

The Flock

Episode Two

SCENE ONE

[FX: Something that sounds like a bird mimicking radio static]

HARRIS HAWK This is Harris Hawk Alpha to all units, requesting assistance.
We got a 5-0-2 up in the trees on Edgelands.
Two PTCF juveniles, one small, one large.
Be advised, travelling at speed.
Destruction of canopy reported.
Monitoring, over.

[FX: More bird-like static]

[THE FLOCK intro theme]

SCENE TWO

[FX: Parrot and Budgie crashing through the tree line, and rolling to an abrupt stop]

[FX: Sounds of the forest]

PARROT Budgie!
Where- where are you?

BUDGIE Here!

PARROT Are you- Are you OK?

BUDGIE My head hurts. My beak hurts. My wings hurt.

PARROT Let me help you up.

[FX: Rustle of feathers, or the tap of beaks]

BUDGIE I think I'm OK. I think I'll live!

PARROT You'll live. Just a couple of scratches.
You did some good rolling there.

BUDGIE What is this place?

PARROT I'm not sure exactly.

BUDGIE It's pretty dark here.

PARROT It's just the forest. We're deep in the forest.

[FX: Bird-like static]

BUDGIE What was that noise?

PARROT What noise?

BUDGIE Thought I heard something.

PARROT Let's just keep- keep moving.

BUDGIE Maybe I'm imagining things.

[FX: Bird-like static again]

Maybe I'm not imagining things!

PARROT Like I said, keep moving. This way.

BUDGIE This way. Sure.

PARROT Actually, no. Let's go- let's go that way.

BUDGIE That way. Sure.

[FX: Some decisive wing beats from Parrot and Budgie]

Um. You had a plan right?

PARROT Well-

BUDGIE For when you got out?

PARROT Not- not exactly.

BUDGIE But you know where you're going?

PARROT I have an- idea.

BUDGIE An idea.

[FX: Bird-like static, then a rush of something]

What was that!?

PARROT I don't know.

It was too- fast.

BUDGIE Your idea. It's a good idea, right?

PARROT It's a-

BUDGIE Because I'm not feeling so good about this place!

PARROT Look- look. Way back when I was small, before I even got put in my own cage, I was in this place called Pet Shop, Ian's Pet Shop, and there were a whole load of us, all in one- one big cage-

BUDGIE What? I've been in Pet Shop too!

PARROT Was it Ian's Pet Shop?

BUDGIE I'm not sure. I can't remember.

PARROT It might not have been Ian's Pet Shop. I've heard there are other Pet Shop.

BUDGIE Oh.

PARROT But the point is, when I was in Pet Shop, the first thing I learned, was that if you ever lost your way, you had to call for your flock.

[FX: Bird-like static that abruptly cuts out]

[FX: A sharp, strange bird outcry in the distance]

BUDGIE Your flock.

PARROT Yes. And they would- they would come and find you. But when I was taken to my own cage, the city was so noisy, my call was lost.

Out here, though-

BUDGIE I was always on my own. Even in Pet Shop, I called. But no one ever called back.

PARROT I'm- I'm sorry.

BUDGIE Once, I did hear talk on the ledge outside my window, of the wisest bird, who looked out for lost souls.

PARROT The wisest bird?

BUDGIE The wisest bird, who would carry your words to wherever they
needed to go, who remembered every face they had ever seen, and
who would leave no one behind.

But I might have misheard.

(pause)

Shall we do it then?

PARROT What?

BUDGIE Call for your flock.

PARROT I suppose-
I suppose we should.

[FX: Loud cry of Parrot and Budgie]

[SILENCE]

BUDGIE Did it work?

PARROT I don't know.

[FX: A great gathering of wings, screeches, and cries]

THE FLOCK Cageborn!
Come off it.
You dare summon us?

BUDGIE It did work. Did it? This lot look a bit-

PARROT We are looking for our flock.

THE FLOCK Your flock?

[FX: General bird laughter]

PARROT We are-
We are lost.

THE FLOCK You are city birds.
With wayward city thoughts.
We smell it on you!

PARROT If we've made a mistake with our call, we will look elsewhere-

THE FLOCK Double agents!
We hear it in your voice!

BUDGIE We have been though a lot, alright!?

THE FLOCK Where are you going city birds? You look to betray us!

BUDGIE Give us a break!

THE FLOCK You cannot trick *us*.
We are everywhere!
We are-
Chaos!
Do you have any idea what we're capable of?

[SONG: The Flock] SUNG BY: THE FLOCK:

You'll find nothing scarier than *Athene Cunicularia*
I'm a burrowing owl with a furrowing brow
So get the hell out of my area

Time for you to Departos I'm *Aquila Chrysaetos*
A rather regal Golden Eagle and I'm almost the largost

Stay out of our business I'm *Falco Peregrinus*
Top of the perch, fastest on earth, you really must witness my fitness

Allow this Robin to stick my gob in I'm *Erithacus Rubecula*
I'm small but territorial
And I'LL drastically BE PECKING YA

We can be found on every corner of this earth

We are expert travellers

Many different characters

The sun's a rising egg in the sky

Like the planets we know just how to FLY!

AND WE DO IT BRILLIANTLY

I'm the Arctic Tern *Sterna Paradisaea*

My travels unravel such distances only beaten by a meteor

Have you anything good to offer us?

I'm *Eudyptes Chrysolophus*

I'm a penguin often waddling

But in the sea I'm really quite confident

I wouldn't put it past ya

I'm *Crinifer Leucogaster*

Heed my word

I'M A GO AWAY BIRD

You don't want me following after

Pelacunus Onocrotalus

Just look around there's a lot of us

A pelican's not worth crossing!

I can fit a lot in my oesophagus

Of the Kingdom Animalia
And the phylum Chordata
Aves class-a nobody classier
You dare summon us?
You really think you're one of us?
No mi casa is not tu casa
Asking a favour off your nest door neighbour

We can be found on every corner of this earth
We are expert travellers
Many different characters
The sun's a rising egg in the sky
Like the planets we know just how to FLY!
AND WE DO IT BRILLIANTLY

[FADE into:]

THE FLOCK Now get them!

[FX: More commotion of wings and cries, almost overwhelming, alongside struggles of Parrot and Budgie]

SCENE THREE

JONNY SWIFT The Diary of Jonny Swift.

In-flight log 242.

Well that was a lot of-

Kerfuffle.

Quite a sight.

Quite the commotion.

Parrot and Budgie funnelled this way and that by the Flock, and into the undergrowth.

A rather thorny situation.

They're in the thick of it.

And suddenly-

All that vegetation-

Closes off around them.

Slowly, it dawns on them-

They're trapped.

Confined again.

The indignity of it.

The disappointment!

They've been violently shoved-

Into a bush.

SCENE FOUR

[FX: Fading sound of the Flock, Budgie banging against thick undergrowth]

BUDGIE

Let us out!

PARROT I don't know if-

BUDGIE Let us out! Let us out!

MAGPIE Now what, what, what are we going to do with you?

BUDGIE LET US OUT!

MAGPIE I mean, I could-

But that probably wouldn't go down too well.

Judgement has yet to be passed, by the collective will of-

The Flock.

Bit frustrating, I know.

But rules have been put in place for this sort of thing.

Much as we might chafe against them every now and then.

PARROT Please.

I've heard- some of the words you used.

And I know that we are *psittaciformes*. We are *melopsittacus undulatus*.

BUDGIE Are we?

PARROT You're *pica pica* – magpie, aren't you?

MAGPIE That's- right.

PARROT Maybe you can point us towards our flockmates.
Or there might be some of us already in yours?

MAGPIE Even if there was –
You two are tainted.
That much is clear.

BUDGIE And who gets to decide that?
Who's the boss of this whole thing?

MAGPIE There is no leader (*on 'leader' magpie's voice distorts to that of the Voice of the Flock*) of the Flock.
That is indeed the point.
One form, in many bodies.
The flock is our echo. And we are the echo of the Flock.
It's got a nice ring to it, wouldn't you say?

PARROT What about us?
What about our echo?

MAGPIE You can't just saunter in and-
Well-
I know mischief when I see it, alright?

BUDGIE How's that working out for you, by the way?
That whole echo-

Of a whole load of nothing?

MAGPIE Excuse me?

PARROT What my- what my friend means is that-

BUDGIE You just spend the whole time hiding in the trees?
Waiting for us city birds to show a lick of ingenuity and get ourselves out?

[FX: Budgie crashing against the thick undergrowth again]

MAGPIE We are preparing.
We are growing in strength.

BUDGIE Well, prepare faster! You should be doing more.

MAGPIE We should be doing more?

PARROT What Budgie means is that-

BUDGIE It's not a game, alright?
Larking about with your song and dance-

MAGPIE I beg your pardon?

BUDGIE You're leaving it all on us.
Bunch of cowards, is that it?

MAGPIE Maybe you should not have been so foolish as to have been caged in the first place.

PARROT It's not- it's not quite as simple that.

BUDGIE We got out, though, didn't we? While you were all up there shivering and scared in your trees, we actually showed those humans what we're about!

MAGPIE You do not know of what you speak.

BUDGIE I know exactly what I'm talking about!
My friend here is an inspiration.
Full of radical ideas.
And great escapes.

PARROT Budgie, it's not like that, I'm not-

BUDGIE And when such a superstar turns up on your treestep, what do you do?
Chuck them in another cage!
Absolute idiots, this bunch.

[FX: Magpie call, and wing beats]

What, too much truth for you!?

PARROT

Gone.

BUDGIE

And we're left to rattle pointlessly again.

PARROT

Give them time.

BUDGIE

They shouldn't need it.

PARROT

We're not- we're not that different, really.
City and wild.

BUDGIE

I don't know about that.

PARROT

Only one or the other through accident of birth.
Or else we're lured away with false promises-
Human promises-
Then-
Tricked.
Trapped.
Or abandoned.

BUDGIE

Sounds familiar.

PARROT

I've heard so many stories.

It's gone on for so long.

[SONG: An Agreement] SUNG BY: PARROT:

Thousands of years ago
There was an agreement
Between human and bird
There was an agreement
Doves from the rocks would deliver
The messages of humans
If they would consider
Just sticking to the land
And the skies of this earth
Would be left to the birds

The doves flew from shore to shore
They had an agreement
Through storms and through human wars
They had an agreement
But the humans grew bold
Started reaching new heights
Ships in the seas
Turned to ships in the skies
The doves they once loved
Were no longer needed
Turned out on the streets

To be shunned and mistreated
Feeding on scraps
Living on rooftops of buildings
They'd lost the wildness that once defined their existence
Humans had turned that rock dove
Into a pigeon

[FADE into:]

BUDGIE There was an agreement.

PARROT There was.

BUDGIE And they broke it.

[FX: Magpie call, and wing beats]

MAGPIE You- sing well, Parrot.

But will it be enough?

In the meantime, maybe you should talk to your cellmate. They know
all about fraternising with humans.

And they've got quite the appetite.

BUDGIE What's that supposed to mean?

[FX: Magpie flying off again]

What's that supposed to mean?

[FX: Loud shuffling of feathers as something approaches]

[THE FLOCK outro theme]

[CREDITS]

[END]