

CRACKERJACK

Written by

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FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN

LOUD SNORING...

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - NIGHT

(SNORING) A FULL MOON illuminates vast snow capped mountains that reach to the Heavens. The timeless rugged wilderness appears untouched by man.

EXT. RIVER - CONTINUOUS

With Springtime approaching, the snow melt-off, a once trickling stream has become swollen river. The moonlight reflects upon the wide moving body of water.

EXT. FORREST - CONTINUOUS

(SNORING) Tall pine trees tower above a thicket of brush. Nocturnal creatures are abound in the forrest primeval. An OWL perched upon a branch scans for unsuspecting prey. A POSSUM scurries along a pine needle path. TWO SQUIRRELS cautiously proceed across a fallen Aspen.

PANTING HEAVILY, A RACCOON weaves its way in and out of thick brush. At a closer look, the Raccoon appears to be sick and lethargic with heavy foam coming from its mouth. It painfully makes its way into a cave where the snoring is coming from.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

SNORING VOLUME ELEVATES, obviously coming from a LARGE ANIMAL. In almost complete darkness the Raccoon forces its way into the occupied cave, nudging up against CRACKERJACK, a LARGE MALE KODIAK BEAR.

The snoring subsides and a skirmish begins. The hibernating bear is angered by the persistent raccoon. As the angry bear awakens from its deep Winter slumber, it lets out a LOUD GROWL!

The RABID Raccoon doesn't hesitate and attacks first, biting the gargantuan opponent several times before the bear eventually gains enough consciousness to fight back. SQUEALING AND GROWLING.

The tight quartered cave proves to give the advantage to much smaller raccoon for a brief moment. But soon enough, the bear manages to adjust and with one powerful swat from it's massive paw and instantly puts the sick raccoon out of its misery. WE SEE BITE WOUNDS ON THE BEAR.

EXT. FORREST - CONTINUOUS

Crackerjack lets out BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM/ ROAR. Every creature in the entire forrest goes silent in fear.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

A FEMALE VOICE SCREAMS/ MOANS IN PLEASURE echoing through the vast canyons of the huge mountain range.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The now PASSIONATE MOANING continues to stream from a tiny log cabin that rests between ancient Ponderosa trees. A stream of smoke bellows from the rooftop chimney. Two old rocking chairs set on the front porch. Just out back, is an old time outhouse.

Parked in a makeshift driveway is a GREEN BLM (BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT) 4x4 PARK RANGER TRUCK with a MONTANA STATE GOVERNMENT LICENSE PLATE. A bumper sticker reads: "POACHING IS MURDER"

INT. BLM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Several well-worn CDs lay strewn about across the bench seat, FLEET FOXES, BAND OF HORSES, JIMI HENDRIX, and BOB DYLAN. A SAINT CHRISTOPHER NECKLACE hangs from the rearview mirror. WORK GLOVES and a BEANIE rest upon the top of the dashboard. The console cup holders hold 2 CANS OF BEAR SPRAY.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The MOANING SUBSIDES INTO HEAVY BREATHING as the TWO LOVERS try to catch their breath.

The tiny one-room cabin is rustic yet cozy. An ACOUSTIC GUITAR is propped in one corner. In another corner, an old CAST IRON POT BELLY STOVE is the soul source of heat.

Wrapped in one another's arms on a squeaky bed are the noisy culprits. The bed is UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE TO A WINDOW.

On the floor, curled up next to the bed is JEREMIAH (A GOLDEN RETRIEVER) SAMANTHA "SAM" WILEY(25) the most gorgeous tomboy you've ever seen, bedroom eyes and a smile that could light a dark room, and her boyfriend, EZRA MCDANIELS(28) ruggedly handsome, manly man, a gentle giant.

SAM

You can't COMPLETELY rule out city life.

EZRA

You kiddin' me? That what you were thinkin' about this whole time?

Sam playfully slaps his chest.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

POV FOCUS ON THE BEDROOM WINDOW

SAM (O.S.)

No silly, of course not... But seriously, what's so wrong with urban living? It doesn't have to be forever. And, all the best grad schools ARE in big cities.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

TENSION BUILDS AT THE WINDOW

EZRA

I don't know? I'm just not a city guy. They're too... peopley.

SAM

Stop. You love people.

EZRA

Yeah, as long as they keep their distance. (Laughs)

SAM

Babe, I'm serious.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

A CLOSER VIEW OF THE BEDROOM WINDOW

EZRA (O.S.)

Okay, okay, I know. Look, if you gotta go to school... In a big city... I guess that means... that I gotta move to a big city. I can't let you go it alone. I mean, who'd be there to protect you and watch out for you?

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

SAM

Really? You mean it? You'll go?

EZRA

Ah hell, it'll be an adventure. Damn cities are more wild than the wilderness.

CU on Sam close to the WINDOW

SAM

I love you.

EZRA

I love you too, baby.

Sam climbs back on top of Ezra and goes for round two.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY

Winding through a narrow, downhill, dirt path, a MALE MOUNTAIN BIKER(32) weaves in and out of thick foliage as he races down the expert level course.

MOUNTAIN BIKER

WOO HOO!

The bike's suspension is put to the test as it jumps from a steep drop. The rider doesn't flinch. Nearing the bottom of the ravine, he plows right through a rocky stream. The excited rider belts out his favorite Stones song.

MOUNTAIN BIKER (CONT'D)

(Singing) I can't no! Duh na nah, satisfaction! Duh na nah...

EXT. CAVE OPENING - CONTINUOUS

Echoing through the canyon, WE HEAR the Man singing. GROWLING comes from inside the cave.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - CONTINUOUS

As the Mountain Biker rounds the final curve to the bottom of the canyon, he locks the rear break and power-slides to a stop.

MOUNTAIN BIKER
(Singing) When I'm driving in my
car, and a man comes on the radio!

He removes his helmet and goggles. WE HEAR THE STONES SATISFACTION blaring from his Earbuds as he removes them and cuts the sound.

EXT. FORREST OFF THE PATH - CONTINUOUS

POV of the MOUNTAIN BIKER. LABORED BREATHING FROM THE BEAR. It watches the Man. LOW GROWL.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - CONTINUOUS

Unaware that he's being watched, the sweaty Mountain Biker takes a long swig from his Camel Pack.

MOUNTAIN BIKER
Fucking Paradise up here. God's
country.

EXT. FORREST OFF THE PATH - CONTINUOUS

POV NOW CLOSER TO THE MOUNTAIN BIKER. LONG DEEP BREATHS. LOW GROWL.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - CONTINUOUS

The Mountain Biker is now peeing. WE SEE AN OUT OF FOCUS BEAR 30 YARDS BEHIND HIM.

MOUNTAIN BIKER
Ahhhhhh, there's nothing like
draining the old lizard in mother
nature.

LABORED BREATHING IN THE DISTANCE catches the Mountain Biker's attention for a moment. He then shrugs it off. The OUT OF FOCUS BEAR in the background is getting CLOSER. TENSION BUILDS.

EXT. FORREST OFF THE PATH

Now at the edge of the treeline, the Bear is no longer camouflaged. POV CLOSER TO THE MOUNTAIN BIKER.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - CONTINUOUS

The Man places the Earbuds back into his ears. WE HEAR The Rolling Stone's SATISFACTION drowning out all background noise.

THE OUT OF FOCUS BEAR IS MOVING CLOSER AT A FASTER PACE. The Man remains oblivious to his surroundings. The BEAR LETS OUT A MASSIVE ROAR, but the Man's music drowns it out.

He goes to put his helmet back on, then pauses and takes another drink from his Camel Pack. TENSION BUILDS!

THE OUT OF FOCUS BEAR IS MUCH CLOSER NOW AND MOVING A LITTLE QUICKER!

The Man pulls his helmet on. Hesitates to strap it.

MOUNTAIN BIKER

Should just go ahead and eat now?
I'm starving.

THE OUT OF FOCUS BEAR IS MOVING CLOSER YET.

BEAR'S POV, gaining ground on the unsuspecting Mountain Biker.

BACK ON MOUNTAIN BIKER

MOUNTAIN BIKER (CONT'D)

Eh, I better get. The wifey will
kill me if I miss dinner.

The Man clips his feet into the pedals and is off. As he gains speed, SO DOES THE OUT OF FOCUS BEAR HOT ON HIS PATH!

THE CHASE BECOMES FULL ON! THE BEAR COMES INTO FOCUS AND IS ONLY FEET AWAY. The Mountain Biker has no idea the grim reaper is directly behind him.

The Man shifts gears and speeds up leaving the Bear behind. The Bear stops and lets out a blood curdling ROAR!

For the first time, WE SEE CRACKERJACK, the HUGE KODIAK BROWN BEAR in his entirety. Panting heavily, obviously ill, a light stream of foam streams from his mouth. Crackerjack shakes his head back and forth, trying to shake the cobwebs from his mind.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

The GREEN BLM TRUCK leaves a cloud of dust as it makes its way down a rough dirt road. WE HEAR JOHN DENVER'S COUNTRY ROADS playing. Jeremiah rides in the bed.

INT. BLM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Behind the wheel, Sam carefully navigates the road as Ezra scans over a map in the passenger seat. Both dressed in their Park Ranger uniforms now. Ezra reaches to turn down the radio.

EZRA

All's I'm saying Sam, is we need have our ducks in a row before I ask your dad. I don't care if it is in a big city, just get your applications out before I ask. He already has a grudge against me.

SAM

Babe, I will, don't worry about it. And he doesn't have any grudge against you. How were you supposed to know UC Santa Cruz was his alma mater?

EZRA

Still, I called their football team a bunch of sissies. Who the hell would name their mascot the Banana Slugs? What happened to the Trojans or the Wolverines?

SAM

Don't worry about it. My dad's far from being a jock.

Ezra becomes quiet and stares out of the passenger side window.

SAM (CONT'D)

What is it babe?

EZRA

I don't know? I just wish... I just wish we could have one more Summer up here. Chances are, after we get married, have some pups, we'll get consumed with the typical American consumer life like everyone else.

(MORE)

EZRA (CONT'D)

A mortgage, credit cards, little league. We won't have time for this anymore. Or if we do, it'll be a two week vacation once a year.

SAM

Babe, come on, us? No way. I'll never be a yuppie, soccer mom. Look, I wish we had one more Summer up here too. But the internship will look really good on my app. We'll come back one day. Besides, we've still never made it to the deep backcountry to visit that wild uncle of yours.

Ezra chuckles.

EZRA

Yeah, like that's ever going to happen.

SAM

What? You don't know.

EZRA

Sam, even if we had the remotest idea on how to find him, you don't go into the backcountry without knowing how to ride a horse, gut a fish, and for God's sake, know how to use a rifle.

WE SEE A BIG BLUR COMING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN DIRECTLY AT SAM'S DRIVER'S SIDE WINDOW!

SAM

I don't need a damn gun to protect myself.

Ezra sees the BLUR HEADING RIGHT FOR SAM'S DOOR.

EZRA

WATCH OUT!

BAM!

BLACK SCREEN

INT. BLM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Shocked, Sam tightly grasps the steering wheel. Ezra reaches for her and pulls her in for a assuring hug.

SAM

Oh my God, what did we hit?

FOCUS ON THE DRIVER'S SIDE WINDOW. TENSION BUILDS!

EZRA

Babe, are you okay? What the fuck was that?

Both look at the WINDOW. TENSION BUILDS!

The Mountain Biker suddenly pops his head up, scares the shit out of Sam and Ezra! Sam SCREAMS!

EZRA (CONT'D)

Dude! What the fuck!

MOUNTAIN BIKER

Sorry guys, didn't expect to run into anyone in these parts.(Laughs)

EZRA

Are you okay man?

The Mountain Biker dusts himself off. With full gear (chest, elbow, knee and shin protectors, helmet and glove on, he's unscathed.

MOUNTAIN BIKER

All good.(Thumbs Up)

Sam slowly leans back into her seat, rolls the window down.

SAM

I'm so sorry. Are you sure you're not hurt? Jeremiah?

He pats his chest protector and helmet. Jeremiah's tail wags.

MOUNTAIN BIKER

Not in the slightest. I can take an onslaught with this on. Don't worry about it, I was the one that didn't look before crossing road. (Laughs)

SAM

Aright, long as you're not hurt. Do you need a lift? We're heading to town.

MOUNTAIN BIKER

Nah, I'm good. Thanks though.

EZRA
See any wildlife?

MOUNTAIN BIKER
Yeah, a mama elk with two calves,
an eagle, a skunk, and five deer.

EZRA
No wolves? Bear?

MOUNTAIN BIKER
Nah. Otherwise I'd probably take
you up on the ride offer.

EZRA
Just keep your eyes peeled. They're
out here.

SAM
Bears can be a little grumpy this
time of year, coming out of
hibernation and all. Grumpy and
hungry.

The Mountain Biker checks his surroundings.

MOUNTAIN BIKER
(Shrugs) Who's afraid of a little
bear? I know Karate.

Ezra and Sam look at each other and giggle.

EZRA
Okay buddy. Have a safe ride back.

Goodbye gestures are exchanged as the truck drives off.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The Mountain Biker watches the truck disappear down the dirt
road. WE HEAR A LOUD FEROCIOUS ROAR! Now terrified, he hops
back onto his bike and bolts down the trail.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAY

An old MARTY ROBBINS SONG plays. The BLM TRUCK makes it way
through the Mayberry like town, Whitefish, Montana. Jeremiah
greet the town folk with BARKS. A handful of the parking
spaces along Main Street are occupied with pickup trucks. Gun
racks in rear windows aren't an uncommon site. Cowboy hats
are the haute contour of the town.

The BLM Truck parks in a space in front of the BUFFALO CAFE.

EZRA (O.S.)

I could eat a buffalo right about now.

SAM

Oh, did you work up an appetite this morning?

INT. BUFFALO CAFE - DAY

CU MOUNTED BEAR'S HEAD. A taxidermist's dream with stuffed GRIZZLY, ELK, DEER, MOUNTAIN LION, and TROPHY FISH. Rustic yet cozy, the cafe's affinity for the old West shows.

Greeting the couple from behind the counter is the cafe's owner MARION HOWE(60s) big stock with a kind smile.

MARION

Well good mornin' love birds.

The couple greet her with smiles as well.

EZRA

Mornin' Marion.

SAM

Shhhh! We're on duty, Marion.

Marion places her hands on her hips, tilts her head.

MARION

Oh hell, everyone in town knows you two are an item. Ain't no secret. We all adore the idea.

SAM

(Blushes) I know, I know, we're just trying fly under the radar during work hours.

MARION

Oh gotcha. Because when y'all's over at the Bulldog Saloon huggin' and a kissin', drunk as skunks, ain't nobody gonna recognize ya without your uniforms on.

SAM

Marion.(Blushing)

MARION
Okay, okay, I'll quit... Regular?

EZRA
Yes ma'am.

Marion looks to the kitchen.

MARION
Hey Johnny, we need two regulars
for our romantically uninvolved, non-
lover park rangers that show up at
the same time every monrnin'.

JOHNNY (O.S.)
Got it, two breakfast special
number 3's for Ez and Sam.

Sam rolls her eyes, Ezra grins ear to ear, Marion shrugs.

INT. BUFFALO CAFE - LATER

Half finished breakfast plates and steaming coffee mugs rest
on Ezra and Sam's table as the two enjoy their meal.

EZRA
God that's good. Never get tired
of...

Sam's walkie talkie BEEPS. STATIC.

MALE PARK RANGER (O.S.)
Hey Sam, you at The Buffalo?

Sam laughs under her breath and mouths "SO FORMAL."

SAM
10-4 Sheriff, or should I say, yep!
What do you want me to bring you
Jimbo?

Pause... STATIC

SAM (CONT'D)
Jim, do you copy?

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
Uh sorry Sam. I wish I was putting
in an order, but I'm afraid we have
some serious business... There was
a campsite found this morning... It
uh... It was pretty bad.

Concern and confusion wash over the couple's faces.

SAM
I'm sorry Sgt., I don't follow?

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
Why don't you meet me at the station. Ezra with you? Of course Ezra's with you. Both of you, meet me pronto.

EZRA
Howdy Sheriff!

SAM
10-4 copy that. We'll be right there. Over.

Sam replaces her walkie talkie into its holster.

SAM (CONT'D)
I wonder what's going on?

EZRA
Probably damn high school kids out for Spring break vandalizing again. Remember last year? The trailhead at Sawtooth Canyon? Little punks.

The two stand and hesitantly leave their half eaten breakfasts. Ezra grabs his toast to go.

MARION
Y'all want a couple of to-go-boxes?

It's too late, the couple is already half way out the door.

MARION (CONT'D)
Guess not.

EXT. BACKWOODS - DAY

THREE QUADS pull up to a makeshift in a heavily wooded area. Leading the three is SHERIFF JIM "JIMBO" BAKER(50s) mountain savvy and easy going. Following, Sam and Ezra. ENGINES CUT.

SHERIFF BAKER
Be prepared. Hold your breakfast.

SAM
They were certainly off the beaten path.

EZRA

Welp, people don't want to follow the rules and stay in designated campsites, shit happens.

SHERIFF BAKER

Watch your tongue son.

EZRA

But Sarge, you know what I mean. Nearly every time something happens it's when people get off the... Holy shit!

EXT. CAMPSITE 1 - CONTINUOUS

FLIES BUZZING. FOCUS ON A MAIMED HUMAN HEAD. Ten feet away, what's left of a BLOODY HUMAN HAND. CU stuck on the side of a mangled tent, a LARGE CLUMP OF BLOODY HUMAN SCALP.

BEN (O.S.)

SEEERRRGEANT! Better take a look at this!

In a thicket of brush Park Ranger BEN LUDLOW(26) small in stature but big in bravado, finds a gruesome discovery amongst the brush. The crew quickly trudge through the thick foliage. Upon arrival, they spot the remains of a mangled WOMAN(32). Torn in two, the lower half of her torso is missing.

SHERIFF BAKER

Jesus Christ!

BEN

Griz right? Wolves couldn't of done this?

SHERIFF BAKER

I'd say so.

SAM

No... The other victim's entire body is gone. Griz generally leave a carcass. They'll clean their prey to the skeleton, but they won't ingest bone.

SHERIFF BAKER

That's true, but it might of carried it off. A den maybe? Wolves, vultures. No tellin'.

EZRA

A sow hunting for her cubs?

SAM

That's a possibility.

POV SOMETHING'S WATCHING THE RANGERS from the treeline.

SHERIFF BAKER

There's also a possibility that it's still around. This IS afresh kill.

BEN

Yeah, this is giving me the creeps.

SHERIFF BAKER

Gene's on his way now.

BEN

Great, nothing like a drunk county medical examiner.

SHERIFF BAKER

It's not the time Ben. We need to search for any ID we can find. Damn people want to stick it to the man, not pay for backwoods permits. This is what can happen.

SAM

No trace?

SHERIFF BAKER

Nope, Shelley said no backpackers or campers have checked in all week. A few day hikers, a couple mountain bikers, but no overnights.

EXT. NATIONAL PARK ENTRANCE - DAY

A 1980 VW VANAGON pulls into the dirt parking lot just off to the side of the toll booth.

As the side van door opens, a cloud of pot smoke flows out. An AUSTRALIAN SHEPPARD happily jumps from the van, followed by SIX ADULTS, 2 COUPLES(20S) fun loving, free spirit types, dressed in Patagonia duds. All stretch, glad the long ride is over. GARY(26) and JAN(26) hold hands as they walk, whereas STEVE(28) and DEBBIE(27) playfully chase each other.

INT. PARK TOLL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Surfing the web on an older model PC, we find Park Ranger SHELLEY MICHOVITZ(40s) kindhearted with an optimistic demeanor. She's all smiles as the group of young campers approach the booth window.

SHELLEY

Good morning, welcome to Glacier National Park, how can I help you folks today?

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Hello ma'am, we need to see about getting a backcountry camping permit. Lets see, there's six of us... and one dog.

EXT. DIRT PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The happy Australian Sheppard does his business on several trees and bushes that border the parking lot. As he adventurously strolls through the woods, he suddenly STOPS AND TAKES NOTICE OF SOMETHING (WE CAN'T SEE) he whimpers and turns back cautiously.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

WE HEAR the HUM OF A CESENA ENGINE. The glassy water of a pristine lake reflects a perfect sunny day. Surrounded by vast snow capped mountains and bordered by tall pines.

The plane's pontoons gently touch down on the lake's surface, causing a wake in the calm water.

EXT. PLANE AND BOAT DOCK - CONTINUOUS

The Cesena comes to a halt at the dock, the pilot, LANCE(46), CEO type, handsome and athletic, steps onto the pontoon and quickly ties the plane off to the dock.

Lance opens the plane's door and assists the other PASSENGERS. EUGENE(46) KATARINA(35) and ANNE(43). All attractive, oozing success.

EXT. LAKE SIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Overlooking the lake, the ENORMOUS TWO-STORY CABIN has an ALL GLASS FRONT WALL to enjoy the scenery. The two COUPLES follow the trail to the first class remote rental.

LANCE

If this is Springtime, can you
imagine what January's like?

EUGENE

Oh, don't be such a pussy.
(Laughter) Come on, it's better
than being stuck in LA traffic.

KATARINA

I can't wait to put on my new
parka!

ANNE

Oh my God, that is sooo cute! With
your little fur-lined boots.

The guys laugh.

LANCE

Now that's roughing it!(Laughter)

EXT. STREAM - DAY

Crystal clear water trickles around stones untouched for
millennial. Massive Ponderosa pines, ferns, and moss covered
rocks, fill the canyon on both sides.

SLURP, SLURP, SLURP. Licking his now infected wound,
Crackerjack gnaws at the painful bite. Agitated, he lets out
a loud ROAR.

EXT. SHACK - NIGHT

SLURP, SLURP, SLURP. RUFUS, an old HOUND DOG licks himself
clean. The Dog lays next to his owner, FREDDY TURNER(28) Ex-
con tatoos, unshaven, with a raspy voice. Freddy's working on
an old JALOPY up on jacks, parked in front of a run down
shack.

A lone HANGING TROUBLE LIGHT provides just enough light to
work under the fender of the front wheel of the old car. It
also EMPHASIZES FREDDY AGAINST THE NEAR PITCH BLACK DARKNESS
of the forrest.

CLINK, CLANK, Freddy fumbles with a wrench trying to break a
tight bolt.

FREDDY

Sum bitch! Piece-a-shit! And God
damn it Rufus, stop lickin' your
balls.

(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Gonna get another rash and I ain't
rubbin' no more of that cream the
vet gave us on your nuts.

POV ON FREDDY AND RUFUS

FREDDY (CONT'D)

You know I'm just teasin' you ol'
buddy.

Not looking, Freddy reaches behind himself to give Rufus a quick petting. Rufus returns the love with a big sloppy licking on Freddy's hand.

Suddenly Rufus's attention is sparked. He GROWLS, then heads for the woods beyond the yard.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Damn it Rufus! Better not go and
get sprayed again! God damned
tomato juice didn't work for shit
last time. Damn skunks. Rufus!

EXT. CAMPSITE 2 - NIGHT

An OWL HOOTS. CRICKETS CHIRP. The CAMPFIRE CRACKLES. The Stoner Backpackers, GARY, JAN, STEVE AND DEBBIE and their Australian Sheppard from earlier have set up camp in a tiny space surrounded by huge pine trees.

The flickering campfire PUTS THEM ON DISPLAY for anything that might be in the woods watching.

Seated around the campfire, Steve and Debbie pass a joint, while Gary and Jan sip beer. The content Australian Shepard lays at the first couples side.

GARY

It's so rad up here. Dude, we gotta
spend some more time in Montana.
This place is sick!

STEVE

This state is killer. Yellowstone's
cool too, my dad took me there when
I was in high school.

GARY

Speaking of high, let me hit that.

Gary reaches for the joint.

JAN
It's beautiful up here, but the
whole bear thing freaks me out.

DEBBIE
Yeah, I agree.

Gary and Steve laugh.

GARY
A bear won't mess with us, they're
more afraid of humans than we are
of them. No one ever gets attacked
by bears. If so, it's super rare.

STEVE
Exactly. Don't be so chicken shit.

A LOUD CRASH coming from the woods! Gary and Steve jump
higher than the girls!

GARY
Dude, what the fuck was that?

STEVE
Bro, what are we going to do? It's
not like we have a gun.

A TUSSLE IN THE BUSHES just beyond the campsite! All eyes
lock onto a LARGE SHRUB. MORE TUSSLING. Fear grips all of
them.

A MOTHER ELK and her CALF exit the bushes. Relief washes over
all the faces.

EXT. SHACK - NIGHT

CLINK, CLANK. Freddy's fast at work under the old car's
fenderwell. WE SEE A CUT ON FREDDY'S HAND as he wipes the
blood onto his pant leg.

FREDDY
Great, now I'm gonna have to go to
town. See the God damned doctor.
Ain't had a damn tetanus shot
since... Since hell, I don't even
remember.

SNIFF, SNIFF.(O.S.)

FREDDY (CONT'D)
 Did ya get 'em? Eh, good boy, keep
 them God damned raccoons outta
 here. Pesky little bastards.

Not looking behind him, Freddy reaches back to pet Rufus.
 SLURP, SLURP.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
 Yeah, good boy... Nope, I ain't got
 time to play Rufus, can't ya see
 I'm busy? Stop boy! Owe, you sum
 bitch!

Angered, Freddy turns around and slides out from under the
 fenderwell... Only to come FACE-TO-FACE WITH CRACKERJACK!
 Freddy freezes as the massive Bear BREATHES STEAM INTO HIS
 FACE from the cold evening air.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
 You ain't Rufus?

BLACK SCREEN

ROAR. FREDDY YELLS. A FIGHT ENSUES. GROWLING. CLANK, he
 strikes the bear with a wrench. BONES CRACKLE. SILENCE.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN - NIGHT

ADULT CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYS. Warm and toasty inside,
 MODERN DECOR and ART fill the large cabin. The dinning table
 is strewn with half eaten plates of gourmet food. Several
 wine bottles tell of an entertaining evening.

Anne steps directly in front of the WALL SIZED WINDOW. IT'S
 PITCH BLACK on the other side. She moves uncomfortably close
 to it. TENSION BUILDS!

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

POV WE SEE ANNE THROUGH THE WINDOW, COMPLETELY VULNERABLE.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Anne's reflection in the window is the only thing she sees as
 she sips her wine. TENSION.

ANNE
 This is definitely a guy's place.

KATARINA

Right?!

ANNE

I mean, it's beautiful and all. But after a couple days, I think it would get rather boring.

KATARINA

Thank you!

EUGENE

City slickers.

KATARINA

Yeah right, like you're not.

EUGENE

Sweetie, I've always loved the mountains.

KATARINA

Please.

EUGENE

What?

CU ON ANNE'S FACE ALMOST TOUCHING THE WINDOW. TENSION... BAM!
LANCE jumps in front of the window from the outside causing Anne spill her wine. Lance laughs.

ANNE

Oh my God! You ass!

Everyone laughs.

Lance enters the cabin.

LANCE

Sorry my love, I couldn't resist. You looked like a tender morsal standing there, just waiting to be gobbled up.

KATARINA

How are you not scared to go out there at night?

Lance shrugs.

LANCE

It's actually a nice change. I get tired of the hum of the city.

(MORE)

LANCE (CONT'D)

You know? There's never any peace and quiet. Up here, complete silence. Tranquil.

KATARINA

Whatever. I say it's scary.

Laughter.

LANCE

You know, odd thing? I could swear, I heard a guy yelling, almost screaming. Just for a second, but...

ANNE

Okay, here we go! I knew it was only a matter of time before the campfire stories started.

Laughter.

KATARINA

Let me guess? An escaped lunatic hacking up young couples at Make-Out Point, right?

More laughter.

EUGENE

Wait, I heard about that on the radio. I believe he had a sword for a hand, was it?

KATARINA

A hook.

EUGENE

I was trying to be original.

LANCE

(Laughs) Nah, I'm dead serious. I swear, I heard something strange. Like a guy yelling or something.

EUGENE

It could of been that one psychopath that always yells to his future victims, like a warning.

More laughter.

LANCE

Okay, okay, fine, I give up. It must have been the wind in the trees.

Laughter.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

MUFFLED LAUGHTER. POV of the two couples laughing, drinking and carrying on.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Fresh morning sunlight filters through the trees. A BLUEJAY SINGS. A MAMA RACCOON and her FIVE BABIES scurry across front porch. Dew drips from a FERN LEAF.

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)

(Static) Sam, Ez? Do you copy?

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Both snoozing, Sam and Ezra disregard the call. Asleep in his bed, Jeremiah's ears perk up. WE SEE the WALKIE TALKIE on it's charge base on the nightstand.

SHERIFF BAKER (V.O.)

(Static) Sam, Ezra? Dooo yooouu copy?

The couple stirs awake.

EZRA

What time is it? You gotta be kidding?

Eyes still closed, Sam fumbles for the radio.

SAM

(Static) Good morning Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)

Hey Sam, sorry to wake you, but we have another situation. Over at Freddy Turner's place.

Sam sits straight up. Ezra rolls back over, uninterested.

EZRA

Let me guess? A meth lab was mysteriously discovered on his property.

Sam "shushes" him.

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)

There's been another attack. A mauling. It's a... it's pretty bad.

SAM

How bad?

SGT. BAKER

Similar to yesterday's scene. Rene found him outside this morning. Well... what was left of him. I'm afraid we may have a rogue bear.

SAM

Remains?

SHERIFF BAKER

Yeah... kind of. His left hand and both feet. Still in the boots. Ben's been over there all morning. I'm heading back now, Gene should be here any minute.

EXT. SHACK - DAY

As the BLM Truck comes to a halt in front of the shack, Sam and Ezra exit. Sam gestures to Jeremiah in the truck bed.

SAM

Stay.

Ezra takes in the property's surroundings. SEVERAL RUSTED OUT JUNK CARS. STACKS OF TRASH. The RICKETY SHACK. Sgt. Baker comforts a crying RENE(35) hick, tweaker.

Medical Examiner, GENE HEAL(57) weathered yet wise, scours over bloody human remains. The car Freddy was working on has blood chunks of flesh smeared near the fenderwell.

WE SEE a CU of A CLUMP OF BEAR FUR STUCK TO A BLOODY CRESCENT WRENCH. Sam approaches Gene.

SAM (CONT'D)

Grizzly?

Gene looks over the top of his glasses.

GENE

Appears to be. It certainly wasn't
a mouse.

WE SEE FREDDY'S BLOODY HAND inside of a clear plastic
EVIDENCE BAG.

INT. BUFFALO CAFE - DAY

COUNTRY MUSIC PLAYS. Marion fills Sam and Ezra's mugs with
steaming hot coffee as the couple enjoys their breakfast.

EZRA

I hate to ask, Marion, but do you
mind just leaving the whole pot?
Didn't get much sleep.

Marion winks.

MARION

Oh, you two. Sure thing hun.

Too tired, Ezra doesn't try to explain.

SAM

It's just that I'm torn. I fully
realize that we can't have a rogue
bear terrorizing the park.
Especially as summer approaches.
But damn it. It's only surviving.
Doing what bears do. I don't want
to see it killed. What if it IS a
sow? What'll happen to the cubs? Do
they have to die too? It's not
fair.

EZRA

Ahhh, my little bleeding heart.

SAM

Come on babe? It's bullshit.

EZRA

Well, I hate to say it, but Freddy
Turner won't be missed very much
around these parts. But the other
couple... I mean I know, they were
breaking the law, camping off the
grid and all, but Sam, they didn't
deserve to die. That bear's a man-
eater and needs to be put down.

Sam lays her fork down and looks away.

EZRA (CONT'D)

The question is, who's going to track it? There's no-one left around Whitefish. Ol' Sam and Joe Oast are gone. Raymond Holland passed too. Even Logan Howe's gone now. Greg Ludlow. All the old time trackers died off.

Sam's eyes lock onto Ezra's.

EZRA (CONT'D)

What? You serious?

SAM

You've said it yourself, he's the wildest woolliest mountain man in the history of Montana. The toughest man in the Northern Rockies? The Kodiak King? Women love him, men are scared shitless of him?

EZRA

Yeah, yeah, I get it. Sam, it's kind of a joke. Maybe not a joke, but like folklore. I mean, I'm not denying my uncle's not a bad ass. He was a bad ass? Honestly, I don't if he's still alive. He'd have to be in his seventies if he is. He'd be too old to track anything like what we're facing.

Sheriff Baker enters the cafe.

SHERIFF BAKER

Mornin' Marion. Can I get a coffee please? Cream, no sugar.

MARION

Mornin' Jimbo, you bet.

Sheriff Baker pulls out a chair and joins the couple at their table.

SAM

It couldn't hurt to try.

SHERIFF BAKER

Try what?

SAM

I'm trying to convince Ezra to seek help from his uncle.

The sheriff sits up straight. Sighs.

EZRA

See, I told ya.

SHERIFF BAKER

Well... I don't know Ezra? Ol' Sam might be onto something. With all the budget cuts, I don't have many options right now.

Sam gloats.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

When's the last time you or your father's heard anything from him?

EZRA (SHRUGS)

Hell Sheriff, I don't know? I haven't seen him in years. I just told Sam, truthfully, I don't know if he's even still alive. That mountain living's hard on a man.

SHERIFF BAKER

Oh, horse shit. Ron's as rough and tough as they come. He'll live to be a hundred. Question is, do you think your Pop knows his whereabouts?

Ezra hesitates.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Ah hell son, I ain't gonna bring him in. Those charges are long past the statue of limitations. Adrian Strom's been dead for nearly twenty years. He had it comin' anyhow. Hell Jessica's been dead, what 10, 15 years now?

SAM

I don't even want to know.

All eyes on Ezra. (*What are you going to do?*) He sighs.

EXT. FORREST - DAY

WE HEAR the TRICKLE OF A STREAM. TWO WOLF CUBS and the MAMA WOLF sip from the pristine creek water. A HUMMINGBIRD drinks the nectar from a FLOWER. A beautiful morning nature scene. Until WE HEAR A MAN GRUNTING.

Squatting behind a tree, Gary takes a dump.

GARY

For being vegan, those damn burgers
aren't very fibrous.

POV watching Gary through bushes.

Gary finishes his business, pulls up his pants. Proceeds to bury his waste with a small shovel. Then takes in the surroundings.

SNAPPING BRANCHES! Gary's attention is sparked!

EXT. STREAM - CONTINUOUS

A FEMALE VOICE SINGS A CAPPELLA(O.S.).

Water winds around small boulders before entering a calm pool. Lush green moss borders one side of the creek, while a small grainy beach borders the other.

Bathing naked, Jan stands in the waist deep pool singing. Her long wet dark hair tapers down to the small of her back. The crystal clear water leaves little to the imagination.

POV Through shrubs Jan delicately washes her body. Oblivious to her surroundings. TENSION BUILDS!

She dips underwater for a swim across the pool. Popping up on the other side, she's directly in front of the POV BUSHES.

CU JAN'S FACE.

She stands up in front of the bushes. TENSION BUILDS!

POV right on front of Jan. She turns her back.

POV MOVING FAST TOWARDS JAN! She turns, but it's too late! She's driven underwater by something we don't see. UNDERWATER SCREAMS

She surfaces, now in the middle of the pool. Her eyes dart in terror as her chin shivers.

CREATING A HUGE SPLASH, Gary pops up from the water right in front of her! SCREAMS.

JAN
YOU FUCKING ASSHOLE! That wasn't
funny.

Gary slowly moves towards her.

GARY
Rrrraaaaarrrr!

She can't help but crack a smile. The two meet in the middle and begin to kiss.

POV FROM THE BUSHES.

EXT. CAMPSITE 2 - DAY

BIRDS CHIRPING. Two tents occupy the Stoner's campsite. A small campfire lightly smolders from the previous night's fire.

INT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

Fast asleep in a double mummy bag, Debbie and Steve are wrapped in each other's arms. The yellow hue from the tent's nylon rainfly.

(O.S.) TREE BRANCHES SNAP AND BREAK

Slack jawed and drooling, Steve half stirs from his hungover slumber.

(O.S.) LOUDER BRANCHES SNAP AND BREAK.

Steve's eye's pop open (**WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?**)

A tense moment passes before his bloodshot eyes close once again.

DEBBIE
Mmmmmmm. What? (Whispers)

STEVE
Nothing. Probably that mother elk.
Go back to sleep.

(O.S.) LOW GROWL. C.U. Steve's face, eye wide.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Gar?

EXT. RANCH - DAY

CU ON A LARGE CARVED WOODEN BEAR'S, ROARING FACE STATUE. A Big Sky Country ranch house nestled in an open valley surrounded by mountains that reach the sky. Cattle graze in a meadow off to the side. Several other WOODEN ANIMAL SCULPTURES decorate the yard in front of the home, the BEAR, an ELK, an EAGLE and a SASQUATCH.

EZRA (O.S.)

I sure appreciate this, Marcus.
There's no way we'd make it on the
quads.

EXT. HORSE CORRAL - CONTINUOUS

Strapping a saddle to an old Mayer is MARCUS NORRIS(70s) a real cowboy, tough as nails and a ten-gallon hat. Sam nervously stares at another horse that's already saddled up. A HOLSTERED RIFLE is strapped to the saddle.

MARCUS

Ah hell, if I was 20 years younger,
I'd tag along. I'd love to see ol'
Ron. I had a lot of good times with
that crazy huckleberry.(Laughs) He
was as wild as a March hare! Tell
ya what. Ain't a better man to have
on your side, you find yourself in
a heated situation.

EZRA

I just hope we find him. I ain't
been in the back country like that
in years.

MARCUS

That map'll get you there. John's
been flying him in supplies for
years now. He usually heads up late
September, before the first
snowfall. He does an extra fly-by
to make sure Ron hears the plane
and like clockwork, ol' Ron's out
on his porch a wavin'.(Laughs)

Marcus takes notice of Sam's apprehension and chuckles.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Young lady, she ain't going to bite
ya. She's as gentle as a lamb.

EZRA
Pet her. Go on now.

Hesitantly, Sam reaches out and rubs the old horse.

SAM
She is beautiful.

EXT. TRAILHEAD - LATER

All three on horses, Marcus, Ezra and Sam approach a heavily wooded trail. Jeremiah tags along. Marcus gently pulls the reins halting his horse.

MARCUS
Welp, this as far I go. Hell, I wish I was heading out with ya.

EZRA
Me too, Marcus. Thanks a million for helping us out.

MARCUS
Y'all just be careful, ya hear? These mountains has taken a lot of lives. Ya keep your eyes peeled at all times.

EZRA
Yes, sir.

SAM
We will, and thank you.

With a tip of his hat, Marcus turns his horse around and is off. Sam and Ezra watch the old cowboy disappear, then look at each other. Adventure awaits!

MONTAGE - SAM AND EZRA HORSEBACK ADVENTURE

- - They traverse through a thick forest
- - The horses stop for a drink at a stream in the bottom of a canyon
- - They make their way up steep switchbacks over rocky terrain (Midday)
- - Above the timberline, they follow a narrow path
- - They descend down into a huge valley. The vast rugged mountain range extends indefinitely (Late afternoon)

END MONTAGE

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The crackle of the small campfire is the only sound in the forrest primeval. Shadows of massive trees glimmer from the fire's light. Seated next to each other for warmth, Sam, Ezra and Jeremiah silently stare into the mesmerizing flames.

SAM

But why not? If he can track it, we should be able to tranquilize it and transport it to a remote destination. WHY should it be killed?

EZRA

Darling, you gotta be real. Make no mistake about it, this bear has the taste of human blood. That means we're on the menu. It has to be put down, that's all there is to it.

SAM

Do you really think your Uncle Ron can track it?

EZRA

If he's healthy, I can't think of a better man.

EXT. MEADOW - MORNING

Tall yellow grass carpets small rolling hills. WE HEAR FLIES BUZZING.

CU on a HALF EATEN DEAD ELK. Most of the torso, including the rib cage is gone.

CU STEVE'S DECAPITATED HEAD. Eyes open, dried blood caked around his nose and mouth. Other bloody remains lay strewn about the bear's buffet.

(O.S.) GROWLING, PANTING, ROAR!

EXT. FORREST - MORNING

(O.S.) RRRRRRAAAAAARRRRRRR, Ezra lets out an exaggerated YAWN.

The early morning sunrise pierces through the tall pines. Dew drips from the ferns. The water of a nearby stream trickles over moss covered stones.

The two Horses graze on shrubs.

CAMPSITE

The TENT ZIPPER unzips. Ezra pops his head out, then Sam does the same. All smiles.

EZRA

Hungry? How bout some breakfast?

SAM

So hungry, I could eat a horse!

The HORSE NAYS.

EXT. FORREST TRAIL - DAY

Riding their horse's, Sam and Ezra wind through a maze of trees, shrubs and streams.

SAM

So tell me a little more about this legendary mountain man. What was Sheriff Baker talking about?

Ezra laughs

EZRA

Which time?

SAM

You know, the other day. Something about some guy that had it coming?

EZRA

I thought you didn't want to know?

SAM

Come on.

EZRA

Well, I assume you're talking about ol' Adrian Strom?

SAM

Yeah, that was his name.

EZRA

Well, Adrian and my uncle had a beef goin' for years. Ya see, Uncle Ron and Adrian were trappin' partners for years. Hell, they was best friends from kids up. Until...

SAM

Until what?

EZRA

Until what else? A girl.

SAM

Do tell.

EZRA

From my understanding, I think they were in their early twenties? This beautiful young filly moved to White Fish.

SAM

Ohhhhh, that was the lady Sheriff mentioned.

EZRA

Uh huh. Her name was Jessica. Jessica Mendez. Her father was a Spanish diplomat. Wealthy family. Well educated and all. Pretty much outta Uncle Ron and Adrian's league.

SAM

I love it! Keep going!

EZRA

So, they both fall head over heels, as she does for them.

SAM

And?

EZRA

Well, I don't think it takes a rocket scientist to figure out that two young manly men that reek of machismo, wouldn't back down from one another. Especially over such a beautiful woman. And let me tell you, she was truly beautiful.

SAM

So, what happened?

EZRA

Long story short, Uncle Ron got thrown in jail one night after starting a ruckus in the saloon. Word spreads fast in a small town. Very small town back then. Mr. Mendez got word and told his daughter that she was prohibited from seeing any jailbird.

SAM

So, that was it? Uncle Ron lost the love of his life because he got into a fist fight?

EZRA

Ehh, kinda. He put a couple men in the hospital that night. One was Judge Well's son.

SAM

Ouch!

EZRA

Yeah... So, when my Uncle got out of jail, he got wind and he took off to the backwoods and rarely returned to society.

SAM

That's sad. He was young man and made a foolish mistake.

EZRA

He did have a few more run-ins with the law over the years. He moved up to Alaska for a long time. Off and on. He'd come and go. Probably twenty, thirty years? But, ended up getting into some trouble up there too.

SAM

Like what?

EZRA

Mostly bar fights. I think he got caught selling marijuana a few times. Back before it was legal so many places. Cattle rustling. Illegal fur trade.

(MORE)

EZRA (CONT'D)

Capturing and selling exotic game.
He was no Saint by any stretch of
the imagination.

SAM

So what happened between him and
Adrian?

EZRA

Another bar fight. It was after he
returned back from one of his
Alaskan trips.

SAM

I get the impression that Uncle Ron
may have a drinking problem?
Possibly anger management as well?

Ezra laughs as the two stop to let the horses drink from a
creek.

EZRA

Over the years, after they ended
their friendship, they had plenty
of disputes. Trappin' territory,
Adrian's cattle goin' missin' here
and there. They could never let it
go. Then one night at, what's now
The Bulldog Saloon, they ran into
each other. Both shitfaced drunk. A
big fight started. I guess it was
pretty even.

SAM

What happened?

EZRA

Word has it, Adrian threw one hell
of a haymaker... and missed. When
he missed, he lost his balance, due
to being drunk as a skunk, and fell
and hit his head on an oak table,
knocking himself clean out. Later
that night, he succumbed to an
aneurism in the hospital.

SAM

Oh my God.

EZRA

Yeah.

SAM

But essentially, Uncle Ron didn't do it, if Adrian fell.

EZRA

That's how most people seen it. But Mr. Mendez had deep pockets and lots of friends in government, so even though no formal charges were brought against him, he stays clear of town for the most part.

SAM

What ever happened to Jessica?

EZRA

Heart problems. She passed away a few years after Adrian.

Sam frowns

MONTAGE - SAM, EZRA AND JEREMIAH'S HORSEBACK ADVENTURE
CONTINUES

- - In high country now, they wind through a pass above the timberline

- - The SUN'S RAYS are much stronger in the high altitude, causing both Sam and Ezra to apply sunblock, wear dark sunglasses and brimmed hats

- - Jeremiah happily leads the group through a rocky basin

- - The group summit a high plateau that gives way to a beautiful panoramic view

- - As they push on, Sam's horse pauses before raising her tail and taking a huge dump

EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

WE SEE a sign that reads: "WHITE FISH SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT"

A squad car and Sheriff Baker's Bronco are parked out front

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)

Horse shit!... I'll call the God damned Governor myself if I have to! We don't need a bunch lyin', sensationalizing reporters up here scaring people away just before summer!

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Red-faced, seated behind an old desk, Sheriff Baker twirls a pen between his fingers.

Seated at a desk across from him, Ben shakes his head and smiles.

SHERIFF BAKER

Yeah, well damn well better do what you have to. The town needs this summer's tourism. Ain't exactly like small town America felt any economic recovery...(Beat)... Yeah, I know, look Reece, I don't mean to snap at ya, but you know how them God damned journalist spin everything they can. We just don't need that right now. The town's hurtin' for business...(Beat)... (Snickers) Alrighty, will do. Thanks Reece. Likewise, give my best to Riley. Bye, bye.

Sheriff Baker hangs up. Sighs.

BEN

Sheriff, you know it's only a matter of time. The damn media is going to be on this like bees to honey. Timing, huh?

PHONE RINGS

SHERIFF BAKER

Now what?

He answers

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Sheriff Baker here...(Beat)... WHAT!?(Beat)... Now hold on Shelley, slow down...(Beat)... Yeah, yeah, we'll be right there.

Hangs up. Pops up from his desk, straps his gun belt on.

BEN

What is it? Shelley all right?

SGT. BAKER

Been another killing. Two victims. Lets go.

BEN
 Good Lord, almighty!

EXT. PARK TOLL BOOTH - DAY

With siren lights on, followed by a trail of dust, Sheriff Baker's bronco comes to a halt in the dirt parking lot. Sheriff Baker and Ben exit the vehicle in a hurry.

Shelley exits the booth, clearly shaken.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Chopper's on the way. Injuries?

SHELLEY
 She twisted her ankle trying to get the hell out of there, but it's just a sprain I'd say. Sheriff? What are we going do about this?

SHERIFF BAKER
 I'm workin' on it.

SHELLEY
 All my years in the park, I've never been this scared.

SHERIFF BAKER
 I know, I know. Look, for now, we gotta close every entrance to the park. Not just the mains, but the fire roads, the lake access, everything. We need to be adamant, but keep it as quiet as we can. Understand?

SHELLEY
 Yes, Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Gene's on his way now. We'll get him to the scene, retrieve the remains... Any evidence, and get the hell outta there.

EXT. LAKE SIDE CABIN - DAY

Smoke billows from the cabin's chimney. Through the panoramic window, Eugene and Katarina can be seen eating breakfast at the table.

EXT. PLANE AND BOAT DOCK - CONTINUOUS

POV Seated at the end of the dock, with her feet dangling just above the water, Anne sips her steaming hot coffee.

She takes in the magnificent view, oblivious to anything behind her.

POV TENSION (moving towards her FAST!)

She turns around, hearing something running towards her!

POV closing in on her!

She screams!

Lance runs right past her and jumps in the lake. After being submerged for a moment, he pops his head up from the water laughing.

ANNE

Ha ha, very funny mister. That's twice now! I owe you.

LANCE

Third time's a charm. Hop in.

ANNE

Are you nuts? That water has to be freezing. Remember, I didn't take your Wim Hof training!

He gently splashes her.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Don't you dare.

He splashes a little more.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Lance!

He continues. Anne stands, strips down and jumps in with him.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Oh my God! It's freezing!

POV from bushes. She splashes Lance. TENSION

EXT. FORREST TRAIL - DAY

Sam, Ezra, and Jeremiah traverse through a deep canyon. A strong flowing river flows through the middle. They stop to let the horses and Jeremiah drink from the river.

SAM

How much further? My butt is killing me.

EZRA

Breakin' ya in darlin'. Just watch for saddle sores.

SAM

There's actually a name for my butt injury.

EZRA

(Laughs) You'll get used to it.

Ezra pulls the map from his back pocket and scans it.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Lets see. We should be right about here... So, I'd say as long as we keep pace, should be there by this afternoon. It's the next valley over.

SAM

Good. I think I'm going to walk for a while. Give my butt a break.

EZRA

I'll join you. Not a bad idea to give the horses a break too.

Sam checks her phone reception.

SAM

I guess we are in B.F.E.

EZRA

Nope. You're not getting any cell phone reception out here. We are officially off the grid. I love it.

SAM

So he really lives without electricity?

EZRA

He may have a generator, I'm not sure? He likes the old ways. Keeping it simple. The way the world's changing, I'm not sure he's not right.

SAM

Don't get me wrong, I love nature, you know that. But a little convenience is nice at times.

EZRA

I guess? More than anything, it just seems like it speeds everything up. I can't imagine Uncle Ron having an anxiety attack or getting depressed because not enough people liked his social media post.

Both laugh. Ezra sits on a boulder backed up against thick foliage. TENSION BUILDS.

SAM

Babe, watch it.

EZRA

Watch what?

TENSION BUILDS. FOCUS ON BUSHES BEHIND EZRA

SAM

That looks like poison oak behind you. You sit on that and my butt's not the only one that's going to be hurting.

Ezra turns to check the foliage. CU ON THE PLANTS. TENSION

EXT. PARK TOLL BOOTH - DAY

Standing just outside of the Park toll booth, Sheriff Baker converses with Shelley. Ben sits inside the Park Ranger Bronco, on the CB radio.

INT. BRONCO - CONTINUOUS

RADIO STATIC. Seated behind the wheel, Ben taps his finger's tips on the dashboard as he tries to radio.

BEN

Sam? Ez? Do you copy? Over.

Frustrated, he hangs the CB microphone up and steps out of the vehicle.

EXT. PARK TOLL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Ben's posture and disposition tells the story as he approaches the Sheriff and Shelley.

SHERIFF BAKER

Nothing, huh? That's what I figured.

BEN

Try your cell again?

SHERIFF BAKER

Ah, hell, if the damn CB doesn't reach them, no cell phone will. They're in deep backcountry by now.

SHELLEY

God be with them.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - AFTERNOON

Beat from another long day on the trail, Sam, Ezra, Jeremiah and the horses pause at the peak of a high mountain overlooking a valley.

Nestled in the corner of a meadow in the bottom of the valley is a small log cabin. Uncle Ron's!

EZRA

Low and behold! Will you look at that darling? If that ain't a sight for sore eyes, I don't know what is.

SAM

Oh, thank God. Can we PLEASE walk the horses the rest of the way?

The two climb down from the horses and begin to descend into the beautiful valley.

EXT. UNCLE RON'S CABIN - EVENING

Cautiously approaching the caravan stops just shy of the cabin's front porch. The cabin's in immaculate shape. It appears to be a model home as opposed to an old reclusive mountain man's homestead.

All the wood is freshly varnished, not a shake shingle out of place, not a speck of rust on the galvanized fire place chimney, and a small outdoor furniture couch that doesn't show the slightest of dust.

POV FOCUS ON THE COUPLE FROM BEHIND TREES

SAM

Well, he doesn't appear to be roughing it.

EZRA

UNCLE RON? ... Hello?... Anybody in there?... UNCLE RON?

Nothing...

POV FOCUS ON THE COUPLE FROM ANOTHER LOCALE, FROM BEHIND A LARGE ROCK

SAM

You've gotta be kidding?

Ezra shrugs.

SAM (CONT'D)

Babe? Serious?

FOCUS ON THE COUPLE FROM HIGH IN A TREE (DIFFERENT ANGLE)

UNCLE RON

Who goes there? This is private property.

EZRA

Uncle Ron? That you? I'm Ezra... Ezra McDaniel's. Your nephew.

UNCLE RON (O.S.)

(From behind them) Ezra? That you?

Sam and Ezra turn to see where the voice is coming from... Nothing.

UNCLE RON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(From the side) All be damned. You grew up on me kid-o.

Searching, the couple still can't find the person behind the voice. His voice is coming from different directions each time.

EZRA

Uncle Ron?

Suddenly appearing out of nowhere from the thick forrest just behind the cabin steps Uncle Ron with a rifle slung over his shoulder.

He lives up to every bit the legend he's been described as. Tall, muscular, with the energy of a man half his age and a twinkle in his eye's, his warm smile lights up the couple's hearts.

Confused, Sam looks to Ezra wondering how Uncle Ron's voice came from different directions? Ezra smiles and shrugs.

UNCLE RON

How the hell you doin" you ol' coyote? What brings you to these parts?

Ezra looks to Sam.

EZRA

That's the nickname he gave me when I was a little kid. Coyote. (Looks to Uncle Ron) How are you Uncle Ron? You're looking good.

Ezra climbs off his horse. All smiles.

UNCLE RON

God damn, son, you turned into a man. A handsome one at that! Hell you look like me in my younger days.

The two embrace in a big bear hug. Uncle Ron easily lifts Ezra off the ground. Laughter all around.

EZRA

Still strong as a bull.

UNCLE RON

All be damned... It's good to see you.

EZRA

Likewise, Uncle Ron.

Uncle Ron looks to Sam. Smiles.

UNCLE RON

Well don't forget your manners coyote. Aren't you going to introduce me to this lovely young lady?

EZRA

Yes sir, my apologies. This hear... this hear Uncle Ron, this is Samantha Wiley. She's uh... She's my fiance.

Enthused, Uncle Ron looks back and forth at the two. Slaps Ezra on the shoulder.

UNCLE RON

Well ya don't say. All be. Howdy Samantha, it's a pleasure. Don't see too many pretty young ladies around these parts.

Sam blushes and smiles.

SAM

Sam, please. The pleasure is all mine, Uncle Ron. It's an honor to finally meet you.

UNCLE RON

So, you say your last name is Wiley?

SAM

Yes. Wiley.

UNCLE RON

So, Wiley and coyote. Like Wiley coyote. Well hell, I like that.

Laughter.

SAM

I do too! Ahhh, Coyote.

UNCLE RON

Come on down off that ol' mare young lady. Coyote, there's a water trough over yonder, you can tie 'em off, I'm sure they could use a drink. I know I could.

EZRA

Thanks, Uncle Ron.

UNCLE RON

You two must be starved. Lets get
ya some dinner cooked up. You a
whiskey sipper young lady?

Uncle Ron turns to head into the cabin.

SAM

Uh, sure.

Sam climbs down from the horse and follows. Ezra take the
reins and walks the horse to the water trough on the side of
the cabin.

UNCLE RON

Good deal. We got plenty. How do
you prefer your elk?

SAM

Elk?

UNCLE RON

Rare? Medium? Well-done? Or do you
prefer rabbit? Hell, might even
have some squirrel.

Sam looks to Ezra, he mouths "ELK".

SAM

Ummmm, yeah... Elk sounds...
Delicious. Don't you agree...
Coyote?

UNCLE RON

Elk it is! Say coyote, how's your
ol' pa and ma doin'? Ain't seen 'em
for quite a spell.

Sam follows him into the cabin, Ezra follows.

EZRA

Both doin' good Uncle Ron. Said to
say hello and come visit some time.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - NIGHT

MUSIC, GLASSES CLANKING, LAUGHING, A PARTY INSIDE. The
contemporary cabin glows in the darkness. It provides the
only light on a moonless night.

WE HEAR the sound of Crackerjack PANTING. LOW GROWL, as he
observes the tasty morsels inside.

He MOANS as the LOUD MUSIC aggravates him. The PANTING BECOMES LABORED as he begins to make painful suffering sounds. The music is making him crazy.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Seated at the large dining table, buzzed and happy, the two couples drink and feast merrily. Hors d'oeuvres, wine bottles and candles fill the table. A nostalgic 90s SONG begins to play over the home stereo.

LANCE

Dude! No way!

EUGENE

I told you. Still got my skills!

LANCE

Oh man... I don't think I've heard this since college.

ANNE

Oh dear, the college days! The horns are starting to pop out.

KATARINA

Does he do this at home too?

ANNE

Only EVERY time a 90s alternative song plays.

KATARINA

It's not only music, Eug knows the dialogue to every 90s movie that was made.

Anne laughs and nearly chokes on her wine.

ANNE

Same thing!

EUGENE

Come on, not every movie.

KATARINA

If it had Brad Pitt in it, you know it word for word.

ANNE

Oh my God! He does the same thing! Drives me crazy!

Laughter

KATARINA
Does he watch them over and over?

More laughter

ANNE
Oh my God! Totally!

LANCE
Okay now, I think you're
exaggerating a little, don't you?

ANNE
Please!

LANCE
What, maybe a 90s movie marathon a
couple times a year, what's the big
deal? Film went to shit after the
90s.

EUGENE
Amen! Music too!

Lance raises his highball glass for a sloppy, clanking toast
with Eugene.

LANCE
Ladies, we speak the truth.

ANNE
No, you just show how old and
outdated you are.

Laughter

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

PANTING HEAVILY. POV VERY CLOSE LOOKING INTO THE WINDOW
watching the party-goers.

LANCE
Oh! Oh know you didn't!

EUGENE
Now that stings.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

LAUGHTER

LANCE

I mean seriously... Legends of the Fall? Seven?

EUGENE

Freeman was awesome in that too.

LANCE

Oh, absolutely! Don't forget Morgan in The Shawshank Redemption?

EUGENE

Here, here!

LANCE

Back to Brad, A River Runs Through It, True Romance.

EUGENE

Dude! True Romance! Now that was a cast to go down in history. Thelma and Louise, Kalifornia!

LANCE

12 Monkeys, Sleepers, Meet Joe Black, Seven Years in Tibet... Come on! The man's a legend.

The girls laugh and roll their eyes.

ANNE

Can someone say bromance?

LANCE

And the last, but not the least, for the grand finale...

Lance and Eugene simultaneously say:

LANCE (CONT'D)

Fight Club!

EUGENE

Fight Club!

High five! The whole table erupts in laughter.

FOCUS ON THE LARGE WINDOW BEHIND THEM. TENSION!

Another 90s song begins to play.

LANCE

YEAH! CRANK IT!

Eugene grabs the stereo remote

EUGENE

Oh shit! Remember this?!

Just as Eugene turns it up, it goes silent. All eyes on Eugene.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

What the?

As Eugene fumbles with the remote, unbeknownst to the guests watching Eugene, WE SEE CRACKERJACK IN HIS FULL ENORMITY IN THE WINDOW BEHIND THEM. His shoulder's alone stand close to six-feet!

LANCE

Way to go champ.

EUGENE

Hold up, shit, that was mute.

CRACKERJACK STANDS UP TALL GLARING INTO THE WINDOW! Thick foam drips from his massive mouth. HE'S GIGANTIC!

Eugene finally finds the right button to push. The MUSIC BLASTS! Drowning out the laughter of his gaffe. Still oblivious to the HUGE BEAR standing in the window behind them.

The music proves too much for Crackerjack to take. He drops back to all fours and disappears into the night, with neither couple having any idea of their brush with death.

EXT. UNCLE RON'S CABIN - NIGHT

CRACKLING FIRE. Light shines from the cabin's window's into the pitch black night. A stream of smoke flows from the chimney.

INT. UNCLE RON'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Surprisingly comfortable and neat, the tiny cabin is much more modern inside than the exterior. Western paintings hang from the walls. A wood burning stove rests in one corner, a single bed in the other, a small couch, a recliner, and a two-person kitchen table make up the furnishings. A stone fireplace with a neatly stacked pile of firewood keeps the home nice and warm.

Mesmerized by the fire, Uncle Ron, Sam, Ezra, and Jeremiah sit, quite content after their dinner.

EZRA

So, I know it's a longshot, Uncle Ron, but is there anyway I can talk you into helping us out? That is, if you're up to it? Sheriff Baker, Sam and myself, would sure be grateful.

Uncle Ron quietly stares into the fire. Sam looks to Ezra as they patiently wait for a reply.

UNCLE RON

That's a damn shame. Ain't no worse way to go. Eatin' alive. Poor souls.

SAM

So, will you help us?

UNCLE RON

Anyone... anyone, seen the bear that did this?

SAM

No. But the coroner said it had to be a grizzly. Just the pure mauling, the appetite. We know, coming into Spring that the...

UNCLE RON

(Interrupts) Anyone get a foot print?

SAM

Uh, no. All the attack sites were primarily in wooded areas, the soil was too dishevelled. We do have some fur samples though.

Uncle Ron slowly gazes up at Ezra.

UNCLE RON

You sure you're a McDaniel's? (Winks)

EZRA

I haven't trapped or tracked since I was a kid.

UNCLE RON

How's the coroner know for sure it was a griz?

SAM

I believe from the bite radius? And the fur samples, were brown, so it wasn't a black bear. It had to be one of our browns, a grizzly.

Uncle Ron takes a sip of whiskey and pauses for a moment.

UNCLE RON

A griz ain't the only bear with brown fur.

Confused, Sam looks to Ezra.

SAM

But a grizzly is the only bear with brown or even blonde colored fur in these parts. I mean, it certainly wasn't an elk. What? Are you suggesting wolves? A wolverine? I mean what other animal has the ferocity to do something like this? It had to be a grizzly bear. The only other bear with brown fur that I can think of...

EZRA

A Kodiak.

SAM

Yeah, but they're specific to the Kodiak Archipelago. I'm pretty sure there's no Kodiaks in Montana. (Laughs) That would be quite a walk from Alaska.

Sam and Ezra laugh. Silence. Uncle Ron stares into the fire.

Uncle Ron nonchalantly glances over to a CU A CASE OF CRACKERJACK CANDY in a corner behind the stove.

EZRA

So, what do you say, Uncle Ron? Can you help us?... Uncle Ron?

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

CU OF A GRIZZLY BEAR on a MAGAZINE.

Seated at his desk, Ben reads the Magazine. A steaming cup of coffee sets on his desk next to his gun belt with a Glock in the holster and a can of BEAR SPRAY in another holster.

BEN

Talk about bad news bears. They are some mean sons-o-bi...

PHONE RINGS. He answers.

BEN (CONT'D)

White Fish Sheriff's Department, this is Deputy Ben, how can I help you?... (Beat)... Hey Valerie, how are ya? Hey, by the way, I'm sorry about your brother-in-law. I was on duty, couldn't make it to the funeral that day, my regards... (Rolls his eyes)... You're shittin' me! I mean really? Where?... (Beat)... Ah Val, I honestly don't think the Sheriff is going to be too concerned about a permit, seeing what's been happening... (Beat)... Nah, the warrants either. The Sheriff has a way of seeing around those kind of things in a situation like this. You tell him, don't sweat it... (Beat)... Okee dok, we'll get out that way as soon as he gets here.

He looks up to the wall clock.

BEN (CONT'D)

Alrighty Val, thanks for callin'. And hey... It was good talkin' with ya... (Beat)... Likewise. Ok... Bye bye.

He hangs up and stares at the phone (what could have been moment). Grabs the CB radio handle. (STATIC)

BEN (CONT'D)

Sheriff, you almost here? Copy?

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)

Just left The Buffalo, be there in two. Don't tell me we got more bad news? Over. (STATIC)

BEN

No. In fact maybe some good news. O'l Paul Turner bagged him a griz this mornin', up near the North end of the lake. Over. (STATIC)

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
That right?

BEN
Yes sir.

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
What'd he use? An AK-47?

BEN
(Laughs) I wouldn't be surprised.
You know them boys. I uh... I uh,
told Valerie that'd you'd uh...
You'd probably let the warrant
slide, seeing how's things are at
the moment. Over. (STATIC)

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
I suppose you told her he wouldn't
be arrested for killing a bear out
of season either. Am I
right?(STATIC)

BEN
Uh... Yes sir. I kinda did.

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
(Laughs) Ben, that girl's been
married to that bum for over five
years. Don't you think it's time to
let it go? Hell, if anything, you'd
have a better chance if he was in
jail where he belongs, instead of
giving him breaks all the
time.(STATIC)

BEN
I know Sheriff, I uh...

A FEMALE VOICE, NIKKI, the dispatcher, INTERRUPTS OVER THE
RADIO

NIKKI (O.S.)
Can I remind you gentlemen, this
radio is for official law
enforcement use only and not for
relationship advice.

BEN
Oh, hey Nik. Mornin'.

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
 Good mornin" Nikki. You workin'
 from home today, or can we expect
 you in the office?

NIKKI (O.S.)
 Mornin' Sheriff, I'm sticking
 around the house again today,
 Elijah's teething and he's been a
 force to reckon with.(STATIC)

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
 (Laughs) That's fine. You take care
 of that little one as long as you
 need to.

NIKKI (O.S.)
 Thanks Sheriff. Will do.
 Over.(STATIC)

SHERIFF BAKER (O.S.)
 Pullin' in now. Over. (STATIC)

EXT. NORTH LAKE - DAY

WE HEAR QUADS(O.S.)

A DEAD GRIZZLY BEAR riddled with MULTIPLE BULLET WOUNDS lays
 in the mud next to the lake. Standing next to the bear
 carcass is VALERIE TURNER(26) pretty in a backwoods sort of
 way, not the brightest.

Sheriff Baker and Ben pull up on their quads. Cut the engines
 and walk down the steep slope to the water's edge.

BEN
 Holy cow! Did he unload a whole
 clip on that thing?

They approach a timid Valerie. She and Ben lock eyes. The
 spark's still there.

BEN (CONT'D)
 Hey Val.

VALERIE
 Hey Ben.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Howdy Valerie.

VALERIE
 Hey Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER
So this is our culprit, huh?

VALERIE
I guess.

BEN
That's a big sum bitch.

SHERIFF BAKER
We're going to have to cut him
open. Ben, radio Nikki, see if
Marcus is on his way.

Ben and Valerie continue to look into each other's eyes.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)
Now.

BEN
Yes sir.

SHERIFF BAKER
So... Where's he at?

VALERIE
Who?

SHERIFF BAKER
Val, who do you think?

VALERIE
Ben said there wouldn't be no
problems? You ain't going to arrest
him, are you?

SHERIFF BAKER
No, I ain't going to arrest him.

From behind a large pine tree steps PAUL TURNER(30) scruffy,
tough and covered in prison tatoos, with an AR 15 in hand.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)
Paul.

PAUL
Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER
Son, you can put that down, I ain't
takin' you in. You got my word.

PAUL

All the same Sheriff, I think I'll hold onto it.

SHERIFF BAKER

Suit yourself. When'd ya get him?

PAUL

This mornin' just after sunrise. He came down outta the hills to drink. I had seen some tracks around here last week. Figured it might follow the same pattern. Hung my tree stand up there. (Gestures to the same tree he stepped out from) last night.

SHERIFF BAKER

How many rounds did ya pump into him?

PAUL

(Grins) full mag.

Ben returns, him and Paul glare at each other.

BEN

Paul.

Paul doesn't return the hello. QUAD ENGINE IN THE BACKGROUND.

BEN (CONT'D)

That should be him.

SHERIFF BAKER

Good. Get this God damned thing over with.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - EVENING

POV looking into the cabin's master bathroom. Seated inside the jacuzzi sized bathtub, soaking in a bubble bath, Anne sips a glass of champagne.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN MASTER BATH - CONTINUOUS

ADULT CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FILLS THE AIR. Covered to her chin in foam bubbles, gazing out the giant window, Anne sips her champagne. Stepping into view, Lance drops his robe and steps into the tub.

UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE TO THE WINDOW, Anne watches the sun disappear behind the vast mountain range.

ANNE

You know, it truly is magnificent here.

LANCE

It's quite majestic, isn't it?

ANNE

I find it so utterly rugged... yet, breathtaking.

LANCE

Kind of like me?

The two giggle as they begin to kiss. TENSION BUILDS IN FRONT OF THE WINDOW. BAM! A BIRD CRASHES INTO THE WINDOW and falls to its death. The couple's startled!

ANNE

What was that?

Lance stands to look out.

LANCE

It was a sparrow. It happens at work occasionally. My office window, in the high-rise. They fly right into the glass. The collision kills them nearly instantly.

ANNE

Oh no. Poor thing.

LANCE

I'll go out and give it a proper burial in the morning. But for now, lets not let it spoil our evening.

The two begin kissing again. TOO CLOSE TO THE WINDOW!

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

On horseback, Sam, Ezra, and Jeremiah meander along the thick wooded trail. Leading the way, Jeremiah disappears around a blind corner.

EZRA

Sam, I just don't think asking a man for his daughter's hand in marriage over the phone is the proper thing to do.

SAM

Babe, with this whole fiasco going on, I don't think we're going to have time to go to San Francisco before our move.

EZRA

I know, I know, I get it. I'm just telling you, as a man, it's not the right way to go about it. I want to look him in the eye with complete respect and ask the man. It's the honorable thing to do.

SAM

Maybe in 1950. But I'm telling you, my dad's not like that. At all. He's as...

Ezra's horse becomes spooked, suddenly stops and neighs.

EZRA

What is it girl?

The horse rares up, Ezra holds on.

FOCUS ON THE THICK BRUSH AHEAD... TENSION

SAM

Ez, what is that?

Ezra pulls his rifle from the sheath, cocks it and points it at the BRUSH.

TENSION... FOCUS ON THE BRUSH. Suddenly Jeremiah pops out, tail wagging.

SAM (CONT'D)

Jeremiah! (laughs). You almost gave mommy a heart attack.

Ezra lowers his rifle.

EZRA

Damn dog. You have no idea how close you just came to...

INT. BRONCO - DAY

Parked in front of Sam and Ezra's cabin, Sheriff Baker and Ben sit inside the Bronco waiting. Ben rests his feet on the dash.

SHERIFF BAKER

God damnit Ben, get your feet off there. I swear, sometimes you act like a clueless teenager.

Ben quickly removes his feet and sits up straight.

BEN

Sorry, Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER

As I was sayin', I'm just sure glad this didn't make it to the national news.

BEN

Me too, Sheriff. You know? It kind of reminds me of that shark movie. King of the Sea. Remember how that college professor and that old sheriff didn't want the media to blow the story out of proportion? Mess up their summer tourism and all. That was a damn good movie.

Sheriff sighs and shakes his head.

SHERIFF BAKER

Yeah, but this ain't a God damn movie and if it did get out, the people of White Fish would be hurtin' for business. Hurtin' bad.

BEN

Look Sheriff, there's Jeremiah! They made it.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah comes happily strolling up the trail, tail wagging. Sheriff Baker and Ben get out of the Bronco. Ben greets the dog with affection.

BEN

Hey there buddy. How was your trip?

Down the trail, Sam and Ezra round the corner into view on horseback.

BEN (CONT'D)

Hey y'all! Looks like they're alone Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER

That ol' sly dog. He must of remembered he was buying the next round.

INT. BULLDOG SALOON - NIGHT

OLD COUNTRY AND WESTERN MUSIC PLAYS. COCKTAIL GLASSES CLANK. PEOPLE TALKING. Seated around a table with empty beer mugs and pitchers, Sam, Ezra, and Sheriff Baker enjoy each other's company.

SHERIFF BAKER

Probably for the better. At his age, making that trip through the backcountry ain't a very easy task.

SAM

I don't know Sheriff? He looked pretty capable if you ask me.

SHERIFF BAKER

Oh, I don't doubt it, he's a tough ol' coot. Just would have hated to see him come all the way down to the flats for nothing, seeing we already got the bear.

EZRA

DNA samples back yet?

SHERIFF BAKER

Not yet, but the other couple, her girlfriend, she identified the victim's wedding ring. We'll still compare the samples, but I figure, put two and two together.

A COCKTAIL WAITRESS(22) approaches the table.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Another pitcher?

EZRA

Yes, please.

SHERIFF BAKER

Nah, nah, I'm good. I have my two beer limit... Even off duty.

EZRA

We'll take one.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Coming right up.

The Cocktail Waitress leaves.

SHERIFF BAKER

So Ronnie has a nice little spread up there, huh?

SAM

It was like a model cabin. I was shocked when we walked inside.

EZRA

She ain't kiddin'. He had some paintings that could have been in a museum. Beautiful work. And spotless. The whole place, clean as a whistle. Not what you'd think a mountain man's cabin would look like.

SAM

The paintings, the furniture, the rug. The only thing typical was the pot belly stove and maybe the stone fireplace. Otherwise. Oh yeah! And his endless supply of Crackerjacks! Oh, and did you know Ezra has a nickname? Uncle Ron calls him Coyote!

Sheriff Baker's face goes straight.

SHERIFF BAKER

Crackerjack you say?

SAM

Yeah, Crackerjacks, you know, the little boxes of Carmel covered popcorn? He probably had four cases. At least.

EZRA

Don't forget the surprise inside!

SHERIFF BAKER
(Straight faced) Yeah. Don't forget
that ol' surprise.

EXT. THICK WOODS - DAY

SNAP, CRACKLE, POP, tree limbs and twigs BREAK-OFF as something's coming through the forrest.

THE MACHETE makes one final slice through the thicket of brush. Stepping into the clearing, with a large rifle strapped to his back, Uncle Ron wipes sweat from his brow.

He scans the ground for tracks where he spots a MASSIVE BEAR PAW TRACK.

UNCLE RON
Well, all be.

BLACK SCREEN.

SLOSHING, from the sound of boots walking through mud. A MAN BREATHING HEAVY. HEARTBEAT.

SUPER: KODIAK ISLAND 1996

EXT. ALPINE TUNDRA - MORNING

A slimmer of sunlight graces the horizon and pierces the thick brush. Breath vapor from the cold temperature streams from the MUCH YOUNGER UNCLE RON'S mouth. With the eye's of both predator and prey, he inches his way through the knee deep mud. Rifle in tow. EERIE SILENCE. TENSION.

EXT. POND - DAY

FLIES BUZZING. Uncle Ron has made his way to a clearing with a large pond in the center. Tall yellow grass surrounds the borders of the water. FLIES BUZZING GETS LOUDER.

At the base of the pond, he spots a fresh kill, a LARGE, HALF EATEN BISON. SNORING IN THE DISTANCE.

UNCLE RON
Oh shit...

Just then, he spots a MASSIVE SLEEPING KODIAK BEAR across the pond! He freezes.

Unfortunately, as he tries to silently back track, his boots are stuck in deep mud. He tries gently to pull his feet up, but makes a LOUD SLOSHING SOUND.

He looks to the Bear, the Bear wakes and scans the pond, looking to protect her food source. She spots him... EYES LOCK! **OH SHIT MOMENT!**

In no time, the bear makes a rush for him across the fifty-foot pond! He raises his rifle, pulls the bolt-action back to load, aims, FIRES OFF A SHOT. But the Massive Bear's moving fast and erratic! Not sure if the first shot hit her. He loads again.

THE BEAR'S GAINING SPEED! Covering ground extremely FAST!

He POPS ANOTHER ROUND OFF!

Just as he re-loads, the Bear has reached him and tackles him, knocking the rifle into the mud! A fight ensues. The bear tosses him side-to-side like a rag doll. He SCREAMS IN AGONY!

Strapped to his belt, he reaches for a 44. MAGNUM PISTOL. Quickly, he pumps SIX ROUNDS into the bear's chest while she's on top of him.

The bear GROANS IN AGONY! She chomps down onto his skull. BONES CRACKLE.

She slows her aggression. Stands above the blood soaked man, steps aside, then crumbles to her death. Uncle Ron appears dead. Covered in gashes and blood.

EXT. POND - EVENING

FLIES. MAN WHEEZING. WE SEE the gruesome fight scene. The huge dead bear must be close to twelve-feet in length and weigh six-hundred pounds.

The dead bison rests only a few feet away from the fight scene.

Covered in now dry blood, Uncle Ron gasps for breath as he slowly opens an eye and moans. He raises a hand as if asking for help. Then falls unconscious once again.

EXT. POND - NIGHT

The reflection of a full moon glistens on the perfectly still pond water. SNAP, CRACKLE, POP, something in the bushes.

Uncle Ron's eyes fight to open. He slowly turns his head to see where the sound is coming from. His EYES GROW.

BLACK SCREEN

EXT. POND - DAY

The reflection of the bright mid-day sun glistens on the perfectly still pond water. BIRDS CHIRPING. Other than the gruesome fight scene, it appears to be a beautiful day.

Unconscious, Uncle Ron hasn't moved an inch since the attack. His chest slowly inhales, then slowly exhales with a slight gurgle.

THE GENTLE, SOFT CRY OF A BABY BEAR stirs Uncle Ron from his near coma. He cracks one eye, while the crust of dried blood makes it harder to crack the other.

THE BABY BEAR'S CRY is heartbreaking.

Uncle Ron winces as he painfully forces himself to turn his head and look where the cry is coming from.

Just to the side of the dead mother bear, sits the helpless, extremely cute small cub. It's sad eyes look Uncle Ron in the face as it lets out another soft cry for its mother.

EXT. POND - EVENING

A beautiful sunset reflects on the perfectly still pond water.

Unconscious, Uncle Ron is BUMPED awake. His eyes pop open in terror! He slowly gazes down to see who the perpetrator is. Only to see that it's the baby bear laying next to him for warmth. Freezing himself, Uncle Ron doesn't fight it.

EXT. POND - MORNING

A fresh sunrise glistens on the perfectly still pond water.

COUGHING. MOANING AND COUGHING.

The baby bear is startled and quickly moves away from its warm bed mate.

Uncle Ron grimaces in pain and grabs his injured rib cage. White spit straggles from his parched lips. For the first time, he moves his whole body as he fights to drag himself to the pond.

After much exertion, he makes it to the water's edge, where he scoops a handful of water and tries to drink it. It's good. He continues to drink for a few moments.

The baby bear isn't quite sure what to make of the stranger. It keeps a distance but is curious.

Uncle Ron washes the dried blood from his face and scalp.

EXT. POND - DAY

A CRACKLING FIRE. Finally coherent, Uncle Ron cooks the bison meat over a tiny fire. Twisting the makeshift skewer with one hand, he holds his other hand over the fire for warmth.

Ron scans the surroundings. Hears a tussle in the BUSHES. Grabs his pistol. TENSION. Focus on the BUSHES. He aims the pistol.

The baby bear pops its little head out and cautiously yet curiously stares back.

Ron tosses a piece of meat towards the bear. The bear backs up.

UNCLE RON

Don't worry, I ain't going to hurt ya.

He tosses another piece of meat. Slowly, the baby bear comes out from the bushes and sniffs the meat. Hesitantly, it takes a bite, loves it! And devours the meat.

EXT. POND - EVENING

WE HEAR THE BEAR CUB PLAYFULLY GROWLING. CAMPFIRE CRACKLES. As the sun sets, the cold air creates breath vapors. Uncle Ron has clearly made a recovery. Seated next to a BIGGER CAMPFIRE, Uncle Ron now hand feeds the baby bear the last of the bison meat.

UNCLE RON

Okay, okay, little one. That's it for the night.

The playful cub paws at him for more.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

We gotta save some for breakfast. Hold on.

Uncle Ron reaches for a LEATHER SATCHEL. Inside the bag is a box of CRACKERJACK'S. He pours a handful as the curious cub watches on. Uncle Ron extends his hand and the cub slowly at fist takes a single pice of the candy. The cub loves it! And quickly eats the handful.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Well all be. Looks like you got a sweet tooth there. (Laughs) okay, hold your horses.

He continues to feed the cub the entire box.

EXT. POND - DAY

The warm late Spring sun shines down. Time has healed Uncle Ron's wounds quite well. With everything now packed, he straps the horse's saddle on.

The cub watches in concern.

UNCLE RON

Come on Crackerjack. Can't leave you out here. First pack of wolves that spotted ya, would have you for breakfast.

Uncle Ron climbs onto the horse and the threesome set off.

SERIES OF SCENES:

- - Uncle Ron, his horse and Crackerjack wind through a rugged mountain trail
- - They all drink water from a crystal clear stream
- - They make their way on a well-worn path above the timberline. Crackerjack tirelessly follows as Uncle Ron look over his shoulder to make sure the bear's keeping up.
- - The three lay low behind a thicket of trees as they watch a Canadian Mounty on patrol. They rush across the invisible border as soon as soon as the Mounty passes.
- - Finally, the three spot Uncle Ron's CABIN after the long journey. Crackerjack has grown and so has Uncle Ron's now long beard and hair.
- - Once again clean shaven with short hair, Uncle Ron appears to be fully recovered from the bear attack, minus a few scars.

He plays and wrestles with an older and BIGGER Crackerjack. Ron pauses and pulls a handful of Crackerjacks from his flannel's breast pocket. The bear gladly accepts

- - WE SEE a CARTON OF CRACKERJACK BOXES inside the cabin

- - WE SEE a trash bend full of EMPTY CRACKERJACK'S BOXES

- - Now nearly fully grown, Crackerjack is HUGE! The massive bear now dwarfs Uncle Ron. Ron gently pets his big furry friend. Crackerjack adoringly appreciates the affection.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

High atop a tall mountain overlooking a majestic valley below, Ron and Crackerjack take in the beauty.

UNCLE RON

Well buddy, this is it. It's time for you to go off on your own and do.... Do shit bear's do. Eat some elk, catch some trout, find you a cute little sow. I heard somewhere that female grizz are really hot for you big Kodiak boys. Guess they like big fellars. Ya know?

Crackerjack lets out a low growl.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Crackerjack, you're going to be fine. I'm gonna miss ya, but you gotta go be on your own. In the wild, where you belong. It wouldn't be fair to you any other way.

With that, Ron hugs the bear and sends him on his way.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Now go on. Don't make this any harder than it's gotta be.

Crackerjack sadly gazes into his adopted parent's eyes. Ron tears up.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Go on. It's time. Get outta here.

With that, Crackerjack begins his journey to the valley below, as Ron watches the bear until it's out of sight.

A LOUD ROAR ECHOES FROM THE CANYON WALLS. Ron smiles.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

BACK TO PRESENT TIME

Sam and Ezra gaze across THE SAME VALLEY that Uncle Ron and Crackerjack did many years before. Timeless and pristine, the valley remains nearly exactly the same.

EZRA

I don't know darlin', you sure you want to give this up for a congested city?

SAM

Babe, come on.

EZRA

I'm just sayin'.

SAM

Well, in a week, it's going to get pretty darn congested here.

EZRA

Really? You want to go there?

SAM

Oh, like you don't loathe the summer crowds. (Laughs)

EZRA

Okay, miss smarty pants, you're going to get it.

Ezra playfully bear hugs her and swings her around. Sam laughs harder.

SAM

What! You know I'm right!

EZRA

You know what you're right about?

SAM

What?

EZRA

You're right about the right guy.

They begin to kiss.

EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - NIGHT

POP! POP! POP! FIREWORKS fill the clear starry sky. Sheriff Baker and Ben stand on the sidewalk watching the show.

BEN

Well Sheriff, it looks like Mr. Heal's got her down this year. No fires.

SHERIFF BAKER

Welp, we'll see if ol' Mike can stay sober through the opening weekend. A test run doesn't count. Hopefully, he learned from last year.

BEN

And the year before.

POP! POP! POP!

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

POP! POP! POP!(Off in the distance)

A stream of smoke seeps from the chimney. A dim porch light and light pouring from the windows softly illuminates the cabin and its surroundings.

WHOO, WHOO, an owl sings.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

A small TEA KETTLE WHISTLES on the stove. Jeremiah perks up at the sound, then quickly resumes his nap. Sam slides a short robe around her naked body, while Ezra stays under the sheets.

SAM

It'll help you sleep, you sure.

EZRA

Nah, thanks. I don't want to have to pee all night. It's too cold out there.

SAM

Well, you don't have to finish the whole kettle silly. It's not your morning coffee.

She mimics him gulping a cup of coffee.

EZRA

I'm just glad I'm sleeping in tomorrow morning.

SAM

Blah, blah, blah. I getta sleep in tomorrow morning. Watch, I'll be back before your lazy butt wakes up.

EZRA

It's just stupid, why are they having you interview your replacement? Why isn't Mark doing that?

SAM

Because, like I've told you a million times, Mark's in Missoula all week for some conference thingy.

EZRA

Eh, whatever, he never does his job half the time when he is here.

Sam stands uncomfortably close to the window. TENSION BUILDS. She sips her tea.

EZRA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Seems like he has a lot of conference "thingies" he goes to.

Sam blocks the reflective light with her hand as she leans in to look out the window.

SAM

Did you hear that?

EZRA (O.S.)

Hear what?

SAM

I don't know? Sounded like some racoons around the trash bend. You locked the bear box right?

EZRA

Yeah, don't worry about it right now. I'm not going out there. I'm comfortable right here.

(MORE)

EZRA (CONT'D)

Besides, the raccoons have to eat too, don't they?

SAM

Yeah, but I'm the one who'll be cleaning it up in the morning while your lazy butt's snoozing.

She takes her robe off and climbs back into bed.

EZRA

Can't a guy get a day off around here? Jeeze!

SAM

Maybe a day, but not a night.

She kisses him.

EZRA

Now I like the sound of that!

She climbs on top of him.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

BIRDS SINGING. It's a beautiful sunny morning. Just a trace of smoke streams from the chimney.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Rays of sunshine pierce through the window. Sam quietly gets out of bed making sure not to wake a snoring Ezra.

She makes her way to the tiny bathroom and disappears inside. WE HEAR THE SHOWER START.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Dressed in her park ranger uniform, with hair still wet and slicked back into a tight ponytail, Sam quietly locks the cabin door behind her.

Making her way to the BLM truck, she notices a mess by the BEAR BOX/ TRASH BEND. TORN TRASH BAGS litter the area.

SAM

Damnit, I knew it.

She glances at her watch.

SAM (CONT'D)

Ugh!

She starts to pick up the trash when she notices the REMAINS OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE A SLAUGHTERED RACCOON.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh my God!

TENSION BUILDS. WE HEAR AN OFF SCREEN LOW GROWL.

Fear washes over Sam as she slowly turns around to see CRACKERJACK NEXT TO THE TRUCK! The bear is clearly delusional from the rabies now. Foaming at the mouth while swaying back and forth. He hasn't spotted Sam yet.

Sam opens her mouth, but the terror doesn't allow her to call for help.

Crackerjack paws at the truck, nearly lifting it off the ground from his extreme strength. He looks inside the cab for food. He presses his paw against the driver's side window and with little force, the window shatters into pieces. He sticks his head into the broken door window, then reaches in with his claws extended and swipes for food.

Sam sets the trash bags down and slowly backs up.

POP! A downed branch breaks under the weight of Sam's foot.

Crackerjack raises his massive head from the truck window and spots Sam...

Sam closes her eyes in defeat.

Crackerjack locks his crazed eyes on his future prey and lets out a low grumble.

Sam freezes in fear.

EZRA (O.S.)

What the hell, did you lock the keys in the truck again? You know they're gonna get tired of replacing these windows. Hey, maybe would should start a rural locksmith business here. I'm sure you're not the only one that continuously locks their keys inside their vehicle.

SAM

EZRA!

Only clad in his boxers and boots, Ezra appears in view.

EZRA

What?

Sam gestures to Crackerjack.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Holy shit! Babe, don't move.

Crackerjack doesn't acknowledge Ezra. ROARS! Starts to walk towards Sam... Then a slow gallop... Then a full run!

Sam runs!

EZRA (CONT'D)

HEY!!! YOU SON-OF-A-BITCH! COME ON,
GET ME, you mother fu...

Crackerjack stops... Looks at Ezra... ROARS! Showing his huge fangs! Slowly begins to move towards Ezra, growling the whole time.

SAM

NO! EZRA RUN!

EZRA

Oh shit...

Ezra turns to run the other direction, while trying to keep an eye on the bear. (O.S.) JEREMIAH BARKS FROM INSIDE THE CABIN.

Crackerjack starts a slow gallop towards Ezra. Ezra heads for the heavily wooded area behind the cabin.

SAM

EZRA, RUN!

EZRA

SAM, GET IN THE TRUCK AND GET THE
HELL OUT HERE!

SAM

WHERE'S THE RIFLE?

EZRA

IT'S TOO LATE, JUST GO! GET OUT OF
HERE!

Crackerjack bolts towards Ezra! Ezra makes it to the woods and weaves in and out of bushes and trees. Crackerjack is hot on his trail.

Sam runs to the truck and climbs in dropping her walkie talkie She fumbles for the keys... drops them on the floorboard. Grasps them and jams them into the ignition. She cranks it, but the old truck whines and grinds while trying to start.

The truck's noise gets Crackerjack's attention... He stops and turns to look. TENSION BUILDS! ROAR!

Ezra stops in panic and grabs a rock. Throws it at the bear, striking it in the back of the head. (Jeremiah BARKS from inside the cabin)

EZRA (CONT'D)
 COME ON! WHAT, ARE YOU AFRAID TO
 PICK ON SOMEONE YOUR OWN SIZE?!!!

Crackerjack bolts to towards the truck! Sam cranks the ignition to no avail!

SAM
 Please, please God! START!

Sam watches in terror as Crackerjack runs directly at her.

EZRA (O.S.)
 COME ON YOU SON-OF-A-BITCH! COME
 AND GET ME! FIGHT LIKE A MAN!

Sam cranks the ignition, but still nothing. Crackerjack is closing in fast! Ezra runs from the woods after the bear!

Just as Crackerjack slams into the driver's side door with his massive head, the truck finally starts! The bear hits the truck so hard, it lifts up on two wheels and leaves a big indentation in the metal door! SAM SCREAMS! She slams the truck into reverse and steps on the gas.

Crackerjack pounds his gargantuan paws into the truck hood, leaving dents every time. ROARS!

Sam whips the truck around and leaves a trail of dust, finally getting the truck onto the dirt road.

Ezra stops mid-meadow... He and Crackerjack lock eyes...

EZRA (CONT'D)
 It's you and me mother fucker.

Crackerjack once again starts in a slow gallop. Ezra turns back to the woods and starts running. Crackerjack gains momentum FAST! Soon he's right on Ezra's tail.

Ezra reaches the woods and like a jackrabbit, darts between branches and shrubs.

Crackerjack reaches the woods, but has a harder time weaving through them because of his size. Ezra gains ground away from the beast.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Can't keep up, huh? Come on slow
poke!

Crackerjack struggles to get through the thick woods, breaking tree branches and plowing through bushes. Frustrated, the bear lets out an ECHOING ROAR!

Winded, Ezra slows his pace and looks back to the struggling bear, that's finally stuck in a thicket.

EZRA (CONT'D)

HA! Made it. Now, just circle back,
get the gun... and shoot this son-
of-a...

BAM! Not watching where he's going, Ezra slams into a large branch, that instantly knocks him out.

INT. BLM TRUCK (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

Speeding down the bumpy dirt road, Sam bounces back and forth in the cab.

SAM

JEREMIAH!

She steps on the breaks and comes to a halt. Slams it into reverse and speeds backwards along the beat up dirt road.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

WE HEAR JEREMIAH BARKING. Sam slides up in the truck. Checks her surroundings. Bolts for the cabin door and opens it. Jeremiah eagerly greets her.

SAM

Not now boy, lets go!

Sam makes a run for the truck. Jeremiah stops to pee on a bush.

SAM (CONT'D)

JEREMIAH! COME ON, LETS GO!

He takes his time. TENSION BUILDS.

INT. BLM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

FOCUS ON THE PASSENGER SIDE WINDOW behind Sam. TENSION!

POV ON SAM LOOKING IN FROM THE PASSENGER SIDE WINDOW.

SAM
HURRY UP!

Jeremiah nonchalantly hops inside the truck across Sam's lap.

SAM (CONT'D)
Jesus, Jeremiah!

FOCUS ON THE REAR WINDOW BEHIND SAM. TENSION!

She slams the truck into gear and punches it!

EXT. WOODS - LATER

Silence. With a large gash on his forehead, dazed, Ezra slowly comes to. Wincing, he half opens his eyes.

LOW GROWL (O.S.)

Ezra's eyes open wide, then close tight.

PAN OUT to Crackerjack standing over Ezra.

BLACK SCREEN... ROAR!

INT. BLM TRUCK - DAY

WE HEAR THE FULL-THROTTLE ENGINE OF THE TRUCK. HEARTBEAT!
LABORED BREATHING.

POV through the truck's windshield, racing down Main Street.

The CB RADIO and a portion of the FRONT SEAT IS MANGLED from
the Bear. Sam HONKS THE HORN CONTINUOUSLY!

SAM
COME ON, COME ON, COME ON! DEAR
GOD, PLEASE HELP ME!

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - SAME

An old Garth Brooks SONG plays in the background. An antique metal fan softly hums. Ben has his feet propped up onto his desk while Sheriff Baker types away on his computer.

From outside, HONK! HONK! HONK! ENGINE ROARS, TIRES SCREECH.

Both law officers look to one another.

BEN

What in tar nation?

SHERIFF BAKER

Grab your weapon!

The two hurry outside to see what the commotion is.

EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Sheriff Baker and Ben burst through the sheriff's station doors. Sam SCREECHES UP IN THE TRUCK.

SHERIFF BAKER

Sam, what is it?

Sam's truck finally comes to a stop. She jumps out even before the truck has come to a complete halt.

SAM

THE BEAR! THE BEAR!
SHERIFF!(Totally winded)

SHERIFF BAKER

Sam, slow down, what bear? What?

SAM

That wasn't the right bear.

SHERIFF BAKER

Sam, slow down, what are trying to say? Calm down.

SAM

Sheriff, the bear... Ezra...(Still winded)

SHERIFF BAKER

What Sam! What is it? What about Ezra? What bear are you talking about?

SAM
 Sheriff... The bear. The man-
 eater... It's still alive.

BEN
 What?

SAM
 The bear... It was at the cabin. I
 think it got Ezra. (Starts Crying) It
 was huge.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Ben get the keys!

BEN
 Yes sir, right away.

SHERIFF BAKER
 And Ben... grab the heavy
 artillery.

BEN
 Yes sir.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Sam, you ride with me. BEN, TAKE
 SAM'S TRUCK! WE'LL MEET YOU THERE.

BEN (O.S.)
 Will do.

INT. BRONCO (MOVING) - DAY

SIREN. Pedal to the metal, the Bronco whizzes through the
 small town.

SHERIFF BAKER
 I understand what you seen, but
 Paul Turner's bear... The hand and
 the engagement ring? That had to be
 the bear.

SAM
 Sheriff, you yourself know, even a
 hungry sow with cubs, coming out of
 hibernation wouldn't of killed five
 people. And that sow wasn't even a
 mother.

SHERIFF BAKER

I just don't know? I mean, if it had the taste of human blood, who knows? It had an abundant food source right here in the park.

SAM

Sheriff... There's something else...

SHERIFF BAKER

What?... What is it?

SAM

Two things... I think it had rabies. It was foaming at the mouth heavily, and... and, it seemed delusional.

SHERIFF BAKER

Dear God almighty, we can't have rabid grizzly bear running around the park before the first week of summer.

SAM

That's the other thing... It wasn't a grizzly.

SHERIFF BAKER

What are you talking about? A black bear?

SAM

No... not a black.

SHERIFF BAKER

Well I sure as hell know it wasn't a Koala.

SAM

A Kodiak... An Alaskan Brown.

SHERIFF BAKER

A Kodiak, huh? You sure about that? Positive?

SAM

Yeah... What?

SHERIFF BAKER

When you seen ol' Ronnie, did he mention anything about Crackerjack?

SAM

No. I mean he did have... remember,
I was telling you that he a few
cases of Crackerjack's?

SHERIFF BAKER

Shit.

SAM

What is it Sheriff?

EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Ben exits the sheriff's station carrying a small arson. A
scoped rifle, two AR 15s, a 44 Magnum strapped to his waist,
and a Glock 9mm strapped to the other side.

As he beelines for Sam's truck, he spots the huge dents on
the hood, then the driver's side door.

BEN

Holy cow! Must've been a big son-of-
a-gun! Sweet Jesus, Ez is out there
by himself with this thing.

He tosses the firearms onto the front seat and hops in,
starts the engine. He notices the damage to the front seat
and the destroyed CB radio.

JEREMIAH POPS HIS HEAD INTO THE CAB through the rear-sliding-
window, startling Ben!

BEN (CONT'D)

JIMINY CRICKET JEREMIAH! You scared
the livin' daylights outta me! Glad
it's you rather than that big 'ol
bear.

He reaches back and pets the pup.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

ROARING ENGINE. Sam's BLM trucks comes to a grinding halt.
Her and Sheriff Baker exit the vehicle, both with gun in tow.

SHERIFF BAKER

Lock and load, keep your eye's
peeled.

SAM

What year was that?

SHERIFF BAKER

Hell, I don't know? Sometime in the 90s I think?

SAM

So it's feasible? Kodiaks can live close to thirty years.

SHERIFF BAKER

It had to be Sam. That's the only Kodiak bear in Montana that I've ever heard of. You say Ezra was headed to the ravine?

SAM

Yeah, this way!

SHERIFF BAKER

Slow down Sam, we don't want to get ambushed ourselves. This is prime hunting area for bear.

SAM

Fuck that! We're getting Ezra.

Sam darts in and out of the thick shrubbery leaving the older sheriff behind.

SHERIFF BAKER

Sam! SAM!

POP! CRACKLE! Sheriff Baker snaps around to see what's behind him. FOCUS ON HIS FACE.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - DAY

The large windows of the cabin perfectly reflect the calm water of the tranquil lake. A beautiful clear day with abundant sunshine awaits.

Lance and Eugene sit on the cabin's deck sipping coffee.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

BIRDS SINGING. AN EAGLE SINGS. TWO SQUIRRELS CHASE EACH OTHER.

Up on a ridge overlooking the lake, a trail bordered with large pine trees on one side and a panoramic view on the other, Anne and Katarina enjoy a morning jog.

KATARINA
 (Winded) Hold up. I need to stop
 for a minute.

ANNE
 Can't drink like back in college
 can you?

KATARINA
 No, I'm not hungover. Aunt Flow.

ANNE
 Ohhhhh! Gotcha. I have Midol at the
 cabin.

POV from the trees on the GIRLS.

KATARINA
 I'll be okay. Go on, I'll catch up
 with you.

ANNE
 Are you sure?

KATARINA
 Yeah, yeah, I'll be fine. Go on.

ANNE
 Okee dokee artichokee.

Anne continues on the trail, until she disappears from site.
 Katarina takes in the view for a moment. Then gets spooked
 and turns to the TREES behind her.

KATARINA
 Hello?... Hllllloooo? Anybody
 there? My husband's a black belt in
 jiu jitsu!

Fear sets in, she takes off in Anne's direction.

KATARINA (CONT'D)
 Anne... Anne, wait up!

EXT. WOODS BY CABIN - DAY

POV SHERIFF BAKER'S FACE. TENSION.

He raises his rifle, aims it at the thick shrubbery. BEN POPS
 OUT!

BEN
 Hey Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Jesus Christ Ben, I almost blew
 your head off.

BEN
 Good thing ya didn't.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Yeah... Good thing.

BEN
 Where's Sam?

SHERIFF BAKER
 Heading towards the ravine. Lets
 go!

BEN
 Gee Sheriff, I don't know that you
 should of let her go by herself?
 With the bear and all.

SHERIFF BAKER
 No shit Ben. She took off. You
 catch her, my old ass can't keep up
 with you youngins.

BEN
 Yes sir.

EXT. WOODS BY CABIN - LATER

Down the path in a small clearing, Sam, Sheriff Baker and Ben
 stand, observing the ground.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Ah, dear God.

Sam weeps.

BEN
 You can see where it drug him off
 there, see the lines his two shoes
 left. I seen it before when people
 froze to death and we had to drag
 them out. It leaves two perfect
 line just like tha...

SHERIFF BAKER
 God damn it Ben, shut your mouth.
 I'm sorry Sam. There ain't much we
 can do now. The chopper's on the
 way.

(MORE)

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Best we can hope for, maybe they can spot it if it's still in the area. One thing for sure, we'll get that God damned bear, I can guarantee you that.

He reaches for Sam's shoulder, but she shrugs his hand off. Tears stream down her face as her lip quivers. Then rage sets in.

SAM

No... I'm going to get that God damned bear.

She looks to the Sheriff and Ben, with fire in her eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)

I guarantee you that.

EXT. VAST MOUNTAIN RANGE - EVENING

WOLVES HOWLING. OWL HOOSING. Only a glimmer of sunlight remains gracing the western side of the slopes.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

A flickering campfire illuminates the small makeshift campsite. The fire's light dances across the tall surrounding pines. Laying next to the campfire, covered with a wool blanket, and a bandaged head, Ezra slowly stirs awake.

UNCLE RON

How's your head?

EZRA

Oh man... this is worse than any Tequila hangover, I'll tell you that.

UNCLE RON

You remember anything that happened?

EZRA

It's hazy. I kinda remember you slingin' me over the horse's rear. Then getting here and you pullin' me off the horse. Not too much in between.

UNCLE RON

The bear?

EZRA

I don't know if it was a nightmare or real. I just remember that thing standing over me. I mean right on top of me. Then I remembered you and dad always told me to play dead if a bear attacked me. So I did. That's about it. It was a big son-of-a-bitch, I remember that much. Foamin' at the mouth like crazy.

UNCLE RON

You're sure about that? It was rabid?

EZRA

Oh yeah. Foamin' at the mouth and crazy as hell.

Saddened, uncle Ron looks to the Heavens. Ezra sees the pain in his face.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - MORNING

PHONES RINGING. 10 MEN, Sam, Ben and Shelley stand around the Sheriff's desk.

SHERIFF BAKER

Ben, get that. You tell that son-of-a-bitch there isn't an official statement yet and if he calls back here one more time, I will activate that old bench warrant he had for trespassing.

A LARGE MAP is sprawled open across the Sheriff's desk.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Alright, Shawn, Rocky, I need you two to cover the Southern shore. Gabe, Tony, come in through the West entrance and flank them.

The MEN carefully follow the directions.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Josh, Dillon, Eli, I need you three along the ridge. Scour out, try and keep an eye on Shawn and Rocky. I don't need anyone shooting one another.

(Laughter)

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Now I'm serious. This ain't your average bear... We got Michael and Scott patrolling as much ground as they can cover in Mike's Cesena. So keep your ears opened for those walkie talkies in case we get a sighting.

BEN

Sheriff, who's covering the North Eastern portion of the park?

SHERIFF BAKER

We ain't gonna make it in that far today on foot, quads, or truck. But I'll have Mike do a quick fly over along the shoreline near sunset if we haven't had any luck, weather permitting. Worse case scenario, you and I will head into the backcountry first thing tomorrow morning.

GABE

You can't count me in, Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER

Much appreciated there Gabe.

TONY

Me too, Sheriff.

The rest of the Men agree.

SHERIFF BAKER

Thank you kindly gentlemen. Much obliged. But lets hope we don't have to. Lets try and get this son-of-a-bitch today. And as you know, there's storm approaching. Be mindful.

Enthusiasm builds with the hunters.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Shelley, just keep the main closed. Anyone calls about reservations, tell 'em the park's still under maintenance.

SHELLEY

Consider it done, Jimbo.

SHERIFF BAKER

Ladies, Gentlemen... if you don't mind, I believe a quick prayer would be the proper thing to do before we set off.

All agree and bow their head's.. Sam eyes an AR-15 IN THE GUN RACK.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

A MOTOR HUMS. STORMY SKIES APPROACHING. LIGHTENING AND THUNDER. Coming up the dirt road, the Sheriff's Bronco winds up the path and stops near Sam and Ezra's cabin. Sam, Sheriff Baker and Ben cautiously exit the truck with rifles in hand.

SHERIFF BAKER

All right, lets fan out. Keep within seeing distance of one another... And for God's sake, if you spot the bear, put your site right between it's eyes. If it is indeed a Kodiak, we gotta hit it in the sweet spot. So don't take a shot just too hit it, remember these things can run over forty miles per hour and they will be on top of you before you can get two shots off. Make 'em count.

BEN

Yes sir.

SHERIFF BAKER

Sam, you sure you can handle that thing?

She nods yes.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

Now remember, it fires three rounds every time you pull the trigger.

SAM

I know Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER

All right, lets head out. If the storm gets too bad, we'll continue tomorrow. God help us.

EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

DARK SKIES ARE READY TO UNLEASH A BAD STORM. LIGHTENING AND THUNDER CRASH. Dressed in rain gear, Shawn and Rocky patrol the treeline next to the lake's shore. Shawn looks up at the stormy sky, then shoots Rocky a look of concern.

INT. PARK TOLL BOOTH - DAY

The first SPRINKLES OF RAIN begin to patter on the toll booth's roof as Shelley gazes through the windows at the menacing sky.

THUNDER IN THE DISTANCE

Gabe and Tony wave goodbye to Shelley as they head into the West entrance.

EXT. RIDGE OVERLOOKING LAKE - DAY

FLASHES OF LIGHTENING. THUNDER. A light rain begins to fall. Josh, Dillon and Eli wince at the lightening strikes, being more exposed on the ridge.

JOSH

I don't know if this was such a good idea fellas. If the damn bear don't get us, the lightening will.

DILLON

Should we turn back?

They both look to Eli.

ELI

Lets push a little further. If it gets too close, we'll drop down, get the hell off this ridge, and head back.

EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

The rain has hit. IT'S POURING! Visibility is low. Shawn and Rocky slowly inch their way along the muddy shore.

POV FROM THE TREES WATCHING THEM. Shawn slips on the drenched wet slope, Rocky gives him a hand up. Both laugh.

Then Rocky notices the HUGE BEAR PRINTS at the water's edge next to where Shawn's foot slipped.

ROCKY
Whoa!(Points to the tracks)

SHAWN
Holy shit!

ROCKY
That's one big varmint.

SHAWN
Fuck this. Dude, lets call it a day, radio the Sheriff. Tell him no mas. These aren't any conditions to be hunting something like that. Can't see shit. Fucker could hop out and eat us at any second.

Both look around. Rocky nods yes. They turn around to head out. THUNDER RUMBLES, LIGHTENING FLASHES.

POV FROM THE TREES WATCHING THEM.

EXT. FORREST TRAIL - DAY

HEAVY RAIN, THUNDER. Clothed in rain gear, Gabe and Tony slowly traverse the slippery trail. Gabe stops to light a cigarette.

GABE
He's probably going to call it off any minute now. It's bad enough down here, but it beats the hell out of being up high. I'd hate to be up there with Eli and those guys. Wide open with this lightening.

TONY
Make sure you can hear that radio.

GABE
I know. It's up all the way.(
Adjusts the volume knob on the walkie talkie)

FOCUS ON THE TREES BEHIND GABE. BREATH VAPOR'S COMING FROM AN UNKNOWN SOURCE! A LOT OF BREATH VAPOR!

He continues to struggle lighting his cigarette in the rain. TENSION BUILDS.

EXT. FORREST OFF THE PATH

POURING RAIN and low visibility make things difficult for Sheriff Baker, Sam and Ben to navigate through the densely wooded hillside.

BEN

Sheriff, I don't know about this? I mean we're sitting ducks out here. This is the kind of weather we advise people to stay inside for. This is plum crazy being out here. What do you say, we pick up after the storm blows over? Sheriff?

The Sheriff stops and looks to the dark sky, then to Sam.

SHERIFF BAKER

Radio the others. Tell them we'll resume the search after this lets up. If not this afternoon, first thing in the morning.

SAM

No Sheriff, we have to find Ezra!

(O.S.) Ben radios the others.

SHERIFF BAKER

Now Sam, I want to find him as bad as you, but this isn't safe for anyone. You know yourself, lightening storms and high country aren't a good combination. Plus we're all sopping wet, holding metal rifles. I don't intend on becoming a lightening rod.

SAM

EZRA! (Calls out to no avail)

Saddened, Sheriff looks to Ben, gestures to turn back.

EXT. VIEW FROM PLANE - EVENING

THE HUM OF A CESENA. The rain has subsided for now, but HEAVY CLOUDS STILL LOOM ABOVE.

BELOW: The lake reflects the gray skies above as the plane patrols the shore line and spots the LAKESIDE CABIN.

MIKE (O.S.)
 (STATIC) Haha, looky there. Looks like the Wallach cabin has some guests.

INT. PLANE COCKPIT - SAME

Piloting the plane, MIKE(42) points to the cabin. Co-piloting, SCOTT(41) glances out the window to the cabin below.

MIKE
 Twenty bucks. Or you can just cover the bar tab tonight?

SCOTT
 (Laughs) Yeah right, that'll be a lot more than twenty-dollars. I think a crisp Jackson will do.

MIKE
 Man, I sure wish I knew what I did wrong in life. Lifestyles of the rich and famous, huh? Own plane and all. Radio it in.

SCOTT
 Probably some rich CEO asshole.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - NIGHT

POP! A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE OPENS.

A full feast is prepared on the eloquent dinning room table, including (CU) A ROASTED PIG W/ AN APPLE IN IT'S MOUTH. Wine bottles and all the trimmings. The group stands for a toast. EUGENE'S BACK IS UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE TO THE HUGE FRONT WINDOW.

EUGENE
 To the richest CEO asshole I know!
 (Laughter) You know I'm only playing, I love you with all my heart.

ANNE
 Ahhhhhh. I knew there was more to the bromance than meets the eye.

KATARINA
 Right!?

EUGENE

Haha. But seriously, thank you for your generosity, thank you for all this (gestures to the massive cabin).

KATARINA

Thank you for my job.

EUGENE

Haha, you're just on a roll tonight aren't you honey? Here, here, thank you for my solid six... maybe next year seven figure income?

Laughter

LANCE

Now the truth comes out. I knew it, it was all about the money.

EUGENE

So now everyone's a comedian tonight.

LANCE

No, no, by all means, please continue. I never tire of flattery.

Laughter

EUGENE

Thank you for not only being the best boss, brother-in-law, best romance in the bromance department.

KATARINA

Now who's the comedian?

EUGENE

But thanks for being the best friend a guy could ask for. Cheers.

LANCE

Cheers. Thank you.

KATARINA

Nostrovia.

ANNE

Salute.

LANCE

What say? Shall we overly indulge
for our last night here?

EUGENE

I say we overly indulge like it's
our last night on earth!

CRASH! CRACKERJACK BREAKS THROUGH THE WINDOW!

With one swipe from his massive paw, he decapitates Eugene,
sending his HEAD FLYING, LANDING RIGHT NEXT TO THE ROASTED
PIG'S HEAD.

In no time, the bear has Katarina in his mouth, shaking her
back and forth like a rag doll! She SCREAMS!

Anne is frozen in fear. Lance picks her up and dashes to the
stairs as Crackerjack feasts on Katarina. ROAR!

INT. THE BAKER'S HOME - NIGHT

CU A MOUNTED GRIZZLY BEAR'S FACE WITH FANGS SHOWING.

Sam sips tea with MRS. BAKER(50s) classy and as kind as her
husband. The cozy ranch house is decorated in Western flare,
cowboy and horse paintings tastefully hang from the walls. A
warm fire crackles in the large red brick fireplace.

MRS. BAKER

Honey, you're welcome to stay as
long as you so desire.

SAM

Thank you. But I have a feeling
that I'll be moving on as soon as
this bear is found.

MRS. BAKER

Don't give up hope dear.

SAM

I'm sure it's in the area. We'll
get it.

MRS. BAKER

I wasn't talking about the bear.

SAM

Thanks for the encouragement, but I
uh... I just don't know?

MRS. BAKER

I'd say to leave it up to the Lord,
but I've known Ezra since he was a
toddler. That boy was born with
grit. If anyone could...

Dressed in civilian Western apparel, Sheriff Baker enters the
room.

SHERIFF BAKER

If anyone could what?

MRS. BAKER

Oh, never mind.

SHERIFF BAKER

Now woman, don't go puttin'
thoughts in her head. She needs
some rest.

MRS. BAKER

Anyhow. Sweetie, that should be
plenty of blankets for you there,
but if you get cold in the
slightest, the hall closet has a
bunch more. Heck, we have enough
blankets to get through the next
ice age.

SAM

Thank you.

Sheriff Baker brushes Sam's hair out of her face.

SHERIFF BAKER

Now Sam, you need anything, you
holler. You understand?

Sam smiles and nods.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)

I mean anything. If you get hungry,
help yourself in the kitchen.
Speaking of ice ages, hell, we got
enough food in there to get through
one. Get ya some rest.

SAM

Good night Sheriff.

SHERIFF BAKER

Night.

MRS. BAKER
 Good night, hon.

The Baker's exit the living room as Sam curls up under the blankets on the couch. Tears well in her eye's as she stares at a WEDDING PORTRAIT on the fireplace mantle of a much younger Baker couple.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - DAY

HUM OF A BOAT MOTOR. Heavy storm clouds reflect off the water's surface. A boat approaches the dock. Armed with rifles, the Sheriff, Ben, Sam and a CAPTAN(50s) tie the boat off at the dock.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Ben, now God damnit, we're not here for that. We're only here to tell them to leave due to circumstances. And, if they don't check-in next time, yes they will be fined.

Ben grumbles to himself.

As the three approach the cabin, they can clearly see the FRONT WINDOW IS SMASHED IN.

SHERIFF BAKER (CONT'D)
 Sweet Jesus!

BEN
 Holy mackerel!

SAM
 You mother fucker!

Sam and Ben draw their guns up and aim at the cabin.

SHERIFF BAKER
 Now hold up! There might be people inside, we can't go blowing the place apart.

BEN
 With all due respect, Sheriff, this bear ain't really known to leave behind many survivors.

SHERIFF BAKER
 All the same, we can't take a chance.

THUNDER. Slowly, they make their way to the cabin.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN PORCH - CONTINUOUS

The first drops of rain begin to fall. Through the broken window, the three see the carnage.

SHERIFF BAKER

Not again.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Eugene and Katarina's remains are strewn about the dining room. EUGENE'S HEAD still rests next to the PIG'S HEAD.

The Sheriff, Sam and Ben quietly spread out and begin to explore the cabin.

SHERIFF BAKER

(Whispers) Watch yourselves now.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gun drawn with beads of sweat on his brow, Ben cautiously enters the living room. The couch, coffee table, art work and sculptures are pristine and untouched. No bear.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Sheriff silently gestures for Sam to go left while he goes right.

As Sam approaches the master bedroom door, she spots DROPS OF BLOOD on the floor.

Nearing the bedroom entrance, the DOOR has been knocked in. Looking back, the Sheriff is now out of site. Sam must go in alone.

As she enters she spots Lance, unconscious, under the door, LARGE GASH in his head. She checks his pulse.

The large bedroom appears untouched. The king sized bed is perfectly made, the contemporary furniture looks like a model home.

Sam pauses as she looks at the HALF OPENED BATHROOM DOOR. TENSION BUILDS. LIGHT SNORING.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

SNORING. POV CU ON DOOR. Sam quietly peeps inside.

Inside, Crackerjack is asleep inside the jacuzzi. His enormous body takes up the entire tub.

In the corner, behind the tub, Anne is curled up in the fetal position, trembling in fear, forcing her eye's shut in order to play dead. She briefly opens her eyes to spot Sam. Trying not to panic, she mouths "NO" to Sam.

Sam gestures the "Shush" finger and motions for Anne to step around the bear. Anne shakes her head NO! The coaxing takes place for several seconds, before Anne eventually stands and stealthily begins to step around Crackerjack.

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Lightening fills the sky as rain begins to pour. A big storm is beginning to hit.

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

SNORING Sam continues to try to get Anne to get away from the sleeping giant. The coaxing takes place for several seconds, before Anne eventually stands and stealthily begins to step around Crackerjack.

LIGHTENING FLASHES IN THE BACKGROUND WINDOW... THE POWER GOES OUT!

The room becomes nearly pitch black due to the cloud coverage outside. Streaks of LIGHTENING give brief moments of the only light.

As the outside lightening illuminates the room, Sam motions for Anne to come. Finally, Anne follows Sam's lead and quietly sidesteps around Crackerjack.

SUDDENLY, A FLASHLIGHT BEAM COMES FROM DOWN THE HALLWAY outside the bathroom.

BEN (O.S.)

Sheriff, it's clear downstairs.
Ain't no bear. Wonder if they got a
backup generator outside somewhere.
Maybe the shed out back?

PANIC SET IN as Sam turns to the hallway to tell him to shut up!

BEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Sheriff? Sam? Where y'all at?

Ben steps through the bedroom door, Flashlight glaring. Oblivious.

BEN (CONT'D)
Oh hey, Sam. This sure is a nice
place ain't it?...

DISTRESSED, SAM "SHUSHES" HIM. She mouths "SHUT THE FUCK UP!"

BEN (CONT'D)
Why, what's the matter?

Sam motions through the bathroom door, mouths "THE BEAR!" Ben fumbles for his gun and turns off the flashlight.

FLASHES OF LIGHTENING and the sound of distant thunder rumble.

As Sam turns back to the bathroom. A moment of complete darkness.

EXTREMELY LOUD THUNDER! LIGHTENING FLASH!... CRACKERJACK IS RIGHT IN SAM'S FACE!!! ROAR!!! He's so close, his breath literally blows Sam's hair back.

BLACK SCREEN

SERIES OF SCENES:

- Sam runs for the hallway, Crackerjack's hot onto her trail, busting up anything in his way!
- Sam runs down the hallway, Crackerjack's deranged state causes him to bounce off the walls of the hall, blasting holes in drywall after each collision
- Sam sprints down the stair case. Crackerjack destroys the staircase rail in hot pursuit.
- Sam makes it to the living room and turns to the bear, managing to get off a SHOT. ROAR! The shot does nothing.
- She makes it to the kitchen and trips, losing her rifle. Crackerjack knocks down a wall trying to get to her.
- POP! POP! The Sheriff fires two rounds from behind the bear. ROAR! Crackerjack turns to charge him, SWATTING VIOLENTLY!
- Crackerjack swats a thick roof support beam, causing a large portion of the cabin to collapse...

BLACK SCREEN

INT. LAKESIDE CABIN - NIGHT

Now in ruins, the majority of the cabin has been destroyed. The roof has caved in over the kitchen. Wood and drywall debris make up the rubble.

The storm has subsided, as now, MOONLIGHT peaks through the clouds and illuminates the surroundings as just a light sprinkle falls on the exposed interior of the cabin.

The Sheriff is unconscious in the remains of the living room with a head wound. Ben is buried in a pile of rubble, conscious but trying to fight the pain in order to stay quiet.

Sam softly moans as she pushes a large piece of drywall off of her. Opening her eye's slowly, she scans the area for the bear.

UNCLE RON (O.S.)
Come on boy. It's okay Crackerjack,
it's me. Come on now.

Sam raises her head to see Uncle Ron leading the bear away from what remains of the cabin. **Uncle Ron?**

EXT. LAKESIDE - LATER

Now next to the glimmering lake, Uncle Ron continues to coax Crackerjack away from the survivors. Even in a state of rabies induced psychosis, the bear remembers his once adopted parent's loving voice.

The two look into each other's eyes as Uncle Ron slowly backs into the lake water. Heavy foam drips from Crackerjack's mouth. His glare is deranged, yet he fights the instinct to kill.

UNCLE RON
Oh baby boy, I'm sorry. God damned
rabies are eating you alive. I'm
sorry Crackerjack, I gotta put you
out of this misery. No more pain.
It'll be quick.

Uncle Ron slowly raises his rifle and points it at Crackerjack's face.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)
I love you baby boy. I'll see you
on the otherside.

LIGHTENING FLASH! THUNDER CRASH! The sound snaps Crackerjack out of his calm state. ROAR! He swats the rifle from Uncle Ron's hands and slowly inches towards him.

Crackerjack stands on his rear feet, exposing his enormous twelve-foot stature, towering Uncle Ron! ROAR!!!

Just as Crackerjack lunges at Uncle Ron, BAP! BAP! BAP! BAP! BAP! The bear SCREAMS IN AGONY and collapses forward into the lake.

Standing directly behind him, smoke streams from Sam's rifle barrel.

SILENCE...

Head bobbing in three foot of water, Uncle Ron moved just in time from having the massive bear land on top of him.

Sam dashes into the water to help.

SAM

Uncle Ron! Are you okay?

Sadly, looking at Crackerjack, he nods yes.

UNCLE RON

You?

SAM

I think so. Come on, we need to get you out of here.

As the two step out of the lake, Uncle Ron stops to look back at Crackerjack and quietly mumbles.

UNCLE RON

I WILL see you on the otherside. I promise you that baby boy. So long Crackerjack, so long.

Ben runs up.

BEN

Sam, you all right?

EXT. LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Standing in front of what's left of the cabin, Anne and the Sheriff assist Lance in an army carry. The Sheriff's relieved to see that Sam is safe and nods to her.

EXT. BUFFALO CAFE - DAY

Jeremiah patiently waits in the back of the BLM truck parked right in front of the eatery.

(O.S.) OLD SCHOOL COUNTRY AND WESTERN MUSIC PLAYS. PLATES AND SILVERWARE CLANK TOGETHER. PEOPLE LAUGHING AND CONVERSING.

MALE VOICE

Order up!

INT. BUFFALO CAFE - CONTINUOUS

The restaurant is bustling. Summer vacationers have arrived. Seated around a table, Sam, a head bandaged Ezra, Sheriff Baker, Ben and Uncle Ron enjoy a hearty breakfast.

EZRA

You really think you're up for it Uncle Ron?

SHERIFF BAKER

Hell, he's an old time mountain man, Ezra, you know that. He'd still out do all a ya's in the high country.

Laughter

EZRA

Nah, I know. He's the toughest old coot around.

Laughter

SAM

Seriously though, are you sure that's what you want to do Uncle Ron?

All eyes on him

UNCLE RON

Yeah, he deserves that. I'm going to spread his ashes right where his mama died. I know what he did around here did was God awful, but it weren't his fault. Rabies got to him. He needs to go home to rest. It's the proper thing.

BEN

But sir, with all due respect, to
Alaska, on horseback? That's a
mighty long way.

CU on Uncle Ron's face

UNCLE RON

Eh... I figure I got one more trip
left in me. Besides...

FLASHBACK

SERIES OF SCENES:

SAD ACOUSTIC GUITAR MUSIC PLAYS

- When Ron first seen Crackerjack as a baby crying next to his dead mama bear
- Ron feeding him as a cub
- Ron cuddling with the cub
- The cub following Ron on horseback
- Crackerjack as an ADOLESCENT BEAR playing with Ron
- Ron seeing him off as an ADULT BEAR

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

This one's for Crackerjack (Lets
out a CRAZY CACKLING LAUGH.)

CRAZY FAST HILLBILLY BANJO MUSIC PLAYS

- CU Crackerjack ROARING
- Crackerjack eating his first victim
- Crackerjack ROARS IN Fred Turner's face before he eats him
- Crackerjack swats Eugene's head off

Crackerjack standing up ROARING

FADE OUT.