

THE RIVER WILD

Written
by
Denis O'Neill

Revised by
Raynold Gideon & Bruce A. Evans

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1 OVER BLACK:

1

First the sounds of breathing. Rhythmic. Hard. TITLES RUN. Then the sound of oars hitting water with a regular cadence.

FADE IN:

On a rippling gray piece of water reflecting the first rays of dawn. Suddenly, the prow of a one-person shell thrusts into our view and we are:

2 EXT. CHARLES RIVER - CAMBRIDGE/BOSTON - DAY

2

On the seat of the shell, a sweat-drenched, very attractive woman, GAIL HARTMAN, late 30's, strains against the oars. Their blades dip and grab, dip and grab. The seat ratchets back and forth on its frame. The shell powers under a bridge. BOSTON U is spray-painted on its stone arches. Gail increases her stroke. She's going flat out. She's pushed herself to the edge. It's as if she's trying to win a race, but she's the only one on the river. Her breathing gets ragged --- pushed herself too far. The right blade slips, the rhythm is gone. The race is lost. Gail leans back, gasping for air. The gasps turn to sobs and, letting go of the oars, she puts her hands over her face and cries. TITLES END.

3 INT. HELICOPTER (AND EXT. BOSTON) - DAY

3

We're looking through the front bubble at the city of Boston rushing below us.

MAN (O.S.)

(Greek accent)

I want a building that makes a statement, that stands out... I want it to express me, the me that I feel I am when I am happiest with myself, you know.

We bank around to look at a potential construction site.

MAN (O.S. CONT'D)

There's the site. Now look at your drawings. Every one is dull... lackluster. They're gonna get lost in that site.

In the front seat next to the PILOT, TOM HARTMAN, a young 41, suit, glasses, bow tie, flips through the site renderings on his lap. The first signs of airsickness are already there.

(CONTINUED)

TOM
We're a firm that observes more
classical styles, Mr. Niarchos. If
you want something eccentric, then...

MR. NIARCHOS, the wealthy client, leans forward from the
back seat.

MR. NIARCHOS
Please, you, go out on a limb!
(to Pilot)
Take us around again.

The helicopter lurches into a sharp turn. Tom looks like
he's hanging in space. And he feels like it.

MR. NIARCHOS (CONT'D)
Take chances, Tom, you're too
conservative.
(notices he's green)
Are you alright?

TOM
I'm fine.

In the back seat next to Mr. Niarchos, is Tom's PARTNER:

PARTNER
He just can't read and fly at the
same time.

MR. NIARCHOS
I have seen your earlier buildings...
they are so certain... like
mountains. That's what I want. Not
this...

He dismissingly taps Tom's drawings.

TOM
(laughs)
Why do I get the feeling you don't
like my drawings.

PARTNER
(to Tom)
Race you back to the drawing board.

4 INT. MASTER BEDROOM AND LIVING ROOM - GAIL AND TOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT 4

Gail is folding clothes into a suitcase on the bed. Loud
music is coming from somewhere down the hall.

KID (O.S.)
Mom...

(CONTINUED)

Gail turns. Maggie, the family dog, is barking as ROARKE, a 10-year-old boy, chases a screaming little girl from room to room in her underwear as he roars like a monster.

GAIL

Roarke, stop fooling around and for the 157th time, will you please turn down that music. It's singeing my hair. And bring me your old sneakers... Oh,--- and also see if you can find Dad's. I think they're in the spare room.

Roarke, her son, steps into the doorway.

ROARKE

Dad? C'mon Mom, why bother?
(deep voice)

"We don't have to sleep on the ground or shit in the woods anymore ---that's one of evolution's happier success stories."

GAIL

(laughs)
He didn't actually say those words.

ROARKE

Could I make up something that weird?

GAIL

Absolutely.

ROARKE

He's just going to cancel, Mom, he always cancels.

GAIL

C'mon. Something just came up those other times.

The little girl runs in. She is WILLA, 5-years-old, Gail's daughter and Roarke's sister.

WILLA

Momma, I have a stomach ache in my mouth.

ROARKE

Oh God, here we go---another illness so we don't go off and leave her.

GAIL

Stop teasing her, Ro.

WILLA

No leaving me, Mama.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
It's just for a few days, peachie.

ROARKE
With those notorious psychos--- your
grandparents!!

Willa wails. Gail sweeps Willa into her arms.

GAIL
Stop it now. I'm not kidding... Now
let's see my angel's mush. Come
here. Open.

WILLA
Ah.

GAIL
(deadpan)
Oh well. Hmmm. This is very
serious.

Roarke and his mother exchange a look.

WILLA
What is it?

GAIL
I think what you mean is... what's
going to happen?

Before Willa can react, Gail and Roarke turn Willa upside
down, exposing her pink belly.

ROARKE/GAIL
Baby goes upside down! Baby goes
upside down!

Tom walks in seeing all of them playing. They see him and
freeze. The energy changes completely and becomes down.

GAIL
(to Tom)
Hi honey, uh, I think I've got you
all packed, it's just that I can't
seem to find your old ---

TOM
(interrupts)
Gail, something's come up work wise
and I just was wondering is there any
way we can postpone this for about a
month?

Gail turns and looks at him. Says nothing. Can't look at
him.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

You can't imagine how hard it is for me to ask this, but if we could just please ---

GAIL

(interrupts)

Roarke, take your sister in the other room.

(after they're gone)

Something always comes up. Doesn't it, Tom.

TOM

Everything but your estimation of me. That stays pretty low. Maggie, get down.

Maggie, on the bed, ignores him.

GAIL

Maggie...

The dog hops off.

TOM

Look, I'm not cancelling, I'm just asking can we put it off for a while.

GAIL

(interrupts, sighs)

We can't just go anytime we want, you know that. I had to pull strings to get the reservations on the river. What are we to you, Tom? Just some gaggle of obligation pulling on you? Waiting for you? Making you tired?

TOM

Look, I'm sorry. But right now, I have so much pressure at work. It just seems harder than it used to. They're going to give the Niarchos project to Parker if I don't come up with something to placate him. This is not all deliberately set up so you'll get disappointed, you know. Intention is critical. It's the difference between ---

GAIL

(interrupting)

I know, I know. Between 8 to 10 and the chair.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

I just don't understand how this became such a big deal.

GAIL

It's maybe not as BIG as the Niarchos deal, but it's your son's birthday. Again. And he doesn't think you want to spend any time with him. Do you understand that part?

Tom looks defeated.

TOM

I'll see what I can do.

5
THRU 6
OMITTED

5
THRU 6

7 EXT. MONTANA - DAY

7

A passenger train roars through a gentle turn. Beyond the tracks are pine trees and quaking aspens, and in the distance, the snow-covered peaks of Canadian mountains.

8 EXT. TRAIN STATION - LIBBY, MONTANA - DAY

8

The train glides to a stop at the tiny station. Among the several folks waiting on the platform are an older man and woman. These people, this couple, are Gail's parents, JESS and CHIEF. Gail's father, Chief, a handsome circumspect fellow, is tall, lanky and deaf. Gail's mother, Jess, is certainty and straight talk personified. Both have lived their lives outdoors and very much together. She straightens his collar and he pushes her away with gruff appreciation. He signs something to her. She laughs and signs and speaks back.

JESS

I do not treat you like a baby. I treat you like a slob. There's a difference.

Gail exits the train with Willa and Roarke in tow. Tom is noticeably absent. Jess embraces her daughter and her grandchildren, as does Chief. Both Willa and Roarke are shy with Gail's parents.

JESS

Let me look at you. God, it's so good to see you.

(CONTINUED)

Hanging back, Roarke shyly shakes hands with the older man then the man "signs" to him.

ROARKE

(head down)

It's good to see you too, Grandpa.

As Roarke speaks, the man bends down to see Roarke's lips.

GAIL

Come on, Roarke, you know you also have to sign.

(signs and speaks)

Hi, Pop. You look good.

He signs backs to her and they embrace.

JESS

What about a hug for your Grandma?

ROARKE

Okay.

Jess bends down and Roarke hugs her. Gail pulls Willa to her and turns her toward her father.

GAIL

(proudly, signs and speaks)

We have a surprise for you, Daddy.

(to Willa)

Don't we, bean?

Willa nods shyly and blushes.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Okay, do like we practiced.

WILLA

(signs and speaks to her Grandpa)

Hello Grandpa. I love you.

She turns and buries her face in her mother's skirts. Chief kneels down and taps Willa on the shoulder.

GAIL

(interpreting)

She's been coming to school with me when I teach the younger students. She's almost ready to join my intermediate class.

Chief signs to Willa.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
Oh, your own fishing rod, peachie.
To catch rainbow trout as big as you.

WILLA
(signs and speaks)
Do they really have rainbows on them?

JESS
(to Gail)
Where's Tom?

Gail hesitates --- so Roarke answers.

ROARKE
(signs and speaks)
He didn't want to come.

GAIL
Roarke!
(signs and speaks,
embarrassed)
It was work. He's very busy right
now.

O.S. a dog barks. Roarke looks around.

ROARKE
Mags!!...

The adults watch Roarke run to Maggie, who's riding in her
cage on a baggage cart.

9 EXT. RANCH - LATE AFTERNOON

9

Her mother comes up the path from the house and sits next
to Gail.

JESS
You don't look happy.

GAIL
(sighs)
I think my marriage is over, Mama.

JESS
(shakes her head)
I was afraid of... Why?

GAIL
He just... he doesn't seem to have
time for us anymore. We're not a
family. I know that that's just a
symptom. But that's not... there's
just something in him that's gone...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GAIL (CONT'D)

we're estranged and he's afraid and I'm not allowed in to find out what. Everything has become unbelievably hard and it's affecting the children.

JESS

Honey, forgive me, but you don't know what hard is. And that's because you give yourself an out. And when you give yourself an out, mostly likely you'll take it. In our generation, we had no out. That was the pact of marriage. Instead of the problem wearing us out, we wore out the problem. We outlasted it. Do you think that if I gave myself an out with your father, given his orneriness and his disability, that I wouldn't have taken it years ago?

GAIL

(laughs, hugs her)

Why do I feel sometimes like I should hum the Battle Hymn Of The Republic when you talk.

JESS

Because you know what I'm saying is true.

In the distance, out on the valley floor, sirens and flashing lights indicate the passing of a couple of police cars.

GAIL

It's not like I haven't tried, Mama. My God, I left this place and you guys and everything to be with him.

JESS

You're going to have to stop keeping score. Between that and your pride, you'll never find a middle ground.

GAIL

My pride?

JESS

You're not your father's daughter for nothing. Now c'mon --- supper's ready and you know your dad --- if my pot roast is dry, he threatens to use it for a door stop.

Jess starts toward the house, Gail watches, thoughtful. The sirens and the flashing red lights recede into the distance.

10 INT. RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

10

Gail, Jess, and Roarke are playing three-handed Cribbage at the dining room table. Through the doorway behind them, we can see Chief in the kitchen washing the dinner dishes while he watches the local news coming from a TV set on the counter. It's close-captioned and the sound is off. We get glimpses of a NEWSCASTER. Roarke lays down a card.

ROARKE

Seven.

GAIL

Fifteen for two.

She pegs two places on the board. Jess lays down a card.

JESS

Nineteen.

Behind them, the image on the TV changes from the Newscaster to a videotape shot from a security camera of a robbery in progress: three MEN in ski masks. One of them shoots a GUARD. Chief, a dripping plate in his hand, stops washing to watch.

ROARKE

Twenty two.

JESS

Thirty one for two.

ROARKE

Anything I play, you peg.

Behind them, Chief whoops oddly and hurries in from the kitchen to sign to his wife. Halfway through what he's saying, she laughs, signs and speaks back to him.

JESS

I know. I know. You told me.

(to Gail and Roarke,
sighs and speaks)

For thirty years this man has been
telling me that the livestock auction
in town was going to be robbed.
Today it got robbed. It took thirty
years, but today he's right.

Chief laughs and returns to the kitchen.

JESS (CONT'D)

(playing a card)

Four...

(to Roarke)

Are you excited about going down the
river?

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE
(playing a card)
Uh huh... eight.

GAIL
(pegging again)
Fifteen for two.

ROARKE
(exasperated)
Mom!!

11 EXT. RIVER PUT-IN POINT - MORNING

11

In the middle of nowhere, a beat-up pick-up truck with Gail's Dad at the wheel and Jess and Gail next to him, and Roarke and Maggie riding in back, stops near a small house trailer up on blocks. It's painted in Ranger colors and an American flag flies from a pipe pole coming out of the roof. Roarke hops out clutching a yellow piece of paper and, as the pick-up continues on, he runs toward the trailer.

12 EXT. RANGER TRAILER - DAY

12

Roarke runs up to the outdoor office under the awning of the trailer. A man, WADE, in his mid-30s, is just in front of him.

WADE
(to the RANGER)
Hi, your friend down by the water said I needed to get some tags from you. I thought this was all we needed.

He hands him a yellow "flimsy".

RANGER
This just confirms your reservation.

He thumbs through a "reservations" file.

WADE
(notices two First Aid kits)
Can I buy a couple First Aid kits from you? We forgot ours.

RANGER
Those are just for display.

WADE
Oh...

(CONTINUED)

He reaches in the pocket of his black jeans. As he pulls up a fold of bills, Roarke checks him out. Lollapalooza baseball cap, two-day stubble; Wade has the aura of a rock star.

RANGER

Here you go...
(hands him three plastic laminated tags)
Show these to Angie, and if a Ranger on the river asks, show them to him.

WADE

You going home tonight?

RANGER

This is home.

WADE

Oh. Well listen, I think those First Aid kits are twenty-five dollars in town. Here's sixty bucks. You can pick up a couple new ones tomorrow and give me those two now.

The Ranger hesitates.

WADE

(continuing)
It would make me feel a lot safer if I had them on the river.

RANGER

Just give me fifty.

WADE

Sixty'll cover your gas and tax.

The Ranger turns to get the kits.

RANGER

There's some Band-Aids missing from one of them. Guy tore his ear up on a fish hook.

WADE

Hmmm.
(accepting the kits)
Well, thanks a lot.

Wade leaves. Roarke steps to the counter and hands his "flimsy" to the Ranger.

ROARKE

Oh, and can I have a map?

13 EXT. PUT-IN POINT

13

Gail uses a hand pump to inflate a raft while Jess and Chief bring their gear from the truck. The raft is an old one---custom made wooden frame, wooden oars, patches worn like battle scars from countless days on the river. Her father looks at the raft nostalgically, signs something to her.

GAIL
(signs and speaks)
I wish you were, too, Pop. The trips
with you were always my favorites.

She hugs him. Behind them, floating downstream, is a raft with two couples on it. One of the men is playing the guitar ("Water Is Wide" or classical piece).

EXT. RANGER'S TRAILER

Clutching two tags, Roarke runs down toward the river. He overtakes Wade and, trying to dodge past him, trips and falls flat on the dirt.

WADE
(picks him up)
Whoa there, partner, you okay?

ROARKE
(embarrassed)
Yeah... I just gotta get new feet.

Wade picks up the tags and hands them to Roarke.

WADE
Until you get 'em, you better slow
down.

Instead of hurrying away, Roarke lingers for a moment, noticing Wade's Lollapalooza hat.

ROARKE
You went to that concert?

WADE
(realizes what he's
talking about)
What? Oh, yeah, yeah, great show...

ROARKE
Which year?

WADE
The first one.

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE

So you saw Jane's Addiction? Wow, I wish I could've seen them before they broke up.

Roarke stares at him. He wants to say more but doesn't know quite what to say.

ROARKE

You going down the river all alone?

WADE

No. Me and a couple of buddies. Who're you going with?

ROARKE

(embarrassed)

My mom.

WADE

(looks at him)

Yeah? I heard this is a pretty tough river.

ROARKE

She used to be a guide here. She wants me to go down the river before it gets all polluted and ruined and everything.

WADE

Ah. And what about your father?

ROARKE

He didn't want to come.

They resume walking. On the sandy beach, beyond Gail's raft is another raft---a much newer model---with two men, FRANK and TERRY, sitting on the edge of it. Terry gets up when he sees Wade.

WADE

(notices Gail, now in shorts and a T-shirt)

What's your mom's name?

ROARKE

Gail.

WADE

What's yours?

ROARKE

Roarke.

(CONTINUED)

WADE
(offering his hand)
I'm Wade.

They shake. Then as they pass a WOMAN RANGER (ANGIE), Wade holds up the tags, as does Roarke.

Gail stands up from the pump as Roarke and Wade approach.

ROARKE
Mom, this is Wade. He's going down
the river, too.

GAIL
(extending her hand)
Hi, Wade.

WADE
(looks her right in the
eye as he holds her hand)
Great idea, showing Roarke the river
before they ruin it.

FRANK (O.S.)
Come on, Wade...

Wade looks over. Frank slaps a bulging bright blue dry pack that sits on the gunnel.

FRANK
(continuing)
We've got to get going.

WADE
I'll be right there.
(to Gail)
So, you used to be a guide here.

Gail glances at Roarke. Jess has stopped what she's doing to watch the exchange.

GAIL
About 150 years ago.

WADE
You must know the river pretty well.
How far are you going?

GAIL
End of the line, Bridal Creek.

WADE
Us, too.

TERRY
C'mon, Wade! We're dyin' here!

(CONTINUED)

WADE
(to Gail)
Wish I were going with you guys.

GAIL
(flattered)
Your friends are waiting.

Wade smiles at Gail as he hands Roarke the Lollapalooza cap.

WADE
Here, Roarke.

ROARKE
(taking it)
Wow! No way!!

WADE
It'll keep the sun out of your eyes.

GAIL
(to Wade)
Thank you.
(to Roarke)
What do you say, Roarke?

ROARKE
Oh yeah. Thanks. So, see you on the river, I guess.

WADE
I don't know, we're gonna be going pretty fast. Nice meeting you, Gail.

The female ranger comes down from her chair to watch Wade's group push off. Terry is in the front, Frank is at the oars, and Wade's in the back. They watch Frank drop the raft into the first set of rapids.

ANGIE
Guy rowing looks like he knows what he's doing.

GAIL
I thought he was a guide.

ANGIE
Not here. Said he used to work the Colorado.

GAIL
He's very good.

TOM (O.S.)
Is this where you sign up for river rafting lessons?

(CONTINUED)

Gail and Roarke turn. Tom, looking out of place in a rumpled suit and loosened tie, is standing next to an airport taxi at the end of the lane.

TOM
(continuing; holding up a plastic shopping bag)
I got two T-shirts, jeans, swim trunks, a windbreaker, and a pair of reef walkers. Camping guy in Minneapolis said that's all I'd need.

GAIL
What happened to Mr. Niarchos?

With his other hand, Tom holds up a briefcase.

TOM
I brought him with me.

14 EXT. BEACH

14

The entire family is on the beach loading the raft. Jess and Chief stand with Willa who might be tearful in anticipation of the imminent departure of her mother and brother. Tom, looking uncomfortably like a page of an L.L. Bean catalogue, places a box of supplies and returns to the weeping Willa.

TOM
Honey, we'll be back before you can say Jack Rabbit.

WILLA
Jack Rabbit.

JESS
(meaningfully to Tom)
I'm so glad you're going.
(catches herself)
I mean --- not that...

Tom smiles, understanding, then turns to the children's grandfather.

TOM
(signs and speaks)
Chief, take good care of my little critter here.

Gail and Roarke join the group.

WILLA
Mommy, why can't it be my birthday, too?

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
(kneeling to her)
It can be your birthday, bean. And
when it is, what did I tell you you'd
get?

WILLA
Ice Capades. But they don't last
overnight.

GAIL
To some people they seem like they
do.

TOM
Bye bye, Willa.

WILLA
(to Gail, ignoring him)
Mommy! What if I hurt my finger?

Chief signs to Willa.

GAIL
(interpreting)
A piggy back ride? Oh, sweetie,
that's your favorite.

Tom hugs Willa up off the ground and deposits her on
Chief's back. Gail moves to one side with her mother, away
from the group.

ROARKE
(to Willa, signs and
speaks)
Hold on to his hair for reins!

MOM
He's made the first move now...

GAIL
I thought we weren't keeping score.
Besides, he's just doing what he
originally agreed to do.

Jess looks at her daughter with disappointment.

MOM
Oh, Gail ---

GAIL
(interrupting)
I hear you, Mother.

They hug. Roarke, meanwhile, with his yellow waterproof
camera, takes a picture of Gail and his grandmother.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
(signs and speaks)
See you at Bridal Creek.

She kisses her father and Willa who pulls his hair so he looks funny.

GAIL
(to Willa, signs and
speaks)
Bye bunny rabbit.

15 EXT. RAFT (RAPIDS #1)

15

Gail picks up the oars and in three quick strokes sets up for the run through the rapids. But before she commits, she checks on her crew. Roarke is on his knees on the floor in the point of the bow with Maggie. Tom is straddling the right rear side of the raft.

GAIL
Roarke, put on your helmet.

ROARKE
Mom...

GAIL
Put it on. You don't have to wear it all the time but there are some rapids here.
(to Tom, as he does)
If you're going to sit in the back, sit on the floor in the center.

TOM
I can't see from there.

GAIL
Then sit in the front.

TOM
I like it here.

GAIL
Okay.

Gail looks over her shoulder. On a scale of one to five, these rapids are a two. She makes a few adjustments and they're on the roller coaster.

Roarke, his camera around his neck, screams with excitement and Maggie barks as they go into the first dip and up over the wave on the other side. The second wave is bigger. Gail follows the current around it and there's a muffled umph! as the crest breaks over the raft and sweeps Tom off his perch. Gail smiles.

(CONTINUED)

She's got other things to tend to.

If Frank was good, Gail is great. Everything is instinctive and effortless. And with Roarke screaming with delight and Maggie barking, she slips and slides the raft through the rest of the rapids.

In the quiet water at the bottom, Roarke turns casually to his mom and, taking off his helmet:

ROARKE
Awesome river, Mom.
(then he notices)
Where's Dad?

GAIL
Swimming.

She shouts back to Tom, who's bobbing through the last part of the rapids.

GAIL (CONT'D)
Point your feet downstream!

Tom tries, but with one hand holding onto his glasses, he's spun around backward, then he succeeds.

ROARKE
(laughing)
Come on, Dad. Point your toes.

Gail maneuvers over to pick him up.

ROARKE
You were great, Dad, you missed every
rock and bounced all the way down.

He crashes into the side of the raft and stretches up for the oarlock with his free hand. But he's encumbered by his life jacket and the raft is high, curved and slippery. His efforts are very funny to Roarke and Gail. He looks at them laughing at him.

TOM
This is not my idea of fun, Gail.
Now if you would stop laughing for
one sec and help me up, I would
appreciate it.

Gail ships the oars, reaches over, and as she and Roarke flop Tom on board:

ROARKE
Was this the biggest one, Mom?

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
(shakes her head "no")
Rapids are rated one to five. I'd say this was about a two.

ROARKE
What's the biggest one of the whole river?

GAIL
The biggest one is The Gauntlet. It's a five plus. It's off the scale.

ROARKE
Oh, wow!, when do we do that?

GAIL
We don't. That's after the take out at Bridal Creek. Nobody goes down there.

ROARKE
Have you ever been through it?

GAIL
Yes.

ROARKE
Why don't we just stop at Bridal Creek and tell Grandma and Grandpa to meet us after The Gauntlet and you take us through?

TOM
Mom's saying it's too dangerous, Roarke.

ROARKE
For you maybe.

GAIL
Roarke!... Look, I went down the Gauntlet once with two other guides. Experienced guys. We were lucky. We all made it. That same year, two other guys weren't so lucky. One was killed. The other one was paralyzed for life. People don't do The Gauntlet anymore. But don't worry, we're gonna hit some threes and fours. Trust me, you're gonna scream your guts out. But we're not going to get anywhere unless you guys start bailing.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

This is going to be interesting. I'm gonna sleep on the ground, kill what I eat, and be wet for the next four days.

Gail and Roarke exchange a look.

GAIL

Why don't you guys unclip the buckets from the 'D' ring, okay?

Roarke and Tom reach for the buckets and start bailing.

GAIL

(continuing)

You don't have to scoop. Watch.

She takes a bucket and puts it down next to her foot, which she presses into the rubber floor. The water flows into the bucket and she empties it over the side. Roarke and Tom try and imitate her, and as the current carries them along, slurp!, splash!, slurp!, splash! Underneath this, we begin to hear angry voices from somewhere up ahead. But Gail and Tom and Roarke are making too much noise of their own to notice until they come around a bend and Roarke sees Wade's raft squeezed between two rocks and Frank lying on his back with Terry and Wade bent over him. At the same time Roarke sees them, they see Gail's raft and the angry voices stop.

ROARKE

Hey Wade, are you alright?

Wade straightens up and deliberately blocks their view of Frank.

WADE

Yeah, Frank hasn't done this for a while. He got a cramp. We're trying to work it out.

GAIL

I have some salt pills.

WADE

So do we, but they haven't reached Frank's muscles yet. Who's your friend, Gail?

GAIL

This is Roarke's father, Tom.

WADE

Oh, no! You didn't tell him about us, did you?

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
 (laughs)
 Nope.

WADE
 Hi, Tom.

TOM
 Hello.

Tom looks at Gail questioningly.

GAIL
 Roarke met him at the Ranger station.

WADE
 See you later.

ROARKE
 See you later, Wade.

From nowhere, a song blasts out at us.

GAIL
 Roarke, no!

ROARKE
 Mom...

GAIL
 None of that music on the river.

Roarke looks at her. She means it. Sighing, he turns off the tape deck.

CUT TO:

16 A SKETCH PAD

16

on which has been printed a close skyline view of the Niarchos building site. A hand finishes roughing in a building on the site.

GAIL (V.O.)
 Ten-two... ten-two...

17 EXT. SANDBAR (CAMP #1) - AFTERNOON

17

Tom is sitting on a rock with the sketch pad on his knees. He's not happy with the building he's drawn. He turns to a new page. There's the same skyline with an empty space for the Niarchos building. Tom's T-shirt is drying on a willow branch behind him. He lifts a can of Coke out of the cooler next to him and looks wistfully at his wife and son on the tip of the sandbar.

(CONTINUED)

Gail is standing behind Roarke, her hand on his wrist moving his arm, as she teaches him the motions of fly fishing.

GAIL

Okay, we want to drop the fly right next to that log.. ten- two, ten-two, ten release...

The fly sails out and plunk!, it drops next to the log.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Okay, bring it back, slowly...

Roarke reels in the line.

ROARKE

Why can't I do it like this?

He flicks the rod side arm, without letting out any line. The fly plops into the water right in front of him.

ROARKE (CONT'D)

Oh... that's why.

GAIL

Call Dad, see if he wants to come over.

ROARKE

(shouts)
Dad, you want to try this?

TOM

Not right now, honey.

ROARKE

(to Gail)
Do you think he even knows he left Boston?

GAIL

He knows... But he flew all night, took two planes and a charter to get here, so let's give him a break.

ROARKE

How come you're on his side all of the sudden.

GAIL

I'm not on anybody's side --- I mean I'm on everybody's side --- I'm the mother. Now, ten-two...

ROARKE

Ten-two, ten-two, ten...

(CONTINUED)

The fly arcs out toward the log, but just before it hits the water, a rainbow trout leaps out of the river and swallows the hook. Roarke is so surprised he almost drops the rod.

ROARKE (CONT'D)

Mom!

GAIL

Hold onto the rod... Let him run...
Let him run... that's it. Now bring
him in.

18 EXT. RIVER BANK (CAMP #1) - EVENING

18

Gail lays a "cleaned" cornmeal-battered trout next to three others in a skillet of butter set on rocks above a campfire. On a cutting board on top of the drink cooler, Roarke is preparing the ingredients for a green salad: lettuce, tomatoes, snow peas, scallions. They go into a bowl which he shows to his mother.

ROARKE

Mom, is this enough for the three of
us?

GAIL

Uh huh.

ROARKE

How long for the fish?

GAIL

You can put the dressing on now.

Standing in front of the tent with a glass of wine, Tom watches Roarke and Gail. It's obvious he hasn't been part of this team for awhile.

ROARKE

(to his parents)
This is the first time we've all had
dinner together since Mom's birthday.

There's an uneasy silence.

GAIL

Fish is ready. Would you get the
plates, Roarke?

Roarke is carrying the plates to Gail when out on the river Wade's raft sweeps into view with Terry rowing. Wade's in the back. Frank's curled up in the bow.

(CONTINUED)

WADE
Hello the Roarke, Gail and Tom
family, this is the Wade raft passing
you.

ROARKE
Hey Wade, I caught two fish. First
time I ever fished.

WADE
(joking)
Must be that lucky hat.

Roarke laughs.

GAIL
How you doing, Frank?

FRANK
(weakly)
A little sore. I'll be fine
tomorrow.

GAIL
You guys should put in soon. Dark
comes awfully fast on this river.

WADE
We hear you. I'll tell the fish
downstream you're coming, Roarke.

Tom looks at Gail. Wade waves and says something we can't
hear. The raft has moved out of earshot.

DISSOLVE TO:

19 EXT. RIVER (CAMP #1) - NIGHT

19

The fire has burned down to coals and the trees throw giant
shadows on the tent. Through an open flap, we can see
Roarke asleep. In the river, the reflection of the moon is
covered by a cloud. At the water's edge, Tom and Gail are
washing up for bed. More than a distance separates them.

GAIL
(casual)
Did you finish your sketch?

TOM
No.

GAIL
Could you at least pretend to like it
here? If not for me, then for your
son. I don't think I do too bad at
pretending to like your stuff.

(CONTINUED)

TOM
 Oh is that what you were doing?
 Pretending? Well, thanks. Thanks a
 lot. Don't do me any favors, you
 know?

GAIL
 Fine. I won't.

TOM
 Fine.

After a pause, Tom splashes water on his face, then:

TOM
 You know ---

GAIL
 (interrupts)
 Let's just stop, okay?

TOM
 Hey, it's your call.

He leaves Gail watching the water flow by. She looks
 frustrated. Maybe she could've not been so... oh, never
 mind. It's too hard.

20 INT. TENT - LATER

20

Tom and Gail bookend Roarke and Maggie. Both Tom and Gail
 lie awake facing away from one another, thinking, blinking
 in the dark. Suddenly, he stiffens. Maggie growls.
 Outside, there are the sounds of approaching footsteps.
 Then it's quiet. Maggie growls again. He reaches over and
 squeezes Gail's shoulder.

TOM
 (whispers)
 Gail... Gail...

GAIL
 (semi-awake)
 Huh.

TOM
 There's someone outside.

Gail opens an eye and listens.

GAIL
 I know. Maybe it's Mr. Niarchos---
 he might've gotten out of the
 briefcase.

(CONTINUED)

There's the sound again, and again. It's getting closer. They look at each other. He doesn't move. Finally, she does. She opens the flap and finds herself face to face with a white animal with white horns and a goatee. They stare at each other then the animal bolts suddenly, skittering away.

GAIL
An albino mountain goat.
(to Tom)
It's supposed to be good luck.

Gail lies back down and they both lie there in the darkness once again, unable to sleep.

21 EXT. RIVER BANK (CAMP #1) - MORNING

21

The family is down at the raft. While Tom struggles to correctly fold and close his dry pack, Gail and Roarke stow the camping equipment in the storage compartment.

GAIL
(to Tom)
I can do that for you if you want.

TOM
(snaps)
I think I can figure it out on my own.

GAIL
Okay.

A strained silence settles over the group and Roarke casts a worried look from one parent to the other.

22 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY

22

The raft drifts on the current, approaching a narrow canyon.

23 EXT. CANYON WALL

23

We're looking at a series of figures and symbols carved in the stone.

ROARKE
Look, Mom, graffiti.

GAIL (O.S.)
No, 'petroglyphs.' They were carved there by the Indians long before the white man came to this country. Some of them are over a thousand years old.

24 EXT. RAFT

24

Roarke and Maggie and Tom are in the front, his drawings on his lap, staring up at the cliffs.

GAIL

The legend is, see, this part of the river was considered sacred. So Indian boys, not much older than you, Roarke, had to build a canoe all by themselves and then they would run the river from here down to The Gauntlet.

ROARKE

So, but, like if they didn't make it, they died?

Gail smiles. Roarke glances at his father, who doesn't respond.

GAIL

Well, but if they made it all the way, they made a fire and put wet grass on it so the white smoke would let their folks know that they were okay.

Tom has returned to his work.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Tom, there's a rapid coming up, it's about a one. You want to take us though it? I'll show you how.

TOM

I think I'll just master where I sit for this one.

Gail frowns.

GAIL

Roarke, you wanna row for a while.

ROARKE

Can I row through the rapids?

GAIL

Sure.

She hands Roarke the oars and goes forward to sit next to Tom.

GAIL

Listen, it's not enough to just be here. Obviously, you're not having a great time and ---

(CONTINUED)

TOM
No, no, it's---

GAIL
(interrupts)
When you're not having fun, it kinda pulls down the whole group. I think it's great you came, but maybe it would be better if you just went back to work. There's one more chance to get off the river... A walk out right after the rapids up ahead. That would take you to a ranger station---

TOM
(interrupting)
Jesus, Gail, I took three planes and---

GAIL
(interrupts)
I know. Just think about it. Otherwise...

She gets up and rejoins Roarke. Tom watches her thoughtfully.

25 EXT. RIVER (RAPIDS #2) - DAY

25

The rapids are right in front of us. Gail, standing behind Roarke with her hands over his on the oars, is keeping the raft on the edge of the tongue.

GAIL
Are you ready?

ROARKE
Yes... No, wait, wait, wait...

He takes one of his hands off the oars and punches the play button on the Sony waterproof radio/tape deck clipped to his belt. An alternative rock song (by a group like Porno for Pyros) blares from the speaker and bounces off the walls of the canyon.

GAIL
No...

ROARKE
Yes!

He grabs the oar and pulls hard for the tongue. Maggie is sitting in the front. And to the music, Roarke and Gail hip-hop through the rapids. As they shoot into the still water at the bottom, Roarke thrusts a fist into the air.

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE
 (continuing)
 Yes!!... Can I do the next one on my own?

GAIL
 Hang on, Roarke, we might be stopping here at the walkout.

Gail looks at Tom, then she looks at the sign on the river bank. It's faded and has bullet holes in it, but we can clearly read: ARROYO WALKOUT --- Next River Exit --- 76 miles. Gail looks back at Tom. Tom shakes his head "no". He's decided to stay and fight for his marriage.

TOM
 We don't have to stop.

Gail reacts to this, exchanges a look with Tom.

ROARKE (O.S.)
 Can I, Mom?

GAIL
 The next rapid's rated a four.

ROARKE
 (being funny)
 Ah... it wasn't that important.

26 EXT. SHORE - DAY

26

It's rocky and steep. The raft is drifting toward us in a deep pool. Gail and Roarke are fly fishing: one off the back and one off the front of the boat. On the center seat, Tom is working away at his drawings. Trees jutting out from the crevices shadow the still water; but beneath the tranquility there's the ominous rumble of an upcoming rapids. Suddenly, Wade's head moves into frame. He watches the family for a moment, then:

WADE
 (loud)
 Hi there.

The family jumps and turns toward Wade, who's standing on a rock.

WADE
 (continuing)
 We've been waiting for you.

27 EXT. ROCKY COVE

27

Gail, Wade, Tom, Roarke and Terry are making their way across the boulders up the side of a small rise. Behind them the rafts have been pulled up onto the beach. The sound of the rapids is louder up here and increases as the group gets closer to the top.

WADE

I shoulda suspected something when he had us camp at the walk out. We'd been fighting about my sister most of the day. He said some things he shouldn't have.

TERRY

Frank used to be married to Wade's sister. Until she realized what a butt hole he was.

WADE

I said some things, too; but Frank and I always do that. We had a few beers and it got worse.

TERRY

When we woke up this morning, he was gone.

TOM

Why didn't you follow him? Just walk out.

TERRY

That's what I wanted to do.

WADE

You're right. That woulda been the smart thing. But I didn't want to give him the satisfaction. Anyway, what Frank was doing with the raft didn't look that hard, so we headed down the river. Then we heard this.

They reach the top of the rise and Wade points to the rapids. For the first time, we get to see what really big rapids are. There are troughs in these that you could lose a boat in easily.

WADE

(continuing)

That's when we decided to wait for you guys.

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

Wade said you used to be a guide here; is there any way we can walk out now? If we went up the canyon there?

He points back at the little canyon that extends off the cove.

GAIL

You might be able to get up the canyon... might. But once you get up top to the rim and head back toward the Ranger Station, there's a gorge between here and there that you'd have to walk around. Even if you had the equipment and knew what you were doing, it would take you five or six days.

WADE

Sounds like we're stuck.

GAIL

We can help you get down to Bridal Creek.

ROARKE

(happy)
Yeah!

WADE

(to Tom)
We wouldn't want to be a burden.

Tom's mouth smiles.

TOM

Doesn't look like you have much choice.

28 EXT. ROCKY COVE

28

GAIL

Let's get your gear stowed properly. Roarke, give me a hand.

Gail starts to repack Wade and Terry's raft.

TOM

Where the hell is Maggie?

29 EXT. WOODS (NEAR ROCKY COVE)

29

Maggie is digging at a mound of leaves and earth.

(CONTINUED)

TOM (O.S.)

Maggie!

She keeps digging.

ROARKE (O.S.)

Mags!!

Maggie turns and barks and returns to digging.

30 EXT. ROCKY COVE

30

Roarke picks up a bright blue bag.

ROARKE

Cool bag.

GAIL

Gimme that, Roarke.

Terry and Wade exchange a look as Gail takes the bag and stows it. Tom notes this, then:

TOM

That damn dog.

And he starts in the direction of the bark. Wade and Terry look at each other.

WADE

Terry, you stay with Gail.

31 EXT. WOODS

31

Maggie stops digging and jerks back when, suddenly a man's hand, stiff with rigor mortis, rises out of the earth.

TOM (O.S.)

Maggie!

Maggie sniffs the hand and resumes digging.

32 EXT. WOODS

32

Tom is blundering on with Wade not far behind him.

TOM

Maggie!

He comes around a tree and sees Maggie through the branches of a thicket up ahead. We can tell she's digging, but we can't see the hand.

(CONTINUED)

TOM
(continuing)
Maggie! Come on, girl! Come on!

Tom starts toward her. Wade pulls a stubby killing knife out of his waistband and is closing on Tom when:

ROARKE (O.S.)
Mags!

Tom and Wade turn around. Roarke has followed them.

ROARKE
(continuing)
Come on, Mags.

Maggie barks but doesn't move.

ROARKE
(continuing)
Come on, Mags. Time to go.

Maggie looks at where she was digging, then reluctantly obeys and, barking, bounds to Roarke. Shaking his head in disgust, Tom watches them.

WADE
I hate pets.

He slips the knife back into his waistband and he and Tom trail Roarke and Maggie down to the rafts. But we don't go with them. Our view moves into the thicket to see what Maggie has found, and Frank's dirt-filled eyes stare at us out of a shallow grave.

33 EXT. RIVER (RAPIDS #3)

33

Gail's raft is between Wade's and the rapids. Tom and Roarke are in the bow with Maggie.

GAIL
(shouts to Wade)
Remember, point your stern away from the rocks and row like hell upstream; the current'll do the rest. And if you flip, relax; point your feet downstream. Wait till I get set up down there before you start. Remember you don't command the river, you let the river command you.

WADE
C'mon, I don't live my life like that and I don't think you do either.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
 We're not talking about my life ---
 we're talking about making it down a
 river. Not as a metaphor --- as a
 reality. Ready? Good luck.

Terry looks at Wade confused.

TERRY
 Metaphor ---

WADE
 (interrupts)
 I'll tell you later.

She strokes away and almost immediately disappears entirely into a trough. Wade and Terry look at each other. Gail's raft reappears, climbing the wall of a crest and, as she shoots it over the top, we can see air under the hull and then it disappears again.

34 EXT. GAIL'S RAFT

34

This is not an alternative rock rapids, this is Beethoven's Ninth and Gail is a great conductor. Tom is hanging on for dear life. Roarke and Maggie are having a ball. A wave crashes over them and fills the raft. But the extra weight is no problem for Gail. She twists and turns through the roiling water and at the bottom gracefully uses the current to swing the raft around and face it upstream, ready and waiting for Wade and Terry's descent. Gail signals for them to start their run. Wade signals back. As he sits at the oars:

GAIL
 Oh shit!, does he have his life
 jacket buckled?

ROARKE
 I don't think so, Mom.

GAIL
 (waves and shouts)
 Wait!! Stop!!

They can't hear her and anyway it's too late. The current's got them and there's no turning back now.

35 EXT. WADE'S RAFT

35

Waves towering over them, Wade and Terry are terrified and they should be. Wade simply does not have the know-how or the experience to handle a raft in these waters. And he doesn't have his life jacket buckled. Only by sheer luck do they get through the first trough.

(CONTINUED)

But in the second, that good luck runs out. Wade doesn't do what he has to do fast enough and the current swings the raft toward a large rock. Wedged against the rock is a jagged piece of driftwood. The raft goes up, slams into the driftwood with a ripping sound, and then flips completely over. Wade and Terry are thrown clear and disappear into the water.

36 EXT. GAIL'S RAFT

36

Gail, Tom and Roarke watch anxiously for any sign of the men.

37 UNDERWATER

37

Wade is caught in a maelstrom that tumbles him over and over and rips off his life jacket.

38 EXT. RIVER

38

Terry pops to the surface and gets his feet pointed downstream. A little ways from him, upside down, his raft stumbles through the rapids.

39 EXT. GAIL'S RAFT

39

Where's Wade? Gail stands up on the bench and scans the seething water. About halfway down she sees him, gasping and flailing, go over the top of a wave and disappear in the trough below.

40 EXT. RIVER

40

The rapids spit Terry and the raft into the calmer waters. Terry turns around to look for Wade. He sees him struggling to keep his head up over another wave.

TERRY
(shouts to Gail)
He can't swim!!

41 EXT. GAIL'S RAFT

41

She's already moving the raft in front of where the water should bring Wade.

GAIL
Get ready to grab him!

Tom does. He reaches for Wade as he goes by, but the current carries him under past Tom's outstretched hands.

(CONTINUED)

Wade bobs up again, then goes down in the deep eddy at the bottom of the white water. Gail pulls the raft in that direction. Tom strips off his life jacket. He takes off his glasses and hands them to Roarke. A strong swimmer, he dives in.

41A UNDERWATER

41A

Tom grabs Wade from behind and pulls him to the surface.

41B EXT. RAFT

41B

Gail has the raft almost right over them. Crazy, Wade spins around and clutches at Tom and pulls them both back under.

42 UNDERWATER

42

Panicked for air, Wade is pulling Tom down trying to get himself to the surface. It looks like he's going to drown them both until Tom kicks him once, twice in the stomach and Wade lets go.

43 EXT. RAFT

43

Gasping, Tom surfaces and, from behind Wade, puts an arm around Wade's chest and side strokes over to grab the oar that Gail has extended. She pulls them to the side of the raft and, with Gail and Roarke lifting and Tom pushing from below, they manage to get a sputtering Wade aboard.

ROARKE

Wow, Dad...

Tom lunges up, catches one of the oar locks, and with Roarke's help hoists himself over the gunnel.

ROARKE

(continuing)

Boy, you almost drowned, Wade! What was it like?

Still sputtering, Wade raises up and shifts around to sit in the 18 inches of water on the floor of the raft.

TOM

(to Wade)

You okay?

(CONTINUED)

WADE

Wow!

(he laughs)

Someday I'm gonna have to learn to swim.

GAIL

(picking up the oars,
shouts)

Hang on, Terry. We're on our way.

43A EXT. ROCKY BEACH BELOW EDDY - DAY

43A

Wade's raft is upside down on the beach. Gail is patching one of the two air compartments that were gashed in the collision with the jagged driftwood and Terry is standing by with her air pump. Their gear is spread out on the rocks. Wade walks over to where Tom sits alone.

WADE

I want to thank you, Tom. You saved my life.

He holds out his hand. Tom takes it.

TOM

Don't worry about it.

WADE

You didn't have to kick me though, Tom.

His mouth smiling, but not his eyes, Wade keeps hold of Tom's hand.

TOM

Oh yes I did.

Gail stands up from where she is working.

GAIL

All right, guys, let's get this thing right side up...

WADE

How'd we do?

GAIL

The one compartment's fine, but there's not much I can do with the other one.

TERRY

Will the raft float all right?

(CONTINUED)

GAIL

Sure, just looks a little weird.
Doesn't really affect the handling
except in white water. It'll get you
to Bridal Creek just fine.

WADE

Good.

Terry and Wade exchange a glance.

GAIL

Let's load up your gear...

They start loading the raft, Terry grabbing the bright blue
bag first.

CUT TO:

44 CLOSE ON A PLASTIC PLATE 44

being sand washed. As it's raised out of our view, we are:

45 EXT. SANDBAR - POST LUNCH TIME (CAMP #2) 45

And Tom flips the plate he's just washed out to Terry, who
rinses it in the clear water and stacks it with other
plates on a rock.

O.S., Gail laughs. Tom looks up the beach in that
direction and reflected in his sunglasses we see what he
sees. Gail is standing behind Wade, moving his right arm
with her right hand, teaching him the motions of fly
fishing. His shirt is off and she's wearing shorts and a
tied-up shirt, and as their bodies move, the tip of her
breast accidentally touches Wade's bare back and her leg
his leg. Tom looks down and picks up another dish.

Roarke, also fishing, looks over at his mother and Wade.
Behind him, on a rock, his radio is playing.

ROARKE

(calling over)

You got to listen to Mom, Wade, or
it'll fall right in front of you.

WADE

Oh, yeah? Watch this!

GAIL & WADE

Ten-two, ten-two...

GAIL

Release...

(CONTINUED)

The line sails gracefully out over the water.

ROARKE
That's great, Wade!

GAIL
Now reel it in.

Roarke leaves his spot and moves toward them. Behind him, unheard, the news has interrupted the music.

RADIO
This just in, the getaway car believed to have been used in the robbery of the livestock auction where a guard was killed Sunday was found abandoned on a back road near the Canadian border. Police are intensifying their search in that area.

(pause)
Why not stop by Howdy's Western Gear Shop in the Arapaho shopping mall --- we're open 6 days a week...

AT GAIL AND WADE

GAIL
What do you do when you're not trying to drown yourself on a river?

WADE
(through a smile that shows all his teeth)
Well... I'm a ski bum.

GAIL
Oh! I've always wanted to do that! Just take one year and do nothing but ski.

WADE
Be careful. It's very addictive. One year might not be enough.

ROARKE
Where do you ski?

WADE
All over.

GAIL
Do you go to Chile in the summer?

(CONTINUED)

WADE

No, I can't afford to be that kind of fanatic. Usually I work in the oil fields. That's where I hooked up with Terry. What about you guys?

GAIL

I teach history in a school for the deaf and Tom's an architect.

ROARKE

Being a ski bum sounds great.

46 OMITTED

46

47 DOWN THE BEACH

47

Tom pulls his eyes off Wade and Gail and flips a plate to Terry.

TOM

That was a pretty gutsy call going on without Frank.

TERRY

Yeah, well, if we could've walked out we probably would have.

TOM

I thought Frank left at the walkout.

TERRY

Yeah, right, he did. Wade thought we could keep going. You can't say 'no' to Wade.

Tom looks back:

48 UP THE BEACH

48

Wade finishes reeling in.

GAIL

Okay, try it on your own. See if you can put the fly in the quiet water, right in front of the green rock.

With the ease of a natural athlete, Wade whips the line back and forth and then SNAP!, the fly sails through the air and feathers onto the water exactly where it was supposed to. Roarke shoots his fist into the air.

ROARKE

Yes!

(CONTINUED)

She and Roarke applaud.

GAIL
Come on, you've done this before.
This is not your first time.

WADE
No, no. Cross my heart and hope to
die.

GAIL
You want to learn to do it sidearm?

49 DOWN THE BEACH

49

Tom watches as Gail, laughing, again instructs Wade.

TERRY
The ladies sure do like Wade... they
sure do.

DISSOLVE TO:

50 EXT. RIVER - AFTERNOON

50

Gail and Tom's raft is slightly ahead of Wade and Terry's as they drift/row along. Roarke is lying face down on the gunnel at the point of the bow, his headphones on, watching the river flow by. Tom has the oars. Gail is sitting on the side enjoying the ride.

TOM
(glances over at Wade and
Terry)
I don't like those guys. I think
tomorrow we should leave them behind
and tell the rangers where to come
and pick them up.

GAIL
Oh, they're all right. They're just
those kinda drifter guys that never
get out of adolescence.

TOM
It's not that. There's something not
right about them.

GAIL
Well, there's something not right
about everyone - it's just the extent
that ---

(CONTINUED)

TOM
(interrupts)
Why are you defending him?

GAIL
I'm not defending him.

TOM
Yes you are.

GAIL
(smiles)
You sound like you're jealous.

TOM
I'm not jealous. You draped yourself
all over him.

GAIL
I didn't drape myself... I was
teaching him how to cast.

TOM
Well, he's the kind of guy you like.
He's good in the outdoors. He likes
to camp. He even thinks almost
drowning is fun. He's the kind of
guy you should have married.

Gail looks at him. There's a pause.

GAIL
For a long time, I thought I had
married the perfect guy...

TOM
(avoiding her eyes, he
returns to the subject)
Their whole story about Frank leaving
and why they went on from the walkout
doesn't make sense. Did you see the
look on their faces when you picked
up their blue bag? Look, maybe I am
being an asshole about Wade; and I'll
concede to being more than slightly
jealous --- but that still doesn't
change that I just don't believe
them, okay? Something's wrong.

GAIL
They're two bum around high-five
kinda guys, Tom, who got in over
their heads. If something happened
to me and it was just you and Roarke
going down the river, I'd want
somebody to help you out.

(CONTINUED)

TOM
So would I, but we're not Wade and
Terry.

They drift on a moment, then:

GAIL
Tom, I'm glad you decided to stay.

50A EXT. FERN GULLY - DAY

50A

A frog jumps over a rock. Roarke and Maggie scramble after it, splashing their way across a beautiful pool.

GAIL (O.S.)
No torture, Roarke, no torture...

Gail, sitting on a fallen tree, is looking down on them from further up the creek. The vegetation is lush, the scene idyllic. All the way at the bottom of the creekbed, where the stream enters the river, Terry is stretched out on his back, bare-chested, sun-bathing, and Tom, using a rock as a desk, is working on his schematics. Gail watches him thoughtfully. Sensing something, she turns suddenly. She is startling to find Wade right behind her.

GAIL
Oh...

She laughs.

WADE
Is The Gauntlet as dangerous as
Roarke says?

GAIL
Worse.

WADE
But you'd like to try it again,
wouldn't you?

GAIL
Not really. Things are different
now. I have children.

WADE
And a husband.

GAIL
And a husband.

WADE
What if you didn't?

(CONTINUED)

GAIL

But I do.

ROARKE (O.S.)

(calling out)

Look, Mom!

He does a cannonball into the tranquil pool. Maggie barks furiously.

51 EXT. RIVER BANK - DUSK (CAMP #3)

51

Roarke runs from the raft up to where the others are setting up camp. Gail is assembling a collapsible camp oven.

ROARKE

(distracted)

Mom, have you seen my radio? I can't find it anywhere.

GAIL

Did you check your duffel?

ROARKE

I checked everything.

Wade is listening to this exchange.

GAIL

Well, when I finish here, I'll help you look.

ROARKE

You sure you didn't hide it on purpose.

GAIL

I'm sure, Ro. If I had, I'd've done it sooner.

WADE

Tell you what, cowboy, why don't you go and tell Terry to give you my walkman and tapes. It doesn't have a radio, but...

ROARKE

(interrupts)

Oh Mom, can I?

Gail can't win. She smiles and shrugs.

DISSOLVE TO:

52 A CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

52

Wade and Tom and Terry and Gail and Roarke are finishing their delicious away from home cooked and river caught meal. The atmosphere is relaxed, homey. Maggie is stealing some leftovers off the grill.

TOM

Maggie... No.

The dog glances at him and resumes eating.

ROARKE

Maggie...

Maggie immediately stops eating and guiltily slinks off.

GAIL

Did you guys notice that little hanging bridge we went by today?

(they nod)

That's a very famous bridge around these parts.

TOM

Why do I feel a story coming on?

GAIL

(smiles)

In the late 1800's, a prospector named Hoyt Leisure ---

TERRY

(interrupts)

Get out of here, that's a name? Hoyt Leisure?

TOM

They sure don't make names like they used to.

WADE

Thank God. Go on --- go on.

GAIL

Anyway, Hoyt had his little claim way out here on the river and he worked it all alone with his faithful dog. So Hoyt mined and mined for years, for decades --- and in the meantime, he built that little bridge you saw and his lean-to house and a kind of pulley that they sent his groceries across on about once a month.

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

He was like a hermit.

No one listens to Terry.

GAIL

Well, one day, there's this rise in the river --- causing a flood and old Hoyt's mine collapses, trapping him inside. And his faithful dog is howling and yelling --- desolate that his master is well into this jam. Finally, someone comes down the river and digs old Hoyt out --- but by then it's too late. And they say that when the dog saw the body of his beloved master, he keeled over and died himself and they were buried side by side next to the mine. The legend is that some nights, when the river's running high, you can hear old Hoyt's dog howling bloody murder for someone to come save Hoyt.

Roarke pets Maggie affectionately, acknowledging the loyalty of the species.

TOM

Good story, honey...

WADE

Speaking of bloody murder, I have a campfire story, too.

ROARKE

Oooh, tell it, tell it.

WADE

Well, this also happened on a river. Different river though. The Salmon. Long time ago. There's this guy, a prospector, working all alone, like your Mr. Leisure, looking for gold. And word gets out in town that he's struck it rich. So these two guys decide to go rob him. And they float down the river to where his claim is. And the prospector was sitting around a campfire just like we are now, twirling a stick in the sand --- just like you're doing there, Roarke. You know how dark it gets out here by the river --- well it gets so dark and peaceful that you can lose your 6th sense, the sense that tells you you're about to die. For money.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WADE (CONT'D)

Anyway, now the prospector's dog runs out into the darkness and starts yappin' his fool head off. So these bad guys, they kill the dog, see.

Roarke reacts to this. Wade smiles.

WADE

Leastways they think they do. And now they creep over to the guys' campfire all cautious and quiet and (Wade shouts "BOOM" and his listeners all jump) ...the prospector jumps out at them from the dark and they fight and they tussle --- but finally it's 2 to 1 and the prospector goes to meet his final reward. So now the two guys go through the prospector's things lookin' for the gold and while they're looking, they hear this growl. And they think, "Shit --- We killed that dog." So they go with their lantern to check where the dog's body was --- and they get there and you know what?

ROARKE

The body's gone.

Wade nods.

WADE

And now here comes the growl again --- closer, louder and a wind blows... WHOOSH, their lantern goes out leaving them stranded there in the cool, peaceful dark. Now the guys are scared --- real scared --- and now they hear what sounds like footsteps on gravel, but it's dark, see, so they're straining to see, but nothing, no sir, nothing but two bright red eyes, watching, can they see. Well, the guys get so frightened they piss on themselves running around not knowing which way to run or what's chasing them. ROAR!

(again, the listeners,
especially Roarke and
Terry, jump)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WADE (CONT'D)

... and the first man screams and runs flat into the prospector's pick ax and he's killed dead, skewered like pork. Now the next guy, he's crazy, wild with fear. He falls to his knees --- He says, "Please God, spare me. I'll give back the gold --- see?" And he throws the gold into the river and he drops to the ground trembling and howling at the moon. They found him there weeks later, dead, insects crawling all over his terrified eyes. No one ever figured out what it was that scared him to death.

ROARKE

It was the dog, wasn't it?

WADE

Maybe. But my daddy always told me, when somebody dies a violent death, like the prospector did, their spirit is in torment and it hovers near the place of their murder, unquiet, unable to move on until justice is done. And if it's never done, they're trapped forever, lost in the moment, as though it were a maze.

There is a pause.

ROARKE

Wow.

TOM

Whatever happened to the tradition of campfire songs?

Gail laughs and stands.

GAIL

Excuse me a second.

53 INTERCUT

53

with Gail inside the family tent. She's listening to the men with one ear as she secretly prepares something. We can't see what.

WADE

Gail tells me you're an architect, Tom. What kind? Big buildings, shopping malls, houses?...

(CONTINUED)

TOM
Big buildings.

WADE
Cool. You doing anything now?

TOM
Yeah, we've been pretty busy.

WADE
Why don't you guys make a big building that's different? All the new buildings I see are so dull and the same.

Gail raises her head.

WADE (CONT'D)
Why don't you guys take a chance and make one that's interesting?

Before Tom can find the words to answer, Gail interrupts.

GAIL (O.S.)
(singing)
Happy birthday to you...

Everybody turns. Gail is coming out of their tent carrying a small two-layer cake covered with chocolate icing and ten lit candles. Roarke smiles and looks around shyly.

TOM
(joining in)
Happy birthday...

Wade and Terry catch on.

WADE/TERRY
... to you.

EVERYBODY
Happy birthday, dear Roarke, Happy birthday to you.

TERRY
(singing; deep voice)
And many more.

ROARKE
I thought I smelled cake cooking, but I thought I was going crazy because of the ghost stories.

Gail holds the cake out in front of him.

GAIL
Make a wish.

(CONTINUED)

Roarke thinks for a moment, then blows out the candles. As Wade watches this, the fire is reflected in the pupils of his eyes. Gail sets the cake on the drink cooler. She takes an envelope out of a back pocket and, handing it to Roarke:

GAIL
(continuing)
This is from your dad and me.

ROARKE
Oh, wow!, an envelope, I've always wanted an envelope.

GAIL
Maybe there's something inside the envelope.

ROARKE
(opening it)
Oh, that would be too much. An envelope and something.

GAIL
Roarke, just open it.

WADE
(leaving)
I'll be right back.

Roarke pulls out a Polaroid of a pair of great-looking rollerblades.

ROARKE
Oh, Mom, Dad, these are great!
He gives his mom a hug.

GAIL
They're waiting for you back home.
Don't break your leg the first week.

Tom hands Roarke a small wrapped package.

TOM
Here's something you can use here.
Roarke rips through the paper to find a fat Swiss Army knife.

ROARKE
Neat! It's got everything! Thank you, thank you.

GAIL
Who's for cake?

(CONTINUED)

All the men say "me", including Wade who's just coming back from the beach.

ROARKE
(holding up the Swiss
Army knife)
Hey Wade, look what I got.

WADE
(takes the knife)
That's nice.
(hands the knife back)
We don't have anything that fancy,
but this is from me and Terry.

He pulls an ordinary piece of driftwood from his back pocket and hands it to Roarke. Roarke takes it, and with a polite smile:

ROARKE
Gee, thanks, guys...

He turns it over, then spots something he can't believe, in a hole in the wood.

ROARKE
(continuing)
Wow! No way!! Look, Mom, Dad.

He holds up what he's found, two tightly rolled hundred dollar bills.

WADE
It's so if you want to see
Lollapaloosa, buy something, do
anything, you don't have to ask
anybody, it's your money.

TOM
That's too much, Wade. He can't
accept that.

WADE
You guys are saving our lives. This
is just a little gift to show our
appreciation.

ROARKE
Oh please, Dad, can I?

TOM
It's too much, Roarke. We thank you
very much for the gesture, Wade, but
he can't accept it. Roarke, give Wade
the money back.

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE

No. They gave it to me. It's mine.

TOM

Roarke, give it to him. Now.

Roarke reluctantly hands the money back to Wade, then stalks off toward their tent.

ROARKE

You didn't even want to come on this trip.

GAIL

Roarke!...

She goes after him.

WADE

(with the slightest of smiles)

Geez, I'm sorry about that, Tom. I was just trying to be nice.

54 EXT. FERN GULLY - NIGHT

54

Tom is alone at the edge of a the stream, brushing his teeth. The campfire can be seen through the trees down on the beach. In the distance, lightning brightens the bottom side of the oncoming clouds. As the thunder rolls toward him, a hand drops on his shoulder. He looks up. It's Gail.

TOM

I guess I'm not too popular down there right now, am I?

GAIL

Maybe I would have done it differently, but you were right.

Tom stands up. Accidentally, their shoulders touch. They look at each other. A connection is made. They look away.

TOM

God, I haven't been right in a while. You know I know I haven't been the easiest person to live with, but... when we were first together you... believed in me in a way that enabled me to believe in myself. And because of that, I was able to be better, to do better, to take risks, to...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TOM (CONT'D)

and then we had Roarke, and I had to stand on my own more, believe in myself --- which I guess was never that easy for me to do. By the time we had Willa, I felt totally abandoned. And I knew that wasn't fair; the kids needed you --- I felt terrible about thinking they'd taken you away from me.

GAIL

Tom, you never ---

TOM

(interrupts)

What could I say? I knew it was wrong... that I was a heel for begrudging them, their coming first. But without you I... I just wasn't as good. I had to work twice as hard to be half as good.

GAIL

Why didn't you tell me this before?

TOM

I guess I was ashamed of needing you too much. But I never wanted you to think that my... distance had anything to do with... caring for you and the kids any less. I guess... that's all.

They stand in the darkness. Almost touching. The silence growing thick around them. Slowly, Tom leans over and kisses Gail softly on the mouth. Her instinct is to respond and after a moment she does, then she catches herself.

TOM (CONT'D)

(moves back)

Sorry.

He starts to go, she stops him.

GAIL

Tom...

He turns.

GAIL

(continuing)

Thanks, I'm glad you told me.

(CONTINUED)

TOM
(smiles)
It's the truth.

He enters the woods, heading downstream toward the camp.
After watching him go, Gail unbuttons her blouse.

55 CLOSE ON A BOULDER 55

Her blouse falls to the rock. After a beat, her shorts and underwear are dropped next to it. Beyond, indistinct, Gail steps into the deep pond.

56 OMITTED 56

57 EXT. SKY 57

A bolt of lightning streaks toward Earth.

58 EXT. RIVER 58

Gail's in up to her shoulders. She ducks under. When she comes up, her hair is slicked back away from her face. She's beautiful. She lifts an arm and runs some soap over her skin. Slowly she stops. She senses that something's wrong. She lowers her arm and turns toward the darkness of the shore. The lightning flashes again. The fern gully is bathed in light. Gail gasps. Wade is up above, among the trees. He makes no effort to hide himself. The bright plunges back into darkness. Everything is silent and then we hear thunder a long way off. Gail holds her breath. There's another flash of lightning. Wade is still there. Again, Gail is plunged into darkness.

59 EXT. BEACH CAMPSITE - NIGHT 59

Dressed but wet, Gail comes out of the deep shadow of the woods and hurries through the rain to her tent. A light is turned up inside. We can see Gail's silhouette. Tom sits up to face her. They talk but we can't hear what they're saying. Wade steps out of the edge of the frame, looks at what's happening in the tent, and sadly goes to his own.

60 INT. TENT - NIGHT 60

Gail and Tom are in their sleeping bags. Roarke, between them, is asleep. The rain falls heavy on the canvas.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

(whispers)

So we agree we want to get away from these guys.

GAIL

We'll act like nothing's happened and first chance we get tomorrow, we'll take Roarke and leave them behind.

61 EXT. RIVER BANK - MORNING

61

Roarke, in a pout, is helping Wade and Terry load their raft. Tom comes down the beach carrying the tent bag and hands it to Gail.

GAIL

Come on, Roarke, we're ready to go.

Roarke and Maggie get into Wade's raft.

ROARKE

(looking at his father)

I don't wanna go with you. I wanna spend the day with my friends.

GAIL

Roarke, you get your little behind over here right now.

WADE

(pushing off)

It's my fault, Gail, I told Roarke we could practice our fly fishing together today.

(moving his arm)

Ten-two, ten-two...

GAIL

It's too dangerous, Wade, you don't have the experience for him to be safe.

WADE

Hey, I checked the map, there's no big rapids coming up, and anyway, if there's any trouble, you're going to be with us, right?

ROARKE

That way our music won't bother you either, Mom.

He turns on Wade's tape deck real loud.

(CONTINUED)

TOM
When we stop for lunch, Wade, he
comes back to us.

Wade cups a hand behind his ear to indicate he can't hear
over the music.

WADE
What?...

Gail and Tom watch helplessly while Wade rows off with
their son.

62 EXT. RIVER - DAY

62

The two rafts are floating along a safe distance from each
other. Music is still coming from Wade's raft.

GAIL
Do you think he knew what we were
going to do?
(thinking aloud)
And where did he get those two crisp
hundred dollar bills?

TOM
They're on vacation. They have
money.

GAIL
And you said they got nervous when I
picked up the blue bag...

TOM
Gail, Roarke's going to be alright.
Let's not drive ourselves crazy by
making these guys more than they are.

GAIL
Wait a second, yesterday you were the
one telling me you thought there was
something wrong with them.

TOM
Yes. I didn't say I thought they
were criminals though. I don't think
Terry's a bad guy, he's just wrapped
up with Wade who's a creep... He's
right about the rapids.

He folds the map and puts it in his back pocket.

GAIL
I know where the rapids are. It's
not the river I'm worried about.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

At lunch Roarke will get back in our boat and then it's goodbye Wade and Terry.

63 EXT. WADE'S RAFT

63

Wade is rowing. Roarke is showing Terry how to cast.

WADE

Roarke...can you keep a secret?

ROARKE

Yeah.

WADE

Terry, hand me the blue bag.

TERRY

Wade...

WADE

Hand me the blue bag.

Terry unfastens the bright blue bag from where it is stowed and reluctantly passes it to Wade. Roarke is keenly interested in what's going on.

WADE

(to Roarke)

If I show you something, you promise you won't tell?

TERRY

(almost a whine)

Wade...

Wade silences him with a look.

WADE

(to Roarke)

Do you?

ROARKE

I promise I won't tell.

WADE

Not even your mother and father?

ROARKE

I promise.

Wade reaches his hand into the tightly-zippered bag. When it comes out, it is holding a .38 calibre pistol. Roarke's eyes go wide.

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE

Wow.

WADE

That's right.

ROARKE

Can I hold it?

WADE

Sure. Be careful though. It's loaded.

Roarke's eyes get wide. Wade hands him the pistol. The boy takes it reverentially. He is so excited he can hardly contain himself. He looks at Terry. Terry does not share his exuberance. He looks at Wade. If adoration had an expression, it's on Roarke's face now.

WADE

Keep it down low. Your mom might get mad.

With the pistol below the side of the raft, Roarke points it and makes subtle shooting sounds. Wade turns and looks at Gail's raft. She and Tom are both looking at them. Wade waves. They acknowledge the salutation with slight enthusiasm.

WADE

(to Roarke)

You better give it back now.

The boy hands him the precious object. Wade tucks it into the back of his waistband under his shirt.

ROARKE

Thanks, Wade.

WADE

What are friends for?

64 EXT. RIVER BANK

64

We follow the cascade of a waterfall down to find Roarke showering under the spray and Terry waiting to take his turn. Tom, Gail and Wade are watching. Roarke looks happy but the silence hangs heavy on the others. The rafts are pulled up on a narrow beach next to the river, which just beyond this point curves in a big "U". Gail watches the men out of the corner of her eye as she towel-dries Roarke's hair.

GAIL

What were you and the guys talking about?

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE

Things...

He steps away, pulls on a T-shirt, picks up his fishing rod and, with Maggie, starts toward the beach in an angle heading upstream.

ROARKE (CONT'D)

I'm going fishing.

GAIL

If you want to catch anything, your best chance at this time of day...

She points to a huge sugarloaf-shaped boulder on the far side of the river's "U".

GAIL

(continuing)

... would be in the shade of that big boulder down there. Take the path, right there.

Roarke reverses his direction.

In the falls, Tom offers some soap to Terry.

TOM

You want this?

TERRY

(after a quick check with Wade)

Sure.

He takes the soap. Tom leaves. Wade watches him make his way across the rocks to Gail.

WADE

I'm going to the can, keep an eye on them.

He picks up his shirt, shoes and a roll of toilet paper off a branch. Gail watches Wade disappear into the woods. Tom has his back to the Falls.

GAIL

Wade just went into the woods, but Terry's watching.

TOM

Where's Roarke?

GAIL

Look downstream.

(CONTINUED)

Across the rocky center of the "U", Tom can see Roarke and Maggie coming out of the trees on their way to the boulder.

GAIL
(continuing)
Terry's washing his hair, I'll go first...

Under the Falls, Terry wipes the soap out of his eyes and looks toward Gail and Tom. He can only see Tom. But he doesn't seem to be going anywhere. Terry then puts his head under the water and rinses the soap out of his hair. When he opens his eyes again, Tom is gone. For a moment, Terry doesn't know what to do. He steps up on the rocks for a better look, but he still can't see the beach or Tom or Gail. He turns his head and yells into the woods.

TERRY
Wade!

When there's no answer, he zigzags across the rocks to where Gail and Tom were standing. They're nowhere in sight and their raft is gone. He looks down river. There they are. Gail is rowing hard around the bottom of the "U". Then he sees their plan. They're heading for Roarke, who's fishing next to a huge boulder.

TERRY
(continuing)
Oh, shit! Oh, shit!
(yells toward the woods)
Wade!!!
(he looks back at the river)
Shit!

He struggles into his shoes and, without seeing the path that Roarke took, bounds down to the beach.

65 EXT. RAFT

65

Gail is rowing. Tom is seated in the back facing her.

GAIL
Terry's coming after us.

Tom looks back over his shoulder. Terry is running along the beach. They lose sight of him as he approaches a large deadfall.

TOM
We're gonna make it.

66 EXT. BEACH

66

Terry comes to a jittery stop at the deadfall. It's too high and too jumbled to climb over. And to go around the river end, he'd have to deal with the rocks in the water. He scrambles up the bank into the trees.

67 EXT. RAFT

67

Tom and Gail are closing in on Roarke.

ROARKE

(shouts)
Mom, nothing's biting here...

GAIL

(forced whisper)
Reel in your line, Roarke, we'll try
someplace else.

ROARKE

Why? You said this was a good place.

TOM

Reel it in, Roarke.

ROARKE

What's going on?

67A EXT. WOODS

67A

Terry is dodging between the trees and hurtling over logs.

67B EXT. RIVER

67B

Gail noses the raft onto the beach near Roarke and Tom jumps out.

TOM

Come on, Roarke.

ROARKE

(jiggling the rod)
It's stuck.

Tom grabs Roarke's line and breaks it.

ROARKE

What are you doing?!!

TOM

I'll explain later. Get in the raft!

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE

I don't want to ride with you! I hate you! I wanna ride with Wade and Terry...

68 EXT. WOODS

68

If anything, Terry has increased his speed. Branches whip his face. He stumbles but refuses to fall and charges on.

69 EXT. RIVER

69

Tom is moving Roarke toward the boat.

ROARKE

What about Maggie?

Before Tom can answer, there's an explosion of sound at the edge of the trees. Startled, Tom and Gail look in that direction. But it's only a covey of mountain quail bursting from cover. A moment later, Maggie leaps out barking at the quail.

GAIL

Here, Mags. Come on, girl.

Tom lifts Roarke into the raft and is about to get into it himself when:

WADE (O.S.)

What are you guys doing?

Tom and Gail and Roarke's heads whip around to see Wade calmly step out of the woods behind them.

GAIL

We were just gonna go on ahead and be alone for a while.

WADE

Oh...

Roarke looks from Wade to his parents. He gets it.

TOM

This is our vacation and we haven't been alone together all that much.

Terry bursts out of the woods and slows when he sees Wade and the family. He's slightly embarrassed.

TERRY

(panting)

I thought you guys were running out on us.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
No, not at all.

WADE
(looking at Tom)
I think that's exactly what they were
doing, Terry.

TOM
You're right. We were. It's not
working out between us.

WADE
Why? Because your son wants to be
with me instead of you?

TOM
Okay. We tried to do this in a
non-confrontational way, but it
didn't work out. I'm sorry. I'm
taking my family and we're going down
the river alone. That's what we're
going to do. We'll send somebody
back for you.

WADE
Who died and made you stud duck all
of a sudden... Tom? Not me, not
Terry.

GAIL
Rangers come down the river all the
time, Wade, you could end up getting
to Bridal Creek ahead of us.

WADE
What if I said I'm not going to let
you go?

Tom and Wade look at each other.

WADE
(continuing)
What would you do?

They hold for a beat longer, then Tom breaks eye contact
and turns to get into the raft. In a flash, Wade spins him
back and slaps him hard across the face. Tom's glasses are
jarred askew.

GAIL
(screams)
No!! Stop it!!

WADE
What would you do, stud?

(CONTINUED)

TOM
(straightening his
glasses)
I don't want to fight with you, Wade.

Wade slaps him again.

ROARKE
Wade!!!

GAIL
(starting off the raft)
That's enough!! Stop it!!!

With a look, Wade directs Terry to intercept her. He does.

WADE
(to Tom)
Whatever happens from now on is your
fault. I tried to be nice to you. I
tried to be nice to your family. And
what do you do? You try and run out
on me.

He slaps him again.

WADE
(continuing)
I'm drowning, Tom. You want to kick
me?

Wade slaps Tom again. This time the glasses are knocked
off. Gail charges, pushing past Terry. Terry grabs her
and, to Roarke's horror, they fall to the ground.

Maggie jumps out of the raft and starts barking, darting in
and out.

WADE
(continuing)
I'm pulling you down, Tom.

Wade raises his hand. Tom hits him in the face. It's a
good shot. Wade staggers back. Tom follows him swinging
wildly, driving Wade in front of him.

ROARKE
Hit him, Dad! Hit him!

Tom's awkward, but he gets lucky. One of his punches hits
Wade right where the jaw meets the neck and Wade goes down.
Tom stands over him, trembling.

TOM
It's over. I hit you, you hit me.
We're even. I'm going to take my
family and we're going to leave.

(CONTINUED)

WADE

(smiles)
No, you're not.

He starts to get up.

ROARKE

Look out, Dad. He's got a gun!

Gail and Tom react to this. Wade looks at Roarke, his smile changing. Then he turns his attention back to Tom.

WADE

You made me do this.

He feints a jab. Tom reacts directly into Wade's overhand right. Tom's knees buckle.

ROARKE & GAIL

Dad!!... Tom!!!

With the ease of a practiced boxer, Wade props him up.

WADE

It's not going to be that easy...

He steps back. Tom wobbles into an awkward fighting stance and begins to circle Wade.

GAIL

Don't, Tom! This is what he wants!
Don't!

Tom swings at Wade. Wade takes it high on the shoulder, steps to one side, and delivers a vicious hook to Tom's liver. Tom grunts and drops his hands. Wade jabs him twice in the face.

ROARKE

Don't, Wade!! Don't!! Stop!! He's
my dad!! Stop hitting him!!!

Blindly, Tom lunges at Wade and hits him on the side of the head with a looping haymaker, but there's no force behind the blow. Wade smirks, steps inside, and pounds Tom's kidneys. Tom throws his arms around Wade, trying to tie him up. Easily, Wade twists away and in desperation Tom charges him, but Wade is too fast. He pivots out of the way and hits Tom in the side of the face as he goes by. Tom falls to his knees.

TERRY

Stop it, Wade. He's had enough.

Wade comes around in front of Tom.

(CONTINUED)

WADE

Have you, Tom? Have you had enough?
Remember, your wife and kid are
watching...

Tom starts to stand up. Before he can, Wade hits him with a vicious right, left, right, left. Tom crumples over on his side.

Tears in his eyes, Roarke turns away.

GAIL

You touch him once more and I'll
never take you down this goddamn
river. You hear me. You will never
get down this river alive.

Bleeding and dazed, Tom struggles to his hands and knees.

WADE

This is not fun anymore.

He pulls his gun from his waistband at the small of his back, points it at Tom's head. Roarke notices his camera sitting on the dry pack next to him. He picks it up, and presses the "shoot" button. Silently, the waterproof camera begins to click off pictures of his father and Wade. Wade cocks the gun.

GAIL

Oh, God, no, please, please, Wade,
no.

WADE

I need your wife to get down the
river and I need your son to control
her. You, stud, and the dog are
expendable. And right now I think
I'll get rid of... the dog.

He swings the gun toward Maggie.

ROARKE

No!!!

The motion of Wade's arm causes Maggie to jump to one side. As Wade adjusts his aim, Gail throws a rock at the dog. Maggie jumps back. Wade's shot ricochets away.

ROARKE

Run, Mags!! Run!!

She looks at Roarke.

ROARKE

Run!!!

(CONTINUED)

Maggie dashes for the trees. Wade fires again and misses.

TERRY

Son of a bitch!

Wade looks at him.

TERRY

(continuing)

The kid's taking pictures.

Wade looks at Roarke and the camera.

WADE

Were you taking pictures of us,
Roarke?

ROARKE

Yes.

WADE

Give me the camera.

ROARKE

No.

WADE

Terry.

Roarke backs away as Terry moves toward him.

GAIL

Give him the camera, honey.

ROARKE

No.

TERRY

Come on, Roarke, I don't want to hurt
you.

ROARKE

Screw you.

He throws the camera into the middle of the river. It bobs
to the surface and is swept away. Wade drifts toward
Roarke.

WADE

(to Roarke)

You got guts, Roarke.

(gives him a quick, hard
slap)

But you shouldn't've broken your
promise.

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE
(fighting back the tears)
I thought you were a nice guy.

WADE
I am a nice guy, just a different
kind of nice guy.

70 EXT. BEACH - DAY

70

Wade's knife slashes through the air compartments of his raft. As the air escapes and the raft collapses:

WADE
Well, Terry, looks like we're going
to lose our deposit. Take this up
there with the rest of that shit...

Terry grabs the deflated raft and trudges up into the trees. Wade picks up the bright blue bag and goes over to the other raft. Gail, Tom and Roarke are tied to "D" rings, Gail on the bench, Tom and Roarke in front. A piece of tape holds Tom's glasses together.

WADE
Okay, Tom, since I'm the head of the
family now, here's what we're going
to do. We're going to haul ass down
this river. No sightseeing, no
fishing, and unfortunately... no more
skinny dipping.

71 EXT. WOODS

71

Terry dumps the raft next to some of Gail's discarded camping gear and throws dead branches and leaves over it all.

72 EXT. BEACH

72

GAIL
It's very dangerous being tied into
the raft this way. If we capsize, we
could drown.

WADE
It would be very dangerous for me if
you decided to capsize us on purpose.
Then I could drown. This just levels
the playing field.

During this, Terry has returned from the woods. He pushes the raft off and climbs in.

(CONTINUED)

WADE

Oh, by the way, Gail, you're going to get another chance to do The Gauntlet. We're not going to get off at Bridal Creek. Terry and I have a car waiting for us below The Gauntlet and that's where we're all going to go.

GAIL

That's suicide. I can't take you through The Gauntlet.

WADE

It's amazing what people can do when they have to, Gail. And between you and me, I think you're going to enjoy it... So start rowing...

Gail starts to row. In the bow of the boat, Roarke looks at his father's battered face, reaches over and takes his hand. Tom manages a painful smile.

73 EXT. RIVER BANK

73

A wavelet laps Roarke's camera into view. Then it drifts out the way it came in. We pull back to see that the camera is bobbing in a backwater, its strap caught on a piece of deadwood sticking up from below the surface. Although it's bright yellow, it's unseen by the people in Gail's raft passing in the center of the river.

74 EXT. RIVER - DAY

74

The raft is passing through a narrow canyon when Roarke notices something. He "signs" to his father. Tom looks up. It's Maggie. She's up above on the rim of the canyon.

74A EXT. CANYON RIM

74A

Maggie watches the raft, whines softly, and follows along at a gentle trot.

DISSOLVE TO:

75 EXT. RAFT - DAY

75

The river is slow here. Tom is rowing. Gail is in the front with Roarke.

(CONTINUED)

WADE
Sure is pretty country, isn't it,
Tom?

Tom doesn't answer. Wade smiles.

GAIL
(to Terry)
You guys robbed the livestock
auction, didn't you?

WADE
(answers for Terry)
I've always wanted an imagination
like that. It must be great.

TERRY
(laughs)
If we had, this would be an awfully
slow get away.

GAIL
But it would be smart, wouldn't it,
Wade?... Pull a robbery near the
border and everybody thinks you're on
your way into Canada. But instead,
you hop on a river; you're out of
sight for four or five days or longer
and when you come out at the bottom,
you're a couple hundred miles in the
opposite direction.

WADE
Gail, let's get one thing straight.
The less you know about us, the
happier you're all going to be.

GAIL
The money's in the blue bag, isn't
it?
(no answer)
How did you get wrapped up in this,
Terry?
(indicates Wade)
You're not like him.

Terry lowers his head.

GAIL
(continuing)
Frank didn't walk out, did he?...
He's dead.

WADE
There you go again, Gail, with
that...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WADE (CONT'D)

(drawls)
...e-magination. You're one of those
women who's just smart enough to be
dumb.

Gail just looks at him.

76 EXT. CANYON RIM - DAY

76

Maggie watches as far below the raft starts to angle in
toward shore just ahead of a stretch of rapids. She's
about to start down when something causes her to look
upstream. One loop in the river away, someone is
approaching in a canoe.

77 EXT. RAFT

77

Gail is now at the oars, heading for the bank.

WADE
What are you doing?

GAIL
Listen. Rapids up ahead. I have to
scout them.

Wade raises up in the boat and looks ahead.

WADE
No you don't.

GAIL
(pulling back into the
current)
The river's running high. It's
tricky and there are a lot of rocks,
but fine, since you're the expert
now, let's take our chances. If we
flip, though, Wade, and go under, I'm
gonna hang onto you.

Wade looks her in the eye. She's not kidding.

WADE
Okay.

78 EXT. RIVER BANK

78

Gail steps onto the beach. Tom and Roarke are still tied
in the raft.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
(massaging her ankle)
Aren't you going to let them stretch
their legs?

WADE
I like them where they are.

He grabs her arm and lets her lead him up some boulders
toward a rock ledge.

TOM
(whispers)
Wade's gonna kill us, Terry. Let us
go. You don't want to be part of
that.

TERRY
Shut up.

78A EXT. ROCK LEDGE

78A

Gail and Wade ascend the ledge, a good point from which to
survey the rapids that lie ahead. The roar of the white
water is quite loud. Wade glances back, is startled to
see:

HIS POV a young forest RANGER is coming around the bend
behind them in a canoe.

WADE
Terry! Cut them loose and bring them
up here.

78B EXT. RIVER BANK

78B

Terry pulls a Buck knife out of his boot, flips it open,
and cuts Tom and Roarke's bonds. He herds them up the
rocks.

RANGER (O.S.)
(calling out)
Hello, the beach.

78C EXT. ROCK LEDGE

78C

WADE
Hello, the canoe.

Wade watches as the Ranger beaches his canoe down by the
raft. Terry, Tom and Roarke join them.

(CONTINUED)

WADE
(continuing)
How you doing, Officer?

RANGER
About as good as an angel full of
pie.

Wade laughs. Then through his smile without moving his
lips, he speaks to his group.

WADE
(low)
Wade and Terry are old family
friends, and remember, Wade has the
gun.

As the ranger climbs up to the ledge.

RANGER
I've been trying to catch you folks
ever since I heard you were on the
river. But the office said there
were only three of you.

WADE
No. Been five right from the start.
Want to see our tags?

RANGER
No, I musta heard wrong.

No one disputes this. There's an awkward silence.

RANGER
(continuing)
You guys have been moving pretty
fast. I was starting to worry you'd
get to Bridal Creek and be gone.

WADE
Well, Gail's our guide and she makes
the trip real interesting, and once
she shows us one thing, we just
naturally want to move on to the next
as fast as we can.

RANGER
I can believe that. She sure made my
life interesting.

GAIL
Do I know you?

RANGER
I was madly in love with you.

(CONTINUED)

Gail smiles nervously and, with a wary eye to Wade, she folds her arms across her chest and steps forward for a closer look at the Ranger.

GAIL

I'm sorry... I... I'm embarrassed.
I'm drawing a blank... What's your name?

RANGER

Aw, you wouldn't remember even if I told you. It's Jonny Littlefeather. When I was a teenager you were queen of the river and I fell in love with you. We used to call you "Whitewater."

Jonny looks around, expecting a reaction. He doesn't get much.

GAIL

I remember that.

JONNY (RANGER)

Can you imagine what it was like seeing this beautiful woman run the river? For years, no other woman measured up.

WADE

(flat)
We never had nicknames where I came from... Certainly not white water --- white trash maybe. Hey, from what I hear, it's worse to be an Indian in this country than even black or Mexican --- is that right Ranger Littlefeather?

This was said so flat and cold that Jonny doesn't know if he's joking or not. So he kinda smiles in the silence that follows.

TOM

(he holds out his hand)
Tom... Nice to meet you. I'm the lucky guy who got her, I'm Whitewater's husband.

But he doesn't move and Jonny is forced to come to him to shake hands.

JONNY (RANGER)

Hi, Tom, what happened to your face?

TOM

Oh, I slipped on a rock...

(CONTINUED)

Tom's eyes go down to an S.O.S. his toe has drawn in the sand.

TOM
(continuing)
... and I... eh... met a tree.

His eyes go down again. Jonny doesn't follow his gaze, but Wade, who's been following Tom's head bobbing, does. He sees the S-O-S. And so does Gail. Her expression freezes.

TOM
(continuing)
And I really scraped up my hand,
look.

He indicates his hand. Below that we can see the S-O-S. Jonny looks down, but before the letters can register, Wade's boot covers them.

WADE
(offering his hand)
I'm Wade and this is Terry...

TERRY
Howdy.

JONNY
Nice to meet you.

WADE
We're old friends of the family, and
this is Roarke, Tom and Gail's son.

JONNY
Hi, Roarke, nice to meet you...

Roarke glumly shakes the outstretched hand.

JONNY
(continuing)
You're about the same age I was when
I first saw your mom riding the
river.

Roarke looks at his mom for some kind of clue as to what to do. She shakes her head slightly.

WADE
Well, now you've met everybody.

JONNY
I guess I have.

Another awkward silence descends on the group. It makes Jonny uncomfortable. But he tries again.

(CONTINUED)

JONNY

Ever think you'd move back here,
Gail?

GAIL

No.

Jonny waits for her to elaborate, but that's all he's going to get. He looks at the group.

JONNY

Well. I better be shoving off...

No one protests. There's something wrong, but he can't put his finger on what.

GAIL

I guess we'll see you at Bridal
Creek.

JONNY

No, I'm going back the other way. I
just came down to see you. It was
good seeing you again, Gail.

GAIL

Same here, Jonny.

He glances at the others, starts down the rocks. At his canoe, Jonny suddenly stops and turns around. Wade puts his hand on the gun at the small of his back.

JONNY

(calling back)
I almost forgot. Did anybody lose a
camera?

There is a moment of silence, during which Wade looks at Roarke, smiles.

WADE

Roarke! He found your camera!
(calls out to Jonny)
Is it a yellow waterproof one?

JONNY

Yeah.

He bends down, plucks it out of the canoe.

JONNY

Catch...

He tosses it up to Roarke.

(CONTINUED)

WADE
(to Roarke)
What do you say?

ROARKE
(to Jonny)
Thank you.

WADE
Can we give you something for that?

JONNY
Naw, it's part of the job.

He gets in the canoe and pushes off. On the water he raises his paddle.

JONNY
(continuing)
See you all later.

Wade watches him paddle upstream, then steps over to Roarke, takes the camera out of his hand and smashes it against a rock. The yellow camera explodes, with only the exposed film remaining in one piece. As he disdainfully flings the negative aside:

WADE
(to Terry)
Tie the kid in the boat.

Terry takes Roarke down to the raft. Wade, Tom and Gail watch the Ranger as he quickly paddles upstream. He is almost around the bend when suddenly, Gail breaks, running along the edge of the ledge.

GAIL
(yelling)
Come back!

WADE
Hey...hey! Stop!

Wade pulls his gun and moves after her.

WADE
(continuing)
Goddamn you bitch!

GAIL
Jonny! Come back!

But the Ranger doesn't look back, her yells drowned out by the roar of the white water. Gail reaches the end of the ledge.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL

Jonny! Jonny!

Wade grabs for her. Gail leaps off the ledge. Wade watches, stunned, as she drops through space, hits the water and disappears. He whirls around as Tom approaches him from behind.

WADE

Get back!

With Wade's pistol pointed at his gut, Tom backs up.

WADE

Come forward again and I'll kill you.

Terry has arrived. They scan the water for Gail.

TERRY

What do we do if we can't find her?

WADE

Shut up. Look down there...

His gesture is to an out-cropping of rocks that juts into the water twenty yards downstream from the ledge on which they are standing. Terry scrambles in that direction.

78D AT THE WATER'S EDGE

78D

Gail's head breaks the surface, up stream, at the base of the ledge. She is tucked in tight to the stone, out of sight from above. Pulling herself along, she gets to where she can see:

Roarke, tied in the raft. He sees her, too.

Gail pushes back from the rock to check the whereabouts of the others.

Wade is at the end of the ledge, his back to her, and Terry is way downstream.

WADE

Anything?

TERRY

No!

Tom spots Gail. Their eyes meet and hold. He breaks the moment by giving her a nod of his head. She goes for the raft. Gail's fingers tear frantically at the rope binding Roarke's wrists to the "D" ring. She gets him free.

GAIL

Come on...

(CONTINUED)

Taking him by the hand, she leads him over the rocks and up the slope away from the raft.

A FIGURE steps into frame, raises a pistol and squeezes off a shot. A bullet ricochets off a rock next to Roarke's head. Gail turns and looks back. Wade is looking at her down the barrel of the pistol.

WADE

Another step and Roarke takes a bullet.

79 EXT. ROCKY LEDGE (RAPIDS #5) - DAY

79

In front of and below us, the raft with Gail at the oars comes into view bouncing through the rapids.

80 EXT. RAFT (RAPIDS #5)

80

Although this is not a major rapids, Wade, in the stern next to Terry is still a nervous rider. His eyes dart from the waves to Gail, the waves to Gail. In the bow, a downcast Roarke sits on the floor with his back to the river. Tom, facing him, nudges his leg with his foot. Roarke looks up. Tom signs to him. Before he responds, Roarke checks out Wade. He's hidden behind Gail. Keeping watch in that direction, he takes the Swiss Army knife out of his pocket and slips it to his father, who quickly secrets it in his shoe. A look passes between father and son. They're a team now.

81 EXT. ROCKY LEDGE (RAPIDS #5)

81

As the raft comes out the far end of the rapids, Maggie trots up to the edge and whimpers as her family is carried away from her.

82 EXT. RIVER - BRIDAL CREEK TAKE-OUT - DAY

82

We hear the sounds of a classical guitar, and as our view clears a clump of trees on the bank, we see the GUITAR PLAYER sitting on a rock.

GAIL

That's Bridal Creek up ahead there.
The last take-out before The
Gauntlet.

ROARKE

Are Grandma and Grandpa gonna be
there?

(CONTINUED)

GAIL

No sweetie --- we weren't supposed to be there for another couple of days.

(to Wade)

Are we still continuing on?

Wade just looks at her. They are continuing on. Gail turns to Terry.

GAIL

I once knew a guy like Wade, thought there wasn't anything he couldn't do. Well, he was right, up to a point. When they fished him out the river below The Gauntlet, he wasn't exactly dead, but he wasn't exactly alive either. Last I heard, he's in a trailer behind his parents place. They call him The Bridal Freak.

As they float on past Bridal Creek, WE SEE the guitar player's friends folding up a raft and putting it in the back of a Jeep. The Guitar Player is strumming the same song he played at the put-in, but now it has a wistful, almost ominous quality. Our group watches as the point of no return slides further and further out of reach. Everyone watches, that is, excepting for Wade, who keeps his eyes on Gail as they float on towards the unknown, uncivilized portion of the river.

DISSOLVE TO:

83
THRU OMITTED
84

83
THRU
84

85 EXT. RIVER BANK (CAMP #5) - NIGHT

85

We're looking across the water at the campsite. A figure walks between us and the fire.

WADE

You take the next couple hours...
I'll relieve you about two...

TERRY

Right after Letterman.

The figure disappears into the shadows.

86 EXT. CAMPSITE (CAMP #5) - LATER

86

There are flames in the fire but it's mostly embers. Terry, propped up against a log, has dozed off. The gun is in his lap under a slack hand. Across the fire in front of him, the people he is supposed to be guarding, Tom and Gail, are lying next to each other, tied into separate sleeping bags. Gail is asleep. Tom is on his side with his knees drawn up. As we watch, he pokes the blade of Roarke's knife up through the fabric of his sleeping bag and slices the last rope that holds him prisoner. He checks Terry. He's still asleep. With his bag still around him, Tom lays quietly for a breath, then sneaks a hand out and puts it over Gail's mouth. She starts awake. They talk in urgent whispers.

TOM

Sh... sh...

(he holds up the knife)

Terry's asleep. We can get Roarke and...

He starts to cut her loose.

GAIL

(interrupting him)

No, we can't! There are cliffs on both sides of the river. If we get caught, Wade'll kill you this time.

TOM

(continuing to cut)

He's gonna kill us all after The Gauntlet anyway. We've got to do something.

GAIL

There's a good-size rapid a couple miles before The Gauntlet. I'll flip the raft. If we grab the 'D' rings, we could end up in the air space underneath and they'll be swept away.

TOM

(done cutting)

Will that work?

GAIL

What option do we have? It might work.

Tom moves toward her, as though to kiss her.

TOM

Gail, I ---

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
 (interrupts, puts her
 hand on his cheek, next
 to mouth, kisses him)
 I know. Me, too.

With sudden resolution, Tom pushes back the flap of his sleeping bag.

TOM
 I'm gonna try for the gun.

GAIL
 No!!

TOM
 If it doesn't work, you can still
 flip the boat.

GAIL
 Tom... don't.

TOM
 Sh... sh.

Tom approaches Terry and he almost gets to him, when Terry jerks awake and raises the gun at Tom.

TERRY
 Wade!!

Tom dives for the shadows. BLAM! Terry fires a shot after him. Along a:

86A ROCKY PENINSULA

86A

the shot clips rock around Tom, who is scrambling on all fours over the huge boulders. He pushes on, desperate.

87 AT THE CAMPSITE

87

Roarke raises his head as Wade rushes by to Terry.

WADE
 What happened?

TERRY
 He got away!

Wade grabs the gun and slaps Terry hard across the face.

WADE
 Can't you do anything right?!

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE
 (to Gail)
 Is Dad okay?

GAIL
 He went to get help.

WADE
 (to Terry)
 Watch them!

He picks the flashlight off the log and, turning it on, takes off after Tom.

88 EXT. ROCKY PENINSULA

88

Tom stops and looks around. He is pumped up, scared, and it shows. Behind him, the beam of Wade's flashlight. Ahead, the logical way to go, a rocky slope with some trees stretching away downstream. Instead, Tom darts into a narrow crevice between two boulders.

EXT. PENINSULA AREA

Wade scrambles over the rocks.

89 AT THE RIVER'S EDGE

89

Tom clambers between the huge boulders and emerges at the water. He crosses a small beach. As quietly as he can, Tom steps into the water. There's a sound behind him and he turns. The beam of Wade's flashlight is bobbing through the trees on the other side of the rocks downstream. Tom wades into the water along the rocks, keeping himself hidden. Across the river, he sees:

TOM'S POV: The base of a cliff, angling in.

Tom pushes off from the rock and, as silently as he can, he paddles across the river.

90 FURTHER DOWNRIVER

90

Wade arrives at a stand of saplings and stops. He shines his flashlight all around. No Tom. He charges back the way he came.

90A ON THE CLIFF WALL

90A

Tom's about 10 feet up, breathing hard. He looks up, reaches for another hold, tests it, then pulls.

91 AT THE BOULDERS

91

Wade squeezes between the boulders, following the path Tom took.

91A ON THE CLIFF

91A

Tom is trying to get to the shelter of a crevice up above.

92 ON THE BEACH

92

The flashlight picks up Tom's footprints in the sand. Wade follows them into the water and looks downstream. There's nothing but water. He cautiously wades in.

WADE

Tom!... Tom!... I know you're there, Tom!

93 ON THE CLIFF WALL

93

Tom strains to remain motionless while Wade waits for an answer.

94 IN THE RIVER

94

Wade waits, listening for any trace of Tom. He flashes his light again and steps into deeper water. He shines the flashlight across the river and up the cliff. The beam catches Tom near the crevice.

WADE

Oh, there you are.

Tom's fingers scratch at the rock, frantic to find the next handhold, frantic to get to the crevice.

WADE

(continuing)

How does it feel to know you only have a few more seconds to live?

Wade aims the gun at Tom, but because of the angle of the cliff, he can't get a good shot.

WADE

(continuing)

I don't have a very good shot here. I'm gonna have to step further into the river. You just hang on there, Tom.

(CONTINUED)

Wade inches step by step into the river. Tom edges his way toward the crevice. There are several loose stones beneath it. His head is suddenly illuminated by Wade's flashlight.

WADE

(continuing)

Ah, now I have a good shot. I'm gonna try and hit you in the spine right between your shoulder blades, okay? Ready?... Set?...

Tom's fingers whiten on the rock.

WADE

(continuing)

Go!

As Wade fires, holding the flashlight and the gun, he slips on a rock in the river. The beams waves off Tom. Tom's feet dislodge a boulder that hits the water with a huge SPLASH. Wade finds his footing and points his light in that direction. He whips the light back up at the ledge. There's no one there.

Hidden in the crevice, hanging by the tips of his fingers, Tom presses his face to the rock, trying to muffle his heavy breathing. The light leaves him. Wade turns the light back down to the river. The bubbles are swept away downstream. With a final look, satisfied, Wade turns and goes.

Tom, barely managing to hang on, allows himself to peek out of the crevice. He sees the beam of Wade's flashlight heading back towards the camp. Tom silently moves back to where he's visible, where he can get a foothold. He looks up. The massive slab of granite glistens in the moonlight---it's surface unbroken but for a few cracks and chutes.

95 EXT. RIVER BANK

95

Terry, Gail and Roarke watch Wade, gun in hand and wet from the waist down, come back into the campsite.

WADE

(to Gail, pointing with the gun)

Get back in your bag.

(to Terry)

Why is she still out? Tie her in. The kid, too.

ROARKE

Where's my dad?

Shivering, Wade kicks the fire alive.

(CONTINUED)

WADE

He's dead.

TERRY

Dead?!

Gail's face goes white.

ROARKE

(starts to cry)
You killed my dad?

TERRY

Why'd you kill him?!

WADE

He was trying to get away, okay? He fell.

Gail hugs a sobbing Roarke against her.

GAIL

(to Wade)
Where is he?

TERRY

So what if he got away? He couldn't have gone anywhere. We can't walk out, how could he?

WADE

Hey, you want to make the decisions? Here's the gun. Go ahead.

TERRY

(loud)
When we started this, you told us no one would get hurt. Now three people are dead.

WADE

Whose fault is that? Did I tell you to frisk the guard? Huh? Did I tell you to frisk the guard? If you'd frisked the guard like I told you, Frank would be alive. If you'd stayed awake, Tom would be alive. Frank came to me because he wanted to pull a job and didn't know how. I brought you in because you were broke; and I've been cleaning up your messes ever since. And don't think if we're caught you're not going to prison right alongside me. Now shut your fat mouth and tie the kid in the tent.

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

You shouldn't'a shot the guard, and
you shouldn't'a killed Tom. And you
said the river was gonna be easy.
Come on, Roarke.

ROARKE

No! No, Mom, no! No!

GAIL

Go ahead, honey. Go ahead. I'll be
right there.

Terry carries a screaming, struggling Roarke to the tent.

GAIL

(continuing; to Wade)
I want to see Tom.

WADE

Can't help you there. He fell in the
river.

GAIL

Then he might be alive.

WADE

I shot him, Whitewater. He's dead.
Sorry.

Gail locks eyes with Wade and stares hate into his soul,
then turns away and goes to sit on the log next to the
sleeping bag.

WADE

(continuing)
No tears?... You're tough, or things
were worse between you and Tom than I
thought.

GAIL

(softly)
I'm gonna kill you, Wade.

WADE

(smiles)
I don't think so.

GAIL

I told you if you touched Tom again,
you'd never get down this river
alive.

Wade comes over, squats down in front of her, presses the
gun gently between her breasts against her heart, and cocks
it.

(CONTINUED)

WADE
I could kill you and Roarke and bury
you right here.

GAIL
(calm)
Go ahead. Don't keep telling me how
tough you are, Wade. Show me. Come
on, do it. You got two bullets left.

A moment passes between them, then Wade pulls the gun away.

WADE
I wish I had met you ten years ago.
He stands up.

WADE
(continuing; to Terry,
who's returning from the
tent)
Tie her in. There's a couple hours
before dawn; we leave then. Fall
asleep again, prison'll start looking
good.

Wade heads back to his tent.

96 EXT. CLIFF WALL - NIGHT

96

Tom is about ten feet higher than when we last saw him. Climbing in the dark, he clings to the edge of the cliff next to the crevice. He loses his hold, his hand slips, he falls. He manages to grab onto a dead tree trunk, wedged into the crevice at a crazy angle by some long ago high water. Clinging to the dead wood, he pulls himself up. He uses the trunk of the tree as a bridge and crosses the crevice. Once again, he starts to climb.

97 INT. GAIL & ROARKE'S TENT

97

Gail sits on their sleeping bags, holding Roarke, stroking his hair. They look out the flap of the tent at the glittering night sky. Roarke is in shock.

ROARKE
Mama, 'member what Wade said about
people staying close to the earth
cause... cause they died in a bad
way?

GAIL
Yes, honey.

(CONTINUED)

ROARKE

Do you think that's true? I mean, do you think if I said something to Daddy that he could hear me?

GAIL

What did you want to say to him?

ROARKE

Well, it's just that I wanted him to know... I wanted him to know that... even though it might've seemed like I wanted another type of father --- I didn't --- I mean, I didn't hate him like I said.

GAIL

He knew that.

ROARKE

I just wanted to make him feel bad like I did... I mean, daddy? Even if I can't be around you anymore, I wish that you could be around me. I mean, if you can't go to heaven yet, you know?

Beat. Gail, moved, squeezes Roarke to her.

ROARKE (CONT'D)

Do you think he heard me, Mom?

GAIL

(whispers)
I'm sure he did, sweetie.

98 EXT. CLIFF WALL

98

Tom pulls himself up onto a small ledge. Leaning out precariously, he tries to see where he has to go. He's stuck. He settles down and waits for daylight.

DISSOLVE TO:

The first shaft of light knifes over the horizon.

99 EXT. THE RIVER BANK - DAWN

99

All is quiet at the camp.

100 EXT. CLIFF WALL

100

Tom is still on the ledge. After cautiously checking out the silent camp, he starts to climb.

100A EXT. RIVER BANK (CAMP #5)

100A

Wade goes over and kicks Terry awake. Beyond them, down river, Tom is visible, silhouetted against the dawn sky.

101 EXT. CLIFF WALL

101

Tom climbs as fast as he can, trying to get around the side of a ledge to where he cannot be seen from the camp. He dislodges a small rock. He tries to catch it and dislodge another. They fall down and hit the river with a splash. Tom looks toward the camp.

101A TOM'S POV

101A

Wade is saying something to Terry, angry words, indistinguishable from this distance. Neither man looks over at the sound of the splash.

Tom climbs around to the other side of the ledge where he is out of sight.

102 EXT. RIVER BANK - DAWN

102

On his way to the raft with the blue bag, Terry crosses Wade on his way back to camp. When Terry gets to the raft, Gail is climbing out. He glances over his shoulder. Wade has reached camp where Roarke is shaking out a sleeping bag.

TERRY

(to Gail, out of the side
of his mouth)

I'm not going to let him hurt you or
Roarke.

GAIL

I wish you had the balls to stop him,
Terry. But if you did, you'd have
stopped this whole thing a long time
ago.

She continues up the bank toward the woods.

WADE

(coming down the beach
with another load)

Where you going?

GAIL

Guess.

(CONTINUED)

WADE
(puts his hands on
Roarke's shoulder)
You got two minutes.

Gail enters the woods.

103 EXT. GRANITE CLIFF

103

Tom slowly climbs the cliff. Below him, a shear drop down to the rocks and the river. Above, about a hundred feet to the top of the precipice.

104 EXT. WOODS (NEAR CAMP #5)

104

Gail casually picks up a long dry branch and, after checking to make sure she can't be seen, snaps it in two. As she's feeling the point of the break with her thumb (it's sharp), she looks around for the second part of her plan. There it is. Two saplings about six feet apart. She pulls a spool of mono filament fishing leader from her shirt pocket, lays aside the dry branch, and bends down to tie one end of the line around one of the trees about shin high; then loops it around the other tree and brings it back.

104A EXT. GRANITE CHUTE

104A

Tom has a rhythm going. Right foot... push up right side. Left hand... find a hand hold. Tom looks up. He's still got a long ways to go. Left foot... it slips. Tom drops six inches before he's able to stop himself. That was scary.

105 EXT. RIVER'S EDGE

105

Wade, standing next to the raft, looks up from his watch.

WADE
(shouts toward the woods)
Fifteen seconds!

106 EXT. WOODS

106

Gail finishes tying off the mono filament.

WADE (O.S.)
Ten... nine... eight...

Gail picks up her sharp stick and breaks it in half again, creating another sharp end.

(CONTINUED)

A body's length in front of the trip line, she sticks this end deep into the ground, made wet by the storm two days ago.

WADE (O.S.)
(continuing)
Three... two... one...

Gail straightens up and gives her trap the once-over. Satisfied, she turns toward the beach.

GAIL
Coming!

107 OMITTED

107

108 EXT. RIVER BANK

108

With a sharp stone, Roarke is carving a cross in the bark of a tree over the word "DAD" when Wade steps up behind him.

WADE
Let's go.

Roarke ignores him.

WADE
(continuing)
Come on.

Roarke finishes the cross and looks defiantly at Wade.

ROARKE
Don't touch that.

He stalks off toward the beach. Wade contemplates the memorial for a moment, then decides it's no threat to him and scans the rest of the camp for any messages.

109 EXT. CLIFF WALL

109

Tom, his right hand extended above him, is beginning to shake. He throws up his left hand, finds a hold, and moves that way. By leaning out, he is able to look around the edge of a promontory and see:

109A ON THE BEACH - TOM'S POV

109A

The group is getting ready to get in the raft.

109B EXT. CLIFF WALL

109B

Tom reacts. He looks up. Another thirty feet to go. Nowhere to hide. When the raft floats to a position even with him, he will be fully exposed. Frantic, he moves back to the right and resumes climbing. He slips and slides part way down.

109C EXT. RIVER BANK

109C

Terry is in the raft tying ropes to the "D" rings. Standing on the rocks near the bow, Gail, fiddling with a dry pack, reaches out and stops Roarke as he starts to get into the raft. He looks questioningly at her. She signs something to him. They look back at Wade, who's now coming toward them from the campsite. The moment his foot hits the beach:

GAIL

Now!

She grabs Roarke's hand and together they sprint up the bank and into the woods.

WADE

(drawing the pistol)

Hey!!

He runs down the beach after them.

WADE

(continuing; passing the raft, to Terry)

Stay here!

110 EXT. WOODS

110

Crashing through the bushes, Gail looks over her shoulder to make sure Wade is following. He is and he's quickly closing the distance between them. Ahead are Gail's two saplings. Holding Roarke's hand, she deftly slaloms around them. Wade sees he can head them off if he cuts between the two trees. So he does. One of his shins hits the trip wire Gail rigged earlier. He falls forward out of control. The sharp stick rushes up to meet him. WHOOMP! He hits the ground and lays still. Gail and Roarke stop. Roarke stares at Wade in horror.

GAIL

Stay here.

She moves quickly to kick the gun from Wade's extended hand. Her foot goes back, it swings forward. WHAP!!, Wade's free hand catches her ankle. He pulls up hard, flipping Gail on her back.

(CONTINUED)

Wade pushes himself to his knees and looks at his chest. There's a hole in the left side of his shirt with blood around it. The stake scraped between his arm and chest. He looks back at the trip wire and then at Gail.

WADE
Good idea, but you missed. Come here, Roarke.

GAIL
Not him, Wade. Hurt me.

WADE
(points the gun at Gail)
Come here, Roarke.

The boy does.

WADE
(continuing)
Give me your hand.

The boy does. Wade bends back the little finger till it almost breaks.

GAIL
(softly)
Please...

Wade lets go of the finger.

WADE
Next time I break it. Understand?

Gail nods.

111 EXT. CLIFF WALL

111

Hands raw, breathing coming in compressed gulps, Tom struggles upward.

111A ON THE BEACH

111A

They tie Gail and Roarke into the raft.

111B EXT. CLIFF

111B

Tom has another twenty feet to go. He looks around the edge of the promontory.

AT THE RIVER'S EDGE - TOM'S POV

Terry pushes the raft out into the river and clambers aboard.

111C EXT. CLIFF

111C

Tom climbs harder and faster toward the shelter of the table top at the top of the cliff.

111D ON THE RAFT

111D

Each of the grim companions is caught up with his or her own thoughts, unaware of the desperate race going on.

EXT. CLIFF Tom is stuck. His feet are on a little ledge but he has no place within reach that he can step. Panic is in his eyes. Above and to the right is a small scrub pine, somehow rooted in a crack of the cliff. Tom looks out and down.

111E ON THE RIVER - TOM'S POV

111E

The raft is approaching the bend. When they round that they'll be right under Tom.

111F EXT. CLIFF

111F

He eyes the scrub pine once more. It's his only chance. Tom gathers himself for a do-or-die leap. He rocks his body gently against the wall...once, twice...like a kid on a swing trying to get higher. On the third swing he launches himself from his tenuous perch and sails through the air. His hands grab the tree trunk. The little pine creaks. Some of the roots pull out from the cliff, but the tree holds.

111G EXT. RIVER

111G

The raft is coming around the bend.

111H EXT. CLIFF

111H

Tom skitters up the last few feet to where he can get his hands on the ledge. He pulls himself up and throws himself over the ledge, dislodging a few small rocks.

112 EXT. RIVER

112

Gail and the others look in the direction of the rocks hitting the water---fish jumping?---but Tom is nowhere to be seen.

112A EXT. CLIFF TABLETOP

112A

Tom is gasping for air, trying to be quiet. On his hands and knees, he peeks over the edge of the cliff.

112B DOWN BELOW - TOM'S POV

112B

The raft is drifting by, his wife and child oblivious to his presence.

112C EXT. CLIFF TABLETOP

112C

Tom watches them, his mind racing. Suddenly, he is hit from behind as an animal CRASHES into him, knocking him prone. It is Maggie. Frantic, she paws at him, whimpering, licking. He pulls her away from the edge.

TOM

Shhh...shhh...

She licks his face, his neck, his ears. Tom starts to laugh, quietly. She can't kiss him enough. He strokes her, trying to calm her down.

TOM

It's okay, Maggie, it's okay...

112D ON THE RAFT

112D

Roarke looks over at his mother. She gives him a small smile of support.

112E EXT. THE RIVER - TOM'S POV

112E

The raft continues down river, away from the cliff.

112F EXT. CLIFF TABLETOP

112F

Tom and Maggie watch them go.

TOM

We've got to get ahead of them, Mags,
and the only way to do that...

He turns and looks up.

112G CANYON WALL - TOM'S POV

112G

The rocky slope, and then pine trees, goes up to the sky.

TOM (O.S.)

...is up and out. Come on...

Tom and Maggie start the climb.

112H EXT. RIVER - DAY

112H

The raft bumps through a small rapids. Roarke and Terry are in front. Gail is rowing. Wade's in back.

113 EXT. RAFT

113

WADE

You wouldn't be stupid enough to flip us in The Gauntlet, would you?

Gail looks at him, looks away and keeps on rowing. He taps her on the knee.

WADE

(continuing)

Would you?

GAIL

If Roarke and I are going to die anyway, why shouldn't I take you and Terry with us.

WADE

(smiles)

You aren't going to do that. And you know why? Because you can't be absolutely 100% positive that you're going to die today. That someone's not going to appear on the river at the last possible instant and rescue you. If you kill yourself, there's no chance of that. Right, Gail? We're all going to die, but we hang on to the very last moment... don't we, Gail? It's a hell of a system, huh?...

They're staring at each other now.

GAIL

Unless... unless you just have no idea what a woman would do once you've killed her husband and threatened her child. Unless all your instincts about what a person will or won't do have shriveled up and died because on a gut level,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GAIL (CONT'D)

Wade, if I may call you a word that's the equivalent of someone up to their ass in water---on a gut level you and I both know that you're something so perverted and other, that there's no way in hell you can predict what anyone will do that's not as cold and self-serving as yourself. All you can really know is that you'll kill and strut and bully for a lousy parcel of cash --- but the rest of us, Wade? I wouldn't be so sure.

WADE

(breaking eye contact,
shouts)

Terry! Keep an eye out for Tom's body. We don't want him drifting into any pick-up points before we do.

Terry doesn't answer.

GAIL

There are no pick up points anymore, Wade.

114 EXT. CANYON SIDE - SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY

114

Tom and Maggie trudge up the steep slopes, first through rocks, then through a forested area.

115 EXT. RAFT

115

In the bow, Terry whispers to Roarke.

TERRY

I'm sorry about all this.

ROARKE

No, you're not.

TERRY

I have to go along with Wade. He didn't mind prison, he doesn't seem to mind anything. But I don't think I'd last a week.

ROARKE

I don't care.

WADE

Terry, get up here, I want you to relieve Gail.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL

I'm fine.

WADE

(looking at his map)
I want you rested for The Gauntlet.

116 EXT. CANYON PLATEAU - DAY

116

Tom and Maggie are scaling a rocky, knoll-like plateau. Tom leads Maggie through a narrow bouldered area. As he pulls himself up to the crest, he is startled by sudden movement right in front of him. He is face-to-face with a wayward BEAR CUB. The cub is just as surprised as he is. The cub growls at him and scurries away across the crest. Tom laughs, turns to Maggie.

TOM

Did you see that...?

He is JOLTED by a sudden ROAR. Turning back, he is confronted by a MOTHER BEAR, rearing up on two legs to protect her offspring. Tom flattens himself against a boulder, paralyzed with fear. The bear roars again. Maggie bolts forward, getting between Tom and the bear, barking furiously. The bear takes in this new opponent, the snarling, barking dog, and roars again. Tom discreetly withdraws, moving around the side of the boulder.

TOM

Come on, Maggie, come on...

With a final series of barks, Maggie follows him, leaving the plateau to the bear and its cub. Tom rubs Maggie's head.

TOM

You sure showed her! Let's go...

Proudly, Maggie runs on ahead.

117 EXT. RIVER

117

The surface is so still here, it looks like the raft is floating through the sky.

117A EXT. TOP OF CANYON - DAY

117A

First Maggie and then Tom reaches the crest. Tom pulls out his map, consults it, then looks down at the river far below at the base of the canyon.

TOM'S POV: The river winds slowly away, then makes a wide, looping turn to the right where it disappears.

(CONTINUED)

From this distance, the raft is very small

TOM

Here's where we get ahead of them,
Maggie...All we have to do is get
over that...and pick up the river
where it comes around.

"That" is the top of a forested ridge. Tom turns and takes
a last look down at the raft.

TOM

Go slow, honey, go slow...

He and Maggie start for the ridge.

118 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY

118

Terry is rowing now, straining on the oars. A low, whining
noise begins to be heard. They all look up and at each
other. It is the sound of a single engine aircraft. But
where is it coming from? VAROOM!, everyone's attention
snaps up and around as a small Beechcraft appears from
above the canyon walls. Gail looks from the airplane to
Wade, whose eyes seem to be challenging her to do
something. She doesn't, and the plane vanishes as suddenly
as it appeared, only the sound of the motor droning on.

119 EXT. RIDGE - DAY

119

Tom hears it, too. Running through the trees, Tom stops,
trying to determine its direction. Maybe there's a chance.
He sprints to the highest point he can see: a boulder
jutting at an angle out of the woods. He's just reached
the top when VAROOOM!. Tom jumps up and down and waves his
arms, yelling, as it appears. Maggie barks. The plane
passes over this little spit of land that he's on and keeps
on going. It didn't see him. All Tom can do is watch it
go.

120 EXT. RIVER - DAY

120

The prow of the raft surges through the water.

121 EXT. RAFT

121

In the seat, Terry strains behind the oars. Splash...
pull. Splash... pull. On the opposite side of the stern
from Wade, Gail is looking over the gunnel at her distorted
reflection in the water; and from that she looks longingly
at Roarke, sitting alone in the bow.

122 EXT. RIDGE RIM

122

Tom and Maggie slip, slide down the shale side of a butte. Tom is dirty, drenched in sweat and breathing hard. They hurry on.

123 EXT. RIVER

123

Splash... pull. Splash... pull. Splash...pull. Terry continues to plow the raft through the water.

124 EXT. RIDGE RIM

124

Tom and Maggie bound up and down the contours of the terrain.

125 EXT. CANYON RIM

125

Tom and Maggie trot out onto a windswept point and look down the river. There's no raft, but in the near distance the white water of a big rapids. Clutching the stitch in his side, Tom steps to the other edge of the tip and looks down. There below him on the river, just on the verge of rounding the point, is Gail's raft. Tom looks back at the rapids, then pulls out his map, glances at it, glances at the terrain around him, then folding the map:

TOM

Gail's gonna flip the raft in those rapids, Mags.

126
THRU OMITTED
127

126
THRU
127

128 EXT. RIVER (BEFORE RAPIDS #6)

128

The raft rounds the point and, with Terry rowing, ungainly pulls away from us.

129 EXT. RAFT (BEFORE RAPIDS #6)

129

A low rumble grows beneath the splash of the oars. Wade acknowledges it first.

WADE

Terry.

He holds up his hand for Terry to stop rowing. Terry does. Now that it's quiet, the rumble is louder and we can feel it getting closer.

(CONTINUED)

Leaning on Terry, Wade cautiously stands up for a look down river. He can see the spray hanging over the rapids.

WADE
(continuing; to Terry)
Get in the front with the kid.
(to Gail)
You're up.

Gail stands and moves to the seat, but before she sits down:

GAIL
Roarke!

Roarke turns around. Without trying to hide it, Gail "signs" a long message to him.

WADE
Hey, what are you doing?!

ROARKE
(as his mom finishes)
Okay.

WADE
What did you tell him?

GAIL
(sitting at the oars)
Feeling a little nervous, Wade --- afraid there might be something out there that's not impressed with your swagger and your gun and your threats to small children.

WADE
(rising threateningly)
I asked you a question, and I asked it nice.

Shifting her weight from foot to foot, Gail rocks the raft violently from side to side. Wade immediately drops to his knees.

GAIL
Sit down, Wade.

Wade stares angrily at her, then:

WADE
Stay close to the kid, Terry. Gail thinks she's going to flip us in the rapids. I don't think she has the guts.
(to Gail)
Give me your foot.

(CONTINUED)

She does. He takes the rope attached to the "D" ring and cinches it tight around her ankle. Gail winces.

130 EXT. RIDGE RIM

130

On bended knee, with Maggie looking on, Tom focuses the sun's rays through the magnifying glass from Roarke's Swiss Army knife onto a small pile of twigs and leaves. From them comes a tiny tendril of smoke and then a burst of flame.

131 EXT. RIVER (RAPIDS #6)

131

Gail brings the raft alongside the tongue of the rapids. She feathers it there, eyeballing a course through the troughs. When she's decided:

132 EXT. RAFT

132

GAIL

Get ready, Roarke.

Roarke grabs hold of the "D" ring, as does Terry. Gail pulls hard into the rip of the tongue. Trying to hide his fear, Wade hunkers down and searches for handholds on the slick rubber.

GAIL

(continuing)

Scared, Wade?

Wade's too focused on what's coming up to answer. The first wave they hit breaks over them. They don't take on much water, but everyone's drenched. Gail finds her line through the chaos. But it doesn't lead to safety, it's heading straight for the deepest trough and the biggest wave in the rapids. Going up the side of the wave before that one, she slews the raft sideways. She is going to flip them. Wade is about to go swimming. And he knows it. At the top of the wave:

ROARKE

(screams)

Mom!!

Gail darts a glance at him, then looks where he's looking. There are white puffs of smoke rising off the top of the ridge. It's a signal. The raft hangs as if suspended on top of the wave. Gail reacts. Then the bottom drops out from under the raft and sideways it plunges into the deepest trough in front of the biggest wave in the rapids. They're careening up the face; the high edge of the raft begins to tip over. Terry screams!!! The sound brings Gail back to now.

(CONTINUED)

Deftly, she buries her wave-side oar in the crest and heaves back on it. The raft explodes through the curl; the spray stings their faces; but they're out of harm's way.

133 EXT. RIDGE RIM

133

When Tom, who is crouched down holding his shirt stretched between two sticks over his smoky fire, sees Gail punch through the wave, he jumps and whoops for joy.

134 EXT. RIVER

134

Gail bobs the raft out of the rapids.

135 EXT. RAFT

135

In the calm water, Gail releases the oars and, holding her face in her hands, bends over as if to catch her breath.

WADE

(his bravado returned)

I knew you couldn't do it.

Gail, a slight smile on her face, unfolds herself.

GAIL

You're right, Wade. You're always right.

She turns to Roarke and "signs".

WADE

Stop that!

Grinning, Roarke "signs" back. Wade jerks Gail's rope.

WADE

(continuing)

Do that again and Terry breaks the kid's hand.

136 EXT. RIDGE RIM

136

With his shirt back on, Tom finishes throwing dirt on the kicked-apart fire.

TOM

We gotta get to The Gauntlet before they do, Mags.

He breaks into a run, going inland away from the river. Maggie is right with him.

137 EXT. RIVER

137

The raft, with Gail at the oars, moves smoothly past us.

138 EXT. RAFT

138

GAIL

When we get to The Gauntlet, I'm going to have to scout it.

WADE

No.

GAIL

I'm not trying to trick you, Wade. The Gauntlet's much bigger than anything you've seen, bigger than anything you can imagine.

TERRY

Is there any way we can walk around it?

GAIL

No.

WADE

Okay, you can scout it, but Roarke stays tied to me.

GAIL

(slightly sarcastic)

Thank you, Wade. One other thing, in The Gauntlet I'm going to tell you to move from one side of the raft to the other, to shift the weight, and when I tell you, you're going to have to do it fast. And you're going to have to paddle as hard as you can.

WADE

I think we can handle that --- right, Ter?

GAIL

I realize that you don't like taking orders from anyone --- much less a woman, Wade, and I'm not suggesting that you attempt to enjoy following my direction --- I'm simply suggesting that you do. We're all going to have to work together if we're going to get through this thing.

(CONTINUED)

WADE

Why are you suddenly so anxious to get us through?

GAIL

I don't think you know me well enough to determine when I'm being anxious and when I'm being efficient. Ready for our first drill. Now set.

139 EXT. BURNED-OUT FOREST

139

We watch the shadows of Tom and Maggie as they strobe through the blackened trees until Tom and Maggie themselves come into view. Maggie's tongue is hanging out and Tom's face is beginning to show the strain of his journey.

140 EXT. RIVER - DAY

140

Wade and Terry are positioned at the front of the raft, Roarke behind Gail. The two men have oars.

GAIL

Left...

Terry and Roarke react immediately, throwing themselves to the left. Wade's a little late.

GAIL

'Right...'

In unison, Roarke, Wade and Terry throw themselves to the right of the raft.

GAIL

(continuing)

'Left'.

141 EXT. GRANITE MESA

141

Tom and Maggie are running across a flat rock when suddenly Maggie starts barking and bursts ahead. She stops at a long, wide crevasse in their path. Warily, Tom comes up behind her. She barks at him to stay back. The crevasse is a roiling cauldron of vipers. Maggie keeps herself between the snakes and Tom as they carefully skirt their way around the area and continue on.

142 EXT. ASPEN GROVE

142

The trees baffle the sound, but there's the vibration of something big in the air. Although Tom and Maggie are tired, they're still making good time.

(CONTINUED)

In a dappled patch of sunlight, they pause and listen. They can hear it now: the distant but constant thunder of a giant rapids.

TOM
We're almost there...

143
THRU OMITTED
146

143
THRU
146

147 EXT. GORGE RIM - DAY

147

Tom and Maggie descend through the trees, going at breakneck speed, Tom using the occasional boulder or tree to check his momentum.

Tom slams on the brakes and throws himself to the ground. Maggie crashes into him. Two steps in front of them, is the edge of a precipice that drops 30 feet straight into the river, below The Gauntlet. Tom twists violently onto his stomach and grabs whatever he can to halt their slide. One of his feet is hanging in space when they finally stop. As Tom carefully pulls it back onto land, Maggie backpedals away from the drop. Tom gets to his feet and scans the area. They've reached a dead end.

TOM
(to Maggie)
We either look for a way down or we jump. And we don't have time to go looking.

Tom moves to the edge. Maggie follows, warily.

TOM
You ready, Maggie? You with me?
(she barks)
All right, on three... One... Two...
Three!

He jumps. Maggie doesn't. Tom falls through the air, hits the water and surfaces unharmed. Maggie runs around in little circles, whimpering, and looking down at Tom, who is treading water.

TOM
(calling up)
Come on, Maggie. Come on, girl...

Maggie backs away from the edge.

TOM
(calling up)
Maggie, come! COME!

(CONTINUED)

She does. She runs at the ledge and leaps into space. Legs flailing, running on air, she falls to the water. She comes up again, eyes wide. Tom is beside her.

TOM

Good, girl! That's the first time
you've ever minded me...

He starts swimming for the opposite shore, Maggie dog-paddling beside him.

148 EXT. RAFT

148

Gail is still at the oars, shouting instructions at Wade and Terry, who are practicing paddling from alternate sides.

GAIL

Paddle. Harder! You're gonna have
to do better than that, boys.
Listen...

They stop paddling. Low and omnimous, they hear a muted roar in the distance.

GAIL

The Gauntlet's still over a mile
away...Now left! Right!

They go back to high siding with renewed vigor.

149 OMITTED

149

150 EXT. RIVER BELOW GAUNTLET

150

Tom and Maggie come out of the trees, moving upstream now, and start across an open, rocky shelf. The roar of white water is very loud. They pass by an abandoned mine sight, --- a shaft cut into the hillside, rusty equipment, cables running across to an island. Tom keeps moving upstream, drawn by the roar of the water. Coming around a rock ledge, he stops when he sees:

151 THE GAUNTLET - TOM'S POV

151

White water is pouring out of a narrow canyon. The waves are huge, the force unbelievable.

TOM

My God...

(CONTINUED)

Tom is looking at the bottom of the run; he can only imagine what lies above, between the narrow walls of granite. Where the river opens, it is joined by another, coming in from the right. This bigger river keeps going, separated from the mine sight by a small tributary, almost a lagoon, that breaks off and flows around an island. It is to this island that the abandoned cables are strung. At the point of the island, the bow as it were, pointing upstream, a series of Indian petroglyphs are etched on the granite. Just below them, sitting on a rock shelf where it was deposited by some long ago high water, is the trunk of a tree, white with age.

Tom takes it all in. He looks about, frantically trying to think of something, to come up with a plan. He comes up with at least the beginning of one.

He runs to the slow water of the lagoon, splashes in, and wades-swims across to the island. Maggie follows.

152 EXT. RIVER ABOVE GAUNTLET

152

Gail has pulled the raft up next to a rocky shelf. Terry hops out and she tosses him a rope.

GAIL

This is the best place to look from.
I just want to see how high it's
running.

With Terry holding the raft, Gail scrambles out. She starts up the rocky incline toward the point. Wade gets out too.

WADE

(to Terry)
Stay here with the brat.

He follows her. They are no sooner out of sight than a canoe comes into view. It is Jonny, the ranger. Terry takes out his knife, shows it to Roarke, then holds it behind the kid's back.

TERRY

(soft, to Roarke)
If you love your mother, you better
not say anything.

Jonny pulls alongside the raft.

JONNY

Hello, again. I should've known.
Where's Gail? She's up top, right?

Terry nods. Jonny climbs out of the canoe, gives a line to Terry.

(CONTINUED)

JONNY
Mind holding this, too?

153 EXT. ISLAND BELOW GAUNTLET

153

Tom breaks a rusty length of iron from the tower to which the cable is strung. He scrambles down to the dead tree lying across the front tip of the island just below the petroglyphs. Using the point of the iron, he begins cutting away at the dead wood. The tree trunk, almost like a huge arrow, is pointing at the small inlet to the left of the island and the mine beyond.

154 THE ENTRANCE TO THE GAUNTLET

154

The waves are hurricane size. As it races through the narrow canyon, the river drops 120 feet in a little over a quarter of a mile. It's fast and truly, truly terrifying.

155 EXT. LOOK OUT POINT ABOVE GAUNTLET

155

Gail and Wade are on the point looking down. He is mesmerized by the water. But Gail is studying it with purpose. Finally:

WADE
(shouts)
Seen enough?

Before she can answer:

JONNY
Hey, Whitewater!

Wade and Gail turn to see Jonny Littlefeather approaching.

GAIL
(surprised - covers)
Hey, Jonny, what are you doing here?

JONNY
I heard someone went past the Bridal Creek take-out. I should've guessed it was you.

GAIL
(playacting)
Oh yeah, I should've mentioned when we ran into you that me and Wade here were thinking about running The Gauntlet. I figure this is probably my last chance before I get too old --- so when Wade said he'd do it with me...

(CONTINUED)

JONNY

Where's Tom?

GAIL

He got out at Bridal Creek --- had to go back to work.

JONNY

You know, you're one of the few people I ever knew that ran it. People don't try it so much any more after what happened to those two guys after you.

GAIL

Oh... well... those guys didn't know what they were doing, right? That's what I was told anyway. I figured I've done it before --- why can't I do it again? Especially if we scout it right, you know?

JONNY

(smiles)
When I was a kid, I used to fantasize that you would see me run The Gauntlet. That you would notice me and... aw, but that was a long time ago. Kid stuff. Anyway, good luck with it. I'll watch from up above.

GAIL

Thanks, Jonny. Great seeing you.

JONNY

You too, Whitewater.

He starts to step away, then stops.

JONNY (CONT'D)

What about your boy? You're not going to...

Wade pulls out the gun and shoots Jonny in the head.

GAIL

(screams)
No!

Jonny falls into the river.

WADE

Nice try. But he wasn't buying it.

Wade nods towards Jonny's body being carried through the rapids.

(CONTINUED)

WADE (CONT'D)

Anyway, he said he always wanted you to see him run The Gauntlet. I just gave him his wish.

156 EXT. ISLAND BELOW GAUNTLET

156

Tom finishes marking the tree trunk with a large "deaf" sign. He climbs over the petroglyphs, gets back to the water and swims back across the lagoon to the area by the mine.

157 EXT. RIVER ABOVE GAUNTLET

157

Wade pushes Gail down the incline toward the raft. Terry, still holding the line on Jonny's canoe, looks at him questioningly.

WADE

You can let that go. Indian Jonny won't be needing it anymore.

Terry hesitates, troubled by the meaning of this.

TERRY

Oh, that's fine. That's just fine!

WADE

Shut up!

Wade snatches the line away and flings it into the water. The canoe, free now, is pulled away by the swift water.

WADE

(to Terry)

Get the kid in the raft.

Terry lifts Roarke in, as:

GAIL

(to Wade)

Before we do this, I want to ask you a favor...don't tie Roarke.

WADE

(to Terry)

Tie him down.

(to Gail)

I need you to be the best that you can be, Gail.

158 EXT. MINE AREA

158

Tom, using his metal lever, pries one of the two cables free of the pulley on the tower. The cable splashes down into the lagoon.

Carrying an old shovel handle, Tom climbs up to the mine. He ties the end of the cable to a heavy piece of machinery. Working feverishly, he keeps glancing over at the white water at the end of The Gauntlet. Seeing something, he stops to look.

Jonny's body (Tom's POV) comes tumbling over the waves, standing out in sharp contrast to the foamy white water.

Horrorified, Tom watches until the body disappears beyond the point of the island.

159 EXT. RIVER ABOVE THE GAUNTLET

159

Gail is rowing the raft away from shore. Everyone else is hunkering down for the ride. Gail looks at Roarke. He smiles at her and gives her a nod, a look of complete confidence. The river grabs the raft and they're on their way.

GAIL

Remember, do what I say and do it quick.

The raft plunges down the first chute like a car on a roller coaster and swoops easily up over the first crest; then down again and up again. Those were the easy ones. Now the speed picks up and the waves get bigger and things get hairy. The raft bucks and rumbles. Gail misjudges a stroke and gets only air with her left oar. That little mistake and the river swings them sideways up a giant wave.

GAIL

(continuing)

Right!!!

The men, even Wade, react instantly. They press the high side of the raft down. Gail manages to sink in her left oar, but now she's behind the river and off-line for the next wave.

GAIL

(continuing)

Left!!!

The men react, but they're not as successful this time. The wave smashes into them and they take on water, but they're still upright. The raft wallows on. Terry squeals as they plummet into the deepest trough yet.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
 (continuing)
 Left!!!

They shriek up the wave. The wind catches them at the top and tries to push them back. They're too heavy.

GAIL
 Paddle!

SLAP!!! They smack down into an even bigger canyon of water. Gail rises out of her seat, pulling for all she's worth.

GAIL
 Paddle, damn it!

The raft goes up and through. SMASH!!! It's back down. The next wave's closer than Gail anticipated. It breaks right on them. They're spun around into another wave. They hit it stern first. Wade's now in front.

GAIL
 (continuing)
 Right!!!

Wade takes the curl in the face. He loses his grip on the raft and is slammed back into the rower's bench. Gail struggles to get them turned around, but the raft is full of water. Again, she stands up and pulls hard, hard, hard on the left oar. The raft turns. But before she can get around, they're hit again. They're going sideways, directly at a huge boulder. Gail stoves the outer oar, wraps both hands on the boulder-side oar, jams her feet into a bracing position, and pulls. The oar bends but doesn't break. The raft slowly turns.

GAIL
 Paddle!

Gail leans into another stroke. Her hands white-knuckle the grip. Her forearms and calves bulge from exertion. She tilts her head back and howls as the boulder looms bigger and bigger. All Terry, Roarke and Wade can do is watch. At the last moment, Gail is able to pull the nose around. She jerks the oar in and they catapult past the rock. They hit the trough on the other side head on. The raft bends in the middle. The wave collapses on them and Terry is knocked over the side. The river pushes them sideways into the next wave. Terry comes up, he's holding onto a rope. As they rise on the wave, Terry is able to pull himself back on board.

GAIL
 (continuing)
 Left!!!

(CONTINUED)

Slewing sideways, they're lifted up another wave. The curl's got them. They're going to flip.

GAIL
(continuing)
Left!!!

They throw themselves against the high gunnel. All they can see is the raft and sky. They're falling. THWACK!!! They land upright. Two more small waves and they've made it through The Gauntlet.

The raft is at the point where the two rivers come together. Gail steadies it in the white water. Looking ahead, she is charting which course to follow when she notices the hand "signs" on the tree below the petroglyphs. Abruptly she turns the raft out of the main flow of the river and toward the lagoon on the left side of the island.

WADE
What are you doing?

GAIL
I thought I'd rest for a minute if you don't mind. We made it through The Gauntlet.

Terry reacts to this; he starts to laugh, big, infectious sobs of laughter. Roarke joins him, so does Wade. They all laugh until Wade notices Gail's silence. He stops laughing, looks around. Wade meets Gail's eyes. He's back to business.

GAIL
Would you untie Roarke now?

WADE
Sure.

WADE
You're right, Gail, this is a good place to stop.

Gail looks where Wade is looking---the old mine shaft.

WADE
Pull in over there. Roarke might like taking a look around the old mine shaft...

Suddenly, Maggie comes running out of the trees, barking wildly.

ROARKE
Maggie!

WADE
What the...?

160 EXT. LEDGE

160

Wade pulls out his pistol, looking around.

Tom, on the ledge above the mine shaft opening, pushes the piece of machinery over the edge. The machinery pulls the cable with it, stretching it taut.

161 EXT. LAGOON

161

The cable springs up out of the water, directly under the raft, jostling the raft and its occupants. Wade, steadying himself, drops his pistol to the floor of the raft. Gail swings an oar and knocks Terry over into the water. Wade scrambles to pick up the gun.

A banshee scream turns him partway around. His eyes widen at the sight of an apparition that resembles Tom swinging out of the trees at him with the old shovel handle under one arm like a lance. Tom is swinging on the other cable attached to the tower. The surprise slows Wade's reactions. He lifts the gun, but too late. The lance hits him just below the rib cage on the right side and goes completely through his body, the gun falling from his hand into the shallow water. The impact lifts Wade off the raft and, locked together by the lance, Tom and Wade swing up and over the lagoon.

WADE

I killed you!!

TOM

Yes, you did.

Tom lets go of the lance. Wade falls backwards into the water and the SPLASH! folds over him like the arms of a friend.

The cable swings Tom back. He drops off. When he lands in the shallow water, he slips, screams, falls down and grabs his ankle.

Terry labors to a standing position. He pulls the Buck knife out of his boot and flicks it open.

ON THE RAFT, Gail, straining against the rope, is stretched to her full extent across the deck and the gunnel, trying to paddle the raft with her hands back to where she saw the gun disappear into the water. She's fighting a slight current. She turns to Roarke, who's trying to get an oar out of its oarlock.

GAIL

Flip the latch!

Roarke does and pops the oar out.

(CONTINUED)

GAIL
(continuing)
Push us forward.

He does, using the oar as a pole.

162 UNDERWATER

162

The gun is laying on the gravel. In the background, we can see the raft with Gail's hand trailing alongside coming toward us.

163 EXT. LAGOON

163

Wade rises from under the water and stands up. It's so shallow we can see that the fall broke off most of the tip of the lance sticking out of his back.

164 CLOSER TO SHORE

164

Terry sloshes toward Tom, the knife held out in front of him. Tom sees Terry coming and forces himself to his feet with a rock in either hand.

TOM
It's over, Terry!

Terry stops, hesitating, confused about what to do next.

WADE (O.S.)
Kill him, Terry.

Terry looks over to see Wade, grotesquely skewered, staring at him. Wade grabs the part of the shovel handle protruding from his stomach and pulls. He bellows the pain away as it scrapes its way out. The stain of blood creeps rapidly now across the shirt.

WADE
Kill him!

Scared into motion, Terry starts toward Tom with new determination. With all his might, Tom slings the rock in his right hand at Terry. It hits him in the throat, knocking him back. Tom hobbles forward and smashes Terry in the side of the head with the rock in his other hand. This cuts Terry's strings like a puppet; he crumples into a sitting position, his head bowed, his chin on his chest, in the shallow water.

165 UNDERWATER

165

Gail's hand is a fingernail from the gun when the raft moves.

166 EXT. RAFT

166

Almost in tears, Gail looks up to give Roarke new directions and sees Wade closing on Tom.

GAIL

Tom!!!

EXT. LAGOON

Tom whirls around. Wade swings the broken shovel handle at him. All Tom can do is get his shoulder up. The handle glances off that and cracks against his head. The force twists him around. His glasses go flying. Tom collapses into the water. Wade is on him at once, holding his head down.

167 UNDERWATER

167

Tom tries to raise his head but can't. Air bubbles stream out of his mouth. He pulls at the hands on top of his head.

168 EXT. LAGOON

168

Wade continues to hold him down.

EXT. RAFT

GAIL

(to Roarke)

To the left! Push to the left!

The raft swings to the left.

169 UNDERWATER

169

Gail's hand gets closer to the gun.

170 EXT. LAGOON

170

Wade watches Gail's progress while continuing to hold Tom under.

171 UNDERWATER

171

Tom stops pulling at Wade's hands. Instead, he makes a fist and drives it into Wade's stomach, where blood is flowing from his wound.

172 EXT. LAGOON

172

Wade doubles up. Tom raises his head from the water, gasping for air. He attacks Wade, swinging his fists, knocking him back into shallower water. It appears Tom might win, but Wade counters, landing a blow to Tom's face. Two more and Tom falls down. Wade kicks him in the stomach. Tom tries to rise but can't. Wade pulls the stubby killing knife out of his waistband.

173 EXT. THE RAFT

173

Roarke pushes against the oar.

174 UNDERWATER

174

The raft jumps to the left. Gail's hand closes on the gun.

175 EXT. LAGOON

175

Wade advances on Tom. Suddenly, a shot rings out. Wade turns to see Gail holding the pistol.

GAIL

Run, Roarke. Take Maggie and run!
Up into the trees.

Roarke obeys. He jumps out of the raft and, with Maggie following, scrambles up the rocks. Wade starts toward her across the lagoon.

WADE

It's no good, Gail. That was the last bullet. You should've shot me with it instead of wasting it. You miscalculated.

GAIL

No, you're wrong, Wade.

WADE

No, I'm right. I'm always right.

Gail grabs the bright blue bag from where it's stowed.

WADE

I was never going to kill you and Roarke. I was just going to scare you enough so you'd never talk...

He is almost to the raft. Gail flings the blue bag over his head out into the deepest part of the lagoon. It bobs to the surface, the current moving it toward the falls at the end of the lagoon. Wade sees this happening.

(CONTINUED)

Once over the falls, it will be swept away down the river. He goes after it. Deeper and deeper he goes, until the water is over his chest. He loses his footing on the rocky bottom and goes under. Flailing, he comes up again. The current is moving him toward the waterfall. He manages to grab the bag and catch hold of a rock. He pulls himself up onto the rocky shelf at the edge of the falls and stands, holding the bag. He smiles at Gail, victorious.

GAIL

One at Maggie, one at Tom, one at Roarke, one at Jonny, and the warning shot a minute ago. You were wrong about the count, Wade.

Wade's face registers surprise as she raises the pistol and fires. The bullet only hits him in the arm, but perched as precariously as he is, it's enough to send him toppling over the falls.

176 EXT. POOL BELOW FALLS

176

Wade comes to the surface, but he is trapped in the backwash and he goes under again. This time, when he comes up, his face is down.

177 EXT. LAGOON

177

Gail splashes through the shallow water to Tom. Just as she reaches him, Roarke and Maggie come running out of the trees.

DISSOLVE TO:

178 WADE'S BODY

178

being fished out of the pool beneath the falls by two OFFICERS with poles. The blue bag is also retrieved.

179 EXT. THE RIVER BANK BELOW THE GAUNTLET

179

Terry, on a stretcher, is being loaded into a helicopter. Off to the side, watching, Roarke tears the top off a jumbo bag of potato chips. He's holding the bag open for Maggie, and eating some himself, when a COP kneels down beside him.

COP

Were you scared, Roarke?

ROARKE

Only of Wade and Terry... I wasn't scared of the river... I knew my mom could handle the river.

(CONTINUED)

COP
And she brought you through The
Gauntlet by herself?

ROARKE
Yeah.

COP
What about your father? What did he
do?

He looks over to where his parents are embracing. Gail and
Roarke's eyes meet, a message passing between them.

ROARKE
My dad... he saved our lives.
Roarke smiles at his father.

TOM
Come on...
Roarke goes over to them. Tom puts his arm around the boy.
Gail lays her head on Tom's other shoulder and, their arms
around each other, the family walks away.

180 EXT. RIVER

180

We watch the sun set over the River Wild.

FADE OUT.