and Brizzer enter the kebab shop.

Brizzer winks at the kid.

EXT. KEBAB SHOP - NIGHT

The three exit with their kebabs. Brizzer hands the Indian kid a bag of chips.

They keep walking along the high street, stuffing their faces.

DOGFACE

What d'you feed that paki cunt for?

BRIZZER

What?

DOGFACE

This is England, not Bombfuckingbay.

TRIPPY

Dogface, you're a fucking vigilante. Do you even know what that means?

DOGFACE

Yeah, it means I do nonces.

TRIPPY

It means you're a do-er of justice on behalf of those too weak to defend themselves, and whom the penal system has failed to protect, according to the general consensus of the volunteer committee, i.e us. Your man there, incase you hadn't noticed, is too weak to defend himself.

Dogface grunts.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

Oh, forget it. It's like educating fucking Rita.

The three walk on, stuffing their faces. A beat, then...

BRIZZER

Jim said we've gotta 'serve someone up'. What does he mean?

DOGFACE

It means do the cunt in.

Brizzer looks to Trippy.

TRIPPY

Serve him up, hmm...let's see, it means, deliver him...to God, I suppose, on a platter...like John the Baptist's head.

Brizzer stops.

BRIZZER

What?

TRIPPY

Well what do you think he meant? We're all popping round to serve him dinner? Do I look like Jamie fucking Oliver?

DOGFACE

Fuck this. I'm going round me birds for a bit. See ya later.

Dogface goes.

Trippy and Brizzer keep walking.

Suddenly, Trippy GRABS Brizzer's arm and pulls him into a --

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Trippy lights a cigarette, offers Brizzer one. He takes it, lights it.

TRIPPY

Look...don't fucking come tonight.

BRIZZER

Why?

TRIPPY

Because violence is like drugs and sex. It's not for kids.

BRIZZER

I'm not a kid.

TRIPPY

Alright, but you're not a fucking man either. How old are you?

BRIZZER

Eighteen.

TRIPPY

Bollocks are ya! You mark my words. It's dangerous. You could get banged up for life, like. We all could. Is that what you want? I know you wanna prove you're tough to the big boss...

BRIZZER

What?

TRIPPY

I've seen the way you creep up to him, looking for a fucking father figure. We all have. That's why Dogface hates you - sibling fucking rivalry...

BRIZZER

What?

TRIPPY

You think you're the first lost fucking sheep to crawl in off the streets looking for a shepherd, like? London's fucking crawling with you...

BRIZZER

What the...?

TRIPPY

Fact is, the boss has taken a shining to you, like you're the prodigal fucking son or something. I mean, he doesn't usually use people he doesn't know.

Trippy drags on his cigarette.

BRIZZER

But...

TRIPPY

We're family. A clan. I mean, who are you? Nobody knows you. You've only been around five minutes, like...

Trippy takes a final drag then crushes the dogend under his shoe.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

To tell you the truth, I gotta bad fucking feeling about tonight. I don't know why, but...

A loud meeeow!

Both jump and turn to see a black cat walking along the fence, back high, green eyes glaring.

It flicks its tail and disappears.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

You see, a fucking omen! Listen. Take my advice. Fuck off and don't come back. Ever. I'll have a word with the boss, tell him you had to...

BRIZZER

No!

TRIPPY

What d'you mean, no?

BRIZZER

It means, I shook on it. A deal's a deal.

TRIPPY

Are you fucking sure, like?

BRIZZER

Definitely. I'm in.

TRIPPY

Suit yerfuckingself, like.

Trippy scuffles away. Under his breath Brizzer hears him murmur

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

Cunt.

Then he calls out, without looking round.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

Eleven o'clock. Don't be late!

Brizzer takes his last drag, and crushes the dogend under his shoe, copying Trippy.

INT. SQUAT - NIGHT

A tiny, dirty room. Clothes strewn everywhere. Empty beer cans.

Brizzer lies on a mattress, fully dressed, with shoes and jacket on, reading.

The only light comes from a candle. Brizzer holds his book close to the flame so he can read the words.

We just make out the book he's reading - 'Of Mice and Men'.

EXT. SQUAT - NIGHT

Brizzer leaves. He cranks the door shut, puts his hood up and heads off.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Brizzer sees a van outside The Swan, runs.

Jim leans his head out the driver's window.

JIM

You're late. Get in.

The side door slides open.

Brizzer gets in.

INT. BACK OF A VAN - NIGHT

Brizzer finds a seat on a toolbox. The van rocks as it pulls away.

A flash of streetlight through the window illuminates the snake tattoo on Dogface's neck.

Brizzer's POV as the snake seems to STARE at him with RED EYES.

Dogface ignores Brizzer and rolls a cigarette.

DOGFACE

I can't believe you're bringing this cunt.

JIM

Who? Trippy? I know, he's a fuckin' liability.

DOGFACE

No, *this* cunt.

JIM

Who, Bristol? He's my boy.

TRIPPY

To be honest, Jim, I have to say, like, on this occasion I do agree with Dog, like...we should've had a vote.

Suddenly the van SCREECHES to a stop.

Brizzer, Trippy and Dogface fall forwards, BASHING into each other, and spitting EXPLETIVES.

The regain their places. Dogface picks up his scattered roll up.

Jim turns and looks back from the driver's cab.

JIM

Right. Now listen. I'm the chairman of this fuckin' committee. And what I say, goes. If anyone's got a problem, you can fuck off now.

No one moves, or breathes. Dogface and Trippy exchange glances.

JIM (CONT'D)

Right. That's fuckin' that, then. Let's go to work.

Jim drives on.

He turns on the radio: 'Knockin on Heaven's Door' Guns and Roses. He BLASTS it up.

Dogface joins in shouting the chorus. Trippy too.

Brizzer starts to nod along to the music, but Dogface gives him a fierce stare, so he stops.

Trippy takes a small plastic drugs bag from his pocket. A flash of streetlight illuminates its white powdery contents.

Trippy takes a pinch and snorts it, hands the bag to Dogface, who does the same.

But they don't offer Brizzer any.

Suddenly the music STOPS with the van.

JIM (CONT'D)

Here we are. The land of Oz. Let's go and see the fuckin' wizard.

EXT. BACK STREET - NIGHT

Jim gets out the van, lets Brizzer out.

Dogface CLUNKS the toolbox down on the road.

It's a quiet area, no traffic, behind a big old school.

A children's playground is lit by streetlights.

JIM
Must be where he hunts his prey.

Dogface opens the toolbox, takes out a chisel...

JIM (CONT'D)
I'll have that.

...a mallet..

TRIPPY
I'll take that.

...and a monkey wrench.

DOGFACE
And I'll have this.

Then he takes out a hammer and hands it to Jim.

Jim hands it to Brizzer.

BRIZZER
What's this?

JIM
What d'you think it fuckin' is?

BRIZZER
I know...a hammer...but...

JIM
While we're there I thought you might put a fuckin' shelf up.

Dogface smirks.

TRIPPY
It's for whacking the prize nonce, like. Don't worry. Just your average, household, DIY murder weapon.

Brizzer looks at Jim.

JIM
Initiation, son. You're the virgin. Gotta break you in. There will be blood, but hopefully it won't be yours.

TRIPPY
Said the priest to the choir boy.

Dogface smirks.

Suddenly, Jim GRABS Brizzer's shoulder, and brings the hand with the chisel high in the air.

JIM

When you do him, hit him *hard*...
CRACK!!! Right on the crown!

Brizzer cowers, tilts his head back, and watches in TERROR as Jim brings the chisel down FAST and stops millimeters from his head.

Dogface and Trippy laugh.

Brizzer laughs nervously too.

BRIZZER

Wicked.

Something DIVES low over their heads with a high pitched eeeeeeeek!

DOGFACE

What the fuck was that?!!

TRIPPY

A bat. Ya see, ya cunt! Another fucking omen!

JIM

Trippy! Shut the fuck up! Right, let's go! Bristol Boy, you go on ahead.

Jim nods to a lane going along the side of a school.

Brizzer obeys.

EXT. LANE - NIGHT

They creep along the lane, silently.

A children's playground is lit up near the school.

JIM

(quietly)
Must be where he hunts his prey.

They walk on.

Brizzer comes to a gate and climbs over. His hammer CLANKS. The other's SHUSH him.

Brizzer jumps down into a well lit, wealthy --

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

The other's follow.

Jim marches across the road.

JIM
(whisper)
Come on!

Brizzer follows Jim to a large, detached house.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Trippy and Dogface crouch in the bushes.

JIM
(whisper, to Brizzer)
Stay out of sight!

Brizzer crouches under the window frame.

Jim motions 'Ssshhh!'

He rings the bell.

A LIGHT goes on upstairs.

And downstairs.

Footsteps come down.

Jim gestures to Brizzer, finger on lips.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Who is it?

JIM
Police Madame. There's been a
burglary. (Jim winks at Brizzer)
Just need to ask you a few
questions. Only routine. Won't
take long.

A WOMAN'S VOICE
Oh, well I didn't hear about it,
we're in the neighbourhood wa...

She opens the door slightly, keeping the chain on its
latch.

Jim THRUSTS his chisel in the gap, RIPS the chain off, and
WRENCHES the door open.

The WOMAN, 50ish, in a bathrobe, SCREAMS.

Jim BARGES IN.

JIM
(to Brizzer)
Come on!!!

Brizzer follows.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

It's dark.

JIM
Upstairs!

Jim runs upstairs. Brizzer follows. He looks back.

His POV as Dogface and Trippy enter the house. Dogface
PUNCHES the woman.

INT. HOUSE, UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Jim reaches the top of the stairs, Brizzer follows.

Jim BARGES in THE BATHROOM.

Brizzer CRASHES into Jim as he backs out and goes into..

INT. A BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jim hits the lights.

A double room, luxurious.

A small, grey-haired old man, the NONCE, in pyjamas,
whimpers, cowering in the corner, HIDING in a gap between
the wardrobe and the wall.

Jim GRABS him and PULLS him out.

JIM
Come here you nonce!

NONCE
Please, please don't hurt me. No,
no, please don't hurt me,
please...

He whimpers, whines, complains as Jim traps him and locks
his feeble arms behind his back.

The Nonce kicks out with his spindly legs.

JIM
Now! Do the cunt!

Brizzer steps forward, fear in his eyes.

He lifts the hammer behind his head, READY to SWING.

JIM (CONT'D)

Now! Now! Do him you cunt! What
are you waiting for?

Brizzer's POV of the Nonce, pleading with him with his
piercing blue eyes...

NONCE

No, no, please, no, please, don't
hurt me...

Brizzer hesitates, looks at Jim...

JIM

DO HIM NOW! DO HIM YOU CUNT! WHAT
ARE YOU FUCKING MAN OR MOUSE ???

CLOSE ON Brizzer as he SWINGS the HAMMER forward with full
force.

CRACK!!!

ON Brizzer as BLOOD sprays his face and hands.

A THUMP as a body HITS the floor.

Breathy, weak, wordless sobs...

CU - Brizzer as he stares at what he's done --

DISBELIEF in his eyes.

His POV - he drops the BLOODIED hammer to the floor.

Brizzer RUNS out of the room and down the --

INT. STAIRS - NIGHT

The light is on.

Brizzer BOUNDS down, three steps at a time, shaking,
trembling, out of breath.

At the bottom of the stairs DOGFACE and TRIPPY stand
waiting...WEAPONS at the ready.

The Woman lies, groaning on the ground.

A SIREN begins to SCREAM in the distance.

Trippy and Dogface STARE at Brizzer.

Brizzer looks down at the blood on his hands.

DOGFACE
Where's Jim?

Brizzer is stunned. Frozen. Paralysed.

BRIZZER
(controlled, firm)
Upstairs. Jim's still upstairs.

Dogface and Trippy call up:

TRIPPY
Jim! Old bill!

DOGFACE
Let's get the fuck out of here!

TRIPPY
Let's go!!!

Brizzer RUSHES past them, out the front door.

Dogface and Trippy shout after him.

Brizzer ignores them, runs out of the house.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The screaming siren gets closer, louder.

Brizzer STARES at the blood on his hands.

He looks up at the bedroom.

The curtain moves.

The Nonce's face appears in the window.

The siren SCREAMS LOUDER. FLASHES of BLUE LIGHT in the distance.

Brizzer turns and runs.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dogface and Trippy run in, weapons in hand.

They STOP. STARE at --

Jim, *still*, eyes OPEN, BLOOD oozing from and circling his SMASHED-IN head.

SIREN PIERCING, BLUE LIGHTS FLASHING through the window.

FADE TO BLACK.