

Piranha
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. LAKE HAVASU - DAY

A garish Jose Cuervo ad flashes by on the side of a bright yellow HUMMER as it drives through frame, pulling CAMERA into the mid-summer crush of semi-clad, youthful bodies on main street Lake Havasu, Arizona.

Havasu is an overcrowded blue collar summer paradise at the peak of its three-month-a-year run of prosperity. You can almost smell the sunscreen as heat waves make the crowd on the pavement appear to waver like a mirage in the desert. Main street is a row of tourist trap t-shirt shops, bars, coffee shops and cafes. Beyond lies the shimmering expanse of the lake itself.

CRANE SHOT ENDS as a four wheel drive pick-up pulls into foreground. A sign on the side of the truck reads "Patterson Bait and Dive Shop." A beautiful golden retriever, BAXTER, bounds out of the open truck bed, barking merrily.

TED PATTERSON and JULIE TUPPER step out of the cab. They're one of those golden couples who have the ease and confidence of two people who are perfect for each other. They are bronzed, athletic, early thirties.

INT. PET STORE - DAY

A bell mounted on the front door JINGLES merrily as Julie enters with Baxter bounding close at her heels. The Proprietor, NATE HASKEL, is a pleasant, if forgettable, middle-aged man, idly surfing the web on his laptop. He rises as they enter.

NATE

Hi, Ted. Hi, Miss Tupper. Can you believe this heat?

TED

Pretty miserable, but it's good for business.

NATE

(sighs)

Not mine. Tourists usually don't bring pets... and they don't think much about taking one home. What can I do for you today?

TED
We need a bag of dry food and a couple of those rawhide chews.

NATE
You're a lucky dog, Baxter.

Baxter barks in agreement.

NATE
(gathers goods)
So, the big day's coming right up, isn't it?

Julie and Ted share a warm glance.

JULIE
Only three weeks.

TED
You trying to get me nervous, Nate?

NATE
Well, some of us wouldn't mind if you got cold feet. You got the prettiest girl in Havasu.

JULIE
That's sweet, Nate.

NATE
That'll be twenty-two thirty-five.
(as Ted pays)
You know, those Balinese fighting fish should be in next week.

TED
Great.

JULIE
(skeptical)
Balinese fighting fish?

TED
They're beautiful, hon. Wait 'til you see 'em.

JULIE
Sounds like they'll eat everything else in the tank.

NATE
Don't worry, they come with their
own environment.

TED
I heard the Sumatras are more
aggressive than the Balinese.

NATE
Maybe so, but I wouldn't recommend
them. They're much more sensitive
to the PH balance. There's a
website here somewhere...

Nate punches up the website on laptop.

JULIE
(takes Baxter)
You two chat, I've got to get back
to the dock. Your brother's the
only one minding the store.

TED
That's trouble.

She gives him a quick kiss.

JULIE
And don't forget, you've got a dive
at one o'clock with that dot com
guy.

TED
(chuckles)
The great white hunter. How could
I forget?

JULIE
Just don't let him spear you in
that cute tush.

Julie pinches Ted's jeans-clad butt.

TED
Hey, easy...

JULIE
(waves as she exits)
Thanks, Nate!

NATE
Oh, anytime, Miss Tupper.

JULIE

Julie.
(big smile)
Or Mrs. Patterson.

NATE

Okay, Mrs. Patterson.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HAVASU - AFTERNOON

An isolated inlet. This is the remote end of Havasu... breathtaking red rock terrain sculpted by time itself. Not much has changed here in ten thousand years...

CAMERA BOOMS DOWN to reveal Ted standing waist-deep in the water, wearing a full wet suit and diving gear. MR. CROUSE, a slightly pudgy yuppie with a tourist's sunburn waits beside Ted as he checks his spear gun.

TED

The grouper like to feed in these inlets this time of day. Remember, it's all about your approach.

MR. CROUSE

Cool. I'm a human shadow. Lead the way.

Ted slips on his dive mask, sucks in his mouth piece, and submerges with barely a ripple. Crouse follows with an awkward SPLASH.

As they disappear beneath the surface, CAMERA pushes past them to the nearby shore... where an old TIRE SWING is tied off to an oak tree. All is silent and still.

Beat.

Then the tire slowly begins to swing. At first, almost imperceptibly. Then in a widening arc, as if it had a ghostly rider. The barren branches of the entire tree begin to TREMBLE.

ROCK FORMATIONS - VARIOUS

The ground begins to SHAKE. Several fist-sized rocks tumble down the slopes as we hear the growing RUMBLE of an earthquake.

EXT. THE TOWN OF HAVASU - VARIOUS CUTS

People in the streets react as the tremor hits Havasu. A pitcher of beer SMASHES to the sidewalk at an outdoor cafe.

INT. PET STORE

Dogs HOWL and parrakeets FLAP in their cages. Nate manages to catch a fish bowl just as it tips off a counter top.

EXT. LAKE HAVASU - UNDERWATER - SAME TIME

Patterson and Crouse are tossed about beneath the surface in a churning backwash of water.

The rocky slope at the bottom of the lake SHAKES violently. Then a jagged crack travels up the slope like an inverse lightning bolt... and a twenty foot rift in the floor of the lake cracks open.

There is a deafening ROAR of water and both men are violently sucked into the rift... followed by tons of sand and rock.

EXT. DOCK - SPEED BOAT - SAME TIME

Julie rises to her feet, screw driver in one greasy hand, spark plug in the other. JACOB WYATT is assisting her. He's a tough-as-nails ex-longshoreman in his sixties.

The boat they're working on begins BANGING against the dock's pylons. Julie grips the gunnels to steady herself.

Then it's over as suddenly as it started.

INT. PET STORE - SAME TIME

Nate waits a beat, then sets the fish bowl safely back down. The parrakeets PEEP angrily, but settle back in their cages.

EXT. UNDERWATER - SAME TIME

C.U. TED

He struggles to orientate himself in pitch darkness. He's alive... but where?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Ted CLICKS on a flashlight and the beam reveals a dark moving SHADOW whirling straight towards him.

EXT. DOCK - SAME TIME

Julie rises as the boat steadies itself. ZACK PATTERSON, Ted's younger brother, bursts out of the dive shop and crosses to Julie. Zack's a tattooed twenty-year-old with a curious charm about him.

ZACK
You okay, Julie?

JULIE
Yeah. Was that an earthquake?

JACOB
(gets back to work)
Hell, that was nothing but a hiccup. I've been in an earthquake.

MARCUS (20s), Zack's co-worker, joins them.

MARCUS
Let me guess, that one with Moses, right? When he parted the red sea. Wasn't Pharaoh after you guys?

Jacob is clearly used to Marcus' dry humor.

JACOB
As a matter of fact, it was the San Fran quake in '89. Little puss like you would have shit his heart straight into his tighty whities.

JULIE
Zack, is your brother still out on that dive?

ZACK
Yeah. Wonder if he felt anything...

CAMERA PUSHES into a CLOSE UP of Julie as a hint of concern crosses her features.

JULIE
Try him on the radio, will you?

SMASH CUT TO BLACK

Images briefly FLASH against the darkness, like the flicker of lightning. A RUMBLE of thunder accompanies each image;

FLASH #1 - EXT. LAKE - TED'S BOAT - SUNSET

Julie frantically inspects Ted's empty boat, which floats adrift. Zack and Jacob tie their boat off to Ted's.

BACK TO BLACK

FLASH #2 - EXT. LAKE - SEARCH BOATS - NIGHT

Two state owned Fish and Game boats ROAR along the shoreline. A grim-faced SEARCH TEAM scans the darkness with powerful spot lights.

Julie and Zack ride in the back of the lead boat.

BACK TO BLACK

FLASH #3 - INT. TED'S CABIN - NIGHT

Julie, surrounded by Ted's family and friends, breaks down in tears. Zack reacts with anger and frustration, SMASHING his glass in the fire place.

BACK TO BLACK

TITLES FADE UP - "THREE DAYS LATER"

INT. SHERIFF DOBBS' OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

A cluttered Fish and Game Department office. SHERIFF JIM DOBBS, late fifties, is a seasoned enforcement veteran; a good man whose simply been at this job too long to believe he's going to save anybody but himself and his pension.

He sits across the desk from Julie Tupper, who has learned to believe the same about him.

SHERIFF
We've had our resources maxed out for days now. I can't justify it any longer.

JULIE
You're calling the search off.

SHERIFF

I have no choice. Fourth of July is the busiest weekend of the year. Maybe after the holiday...

JULIE

Maybe what?! He could still be alive out there.

SHERIFF

He certainly could. In fact, I'd bet money on it. But not in Havasu, maybe not even in Arizona.

JULIE

What are you talking about?

SHERIFF

Look, I don't want to upset you anymore than I have to...

JULIE

It's a little late for sensitivity.

SHERIFF

Ted Patterson was a better diver than any man on my search team. There's no way he drowned in Lake Havasu.

(beat)

The truth is, there's no evidence that there was any kind of accident at all.

JULIE

We found his boat adrift!

SHERIFF

Which makes it seem pretty damn strange that we haven't found a body by now.

(pauses)

Your wedding was supposed to be in two weeks, correct?

JULIE

What are you getting at?

SHERIFF

We have to consider all the possibilities. One of them is that Ted simply left town.

JULIE
That's ridiculous!

SHERIFF
You want to tell me what's more likely? Alien abduction?

JULIE
How do you explain the businessman Ted was diving with...?

SHERIFF
We still have no record of this "Mr. Crouse." None of the hotels had him registered. No one's turned up to inquire about him.

JULIE
So, what... you don't believe me?

SHERIFF
I know this is difficult for you.

JULIE
You're difficult for me.

SHERIFF
(ice cold)
We're done for today, Miss Tupper.

JULIE
You were done before you even started, weren't you Sheriff?
(rises)
I guess I can't blame you, this is such a busy time of year for you. Must be hard to keep up with all those fishing licenses.

Julie storms out and slams the door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Jacob is waiting for her, standing beside the dive shop pick-up. He knows the story from the look on her face.

JULIE
(enters passenger's side)
Don't ask.

JACOB

They're just glorified park rangers, Julie. Even if Dobbs wanted to help, he couldn't find his own ass with two hands and a flashlight.

Julie slides into the passenger seat, the entire weight of the tragedy on her shoulders.

JULIE

What do you think happened to him, Jacob?

JACOB

(shrugs)
Anything can happen in the water. Anything. I don't care if it's six feet or sixty.

JULIE

(searches for the words)
But Ted was... he was the best.

JACOB

I know. I taught him.

Jacob cranks the engine, reaches under the seat and hands Julie a coffee thermos.

JULIE

Coffee's the last thing I need.

JACOB

It ain't coffee.

As Jacob pulls out, Julie unscrews the cap and sniffs. The vapors alone makes her eyes water.

JACOB

Go ahead, it won't make you feel any worse.

Julie thinks it over... then she takes a deep swig.

WIDER - HAVASU

The pick-up swings out and passes by a traffic jam of incoming tourists. A large red, white and blue banner is strung across main street. It reads "Happy Independence Day From Lake Havasu City Council."

EXT. DOCK - DIVE SHOP - NEXT DAY

Posters for "Havasu's Fourth of July Fireworks Extravaganza" adorn the building. The dock is busy with a variety of college kids and vacationing families.

INT. DIVE SHOP - DAY

TAYLOR BILLINGS enters the shop like he owns the place. He's a trust fund kid with a rocker ponytail, streaked with beauty salon highlights.

He's accompanied by REGGIE TRIPP, a frat type with a gym rat physique, Reggie's girlfriend, SYDNEY (hot and knows it) and her college roomies CAMILLE and J.C. Camille talks on her cell phone as she aimlessly wanders about the shop.

The girls are pretty, but there's something special about the quiet one, J.C. Zack notices her right away.

ZACK

Hi. Can I help you guys?

TAYLOR

We want to rent tanks, regulators, the works.

REGGIE

Light gear. Just for a little sport diving.

ZACK

Great. Are you certified?

REGGIE

I'm a Navy Seal, man.

ZACK

Really?

REGGIE

Yes, really.

ZACK

Still gotta know if you're certified.

REGGIE

(getting irritated)
I'm certified, alright?

ZACK
Then you've got a card...?

REGGIE
I got this.

Reggie pulls up his sleeve and flexes. There is an impressive Navy Seals tattoo on his bicep.

REGGIE
(in Zack's face)
You can read, right?

SYDNEY
C'mon Reggie. Please don't start.

ZACK
(to girls)
What about you guys? Ever dive before?

J.C.
Just some snorkeling. But I'd like to learn.

REGGIE
I can take care of them. I'm an instructor too.

ZACK
(sighs)
Right. Look, if they want to dive, they need to get certified. Takes about a week. Maybe you should do it too, y'know. Just to brush up.

Taylor intercedes, pulling out a Gucci money clip loaded with fifties.

TAYLOR
We're only in town for a couple of days. I'll pay double. Like a rush fee.

ZACK
Can't do that.

Julie enters from the back of the shop, senses trouble right away.

JULIE
What's going on, Zack?

ZACK
Gear rentals. I got it. It's
okay.

Zack sets down a clipboard with a rental form on it.

ZACK
If you really want to dive, I can
take you guys out myself. As long
as I accompany you, one quick
lesson and you're good to go.

REGGIE
It's a scam.

JULIE
It's the law. If you don't like
it, that's okay. There's lots of
other things to do in Havasu.

REGGIE
(eyes Julie)
Why don't you take us out?

JULIE
Zack's the best. If you like, we
also do tours on our glass bottom
boat. Stay dry and see some
spectacular underwater life.

REGGIE
That shit's for tourists.

SYDNEY
Come on, Reggie. Don't be a dick.
Let's go on the dive.

Camille finally finishes her phone call.

CAMILLE
Screw this, you guys. We can just
hangout on the houseboat.

J.C. smiles at Zack. Something's going on between the two of
them.

J.C.
No. Let's try it. It'd be cool.

Sydney squeezes Reggie's arm.

SYDNEY
C'mon, baby.

REGGIE
 (shrugs)
 What the hell...

ZACK
 Best time's early. Like seven a.m.

CAMILLE
 Gawd. Are you serious? This is supposed to be a vacation.

JULIE
 He's right. The lake'll be calm. Good visibility. Good dive will take you 'til lunch. We supply sandwiches and sodas.

Taylor lays down his platinum card.

TAYLOR
 Can you stock some Coronas?

JULIE
 Only for after the dive.
 (aside, to Zack)
 You sure you want to take these guys out? They seem like a handful.

Zack glances up at J.C. and catches her looking at him.

ZACK
 It'll be okay.

JULIE
 If they don't shape up during the lesson, promise me you'll pull the plug.

ZACK
 You got my word.

EXT. DIVE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

The girls and guys walk to their cars.

CAMILLE
 I can't believe it. You liked that guy.

J.C.
 No way.

CAMILLE

Bullshit. I know you, J.C.

J.C.

Alright, he was cute. So what?

SYDNEY

He's a loser townie, J.C. And if you start hanging out with one of the locals it makes us all look like sluts.

CAMILLE

Two more weeks and we're back at school. You can wait 'til then to get revenge on Chad.

J.C.

I don't want revenge on Chad.

SYDNEY

Of course you do. He dumped you in front of the entire school.

CAMILLE

Besides, nothing's better than revenge sex. That'll get Chad jealous and he'll want you back. Then you get to have great make-up sex. And after that, you'll finally be over Chad, so you can be the one to dump him. Perfect, right?

J.C.

Camille... are you still seeing that therapist?

CAMILLE

No. My mom started dating him, so it kinda seemed like I was talking to my dad.

INT. DIVE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Zack watches J.C. through the dive shop window. MARCUS, Zack's co-worker, enters lugging a pair of tanks through the back door.

MARCUS

See something you like?

ZACK

I dunno.

MARCUS

They're Arizona State girls, Zack. They're all looking for some preppie asshole with a Porsche and a trust fund. That ain't us.

ZACK

True.

MARCUS

Any word on your brother?

Zack hangs his head.

MARCUS

He's gonna turn up, Zack. You did everything you could, so...

ZACK

(cuts him off)

Let's drop it, okay?

MARCUS

Okay, okay...

Marcus reaches into his back pocket, pulls out a flyer...

MARCUS

Here. Concentrate on this.

It's for a Fourth of July party.

ZACK

Club Zanzabar?

MARCUS

I made a deal with Rodriguez to use the Sand Bar. If I turn a profit, I'll get to do it every Wednesday night. I'm a club promoter now, man.

ZACK

You can call it what you want. It's still the Sand Bar. The place's got fleas.

MARCUS

I got a D.J. out of Vegas. Guy's smokin' hot.

(MORE)

MARCUS(cont'd)

The place will be packed and not
with those stuck up college
bitches, either.

Zack takes a last glance out the window at the girls. They
climb into Taylor's big Mercedes and peel out. Looks like
fun and money.

EXT. THE LAKE - SUNSET

The orange rim of the sun dips beneath the horizon line.
The exact moment it's snuffed out like a candle... nightfall.

The water is calm.

Beat.

A TURBULENCE begins just beneath the dark surface... dozens
and dozens of source points swirl about.

One split second of activity, then the strange phenomenon is
over as if it never happened.

EXT. TRAIL - NIGHT

Two tourists, a teenage boy and girl, ride along on
horseback, passing a joint back and forth.

BOY

Let's stop for awhile. There's
supposed to be an old boathouse a
little ways up this trail.

The girl giggles and passes the joint back.

GIRL

Okay, but you have to catch me
first!

The girl kicks her horse in the flanks and it takes off like
a bolt of lightning. The boy wheels around and pursues at a
full gallop.

BOY

Amy!

EXT. SHORELINE - NIGHT

The girl is a hell of a rider. She rides at a full gallop
straight toward the lake, laughing wildly. Youth plus dope
and horse power. Always trouble.

The horse plunges straight into the lake. KER-SPLASH!
Probably feels good on this hot night.

The boy reigns his horse in at the shoreline.

BOY
Amy, get back here!

AMY
Come and get me! What's wrong,
scared of the water?

She and the horse are now chugging along in deeper water,
following the shoreline. The boy kicks his horse's flanks,
but it spooks at the water line, refuses to go in.

EXT. BOATHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Amy has reached the abandoned boathouse. The dilapidated
pier is half-submerged in the inlet. An old tire swing hangs
from a dead tree. The same tire swing where Ted was sucked
under. Now we know exactly where we are... and it's not a
good place to be.

Amy can hear the boy calling.

BOY (O.S.)
AAAMMMYYYYY!

She reigns her horse in and pats him on the neck. He stands
in the water, up to his shoulders.

AMY
What do you think? Should we go
back...?

The horse WHINNIES deep in its throat. Something is spooking
him.

Amy follows the horse's fearful gaze.

AMY'S P.O.V. - THE WATER

The strange DISTURBANCE appears on the moonlit surface.
Dozens, maybe hundreds of churning points of contact. But
this time they move with purpose, traveling directly at Amy.

The entire formation submerges as it races straight at her.

The horse rears up in panic. Amy tries desperately to reign
him in.

AMY
No, Stormy!

ANGLE ON THE BOY

He hears the horses frantic WHINNY and realizes something's deeply wrong. He kicks his horse into a gallop along the rocky shoreline.

BACK TO AMY

Her horse is clambering for a foothold, still up to its shoulders in the water. Amy is fighting to control him with all her might.

AMY
No, Stormy, no!

MYSTERY P.O.V.

Eerie SONAR VISION scans the horse beneath the surface as it struggles to get it's footing.

The P.O.V. picks up speed, rocketing straight at its intended target.

ON SHORE - THE BOY

At a full gallop, somehow knowing, fearing just how bad this could be. He hears Amy SCREAM.

AMY

The water all around her suddenly ERUPTS with blood and bubbles. The horse BRAYS in agony, thrashing violently against an unseen enemy.

It collapses into the churning water, taking Amy with it.

THE BOY

Finally gallops up to Amy's location. He dismounts and rushes to the edge of the water.

But there's no sign of the horse or Amy.

SHOCK CUT

The horse breaks the surface, it's a LIVING NIGHTMARE of raw flesh stripped down to the bone, yet it's somehow still alive; it's eyes rolled back in agony. Amy is coughing water, clutching in blind fear to the saddle horn.

CLOSER - AMY

She SCREAMS hysterically as her horse is literally torn to pieces beneath her... she tumbles with it, straight back down into the deadly broiling water.

The boy flies out of the darkness on the tire swing... He grabs Amy around the waist and swings to safety as the horse finally collapses beneath the surface.

All this has happened without ever revealing a glimpse of the ungodly force that pulled the horse under.

SHORELINE

The boy and Amy hit the ground hard as they land on the rocky shoreline. He scrambles to his feet, holding her tightly.

BOY

Amy, are you okay?

She does not reply. By the vacant look on her blood-splattered face we realize she may never be okay again.

BOY

Amy?!!!

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCK - MORNING

A beautiful sunlit dawn. Julie detaches the gas line from a large, expensive looking houseboat. MRS. TUNNIE, a middle aged woman with oversized accessories (hat, ear rings, sunglasses) steps up to the rail.

MRS. TUNNIE

So sorry to hear about Ted. A terrible tragedy. But he was a real sportsman, wasn't he? So he liked taking those risks.

JULIE

(pauses)

It's still kinda tough to talk about.

MRS. TUNNIE

Oh, I understand.

(beat)

So, you must be starting to think about moving on by now...

JULIE

What?

MRS. TUNNIE

Well, now that Ted is gone aren't you going back to Vegas?

JULIE

I'm not from Las Vegas, Mrs. Tunnie. I'm from L.A.

MRS. TUNNIE

Really? I heard you were a show girl or something.

JULIE

I was a realtor.

MRS. TUNNIE

Only danced part time?

JULIE

(gives up)

That's fifty-six thirty-nine, Mrs. Tunnie.

MRS. TUNNIE

(pays)

So you're going to stay in town after all?

JULIE

Yes, actually, I am. Ted's dad needs me to run the dock.

MRS. TUNNIE

Well, tell him my husband will take this old dock off his hands whenever he's ready to sell.

JULIE

This dock has been in Ted's family for years.

MRS. TUNNIE

That may be so, but you're not.

JULIE

Excuse me?

MRS. TUNNIE

You're not part of Ted's family are you? Not really.

(MORE)

MRS. TUNNIE(cont'd)

And now that Ted's gone, you won't ever be. Joe can't run things anymore with his heart condition. So...

Julie finally starts to get steamed.

JULIE

You know what, Mrs. Tunnie? There's only one thing I miss.

MRS. TUNNIE

About what?

JULIE

Dancing in Vegas. I miss shaking my bare ass for men like your husband.

MRS. TUNNIE

I knew it! Where there's smoke, there's fire. If you're smart you'll cut your losses and move on while you can, missy!

(calls to captain)

We're done here, Jose.

As the houseboat slowly pulls out, Zack steps up beside Julie.

ZACK

You really danced in Vegas?

JULIE

Nope. Think I ought to give it a try?

(Zack grins)

Don't answer that.

Julie secures the gas line. Jacob steps up and takes over for her.

JACOB

Let me grab that for you, kid.

JULIE

Thanks, Jacob.

JACOB

Don't let that old gas bag get to you. Her and her old man have been trying to get their hands on this pier for twenty years now.

JULIE
Well, they'll have to wait another
twenty as far as I'm concerned.

JACOB
That's my girl.

ZACK
I've got to take out that charter.
You need anything?

JULIE
I'm fine. Just keep it simple with
those kids, okay?

She tosses Zack the boat keys.

ZACK
No worries.

EXT. LAKE - MORNING

The Patterson's excursion boat, the "Chill Pill" cuts across the calm waters of Havasu with Marcus at the helm. Taylor, Reggie and the girls are lounging on the open deck as Zack helps them prep for the dive.

Zack helps J.C. slip on her tank. He adjusts the harness.

ZACK
Too tight?

J.C.
No, it's fine. I didn't think air
could be this heavy.

ZACK
Once you're in the water, you won't
even know it's there.

J.C.
Hold on a sec.

She adjusts a neoprene knee brace.

ZACK
Bad knee?

J.C.
Just gotta take care of it. I tore
some cartilage swimming.

ZACK

What kind of swimming?

J.C.

I compete for Arizona State. I'll be fine as long as I don't push it.

ZACK

As far as I'm concerned, the whole point of diving is not pushing it. It's about going with the flow. I think you're gonna love it.

J.C.

Why do you?

ZACK

What?

J.C.

Love it so much. I can see it in your face when you talk about it.

ZACK

(adjusts her harness)

I dunno. It's kind of like flying. No, it's more like... a dream of flying. You're weightless, gliding through this secret world where all you can hear is your own breathing. And no one else can see what you see.

J.C.

You must dive alone a lot.

ZACK

...guess I do.

Reggie interrupts, dropping his tank down with a loud CLANG!

REGGIE

Hey man, this regulator's fucked up.

ZACK

Should be okay. I checked it this morning.

Reggie strains to turn the valve.

REGGIE

Well, you didn't check this. I can't work with this cheap crap.

ZACK

Lemme see.

Zack turns the valve in the opposite direction Reggie's been turning it. We instantly hear the HISS of air coming through the line.

REGGIE

This is different than the gear we train with.

ZACK

Sure. The Seals probably use valves that twist in the wrong direction to like, foil terrorists, right?

Reggie fumes. Marcus cuts the engines and trips the anchor release.

MARCUS

(over intercom)

Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. Please stow your tray tables in their upright position. We have arrived.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The boat drifts to a stop, revealing a picturesque hidden cove. Red rock walls tower above placid water.

Zack slips overboard into waist-deep water.

ZACK

Okay. We'll stop for a quick lesson and still have plenty of dive time before lunch.

SYDNEY

(admires view)

...not bad.

TAYLOR

Cabo's nicer.

CAMILLE

This sucks. Can we try someplace else?

J.C.
 (slips into the water)
 C'mon, Cami, it's beautiful. The
 water's perfect.

CAMILLE
 (displays phone)
 No reception.

TAYLOR
 You just might have to talk to us
 in person without A.T. & T.
 involved.

Zack plunks the gear down on shore. J.C. notices something.

J.C.
 Look at that...

ANGLE ON SHORELINE

J.C. hops up into the old tire swing. Now we know they've
 dropped anchor right were Ted Patterson disappeared.

J.C. begins to swing. The old rope CREAKS under her weight.

ZACK
 Hey! Don't do that!

J.C.
 Why not?

ZACK
 That thing's like twenty, thirty
 years old. I don't want you to
 fall on your... um.

J.C.
 My ass?

Taylor wades up onto shore.

TAYLOR
 And a fine ass it is.
 (to Zack)
 Calm down there, Aqua Boy. You
 don't want to pop a stiffy in your
 speedo.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Havasu doesn't have the crystal clear waters of the Caribbean, but it does have its own unique beauty. The "atmosphere" of the water carries breathtaking shafts of light that ripple across the perfect bodies of J.C. and her girlfriends as they gracefully descend.

MONTAGE:

Zack puts the college kids through some of the basics;

Flooding their face masks, then learning how to blow them clear without surfacing.

"Buddy Breathing," in which two divers alternate off of one tank. Reggie breaks rank to play grabass with Sydney.

Zack and J.C. glide weightlessly along the incline of the rocky slope. J.C. spreads her arms like wings to "fly" for Zack.

Taylor gets Zack's attention, showing him that his regulator is reading in the red (low air time). Zack scribbles on a hand-sized MARKER BOARD. It reads: "Relax. You're Hyperventilating."

ANGLE J.C.

She's noticed something peculiar a short distance ahead. We immediately recognize the RIFT, the deep crevice that swallowed Ted Patterson alive.

CLOSER - RIFT

The sand along the rim is slowly, but constantly trickling inward, disappearing into the dark void within. It's a subtle but weird phenomenon.

J.C. glides over for a closer look.

ANGLE ON ZACK

As he turns, realizing he's lost sight of J.C... then he spots her.

THE RIFT

J.C. swims down towards the rift, gracefully passing through a shaft of rippling light. The second she's over the open crevice, she's violently sucked down into it.

ZACK REACTS

He drops his hand board and swims with all his might, blazing straight to J.C.

THE RIFT

J.C. desperately clutches a rocky outcropping as the undertow drags her inside. Nothing but a slippery hand hold keeps her from being swallowed up by the darkness.

INT. RIFT - SONAR P.O.V.

An eerie SONAR image of J.C., as she's seen by something from inside the rift. She appears as a softly strobing silhouette, constantly scanned and rescanned by radiating sonar waves. A small figure in a vast black limbo.

The P.O.V. rushes straight up at the struggling J.C.

ANGLE ON THE RIFT

J.C.'s hand slips and she's jerked inside. But she snags a second hand hold.

Frantic, she looks back over her shoulder, into the darkness. Her dive mask is RIPPED from her face by the relentless current. She slips a few more inches, now blinded.

SONAR P.O.V.

Rushing straight at J.C.'s feet

C.U. - J.C.'S HAND

White knuckled grip. She hangs on... but the rock gives way. CA-RUNCH!

J.C. disappears into the darkness. But Zack's hand thrusts into the rift and grabs her forearm.

ZACK

He straddles the rift, fighting tons of water pressure. He pulls all his might... and J.C. slowly begins to appear, inch by inch.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Zack manages to get J.C. past the outer edge of the crevice. The grip of the relentless undertow is suddenly broken and Zack and J.C. sling shot away.

Zack takes J.C.'s hand and quickly leads her to the surface.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCK - DIVE SHOP - AFTERNOON

Julie sips a cup of coffee as she leans against the weathered railing, gazing out at the sparkling reflections of the late afternoon light on the water.

As she watches, Julie notices an odd turbulence on the lake's surface. It's distant, but still noticeable.

Julie slips on her UV sunglasses.

JULIE'S P.O.V.

The image is cleaner. There is definitely something odd about the disturbance on the surface.

WIDER

Julie walks a few feet down the dock and grabs a pair of binoculars from a tackle box. She scans the water, but is now past the safety railing, perched on the edge of the dock.

JULIE'S P.O.V. - BINOCULARS

A water skier, a young girl, is heading toward the patch of turbulence.

LOW ANGLE - WATER

A tracking shot from in the water as Julie watches. Something is watching her. There is a growing sense of dread about what lies in wait for Julie.

Julie GASPS as the ski girl crosses the odd patch of water and WIPES OUT, disappearing in a spray of water.

C.U. - JULIE'S FEET

Julie, engrossed in the view through her binoculars, steps dangerously close to the edge of the dock.

BINOCULAR - P.O.V.

The girl does not surface for one, two, three seconds... her empty skis pop up.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Julie slips, losing her balance.

A HAND

Shoots out of nowhere, grabbing Julie's forearm... pulling her back to safety.

WIDER

It's Nate, the pet store owner. Julie recovers, still upset by what she's seen.

JULIE

Nate... you startled me.

NATE

(awkward)

Oh, sorry! I, uh... you almost fell in.

Julie glances back at the scene. The ski girl finally surfaces, laughing. Her friends in the boat pick her up. All is perfectly normal.

NATE

I just thought I better stop by and service the aquarium. I figure since Ted's... well, since he's not around, I...

JULIE

(pulls herself together)

That's sweet of you, Nate. C'mon in.

INT. DIVE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Nate and Julie enter.

NATE

I'm really very sorry about Ted.

JULIE

I haven't given up. I won't until I know what happened to him.

NATE

You'll find him. I know you will. If there's anything I can do... anything. Just let me know.

JULIE
Of course, Nate.

Nate is left in a totally awkward state.

NATE
I'll... just, you know, check the
PH. The angel fish, they're
tricky.

JULIE
Thank you...

NATE
Okay, then.

Nate finally turns and hurries off to the safer world of his
fish.

EXT. PATTERSON DOCK - DAY

The Looking Glass pulls into its sloop. Jacob greets them
and expertly ties off the tow lines.

JACOB
How was the dive?

TAYLOR
(hops off)
Great, except for the part where
your instructor almost got my
friend killed.

Marcus guides it into its slip at the Patterson dock. Zack
helps J.C. step off the boat. She's still badly shaken from
the misadventure.

ZACK
There's an emergency ward five
minutes from here, I can...

J.C.
I told you, Zack. I'm okay.

ZACK
Just to make sure.

J.C.
This is already embarrassing
enough... really, I'm fine.

TAYLOR

You're the one who's got problems, aqua-boy. My dad specializes in injury law. We're going to own that boat, this dock and every dime you make for the rest of your natural life.

SYDNEY

Taylor, try not to think about money for five minutes, okay?

Reggie confronts Zack as he off-loads the tanks.

REGGIE

So that was your "sweet dive spot?" Fuckin' idiot.

ZACK

Back off man.

REGGIE

Next time we go out, I run the dive.

ZACK

Before you get somebody hurt, maybe your friends here oughta know the closest you've ever been to the Seals is at Marine World.

REGGIE

You don't know shit.

ZACK

Really? Better tell the guy who did your tat that the "e" in Seals comes before the "a."

Reggie stops in his tracks and checks the tattoo on his bicep. A shocked look crosses his face.

REGGIE

What?! That stupid shit! Are you serious?

ZACK

(ice cold)

The tattoo's fine; but you're no Seal.

(beat)

My brother was a Seal. You couldn't shine his shoes.

Zack walks off towards the dive shop, leaving Reggie completely flustered. The girls begin to giggle.

TAYLOR
(laughs)
Oh, man, you are so busted.

REGGIE
(calls after Zack)
You're dead meat, trailer trash!

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Zack and Marcus stow the dive gear as they discuss the incident with Julie.

JULIE
Sounds like you got caught in some kind of suck hole. When I was a kid we had to watch out for them along the California coast.

MARCUS
But this is a lake, not the ocean.
(to Zack)
Are you even sure what you saw down there?

ZACK
The girl almost got killed, okay Marcus?

MARCUS
How do you know that? If the undertow was that strong it couldn't be constant. Unless it's just "the black hole that eternally sucks."
(pauses)
No, wait... that's my life.

JULIE
(pauses)
You think you could find it again?

ZACK
(shrugs)
It was hard to see when I was right on top of it. I could try.

MARCUS

What's the point? Just stay away from it.

JULIE

The point is... if it happened to you, it could have happened to Ted.

A chill goes through every person in the room, as they realize that Julie is right.

ZACK

(softly)

Even if it did, he would have never survived this long...

JULIE

I know that.

(beat)

If he is down there, I can't just leave him. We've got to bring him home.

Zack begins to choke up.

ZACK

Yeah... you're right.

NATE

There could be air.

ZACK

What?

NATE

You never saw this rift before that little tremor on Thursday, right?

ZACK

Right. Which is very weird because we dive there all the time.

NATE

If there's a strong current, it may be that something large opened up.

JULIE

If it is one of these lakes... is it possible that it could have an air pocket?

NATE

Oh, I don't know about that...

Phone RINGS.

MARCUS
Nate, there's a call for you.

NATE
No one knows I'm here.

MARCUS
It's your mother. She says the
Sheriff's Department is looking for
you.

NATE
(panics)
What?! Tell her... tell her I'm
not here. Tell her...

ZACK
You in trouble, Nate?

NATE
No. Not that I know of...

MARCUS
(hands him the phone)
Go ahead. Don't worry, I can hook
you up with a good lawyer.

NATE
(into phone)
Hello, ma?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSEBOAT - DAY

CAMERA BOOMS DOWN from the upper deck of the houseboat, where
the girls are greased up, catching some rays. Someone's mp3
player is plugged into a boom box. Reggae/Rap BLARES.

CAMERA ENDFRAMES on the rail of the lower deck. Reggie sits
on a lounge chair, puffing on a Cuban cigar.

Taylor appears and sets some cold Coronas in the tub of ice
beside Reggie.

He sits in a lounge beside Reggie.

TAYLOR
We need to talk.

REGGIE
Sure... about what?

TAYLOR
The girls.

REGGIE
They're hot, right?

TAYLOR
Yeah. But I thought you said
they'd want to party.

REGGIE
They do. You just gotta get them
in the mood.

TAYLOR
The mood is about a grand a day of
my money. Which is starting to get
irritating. Tell them if I was
looking for new buddies, I'd have
joined a softball team.

REGGIE
C'mon, man. These are sorority
girls. You don't want to freak
them out.

TAYLOR
Yeah, I know. But if this keeps
up, I'm going to have to have a
funeral for my dick.

REGGIE
Which one do you like?

TAYLOR
J.C.

REGGIE
You make her nervous. Camille is
more your type. Concentrate on
Camille.

TAYLOR
No, J.C. Lets figure out how to
make her un-nervous.

Reggie reaches into his pocket and pulls out a slip of
paper... the Club Zanzibar hand out.

REGGIE
Here, check this out.

TAYLOR
What is it?

REGGIE
A very hot Fourth of July party tomorrow night. Supposed to get seriously wild. If that doesn't loosen the girls up, I've got something special that'll chill J.C. out for you.

TAYLOR
For real?

Reggie reaches into his backpack and tosses Taylor a small aspirin tin.

REGGIE
For emergency use only. Two in her margarita and she's yours.

TAYLOR
Is it safe?

REGGIE
(shrugs)
You're not taking 'em, bro. She is.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

The Deputy Sheriff steers the Fish and Game Department's boat. Sheriff Dobbs stands beside Dale, scanning the coastline of this rugged end of the lake. Nate sits idly behind them.

SHERIFF
I'm not sure I understand this, son. How do you lose an entire horse?

DALE
I don't know. Something just dragged it down.
(softly)
I didn't know a horse could scream.

NATE

Technically, they do. If you know what to listen for, they also laugh and cry. In fact, a number of mammals do, including dolphins and elephants.

SHERIFF

Spare us the Discovery Channel B.S., Nate. We're just trying to piece together what happened here. You're the only horse expert we got.

NATE

I supply feed for the dude ranch, but... actually, my specialty is tropical fish.

SHERIFF

(irritated)

Fine. Do you happen to have an opinion about what this boy has been telling us?

NATE

Well... It's awfully shallow here for a healthy horse to drown. Might have broken a leg and spooked.

DALE

That's not what happened.

DEPUTY

There's the boathouse.

The Deputy slows the engines. The boathouse is clearly abandoned, it's dilapidated pier half-submerged in the water. The familiar TIRE SWING is prominent on the shoreline.

DALE

It was in here somewhere.

NATE

What's that?

The Sheriff follows Nate's gaze. Only rocks and seaweed are visible beneath the boat.

SHERIFF

What?

NATE

I'm not sure. Circle around...

The Deputy swings the boat in a tight 360. This time he cuts the engines and they drift along in silence. Nate scans the lake bed.

NATE

Right there...

He leans out over the side of the boat to get a better look.

SONAR P.O.V.

From below... scanning Nate as he leans out. The sun behind Nate flares, obliterating the image.

ANOTHER ANGLE - NATE

Half hidden in the shallows, a piece of metal GLINTS in the sunlight... a stirrup.

NATE

Right there.

Nate slips over the side into waist-deep water. The terrain beneath the water is rough. The rotted wood of the old boathouse's dilapidated pier makes it tricky.

SHERIFF

(to Deputy)

For Christ's sake, Jerry. Give him a hand.

The Deputy slips off his t-shirt and tosses it in the boat... submerges in the shallow water.

UNDERWATER - SIMULTANEOUS

The Deputy grabs the stirrup and pulls. Whatever the strap is attached to, it's firmly hooked up under wooden debris.

SURFACE

The Deputy comes up for air, gasping.

DEPUTY

It's hung up on something.

Nate wades over beside the Deputy.

EXT. UNDERWATER - SONAR P.O.V.

In eerie, softly glowing SONAR VISION, The Deputy reaches right into CAMERA to get a grip on the stirrup.

Whatever is watching The Deputy, it's so close that it's strange he doesn't see it.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The Deputy and Nate strain against the stubborn stirrup... suddenly, with the CRUNCH of wood, a large SHADOWY MASS breaks free.

SURFACE

Nate tumbles backwards into a section of rotted wood. It crumbles on impact. CRUNCH-SPLASH!

CLOSER

The HORSE'S GRISLY BONES burst to the surface in a cluster around Nate... he scrambles to free himself, tangled up in an old net that has snagged the remains.

The Deputy helps Nate out of the tangle of rancid bones and netting. The Sheriff observes from the side of the boat.

DEPUTY

You alright?

NATE

Fine! I'm fine.

The Deputy heaves the saddle up into the boat and the men climb back on board. The Sheriff grabs a small camera from his gear and snaps a picture of the bones.

SHERIFF

How long ago did you say this happened?

DALE

Last night.

SHERIFF

Looks more like last week. Those bones have been stripped clean.

The shredded SADDLE looks as if it's been through a wood chipper.

SHERIFF

What the hell could have done this?

NATE

I have no idea...

The Sheriff gets a shot of the saddle as the Deputy inspects the straps, ripped into ribbons of leather. Water pours out of the torn saddle bag...

SHOCK CUT

A DARK SHAPE explodes out of the saddle bag... right at Dale's throat. Jaws SNAP! Dale SCREAMS as arterial blood sprays out in a gruesome arc.

The Deputy grabs the dark, glistening CREATURE and yanks it off Dale's blood-splattered neck. It's tail whiplashes as it flies overboard and disappears beneath the surface.

Dale scrambles away, gripping his throat, but the blood still squirts out with each heartbeat.

The Sheriff grabs a towel and presses it to the open hole.

SHERIFF

Sit back! You've got to lie still.

The Sheriff applies direct pressure to the shocking wound.

SHERIFF

(to Deputy)

Get us out of here.

The Deputy guns the engines.

SHERIFF

(to Nate)

You want to tell me what the hell that was?

NATE

I didn't get a very good look, I...

SHERIFF

You said you were a fish expert.
Find out. And find out soon.

Nate sits... and notices the Sheriff's digital camera lying beside him.

The image of the waterlogged saddle is frozen on the view screen. A dark BLUR has been captured on the lower right edge of the shot... the creature leaping from the saddle bag.

Nate takes the camera and punches the screen controls, ZOOMING IN on the image.

Although it's dark and distorted, the creature's gruesome profile is visible. Rows of horrid fangs and a white, glaring eye are visible within the ghastly blur.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SAND BAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Marcus pulls up in front of the Sand Bar in his 70's Shelby Cobra. It would be a classic, but it's more bondo than Cobra.

As Marcus exits the car, he notices an orange state-sanctioned PICKUP parked near the bar's retaining wall.

Two men, STATE GEOLOGISTS, are checking the pylons that support the bar's outdoor deck that hangs over the water.

Marcus is immediately concerned. He tries to look casual as he saunters over to the pair.

MARCUS

Hey, guys. What's going on?

GEOLOGIST #1

Are you the owner?

MARCUS

(lies)

I'm his partner.

GEOLOGIST #1

We've been spot-checking some of the public buildings since that quake.

MARCUS

Wasn't much of a quake, though, was it?

GEOLOGIST #1

Three point eight. But the numbers can be misleading. Looks like you have some baseline damage on your pylons.

MARCUS

Really? You sure about that?

GEOLOGIST #2

The damage might not be structural. We'll have county engineers out here sometime next week to do a more thorough assessment. In the meantime, you'd best keep people off that deck.

The Geologist fills out a form and hands it to Marcus.

GEOLOGIST #2

Call us if you have any questions.

MARCUS

I get it. Better to be safe than sorry.

GEOLOGIST #1

Exactly. You have a good holiday.

MARCUS

You too, sir. Thanks.

Marcus watches as the Geologists return to their truck. He waves at them as they pull out onto the main road.

As soon as they're out of sight, Marcus balls up the notice and tosses it in a trash can.

MARCUS

And you can kiss my sweet Irish cheeks until Sunday morning.

He stuffs it in his pocket and slaps on of his club flyers on the door in it's place; "Club Zanzabar - Party Down on the Fourth."

CUT TO:

C.U. - TED PATTERSON - DAY

He's standing in the rear of a speedboat. This is PLAYBACK of a digital tape. Julie is operating the digital cam, so we can hear her voice, but she's not in the shot. She's in the midst of a playful "interview" with Ted.

JULIE (V.O. - TV)

So, Mr. Patterson, as a famous deep sea diver...

TED

Lake diver. That's a lake behind me.

JULIE (V.O. - TV)

Okay, whatever. "Deep lake diver," to what do you attribute your great success?

TED

I owe it all to the little people. Specifically the little five-foot-two girl in the red bikini right here.

(grabs off cam at Julie)

Now suit up.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Julie, curled up on her couch with Baxter watching the playback on her TV.

JULIE (V.O. - TV)

I told you I don't do scuba. You guys dive, I'll make lunch.

TED

What are you scared of?

JULIE (V.O. - TV)

Everything. I'll be so slow, you'll end up leaving me behind.

TED

(suddenly serious)

Listen, I will never, ever leave you alone down there, understand? Now go get your gear on...

Ted playfully SNAPS his towel somewhere below the frameline. The camera goes cock-eyed as Julie shrieks with LAUGHTER.

EXT. JULIE'S CABIN - LAKEFRONT - NIGHT

The sounds of the playback of Julie's laughter ECHOES across the moonlit lake. The swirling TURBULENCE briefly appears on the surface of the water, a larger more defined arrowhead of motion... then all is still again.

EXT. HOUSEBOAT - NIGHT

The houseboat is docked for the night at a remote pier. Laughter and music can be heard from inside.

INT. HOUSEBOAT - MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

J.C. is painting her toenails. Camille is chatting on her cell phone. Reggie and Sydney begin necking shamelessly on the couch. Taylor enters with a pitcher of margaritas, puffing on a joint.

TAYLOR

Hey, we gave you two the master so we wouldn't have to watch the miracle of creation.

REGGIE

(mumble)
Fuck off...

CAMILLE

(into cell phone)
Jackie? I'm losing you...

Camille rises, trying to find a "sweet spot" for reception. Taylor pours J.C. a margarita and offers her a puff of the joint.

J.C.

No thanks.

Taylor picks up her nail polish bottle and takes a whiff.

TAYLOR

No wonder. You already copped a buzz off of this shit.

Camille mimes her irritation.

CAMILLE

(into phone)
Sorry, I can't hear you. People are talking in here.

TAYLOR

That's our primary form of communication on this planet. I'll phone you sometime and explain it.

Camille exits in disgust.

EXT. HOUSEBOAT - NIGHT

Camille steps out onto the pier, searching for reception.

Three drunk FRAT BOYS are lounging on a speedboat docked in the next slip. They try to get Camille to join them as she passes by, but she won't have anything to do with them. She remains focused on her cell phone, panning it like she's searching for gold with a metal detector.

ANOTHER ANGLE PIER

Camille slips off the pier into warm waist-deep water.

E.C.U. - CELL PHONE SCREEN

Camille sees the phone's reception bars multiply from zero to three...

CAMILLE
(softly)
Yesss...

She wades further out.

UNDERWATER P.O.V. - SAME TIME

In eerie, undulating SONAR VISION, we see Camille's lower torso wade out into deeper water. The P.O.V. is distant, but approaching fast.

CAMILLE

She's still casting about for reception... slows to a stop.

UNDERWATER P.O.V.

As Camille stops walking, her sonar image disappears like a ghost. Whatever this "vision" is, it only works on moving targets.

WIDER - PIER

One of the frat boys has followed Camille to the edge of the dock. He watches her, admiring her body... but then notices something strange.

The TURBULENCE flickers across the surface of the water, heading straight for her.

FRAT BOY
...hey.

Camille is still preoccupied, trying to get a call out. She remains standing in place, punching her send button.

FRAT BOY
 (louder)
 Hey!

Camille finally looks up, irritated at the interruption.

FRAT BOY
 (softly, intensely)
 Don't move.

Camille recognizes the fear in his voice. Something is wrong. Very wrong.

She glances down at the water.

VERTIGO CRANE SHOT

C.U. of Camille as she looks down in horror all around her. CAMERA rapidly BOOMS UP until it's directly overhead, revealing an IMMENSE SHADOW circling Camille beneath the surface. It could be the Loch Ness Monster... or hundreds of Piranha.

Whatever it is, it completely encircles her.

UNDERWATER - PIRANHA P.O.V.

SONAR VISION is receiving scattershot images; a section of the uneven lake bottom, a bit of Camille's calf, a section of the pier's pylons. As long as she holds still, the target is unclear.

E.C.U. - CAMILLE'S CELL PHONE

The L.E.D. display lights up with a message; INCOMING CALL. Beat. The phone RINGS LOUDLY.

HIGH ANGLE

The SHADOW RING of piranha instantly responds to the RING and attacks Camille! The water EXPLODES all around her as she's jerked beneath the surface.

C.U. - THE FRAT BOY

Watches in stunned disbelief.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE HAVASU - HOUSEBOAT -LATER

We see lights clicking OFF.

INT. HOUSEBOAT - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

J.C. is nearly asleep on a fold out bed when Sydney enters. She looks exhausted and is carrying a pillow and a blanket.

SYDNEY

Reggie snores like a fucking lion.
Mind if I crash on the couch?

J.C.

No. Go ahead. Is Camille back yet?

SYDNEY

(shrugs)
Not that I know of. She must have finally made her love connection.

J.C.

Her what?

SYDNEY

Look, I love Camille. But she's the queen of booty calls. Why do you think she's always on the phone? The girl's quicker on delivery than Domino's.

J.C.

You sure she's okay?

SYDNEY

You'll see. She'll probably show up at the party tomorrow with some hot guy. Maybe two.

J.C.

Maybe three.

SYDNEY

Great. Then I can finally ditch Reggie. I think all those steroids are starting to take the lead out of his pencil.

The girls giggle and high five. J.C. clicks off the light.

EXT. PATTERSON DOCK - DAWN

JACOB assists Julie and Zack as they load diving gear into the glass bottom boat, preparing to search for the rift. Baxter the dog is excitedly running up and down the dock.

VOICE (O.S.)

Ahoy, there!

Julie turns. Nate marches out onto the dock, wearing a bad boating hat and carrying an overstuffed beach tote. Baxter BARKS a joyful greeting and dances around Nate as he approaches.

JULIE

Oh no, Zack. You didn't.

ZACK

Not me. He invited himself.

NATE

(calls out)

Morning!

JULIE

(half-hearted)

Hi, Nate.

Nate holds up his duffel, stuffed full.

NATE

Brought my gear. I just thought you could use some help.

JULIE

It's sweet of you to offer, but we have no idea if we'll find anything.

NATE

(softly)

He was a good man. I just...

(awkward)

Well, I'd like to help, if I can...

JULIE

(considers)

Of course, Nate. Climb aboard.

Jacob grabs his duffel, helps him board.

ZACK

So how was your big meeting with the Sheriff?

NATE

Very strange indeed. He needed my advice.

ZACK

Is he interested in fish?

NATE

He is now. But I'm not so sure I can help him.

JULIE

Alright, grab a seat, everybody.

Baxter leaps on board just in time as Julie pulls the boat out of it's slip.

CUT TO:

EXT. COVE - THE LOOKING GLASS - DAY

KER-SLASH! Zack drops the anchor overboard. They've reached the remote cove. Julie passes out compact high-beam flashlights.

JULIE

You put in the fresh batteries?

ZACK

Yeah.

(tests his light)

This'll be like looking for a needle in a haystack.

JACOB

Try this...

Jacob tosses Zack an UNDERWATER FLARE from a cardboard box.

JACOB

That's a hell of a lot brighter than your flashlight; but they're only good for about fifteen minutes. Just crack the cap... and keep it away from your face.

Zack casually inspects his flare, but does a double-take as Nate steps up from the aft of the boat.

Nate has donned a surprisingly flashy red and yellow wetsuit with a large NO FEAR logo down the arm.

NATE
(off Zack's reaction)
What? It was a gift.

Jacob hands Nate a flare. Nate handles it gingerly.

ZACK
Something wrong?

NATE
Sorry. It's just that I'm a little claustrophobic, so if we do find a cavern...

JULIE
(takes back the flare)
That's okay. We don't expect you to go in.

NATE
But I've got your back.

ZACK
Good to know.

EXT. UNDERWATER - MOMENTS LATER

One by one Julie, Zack and Jacob plunge into the water and begin their descent.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE - SEARCH FOR THE RIFT

They methodically cover the lake bed... gliding over sand and rock as they seek the rift.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAND BAR - OUTDOOR DECK - LATE AFTERNOON

Marcus is busy making preparations for his party. A waitress, a bus boy and CARRIE the bartender, are helping out.

CARRIE is a tough, buff biker chick in her late twenties, everybody's favorite bartender.

CARRIE
What kind of crowd are we
expecting?

MARCUS
The kind with cash... and plenty of
it, I hope.

RODRIGUEZ, the owner, steps out onto the deck.

RODRIGUEZ
Hey, Marcus, we got a problem.

MARCUS
What?

RODRIGUEZ
Your D.J.'s people are here.

MARCUS
So what's the problem?

RODRIGUEZ
They want to know where to put
their gear.

We now hear the WHINING of heavy machinery and two roadies appear on a FORK LIFT PLATFORM as it rises into frame.

A huge stack of amps and a set of SPOTLIGHTS are lifted to deck level. In the B.G., two vans and a large generator truck have just begun to unload.

CAMERA BOOMS DOWN from Marcus' stunned reaction... down past the structure of the deck... to the PYLONS that support it above the water.

A small chip of plaster falls off the hairline FRACTURE of the center pylon.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - LATE AFTERNOON

Baxter is poised at the bow of the boat... ears perked as he patiently waits for his mistress. The sun is dangerously low on the horizon.

EXT. UNDERWATER - SAME TIME

Julie, Zack and Jacob continue their search, gliding across the lake bottom.

ANGLE ON THE RIFT

Zack and Jacob glide down and settle beside the rift. Jacob raises a hand, cautioning Julie back.

He digs his hand into the lake bottom and releases a handful of sand over the rift. It plumes out, then is suddenly sucked inside by the powerful undertow. The current is on.

Julie nods, she understands.

Jacob checks the rock formation for a solid spot, then unslings a rock hammer from his dive belt and pounds a STEEL PITON into the bedrock.

Zack does the same.

They clip nylon lines to the pitons and secure them to their dive belts.

Jacob shows Nate how to tend to the coils of line. Nate gives an exaggerated thumbs up.

Julie CRACKS off the end of her flare, which ignites its magnesium core. A bright blue incandescent LIGHT illuminates their surroundings. She looks to Jacob. He CRACKS his flare, moving in right behind her.

Julie pushes out over the rift, holding the flare before her... In an instant she is swept inside by the powerful current. Her nylon line quickly plays out.

INT. RIFT

Julie tumbles inside, ripped head over heels by the powerful backwash. She slowly regains control and drifts to a stop.

CLOSER - JULIE

She gazes up in awe at the vista before her, illuminated by the ghostly flicker of her flare.

Zack shoots into the cavern right behind her. Jacob's last.

JULIE'S P.O.V. - UNDERGROUND LAKE

The vast ceiling of the underwater cavern is breathtaking, a Sistine Chapel of ancient rock arcing out into darkness.

This place may have existed undisturbed for centuries.

Julie glances back at Zack and Jacob, who are equally in awe. All are humbled by the sheer size of this place.

There are several HOLLOWs in the cavern walls, which may or may not be passages. Julie and Zack glide forward, pausing at each hollow to briefly illuminate its interior with their flares... searching for any sign of Ted Patterson.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Julie, Zack and Jacob pass by, SWARMS OF PIRANHA are revealed, watching from the shadows within the hollows. They hover just beyond the ring of light from the flares.

The ghostly forms rise and fall with an eerie grace, staying just out of sight as our heroes slowly swim past.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - THE LOOKING GLASS - SAME TIME

Baxter stands poised at the bow of the boat, waiting patiently for his master.

NATE

Don't worry, boy. They're okay.

Nate sits in the bow with his laptop open and scrolling through a site titled "National Oceanographic Society" The program is in the midst of a search titled "Fresh Water Fish - Characteristics."

On the lower quadrant of the screen is a scan of the Sheriff's photo of the mystery fish.

Nate carefully overlays the blurred image with green reference points that detail the fish's facial characteristics. A glowing grid connects the dots.

Nate presses a button and the program begins to rapidly search hundreds of images from the site... seeking a match.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERN

Zack, Jacob and Julie swim along with their flickering torches held before them. The cavern has narrowed down to a winding tunnel filled with rocky arches and dark hollows.

Jacob motions to Julie, showing her that their lifelines are nearly played out.

As Julie checks her line, the light from her flare falls on a beautiful little SEAHORSE, unlike anything she's seen before.

It GLOWS with a soft phosphorescence and its entire body is translucent. Its fluttering heart and organs all look as if they're made of glass.

It circles around them, its delicate fins whirring like humming bird wings. It's followed by another half-dozen of its kind, all glowing like something out of a fairy tale.

As Julie watches, the seahorses skim across the sandy floor, passing over something metallic in the sand... something man made.

Julie starts towards it, but is pulled up short as her nylon cord goes taut. They've reached the end of their lifelines.

She glances back at Zack, then makes a decision. Julie unclips her line and continues forward.

Zack is obviously concerned. He looks back.

JACOB'S P.O.V.

Their lines trail off into the dark murky void. Zack reluctantly unclips his line and follows Julie.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE CAVERN FLOOR

Julie dusts the sand away from Ted's cracked DIVE MASK. She glances at Zack. Whatever Ted Patterson's fate was, they're getting closer to finding out.

A ripple runs through the swarms of piranhas in their positions throughout the hollows. The natives are restless, but they still avoid the radiant nimbus of light that encircles the divers.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - LOOKING GLASS - SUNSET

Baxter begins to WHINE, pacing up and down along the side of the boat. Nate is getting nervous as well.

NATE
Don't worry boy, they'll be back soon.

Nate now hears a soft BEEP TONE from his computer, glances back at the screen...

NATE
(softly)
Damn...

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN

The program flashes NO MATCH. A question appears on the screen; "Alternate Search." Nate checks the box marked "scale twelve inches" to "any scale." The search instantly flashes to a MATCH.

The gruesome profile of a BRAZILIAN FRESHWATER PIRANHA fills the screen. It's a close match to the photo... only our fish is twice the size and three times as nasty looking.

NATE
(whispers)
Sweet Jesus with a tambourine...

Nate clicks "more" and is hit with dozens and dozens of images... each more gruesome than the next of the vicious species. The tiny, evil eyes, disproportionately large fangs, the distinctive underbite. An mpeg suddenly appears and begins to playback a jittery black and white film clip;

CLOSE - COMPUTER SCREEN

In the crude image, an ox is led by Brazilian ranch hands into a swiftly flowing river. As it steps into the water, a time code appears in the corner, counting the seconds.

At first, nothing happens. Then the ox suddenly collapses into the water.

The water around the oxen now churns violently. It's head breaks the surface, braying in pain.

The moment the time code hits twenty-seven seconds it FREEZES. Ox bones bob up to the surface, picked clean of flesh.

C.U. - NATE

He's thunderstruck as he realizes;

FLASHBACK

Nate tangled in the horse's bones.

WIDER

Nate rises, nervously pacing back and forth. Baxter BARKS, picking up on Nate's indecision and fear. Nate glances at the extra oxygen tanks. The box of flares. He knows he should warn Julie.

Baxter BARKS.

NATE

I can't! I told them, I can't go
in there. They'll just have to...

Nate's voice trails off. He's stuck between a rock and a hard place of sheer terror... and the sun is setting.

INT. CAVERN

Zack's flickering torch reveals a blocked passage. Dead end. He turns back to Jacob and Julie... now what?

At that moment, Zack's torch begins to SPUTTER.

Zack fumbles for the flashlight clipped to his belt, just as a swarm of PIRANHA rises up from the hollows behind him.

Dozens of sightless eyes reflect the dying light as they rise up out of the darkness. Zack's flare finally goes out.

Julie grabs Zack's arm, pulling him back. The swarm surges forward in a swirling mass!

Julie holds her flare higher, briefly driving them back, but then her flare begins to sputter!

Icy fear grips Julie as she realizes their situation. She turns back, looking for any other escape route.

JULIE'S P.O.V.

By the last cold-blue flicker of Julie's light, the cavern walls appear to move. Hundreds of piranha line the walls. They rustle like leaves in the wind, their metallic scales GLISTENING. Julie, Zack and Jacob are completely surrounded.

Then Julie's flare sputters out. The entire cavern is plunged into PITCH BLACK.

Zack's FLASHLIGHT BEAM finally flashes ON, stabbing through the darkness... It's too damn narrow and too dim, but it reveals our worst fears;

SHOCK CUT

A cloud of piranhas, swirl around them, closing in for the kill. They tear into the closest target... Jacob.

Zack watches in horror as Jacob is ripped to pieces before his eyes... still alive and SCREAMING as the gleaming white bones of his rib cage are stripped bare.

The fish go berserk, tails lashing and fangs snapping. Jacob's blood billows out in a dark cloud as his limbs are ripped from his torso. The power and speed of their attack is absolutely terrifying.

CAVERN

Zack discovers his light beam has the effect of a Star Wars "light saber." It repels the fish as it strikes them.

But Zack is fighting a losing battle as the swarm grows around them... becoming more aggressive with every heartbeat.

Julie's light beam FLASHES on, as Jacob spins about in panic, caught up in a living twister of piranhas. His blood stirs the piranhas into a greater frenzy.

Julie tries to help, but is quickly forced to fend off her own attackers. She flashes her light in their eyes to turn them away.

Zack turns and the beam reveals a huge SWELL of piranha surging straight towards him.

Zack backpedals in the darkness and collides with a cavern wall. His flashlight is knocked from his grasp and tumbles into the darkness below. Zack immediately swims straight down... trying to catch it.

Julie swims for her life in a blind panic, deeper into the cavern. The swarm splits; half whirls about to pursue Julie, half dive bombs after Zack.

INT. DROP SHAFT - SAME TIME

Zack swims straight down into this natural well of icy water... and the swarm swoops down right after him.

Zack's flashlight tumbles down through the darkness, its beam bouncing off the craggy walls.

Zack is in a deadly race... straight to the bottom of this natural well, with the swarm right behind him.

INT. CAVERN - BOTTLE NECK

Julie swims for her life. The pitch black cavern has now narrowed into a winding tunnel. Julie's legs are scraped by the razor sharp walls, leaving a trail of blood behind her.

Piranha swarm into the tunnel from both directions. Teeth and eyes FLASH up out of pitch blackness, cutting off her escape.

ANOTHER ANGLE

At the last second, Julie ducks into a narrow hollow in the cavern wall.

The two swarms COLLIDE into one another, just missing Julie. The fish attack each other in their killing frenzy, quickly filling the tunnel with dark blood and bits of flesh.

INT. NARROW PASSAGE - JULIE

Julie swims for all she's worth, heading straight up a narrow "stove pipe" passage. It grows narrower as it twists and turns... growing more and more claustrophobic.

Julie now hears the eerie SOUND of the swarm approaching, the leathery SNAP of tails accompanied by an almost subliminal banshee WAIL.

Julie twists about, scraping the narrow walls as she checks behind her with her flashlight.

JULIE'S P.O.V.

Hundreds of piranha streak straight up, completely filling the narrow "stove pipe" passage.

JULIE

Turns back... and bumps straight into a GRISLY CORPSE. Half a body blocks her path, a grinning skull beneath a dive mask.

She instinctively flinches backwards, but the sound of the piranha grows LOUDER and LOUDER.

Julie grabs the corpse. Could this be Ted? There's no time to think. The corpse pulls free, falling to pieces and Julie swims straight through it!

REVERSE

The piranha race straight up through the narrow funnel of rock.

JULIE

Pure adrenaline empowers her. She desperately swims/scrambles up the jagged walls.

JULIE'S TANK

SLAMS into solid rock. She's caught! The passage is simply too tight to make it through.

She SLAMS into the ring of solid rock again and again, but she's stuck like a cork in a bottle.

THE SWARM

A living wall of teeth rockets up the rocky chute and tears into the flesh of Julie's legs!

JULIE

She SCREAMS, losing her mouthpiece. The pain is excruciating. She panics, gulping water, only seconds left to live.

QUICK CUTS

Julie releases her harness. She pulls free of her tank... swims straight up with no oxygen.

THE PIRANHA

In their frenzy, they attack the oxygen tank. We hear the metallic SCREECH as teeth scrape on metal.

JULIE

No choices left, swims up... up... going on thin hope. Long odds. Trailing blood. Lungs about to burst.

JULIE'S P.O.V.

Rising up over jagged rocks... the beam of her flashlight catches something strange in the darkness dead ahead.

Her own reflection swims straight at her. Julie breaks the surface!

INT. CAVERN - AIR SPACE

Julie sucks in a lungfull of centuries-dank air... and immediately begins coughing.

She has surfaced in an AIR POCKET somewhere within the cavern. The beam of her flashlight quickly reveals the truth:

She has surfaced in a dead end... a rocky cove the size of a coffin. She flashes her light back downwards.

BELOW

Her tank is solidly wedged in the narrow bottleneck. The swarm's access is blocked for the time being.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAND BAR - DECK - DUSK

The place is packed, inside the bar and out, standing room only. Rap/Rock blares.

Marcus is a nervous wreck. He sucks down a shot of tequila and SPANKS the bar.

MARCUS

Carrie, hit me!

CARRIE

Don't tempt me. This is a mob scene, Marcus! I should have three back-ups working this bar.

MARCUS

That's why I'm lucky to have a pro
like you.

CARRIE

Nice try.
(tosses him a bar towel)
Get back here and give me a hand.

MARCUS

What?!!

CARRIE

You heard me, get to work or I'm
walking. Now, Marcus.

MARCUS

Okay, okay.

Rodriguez elbows his way to the bar.

RODRIGUEZ

The Sheriff's office just called.
We have to clear some of these
people or they'll shut us down.

MARCUS

Just stall 'em. Fireworks will
start any minute. Some of them
will leave.

We now see a PATRON turn away from the bar, loaded down with margaritas... it's Taylor. He makes his way through the crowd.

ANGLE ON A TALL BAR TABLE

Taylor delivers the drinks to J.C., Sydney and Reggie.

J.C.

Where's Camille? I thought you
said she'd meet us here.

SYDNEY

Don't worry, She can take care of
herself.

REGGIE

This is a rip-off. I thought there
was supposed to be fireworks.

SYDNEY

The fireworks are right here, sweet
thang.

Taylor slides in beside J.C. The rowdy crowd pushes in on
them from all sides.

TAYLOR

This place is a zoo. I know a
great little restaurant that serves
killer barbecue. Maybe we should
slip out for awhile.

J.C.

(re: Reggie and Syd)
They look pretty happy here.

TAYLOR

No, I mean just you and me.

ANGLE ON THE STAGE

Basically a wall of giant speakers and a high tech set of
turntables. A local D.J. grabs the mic.

D.J.

And now... from the stone cold
heart of Las Vegas, where paradise
is a pair of dice. We bring you
Lil John and the Too Live Crew.

ANGLE ON THE GIRLS

J.C. and Sydney watch as the hard core rap crew takes the
stage.

Taylor takes advantage of the distraction... He drops the
small white PILL from Reggie's aspirin tin into J.C.'s drink.

ANGLE ON THE STAGE

LIL' JOHN, a hard core rapper, his bare chest covered with
jailhouse tats, takes the mic as his D.J. starts spinning the
turntables.

The stack of base woofers BOOM like cannons as Lil' John
begins his rap. The crowd moves to the beat.

ANGLE ON PYLONS - WATER LINE

That fracture in the central pylon is no longer "hairline." More plaster flakes off as the combination of the dancing and the monster subwoofers VIBRATES the entire deck.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERN - AIR SPACE

Julie is clinging to the rocks, trying to slow her breathing. Stay calm to survive. She hears a disturbance in the water beneath her.

JULIE'S P.O.V.

A single piranha is squirming through the narrow space between her tank and the passageway.

Julie desperately tries to climb higher, but it's impossible on the slippery moss covered rocks. Trapped.

The piranha shoots straight up and breaks the surface like a leaping trout. Julie throws herself to one side.

It's teeth SNAP as it just misses her. The piranha impacts the side of the cavern and careens back into the water.

Julie begins to hyperventilate, trying desperately to locate the piranha with her flashlight. It could be coming at her from any direction.

Her flashlight beam reveals two more wriggling through. The tank SCREECHES against the rocks as it becomes dislodged.

The tank drops away into the darkness, and the entire swarm surges straight up at Julie.

We now hear the most surprising thing of all... a voice. Barely a WHISPER.

VOICE

This way...

Her beam flashes upward, revealing a hidden shelf on the opposite wall of the narrow air space.

Julie snags a slippery hand hold and scrambles up as a dozen piranhas leap up at her heels.

HIGH ANGLE

The rabid piranha fly into the air, SNAPPING at Julie as she rolls into the safety of the hidden shelf.

ANGLE ON SHELF

Ted Patterson lies wedged in the tiny alcove just a few feet from Julie. He looks frighteningly thin and weak, but he's alive!

JULIE

Ted! Oh my god, Ted...

Tears well up in Julie's eyes.

From this closer angle, we can see how tough it is for him to muster the energy to speak.

TED

(weak whisper)

Julie. How did you...?

JULIE

Are you alright?

TED

(coughs)

I've been better...

Julie notices his hands are dark with blood and curled into tight fists.

JULIE

Your hands...

TED

I was... I was trying to dig...
stupid.

The flesh of Ted's fingers are scraped down to the bone. The rock ceiling above him is covered with bloody claw marks.

JULIE

Can you move?

TED

I don't know. I busted some ribs.
Can't feel my legs.

Ted begins coughing again... sounds worse this time. Julie cups some water in her hands and brings it to his lips.

JULIE

Here. Try to drink.

Ted sucks the cool water through blistered lips.

JULIE
We've got to get out of here.

The fish can be heard SPLASHING just below them.

TED
Those fucking things... they're
waiting for us.

Julie's voice shakes with emotion; the entire experience is catching up with Julie.

JULIE
(softly)
They killed Jacob right in front of
me. Tore him to pieces. I tried
to help him, but I couldn't, I...

TED
That's enough.
(pauses)
We've got to think. Did you see
any other way out of here?

JULIE
(shakes her head)
Nothing, as far as I can tell. One
way in, one way out.

TED
Is anyone else with you?

JULIE
Zack, Nate... we got seperated.

TED
They'll never find you in here.
You've got to get back to the
entrance.

JULIE
(corrects him)
We have to get back to the
entrance. I'm not going without
you.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - SUNSET

Baxter WHINES, pacing back and forth along the length of the
boat.

CLOSER - SUN

The last rays of sun dip below the horizon.

INT. CAVERN - AIR SPACE

Julie pauses as she hears a DISTURBANCE in the water. She trains her light on the pool beneath them.

THE PIRANHA

Still circling... but one by one they dive downward, returning to the main cavern.

JULIE

What's happening?

TED

Nightfall. The swarm leaves the cave as soon as the sun sets.

(beat)

This is your chance, Julie...
you've got to take it.

EXT. SAND BAR DECK - NIGHT

It's a few margaritas later and Sydney is busy arguing with Reggie about his "lack of commitment." Taylor leans close to J.C. as she finishes her drink.

TAYLOR

You ready to go?

J.C.

No, I...

J.C.'s head bobs as she begins to nod off.

J.C.

Wow... that was strong. Was that a double?

Sydney suddenly jumps up from her seat.

SYDNEY

Hey you guys, look! The fireworks are starting.

Everybody looks up as an impressive display of multi-colored fireworks CRACKLES in the early evening sky. The D.J. cranks up the music. The crowd rises to their feet.

J.C. stumbles as she tries to rise. Taylor swoops right in, slinging an arm around her.

J.C.
(softly)
I don't feel so good...

TAYLOR
I've got you, just relax.

J.C. swoons. With her head leaning on Taylor's shoulder, they look just like a normal young couple in love.

Taylor glances back at Sydney. She's still watching the fireworks with Reggie. Taylor pulls J.C. closer.

TAYLOR
C'mon. You need some fresh air.

He rushes her off through the crowd.

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

Ted's growing weaker... can barely speak.

TED
You've got to hurry. Go on. Take my tank. There's still air in it.

JULIE
We're going together.

TED
I'll just slow you down.

JULIE
Remember when you told me you'd never leave me alone down here?

TED
(smiles weakly)
...yeah.

JULIE
That works both ways.

Julie braces herself against the rocks and carefully drags Ted into the water beside her.

CLOSER

Julie fumbles for his oxygen bit and secures it in his mouth. She still has no tank of her own. Ted's too far gone to argue.

Julie hyperventilates with quick short breaths to fill her lungs to capacity, then takes one last long GASP and dives straight down, clutching Ted closely to her side.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERN

Julie swims straight down with all her might. She's forced to go through the bottleneck first, then pull Ted after her. Her lungs already aching.

THE CAVERN

Julie exits the hollow and peels out into the main cavern, navigating by the narrow beam of her flashlight. Still no fish in sight.

She makes a beeline for the exit... but hits a rocky wall.

CLOSER JULIE

As she realizes she's taken a wrong turn. She desperately flashes her beam around the unfamiliar rock formations.

EXT. UNDERWATER - RIFT ENTRANCE - SAME MOMENT

Nate finds the rift and swims straight for it... but pulls back at the last second.

CLOSER - NATE

His eyes grow wide and he begins to rapidly hyperventilate. We can see that his claustrophobia is suddenly overwhelming him.

NATE'S P.O.V. - THE RIFT

A classic Spielberg PUSH IN/ZOOM OUT, vertigo of the narrow rift. Only a fool would go in that narrow, nightmarish passage.

INT. CAVERN - SAME TIME

Julie turns, panic stricken, completely disoriented in the vast black limbo of the cavern. She gives up her last gasp of oxygen... but still won't take the bit from Ted.

She's suddenly jerked back... a hand grasps her shoulder.

It's Zack, holding her nylon line. Zack takes out his oxygen bit and offers it to Julie. She takes a desperately needed gulp of air.

Julie "buddy breathes" with Zack as he helps her pull Ted towards the cavern exit.

SHOCK CUT

A pack of piranhas swirl up out of the darkness directly behind them.

Julie and Zack make a break for the entrance, dragging Ted with them. The passageway is only twenty yards ahead...

The piranhas wheel about and head straight for their victims... picking up speed.

Julie, Zack and Ted are going to reach the entrance at exactly the same time as the swarm.

ANGLE ON THE PASSAGEWAY

Nate shoots inside, thrusting a BLAZING FLARE before him. Instantly, the pack scatters from the blinding light.

But Nate panics, dropping the flare. He's pushed himself beyond his limits and can barely move.

Zack pushes Nate back out the rocky passageway as Julie pulls Ted along with her.

EXT. LAKE - MOMENTS LATER

Baxter BARKS excitedly as oxygen bubbles break the surface.

Nate appears, then Zack and Julie, supporting Ted. They cling to the boat's aluminum ladder.

ZACK
Ted... is he alive?!

Julie spits out the mouthpiece, gasping.

JULIE
He's hypothermic. We've got to get
him to St. Edwards!

NATE
(climbing up)
What happened to Jacob?

JULIE
He's gone.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERN - SAME TIME

Nate's fallen flare sputters out, leaving the passageway in
darkness again. The swarm quickly regroups.

CLOSER - THE SWARM

The swarm's point man, THE ALPHA FISH, is a large, battle
scarred male with a broken fang. He surges forward, leading
them through the passageway.

The entire swarm fans out behind him as they head into the
lake in a search and destroy mode.

Alpha Fish reacts as he hears a low, rhythmic THRUM.

ALPHA FISH P.O.V.

This THRUM can actually be seen by Alpha Fish... it appears
as a deep, wide RIPPLE in the otherwise even sonar plane of
the lake bed.

ANGLE ON ALPHA FISH

He swims upward toward the sound, leading the entire swarm
towards the surface.

EXT. LAKE HAVASU - SURFACE

CAMERA races along the surface of the lake as the now
familiar TURBULENCE appears, the eerie swirling phenomenon
that is the sign of the piranha. The shadowy swarm skims
along just beneath the surface of the moonlit water.

CAMERA BOOMS UP to reveal their destination. The party
lights of the Sand Bar's outdoor deck lie directly in the
path of the swarm.

The rhythmic THRUM becomes loud and clear... it's the bass line of Lil' John's rap performance as the Fourth of July party heats up.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAND BAR DECK - THE D.J./RAPPERS - NIGHT

Lil' John is on the mic, working the crowd.

LIL' JOHN
(chants)
Jump on it! Jump on it! Jump on
it!

The crowd HOOTS and HOLLERS, jumping in unison to the beat.

EXT. SAND BAR - BENEATH THE DECK

The pylon finally CRACKS wide open. The underside of the deck SHAKES. Dust trickles down.

CAMERA BOOMS DOWN to the surface of the water.

The pale eyes of the approaching swarm of piranhas are visible, glowing through the dark surface of the water like a parade of ghosts.

EXT. DECK - BEHIND THE BAR

Carrie is still trying to serve a sea of customers. Marcus does his best to back her up.

Carrie pauses, sensing something...

CARRIE
Hey... Did you feel that?

MARCUS
What?

CARRIE
I dunno. For a sec I thought it
was another earth quake.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - THE LOOKING GLASS - NIGHT

The boat flies across the moonlit water with Zack at the wheel. He's speaking on the boat's shortwave radio. Julie sits with Ted, a blanket pulled tightly around his shoulders.

ZACK
(hangs up)
There'll be an ambulance waiting
for us at the dock.

Julie glances at Ted, who nods weakly.

JULIE
He's going to make it.

NATE
How did you two survive in there?

ZACK
They couldn't stand the light. It
was the one thing that backed them
off.

NATE
(pauses... thinking)
Light sensitivity only occurs in
cave fish, or fish that have
evolved in the deepest parts of the
ocean. Most of them are nearly
blind in the sunlight.

ZACK
...that's why the attacks only
happen at night.

JULIE
But how could creatures like that
turn up in Havasu?

NATE
That wasn't just a cavern, it was
an underground lake.

ZACK
A what?

NATE
A large body of water completely
cut off from the outside world.
Maybe for centuries.

(MORE)

NATE(cont'd)

They're not uncommon, especially here in Arizona.

JULIE

If that's true, something had to open it up.

TED

(softly)

The quake...

They all turn to Ted. He's fully conscious, but his voice is still weak.

TED

The lake bed collapsed... we were buried alive.

NATE

It would take an environment that was closed off for centuries, for that kind of creature to evolve.

JULIE

What kind of creature Nate? What are they?

NATE

(pauses)

Piranhas.

ZACK

They're much larger than piranhas.

NATE

But they have all the other attributes. The predatorial fangs, the swarm mentality...

(beat)

If they did evolve in isolation, they could be the progenitors of the entire species.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

A secluded spot a short distance from the Sand Bar. Spotlights from the party can be seen in the B.G. Occasional FIREWORKS continue.

Taylor's Mercedes pulls down an incline to a stand of weeping willows at the end of the pier. The engine and the headlights click off.

CLOSER - MERCEDES

Taylor leans over to J.C. She is slumped in the passenger seat, fading in and out of consciousness.

Taylor cautiously runs a hand along her bare arm... caressing her. A test to see if she'll wake up.

J.C. moans softly and stirs. Taylor gets more daring with his caress. Leans closer.

TAYLOR
(whispers)
Feels good, doesn't it? You're so beautiful...

The delusional bastard thinks she's enjoying this!

He reaches across and lowers her seat back. It drops down with a CLUNK.

J.C. stirs, her eyes half open. Is she going to wake up? Taylor slides across the console and lays on top of J.C.

TAYLOR
(whispers)
I know what you want...

Taylor nudges her legs apart and kisses her neck. He fumbles with the snap of her jeans.

J.C.'s eyes flash open. She wakes up, completely disoriented.

J.C.
What are you...? Taylor!!!

But Taylor is committed to getting what he wants.

TAYLOR
Hey, don't be a little tease...

Taylor continues to grope her, getting forceful. J.C. fights back, raking his face with her nails.

EXT. PIER

Three COLLEGE BOYS, jock types, are sharing a joint as they watch the fireworks. They react to J.C.'s SCREAM.

JOCK #1
(rises)
What the hell was that?

INT. CAR

J.C. kicks and punches Taylor with all her might.

TAYLOR
You bitch!

Taylor is such a punk, he starts to hit her back. He doesn't notice as he BUMPS the gear shift... putting the car in neutral.

EXT. CAR

As they struggle, the big Mercedes slowly rolls down a brief incline... and out onto the short pier.

ANGLE ON COLLEGE JOCKS

They see the car rolling straight towards the edge of the pier.

JOCKS
Hey!... Hey! Look out!

THE MERCEDES

The car is slowly losing momentum... the front wheels go off the edge.

INT. CAR

J.C. and Taylor both react to the double BUMP as the front wheels drop. There is a SCREECH of metal on wood as their world tips over towards the water.

EXT. PIER

The Mercedes seesaws, then plunges off the edge of the pier with a huge SPLASH!

EXT. UNDERWATER - SAME TIME

The Alpha Fish turns abruptly at the sound of the splash. The vast formation behind him follows.

EXT. LAKE

The Mercedes bobs back up and drifts out into the lake.

INT. CAR

Taylor finally realizes what's happened. The water line is already halfway up the windows and rising.

TAYLOR
My car! You stupid bitch!

EXT. UNDERWATER

The swarm is on the move, wheeling about, swirling towards the sinking Mercedes.

SHORE

The Jocks splash into the water. The car is only a few yards further than the pier.

JOCK #1
(to Jock #3)
Get some help.

As Jock #3 hurries off, Jocks #1 and #2 wade straight out towards the car.

INT. MERCEDES

The car is quickly sinking; the waterline continues its steady rise up the windows.

TAYLOR
Shit... my Dad's gonna kill me.

J.C. tries the door, but it's held shut by the external pressure of the water. Her attempts grow more frantic.

TAYLOR

Hey, chill out, okay? The water's not that deep. The pressure will equalize in a couple of minutes.

J.C. notices that rushing water is quickly filling up the car through the air vents.

The two Jocks appear, up to their chests in the water. J.C. can see them above the split waterline as the car continues to sink.

JOCK #1

Hey! You okay in there?

TAYLOR

Fuck off! We're fine.

As J.C. watches, a strange SURFACE TURBULENCE rushes at the Jocks from behind. A swirling SHADOW darkens her view below the surface.

The foremost Jock is struck by an invisible force so hard he's spun around... but he's still standing, a surprised look on his face.

The Jock raises his arms above the waterline... revealing bare, splintered bones sticking up from two bloody stumps!

The water now EXPLODES into churning hell and both Jocks are pulled under.

TAYLOR

(gasps)

What the hell's happening?

The waterline continues to rise as the Mercedes sinks... only inches of air space visible along the top of the windows. The interior water is three feet deep and rising.

ANGLE ON WINDOWS

The murky water surrounding the car is now washed by a DEEP RED... reducing visibility from bad to zero.

J.C. can no longer see anything through the bloody red water. It is deathly quiet until...

CLACK! CLACK! CLACK!

Multiple piranha hit the glass, their deadly teeth mashed against the window, SNAPPING inches from J.C.'s face. She SCREAMS.

CLACK! CLACK! CLACK! CLACK! CLACK! Dozens more swim into the glass, literally covering every inch of surface... CAMERA REVOLVES around J.C., a terrifying 360 degree view of the nightmarish attack.

At the same moment, the interior is rapidly flooding, reaching the dash. Hundreds of SNAPPING mouths fight for position at the windows. J.C. screams.

TAYLOR
Shut up!!! I'm trying to think.

Taylor stabs at a button on the dash... the sun roof! It's still just above the surface of the water, but it doesn't open.

Taylor cranks the keys in the ignition. The interior lights BLINK ON, then instantly short out.

TAYLOR
Shit!!!!

He stabs the button again... And the sun roof smoothly WHIRRS open, revealing fireworks in the starlit sky.

TAYLOR
(smiles)
Yes! German craftsmanship...

Taylor scrambles up out of the sun roof. J.C. hurries after him.

EXT. LAKE - SAME TIME

Taylor and J.C. pull themselves up onto the roof of the sinking mercedes. The water around them churns with piranhas as the grisly bones of Jocks #1 and #2 bob up to the surface.

The shadow of the swarm is immense, swirling around the car on all sides.

J.C.
What are they?!

TAYLOR
Seriously pissed off fish...

They balance on the roof as the slippery blood-darkened water inches up on them.

Taylor pulls open the blade of a pearl-handled penknife. Looks crazy, but it's his only defense.

J.C. gazes at the churning water, scared out of her senses. A light appears out on the darkness of the lake. It's the Looking Glass!

J.C.

A boat!
 (calls to boat)
 Hey, over here!

ANGLE ON THE LOOKING GLASS

Zack is at the helm. He's still far away, but he spots them.

ANGLE ON TAYLOR AND J.C.

The water washes over their feet... floods down through the sun roof.

TAYLOR

Shit!!! They're not going to get here in time.

The car slowly starts to tilt, rolling over in the water. J.C. and Taylor balance as best they can.

J.C.

You think we can swim fast enough?

Taylor gets a crazy look in his eyes. He suddenly grabs J.C.'s wrist and cuts deeply across her forearm with the penknife. Blood wells up.

TAYLOR

Now I only have to swim faster than you.

He shoves J.C. into the water!

ANGLE ON THE LOOKING GLASS

Zack reacts as he sees the young girl thrown into the water.

ZACK

My god.

Zack turns to Julie, who sits in the back of the boat with a blanket wrapped around Ted's shoulders.

ZACK

Hang on!

Zack slams the throttle forward. Nate is thrown off his feet and lands hard on the deck.

ANGLE - THE ROOF OF THE MERCEDES

Taylor dives out as far as he can from the car. The Mercedes sinks from sight with an eruption of bubbles.

UNDERWATER - J.C.

The circle of piranha surges inward, striking at J.C... but J.C. swims under the sinking car.

PIRANHA P.O.V. - SONAR VISION

J.C.'s SILHOUETTE merges with the shape of the car, causing her to disappear as she swims beneath it's chassis.

UNDERWATER - CAR

The piranhas' attack dissolves into confusion as J.C. swims the length of the chassis and comes up the other side.

CLOSER - ALPHA FISH

He wheels about, scanning for her. But the formation of fish behind him has broken up into a feeding frenzy.

ANGLE ON TAYLOR

Taylor swims for his life. He only slows down to make sure the boat sees him.

TAYLOR
(waves)
Please, help!!!

J.C. surfaces a short distance behind him, swimming like an Olympic athlete!

Taylor can't believe his eyes. He gets back into the race, swimming for all he's worth.

EXT. UNDERWATER - ALPHA FISH P.O.V.

The piranha's sonar focuses up on two nice loud targets SPLASHING away in unison; J.C. and Taylor.

ANGLE ON ZACK

He's astonished to see the TURBULENCE closing in on Taylor and J.C.

ZACK
(to Julie)
Take the wheel!

ANGLE ON J.C. - UNDERWATER

She's swimming all out... then we hear her knee POP as she snap kicks. J.C. winces in pain.

THE LOOKING GLASS

Nate takes hold of Ted as Julie springs forward and grabs the wheel.

ZACK
Cut it as close to her as you can.

JULIE
What are you...?

Zack races to the back of the boat.

CLOSER - J.C.

She digs into the water fighting the pain, powered by fear of what's behind her... and outrage at the bastard ahead of her. She slowly gains on Taylor.

Taylor and J.C. are neck and neck. The TURBULENCE is right on top of them, no more than a few feet and closing fast.

J.C. grabs Taylor's ponytail and jerks back with all her might. Taylor SCREAMS like a little girl. J.C. swims right over him.

She's gained a few yards, but the piranha close in for the kill. The TURBULENCE steam rolls over Taylor, who's pulled down, SHRIEKING in agony.

BACK ON THE BOAT

Zack hooks a foot in a wide SLALOM SKI in the aft of the boat, grabs a coil of tow rope and leaps out into the boat's wake.

Zack hits hard, shooting up a wall of spray... but he hangs on and rises up out of the water.

Julie bears down on the throttle, heading straight for J.C.

Zack quickly shoots up over the wake, sails through mid air and lands wide of the boat.

J.C.

She's swimming for all she's worth, BUT THE CHURNING WATER ROLLS RIGHT OVER HER!

ZACK

Leans into the water in a full horizontal. He plows straight into the swarm at full speed.

A wall of water explodes up. Looks like a wipe out!

CLOSER

Then Zack pulls free, surfacing with one arm wrapped around J.C., the other still hanging onto the tow rope!

He cheated the swarm a split second before it would have stripped J.C. to the bone.

THE LOOKING GLASS

Julie pulls them to safety, then loops the boat around in a u-turn to pick them up. She cuts the boat's engines. Nate scrambles to the rear of the boat as Zack scrambles up the short ladder with J.C.

Nate pulls J.C. in. She collapses to the floor, still wide-eyed and panting hard. She grasps her knee in pain.

Zack kneels down beside J.C. on the floor of the glass bottom boat.

ZACK

(softly)

Take it easy, you're safe now.

SHOCK CUT - GLASS BOTTOM

Taylor's bloody face appears inches from J.C. pressed up against the glass... still alive!

He pounds his fists on the glass as the piranha rip his flesh from his bones.

Zack pulls J.C. to the gunnel. When they look back, Taylor's remains are being dragged down into the darkness by the swarm... gone for good.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAND BAR DECK - SAME TIME

Lil' John is joined on stage by the rest of his crew as their hip hop CHANT reaches a crescendo. The crowd jumps to the pounding beat.

EXT. SAND BAR - FRONT ENTRANCE

Rodriguez is doing his best to please Sheriff Dobbs. Dobbs is backed up by two of his deputies.

DOBBS

We're shutting you down. I want these people out of here, now.

RODRIGUEZ

Sheriff, I'm sure there must be...

Sheriff Dobbs and his deputies react to a loud off camera screech of rending wood.

EXT. SAND BAR - DECK

ANGLE - PYLONS

The central pylon TEARS LOOSE and the entire deck finally breaks free with a terrifying SCREECH of wood and metal.

QUICK CUTS - PARTY

The deck tips down at a gut-wrenching angle sending a wave of partygoers sliding across the dance floor... several hit the rail and flip over into the darkness.

ANGLE ON BAR DOORWAY

The Sheriff races out and is taken by surprise by the sharp angle of the deck. His feet shoot out from under him and he slides straight down into the darkness, past SCREAMING patrons clinging to the wreckage.

ANGLE ON THE WATER

Sheriff Dobbs SPLASHES down in a spray of water. He surfaces, shocked, GASPING for air.

SHERIFF'S P.O.V.

Dozens of piranha leap up out of the water, teeth FLASHING.

EXT. UNDERWATER - TAYLOR'S CARCASS

Hundreds of piranha fight for the last morsels.

Alpha Fish drifts up into the foreground, chomping down a bit of Taylor's flesh. He hears the sound of MULTIPLE SPLASHES, and surges forward with deadly purpose.

The swarm accelerates like a whirling tornado and streams after him.

EXT. DECK - SAME TIME

Marcus clutches the bar and hangs on as drinks slide by him.

SYDNEY

Grabs her high bar table, which is bolted to the floor... but Reggie slides straight down into the tangle of partygoers and slides SCREAMING off the deck. He hits the rail at full speed, SMASHES straight through it.

ANGLE ON THE WATER

Reggie tumbles downward and SPLASHES into the water with dozens of other partiers.

SYDNEY - AT THE TABLE

She SCREAMS as a HUGE CRACK appears, traveling along the deck beneath her feet. The floor under their table is breaking away.

Wood GROANS as the split grows wider... then with a deafening ROAR, the section of deck breaks away!

MASTER

We see it all as half of the party breaks away. The wood SQUEALS like a huge sequoia going down. Pylons crumble. The deck collapses into trash, taking dozens of victims with it.

Multiple SPLASHES of people and debris send explosions of spray into the air.

REGGIE

Surfaces, sputtering for air just as a half ton of shattered wood SWATS him like a fly.

EXT. WATER - THE LOOKING GLASS

Julie, at the helm, reacts to the sight of the collapsing deck... the SCREAMS of the partygoers.

JULIE

Oh my god...

Julie watches in stunned disbelief. Then she sees the TURBULENCE swirl about... sweeping towards the victims. She hits the gas and veers the boat around.

UNDERWATER - PIRANHA P.O.V.

Sonar defines dozens of swimmers thrashing in the water as more splash down.

ALPHA FISH

Leads the charge straight at the wide array of victims.

THE WATER

The piranhas strike! Horrified victims are dragged, kicking and SCREAMING beneath the surface as they water churns with blood.

SYDNEY'S TABLE

Is on the very edge of a sheer drop, tilted at a radical angle. Sydney hangs on for dear life as less fortunates tumble by.

CLOSER - BENEATH TABLE

Two bolts EXPLODE off the table's base. It swings out over the edge as if on a hinge.

Sydney clings to the table as it swings down... and jerks to a halt, hanging upside down. She's whiplashed off, SCREAMING as she tumbles into darkness.

MOVING CAMERA - HORROR MASTER SHOT

Half-skeletal victims thrash in the churning water (CG and makeup FX). A victim who won't give up, drags himself onto shore, covered in lashing piranhas. The lower part of his torso is missing! Sydney breaks surface in the foreground, SCREAMING with half her face torn off.

ANGLE ON THE LOOKING GLASS

Dozens of panicked swimmers grab at the Looking Glass... all on one side. Their weight threatens to capsize the boat.

NATE

No, no! Don't do that...!

J.C. grabs the gunnels for support. Julie GUNS the engine.

But the weight of the swimmers turns the boat in a tight circle... sending it across the wreckage.

ANGLE ON GLASS BOTTOM

The twisted STEEL RODS of the stump of a pylon SCRAPES along the glass bottom of the boat... CRACKING the glass!

ANGLE ON THE BAR

It hangs at forty-five degrees, literally swinging in the wind. Marcus is scared shitless, clinging to his swivel chair, one in the row bolted to the bar. He grabs a shot of tequila as it slides by, sucks it down.

CARRIE

What's happening, Marcus?!

MARCUS

(freaked out)

I didn't mean for anybody to get hurt, I...

CARRIE

What?! You knew this would happen?

MARCUS

No, I...

Carrie grabs him by the collar and pulls him across the bar.

CARRIE

Talk to me, Marcus!

MARCUS

(starts to cry)

The quake... it busted the pylons somehow.

With an ominous GROAN, the bar tilts further.

CARRIE
What the hell's in the water?

MARCUS
I don't know, swear to God...

MARCUS LOOKS DOWN

One of Lil' John's powerful spotlights is now pointing straight down.

Carrie notices that the shadows of the piranha are avoiding the circle of light... scattering as it swings back and forth.

CARRIE
Whatever they are, they don't like the light.

Marcus now sees the Looking Glass, hung up on wreckage and surrounded by the mayhem.

MARCUS
Holy shit... Julie!

ANOTHER ANGLE - WATER

Lil' John and two of his rap crew are stranded, clinging to a six by six chunk of debris.

People are being torn to pieces all around them as their makeshift raft tilts/sinks.

Piranhas swarm up the incline, leaping over one another to tear into Rap Crew #1 and #2. They tumble into the churning water, kicking and screaming.

Lil' John hangs onto the highest tip of the sinking wreckage. He pulls a 9MM out of the back of his pants and starts BLASTING away.

LIL' JOHN
(freaking)
I eat fish!!! Motha fuckin' fish
do NOT EAT ME!

And, he's actually a damn good shot, nailing leaping piranha like a skeet shooter. BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Then one SNAPS onto the wrist of his gun hand! Two more strike his throat like arrows and CHOMP DOWN, tails lashing.

Lil' John's gun finger is still twitching, CLICKING on empty chambers as a half-dozen piranha strike his bare, tattooed chest. Lil' John finally collapses into the churning water.

EXT. SAND BAR - SPOTLIGHT

Marcus stands on Carrie's shoulders, climbing the side of the building.

MARCUS
C'mon, hurry!

She boosts him higher...

Marcus gets a hand hold and pulls himself up to the powerful SPOTLIGHT mounted on an upper corner of the building.

Marcus grabs hold and the spotlight FLARES into CAMERA.

EXT. WATER - LOOKING GLASS

Julie guns the engines, but the boat is stuck solid.

Water seeps through the cracks in the glass bottom boat. Rabid piranhas BUMP and THRASH against it, trying to get to their victims. The weakened glass spiderwebs further.

JULIE
Zack... get Ted!

Nate looks back... the entire swarm is now heading for their boat.

NATE
There's nowhere to go!

Suddenly the glass bottom BURSTS! A fountain of piranha spouts up onto the deck. The boat is instantly flooded with rising water and SNAPPING piranha.

Julie drags Ted up on the narrow gunnel as the ship sinks.

Zack and J.C. scramble up to the highest point on the bow, but they are all going down with the ship, no hope in sight.

JULIE
Swim for it!

Zack holds J.C.'s hand as they jump into the water.

Julie eases Ted into the water, calls to Nate.

JULIE

Hurry!

Nate takes a last look behind them. It's too late. The swarm is almost upon them. They'll never make it to the shore.

Julie plows through the waist-deep water dragging Ted... but turns when she realizes that Nate isn't behind them.

JULIE

Nate?!

Nate grabs one of the last waterproof flares in his hand.

NATE

(to Julie)

Go! Get out of here!

Nate turns back to the rear of the sinking boat. Julie has no choice but to continue her race to the shore.

Nate CRACKS the fuse cap on the flare as he fights his way to the rear of the boat. The bright blue/white FLARE is nearly blinding.

A leaping Piranha strikes Nate in the shoulder, ripping deep into the flesh. Another sinks its teeth into his forearm. Nate SCREAMS as blood gushes, but he's reached his goal... the big twin engines at the rear of the boat.

Nate desperately twists off the gas cap. He takes a last look at the approaching swarm.

NATE

Sayonara, you little bastards.

Nate jams the flare in the open tank just as the swarm reaches the boat.

KA-THOOM! The half-submerged engine blows in a thunderous ball of fire... the second engine ignites a split second later.

Julie turns back to see the boat rise up out of the water as it's blown to pieces... fire, spray and fish bits fill the air.

THE SWARM

It doubles back on itself as the fireball erupts. Nate has given his life to buy his friends a few precious seconds.

Julie drags Ted as Zack helps J.C. thrash through the water in a race to shore. The swarm regroups and is closing in fast!

Julie stumbles into a floating corpse... nearly falls with Ted in her arms.

ZACK

Julie!

The foremost row of piranhas reaches her, leaping up out of the water. Suddenly a BLINDING LIGHT pierces the darkness, flaring off the water all around them.

REVERSE

It's Lil' John's spotlights! Marcus and Carrie man the two monster ARC LIGHTS, focusing them on our heroes.

The swarm scatters, but swirls threateningly just beyond the ring of light. Our heroes suddenly have a chance.

MARCUS

(yells)

FOLLOW THE LIGHT!

Julie carries Ted through the waist-deep water. Zack protects J.C. as the angelic shaft of light surrounds them. Piranha thrash a few yards away, angry at losing their meal.

EXT. BANK - CONTINUOUS

A dying victim clutches at Julie. She doesn't pause, but drags Ted straight up the incline, until they are far from harm's way.

EXT. SHORELINE - CONTINUOUS

Zack and J.C. scramble to safety as a fire truck pulls up in the B.G. Firemen rush to help others still struggling to get out of the water.

EXT. CREST OF EMBANKMENT

Julie drops to her knees, exhausted, as she finally reaches safety. She carefully eases Ted back onto the soft grass.

He looks as if he's close to death. His voice is a barely audible rasp.

TED
...help me.

Julie pulls him closer.

JULIE
What... what can I do?

Ted raises his arm, looking beyond Julie. She realizes he's pointing to something behind her. We hear an unsettling electronic HUM... growing louder and louder. Julie turns.

JULIE'S P.O.V.

A large TRAILER is the source of the humming, a heavy-duty gas powered GENERATOR attached to the back of Lil' John's equipment truck. It's the power source for all his lights and amps... parked only a few yards away.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Julie looks from the gennie, back down the embankment. It's directly in line with the swarm, which is in a feeding frenzy on the remains of dozens of victims.

TED
...kill them. Kill them all.

Julie helps Ted rise. He leans heavily on her as they make it to the gennie.

EXT. SHORELINE - CONTINUOUS

Marcus and Carrie hurry down to Nate and J.C. Firemen tend to victims in the B.G.

MARCUS
Where's Julie?

C.U. - GENERATOR SWITCHES

Ted's fingers travel down the row of switches, flicking them all to MAX. We hear the generator's engine REV loudly in response. The gauges hit red, over a hundred thousand volts.

Ted, with great effort, manages to stand on his own two feet. He grabs the latch on the trailer hitch, but it won't budge.

TED
(to Julie)
...do it.

Julie SLAMS open the trailer hitch.

ANGLE ON ZACK

As he realizes what Julie is about to attempt.

ZACK
(softly)
My god...

ANGLE ON JULIE

She throws her weight behind the trailer. Smoke pours out of the overheating generator.

The tires slowly start to roll down the embankment.

ANGLE ON THE SURVIVORS

Everyone's attention is drawn to the huge generator as it CRASHES through the brush, picking up speed.

MASTER

The generator hits the curb of the retaining wall at full speed. Does a half-flip, up and over...

Beat.

There is a deafening CLAP OF THUNDER and a blinding FLASH of electricity as the half-ton generator hits the surface of the water.

A spiderweb of CRACKLING electrical energy dances across the inlet.

UNDERWATER

A shuttering ELECTRONIC PULSE rips through the entire swarm.

ALPHA FISH

Alpha Fish's eyes EXPLODE as the arc of power blazes through him

THE GENERATOR

It's a flickering light show as it sinks to the bottom of the lake. It shorts out in a final eruption of fiery bubbles.

THE SURFACE

Beat. One by one, the corpses of the piranha bob to the surface... dozens... hundreds.

THE EMBANKMENT

Julie looks to Ted, the exuberance of their victory lifting her from exhaustion. Ted manages a weary smile.

TED

It worked...

Julie embraces him; tucking her head into his shoulder.

ANGLE ON MARCUS

He gingerly picks a smoking piranha carcass up by the tail.

MARCUS

Check it out... any of you mother fuckers bring tartar sauce?

Marcus takes a big crunchy bite out of the piranha's flank.

ANGLE - EMBANKMENT

Julie and Ted appear on the edge of the embankment, gazing down at their handy work.

CAMERA BOOMS UP

From the C.U. of Julie's haunted, exhausted gaze... wider over the embankment as Zack runs into frame, embracing his brother... wider as J.C. puts a jacket over Julie's shoulders and firemen step in to help. Ambulances and police cars finally begin to arrive.

END FRAME reveals the entire inlet, with the fallen remains of the deck, dozens of half-eaten bodies... and hundreds of fish carcasses floating on the calm surface of Lake Havasu.

FADE OUT.