LAKE PLACID

Written by
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Full Pink Draft

OVER BLACK we HEAR the distant but near melodic CRY of a LOON.

SLOWLY FADE IN TO:

EXT. BLACK LAKE - NIGHT

The loon continues its hypnotic call, as the steamy mist lifts off the dark water, which doesn't even ripple. The loon continues her nocturnal cry, as we savor the beauty of the lake, the elegance of the bird, and the haunting echo of her lonely call... until suddenly the bird is crisply pulled under, silenced forever. A lone feather surfaces and floats as:

Credits roll over the black lake to Richie Havens singing "I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW." Then--

OVER BLACK

KEOUGH (O.S.)
And they pay you for this? To tag beaver?

WALT (O.S.)
Imagine.

As we FADE IN a face COMES INTO FOCUS from underwater. It is the face of WALT LAWSON (Maine Fish And Game) looking down from a boat.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Next to him is SHERIFF HANK KEOUGH, paunch, disposition of an untipped waiter.

KEOUGH
Ask me, what an animal does in the wild is his own business so long as he doesn't do it to man. I think Mark Twain said that.

WALT
I think he didn't. But since you've said it, I guess we're covered.

Keough holds a stare. Walt drops overboard. Keough pulls a Twinkie from his pocket. Begins to unwrap.

EXT. NEW YORK - MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

FIND KELLY SCOTT, pretty, thirty, as KEVIN CAMPBELL, forties, approaches.

KEVIN
Kelly.

KELLY (warmly)
Kevin, hey.

She beams affection, he exudes a little discomfort.

KEVIN
Hi. Listen. Could I steal you a second?

KELLY (great idea)
Absolutely.

INT. KEVIN'S OFFICE - DAY

They enter ON THE CUT, he closes the door.

KEVIN
I had a great time last night. Again.

KELLY
Me too.

Reading his look, she suddenly smells it. Her face drops.

KELLY (CONT'D) (deducing)
That's not what you came to say.

KEVIN
You work for me. I'm not comfortable with-- y'know, "us"...

She's a little crushed.
KELLY
I was working for you when "us" started, what's--

KEVIN
I know and I thought I could handle it but work and pleasure along with somebody else, it's a dangerous mix.

KELLY
Kevin, as long as we...
(suddenly)
What was that last part?

KEVIN
(sheepish)
The somebody else part?

KELLY
Yeah, that part. There's... somebody who's um...

KEVIN
(feels terrible)
Else.

A beat.

KELLY
(covering)
Oh. Oh. That's okay. Well. This uh... this probably wasn't meant to be, y'know. I mean, I'm... God, I gotta be ten years younger and you, you... you're y'know...

KEVIN
(reading her mind)
A jerk.

KELLY
(you have no idea)
Oh...

(then)
No, no, I'm not angry I'm not, I'm just thrown, I'm...
(checks her watch)
I actually have an early lunch, so...

KEVIN
It's ten after nine.

KELLY
Yes, well...
(smiling)

famished.

And she rushes out of the room. OFF Kevin, we:

CUT TO:

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Walt dives down, visibility is lousy. Whether it's algae or dense vegetation, the water is extremely murky.

EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Keough unwraps the second Twinkie.

EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Walt continues to swim.

HIS P.O.V.

Not much to look at. Then suddenly... no, just a snapping turtle swimming away. Walt descends a little deeper. He loves it beneath the water, there's a tranquility he can find nowhere else. Next best thing to meditation. Suddenly, he stops kicking.

HIS EYES FOCUS

A black water snake, it must be almost three feet in length.

RESUME

Walt flippers himself closer, wants a closer look. The snake seems unimpressed. Then suddenly, the snake lunges at him, misses. Shit. Walt's look says "what the fuck?" A beat. Then the snake swims off. Walt relaxes. A beat. But then... he looks around, uneasy. He gets this feeling he's not alone down there. Looks about, nothing but murky water. But he's not alone, we can feel he's not alone.

He looks left, right... then... four snakes, swimming, hovering, looking back at him. What's with these snakes? Walt decides he'll go back to the boat. Then... BOOM. Something hits him... and it's no snake.

EXT. BOAT - CONTINUOUS

Keough. Oblivious. Waiting. Suddenly-- Walt comes thrusting up with a scream!

WALT

Sheriff!!
And Walt is promptly yanked back under.

**KEOUGH**

Hey!

Upon which Walt surfaces. He swims frantically for a beat before he's suddenly yanked under again. Then he surfaces, thrashing as Keough speeds over with the boat. He takes hold of him and pulls him on board. Actually... what's left of him. There's nothing below the waist. Walt is just a bleeding torso, though still conscious.

**KEOUGH (CONT'D)**

(going into shock)

Jesus Christ.

**ANGLE WALT'S REMAINING HAND**

clenching around Keough's arm.

**ANGLE WALT'S FACE**

He knows he's done. OFF Keough's continued horror, we:

**CUT TO:**

**BLACK AND WHITE**

A DINOSAUR (T-Rex) is angry and out for blood.

**REVEAL**

**INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY**

We're watching an old classic creature feature. FIND Kelly alone, slowly eating popcorn, rapt, tense... watching the movie. As the suspense builds, her hand freezes halfway between the popcorn bag and her mouth.

**ANGLE THE SCREEN**

The monster pursues its human victim.

**ANGLE KELLY**

fear on her face.

**ANGLE THE SCREEN**

The monster makes its final surge, capturing its prey.

**ANGLE KELLY**

as she screams with fear and delight. Her scream is only partially muted by the shrieks of the other moviegoers.
After a beat, she calms, daring to eat popcorn again. Wearing gullibility, vulnerability all over her face. Then from behind a hand appears, taps her shoulder, causing her to let loose with the most blood-curdling scream of all.

All the moviegoers turn to see... as will we:

MYRA OKUBO

Thirties, standing mortified; the woman who tapped her shoulder.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Kelly and Okubo emerge from the movie theater.

KELLY
What do you expect, mugging me from behind?

OKUBO
I tapped you.

KELLY
Well you shouldn't have. How did you even know where I was.

OKUBO
(sarcastic)
Wild guess.

KELLY
I don't like to be scared, Myra, I have a thing about fright, don't ever scare me.

OKUBO
Kevin told me you were upset.

KELLY
Really? I never realized he was so psychic, how could he detect that, did he tell you there's somebody else?

OKUBO
(sheepish)
Well... he didn't have to tell me that part.

Kelly freezes. Stares at her. Then:

KELLY
You?
OKUBO
It started before you, Kelly, I never would've--

KELLY
You?

OKUBO
It was just a quick thing which we thought was over, and and...

KELLY
You and Kevin.

OKUBO
It wasn't suppose to happen, I don't know what to say...

A beat.

KELLY
You don't know what to say, lucky for you action speaks louder than words.

OKUBO
Kelly--

KELLY
I'm not upset, Myra, okay. I just never thought of you as a y'know...

OKUBO
Backstabber?

KELLY
(don't be silly)
No.

OKUBO
Liar?

KELLY
(c'mon)
Myra.

OKUBO
Shitbutt?

KELLY
I really... I should get back.

And Kelly peels off to go on her way. Bumps into a Pedestrian. She then gives him an angry shove, under--

KELLY (CONT'D)
(to the pedestrian)
Don't fuck with me!

And off she goes. The Pedestrian and Okubo exchange a look.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Coroner's ambulance. Walt's covered body is being loaded, as JACK WELLS, Fish and Game, thirty, emerges from his truck. He approaches the body. Lifts up the sheet. Stares a beat in disbelief. Turns to Keough.

JACK
What did this?

OFF Keough, we:

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

Kelly's in her office, working at her desk. Kevin enters.

KEVIN
Hey.

KELLY
Kevin. How's it going, what's happenin', family good, great, nice to catch up, get out.

KEVIN
This is business.

(then)
There was an accident in Maine, some guy got killed by something in a lake. Probably a bear, but... they found a tooth.

KELLY
A tooth?

KEVIN
A tooth they say couldn't have come from any bear. They say it looks prehistoric. Like maybe a dinosaur.

KELLY
(without looking up)
Oh, well then I'm sure that's it, he got killed by a dinosaur, anything else?
KEVIN
I want you to go there.

Now she looks up.

KELLY
Sorry?

KEVIN
I'm sure it's nothing, but you're a paleontologist, this is what we do, I--

KELLY
This is what we do?

KEVIN
I'd like you to check out this lake. See--

KELLY
Are you on drugs?

KEVIN
Kelly--

KELLY
I'm not going to Maine, I won't even go west of Forty-third Street--

KEVIN
Part of our research--

KELLY
I'm not even a field person.

KEVIN
Well on this one I'd like you to be.

Kelly stares back. The nickle drops.

KELLY
This was Myra's idea, wasn't it? Get me out of the office for a few days, until--

KEVIN
It has nothing to do with--

KELLY
I never do field work and even if I did, Maine, to look at a tooth of a dinosaur who bit somebody, couldn't you dream up something--
KEVIN
Kelly--

KELLY
I am not going to Maine. That's ridiculous.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAINE SKIES - DAY
A sea helicopter is sailing up against the blue sky, nothing but Evergreens and lakes below.

INT. HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS
Kelly with the Pilot. She looks a little white.

INT. JACKSON HOSPITAL - DAY
Kelly is walking with Keough toward the morgue.

KEOUGH
He just came up screaming.

KELLY
Did he say anything?

KEOUGH
He just kinda gurgled. He was pretty much dead.

KELLY
And you didn't see anything?

KEOUGH
The lake was dead calm until up he came. The tooth is in there.

KELLY
(seeing)
There? That's the morgue.

KEOUGH
Yes.

KELLY
Is the dead guy in there?

KEOUGH
That's where they keep them.

(then)
You want me to bring the tooth out here?
CLOSE ON THE TOOTH

Reveal--

INT. MORGUE - DAY

The Medical Examiner, STEVEN DANIELS, is there with Keough and kelly. Walt's torso is covered. Kelly is examining the tooth.

Kelly
I need to get a microscopic look at it.

Daniel
Fine.
(indicating)
There you go.

Kelly
Maybe I should see...
(the body)

Keough
(reading her)
I wouldn't.

Kelly
I'm fine, thank you.

Keough
Have you ever seen a dead body before, Ms. Scott?

Kelly
Well.
(admits)
At wakes.

Keough
This is a little different.

Kelly
I can look at dead things.

And Daniels is about to pull the sheet back--

Kelly (cont'd)
Wait.

She takes a breath.
KELLY (CONT'D)
Okay.

And Daniels peels back the sheet. Kelly strains to disguise her extreme horror. Finally--

KELLY (CONT'D)
(fighting off nausea)
This... how long did this attack go on for?

KEOUGH
Seconds. Three, four.

KELLY
And this is how he came to the boat?

KEOUGH
Yes.

KELLY
Okay.
(them)
And is there a place nearby I could go to vomit?

OFF this, we:

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIGO MAINE - DAY

It's a small, almost tiny town; general store, post office, fire station. Kelly and Keough are in front of the general store loading supplies into a van, across the street in front of the Sheriff's Department.

KEOUGH
Nobody lives within twenty-five miles, 'cept some old couple who live right on the lake. Teenagers trek in every once in a while, none have disappeared, and none have spotted anything unusual.

KELLY
You talk to the married couple?

KEOUGH
Not yet.

KELLY
What kind of backup do we have?
KEOUGH

We?

That strikes a nerve.

KELLY
(defensive)
What?

KEOUGH
Sorry. I'm just a little unclear as to why the Museum of Natural History would send somebody here.

KELLY
You have a thing against museums?

KEOUGH
I got nothing against--

KELLY
Ever even been in one?

He stares back. Then picks up a huge cannon-like gun. As he loads it--

KELLY
What is that?

KEOUGH
Lightweight Forward Area air device unit. Whatever's out there, one shot with this and he's dead.

KELLY
(incredulous)
And you stock these things for what, to fend off Russia?

A beat.

KEOUGH
You're sort of a rude person.

KELLY
It's just that--

Suddenly, like a shot, Kelly's arm jerks up as she jet sprays a white fog from a can of Yard Guard. Keough holds a look at her.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Mosquitos. I have a thing about mosquitos.

Upon which a sport utility vehicle pulls up, it's marked "Maine Fish And Game". Jack Wells emerges, Kelly's eyes scan him like radar.
JACK
We set?

KEOUGH
Ready.
(re Kelly; dry)
A museum in New York sent us some additional back up.
Kelly shoots Keough a look. Then:

KELLY
Kelly Scott.

JACK
Jack Wells. A museum sent you?

KELLY
Are we all museum bigots in Maine?
Jack holds a look, decides to let that pass.

JACK
Did you make anything of the tooth?

KELLY
Yes, it did seem prehistoric but I'm sure he just carried the thing for luck. Not that it worked, obviously. It probably somehow got lodged into his body.
Jack holds another look.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Why are you staring at me?
(to Keough)
Do I have a smudge on my face, it would be so you not to have told me.

Keough also lets that pass.

KEOUGH
(to Jack)
I'm ready when you are.

JACK
Let's go.
As they start out, Kelly grabs Jack by the arm.

KELLY
Excuse me. One other thing, it's a small point, but... I have a thing about being humored, and I'm
feeling humored, more by him, but you seemed quick to join in.

JACK
Ma'am, your first impression isn't going well.

As JANINE POST, sixteen, flirtatious little vixen, steps up.

JANINE
Excuse me? Is it true you're going to look for some kind of monster in Black Lake?

KEOUGH
We're just going to investigate an accident. There's no monster.

JANINE
We heard a man got bit in half.

KEOUGH
There was an accident, that's all. Nothing to worry about.

And Janine goes into the store. The men just watch her go. Sixteen going on twenty, nubile. Kelly just looks at the men, gaping at the girl.

KELLY
Please.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Keough, Jack, and Kelly are in a boat motoring towards a farmhouse. No other houses in sight.

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Jack, Kelly and Keough are questioning DELORES BICKERMAN, mid-sixties, eccentric if not slightly daffy. She's brought out refreshments.

BICKERMAN
Oh, my husband passed away almost two years ago.

KEOUGH
My department doesn't have any record of that, Mrs. Bickerman.

BICKERMAN
(with some attitude)
Oh well, I'm sorry. I didn't realize you keep such a firm track of the dead.

KELLY
(gently)
What was the cause of your husband's death, Ma'am, do you know?

Off Bickerman's silence--

KELLY (CONT'D)
We don't mean to invade your privacy but... was he ill, was he sick?

KEOUGH
Was he swallowed?

KELLY
(reprimanding)
Sheriff.

JACK
Mrs. Bickerman, the reason we're up here... a man was fatally attacked yesterday by some animal in this lake. Do you know how your husband died?

BICKERMAN
(brightly)
Oh yes. I killed him.

Keough clenches his eyes shut. The old woman's a loon.

JACK
You killed him.

BICKERMAN
(happily)
Oh, yes.

KEOUGH
And how would you have accomplished this, Ma'am?

BICKERMAN
(rattling it off quickly, simply)
Well, he was very ill and he refused to go see a doctor and well... I think he had Alzheimer's, he would be coherent one day, incoherent the next and one coherent day, he asked me to end
his suffering. I wouldn't do it but he kept insisting and insisting and deteriorating till the point the only cognitive thing he could really do was that I finish him off. Finally I just gave in and hit him on the head with a skillet then buried him under the bulkhead.

Jack, Keough, and Kelly just stare back at this crazy woman. Off their looks--

BICKERMAN (CONT'D)
(to Keough)
Dig him up if you don't believe me, Javert.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Keough and Kelly are in the boat slowly traveling along the thickly wooded shoreline.

KEOUGH
Half mile up, there's a clearing.

JACK
You gonna dig up that lady's husband?

KEOUGH
I'll call the coroner.

KELLY
(looking around)
What is with this lake? It looks black and... there are no waves or anything.

KEOUGH
They wanted to call it Lake Placid. But somebody said that name was taken.

KELLY
(to Jack)
Gee.

Jack smiles, gets her sarcasm.

KEOUGH
The tents were sent ahead, they should already be set-up.

KELLY
(what?)
We're staying in tents?

KEOUGH
I told you. Two days, we'd have to camp.

KELLY
Yes, camp, I thought that meant Holiday Inn, I never heard "tents", will there be toilets?

KEOUGH
(seeing something)
What the hell?

Keough's attention has been otherwise arrested. He sees something in the water.

KELLY
What?

KEOUGH
(slowing the boat)
I thought I saw...

KELLY
It looks like a branch.

He leans over to grab something floating in the water. Looks like a branch. He lifts it up, revealing it to be an antler. Connected to the severed head of a moose. Keough, seeing it as he lifts it, screams, throwing it.

It hits Kelly and she screams, a blood-curdling scream, as the HEAD hits the floor of the boat with a HEAVY THUD. Kelly rears back, still screaming, and belts Keough in the shoulder.

KEOUGH
Hey!!

KELLY
You threw it at me!!

KEOUGH
(denying)
I just let go of it.

KELLY
You threw it at me!!

JACK
Alright.

(to Jack)
Did you see that?

She belts him again.

KEOUGH
Stop hitting me!

JACK (CONT'D)
Ma'am!
KELLY
Don't throw heads at me,
(to Jack)
and stop calling me "Ma'am"!

ANGLE THE HEAD

RESUME

A beat. This head looks ripped off the body.

JACK
What is going on here?

EXT. BEACHSIDE CAMPSITE - AN HOUR LATER

A small tent camp is being set up. People unpacking. Two Deputies, BURKE and STEPHENS, present. Kelly is with Jack.

KELLY
How big do the bears get?

JACK
Big but... a bear couldn't do that to a moose or man in water. On land maybe. But...

KELLY
And they're sure he didn't get tangled under the outboard somehow?

JACK
Hank says he's sure.

Kelly takes in the scenic surroundings.

KELLY
It really is beautiful, isn't it?

JACK
Never been to Maine before?

KELLY
I was told they discriminate against people with hygiene.
(off Jack)
I never believed it.

He measure her. Then--

JACK
Why are you here? Really.

KELLY
I told you.
JACK
The Museum of Natural History
doesn't send out investigators to--

KELLY
How would you know, what--

JACK
And even if they did, I doubt he or
she would have problems with tents.

KELLY
So I don't like tents, why--

JACK
You don't like tents, mosquitos,
look at your fingernails, you have
about as much business being in the
woods--

KELLY                      JACK (CONT'D)
What's wrong with my        --as Emily Post, it doesn't
fingernails these are      make sense--
perfectly good--

JACK (CONT'D)
(overriding)
They sent you out to examine a tooth,
why are you out here on the on the lake?

A beat. Might as well tell.

KELLY
I am a paleontologist.
(throwing it out)
I also was dating my boss he turned
out to be involved with a co-worker
who was also my friend and for the
sake of comfort, theirs, I was
shipped off to Maine.
(then)
I don't feel like going back yet.

There. She said it. He stares back.

KELLY (CONT'D)
I'm not making it up.

JACK
Well. You don't have to stay out
here, why don't--

KELLY
I've come, I'm here, I'm staying.
Unless there are ticks.
We then HEAR the SOUND OF A DESCENDING HELICOPTER. She looks up. Then:

**KELLY (CONT'D)**

Oh my God.

**JACK**

What?

**KELLY**

If this is who I think it is.

(as it gets closer)

It is.

**JACK**

Who?

**KELLY**

Hector Cyr. He's a rich kook mythology professor. He's done some work with our museum. He also treks the world to swim with crocodiles.

**KEOUGH**

(arriving)

With what?

**KELLY**

Crocodiles. He's an expert on them. And if he's here... then he must think that's what's in this lake.

**JACK**

In Maine?

**KELLY**

There have been Northern sightings. But not this North.

As HECTOR CYR, this giant ball of life, deboards his chopper--

**HECTOR**

(spotting Kelly; disappointed)

You beat me. Balls.

(then)

I need some of you to help me unpack.

(to Burke and Stevens)

You and you.

(to Keough)

Not you.

(to Kelly)

Who do we have from Fish And Game?
KEOUGH                      JACK
(to Kelly)                 Me.
Who is this man?

HECTOR
(rapid fire)
I could see the algae blooms just coming in, how long has this lake been stagnant?
(extend his hand to Keough)
Hi, Hector Cyr. The Earth is round and so should you be.

KEOUGH
(to Kelly)
--Who is he?

HECTOR
I'll need any and all topographic studies.

KEOUGH
Wait just a second. You don't just fly in here and start barking orders.

HECTOR
I apologize, I just don't want to lose the light, we've got time for a quick scout, (to Kelly)
you've had work done.

KELLY                KEOUGH
(flaring)             (frustrated)
I have not.           Who is this man?

HECTOR
Hector Cyr, I said it once, let me know when it sinks in, (to Kelly)
have you seen it?

KELLY                      KEOUGH (CONT'D)
No.                      Mister...

KELLY (CONT'D)
It couldn't be a crocodile.

HECTOR
They've been migrating north, Kelly, this lake connects to the ocean,--

KEOUGH
(frustrated)
Mr. Cyr!

HECTOR
C'mon, we're losing light,
(to Kelly)
why does the big one heckle me?

Kelly yanks him aside.

KELLY
(sotto)
Hector. The big one has no sense
of humor. And since he's the one
who decides whether you get to
play, try not to be your obnoxious
self.

HECTOR
That hurt my feelings.

And it did a little. Hector is a big Teddy Bear.

JACK
(arriving)
If we're gonna go we better go.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - SUNSET

Keough and Kelly are in one canoe, Hector and Jack are alongside
in another. Hector is operating one of his sophisticated sonar
devices. The calm. The still. The beauty.

HECTOR
If he's here, I'll find him.
(to Jack, re Kelly)
Did she tell you we had sex
together?

KELLY
I never had sex with you!

HECTOR
Even so, you're allowed to boast.
You look thin by the way, I've
mentally undressed you, I can see
your ribcage.

KEOUGH
I really don't mean to be
discourteous.
(patronizing)
But how is it a person could come
to believe that a crocodile is in
New England?
HECTOR
They have saltwater glands, they can swim across oceans, it's only a matter of time.

KEOUGH
And what would he do come winter?

HECTOR
They can survive winter. As long as their nostrils don't freeze, they survive,
(to Kelly)
am I foolish to explain things, he had such trouble with my name?

KELLY       KEOUGH
(scolding)   Hey.
Hector.

HECTOR
(to Keough)
Is this where it happened?

KEOUGH
Around here. Yeah.

HECTOR
(knows his crocodiles)
If he's eaten in the area, he shouldn't be far away. Crocs hang around the food source.

KELLY
But they're nighttime hunters, Hector, he'd probably be on land now anyway.

HECTOR
'Cept he wasn't before, was he?
(then to Keough)
You know, when friends or family members say things, they tend not to register so sometimes it helps to hear it from a total stranger. You're fat.

KELLY
Hector.

Suddenly there are ripples, fish breaking surface about thirty feet away.

JACK
What's that?
KEOUGH
White perch.

JACK
Are they feeding?

KEOUGH
Doesn't look like it.

JACK
They look like they're jumping.

KELLY
They look scared.

Upon which something grabs the front of Kelly's canoe and with one crisp yank, flips it over like a spoon on a dinner table, sending them all flying.

In an instant, Keough and Kelly are swimming for their lives. Screaming/yelling, they scramble for the canoe, climb onto it's flipped-over back. Breathless, they all exchange confused looks. "What the hell happened"?

KELLY (CONT'D)
My hair.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - SUNDOWN

Kelly, still in wet clothes, is talking on her portable phone. Keough is there as Hector approaches. Jack is approaching as well. Activity bustles in the b.g.

KELLY
(into her phone)
None of us actually saw anything.

(then)
I realize this Sir, but something flipped us over, I doubt very much it was a mink.

HECTOR
What's going on?

KEOUGH
They don't believe her.

KELLY
(still into phone)
Thank you, it's so rewarding to imagine my tax dollar finding its way to you, you Fucker.

(she clicks off)
HECTOR
Such the flirt.

KELLY
U.S. Wildlife won't send anybody without a confirmation.

JACK
Same thing from Fish And Game.

KELLY
Something's in that water.

JACK
Well until we see it, we're not gonna be convincing too many people.

As DEPUTY SHARON GARE approaches--

GARE (O.S.)
(calling)
Sheriff.

Keough looks over.

GARE
(pointing to the ground)
You might want to see this.

They all walk over.

ANGLE THE GROUND
There's hundreds, maybe a thousand worms squirming, surrounding... a human toe.

KELLY (O.S.)
Oh God, worms. I got a thing about worms.

RESUME

GARE
It's a human toe.

Hector studies it, picks it up. Then--

HECTOR
Some decomposition, little acidic, it has been swallowed.
(to Keough; holding the toe)
Is this the man who was killed?

Keough deadpans back. Then--
KEOUGH
We'd only just met.

HECTOR
Well, you've got a croc alright, they're keystone species.

KEOUGH
Keystone what?

HECTOR
Species, keystones affect the entire ecosystem, that could explain all these worms, the water. You've got a crocodile.
(proffering the toe)
Bury your friend.

Hector gives the toe to Keough, then heads off. Keough stands there, holding the tow, as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Kelly is testing a MACHINE that sends out little SQUEAKY SOUNDS, as Jack approaches. He stops. Takes a second to... well, admire her. She's an attractive woman. He then approaches.

JACK
Baby crocs?

KELLY
Adult males will charge hatchlings. If there's one out there...

JACK
If one could be out there... why does Fish And Game tell me it's impossible?

KELLY
Because they just consult their little indigenous charts.

A beat, as she tends to her work.

JACK
Listen... if you really do know crocs, you should know how stealth like they are. I wouldn't be standing a foot from the water.

She looks.

JACK (CONT'D)
He could be right there and you wouldn't see him.

KELLY
(still looking at the water)
I'd be able to see something.

Upon which, Jack tosses a rock over her shoulder. As it makes a splash, she screams and practically jumps into his arms. Then:

KELLY (CONT'D)
(realizing)
Oh that's funny. That was real funny.

And she heads off. OFF Jack, we:

CUT TO:

EXT. HECTOR'S TENT - NIGHT

Two deputies are digging deep pits about thirty feet in front of his tent. From within we HEAR MUSIC, the SOUNDS of a PARTY. Keough approaches... looks at Deputy Burke, who's digging.

BURKE
(shrugs)
He paid us. Five hundred.

Keough continues on toward the tent.

INT. HECTOR'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

His tent is on the palatial side. Stereo, generator, he's got a margarita bar going. There's a party. Hector's dancing with Deputy Gare, others are enjoying the drinks and MUSIC.

HECTOR
You're a beautiful woman.

GARE
Thank you.

HECTOR
And law enforcement, such dangerous work. The idea that you could die suddenly with no offspring, disconcerting, let's mate, commit your genes to perpetuity.

Upon which, Keough enters, doesn't like what he sees.

KEOUGH
Hey.

He goes, turns OFF the MUSIC.

KEOUGH
We are here on official business.

HECTOR
Cocktail?

KEOUGH
No!!

(then)
What's with digging the holes?

HECTOR
They come on land and they're brazen. They're also attracted to noise, you can see I make a lot of it.

KEOUGH
Everybody out, back to your tents, now!

They start to leave.

HECTOR
(re Gare)
Could she stay, we've tentatively scheduled intercourse.

KEOUGH
No!! Out!

And they all go, including Gare, who shrugs to Keough "he's kind of funny".

KEOUGH (CONT'D)
(to Hector)
You listen to me. The only reason I'm letting you be part of this is 'cause you got the helicopter and the radar--

HECTOR
And you like me.

KEOUGH
I do not like you.

HECTOR
Deep down, gut check. I'm growing fond of you and it's liberating to say so.

Keough stares back.
KEOUGH
You're a whacko.

And Keough leaves, to:

EXT. CAMPSIGHT - CONTINUOUS

As Keough heads off--

HECTOR (O.S.)
That hurt my feelings.

CUT TO:

A CAMPFIRE

REVEAL--

EXT. BEACH CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Kelly stands, alone, skipping stones. After a beat, Jack approaches.

JACK
What are you doing?

KELLY
Skipping stones. Look how flat that water is, you can get ten skips on a good one.

A beat.

JACK
Listen, uh... Hank and I think it best if you stay on shore.

KELLY
I beg your pardon?

JACK
Whatever's out there did flip over a canoe--

KELLY
I am not staying on shore.

JACK
It's too dangerous for--

KELLY
I didn't fly up here to roast marshmallows--
JACK
You flew up here because your boss--

KELLY
I am going out on that boat and why are you picking on me, is this some kind of--

KELLY (CONT'D)    JACK (CONT'D)
hazing, new fingernails    I'm not picking--
in the woods?

JACK (CONT'D) (overriding)
I'm beginning to see why you were shipped off.

And her face falls.

KELLY (wounded; quietly)
That was an awful thing to say to me.

JACK (feels bad now)
I'm sorry but you're...

A beat. He doesn't finish the sentence.

KELLY (genuine)
I do know crocodiles and I won't get in your way.
(then)
I really do want to be a part of this.

Jack reads her, he can see that she does.

JACK
Okay.
(then)
We're up at six.

KELLY
Good.

JACK (a beat)
'Night.

There's a little chemistry here, though both would probably deny it. He heads off toward his tent, she sits with her book. She gives one last look, watches him go. Then she goes back to her book.
DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE - MUCH LATER

The lake is still, the campfire is out, the tents are quiet. The quiet SOUNDS of NIGHT. CRICKETS. A LOON. An OWL. A courageous raccoon looks about, seeing what he can rummage. By the water... a black bear takes a drink.

ANGLE KEOUGH'S TENT

He emerges, compelled by a full bladder, wearing only his trousers, carrying a revolver. He walks into the nearby woods. He removes from his shorts his bladder's connection to the outside world. Proceeds to URINATE. Then... he hears something. The SOUND of RUSTLING LEAVES. He STOPS URINATING, we HEAR a HALF SECOND of MOVEMENT. Then quiet. Must be his imagination. He RESUMES his business.

More RUSTLING, it's not just the sound of dense urine against leaves, he stops... something's out there in the darkness. Quiet. He starts up for a second, STOPS QUICKLY, and we HEAR it for sure. Something's RUSTLING TOWARDS him. With his free hand, Keough pulls out his revolver. More RUSTLING... Keough points the gun. Something on the ground is coming toward him. He moves slowly, gun drawn, into the darkness. The RUSTLING is getting LOUDER. It's almost upon him. A beat. CLOSER. CLOSER. Then Keough peels away a bush revealing:

HECTOR

Looking into a gun barrel. He screams. Keough screams. Then--

HECTOR
Jesus Christ!!

KEOUGH
What the hell are you doing?!!

HECTOR
What are you doing?!?

KEOUGH
You're crawling around like a--

HECTOR
I'm laying a spring trap!

KEOUGH
A spring trap!

HECTOR
I keep telling you, they can come on land, I don't wanna wake up in the middle of the night--
KEOUGH
I coulda shot you, you--

HECTOR
This could end up saving your life,--

HECTOR (CONT'D)                  KEOUGH
You'll be glad you didn't    Hey look, I'm sure you
shoot me then, you'll be    finished first in your
tongue massaging my    class but I think you need
hemorrhoids, just before    to be retired to the big rubber
running off to get your    room, where you can play with
sister pregnant, who you    soft stuffed reptiles.
probably already call mom.

And now all the others, awakened, are charging.

KELLY
(arriving)
Hey!  What is going on?

HECTOR                    KEOUGH
This man takes a pistol     He's crawling around--
to pee!

KEOUGH (CONT'D)
(escalating)
This is an official investigation,
and this cuckoo bird is a civilian.
I don't care how much money he's
got, he's a total mental.

And Hector storms off.  A beat.

KELLY
You hurt his feelings.  I think you
should go apologize.

KEOUGH
Apologize?

KELLY                    KEOUGH (CONT'D)
We're a team here.  It    He's a fruitcake!
won't kill you to get
along.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Look.  The thing about Hector... he
takes this crocodile business
very...
    (how to say it)
he thinks they're Godly.

A beat.

JACK
He thinks they're what?
KELLY
In his defense, every primitive culture known to man deified them. He's a mythology professor, he thinks crocs are divine conduits.

KEOUGH
Is this 'spose to make me take him more serious?

KELLY
It's to make you understand him, with understanding comes tolerance. Too bad they don't put proverbs in Twinkies, my load would be lighter.

KEOUGH
(befuddled)
Why does everybody insult my intelligence, I have intelligence, intelligent people eat Twinkies.

KELLY
I'm sorry.

Keough shoots a look to Jack.

JACK
Let's just all get some sleep.

And Keough heads off, under--

KEOUGH
I'm an intelligent person.

Upon which, he disappears from Earth. He's stepped into one of Hector's pit traps. A beat.

KEOUGH (O.S.)
(calmingly)
I shall kill him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE - SUNRISE

The steam is lifting off the lake.

EXT. LAKE - MORNING

Keough, Kelly, Hector, and Deputy Burke are cruising in the whaler. Hector and Jack are both in full diving gear. Jack also has a stick gun for protection. Hector does not.
KEOUGH
Again, I don't mean to be annoying with my questions. But if it is a crocodile which I don't think it is. And if they do charge these baby hatchling sounds...
(to Jack)
why exactly would you want to be underwater at the time?
(to Hector)
With you it makes sense.

HECTOR
They don't really attack underwater and--

KEOUGH
That "Walt" guy got hit underwater--

HECTOR
No crocodile has ever--

KELLY
(to Hector)
You should take a flax pole.

HECTOR
And what if I tranq him Kelly? He drowns. You think about that?

KELLY
I'm just saying last resort.

KEOUGH
Again. Not to be disruptive. Do we have a problem with it dying?

HECTOR
Crocodiles don't sever with their teeth, their molars are blunt.

As if that's suppose to clear it up. Keough stares back blankly. Then:

KEOUGH
Is this a trick?

HECTOR
What I'm saying is if it's a crocodile that cut a man in half he would have to be over twenty feet which would make him well over a hundred years old, it would be unthinkable to destroy him.

JACK
(to Burke)
Alright, let's just drop here.

Burke lowers the anchor, as Keough just continues to stare at Hector. Kelly readies the hatchling recorder. She lowers it into the water.

**KELLY**
They respond pretty quick. I'll wait till you get down before I turn it on.

**JACK**
Good.
(climbing over)
See ya soon.

**KELLY**
Good luck.

There was a twinge of real concern in her voice. He makes eye contact with her. Then drops over. Goes under.

**HECTOR**
(to Kelly)
Two years married, divorced, used to be a lawyer, quit, I'm still waiting on his sperm count.

**KELLY**
What?
(off Hector's look)
Oh as if I'm interested.

**HECTOR**
As if.
(as he's about to go overboard; to Keough)
Will you miss me?

**KEOUGH**
(to Hector)
I brought a pork chop, maybe we could hang it around your neck for luck.

**HECTOR**
No thank you, but maybe later you can chew the bark off my big fat log.

And Hector drops overboard.

**KEOUGH**
(to Kelly)
Was that like a homo-sexual remark?

**KELLY**
(strict)
I asked you to be nice to him.

Keough rolls his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNDERWATER - ANGLE ON JACK - DAY

Jack, diving. We HEAR the HIGH PITCH of CROCODILE HATCHLINGS. Visibility is again pretty limited.

EXT. LAKE - ANGLE ON HECTOR - UNDERWATER - DAY

Hector dives through the dark black water. Visibility is lousy.

EXT. UNDERWATER - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Jack dives, searched. Looks ahead, sees something... He moves closer... it's the carcass of the moose, no head.

EXT. LAKE - AN HOUR LATER

Kelly and Keough onboard.

KELLY
He may be a kook but he's also been all over the world with them. He even swam in the Grimetti with killer Niles all around him, he never got nipped.

KEOUGH
And that's why he thinks they're Godly?

KELLY
He said he knew it when he looked into their eyes.

KEOUGH
(simple)
You like Jack?

KELLY
(thrown)
What? I don't even know the guy.

KEOUGH
Hector thinks you like him.

KELLY
Well Hector's a giant cracker.
KEOUGH
You think Jack's handsome?

KELLY
What is this?

KEOUGH
I'm just curious. I can never tell what women think is handsome. Is he handsome?

KELLY
Well. He's probably rugged handsome I guess. Yeah.

A beat.

KEOUGH
Am I?

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY
Jack and Hector, diving together.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE - TWO HOURS LATER
The boats sit still on the dead calm water. Kelly works the RADAR, Keough covertly eats a Twinkie.

KELLY
It shouldn't be taking so long.

They both scan the surface. Dead calm.

EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS
Hector moves about. We can hear the HATCHLING RECORDER, but he's not seeing anything.

EXT. UNDERWATER - (ANOTHER AREA) - CONTINUOUS
Jack looks about. He looks up. Doesn't see much but he gets an eerie feeling. Something's out there.

EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS
Keough, Kelly, and Burke, standing idly, scanning the calm surface.
KEOUGH
(into headset)
Hector, Jack, we show you with about twelve minutes of oxygen left, and you're on the last tank. Time to go home.

KELLY
That was a bust.

A beat. Another beat. Then... something jerks the boat a little.

KELLY (CONT'D)
What was that?

KEOUGH
I don't know. It was like a tug. Something tugged us.

Upon which something really yanks the boat. So hard... Kelly flips over the back, into the water.

KEOUGH (CONT'D)
Hey!

The boat is moving, being dragged quickly.

BURKE
Something's got the anchor line!

KEOUGH
Kelly!!

But Kelly's alone in the water, the boat being pulled away.

RESUME

KEOUGH
(into headset)
Jack!! Hector! We're being dragged!!

(as he starts the motor; to Burke)
Cut the line! Cut the fucking line!

Burke goes to work on the anchor line as we ANGLE Kelly, treading water, in the middle of nowhere. She's completely vulnerable.

EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Hector, swimming for the surface.
EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Kelly, treading water. FIND Keough on the boat, he now has the engine running, fighting against the drag but whatever has that boat has a fucking strong hold.

KEOUGH
Cut the Goddamn rope!

BURKE
(work away)
I'm trying!

And finally, as he severs the rope the boat almost goes airborne with a jump, Burke nearly sails out. Keough's boat then races to Kelly.

ANGLE KELLY

KELLY
Hurry up!!

Suddenly about thirty feet away... we SEE fish breaking water.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Shit!! Hank!!

The boat is zooming toward her. It arrives. As Keough and Burke go to pull her aboard, we see a dark shadow rising.

BURKE
(screaming)
Look out!!

And Jack explodes out of the water, it was his shadow. Keough and Burke pull them both aboard.

KEOUGH
(back to Kelly)
Are you alright?

KELLY
I think. My hair.
(then)
Where's Hector?!
(to Jack)
Where is he?

JACK
We went in different directions. That water is thick, you can't see through it!

EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Hector is swimming toward the surface. Suddenly... a shadow
looms over him. He looks up.

**HIS P.O.V.**

There is no boat. We can't see it, just a big shadowy mass.

**RESUME HECTOR**

He's scared.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS**

**KEOUGH**

(into headset)

Hector! Hector, we got dragged off position, when you surface, you gotta yell.

**EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS**

Hector is still charging toward the surface. The lack of visibility is frightening, something could be six feet away and he wouldn't know it.

**EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS**

**KELLY**

(pointing)

There's bubbles over there! Look!

Keough quickly maneuvers the boat to where Kelly indicated, under--

**KELLY (CONT'D)**

There he is. Here he comes!

And Keough has the boat to him as Hector breaks surface.

And they quickly pull Hector on board, all attention is on Hector as they lean over to rescue him. On the far right... two eyes... moving closer to the oblivious rescuers.

Slowly moving in, everybody is so preoccupied with Hector, Deputy Burke, at the end of the boat, is leaning way over to see Hector. If only he knew what he's not seeing. The eyes come closer. They're now in the water right below Burke's head. How can he not see it? A beat. Another beat. Then... suddenly, a mouth, a dragon, teeth, something, flashes from the water--snap. And Deputy Burke's head is simply gone as his limp body hangs over the boat. Kelly screams in horror.

In a microsecond, Burke's head and life are both gone. OFF
their stunned faces, as Kelly continues to scream we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPsite - SUNSET

Burke's body is being loaded into an ambulance. People move in silence, the wake of tragedy. A few State Troopers are on the scene.

KEOUGH
(giving a statement)
Nobody actually saw it. It happened sudden.

PAN TO FIND Kelly, staring almost blankly, as Jack, finishing a phone call, approaches. He measures her expression, she's still in shock.

JACK
You okay?
(nothing)
Kelly?

KELLY
Yeah.
(then)
Nobody saw anything?

JACK
No.
(then)
U.S. Wildlife is on their way.

KELLY
That's probably good.

JACK
Police want to keep it quiet, if the press gets word... lake monster. They just want us to sit tight.

ANGLE KELLY
She is visibly undone, she appears almost to be fighting off shock. Jack puts his hands on her shoulder to steady her.

JACK
Are you okay?

KELLY
Um... y'know...
(swallows)
Yeah.
Jack can see she's willing herself to be stoic.

**JACK**
A man died. You don't have to be so tough.

She nods, appreciatively. Part of her would love to collapse into him but a bigger part demands that she remain stoic.

**KELLY**
I'm fine. I uh... I'm fine.

PAN TO FIND Keough, walking. Still visibly shaken. He unwittingly approaches Hector. They hold a look.

**HECTOR**
(genuine)
I'm sorry.

A beat.

**HECTOR (CONT'D)**
Was he a good man?

**KEOUGH**
Yup.

**HECTOR**
Whenever somebody dies I consider it such a waste that I didn't know him better.

A beat. Then--

**KEOUGH**
(fighting off disbelief; shock maybe)
His head was just... bitten off.

**HECTOR**
(sadly)
I used to have this recurring nightmare that I was headless.

Keough turns to stare at him with incredulity.

**HECTOR (CONT'D)**
(quietly rattling it off)
I'd be on the ground looking up at my body, no head, walking around bumping into everything. And my parents wouldn't let me in the house 'cause they'd just bought all these new antique lamps and they were afraid I'd knock them over, made sense, and meanwhile, the neighborhood bullies would see my
round little head on the ground
looking like a ball, and they'd
come rushing over to start up a
game of soccer. I'd actually feel
grateful just for being allowed
into the contest, that's esteem for
you, what are your thoughts?

Keough has had enough of this guy.

**KEOUGH**

(a powder keg)
You know, Hector, I'm sure you're
a fine person in your own mental
way. But I think it would be best
if you and I didn't speak.

And Keough heads off. He takes about four steps... then SNAP.
Up goes his upside-down body like a rocket. He's stepped in
Hector's spring-bow trap. A beat. He swings upside-down like
a pendulum. Another beat.

**HECTOR**
This is a setback.

**KEOUGH**
You don't want to cut me down.
'Cause I'll kill you.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. BEACH - NIGHT**

Kelly and Jack.

**KELLY**
Hard to believe there could be a
monster under such peacefulness.

**JACK**
I thought I might track the
shoreline tomorrow, look for
prints.

She just stares out as if she didn't hear. And he fixes his own
stare on her. Feeling it, she turns, catches him looking at
her, he diverts the stare. She feigns a non-reaction. A beat.

**JACK (CONT'D)**
You know they say the brain
confuses fear for passion.

**KELLY**
Excuse me?

**JACK**
When you get scared, the brain releases a chemical, same chemical it releases when somebody's...
(a beat)
in high school, the thing to do was to take the girl to a scary movie.

**KELLY**
What are you talking about?

**JACK**
I'm saying between the moonlight, a beautiful lake and a monster that bites heads off... you look good.

**KELLY**
Gee, that was so poetic, Jack. I'm all moist.

**JACK**
Forgive me for trying to be nice.

**KELLY**
Nice? Nice would be "you look pretty," nice is not some man-eating monster has tricked my brain into making you look good.

**JACK**
I didn't say it like that.

**KELLY**
You did, you--

**JACK**
I was trying to pay you a compliment, I was guising it as science 'cause I know you're comfortable in that arena. Science.

**KELLY**
A man just died, you're hitting on me with science.

**JACK**
Just forget it.

**HECTOR**
(arriving)
Beg pardon? Sorry to intrude but Hank seems to have gotten himself stuck in a tree.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - SECONDS LATER**
Hank hangs still, upside down, from the tree, as Hector, Kelly, and Jack approach.

HECTOR
I probably could've accomplished freeing him myself but he had a look of mayhem on his upside down face.

They arrive. Hank says nothing, he hangs there perfectly still.

KELLY
Hank?

KEOUGH
(calming)
Yes.

The three exchange looks.

KELLY
Are you okay?

KEOUGH
(calming; almost sweet)
Other than feeling slightly embarrassed, I'm perfectly fine.

(calming)
Could you cut me down?

HECTOR
Promise you won't kill me, first.

KEOUGH
(calming)
I have no interest in ever looking at you, Hector.

(calming)
Could you please cut me down?

Jack gives Kelly a knife.

JACK
You cut, we'll hold him.

Hector and Jack grab hold, Kelly cuts, they lower him to the ground. He rises.

KEOUGH
(calming)
Thank you.

(calming)
I lied.

And he charges after Hector, who runs toward the beach. Keough chases, Jack and Kelly pursue, trying to stop him. And suddenly, exploding out of the woods, a ferocious charging
GROWL. An attack. Screams all over, a half-second of confusion before we SEE it's a large BLACK BEAR jumping out of the darkness, right at Hector. Hector dives out of its path. Screams, panic, shouting, as the bear rears up on his hind legs. Seemingly about to lunge when... exploding out of the water the giant jaws of a crocodile.

In a flash instant, the beast engulfs the bear, twisting it, slamming it on the ground and then pulling it into the water.

The bear fights back ferociously for a second but there can only be one outcome here. In a matter of seconds, both bear and crocodile have vanished. And the water is calm again.

ANGLE THE FACES

Utter catatonia. Shock. Whatever they expected to find in this expedition, they weren't remote prepared for that. There are no words here. Shock is pre-empting every other human sensory. What they just saw... a crocodile head measuring five feet rise up out of the water and gobbled a fucking bear. A beat. Then--

KEOUGH
(admitting)
Okay. It's a crocodile. I'll admit it.

A beat as they gulp air.

KELLY
(to Jack)
You're cut.

There is a little blood over Jack's right eye. He dabs it.

KELLY (CONT'D)
(to Hector)
He was an Indo-pacific.

HECTOR
(daunted)
Are you sure?

KELLY
Scales were oval. It was an Asian crocodile.

KEOUGH
Asia? How... how could he get here?

HECTOR
Obviously some asshole in Hong Kong flushed him down a toilet.

KELLY
He had to be thirty feet long.
Another beat.

**JACK**
(charged)
Hank. The little cannon you brought, get it. Guard the shoreline. Otherwise, we're done. We made the I.D., our job is finished.

**KEOUGH**
Alright, Ms. Paleontologist. I wanna know why that monster is here. You got a theory?

**KELLY**
Why he's that big, I don't know. Why he's here... the wetlands are being developed, crocodiles are moving. Australia, Fiji, the things have started to cross oceans.

**JACK**
But why Maine and why alone? Crocs are social, why's this guy on the move by himself?

**HECTOR**
Maybe he doesn't play well with others.

**KEOUGH**
Is everything a big fucking joke to you?

**HECTOR**
(re his groin)
Bite my bishop.

And Keough starts for him, but Jack intercedes.

**KEOUGH**
I'm sick of him!

**JACK**
(interceding) C'mon.

**HECTOR**
Let him go! I'm sick of you too, let him go.
(thен)
Thing about being rich, Sheriff, my parents had the added luxury of being able to ditch me off at Karate school, I'm a brown belt. So go ahead. Take your best shot.

Keough throws a haymaker, decking Hector. Lays him out.
KELLY
Hank!

KEOUGH
(who knew?)
He said he knew Karate!

HECTOR
(shaken)
At school they'd always say "go" first.

JACK
(to Keough)
Get your big gun and guard the shore. Hector. Go to your tent.

HECTOR
(muttering as he goes)
He never said "go".

JACK
(to Keough)
Get the gun.

KEOUGH
(muttering as he goes)
If I fall into a hole or get hoisted into a tree...

And he's gone.

JACK
(re Keough and Hector)
Like little children.
(then)
You okay?

KELLY
Yeah. I got some stuff for your cut.

JACK
I couldn't believe... did you see the size of that thing's mouth?

KELLY
I wonder if he's some kind of mutant.
(then)
That bear had to be surprised.

JACK
(taking her arm; ushering)
Let's get away from the shore.
She looks at his hand on her arm, which suddenly makes him self-conscious.

JACK (CONT'D)

Sorry.

KELLY

It's okay.

They hold a look.

EXT. LAKE (WESTSIDE) - NIGHT

We are at a small clearing on the other side of the lake. A four-wheel-drive of some sort is bumping down a fairly unpassable dirt road into the clearing.

TOM (O.S.)

Told you I could make it.

As the jeep comes more INTO VIEW, we REVEAL its occupants to be six teenagers, including Janine, and TOM, STEVE, DANNY, CAROL, ELLEN. They've been drinking but they're not sloppy drunk. As they climb out, Tom points to a swing rope which extends from the branch of a tree that overhangs the water.

TOM

There it is.

STEVE

(stripping)

Last one in's a dead man.

Could be more like first one in. The teenagers begin to strip off their clothes. As they giggle and laugh we:

CUT TO:

INT. KELLY'S TENT - NIGHT

Kelly is butterflying Jack's wound, necessarily working very close to him.

JACK

Ow. Shit.

KELLY

Just gotta pull it a little tighter.

JACK

Who taught you be be a nurse?

KELLY

Father's a surgeon. I can even
stitch in a pinch, wouldn't be a bad idea here.

JACK
No thanks.

KELLY
Keep it dry. No swimming.

JACK (dry)
Thank you.

They hold a look. Then --

JACK (CONT'D)
You're having the best time of your life, aren't you?

KELLY (caught)
What? Why... people have been killed, I hardly think I'm having a good time, why would...
(off his look; copping)
Does it show?

Jack nods slightly.

KELLY (CONT'D)
This is the first time I've actually... y'know been in the middle of anything. I've never really even gotten dirty before, with me showers have always been preventative.

Their eyes are locked now, making her self-conscious and nervous.

JACK
That's why you're here. To get in the middle of something?

KELLY
Maybe. I've always read about what's happened. I've never... I know it sounds silly but, it's nice to be someplace while something is actually... y'know... happening.

Something is happening right now. A beat.

KELLY (CONT'D)
We should probably go to bed.
(quickly)
Get rest, get some rest. Go to our
separate beds, get some rest.

The Freudian slip of her life. They hold another look. Then he starts to exit. He stops at the door, turns back.

JACK
Thanks for the... bandaid.

KELLY
(please don't go)
Night.

He holds another look, then leaves. OFF her punishing herself for both the slip of the tongue and for cutting the moment short.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE (WESTSIDE) - NIGHT

The teenagers are now skinny-dipping, having a grand ol' flirtatious time. As they splash and frolic and cop their feels, we ANGLE... about fifty yards away. Two eyes pop above the surface... followed by the snout. GO TO:

THE CROC'S P.O.V.

Six fresh delicious teenagers. Midnight buffet.

RESUME

the croc as he slowly starts to move. The teenagers start to take turns, swinging on a rope from a branch which overhangs the shoreline. As they laugh and yell, Danny swings on a long rope... landing with a splash. About ten feet from the croc, waiting stealth-like, his eyes barely above surface. He could easily go for Danny... but he somehow knows the service will get better. As Danny swims back to shore, Janine takes hold of the rope.

JANINE
Here I come. Ready or not.

And she swings away... a better swing than Danny's... and she splashes down about five feet from the eyes. Again, the eyes don't move. The teenagers cheer Janine's record-setting swing as Tom takes hold of the rope.

STEVE
All or nothing, Tom.

TOM
From the jaws of defeat...

And he flies away. It's a leap to die for. As he splashes down... gulp. Like a seal grabbing a fish... and Tommy has
vanished. The kids, cheering at the leap, stop cheering when Tommy fails to resurface. A beat. They first think he's playing a joke.

STEVE
Ha ha.

Another beat. Still no sign of Tommy.

JANINE
 stil in the water)
Tommy?
(then)
This isn't funny, Tommy.

And now they're concerned. They all move down toward the shore.

STEVE
Tommy?

DANNY
C'mon, Tommy.

And now they're starting to panic.

JANINE
Where is he?

DANNY
(yelling)
This isn't funny!!

Suddenly-- thrusting up out of the water. The crocodile, Tommy in its jaws. Bloodcurdling screams from all as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Hector and Keough both hear the screams of the teenagers.

HECTOR
What's that?

KEOUGH
It came from across the lake.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Keough, Jack, and Deputy Stevens are in the boat, zooming towards the teenagers.

JACK
(to Keough)
You said nobody came in here!
KEOUGH
Obviously I was wrong!

CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT
Hector and Kelly are flying toward the area, the search beams are on.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON JANINE

JANINE
He just took him in his jaws.

REVEAL

EXT. LAKE (WESTSIDE) - NIGHT
The teenagers have some or most of their clothes back on. Hector's chopper is hovering over the area, its beams lighting the water. Lying on the beach, covered... is Tommy. Alive. And basically unhurt!

KEOUGH
He was in his mouth?!

JANINE
Yes.

JACK
(stunned; to Tommy)
You're okay?

TOMMY
(in shock)
I think; just cuts.

DANNY
The thing just came up out of the water and kind of spit him at us.

JANINE
You should have signs posted, for God's sake!

JACK
(examining him)
You're really okay?

Tommy nods. Then--
TOMMY
I might need a Tetanus.

Keough and Jack exchange a look of disbelief.

EXT. CAMPSITE - AN HOUR LATER

Hector, Keough, Jack, and Kelly, looking tired, trek toward their tents.

HECTOR
Just spit him back out. Some shall live, some shall die, arbitrarily, sound like any higher power we know?

KEOUGH
(dismissive)
He didn't eat the kid cause he'd just swallowed a bear.

HECTOR
Sobek. Half man, half croc, oldest God--

KEOUGH
I'm tired, Hector. I know this because you're beginning to not bug me.

HECTOR
That sounds good but underneath it's hurtful.

(then)
Nightcap?

KEOUGH
Raincheck.

They're growing on each other. Jack and Kelly exchange a smile. Hector and Keough are developing an odd kinship almost. They continue on as Jack and Kelly stop at her tent.

JACK
Well. Goodnight.

KELLY
We seem to say goodnight a lot.

JACK
We could not say it and...

(suddenly a coward)
Well, that thing is ambulatory if you want somebody in your tent to...
She smiles. Then:

KELLY

Night.

He holds another look. She goes into her tent. He stands there. A beat. Waits to see if she calls him back. She doesn't. He then heads off. Her head pops out. Watches him go. Almost calls after him. Doesn't.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

We see the campsite, looking at it from the water. All is still. After a beat. An eye blink. We are not looking at the campsite. We are CLOSE ON an EYE, REFLECTING the campsite. Another blink. Still another. We HEAR a slight SNARL. Then:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE - SUNRISE

Hector and Deputy Gare, inside the chopper, lifting off, to begin an early morning search.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHORE - (DIFFERENT PART OF THE LAKE) - SUNRISE

Kelly, Jack, Keough, and Stevens searching for tracks along the wooded shoreline, staying a good six feet from the actual shore. Their senses are very heightened. Keough has his cannon gun.

JACK

Get back from the shore. We know how fast he can leap out.

KEOUGH

We shouldn't even really be doing this.

JACK

They won't be here till at least noon. We got a few hours to kill.

KEOUGH

So does he.

KELLY

(obsessing)

I'm gonna get ticks. I know it. They're drawn to me. I got a thing about ticks.

JACK
(quickly)
Ssssh!

KELLY
What?

JACK
I heard something.

He's staring at a brush thicket. After a beat, we HEAR a slight RUSTLE. The guns go up quickly. A beat. Nothing. Jack bends down, picks up a stone. Tosses it into the thicket. And out it charges. Kelly screams, they're all about to fire before they realize it's only a beaver. It scurries into the water.

KELLY
(trying to gather herself)
Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit.

KEOUGH
(suddenly)
Look.

ANGLE A GIANT PAW PRINT
embedded in the mud. It must be two feet in diameter.

RESUME

JACK
(to Keough)
Guard the water.

Kelly and Jack go quickly to examine the print.

JACK (CONT'D)
That's pretty big.

EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS

The chopper is descending. Hector and Gare are inside.

GARE
It seems like we're getting lower.

HECTOR
It happens when I land.

GARE
Why are we landing?

HECTOR
'Cause this is the cove he obviously lives in.

GARE
(alarmed)
So why are we landing?
(them)
Hector.

EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS

Kelly and Jack are still working on the footprint. Physical proximity, which they're both a little distracted by.

KELLY
Thing we can lift it?

JACK
Maybe. Don't mush it.

KELLY
(annoyed)
I'm not mushing it.

JACK
You're mushing it a little around the--

KELLY
I'm not mushing it.

Suddenly another beaver scurries out from underfoot, scaring all of them, but particularly Kelly who jumps. Her foot lands on a long extended branch, and even more suddenly Burke's severed head seesaws out of the shallow water, hitting her in the shin. She screams as they all jump back.

ANGLE THE HEAD

RESUME

They just stare, as Kelly continues to scream.

JACK
(holding her)
Okay. Okay. Okay.

KELLY
That is it!!

JACK
Really--

KELLY
No. I keep getting hit with heads!

JACK
(holding her shoulders)
Calm down.
KELLY
You calm down!

JACK
Calm down.

She takes a couple of calming breaths.

KELLY
I'm being very calm. I'm composed. This is the second time I've been hit with a severed head, I'm entitled to complain.

STEVENS
(re the head)
Is that uh...

KEOUGH
I can't recognize him from the back. It looks like him.

Keough takes a stick. Squeamish, he tentatively pokes the head, trying to turn it over.

ANGLE THE HEAD
It is Burke.

RESUME
Keough leans in for a closer look.

KEOUGH
That's him.
(re something)
What the...?

Something appears to be in his mouth. Keough takes a small twig, pries back a cheek... the mouth is full of worms.

KEOUGH (CONT'D)
Now I'm gonna puke.

JACK
(seeing something)
You gotta be kidding.

KELLY
What?

JACK
(pointing)
Look.

THEIR P.O.V.
About a hundred yards north, Mrs. Bickerman is leading a blindfolded cow to the water.

RESUME

Kelly raises her binoculars. So does Jack.

KELLY
What is she doing now?
(then)
Mother of God.

KEOUGH
What?

KELLY
Look ten feet into the water.

THEIR P.O.V.

There waiting... mouth fully open... is the fucking crocodile.

RESUME

Kelly, Jack, and Keough, as they lower their scopes. They look at each other, then back at the foregoing.

EXT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Bickerman, singing "Itsy Bitsy Spider" is happily leading the blinded cow to the shore. The cow, tentative, just allows itself to be led, not knowing what the plan is. As Mrs. Bickerman gets to the water, she looks out to the croc.

BICKERMAN
Come and get it.

And with that, she whips the hind of the cow causing it to jump forward. Almost simultaneously, the croc makes its charge and the cow is dead before it has a clue.

CUT TO:

ANGLE JACK, KEOUGH, AND KELLY

utterly agape. After a long beat:

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - DAY

Keough, Kelly, and Jack are questioning a slightly hostile Mrs. Bickerman.
BICKERMAN
(indignant)
I haven't broken any laws.

KEOUGH
(bordering on condescension)
Oh, but you have, Ma'am. You lied to us, that could be obstruction of justice. A man's been killed in part 'cause of your silence, I could make out a charge of reckless endangerment and I'm sure PETA would be annoyed at how you treat your cows.

BICKERMAN
The reason I lied is if I'd told you the truth, you'd just hunt it down and kill it which seems to be exactly what you're doing.

KELLY
How long have you been feeding this thing?

BICKERMAN
About six years. He first appeared in May of nineteen-ninety-one. Bernie was out fishing and it followed him home. So we threw him some scraps and well... he didn't seem to bother anybody. He became kind of like a pet who lived in the wild.

JACK
He just appeared. You have no idea how he arrived in this lake?

BICKERMAN
No. Do you?

KEOUGH
Ma'am. Your husband, Bernie. You didn't, by any chance, lead him to the lake blindfolded?

BICKERMAN
(offended)
No, I did not.
(them)
The crocodile did kill him, though. But it was all... it was a mistake.

KELLY
A mistake.
BICKERMAN
One of our horses got loose two years ago, went to the lake to drink and... well the crocodile started coming in, Bernie went to intercede and... it was all a terrible misunderstanding.
(then)
If I reported it, they would've sent people to kill it.

Keough, Kelly and Jack can't quite believe what they're hearing. Then--

KEOUGH
Ma'am, how could you not report this? He puts human life at risk and--

BICKERMAN
Nobody lives on this lake. it's really his lake now.

EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS
The chopper, free-floating, is drifting near a small cove. Hector, in diving gear, is about to go into the water, as Gare tries to dissuade.

GARE
(getting panicked)
C'mon Hector. I know you're crazy but you can't--

HECTOR
I need to see his habitat.

As he drops in.

GARE
Please. I'll have sex with you, anything, but get out of the water.

HECTOR
He's not gonna hurt me.

CUT TO:

INT. BICKERMAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS
Kelly, Jack and Keough with Bickerman.

BICKERMAN
Murders and rapes in the cities.
People bomb planes... can the police stop them? No. But feed one little cow to a crocodile...

KEOUGH
You're to wait right here until the police show, you're under full house arrest.

BICKERMAN
Thank you, Officer Fuckmeat.

GARE (O.S.)
(through walkie-talkie)
Hank! We got a problem with Hector.

KEOUGH
(into walkie-talkie)
What problem?

GARE (O.S.)
(through walkie-talkie)
He went swimming.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS
Hector is underwater, exploring.

ANGLE GARE ON THE CHOPPER
Her radar is up, she heard something. But she doesn't see anything. She scans the surface closely.

EXT. LAKE - UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS
The water is slightly more visible as Hector swims. Other than the odd school of fish, an otter, a snapping turtle... nothing extraordinary. Then, a flash shadow looms over him. He looks up, but sees nothing. Probably just the sun ducking under a cloud. It does make him sufficiently nervous, however, to head for the surface. He swims upward.

EXT. LAKE (SURFACE) - CONTINUOUS
Hector breaks the top. Lifts his mask, looks toward the chopper, which he sees about forty yards out. He continues to breaststroke on the surface. Suddenly... the croc's head rises up right behind Hector, who's oblivious. He continues to swim. The croc follows. Then... maybe divine intuition... Hector gets
a feeling he's being followed. He then turns to look the other way, upon which his face goes rigid.

**HIS P.O.V.**

About three feet from his nose... are two giant eyes staring at him.

**ANGLE HECTOR**

ashen.

**HECTOR**

(weakly)

Oh.... my.

The croc doesn't move. It just stares at him. Then end of his snout is almost touching Hector. Hector himself doesn't dare move, for fear of spooking the croc into action. We get the idea that looking into the eyes of this crocodile is not filling any spiritual voids. A beat.

**HECTOR (CONT'D)**

I suddenly feel a bit foolish.

(then)

You're different from the others.

The croc raises his head now to reveal the snout. And his deadly smile. Hector just tries to tread water with as little motion as possible. He deathly fears a quick movement will cause his life to be over. Perhaps this is what he came for. To be judged by this symbol of mythology.

He backswims ever so slightly. The croc pursues just as slowly, their eyes are locked. He could snap off Hector's head in an instant.

**HECTOR (CONT'D)**

(terrified; trying to convince himself)

Holy spirit of Sobek. Holy ghost.

(swallows)

Holy shit.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SEA CHOPPER - CONTINUOUS**

Gare still scans the water's surface, looking for any sign of Hector. And her face freezes. Oh yes, there's the sign.

**HER P.O.V.**

Hector continues to backswim slowly to the plane and the croc slowly follows.
GARE

Hector!!

We can hear the quaking fear in Hector's voice. As he continues to slowly backswim.

HECTOR

(to Gare; forced calm)

Just turn the ignition, it's fuel injected.

Gare turns the ignition, the ENGINE KICKS and DIES.

GARE

Come on.

She turns it again and the ENGINE TURNS OVER.

ANGLE HECTOR

The crocodile is still right with him as they inch closer and closer toward the chopper.

HECTOR

I know under the circumstances, biting off my head might seem viable. It would cheapen you.

But nothing's funny about this to Hector now. What he's staring into is death. His own. Gare raises her rifle.

GARE

I might get a shot.

HECTOR

(fear in his voice)

No. If you don't kill him instantly, I'm dead and you'll only kill him instantly if you get his brain, which is about the size of a cherry. And even if you were on target, a bullet might not penetrate his hide.

ANGLE GARE

GARE

(re the croc)

Jesus.

(to Hector)

About twelve more yards. Keep coming just like that.

ANGLE HECTOR

craning to see how far away he is and as soon as he breaks eye contact with the CROCODILE, it GROWLS. Hector quickly locks
eyes with him again.

**ANGLE GARE**

**GARE**
(weakly)
Oh my God.

**RESUME**

By now Hector is almost to the chopper, the croc is right there too. Hector's right hand then goes slowly for his belt though it's impossible to discern why. The crocodile seems poised to finish him. There's a slight GROWL.

And then suddenly, a small underwater POP, followed by an EXPLOSION out of the water. it's an inflatable life vest and as it pop tarts out of the water, the croc lunges for it.

As the croc goes for the vest, Hector makes his dash for the chopper. In almost an instant, he's climbing on board as the croc pulls the vest into darkness underwater.

Hector's up on the chopper's ski.

**HECTOR**
Move over!!

The crocodile's head comes thrusting up, its massive jaws snapping shut, missing Hector by an inch, maybe two. Hector dives into the chopper, screaming.

**GARE**
Go!!

She REVS the CHOPPER. The croc comes up again, chomping down on one of the landing skis. Both Gare and Hector scream as the whole helicopter is jerked mightily.

**GARE (CONT'D)**
(screaming)
Go!!!

**HECTOR**
I'm trying!!!

The croc releases and the chopper rights itself and begins to thrust off, when the croc surfaces again, mouth open. Gare FIRES her REVOLVER. It might as well shoot BB's. The croc is undaunted but he does miss the ski and by now the chopper is up and running, finally safely out of the reptile's reach.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. CAMPSITE - TWENTY MINUTES LATER**
Jack is nearly manhandling Hector, pulling him by the elbow towards his tent. Kelly and Keough are there too.

**JACK**
(livid)
This time, I'm gonna kick your ass.

**HECTOR**
Bastard bit my chopper.

**JACK**
Hey!!

Jack simply grabs his arm and squeezes a pressure point. Hector yelps in pain.

**JACK (CONT'D)**
You wanna kill yourself, that it, you looking to commit some kind of divine suicide?

**KELLY**
Alright, Jack!

**JACK**
No!
(back to Hector)
You might think they're Godly, you might get some spiritual lift backstrokin' with dragons but you just put a deputy at risk and--

**HECTOR**
(flaring)
Let's not overlook he didn't eat me, maybe--

**JACK**
'Cause he just ate a cow, you stupid--

**KELLY**
Jack!

**HECTOR**
I'm a civilian! You don't have any authority--

**KEOUGH**
I can arrest you!!

**HECTOR**
Then do it!!

**KEOUGH**
You probably do want to be killed
by it, that was you trying to meet your maker.

HECTOR
So profound and fat.

Hector, feelings hurt, stomps off again. Kelly looks at Jack. Then Kelly follows Hector.

INT. HECTOR'S TENT - A MINUTE LATER

Hector enters, sits. A beat. Kelly enters, goes to sit next to him.

KELLY
(softly)
Did you want to be killed by it?

HECTOR
You think I'm that nuts?

KELLY
(softly)
Hector.
(then)
What you just did... there was at least some sort of a death wish going on.

HECTOR
Nothing's real.

KELLY
Excuse me?

HECTOR
Nothing's real.
(escalating)
I'm rich, people are automatically my friends, sycophants ooze out like oil slicks and and and--

He's sounding erratic.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
With crocodiles... everything's even.

KELLY
I'm no psychiatrist. But I would think there have to be better places to look for autonomy, than--

HECTOR
(pained)
I'm an empty man, Kelly, wealth has
robbed me of the dream in life, I sit here broken, a hollow sack--

KELLY
Oh, bullshit.

And Hector drops the act.

HECTOR
Didn't even sound good?

KELLY
No.

HECTOR
(worth a try)
Eh.  Fuck it.

KELLY
Can I tell them you won't go back in the water?

HECTOR
Yes.  You may.  But maybe... I don't know...

He has trouble saying it.

KELLY
What?

HECTOR
Could we have intercourse?

She just whacks him.  Then exits.  OFF Hector, "worth a shot", we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Jack and Keough are there to meet Kelly.

JACK
Just heard from Wildlife and Florida Fish And Game.  They should be here by four.

KELLY
Okay.

JACK
We might as well pack.

KELLY
Good idea.
HECTOR (O.S.)
They'll kill him.

They turn to see, Hector is standing there.

HECTOR
They're not going to be able to
snag him in pitmans. Tranq him in
water, he drowns.

KELLY
They could try to tranq him on
land.

HECTOR
(knowing)
They won't. He's taken human life,
the mission will be to put him
down.

KEOUGH
Gee, that would really disappoint
me.

HECTOR
Forget about him being God, he's
thirty feet long, he is a miracle
of nature, who somehow made his way
to Maine. This is a grand beast.
A grand dragon. An attempt should
at least be made to capture him
alive.

JACK
Well, you can try talking them into
that, if--

HECTOR
I have enough flaxedil with me to
put him out. And I think I know a
way to--

JACK
Forget it.

HECTOR
Look. I know I'm crazy, but when
they come, they will kill it. They
have to, politically, he's too
dangerous, if something were to go
wrong... the odds are he will be
destroyed,--

KEOUGH                    HECTOR (CONT'D)
Which is exactly          Please, Hank, let me finish
what...                   I'm having a sane moment, this
is a window.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
If he were neutralized when they got here... they might consider saving him.

KELLY
And how would we neutralize him?

HECTOR
We lure him on land and pump him with the drugs.

JACK
No way.

HECTOR
Jack. We've all seen it. He's probably a hundred and fifty years old, he's bigger than an elephant.

Hector's impassioned here, he's not fooling around.

JACK
So maybe Wildlife will try to save him, they're more equipped to--

HECTOR
We both know what they'll do.

Silence. Admission by silence. Then--

JACK
Even if we could tranq him-- how would we get him on land.

KEOUGH
Other than to eat us?

HECTOR
He follows anything that moves. You guys can be in the trucks with tranq guns. If he charges, drive off, plus Hank you've got your hand-held cannon. We could do this with no safety risk. If it works, we save a beast that should be saved.

A beat. They are sympathetic to the idea.

JACK
And again. How would you get him on land?

HECTOR
That's actually the easy part.
EXT. BICKERMAN’S HOUSE – AN HOUR LATER

We HEAR the CHOPPER.

BICKERMAN
(to Keough)
I'll sue you.

KEOUGH
Go ahead.

And up goes Hector's chopper. And... REVEAL connected to a long cable... a cow. An airborne cow, dangling from the chopper.

BICKERMAN
(to Jack)
You can't take a cow by eminent domain.

JACK
We won't let him get hurt, Ma'am.

BICKERMAN
You're all fuckers. Vicious little fuckers.

Jack turns to Kelly.

JACK
Are we crazy?

KELLY
Well...

JACK
We've got a cow hanging from a helicopter.

She shrugs.

KEOUGH
Let's get back to camp.

CUT TO:

INT. CHOPPER – CONTINUOUS

Hector pilots.

HECTOR
Not much drag. As long as I can keep him from swinging, we're okay.
EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Hector's chopper is flying the befuddled animal toward the cove. 
FIND Keough, Kelly, and Jack on the water cruising back to camp. 
Keough has his gun.

EXT. CAMPSITE - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Two pickup trucks have been backed in for a shooting vantage. 
Kelly, Jack, Keough. Riflemen are ready with tranq guns.

ANGLE JACK

JACK
(into headset)
Keep enough tension to hold him up, 
Hector, we don't know if he can swim.

HECTOR (O.S.)
(through headset)
Right.

JACK
The more he thrashes, the better.

HECTOR (O.S.)
(through headset)
You ready on shore?

JACK
We're ready.

RESUME

The chopper lowers the cow. He starts to kick his legs in anticipation.

JACK (O.S.)
(through headset)
If he tires, lift him out.

And the cow goes into the water. He swims frantically a few meters. The chopper lifts him out briefly.

JACK
It can't work.

KELLY
He has been going after everything. 
It could work. 
(then)
But this is not a happy cow.
JACK
He looks like a giant tea bag.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE - AN HOUR LATER

The cow has been dipped more times than a stale donut now and he just hangs there like pasta. Jack, Keough, and Kelly are poised with tranq guns on the beach.

JACK
(looking through binoculars)
He doesn't seem to be swimming. Is he swimming?

KELLY
(looking through binoculars)
He's floating. Take it home.

JACK
(into headset)
Hector.

HECTOR (O.S.)
Hold on!

INT. CHOPPER - CONTINUOUS

HECTOR
I got something on the screen.

JACK (O.S.)
You do?

ANGLE THE SCREEN

There's a mass... moving toward the cow.

HECTOR
He's coming.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

JACK
(into walkie-talkie; now adrenalized)
Where? Where?

HECTOR (O.S.)
(through walkie talkie)
Thirty meters or so. Moving slow,
but straight toward Elsie.

**JACK**
Can you confirm visually or just radar?

**HECTOR (O.S.)**
(through walkie talkie)
Radar, he's underwater. But he's definitely coming.

**JACK**
Okay. Lead him in.
(to the others; barking)
Okay, everybody up on the trucks.
We aim for the stomach or side...
there's little chance the darts will pierce his hide. Everybody up on the trucks.

They move into position.

**INT. HECTOR'S CHOPPER - CONTINUOUS**

**HECTOR**
(charged)
On our way. There, he's surfacing, there's the snout. You little sucker.

**EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS**

Sure enough... that giant snout breaks the surface. Ever so calmly... it moves toward the cow.

**EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS**

**KELLY**
(into walkie-talkie)
If he gets close, you go up, Hector, don't you endanger that cow.

**KEOUGH**
She's worried about the cow now.

**HECTOR (O.S.)**
(through walkie-talkie)
He's following. Here we come.

**ANGLE THE RADAR SCREEN**

Depicting the same.
EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

JACK
(to Hector)
Nice and slow.
(to the others)
Let's get ready.

Hector's chopper, cow dangling, is slowly approaching the shore. Behind it... the snout and eyes of a giant croc. Back on the shore, Keough's men ready themselves for action. Tranq guns. rifles... the team is mobilized. We HEAR a DISTRESSED CRY from the COW.

KELLY
He's mooing.

JACK
You wouldn't?

KEOUGH
They're coming right in.

KELLY
Such a simple idea and it's working. What does that tell you?

KEOUGH
That it's about to go wrong.

JACK
(into walkie talkie)
Almost here, Hector. Don't forget to lift up the cow.

HECTOR (O.S.)
(sarcastic, through walkie talkie)
Thank you, Jack.

JACK
(to the team)
You shoot on my order. If he charges, I'll be yelling "go" which means drivers take off. And drive fast, they can move on land.
(to Keough)
You set?

KEOUGH
Don't worry about me.

Incredibly... the plan is working. A giant dragon is following a dangled suspended cow to the shoreline.

Hector dangles the cow closer, they're now nearing shore. The
big crocodile, eyes on the prize, is moving in for the flank steak. The time is now.

INT. CHOPPER - CONTINUOUS

HECTOR
We're in about four feet of water now.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

JACK
Little closer. Three, two, one...

The crocodile then suddenly thrusts up after the cow, snapping at air. Hector pulls up with the chopper.

JACK (CONT'D)
Fire!!

Jack, Gare, and other officers pump the beast with tranq darts. But Hector has taken his chopper up too fast, causing the cow to swing like a pendulum. It rocks the chopper.

INT. CHOPPER - CONTINUOUS

HECTOR
Oh, shit.

The chopper is in trouble. The cow sways, the helicopter struggles to stay airborne.

EXT. BEACH - ANGLE KELLY - CONTINUOUS

KELLY
(screaming)
Watch out!!

JACK
Keep firing!

The men continue to pump the beast with tranquilizing darts.

INT. CHOPPER - CONTINUOUS

Hector's having trouble righting his chopper.

HECTOR
Motherfucker.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS
Suddenly the croc goes up and grabs the dangling cow, snapping off the cable.

    JACK
    Shit!!

And down comes to the chopper, Hector cannot control it. It crashes into the lake.

    KELLY
    Hector!!

    JACK
    (to Keough)
    Take him.

    KEOUGH
    I can't. I'll get Hector!!

    JACK
    Where is he?!

    KELLY
    We gotta get to Hector!!

    JACK
    (to the driver)
    Back us in a little, we need to get a shot!

Hector pops his head out of the overturned chopper. He looks around.

    HECTOR
    Where is he?

    JACK
    (to the Deputies)
    Tranq guns down, rifles up!

The men switch guns, under--

    JACK (CONT'D)
    (yelling to Hector)
    Do not go in that water!
    (to the driver)
    Back us in!!

As the pick-up backs closer to the shore--

    JACK (CONT'D)
    (to Keough)
    If you get a safe shot...

    KEOUGH
    I'll take it!
JACK
Hector. Do not move.

The water is calm again. A beat.

JACK (CONT'D)
(to Gare)
You see anything?

GARE
(looking through binocs)
Nothing. Maybe he swam out.

Upon which the croc comes thrusting up out of the water charging the truck. Screams.

JACK
Go!! Drive!!

The pick-up spins dirt, lurches forward, throwing Keough off balance. The croc heads back for the water as Keough regains his balance.

JACK (CONT'D)
Take him!!

And Keough blasts. It detonates the ground near the croc causing him to surge airborne into the water. And he goes under. Silence. A beat.

KELLY
Did you get him?

KEOUGH
I don't know.
(to the Driver)
Back the truck--

ALL
No!!

JACK
Hector, you see anything?

ANGLE HECTOR
on the pontoon of his chopper. He's looking about, studying the water.

HECTOR
No!

KEOUGH
(sarcastic)
I just have this feeling everything's totally safe.
HECTOR
(yelling)
I see blood. Maybe you got him,
Hank.

And as Hector looks further. Behind him... up surfaces the
crocodile in all his stealth. His head is two feet from Hector
and nobody knows it. Least of all Hector.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I can't see him, but this is
definitely blood. Maybe you got
him.

And as he turns back, he sees it. The croc comes up as Hector
screams, jumps off. Screams. Keough leaps off the truck and
charges into the shallow water with his gun, looking to give
Hector some cover.

Hector then resurfaces swimming to his bobbing chopper. He
climbs in.

KEOUGH
Where is he?!

HECTOR
I don't know!

No sooner said than the croc comes launching up. As he springs
toward the open chopper cabin, Hector, leaps out on the other
side. The croc's head comes crashing clear through the cabin
and he becomes wedged. The crocodile is stuck, he protrudes
right through the chopper. He's not completely immobilized but
wherever he goes now, the helicopter is going with him.

KEOUGH
Hector!!

But now Jack has joined, rifle in hand. Hector surfaces again,
swimming for shore. Jack runs to help him onto land.

KEOUGH (CONT'D)
(taking aim)
Alright. Game over.

But the croc looks feeble now. He lets out this MOAN of DEATH.
And even Keough hesitates to pull the trigger.

KEOUGH (CONT'D)
(to Kelly)
Should I?

KELLY
Wait.

RESUME
The croc, unable to dive, is now thrashing toward the beach. But there's no rage in his behavior now. He seems desperate. He's taken some bullets, he's tired, he's wedged inside a two ton piece of metal and he's exhausted.

KELLY
I think the drugs are kicking in.

Breathing heavily, he lumbers into the shallow water, unable to free himself from the mangled wreckage. As unbelievable as that cow looked dangling from this very chopper, the sight is even more astonishing, if not preposterous, now. A thirty foot exhausted crocodile is wearing the broken helicopter. And he just cannot go on anymore.

Kelly, Hector, Jack, Keough, stare back. They approach with caution. They all stare at the tired crocodile.

ANGLE THE CROC
He's now looking back. Bleeding, gasping... beaten. In his eyes... we can see it. The beast is beaten.

ANGLE THE PRINCIPLES
There's no triumph. In their eyes... sadness.

JACK
I don't think we really want to wait for him to catch his breath.

It continues to breathe heavily.

KELLY
He's through fighting. Look at him.

JACK
I don't care. Hank. End it.

Keough raises his cannon.

HECTOR
No. Look. He's got nothing left.

JACK
Yeah and every time we think there's no more danger--

Upon which, a twenty footer, another croc, thrusts up out of the water, seizing Hector. Screams. It death rolls Hector, flings him out of his mouth and in seconds, he's coming up for more. Keough blasts his Avenger. A direct hit.

It takes the smaller croc's head right off sending it sailing into the air. It splashes down, the first head not to hit
Kelly.

They all then go for Hector, pulling him to shore. He's bleeding.

**HECTOR**
I'm okay.

**KELLY**
You're not okay, your leg's a mess.

**JACK**
Get him onto shore.

**KELLY**
He needs a tourniquet.

Keough quickly peels off his shirt. Gives it to Kelly, who goes to work.

**KELLY (CONT'D)**
You're gonna be okay.

**HECTOR**
Guess I finally got bit.

**KELLY**
Yeah, you got bit. I'm gonna fix it.

A sudden ROAR. Kelly screams as Jack and Keough wheel to see... the big croc. Maybe his final roar, he looks weak. GASPING in the crashed chopper. Jack and Keough approach.

**KEOUGH**
(quietly; re the big croc)
He's done. He's dying.

**JACK**
Don't count on it.
(then)
We better take him out.

But something about this crocodile... his eyes looking back at them... nobody wants wants to take him out.

**ANGLE THE CROC**
looking back at them. He knows he's in their hands now. He knows.

**ANGLE THE HUMANS**
A beat.

**HECTOR**
(qiet)
Flax him under his tail. Two hundred cc's. Under the tail, that'll put him to sleep.

Upon which we HEAR the SOUND of TRUCKS. Florida Fish And Game, U.S. Wildlife, arriving on the scene.

**JACK**

Thank God.

**OFFICER COLSON**, Florida Fish And Game, emerges, approaches. Stares with utter disbelief.

**KELLY**

We need to get it some medical help.
(re Hector)
And him too.

By now the Florida army has moved in. They all stare with the same suspended disbelief.

**KEOUGH**

(explaining)
We trapped him with our chopper.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. BEACH - AN HOUR LATER**

A crew, including vets, are working on the sedated croc, trying to free it from the wreckage. FIND the PARAMEDICS with Hector, on a stretcher. Jack, Kelly, and Keough are there.

**PARAMEDIC**

We're gonna airvac him to Portland.

**KELLY**

Okay.
(to Hector)
That's where they're taking the croc, Hector, they've got some big tank there.

**HECTOR**

He's gonna live?

**KELLY**

Yeah. Thanks to you.

**HECTOR**

And Hank.
(to Keough)
I know you weren't really trying to hit him.
KEOUGH
   (gently)
   I was aiming for you.

Hector smiles.

HECTOR
   Thanks for the rescue.

Jack leans down.

JACK
   You take care.

HECTOR
   You talk to Bickerman?

JACK
   She didn't tell us about the other croc 'cause she was afraid we'd blow it's head off.

HECTOR
   Women's intuition. Are there anymore?

JACK
   Just those two.

PARAMEDIC
   We gotta take him.

JACK
   Okay.

PARAMEDIC
   We got room for one.

JACK
   Well... I got stuff to pack up and...

He looks to Kelly, but before she can say "yes"--

KEOUGH
   (grudging)
   I'll go.

Hector smiles. The Paramedics board Hector. Keough turns to Jack.

KEOUGH
   Thanks for your help.

JACK
   You too.
Handshake. Respect. That's about as much affection as you get from Keough. He then extends his hand to Kelly.

**KELLY**
I'm sure this would offend you on principal but... could we keep in touch?

**KEOUGH**
I guess.

And she kisses him on the cheek. Keough fights off his blush, boards the chopper. As it then lifts up, Kelly turns to Jack.

**KELLY**
Well...

**JACK**
You wanna ride in my truck?

**GARE**
(arriving)
Your truck is jammed. Should we take some stuff out?

**KELLY**
No, no, I'll be a while anyway. I'm gonna say goodbye to the lake.

**JACK**
You sure? I don't mind...

**KELLY**
No, I actually want to stay for a little while.

They hold a look. Then--

**KELLY (CONT'D)**
I'll miss you most of all scarecrow.

And she kisses his cheek.

**JACK**
If I'm ever in New York...

**KELLY**
Yeah.

They hold another look.

**JACK**
Y'know, if we didn't live in separate worlds and...

(a beat)
**KELLY**
But we do.
   (then)
Hey, we'll always have Maine.

He smiles.

**JACK**
It was... something meeting you.

**KELLY**
Likewise.

He kisses her hand. Holds a look. Heads off.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. BEACH - DUSK**

The tents are down, everything's packed. A couple trucks remain. The croc is gone. Things are quiet. Kelly stands down by the water, staring out.

**HER P.O.V.**

Hypnotic beauty. The lake doesn't even ripple. She soaks it in as if she knows it may be a while before she ever gets close to this again. She HEARS every BIRD. Including a DISTANT LOON. Serenity has returned. Then suddenly... a stone goes skipping out, four, five, six skips. Kelly turns around. Jack stands there. They hold a look.

**JACK**
I thought I should say goodbye to the lake too.

He approaches. Takes her hand.

**KELLY**
(weakly)
Different worlds, Jack.

**JACK**
Yeah, I thought about that as I was driving... and... I haven't found somebody in my world. You found anyone in yours?

**KELLY**
No.

**JACK**
So I was thinking... maybe if I met anybody in my world who was good for you and if you know somebody in New York good for me, we could fix
each other up.

KELLY
You think?

JACK
Worth a try. We don't wanna be alone forever, do we?

KELLY
Probably not.

They hold a look. He kisses her softly.

JACK
That was... y'know if the guy asks me can she kiss, now I'll be able to tell him if you can.

KELLY
Good thinking.

And they kiss again, this one escalates a little. They break.
And then he holds her. Tightly as the CAMERA PULLS UP to an AERIAL VIEW of them, embracing at the water's edge.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAINE TURNPIKE - AERIAL SHOT - DUSK

Police cars, lights flashing, motor down the highway. Behind them... on a flatbed truck... a thirty foot giant crocodile. Headed down the southbound lane of the Maine turnpike. Rolling. Rolling. Rolling along. It doesn't even look ridiculous. We've become accustomed to such sights.

As we lift up higher and higher, Richie Havens' "I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW" RESUMES. Eventually, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - SUNSET

Jack and Kelly board his vehicle. They drive off, as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BICKERMAN FARM - SUNSET

Daffy Mrs. Bickerman sits at the end of her dock, feet dangling in the water. Throwing bread crumbs.

BICKERMAN
Cute little Buttons. Mommy loves

REVEAL

Three, maybe four, crocodile hatchlings, a foot in length, are swimming near her feet, eating the bread, nibbling her toes. OFF them, THEN happy Mrs. Bickerman, we:

FADE OUT.

THE END