

The hum of a nearby motorway means little inside an ancient oak tree. Its inhabitants, unmoved by changes in modern society, continue much as they have for a millennia – largely ignorant of their itinerant human neighbours.

Only the tree's oldest resident, a long-suffering owl, is made ornery by the intermittent honking of car horns. Yet his sleepless days lead to the liberation of mice by night, who are then free to scurry about the scorched grass in their ceaseless search for food.

With the arrival of the weekend, a group of teenagers gather from across the city to take shelter under what little shade sunburnt leaves can cast. As the day yawns onward, they debate at length the meaning of life beneath a branch where, unbeknownst to them, the body of a criminal once hung.

The many animals who call the oak home hide as this inconsequential chatter takes place, each impatient for the moment when their lives might be permitted to continue...

As the teenagers decide to depart, the secret couple in their midst linger, just for a moment, to carve their initials clumsily into bark – creating a legacy for a relationship which otherwise wouldn't last the summer.

Several layers beneath that ill-fated insignia lies the mark of a misfired musket ball, the only witness left to a duel. Its twin was shattered as it struck its target, an elderly aristocrat who has long since nourished the roots of the ancient oak tree – a footnote in its story.