

**"TREETOPS", 58 SPITFIRE CLOSE, SOUTH CROYDON, SURREY**

RSPB  
The Lodge  
Sandy  
Bedfordshire  
SG19 2DL

Dear Sirs

I am writing to you with a very sad story. Whether this is coincidence or not, last Wednesday evening I was watching "The Birds" by Alfred Hitchcock on television with my marmalade cat Boris. It is, of course, not only a classic chiller, but also a stark warning about the grave danger we all face on a daily basis. Thankfully Boris didn't seem too affected by it. Having brought a fledgling he'd dispatched earlier for my inspection, he sat contentedly on my lap throughout the film.

The morning, however, was a very different story. When I let him out to do his business in the neighbour's garden, he didn't want to go and was quite agitated. However, using the fledgling as bait, I was able to tempt him outside.

That's when I saw them.

Sitting on the wall where I normally leave bread and water out for the squirrels was a long line of menacing birds. I counted two fat Pigeons, a pair of nasty Magpies, a whole host of vicious Blue Tits, one of those vile Blackbirds, a member of the aptly-named Thrush genus and a couple of particularly evil-looking Robins. There were a number of other very threatening birds in the trees which I could not identify, but which my wife Deirdre warned me were a gang of dangerous Black Caps and Wrens.

As you can imagine, I took to my heels and raced back indoors, my heart pounding. But tragically - and here's the awful part - it was too late for Boris. Seeing those loathsome creatures and realising they had seen him must have been just too much for his little heart. With a strangled mew, his body became completely rigid. He had literally died of fright. What made it worse were the piercing shrieks of triumph those wretched birds let out before flapping away to terrorize some other poor pussycat.

Clearly it will take time for Deirdre and I to recover, but for poor, dear Boris there is no recovery. I feel strongly that as the organisation chiefly responsible for encouraging these ghastly creatures you bear the brunt of the blame and therefore the cost. I therefore enclose an invoice to cover costs and as recompense for your shocking irresponsibility.

I would appreciate prompt payment.

*Bob Johnstone*

Bob Johnstone

# Sales Invoice

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Invoice No: BOB 012

From: "Treetops" Spitfire Close, South Croydon

Qty	Description	Amount exclusive of V.A.T. £	V.A.T. Net £
	<i>Sleeping pills (herbal) during post-traumatic Stress period</i>	<i>£9.50</i>	
	<i>Sundry anti-bird devices to protect the garden, Including traps and anti-climb paint</i>	<i>£25.00</i>	
	<i>Punitive damages in respect of the murder of Boris And the appalling toll on Deirdre's health</i>	<i>£100.00</i>	
	<i>Cheques payable to Bob Johnstone</i>		

Sub total exc. V.A.T.£

V.A.T.£

Total due£

**£134.50**

V.A.T. rate.....

Payment terms.....

Tax Point .....



for birds  
for people  
for ever



Mr B Johnstone  
'Treetops'  
58 Spitfire Close  
South Croydon, Surrey

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26 May

Dear Mr Johnstone,

Thank you for taking the time to write to us about the demise of poor old Boris.

Firstly, I am sorry we have not replied to your initial letter. You may well have a point; perhaps the thieving magpies may have carried out an overnight raid on the post room in their desperate search for goodies. Not finding anything worth stealing, they took your letter out of spite.

Now what can I say about Boris! On the one hand, I can share your grief in the loss of a much loved and treasured pet, yet on the other hand and by your own admission, a prolific mouser and killer of fledgling birds had finally met his match.

Although we are Europe's largest environmental conservation charity, we are still a charity and have to account for every penny of our income. Do we ask for compensation from cat owners for the estimated 55 million birds killed each year by these opportunistic hunters? No, we do not! Let us not forget to mention the innocent bystanders traumatised by the aftermath of the carnage and the massive clean-up operation. I could also put you in contact with local vets and the RSPCA who must care for and re-habilitate these poor defenceless victims back to full health after these savage attacks.

Which is why I can only offer my heart felt condolences to you and your wife and decline to offer any monetary re-numeration.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pinhorn  
Wildlife Adviser

