

P I R A N H A

Screenplay by

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Shooting Script

FINAL DRAFT
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1 PATH THROUGH WOODS, MOONLIT NIGHT

A young couple walking along in hiking gear. They pause for a moment. We hear crickets.

BARBARA
It's got to lead somewhere.

DAVE
We'll stop and make camp pretty soon. Got your breath?

BARBARA
Uh-huh. Let's go.

We FOLLOW them a moment, then STOP and let them walk out of the shot. There is an overgrown sign along the side of the path, we TRACK IN to read it -

U.S. ARMY TEST SITE - AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

CUT TO:

2 WIRE FENCE

Looming in the moonlight, underbrush grown up to its base.

CUT TO:

3 FENCE GATE

Creaking open in the breeze. Dave and Barbara appear, Dave holds the gate still -

DAVE
Looks like nobody's been up here for a long time.
(starts in)
It's open house.

BARBARA
Think we ought to?

DAVE
Who's gonna know the difference?
Come on.

CUT TO:

4 DESERTED COURTYARD

Far across it are several low, military-looking buildings, a barren flagpole before them. Dave and Barbara appear and walk into the center of the yard.

BARBARA

Maybe it's some kind of military place. I'm gonna look around, okay?

DAVE

Don't go too far.
(stays put as
Barbara walks away)

CUT TO:

5 WATER SURFACE

Glinting in the moonlight. Very still.

CUT TO:

6 WATER

From further back, the edge of a huge pond set in concrete.

CUT TO:

7 WATER SURFACE, CLOSE SHOT

At edge of pond. Barbara's hand appears, dips in to feel. We TILT UP to her face.

BARBARA

(calling)

Davy!

DAVE

(off)

Yeah?

BARBARA

Over here! There's a swimming pool!

CUT TO:

8 POND'S EDGE

A backpack thuds to the ground, followed by one hiking boot, then another.

DAVE

(off)

Think there's anything in it?

CUT TO:

9 BARBARA & DAVE

At pond's edge peeling off their clothes.

BARBARA

Turkey. What could be in it?
It's a concrete pond.

DAVE

Ever see the Creature from the
Black Lagoon?

BARBARA

No.

DAVE

Attack of the Crab Monsters?

BARBARA

Don't you try to scare me. C'mon,
we can wash off, it won't be so
funky in that sleeping bag.

They move out of the shot and we hold on the pile of
their clothes.

BARBARA

(off)

Whoooooh! It's cold! Hey, what's
this?

DAVE

(off)

It's my big toe. Don't horse
around.

BARBARA

(off)

Ever see Revenge of the Toe-Snatchers?

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

(off)

You're not funny.

We hear them start to splash and giggle. We TRACK AWAY from the pile of clothes, away from the pond.

BARBARA

(off)

Hah! Gotcha!

DAVE

(off)

Okay, knock it off, it's too dark to fool around. Barbara!

BARBARA

(off)

What? I didn't lay a finger on you.

DAVE

(off)

The hell you didn't, you pinched me. Ow!

BARBARA

(off)

Don't. That's not funny, Davy.

DAVE

(off)

Something bit me, I'm not kidding, there's something - AHHHHHH!

BARBARA

(off)

DAVY!

We hear screaming and thrashing but continue to TRACK AWAY, moving till the courtyard and buildings from shot #4 are in sight, then STOP. One last scream, then silence. A window lights up in one of the buildings.

CUT TO:

CUT TO:

11 POND

The surface is ghostly and still in the moonlight.

FADE TO BLACK:

12 TITLE

Flashes on the black background.

PIRANHA

CUT TO:

13 INT. AIRPORT - VIDEOGAME SCREEN.

A tiny abstract diver "swims" along the flickering scan lines of a "Jaws" arcade game until "eaten" by a toothsome fish.

14 MAGGIE

Maggie McKeown, an attractive woman in her late twenties, is letting her inability to master the game get to her. In background we see EARL LYON, her boss, conferring with the woman behind a car-rental counter. He walks over to Maggie, whose eyes remain fixed on the game.

MAGGIE

Well?

EARL

All set. You can leave the car at Indian Springs and rent a jeep. Those roads are pretty rough.

MAGGIE

No sweat.

With a sigh she gives up on the game and turns to face him. They look at each other for a moment.

MAGGIE

Hey, don't worry, I can handle it.

EARL

(forces a grin)

Sure you can. I didn't think so I wouldn't be sending you.

(CONTINUED)

13. CONTINUOUS

MAGGIE

I found the bigamist, didn't I?

EARL

Right.

MAGGIE

And the bal-check lady? Mrs. Pilgrim?

EARL

Right.

MAGGIE

And I found Joe Schneider?

EARL

Three times. But this isn't your routine rabbit, these kids have -

MAGGIE

I can find anything, I'm two-thirds bloodhound, I told you that when you hired me -

14. Maggie reaches into a pocket - nothing there. She begins to panic, searching all over herself.

MAGGIE

My ticket! I thought I - oh, God, where did I -

Earl produces the ticket, trying not to smirk. Maggie snatches it, grabs her luggage, just beating Earl to it.

MAGGIE

I can manage it, Earl.

EARL

(backs off, nods)

Of course you can.

MAGGIE

It's money in the bank.

Maggie turns to go and her suitcase springs open, spilling clothes, make-up stuff, etc., all over the floor. She gives Earl a sheepish smile.

CUT TO:

15. RIVER THROUGH THE WOODS, MORNING LIGHT

Clear and fresh.

CUT TO:

16. MINNOW IN MAN'S HAND

A hook being poked through the fish. We PULL BACK to see PAUL GROGAN, around thirty, squatting to bait his fish line.

CUT TO:

18 PAUL

Standing, casting his line into the river.

CUT TO:

19 WATER SURFACE

Hook and bobber make a soft PLOP as they land in the center of the current.

DISSOLVE TO:

20 PAUL

Sitting, holding the pole idly in one hand.

DISSOLVE TO:

21 WATER SURFACE

River running peacefully. SMASH! A huge catfish breaks the surface, hooked, thrashing, then dives back under.

CUT TO:

22 CATFISH, CLOSE SHOT

Fighting for its life - losing -

CUT TO:

23 PAUL

Pulling the fish in, laying it on the bank. Its sides heave, he removes the hook -

CUT TO:

24 PAUL

Washing blood from his hands in the river. He sits by the dead fish, pulls a pint-bottle of whiskey from his tackle-box, raises it in toast to the fish, and takes a long pull.

CUT TO:

25 PAUL, BEHIND CABIN

Splitting firewood with an axe -

CUT TO:

26 PAUL, INT. CABIN KITCHEN

Bringing an armload of wood in to the wood stove he passes a small mirror tacked above the sink, sees himself. He has a three-day stubble. He scratches at it -

CUT TO:

27 PAUL, INT. BATHROOM

Rooting through the medicine cabinet for a new razor, he comes across a lipstick. Looks at it, shakes his head, tosses it into the wastebasket.

DISSOLVE TO:

28 PAUL, INT. KITCHEN

Clean-shaven now, carefully pouring the last of the whiskey bottle into a canteen. We FOLLOW the bottle down as he lays it in a box full of empties.

DISSOLVE TO:

29 PAUL, CABIN PORCH

Paul sits in front of a small wooden cabin cleaning the catfish laid on newspapers on the top step of the porch. An old dog appears, noses at the fish. Paul pushes it back gently.

PAUL

That's my lunch, Brandy, you stay back. Sit.

(the dog sits)

Where's the old man, draggin' behind?

We PULL BACK a bit as JACK, a scruffy fellow of indeterminate age and a certain seedy dignity trudges into SHOT, pulling a child's wagon with a sack in it. He plops down next to Paul.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

That trip up from town's a killer.
I hope you appreciate this.

PAUL

You oughtta get a car, Jack.

JACK

I got a car. Had it for years.
It's up on blocks where it belongs.
Doesn't cost me, doesn't pollute. Safer,
too. Get one yourself, then you can
lug your own stuff up here for a change.

Jack sighs and pulls bottles from the sack, lining them
up by Paul.

JACK

One scotch, one gin, one bourbon,
one vodka.

PAUL

Ah, Jack, you're the Seventh Cavalry.
I just ran dry this morning.

He opens the gin bottle and starts to fill his canteen.

JACK

Oh yea, I almost forgot.
(lifts from bag)
One sack of corn meal. Man
cannot live by booze alone.

PAUL

I been doing okay so far. So what
have I been missing?

JACK

Back there? Nothing, the usual.
People running around, lousing up the land,
fouling up the air, and then complaining
because they don't enjoy life anymore.
Better off up here by ourselves. By the way,
that'll be \$32.50 Plus Tax. And, of course-
a small delivery charge.

PAUL

Greedy old fart.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED

JACK

You rented a cabin, not a delivery boy.

PAUL

I hadn't rented it you'd be back selling elastic fruit or whatever it was you did down there.

Paul takes a pull of gin.

JACK

I'd jump in the river first.
(indicates bottle)
That can get to be a habit.

PAUL

What's it to you?

JACK

(shrugs, hurt)
Us hermits ought to stick together.
(rises)
C'mon girl, let's go. We come back in a week, maybe he'll be a little friendlier.

CUT TO:

30 DIRT ROAD THROUGH THE WOODS

A rutted logging road. A Jeep careens into the shot, axles slamming into a pothole, kicking up dust.

CUT TO:

31 JEEP

Grinds to a halt in a cloud of dust. Steam pours from under the hood. Maggie gets out and opens the hood. There is a huge wash of radiator steam.

CUT TO:

32 FRYING PAN

Catfish fillets sizzling in grease, Paul's hand shaking the pan. A KNOCK at the door.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED

PAUL
I'ts open!

CUT TO:

33 KITCHEN

Maggie peeks around the doorway as Paul is sitting down with a plateful of fish and his canteen.

MAGGIE
Paul Grogan?
(enters, offers her
card)
My name is Maggie McKeown, I work
for a skip-tracing company -

PAUL
(ignores her card)
What's that?

MAGGIE
We find missing people. Now
what I'm -

PAUL
Did my ex-wife send you?

MAGGIE
I'm looking for a pair of teenage
kids, they've been missing a week
now. They told friends they
might go backpacking up here.

PAUL
(shrugs, begins to
eat)
Haven't seen 'em. You talk to
the Sheriff's people?

MAGGIE
They said it's a big mountain.

PAUL
(through a mouthful)
They're right. It is.

MAGGIE
I figure they might have followed
along the river. Are there places
to swim near here?

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED

PAUL

If they drowned, they'd be swept down to the dam. You're starting at the wrong end.

MAGGIE

You're the wrong end, all right.

(waits)

Look, am I interrupting something? This is important.

PAUL

Hey, cool your jets lady, I didn't ax-murder your young couple. I haven't seen them, I can't help you.

MAGGIE

Are there any other shacks up here?

PAUL

Cabins. This is a cabin.

MAGGIE

Are there any more of them? Any other places they might have holed up in?

PAUL

(sighs)

Old fella named Jack has a place down river a bit. They're not with him. And there was some kind of Army testing site up the mountain. Closed down five or six years ago.

MAGGIE

Let's go.

PAUL

Go where?

MAGGIE

You're taking me up there.

PAUL

No I'm not.

CUT TO:

34 JEEP

Banking over a narrow, rutted logging road, spraying up with dust -

CUT TO:

35 PAUL & MAGGIE, FRONT SEAT

Maggie gunning the jeep over the road, Paul trying to get a drink from his canteen without knocking his teeth out as the jeep rattles and slams through the ruts. He gives up, caps it.

PAUL

Jesus, take it easy.

MAGGIE

Don't worry, I'm a good driver.

PAUL

Glad to hear it, I'll take a nap.

MAGGIE

You think I'm wasting my time here, don't you?

PAUL

Nope. I think you're wasting my time.

CUT TO:

36 TESTING SITE GATE

Swinging open, Paul and Maggie standing before it. They shrug to each other, go in through it.

CUT TO:

37 DESERTED COURTYARD

We saw in shot #4. Paul and Maggie cross the courtyard, enter one of the buildings.

CUT TO:

38 INT. BUILDING

They walk in a deserted hallway. Echoes-

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED

MAGGIE
Davidavidavidavid! BarbaraBarbara!

CUT TO:

39 HALLWAY

Looking down from their P.O.V. Absolutely empty.

CUT TO:

40 FRONT OF BUILDING

We see the window that was lit in shot #10. No sign of life.

MAGGIE
(off)
Davidavidavidavid!

CUT TO:

41 COURTYARD

Empty, the barren flagpole standing eerily.

MAGGIE
(off)
Barbarabarabara!

CUT TO:

42 POND, PAUL & MAGGIE

We FOLLOW them along the edge.

MAGGIE
What were they testing here?

PAUL
Who knows? I hiked up here once with my ex-wife, they had guard dogs out, the fence was electrified, the works.

MAGGIE
Hold it.
(she sees something on the ground, picks it up)

CUT TO:

43 MAGGIE'S HAND

A golden disc earring - engraved with initials.

MAGGIE

B.R. Barbara Randolph.

44 PAUL AND MAGGIE

Paul holds up a hiking sock he has found.

PAUL

Think this might belong to them?

They look to each other, then out over the water. Paul bends and skims some leaves off the top.

CUT TO:

45 UNDERWATER SHOT, FISHEYE P.O.V.

ZOOM up at Paul's hand. He takes it out unharmed.

CUT TO:

46 PAUL AND MAGGIE

MAGGIE

Their parents said they were both excellent swimmers.

PAUL

Wouldn't they be floating on top by now?

MAGGIE

It takes a while for the body to bloat with gas.

PAUL

Nice business you're in.

We PAN AWAY from them across the pond, approximating their gaze, till we see a small shed on the far side with cable and wire running from it in every direction.

MAGGIE

(off)

Think there's a way to pull the plug on this thing?

CUT TO:

46 CONTINUED

PAUL
(off)
It's worth a look.

CUT TO:

47 SHED

We FOLLOW Paul and Maggie in. The room is full of scientific equipment. There are charts and graphs held down on a desk by a coffee mug. Maggie lifts it - still coffee inside - sniffs, tastes -

MAGGIE
Still warm.

CUT TO:

48 SHED FLOOR, GEAR

David and Barbara's backpacks, boots, clothes, heaped in a corner. Maggie examines them -

MAGGIE
They're been here all right. And unless they brought a complete change of clothes -

PAUL
I say we drain the pond.

CUT TO:

49 INSTRUMENT PANEL

We PAN ACROSS various dials and levers - Temp., Agitation, Salinity, Ph Factor, Mineral Balance, and STOP at 'Drain On-Off' lever -

MAGGIE
(off)
You think we ought to?

CUT TO:

50 PAUL AND MAGGIE

PAUL
If it still works, it's the quickest way to know if they're down there or not..

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED

MAGGIE

Oh God, I hope they're not.

Paul pulls the lever back. There is a mechanical humming sound, they look at each other.

MAN

(off, from doorway)

What are you doing?

CUT TO:

51 DOORWAY

DR. HOAK, a bearded, middle-aged man with a clothsack over his shoulder, a boat hook in his hand and a horrified look on his face. He drops the sack.

CUT TO:

52 ROOM, PAUL, MAGGIE, HOAK

The man steps in, reaches for the lever -

PAUL

Who the hell are you?

Paul grabs his arm to stop him, he pulls away and knocks Paul back with the boat-hook, goes for the lever again. Paul grabs the hook, Hoak tries to yank it away but Paul holds on. They struggle, crashing around the tiny room.

CUT TO:

53 MAGGIE

We FOLLOW Maggie as she darts around the fight, trying not to get crushed, looking for a weapon to help with. She picks up a chair - too heavy, she can't get it over her head. Puts it down. Picks up a knife, considers its sharp point, puts it down. The man has Paul against a wall, pressing the bar of the boat-hook across his throat. Maggie grabs the canteen from the floor, rushes up and smashes it to the back of Hoak's head. He kicks back with his leg, knocking her down, continues to strangle Paul. Maggie gets up, pounds the man's head twice more with the canteen. He whirls, clipping her with the butt of the boat-hook, and Paul hits him with all his might just over the ear. The man goes down in a heap, Maggie is flat on her back, and Paul sinks to his knees holding his hand. They lay that way for a long moment, breathing hard. Paul speaks, gasping--

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED

PAUL

Are you -- are you okay?

MAGGIE

(wheezing)

I think - think he - knocked
the wind out of me. How 'bout
you?

PAUL

My hand feels broken.

MAGGIE

Who is he? Is he alive?

PAUL

No idea. Whoever he is - or
was - he didn't want us draining
that pond.

MAGGIE

If you could - could help me - to
my feet - I could breathe better.

Paul stands, moves to help her up. They look at the
man.

MAGGIE

He's breathing.

PAUL

No thanks to you.

MAGGIE

What am I supposed to do? He had
you by the throat.

PAUL

I would've gotten loose in a
second.

(finds his canteen)

Look at this, you put a dent in it.
(takes a drink)

MAGGIE

Can I have a sip of that?

PAUL

It's not water.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED

Maggie holds her hand out. Paul shrugs, gives her the canteen and goes to look in the man's sack on the floor. Maggie takes a drink and grimaces.

MAGGIE

You're right, it's not water. What's in there?

CUT TO:

54 PAUL, SACK

PAUL

Looks like a Persian, two tabbies and a cocker spaniel.

(he pulls a dead cat out by the tail)

MAGGIE

Jesus.

PAUL

Everybody needs a hobby.

MAGGIE

Hobby my ass. Look at this.

We FOLLOW Paul over to where Maggie is bent over a large empty fish tank.

PAUL

Tropical fish?

CUT TO:

55 TANK, FROM ABOVE

The center section of it is broken up by a series of plastic walls that form a complicated maze.

MAGGIE

It's like for laboratory rats, where they have to make it through an obstacle course to get a reward.

PAUL

This place gives me the creeps. Let's take a look at that pond.

CUT TO:

56 POND BOTTOM

Paul and Maggie walking in the drained pond. We FOLLOW them; stepping around small puddles left in the concrete. Paul squats, tastes water from one of the puddles. He frowns.

MAGGIE

What is it?

PAUL

Water's salty.
(he shrugs)

MAGGIE

Where does this drain to?
(they continue walking)

PAUL

It was a fish hatchery before the Army took it over. It probably drains underground into the river.

MAGGIE

(sees something ahead)

Uh-oh.

They hurry ahead to a huge grate in the pond floor. There is a skeleton twisted around the bars. Paul stops to examine it.

PAUL

It's a dog. Something big like a shepherd or a labrador.
(looks to grate)
I wonder if they could have fit through here?

MAGGIE

Not in one piece.
(beat)
Think he's all right up there?

We hear the roar of an engine starting.

PAUL

Oh shit.

CUT TO:

57 WHEEL OF JEEP

Kicking up dust as it peels out.

CUT TO:

58 DIRT ROAD, PAUL & MAGGIE

Arrive panting, to find a cloud of dust where the jeep was.

MAGGIE

He must have hot wired it.

PAUL

Very observant.

CUT TO:

59 HOAK

Blood dripping into his eyes, obscuring his vision as he struggles to control the vehicle. He blinks and shakes his head as if to keep from fainting.

CUT TO:

JEEP

Careens crazily down the road.

CUT TO:

HOAK

The effort is too much. He blacks out.

CUT TO:

JEEP

runs up an embankment and flips over. The horn sticks.

CUT TO:

60 PAUL AND MAGGIE

Running to the scene.

CUT TO:

61 HOAK

Lying unconscious, his forehead bleeding profusely. We PULL BACK to include Paul and Maggie. She takes his pulse.

MAGGIE

He's alive.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED

PAUL

He's indestructible. Are there any bones broken?

MAGGIE

What am I, Florence Nightengale? You see as much as I do, he's unconscious, his head is bleeding.

PAUL

We'll carry him down to the cabin. If he screams out in pain, there's probably something broken.

MAGGIE

Carry him?

PAUL

We'll wait a second. You catch your breath.

MAGGIE

You're all heart.

62 RIVER

We PAN ALONG with its flow till we come to a pair of legs dangling up to mid-calf in it, then TILT UP to see Jack sitting on a little dock, cleaning fish. His boots sit on one side of him and Brandy on the other, sniffing the fish. Jack scoops the innards from the fish and flicks them into the water.

CUT TO:

63 FISH GUT

Bobbing on the surface, we FOLLOW it downstream a ways until -

SNAP

There is a rapid stir on the surface and the guts are gone so fast we don't see what got them. We hear Brandy begin to growl.

CUT TO:

64 JACK & BRANDY

Jack watching the dog as it stares out into the water and growls, teeth bared.

JACK

Now what's got into you? It's just the river out there, same as always. I swear, I think you're getting senile is what. Soft in the head.

Jack scoops another wad of fishgut out and tosses it into the water, shaking his head. He sticks his Bowie knife into the dock post beside him and begins to bend over to rinse the gutted fish out. He stops, looks puzzled, winces. He looks to his feet. His eyes widen.

CUT TO:

65 JACK, CLOSE UP

Of his face as he shrieks in pain, shriek after shriek staring in shock as we hear Brandy barking frantically next to him.

66 JACK'S FEET

In the water. Bloody bubbles churn around them.

CUT TO:

67 BARRACUDA

Stuffed and mounted on the wall. We PULL BACK to see Maggie standing staring at it, inside Paul's cabin. On the fireplace mantel below the barracuda are the bottles Jack brought, lined up. We FOLLOW Maggie around the room.

PAUL

(off, next room)

There's no way we're gonna get this guy down to town without your jeep.

MAGGIE

Then where's the nearest help? He might have a fractured skull or something.

Maggie picks up a framed picture off a table -

PAUL

(off)

We'll have to get him to the dam. There's usually a ranger there.

CUT TO:

68 PICTURE

A little girl in a T-shirt that says 'LOST RIVER', smiling and holding an oar.

MAGGIE

How do we get there?

CUT TO:

69 ROOM

Paul enters, takes the picture from Maggie and puts it back on the table as he passes through the front door.

PAUL

On a raft.

MAGGIE

(following Paul out
the door)

Don't kid around. How do we get there?

CUT TO:

70 RAFT

Paul and Maggie are pushing a small, primitive-looking log raft end-over-end toward the river bank.

PAUL

I read my daughter Huckleberry Finn last summer and she wanted to light out for the territories. We did this for a compromise.

MAGGIE

Looks authentic.

PAUL

Cut the logs ourselves, didn't put a single nail in her. It's all leather lashing.

MAGGIE

Where' your daughter now?

PAUL

Summer camp on the other side of the dam.

(they have the raft tilted
on the very edge of the bank now)

Stand back when we let go, it's gonna splash.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED

MAGGIE

How sturdy is this thing?

PAUL

We never tried it. My daughter
is afraid of the river.

They push the raft, it splashes into the water, floats.

CUT TO:

71 CHILD'S FOOT

Dipping in to test the flowing river. The foot jerks
out of the water. We PULL BACK to see Suzie, the little
girl in the picture in shot #68, sitting on the edge of
a small dock in her bathing suit. A teenage girl wearing
a LOST RIVER T-shirt stands behind her.

LAURA

Don't be scared, Suzie. You just
have to swim out to the marker and back.
You've probably swum twice that far in a
pool.

Suzie stares at the water, shakes her head.

LAURA

If you don't pass your solo swim you
can't get your Water Scout badge.

SUZIE

I don't care.

LAURA

What are you afraid of, honey?

SUZIE

Things.

LAURA

What things?

SUZIE

Things in the water. That they
don't have in swimming pools.

(CONTIUED)

71 CONTINUED

LAURA

(smiles)

Like sea monsters? There's only a few little fish in here, Suzie, they eat plants at the very bottom of the river and aren't at all interested in little girls' fingers and toes..

MR. DUMONT

(off, calling)

Dickenson!

LAURA

Over here!

72 DUMONT, the camp head, appears carrying a stack of letters. He wears a safari jacket and a pair of Madras shorts with a huge sheathed Bowie knife.

DUMONT

Letter for you, Dickenson. That same boy.

LAURA

Thank you.

DUMONT

Still haven't tackled your solo swim, Grogan?

SUZIE

No, sir.

LAURA

She's afraid of things in the water.

DUMONT

Things! What things? Fish?
(he stares at Suzie)
People eat fish, Grogan. Fish don't eat people! You don't want to let your squadmates down, do you? What squad are you on?

LAURA

She's with my squad. The Minnows.

DUMONT

Do you want to be the one who costs The Minnows the camp competition? Of course you don't.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED

LAURA

She's doing really well in the handicrafts, Mr. Dumont.

DUMONT

Handicrafts! Handicrafts don't take any nerve, any intestinal fortitude. You know what that means, Grogan?

SUZIE

Yes sir. Guts.

DUMONT

Right. Tell you what. I'm taking some kids across to the new resort tomorrow to be in a television commercial. If you do your solo swim, you can be in it too.

SUZIE

I don't want to.

DUMONT

Nonsense. Everybody wants to be on television.

LAURA

Is there any mail for her?

DUMONT

(flips through letters)
Nope. Skunked again, Grogan.
(starts to leave,
then stops and points at
Suzie)

Guts.

(leaves)

LAURA

Your dad hasn't written you, has he?

Suzie shrugs, hangs her head. Laura puts her arm around her.

LAURA

C'mom honey, let's go inside. Maybe we'll have you try it tomorrow with an inner tube.

Suzie takes one last frightened look at the river as they walk away.

CUT TO:

73 RAFT, LONG SHOT, EVENING

Paul and Maggie poling it down the river. The man is propped in a sitting position, hands tied, staring out over the water.

CUT TO:

74 RAFT, ON BOARD

MAGGIE

(peeking at Hoak)

I wish he'd say something.

PAUL

He's taken some hard shots; he seems kind of dazed.

MAGGIE

Who do you think he is?

PAUL

He's a goddam nut case, that's who. Look at him.

MAGGIE

I'm trying not to. He just stares, it gives me the willies. How long is it to the dam?

PAUL

I don't think we can make it before it gets dark. We'll have to camp somewhere and go the rest of the way in the morning.

MAGGIE

We have to spend a night with him?

PAUL

Don't see how we can avoid it.

Maggie squints to see something on shore - we hear BARKING.

CUT TO:

75 JACK'S DOCK, MAGGIE'S P.O.V.

Brandy is out on the dock barking at them, going wild -

MAGGIE

What's that?

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED

PAUL
Jack's dog. His place is set back
in the woods there.

MAGGIE
Is it always so ferocious?

PAUL
You know I don't think I've ever seen
her do more than rollover and beg for
food. We better take a look -

CUT TO:

76 DOCK, BRANDY

Barking frantically.

CUT TO:

77 BOOTS, DOCK

Jack's boots sitting empty. We PULL BACK to see Paul and
Maggie pulling up, climbing on. Brandy barks at them and
pulls at them to follow.

PAUL
Easy girl. Easy.

MAGGIE
(sees something)
Paul? Look here...

CUT TO:

78 DOCK BOARDS

Two parallel trails of blood lead from the edge of the
dock into the woods -

CUT TO:

79 PAUL, MAGGIE, BRANDY

We FOLLOW as the dog leads them up the bank into the woods,
till they stop, horrified with what they see ahead -

MAGGIE
Oh my God. His feet.

CUT TO:

80 JACK'S FACE

Bluish, frozen in a scream, mouth and eyes wide open -

CUT TO:

81 PAUL AND MAGGIE

PAUL

(examining Jack)

He must have dragged himself this far.

MAGGIE

But his feet. They're gone.

PAUL

He bled to death.

MAGGIE

What could have done it?

PAUL

(shakes head)

He was - I don't know -

MAGGIE

(touches shoulder)

I'm sorry.

PAUL

I'll get a shovel.

(starts to cry

turns from Maggie)

He wouldn't want to be buried in town.

CUT TO:

82 WOODS, NIGHT, CAMPFIRE

Campers circled around the fire as Betsy, a counselor, tells a ghost story. We PAN AROUND the circle to see - Campers listening intently. Laura, smiling, stroking the head of a little boy asleep in her lap. A boy so transfixed his marshmallow is burning unnoticed at the end of his stick. Dumont, as spooked as the children. Suzie and her buddy Darlene, holding hands in fright.

(CONTINUED)

BETSY

He was squat and thick, like an ancient tree stump, his gnarled skin the color of iron. He smelled of the earth, a dank, heavy odor of timeless decay. Viy was so old his eyelids sagged to the floor like two thick ropes.

"RAISE-MY-EYELIDS!"

The demons peeled the heavy eyelids back. "THERE!" Said Viy in a voice like an earthquake. "THERE HE IS!"

CUT TO:

83 HOAK

HOAK

Ahhhhhhhh!

The man's moonlit face, screaming in terror. We PULL BACK to see that he is tied down to an old couch in Jack's cabin. He screams and begins to writhe. A light comes on in the next room, Maggie appears beside him.

MAGGIE

Easy now. Easy.

HOAK

(as if trying to tell her something important)
Razorteeth.

MAGGIE

What's that? What's Razorteeth?

MAN

Did you drain the pond?

MAGGIE

Yes. We found a -

HOAK

(struggling to get up)
You let them out!

MAGGIE

Let who out?

Paul comes into the room in his shorts -

PAUL

You okay? What's he doing?

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED

MAGGIE
Who did we let out? Was it a
young couple?

HOAK
You dont' know what you've done.
Untie me.

PAUL
(grabbing man and
shaking him)
The question is what you've done,
mister. What happened to those
kids?

HOAK
(hysterical)
You don't know - they breed
like flies - there'll be no
way to stop them -

PAUL
(shaking him hard)
Talk sense, dammit! Those kids-

MAGGIE
Paul, don't -

They'll kill me! They will. I won't talk!

PAUL
(raising his hand)
The hell you won't!

MAGGIE
Paul!

Paul hesitates, then let's go of him.

PAUL
Okay, my friend. They'll sweat it out
of you in town.

Paul stalks out. Maggie looks at the man, who is sweating,
bug-eyed with fear and confusion.

HOAK
They'll kill me. They'll kill all of
us. They will.

CUT TO:

84 BEDROOM, PAUL

Sitting up in bed, sipping from his canteen. Maggie appears in the doorway.

MAGGIE

He thinks somebody's going to kill him.

PAUL

He's right. I am, if he steps out of line.

MAGGIE

Have you got any cigarettes?

PAUL

Nah, I quit a year ago. It interfered with my drinking.

MAGGIE

Oh.

(pause)

Can I come in for a minute?

PAUL

Sure.

Maggie enters and sits on the edge of the bed. Paul offers her a nip, she shakes her head no.

MAGGIE

Did you start drinking before or after?

PAUL

Huh? Before or after what?

MAGGIE

Your wife left you.

PAUL

What kind of question is that? Look, I'm not one of your lost people -

MAGGIE

Missing people. I'm sorry, I was interested.

PAUL

Don't be.

(pause)

How'd you know she left me?

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE

Lucky guess. If she had died you'd have pictures of her in your cabin. Mind if I sit up here?

PAUL

Go ahead.

(Maggie sits beside him)

When she left she said she couldn't stand the sight of me.

MAGGIE

How long were you together?

PAUL

Ten years. She was seventeen when we eloped in her father's car. We thought we had the world by the balls.

MAGGIE

Where did you live?

PAUL

In town. I worked in the smelting operation down river at the quarry.

(Maggie moves closer)

Then, the government closed us down. Said we were killing too many fish. Then they bought the land cut-rate, gave it to the Army, and the Army sold it to some resort outfit. Somebody must have made a bundle somewhere along the line.

MAGGIE

What's wrong?

PAUL

Huh?

MAGGIE

You're so tense.

PAUL

(shrugs)

I guess I'm not used to being around people.

MAGGIE

That's obvious. I've been trying to hint my way under the covers for five minutes now.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED

PAUL

You're really something. I bet you got an A in assertiveness training.

MAGGIE

Look, I'm too freaked out by all this to be alone tonight, and it's either you or Silent Sam out there.

PAUL

Thanks.

MAGGIE

I could really use the company.

Paul sighs and opens the covers. Maggie climbs under and they sit awkwardly for a moment. Paul shuts the kerosene lamp off. A pause-

MAGGIE

I've never been on a raft before.

CUT TO:

85 MAGGIE'S HAND, RIVER, MORNING.

Her hand trailing in the water as the raft floats downstream. We PULL BACK to see her and Paul sitting at one end, the man propped up at the other, tied, staring sullenly at them. Brandy sits nervously to one side. Paul takes a liquor bottle from his tackle-box to refill his canteen -

PAUL

Okay, my friend, number one- what happened to those kids?

(no response)

All right, try number two -

What were you doing up at the army site?

CUT TO:

86 HOAK

Staring at Maggie's hand in the water -

PAUL

We got all morning, pal. Try this -

CUT TO:

87 HAND IN WATER, HOAK'S P.O.V.

PAUL
(off)
What's your name?

CUT TO:

88 MAN

HOAK
Stop that!

CUT TO:

89 RAFT

Paul and Maggie look at him in surprise - (all through this scene Brandy stands at the edge of the raft snarling and baring her teeth, getting more and more excited, her anger matching Paul's).

PAUL
He speaks.

MAGGIE
Stop what?

HOAK
Your hand. Take your hand out of the water.

MAGGIE
(lifts hand, confused)
What's wrong with the water?

PAUL
Since you're talking this morning, buddy, how 'bout a name?

HOAK
(with dignity)
Hoak. Dr. Robert Hoak.

MAGGIE
What's wrong with the water?

HOAK
The water is full of carnivorous fish.
Piranha.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED

PAUL
(rolls his eyes)
Oh Christ!

MAGGIE
Wait a minute, Paul. Piranha in here?
How'd they get in?

HOAK
You let them in when you drained the
pond at the test site. If you hadn't
been in such a hurry.

PAUL
You might as well be talking about giant
cockroaches.

MAGGIE
Paul -

PAUL
Piranhas are tropical fish, this is cold
mountain water. They wouldn't last a
minute.

MAGGIE
What about Jack's feet? And that
skeleton?

PAUL
What were piranhas doing in that pond?

HOAK
Untie me.

PAUL
(on him, grabs hold)
What if I dip you in the water a bit
first, Doc? See if you're making the whole
think up or not?

Brandy is barking and snarling, crouched ready to leap
now -

CUT TO:

BRANDY
Teeth bared at the water, coiling --

CUT TO:

RAFT
PAUL
Brandy! Stop!

The dog gets more furious, finally leaps into the water -

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED

PAUL

Brandy!

The water around the dog begins to churn instantly, she snaps at it as she swims -

CUT TO:

MAGGIE

Watching, horrified. We hear Brandy thrashing.

CUT TO:

PAUL

Stunned. Brandy is yelping now.

CUT TO:

HOAK

Watching, not surprised, but grim. The dog's cries stop, we hear the churning of little boddies, then nothing.

CUT TO:

RAFT

MAGGIE

She attacked them. She knew what they were and she attacked them.

PAUL

She saw them kill Jack.

CUT TO:

WATER SURFACE

By the raft, a slick of blood rippling on it. Up pops what's left of a piranha. Only the head and a few scraps of body are left.

RAFT

Paul gingerly flicks the fish out of the water onto the raft and holds it up.

FISH

The head of a large piranha, body eaten away.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED

MAGGIE
They even eat each other.

PAUL
Jesus, look at the teeth.

MAGGIE
Is it...?

HOAK
Serrasalmus Mutandis.

CUT TO:

HOAK
Solemnly regarding the Piranha.

HOAK
...a brand-new species.

CUT TO:

90 WATER

As a soda can plops into it. We PAN over to the culprit, a small boy in a canoe, who grabs another can from a styrofoam cooler.

CUT TO:

91 CANOE, BOY, FATHER

The father paddling smoothly to a clorox bottle bouy tied in the middle of the river, catches hold of it --

CUT TO:

92 BOY, FATHER

Pulling up a net attached to the bouy. The canoe tilts.

FATHER
Lean back, we're tipping too much.
And what did I tell you about throwing
stuff in the water? If everybody did that
there wouldn't be room for the fish!

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED

The boy leans back. They get the net in -- empty. The father holds it out to see and frowns at the gaping holes.

BOY

What happened?

FATHER

Beats me. The fella at the store said this thing could hold a twenty-pound catfish. Just look at it.

BOY

Maybe something cut through it.

FATHER

There's nothing in this river with that much bite. Nothing that I've ever come across. I think we just got sold a bill of goods on these nets. Better check the other one.

DISSOLVE TO:

93 BOY, FATHER, CANOE

On another stretch of river, by another bouy. The father reaches in almost up to his shoulder, straining to get hold of the net, while the boy sits back and drinks his root beer.

FATHER

Feels like it's snagged on the bottom.

(can't get his arm free)

Dammit, now it's got me tangled.

BOY

You want me to help.

FATHER

No, you'd better stay over there and balance the canoe.

BOY

I thought you knew all about this kind of fishing. From when you were a boy.

FATHER

When I was a boy we made our own nets and made them right, Jesus, I think something's caught in it. Ouch.

(CONTINUED)

BOY
Did you get bit?

FATHER
Sure felt like it. I gotta get
loose from this -

Sudden churning, the father screaming, red froth on
the surface around his arm. The boy moves to help --

BOY
Dad!

FATHER
Stay back! Stay back!

The boy moves too quickly, the canoe begins to flip -

CUT TO:

94 BOY'S FACE

Screaming as he loses balance and heads for the water.

CUT TO:

95 DUMONT, RESORT GROUNDS

Reviewing a squad of a dozen campers -

DUMONT
Campers-- at thirteen hundred hours
we muster in front of the bathhouse
for the day's shooting. We want to
put on a good show, we want to display
the winning attitude we try to breed
here at Lost River. I think you all
know your line by now. Let's hear it.

CAMPERS
(lackluster)
It's great!

DUMONT
Weak, that was very weak, campers.
Let's have some voice now, belt it out -

CAMPERS
It's great!

DUMONT
I hand-picked you people for this
mission, don't let me down.

CUT TO:

96 CAMPERS

We TRACK IN to one little boy, looking unenthusiastic.
He doesn't yell with the others.

DUMONT

Let's have some Lost River spirit, some
Lost River pride! Let's hear it!

CAMPERS

IT'S GREAT!

The boy rolls his eyes.

CUT TO:

97 DUMONT

DUMONT

That's the ticket, campers.
Practice that to yourselves till
H-Hour.

(gives a curt nod and
marches away)

CUT TO:

98 LITTLE BOY

BOY

(muttering to the
next kid)

What a jerk!

CUT TO:

99 RAFT

Hoak is untied now -

MAGGIE

The Government paid you?

HOAK

More than we'd ever have been paid
in private work.

PAUL

For raising fish?

HOAK

It's more complicated than that.
Genetics, radiation, behavior modification,
selective breeding. They called it Operation
Razorteeth.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED

MAGGIE

What was it all for?

HOAK

To destroy the North Vietnamese river system. We were supposed to develop a strain that could live in cold water and that would reproduce at a greatly accelerated rate. They provided anything we needed, blank check. Then the war ended.

PAUL

You sound disappointed.

HOAK

They poisoned the water. All that work -

MAGGIE

But some survived -

HOAK

(smiles)

We produced a lot of mutants. A few were resistant to the poison, they ate the dead and began to breed. Suddenly, there were hundreds of them.

PAUL

Our tax dollars at work.

MAGGIE

Like the CIA secretly giving people acid trips -

PAUL

Or spreading strains of bacteria in the subway system -

HOAK

It was science. It was for the defense effort -

MAGGIE

Defense my ass. You were going to put them in rivers where they could kill people.

HOAK

I never killed --

MAGGIE

Including civilians.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED

HOAK

I didn't want --

MAGGIE

And little kids, swimming in the
rivers -

HOAK

I never meant for anyone to get
killed. It was science --

PAUL

Kids in the water --
Oh God.

MAGGIE

What's wrong?

PAUL

The dam! They've been letting water
through every couple days to keep the
level steady on the new lake. The camp
is there, the kids!

Paul grabs a pole to push the raft -

MAGGIE

Just how...dangerous are they?

HOAK

(scared now)

They kill more people every year
than sharks do. They attack
anything that moves.

CUT TO:

100 LAKE, CAMPERS

Splashing around in inner tubes, screaming with joy -

CUT TO:

101 FEET

Little feet churning in the water -

CUT TO:

102 HANDS

Tiny fingers paddling away -

CUT TO:

103 UNDERWATER SHOT, CAMPERS

Several of them racing above us in their tubes -

104 LITTLE BOYS IN TUBES, PASSING A STYROFOAM BATON.

CUT TO:

105 LAURA AND BETSY

Up to their knees in water, watching. Betsy blows a whistle.

CUT TO:

106 CAMPERS

Clambering out of the water -

CUT TO:

107 LAURA

LAURA
Minnows over here!

BETSY
(off)
Goldfish! Let's go!

3RD COUNSELOR
(off)
Guppies! Let's have my Guppies!

The Minnows, very young girls, muster in line before Laura.

LAURA
Okay, buddy system, hold up your arms!

CUT TO:

108 MINNOWS

We PAN ALONG the line. The girls hold their arms up in pairs. Suzie and Darlene are buddies -

CUT TO:

109 LAURA

Addressing all the squads.

LAURA

It's ten-thirty, everyone. You know what time that is.

(campers all groan)

That's right, calisthenics. But, since Mr. Dumont is busy across the lake and can't lead us, I don't think we could do them right, do you?

CAMPERS

NO!

LAURA

In that case, you'll just have to go back in the water for another hour.

CAMPERS

(breaking and running for tubes)

Yeaaaaaaaaay!

BETSY

(appears by Laura)

Doesn't look much like a tube-race so far, does it? Nobody stays in their lane.

LAURA

Who cares? They're having a great time.

CUT TO:

110 LONG SHOT, CANOE, BOY

The little boy lying on the overturned canoe, very much alone -

BOY

(calling)

Daddy? Daddy?

CUT TO:

111 RESORT, ACTOR

Facing the camera, flashing teeth -

ACTOR

Lost River is lost no more. Yes, friends, you can be part of a modern ecological miracle. Acres and acres of reclaimed land nestle in a scenic mountain valley, site of the newly formed Lost River Lake. You'll find swimming, sailing, water-skiing, snorkling, skin-diving, shuffleboard and just take a look at our beautiful marina -

The actor gestures and the camera ZOOMS back to show the lake behind him and there stands Dumont, watching and picking his nose -

GARDNER

(off)

Cut! Cut it!

112 REVERSE ANGLE

Showing Camera Crew shooting the Lost River Commercial. GARDNER, the Resort owner in a loud red blazer, comes storming out to Dumont -

GARDNER

What the hell you think you're doing?

DUMONT

Me? Uhm - I was - uhm - watching?

GARDNER

(seething)

We're not ready for you. We do this, we do the before-and-after on the smelting towers, then you. You're standing in camera range, we got you in the shot.

DUMONT

Oh. How'd I look?

GARDNER

(stares unbelievably)

Whitney!

A lackey in a blue blazer rushes to his side -

WHITNEY

Yes sir?

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED

GARDNER

Could you escort the gentleman back to his little friends and keep him there till we need him?

WHITNEY

Yes sir.

(leads him off)

GARDNER

(to actor and crew)

Thank God the rest of the bozos don't get here till tomorrow. Take it from the top.

CUT TO:

113 RAFT

HOAK

It was pure research. No scrounging for grant money, no academic politics. You don't know what that means to a scientist.

Paul and Maggie pole rapidly, ignoring his rationalizing.

HOAK

I mean we never thought they'd actually go through with it. If we had, well - it was such a wonderful opportunity, all the funds, the equipment--

MAGGIE

You fed them. You kept them alive.

HOAK

I was continuing the experiment. There was so much more I could do with the species, so much further I could take them. You don't - you're not holding me responsible for

(no response)

I think you are. That's incredible. I think you're blaming me.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED

PAUL

I think if you open your mouth
again, I'll stick this pole in it.

MAGGIE

Do you think they've opened the
dam up yet?

PAUL

We can only hope.

We hear a small voice in the distance.

MAGGIE

What's that?

The three of them strain to hear. A high, calling voice
floats over the water -

BOY

(off)

Daaaaaaaady-dy! Daaaaaaaaaa-dy!

The three look at each other. Maggie grabs a pole.

PAUL

Let's move it.

CUT TO:

114 MAGGIE

Straining, pushing at her pole -

CUT TO:

115 PAUL

Straining, pushing -

CUT TO:

116 HOAK

Kneeling at the front of the raft, watching ahead -

BOY

(off)

Daaaaaaa-dy! Help me Daddy.

CUT TO:

117 RAFT

Paul and Maggie poling furiously, the raft ploughing through the water.

CUT TO:

118 HOAK

Seeing, pointing --

HOAK
There! Up ahead!

CUT TO:

119 BOY, CANOE

The boy is sitting on the overturned, half-submerged canoe, his arms bleeding, looking like he's in shock. Cans of soda and beer bob in the blood-stained water around him.

BOY
Daddy? Help me, Daddy.

CUT TO:

120 MAGGIE

Calling to him -

MAGGIE
Stay on top! Stay on top of the
canoe! We're coming!
(to Paul)
It's sinking, Paul, the canoe is
sinking!

CUT TO:

121 HOAK

Watching the boy, horror-stricken --

CUT TO:

122 RAFT, CANOE

A long shot showing the distance between them, a couple dozen yards.

CUT TO:

123 PAUL
Poling furiously.

CUT TO:

124 MAGGIE
Poling --

CUT TO:

125 CANOE
We can see the prow of it sinking further into the water -

BOY
Daddy? Help me.

CUT TO:

126 HOAK'S FACE, C.U.
Watching the boy with increasing desperation -

BOY
(off)
Daddy? It's going under, Daddy.
Help me.

HOAK can't take it anymore, he leaps from the raft into the river -

CUT TO:

127 RAFT

PAUL
Doc! Get out of there, don't
do it!

CUT TO:

128 HOAK, RIVER
We FOLLOW as he swims for the canoe, ZOOM IN to his face
up gasping for air between strokes --

CUT TO:

129 BOY, CANOE

Sinking rapidly, the boy watching the water come up around him, crying softly. Just as he is about to go under, Hoak grabs him, holds him up. Hoak is submerged completely but for his hands, supporting the boy. The water around him begins to churn, red blood rising. The front of the raft appears -

CUT TO:

130 UNDERWATER

Piranha attack Hoak.

131 MAGGIE, BOY

Maggie snatching the boy up onto the raft --

CUT TO:

132 HOAK'S HANDS

Frozen into claws above the water -

CUT TO:

133 RAFT

Paul holding it steady against the current with his pole -

PAUL

Get the Doc! Pull him in!

Maggie rushes to the edge and grabs hold of Hoak's hands.

CUT TO:

134 MAGGIE

Pulling Hoak aboard. We can see by her face that the doctor is chewed pretty badly. She backs away from the body.

MAGGIE

Oh my God. Oh my God. He's still breathing!

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED

PAUL
 (holding the boy
 who stares blankly)
 What's your name?
 (no response)
 Do you remember your name?

MAGGIE
 Who else was with you? Who else
 was in the canoe?

He looks at her, speaks in a matter of fact tone -

BOY
 My daddy. He fell into the water.
 We hear Hoak moan. Paul goes to him.

CUT TO:

135 PAUL & HOAK

Paul leaning close to the doctor's face to hear -

HOAK
 (gasps)
 We knew they'd never dare to use them.
 It was pure research. Pure research.

PAUL
 Doc, you gotta tell me more about
 them. You bred them, you trained
 them. What else can they do?
 How can they be stopped?

HOAK
 (smiles slightly)
 You'd be surprised.
 (dies)

PAUL
 Christ.

Paul covers Hoak's body with his jacket. We PAN AWAY from
 him to the water behind the raft. A styrofoam cooler and
 half-dozen beer and soda cans bob in its wake.

CUT TO:

136 CAMP, LAURA, BETSY

Watching the swimming campers -

LAURA

Anyhow, it's parents' day and Suzie's father comes down and he's plastered. Same thing happened the year before, only this time Dumont tries to kick him out. We had to fish our fearless leader out of the river with a boathook.

BETSY

I would have loved to see that one.

Darlene appears by Laura and tugs on her arm.

DARLENE

Suzie's crying.

LAURA

(sighing)

What else is new? Watch out for my Minnows, Betsy.

(she goes with Darlene)

CUT TO:

137 LAURA, DARLENE, SUZIE

Standing on the river bank, Suzie in tears. Laura squats by her.

LAURA

What's the matter now, honey?
You want to tell me?

Suzie shakes her head no.

DARLENE

The kids were yelling at her cause she wouldn't race. She's afraid to put her feet in the water.

LAURA

Is that right, Suzie?

Suzie nods her head yes.

LAURA

Well, I'll try to get you out of the tube race if you want me to. Do you want me to?

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED

Suzie nods her head yes.

LAURA

In just a few days you can go home and be where the only water is in your bathtub. You're not afraid of bathtubs, are you?

Suzie shakes her head no.

LAURA

Good. You can just stay out of rivers and lakes and oceans until you're not afraid of them anymore. Listen, after lunch I'm off duty for an hour -- would you like me to take you and Darlene over to look at the new resort?

Suzie nods her head yes. Laura rises to leave.

DARLENE

Laura?

LAURA

What honey?

DARLENE

There's nothing bad in the river, is there?

LAURA

Nothing bad. Just a few little fish.

CUT TO:

138 RIVER, POLE

Breaking its surface. We PULL BACK TO see Paul heaving away, sweating -

CUT TO:

139 MAGGIE

Poling, looking grim.

CUT TO:

140 BOY

Sitting, staring in shock -

CUT TO:

141 RAFT

PAUL

So far we know that they can live
in cold water --

MAGGIE

And they seem to be moving down-
river.

PAUL

And they're big. From the size of
that head, they must be at least two
feet long.

CUT TO:

142 HOAK'S BODY

Under the red-stained sheet. We TRACK IN. One of his hands
sticks out from under the sheet, inches from the edge of
the raft -

MAGGIE

(off)

We've got to find someone who knows
how to deal with these things.

CUT TO:

143 HAND

Blood flowing down into the palm, trickling off into a
crack between the logs and into the river -

PAUL

(off)

There'll be a phone at the dam. We can
call ahead.

CUT TO:

144 LOG

We watch the log Hoak's hand rests on begin to tremble.
Something moving beneath it. Suddenly its lashing gives
way and it pops out away from the rest of the raft.

CUT TO:

145 RAFT

PAUL

(seeing log go)

Hey!

(CONTINUED)

145

MAGGIE

What is it?

PAUL

I don't know, maybe the lashing
is working loose.

A log on the other side right behind Maggie spins away.

MAGGIE

Paul! Something's under us, something's
doing it!

PAUL

The blood. It's the blood.

CUT TO:

146 RAFT FLOOR

We see the water churning in the chinks between the logs,
hear thousands of little teeth gnawing. We PAN rapidly
to Hoak's body.

PAUL

(off)

It's Doc's body, the blood is seeping
through. They're eating away at the lash-
ing to get to him.

CUT TO:

147 UNDERWATER

The Piranhas swarming at the raft.

148 RAFT

Maggie jumps as the log she is standing on breaks away
under her feet.

MAGGIE

Paul! It's coming apart!

149 Paul rushes to Hoak's corpse, begins to push it off the
raft but the boy snaps out of his daze and grabs hold of
the dead man -

BOY

My Daddy, my Daddy!

PAUL

I've got to get rid of him!

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED

BOY

No, that's my Daddy!

Paul yanks the body away, the boy's left holding the bloody coat, and throws it over the side. Paul has to grab the boy to keep him from jumping in after. There is violent bloody churning around Hoak's body as it sinks.

BOY

Daddy, Daddy!

CUT TO:

150 RAFT LOGS

Under Maggie's feet suddenly breaking loose from the raft

CUT TO:

151 MAGGIE

Stranded on two tipsy logs -

MAGGIE

Paul!

CUT TO:

152 PAUL

PAUL

Jump, Maggie, quick!

CUT TO:

153 RAFT, LOGS

Maggie leaping from the logs to the raft, narrowly escaping a plunge into the river. Another log breaks off the raft-

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED

PAUL

The blood's soaked in, they won't stop!
We've got to get to shore!

Maggie takes the bloody coat from the boy and throws it into the river - instant churning around it. They both begin to pole toward shore. Another log spins off, the bank is close, closer, they're balanced on two logs now -

CUT TO:

154 BANK

Maggie landing on the bank, falling on her side, followed by Paul leaning with the boy in his arms -

CUT TO:

155 RIVER, LOGS

The river calm again, single logs floating down it peacefully.

CUT TO:

156 BANK, PAUL, MAGGIE, BOY
(all three panting)

MAGGIE

How far is the dam?

PAUL

Close. I think it's close. I'll run ahead.

CUT TO:

157 DAM, LONG SHOT

A small dam containing the river -

CUT TO:

158 PAUL

Crashing through the woods, panting -

CUT TO:

159 CONTROL TOWER, DAM

We see someone moving around inside -

CUT TO:

160 PAUL

Dodging and stumbling through the woods. He trips, falls, rolls and comes up running, wheezing in exhaustion -

CUT TO:

161 INT. CONTROL TOWER

A ranger checking out an instrument panel much like the one at the Army test site. He stops by a gauge labeled "WATER LEVEL" and absently makes a note on his clipboard. He is eating a sandwich, and behind him is a little TV on a roller-stand from which we hear the ACTOR from #111

ACTOR (V.O.)

-So pack up your RV's, your station wagons, your trailers and cars and hustle on up to Lost River Campsites for a free introductory weekend. No charge, no obligation to buy, no -

CUT TO:

162 PAUL

Crashing through the woods -

CUT TO:

163 RANGER

Moving along the instrument panel, stops at one labelled "LEVEL CONTROL - OPEN" He is watching the TV intently now, a soap opera on -

JANET (V.O.)

But you've got to tell him sometime, Rachel.

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED

RACHEL (V.O.)

Why? If I give the baby up for adoption why does anybody have to know?

JANET (V.O.)

Don't you think he'll be suspicious?

RACHEL (V.O.)

I'll tell him it's Larry's.

The ranger has his hand on the lever, remembers something, snaps his fingers and moves away -

JANET (V.O.)

Do you think that's fair to Larry? Just when he's marrying Daphne?

CUT TO:

164 PAUL

Crashing through the woods -

CUT TO:

165 RANGER

Seen through a fish tank as he taps food flakes out of a box for his goldfish -

RACHEL (V.O.)

Then I'll say it's Tom's.

JANET (V.O.)

Tom is a priest, Rachel, you can't do that.

RACHEL (V.O.)

Phil will believe whatever I tell him, he always has.

CUT TO:

166 PAUL

Stumbling into a clearing. Beyond him we see the dam, he starts for it -

CUT TO:

167 RANGER
By the lever again, eating an apple, watching the tv -

JANET (V.O.)
And what about Dr. Robbins?

CUT TO:

168 PAUL
Running -

CUT TO:

169 RANGER
Turns to the panel, grabs the lever -

RACHEL (V.O.)
What about Dr. Robbins?

CUT TO:

170 PAUL
Pulling himself up the iron steps of the control tower -

CUT TO:

171 RANGER'S HAND
Beginning to pull the lever -

JANET (V.O.)
Rachel, I'm warning you -

A door bangs open, Paul's hand grabs the ranger's at the wrist -

CUT TO:

172 PAUL, RANGER

PAUL
Don't open it. Whatever you do, don't
open it.

CUT TO:

173 ARMY CONVOY

A convoy of army utility trucks drives past us one by one. Bringing up the rear we see a jeep, TILT DOWN to see the stars of a full colonel on the plates -

CUT TO:

174 INT. JEEP, WAXMAN AND MENGERS

Colonel Waxman in uniform, stoic, and Mengers a very worried civilian scientist.

175 BEEF HAUNCH

Being rigged on to a line by a soldier. WIDEN to show Waxman, Mengers, Paul and Maggie, at water's edge by the dam. In the background trucks pull up and soldiers pull hoses from the trucks.

WAXMAN

We're grateful you've notified us, Mr. Grogan, but your story is a little hard to swallow.

MENGERS

The piranha is a warm water fish-
(indicates water)
-this is hardly the Amazon.

PAUL

I told you these are mutations. They've already killed five people that I know of.

MENGERS

Science fiction.

WAXMAN

Ready with that bait, soldier?

SOLDIER

Yes sir.

WAXMAN

Then let her go, son.

CUT TO:

176 SOLDIER

Gets the meat swinging by the rope over his head like a hammerthrow and hurls it out over the water.

CUT TO:

177 WATER, MEAT
Splashing in and sinking.

CUT TO:

178 MENGERS
Actually a piranha was once caught in a pond in Miami, Florida. 1972, I believe. But the game and Fresh Water Fish Commission poisoned the water and, of course, that was that.

MAGGIE
That was that, huh?

MENGERS
Of course the rumors persisted, but...

WAXMAN
Pull it in, son.
They watch as the soldier reels in the line.

CUT TO:

179 END OF ROPE
Comes out of the water with only a bone and a few scraps of sinew still fastened to it.

CUT TO:

180 WATER'S EDGE
The soldier is amazed. Waxman, his worst fears confirmed, sighs.

WAXMAN
Tell Sergeant Howco to start pumping.

SOLDIER
Yes sir.
(runs off)

Paul and Maggie exchange glances, momentarily vindicated.

MENGERS
We should be able to get them all in this same area.
(then, for Paul and Maggie's benefit)
They travel in schools, you know. We'll be using a double dose of our most effective poison.

(CONTINUED)

180 CONTINUED

PAUL

Came pretty well prepared, didn't you?

MAGGIE

Won't it ruin this section of the river?

WAXMAN

(laughing to himself)

Sometimes it's necessary to destroy
in order to save.

PAUL

What if they realize they're being slaughtered
and head back up the river?

MENGERS

We're talking about fish, Mr. Grogan.
Fish. They don't realize much of anything.

PAUL

Listen, who are you trying to kid? You
knew these things were really here or you
wouldn't have brought all this stuff!

WAXMAN

(icily)

Okay, Grogan, here it is. You and Miss McKeown
are the only civilians who know about this
project -

MAGGIE

-Operation Razorteeth-

WAXMAN

-Which doesn't exist.

MENGERS

(softening the blow)

What the General means is that we'd
prefer it if you'd consider yourself one
of us. Part of the team, if you will.

PAUL

(disgusted)

It figures.

He and Maggie walk away. Waxman and Mengers stare grimly
after them.

CUT TO:

181 TWO MEDICS

Carry the little boy on a stretcher to a waiting ambulance. As they put him in the rear, Maggie looks sorrowfully in at him. He looks catatonic. The doors close and the ambulance pulls away. Maggie takes Paul's hand.

CUT TO:

182 SOLDIER

Holding a huge hose coming from a truck, spewing liquid into the water -

CUT TO:

183 HOZE NOZZLE

Held by another soldier. The liquid comes spewing out -

CUT TO:

184 ANOTHER NOZZLE

Liquid comes spewing out -

CUT TO:

185 TWO SOLDIERS

Scooping the water surface with long-handled nets.

SOLDIER #1

Hey, I got one! I got one in the net!

(pulls the net in)

CUT TO:

186 NET, PERANHA

A dead one at least two feet long -

SOLDIER #1

Jesus, lookit the thing.

(CONTINUED)

186 CONTINUED

SOLDIER #2

Mengers said it's a Brazilian
Piranha.

SOLDIER #1

It's an ugly mother, whatever you
call it.

CUT TO:

187 PAUL & MAGGIE, INT. ARMY TENT, NIGHT

Lying on cots, a kerosene lamp hung between them. Paul
seems preoccupied as Maggie talks.

MAGGIE

-So this guy I was living with just took
off on me. Disappeared without a trace.
I thought maybe he was in some kind of
trouble, so I hired the skip-tracing
company to find him. They worked with
me, put a lot of the pieces of his past
life together. It was fascinating. I
got hooked on the process.

PAUL

Did you ever find the guy?

MAGGIE

Eventually. He just got up one morning
and hit the road. One of those characters
who makes a career out of being enigmatic.

PAUL

What happens when someone you're looking for
doesn't want to be found?

MAGGIE

That's what really intrigues me. Figuring
out why somebody would want to disappear,
reconstructing their personalities, it's
like wandering through a maze.

(she reflects a moment)

Yeah, but what'll I say when I get back?
What can I tell the parents of those kids -
I mean, do I need an okay from General Patton
out there or what?

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED

PAUL
(sits up)

A maze.

MAGGIE
Huh?

PAUL
Did that ranger have a map of the
river?

MAGGIE
A big relief map on the wall. Why?

PAUL
(jumping out of bed)
Get your clothes on. Remember that
fishtank we saw up at the Army site
while Hoak was conked out?

MAGGIE
What about it?

PAUL
(grabbing clothes and
rushing out)
The maze, the maze!

CUT TO:

188 RELIEF MAP, LOST RIVER SYSTEM

We see the test site, the river, the dam, the river
beyond that leading to the resort lake and beyond that
to the ocean.

MENGERS
(off)
Highly unlikely.

WAXMAN
(off)
Impossible.

CUT TO:

189 INT. CONTROL ROOM

Paul and Maggie, Waxman and Mengers clustered around the map on the wall.

PAUL

You're a full colonel, right? I assume you can read a map. Just look -

CUT TO:

190 MAP

We FOLLOW Paul's fingers as he traces the route he describes -

PAUL

(off)

Here's the dam, right? Follow the river an eighth of a mile backwards, to here, we see this - A stream feeding into it. Follow the stream back up and we come to a fork in it. Follow the other branch back downstream - right there. It feeds into the river on the other side of the dam. The Piranha have a way to get around the obstacle.

CUT TO:

191 ROOM

MENGENS

We're not arguing that such a bypass exists, Mr. Grogan, merely that these Piranha have neither the intelligence or the motivation to find it.

PAUL

You know better than I do what Hoak was into - breeding them for endurance and intelligence and God knows what else.

WAXMAN

The situation is already under control, Grogan.

PAUL

What is this? You're deliberately ignoring me!

(CONTINUED)

191 CONTINUED

WAXMAN

Listen to me, Grogan, I'm only going to say it once. This project does not exist. The Piranha do not exist. And if you don't keep your mouth shut about this, neither will you.

MAGGIE

(scared)

Paul...

PAUL

What the hell decade are you living in? The war's over, dammit!

MENGERS

(smiles)

There'll be other wars, Mr. Grogan. And, you can be sure, other projects. We have all kinds of things. Things you'd probably...
(catches herself)...

Well.

At Menger's signal two soldiers appear and hustle Paul and Maggie out.

CUT TO:

192 EXT. TENT

A soldier is pacing in front of it, rifle on his shoulder.

CUT TO:

193 INT. TENT

PAUL

He still out there?

MAGGIE

(peeks out)

Yup.

Paul lifts a sleeping-bag from his cot, begins to zip up its side -

PAUL

You'll have to distract him.

MAGGIE

Why?

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
So I can get away.

MAGGIE
So you can get away! What about me?

PAUL
Suit yourself. But first you've got to
distract him.

MAGGIE
How?

PAUL
How should I know? Just get him with
his back to the opening here. Come
on to him.

She starts out, stops -

MAGGIE
What if he's gay?

PAUL
Then I'll distract him. Let's go.

CUT TO:

194 EXT. TENT, SENTRY, MAGGIE

She comes out, looks at him, smiles. He keeps pacing in
front of her, deadpan -

MAGGIE
Uhm- hi.

No response. He keeps pacing. Maggie doesn't know what
to do.

MAGGIE
Nice night, huh?

Nothing from the sentry.

MAGGIE
Uhm - listen - are you gay?

The sentry stops in mid-pace, turns and comes over to Maggie.

SENTRY
What?

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED

MAGGIE

I was just - uhm - just reading this article in this magazine - and hum - here -

She gently moves around him and pushes him back toward the tent opening -

MAGGIE

Let me get a look at you in the light.

SENTRY

What did you ask me before?

MAGGIE

Oh - uhm - nothing. Nothing.
(moves close; whispers)
Wanna see my appendix scar?

SENTRY

(confused)

Are you okay?

MAGGIE

(suddenly pointing up)

Look! Up in the sky!

SENTRY

(looks up)

Huh?

CUT TO:

MAGGIE

Quickly unbuttoning her shirt as the sentry looks up.

MAGGIE

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's -

CUT TO:

SENTRY, MAGGIE

Shooting from behind Maggie now so we can see the soldier's face and Paul beginning to come out of the tent behind him.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED

MAGGIE
 (throwing her shirt open and
 sticking her chest out at at
 the sentry)

SUPERMAN!

The sentry stares at her, frightened, takes a step back,
 then POUNCE! Paul stuffs the sleeping bag over him and
 drags him kicking and making muffled shouts back into the
 tent. Maggie picks up his rifle and follows in.

MAGGIE
 - and his never-ending battle for
 truth, justice, and the American way. -

CUT TO:

195 EXT., FLASHLIGHT BEAM

Plays along pavement for a moment, then settles on the
 plates of the Colonel's staff car -

CUT TO:

196 BEAM

Moving over the interior of the car's engine. Paul's
 hand reaches in -

CUT TO:

197 DARKNESS

We hear an engine kick into life, the headlights flash on
 straight at us, then the jeep patches out and screeches pas us.

CUT TO:

198 INT. CAR

Maggie driving.

MAGGIE
 Where'd you learn to hot-wire a car?

PAUL
 I was an Eagle Scout.

CUT TO:

199 DUMONT

In bed. The phone rings beside him, waking him up -

DUMONT

Hello? What? What Piranhas? What are you talking about? Huh? What, are you crazy? Who is this? Grogan, huh? I remember you. You're not crazy, you're drunk. No, I don't want to talk to your friend. I'm sure she's drunk too. You wake me up again and I'll have the cops on you - no you can't speak with your daughter - sober up, Grogan, and fly right.

(slams the receiver
down)

Piranhas!

CUT TO:

200 PAUL & MAGGIE, ROADSIDE PHONE BOOTH

Paul slamming the receiver down -

PAUL

Asshole.

MAGGIE

He didn't believe you?

PAUL

He thinks I'm drunk.

MAGGIE

Can you get through to your daughter?

PAUL

No way. We've got to get down, there.

CUT TO:

201 WATER SURFACE, BY THE DAM

A few dead Piranha floating in the moonlight -

CUT TO:

202 RIVER, LOOKING UPSTREAM

The water flowing towards us, woods on either side -

CUT TO:

203 STREAM

Maybe ten feet wide, fairly rapid-moving -

CUT TO:

204 FROG, CLOSE SHOT

His eyes glinting metallic in the moonlight. We PULL BACK slightly, see that he's on a log by the stream. He croaks, hops in. There is an immediate churning of Piranha.

CUT TO:

205 STAFF CAR, COUNTRY ROAD

Paul and Maggie roaring around a corner, tires screeching.

CUT TO:

206 COUNTRY ROAD

We see a little side-road leading off it. WHIZZ! The staff car blows by us. Headlights flick on from the side-road, a patrol car pulls out, takes off in pursuit -

CUT TO:

207 MAGGIE

Sitting in the driver's seat. She looks up to the mirror -

CUT TO:

208 MIRROR

The image of the strobe-flashing patrol car coming up fast behind them -

CUT TO:

209 MAGGIE & PAUL

MAGGIE
Paul. Behind us.

(CONTINUED)

209 CONTINUED

PAUL

I know. And there's no way we can outrun him in this thing.

MAGGIE

Maybe he'll believe us. Maybe he'll help us.

CUT TO:

210 ROAD

The Patrol Car pulling the pickup over to the side-

CUT TO:

211 FRONT SEAT, STAFF CAR

A trooper leaning in the window, pointing flashlight on Paul and Maggie.

TROOPER

Piranhas, huh? And where did they come from?

PAUL

From an Army test site on the mountain.

TROOPER

That's posted up there. There's no trespassing.

PAUL

Posted or not, two people were killed up there, and more have been killed along the river.

MAGGIE

You've got to believe us.

TROOPER

(shines light on Paul)

Killed, huh? Say, aren't you Grogan?

PAUL

That's right.

(CONTINUED)

211 CONTINUED

TROOPER

I remember we had you in on a drunk and disorderly last month.

PAUL

I'm not drunk! Dammit, I'll take a breath test, whatever you want, just listen to me!!!

TROOPER

Think I'm gonna take you up on that, buddy, back to the station. While we're there you can explain what you're doing out this time of night in an Army staff car.

MAGGIE

There isn't time! We've got to warn those people!

TROOPER

If there's any warnin' to be done, we can handle it. And don't get any notions, cause I got my gun in my other hand here. Let's go.

CUT TO:

212 WAXMAN

On phone, Mengers is watching in the background.

WAXMAN

- yes, we've got a bit of a situation up here, a very delicate situation. You could help us keep it under control by holding them for us. Yes - yes, that's good. And make sure they don't communicate with the outside, we're trying to avoid unnecessary panic -

CUT TO:

213 SHERIFF'S OFFICE, TROOPER

On the phone -

(CONTINUED)

213 CONTINUED

TROOPER

Yes, Colonel, yes, I understand.
Will do. Their best interests,
I agree. Certainly. And don't
forget we got your car down here.
It's in good shape. You're welcome,
Colonel, see you in the morning.

The Trooper hangs up, we FOLLOW him across the room to Paul and Maggie in adjoining cells. There is a solid wall between the cells so that they can't see each other.

TROOPER

Best make yourself comfortable,
folks, you'll be spendin' the night.

PAUL

What about a phone call? You have
to give us a phone call.

TROOPER

That's only if you're under arrest.
You folks are just bein' held.

MAGGIE

On what count?

TROOPER

Suspicion.

MAGGIE

Suspicion of what?

TROOPER

Nothin' in particualr. Just
suspicion. Now there's a fella
named Leonard sleepin' in the next
room, he's your jailer. You wake
Leonard up, you better have a damn
good reason. Try and relax till morning.
Everything'll get straightened out -

PAUL

It'll be too late -

(CONTINUED)

213 CONTINUED

TROOPER
 (raising his hand)
 I don't wanna hear it. I got
 to get back on that road now, so
 you folks just behave yourself.
 (begins to leave)

CUT TO:

214 PAUL

Gripping the bars, shouting after the trooper -

PAUL
 Wait a minute, you can't just
 leave! My daughter is down there,
 there's kids down there! The
 Piranha are still out there,
 believe me. You've got to believe
 me!

Paul stares out into the empty room. Maggie's hand
 appears, reaching over through the bars. Paul takes
 it in his.

CUT TO:

215 RELIEF MAP - NIGHT

Of the river on the wall. Someone is tracing the route
 Paul described around the dam with a pencil We FOLLOW
 it all the way, down the river to the dot labelled
 'Lost River Lake' -

CUT TO:

216 MENGERS - NIGHT

At the map with her pencil. She ponders a moment, then
 shakes her head violently.

MENGERS
 Impossible. Scientifically impossible.

CUT TO:

217 WAXMAN - NIGHT

On the phone again -

(CONTINUED)

217 CONTINUED

WAXMAN

-So, I wanted to warn you just in case they were able to get a call through. A groundless panic of that kind wouldn't help our grand opening any.

CUT TO:

218 RESORT OWNER - INT. RECREATION CENTER - NIGHT

He is tieless and frazzled under the red blazer, carrying the phone around on a long extension as he picks his way around pool tables and over dropcloths on the floor. Someone is hammering in the background and behind him we see a crew of workmen painting the walls -

GARDNER

No, no, we certainly don't want that.

(unctuous)

I appreciate the warning, Colonel. I'll brief the staff. By the way, are you going to make it down tomorrow? Good, good, your presence will lend a certain - prestige to the opening. No, nobody's aware of your investment Colonel. With me a silent partner's privacy is sacred. Yes, Right. Goodnight, Colonel.

(hangs up, turns shouting to the painters)

All right, you guys, let's haul ass! That stuff's gotta be set by ten o'clock!

DISSOLVE TO:

219 RIVER - VERY EARLY MORNING

Flowing through the woods. A duck flaps down, settles on the water, floats for a moment. Suddenly the water around it is churning, it disappears under the surface -

CUT TO:

220 CAMP, SUZIE & BETSY

Sitting by a small lifeguard shack, very early morning.

BETSY
Even in an inner tube?

SUZIE
Uh-huh.

BETSY
I mean it's almost impossible to fall in.

SUZIE
They can still get you.

BETSY
'They', huh?
(sighs)
Well, if that's the way you feel,
I'll help you get out of the race.
We have to think of an excuse
Dumont will buy.

SUZIE
I got poison ivy.

BETSY
So does everybody else in camp.
Hey, maybe you could just be getting
your -- no, you're too young for
that, aren't you?

SUZIE
Huh?

BETSY
Wait a minute, I got an idea.
(she pulls out a red marker)
Give me your knee.
(paints knee with
red marker)
Get Darlene to take your place in
the tube race, and if Dumont
squawks, show him this. We'll get
you a big bandage.

SUZIE
What was I too young for?

BETSY
(painting)
I'll tell you later.

CUT TO:

221 JAIL CELLS, PAUL & MAGGIE

Maggie is lying on her back under the sink in her cell, kicking at the pipe under it. She has wrapped the pipe with her blanket to muffle the sound. Paul is up by their common wall, listening, confused -

PAUL

What are you doing there?

CUT TO:

222 MAGGIE, CLOSE SHOT

Kicking, the pipe starting to give -

MAGGIE

I ever tell you about Moe Schneider?

PAUL

(off)

Moe who?

MAGGIE

Schneider.

PAUL

(off)

Who's that?

MAGGIE

This character they sent me to find one time. He was a plumber who was always running off and getting busted for indecent exposure.

The pipe busts loose, Maggie gets up.

CUT TO:

223 SINK FAUCETS

Maggie's hands turning them on full blast -

CUT TO:

224 PIPE, FLOOR

Water pouring out of the broken pipe onto the floor -

PAUL

(off)

Hey, what are you doing?

CUT TO:

225 TOILET TANK

Maggie's hands lifting the porcelain lid off the tank -

MAGGIE

(off)

Moe was in the pokey so many times he developed a regular escape routine --

CUT TO:

226 MAGGIE

Climbing up on the toilet bowl with the lid -

MAGGIE

And of course, being a plumber he used
what he knew best.

She lifts the lid high over her head, then lets it drop -

CUT TO:

227 LID

Smashing to pieces on the concrete floor -

CUT TO:

228 PAUL

Looks worried.

PAUL

Jesus, what are you doing?
Are you okay?

CUT TO:

229 MAGGIE

Hurriedly kicking the chunks of porcelain into the
corner. The water has completely covered the floor of
her cell, is seeping out into the main room.

MAGGIE

Give me one of your socks, hurry!

CUT TO:

230 PAUL

Confused -

PAUL

What?

MAGGIE

(off)

One of your socks, it's part of
the plan! Hurry, the crash probably
woke him!

CUT TO:

231 PORCELAIN DEBRIS

In the corner of Maggie's cell. Her blanket flops over
them -

CUT TO:

232 FAUCETS

Maggie's hands turning them off -

PAUL

(off)

This plan, whatever it is, did
it ever work?

MAGGIE

(off)

No, but he came damn close a
couple of times.

CUT TO:

233 PAUL'S HAND

Holding the sock. We FOLLOW it out through the bars,
Maggie's hand appears, takes the sock, we FOLLOW it
into her cell and see her other hand stuff a large chunk
of porcelain into it -

MAGGIE

(off)

Pretty damn close.

CUT TO:

234 DOORWAY, LEONARD

The jailer appearing, rubbing his eyes and yawning -

LEONARD

Sweet Jesus, what's goin' on out here? Sounded like the roof fell in.

CUT TO:

235 ROOM, LEONARD, PAUL & MAGGIE

The jailer facing their cells.

LEONARD

What's all this water from?

MAGGIE

Something's leaking in here, I'm going to catch pneumonia if it doesn't stop.

LEONARD

(peering)

Looks like your sink trap is bust.

CUT TO:

236 MAGGIE, LEONARD

Looking out from the back of the cell, we can see the improvised sap behind Maggie's back. She tries to look helpless -

MAGGIE

I've tried and tried but I'm just not strong enough to put the pipes back together.

LEONARD

All right, you just stand back there, I'll take a look at it.

CUT TO:

237 KEYS, LOCK

Leonard's hand fumbling with a huge key ring that hangs through one of his belt loops. He finds the right one, sticks it in, opens the door -

CUT TO:

238 238 MAGGIE'S HAND

Tightening around the sap behind her back -

CUT TO:

239 MAGGIE

Nervous, taking a deep breath -

CUT TO:

240 CELL, LEONARD, MAGGIE

Leonard comes in, shakes his head at the pipe, bends over by it -

LEONARD

You move over by the wall, there, Missy. What the hell did you do to this thing? Trying to crawl through the drainpipe?

CUT TO:

241 BACK OF LEONARD'S HEAD, MAGGIE'S P.O.V.

Very inviting.

CUT TO:

242 MAGGIE

Sap poised, closes her eyes, brings it down hard -

WHUMP!

CUT TO:

243 CELL, LEONARD, MAGGIE

Maggie drops the sap and steps back. Leonard stands, turns, and gives Maggie a puzzled look, then sinks to his knees in a faint, his head resting against her thighs.

(CONTINUED)

243 CONTINUED

MAGGIE
Oh my God, I think I killed
him.

PAUL
(off)
What's happening? What's going
on in there?

Maggie grabs Leonard by the wrist, takes his pulse.

MAGGIE
He's alive. He's alive, Paul!

CUT TO:

244 PAUL

Standing, holding the bars -

PAUL
What are you doing? What
happened?

CUT TO:

245 MAGGIE'S CELL

Maggie's trying to get the ring of keys free from
Leonard's pants, half-dragging him across the wet floor
as she yanks at them -

MAGGIE
He's knocked out but he's alive!

PAUL
(off)
Get his keys, get his keys!

MAGGIE
They're chained to his pants!

PAUL
(off)
Well, take his pants off then!

Maggie fumbles with Leonard's pants, tugs them off,
and we FOLLOW as she rushes out with them to Paul's
cell. She starts trying different keys in the lock -

PAUL
What'd you hit him with?

MAGGIE
A piece of the toilet lid.

(CONTINUED)

245 CONTINUED

PAUL

Jesus.

MAGGIE

We should have tried bribing him first.

PAUL

Thank you Moe Schneider. Think one of those keys fits a patrol car?

MAGGIE

I wouldn't be surprised.
(the cell door opens)

Let's go!

They run out, Maggie with the pants. We hold a moment on Leonard lying on his back on the cell floor in his underwear.

CUT TO:

246 TROOPER, STREET

The trooper who busted Paul and Maggie comes out of a diner with a styrofoam cup of coffee, looking tired. As he steps off the curb we hear the screech of brakes, the trooper hops back and is smacked in the face with a flying pair of pants. He looks after the car, holds the pants out to examine them, puzzled -

TROOPER

Leonard?

CUT TO:

247 RESORT, MARINA, GARDNER

In a fresh red blazer with a 'Lost River' insignia on it standing at the foot of a dock stretching out into the marina. Sailboats and motorboats bob in their slots, there is a ceremonial ribbon just behind him. He is addressing a throng of vacationers -

GARDNER

- and on behalf of the Lost River Development Corporation, I'm happy to welcome you to our opening festivities.

(CONTINUED)

247 CONTINUED

If you have any questions during the day about the purchase of a site up here, we'll have our people mingling with you to answer them. Remember, you have no obligation to buy anything, only to enjoy yourselves. Honey?

A little girl comes out of the throng wearing a red-white-and-blue outfit and carrying a huge pair of plastic scissors. Oohs and aahs from the throng. She cuts the ribbon, the people cheer -

GARDNER

(over the cheer)

Don't forget the free barbeque at one o'clock.

The people crowd past him to their boats -

CUT TO:

248 SWIMMING HOLE

Just back on the river from the kids' camp. A boy is swinging out on a tire hung from a tree, another treading water below -

CUT TO:

249 WATER

Splash! The boy cannonballs in from the tire. He surfaces and the other boy paddles over to him -

BOY #1

Great idea, huh?

Boy #2

What if Dumont finds out?

BOY #3

Dumont?

(makes a face)

Dumont's got his head up his rear, he'll never miss us.

CUT TO:

250 DUMONT

Surrounded by campers with bows and arrows, firing away at a row of targets. Dumont checks his watch, blows his whistle -

DUMONT

(shouting)

Water competition! Muster up!
Time for the water competition!

The campers run shouting for the water, firing their parting arrows like an army falling back.

CUT TO:

251 INT. STOLEN PATROL CAR, MORNING

PAUL

Salt water.

MAGGIE

What?

PAUL

I just remembered. It was salt water.

MAGGIE

What was?

Paul

In the pond at the test site. I thought it was strange at the time, but then I forgot about it.

MAGGIE

So?

PAUL

Piranha are freshwater fish. Dr. Hoak must have bred a strain that can live in both fresh and salt, like salmon. That's why they're heading downstream -

MAGGIE

And if they get to the ocean -

(CONTINUED)

251 CONTINUED

PAUL

There'll be no way to contain them.
They'll be able to swim up every river
system in the country.

MAGGIE

Oh my God.

CUT TO:

252 SWIMMING HOLE

The surface, calm - SPLASH; Boy #1 cannonballs in.
SPLASH! Boy #2 follows. They come up grinning.

CUT TO:

253 CAMP, WATER

Three lanes of campers are lined up for a tube
relay, treading water to stay in place. Deeper
in the water are Betsy and Laura, sitting on the
same truck-tire tube, well out of the water.

CUT TO:

254 SUZIE

Sitting on the beach watching. Dumont's legs
appear beside her. He clears his throat. We PULL
BACK to include him in the shot as Suzie springs
to her feet.

DUMONT

And what are you doing here,
young lady? You're supposed
to be out in that race.

(CONTINUED)

254 CONTINUED

SUZIE

Uhm - I --

DUMONT

I don't want to hear any
excuses, get yourself a tube
and get out there.

SUZIE

(pointing to her
bandaged knee)

But I --

DUMONT

On the double, camper!

We FOLLOW as Suzie hurries away. She passes a
big rowboat lying keel-up on the edge of the water.
She looks back toward Dumont, then to the boat.

CUT TO:

255 POLICE CAR

Squealing around a curve, barely holding the road.

CUT TO:

256 CAMP, DUMONT

Chest deep in the water, raising a starting pistol -

DUMONT

Ready?

CUT TO:

257 DUMONT'S HAND, PISTOL

BANG!

CUT TO:

258 CAMPERS

The first leg campers paddling forward, shouting all around them -

CUT TO:

259 SUZIE

Peeking out at the race from under the rowboat on shore -

CUT TO:

260 CAMPERS

Churning along in their tubes, reaching out to pass the batons -

CUT TO:

261 POLICE CAR

Whizzing past us, we barely make out Paul and Maggie -

CUT TO:

262 UNDERWATER SHOT, CAMPERS

We see them churning above us from a Piranha's eye view -

CUT TO:

263 POLICE CAR

Passing a truck on a blind curve, zigging into the right lane just in time to miss an oncoming car --

CUT TO:

264 CAMPERS

Three campers waiting to be passed a baton on the surface, treading water to stay in place, screaming encouragement to their teammates. One of the campers on the end starts to scream for real, in pain, and the other two don't notice.

CUT TO:

265 LAURA AND BETSY

On the truck tube, looking concerned -

BETSY

What's wrong?

CUT TO:

266 DUHONT

Waist deep, looking puzzled, starts to wade in deeper, when they hit him, he screams in terror -

CUT TO:

267 LITTLE GIRL'S FACE

Screaming -

CUT TO:

268 SWIMMING HOLE, BOY #2

Swinging wildly on the tire above the water, holding on for his life. We hear screams beneath him, he looks down in horror -

CUT TO:

269 LAURA AND BETSY

Trying to paddle the big truck tube in to help -

LAURA

(yelling)

Pull your hands and feet out of the water! Don't try to swim in, stay as still as possible, just stay on top of your tubes!

BETSY

(sees air bubbling from bottom of their tube)

Laura! It's ripped open, it's sinking.

CUT TO:

270 LITTLE GIRL'S FACE
Again, screaming --

CUT TO:

271 ROWBOAT, SHORE

Suzie crawls out from her hiding place and sees the carnage underway --

CUT TO:

272 POLICE CAR

Hurtling past us -

CUT TO:

273 CAMPERS

Terrified, floating along, on all fours on the tubes, hands and feet out of the water --.

274 LAURA AND BETSY

Betsy hysterical, clinging to Laura, their tube getting flaccid, their legs almost in the water -

BETSY

It's sinking, it's sinking, it's sinking.

275 SUZIE

As the boat turned over, pointed at the water. She looks fearfully at the water --

CUT TO:

276 WATER, SUZIE'S P.O.V.

CUT TO:

277 SUZIE

Takes a deep breath, looks out -

CUT TO:

278 LAURA AND BETSY, SUZIE'S P.O.V.

Clinging to each other, sinking, screaming -

CUT TO:

279 SUZIE

Pushes boat, but it's too big, she can't get it ungrounded.

CUT TO:

280 DUMONT

Scrambles out of the water, covered with blood, dragging an unconscious camper.

CUT TO:

281 CAMPERS

Kneeling on tubes, floating, crying in terror.

CUT TO:

282 SUZIE

Has a truck tube. She lays one oar across the hole to make a kind of seat, and pushes off with the other one, paddling toward Laura and Betsy.

CUT TO:

283 POLICE CAR

Skidding past a turn, backing up, making the turn with a squeal -

CUT TO:

284 CAMPERS

Kneeling on their tubes, silently, terrified, drifting --

CUT TO:

285 SUZIE

Has paddled out just in time for Laura to crawl onto her tube. Laura turns to give Betsy a hand but they've drifted out of reach, Betsy is treading water, starts to scream. Laura grabs the oar from Suzie and reaches it out --

CUT TO:

286 OAR, BETSY'S HAND

Grips it for a moment, then jerks away in pain and sinks under the water --

CUT TO:

287 LAURA

Screaming -

LAURA
Betsy!!!

CUT TO:

288 UNDERWATER SHOT

Betsy covered with Piranhas.

289 POLICE CAR

Screeching into the lot of the kids' camp. Paul and Maggie come out sprinting.

CUT TO:

290 CAMPERS

We see several campers frozen on their tubes drifting together, then we hear a series of muffled reports and bubbles fizz up from under the tubes --

(CONTINUED)

290 CONTINUED

CAMPER
They're popping them! They're
popping the tubes!

CUT TO:

291 PAUL AND MAGGIE, SHORE

Paul sprints to the rowboat, pushes it into the water and
hops in -

PAUL
Suzie!

CUT TO:

292 SUZIE, LAURA

On the truck tube, paddling toward the other campers -

SUZIE
Daddy!

CUT TO:

293 PAUL

PAUL
(to Maggie)
Call the resort and warn them.
I'll get these kids out of the
water.

Maggie runs off and Paul turns to row and sees there are
no oars. He kicks a board loose from the seat and paddles
out with that. Suzie and Laura meet him halfway, Suzie
climbing into his arms and hugging tight. Laura moves to
help another camper aboard -

CUT TO:

294 RESORT OWNER, INT. OFFICE

At his desk. Over his shoulder we see the lake full of
people through a window. The phone rings.

GARDNER
Lost River Campsites. Emergency?
(smiles)
Yes, that is serious. We'll have
to clear the water at once.

(CONTINUED)

294 CONTINUED

GARDNER (Cont'g)
 (laughing to himself)
 Thousands of Piranha heading our
 way. Imagine that.

CUT TO:

295 CAMP, TUBES

Floating empty on the water -

CUT TO:

296 NOSEPLUG

Bobbing on the surface -

CUT TO:

297 LAURA

On shore, calling Paul standing by her -

LAURA
 Okay, Minnows now! Minnows line up,
 buddy system, get with your partner!

CUT TO:

298 CAMPERS

We PAN ALONG the line of Minnows, the campers crying,
 holding their partner's hand up in the air. At the end
 of the line is Suzie, raising her hand with no partner -

CUT TO:

299 MAGGIE

Running out to join them -

PAUL
 Did you get them?

MAGGIE
 I told them the whole story but
 I don't think they believed me.
 I felt like I was being humored.

(CONTINUED)

299 CONTINUED

PAUL
We'll have to go ourselves. Can
you handle this?
(to Laura)

LAURA
I think so.

PAUL
(to Suzie)
I'll come back for you real soon,
honey. You be brave and help out
here.

Paul and Maggie hurry off. Laura holds Suzie.

LAURA
Don't you worry. He'll be back.

CUT TO:

300 BOY #2

Still holding onto the tire, which hangs still now over
the water. The boy is crying softly.

BOY #2
Help....somebody.

CUT TO:

301 LONG SHOT, BOY

Hanging all alone above the swimming hole -

BOY #2
Somebody help me.

CUT TO:

302 RESORT LAKE, LONG SHOT

Motorboats, sailboats, swimmers -

CUT TO:

303 BEACH AREA

Alive with activity. Children and adults plunge into the water.

304 FAT MAN

Sitting in a flimsy beach chair. Beside him sits a large bulldog, also overweight, his leash tied to the chair.

305 BOY

Running down the beach with a mutt on a leash. The boy runs past the fat man, the bulldog taking off in hot pursuit. The chair leg snaps, the fat man goes sprawling into the sand.

306 LAKE, PEDAL-BOAT

Waxman and Mengers the passengers, Whitney pedalling it out to a large float where a cocktail party is in session. People are swimming and boating all around them, the resort is swarming. They reach the float, and step aboard, Gardner hurrying over to greet them.

GARDNER

Colonel Waxman! Dr. Mengers!
What a surprise!

WAXMAN

(smiling, talking through
his teeth)
They busted jail.

GARDNER

(smiling, whispering)
I know. They called.

WAXMAN

Is your staff ready?

GARDNER

They're all set.

MENGERS

You'd better call your friends at
the local newspaper and warn them they
might be getting a few crank calls.

(CONTINUED)

306 CONTINUED

GARDNER

But won't that just make them -

WAXMAN

(snapping)

You've got your orders, Mister,
hop to it.

GARDNER

(meekly)

Yes, sir.

(turns, sees Whitney)

Whitney!

WHITNEY

Yes, sir?

GARDNER

Pedal me back to shore, Whitney.
Hop to it.

WHITNEY

Yes, sir.

As they leave, a middle-aged woman bubbles up to Waxman.

WOMAN

Oh, General Waxman, it's been so
long!

WAXMAN

It's Colonel, Ma'am.

WOMAN

Colonel? Still? I can't imagine why.

WAXMAN

Politics, Ma'am. Politics.

CUT TO:

307 YOUNG COUPLE

On a little sailfish. Behind them in the distance we
see the crowded marina area.

YOUNG MAN

Okay, when we come about you be ready
to duck out of the way if the boom
comes at you. Ready?

CUT TO:

308 MOTOR BOAT, MIDDLE OF LAKE

A scuba instructor and four wet-suited tourists sitting on the rail of the boat, masks on, backs to the water set to fall in --

INSTRUCTOR

Ready?

CUT TO:

309 ANOTHER MOTORBOAT

Different part of the lake. Two teenage girls are in the boat, a teenage boy behind on water skis, sitting in the water set to go -

GIRLS
(calling back)

Ready?

CUT TO:

310 POLICE CAR

Zooming past us -

CUT TO:

311 SAILBOAT

The boom swinging across, the young woman ducking away from it.

312 SCUBA DIVERS

Kicking back into the water -

CUT TO:

313 MOTORBOAT

Zooming, the skier pulled up -

CUT TO:

314 GARDNER, WHITNEY - INT. OFFICE

GARDNER

Every phone on the premises,
understand? Out of order. We've
got to stop this hoax. All in-
coming calls will be switched through
here. Got it?

WHITNEY

Yes, sir.

GARDNER

Then snap to it.
(Whitney rushes out)
(Gardner scowls shakes
head)
Piranhas.

CUT TO:

315 LAKE SURFACE, SCUBA DIVERS' BOUY AND FLAG

CUT TO:

316 UNDERWATER, SCUBA DIVERS

Swimming single file across the shot. The last one in
line stops to adjust a flipper looks behind him, sees
something.

CUT TO:

317 UNDERWATER SHOT, PIRANHA

Appearing out of the underwater gloom, the whole school
of them swimming directly at us.

CUT TO:

318 DIVER'S FACE

His eyes bugging behind his face-mask -

CUT TO:

319 SAILBOAT

A little Sailfish with a young couple on it. Water washes over the young woman's legs. She looks down at it --

CUT TO:

320 LEGS, WATER

Tinged with blood as it washes over. .

WOMAN
Harry, it's blood!

CUT TO:

321 POLICE CAR

Taking a curve on two wheels -

CUT TO:

322 WOMAN'S FACE, RESORT NEAR SHORE

Screaming right at us, we can just about see her tonsils.

CUT TO:

323 SWIMMING AREA

The roped off swimming area is solid with people, some of whom react with confusion to several more screams.

324 MAN

In the center of the group, floating on an innertube, head, arms, shoulders, the only parts of his body out of the water. The man suddenly starts jerking as if hit by electric shocks. The innertube explodes and the man disappears beneath the water.

325 TEENAGER

Thrashing in the water, bloody churning around him, screaming, people all around him thrashing and screaming -

CUT TO:

- 326 UNDERWATER SHOT, SWIMMERS
Churning arms and legs from fish-eye view -
CUT TO:
- 327 WOMAN SCREAMING
CUT TO:
- 328 CLOSE SHOT, PIRANHA
A bunch coming right at us -
CUT TO:
- 329 SWIMMERS
Thrashing for shore on the surface, some being attacked.
CUT TO:
- 330 CLOSE SHOT, A PIRANHA
About to bite the lens -
CUT TO:
- 331 SWIMMER SCREAMING
CUT TO:
- 332 UNDERWATER, PIRANHAS
Tearing at something, soon disappearing in bloody murk -
CUT TO:
- 333 SWIMMING MAN
We FOLLOW as he swims for shore - stroke, stroke, breath -
stroke, stroke, breath - stroke, stroke ----- he doesn't
come up, blood billows to the surface -
CUT TO:

334 A FIVE YEAR OLD BOY

Stands on the shore watching. Unaware of exactly what's going on, he eats a large pink cotton candy.

335 VACATIONERS ON SHORE

Becoming aware of the offshore activity.

336 SWIMMERS

Begin reaching the shore, scrambling to safety. Pushing, shoving, yelling.

337 GARDNER, INT. OFFICE

On the phone, smiling, oblivious to the panic outside.

GARDNER

No, it's completely false, they've already made several calls to -

WHITNEY

(busting in breathless)

Sir, Sir!!

GARDNER

Excuse me -

(covers mouthpiece)

I'm on the phone!

WHITNEY

But sir, the Piranhas -

GARDNER

I thought I told you not to even say that word!

WHITNEY

But the Piranhas-

GARDNER

What about the goddam Piranhas?

WHITNEY

They're eating the guests, sir.

(CONTINUED)

337 CONTINUED

GARDNER

(stunned, speaks into
phone)

Bob? Uhm - I'll have to get back to
you on this. We've got a little -
uhm - situation here-

CUT TO:

338 LAKE, WOMAN

Screaming as the air raft she is on deflates and Piranhas
churn around her -

CUT TO:

339 PARTY FLOAT, SWIMMERS

Panicking swimmers clambering onto the overcrowded float,
threatening to tip it-

CUT TO:

340 FLOAT, WAXMAN

At the edge, clinging on, kicking at a swimmer trying to
climb aboard, everybody screaming -

CUT TO:

341 MOTORBOAT OUT ON THE LAKE

The two girls pulling the boy skiing --

CUT TO:

342 ON BOAT

GIRL #1

(the observer)

Just look at him show off!

GIRL #2

(the driver)

He thinks he's such a hot dog.

CUT TO:

343 SKIER

TRACKING alongside of him as he slaloms, something appears in the water ahead - a diver floating just under the surface in a bloody clout - the skier looks back as he passes it - puzzled -

CUT TO:

344 ON BOAT

GIRL #1

Maybe we're not going fast enough
for him -

GIRL #2

(smiles, reaches
for the stick)

I can fix that!

CUT TO:

345 RESORT, BEACH, MARINA

Looking like the aftermath of a battle, hysterical, bleeding people zipping around in a panic. Paul and Maggie appear dodging through them to the water. Paul points --

CUT TO:

346 MOTORBOAT

A motorboat that has been beached with its engine still churning in the water --

CUT TO:

347 FLOAT, WAXMAN, MENGERS

Complete panic on the float, water sloshing over it, people kicking and clawing to stay on. Waxman is kicking a swimmer back, the swimmer grabs his legs and they both go in. Mengers rushes to help, too late -

CUT TO:

348 WATER, WAXMAN, SWIMMER

Screaming as the Piranha hit them, thrashing, going under, with only Waxman's hat left floating on the surface -

CUT TO:

349 PAUL AND MAGGIE

Hop in the boat, throw it into reverse, turn and speed out across the water.

CUT TO:

350 INT. BOAT, PAUL AND MAGGIE

MAGGIE

Where we going?

PAUL

(points)

The lake narrows right where the outlet for the refinery was, they'll be bunched tight when they come through there.

MAGGIE

What then?

PAUL

If it's not capped off there might be enough waste left in the smelting tanks-

MAGGIE

It'll kill fish?

PAUL

It'll kill anything. We'll pollute the bastards to death!

CUT TO:

351 MOTORBOAT AND SKIER

They are trying to dump him, pulling him in figure-eights across his own wake, full speed -

CUT TO:

352 SKIER

Hanging on tight as he hurtles over the choppy waves they've made -

CUT TO:

353 ON BOAT

The girls laughing. Then #1 gets a serious look on her face.

GIRL #1

Hey, I think something's wrong.

GIRL #2

Yeah, we haven't managed to dump him yet.

GIRL #1

I'm serious, Shelly, he looks really scared. You better stop.

GIRL #2

What?

GIRL #1

Cut the motor! Cut the motor!

CUT TO:

354 GIRL'S HAND

Pulling back on the stick -

CUT TO:

355 SKIER

Horror in his eyes as he feels himself losing speed, he shakes his head frantically, begins to sink, shouts -

SKIER

No! No!

CUT TO:

356 ON BOAT.

GIRL #1

Wait, he says no. Speed up.

Girl #2 shrugs, reaches for the stick--

CUT TO:

357 GIRL'S HAND

Pushing stick full forward --

CUT TO:

358 SKIER

Pulled up from a sitting position in the water looking very relieved --

359 MOTORBOAT, PAUL AND MAGGIE

Slowing up near the far shore to see -

CUT TO:

360 REFINERY

Or what's left of it, as only a few buildings and parts of buildings are left above the water as the lake narrows into a river again --

CUT TO:

361 PAUL AND MAGGIE

PAUL

Oh God, no.

MAGGIE

What's wrong?

PAUL

It's all flooded. The waste tanks, the control booth, it's all under water.

MAGGIE

What do we do?

PAUL

(thinks for a moment)

We gotta try. Where's that tow-line?

CUT TO:

362 GARDNER & WHITNEY ON SHORE

Panic is rampant. People run in all directions. A man runs past CAMERA, the left side of his body torn open. He screams in agony, running nowhere.

CUT TO:

363 SKIER

Hanging on. He sees the shoreline coming invitingly close on one side of him. He points to it forcefully -

CUT TO:

364 BOAT, SKIER'S P.O.V.

The girls turn and both shake their heads smilingly -

CUT TO:

365 SKIER

Takes a deep breath, swings out to the far side of the wake from the shore, then bends, digs his edges in and cuts hard across the wake, picking up speed as he cracks the whip -

CUT TO:

366 SKIER'S HANDS

Letting go of tow-bar -

CUT TO:

367 SKIER

Skimming across the water with only his momentum to keep him up -

CUT TO:

368 SIDE VIEW, SKIER, SHORE

He has a long way to go -

CUT TO:

369 SKIER'S FACE

Tense.

CUT TO:

370 SHORE, SKIER'S P.O.V.

Coming closer, closer -

CUT TO:

371 SKIER

Only feet from the shore, beginning to sink, he jumps out of the skis and scampers onto an empty piece of shore. He turns to look at the water -

CUT TO:

372 MOTORBOAT

Making a pass in front of him, the girls waving and shouting happily, unconcerned -

CUT TO:

373 SKIER

Fainting dead away on the sand -

CUT TO:

374 MAN ON WATER SCOOTER

Racing toward shore, screaming. He reaches down and tears a piranha off his leg.

375 SPEED BOAT

Just beyond dock area, the boat races at high speed toward the dock.

376 SPEED BOAT P.O.V.

Approaching the water scooter, which cuts in front of the boat.

377 SPEED BOAT

Veers sharply off to miss the scooter, and runs directly into a fast-moving outboard. EXPLOSION.

378 WATER SCOOTER

Runs up on shore. Several people go to the driver's aid.

379 PAUL AND MAGGIE

Paul in his shorts, a tow-line tied round his wrist and onto the cleat on the rear of the boat -

PAUL

-so count slowly to three hundred
and then whether I'm to the surface or
not, you gun it out of here.
If I'm not up by then it means I'm
in trouble, that's as long as I can
hold my breath. Let's get our count
together, okay?

(Maggie counts with
him)

One -two - three - four - five

Paul dives into the water -

CUT TO:

380 UNDERWATER SHOT, PAUL

Comes splashing in, immediately starts swimming down, sees what he wants -

CUT TO:

381 CONTROL BOOTH, PAUL'S P.O.V.

Looking like the cab of a big crane, with the front almost all glass -

CUT TO:

332 PAUL

Swims down and tries to pull the door of the booth open. No dice. He moves to the glass, kicks at it with both feet -

CUT TO:

383 MAGGIE

Standing with the motor idling in neutral, her hand ready on the stick -

MAGGIE

-thirty-two, thirty-three, thirty-four...

CUT TO:

384 CONTROL BOOTH, GLASS

From the outside, we see the edges of the hole Paul has kicked in the glass, we MOVE IN through it. We FOLLOW along the tow-rope to find Paul at a glass door. He opens it and moves to a control panel, wrestling with a large wheel-valve.

CUT TO:

385 CONTROL BOOTH GLASS

From the inside out. Piranhas appear out of the underwater gloom, swim towards the glass --

CUT TO:

386 CLOSE SHOT, PIRANHA

Bumping up against the other side of the glass -

CUT TO:

387 CLOSE SHOT, A PIRANHA

Swimming through the shattered hole in the glass, others following it in -

CUT TO:

388 MAGGIE

MAGGIE
-two hundred four, twp-hundred five,
two hundred six --

CUT TO:

389 PAUL, UNDERWATER

Twisting the wheel-valve, faster and faster -

CUT TO:

390 UNDERWATER PIPES

A row of huge pipes sticking out horizontally. Green sludge begins to come from them, quickly clouding the water so we are blinded --

CUT TO:

391 PAUL

Has got the valve open full, turns to swim out, sees -

CUT TO:

392 CLOSE SHOT, PAUL

Eyes bugged in horror -

CUT TO:

393 CLOSE SHOT, PIRANHA

A swarm of them filling the booth beyond the door, inches from us --

CUT TO:

394 PAUL

Opens the door to get out and is suddenly surrounded by Piranha. He thrashes to get through them, blood beginning to cloud the water.

CUT TO:

395 CONTROL BOOTH, EXT.

We see through the window from the outside, nothing but a cloud of red at first, then Paul appears as he flattens up against the glass, trying to find the hole, blinded by his own blood -

CUT TO:

396 MAGGIE

MAGGIE

Two eighty-nine, two ninety, two
ninety-one --

CUT TO:

397 CONTROL BOOTH

From outside, blood rolling out to meet the green sludge that is clouding the water.

CUT TO:

398 MAGGIE'S HAND

Gunning the stick forward --

CUT TO:

399 MOTORBOAT PROPELLER

Churning white froth -

CUT TO:

400 CONTROL BOOTH

From outside, as the two-rope snaps taut and Paul in a bloody cloud comes exploding through the glass.

CUT TO:

401 MAGGIE

Gunning the boat full speed towards the center of the lake. She looks behind -

CUT TO:

402 TOW-LINE, MAGGIE'S P.O.V.

The line is taut, something dragging underwater at the end of it -

CUT TO:

403 MAGGIE

Cuts the engine, runs back to the tow-line. She pulls on it - no tension. She reels it in as fast as she can, the line giving no resistance-

CUT TO:

404 ROPE

Coming out of the water, the wrist-loop empty -

CUT TO:

405 MAGGIE

Sits back on the gunwale, stunned, staring -

MAGGIE

Oh my God. Oh my God.

She sits in shock for a moment, then a bloody, green-clotted hand, more claw than hand, rises behind her and clamps onto the gunwale - Maggie sees it, turns, screams -

MAGGIE

PAUL!

CUT TO:

406 VIDEO IMAGE, BEACH AREA, EVENING.

WIDE SHOT of the area, littered with the injured being attended by Army Corpsmen. TV trucks are everywhere, vying for space with ambulances and police cars. Camera-men are filming all the debris they can find.

(CONTINUED)

406 CONTINUED

NEWSCASTER #1 (o.s.)

Though the actual details remain cloudy, the extent of this tragedy is painfully clear -

CUT TO:

407 VIDEO ZOOM IN ON CORPSE

Its skin nearly stripped away. A blanket covers it up.

CUT TO:

408 TV NEWS CAMERAMAN

Visibly annoyed that his close-up shot has been ruined.

CUT TO:

409 BEACH

PAN along a row of shrouded bodies, corpsmen continuing to cover them.

NEWSCASTER #2 (o.s.)

We can only speculate as to the ultimate ramifications of this ecological disaster. Could this be Nature's revenge -

CUT TO:

410 NEWSCASTER #2

Speaking into a microphone. He wears a blue blazer with his channel number on the pocket.

NEWSCASTER #2

-for man's destruction of his environment?

(pause)

Only time...will tell.

He makes a face, shakes his head.

NEWSCASTER #2

Pitiful. Erase that one, will you, Bob?

CUT TO:

411 NEWSMAN #3

Green blazer, different channel number. He trots through the carnage with his microphone, sound man and cameraman in tow.

NEWSCASTER #3

Little girl! Little girl!

CUT TO:

412 SUZIE

Making her way through the congestion with a canteen in her hands. The newsman catches up with her, holds his mike in her face-

(CONTINUED)

412 CONTINUED

NEWSMAN #3

Little girl, would you like to tell us what happened?

Suzie shakes her head, tucks away from the mike to keep walling.

SUZIE

No.

NEWSMAN #3

Wouldn't you like to be on television?

SUZIE

My daddy hates TV. He says it's ruining the country.

NEWSMAN #3

Was your daddy here today?

Suzie gives him a sad look, runs off. The newsmen shrugs to his crew.

NEWSMAN #3

We'll have to find another one.

CUT TO:

413 SUZIE

Hurrying through the wounded, she passes Gardner, who is arguing with another TV REPORTER.

GARDNER

You're not gonna put this on TV! You do and you're gonna get hit with the biggest lawsuit you ever saw, buddy!

CUT TO:

414 SUZIE

A little further on she reaches Maggie, kneeling by Paul. He's on a stretcher, tubes running from his arm. Maggie takes the canteen from Suzie.

MAGGIE

Would you like a drink of this?

PAUL

What is it?

MAGGIE

It's water.

Paul takes a drink, makes a face.

PAUL

You're right, it is water.

Maggie smiles.

CUT TO:

415. MENCERS, RADIO ANNOUNCER.
Mengers is composed, being interviewed.

ANNOUNCER

And where do we go from here, Dr. Mengers?

MENCERS

I'm personally going to head a full-scale investigation of this incident, both to discover who is responsible for it and to make certain that nothing like it can happen again.

CUT TO:

416 TRANSISTOR RADIO

On a broad beach. WIDEN to show its owner surf-casting. He whips his pole back, snaps it forward as we hear the announcer continue.

ANNOUNCER

As an expert in tropical species, what danger is there in the possibility of the piranha reaching the ocean?

MENCERS

None at all. Most of them seem to have been destroyed by pollution at the end of the lake, and if any did get through, there is no way they could survive in salt water. There's nothing left to fear.

CUT TO:

417 BAIT

Tailing through the air, plops into a wave.

CUT TO:

418 UNDERWATER SHOT, BAIT

In foreground. We FOLLOW it down as it sinks, sinks, and then, out of the murky background, the remnants of the Piranha school appear, ten or fifteen of them swimming at the bait, at us, closer, closer, swimming into CLOSE-UP. FREEZE.

THE END