

"PREY"

a screenplay by
John Carpenter
and
James Nichols

"PREY"

FADE IN:

1 TITLE SEQUENCE
OPENING MONTAGE

We see a glistening spider's web filling the screen. A butterfly gets caught in the sticky fibers. Suddenly a huge multicolored spider crawls up the web toward the fluttering butterfly.

2 ANGLE ON GROUND

A muskrat slinks along the ground. A huge brown tree owl swoops down from the sky and lands on the muskrat, grasps the small creature in its talons and takes off again.

3 MONTAGE

THRU
9

of natural prey situations: animals stalking and killing other animals, insects, lizards, etc.

10 LONG SHOT OF THE MOON

Big, ghostly, ominous; it fills the screen.

DISSOLVE TO:

11 EXT. DEEP FOREST - DAY

The sun peeps through the trees. PAN DOWN to a thick, tangled woods. Something is wrong with this place. It decays and flourishes at the same time, as though Nature had forgotten the rules. There are no animals, no insects, no sounds. The forest is unnaturally quiet.

12 ANOTHER ANGLE - CHASM

We see a huge fallen log. One end is in VIEW: a gnarled, twisted clump of roots juts out like a fist. The log looks like a big tree that was yanked from the earth by a huge hand, then stripped clean... except for the roots. The log lies near what appears to be a dark slice in the earth.

The slice is a broad, black chasm snaking across the forest floor. It is fifteen feet wide.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

On the other side of the chasm DAN MILLER walks along the edge. He is rigged out for backpacking: canteens, boots, aluminum framed pack with sleeping bag, walking stick, etc. He looks as if he has hiked for many days. With him is MAX, a large golden retriever.

Miller stares at the chasm, looking down into it. He looks first up one direction, then down the other. He seems excited. Finally, Miller whistles to Max and the man and the dog tromp off into the forest away from the chasm.

Silence. Suddenly, the log begins to move. It rolls from one side to the other, the motion increasing. Someone has a hold of the other end. Then the log is raised up from the forest floor.

13 INT. CHASM

From inside the black abyss, looking up at the sky, we see the log move to the edge and stand poised on the lip of the chasm. Then it drops down... CRASH! The log now spans the chasm, forming a bridge.

SUPERIMPOSE:

PREY!

HOLD on the log. CREAK, CREAK, CREAK. We hear the SOUND of something enormous walking across the log.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. SMOKEY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

We see an immense forest that stretches on forever in the late afternoon sunlight. Above the trees, looming dark and distant and ominous, is Mount Tobias, a huge mountain in this wilderness national park.

PAN DOWN to Miller walking through the woods. Max trails behind him, panting tiredly. Miller stops and looks back over his shoulder. He looks on edge.

MILLER

Max... come on...

The dog lopes over and they move off together.

15 EXT. MOUNTAIN BROOK

Sunlight streams through pine trees and shimmers across a mountain brook. A family plays at water's edge as FATHER fishes. MOTHER searches for rocks on the sandy bank. SON helps Father with his fishing worms. The TEENAGE DAUGHTER in bikini top and cut-offs picks up a towel and walks downstream. It is an idyllic leisure scene which could have been posed for in any vacation brochure.

Dan Miller emerges from the woods. He is much more worn and tired-looking than before. Max is with him. The dog jumps and frolics down the bank as Miller approaches the Father.

MILLER

Having any luck?

FATHER

Too late in the season.
(looks suspiciously
at Miller)
Are you a ranger?

MILLER

(shakes his head)
State survey department.

FATHER

Good, 'cause I don't have a
fishing license.

Miller and Father chuckle. Son begins playing with Max, who eagerly fetches the stick that he tosses into the water.

MOTHER

We have plenty of cold beer.

MILLER

You saved my life!

She opens a cooler and hands Miller a can of beer. He pops the top and takes a big drink. Son walks over to Miller.

SON

Are you a mountain climber?

MILLER

No, I draw maps.

Father casts his line out into the stream.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

FATHER

How far up were you?

MILLER

About halfway up. I found an area up there we didn't even know about. Had to come back for more supplies.

SON

(eyes wide)

Can I go, too?

Father and Miller laugh at his enthusiasm.

16 EXT. POOL

The Teenage Daughter swims in a dark pool formed by a widening of the brook. She's naked and vulnerable as she swims, her hair slicked back against her head. On the bank near her, Max drops the stick and BARKS enthusiastically, looking for someone to play with him. The Teenage Daughter glances at him and continues her swim.

Max reacts to a SOUND from the trees beyond the bank. He stares into the woods for a moment, then picks up the stick and runs from the bank.

17 EXT. THICK WOODS

Max carries the stick and stops in front of a man. We see only a pair of scuffed, cracked cavalry boots with rusty spurs. Max looks up at the man o.s., wags his tail and drops the stick. The tags on Max's collar JINGLE as he BARKS. In the b.g. we HEAR the teenage Daughter splashing a hundred feet away.

We HOLD on Max as the man's hands pick up the stick and lift it up out of FRAME. Max wags his tail furiously and jumps up at the stick. He jumps again and again, BARKING.

Suddenly, Max's legs abruptly stop at the top of FRAME. His BARKING turns to a muffled WHINE. The man has grabbed him. Max's legs kick for several moments, then slowly they stop moving and dangle lifelessly.

18 ANGLE ON TEENAGE DAUGHTER

She has heard Max's whine. She searches the bank and the trees.

TEENAGE DAUGHTER

Here, boy... here, boy...

19 TEENAGE DAUGHTER'S P.O.V.

In the distance, just barely visible in the trees beyond the bank, is the figure of a man. He holds something brown in his arms.

20 ANGLE ON TEENAGE DAUGHTER

She stares at the distant figure.

21 TEENAGE DAUGHTER'S P.O.V.

The figure is gone. Just the trees and the brook.

22 ANGLE ON TEENAGE DAUGHTER

The girl fearfully swims to the side of the pool and scampers out of the water. She grabs a towel and runs off down the bank.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

A WKS News helicopter glides over the Washington D.C. skyline.

24 EXT. HELICOPTER LANDING PAD

From inside the helicopter we see it land on a small pad.

25 ANGLE ON HELICOPTER

Immediately, the door opens and a young woman dashes out, her long hair blowing in the prop wash. She is ELAINE MACAVIE, television newswoman. Elaine is beautiful -- her features are cool and sculptured like those of an actress. She rushes to a WKS remote truck at the edge of the landing pad.

26 EXT. DOWNTOWN TRAFFIC

A bicyclist in bright eye-catching clothes, weaves expertly through the Washington traffic. ROSE HELM'S long, graceful legs attract the eyes of men motorists as she glides through the stalled intersections.

27

EXT. RESIDENTIAL SUBURBS - DAY

KATHY BRIGGS jogs along a quiet, neighborhood street. She is thirty, blonde and pretty in a direct, open way, and works truly hard at getting in shape. She passes by the house of a friend. A woman unloads groceries from the back of a station wagon. Kathy waves "hello".

Ahead of Kathy are two teenage boys. They wear high school track jerseys and are jogging briskly along. Kathy pulls up to them, runs alongside a moment, then easily moves out in front of them and leaves them way behind. The boys' faces tighten with determination and they sprint faster, but they can't catch her.

28

INT. ARCHERY RANGE - DAY

WHUMP! A projectile THWOKS into a target near the bullseye. We see that it isn't an arrow but has a shorter and thicker shaft with long, wicked multi-pronged flanges. Two more darts THWOK right into the bullseye.

Rose stands at one end of a private indoor archery range by herself. She holds a peculiar-looking pistol, a compact cross-bow. The weapon has a wire frame stock and pistol grip. Rose snaps a fresh magazine into the 'bowgun' and turns down range. WHUMP, WHUMP, WHUMP. Three more darts smack into the target.

A middleaged man watches Rose from behind the firing line. WILLIAM MERRILL is the owner of a sporting goods chain, Rose's boss. His eyes suggest that they hide a calculating brain. He walks over to Rose.

MERRILL

Why don't you leave this to our testing bureau and stay at your drawing board? You could get hurt up there.

ROSE

No chance. And by the way, the bowgun isn't yours yet.

MERRILL

We have a contract.

ROSE

Which doesn't include hardware in any shape or form, just designs and software. Check it out with Coleman.

(CONTINUED)

MERRILL
(under his breath)
I have checked with Coleman...

ROSE
So there we are. We renegotiate.

MERRILL
I have a proposal. You want parity in business, I'll make you the same proposition I'd make a man in your position. I'll manufacture your bowgun.

ROSE
Of course you will.

MERRILL
If you climb that mountain in seventy-two hours we stay with our fifty-fifty split. If you fail, we split the profits seventy-thirty after expenses.

ROSE
(smiles evenly)
Why should I make a bet like that on my future?

MERRILL
We're not betting on the bowgun, Rose. It's on you and the mountain.

Merrill smiles coldly. He has said just the right thing and he knows it. Rose extends her hand.

ROSE
You're on.

29 EXT. RIVER OAKS WATERWAY - DAWN

Large homes sprawl alongside an inland waterway. A couple jogs down the beach: Elaine and her BOYFRIEND. On the water a speedboat ZOOMS by, churning up waves that wash in around their ankles. Elaine wears silk track shorts and a t-shirt imprinted with:

MOUNT TOBIAS
OR BUST

Her handsome Boyfriend jogs along in a full sweatshirt.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

She struggles to keep up with him and finally slows to a stop.

ELAINE

(panting)

Come on, Jimmy, slow down.

BOYFRIEND

You got to get in shape. That's no way to set a record.

ELAINE

(shakes her head)

Oh, screw it... give me a cigarette.

30 INT. MASTER BEDROOM, BRIGGS' HOME - NIGHT

TODD BRIGGS is wide awake. He sits in bed, reading a magazine. He is a serious man of about thirty-five and gives the impression of being a professional, probably a lawyer.

Kathy enters the bedroom. She has on colorful and very flattering hiking clothes. Her boots are low-cut with contoured soles. She wears knee socks, a pair of tight shorts with big flapped pockets and a shiny jersey that looks like satin. All of the items are color coordinated. Kathy looks smashing.

KATHY

Bobby's finally asleep.

Todd glances up at her, pretending not to notice her outfit, then looks back down at his magazine.

KATHY

(continuing)

I think Rose wants to start her own company. Her designs are super.

She walks over to the bed to display her outfit.

KATHY

(continuing)

What do you think?

Todd turns a page, ignoring her. She looks at him sadly.

KATHY

(continuing)

It's only for a week.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

No response from Todd.

KATHY
(continuing)
Can't you give me just a little support?

TODD
(without looking up)
I've told you, if you want to go camping we could all go together on my vacation next summer.

KATHY
This is something else. This is for me.

TODD
I'm all for doing things for yourself.

KATHY
Then why do you make it so hard for me? You make me feel so guilty.

TODD
Three women hiking up a mountain ... okay, so you're trying to prove something. Okay, I can understand that. But if you think it's more important than your responsibility to your home and to me... then I think we have a big difference of opinion.
(looks at her for several beats)
You do what you need to do, Kathy.

Todd rolls away from her. Kathy sits down on her side of the bed. She looks at her husband's back under the blankets. He is motionless and impassive as a rock. She turns away, hurt and confused. We HOLD on her face.

CUT TO:

31 INT. DE FOREST RESEARCH - DAY - CLOSE SHOT

of an elaborate diorama model of Mount Tobias, showing most of the prominent features of the mountain. PULL BACK to a FULL SHOT of the three women: Kathy, Rose and Elaine, standing around the model.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

ROSE

It's here, all along this ridge,
eighty to one hundred feet deep
and at least sixty feet across
at its narrowest.

Rose points to the model, to the chasm running quite a
ways across the side of the mountain.

ROSE

(continuing)

And that's why no one's ever
climbed the northwest slope.
It looks like you'd have to go
all the way up here to get
around it.

She points to the end of the chasm, way up on the mountain.

ROSE

(continuing)

But, I think both the Indian
trails and the pioneer trails
indicate that it narrows right
here in the middle.

(points to a spot
midway in the
chasm)

Fifteen feet or less I make it.
If we climb down into the chasm
and up the other side, we save
six hours.

KATHY

How deep is it?

ROSE

Twenty, thirty feet.

KATHY

What if you're wrong and it's
too deep or too wide?

ROSE

Then we don't break the record.
But let's face it, we don't
break it anyway if we go the
usual route. I know I'm
right. There's nothing to it.

ELAINE

I'll remember you said that when
they scrape me off the bottom.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED (2):

ROSE

You have no faith, Elaine.

ELAINE

Oh, I have plenty of faith. Just no brains. If I had any brains I'd never have gotten tangled up with you two. Just shows you what can happen when you get chummy with fanatics.

We PAN DOWN to the chasm on the model and:

DISSOLVE TO:

32 EXT. SMOKEY MOUNTAINS - DAWN

The huge rising sun fills the SCREEN. PULL BACK to see a glorious sunrise over the fog-filled valleys. PAN DOWN to see a station wagon speeding down a highway.

33 INT. STATION WAGON - DAWN

The three women bounce along in the front seat of a late model station wagon. The back of the wagon is loaded with their equipment. Rose is at the wheel. Kathy and Elaine are fast asleep. Rose glances at them, then turns on the radio. Country MUSIC blasts out loudly.

ROSE

Wake up, ladies!

Kathy and Elaine slowly wake up.

34 EXT. SCENIC COUNTRY VIEW

The car ZOOMS along a winding mountain road. In the b.g. we see the sun rise over the Smokey Mountains. We HEAR the country music fade away with the car.

DISSOLVE TO:

35 EXT. SCENIC VISTA - DAY

The station wagon pulls off to the side of the road on a turnout. The three women get out and walk to the edge of the vista. In the distance Mount Tobias looms above the treeline, high, broad and majestic. It sits waiting in the blue stillness.

36 ANGLE ON THREE WOMEN

They stare up at the mountain, captivated by its huge presence.

ROSE

That's our conquest.

ELAINE

That? We'll be up that in ten minutes.

ROSE

I'll remember you said that.

We MOVE IN on Kathy's face. She looks uncertain, in awe of the mountain and slightly fearful of it.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. MOTEL - DUSK

PAN DOWN a creek UP to a small bridge where the station wagon drives past several guest cottages, rustic little cabins set in the woods. There are several mattresses leaning against the front of each cottage they pass.

38 INT. STATION WAGON

ELAINE

From the looks of this place, we may be camping out tonight.

ROSE

We're the only guests. It closes tomorrow.

ELAINE

No wonder. Look.

39 MOVING P.O.V.

An old woman stands in front of one cottage, spraying a mattress with a large atomizer. She stops and stares at the station wagon as it passes. The expression on her wrinkled face is permanent and unchanging like a mask.

40 EXT. MOTEL

The station wagon pulls up in front of the office. Rose gets out and walks in.

CUT TO:

41 INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The inside of the motel is as rustic as the exterior. Elaine sits cross-legged on one of the two beds. She files her nails and talks heatedly into the telephone. Rose sits in a chair, working over a boot with saddle-soap. In the corner, a battered black-and-white TV is on. Elaine stares at the TV as she talks. The SOUND of the shower running comes from the bathroom.

ELAINE

(into telephone)

Alex, you can't do this to me!

42 ANGLE ON TV

On the television we see a news reporter in a WKS blazer. GREGG GARRETT holds a microphone. The three women come jogging into VIEW behind Garrett. He turns and watches them approach.

43 BACK TO SCENE

Rose puts down her boot and fiddles with the rabbit ears on top of the set.

ROSE

KATHY! We're on!

Elaine stands up and begins pacing with the telephone in her hands. She keeps her eyes on the TV set. Kathy scampers out of the bathroom, wearing a ragged pair of cut-off jeans.

44 ANGLE ON ELAINE

ELAINE

(into telephone)

Do I have to spell out the news angle for you? No one's climbed the northwest slope in fifty years! Sports, fashion, feminism, ecology... What? What wildcat strike?

45 CLOSE SHOT - TV

ELAINE

(on TV)

Our goal is to climb Mount Tobias in seventy-two hours and break the record that was set over fifty years ago.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

ELAINE (cont'd)
I might add we are the first
women to attempt such a climb

GARRETT
The best of luck, girls, and WKS
will have a newscopter standing
by at the peak on Thursday
morning.

46 ANGLE ON ELAINE

Elaine points right at the TV.

ELAINE
You're committed!
(begins pacing
again)
If you don't get a remote unit
up here to follow up, it's your
ass! Besides, it's the best
feature you ever had!
(pause; then she
goes nuts)
Options! Are you threatening me?

Rose reaches over to a backpack and removes a plastic
container full of amber liquid. She picks up two plastic
cups from the bureau and motions to Kathy.

ROSE
I think it's time for a walk.

Kathy pulls on a sweatshirt and they go outside.

47 EXT. MOTEL GROUNDS - NIGHT

The night is clear and the sky star-filled. Rose and Kathy
walk from the cottage across the driveway to a nearby
picnic table.

Kathy sits and Rose pours whiskey from the flask. She
gives one of the cups to Kathy and then sits down beside
her.

KATHY
Southern Comfort?

ROSE
What else?

They drink. Kathy looks up at the mountain.

48 KATHY'S P.O.V. - MOUNT TOBIAS

The huge black mass is outlined by countless stars. It blots out their light, giving the illusion of a huge hole in the starry curtain.

49 BACK TO SCENE

KATHY

I'd forgotten how many stars there are.

ROSE

Easy to forget in the city.

KATHY

It takes their light so long to reach the earth, some of the stars aren't in the same place now. Some of them may not be there at all.

(takes a drink)

Staring up into the past, at some lights that aren't there anymore and a mountain that is.

ROSE

Don't know about the stars, but our mountain is like any other, just a big slab of rock.

KATHY

"Our mountain"... I wish I could feel that way about it. It's been there for thousands of years and I've been around a little over thirty.

(looks at Rose)

I wish I could feel my strength the way you do. You seem to belong, no matter where you are.

ROSE

Don't you remember that little kid on Chestnut Street who got thrown in the lake every Saturday by her friends? You were the one who used to pull me out.

Elaine comes stomping out of the cabin and up to the picnic table. She sets a cup down forcefully.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

ELAINE

Gimme a drink!

Rose pours from the container. Elaine downs it and slams the cup down for more.

ROSE

Did you lose the fight?

ELAINE

That asshole! I get it set with the networks and he tries to kill it.

KATHY

So... ?

ELAINE

So I just talked to Garrett. He'll be down tomorrow morning with a remote unit. He can sweet-talk Alex into anything. They were in the Marines together.

ROSE

(grins)

She knows how to get what she wants.

Elaine looks up at the mountain and salutes it with her cup.

ELAINE

"Ad astra per aspera".

Kathy and Rose look at her.

ELAINE

(continuing)

The state motto of Kansas.

KATHY

Translated...

ELAINE

If they can't take a joke, screw
'em!

As they laugh and talk and pour another round, CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS BACK to a LONG SHOT of the three women at the picnic table in front of the dark, silent motel. In the distance, is Mount Tobias.

CUT TO:

50 EXT. FOREST, CHASM - NIGHT

Dan Miller, the surveyor, has pitched camp within sight of the broad, black chasm in the forest floor. He has a fire going and has raised a small pup tent. A coffee pot sits on the fire's edge.

It is strangely quiet in the woods. Miller writes in his journal, occasionally consulting a map which he has spread out nearby.

51 ANGLE FROM ACROSS CHASM

We see Miller return to his campfire, sit down and continue writing, completely absorbed.

The huge log with the gnarled end lies in the f.g. It is raised up off the forest floor silently.

52 ANGLE ON MILLER

He writes. Suddenly KAWHAM! Miller drops his journal and whirls around.

There, ten feet away, is the end of the huge log which now lies across the chasm.

Miller jumps up, grabbing his flashlight. He runs to the edge of the chasm. The flashlight beam plays along the length of the giant log bridge. Miller then points the beam into the woods on the other side. Nothing.

MILLER

Who's there?

Silence.

Something happens to Miller. He becomes completely unhinged by the woods and the darkness. His face screws up in fear. He bolts back to the campfire and tears the small tent down. He jams the tent into his pack and pours coffee on the campfire to extinguish it. Miller hoists the backpack up to his shoulder. He turns abruptly and shines the light back across the chasm.

No movement. No sound.

Miller kicks at the fire to make sure it's out. Then he turns and moves away from the chasm into the dark woods.

53 ANGLE FROM ACROSS CHASM

We see Miller leave, his flashlight bobbing up and down among the tree shapes.

54 CLOSE ON END OF LOG

A pair of feet move in -- scuffed, cracked cavalry boots. The feet step up onto the log and move across toward Miller's camp, CAMERA TRACKING with them across the log.

Then the feet move off into the dark woods after Miller.

FADE OUT.

55 FADE IN:

EXT. O'CONNORS CAFE AND GAS STATION - EARLY MORNING

An early morning mist hangs in the trees, across the highway and enshrouds O'Connors, a combination chop-house, saloon, curio shop and gas station. The station wagon glides down the highway out of the mist and pulls in to one side of the service drive.

The three women get out, wearing long coats. They stand for a minute, staring at the fog-laden forest. It is quiet, still, eerie. Rose notices that Kathy is a little uneasy.

56 INT. O'CONNORS - EARLY MORNING

O'Connors is divided into two sections: main entry with counter and adjacent dining room with table and chairs. A door at the rear of the dining room leads to the service garage.

At the counter sit CADY and PRICE, two locals. They are both middleaged with the peculiar kind of hostility that pervades the consciousness of mountain people. Behind the counter is O'CONNORS, more rotund than the other men and more inclined to conversation than action. In the kitchen is the COOK, a hard woman with dark, stringy hair.

O'Connors leans across the counter. Behind them the three women enter. O'Connors straightens up, and notices the three women standing by the door. Cady and Price notice his gaze and turn around.

Under their coats, Rose, Elaine and Kathy are suited-up for their climb. They wear Rose's custom-made outfits which are vivid and very complimentary. Rose leads the women to a table in the dining room.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

O'CONNORS

What... can I do for you, ladies?

ROSE

We can start with a menu.

O'Connors grabs water, glasses and menus and walks to the table. Cady and Price give the women sidelong glances.

ELAINE

Has there been a TV crew in here this morning?

O'CONNORS

Nope.

Elaine looks around and spies a pay phone.

ELAINE

I want scrambled eggs and a glass of milk for my ulcer.

She gets up and walks to the pay phone.

ROSE

Bacon and eggs, and coffee.

KATHY

The same here.

O'CONNORS

Y'll better lookin' in person.
'Course the color's messed up
on my TV...

He turns and walks away from the table as a truck pulls into the service drive outside. Kathy cranes her neck to see it.

57 KATHY'S P.O.V.

It is an olive drab pickup truck with Park Service emblems on the side. A man in a ranger's uniform gets out.

58 ANGLE ON TABLE

Elaine returns from the pay phone and sits down.

ELAINE

I couldn't get anyone. It's a waiting game.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

Elaine takes a big drink of milk as the ranger walks in. Forest Ranger JOHN WYATT is a rangy six-footer about thirty-five years old. It is apparent from his deep tan and physique that he spends much time outdoors.

Wyatt doesn't notice the women in the adjacent dining room at first. Kathy notices him, though. She stops eating for a moment and watches him. O'Connors walks back to the counter and passes Wyatt.

O'CONNORS

Hello, John.

WYATT

Morning.

O'CONNORS

That Miller get back yet?

WYATT

He's still up there, but I found his dog.

O'CONNORS

Dead?

Wyatt nods.

O'CONNORS

(continuing)

Animal git him?

WYATT

I don't think so. He didn't have any head or legs.

Kathy winces at this. She shakes her head, moaning to herself. Wyatt glances at the women for the first time. Cady gestures at them.

CADY

That's them.

PRICE

(sullenly)

I don't believe they could walk to the market.

Wyatt looks at the women curiously, then walks over to them.

WYATT

Miss Helm? I'm John Wyatt.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED (2):

ROSE
(extends her hand)
This is Elaine MacaVie and Kathy
Briggs.

They exchange hellos.

WYATT
Can I see your permit?

Rose hands it to him.

WYATT
(continuing;
checks his watch)
When are you planning to start?

ROSE
Just as soon as we pay our check.

WYATT
Well, you look determined.

He hands Rose back the permit.

ELAINE
Why do you say it that way?

WYATT
I think it's too rough up on
Tobias for anybody. Right now
there's a state surveyor up there
that I'm worried about. He's
mapping the area...

Behind them there is a movement outside. A large white van
stops so that it is visible through the window. On the
side are the letters WKS. Elaine jumps up.

ELAINE
They're here!

She hurries out the door. Rose goes over to the cash
register to pay the bill.

KATHY
(lowers her voice)
Who would do that to a dog?

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED (3):

WYATT

I don't know. We have a history
of strange incidents in the park,
things disappearing.

Rose enters the cafe.

ROSE

(to Kathy)

We're ready.

WYATT

(to Rose)

I want to check you out on
procedure.

ROSE

(looks at her watch)

Main trail. Ten minutes.

Rose and Kathy step outside. Wyatt watches them go. Cady
sidles up beside him.

CADY

Gonna let 'em do it, John?

WYATT

Not a thing I can do to stop them.

CADY

They ain't got a lick of sense.

PRICE

They should be home. They
deserve what they get.

CUT TO:

59 EXT. MAIN TRAIL MARKER, RANGER'S CABIN - DAY

The three women stand in front of a wooden sign reading:

BEECHER TRAIL
GREAT SMOKEY MOUNTAIN
NATIONAL PARK

Just off to the side of the sign is the ranger's cabin, a
small four-room house with firewood stacked along the side.
The green pickup truck sits nearby.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

The women have their packs on and are ready to hike. The TV news CREW gets into position: a CAMERAMAN loads his 16mm camera, the SOUNDMAN has his Nagra set up and Gregg Garrett stands to one side, natty in his blue WKS blazer, looking closely at his face in a small makeup mirror.

Wyatt stands in front of the three women.

ROSE

You seem to think three women in the woods can't take care of themselves?

WYATT

No, that's not what I'm saying. I know the side of the mountain that's in the park. If one of you should get hurt, I can find you much faster inside the park boundaries. Look, I'm not trying to discourage...

ROSE

(interrupts)

You've made your point.

WYATT

You got to understand the wilderness. Every animal is prey to another, everything is hunted by something else. There's a balance. Now sometimes the balance shifts.

Rose's decisive motion cuts him short. She reaches down and unsnaps a leather holster on her belt. She assembles the bowgun. SNAP, SNAP, SNAP.

ROSE

This is a modified crossbow. I've got a license to carry it from the American Archery Association.

Rose breaks the bowgun down and holsters it.

WYATT

How about flares?

From a pocket in her backpack Rose produces a small metal tube.

60 CLOSE SHOT - SUPER FLARE

The small tube has a ring on one end. It is emblazoned with the words: "MITE-EE BRITE". Rose pulls on the end of the tube opposite the ring. A metal sleeve slides out doubling the length of the flare to about twelve inches.

61 BACK TO SCENE

Rose hands the flare to Wyatt.

ROSE

It's thrown two hundred feet into the air by pulling the ring. It drifts down in a small parachute and automatically extinguishes itself.

Wyatt looks at it curiously, then hands it back to her.

WYATT

All I got to say is good luck.

Garrett walks over to the women and Wyatt. He looks incredibly well-groomed and out of place in his coat and tie.

GARRETT

Let's try it again, Elaine.

The three women group together on the trail.

ELAINE

(to Soundman)

Roll it, Bill.

SOUNDMAN

Speed.

ELAINE

(into microphone)

Tobias story, shot five, take four hand slate.

She whaps her hands together, then assumes her position with a big smile. The camera rolls.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

ELAINE

(continuing)

I'm giving the mike back to you, Greg, as I and my two companions Rose Helm and Kathy Briggs officially begin our attempt to climb Mount Tobias in record time. This is Elaine MacaVie with a WKS news exclusive.

She hands the microphone to Garrett and the women start hiking up the trail. They pass out of sight around a large rock for a moment or two. The Cameraman continues to hold his shot on the trail.

ELAINE (O.S.)

(continuing;
yells)

Cut!

Elaine walks back to the crew.

GARRETT

You're really pushing for that national spot, aren't you?

ELAINE

(looks at him
evenly)

Thursday morning, nine o'clock, the peak of the mountain, Gregg. If Alex won't approve a helicopter, steal one.

She turns to the crew.

ELAINE

(continuing)

Thanks, boys. See you on top of the rock.

The women move off up the trail. Wyatt stands near the marker signpost. As they go, he calls out.

WYATT

Keep an eye out for the surveyor, Dan Miller.

(smiles)

I'll look for you on the news on Thursday.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED (2):

Kathy smiles, turns and follows Rose and Elaine into the woods. Wyatt watches them disappear with a troubled look on his face.

The Cameraman and Soundman dismantle their equipment and pack it away. Finally Elaine and the other two are out of earshot.

SOUNDMAN

Lady's got balls.

Garrett stands watching the women go. Elaine waves back to them as they round the big rock for good. Garrett returns her wave, then turns away with an angry look on his face.

GARRETT

The lady can shove it!

CUT TO:

62 EXT. TRAIL, NATIONAL PARK - DAY

It is later in the day. The women walk along at a good pace. Perspiration is beginning to soak through their clothing, but they are getting the rhythm now: they move easily and march in step almost like a military unit.

Rose leads, followed by Elaine who munches on a high protein candy bar. Kathy is the last in the procession and she sips water from a plastic container with an attached tube, the kind bicyclists use.

63 EXT. WOODS - MONTAGE

A SERIES OF SHOTS of the three women hiking through the woods; the sun sinking lower in the sky, casting long shadows through the columns of pines.

64 THE THREE OF THEM

reaching a hillside that gives a glimpse of a beautiful forest vista in the late afternoon.

65 SCENE

They are now well into the wilderness. The trail is less distinct, but still very much there.

66 EXT. BOUNDARY, NATIONAL PARK - DAY

The sun is almost gone as the women walk into a small clearing. There is a campsite that has the standard features found in parks.

Across from it the undergrowth is more dense and tangled than any we've seen. In front of the mass of greenery is a sign:

BOUNDARY -
SMOKEY MOUNTAIN
NATIONAL PARK

The women look more trail-weary now than before, sweatier and dustier. They walk to the table and remove their backpacks. Then they sit down heavily. Elaine takes off her blue aviator sunglasses.

ELAINE

This looks great.

ROSE

Let's keep moving. We've got another thirty or forty minutes of good light.

KATHY

You told the ranger we were going to spend the night here.

ROSE

We're moving faster than I had estimated. I say we keep going.

Rose looks at Elaine. Elaine shrugs wearily.

KATHY

I don't know...

ROSE

(evenly)

What don't you know?

KATHY

I think we should do what you said.

ROSE

You mean what he said.

Kathy starts to speak but Rose cuts her off.

ROSE

(continuing)

I'm leading this climb, not him.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

We hear a SOUND off behind them. They turn and react.

A jeep drives up and peers over a ridge and stops. In the jeep sit Cady and Price. They get out and walk over to the women.

The women react with surprise to the two men.

KATHY

(whispers to Rose)

What do they want?

ELAINE

What a question.

The women get to their feet, reshoulder their packs and walk out to the two men who stand by the boundary sign looking sullen and withdrawn.

ELAINE

(continuing; points
to the jeep)

There's a road over there?

CADY

Sure.

(points to the trees)

Old logging road. Ain't no
secret. It's on the map.

ROSE

You miss the point. We're hiking
to set a record, not driving.

Driving would be cheating.

Anybody could do that.

(gestures at Cady
and Price)

Anybody.

CADY

You know, you're gonna be out of
the park if you go on up that
way.

Cady points to the wall of green.

ROSE

Adios.

She starts to move around the jeep when Cady steps in front of her. He reaches out and puts his hand on her shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED (2):

CADY

Listen...

Rose looks down at his hand, and then directly into his eyes. Her message is unmistakable..

Cady quickly drops his hand.

CADY

I, uh... we don't think you all ought to go off in that direction. Actually... we don't think you all ought to be climbing Tobias at all.

Rose continues to stare at him. Cady looks to Price for help.

PRICE

Aw, hell, Cady. They know what they're doing. I'll bet they're gonna make it up that mountain after all.

Cady seems genuinely upset.

CADY

You remember Raymond's daddy, you remember what happened to him up there.

Rose nods her head slowly, sensing a tall story coming.

ROSE

Here we go... !

PRICE

He was crazy, everybody knows that. Took him to Charlotteville, didn't they?

ELAINE

What are you talking about?

CADY

Raymond's daddy said he seen things back up in there.

KATHY

What kind of things?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED (3):

CADY
 (uneasy)
 Strange kind of things.

PRICE
 (softly)
 People.

ROSE
 What?

Cady says nothing. He just stands silently.

ROSE
 (continuing)
 What people?

Both men are silent.

ELAINE
 Have you ever been up there?

CADY
 No.

ROSE
 (to Price)
 Have you?

PRICE
 No, ma'am, I haven't, but I tell
 you, personally, I wouldn't
 climb that mountain myself.

ROSE
 I would and I am, and no amount
 of bullshit is going to scare me
 away.

Rose pushes by the two men and plows into the thick brush.
 Elaine and Kathy hitch up their packs and follow behind.

At the marker post Kathy stops. She reads the words to
 herself, then looks back at Cady and Price.

They stand together in the failing light, watching her.
 There is no hint of humor in their expressions. They are
 deadly serious. There is an ominous feeling about the two
 men standing back in the road as if they are afraid to get
 near the post.

CADY
 Good luck, lady.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED (4):

Kathy turns abruptly and follows the other two women into the woods.

The CAMERA HOLDS on the two men standing in the road, staring at the spot where the women entered the woods.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The campfire is CRACKLING in the small clearing. Rose, Elaine and Kathy are illuminated by its flickering light. They sit on their sleeping bags which ring the fire. On a grill sits a pan of steaming water. The utensils from the evening meal are soaking.

Rose pours over her maps while Elaine gives some attention to her feet; they are sore. Kathy sits with her knees pulled up and looks out into the night. They are all preoccupied with their chores and thoughts.

RIIIIP! Elaine tears the paper wrapper off a band-aid and tosses it into the fire. She presses the band-aid onto her heel. Rose looks up.

ROSE

Blisters?

ELAINE

Just a little tender. They need some soothing.

ROSE

You have the salve, and I've got an extra pair of socks.

ELAINE

You can't drink a pair of socks.

ROSE

Oh.

Rose brings out the container. She hands it to Elaine, who takes a big swig.

ELAINE

Much better.

Elaine offers the container to Kathy.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

ELAINE

(continuing)

Come, on, Kath. It'll give you
sweet dreams.

Kathy looks at the container a moment, then takes it and
drinks. She is quiet, tense.

ELAINE

(continuing)

Hey, Kath, loosen up a little.

ROSE

I think it's me.

ELAINE

Do you think the ranger would
have given a goddamn if it was
three men making the climb?

Kathy doesn't respond. She takes a drink from the
container.

ELAINE

(continuing)

Hell, no, but let three women try
it. First comes the fatherly
advice, and when that doesn't
work they trot out the ghost
stories.

(her eyes widen)

People back in here... Crap!
They just don't like the idea of
their territory being invaded by
three strong woemn. Women are
supposed to stay home and have
babies. Men get to go out and
have adventures.

Kathy hands the container back to Elaine and stands up.

KATHY

Like I said, no problem.

(to Rose)

Throw me the roll.

Rose pulls a roll of toilet paper out of her backpack and
throws it to Kathy. Kathy walks across the clearing into
the darkness.

Rose and Elaine exchange looks.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED (2):

ELAINE
(whispers)
She's just a little insecure.

ROSE
So when does she grow up?

68 EXT. WOODS, SOME DISTANCE AWAY - NIGHT

The fire flickers dimly through the trees as Kathy comes into VIEW. She carries a large flashlight in one hand and the toilet paper in the other. CAMERA TRACKS with her as she picks her way along.

She stops by a large pine tree and sets the flashlight and toilet paper down on the ground. She begins to unfasten her hiking shorts.

CRACK! A branch snaps nearby.

Kathy quickly picks up the flashlight and stabs the beam in the direction of the sound. SNAP-CRACK!

This time the sound is on her blind side. She whirls around with the light.

KATHY
Who is it?

CRACK! Right behind her!

Kathy bolts in panic.

She runs through the woods full tilt toward the campfire. The flashlight beam waves wildly in the darkness. The roll of toilet paper bounces along the ground, one end stuck to her foot, unrolling like a paper snake.

WHAM! Kathy falls straight down.

69 CAMPSITE

Rose hears the SOUND and jumps to her feet. She grabs the bowgun. Elaine is on her feet. They move to the edge of the firelight.

KATHY (O.S.)
Help!

The two women move out into the dark woods.

70 ANGLE ON KATHY

Kathy sits in a heap. Something stringy is tangled around her ankles and she struggles to remove it.

Rose and Elaine walk up. Elaine holds a flashlight.

ROSE

What happened?

KATHY

I heard something.

Elaine swings her flashlight around and they look. Nothing but dark trees. The woods are empty.

ROSE

Running in the woods at night is no good.

KATHY

Crapping in the woods at night is no good.

Kathy pulls at the mess around her ankles.

KATHY

(continuing)

What the hell is this?

Elaine bends down with the light.

ELAINE

Looks like canvas all tangled up.
Here...

She pulls at the wad of canvas and frees Kathy. Kathy stands.

ELAINE

Grab hold.

Kathy picks up her flashlight and grabs a corner of the cloth. They tug it back toward the firelight.

71 CAMPSITE

Elaine and Kathy pull the heap over to the fire and drop it. Elaine kneels down and pokes through it.

ELAINE

(continuing)

Whatever it is, it's been out here a long time.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

Rose plants two rusty poles in the ground. She motions to Kathy. Kathy pulls it and the mass untangles. It is a small tent in very poor condition, nearly totally rotted. The flames of the campfire dance on the tattered canvas which hangs limply like dozens of long, thin fingers.

KATHY

It's a tent.

Kathy lifts the side wall and looks inside. She digs around. She has something in her hand. She pulls it out and holds up a canvas strap about three feet long.

There is a crumbling bag on the end with a circular metal container in it: a canteen.

ROSE

Let me see the light.

Elaine hands her the flashlight. She switches it on and she and Kathy scrutinize the canteen.

72 CLOSE SHOT - CANTEEN

Kathy's thumb smears some of the rust around, and we see the embossed letters "C.S.A." with an oval enclosing them.

73 BACK TO SCENE

Rose laughs.

KATHY

C.S.A.?

ROSE

(to Elaine)

What does C.S.A. mean to you?

ELAINE

(thinks a moment;
then)

Cub Scouts of America!

ROSE

Exactly.

Both Rose and Elaine laugh.

ELAINE

Sure is rough up here in these woods!

73 CONTINUED:

ROSE

From the looks of that pup tent,
the Cub Scouts have been coming
up here for quite some time.

Kathy continues to stare at the canteen, thinking hard.

KATHY

This isn't the Cub Scout emblem
on here.

ELAINE

Huh?

KATHY

Bobby is a Cub Scout. Their sign
has a diamond around it. It
doesn't look like this.

ELAINE

Maybe it's the old Cub Scouts.
They've been around awhile, you
know.

Kathy looks over at Rose, then up at Elaine. She's not
convinced. Rose and Elaine are, however.

ROSE

That should make you feel a
little better, Kathy.

Kathy looks at Rose quizzically.

ROSE

(continuing)

Shows you what a load we've been
getting from everybody.

Rose and Elaine return to their backpacks and the fire,
while Kathy continues to stare at the canteen.

CUT TO:

74 ANGLE ON CAMP - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Kathy sits on a log which she has pulled over to the fire.
She has a knife and she scrapes at the canteen's bottom.
Both Rose and Elaine are rolled up in their sleeping bags.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

Kathy stops scraping. She dabs some water on the canteen, rubbing it around with a cloth. She holds the rusty container close to the fire and reads something on it.

KATHY
 Harper's Ferry...
 (rubs more with
 the cloth)
 W... V... A...
 (pause)
 Harper's Ferry, W. Va.? West
 Virginia?

Kathy sits motionless for a moment looking into the fire. She frowns and turns around to Rose.

KATHY
 (continuing)
 Rose... Rose?

Rose is fast asleep as is Elaine. Kathy turns back around and faces the fire. She sits holding the canteen in both hands. Suddenly she sits upright.

KATHY
 (continuing)
Confederate States of America!

Kathy wakes up Rose who looks at her sleepily.

KATHY
 (continuing; runs
 her fingers over
 the oval insignia)
 It's not the Cub Scouts, Rose.
 Confederate States of America!

ROSE
 Okay...

Rose rolls over and immediately goes back to sleep. Kathy just sits and stares at the canteen. We SLOWLY PULL BACK away from the campfire, further and further back until the fire is a small dot of light in the black screen.

CUT TO:

75 EXT. CAMP - EARLY MORNING

The three women are asleep. It is just prior to dawn and light begins to show in the woods.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

Kathy sleeps soundly. She is curled up in her sleeping bag close to the smoldering fire. The blue smoke drifts up into the blue-gray of the early morning.

CRACK! A twig breaks nearby, then another, SNAP! Kathy stirs slightly and her eyes blink open.

76 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Across the clearing in the woods, through the gently rising smoke, there is a shape among the trees. It seems to be a man standing watching.

77 BACK TO KATHY

Kathy's eyelids slowly sink down. Then, as though the image had just registered in her brain, she opens her eyes again.

78 KATHY'S P.O.V.

The shape is gone. Only smoke and trees.

79 CLOSE SHOT - KATHY

Kathy closes her eyes and rolls over.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. THICK WOODS - DAY

The women hike through thick woods, moving more slowly than the day before due to the density of the undergrowth. Rose leads the way as they twist and wind through the ferns and laurel bushes. There is no longer any trail to follow. The ground foliage is tangled and matted. Leathery vines and purple veins of sorrel tug against their legs. It is steamy hot. The women perspire heavily.

81 EXT. OUTLOOK - DAY

An hour or so later the women stop at an outlook: a waterfall cascades down the side of the mountain. Kathy drinks from a plastic squirt bottle and Elaine mops her face with a bandana.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

Rose holds a piece of clear plastic with an attached cord which is looped around her neck. Mounted in the plastic square is a compass and a viewfinder. She sights through the viewfinder at the distant waterfall.

ROSE

We're going too slow. We should have been here an hour ago.

ELAINE

That's great, just great...

They move from the scenic vista and forge ahead.

CUT TO:

82 EXT. SMALL POOL - AFTERNOON

A brackish pool stands in a small clearing. There are fallen trees coated with mossy, green mold around the still blue-black water. Even though the sun beats down hotly it is impossible to see more than six inches beneath the surface of the dark water. Dragonflies drift through the sultry air dipping down to hover over the scummy pool.

There is a RUSTLING in the bushes nearby and Rose surges into VIEW. Elaine and Kathy follow. They are winded from fighting through the heavy brush. Their bright clothes show large, dark splotches of perspiration.

ELAINE

(panting)

Let's... take five, huh, Rose?

ROSE

Okay... but five's all.

ELAINE

(not smiling)

Thanks, boss.

Elaine unslings her backpack. Kathy does, too. Rose continues standing, looking at her map. She frowns.

ROSE

There's supposed to be a tree nearby that was hit by lightning.

ELAINE

Supposed to be?

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

ROSE

Yeah. Around here somewhere.
I'll be back in a minute.

Rose moves off into the tangled shrubs leaving Elaine and Kathy alone by the pool. Elaine kneels down at the water's edge and her knees start to sink in soft, mulchy earth. She puts a hand down to push herself back. It sinks into the bog also. She retracts it, looking at the black, gooey mess which covers her palm.

ELAINE

Shit.

Elaine stands and walks over to a log. She tests it with her weight. It sinks down a little but floats. She sits on it and shinnies out a short distance.

Elaine swishes her hand in the water to clear the scum away, then washes the black mud off. Impulsively she raises her arms and peels off her sweaty jersey. She tosses the clothing over to the bank. She dips both hands into the water and dabs some under her arms.

Kathy walks over holding the old canteen.

KATHY

I think you and Rose were wrong
about this canteen.

SNAP! Directly across the pool from the two women, a branch breaks under a heavy weight. They both look in that direction.

83 P.O.V. SHOT

There in the trees is a dark shape, clearly the outline of a human being.

84 BACK TO SCENE

Elaine inhales sharply, and grabs her jersey, holding it over her exposed breasts.

Kathy stares at the shape, trying to see it distinctly.

KATHY

(calls out)

Rose?

84 CONTINUED:

Behind the pair, a crashing SOUND occurs. They both turn to look at the brush where Rose disappeared moments before. Rose emerges.

Elaine and Kathy look back across the pool.

85 P.O.V. SHOT

The figure is gone.

86 BACK TO SCENE

ROSE

I couldn't find the tree.

Elaine and Kathy continue to stare across the pond. They both look frightened. Rose unfurls her map and pulls out the pathfinding device again. She raises it to her eye.

ROSE

(continuing)

No cause for alarm. It just means that the tree isn't where it stood fifty years ago.

ELAINE

Rose...

Rose looks up at them.

ELAINE

(continuing)

There's somebody up here with us.

KATHY

We just saw him, standing over there in those trees.

Rose looks where Kathy points. Quickly Elaine wriggles back into her jersey.

ROSE

Him?

ELAINE

Him, her, it, someone!

Rose looks directly into Elaine's eyes. Elaine is scared. Rose glances back across the pond.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

ROSE
What was he doing?

ELAINE
Standing there.

ROSE
Probably one of those crackers,
or the ranger...

KATHY
It wasn't the ranger.

ROSE
Just because he's a ranger
doesn't make him a goddamn
saint!

KATHY
It wasn't him. I know it wasn't.
Maybe it was the surveyor he
told us about.
(pause)
What do we do?

ELAINE
Look, let's just get going. I
don't like standing around here.

ROSE
Neither do I. We're wasting time.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. DEEP FOREST, CHASM - LATE AFTERNOON

The ground vegetation is very thick now. The women move along occasionally looking back over their shoulders at the undergrowth. Rose has a small machete in her hand. It has a wire frame handle like the bowgun. She methodically raises the long knife and hacks away at the matted undergrowth. Elaine and Kathy are tired. Their hair hangs in wet, matty strands and their jerseys are soaked through with the sweat of their exertions. Elaine and Kathy stop walking.

ELAINE
My goddamn feet are on fire!

Rose continues to slick the ground cover away.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

ROSE
We're almost there.

ELAINE
Where?

Rose doesn't answer.

ELAINE
(continuing)
Where's that tree you've been
trying to find?

No reply.

ELAINE
(continuing)
You're not answering me!

Rose whirls around and looks at Elaine.

ROSE
I don't know where the tree is!
It just wasn't where it was
supposed to be, that's all!
What do you want me to say?

ELAINE
No chance we could have strayed
off course, is there?

Kathy moves forward past Rose a few feet.

KATHY
Over here!

She moves forward several yards and stands at the edge of the chasm. Elaine and Rose join her and they look up and down the dark, yawning ravine excitedly. It is at least sixty feet across and seventy-five feet deep.

ROSE
(looks at Elaine)
We're on course.
(points down the
chasm)
This way to the narrow.

They move off down the edge of the chasm.

DISSOLVE TO:

88 EXT. CHASM - DAY

The women move along the edge. Elaine points down the chasm a few yards, at the huge log that spans the narrow forming a bridge. The three women walk down to it.

ELAINE

Almost like a bridge.

ROSE

This is terrific! We'll save three hours!

Elaine kicks the ground stirring up ashes.

ELAINE

Someone camped right here, looks like just a few nights ago.

KATHY

That surveyor...
(points to the
log)
He must have put it here.

Rose steps up on the log and tests it. The log is solid. She jumps on it a couple times.

ROSE

I don't care how it got here,
we're going to break the record
by six hours!

Rose walks over to the other side. Elaine and Kathy slowly and carefully follow her. For a moment the three women stand on the edge of the chasm looking back at the forest from which they have come. Then they slog forward again.

CUT TO:

89 EXT. WOODS - LATE AFTERNOON

It is fifteen, twenty minutes later. The greenery is less thick now and tall trees dominate. There is light ahead showing amidst the thick tree trunks. The women come into VIEW.

Rose hikes with her usual measured pace, while Elaine and Kathy straggle behind. Elaine is limping.

ELAINE

We gotta stop! Really!

Rose looks back at her.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

ROSE

There should be a clearing ahead,
and a stream.

ELAINE

A what?

ROSE

Listen...

There is a kind of rushing, tinkling NOISE ahead of them in
a clearing.

ELAINE

You're right!

They start hiking again with renewed energy and move quickly
through the trees toward the clearing and the NOISE.

90 EXT. THE CLEARING - LATE AFTERNOON

The three women come to a stop and stand perfectly still on
the edge of a ring of trees which borders the clearing.
They stare speechlessly at the strange sight ahead.

The clearing is a rough circle about 150 feet in diameter.
The ground has been defoliated somehow so that the bare
earth shows. Even the rocks have been removed. Here and
there are burned-out stumps where trees stood before. They
jut up like charred black fangs. It is apparent that some-
one has tried to remove all signs of life, except for:

A large dead oak tree which stands in the middle of the
open space. Its bole is split and blackened as though hit
by a giant cleaver -- the lightning struck tree. The
branches of the tree have been plucked clean, and, in place
of leaves, bright, metal objects hang like ornaments on a
Christmas tree. There are hundreds of these shiny pieces
dangling and TINKLING melodically in the light breeze.

Near the base of the oak tree there is an open pit about
ten feet wide. There is no stream, no movement or sound
except for the eerie CLINKING of the ornaments.

The three women watch motionless. Rose moves first. She
yanks out the laminated map and squints at it incredulously.

ROSE

This can't be the lightning-hit
tree. We should have passed it
three hours ago on the other
side of the chasm.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

ELAINE

Oh, that's good news. I mean,
oh boy!

Kathy is transfixed by the weird tree. She walks to it, reaches up and pulls an object from a dead branch. It is a pair of wire-rimmed glasses. The lenses are gone. The glasses were hung by a piece of twine exactly like a Christmas bulb. Kathy pulls down something else, a badge. She peers closely.

KATHY

(reading)

State Department of Forestry...

She takes down two small medallions.

KATHY

(continuing)

Rabies vaccine... Dog license,
Memphis, Tennessee, 1977.

Elaine limps up.. She walks to the edge of the open pit and looks in.

ELAINE

Look here.

Kathy joins her. Rose remains at the edge of the clearing studying her map.

91 P.O.V. SHOT - THE PIT

The hole has been dug down about seven feet. It has an assortment of things lying on the bottom: ragged clothing, rusty picnic coolers, bottles and cans.

92 BACK TO SCENE

ELAINE

(continuing)

Maybe... we've hiked into the
town dump.

Kathy looks up at the oak tree, the ornaments, and the boundary of the clearing.

KATHY

No way. This isn't a dump.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

ELAINE

What is it then?

KATHY

I don't know.

ROSE

(looks at her map)

We're back on schedule!

ELAINE

Thank God!

Elaine takes a couple steps away from the open pit, plops down and begins to pull off her boots.

ROSE

Elaine, you can't do that now.
If you take them off you'll
never get them on again.

Elaine nods slowly. Kathy scans the woods around them slowly. She glances at the badge and dog tags in her hand.

KATHY

(to herself)

Looters...

93 INT. CHASM - LATE AFTERNOON

We see up the walls of the chasm from the inside. The log still stretches across the abyss.

HOLD on the log. We HEAR a creaking as something walks across the log from one side to the other.

Then slowly the log is withdrawn, pulled back across the chasm by the unseen something. We hear the SOUND of the log being dropped on the forest floor. The bridge is gone.

Then silence.

CUT TO:

94 EXT. CAMP, THE CLEARING - NIGHT

Flames lick up from a small campfire. The women sit close to it with all their packs and sleeping bags pulled into the small circle of light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the dancing shadows, the oak tree can be seen a short distance away. The faint light catches the metal surfaces in its branches from time to time, sparkling and flashing. The tinkling NOISE the ornaments make is the only sound in the still night.

Kathy stares out into the darkness, as if she senses something is out there.

KATHY

There's something out there.

ROSE

It's just the tree.

Elaine lies on her stomach between Kathy and Rose, who has all her maps spread around her now. Finally Rose looks up at the others.

ROSE

Tomorrow we start the uphill climb. No more thick woods. One more hard day and we're there.

No response from Elaine or Kathy.

ROSE

(continuing; to
Kathy)

Booze.

Kathy hands the flask to her. Elaine unscrews the top and tilts it up to her mouth.

ROSE

Maybe we did lose some time today. It was rougher than I thought it would be, but we can make it up tomorrow.

ELAINE

Since you've still got plenty of answers, Rose, and you still like to dole them out, just tell me who was that son of a bitch on the other side of the pond staring at us?

Rose says nothing. She keeps looking down at her maps.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED (2):

ELAINE

(continuing)

Oh, no answer for that one, eh?
You're slipping, Rosie,
starting to give way there,
babel!

Elaine takes another swallow from the flask.

ELAINE

(continuing)

The worst thing is we're running
out of booze. What do you say,
Rose? Can you find a way to
distill me some more real quick?

Rose's backpack is propped up against a stump about ten feet from Kathy. She starts up to get the methiolate.

KATHY

That tree really bothers me.

ELAINE

Me, too. It's going to tinkle all
the goddamn night.

Kathy is facing the campfire as she rises unaware that there is a MAN standing directly behind her.

KATHY

You know, there's a watch on the
tree that's as old as that
canteen...

Kathy turns to go to the backpack and gasps. Elaine and Rose look up.

There, standing at the edge of the fire's light, is SWAIN.

Swain is six feet tall, thin, old, cadaverous. His eyes are sunken back in his head and dart quickly from woman to woman like an animal's. His mouth and chin are covered by a scraggly beard and his long dirty hair touches his shoulders. Swain wears a Confederate cavalry officer's coat which looks like it has been worn continuously since Bull Run. The coat is patched with cloth, animal skin and feathers, but still bears the original insignia. On his head is an officer's hat almost completely discolored from wear, but still showing the emblem, "C.S.A." enclosed by an oval. It is impossible to tell how old Swain is. In the dim, flickering light he looks like a ghost.

(CONTINUED)

94

CONTINUED (3):

Swain stands motionless. He stares at the women and they stare back, dumbstruck. Several beats pass.

KATHY
(continuing)

Hello...

Swain doesn't make a sound.

ELAINE
We... didn't think anybody was
up here...

When Swain speaks his voice is a thin croak with a strange drawl to it.

SWAIN
I'm here.

ELAINE
Pardon me?

There is something peculiar about Swain's timing and reactions, as though he isn't used to talking much.

SWAIN
Said I'm here.

ROSE
Are you from Sanger?

SWAIN
From yonder.

He gestures into the trees. The women look at each other.

ROSE
You live up here?

A moment's silence. Swain seems to weigh every word and motion. His dark, sunken eyes are piercing.

SWAIN
Where y'all goin'?

ROSE
We're on a hike up Mount Tobias.

No response from Swain.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED (4):

ELAINE

We're trying to set a world record. It's going to be on TV. There's a crew not far behind us now.

Elaine gestures out into the night. Swain follows her arm movements closely, saying nothing.

KATHY

You said you live up here?

SWAIN

My land.

ELAINE

(quietly)

What?

SWAIN

My land.

Rose slowly picks up the bowgun, keeping her eyes riveted on Swain. He senses the movement. His eyes flick toward her.

SWAIN

(continuing)

What's that?

Rose raises the compact gun for him to see.

ROSE

A portable crossbow.

She snaps the wire stock into place.

The SOUND makes Swain melt back into the darkness.

ELAINE

Wait! Come back, it's okay!

Elaine quietly moves her camera from under her sleeping bag.

ELAINE

(continuing;
whispers)

I want a picture.

Swain returns to his original position.

KATHY

Have you been following us?

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED (5):

There is no answer.

KATHY
(continuing)
Were you watching us' today by
that pool?

SWAIN
(disregards her
question)
Where y'all goin'?

The women look at each other in amazement: he doesn't seem to hear the questions or the answers.

ROSE
Up Mount Tobias, we're going up
the mountain.

Elaine clicks the advance knob and raises her camera.

ELAINE
Say, would you mind if...

Elaine's expression changes. Swain is gone. There is only darkness where he stood, and the ironic JINGLE from the oak tree.

CUT TO:

95 ANGLE ON CAMP - LATER THAT NIGHT

The fire is roaring. A huge pile of wood is stacked next to it. The three women are crowded around and the flask is making the rounds. Rose has her bowgun assembled. It rests in her lap.

ROSE
One day to the top, two days if we
go back down. Besides, once we
get to the top we ride out in a
helicopter. I just don't see we
have any other choice.

Silence. Elaine swigs from the flask.

ELAINE
A crazy old bastard living in the
corner of a national park. What
a story!
(takes another drink)
Looks like he hasn't had a bath
in a hundred years.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

KATHY
 (glances at Elaine)
 It was him watching us by that
 pool.

Elaine shivers and swigs again from the flask.

ELAINE
 Only way I'm getting to sleep
 tonight is dead drunk.
 (looks at other two)
 Strike "dead".
 (glances at
 Rose's bowgun)
 Don't have another one of those,
 do you?

Elaine moves to her backpack. She unzips a pocket.

96 CLOSE SHOT - FLARE

Elaine pulls out a "MIT-EE BRITE" flare. She rolls down
 her sock and places the flare next to her ankle. Then she
 rolls the sock up.

97 ANGLE ON CAMP

Elaine moves to her sleeping bag and crawls down inside.
 She zips up the front of her bag. Kathy looks at Rose.

KATHY
 Shouldn't one of us stand guard
 or something?

ROSE
 I will.

KATHY
 You need some sleep, Rose.

Rose looks at Kathy. The antagonism finally dissolves.

ROSE
 (smiles)
 We all need sleep.

They stare at the fire a moment.

ROSE
 (continuing)
 I should have listened to them,
 the two crackers, the ranger.
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

ROSE (cont'd)

That'll teach me. When they tell you about someone's daddy being carried out of the woods, listen.

(thinks to herself
a moment)

It could be a prank. Think about it. An elaborate trick played on three city women.

KATHY

(gestures to the
woods)

He was real.

Rose nods in agreement and looks back at the fire.

ROSE

God, how I wish he wasn't. I'd give anything to see those two old boys come out of the bushes right now, laughing and drinking and cawing us about how we fell for it...

(she stops; pauses)

Goddamn mountain!

KATHY

It's not the mountain, it's a crazy old man so far away from people he's probably never even seen indoor plumbing or a TV set. Tomorrow we go up to the top and fly out in a helicopter, and nothing is going to stop us. Just like we set out to do, Rose.

Rose looks at her and smiles warmly.

ROSE

Now look who feels her own strength.

KATHY

I'm going to bed. Wake me in an hour. I'll relieve you.

Rose doesn't answer. She stares at the fire.

KATHY

(continuing)

An hour, Rose.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED (2):

ROSE

Right, an hour.

Kathy crawls into her sleeping bag. Rose continues to sit staring at the fire. She is worried. CAMERA PULLS BACK to a WIDE SHOT of the camp. The three women look small and vulnerable in the orange firelight.

CUT TO:

98 ANGLE ON CAMP - ONE HOUR LATER

Kathy sleeps fitfully, in the grip of a bad dream. She tosses and turns. Elaine is quiet, sleeping soundly. The fire has burned down and gives off a pale glow. Rose sits in the same position but her head dips down as she nods off, too.

CRACK -- CRACKLE! From nearby the SOUND is heard. Rose jerks awake and looks up. SNAP!

Rose gets up. She clicks the magazine into place on the bowgun and switches on her flashlight. She moves forward to investigate.

99 ANGLE ON EDGE OF PIT

At the perimeter of the dim firelight Rose stops. She stands at the edge of the open pit. Rose shines the flashlight out into the darkness.

100 ANGLE ON PIT - ROSE'S FEET

Suddenly Rose is raised straight up. There is silence. Her feet kick wildly at the top of FRAME. She is helpless in the grip of something huge and unseen. Her flashlight and bowgun CLATTER down into the pit below.

101 ANGLE ON ELAINE

Elaine's sleeping face is placid. A shadow slowly falls across her.

A hand clamps across her face covering it completely. She is silently pulled straight up into the night, sleeping bag and all.

102 ANGLE ON KATHY

Kathy moans softly in her sleep and rolls over. Her brow is wrinkled; she is having a nightmare. She lies on her side, facing the fire.

Directly in front of her is a pair of scuffed, cracked cavalry boots with rusty spurs. Kathy's nose twitches and she brings her hand up to scratch it. She opens her eyes and looks at the boots only twelve inches away. Then she looks up.

103 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Towering above her is an enormous man outlined by the campfire.

104 ANGLE ON KATHY

She opens her mouth to scream and a dirty rag is stuffed in. A mammoth hand reaches down and zips her sleeping bag up to the top. Then the hand grabs the bag beneath her chin. Kathy's eyes bulge with fear as she is effortlessly hoisted up like a cocoon.

105 WIDE SHOT - CAMP

The giant man shifts Kathy around like a sack of potatoes, then walks across the campsite, stepping over the fire in a single long stride. He has Elaine and Kathy both encased in their sleeping bags slung over each broad shoulder. We can't see his face clearly. He disappears into the night.

CUT TO:

106 EXT. THE WALL - DAWN

We see a solid wall of dark green, thick evergreens, creepers and laurel. It is tangled and so matted as to be impenetrable. We HOLD on an opening purposely made in the wall of undergrowth.

Then Swain appears through the opening. He carries Rose draped over his shoulders. Her hands and feet are tied. Swain moves through and steps to one side. He stands Rose against the wall as OTIS comes through.

Otis is a giant, 6'7" and about 280 pounds. He wears tattered black trousers which are stuffed into the ancient cavalry boots. Otis lumbers on carrying Kathy and Elaine over his shoulders.

107 EXT. THE HOLLOW - EARLY MORNING

Otis and Swain walk into the middle of a hollow. The area is about 200 feet wide. Overhead, weak morning sunshine filters through the solid canopy of trees giving the air a gray, brooding quality. There are no birds chirping, no wind blowing, no sounds other than the movement of the two men laboring with their prey. We are aware of some buildings standing in the hollow, but they are not yet clear in the low light.

Otis and Swain stop in front of a thick pole which stands in the center of the hollow. They dump the women on the ground. Swain leaves, walking to a house in the shadows nearby.

Otis looks down at the three women. They are all conscious, looking up at him fearfully. He bends down to Elaine in her sleeping bag and grabs the fabric on either side of her face. She WHIMPERS around the greasy rag in her mouth. Otis yanks his hands apart and tears the thick bag right down the middle peeling it away as though it were made of newspaper.

Elaine starts to move when Otis reaches down and grabs the lower half of her face, pinning her to the ground. Elaine's eyes dart wildly as she peers over the top of his hand.

Swain reappears holding a length of rope. He pulls out a long knife and cuts off two short pieces, tossing them to Otis. Otis ties Elaine's hands together behind her back, then ties her feet.

Elaine is totally bound like an animal.

108 ANGLE ON KATHY

Otis moves to Kathy and tears her sleeping bag open. It does not separate as cleanly as Elaine's, so Otis grabs the bottom and upends it, shaking Kathy out on the ground. Kathy struggles up on all fours when Swain plants a foot on her back and shoves her down on her stomach. Otis then ties her hands and feet.

109 ANOTHER ANGLE

Swain tosses the remaining rope on the ground keeping one end loose. He ties that end around the pole, then walks over to Rose, pulling the rope after him. He loops it around her neck twice and pulls it tight. She GRUNTS in pain. Swain moves in a quick, matter-of-fact manner to the other two repeating the collaring process.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

He ties the loose end around the pole.

Swain looks at Otis. It is obvious from the way they stand and gesture that Swain is Otis' father, or at least an elder. They walk off toward the house.

110 ANGLE ON THREE WOMEN

The women lay tethered like livestock in the middle of the hollow.

We see their faces. Their eyes are wide, filled with terror.

CUT TO:

111 EXT. THE HOLLOW - DAY

The sun is higher now. Kathy has struggled to a sitting position. She looks around the hollow.

112 KATHY'S P.O.V.

There is a ramshackle two-story house built of rough-hewn lumber. It is dilapidated, falling down from disuse. A wisp of smoke curls from its chimney. The windows on the lower floor have their dirty curtains drawn. The windows on the second floor are boarded up from the outside.

A porch runs the length of the house facing out into the hollow. An old kitchen chair sits on the porch.

Near the house is a smaller building, a smoke house, made of sod. It has no windows. An old wagon sits across the yard, its rusty hoops arching up like the ribs of a skeleton.

Closer to the women is a small garden patch which is heavily grown with weeds. Two sickly chickens scratch and peck there without finding much.

113 ANGLE ON KATHY

Her eyes take in the sight around her, then flick quickly to a SOUND.

114 KATHY'S P.O.V.

The door of the house opens. An old woman emerges, holding a pan.

She is thin, her hair dirty white. She wears a flowery dress which hangs limply from her bony body. She also has on a dirty brown work shirt which is somewhat newer. It has a forest service emblem dangling loosely from one shoulder. Her face displays the characteristic sunken eyes, but she is more anemic and unhealthy looking than the men.

GRANDMA sits in the chair facing the pole and the three captives. She begins work shucking peas in a pan.

115 ANGLE ON KATHY

Kathy maneuvers herself into a crouch, keeping her eyes on Grandma. Kathy begins scooting over to Elaine who lies on her stomach. Kathy positions her hands and starts to untie Elaine's bonds.

116 ANGLE ON GRANDMA

Grandma sets down the pan and stands. She moves off the porch with an arthritic hobble toward the women. As she comes she scoops and picks up a rock lying a few feet from the porch. She brandishes it in her hand.

117 ANOTHER ANGLE

Elaine makes a gagged MMMMFFFF sound. Kathy turns around and sees Grandma draw back her arm and let the rock fly.

Her aim is remarkable: the rock hits Kathy on the side of her head. Kathy tumbles over in the dust.

Grandma turns and calls to the house for help. Her CRY is indistinguishable, more animal than human. She bends over and grabs another rock. Swain appears in the doorway and hurries to the post.

Swain grabs Kathy and shoves her down on her stomach. At the same time Rose kicks at him viciously. Swain turns and grabs Rose by her jersey, tearing it. He drags Rose to the pole. Grabbing the slack rope around her neck, Swain pulls Rose to her feet and loops the rope around the top of the pole.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

Rose gags. Swain has pulled her nearly up off her feet. He secures the rope and leaves her standing on tiptoes. She can barely breathe, making choking sounds. Her neck muscles are taut and her arms dangle crazily behind her as she strains to keep her full weight off the rope around her neck. Swain walks away.

As Swain passes Grandma she lowers the rock and follows him back to the porch. He goes inside without a second look, and Grandma resumes her work in the chair on the porch.

118 EXT. HOLLOW - LATER THAT DAY

Time crawls by for the three women. They lie tied helplessly watching and waiting.

Kathy lies on her stomach in the dirt. She can see Grandma by cocking her head at a crazy angle. The old woman continues to work and watch.

Elaine lies on her stomach also. The chickens are pecking the dirt near her. One of them comes very close to Elaine in search of grain. He is scrawny and diseased, his sharp bill hammering away at the soil inches from Elaine's eyes.

Rose pants and twists helplessly around the pole. Her legs are straining, pushing her up to keep her from strangling. Her breathing is labored and agonized through the filthy rag in her mouth. The hollow drifts and spins crazily around her as she works to keep her balance.

Grandma sits on the porch, watching silently.

119 EXT. HOLLOW - LATE AFTERNOON

The door of the house opens. Swain and Otis emerge. They walk purposefully toward the women.

At the pole Swain pulls his long knife and cuts Rose down. She falls in a heap on the ground gasping for breath. Otis roughly pulls Elaine and Kathy up on their feet and begins herding them toward the house. Swain follows dragging Rose by her arms.

120 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The three women are huddled against a wall near the door. A hand-made table stands in front of them. On the other side, Grandma tends a pot in the fireplace. Otis sits at the table staring at the women sullenly. Swain comes into VIEW walking down a rickety staircase against one wall. He carries a large bowl made from a hollow gourd. He sets the bowl down on the table and stands looking at the women.

Grandma takes the bowl and ladles hot, thick soup into it from the black iron pot hanging in the fireplace. Swain picks up the bowl and walks back up the stairs with it.

The women watch as Grandma starts ladling the gruel into three more gourd bowls. Otis sits quietly, his eyes moving from woman to woman. There is a hint of mongoloidism in his stare.

Swain returns without a bowl. He sits on the bench next to Otis. Grandma places the steaming bowls in front of them, then sits on a stool by the fireplace with her bowl. They eat.

Elaine, sitting between Rose and Kathy, abruptly begins to twist and jerk, pounding her stocking feet on the floor. Her jaws work around the gag as she tries to pull herself up.

Elaine works her way to her feet. Swain gets up and moves to her. With casual deliberation, he kicks her feet out from under her. Elaine drops back into place between the other two. The gag in her mouth is jarred loose. She spits it out.

Elaine screams. The sound startles Swain, Otis and Grandma. They stop eating and stare at her.

ELAINE

Jesus. . . Jesus . . .

(she stares at
Swain)

Who are you? What the hell do
you think you're doing?

Swain stares at her a moment, then continues eating.

ELAINE

(shrieking)

I want some answers! You're going
to be in some big goddamn trouble
here, pretty quick!

No reaction or answer from the table.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

ELAINE (cont'd)
 (hysterical)
 Answer me, damn you!

Swain finishes his soup and pushes his bowl away. He licks off the spoon and tosses it on the table. He looks at Elaine as if aware for the first time that she was in the room.

Grandma gets up and brings him a small package from above the fireplace. It is a pack of Marlboro cigarettes squashed almost flat. Swain carefully takes one out and lays it on the table, then takes a corncob pipe from his pocket. He rips open the cigarette and stuffs it into his pipe. Grandma fetches a piece of burning kindling from the fire and Swain puffs contentedly.

Grandma replaces the pack above the fireplace and sits on her stool again. Swain blows a long stream of smoke from his nose.

SWAIN
 Gonna be reborn... start again...

Grandma makes a noise in her throat and begins to rock back and forth looking at the fire.

SWAIN
 Granddaddy's volunteer... army...
 Quit after Danville... bad times,
 army drove down... was follered.
 Kilt his brother... turned on one
 another... 'uz bad times...

Grandma's grunting and rocking begins to work in a pattern. She looks into the fire remembering the times Swain describes. She is in a reverie.

ELAINE
 What... army?

SWAIN
 'S our army... Tenn'see number
 sev'n... rebels...

Elaine stares at him in disbelief. She looks over at Kathy, who shakes her head from side to side; this can't be true.

ELAINE
 The Civil War... ?

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED (2):

SWAIN

'S war... 's war... Over soon...
Soon...

Elaine just stares, incredulous.

SWAIN

(continuing)

Goin' on back... goin' bury
Granddaddy proper... damn them
army... damn court martials...
Cain't git us here... Nossir!
We's safe... done took to the
woods...

Elaine glances over at the table.

Otis stares at her darkly. Grandma sings to herself with
her eyes closed.

Swain continues to puff away on his pipe.

Elaine speaks with a new note of resignation in her voice.

ELAINE

Your family's lived back here
since the Civil War?

SWAIN

(ignores her
question)

Come the fever...

This sets Grandma off. Her volume goes up and the
frequency of her sways increases.

SWAIN

(continuing)

'S turrible sick... took nine away,
all the women... all the women...
sick 'n died... Esther...
suffered... She suffered awful...
She birthed Luke, then she went too...

At the mention of Luke, Otis stirs.

SWAIN

(continuing)

Now... gonna be reborn...
Start again...

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED (3):

Rose makes a noise through her gag. Elaine glances over, then back at Kathy. All three women realize what Swain is saying.

Swain knocks the ashes out of his pipe onto the floor. He sticks the pipe back into his pocket and stands. Grandma stops her litany and wheels around to watch.

SWAIN
(continuing)
Luke's child... Gotta be Luke's
child... He's the only one...
Start again...

Swain walks over to the three women and squats in front of them. He has no particular malice in his expression.

SWAIN
(continuing)
I can't... Otis can't... Gotta
be Luke... Luke's child...

Swain looks at Kathy. He pulls back her hair away from her ears. She wears small gold pierced earrings. He fingers one of them, studying it. Then suddenly he yanks on it hard.

Kathy lets out a muffled cry. Her head jerks violently. Swain holds the earring in his hand. He regards it a moment, then tosses it to Otis.

Then Swain holds Kathy's hand. Her wedding ring with its bright diamond catches his eye. Swain grabs the ring and twists and pulls to get it off.

Rose inches up the wall to a half-standing position. She has her eye on the door.

Swain sees Elaine's blue sunglasses hanging from her belt. He starts to grab them when Rose makes her move. She hops toward the door like a crazed rabbit.

Swain jumps up to intercept her. She pivots and butts him savagely with her head, right in his face.

Swain staggers back, holding his hands up over his nose.

Otis leaps up and grabs Rose in a bear hug and lifts her off the floor. She is caught in his grasp unable to move.

Swain gestures to the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED (4):

SWAIN
(continuing)
Luke's turn.

Otis throws Rose over his shoulder and carries her right up the stairs. Swain follows, still clutching his nose.

Kathy and Elaine look at each other fearfully.

121 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The small dark hallway is lit only by the light which strays up from the fireplace downstairs. Otis stands in front of a huge oak door holding Rose over his shoulder. A thick, wide board is laid across the door resting in broad metal straps on either side. Swain lifts the heavy bolt out of its holders and stands it on end beside the door.

Then Swain pulls the door open. Otis sets Rose on her feet and Swain pushes her through the open door and follows her into Luke's room.

122 INT. LUKE'S ROOM

Dim light seeps into the dark, musty room revealing pitch blackness. Rose stands just inside the door. Swain walks past her and peers into the blackness. He seems to be looking at something. Then he turns back to Rose.

Swain grabs the front of Rose's jersey and tears it down to her navel. He peels it back, exposing her breasts. He looks at her a moment, then back into the darkness, then turns and leaves the room. He closes the door and bolts it from the outside.

Rose immediately pulls her bound arms forward. She steps through them to get her hands in front of her. She pulls the gag out of her mouth and squints into the darkness around her. The room is quiet, empty.

Rose bends to her boots and gropes with the bonds. After a moment her feet are free. She wheels around to the door and reaches for the handle. There is none -- it has been removed. She runs her hands over the door frame searching for hinges or a crack. It is solid and smooth.

Suddenly there is a scuffling NOISE from behind her. Rose pivots around to face blackness.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

Silence. Then more SCUFFLING.

Rose sees a black shape, the vague outline of a MAN standing motionless where there was nothing before.

ROSE

Who is it?

No answer. No movement.

ROSE

(continuing)

Who's there?

Nothing. Rose steps back to the door, her eyes carefully searching the darkness.

Suddenly the figure draws closer. It stops five feet away. In the faint light we see LUKE'S eyes, curious, childlike, watching Rose. Then an impression of his face, of a little boy in a man's expression, of something innocent and twisted at the same time.

Rose looks to the side trying to find a weapon. On the floor nearby is a broken chair leg. She reaches down and picks it up, holding it in her tied hands, ready.

Luke walks up to her. He is shorter than the others, and broader. Except for a makeshift pair of canvas trousers, he is naked. His chest is covered with dark hair. Rose is pressed back against the door, breathing hard.

Luke stands in front of her, staring at her breasts with a mixture of lust and childish fascination. He slowly reaches forward to touch her.

Rose swings the chair leg and smacks Luke in the side of the head.

Luke cowers, grabbing his head, staring at her in complete surprise. Then Rose brings her knee up swiftly and on target. Thunk! Luke doubles over in agony, holding his groin, exhaling sharply.

Rose wheels to the door. She scratches and claws at it, frantically trying to find a way out. No handle, no hinges, no exit. Rose is losing control. She bangs on the door with her fists.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED (2):

Then she stops. Luke is whimpering behind her, like a little boy. Rose turns around. He is standing upright, tears streaming down his face, the look of a wounded child.

Rose stares at him.

Then suddenly Luke's expression changes. In an instant his face twists into a wild grimace. He bares his teeth and screams in a demented fury.

ROSE
(continuing)

NO!

Luke lunges forward. He is on Rose in one blurry second.

123 CLOSE ON ROSE

Rose's mouth, screaming. Suddenly she is pulled down to the floor.

124 INT. DOWNSTAIRS

Kathy and Elaine sit shoulder to shoulder, their eyes on the ceiling above them, listening to Rose's MUFFLED SCREAMS. Wild SCUFFLING and THUMPING NOISES come from Luke's room. Kathy whimpers and shakes her head frantically. Elaine's nostrils flare out, her jaw muscles fighting against the gag.

Across from them, Otis sits at the table. He plays with the broken pathfinder, oblivious to the hellish RACKET upstairs.

Grandma hobbles in from the kitchen looking alarmed. She looks up at the ceiling. The NOISE increases. WHAM! WHAM! A little dust dislodges and drifts down into the room.

Grandma moves quickly to the front door. She goes outside and a moment later reenters with Swain. He casts his eyes at the ceiling. CRASH, THUD, the violence continues.

Swain and Grandma have alarm on their faces. Swain grunts at Otis and starts up the stairs. Otis puts down his plaything and follows.

Elaine twists and kicks, trying to get to her feet. Grandma sees her and darts to the fireplace.

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

She grabs a fireplace poker and totters around the table with the iron drawn back like a baseball bat. Crack! She smacks Elaine across her shins hard.

Tears stream down Elaine's cheeks. She sinks down crying uncontrollably through the gag in her mouth. She slumps against Kathy. Grandma stands over them, her poker raised.

The violent NOISES upstairs reach a crescendo. Then they stop.

Quiet. Complete silence. Grandma lowers her iron and looks up at the ceiling.

125 INT. LUKE'S ROOM

Darkness.

The SOUNDS of the door being unbolted. A crack of light appears and the door opens slightly. Something on the floor is blocking it. The door is pushed hard, moving the object, and Swain's face appears. He looks down.

Rose lies in front of the door. She is still, her body bent backward at an impossible angle.

Swain bends down to her and lifts her head up by her hair. She is dead.

Swain becomes furious. He stares into the darkness of the room.

SWAIN

Fool! 'S damn fool!

Swain rushes across the room to where Luke is hunched against a wall. Swain kicks Luke, again and again, screaming at him unintelligibly.

Luke cowers, taking the beating like a dog, whimpering and moaning.

Otis enters the room. He stands near the door watching the beating with a blank expression.

CUT TO:

126 INT. DOWNSTAIRS

Otis walks down the stairs with Rose's body, wrapped in an old burlap sack, draped over his shoulder.

Kathy and Elaine watch as Otis steps out the front door.

127 P.O.V. SHOT

Otis carries Rose's body down the porch steps to the smoke house. He pulls open the door and ducks inside.

128 BACK TO SCENE

Swain hurries down the stairs. He moves to Grandma and begins speaking to her heatedly. Some of his words are recognizable and carry over to Kathy and Elaine.

SWAIN

... fit... bad fit... Never done
that fore... 's only one, so we...
again, try again...

Swain turns and moves out the front door to the smoke house.

Grandma returns to her stool by the fire. She stirs the coals around with the poker, sits on her stool and faces the two women with a vigilant eye.

129 ANGLE ON KATHY AND ELAINE

Kathy leans back with her eyes closed. Elaine sits up now, her eyes darting around alertly.

130 ELAINE'S P.O.V.

The staircase, the darkness at the top, the murderous silence.

131 ANGLE ON ELAINE

She glances out the open door.

132 ELAINE'S P.O.V.

The smoke house is dark, sinister, silent.

133 ANGLE ON ELAINE AND KATHY

Kathy opens her eyes. She glances at Elaine.

Elaine looks directly at her. She directs her eyes down.

134 CLOSE SHOT - ELAINE'S ANKLE

Her sock is rolled down a bit over her boot. The end of the "MITE-EE BRITE" flare with the ring on it is showing.

135 ELAINE AND KATHY

Kathy nods in acknowledgement. Elaine flicks her eyes at Grandma.

136 ANGLE ON GRANDMA

Grandma sits expressionless.

137 ANGLE ON FIRE

The fire burns with a blue-orange flicker. The iron poker rests in its coals.

CUT TO:

138 INT. DOWNSTAIRS

Swain strides into the room and walks to the two women. He stops directly in front of them and looks down, making a terrible judgment. Otis comes in and stands by his side.

Swain stabs a bony finger at Elaine. Otis immediately pulls her to her feet. He manhandles her to his shoulder exactly as he did with Rose.

Swain goes back up the stairs followed by Otis and Elaine. Elaine looks back at Kathy, her face a mask of fear.

139 INT. LUKE'S ROOM

The door opens and Elaine is shoved in. Swain follows her. Otis stands in the doorway, blocking it.

Swain herds Elaine into the middle of the room. He grabs her shoulders and turns her around in a circle as though exhibiting her. While he does this, he stares into the darkness of the room with a stern expression.

Then Swain pushes Elaine down on the floor and makes a gesture at her. He beckons to the darkness then points down to her. She lies helpless looking up at Swain, then straining to see what's hidden in the void.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

Swain walks to the door. He stops, reaches down and picks up the chair leg lying there. Swain looks back into the darkness and brandishes the stick. He has a set, cold expression. Turning, he motions to Otis and leaves the room. The door SLAMS shut and is bolted.

Elaine rolls on her side and quickly maneuvers her hands over her legs. She tears out the dirty gag and fumbles with the rope around her feet. She claws the ropes loose and pulls out the flare. She grabs it and positions it between her legs. Holding the barrel with her knees, she pulls back. Snick! The tube telescopes out to its full length.

She clambers to her feet holding the flare in her tied hands. Elaine backs to the door and stops. She stares into the darkness trying to see Luke. A long moment passes.

Wham! A long arm snakes in from Elaine's blind side. Luke grabs her firmly.

Elaine does not move. Luke steps in front of her, staring at her almost fearfully, yet with the child's fascination. His hand moves from her arm up to her shoulder, exploring. Elaine remains still.

Luke sidles up to her. His fingers gently touch her cheek. Elaine stands as though chiseled of stone. Luke moves right up against her and puts both hands on her breasts. He begins to rub and knead them.

Elaine allows this. Her jaw muscles flex and her eyes narrow, but she doesn't move.

Then Luke moves his face near to hers.

Suddenly Elaine pulls her arms up. She jams the flare up at Luke's face.

It lodges in Luke's mouth with a thump.

Luke reels back, releasing his hold on her. He looks at her for a split second with surprise. Then Elaine yanks on the ring.

KATHOOM! Luke's head explodes as the flare ignites. His whole head is engulfed in flames. He stands still, his arms drop to his sides, his head a raging torch. Then he topples over into a flaming heap.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED (2):

Elaine falls back to one side of the door. The bolt is withdrawn and the door bursts open. Swain rushes in, and then Otis.

They beat at the fire but it spreads to the rags and sticks around the room.

Elaine races out the door.

140 INT. DOWNSTAIRS

Elaine runs down the stairs. Kathy looks up at her in total surprise.

Grandma jumps to her feet, moving at Elaine.

Kathy coils up her legs and pushes away from the wall. She connects with Grandma. The old woman goes crashing down.

Elaine moves to Kathy and unties her feet. Grandma stirs. She gets up and crawls back to the fireplace on all fours.

Kathy's gag is gone. Elaine tugs at the ropes on her hands.

Grandma is on her feet, the glowing white-hot poker in her hands. She moves for them.

KATHY

Look out!

Grandma swings on the run. Elaine ducks. The smoking tip of the poker whishes by.

Kathy twists around and kicks out hard. She catches Grandma's foot. The old woman slips and falls forward, on to the poker, driving it up into her. For a moment Grandma is poised, suspended above the floor, the poker protruding from her chest. Then she goes down to the floor with a thump, dead.

Elaine pulls open the door, shoves Kathy out, and follows limping.

141 EXT. THE HOLLOW - NIGHT

Elaine and Kathy run fast. It's difficult for Kathy with her hands still tied behind her. They run through the small garden, by the post where they were tied, by the old wagon.

Kathy falls. Elaine boosts her back up and they run again.

142 EXT. THE WALL - NIGHT

Massive greenery looms in front of them, so thick that an arm couldn't penetrate it. They stop at the wall, panting.

Elaine kicks at the tangled brush. No sign of the opening. She looks back at the house.

143 P.O.V. SHOT - THE HOUSE

Upstairs, smoke pours out from under the boarded windows.

144 BACK TO SCENE

Elaine turns back to the wall.

ELAINE

(screaming)

Where is it?

She beats at the green bulk with her fists.

KATHY

Down there...

Kathy motions with her head. Elaine moves that way. They scurry down the wall to the opening.

Kathy jumps through, then stops and turns back.

KATHY

(continuing)

Look!

145 P.O.V. SHOT - HOUSE

There are just a few wisps of smoke: Otis and Swain have put the fire out.

Out of the front door emerge two figures, Otis and Swain. Otis carries Grandma's body in his arms.

146 BACK TO SCENE

ELAINE

Oh, Jesus!

Elaine jumps through the opening and the two women run into the night forest.

DISSOLVE TO:

147 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Elaine and Kathy crouch down in a fern thicket. The moon slides in and out of cloud banks. It is very dark.

Both women are winded, panting heavily. Elaine pries at the ropes on Kathy's hands. They come loose at last. Kathy flexes her arms weakly. Elaine thrusts her bound wrists forward. Kathy picks at the knot and unties it. Elaine rubs her wrists.

ELAINE

Ohhh man...

KATHY

We gotta go up! The helicopter will be there tomorrow morning!

Elaine nods, then looks away a moment. When she turns back, tears are pouring down her face.

ELAINE

Uphill, right? That's what Rose would do.

(she sobs)

Keep going uphill...

KATHY

(softly)

Yeah. That's right.

They get to their feet and look around cautiously. Nothing in sight. Just empty trees and greenery. They move off up the slight incline.

CUT TO:

148 EXT. WOODS, UPHILL - NIGHT

The terrain is rockier now. Kathy and Elaine pick their way gingerly. Elaine favors her left foot. She limps badly.

149 ANGLE ON SKY

Clouds drift leisurely over the moon.

150 CLOSE SHOT - KATHY

Kathy looks over her shoulder.

151 KATHY'S P.O.V.

The dark woods below them show no movement.

152 ANGLE ON ROCK

Elaine sits on a large rock, rubbing her left foot. She removes a spent bandaid and tosses it away. Next to her, Kathy looks up.

153 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Mount Tobias goes up and up, dark and forbidding.

154 SERIES OF SHOTS

The rocks get larger. Both women use branches for walking sticks. They move uphill, relentlessly, on and on. We see several SHOTS of the women climbing up the mountain through the darkness.

DISSOLVE TO:

155 EXT. PLATEAU NEAR SUMMIT - DAWN

The sun breaks over the rim of the mountain. From the valley floor it would be a majestic sight, but at the top of the mountain it is something else again.

Desolate. Cold. Windy. Barren. The peak is craggy with flat plateau areas. There are many large rocks and no trees.

156 ANGLE ON BOULDER

Kathy and Elaine are huddled together behind a boulder on one of the small plains. They look lost, exhausted, vulnerable. They sleep in each other's arms.

CUT TO:

157 EXT. PLATEAU NEAR SUMMIT - AN HOUR LATER

Elaine wakes suddenly. She looks around cautiously, then checks her watch. Kathy is awake, rubbing her arms against the cold.

ELAINE
Congratulations.

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED:

KATHY

Huh?

ELAINE

(points to her
watch)

You're a world record holder.

Kathy just looks at her for a moment, then manages a slight smile.

ELAINE

(continuing;
shivering)

It's so cold...

Kathy blows on her hands, and rubs them together. She looks around the summit, scanning the sky for some sign of the helicopter. Tears well up in Elaine's eyes. She looks at Kathy.

ELAINE

(continuing)

How the... hell can this happen?
This just can't...

Suddenly Elaine stops. A realization hits her. She looks at Kathy fearfully.

ELAINE

(continuing)

Would they come all the way up
here, just to get us?

KATHY

They've been down into the park before, over the years, stealing glasses and dog tags and stuff, but they've never even gotten close to any people. Now we destroyed their world. They'll come after us.

Elaine begins to cry.

KATHY

(continuing)

We gotta hold on.

ELAINE

Yeah... yeah... Didn't turn out
like we planned, did it?

Kathy shakes her head and keeps looking up into the cold morning sky.

CUT TO:

158 EXT. PLATEAU NEAR SUMMIT - AN HOUR LATER

A WIDE PANNING SHOT of the empty rocks and boulders, ending on Elaine standing on top of the rock where they were sleeping before. She has her hands on her hips as she scans the sky.

ELAINE

Where are they?

Kathy stands below. She looks around nervously, then grabs Elaine by the pants leg.

KATHY

Come on down.

ELAINE

Goddamn you, Alex, and goddamn you, Gregg!!

Elaine stomps her foot down, hard. Immediately she doubles over in pain. Kathy helps her down off the rock. They both sit leaning against the boulder. Kathy removes Elaine's boots and looks at her feet. They are cut and swollen and beginning to take on a bluish color.

ELAINE

(continuing)

Pretty, huh?

KATHY

Why didn't you say something?

ELAINE

What good would it have done?

Elaine looks at her watch. The muscles in her jaws tighten.

ELAINE

(continuing)

Goddamn it, it's forty minutes late... I'm gonna kill Alex, the bastard.!

Elaine tries to get up. Kathy restrains her.

ELAINE

(continuing;
screaming)

Assholes! Assholes!

She beats her fists against the rock. Then her anger subsides into sobbing. She slumps over on her side. Kathy puts her arm around her, then raises to her feet and peers over the rock.

159 KATHY'S P.O.V.

There, about one hundred feet away, are Swain and Otis. They are bent down, looking at the ground, moving slowly up the plateau.

160 ANGLE ON ELAINE AND KATHY

Kathy ducks down quickly.

KATHY
(whispers fearfully)
They've found us!

ELAINE
The helicopter...?

KATHY
No!

Elaine stares at her. She realizes. She begins to shake.

KATHY
(continuing)
We've got to run!

ELAINE
I... can't even walk.

Kathy eases up and looks over the boulder.

161 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Swaine and Otis are sixty feet away and advancing slowly. Swaine carries a vicious looking sickle-scythe.

162 ELAINE AND KATHY

Kathy pulls Elaine up. They move up from the rocks to the top of a slope. A tree has broken off and the huge trunk lies down the slope. Kathy points down into the inside of the trunk.

KATHY
Get in there!

Elaine looks at her.

ELAINE
No!

(CONTINUED)

162 CONTINUED:

KATHY

You have to. I'll draw them
away from you and when I get down
I'll send somebody up for you.

ELAINE

You mean all the way down, don't
you?

KATHY

(looks at Elaine
firmly)

Move it.

Elaine crawls down and up into the trunk and slides way
up where she cannot be seen. She is completely hidden.

KATHY

(continuing)

There's no way they'll find you.
And I'm going to make it down,
Elaine. I promise.

Inside the trunk, Elaine puts on her blue aviator sunglasses.

ELAINE

I'll remember you said that.

Kathy gets up and darts away.

163 HIGH ANGLE

Kathy moves around the rock formation on one side as Swain
and Otis approach up on the other. Kathy breaks downhill
in the direction the two men came from as Swain and Otis
stand on the spot where the girls were moments before.

Otis goes down on his haunches close to the ground, looking
for traces as Kathy's figure becomes smaller and smaller in
the b.g.

Otis jumps up suddenly and points. Swain turns around to
see Kathy just as she vanishes down out of the field of
vision.

Swain and Otis look at each other. Swain gestures toward
Kathy and they stride off after her.

CUT TO:

164 EXT. WOODS - DAY

Kathy flies downhill on the outer limits of control. She sprints through the rocky terrain. The sun is high now, the day bright and hot.

165 ANGLE ON PRECIPICE

Kathy moves along through the thick woods. She rounds a bend in the rocks, races past some trees and runs right up to the edge of a precipice.

She tries to stop short but her momentum carries her right up to the cuff of the overhanging rock face. She scrambles wildly and jumps back away from the brink, falling on the ground.

Out from the precipice we see the expanse of the state park. It looks like a million miles down from the very edge.

Slowly, Kathy gets to her feet and backs away from the precipice. She begins to pick up speed again, retracing her steps back through the woods.

CUT TO:

166 EXT. PINE TREES - DAY

Kathy runs among smallish pine trees, pushing branches aside. She turns and looks uphill.

167 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Nothing but rocks and trees. Then, there's a small movement among them, undefined, yet there.

168 ANGLE ON KATHY

She bolts away through the pine trees.

CUT TO:

169 EXT. TREE TRUNK - DAY

Elaine is still tucked up under the trunk, out of sight. She rests quietly, listening to the SOUNDS around her.

Suddenly there is a LOUD SHRIEK and a shadow flutters across the opening of the trunk. She jumps, then remains very still.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED:

A hawk circles around above the plateau, then glides away into the sky.

Elaine slowly moves and peeks over the edge of the trunk.

170 ELAINE'S P.O.V.

In the trees, just beyond the plateau something moves. It could be anything: an animal, a shadow, a bush.

171 ANGLE ON ELAINE

She ducks back down in the trunk fearfully and waits.

CUT TO:

172 EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Kathy sprints along. Sweating, panting, she stops and rests on a fallen log. She tears off the bottom of her soaked jersey and ties it around her ankle, covering a red scraped spot. She gets up to move on, then stops.

The place looks familiar. TINKLE, JINGLE, CLINK. Kathy moves toward the noise.

173 EXT. THE CLEARING

Kathy steps into the clearing. It looks unchanged, the stumps, the tree, the pit. She walks to the spot where their camp was only two nights ago. The ashes remain from their campfire. Nearby is Elaine's backpack. The frame is bent in half.

Kathy bends down and rummages through it. She pulls out Elaine's camera. Film unspools from its open back. The lens is shattered.

She looks around. Rose's sleeping bag is near the pit. She walks to it and stands on the edge, looking down.

174 KATHY'S P.O.V. - THE PIT

On top of the rubble lies Rose's backpack, mutilated. Right beside it is the bowgun.

175 ANGLE ON KATHY

Kathy climbs down the side into the pit and carefully picks her way through the cans, bottles and trash. She pulls away the rotting fabric of some unfortunate camper's tent to reveal the bowgun. She bends and grabs it, holding it to her thankfully.

SNAP, CLICK, CRUNCH. Noises from outside above her. Quickly, Kathy reaches out to the moldy tent and slides it to her. She lies back in the debris, tugs the tent across her body and settles in to absolute silence.

176 ANGLE ON CLEARING

Otis lopes into the open area from the woods. He stops abruptly and looks around, then moves to the edge of the pit and looks in.

177 ANGLE ON KATHY IN PIT

Kathy lies hidden beneath her cover.

178 ANGLE ON OTIS

He grabs a long stick from the ground and begins to poke it down among the debris in the pit.

179 ANGLE ON KATHY IN PIT

The stick SMACKS the canvas above Kathy. THUMP, THUMP. Some debris is dislodged and CLATTERS around her.

Then silence. The only SOUND is the jingle of the tree above. Wisps of smoke drift lazily overhead. She waits. Nothing. Silence.

Suddenly an arm SMACKS down on Kathy's chest. She stifles a scream and looks up.

Dan Miller's partially decomposed body dangles in the tangled junk above her. Miller's body begins to slide slowly down. The cans and bottles RATTLE and roll with his weight.

Kathy squirms away, trying to keep quiet, but Miller gains momentum. He lands on top of her! His dead, gray face PLOPS down to meet hers.

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED:

Kathy panics. She claws her way madly up the side of the pit. She leaps up out of the pit, terrified. She crouches with the bowgun and whirls around, expecting to see Otis.

180 KATHY'S P.O.V.

The clearing is empty.

181 ANGLE ON KATHY

She races for the woods.

CUT TO:

182 EXT. TREE TRUNK - DAY

Elaine lies motionless in the trunk. We see over the edge of the tree and in the distance behind her Swain appears. He stops near a boulder looking down at the ground, then crouches down and sniffs for her scent.

183 CLOSE SHOT - ELAINE

She is completely terrified. Her eyes wide with fear under the blue sunglasses. She doesn't dare move or look over the edge.

Suddenly we hear the distant SOUND of a helicopter, getting closer and closer.

Elaine peeks out of the trunk and looks up into the sky. The helicopter SOUND gets louder!

Elaine slowly peers back up over the edge of the trunk.

184 ELAINE'S P.O.V.

The plateau is deserted. Swain is gone.

185 ANGLE ON ELAINE

Slowly Elaine pulls herself up and crawls up out of the trunk. She shakily climbs back up on the plateau.

As she is about to stand up, Swain suddenly rises from behind a boulder, right in front of her! He holds the sickle-scythe and grins insanely.

CUT TO:

186 EXT. THICK WOODS - DAY

Kathy sprints at top speed, her finger on the trigger of the bowgun. Thick matted ground cover, mossy trees, the dense part of the forest surrounds her, yet doesn't slow her pace. She burns through the woods, an animal on the run.

187 EXT. DEEP FOREST, CHASM - DAY

Kathy runs through the forest right up to the edge of the broad, black chasm. The log bridge lies on the ground near her. She tries to move it, but the log weighs too much.

Carefully standing at chasm's edge, Kathy measures the distance to the other side. She glances around the forest and makes up her mind.

She holds the bowgun in one hand and aims it for an underhand throw to the other side. She winds up several times and hurls the bowgun across the chasm. It lands several feet from the edge.

Kathy moves back away from the edge of the chasm.

There is a rustling SOUND in the trees behind her.

Kathy charges forward, sprinting hard toward the chasm. At the edge she throws herself out across the dark yawning space and sails through the air.

CLUNK! She lands on the opposite bank, half in and half out of the crevice. She topples backward, digging in with her hands. For a long moment she dangles over the edge, her feet scrambling for a hold. Slowly, she pulls herself up over the lip and flops up on the ground.

She lies breathless... until Otis emerges from the undergrowth on the other side.

Otis immediately moves to the log-bridge and hefts it up. Part of the weight balanced by the gnarled clump of roots, Otis moves the log toward the edge of the chasm.

Kathy leaps up and grabs the bowgun. Without a backward look, she darts into the woods.

188 TRACKING SHOT - KATHY

CAMERA TRACKS ALONG with Kathy as she hurtles through the forest. Tree limbs and bushes and branches rake at her savagely, but she keeps moving, sprinting hard, the muscles in her legs pulling and flexing.

No longer soft and vulnerable, she moves like a marathon runner through the wilderness.

189 ANGLE ON THE SKY

The sun moves across the sky as the day wears on.

190 CLOSE ON KATHY'S FACE

We see something incredible in her expression: the will to survive, pushing her beyond endurance, on and on, her breath exploding from her mouth.

CUT TO:

191 EXT. BOUNDARY, NATIONAL PARK - DUSK

The narrow rutted road where Price's jeep stood two days earlier is empty and quiet in the evening light. Kathy plummets through the tangled underbrush like a fullback on fourth down.

She moves down beside the marker post. She can hardly move, but she does, somehow pushing herself up, onto her knees, then grabbing the marker post for support. She gets up, moves forward, staggering, limping, stumbling into the dusk.

192 EXT. MOUNTAIN STREAM - NIGHT

A full moon hangs over the tall pine trees. The stream tumbles and churns, a cascade of silver against the black sky.

Kathy walks toward the stream on wobbly legs. She falls to her knees before reaching the water. With her head down, she crawls, her whole body heaving with each breath, lungs strained to the bursting point. The bowgun falls from her grasp as she moves to her goal -- water. She looks at the stream a moment, then she faints, falling into the water.

A long moment passes as the water swirls her hair and flows around her face. Finally she revives, lifting her head up, then drinking, then pulling herself out of the stream. She lies down flat on her stomach on the bank and drinks and drinks.

Kathy sits up, picks up the bowgun and crawls on hands and knees to the closest rock. In its shadow she leans back, her head tilted up.

193 KATHY'S P.O.V.

There, under the black crystalline sky, looms Mount Tobias, ageless, indifferent. The stars twinkle all around it.

194 ANGLE ON KATHY

The deep rushing SOUND of the stream is a narcotic. Kathy's eyes close and she sleeps, the bowgun in her lap.

CUT TO:

195 ANGLE ON KATHY - LATER

The moon has shifted in the sky. Kathy leans against the rock, sleeping, bathed in a silver-blue glow. She is peaceful, still, drugged by fatigue.

A long shadow falls across her. Slowly, Kathy opens her eyes.

196 ANOTHER ANGLE

Otis stands there, blocking out the moon, staring at her with his idiot smile from five feet away.

Kathy sits up. No gasps, no screams. Kathy raises the bowgun and fires -- WHUMP, WHUMP!

The two darts ZING by Otis' head, a narrow miss. Kathy fires again -- WHUMP!

The dart SMACKS into the fleshy part of Otis' shoulder, penetrating it completely. The wicked flanges stick out of his back. Otis shows no reaction, just the idiot smile.

Kathy fires another. A dart materializes near the first one, SNAPPING Otis' collarbone.

Now Otis moves for her, his arms extended, GROWLING.

Kathy CLICKS the empty bowgun at him, then throws the gun at his face and rolls to her side at the same time. She is on her feet and moving fast. Otis turns and lumbers after her, unable to move as swiftly.

197 TRACKING SHOT - KATHY

She runs for her life. Moonlit trees and rocks tear by her. She's almost flying.

198 MOVING SHOT - OTIS

Underbrush in back of Kathy THRASHES and CRUNCHES under great weight. Brief flashes of Otis can be seen -- moving clumsily, smashing through bushes and flattening small trees. He catches his shirt on a tree limb and flops down on the ground, giving Kathy a substantial lead.

CUT TO:

199 CLOSE SHOT - TELEPHONE

RIIIINNGG! 6 a.m. Wyatt's hand reaches into FRAME, gropes for the receiver and answers the phone.

WYATT

Hello.

200 EXT. PICNIC AREA - DAWN

Kathy darts through a deserted picnic area. In the dawn light we see that all the picnic tables have been gathered into one spot as she runs by them. Benches are stacked up. She hurdles them like an Olympic sprinter. A few moments later Otis comes loping after her through the picnic area.

201 INT. RANGER'S CABIN

Wyatt sits at a table talking on the telephone.

WYATT

Can't we get Park Service rescue from Rolling Creek? Hell, yes it's an emergency! They just called. The helicopter showed up and no women!

202 EXT. NATIONAL PARK

Kathy runs between two outdoor toilet facilities. Their doors flap in the breeze.

203 INT. RANGER'S CABIN

WYATT

(into telephone)

Alright, the state police should be notified. They have three helicopters. We'll need them all! Right. Goodbye.

204 EXT. WOODS

Daylight streams through the trees as Kathy runs and runs. Tree limbs swipe at her face. She knocks them aside.

205 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Through the oncoming bushes Kathy glimpses the ranger's cabin ahead of her.

206 TRACKING SHOT - KATHY

She pumps her arms and legs, straining, going all out. Face contorted, hair flying, she is going like hell.

207 INT. RANGER'S CABIN

Wyatt puts on his hat and walks out of the cabin.

208 EXT. RANGER'S CABIN

Wyatt walks to his pickup and gets in.

209 INT. PICKUP TRUCK

Wyatt puts the key in the ignition and starts the engine.

210 ANGLE ON KATHY

running. She gives it everything.

211 KATHY'S P.O.V.

The cabin is growing larger.

212 INT. PICKUP TRUCK

Wyatt gears into reverse and backs up.

213 ANGLE ON KATHY AND OTIS

Just as Kathy reaches the cabin clearing Otis' arms lunge at her. She twists away, but he has a piece of her jersey. She rips loose, spinning wildly, running for the cabin. She looks back.

214 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Otis is on her heels, running like a madman. He leans forward, straining to reach her.

215 ANGLE ON PICKUP TRUCK

The truck pulls away from the cabin, rolling at about ten miles an hour, gathering speed. Kathy runs, trying to catch it. She is gaining, but so is Otis. HE IS RIGHT ON TOP OF HER.

216 INT. PICKUP TRUCK

Wyatt drives on, unaware of what is going on behind him.

217 ANGLE ON PICKUP TRUCK

Kathy runs right at the tailgate, unable to run any faster. Otis reaches for her. His hands are right in back of her head... closer, closer...

Kathy dives. She grabs the truck's tailgate and pulls herself over it. Flopping onto the truck bed, she twists around and looks back.

218 KATHY'S P.O.V.

Otis' huge hands come up over the tailgate!

219 ANGLE ON TRUCK REAR WINDOW

Wyatt jerks around and sees Kathy.

220 ANGLE ON KATHY

She looks at Wyatt.

KATHY
(screams)
DON'T STOP!

221 FULL SHOT

The truck slides and skids to a stop on the gravel road. A great cloud of dust goes up, obscuring the truck bed.

222 ANGLE ON TRUCK BED

Kathy lies in the rolling dust, gasping for breath, unable to move, completely spent. The dust begins to clear. There is movement at the back of the truck.

Kathy's face twists in fear... and Wyatt appears.

He looks down at her dumbstruck. She is a total wreck, dirty, ripped, bleeding, exhausted.

WYATT
God...

(CONTINUED)

222 CONTINUED:

Kathy makes a feeble effort to sit up. Wyatt climbs into the truck bed and kneels beside her. He puts his arm around her shoulders in support. Kathy peers over the truck's low sideboard.

223 KATHY'S P.O.V.

The gravel road is deserted. So are the woods. No trace of Otis.

224 ANGLE ON KATHY AND WYATT

She sinks weakly into Wyatt's arms and closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

225 INT. O'CONNORS - DAY

Kathy sits alone at a table in the dining area. She is wrapped in blankets and drinks a steaming cup of coffee. She just sits staring.

Cady and Price are at the counter watching her. O'Connors serves breakfast to a tourist family. Father is middle-aged and plump and mother wears pink pedal-pushers and a white sweater to match her white glasses frames. Older daughter, about eleven, sits next to mother, and younger daughter, eight and Tom-boyish in her Dodgers' baseball cap, orbits around the cafe handling everything she sees. Every once in awhile father or mother will shoot a glance at Kathy.

Wyatt is on the telephone.

WYATT

(into telephone)

- Yes, yes... Three women, one lost... one dead, third one's here with me... No, not impossible. Remember those Japanese soldiers they found on Leyte?

Cady and Price amble from the counter over to Kathy.

CADY

Lord a mighty...

Kathy looks up at them.

(CONTINUED)

225 CONTINUED:

PRICE

You did get into some fix, lady.

Kathy just stares at them numbly.

CADY

All those years, people living back in there like that... I thought old Raymond's daddy was crazy, but I guess he seen them all right.

Price just shakes his head in bewilderment.

PRICE

Some fix, lady.

O'Connors walks over from the counter and shoos Cady and Price away from Kathy.

O'CONNORS

You boys let her be to herself.

O'Connors looks at Kathy and smiles.

O'CONNORS

(continuing)

You need anything?

KATHY

(softly)

No thank you.

O'CONNORS

Well... you just let me know if you do. Anything in the place is yours.

KATHY

(barely audible)

Thank you.

O'Connors walks away as Wyatt returns from the telephone.

WYATT

I got the Highway Patrol and the Park Service. They're putting their rescue team in the helicopter right away. They should be over Tobias in about thirty minutes. They'll find her.

Kathy looks up at him with bloodshot eyes.

(CONTINUED)

225 CONTINUED (2):

WYATT

(continuing)

I'm going to call down for an ambulance for you.

KATHY

I'm waiting right here for Elaine.

WYATT

That's not going to help find her.

KATHY

I didn't say it would. I just said I'm going to wait.

Kathy thinks about it. Finally she acquiesces. Wyatt heads back to the telephone.

226 EXT. O'CONNORS - DAY - FULL SHOT

From a LOW ANGLE across the road we see the dumpy little store framed by pine branches.

Suddenly the branches are pushed away. Feet move in and stop. We clearly see a pair of scuffed cavalry boots with rusty spurs.

Then a pair of shoes made of patched animal skins moves in and stops. Otis and Swain.

227 INT. O'CONNORS

Younger daughter scoots over to the pinball machine. She drops in her quarter and the machine comes to life. Wyatt stands at the phone near her. The PINGING and RINGING of the machine make it hard for him to hear. He places one hand up over his ear and turns his back on the little girl.

WYATT

(into telephone)

We're at O'Connors north of town. Well, how soon do you think it'll be?

228 ANGLE ON KATHY

She sips her coffee, head bowed. The incredible strain and tension show in her face.

229 ANGLE ON COUNTER

Cady and Price speculate, with O'Connors listening in. Father and mother also converse about Kathy.

230 ANGLE AT PINBALL MACHINE

Younger Daughter bangs away at the pinball machine. Lights flash, flippers flip. The machine stops abruptly. Younger Daughter pounds the coin return, then stoops over to the side of the machine by the window to see if the money is there. She paws at the slot, then looks up very slowly at the window.

231 YOUNGER DAUGHTER'S P.O.V.

Standing on the other side of the window inches away is Swain!

There is blood on his coat and on the blade of his scythe. He wears Elaine's blue sunglasses. One of the lenses is gone. Swain smiles hideously.

232 INT. O'CONNORS

Younger Daughter shrieks and backs away from the window.

Every head turns. Wyatt wheels around with the phone in his hand. Younger Daughter bumps into him. O'Connors drops his coffee cup. Kathy looks up.

The front door explodes. Glass fills the air. Otis stands in the doorway. The two darts still stick in his shoulder, dried blood all over his canvas shirt.

Otis sees Kathy. He bellows and goes for her.

Pandemonium! Cady and Price get in Otis' way. He smacks them with a sweep of each arm. They fly in opposite directions, thudding to the floor.

Wyatt drops the phone and starts to move.

The tourist family sits immobile like statues.

In through the front door comes Swain, his scythe raised.

Kathy stumbles back out of the chair. Otis swings at the table in front of her and sends it smashing into the wall. Kathy backs away from him as he advances. She looks around wildly and sees the door leading to the garage. She runs for it, Otis right behind her.

233 INT. GARAGE

Kathy races through the door and slams it shut behind her. She tries to lock it. CRACK! CRUNCH! Otis' arm drives right through the wood, narrowly missing her.

Kathy backs away and turns trying to find a way to escape.

The garage is big enough for two cars, one by the work bench, one on the hydraulic lift. Beneath the lift is a grease pit about four feet deep. The big double door leading to the service drive is down. Four-tiered tire racks stand by the work bench. Their ends are butted together.

Kathy runs to the double door. Behind her Otis pulverizes the cafe door with a splintering CRASH.

She tries to raise the double door. It's locked.

The cafe door slaps to the floor, torn from its hinges. And there's Otis. He stands still for a moment, looking at Kathy. From the cafe behind him comes the SOUND of glass breaking and frantic voices. Swain is at work.

Otis moves for Kathy. She runs for a two-foot gap between the tire racks and the wall, and wedges herself behind them.

234 BEHIND THE TIRE RACKS

Kathy wriggles and squirms along the wall. Between the tires she can see Otis' boots moving parallel to her on the other side.

Kathy stops. The tire directly in front of her is pulled away. Otis snarls and grabs at her. Kathy ducks down and wriggles away. More tires are pulled off the rack.

Twisting and moving wildly Kathy nears the work bench and sees a wrench on it. She grabs the wrench and pulls it back to her just as Otis' arm shoots after hers. He clutches at her wrist. She raises the wrench and whacks him on his forearm.

Otis retracts his arm and roars. The entire tire rack shakes, tires spilling out onto the floor. Otis plows into the rack. It rocks back and forth, the top banging against the wall.

The tires in front of Kathy's face fly away. Otis' face is ten inches from her. She swings the wrench hard. Whap! she hits him between the eyes. She swings again, connecting with his forehead. Smack!

(CONTINUED)

234 CONTINUED:

Otis dives through the rack. His arms close around Kathy's waist. Kathy raises the wrench overhead and slams it down on the back of his neck.

Otis goes limp. His knees buckle and he falls backwards. The tire rack goes over with him. Tires roll crazily around the floor.

Kathy stands with her back against the wall. She stares at Otis. He is out cold. She rubs her hand across her eyes and the wrench slips from her grasp and CLANGS on the floor.

It's over. Kathy moves to Otis. She stops and looks down at his unmoving hulk under the tire rack.

Kathy steps back and starts around the rack.

The rack begins to move. Otis moves his hands and then in one smooth motion he knocks away the entire rack.

He gets to his feet as though nothing had happened.

Kathy screams and takes three quick steps toward the cafe door, but Otis is on her. He wraps his enormous arms around her from behind and lifts her off the floor.

Kathy's head and arms are free above the crunching brawny arms around her rib cage. The two darts protrude from Otis' shoulder right next to her face. She grunts and gags as he starts squeezing the life out of her, claws and scratches at his face trying to get to his eyes. Otis turns his head away and squeezes harder.

One of Kathy's flailing hands closes on the dart in Otis' shoulder. She pulls hard. The dart comes free.

Kathy grabs the dart with both hands and drives it down hard below Otis' arms, into his side.

Breath whistles from Otis' lips and he topples backwards taking Kathy with him. They tumble down into the grease pit.

235 INT. GREASE PIT

Otis lies face down, the dart protruding from his side. Kathy is pinned under him. She twists and shoves and works her way free. She crawls away from him.

(CONTINUED)

235 CONTINUED:

Kathy sits in the semi-darkness sobbing. She cradles her left arm in her right -- it is numb, broken. She looks over at the huge man one yard away. He lies spread-eagled, his arms stretched in front of him. Huge, dark, dead.

She tries to pull herself up, grabbing a conduit pipe on the wall. She works herself into a standing position. She pauses, leaning on the control box for the hydraulic lift.

SNAP! Otis' fingers close around her ankle.

Kathy screams -- he won't die! Otis is exactly as he was before, lying on his stomach, but one outstretched arm pulls Kathy back toward him, slowly, relentlessly.

Kathy claws, reaching for anything to get away. Otis pulls. She is tugged back more. Her fingers wave frantically. They hit the conduit on the wall.

She gropes up, trying to grab the lever on the control box. Her fingers find it. She holds on to it. Otis pulls again. Kathy stretches out, her body a straight line between the control lever and Otis' death-grip. She hangs in space, defying gravity... until Otis yanks hard.

Kathy falls back into the pit, pulling the control lever.

The hydraulic lift HISSES down suddenly. One huge support beam settles across Otis' broad back. 850 pounds of iron drops with a CRUNCH!

Otis grunts, flails wildly, reaching for Kathy one last time, then shudders and lies still.

Otis is dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

236 INT. O'CONNORS - DAY

It is an hour later. State police officers are everywhere. Some stand around looking, others drink coffee.

Kathy and Wyatt stand silently by the counter. Wyatt's shirt is torn and cut through at the shoulder. It is dark and caked with blood. A medic applies ointment to the cut.

(CONTINUED)

236 CONTINUED:

In the corner of the room sits Swain, completely manacled and handcuffed. Two officers stand on either side of him. His eyes dart around the room, taking in all the police. He looks like a wild, frightened animal.

Kathy and Wyatt move from the counter. As they pass Swain, Kathy glances at him, then quickly moves out the door.

237 EXT. O'CONNORS - DAY

Outside the morning is bright and warm. Kathy and Wyatt step through the smashed-in front door.

They walk through the service drive past several state police cars to the road where they stand for several moments. Kathy looks at Wyatt, then her eyes move up to the mountain, rising huge and powerful above them. A slight, private smile crosses her face.

CAMERA PULLS BACK on Kathy and Wyatt standing outside the cafe.

ROLL END CREDITS.

FADE OUT.

THE END