

lake placid

written by:

david e. kelley

May 6, 1998

Full Pink Draft

NOTE: THE HARD COPY OF THIS SCRIPT CONTAINED  
SCENE NUMBERS, WHICH HAVE BEEN REMOVED FOR THIS  
"SOFT" TEXT COPY.

"LAKE PLACID"

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

(dry)

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?

KELLY

Um.

(bravado)

No, no. Let's go.

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.

DANIELS

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.

(then)

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!!

(to Jack)

Did you see that?

JACK

Alright.

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

What's wrong with my  
fingernails these are  
perfectly good--

JACK (CONT'D)

--as Emily Post, it doesn't  
make sense--

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, debboards 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

(to Kelly)

Who is this man?

JACK

Me.

HECTOR

(rapid fire)

I could see the algae blooms just  
coming in, how long has this lake  
been stagnant?

(extending 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  
(flaring)  
I have not.

KEOUGH  
(frustrated)  
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  
No.

KEOUGH (CONT'D)  
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

(scolding)

KEOUGH

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)

hazing, new fingernails  
in the woods?

JACK

I'm not picking--

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)

You'll be glad you didn't shoot me then, you'll be tongue massaging my hemorrhoids, just before running off to get your sister pregnant, who you probably already call mom.

KEOUGH

Hey look, I'm sure you finished first in your class but I think you need to be retired to the big rubber room, where you can play with soft stuffed reptiles.

And now all the others, awakened, are charging.

KELLY  
(arriving)  
Hey! What is going on?

HECTOR  
This man takes a pistol to pee!

KEOUGH  
He's crawling around--

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  
We're a team here. It won't kill you to get  
along.

KEOUGH (CONT'D)  
He's a fruitcake!

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.)

(calmly)

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

(working 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

(calmly)

Yes.

The three exchange looks.

KELLY

Are you okay?

KEOUGH

(calmly; almost sweet)

Other than feeling slightly embarrassed, I'm perfectly fine.

(then)

Could you cut me down?

HECTOR

Promise you won't kill me, first.

KEOUGH

(calmly)

I have no interest in ever looking at you, Hector.

(again)

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

(calm)

Thank you.

(then)

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.

(then)

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

(still 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?  
(then)  
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.  
(then)

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  
Which is exactly  
what...

HECTOR (CONT'D)  
Please, Hank, let me finish  
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.

CUT TO:

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

(quiet)  
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 you. Come eat your supper little buttons. Nibble Mommy's toes.

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