

LAKE PLACID 3

Third Draft
05-15-09

Written by:
David Reed
reed.david.r@gmail.com

© 2009 LP3 Productions, LLC
3400 W Alameda Ave Suite 200
Burbank, CA 91505

LAKE PLACID 3

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

A PICKUP TRUCK barrels straight toward us, kicking up dust in its wake.

We swing around to the bed of the truck, where a scruffy-looking MAN and WOMAN (20s) lean against their overstuffed backpacks. Her foot nudges against his. She smiles seductively, and he grins right back.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER (late 30s, husky) sings absently along to loud BLUEGRASS MUSIC.

Behind him, he hears TAPPING - the Man, knocking persistently on the glass between them.

DRIVER
(kind of a dick)
No potty breaks.

MAN
(barely audible)
You can drop us here.

DRIVER
I'm not kidding. Whip it out and go off the side.

MAN
But--

DRIVER
I won't watch.

MAN
Dude... *no*. Let us off here.
We'll, uh--
(to the Woman,
mischievously)
Walk.

*

JUMP CUT TO:

*

(CONTINUED)

BACKPACKS hit the pavement with a THUD, followed quickly by the Man and Woman. *

The Woman nods toward a SIGN in the distance - "Black Lake Wildlife Area."

WOMAN
How far's the lake?

DRIVER
(leaning out his window) *

WOMAN
(to the Man) *

Perfect. *

(with a wink) *

Because I need a bath.

Off the Man's stupefied grin...

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - TWILIGHT

The Man pushes through a thicket, trying to keep up with the Woman.

MAN
Not that I don't love this sexy
impulsiveness thing, but what are
the chances we get lost and die
horribly? *

WOMAN
(smirking)
Keep talking like that, you're
gonna start lactating.

They've arrived at...

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE - TWILIGHT

A secluded inlet of BLACK LAKE, the setting of the first two Lake Placid movies. She steps towards the water.

MAN
Fine. Make fun of my fear, but
when a wolverine jumps out and
mauls you, you're...
(eyes wide)
You're getting naked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Yup, she sure is. Before the Man can even comprehend it, she's STRIPPED DOWN, splashing the cold water on her face, down her arms, and onto her chest. She cleans up well. The Man frantically unbuttons his jeans. In his hurry, he trips over his pants and FALLS face first into the water.

The Woman LAUGHS. When he surfaces, she pushes him back down, straddling him. We see as much of their lustful splashing as standards will allow.

UNDERWATER - SOMETHING MOVES

BACK TO THE COUPLE. They hear a GURGLE, coming from behind them. The girl stands, covers herself up.

UNDERWATER - OUR POV MOVES SWIFTLY TOWARDS THEM

MAN (CONT'D)

Ow!

We follow his foot as he lifts it out of the water. There's a tiny, insignificant drop of BLOOD on it. A bite.

WOMAN

(laughing)

Wolverine?

The blood DRIPS from his injury into the pond. An instant later, something KNOCKS him on his ass. He tries to swat the creature away, but his arm is TUGGED into the water. The Woman takes a step towards him, but he holds his hand out to stop her - and he's MISSING THREE FINGERS.

MAN

No! No, wait--

Before the Woman can get a hold on him, he disappears into the muck. She splashes in after him, to no avail. In shock, she starts hyperventilating.

WOMAN

(too scared to yell)

Help, gotta-- gotta get help,
someone--

Without warning, both the girl and our POV are PLUNGED UNDERWATER. Writhing, she tries to get free of the SWARM OF CREATURES around her, forms that never quite become clear. All we can make out is a whirl of flicking tails and biting mouths. Blood blossoms out of her wounds like crimson explosions.

(CONTINUED)

As she's torn to grisly pieces, fading into the murky distance:

SUPER: LAKE PLACID 3

We rise back towards the surface, and see something there...
TOES.

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - DOCK - MORNING

As we break the surface, we realize that we're in a different place. Same lake, but this time, next to the BICKERMAN CABIN. A boy, CONNOR BICKERMAN (8), sits on the dock, dangling his toes into the water.

AN SUV is parked in the driveway. *

SUPER: Black Lake, Maine - 2007

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

NATHAN BICKERMAN (early 40s, the kind of guy who gets his hands dirty) carries an EMPTY BOX through the front door (we notice the "Welcome to the Bickerman's" door mat). *

The place is cluttered with the possessions of the former owner, who apparently was way into animals. A taxidermied squirrel hangs on the wall next to an empty lizard cage and a book called "Mammals of Maine." Nathan seems right at home. *

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

How can this place smell like
cookies and foot cream at the same
time?

Nathan's wife, SUSAN BICKERMAN (late 30s) walks in behind him. She's beautiful but frazzled (in a Nancy Botwin sort of way), and totally out of place in the rustic environment. *

NATHAN

Aunt Sadie's two favorite things,
besides dropping F-bombs.

SUSAN

I'm not gonna miss that at
Thanksgiving.

Nathan picks up an old family photo - SADIE BICKERMAN (Cloris Leachman), age 40, standing on the dock with a 10-year-old Nathan, who wears a life-jacket. Written in sharpie on the bottom: "Sadie & Nathan, Summer '75"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN

Everything's just how I remember
it.

*
*

Nathan's smile disappears for a moment. Say whatever you
want about Sadie, but he misses her. He puts the photo
gently into a box, then moves on to a picture of Sadie and
DELORES BICKERMAN (Betty White).

*
*

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Never thought she'd...
(trying not to say "die")
I never thought I'd be cleaning out
her house.

*
*
*
*
*

Susan sees his expression, tries to lighten the mood.

*

SUSAN

I've got a pop quiz for you, mister
EPA scientist.
(re: lizard cage)
What kind of animal lives in a tank
like this?

*

He points at her feet.

*

NATHAN

Smart money's on that lizard.

*

SUSAN

Wha--

Susan tries to kick off the reptile, but there's nothing
there. She can tell from Nathan's smirk that he's messing
with her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Nice. Freak out the city girl.

*

NATHAN

I'm giving you material for your
book. The attack of the rogue five-
inch reptile.

SUSAN

I don't share the Bickerman
infatuation with--

*

NATHAN

(playfully interrupting)
Nature?

*

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
Disgusting creatures. *

He nods. It's a fair assessment. *

NATHAN
(deadpan) *
Seriously though, there is an
escaped lizard somewhere in the
house. Just a heads up.

CONNOR *
Can we keep it?! *

Neither of them noticed that Connor had come in. *

SUSAN *
Absolutely not. If we see it, your
dad is going to take care of it-- *

NATHAN *
("come on") *
We do have the tank... *

SUSAN *
--and by take care of it, I mean *
he's going to smash it to death *
with a hammer. *

Someone KNOCKS. Nathan and Susan share a confused look. *

SHERIFF TONY WILLINGER (30s) stands at the door with his hat
in his hands, looking like he just ran over their dog. His
Brooklyn accent betrays his big-city roots. *

WILLINGER *
You're Sadie's nephew? *

Nathan nods. *

NATHAN *
Nathan Bickerman. *

WILLINGER *
Willinger. Tony Willinger. *

Willinger pauses for a second, finding the right words. *

WILLINGER (CONT'D) *
I'm afraid you haven't been told *
the whole story. About what *
happened to your aunt. *

Concerned about where this is going, Nathan looks back at Connor. *

NATHAN *

Hey, buddy, why don't you run out *

to the lake, give us a few minutes *

to talk? *

WILLINGER *

(grim) *

Actually, Mister Bickerman, you're *

gonna want him to stay inside. *

Off Nathan's troubled expression... *

TIME CUT TO: *

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - LATER *

Willinger sits, Nathan paces. Susan stands off to the side, hands on her temples. *

NATHAN *

("WTF?") *

A crocodile? In Maine? *

WILLINGER *

Crocodiles. Plural. *

FLASH TO: *

LAKE PLACID 2 - SADIE BICKERMAN IS KILLED BY A CROCODILE *

FLASH BACK TO: *

Nathan, who looks away from Willinger, overwhelmed. Susan puts her hand on his shoulder. *

NATHAN *

This is... Unreal. *

WILLINGER *

It sounds just as crazy to my ears. *

But I had to tell you the truth, *

not that garbage on the news about *

a boating accident. *

NATHAN *

(dead serious) *

Tell me they aren't still out *

there. *

Off Susan, looking out the window... *

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - KITCHEN - SIMULTANEOUS *

Connor sits at the kitchen table, just out of earshot. A TOY *
DINOSAUR in his hand, another on the table. He hears *
MUMBLING from the living room. *

With a swift motion, he attacks the dinosaur on the table *
with the one in his hand, making a dinosaur GROWL. *

One of the toys falls off the table. Connor drops to the *
ground, searching for it, but instead, he sees the LIZARD. *
It scurries to the open back door and disappears outside. *

Connor briefly glances at the door to the living room, then *
follows the reptile outside. *

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS *

Back to the adults. *

WILLINGER *

I can assure you, there's nothing *
bigger than a trout in that lake. *
Rangers came down with sonar rigs, *
checked the whole lake back to *
front. *

SUSAN *

(to Nathan) *
We can't tell Connor. It would *
give him nightmares for weeks. *

NATHAN *

So, we just lock him in a cage, *
stop him from ever swimming again? *

SUSAN *

If we find a cage that's big *
enough. *

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - MOMENTS LATER *

Connor hurries towards the lake, following the lizard. *

Just as he's about to catch up with it, a small CROCODILE *
tear out of the water, grabbing the lizard and pulling it *
underwater. *

Connor steps back, shocked. But then, a tail FLICKS in the *
water. He cautiously steps closer to get a better look. *
Then starts following the swimming beast. *

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Nathan, Susan and Willinger.

NATHAN

I guess moving here is out of the question.

Willinger looks a question.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

(distractedly)

I'm doing a research study for the EPA. Elk migration.

WILLINGER

Like I said, lake's been cleared. But I wouldn't let your son run around out here, just to be safe. Maybe find a place in town instead.

Susan walks to the kitchen door, opens it, and is faced with her worst nightmare.

SUSAN

Where'd he go?

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE - CONTINUOUS

Connor's made his way to the COVE we saw earlier. Remnants of a torn-apart BACKPACK litter the ground, but Connor's oblivious. He's following the CREATURE.

CONNOR

Come here, little guy. I won't hurt you...

A TINY CROCODILE scampers out of the water. Maybe a foot and a half long, it's nowhere near big enough to be scary. Connor is bewitched, and moves in to pet it. It SNAPS at him.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Whoa.

Thinking fast, he pulls a piece of JERKY out of his pocket and tosses it to the croc. As it's devoured, another TINY HEAD appears in the water. And ANOTHER. But he's not scared - Connor's making new friends, and he couldn't be happier.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

I guess I get a pet after all.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN (O.S.)
(yelling)
Connor?

*
*
*

The crocodiles dart under the water. Connor turns around just in time for Susan to grab him by the arm. She's not angry, just relieved to see him in one piece.

*
*
*

SUSAN (CONT'D)
We told you to stay inside, big
guy.

*
*
*

He looks back at the water, filled with curiosity.

*

Off of that, we pan a few feet over, out of Connor's view - to the Man's SEVERED HEAD, most of the meat chewed off.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - MORNING *

The Bickerman House is a modestly decorated suburban home. *
 Much more inviting than the cabin, but it lacks the rustic *
 charm. *

Nathan Bickerman races around the house, getting ready for
 work. He's buttoning up his khaki shirt, which bears the EPA
 logo. Susan is eating a bowl of cereal, staring at some
 MANUSCRIPT PAGES.

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER

SUSAN

It's six AM and you're not on the
 trail, you going soft on me?
 Thought you had a big day?

No response.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Can I get a "good morning"?

NATHAN

We lost another one.

That's all he had to say. She's instantly more sympathetic.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Signal from the elk's radio collar
 became erratic, then stopped
 entirely yesterday afternoon.

(with authority)

I plan on making this the last one.

SUSAN

Meaning you know what's been
 happening to them?

NATHAN

I think we've got a poacher,
 bringing hunters onto state land. *

He quickly laces his shoes and grabs his keys. *

SUSAN *

Promise me you'll remember one
 thing: they're just elk. *

(CONTINUED)

NATHAN
(smiling)
And it's just a book you're
writing, huh?

*
*
*
*

SUSAN
(joking)
Of course not, *this* is important.
(serious)
I hope you find your bad guys.

*
*
*
*
*

She plants a kiss on him that momentarily stuns him.

NATHAN
I forgot what we were talking
about. My brain turned off.

She smirks, then goes back to her cereal.

As Nathan's walking out the door:

SUSAN
Don't forget the little monster.

NATHAN
(remembering)
Connor.
(yelling)
Hey Connor, I'm walking out the
door, you planning on saying
goodbye?

SMASH CUT TO:

A CROCODILE'S TERRIFYING JAWS

...a stuffed crocodile. Connor (now age 10) carries it out
of his bedroom, half-asleep.

CONNOR
(confused)
Goodbye? When did you get home?

NATHAN
I got in late, something came up at
work. I'll tell you all about it
tonight.

Nathan steps out the door.

CONNOR
Dad?

NATHAN
(in a hurry)
Gotta go, buddy.

He's out the door. Connor stares after him for a beat.

CONNOR
(to the door)
Bye.

Off Connor's disheartened reaction...

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - LATER

*

Mid-morning, Susan sits at her laptop, typing. She's worlds away.

Our POV starts approaching her, stealthily. Closer and closer, yet she's completely oblivious.

Suddenly, Connor's STUFFED CROCODILE lunges at her, scaring the crap out of her.

SUSAN
Mother of--

Connor LAUGHS, happy to get any reaction out of her. Susan just SIGHS.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
(joking...kind of)
Next year you're going to summer school. Or *boarding* school.

*

CONNOR
You've been working all morning,
when are you going to be done?

SUSAN
Never. I'm a writer.

CONNOR
Can I turn on the TV?

SUSAN
I need to concentrate, just for a
little bit--

CONNOR
That's what you said yesterday.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
--after that, you'll have my full
attention. Can you please--

CONNOR
Get out of the house?

SUSAN
--get out of the house?

*
*

Clearly, this is a conversation they've repeated many times.
Connor's already sullenly grabbing his backpack. He waits
until she returns to work, then goes into the kitchen...

*

EXT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - MORNING

*

It's just as boring on the outside.

*

Connor jumps on his bike, starts pedaling, then sees some
OLDER BOYS, also on bikes.

*
*

CONNOR
Hey!

*
*

The Boys make some disparaging remarks about Connor that we
can't quite hear, then LAUGH. Connor starts moving towards
them, but they start pedaling away.

*
*
*

CONNOR (CONT'D)
Wait up!

*
*

But they're going too fast. Defeated, Connor turns around
and bikes away in the opposite direction.

*
*

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE - DAY

It's dark, overcast, and depressing. Equally depressing is
the look on Connor's face as he pushes his bike through the
forest. That is, until he sees his reptile friends...

*
*

REVEAL: FOUR CROCS, each 10 feet long. Things have changed.

CONNOR
(perking up)
Feeding time.

Connor dumps out his backpack near the water's edge. Some
chicken, a few packages of dripping thawed-out ground beef,
and A DEAD RABBIT.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
I caught the rabbit myself.

The crocs lunge at the food.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
I guess the semi did most of the
work. But *I* scraped it off the
highway.

They've already ripped through every scrap of meat, and are starting to claw and bite each other, trying to steal the last bits from each others' mouths. Connor gets a thrill from seeing the giant reptiles fighting.

He checks his bag for more meat, but it's empty.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
That's all I've got.

Then, one of them SNAPS AT HIM, and he falls backwards.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
Hey, no eating the cook.

They don't look like they're listening. He scrambles away from the shore.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
I'll... I'll try to bring more.

The look of concern on Connor's face grows as the crocs slither menacingly under the water. We hear prelap STATIC.

CUT TO:

INT. SUV - DAY

Nathan Bickerman is in the driver's seat, tuning the radio as he drives down a forest road.

RADIO VOICES
-- lots of activity on the
waterfront this morning, people
boarding up --
 (he switches stations)
-- less talk, more music! --
 (he switches stations)
-- the storm is smashing its way up
the east coast, with record
rainfall predicted for some areas.
What does that mean for Maine?
Find out after--

*
*
*
*
*

Nathan flips off the radio and dials his cell.

(CONTINUED)

NATHAN
Sheriff Willinger?
(beat)
I've got a lead on my missing
elk...

*
*
*
*

He notices something along the side of the road.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
(into phone)
...it seems like he's migrated
right into Sadie's backyard. What
do you think the chances are that--
(beat)
I know. Can't be. Gotta go.

*
*
*
*

He hangs up his cell as he pulls the SUV to the shoulder.

EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Nathan gets out of the SUV and grabs a RADAR ANTENNA from the
back seat. He switches it on, and it immediately starts
BEEPING. He's tracking something, and it's close.

He walks into the forest, right past the "Black Lake Wildlife
Area" sign from the teaser.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - DAY

*

Connor slips in unnoticed behind VICA (18) his busty
Bulgarian nanny. She's watching "Deal Or No Deal" on TV.

VICA
(to the TV, wary)
I would not be trusting this man
with his boxes. There could be
snake in box.

Her POODLE barks ineffectually at Connor, causing Vica to
notice him.

VICA (CONT'D)
Oy! Boy-child! Where have you
been?

CONNOR
Where's my mom?

Just then, Susan walks in from the other room, coat on,
laptop bag slung over her shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
I'm leaving you with Vica for the
rest of the day.

CONNOR
But you said--

SUSAN
I don't have time for a tantrum,
Connor.

He looks at her, something weighing on him heavily.

CONNOR
I just-- I need to show you
something.

SUSAN
(with a fake smile)
Once the book is done.

Even Susan knows that's like saying "never." Before he can
comment, she's out the door, leaving him alone with Vica.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

*

Connor opens the freezer, finds it empty. His face falls.

VICA
You should not be in out-of-doors,
you catch bird flu.

She feels his forehead.

VICA (CONT'D)
(dead serious)
You have been touching birds?

Connor rolls his eyes.

CONNOR
Can you take me to the store?

Vica spends a moment looking at her fingernails.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
Vica, you know how I promised not
to tell my parents about your
boyfriend, and that disgusting
thing you were doing to him on the
porch?

(CONTINUED)

VICA
Da.

CONNOR
(insistent)
You're driving me to the store.

CUT TO:

INT. GROCERY STORE - LATER

Connor (wearing his backpack) and Vica wander the aisles. Vica's brow is furrowed. She stops a passing STOCKBOY.

VICA
Where I might find banitsa?

Connor sneaks past them to the meat freezer.

STOCKBOY
Is that like a little banana?

Connor slips a steak into the backpack, looks back, and sees Vica and the Stockboy are still distracted. He steals a few more.

VICA
From Bulgaria. Banitsa. Baaa--

STOCKBOY
(really confused)
Lamb chops are in the deli, ma'am.

The backpack will barely shut. Connor smiles...

Until a hand GRABS HIS BACKPACK, STERNLY.

WOMAN'S VOICE
(angry)
What did I tell you?

Connor looks up in terror at SUSAN BICKERMAN. Vica backs quietly away from the confrontation.

SUSAN
(sotto)
Connor, you get caught *stealing*
meat again, and-- And I never came
up with a punishment, but you can
bet your little klepto butt that
I'm going to think of one now.
(about to throttle him)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Side note, I don't even want to know what you're doing with all this raw meat.

*

OWNER

What's the problem here?

The OWNER of the store saunters up, a permanent smile stapled to his face. We may recognize him - he's the DRIVER from the teaser.

SUSAN

No problem.

She shoots a glare at Connor that says otherwise, and the Owner sees it.

OWNER

Wait...

(squints at Connor)

This kid is on our shoplifter wall of shame. He's the meat-fiend.

While they're talking, Connor plays with a display of CIGARETTE LIGHTERS. Totally uninterested in what the adults are saying. He pockets one.

*

*

*

SUSAN

I promise you, he's not a meat-fiend, he's just my son.

(desperate)

And he was just leaving.

The Owner considers letting the whole thing go, but Connor gives him a "fuck you, old man" grimace.

*

*

OWNER

Let's all step into the back room.

As Susan's forced smile slips into hopelessness...

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The clouds roll menacingly overhead. Nathan's holding the ANTENNA, scanning it slowly back and forth across the forest all around him. Every few seconds, it BEEPS softly.

NATHAN

Come on, you've gotta be out here somewhere.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, the antenna BEEPS LOUDLY. A signal.

Nathan moves quickly in that direction, crawling over a
downed tree. He takes off in a cautious run, moving faster
and faster as the BEEPS get louder and louder.

As he clears a thicket, BAM! Nathan runs into something at
full speed and is knocked on his ass.

ELLIE

Oh my God!

Nathan looks up and finds himself surrounded by COLLEGE KIDS.
Four of them, 2 girls and 2 boys. One of the girls, ELLIE,
is helping the boy, AARON, who Nathan ran into. All of them
are carrying big backpacks.

As Ellie touches Aaron's arm to lift him up, they share an
intimate look. She lets go, embarrassed.

*
*

AARON

(to Ellie, soft)

Thanks.

(to Nathan)

I think you knocked out a filling.

*
*
*
*

NATHAN

Sorry about that. I have an
alright orthodontist.

*

CHARLIE

(sort of a douche)

Thanks for the tip, Speedy
Gonzales.

(points to the antenna)

Maybe we can call him from your
space-phone.

Nathan looks at the antenna - it's bent in half, and
completely non-functional.

NATHAN

It's a radar antenna. I'm a
zoologist, doing a study with the
EPA. Elk.

ELLIE

Elk? Like, deer with big antlers?

NATHAN

Yeah, pretty much.

The kids exchange a knowing look.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

What?

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - FAR SHORE - LATER

Nathan and the Campers stare down at something which is obviously unsettling. The other girl, TARA, chimes in:

TARA

Are they usually...like that?

Nathan looks at her, dumbfounded.

NATHAN

...no.

FROM OVERHEAD

We see the DECAPITATED HEAD OF AN ELK, still wearing its RADIO COLLAR. Its grizzly entrails lead into the water.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Unless there's a species of flying elk heads that I haven't heard of, I'm gonna say this isn't normal. The EPA's been trying to reintroduce Elk to this area, hence the collar. My job is to figure out why they're dying off.

They hear THUNDER in the distance.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Some day you guys picked to go camping.

ELLIE

You're telling me.

She looks at Aaron, but he looks away.

Nathan's cell BUZZES.

NATHAN

I better...

*

Ellie nods, and Nathan answers the phone.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Hello?

(CONTINUED)

INTERCUT:

EXT. GROCERY STORE - PARKING LOT

Susan sits on the curb, fiddling her KEYS between her fingers.

SUSAN

I'm going to recap the day I've had: My publisher called to tell me my novel's not commercial enough to sell. Two years of living in the middle of nowhere, working my ass off, practically ignoring my family for nothing. And now our sirloin-addled son just got caught shoplifting. Again.

*

*

Nathan is silent for a second.

NATHAN

(deadpan)

Is that it?

Susan's mouth hangs open; whether to laugh or cry, she's not sure.

SUSAN

He stole a backpack full of... I don't know, pork chops and rib roasts and... Anyway, my publisher wants their advance back, so don't buy anything expensive; except maybe flood insurance. Do we have that?

NATHAN

No.

SUSAN

Of course.

(beat)

Did we not feed Connor the right things as a baby? Did I eat too much curry when he was in the womb, and now he's a sociopath?

NATHAN

He's not a sociopath, Susie, he's a little boy. Put him on the phone, I'll let my paternal presence be felt.

SUSAN
He's not here, I sent him home with
Vica.

NATHAN
(earnest)
I'm sorry about the book. I
thought it was great.

SUSAN
You fell asleep reading it.

NATHAN
(joking)
And it haunted my dreams.

SUSAN
I'll see you at home.

NATHAN
Bye, babe.

As Nathan hangs up, he furrows his brow. A lot's on his mind, but he has to deal with one thing at a time. He rejoins the College Kids, who are huddled around the head.

AARON
What could have eaten the body? A
bear?

CHARLIE
I told you, I saw cougar tracks
back there.

TARA
He wasn't asking you, Charlie, he
was asking the zookeeper.

Again, Nathan is dumbfounded.

NATHAN
...zoologist.

TARA
(quietly, to Ellie)
What did I say?

Nathan takes a closer look at the severed elk head. He winces from the smell.

NATHAN
This is the thirteenth Elk that's
been killed around here.
(MORE)

NATHAN (CONT'D)
And if I'm right, it wasn't a bear
or a cougar. It was a trigger-
happy hick named Reba...

CUT TO:

INT. WINCHESTER BAR - DAY

REBA THRACE, a firecracker disguised as a woman, slams back a
beer with TWO MEN. *

NATHAN (V.O.)
... a hunting guide who poaches
endangered species on state land.

As the teenage WAITER sets down another round of drinks, Reba
slaps him on the ass.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - FAR SHORE - RESUME

CHARLIE
Sounds like a cougar to me.

ELLIE
Wait, wait. Why would a hunter
chop off the head?

TARA
Yeah, isn't head-meat delicious?

Charlie raises his eyebrows. If there was another pervert
around to high-five, he'd do it.

NATHAN
One: because she's a lunatic, if
her reputation is to be believed.
Two: because there's a giant radio
tracker around its neck, and unless
you want me following you home, it
has to come off. This is the
easiest way.

They all stare at the head for a beat.

ELLIE
Hunters are weird.

NATHAN
(no kidding)
I'm gonna call in some backup.

(CONTINUED)

More THUNDER.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

This storm's supposed to be pretty
big. There's a cabin on the other
side of the lake, you can duck in
there if you need.

*
*
*

AARON

(feeling his jaw)

We can swim.

Ellie looks away, embarrassed.

NATHAN

Fair enough.

As they go their separate ways...

CUT TO:

INT. WINCHESTER BAR - RESUME

Reba and the Two Men, JONAS and WALT, both in their forties.
A third man, BRETT (20s) joins them.

*
*

BRETT

You're Reba?

*
*

REBA

That's me. I trust that makes you
Brett?

*
*
*

He nods. Not much of a talker.

*

JONAS

(to Reba)

Photo in your ad doesn't do you
justice, Reba.

Reba smiles, finishes her beer, immediately opens another.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Walt and I thought we were just
getting a hunting guide, but...

As he trails off, he cups his own boobs for a second. We
know what he's staring at.

REBA

Once we're miles from civilization,
it's not beauty you're gonna want.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

REBA (CONT'D)

When you've been out there a few days, missed everything you shot at, and your belly starts grumbling, you're gonna appreciate my aim a lot more than my other assets.

WALT

I, for one, plan to appreciate the whole package.

Jonas notices Brett's foul look.

JONAS

(to Brett)

What about you? How'd you hear about Reba?

BRETT

(straight-faced)

Internet.

The guys seem to accept that non-answer, Reba knows it's bullshit.

REBA

(falsely)

I knew that website would pay off. *

(to Jonas and Walt)

How 'bout you two load your gear in my truck? It's the big one, boat on the back, gun rack up front, mildly offensive bumper-sticker. You'll see.

Jonas and Walt stand up hesitantly and leave the bar.

REBA (CONT'D)

So, Brett. You play your cards pretty close to the vest. But I think I might deserve to know what you're really doing here. *

BRETT

You don't have a--

REBA

--website, no I do not.

BRETT

Well, let's just say you're kind of a legend. *

REBA
A legend of what sort?

BRETT
You know how to find things that
don't want to be found.
(leans in)
I'm not looking to poach an elk.
I'm looking for a girl.

Reba sizes him up.

REBA
Girl that hangs out in the woods?

BRETT
On the lake. I don't have a chance
of finding her on my own, and
you're the only guide that goes
into the area.

Reba nods.

REBA
Alright then. I guess we'll see
what we see.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - DAY

Nathan leans on his SUV. A PICKUP TRUCK pulls up, towing a
BOAT. Sheriff Willinger steps out.

WILLINGER
Alright, let's see it.

The pair walk away from us, deep into the imposing forest.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - DAY

Connor walks in, downtrodden, followed by Vica.

VICA
Go to room.

Not a chance. Instead, he walks right out the back door.

EXT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - DAY *

...and gets on his bike. He pulls a piece of STEAK from his pants-pocket. Something the store owner didn't find. He takes off towards the lake. *

Vica runs out after him, her dog cradled in her arms. *

VICA *

Come back! Your mother-figure will be much mad! *

CONNOR *

Leave me alone! *

He keeps pedaling, into the distance. With no recourse, Vica puts her dog in the passenger seat of her car and revs the engine. *

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - LATER *

Connor pulls up on his bike, Vica a few seconds behind him in the car. *

VICA *

Where you go to? *

Connor's already dropped his bike and run into the forest. As Vica gets out of her car, her dog BARKS and chases after Connor. She tries to follow, but her HEELS slow her down. *

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE - MOMENTS LATER

As Connor gets to the cove, the dog runs after him, right up to the shore, where something is MOVING underwater. *

CONNOR *

Stop! *

For a moment, everything is silent. It unnerves Connor, who gulps down his fear. *

The dog laps at the water.

Off Connor, stepping towards the lake himself...

CUT TO:

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS *

Vica HEARS something - Connor yelling? *

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - FAR SHORE - SIMULTANEOUS

Nathan stands perilously close to the water, Willinger a few steps back.

NATHAN

It was here.

WILLINGER

Mister Bickerman, I drove all the way out here, you promised me a bloody mess.

He searches along the shore, until he finds the path of ENTRAILS that lead into the water.

NATHAN

Right here...

Willinger keeps his distance from the shore, but leans in to see the blood.

UNDERWATER

Our POV moves with purpose towards the shore.

ON LAND

Nathan spots something in the water. Is it a fallen branch, or is it an antler?

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Wait.

He grabs a stick and tries to pull in the mystery object. Willinger is clearly getting disturbed.

WILLINGER

Careful there...

FLASH TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE - SIMULTANEOUS

We flash to Connor, standing on the shore, watching Vica's dog paddle into the black water...

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - FAR SHORE - RESUME

Nathan reaches out, his foot slips into the water, and he nearly face-plants into the muck.

(CONTINUED)

UNDERWATER

We fly towards shallow water - pushing aside plants and muck.

FLASH TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE - SIMULTANEOUS

Connor takes a step towards the shore.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - FAR SHORE - RESUME

As Nathan pulls in the mystery object, Willinger is about to cry out a warning, when...

A CROCODILE SNAPS ITS JAWS OUT OF THE WATER

...devouring VICA'S DOG in a single, crushing BITE. We're:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE

Connor stumbles backwards, a thin spray of blood on his clothes. The ferocity of the kill was more than he was expecting, and he's ready to get the fuck out of Dodge.

He runs into the forest, never looking back.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - FAR SHORE - SIMULTANEOUS

Nathan pulls an antler-shaped BRANCH out of the water. No dice. While he's not looking, a CROCODILE comes up for air behind him, then slips back into the deep.

NATHAN

Nothing. It must have...
(working it out in his
head)
Something must have come back for
it.

WILLINGER

How many elk have you lost?

NATHAN

Thirteen. In the last six months.
I'm starting to think this isn't a
poacher.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

WILLINGER

(wary)

Mister Bickerman, I've checked the lake every three months for two years. Never saw a trace of... you know.

*
*
*
*

NATHAN

Then let's go back to the station, get the equipment, and check it right now. Together. If you're right, then we can both rest easy.

*
*
*
*
*

Willinger shakes his head.

*

WILLINGER

Crocodiles. Ridiculous.
(beat)
Alright. Let's go.

*
*
*
*

Off Nathan's concerned look...

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Vica tries to traverse a fallen log in high-heels.

VICA

(screaming)

Boy-child! Where have you gone?
You bring home Mister Fluffers now--

She SLIPS AND FALLS off the log, landing face down in disgusting, swampy water.

She looks up... and into the eyes of a TEN FOOT CROCODILE.

It LUNGES--

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

Nathan and Sheriff Willinger pull up in their respective vehicles. Thick, menacing clouds fill the sky, THUNDER rolls across the city.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Willinger unrolls a large MAP, which is covered with RED DOTS. Nathan looks on with suspicion.

WILLINGER

These are the sightings, the
rumored sightings, the guy-who-
thinks-he-saw-the-Loch-Ness-Monster
reports. Everything I have.
Nothing conclusive.

*
*

Nathan leans in for a closer look.

*

WILLINGER (CONT'D)

*

I'm from New York. People think
we've got crocodiles there too, in
the sewer. I don't buy it either
place.

*

NATHAN

*

Where's the sonar gear?

*

Willinger smiles.

*

WILLINGER

*

If we're going to do this, I say we
do it right. And that means
bringing more than sonar.

*
*
*

He opens a door to the next room...

INT. WEAPONS LOCKER - CONTINUOUS

Willinger flips on the lights, revealing a room full of every type of weapon imaginable. Shotguns, assault rifles, spear guns...

*

NATHAN

(impressed)

*

How many of these can you carry?

*

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - DAY *

Susan Bickerman walks in the door, which was left ajar when Vica left. *

SUSAN

Connor?

(looks in the kitchen)

Vica? *

She sees the STUFFED CROCODILE lying on the floor. She picks it up, realizing where they may have gone. *

CUT TO: *

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - LATER *

As Susan comes in, still holding her bag. *

SUSAN

Vica? I saw your car outside,
where'd you go? *

She throws a copy of her MANUSCRIPT onto the counter, which knocks over a picture of her, Nathan and Connor. It SHATTERS.

SUSAN (CONT'D) *

Dammit!

She examines it, then tosses it in the trash. A second later, she goes back and trashes the manuscript as well.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Please, before this day gets any worse, just kill me now.

The front door swings open, and a gust of wind blows in. Susan turns and sees Connor, splashed with blood, terror in his eyes.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

What happened to you?

CONNOR

(in shock)

Mom? I think I did something bad.

She pulls him out of the doorway and wraps a blanket around his shoulders.

SUSAN

Is this blood?

(CONTINUED)

Connor's hand stuffs the LEASH further into his pocket.

CONNOR
I was by the lake...

Something SLAMS INTO THE DOOR.

A BLOODY HAND smears against the window, followed by a blood-curdling SCREAM.

Susan opens the door. Outside, Vica is torn up, her leg gnawed open. She's losing blood quickly, barely standing.

She falls into the house, weeping. She's carrying one of her high-heels.

SUSAN
(overwhelmed)
Someone please tell me what happened out there.

Connor stares at Vica's mangled leg.

VICA
(through tears)
Monster. Monster in the water.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - BEACH - DAY

Despite the clouds, Ellie and Tara are trying to enjoy themselves, lying on the beach and reading.

Charlie is trying to enjoy the view up Tara's skirt.

Out of nowhere, Aaron runs out of the forest SCREAMING. He CANNONBALLS into the lake, splashing the other three.

AARON
You coming, Ellie?

She looks up at the cloudy sky.

ELLIE
Isn't it a little... frigid?

AARON
This is why we came here! Get out into the real world, the way things used to be. When our ancestors got here, there weren't heated pools.

*

(CONTINUED)

ELLIE

That's why you came out here. Some
of us just wanted a regular
vacation.

AARON

A vacation is a vacation in my
book. At least you got away from--

*
*

ELLIE

Let's not talk about it, okay?

*
*

TARA

I bought a new bikini for this
trip. I have to use it, whether
it's freezing or not.

*

Charlie feels an opportunity slipping away.

CHARLIE

Or we could all just jump in naked.
That would be hilarious, right?
You guys first.

The girls ignore him. With a look of resignation, Ellie
follows Tara into the forest to change.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Ellie and Tara both pull off their shirts. Charlie would
kill to see this...

Which is why he's WATCHING FROM BEHIND A TREE.

His eyes go wide, unable to believe the glory of what he's
seeing.

EXT. BLACK LAKE - BEACH - SIMULTANEOUS

Aaron shivers in the water, waiting for them to come back.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The girls put on their bikinis. The show over, Charlie ducks
out of sight. He sits against a tree, trying to preserve a
mental image of what he just saw.

Then, a bush MOVES in front of him. Struck by curiosity, he
moves towards it.

EXT. BLACK LAKE - BEACH - SIMULTANEOUS

The girls run out to join Aaron in the water, all of them splashing and yelping from the cold water.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Charlie cranes his head over the bush--

AND A CROC LEAPS UP, GRABBING HIM BY THE NECK

There's a vicious struggle as he tries to get out a scream, but his windpipe has already been crushed. Blood pours out of his wounds.

He's dragged a few feet, past a regurgitated chunk of ELK HEAD.

He punches at the croc, trying to land a solid blow, anguish on his face, but...

The croc TWISTS, snapping Charlie's neck.

OUR POV follows Charlie's view as he's dragged through the forest and into the water. His last sight is his friends, having fun in the lake, blissfully unaware.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - DAY

Elsewhere on the lake, Reba, Brett, Jonas and Walt are motoring across the blue expanse. Each of them is holding a large HUNTING RIFLE. Reba's boat has TEETH painted on the front, as if it's a shark eating the waves.

Reba's in the middle of a story.

REBA

-- not that I didn't want to let the poor bastard live, but how many chances do you get to shoot a giraffe?

Jonas and Walt laugh.

REBA (CONT'D)

Anyway, the zoo took away my membership after that.

Brett scans the horizon, trying to tune out Reba, but failing.

(CONTINUED)

BRETT

I honestly can't tell if you're
joking.

REBA

Just giving further proof that my
philosophy is correct. Hunting's
not fair, so there's no point
pretending otherwise.

She takes out a RADAR ANTENNA - just like Nathan's.

BRETT

What's that?

REBA

This is what guarantees you a shot
at the big game.

(off Brett's look)

Big game is what you're after,
right? Nothing like shooting and
eating something you're not
supposed to.

Out of the corner of his eye, Brett sees something MOVE.

BRETT

Stop the boat.

Reba eyes Brett warily, but she complies. She looks from him
to the water. *

REBA *

What'd you see? *

BRETT *

Quiet.

They all scan the horizon. Nothing.

Every one of them JUMPS when Reba revs the engine and sets
them back on their way.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - DAY

Vica is still weeping. Susan is trying to make a tourniquet
for her leg out of an old t-shirt, but blood is everywhere.

Connor is standing a few feet back, still in shock.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
Hold still. Hold still, Vica, or
it'll hurt worse.

Vica is able to control herself for a moment, and Susan PULLS
the tourniquet tight. Vica SCREAMS.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Connor, get me another t-shirt.
Something to soak up the blood.

He moves to get one.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Vica, tell me what happened. *

VICA
Water Monster. Big--
(she winces)
Teeth.

Connor comes back with the t-shirt, which Susan presses
against Vica's leg. *

Vica MUMBLES in Bulgarian. *

SUSAN
English, Vica.

VICA
(in Bulgarian, on the
verge of passing out)
Or you could learn five words in
Bulgarian! *

SUSAN
Connor, start talking. *

CONNOR
I just wanted a pet. *

He looks at Susan, terrified. *

CUT TO:

INT. SUV - DAY

Nathan's blasting down the highway. His phone BUZZES.

NATHAN
Hello?

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - DAY

Susan and Connor stand in the window, looking out. The look of shock on Susan's face can't be overstated.

SUSAN
(into cell)
Nathan. I need you to come to the
cabin, right now. And bring the
police. There's something--

*
*

NATHAN (PHONE)
(interrupting, static)
Susan? Hello? Are you--

We start to PULL BACK.

SUSAN
Nathan? Nathan?

NATHAN (PHONE)
(static)
-- can't hear -- driving -- lock
yourself in --

Susan drops the phone to her side, not listening.

REVEAL TWO CROCODILES, both ten feet long, perched outside the Bickermans' Cabin. Scratching at the ground, snapping at each other...

...and moving towards the door.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - DAY

Nathan Bickerman's SUV rages down the road, around a corner, and straight towards "ROAD CLOSED" signs.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Nathan SLAMS his hand against the steering wheel.

NATHAN

This isn't happening.

EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - ROAD BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Nathan stops his car, as does Willinger behind him. They both run into the street, towards the signs.

"BRIDGE OUT."

NATHAN

My wife just called, I couldn't hear the whole thing, but it sounded like she was in trouble at the cabin. Still thinking it's a poacher?

*
*
*
*
*
*

WILLINGER

Still more likely than a crocodile. I checked the lake myself.

*
*
*

NATHAN

(imploring)

There has to be another way, some side route - another bridge...

*

WILLINGER

I just got off the radio with dispatch. The storm surge is coming in, flooding the river. All the bridges between here and your place are closed. We could cut up onto I-ninety-five to bypass the bridge, but--

NATHAN

We don't have that kind of time.

WILLINGER

You're welcome to swim across.

Nathan scoffs at his tone.

*

(CONTINUED)

WILLINGER (CONT'D)

Nate, I can't change the weather.
We're not getting across that
bridge unless your Suburban's got
pontoons hidden underneath.

*

NATHAN

Maybe swimming's not a crazy idea.
Hitch a ride on the other side.
(remembers)
Or we could stop being idiots and
take your *boat* across the river.

WILLINGER

There's no guarantee anyone would
be on the other side to give us a
ride.

Nathan gets an idea. He starts walking towards the Sheriff's
truck.

NATHAN

So let's skip the driving part.
The river connects to Black Lake.
We can take the boat straight
there.

The Sheriff considers it for a beat.

WILLINGER

(finally)
I'll start loading the guns.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - DAY

Susan sits on the couch next to Vica, who is barely
conscious. Susan tries to comfort her, but it's not much use
in her current state.

Connor stares out the window. The crocodiles have moved out
of their view.

CONNOR

I think they're gone.

*

SUSAN

(relieved)
I hope so.
(beat, quiet)
What did you see?

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

His hand wraps around the leash in his pocket.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Did you see Vica get bitten?

CONNOR
No.

SUSAN
Then whose blood is that?

He looks down at his shirt.

CONNOR
(reluctantly)
Mister Fluffers.

Susan sighs.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
I fed them.

SUSAN
What?

CONNOR
I've been feeding them meat from
our freezer, that's why I stole
from the store. Because I couldn't
feed them enough. That's why they
killed Vica's dog.

SUSAN
You've been coming out here, after
we told you not to? *

CONNOR
(nodding) *

On my bike. *

SUSAN
You knew there were dangerous
animals in the lake, and you didn't
tell us? *

CONNOR
You would have made dad kill them.

Susan is taken aback. *

SUSAN
He would never have done it. He
would have...

(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)
moved them, taken them some place
safe. God knows why, but he even
cares about the stupid animals.

CONNOR
(re: Vica)
Is she going to be okay?

Susan ponders that for a second. Should she be honest?

SUSAN
I'm not sure, sweetie. Try 9-1-1
again.

Connor dials, gets no response. He shakes his head.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Then we need to get her into the
car, take her to the hospital.

*
*
*

CONNOR
What if they come back?

*
*

Good question. Susan doesn't know.

*

We hear a prelap BEEPING.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - DAY

As the boat roars along, Reba is using her RADAR ANTENNA to
scan the treeline. The BEEPING is getting faster and louder.

REBA
Gettin' there.

BRETT
Doesn't this take some of the fun
out of it?

Reba takes out a GIANT RIFLE from her BAG.

REBA
I find shooting to be the fun part.

They're getting close to the shore. The antenna is going
nuts, BEEPING almost continuously.

REBA (CONT'D)
Close enough. We'll let your
predator instincts take over from
here. Hold this.

(CONTINUED)

An instant after she hands the antenna to Jonas--

THE BOAT IS BLOWN INTO THE AIR

...scattering the hunters into the water.

Reba CLAWS towards the surface, choking on the dark water.

Jonas and Brett are already swimming towards the shore, but Walt is nowhere to be seen.

REBA (CONT'D)

Walt!

She dives under, searching for him. All she sees is cloudy darkness. She swims deeper.

On the surface, Jonas gets to shore first. He clambers up the bank and collapses from exhaustion.

Underwater, Reba is running out of breath. She turns around to head back, when she sees it--

WALT, being TORN APART by a crocodile. With all the blood in the water, it's hard to tell exactly what's happening, or exactly how big that croc is...

Despite the overwhelming size of the thing, Reba pulls a KNIFE from her coat, getting ready to strike.

Then, something GRABS REBA, pulling her upward. It's BRETT, and he pulls her to shore, kicking and fighting the whole way.

REBA (CONT'D)

Let me go! We've gotta go back.

BRETT

Don't be an idiot!

She pushes off against him, sending him flying into a bush, where he falls face first onto CHARLIE'S BODY. His skin ashen, he looks like a ghost that was ripped in half (the bottom half eaten).

BRETT (CONT'D)

Aaaah!

Brett backs away as fast as he can. Jonas has restrained Reba, who is now coming to her senses. The water has turned blood red.

REBA
That ain't right. That ain't
anything close to right.

As they all catch their breath, they notice the ANIMAL
SKELETONS littering the ground. The forest is getting dark,
there's something in the water; they're fucked. *

JONAS
What do we do? Run?

REBA
To where?

JONAS
(pissed)
You're the guide, you tell me.

Reba looks back at the now-upside-down boat, torn over what
to do.

REBA
We can't leave Walt.

JONAS
Of course we can!
(points at Charlie)
Something bit this schmuck in half,
and now it bit Walt in half, so
let's get the fu--

BRETT
Shut up!

They hadn't been paying much attention to Brett, who hasn't
taken his eyes off of Charlie since landing on him.

BRETT (CONT'D)
(re: Charlie)
This is what I came to find.

Off Charlie's corpse...

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - BEACH - DAY

Tara sits alone on the beach, reading a book (entitled "Lusty
Inferno: A True Life Tale of Firemen in Love"). It's cloudy
and gross out, to Tara's annoyance.

(CONTINUED)

ELLIE (O.S.)
(yelling)
Charlie?

AARON (O.S.)
(yelling)
Hey man, Tara needs you! Someone
has to check her for ticks!

Tara rolls her eyes, then goes back to her book.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Ellie (now back in her regular clothes) and Aaron scour the forest.

AARON
(yelling)
This isn't funny, get your ass back
here.

ELLIE
(to Aaron)
Which direction did he go?

Aaron shakes his head, unsure. They keep walking.

AARON
Knowing Charlie, he's probably
finding a quiet spot to take a
dump.

Ellie balks at his language.

ELLIE
Why did we have to bring him?

AARON
(smiling)
I shouldn't have. I knew with him
here we would never get a second
alone. *

ELLIE
(chiding him)
So that's what you're after, huh? *

Aaron blushes. *

AARON
I thought it was pretty obvious.
Maybe, after we find him-- *

ELLIE
Let's find him first, then talk
about it, okay?

*
*
*

Ellie swats at a fly. She hates the woods.

AARON
(pissed)
I was surprised before when you
said you didn't like it out here.
I thought you'd be grateful we
brought you along, considering the
alternative.

*
*
*
*

She thinks about that for a second, then keeps walking.

CUT TO:

*
*

EXT. BLACK LAKE - BEACH - DAY

Tara's engaged in her book, when a DROP OF RAIN hits her.
Then another, and another.

She stands up. Fuck.

TARA
(meekly)
You guys?

She grabs her clothes and starts to quickly change, starting
by taking off her top.

As she's pulling on a sweatshirt, we see a crocodile inching
its way out of the water behind her. We know it's coming,
just not when...

TARA (CONT'D)
Charlie, is that you?

BAM! The croc (10 ft) leaps forward, jaws wide--

--but ANOTHER CROC (10 ft) slams into it, knocking it back
into the water with a huge SPLASH.

The crocs both CHASE her across the beach. For a second, it
seems like she might get away, but these crocs are hungry.
One of them bites into her leg, and the other uses that
opportunity to TEAR HER ARM OFF.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - DAY

Nathan and Sheriff Willinger cruise across the lake on the Sheriff's boat. Nathan steers while the Sheriff loads a SHARKSTICK. It's raining. *

WILLINGER

It's a sharkstick. Kind of like a
shotgun, but it works underwater. *
One shot will blow the thing's head *
clean off. *

NATHAN

Very impressive.

WILLINGER

We are gonna blow it's head off,
right?

NATHAN

What do you mean?

WILLINGER

I mean, if we find a crocodile out *
here, not that I think we will, but *
I don't want to hear any EPA bull
about endangered species lists.

Nathan mulls that over for a beat. His entire life's work is to protect these animals. But weighing that against his family?

In the distance, they hear Tara SCREAMING.

WILLINGER (CONT'D)

What's that?

NATHAN

(urgent)

I don't know, shut up and listen.

They're silent for a beat. No more sounds.

WILLINGER

Did you hear which direction it
came from?

NATHAN

I'm not even sure I heard it.

Nathan shakes his head.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
But I can tell you one thing.
(grim, sad)
Whatever's out there, we're here to
kill it.

Off Willinger's dark smile...

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - NEST - MOMENTS LATER

Reba, Jonas and Brett are standing nervously over Charlie's
body. They're huddling under a tree to avoid the rain.

REBA
You mean to tell me you knew these
things were out here?

BRETT
I didn't say that--

REBA
What the hell is wrong with you? I
thought you were looking for a
girl? *

BRETT
Wait--

JONAS
What is it? A shark? Like a
megaladon? *

REBA
Didn't look like a shark to me.

BRETT
(pointing at Charlie)
Wait. *

That shuts Jonas and Reba up.

BRETT (CONT'D)
His name is Charlie Burton. He's a
college student at Northeastern
University, here on a backpacking
trip.
(beat)
He's a friend of a friend, so to
speak. *

Reba looks at Charlie's body in a whole new light. *

(CONTINUED)

BRETT (CONT'D)
I came here to find my girlfriend,
and to stop her from doing
something stupid.

*
*

REBA
(re: Charlie's body)
Seems like coming out here was
already pretty stupid.

*

Brett frowns at that, unamused.

*

REBA (CONT'D)
Well. I'm sorry about your friend.

*

BRETT
(with a sad smile)
I hated him. He was an idiot and a
pervert.

Despite that, Brett takes off his leather jacket and covers
Charlie with it.

REBA
Well, then I'm sorry he smells so
bad.

JONAS
So what do we do?

Reba looks at a set of bleached white antlers in the nest.

REBA
That depends on you, Jonas.

Off Jonas' confused look...

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - DAY

Connor stares out the rain-slick window at the CROCODILES
outside.

SUSAN
Get away from there, they can smell
you through the glass.

CONNOR
Is that true?

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
(exasperated)
I don't know! It sounds true!

Something catches Connor's eye...

CONNOR
Dad!

Susan darts up from Vica's side.

Sure enough, Nathan and Sheriff Willinger are motoring up in the Sheriff's boat. Susan cracks the window open enough to shout through.

CONNOR (CONT'D) SUSAN
Dad! You made it! Nathan!

ANGLE ON NATHAN AND WILLINGER

As they see the crocs. One of the crocs turns and heads for the water...

WILLINGER
I'll be damned.

*
*

NATHAN
That can't be good.
(yelling)
Susie! We're gonna have to put
them down! Get away from the
window!

INSIDE

Susan obliges, pulling Connor back.

SUSAN
Bathroom. Thick walls in the
bathroom.

Together, they lift Vica and pull her into the bathroom, then shut the door and duck down.

OUTSIDE

Willinger chooses between the shark stick and a large-bore rifle. The type with explosive shells. He picks the rifle.

The croc is almost to the water. Nathan picks up another rifle and they both take aim.

WILLINGER

Let'em get closer. Five seconds.

Nathan tenses up.

WILLINGER (CONT'D)

Four.

The other croc turns and heads for the water.

WILLINGER (CONT'D)

Three.

His finger finds the trigger.

WILLINGER (CONT'D)

Two.

The closer croc THROWS ITSELF towards them, and WILLINGER FIRES.

THE CROC EXPLODES INTO A SHOWER OF GUTS AND BLOOD, splattering the beach and turning the tide red.

Nathan FIRES several shots, most of them missing, a few of them finding their marks on the hide of the second croc, little spurts of blood shooting out of it.

WILLINGER (CONT'D)

Ha! I got--

HOLY HELL - A TWENTY FIVE FOOT CROC TEARS OUT OF THE WATER, LITERALLY BITING THE BOAT IN HALF.

We lose Nathan and Willinger in the chaos, somewhere under the float of debris.

INSIDE

Susan flinches from the sound of the EXPLOSION, followed quickly by the CRACK of the boat fracturing.

She darts out of the bathroom, only to see the giant BULL CROC galloping towards the window.

It SHATTERS IN, sending splinters of wood and glass flying into the camera...

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - BATHROOM - DAY

Silence, except for the raindrops splashing against the roof. Connor sits on the floor, Vica's head resting on his legs, riveted with fear.

He reaches his hand out, slowly, for the doorhandle.

CRASH!

The whole room shakes.

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Nathan pulls himself onto the muddy shore just in time to see the Bull Croc SMASH into the cabin a second time. He picks up a RIFLE that was thrown onto the beach and limps towards the side of the building.

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Susan, on her hands and knees, evades the Bull Croc's gnashing jaws, which are sticking through the window. Not finding a meal inside, the big croc backs off and slinks into the water.

Nathan bursts through the door, quickly SLAMMING it shut behind him.

NATHAN

You okay?

Without a word, she embraces him, tightly.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

What about Connor?

Hearing his name, Connor steps out of the bathroom. He takes in the carnage for a beat.

CONNOR

(to Nathan)

What did you do to the cabin?

*

Nathan goes to him and pulls him into a hug.

NATHAN

Glad you're okay.

Connor looks over Nathan's shoulder - out the window.

(CONTINUED)

CONNOR

Where's the guy you were with?

Nathan follows his gaze. Good question.

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Sheriff Willinger pulls himself onto the wreckage of his boat, a bloody gash on his forehead. He makes a concerted effort to be very, very, very still and silent.

FROM OVERHEAD, we see the biggest croc swimming underneath him.

CLOSE on Willinger, as he gulps down his fear...

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Nathan's looking out the window, trying to see Willinger.

CONNOR

Are you going to kill them?

Susan looks at Nathan, wondering the same thing.

NATHAN

If they get between us and safety,
yeah.

*
*

SUSAN

So how do we get to safety?

*

He looks out the busted-in window, doesn't see anything.

NATHAN

Hide. Survive. Wait for help.

CONNOR

Is help coming?

NATHAN

Sheriff's office knows we're here.
They'll send someone--

A CRACK OF LIGHTNING startles them all. The sound of RAIN outside picks up a little bit.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

...just as soon as they rebuild the
bridge.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - BEACH - SIMULTANEOUS

The rain soaks Aaron and Ellie as they scramble across the beach. Tara's gone.

AARON

What the hell's wrong with her?

ELLIE

(yelling)

Tara! Where'd--

Oh no. She sees Tara's BOOK floating in the water.

Tears swell in Ellie's eyes as she rushes to the lake's edge. In an instant, she's waist deep in the water, grabbing the book, splashing around underneath it. No sign of Tara.

Aaron comes in after her and drags her away.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

No! She was-- She--

AARON

(doesn't believe a word)

It's okay. We'll find her. It'll all be okay.

They both know it won't be.

CUT TO:

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - LATER

Willinger floats on the boat debris. He's trying to look underwater for crocs, but the rain makes it difficult to see.

He takes a moment to steel himself, then DIVES IN with determination.

SPLASH, SPLASH, SPLASH - he moves as quickly as he can through the waves, the cabin in his sights.

But then, he sees something on another piece of wreckage. The SHARKSTICK - his big gun.

He makes his choice and moves towards the sharkstick.

We see a TAIL swishing behind him - one of the smaller crocs, closing in. He only has a few seconds.

WILLINGER

Please...

(CONTINUED)

He reaches out - and GRABS the sharkstick.

The massive Bull Croc opens its jaws behind him, water funneling into its mouth like a black hole.

The jaws CRUSH DOWN on Willinger, but they're held open by a piece of BOAT DEBRIS (think Luke using the bone to hold open the Rancor's mouth in "Return of the Jedi").

Willinger's been given two seconds to get away, and he takes it, swimming fiercely to the shore and taking off running, sharkstick in hand.

The Bull Croc SNAPS the boat debris in half, then recedes back into the water...

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

POUNDING on the door. Nathan opens it, letting Willinger tumble inside.

WILLINGER

I think I officially owe you an apology.

EXT. FOREST - CAVE - DAY

Reba and Brett hide under a rock formation, sheltered from the rain. It's an awkward moment, neither really having anything to say to the other.

REBA

Could be an alligator.

Silence. Brett doesn't like that line of conversation.

REBA (CONT'D)

I'm sure she's fine. Your girlfriend.

*

Brett nods.

REBA (CONT'D)

This about another guy?

*

(no response)

Yeah. So she goes on a camping trip without you, and you hire a hunting guide to help you stalk her through a State Forest? Totally normal.

*

*

(beat)

Did she forget her chastity belt at home?

BRETT

(fed up)

It's a little more complicated than
that. And it's not your damn
problem.

*
*

REBA

How is it not? I agreed to help
you find her. Getting you all back
in one piece is my responsibility,
and I take it very seriously. So
the least you can do is drop your
douchebag attitude.

Brett ponders that.

BRETT

(relenting)

Yes. She came with another guy.

*

Reba smiles. Jonas hurries in from the rain.

JONAS

I found it.

He hefts up the RADAR ANTENNA - a little wet, but still
working.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - NEST - MOMENTS LATER

Rain pours off of the leaves in little eddies. Brett, Reba
and Jonas stand a safe distance from the nest.

REBA

Before we got unceremoniously
jacked out of my boat, we were
following a tracking signal from an
elk. It seems that elk is now
passing through the digestive tract
of our, uh, megalodon friend--

Brett rubs his temples, annoyed.

REBA (CONT'D)

--and so is the radar tracker. I'm
sorry to put it this way, but
predators go to where their food
is. Whatever killed smelly over
there knows where your girlfriend
is. All we have to do is follow
him there.

*

(CONTINUED)

She CLICKS on the antenna. After a moment, it BEEPS.
Off Brett, elated and terrified at the same time.

CUT TO:

INT. TENT - LATER

Rain POUNDS on the tent. Ellie and Aaron are both soaked and exhausted.

AARON

We'll go back out when the storm passes.

ELLIE

They're out there in the storm, the least we can do is be out there with them.

*
*
*

AARON

Tara and Charlie are hooking up under a log somewhere, laughing at us for worrying.

*

ELLIE

We could still go to Nathan's cabin, on the other side of the lake.

*

AARON

Relax.

ELLIE

Find a phone that works, call for help.

AARON

We're not going out there. That's final.

*

(beat)

Isn't this what you wanted? A bit of time away from the world?

*
*

ELLIE

(emphatic)

I just wanted to forget about Brett for a few days. I didn't want to get lost in the Land of the Lost. At least if Brett was here, he wouldn't give up on finding his friends.

*
*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

AARON

Talking about him isn't a very good
way to forget about him, Ellie.

(beat)

I'm trying to help you.

*
*
*
*

He leans in to put an arm around her shoulder. She lets him.

When he moves in for a KISS, she pushes him away.

*
*

ELLIE

Seriously? My best friend is
missing.

(pleading)

We need to go get help.

*
*
*
*

Off Aaron, irritated.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - EARLY EVENING

Nathan is holed up at the window, RIFLE in hand, ready to
fire on anything that moves. Vica's back on the couch, still
barely holding on to consciousness.

Willinger's head wound is being tended to by Susan.

NATHAN

I don't see them.

Connor starts to walk to the window, but Susan holds out her
hand to stop him.

SUSAN

Stay back, honey.

Outside, the rain continues. Nothing else moves.

NATHAN

They must have been living on the
other side of the lake, or else we
would have seen them sooner.

Connor shoots a guilty look at Susan.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Question is, what drew them here,
to our cabin? Why today?

SUSAN

It's not just today. They've been
here for months.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN (CONT'D)
(off Nathan's questioning
look)
Talk to your son.

Susan walks into her bedroom and shuts the door. The tension between Connor and Nathan is palpable.

WILLINGER
I'll uh... check the, um.
Bathroom. For supplies.

As he moves off...

NATHAN
You knew about them? *
(starting to understand) *
Is this where you've been biking *
to? Every day, you ride off... I *
thought you were going to the *
playground. How could you keep *
this to yourself? Those things *
nearly tore Vica's leg off. They *
could have killed me.

CONNOR
They never hurt me.

NATHAN
Connor, they're wild animals.
They're not your friends. Animals
follow a set of rules to ensure
their survival, and one of those
rules is that they eat anything
littler than them.
(he looks outside)
They're not your friends.

CONNOR
(quietly)
I didn't say they were my friends.
They were something to play with
when both of you left me alone.
You spend more time with the stupid
elk than with me, and mom-- She
hates it here. She'll take any *
excuse she can get to leave the
house. Isn't it a rule of nature
that parents take care of their
kids?

Connor walks away, dejected.

NATHAN

(beat)

It is.

Nathan looks around the demolished house. Blood on the floor, windows broken in, shattered dishes.

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - BEDROOM

Nathan finds Susan cradling her head in her hands on the side of the bed.

NATHAN

(sarcastically)

So. Now you can definitely write a book about a lizard attack. "Write what you know."

*
*
*

She looks up at him, not sure why he's joking at a time like this. Then, after a moment, she accepts it.

SUSAN

(deadpan)

Might even be commercial enough to get published.

*

NATHAN

I, for one, am ready to give up lake-side living forever. Not worth it. So let's get out of here. We still have a few hours of light. Better to make a run for the car now than to wait for dark.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

SUSAN

Vica...

*
*

NATHAN

We can carry her. Willinger has a big gun. It's our best option.

*
*
*

SUSAN

Alright then. Let's go.

*
*

CUT TO:

*

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - LATER

Susan's holding the RIFLE, while Nathan and Willinger scope out the situation outside.

(CONTINUED)

WILLINGER

We'll need to pull the car up to
the door to get you all in safely.

NATHAN

Be ready to run.

SUSAN

Got it.

NATHAN

Connor, look after your mother.

Tall order for a short guy. He nods, but this whole plan
scares the crap out of him.

Vica is sitting up, a little more alert than when we last saw
her.

VICA

We going to rodeo?

SUSAN

(whatever you say)
Yeah. The rodeo.

VICA

Excellent.

NATHAN

(to Susan)
Still no sign of them. Looks like
we're actually going to do this.

SUSAN

Love you.

NATHAN

If something happens...just keep
shooting until you run out of
bullets.

With that, the men step outside, Willinger cradling his
sharkstick...

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

...And move towards Susan's SEDAN. With the rain, it's hard
to see more than a few feet beyond the car. So far, the
coast is clear.

(CONTINUED)

WILLINGER

Nathan. I have to say it again.
I'm sorry I didn't--

NATHAN

I get it, Sheriff. Really.

WILLINGER

If I was you, I wouldn't be taking
this so well. Protecting your
family--

NATHAN

(a little harshly)
Just be glad I'm not you.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Susan stands watch, a row of SHELLS lined up in front of her.

OUTSIDE

Nathan gets to the car door, but it's locked. He fumbles
with the KEYS, looking over his shoulder the whole time.

The door unlocks with a CLICK, and he scrambles into the
driver's seat. Unlocks all the doors from the inside,
letting Willinger gets in the passenger seat.

Nathan allows himself to take one long breath, trying to calm
his shuddering hands.

He TURNS THE KEY, and before the engine has even turned
over...

The BULL CROC SCREAMS OUT OF THE RAIN, galloping towards the
car. Nathan doesn't even see it before the car is SMASHED
OVER onto its side.

The AIRBAGS GO OFF in Nathan and Willinger's faces, knocking
the sense out of both of them.

In the croc's struggle to get at Nathan and Willinger, it
bashes VICA'S CAR into a tree, totalling it.

*
*

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Panic grips Susan's face. She fires the rifle - three shots
in quick succession. The Bull Croc doesn't even feel it.

The croc nudges the car with his snout, trying to work his
way in through the broken window.

(CONTINUED)

INSIDE THE CAR

As Nathan regains his bearings, he tries to release his seatbelt, but it's jammed. He can't get free. And a giant crocodile is trying to eat his head. Willinger's unconscious, but farther from danger.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Susan keeps shooting. And shooting. And shooting. The Bull Croc's hide is too thick.

Susan picks up the last shell and loads it.

SMASH TO BLACK.

We hear the rifle FIRE its final shot.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT./EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - DRIVEWAY - EARLY EVENING

The BULL CROC gnaws at the side of the car, trying to get a grip on Nathan inside. One of the smaller TEN FOOT CROCS joins it, trying to SMASH THROUGH the windshield rather than go through the driver's side window.

INSIDE THE CAR

Nathan struggles to free himself. Willinger's still out cold, blood trickling from his nose.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Susan stares out in panicked disbelief. She's out of bullets, there's nothing she can do.

Connor gapes with wonder at the size of the Bull Croc. He's never seen it before.

CONNOR

That-- that one's new.

Susan darts away from the window, disappearing for a few seconds. She comes back holding a CHAINSAW.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

(shocked)

What are you doing?

SUSAN

(commanding)

Stay inside. I mean it.

She tries to rev up the chainsaw, but it takes a few tries. Every second that goes by, the crocs get closer to devouring Nathan and Willinger.

WHIRRRRRRRR - the chainsaw starts up, and Susan pushes outside.

Both crocs turn to face her. She hadn't really planned beyond this point, so she just stands there, stuck in place. The smaller crocodile skitters towards her.

CONNOR

Mom!

INSIDE THE CAR

(CONTINUED)

Nathan is able to free himself from his seatbelt, but the Bull Croc is still right outside...

OUTSIDE

Susan SWINGS THE CHAINSAW and connects with the smaller croc, SPRAYING BLOOD across the driveway. The croc leaps backwards, curling up for protection next to the Bull.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Connor watches in horror as the Bull Croc swings its tail at Susan, knocking her back and forcing her to drop the chainsaw. The Bull takes one more bite at Nathan, then turns to follow Susan.

ANGLE ON SUSAN

On her back, scurrying away as fast as she can...

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Hey!

Susan whips around to see Connor waving his hands at the Bull Croc.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Get away from her!

Connor picks up a rock and throws it right into the Bull's face, hitting it in the eye. The Bull CHARGES forward a few meters, and Connor TAKES OFF in the other direction - towards the water.

Susan leaps to her feet and tries to put herself between the Bull and Connor. The Bull LUNGES at her, but she's able to dive away.

Before she can stand, the Bull is towering over her, ready to tear her to pieces.

WHIRRRRRR - the CHAINSAW revs to life behind the Bull.

Nathan, now free of the car, SLICES INTO the Bull's tail, severing the back half in a sickening spray of viscera.

The Bull WHIPS AROUND, SNAPPING AT NATHAN. It misses its target, instead slamming its head into the car, tipping it back on its right side.

ANGLE ON CONNOR, who is maneuvering his way back to the front door. When he gets there, it won't budge. It's LOCKED.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Inside, VICA has propped herself up by the door. Seeing the chaos outside, she locked herself in. The windowpane is ringed by SHARDS OF GLASS - you could climb through, but you'd disembowel yourself in the process.

Moving at lightning speed, Nathan sweeps Susan into his arms and pulls her to the door. He BANGS on it, but Vica's too terrified to let them in.

NATHAN

Open the damn door! Vica!

Vica shakes her head. She backs away...

As Nathan SAWS THROUGH THE DOOR, SEVERING THE LOCKING MECHANISM. He kicks the door in, shoves Connor and Susan through, then dives in himself just as the Bull Croc RAMS into the door-frame.

The Bull is too big to get inside, but the Ten-Footer isn't.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Help me block the door!

Connor is too small to do anything, Vica is in catatonic shock, and Susan's had the wind knocked out of her. Nathan's on his own.

The Ten-Footer scratches against the door, trying to squeeze its way in. Nathan uses every ounce of strength to keep it out, but it's a losing struggle. It BURSTS through, snapping and lunging at all of them. Nathan, Connor and Susan all back away, but Vica's in shock - and it costs her. The croc GRABS her injured leg, TWISTS HER off her feet, and drags her screaming out the door.

But the Bull doesn't want to share. He RIPS Vica from the smaller croc, throws her body into the air, and CRUNCHES her body into pieces.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - EARLY EVENING

Ellie marches through the forest, unsure of what direction to go, but moving quickly anyway. Aaron's a few steps behind her. Because they're in the forest, we can hear the rain, but we don't necessarily need to see it.

AARON

You got us turned around. I can't even tell which way the camp was.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

ELLIE

I heard a noise from this way.

AARON

You heard *gunshots*. Do we want to go towards gunshots?

ELLIE

We want to go towards people. Unless a bear got a permit to hunt its cousins, we're going towards...

She sees something. Something very bad.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

...people.

A BODY, covered with a jacket.

Aaron moves closer, looks under the jacket.

AARON

(barely keeping it together)

Charlie.

Ellie turns into the forest and WRETCHES.

When she's finished, she tries to sit down, but ends up basically collapsing. Where Ellie's overcome with sadness, Aaron is getting angry.

AARON (CONT'D)

We need to-- to get away from here. Now.

Ellie can't even stand up.

ELLIE

Tara...

AARON

Get up. Don't cry. Come on.

ELLIE

I can't.

AARON

Get up, damn it! I'm not gonna say it again!

Ellie's staring at Charlie's body. Then, she squints, tries to get a better look.

AARON (CONT'D)

I'm walking away, with or without
you. Stop being a child and get
up.

She pulls the JACKET off of Charlie's body. Looks at the
tag.

ELLIE

Dad?

That stops Aaron's rant in its tracks.

AARON

What did you say?

ELLIE

This is Brett's jacket. *

AARON

I don't know what the hell is going
on here, but we need to leave,
Ellie.

ELLIE

I think he's looking for me. *

All Aaron can do is snicker.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What?

AARON

You think Brett cares enough to get
his shoes dirty for you? *

Ellie has to think about that.

AARON (CONT'D)

If that was true, you wouldn't be
here with me in the first place. *
He's *cheating on you*, Ellie, and *
everybody at school knows it but *
you. *

ELLIE

He might have heard the gunshots
too. Or maybe he fired them--

AARON

We have a camp a few miles from
here, Ellie. *

(MORE)

AARON (CONT'D)

We get there, we hide in the tent,
we're safe. Don't be stupid.

*
*

ELLIE

We've been turned around for an
hour! The only direction we know
is towards the gunshots.

Aaron takes a few steps the other way.

AARON

Make your choice. Let me save you,
or go crying to Brett. Like usual.

*

ELLIE

Please come with me.

She stands up, and takes a step towards the cabin. Towards
Brett. The line in the sand is drawn, and they both know it.

*

AARON

Then you're walking alone.

Aaron walks off into the growing darkness.

ELLIE

Come back. Aaron? Please!

But he's gone. Ellie is overwhelmed with dread as she takes
in the vast stretch of dark forest ahead of her.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - SHORE - EVENING

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

Reba, Brett and Jonas are stalking a crocodile through the
bush. Each of them holds a rifle, and Reba has her bag of
guns slung over her shoulder. They're all soaked to the bone
from the rain.

REBA

(to Jonas, sotto)

Aside from the missing girl, this
is kinda the most fun I've ever
had.

JONAS

(sotto)

I can't tell if I'm excited, or if
I'm going to throw up in my mouth
from the terror.

(CONTINUED)

The BEEPING gets a little faster.

REBA

(sotto)

We don't even know what the hell it is, and I'm already picking a spot on my wall for its head.

JONAS

(sotto)

...or heads.

Reba nods. Interesting possibility.

JONAS (CONT'D)

(sotto)

If that happens to be the case...

REBA

(sotto)

I want both of them. If there's three heads, you can have one.

BRETT

Guys, I can hear you.

Jonas and Reba share a look.

REBA

If he wants one of the heads, he's not getting one of mine.

(to Brett)

Last chance, Brett. Gonna tell us why you're stalking your own girlfriend?

*

BRETT

(after a beat)

Because she's being lied to. This guy, Aaron, he used to be a friend of mine. I made one little mistake, and he used it to get between me and Ellie. He takes her with him on this trip, you can guess what he's hoping to do with her.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

REBA

(after a dramatic beat)

Sounds like an episode of The Bold and the Beautiful.

Brett looks at her, quizzically. This enormous weight that he's been carrying, reduced to a silly soap opera plot.

The BEEPING is now almost continuous. Jonas flicks the antenna off, and all three raise their rifles.

Because of the low light, it's hard to make out what exactly they're seeing. A dark shape writhes and encircles a ghostly white figure. They step closer, ready to fire.

It's TARA, being devoured by a TEN-FOOT CROC.

Reba and Jonas both look somberly at Brett, who shakes his head.

BRETT
(sotto)
It's not her.

The crocodile stops eating and looks up - he heard them.

Jonas looks down his scope...

But the crocodile is gone. It's slithered into the tall grass nearby before they could get a shot off.

Brett moves forward, examining Tara's body.

BRETT (CONT'D)
(somber)
It's her best friend. She must be close.

He stands up, and bellows out:

BRETT (CONT'D)
Ellie! Can you hear me? *

JONAS
That's one way to bring the megalodons closer. *

BRETT
CAN YOU HEAR ME? *

REBA
(quiet, to Jonas)
You ready for this? Try not to mess up the head. *

Jonas smirks. *

BRETT

Ellie!

*

The sound of LEAVES RUSTLING fills the air. Reba raises her rifle, aims into the tall grass, and FIRES.

The RUSTLING continues, getting closer - she aims again and FIRES TWICE.

Jonas FIRES too, but he clearly isn't enjoying this anymore. The croc BURSTS OUT of the long grass, barrelling for Brett. Reba and Jonas both hit it with shell after shell, nothing doing any damage.

Reba's clip is empty. She drops the rifle, and within a second pulls TWO HANDGUNS from holsters under her shirt. She walks confidently towards the croc, unloading her whole clip into its head, until it finally shudders to a stop at her feet.

ANGLE ON JONAS

Who kneels on the ground, reloading his rifle. Now that the danger has passed, he lets out a sigh of relief.

JONAS

(blown away)

That was the hottest thing I've ever seen.

From behind him, without warning, a CROCODILE BITES HIS HEAD CLEAN OFF.

The croc (a TEN-FOOTER) doesn't swallow it, it just tosses it aside and keeps moving. As the head rolls up to Brett, the Croc HEAVES Reba off her feet and drags her into the grass.

ANGLE ON REBA

...being dragged fifteen miles an hour through a field of swaying grass.

She pulls a KNIFE from her boot and STABS at the croc, with no effect. The knife gets STUCK in the croc's head.

ANGLE ON BRETT

Chasing after her, but about to lose sight. He raises his rifle, then hesitates. All he can see is Reba.

BRETT

I'm sorry.

LAKE PLACID 3 - 3RD DRAFT - 05/15/09 - D. REED
CONTINUED: (4)

74.

He FIRES.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - TWILIGHT

Nathan presses his weight against the door to keep it closed.

NATHAN

Can you see him?

Susan is at the window with a flashlight, trying to see into the car outside, where Sheriff Willinger is still unconscious.

SUSAN

Windshield's cracked. I can't get a good-- Wait.

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - TWILIGHT

Inside the car, Sheriff Willinger is stirred awake by the light from the flashlight.

WILLINGER

Where--

Before he can ask his question, he realizes the answer. Lets out a sigh. He tries to wipe the blood from his face, but more wells out of his nose and the cut he got from the bull croc.

He looks out the rain-obscured windshield, sees Susan in the house, waving at him.

He looks at the ignition - the keys are still there.

His eyes dart back to Susan. He doesn't return her wave.

CUT TO:

EXT. TALL GRASS - TWILIGHT

Brett races through the field, with no regard for his own safety. He holds his rifle at his side.

He comes into a CLEARING, at the edge of which...

REBA IS BEING DRAGGED AWAY, the crocodile now slowing down from exhaustion. Reba is kicking, twisting, trying to scramble out of the croc's clenched jaws.

Brett doesn't have time to aim - he raises the rifle and FIRES.

(CONTINUED)

With her free leg, Reba KICKS the knife deeper into the croc's head, and in response, it FLIPS HER OVER, trying to break her legs.

She's able to PULL her leg a few inches out of the beast's mouth, but the motion SHREDS OPEN A GASH on her leg.

The croc lets go for one fateful instant, trying to get a better grip, and Reba starts to BOLT, but...

...Brett FIRES again...

...in SLOW MOTION, the bullet RIPS THROUGH REBA'S SHOULDER, then TEARS INTO THE CROCODILE'S EYE. The croc GROWLS in pain, then forcefully BASHES its way through some foliage and out of sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - TWILIGHT

Willinger slides his bashed-up body into the drivers' seat. Still doesn't acknowledge Susan.

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Susan looks at Nathan, worried.

SUSAN

He's awake. Moving into the driver's seat.

NATHAN

If that bastard leaves without us...

He opens the door a crack.

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Nathan sees Willinger try the ignition, only to have it fail.

NATHAN

Don't do it.

Willinger tries it again. VRRRROOOM, the engine starts up.

STOMP. STOMP. The unmistakable sound of the Bull Croc fills their ears.

INSIDE THE CAR

(CONTINUED)

Willinger puts it into gear, tries the accelerator. The tires SPIN in mud.

IN THE HOUSE

Nathan's furious.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Grab Connor. Get ready to run.
(shouting out the door)
Wait for us!

INSIDE THE CAR

Willinger's starting to panic.

WILLINGER
(to himself)
Shut up.

OUTSIDE

Nathan, with Connor at his side, starts to move towards the car--

But Willinger puts it in REVERSE and guns the engine, trying to get out of the muck.

NATHAN
Stop!

The BULL CROC is on top of them in a flash, going straight for Nathan. They're forced to dive back into the house.

Slamming back into drive, Willinger doesn't wait for them.

Susan makes eye contact with Willinger as he starts to drive off--

Only to have the Bull Croc GRAB the back of the car and DRAG IT BACKWARDS. Susan's eyes are still locked with Willinger's as he SCREAMS for help.

Help never comes. The car is pulled all the way to the lake, and DRAGGED UNDER. As he disappears from view, Willinger grabs the SHARKSTICK and points it at his own heart.

Sharksticks work underwater. BANG!

CUT TO:

EXT. TALL GRASS - TWILIGHT

Brett rushes over to Reba, who is lying in a growing puddle of blood.

BRETT

Oh my God, what was I thinking...

REBA

Gimme.

(pained beat)

That.

With all of her strength, she pulls Brett's rifle out of his hands.

REBA (CONT'D)

(through clenched teeth)

I'm afraid I have to ban you from ever participating in one of my hunting trips, ever again. Something in the contract about not blowing holes in the guide.

BRETT

No complaints from me. I hate the wilderness.

*

REBA

(pained)

Must really love your girl, then.

*

*

*

BRETT

I do.

(beat)

I really am...

(looks back towards Jonas' body)

... you know.

*

*

*

REBA

You trying to say sorry, Brett?

(looks at her leg)

The little bastard ruined my pants, and he stole my knife.

BRETT

You stabbed him in the face.

REBA

Yeah, and I would have carved my name in his hide if it didn't get stuck in there.

(CONTINUED)

They start walking/limping back towards Jonas' body.

REBA (CONT'D)

As for your belly-aching, it's not
the first time I've been shot at by
a friend of mine.

(reeling from the pain)

It is the first time I got hit.

She stops and looks at Brett, concerned.

REBA (CONT'D)

I'm not sure I'll be able to walk
out of here.

They look around the tall grass all around them - a croc
could be waiting to ambush them four feet away and they would
never know.

BRETT

The boat.

REBA

Getting in the water is a good
plan?

BRETT

No, but unless you want me to drag
you--

She winces a little.

REBA

Can we not talk about dragging?

BRETT

Unless you can come up with another
way...

She shakes her head.

REBA

Nah. No way to keep our
orientation with the storm and with
no light. We head the wrong way,
it could be days before we find
another soul on foot.

BRETT

So once we're in the boat, where do
we go?

REBA
Only one place to go. *

Brett looks a question.

REBA (CONT'D)
There's a cabin on the other side
of the lake. I'm having a bit of a
misunderstanding with the owner, so
if anybody's home, let's keep the
elk-poaching on the down-low. *

Brett stops walking.

REBA (CONT'D)
I'm the one with the bum leg,
Rambo, keep up the pace.

BRETT
What about Ellie? *

Reba looks away. It's obvious to her that Ellie's dead.

REBA
We're not gonna find her now. We
wouldn't know where to look.

BRETT
You think she's dead.

REBA
(lies)
I don't. I can't know for certain.
But we don't do her any good
getting ourselves killed.

BRETT
Those were crocodiles. I've seen
enough movies to know that
crocodiles don't stop killing food
just because they're full. They
also don't travel far if they don't
have to. She's nearby.

REBA
Screaming did a lot of good the
last time.

BRETT
(urgent)
She's my girlfriend. If you had
any sort of normal relationships,
you'd understand. *

REBA

What makes you think I don't?
Jonas and I chase after a killer
crocodile for you, practically
playing twenty questions trying to
figure out what drove you to follow
Ellie here. May I point out that
we didn't even know the damsel's
name until you started screaming it
at the top of your lungs,
attracting the monster that bit off
Jonas' frickin' head? I can't hang
that on my wall! Maybe I have my
own reasons for tromping around the
sticks, far as I can get from
'normal' people. But do you ask
one question about me? One?

*

BRETT

(exasperated)

Do you have a boyfriend?

*

REBA

No, dick, I don't. That was
hypothetical. Now let's get in the
boat and go someplace safe.

Brett stands his ground.

BRETT

I won't. Not without her.

Reba SWINGS and CONNECTS with his jaw, knocking him out cold.

REBA

Fine, ya jackass, then we'll see
how you like getting dragged.

She grabs his feet, and starts PULLING.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - NIGHT

Darkness has fallen outside, and the lights are starting to
FLICKER inside.

Nathan, wiped out from exertion, has his back resting against
the door to hold it shut. Susan and Connor sit in the center
of the room.

The sound of RAIN FALLING is almost deafening.

(CONTINUED)

WATER SEEPS IN UNDER THE DOOR

...and begins to pool across the floor. Connor sees it and pulls away, as if it was a snake slithering towards him. *

More water pours from a leak in the ceiling. *

NATHAN

It's okay, Connor.

Susan and Connor can both read his face well enough to know it's not okay.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Just a little trouble with the ceiling. We'll be fine. Unless the levee overtops, in which case the whole lake will flood, combined with the storm surge-- *

SUSAN

Maybe now's not the best time for a science lecture.

(beat)

Unless you know how to formulate bath-tub Xanax. I would listen very intently to that presentation.

NATHAN

I think there's a bottle of gin in the cupboard.

CONNOR

What do we do if they get inside? *

NATHAN

They won't. *

CONNOR

What if they do? *

Nathan looks at Susan, overwhelmed by the questions.

SUSAN

Don't look at me, he gets that from you. Always asking questions with complicated answers.

(beat)

In fact, you two have a lot in common. Not very good listeners.

The water is now flowing in with more force. Nathan doesn't move away from the door, choosing instead to sit in the brutally cold water that pools around him.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Enamored with stupid animals.

Nathan and Connor lock eyes. In the moment, they can both see she's right. Nathan's face softens. There's an unspoken forgiveness between them, a benediction for all of the things they've said and done. *

CONNOR
So what's the complicated answer? *

NATHAN
(trying to be cheerful)
We swim away. *

Connor's ears perk up. The hum of an OUTBOARD ENGINE can be heard outside...

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - NIGHT *

GIANT TEETH WIPE ACROSS THE SCREEN

...the painted front of Reba's boat, speeding towards the cabin.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Reba COLLAPSES into the cabin, Brett a second behind her, still fazed from her knockout punch. Nathan closes the door behind them, quickly scanning for crocs outside. *

NATHAN
(not that friendly)
Reba.

REBA
(a little guilty)
Johnny Law.

Reba sets her RIFLE down by the door.

NATHAN
Nathan, actually. I would have introduced myself the last time we spoke, but you backed into my car and drove away.

REBA
I'm a shy girl.
(changing the subject)
You know you've got a bit of an
infestation out there, of a very
unusual variety.

NATHAN
(that's an understatement)
We noticed. Looks like you got hit
pretty bad.

REBA
There were four of us, the other
two...

She sees Connor, and tempers her language.

REBA (CONT'D)
They didn't fare as well. But the
crocs didn't shoot me.
(points at Brett)
That one did.

BRETT
If I had a gun, I'd do it again.
Thanks for taking us in, Nate, but
we need to get back out there. I'm
Brett, by the way.

NATHAN
(pointing)
Susan and Connor. And Reba here is
legendary in this household.

SUSAN
(to Brett)
Wait, what's out there that's worth
risking your life? We're safe in
here--

The lights DIM, then GO OUT ENTIRELY. Maybe they're not so
safe.

REBA
Having some trouble with your roof?

Nathan shoots her a look: "shut the hell up."

CLICK. A flashlight turns on, then another. Susan has one,
she hands Brett the other.

BRETT

My girlfriend is on the lake. We
were looking for her when Reba...
decided to come here instead.

*

REBA

I saved his dumbass life. Better
off behind a closed door than
running around in the dark.

BRETT

Exactly why we need to find Ellie.

*

NATHAN

The point is academic, now. No
lights and a collapsing roof means
we're no safer here than outside.

*

Connor tucks in next to Susan, afraid.

BRETT

So we get back in the boat. We
find Ellie, and we get the hell
away from this lake.

*

Reba, Nathan and Susan all consider the options. All of them
are frowning.

NATHAN

I'm sorry, Brett, but--

BRETT

No. This isn't up for debate. We
are *not leaving her*.

NATHAN

We don't know where your girlfriend
is, but my son is *right here*. I
can't risk his life to go after
her. We can get in the boat, but
we head for safety.

*

Brett steps towards the door, Reba moves to stop him, but her
leg slows her down.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Wait, we can talk about it--

BRETT

(re: Reba)

Sensible conversation didn't get me
very far with her. I'm very sorry
to do this.

He picks up Reba's RIFLE, and points it at Nathan, who is still holding the door shut.

BRETT (CONT'D)
I've already shot someone today.
Get away from the door.

SUSAN
No, Brett, please...

Slowly, delicately, Nathan eases away from the door, and water starts to flood in.

BRETT
I'll come back for you, I promise.
Once I find her.

He sloshes outside and into the boat.

Nathan struggles to close the door, but the flood of water is too great.

OUTSIDE

The two remaining smaller Crocs are waiting in the rising water. As they move towards the open door...

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

EXT. BLACK LAKE - NIGHT

Brett motors across the lake, frantically searching the shoreline with the flashlight.

BRETT
Ellie! Ellie!

*

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - SIMULTANEOUS

Ellie stumbles through the forest, in tears, unsure where she's going.

*

BRETT (O.S.)
(distant)
Ellie!

*

ELLIE
(to herself)
Brett?

*

The fire returns to Ellie's eyes. Hope.

ELLIE (CONT'D)
(screaming her head off)
Brett! Over here!

*

She starts running towards the shore, which is a ways away. She's been steering clear of it.

*

*

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - SIMULTANEOUS

Brett swings the light in the direction of her voice.

She's back towards where he came from. The Cabin.

BRETT
Son of a...

He sees the two Crocs inching their way towards the door.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Susan and Reba try to help Nathan force the door shut, but a croc JAMS itself into the frame, snapping at their arms.

(CONTINUED)

They're all forced to back away, Reba stumbling because of her injured leg.

NATHAN

Connor, get in the bathroom. Lock the door.

Connor starts to oblige him, but the croc LUNGES and strikes at Nathan's arm, tearing it open.

The other Croc, with Reba's knife STILL IN ITS HEAD, waits for its turn to get inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - SIMULTANEOUS

Brett is gunning the engine as fast as he can.

Ellie appears at the edge of the forest, waving at him.

BRETT

Get away from the water!

ELLIE

What?

Brett's anxiety goes into overdrive...

*

...because he sees the SNOUT OF THE BULL CROC, five feet away from Ellie.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Nathan falls to the ground, bleeding heavily. Connor PULLS HIM back, lugging him towards the bathroom.

SUSAN

Run, Connor!

Reba locks eyes with the knife-in-head croc, and tries to flank it. Susan heads for the kitchen, grabbing the KNIFE SET.

Connor pulls Nathan into the bathroom and shuts the door.

WE HEAR CHAOS OUTSIDE

(CONTINUED)

Snapping, hissing, slashing, splashing, and screaming.
Connor squeezes his eyes shut, as if that will stop him from
hearing the horrifying sound of his mother being killed.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - SHORE

The Bull Croc moves forward, preparing to strike at Ellie.

Brett is almost to the beach, but he doesn't slow down. He
presses the engine as fast as it will go...

BRETT
Run, Ellie!

She turns and starts to run, and everything slows down.

-- The Bull Croc lunges forward...

-- Connor squeezes his eyes shut...

-- Brett SCREAMS, but we don't hear the sound...

-- Susan slashes at an unseen croc with a butcher knife...

-- Nathan grasps at his bleeding arm, trying to staunch the
flow...

-- The TEETH on Reba's boat blow through the dark water...

... and SLAM INTO THE BULL CROC, sending Brett FLYING!

The Croc doesn't fare much better, getting its side split
open by the impact. The metal boat skids across the
Bickermans' driveway.

Ellie rushes to her boyfriend-turned-savior's broken body. *
He's able to lift himself up, but he's hurt pretty bad.

ELLIE
Brett...

BRETT
Baby. I-- I can't believe I found *
you.

ELLIE
How did you--

BRETT
--guess I'm not such a bad *
boyfriend after all. *

(CONTINUED)

ELLIE
I'm sorry for going with him, with
Aaron, he was--

BRETT
Don't be sorry. Just-- Just run.

ELLIE
What?

BRETT
I love you, Ellie. *

ELLIE
I... I love you-- *

He looks at her very seriously.

BRETT
Run. *

He forces himself up to standing, grabbing his fallen RIFLE
as he does.

When he's standing, we REVEAL the BULL CROC - also overcoming
its injuries. It HUFFS loudly.

ELLIE
No, you've got to-- *

Brett FIRES his rifle into the Bull Croc's face.

Ellie's heart skips a beat. She takes two steps backwards.

Brett FIRES again.

Ellie, devastated, turns and RUNS, unable to watch as the
Bull lashes out. It grabs Brett by the leg, and DEVOURS HIM.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN CABIN - SIMULTANEOUS

Unable to stand the sounds, Connor pushes open the bathroom
door. When he steps out, he sees an incredible sight.

SUSAN, HOLDING UP THE HEAD OF A DEAD CROCODILE, BUTCHER KNIFE
IN HER HAND.

Behind her, Reba isn't doing as well. The knife-in-head croc
SNAPS at her, then turns tail and slips into the water.

(CONTINUED)

NATHAN

The boat. It's right outside.

Nathan's stumbled out of the bathroom, a t-shirt wrapped around his bloody arm. Susan looks at him warily.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

We'll never get this lucky again.
It's our only shot.

Reba nods, and the group hurries out the door.

Susan stops, remembering something. She reaches into the trash can and pulls the FAMILY PHOTO out of its broken frame, ignoring the manuscript.

EXT. BICKERMAN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

As Nathan, Susan, Connor and Reba run towards the boat, Ellie runs from the other direction.

Nathan recognizes her.

NATHAN

Ellie!

ELLIE

It's right behind me, it got-- It
killed-- It killed him!

*
*

NATHAN

Brett? You're Brett's girlfriend?

*

SUSAN

Talk later, flip the boat now.

They heft the boat over, dumping as much water as they can out of it.

REBA

Hopefully the engine works.

They all pile in, and Reba slams it into gear, primes the engine, and PULLS THE CORD.

Nothing.

NATHAN

Come on, crank it!

She pulls the cord again. Nothing.

REBA

Aaaaaah!

With her good foot, she KICKS THE ENGINE, which sputters to life, and they motor away.

Nathan, Susan and Connor sit at the back of the boat, watching the Cabin recede into the distance.

ELLIE

Where do we go now?

NATHAN

Some place near the river, with doors that lock.

Susan looks down at the family photo, and something clicks in Susan's brain.

SUSAN

I think I know a place.

HIGH ANGLE, OVERLOOKING THE BOAT

The dark figure of the Bull Croc swims under the surface behind them.

Stalking them.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER - SHORE - NIGHT

Suddenly, everything is quiet. The survivors: Nathan, Susan, Connor, Reba and Ellie, pile out of the boat at the river's edge. It's not raining here, and they're able to catch their breath for a moment.

NATHAN

I think we're safe.

Connor scoffs.

CONNOR

You never say that! We're all gonna get swallowed alive, and it's because you had to say that we're safe. Watch a movie!

Susan swings her flashlight across the water behind them.

A large pair of EYES lights up. The tension snaps back into the group.

(CONTINUED)

NATHAN

Go.

They scramble up the embankment, and there it is:

EXT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

The scene of Connor's crime.

They stand outside the front door of the store, as Susan shakes the door handle with no effect.

Reba looks like hell. She's lost a lot of blood, and it shows.

SUSAN

Dammit.

ELLIE

Let's go to another store.

SUSAN

(re: Reba)

She's not gonna make it to the next store.

Before they can argue, Nathan picks up a SHOPPING CART and SMASHES IT through the window.

NATHAN

(to Susan)

After you.

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

They walk cautiously through the pristine aisles.

SUSAN

I'll try the phones.

She goes to a cash register and picks one up.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

It's dead.

As she sets the phone down, we see a red ALARM LIGHT flashing under the counter.

IN THE BACK OF THE STORE

Connor finds himself by the meat section. Ahh...memories.
He walks away swiftly.

CUT TO:

EXT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

A PICKUP TRUCK (the same one from the teaser) pulls up
outside the store. The store's OWNER steps out.

OWNER

(into cell phone)

I just got here. They smashed in
the front windows. I'll have to
lay off a few of the migrants to
pay for this. Well, I don't have
to, but I'm going to.

He's a douche. We hate him. So does Connor, and his disgust
is clear when he SEES HIM through the shattered glass.

They have a moment.

The Owner sneers.

...and is BLINDSIDED by the Bull Croc, his torso ripped off
so quickly that his legs take a second to fall over.

INT. GROCERY STORE - CONTINUOUS

The Bull Croc SQUEEZES its way through the broken windows,
TEARING UP displays and cash registers.

The knife-in-head Croc scrambles up the bigger croc's back,
and LEAPS into the store.

The survivors race to the back.

NATHAN

They've got us pinned back here.
Maybe this wasn't such a great plan
after all.

SUSAN

Our other plans have worked out so
well...

As the Bull Croc blows through the store, heading straight
for them...

SMASH TO BLACK.

(CONTINUED)

END OF ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

The survivors SCATTER, and the Bull Croc smashes into the back wall, broken glass flying everywhere.

ANGLE ON CONNOR

Who is being chased by the head-in-knife croc down one of the aisles. He turns a corner and falls, and the croc is on him. He's dragged backwards, flipped over, and the croc BITES INTO HIM.

ANGLE ON SUSAN

Horrified, she THROWS HERSELF onto the croc, but is immediately thrown off.

ANGLE ON NATHAN

Who smashes on the locked EMERGENCY EXIT. The Bull Croc moves towards him, toppling a wall of cereal boxes on Nathan's head.

ANGLE ON REBA

Delirious, who sees her last chance at glory. She PLOWS INTO the knife-in-head croc, using her inertia to rip the knife out of its head, and she STABS IT IN THE NECK.

It lets go of Connor, and instead BITES REBA IN THE NECK, spraying blood on everything around her. Susan grabs Connor and pulls him away.

ANGLE ON ELLIE

Who tries to help Nathan out from under the mountain of shit that collapsed on him. She narrowly avoids getting BITTEN by the Bull Croc. She sees the EMERGENCY EXIT DOOR SWITCH on the wall, but she'll have to run in front of the Bull to get to it.

Thinking fast, she picks up a tub of ICE CREAM and HURLS it at the switch, which unlocks the emergency exit.

NATHAN

Susan! The emergency exit!

ANGLE ON SUSAN

Who runs with Connor towards the Emergency Exit.

(CONTINUED)

ANGLE ON REBA

Who, despite having her own neck in a death grip, is still stabbing the crocodile in its neck.

ANGLE ON THE BULL CROC

Which LUNGES AT ELLIE. She ducks out the exit just in time.

ANGLE ON REBA

As the croc SNAPS HER NECK. It takes a few steps away, then collapses as well, dead.

AT THE EXIT DOOR

The Bull tries to fit its jaws through the emergency exit, distracting it for long enough to allow the Bickerman family to high-tail it to the front.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

The family funnels out the front door to find Ellie already waiting by the Owner's truck.

NATHAN

Keys in the ignition?

ELLIE

No. Do you know how to hot-wire--

NATHAN

I'm a zoologist.

ELLIE

Where's Reba?

Susan shakes her head.

SUSAN

She's not coming. We need to run.

INSIDE

The Bull pulls its jaws out of the emergency exit and heads for the front.

OUTSIDE

Connor walks over to the Owner's severed legs, and with a look of supreme disgust on his face, reaches into the dead guy's pocket.

SUSAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Connor, let's go! Hurry!

He pulls out the guy's KEYS and throws them to Nathan.

NATHAN
First time I've been glad you stole
from him.

They climb into the truck just as the Bull BURSTS outside,
throttling towards them.

INSIDE THE TRUCK

Nathan hits the gas, and the tires SQUEAL.

OUTSIDE

The Croc chases after the moving vehicle, BITING into one of
its rear tires, which BLOWS OUT.

INSIDE

Nathan struggles to maintain control, but can't. The truck
SWERVES...

SMASH TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

ON NATHAN'S FACE.

He's coming to, after having crashed the truck.

Shell-shocked, all he hears is BUZZING.

He pushes open the door, finds himself outside...

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

The truck is crashed into one of the pumps. It's not driving
anywhere. The Bull Croc is lumbering slowly towards them.

Nathan looks into the croc's eyes. It knows it's won.

Susan and Connor get out of the truck, Susan pulling Ellie's
unconscious mass after her.

We still only hear BUZZING.

Susan mouths some panicked words at Nathan.

Connor looks at his dad's hopeless face. He knows it's over.

(CONTINUED)

He fishes into his pocket, pulls out the LEASH - tosses it on the ground. Reaches in again, and pulls out the CIGARETTE LIGHTER he took from the grocery store. *

Nathan sees it in his hand, and SCREAMS over the ringing in his ears:

NATHAN
Don't wait for me!

Nathan grabs the lighter from Connor's hand, and heads to the gas pump. *

As the BUZZING subsides, we hear Nathan clicking through the gas pump's menu. Shit. He's going to have to pay for it.

Susan, Connor and Ellie flee to a safe distance.

Nathan swipes his credit card. Doesn't go through.

The Bull Croc steps closer.

He SWIPES IT AGAIN. DING!

"PLEASE ENTER YOUR 5 DIGIT ZIP CODE"

He types furiously on the pad.

The Bull Croc knocks aside the truck, then gets a FACE FULL of GASOLINE. It tries to shake the gas out of its eyes, but can't. It LUNGES FORWARD, CRUSHING NATHAN'S HAND.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Ahhhhh!

...but it also just ate the fuel nozzle. GAS SPILLS OUT of the croc's mouth, and Nathan PULLS HIS HAND AWAY.

-- NATHAN RUNS

-- THE CROC FOLLOWS, stripping the gas hose from the pump

-- NATHAN FLICKS THE LIGHTER *

-- THE CROC OPENS ITS ENORMOUS JAWS

... and Nathan throws it. The lighter nearly goes out as it flips end over end, but it finally reaches its mark. *

THE BULL CROC EXPLODES INTO A WALL OF RED VISCERA.

CONTINUED: (2)

Nathan, Susan, and Connor stare at the disturbing sight, disgusted and relieved in equal measures. Ellie slumps to the ground, passed out.

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - DAWN

Ellie is loaded onto a stretcher and carted into an AMBULANCE.

Connor, wearing a BLANKET around his shoulders, is still shell-shocked from the events of the night.

NATHAN (PRELAP)

I would like to present to you today an extraordinary case.

An EMT tends to Nathan's wounds. Looks like he may lose a few fingers.

NATHAN (PRELAP) (CONT'D)

Proof that no matter what we think, we are not in control. We're not in control of our jobs, we're not in control of our children.

Susan brings a cup of HOT CHOCOLATE to Connor.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

And we are certainly not in control of our planet.

Nathan joins Susan and Connor. The family reunited.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - COVE - DAY

Connor walks cautiously out to the cove, this time, with Nathan in tow.

He points to where he first fed the crocodiles. They talk, but we don't hear them.

NATHAN (PRELAP)

There are no rules of nature. No system that we can catalogue and analyze that will predict what animals will do, or where they'll go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Connor kneels down. He sees something - a BABY CROCODILE.
One, lone remnant of the mighty family.

Without even looking at Nathan, he STOMPS ON IT.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Nathan stands in front of a group of COLLEGE STUDENTS. ELLIE
is among them.

NATHAN

So with that out of the way, let me
regale you with the story of a
unique species. The Maine River
Crocodile. And for the record,
it's extinct.

The class LAUGHS.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The day after we last saw him, Aaron stumbles through the
forest, completely lost. He's starving, thirsty, and
desperate.

*

OUR POV SUDDENLY SHOOTS TOWARDS HIM

...and the last thing we see are JAWS SMASHING SHUT.

THE END