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# The Hollow

By Rick Suvalle

...the accountants who look after Ireland  
don't see forest like that at all.  
And subsequently Greece isn't the only  
member of the Poor Eurozone club  
to consider selling off bits of  
its environment to make some money.  
But this would leave Ireland  
as the only country in the developed world  
without a publicly-owned forest.  
And it isn't even as though  
it's going to get rich out of it.  
Hence the backlash we experienced today  
at the Free Our Trees rally.  
Those parasites can show up and try  
but I'll tell you one thing for sure  
over our dead bodies  
will they take our trees from us!  
Yeah.  
There's enough trees to keep Daddy  
busy until you're all grown up.  
I know.  
I like it, too.  
A lot of them are gonna have  
to come down, Finn.  
Yeah.  
It's sad.  
Alright. Let's get you back to Mom.  
Iggy!  
Iggy!  
Hey, come on, Finnball.  
Let's go and find Iggy.  
Iggy!  
Iggy!  
Iggy!  
Yeah.  
What do you think of that, Finn?  
Hey.  
What's going on?  
Don't tell Mom.  
Shit!  
I'm sorry, Mr. Donnelly. He's not here.  
You can come in and wait if you like.  
He's in the forest again, is he?  
- He's trespassing.

- It's his job, Mr. Donnelly.  
It's dangerous for him...  
and the little one.  
I'm sorry. I'll make sure my husband  
stops by your farm first thing tomorrow.  
Tonight.  
He comes to see me tonight.  
- Christ! When did you get home?  
- Just got in. Can you take Finn?  
- Colm is out there. Go talk to him.  
- No, not today.  
Why? Adam, please just go,  
buy him a pint and hear him out.  
Tried that. Still not mates.  
That's the third time since we moved here.  
He's creeping me out.  
Look, they're just words.  
He's just not happy they're selling  
the forest, neither am I.  
But I have work to do  
and he's gonna have to deal with it.  
- I can't not do my job, now, can I?  
- Please, just talk to him.  
Okay.  
What did you find, Iggs?  
Come on, darling. Come on. Hey.  
Adam?  
Adam! The roof's falling in.  
Literally?  
Yes, Adam. Five hundred years  
of ancient Irish sludge  
are dripping all over Finn's bed.  
I'll move the cot.  
Can you check the attic, please?  
Didn't find anything.  
Everything's okay.  
Probably just damp. It's an old place.  
- Are you missing London?  
- Oh, God, no.  
Me neither.  
Wine. Wine.  
It's like camping.  
Have I ever shown you a cordyceps?  
Probably.

You show me lots of weird shit  
when you smoke weed.  
It's the Trojan Horse of parasitic fungi.  
Come see this.  
This little beauty.  
Its spores can penetrate  
the skull of an ant...  
take control of its mind.  
That's disgusting.  
It's amazing.  
It gets inside the nest, drops its spores  
over the entire colony...  
creating thousands of little...  
fungus...  
controlled automatons.  
You're so high.  
Not when I found it.  
I wasn't.  
- I was with Finn.  
- Fine, fine, Doctor Attenborough.  
Just don't go bringing  
any of those in here.  
Of course you did.  
Those ants really do it  
for you, don't they?  
- I need to drain the pasta.  
- I know.  
Is that why you're stepping on my foot?  
I do. I really... I really need  
to get the pasta now. I do.  
Don't creepy-eye me, Ant Man.  
I remember you back in school.  
Poor girls. Bring the pot, please?  
Just baby dreams.  
Okay.  
Colm.  
- It's okay. It's okay.  
- It's Colm.  
Honey, it's okay. It's o...  
Yeah, police.  
Well, your window's definitely broke  
but your frame looks intact.  
I understand stuff like this  
can get quite unnerving

especially when it happens  
in the middle of the night.  
But I wouldn't worry about it too much  
it's probably just some bird  
that's dipped his beak in too many pints.  
How does a bird throw a lamp?  
Well...

see a shiny object through the window  
flies in, gets injured,  
flies around the room  
knocks over a lamp. Happens all the time.

- Is that right?

- Yeah.

Mr. Hitchens, this isn't London.  
Things here go bump in the night.  
Look, we've not been well received here.

- Our neighbor...

- Colm?

- Colm, yes.

- Not without cause.

You're aware?

Everybody is. You're making people  
nervous when you're out there.

- It's my job.

- I know, Mr. Hitchens.

- But these people have got certain beliefs.

- Beliefs?

They believe that the forest that you're  
trampling on belongs to the Hallow.

- The Hallow?

- The good people.

Fairies, banshees, baby stealers.

You're not afraid with your Irish folklore,  
are you, Mr. Hitchens?

A conquered people, forever in hiding  
driven from their sacred lands  
by man with iron and fire.

Beautifully told.

So you're a believer?

No, not me. I'm from Belfast.

Different sort of boogeyman up there.

But we're dealing with a very  
superstitious people around here.

Especially Mr. Donnelly.

You see, his beautiful wee daughter Cora  
she wandered into the woods one day.  
She never came back.  
And he would have you believe  
that they took her.  
I'm sorry.  
Should have just...  
gone and talked to Colm.  
- Do you really think...  
- Or what?  
A drunken bird?  
Or a...  
A Hallow?  
He's just trying to scare us, that's all.  
You should sleep.  
I'll be right back.  
- Where are you going?  
- Just gonna take some pictures.  
For evidence.  
Iggs?  
Iggy?  
Come here, Iggs.  
What's wrong, Iggs?  
Adam, love.  
- It's noon.  
- Shit.  
Fell asleep.  
I'm gonna get the window mended.  
And Colm?  
Yeah. I'll see him tonight. Promise.  
Gotta get out there, here you go.  
We had an incident.  
Police seem to think a pissed off  
bird mistook my house for his.  
- You're the tree doctor?  
- Not exactly, but, yeah.  
If you trespass upon them...  
- they'll trespass upon you.  
- Is that right?  
Look, I'll fix this  
but if your wife doesn't put the iron  
back up there's really no point.  
You don't listen.  
You think I'm crazy?

Please. Plea...

Come on, Finn. We're almost home.

Here we go.

Finn. Come on, buddy. It's okay.

Fuck.

Back in a minute.

Finn? Finn!

Finn?

It's alright, Finn.

Hey.

Come on. Come on.

It's alright.

Oh, my...

Come on.

Good boy.

- Claire?

- In here.

- Where have you been?

- I was hoofin'.

- You okay?

- I tried to call you. Colm was here.

In the house?

Take Finn upstairs. Call the police.

Adam, what's going on?

- Answer me.

- Just call the police.

Adam?

Do you know how to use that?

- Doesn't matter.

- No, it's not right.

It's just in case.

Until the police arrive.

Stay here. Lock the door.

It's okay. It's okay.

The police are coming!

Colm.

whatever happened to your daughter...

has nothing to do with us.

Adam?

Adam?

Adam, are you okay?

No. No, I'm not okay.

He came into our house.

He came into our home.

Stop! Adam, stop!  
Don't lose your head.  
Hey, hey, hey...  
This...  
- this is not right.  
- I know.  
- We just need to leave.  
- We're not fucking leaving.  
We've been here a month.  
We haven't bothered anyone.  
I'm not being intimidated by that man!  
Adam, just calm down.  
What's this?  
Colm brought it over.  
It's a book of fucking fairy tales.  
We need to leave now.  
Okay.  
Get Finn's bag.  
I'm sorry, Claire.  
Iggy!  
Iggy!  
Stay here, Claire.  
Iggs.  
Iggs.  
Iggy.  
Jesus, Iggs. What did they do to you?  
Come on. Let's go.  
Iggs.  
Iggy.  
- Iggy! Come back here.  
- Iggy!  
- Bastard! Bastards.  
- Come on. Adam, come on.  
Cowards.  
Claire, take the bag.  
- You ready?  
- No, wait.  
Come on.  
Okay, now.  
It's not.  
Okay, hit it again.  
- Adam.  
- Wait!  
Quick, Adam! There's something back there!

Go, now.

Well, come on, Adam! Come on!

Get in, get in, get in.

Get in, get in, get in!

Get in!

Sorry!

Adam, get in! Get in, get in, get in!

Go!

- Get to the road, Claire!

- I am, I am!

Let's go!

Is he okay? Is he okay?

Claire, you alright? Finn.

Finn.

Careful.

- It's okay. He's okay.

- Finn?

He's okay!

Come on. Come on, come on, come on.

Claire.

- Please listen, okay?

- What?

- Claire.

- Adam, what?

- It's... it's...

- Stop. Stop. Don't try.

We saw the same thing. The Hallow.

It's real.

God! Goddamn it!

- Show me, show me, show me.

- Something in my eye.

Get the other torch!

Upstairs. Go quickly. Upstairs.

Now!

Watch out, Claire.

Go up there.

Take this. Hide up there, Claire.

- Why?

- If the light hurt it, I gotta go back out.

I've gotta start the generator.

Go up there now.

Honey, it's okay.

Adam? Adam?

- Claire?

- Adam.  
Claire?  
It's okay, Finnball.  
It's okay.  
Adam?  
No, no!  
Bastards.  
- Are you okay?  
- I'm alright. Fine.  
It's okay.  
I'm gonna need your help with these.  
Light and iron.  
That's what the policeman said.  
Claire, can you put it across the middle?  
Hold it there. Okay.  
- Hang these up.  
- How do you know this is going to work?  
I'm certain.  
- Alright?  
- What are you doing?  
It's not safe for him.  
- You... you can't put him in there.  
- Where else?  
With us.  
Claire...  
the generator's gonna die.  
When it does, he's safer  
in here than he is with us.  
I promise.  
If he so much as whimpers,  
we'll get him out.  
Okay?  
It's just till dawn.  
Listen.  
Listen.  
See? It's fine.  
Alright.  
"Hallow be thy name.  
"Blessed be thy claim.  
"If you who trespass put down roots...  
"then Hallow be your name."  
Adam?  
"Changeling."  
Adam?

- Checking on Finn.  
- Don't. You'll wake him.  
I don't care. I want to see him.  
You have the monitor.  
Just listen. He's fine.  
See?  
He's asleep.  
Heya, Finnball.  
Adam...  
No! No, no, no, no! Adam!  
It's taken him.  
Finn!  
Please give him back!  
Please give him back!  
Finn!  
- Finn!  
- It's in the beam! It's in the beam!  
It's in the beam.  
No, no!  
- You'll hit him! You'll hit him!  
- It's gone up.  
Please find him. Please find him.  
There you are.  
Adam.  
Adam? Adam? Adam?  
Finn.  
Come on. Come on. Get up!  
Please get up!  
Oh, God! Oh, God! Oh, God!  
Finn!  
No!  
Give me.  
He needs to be dried and changed.  
Quick, Adam, he's freezing.  
Here.  
Adam?  
- It's not Finn.  
- What did you say?  
Look at him.  
Adam?  
It's a changeling.  
No.  
You need help. We need to get you help.  
Give him to me.

Give him to me.

- It's a trick.

- No.

Adam, look at yourself.

They're in your head! Like the ants!

It's not Finn.

- This is...

- Listen.

- Give him to me.

- No!

- No!

- Give him to me!

Adam!

Listen to me, they're in your head.

Show yourself. Show yourself!

Show yourself.

Show yourself.

Show yourself.

Please, Adam.

Where's my boy?

Claire!

- Claire, wait!

- No, no, no! Stay back!

Wait, you don't know what you're doing!

- We have to find Finn!

- This is Finn!

They tried to trick us!

They tried to trick us!

- You're sick!

- It's not Finn!

It's not Finn!

- Claire!

- No!

Claire!

Claire!

Give me the boy, Claire.

He's not yours.

He's not yours at all, Claire.

- Can't you tell?

- Please, Adam, please.

You're wrong. You're sick.

No, Claire. No, Claire.

No, please, please. No, no, no.

It's... it's not me.

I'm not the one that...  
that's going to hurt you.  
The boy... the boy... the boy is.  
The boy is.  
You really... think  
they'd give him back to you?  
They want you.  
Give him to me.  
They want... Claire!  
- Please.  
- They want all of us!  
All of us!  
No!  
Get back!  
Stay away!  
Adam?  
What's happening?  
Adam?  
Adam?  
Adam?  
Adam?  
No!  
No! No!  
Claire!  
Claire!  
Claire!  
Claire!  
Claire!  
Please, I need help!  
Please.  
Thank you.  
Oh, thank...  
Get away from here.  
You... you have to help us.  
I already did.  
I know, but please.  
I can't help you. I can't.  
They took my Cora.  
They took my little girl.  
They take what we love most, and...  
Be gone now before you  
bring them down here.  
Take my baby, please. Just until morning.  
- Please, Colm, please!  
- He should've listened!

Go!  
Go!  
You should never have come here!  
Cora?  
No, Cora.  
Claire?  
Adam?  
I got him back.  
- What is that?  
- It's... it's Finn.  
No. Adam, no.  
That's why they're here.  
They want... Finn.  
They want him for their family.  
Take him.  
Leave that thing. It's one of them.  
It's... it's nothing. It's a trick.  
Adam!  
Claire... take him.  
Take him.  
Adam?  
I did...  
You're so beautiful.