

RAMU II

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FADE IN.

EXT. TROPICAL JUNGLE/RIVER -- DAY

FX: A GIANT SLOTH moves from an upright position beside a large tree.

The Sloth approaches the river in order to drink. It bends down carefully to the water.

Suddenly the giant head of PURRUSAURUS (60 foot alligator) emerges from the water, grabbing the sloth and dragging it into the water. Although the sloth struggles furiously, the Purrusaurus drags it under as the water bloodies around them.

EXT. TROPICAL JUNGLE/RIVER -- DAY

Coming down from a lush canopy of trees to encompass a large river...

SUPER: THE ALTO RIO ACRE RIVER, PERU,
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION, 1988.

EXT. JUNGLE -- DAY

A paleontological expedition is making its way through the jungle. CARL FRAILEY, the head of the expedition, is distinct among its members. The party looks to be weary and hot as they struggle, carrying various fossils.

EXT. TROPICAL RIVER -- DAY

There are a number of dugout canoes hidden under branches by the riverside. Emerging from the jungle, the expedition makes its way down onto the riverbank and begins uncovering and loading the canoes.

As each person comes down the bank they step over/around a large jutting rock. Carl is making his way down to the river. A sound in the canoes attracts his attention.

A NATIVE BEARER is having trouble getting a large fossil into the canoe.

CARL

Hey, someone help with that fossil!

Distracted, Carl does not see the large rock everyone else has avoided, and trips. He sits up, rubbing his shin. As he looks for the cause of his fall, frowning in pain and

annoyance, his expression gives way to one of wonder as he realizes what he is looking at. He crawls closer and clears away some debris. A 2 inch diameter tooth socket is revealed in a massive jawbone.

CARL

My God.

SCIENTIST 1

What is it?

CARL

Can't be...My God.

He looks up.

CARL

I just fell over a Purussaurus.

SCIENTIST 1 looks astonished.

EXT. TROPICAL RIVER -- DUSK

A BEARER is lighting a lantern in the foreground. Carl and SCIENTISTS 1, 2 & 3 have unearthed an enormous crocodilian skull over two meters in length.

CARL

Must weigh half a ton.

SCIENTIST 1

How are we going to get it out? It's way too big for these canoes.

SCIENTIST 2 (Spanish or Portuguese accent)
Seems to be cemented in by these calcite deposits. We'll have to cut logs, lever it out. I'd say we have no chance getting it out whole. It'll fracture wherever the calcite fractures.

CARL

(nodding)

Get the boys to cut the logs.

SCIENTIST 3

Aren't we forgetting something? We'll miss our connecting flights.

CARL

Not if we work all night.

SCIENTIST 3

But the monsoons. My barometer's dropping like a stone.

CARL

Which means that twenty-four hours from now this river will be a raging flood and this fossil will be lost forever.

SCIENTIST 3

But we were supposed to be out a week ago. We can mark this spot and...

CARL

Let me get this straight. This is probably the biggest carnivore that has ever lived, terrestrial or aquatic, and you want to leave because you don't want to get wet or miss your flight?

Scientist 3 feels suitably chastised.

EXT. RIVER -- FIRST LIGHT

It is raining heavily. The river is now flowing much faster. The four Scientists are heaving one giant section of the skull into a canoe. The other end of the canoe is rising high out of the water.

SCIENTIST 1

We could lose it all if these canoes capsize!

CARL

No choice! We'll have to go! This'll be rapids soon if we don't leave now!

The expedition climbs into the canoes and hurriedly leaves.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Still raining heavily. The expedition paddles hard in a swollen river. The venture looks highly precarious.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

Still raining heavily. The expedition has come ashore. They are heaving the heavy canoes up the riverbank and into the jungle using ropes. Various members slip and fall on the muddy slopes.

Carl strains on a rope as the enormous jawbone and fangs of Purussaurus jut from the canoe he is pulling.

CARL

Heave!!!

He strains with all his might.

EXT. BOSTON MUSEUM -- DAY

Calm, serene, culturally exclusive. CASEY SOLSTEIN enters the museum. Perhaps we see a sign: Boston Museum of natural history.

INT. MUSEUM -- DAY

Casey walks past large and exciting exhibits of prehistoric animals.

INT. MUSEUM -- DAY

Casey passes an aging MUSEUM GUARD. He recognizes her and she him. They hug briefly, obviously old friends. She waves and moves on.

INT. LONG HALLWAY -- DAY

Casey is walking down a long, polished walkway, her heels on the floor sounding loud and isolated.

INT. WAITING ROOM -- DAY

A door, marked 'Conference Room', opens. Kembler, the museum board chairman, pokes his head out. He raises his eyebrows. Casey waits pensively.

INT. MUSEUM BOARDROOM -- DAY

Casey enters, apprehensive. Seated round the table are the BOARD OF DIRECTORS. At the head of the table is Kembler, resuming his seat. Either side nearest him sits MRS. FOSTER, an influential sponsor, and WILTON, the secretary/funds manager. There are eight further BOARDMEMBERS round the table. In the chair nearest Casey, as she approaches the table, sits WAYNE THILBY, a middle-aged scientist. He was previously her subordinate but now occupies her post as head of paleontology. The impression one gets is that no one in the room is pleased to see Casey, especially Thilby, who for the moment appears smug. Casey remains standing.

CASEY

Good morning. Six months ago, this board saw fit to dismiss me. Perhaps in your shoes I might have done the same thing, so before I begin I'd like to thank you for allowing me to restate my case.

FOSTER

Young lady. We're not assembled for your benefit. This is our monthly meeting. Just get on with it.

CASEY

I have irrefutable proof that I was unfairly dismissed. What is more I have proof that Dr. Thilby, here, misled the board, deliberately plotting for my dismissal in order to take my place...

FOSTER

I seem to recall it was more to do with your lies about giant black crocodiles that got you dismissed, young lady.

CASEY

Mrs. Foster, do you have some problem with me just for being young?

FOSTER

Yes.

CASEY

I am a scientist. I have the good manners to address you by name so kindly reciprocate.

FOSTER

You don't get respect just because you got a cute tush, hon.

Kembler holds up a calming hand.

KEMBLER

That's a serious charge, Casey. I have to caution you, this is a minuted meeting and if you make unsubstantiated claims against a fellow scientist then you might find yourself with...

CASEY

I am more than happy to make my statements
for the record.

Kembler finds her determination surprising. He looks at
Thilby. He gestures, 'okay with you?' Thilby nods and looks
at Casey. When he looks at her, however, he has grown
uncomfortable. She grins mirthlessly, increasing his
discomfort.

CASEY

I admit the reasons I first concluded there
might be a surviving giant crocodile were
perhaps capricious...

WILTON

"Analog Science Fiction"? Capricious?

CASEY

Actually it was "Astonishing Science
Fiction". Never-the-less, I had good reason
at that time to develop the notions I
did....

EXT. FLEA/CRAFT MARKET -- DAY

The past. There is a stack of "Astonishing Science Fiction"
magazine on a fold out table. The first few are picked up by
Casey.

She leafs through them with interest. RICHARD, her English
boyfriend, is nearby.

CASEY

Hey, look, original editions.

Richard looks at them with disinterest.

RICHARD

"Astonishing". Never heard of it. Anyway,
thought you liked "Analog"?

CASEY

Original edition.

She attracts the attention of the STALL OWNER.

CASEY

How much?

STALL OWNER

Three bucks apiece.

Casey quickly counts the stack.

CASEY

There's ten here. Give you twenty.

STALL OWNER

Twenty-five.

CASEY

Twenty-two fifty.

STALL OWNER

You're killing me.

He is already putting them into a carry bag. Casey hands him the money and takes the bag.

CASEY

Thanks.

RICHARD

You're spending twenty-two fifty on mags you've never heard of?

CASEY

Original edition. Doesn't matter what's in them, they're collectibles.

RICHARD

But you never sell the ones you've got.

CASEY

That's because I'm a collector.

RICHARD

Uh huh. (to the Stall Owner, Casey is moving away) Got any "Phantom" comics, per chance?

Casey rolls her eyes to herself.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. SPORTS CAR IN MOTION -- DAY

Richard is driving.

RICHARD

So I'll be away 'til Wednesday. We've got an overnigher in Singapore then I've got the Tokyo - LA leg.

Casey has the carry bag on her lap and is looking through it. She pulls out some "Phantom" comics in order to get at her "Astonishing Science" mags.

CASEY

(paying little attention)

So you'll be jet lagged 'til Friday.

RICHARD (slightly ticked off)

I keep telling you, babe, we take it in turns sleeping East Coast time. Never go off it. Put it on autopilot and keep meal times the same.

While Richard talks Casey flicks through the top mag. She pauses as she comes to a badly drawn depiction of a giant crocodile eating tiny black people. The title reads, "The Monster from the Murk - Tales of a giant black crocodile in the jungles of New Guinea."

CASEY

That's interesting.

Richard gives her a sideways glance, ascertaining she was barely listening. Irritated, he drops the car down a gear.

The car roars by.

EXT. GARDEN, CASEY'S HOUSE -- DAY

Casey and Richard lie top and tail in a double hammock. Casey reads her "Astonishing" mag, while Richard reads a "Phantom" comic.

Eventually...

RICHARD

What I'd like to know is, why the Commander has never checked under his safe for a tunnel.

CASEY

What?

RICHARD

Jungle patrol. He can never understand how the Phantom puts his orders in his safe. I think most people would check for a false bottom, don't you?

CASEY

Mmm.

Richard looks over his comic at her. She is still reading.

RICHARD

Then it could be because he's secretly sodomizing the Phantom and doesn't want to ruin the relationship.

CASEY

Mmm.

Richard puts his big toe under her magazine. He wiggles it under her face.

RICHARD

Oww!

Casey has bitten him.

RICHARD

Why'd you do that?!

CASEY

Reading about a crocodile.

RICHARD

Casey, my love.

There is no response.

RICHARD

Sweetheart...cherub...my little cabbage...fuck-features.

CASEY

What?!

RICHARD

I have to go home and get changed for work in three hours.

Casey's look asks the question.

RICHARD

So what do you say to a nap?

CASEY

Not sleepy.

RICHARD

Neither am I.

Casey lowers the magazine. She almost grins.

RICHARD

This may be my last mission. No telling what Jerry will throw at us tonight. Tomorrow you might receive a telegram. I might be just another name on the casualty lists. Just another, fading memory.

CASEY

So I suppose you'd like a fuck?

Richard is thoughtful.

RICHARD

Wouldn't have put it quite so crudely, but, yes, correct.

CASEY

Thanks.

She goes back to reading.

This is far more interesting.

Richard gets up and drags her along. She laughs, but still carries her magazine.

INT. BEDROOM, CASEY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

They are naked under the bedsheets. Richard is asleep facing away while Casey reads her magazine, her bedside lamp the room's only illumination. She looks round at a clock on her bedside table. She shakes Richard gently.

CASEY

Time to go hunt Jerry.

Richard groans and rolls over toward her, barely awake. He hugs her.

RICHARD

You go for me, mummy.

CASEY (reading)

S'that mother England?

RICHARD

You still reading that shit?

CASEY

Surprisingly good shit.

Richard rolls away up to a sitting position.

RICHARD

Never found shit interesting. Call me quirky.

CASEY

Well, it's not "The Phantom", I give you that.

Richard stands, leans over and kisses her.

RICHARD

It's only fair to warn you, I'm surrounded by less intelligent and far more beautiful women every day.

He begins dressing.

CASEY

And I'm surrounded by more intelligent, far less handsome men every day. Guess which I find most appealing?

RICHARD

As a scientist? I would think you'd welcome the relief of having yourself a shallow cad who bonks like a whippet.

CASEY

Bonking is a function of the lower brain. Means you're a reptile not a mammal.

RICHARD

(gesturing at the magazine)
And you're interested in reptilian carnivores. Ergo, you find me irresistible.

CASEY

No...

Richard glances round at her.

CASEY

But it is interesting you added the letter
'r' to 'ego'.

She is frowning and flipping back to the cover page. Richard is still trying to work out her remark.

RICHARD (resentful)

Oh, ergo, ego. Yes...clever.

CASEY

Now this is interesting. This was printed in '79.
Yet the author is describing something like
Purussaurus perfectly.

RICHARD (charmingly sarcastic)

Is he?...Good God.

CASEY

Well they didn't even find a full skull
'til '86.

RICHARD

I know, I know. Shouldn't worry, darling,
Orwell wrote about people going to the moon
years before it happened.

CASEY

H.G. Wells.

RICHARD

Yes, so maybe Mr. Wells wrote that.

CASEY

A century later and using the pseudonym
'Harrison Palmer'?

RICHARD

They laughed at my uncle Charles, don't forget.

CASEY

Charles?

RICHARD

Darwin...Oh, yes, at last, a tiny victory.
(leaving) Cheery-bye.

CASEY (mumbling)
Microscopic.

RICHARD
(pausing)
What's that, tulip?

CASEY
Said, 'Have a good trip'.

RICHARD (OS)
(leaving)
Shall do, call you Thursday. Toodles.

CASEY
(still reading)
Mmm...toodles.

Casey is thoughtful as she reads. Close on the cover of the magazine.

INT. BOSTON MUSEUM/CASEY'S OFFICE-- DAY

Matching shot. Casey still reads as she sits at her desk. There is a tap at the door and Wayne Thilby enters, carrying files. As the door closes, CAROL, Casey's secretary, can be seen trying to stop him entering, but has the door closed in her face.

THILBY
Hard at it I see.

CASEY
Oh...

She grins and drops the magazine into her desk drawer.

CASEY
Just something interesting.

THILBY
You're a science fiction fan?

CASEY
I'm a collector, my hobby.

THILBY
These are taxonomy for Big Bend. For your approval, mien Herr.

CASEY

Oh, thanks.

THILBY

I assume your move was not too traumatic?

She gives him a questioning look.

THILBY

Settling in alright, are we?

CASEY

Wayne...

THILBY

I still prefer Dr. Thilby.

CASEY

I know you must be a bit miffed about...

THILBY

A bit miffed? Let me see...Twenty-five years of diligent research and scrupulous publishing to be passed over for political correctness? And I walk in and you're reading pulp science fiction during your first week. Yes, a bit miffed.

He begins to leave.

CASEY

I agree. Your work has always been scrupulous. I'm sorry they passed you over.

THILBY

Oh, please, I don't want your pity...

CASEY

(coming out from behind her desk)
You're not getting it. There's certain realities you overlook, Dr. Thilby. If you'd spent more time in the field and less in the lab you might've gotten this job. I specialized in large carnivores, you chose rodents. I published in "Omni" you used "Scientific American", Today's museums want electronic-friendly, high-profile cover stories, bigger and better discoveries, and big sponsors. In short, you should be the dinosaur expert, not me, because you act like one.

THILBY (fuming)

Why...

CASEY

You want frankness, you got it. Evolution is about adaptation. I'm here because I'm the right person for the job, and you're not. Now if you want to hang onto your job then you better get your ass out in the field and while you're at it polish up on your PR. It's that kind of terse rudeness you've just displayed that makes you so unappealing as leadership material.

She shuts her door in his face.

CASEY

Asshole.

EXT. CASEY'S OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

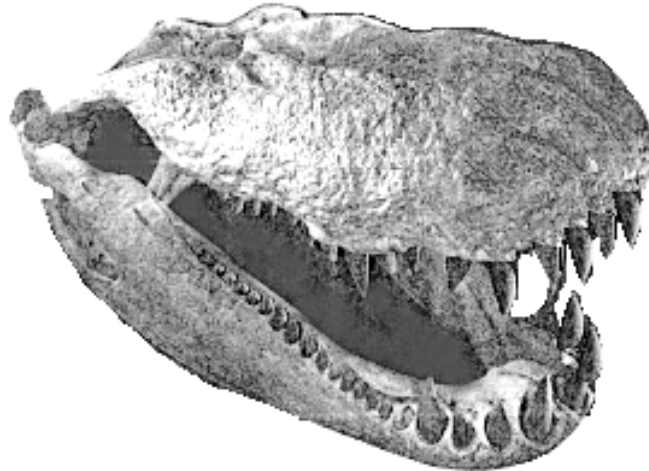
Thilby stares at the closed door. He turns, looks at Carol, guffaws with fury, and walks away.

Carol makes visual comment on Casey's underestimated toughness.

INT. CASEY'S OFFICE-- DAY

Casey reads the "Astonishing" magazine again. She puts it down and swivels to her computer. She accesses the net and calls up a search engine.

Close on a **Find?** button. She types 'Purussaurus' in the interstice. A fleshed depiction of the giant crocodile attacking Hadrosaurs appears. She pages down to see the croc's massive skull in a museum display:



No animal that met Purussaurus lived to tell the tale.

As she scrolls further she comes across the depiction:



Size comparison with an average-sized man.

Back to the internal search engine, she types in "skull dimensions". She is taken to a drawing of the skull with dimensions drawn in e.g. 2 m long X 1.3m wide X 1m high.

ECU: "Overall length estimated 50 to 80 feet. Weight comparison: **T-Rex** 6 - 8 tons, **Purussaurus** 18 - 22 tons."

CASEY

Jesus.

Closer ECU: **T-Rex** 6 - 8 tons, **Purussaurus** 18 - 22 tons.

She goes back to the search engine and types in "University + Papua New Guinea."

She is taken to the homepage of the National University of Papua New Guinea and accesses the zoological faculty, finds an internal search engine and types in "Black crocodile".

An image of a black, freshwater crocodile appears on screen. Casey (OS) may mumble the following, finding the underlined section of particular interest, as the following is shown: "Species Crocodylidae Negros, discovered in the region of the upper Ramu River, by Dr. Imu Larvane 1992. A rare and particularly aggressive species that grows to approximately

7 feet in length. So far only females of this species have been found. They are also distinguished by a wider and more massive jaw structure than any other known freshwater species."

She goes back to the original search engine. She is typing in: "Newspapers + Papua New Guinea + Madang". The result shows: "No match".

She tuts in annoyance, deletes "Madang" and hits 'Enter'. She receives a list of newspapers and traces down the screen. Her finger stops opposite: "THE MADANG TIMES - madangtimes@media.com.pn" She clicks on the email address and is taken to an email screen where bits and pieces of her rapidly typed message are shown: "Request information on Tom Cole, crocodile hunter, and John Godson, patrol officer, believed to have disappeared in the Ramu Valley in 1949." She moves the cursor onto the "Send" button, and clicks. The email message disappears.

Casey swivels away from the computer and looks at the "Astonishing" magazine once more. She checks the inside front cover for a phone number, picks up the phone, and dials out.

PUBLISHER (phone fx)
Bolack publications.

CASEY
Oh, I'm sorry, I was looking for
"Astonishing Science Fiction".

PUBLISHER
Oh, they stopped trading, ma'am, 'bout ten
years back.

CASEY
Oh, well, did you buy them out?

PUBLISHER
Bought their equipment and took over their
lease, yeah.

CASEY
And I don't suppose you know where the
publisher is now by any chance?

PUBLISHER
No, sorry, can't help.

CASEY

That's okay, thanks.

She hangs up.

Damn.

She is thoughtful for a moment and opens the magazine once more.

She considers the cover page of the story with the illustration of the giant crocodile. Her eyes drift down and find below the Title: Adapted from the diary of Harrison Palmer, died 1975.

CASEY

Yes, but are you real?

INT. CASEY'S OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Carol is filing as Casey comes from her office. Casey goes by and Carol sees she is carrying her handbag.

CAROL

Going out?

CASEY

(still walking)

Yeah.

CAROL

Well, when will you be back?

CASEY

'Bout an hour.

CAROL

Well, where will I say you are?

CASEY

(shrugs)

Make something up.

Carol rolls her eyes.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE -- DAY

CHARLIE, a hacker, sits in a room surrounded by computers. His doorbell rings.

CHARLIE

It's open!

Casey comes up the stairs.

CASEY

Hi, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Hey, doc, how's my favorite paleowhat'saname?

CASEY

Feel like picking a few locks?

CHARLIE

You name 'em, I break 'em. Citibank,
American Express, NASA?

CASEY

Just a hospital.

CHARLIE

Aw, c'mon, give me a challenge.

CASEY

Just want an address, Charlie. A patient
called Harrison or Harry Palmer. He was an
amputee, sometime between 1950 and 1975.

CHARLIE

What happened then?

CASEY

He died...supposedly.

CHARLIE

Supposedly?

CASEY

I need to find out if he's a real person.

CHARLIE

Well, you can't die if you're not real.
What hospital?

CASEY

Start with Baltimore General.

CHARLIE
Gotit.

CASEY
How much?

CHARLIE
Thousand bucks.

CASEY
A thousand?!

CHARLIE
Three hundred?

CASEY
Oh, good bartering, Charlie. Take my
advice, never go to Asia.

CHARLIE
Go there every day. Take a seat.

FADE OUT.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

FADE IN.

Casey wakes, reclining on an old couch. There are many
magazines on a table before her. She groans with discomfort
as she checks her watch.

CASEY
Oh, God.

She sits up and takes money from her purse.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Casey, the money in her hand, approaches Charlie.

CHARLIE
Why would they have a 128 bit encryption at
a hospital?! There's no trust anymore!

CASEY
Maybe they're just too good for you.

CHARLIE
What?! What?!

CASEY

But I think you're the best, Charlie. You can email me the address if there is one...and, if you get it.

CHARLIE

Oh, I'll get it, baby! You can take that to the bank!

Charlie taps furiously. Casey goes down the stairs. Charlie lets out a noise of frustration as he gestures at something on the screen.

CHARLIE

What?! What?!

INT. MUSEUM. OFFICE HALLWAY -- MORNING.

Casey is having an almighty yawn as she walks along.

Kembler is coming from an office.

KEMBLER

Oh, how's the hernia?

CASEY

'Scuse me?

KEMBLER

The hernia.

CASEY

Hernia?

KEMBLER

Your secretary said you went to the doctors with a hernia.

CASEY

Oh. No. Lady's problems.

KEMBLER (Immediately not wanting to know more)
Oh.

He walks away, but turns as he is going.

KEMBLER

Don't forget you've got that sponsor's presentation, Monday. I'm counting on you.

CASEY

No, I, I haven't forgotten.

It obvious she definitely had forgotten.

INT. CASEY'S OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Carol is at her desk.

CASEY

A hernia?

CAROL

It's all I could think of!

CASEY

Well, it's original.

She enters her office.

INT. CASEY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Casey sits at her desk. She looks at the files Thilby gave her the previous day. The top file is titled, "Big Bend". Casey sighs, and taps the files thoughtfully. Instead of opening them she decides to turn on her computer. A rotating E-mail symbol appears on her screen. She opens the message.

It is a section of a newspaper article, titled "The Madang Times", October, 1949.

There is a picture of JOHN GODSON. Some of the headline reads, "Patrol Officer Missing", then some of the text: "...has disappeared in the Ramu Valley while on patrol."

CASEY

Bingo.

She hits the "print" button.

As the article is printing out, she accesses the next email message. A crazy Java script of CHARLIE with his eyes popping out comes on the screen along with an excerpt of a hospital message headed: PATIENT: HARRISON PALMER. Two pages of his treatment history are attached. Camera notes: "...amputated left lower leg" "ADDRESS: 16 Mason Street, Stafford, Baltimore." "Deceased June 3, 1975."

CASEY

Double bingo.

She hits the "print" button again.

As the page prints she takes the "Astonishing" magazine from her filing cabinet and flicks through to the crocodile article. She compares some of the facts from the pages she grabs from the printer with those in the article, feeling she is really onto something.

CASEY (amazed)

It's true?

She is thoughtful for a moment then checks her rolodex for a phone number. She punches it out.

INTERCUT:

INT. CARL FRAILEY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Carl answers the phone.

CARL

Carl Frailey.

CASEY

What's a blonde's favorite nursery rhyme?

CARL

Humpme Dumpme. God, how's it going, Case?

CASEY

Not bad, whose heart you breaking now?

CARL

My wife's. Keep knocking her up.

CASEY

God, a daddy and everything. Well, well, so every dog does have its day.

Carl laughs.

CARL

Yeah, well...So...I heard you been bumped up. Head of department?

CASEY

News travels fast.

CARL

Well, you know what they say, cream rises to the top.

CASEY

Yeah and bullshit floats. Listen, I've got a really stupid question for you.

CARL

Oh, like old times.

Casey laughs.

CASEY

I was ten years younger you know.

Carl laughs.

CASEY

Your croc friend Purussaurus, he was completely fresh water, right?

CARL

Yeah. Actually he's a giant 'gator, a caiman, not a croc.

CASEY

So there's no chance he could go marine?

CARL

No. What, intercontinental?

CASEY

Yeah.

CARL

No, 'course not. Why?

CASEY

I mean a huge animal like that, if he found his habitat changing, he couldn't like, island hop or something?

CARL

No...well, he could make it to a nearby land mass I suppose but he couldn't go fully marine for a sustained period. No.

CASEY

Yeah. Well, told you it was stupid.

CARL

If he could do that then he would've escaped when the inland sea in South America disappeared. He would've adapted.

CASEY

So what are we talking here, Cenozoic?

CARL

Late Miocene, Oligocene. We've dated the fossil I found at 8 million years.

CASEY

That recent? So what about convergent evolution under the same conditions? You know, I mean we had Deinosuchus at Big Bend. And how big was he comparatively?

CARL

Oh, not as big as Purussaurus, but getting there. Yeah, well of course. You start with a croc of some sort, take away competitors like, say, wiping out the dinosaurs with a comet or something, add tropical conditions and that's a formula for giantism.

CASEY

So it would be logical to assume something like Purussaurus or Deinosuchus could've evolved somewhere else in the world under the same conditions?

CARL

Suppose. Africa maybe. But you'd need a vast inland lake system, and Africa never went under.

CASEY

Well, thanks, that's all I wanted.

CARL

Thinking about a dig?

CASEY

Maybe. Early days.

CARL

Whereabouts?

CASEY

I'll let you know.

CARL

Yeah, sure.

Casey chuckles.

CASEY

Well, we are competitors now.

CARL

Weren't we always?

CASEY

Nice speaking to you, Carl.

She hangs up.

Casey picks up her car keys.

INT. CASEY'S OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Casey exits her office, carrying her handbag. Carol looks up.

CAROL

You're not, you're not...?

CASEY

If it's a man tell 'em it's lady problems.
They won't want to know any more.

CAROL

What if it's a woman?

CASEY

Tell 'em it's lady's problems and when they
ask what kind just say I'm having a grease
and oil.

Casey is gone. Carol gives a big, frustrated sigh.

INT. AIRPORT -- DAY

Casey walks toward a boarding gate as the announcement is made.

AIRPORT P.A.
 Passengers for flight 412 to Baltimore now
 boarding through gate 7.

Casey hands over her boarding pass and continues through.

INT. HALL AND CASEY'S OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Following Thilby down the hall. He carries a file. He rounds
 the corner to find Carol sitting at her desk.

CAROL

Oh, hi.

THILBY

Tell your boss I've got a few corrections
 for the Big Bend file.

CAROL

Oh, ah, she's away for the day, Dr. Thilby.

Thilby waits for a further explanation.

CAROL

Lady's problems.

THILBY (Immediately not wanting to know more)

Oh.

He seems at a loss, considering the corrections he has.

THILBY

Well, can you get me the Big Bend file?

CAROL

Oh, I can do it.

THILBY

No, I'd better. Make sure they go in the
 right spot.

Carol gets up and opens Casey's door.

CAROL

I think it's still on her desk.

INT. CASEY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Thilby follows Carol in.

CAROL

Yeah, there.

THILBY

Oh, okay.

Carol waits. Thilby looks at her.

THILBY

This'll take a minute.

CAROL

Oh.

She grins politely and leaves the office. Thilby sits at Casey's desk and puts on his glasses. He opens the files and sorts through them. He pauses as he notices the "Astonishing" magazine. It is sitting on top of the email printouts.

INT. AIRLINER -- DAY

The plane is in flight. Casey is served coffee by a FLIGHT ATTENDANT.

BACK TO.

Thilby turns on a photocopier, opens the lid and places the "Astonishing" magazine open on the glass.

EXT. AIRPORT -- DAY

Casey gets into a cab.

INT. CASEY'S OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Thilby exits from the office. He grins at Carol.

THILBY

All done.

Carol, typing, grins politely. Thilby continues on.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - HARRY PALMER'S OLD HOUSE -- DAY

Casey pays the cab driver. As the cab departs, she looks at the house number: 16.

EXT. HARRY PALMER'S HOUSE - PORCH -- DAY

Casey is before the front door. Someone is coughing on the other side of the door. VANCE THURGOLD III, an elderly Englishman, opens the door.

THURGOLD

Hello?

CASEY

Hi, Casey Solstein. I'm director of Paleontology at Boston Museum.

Thurgold blinks, intrigued.

INT. HARRY PALMER'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM -- DAY

Thurgold and Casey have tea. Thurgold is pouring.

THURGOLD

You'll have to excuse my coughing. Emphysema. Don't think I'm much longer for this world, actually.

CASEY

Sorry to hear it.

THURGOLD

Oh, getting my just deserts. Smoked all my life. Shouldn't complain. Sugar?

CASEY

No thanks, just milk.

He hands her the cup.

CASEY

Thanks.

THURGOLD

I'm actually being treated at the same hospital as our Mr. Palmer. How is it you know about him?

CASEY

This is going to sound stupid, but I read this story in an old science fiction magazine called...

THURGOLD

"Astonishing Science"? Yes, I sold them the story.

CASEY

Did you write it, Mr. Thurgold?

THURGOLD

No. Well, yes, adapted it from his diary, you know, so it would flow better.

CASEY

Do you still have the diary?

THURGOLD

Certainly.

Casey is pleasantly surprised.

INT. HARRY PALMER'S HOUSE - DEN -- DAY

Thurgold crosses to the desk. He picks up a set of old dogtags and hands them to Casey.

THURGOLD

These are Royce Palmer's. The reason why Harry Palmer and his wife went out to New Guinea.

He takes the ledger book diary down from a shelf and blows dust off it. As a result he has a coughing fit and hands the book wordlessly to Casey. She looks through it.

THURGOLD

Oh. I swear one day my head is going to drop off.

CASEY

How did you come by this?

THURGOLD

Well I bought this place, deceased estate, you see, quite cheap. Found that in the attic. Read it, thought it was wonderful. So, thought I could make a couple of bob and sent it off to a publisher.

He begins coughing once more. Casey watches him, wondering.

INT. KEMBLER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Looking at the picture of Crocodylidae Negros seen earlier on the internet, though this time it is hardcopy. Kemberler holds the picture.

KEMBLER

So, it's a black crocodile? Unusual, interesting, so what?

CASEY

Crocodylidae Negros comes from the Ramu Valley. Here, look.

She hands him a picture. It is of a crocodile skull.

KEMBLER

Purussaurus? Deinosuchus?

CASEY

Crocodylidae Negros.

KEMBLER

You're kidding?

He is immediately checking it against the fleshed photograph.

CASEY

So why would a little seven foot crocodile have massive bone structure like that? Especially a freshwater croc.

KEMBLER

Why would it have black skin? What's your point?

CASEY

Frailey found Purussaurus in South America. Why would something that can grow to eighty feet even be there? Because after the age of the dinosaurs there was no competition, so crocodiles became the next dinosaurs. That's why you've got Purussaurus in the Amazon and Deinosuchus in Texas and they're both the size of Mac trucks, but...the common factor for both is...this.

She hands him a computer generated photo of North and South America during the Cenozoic era. Texas and the source of the Amazon are vast inland waterways.

CASEY

Both areas were underwater then.

She hands him another computer generated photo. This one is of Africa.

CASEY

But Africa didn't go under at that time. So nothing changed there. But look at this.

She hands him another computer photo. The land mass looks unfamiliar.

KEMBLER

New Guinea?

CASEY

Same period. And this huge inland waterway, now the Ramu Valley, just happens to be where you find Crocodylidae Negros nowadays, who, when stripped of her flesh just happens to look like Purussaurus and Deinosuchus. This little girl has to be a descendant of something that was once massive. I'm betting there's fossils up in the Ramu Valley that will rival Purussaurus.

KEMBLER

Okay. I'm hooked. Cut to it.

CASEY

My job description says I have the authority to initiate one expedition per year from my own budget.

KEMBLER

Not without board approval and not without the agreement of your senior staff e.g. Thilby.

CASEY

When's the next board meeting?

KEMBLER

Monday. And unless I'm mistaken you've got that Big Bend presentation in the afternoon. You are ready with that? I've been talking my ass off to the sponsors.

CASEY

I'll be ready. But I'd also like to address the board in the morning about this.

KEMBLER

Why the rush? Why not after Big Bend?

Casey hesitates, about to lie.

CASEY

Frailey knows.

KEMBLER

What, how? New Guinea is Frailey's idea?

CASEY

(nodding)

I want to get the jump on him.

KEMBLER

How did you find out?

CASEY

Oh, we used to date. Carl doesn't know about my promotion. He's always thought I was too dumb to have initiative. So he talked too much.

KEMBLER

It'd be a major coup to beat Frailey.

CASEY

I was going to ask Thilby to head Big Bend.

KEMBLER

What?!

CASEY

He's thorough, diligent...

KEMBLER

And he has bad breath, no people skills and I hate his bow ties. Listen, Casey, the world is a very different place the closer you get to the top. The bottom-line? It is about scamming sponsors. See, first we tell big lies, then we get the big money, then we advance science a tad. Thilby doesn't understand that because they don't have free enterprise on planet Zardoz where he comes from.

CASEY

Never-the-less...technically it's my call.

Kembler looks at her for a long moment.

KEMBLER

You're playing politics. You give Thilby Big Bend and he gives you New Guinea. Dangerous, Casey, dangerous.

Kembler moves on. Casey watches him guiltily.

INT. CASEY'S OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Carol is on her knees on the floor sorting through some files. Casey's legs appear beside her.

CASEY

I need you to work over the weekend.

CAROL

What? I, I, I can't.

Casey is entering her office.

CASEY

I really need you, Carol. I've got two presentations to prepare by Monday.

INT. CASEY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Carol enters hurriedly behind Casey.

CAROL

But my little boy's birthday's on Sunday.

CASEY

He's only one, isn't he?

CAROL

Yes.

CASEY

Do you think he fully comprehends annual celebration of emergence from the birth canal?

CAROL

You don't have kids, do you?

CASEY

Pretty sure I'd make the same supposition.

CAROL

Then let me rephrase. You don't have relatives, do you?

CASEY

Let me rephrase. Job security.

CAROL

Oh. Well, let me rephrase. I can get a secretary's job anywhere.

CASEY

Alright, if threats don't do it, how's double time plus Monday off.

CAROL

Well, his birthday's really on Monday and we do need the money.

CASEY

Make your phone calls, girl, we got major butt to kick.

CAROL

Why two presentations?

CASEY

'Cause I just told a major whopper and I'll get fired if I don't deliver.

CAROL

Oh. Well. Long as it's not serious.

INT. CASEY'S OFFICE -- DAY & NIGHT

MONTAGE SEQUENCE: Long, grueling hours of lecture preparation featuring Casey and Carol. Suggestions for montage:

- a) Casey and Carol go through the filing cabinets and compile files, which they stack on a desk.
- b) Casey, wearing glasses, paces about, holding research papers, dictating to Carol, who takes it down in shorthand.
- c) Both of them work on computers. Carol typing, Casey downloading images from the internet. They are eating pizza as they work.
- d) A transparent overhead is emerging from the printer. Casey separates the sheets and holds it up to the light.
- e) Carol is on the floor, working on a large chart depicting crocodile evolution, which she is drawing.
- f) Casey gives a mock lecture, referring to a chart using a laser pointer. Casey dries, Carol prompts her, Casey acknowledges and continues on.
- g) Casey and Carol, looking exhausted, feet up, having coffee and doughnuts. It's late at night.

CAROL

Want me to come in early to make sure you got everything?

CASEY

No, deal's a deal. You stay home and confuse junior with strange celebratory rituals.

CAROL

Well, make sure you get a good night's sleep. No bonking that airline pilot all night.

CASEY

Oh, shit! Shit!

CAROL

What?

CASEY

He said he'd call Friday. Christ, I totally forgot.

CAROL

Wow, must be deep and meaningful. Night.

Casey nods, and left alone, groans and shakes her head.

EXT. WALKWAY TO MUSEUM CARPARK -- NIGHT

Casey crosses to the carpark, walking along a path by office windows. She sees a light on in a lab and comes to a stop, looking in. Thilby is in the lab working by himself.

INT. LAB -- NIGHT

Thilby looks through a microscope, taking notes.

CASEY

Hope you're not thinking about overtime.

Thilby is surprised to see Casey in the doorway.

THILBY

I work because I like to.

CASEY

I know.

She enters.

CASEY

I'm thinking about heading an expedition to New Guinea.

Thilby, about to look into the microscope, hesitates, but does not let her see his expression.

THILBY

Really? What are you hunting?

CASEY

Giant crocodiles.

THILBY

Well, no place for me, then.

CASEY

How'd you like to head Big Bend this year?

THILBY

Serious?

CASEY

I know you're the best taxonomist we have, Doctor, but you do have to spend more time in the field.

THILBY

Can I think about it?

CASEY

You surprise me.

Thilby raises his eyebrows in question.

CASEY

One minute you're bitter about being passed over, next you're indifferent to opportunity.

THILBY

Giant crocodiles. Why would you think they exist in New Guinea?

CASEY

Research.

THILBY

Ah...Yes, I'd be happy to head Big Bend. Thank you.

Casey appraises him for a moment, not sure about him.

She exits.

Thilby goes back to work, but leans back from the microscope, a self-satisfied grin coming to his lips.

INT. OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM DOOR -- DAY

A door is marked 'Conference Room'. It opens and Casey comes out, clasping her notes. She closes the door, leans back against it, weary. We suspect momentarily she has been rejected, however this is quickly dispelled when she clasps her fist triumphantly.

CASEY

Yes!

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM --- DAY

The full Board is assembled.

WILTON

Look, before we move on I'd like to say that I think we should hobble Casey a bit.

FOSTER

What the hell for?

WILTON

She needs bleeding. Her figures are too tight. New Guinea's halfway round the world. There'll be budget blowouts.

KEMBLER

I'm inclined to agree. It's purely speculative and the two scientists she nominated would serve us far better at Big Bend where there's confirmed fossils.

FOSTER

But we've already told her 'yes'.

KEMBLER

Send her on her lonesome. She's new, she has to learn about budgetary constraint. (to Wilton) 'Bleeding'.

INT. CASEY'S OFFICE-- DAY

CASEY

What?! Well what is the point of me going to New Guinea by myself?!

WILTON

Sorry, the board decided your idea was speculative. If you find something promising we can always approve more staff later.

CASEY

But that cuts down my chances of finding anything in the first place.

Wilton shrugs, on his way out.

WILTON

Try Earthwatch.

CASEY

I don't want volunteers. You need trained eyes to spot fossils...

WILTON

Sorry, best I can do.

He exits.

Casey breaks her pencil in annoyance.

EXT. AIRFIELD -- DAY

Aircraft noise. Casey, clipboard in hand and industrial headphones on, checks off cargo as it is loaded onto a plane.

She looks up and notices a man lingering near pallets of the expedition's equipment. He looks out of place, so she decides to investigate.

CASEY

Excuse me....Excuse me!

JAKE

Oh...Hi!

CASEY

Can I help you?!

JAKE

Jake Williams! I'm an Earthwatch volunteer!

CASEY

Oh! How'd you get out here?!

JAKE (shrugs)

Just walked!

CASEY

Well, we're meeting over in the international terminal at 10.00 o'clock!

JAKE

Oh. Okay!

He waves and walks off. Casey watches him go for a moment, annoyed he somehow got onto the tarmac. She shakes her head and goes back to work.

EXT. AIRPORT -- DAY

Casey approaches the terminal. She begins to enter when she sees Richard (in uniform) exit through another door. She is about to call to him when an attractive AIR HOSTESS comes through the same door, and Richard turns and kisses her. They walk off arm in arm. Casey is stunned.

INT. LADIES RESTROOM. AIRPORT -- DAY

Casey sits on a toilet seat crying, mopping at her tears with toilet paper.

INT. AIRPORT -- DAY

Casey arrives before the EARTHWATCH VOLUNTEERS gathered in front of the Qantas desk. Aside from Jake there is a strange looking elderly Mexican man, JUAN, an overweight woman, SALLY, and an oddball version of a surfer, named MAX. Max is holding a surfboard in a carry bag.

CASEY

Folks, on behalf of the Boston Museum I want to thank you for volunteering your services. My name is Dr. Casey Solstein and I am the paleontologist heading the expedition. So, I should get to know you I suppose. Um, which one is Max?

MAX

Yo! Me.

Casey shakes his hand.

CASEY

Hi. Um, do you know there's no surf in New Guinea and anyway we're going inland?

MAX

You're kidding?

CASEY

No, was in the letter. And you must be Sally.

SALLY

Yeah.

CASEY

And you're a laundry technician, Sally?

SALLY

Yeah. But that's just a fancy way of saying I'm a laundry lady. At a hospital.

CASEY

Good. Yes. Well, you'll come in handy. And you must be Juan?

JUAN

Si.

CASEY

Do you speak English, Juan?

JUAN

Si.

CASEY

Very well?

JUAN

Si.

CASEY

Is your ass on fire?

JUAN

Si.

CASEY

I thought so. And Jake I've already met. Jake, you're a paleobiology student at UCLA?

JAKE

Yeah.

CASEY

Great, great. How is it you knew we were meeting in front of the Qantas desk here, Jake?

Jake is stumped for an answer. He smiles and points at her, acknowledging she 'got him'.

JAKE

I just wanted to see all the aspects on how it comes together. You know, for when I do my own expeditions.

CASEY

Well, yeah, but I just chewed out security 'cause you got onto the tarmac unnoticed, so...

JAKE

Oh. Yeah. Sorry.

CASEY

Okay, our flight is Q451, and we'll be leaving through gate 7. In the meantime check your luggage and go through security, and...I'll see you all on board.

Casey smiles false cheerily, turns and walks away, her eyes rolling back in her head in disbelief.

INT. AIRLINER INT FLIGHT -- DAY

Casey is in an aisle seat. She clasps the bridge of her nose as though with a headache. She is sitting next to Juan, and beyond him is Sally. Jake, in the first seat nearest across the aisle, is sitting next to Max, who is reading a surfing magazine and grooving to music on the headphones. Jake leans across the aisle to Casey, and shakes a cigarette up out from a soft pack.

JAKE

Smoke?

CASEY (disbelief)

You can't smoke on a plane.

Jake shrugs, puts the cigarette to his lips and extracts it from the pack. He then eats the cigarette. He looks at Casey.

JAKE

Peppermint.

Casey realizes he was eating candy and finally allows herself a grin.

JAKE

Got a headache?

Casey nods.

JAKE

Stress?

CASEY

You could say that.

JAKE

So, why haven't I heard about New Guinea for giant crocodile fossils before?

CASEY

No one's come up with that theory before.

JAKE

Which is?

CASEY

Just a stupid hunch based on silly reasons. Here, we've got time, read this.

She takes Harry Palmer's diary from some hand luggage.

CASEY

Let me know what you think.

INT. AIRLINER -- NIGHT

Everyone is asleep. Jake still has his reading light on. He shuts the diary, impressed.

CASEY

Well?

Jake looks round, surprised she is awake and watching him.

JAKE

Awesome. But, you based an expedition on this?

CASEY

No. I think that's a hoax. But I do have valid reasons to assume we might find fossils. What bothers me is that all the people are real. 'Ramu' does mean 'the valley of death', Tom Cole was a famous croc shooter, John Godson was a patrol officer, and they did both disappear in the Ramu valley in 1949. Harry Palmer was an

CASEY (Cont'd)

amputee and his father was shot down over New Guinea.

JAKE

Maybe Harry Palmer just embellished.

CASEY

Yeah, thought of that.

JAKE

So where's the dig?

CASEY

I think as good a place as any is where he said the cannibal village was, about twenty miles upriver from the old Faita airbase. Geological surveys are consistent with a vast lake system there once.

Jake raises his eyebrows a few times at her with the excitement of the adventure. Casey grins. She turns her head back to face front, and sighs deeply.

INT. VILA UTALA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Matching shot on Casey in a darkened room. She puts her head down and clasps the bridge of her nose, as though coming down with a headache again. She sighs deeply, and looks up.

She is looking at a slide projection of a dam. She gets up and crosses wearily to a light switch, which she flicks on.

CASEY

Doctor...May I call you Vila?

VILA

Of course.

CASEY

You don't think it was important to tell me there's a dam there now?

VILA

But the Ramu Valley is fifty miles long. Those waters only go back ten miles.

CASEY

But the catchment is where I nominated we should dig.

VILA

So? I thought this whole area was once underwater. Surely anywhere along the riverbank is a good place to start.

CASEY

I suppose. Guess I'm just disappointed.

VILA

Why?

CASEY

Nothing. Just thought I might find a certain village, that's all.

She crosses to a stuffed model of *Crocodylidae Negros*.

CASEY

You say this little girl died about a week after capture?

VILA

Yes, we've only ever caught three and they always die soon after.

CASEY

Unusual. You take blood and flesh samples?

VILA

Of course.

She checks her watch.

CASEY

Mind if I call my boss, might just catch him.

Vila nods, indicating a phone. Casey punches out an ISD number.

INTERCUT:

INT. KEMBLER'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Kempler is walking toward the door, his briefcase and coat in his hand. He turns as the phone rings. He is in two minds whether to answer it, but relents and comes back.

KEMBLER

Kempler.

CASEY

Hi. It's me.

KEMBLER

Oh, you've arrived. Everything alright?

CASEY

Yeah. Listen, I'm with Dr. Vila Utala at the National University and he said he's got some blood from Crocodylidae Negros. I was wondering if I could ship some home to run the genome.

KEMBLER

Why?

CASEY

Well we could see just how much mitochondrial variance there is from modern crocs and...

KEMBLER

I don't know, that's pretty expensive.

CASEY

I know, but if we find out for example if it's from a separate species, then we know for certain its ancestors...

KEMBLER

No, Casey, Wilton would have my ass...

CASEY

Yes, but I'm trying to save money long-term...

KEMBLER

Casey. No. You've got your budget, now please stick to it. Ciao.

He hangs up.

CASEY

Yes, but wait, I...

She realizes he has hung up.

INT. VILA UTALA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Casey looks at Vila and, a bit embarrassed, hangs up. He gives her a sympathetic look. Casey gets an idea.

CASEY

Wait a minute. We've got a paleobiologist with us. Well, he's a student. We can do a reptilian breath test.

VILA

On the student?

CASEY

Trust me he's a mammal. But if we capture another little girl, sample her breath, we can deduce her metabolic rate. If it's unusual then that would convince them to run the DNA.

Vila nods, agreeing.

CASEY

Any idea why it's only females you've found?

VILA

Well we've only caught three so far, but I'm thinking global warming is interfering with sexing.

CASEY

The wrong temperature in the nest?

Vila nods.

CASEY

Could explain their rarity. This might be a species on the edge of extinction.

Vila nods in agreement.

EXT. MADANG, PAPUA. HOTEL -- DAY

Casey, Vila, Jake. Sally, Juan and Max walk down the street - an odd, motley crew. They turn into a hotel.

SUPER: MADANG, PAPUA, NEW GUINEA

INT. HOTEL FRONT DESK -- DAY

Casey hands out keys to the Expedition. As she does so:

CASEY

Okay, folks, we'll be flying out at 6 a.m. sharp, which means you have to be here in the lobby at 5 a.m. sharp. Anyone here not got an alarm clock?

JUAN

Por Favor?

CASEY

Alarm clock. Ding-a-ling-a-ling-aling. 5 a.m..

JUAN

Ah, si, si. 5 yay-em.

CASEY

5 yay-em. Yeah. Here. In the lobby.

JUAN

Si, si.

CASEY

Okay, you've all got the night off. Everyone get a good night's sleep, we got a big day tomorrow.

The group begins to break up. Casey turns to the DESK CLERK.

CASEY

Excuse me, do you have a land titles office around here?

INT. HOTEL HALL, CASEY'S DOOR -- DAY

Casey exits her room. Jake is coming down the hall. They begin to move down the hall as they speak.

JAKE

Hi.

CASEY

Oh, hi.

JAKE

We're meeting in the bar for a drink. Want to join us?

CASEY

Oh, thanks. I'll take a rain check. Thought I might do a little detective work while we're here.

JAKE

On that diary?

CASEY

Yeah.

JAKE

Need a hand? I'm intrigued.

CASEY (almost refusing)

Sure.

INT. LAND TITLES OFFICE -- DAY

Casey looks through a microfiche library. Jake approaches with an opened manila folder.

JAKE

Tom and Mary Cole. Lots 147 to 607.

Casey searches for the numbers and finds them.

CASEY

(reading from the screen)

Property was sold in 1964 to Stan and Sally Clifton, then sold in 1968, then 1972, 1982, 1989, and the last owners are...damn, it's a corporation.

JAKE

Well, who were the last freeholders?

CASEY

Well, the last white owners seem to be '72 to '82, Ron and Francine McDonald, then it was...however you say their names, must be native people, nationals.

JAKE

Well, why don't we just check the phone book. Can't be too many McDonalds in town.

Jake has already picked up a thin phone book.

CASEY

Just look for the golden arches.

JAKE

Yeah, but these owned the farm, not the diner. Yeah, there's only one. F. McDonald, 18 Milford Street, Madang.

Casey sees a CLERK going by.

CASEY

Excuse me, is Milford Street near here?

EXT. STREET - FRANCINE McDONALD'S COTTAGE -- MADANG -- DAY

In LS Jake and Casey stand on the front porch.

Closer, FRANCINE McDONALD comes to the screen door. As she talks to Casey she steps halfway out from behind the screen. Finally, she opens the door all the way and Casey and Jake step inside.

INT. FRANCINE McDONALD'S HOUSE -- DAY

They have pink lemonades in their hands as they sit and talk.

FRANCINE

That was the last plantation we owned. Beautiful old house, sorry to leave, but we were forced out when New Guinea got independence.

JAKE

Did you know Tom Cole?

FRANCINE

Heard of him. Croc shooter....?

JAKE

That's right. So what about Mary Cole? I she was called Meg.

FRANCINE

Oh yes, the people we bought off mentioned her. Think she moved back to Brisbane in the early sixties or so. She was pretty old then. Be well and truly dead now.

CASEY

And what about John Godson, have you ever heard of him? He was a patrol officer here.

FRANCINE

No. When was this?

CASEY

Well he disappeared in 1949.

FRANCINE (laughing)

Oh, heavens! I'm old, darlin' but not that old!

Casey nods, smiling, feeling a little awkward.

CASEY

Have you ever heard of a native named Kila Rono?

FRANCINE

No.

CASEY

Well then, what about a village named Keneobatu?

FRANCINE (Correcting pronunciation)
Keneobatu. (pointing) Five miles that way.

Casey is pleased with her progress.

EXT. CAB INT - IN MOTION -- DAY

The cab travels down a dirt road, approaching a village.

JAKE

I'd say the chances of Kila Rono still being here, or even alive, would be a thousand to one.

CASEY

You're assuming he exists at all.

Jake nods. Casey sees they are entering the village.

EXT. VILLAGE -- DAY

As they exit the cab they are swarmed on by NATIVE CHILDREN, who take them by the hand and lead them away.

INT. HUT -- DAY

Casey and Jake sit on a mat opposite a wizened, elderly man, KILA RONO.

CASEY

Did you know Harry Palmer. Mr. Rono?

Kila looks from Casey to Jake, his slight reaction being either surprise or lack of understanding.

CASEY

Did you know Tom Cole?

Same reaction.

CASEY

John Godson? Mary Palmer?

KILA

Why?

CASEY

I read a diary written by Harry Palmer. He mentioned you. You were a little boy then.

KILA

Why do you want to know?

CASEY

Well, we are going into the Ramu Valley. We are scientists and we are looking for a black crocodile...

KILA

You must not!

CASEY

What?

KILA

You must not!

JAKE

Hey, want to settle down there, granddad.

KILA

You must not! You go now, please! Go! You go!

Casey and Jake are stunned by his reaction.

EXT. CAB IN MOTION -- DAY

The car is traveling through Madang. Casey and Jake are reflective.

JAKE

He's probably just senile.

Casey is thinking.

JAKE

You don't think he thought you meant a fifty foot black crocodile?

Casey shrugs.

JAKE

You're not starting to believe that diary?

Casey shakes her head.

JAKE

What then?

CASEY

Don't know. Every time I convince myself it's a hoax something else turns up that makes it seem authentic. I mean, why was he so scared?

JAKE (a little condescending)

Well, I wouldn't get too spooked, doc. I mean I'm sure if there was a species of twenty ton, fifty foot black crocodiles out there we'd all know about it.

Casey leans forward and taps the CAB DRIVER on the shoulder.

CASEY

Excuse me, we are going into the Ramu. Do you know where we can get some people to help carry our supplies?

CAB DRIVER

Oh, no one go there, missus. Bad place. Is very bad place.

CASEY

No one goes there?

CAB DRIVER

No. Is bad place. Is very bad place.

CASEY

Thank you.

Jake's jaw has dropped as he stares at the man. He snorts a nervous laugh and looks back at Casey.

JAKE

I like you, doc.

CASEY

I like you too.

JAKE

Let's have a drink before we go to
(imitating CABDRIVER) 'the very bad place'.

CASEY

Yeah, maybe you're right.

INT. BAR -- NIGHT

MONTAGE.

Casey, Jake, Juan, Vila, Max and Sally are drinking. A few drinks turns into a session. The montage should have a comical bent and by the end of the night the expedition has bonded and done some pretty ridiculous things. A slide sequence with music could be used to good effect.

INT. HOTEL HALL, CASEY'S DOOR -- NIGHT

Casey and Jake are coming along the hall, laughing, drunk. They stop in front of Casey's door. Eventually they stop laughing. She looks at him.

CASEY

I'm a fucking idiot.

Jake finds her funny.

CASEY

I am. No, I am...Listen, I don't sleep with babies.

JAKE

Fair enough. Necrophilia?

Casey laughs and pushes him off.

CASEY

No, no, I yam going to bed.

JAKE

You yam going to bed?

CASEY

Yes, no, yes, and, alone, look, and, I'm,
in fact we, have to be up by five yay-em..

JAKE

Yay-em?

CASEY

...and we're going to um....Look, good night.

She suddenly shakes Jake's hand, turns and goes inside.

INT. CASEY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Casey crosses to the bed and halts.

CASEY

You're on the rebound. He's too young.

She nods to herself, accepting she is doing the right thing.

CASEY

And you're the leader of the expedition,
and you're drunk.

She nods to herself again, then abandons any self-control,
crosses quickly to the door and opens it.

Jake still leans against the doorframe. They burst out
laughing. He comes in, kissing her and kicking the door shut
behind him.

INT. CASEY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Casey sleeps in Jake's arms. The phone rings, loud in the
silence.

CASEY (in pain)

Oh!

She fumbles for the phone.

CASEY

Yes?...Yes, thank you.

She hangs up. She groans and moans and swings her legs out to sit on the side of the bed.

CASEY

I am such a fuckwit...I am such an irresponsible fuckwit.

JAKE

I'll drink to that.

CASEY

I am. I'm supposed to be heading an expedition not getting everyone drunk and being seduced by you!

JAKE

As I recall, we got you drunk and then you jumped me.

CASEY

(getting dressed)

Yes, well, yes, technically, yes. If I could remember anything I might argue with you, but as I can't...

Jake pulls her back down and kisses her.

JAKE

Mellow out, doc, we're volunteers, we're here to have a good time and we promise not to tell on you.

He kisses her again, and she takes his advice and relaxes into it.

EXT. TRAVELING MONTAGE.

a) Outside the hotel the Expedition loads into a mini-bus. Everyone looks to be very hung over.

b) The expedition arrives at an airfield and pulls up alongside a DC3 on the tarmac. Casey gets out and shakes the PILOT'S (black national) hand.

c) The plane lifts off.

d) Spectacular aerial footage of New Guinea, the plane flying through frame.

e) The plane touches down.

- f) The Expedition is unloading gear from the plane into two four wheel drive vehicles. Behind each vehicle is a Zodiac on a trailer.
- g) The vehicles make their way along a bitumen road. It abruptly turns into a dirt road.
- h) The vehicles drive through tropical jungle. We see various members looking out with wonder at the rich canopy. NATIVES, walking their pigs, stop and stare as the cars go by.
- i) The novelty has worn off and it is turning into a long drive e.g. Max and Sally play a card game while Juan dozes.
- j) A distant shot, showing the vehicles crossing a rugged mountain range, with spectacular nearby peaks.
- k) The vehicles travel down a very steep road and splash through a creek crossing.
- l) The vehicles approach a large dam. The sun is going down.
- m) One of the zodiacs is being backed into the water, members of the Expedition helping.
- n) Round a campfire Sally dances with Juan. Everyone finds it very funny. THREE NATIVE DRIVERS clap along with the rest and laugh.
- o) Dawn. Casey emerges from her tent, stretches and smiles at the new day.
- p) The Expedition loads into the zodiacs. Casey shakes hands with the three vehicle drivers and climbs into the last boat. The Expedition heads out.
- q) The Expedition travels in the zodiacs, racing across wide, still waters.
- r) The Expedition now travels along a wide river.
- s) The Expedition is stalled at the junction of two rivers. Casey refers to a map. She points up one of the tributaries. They head up that tributary.
- t) The Expedition heads up a small river.

u) The Expedition comes to small rapids. Casey points to a tributary running off to one side, and the Expedition heads up it.

v) The Expedition sets up camp, unpacking supplies.

w) Casey and Jake scout a cliff-face for fossils. Jake points out something in the cliff. Casey nods in agreement.

x) The Expedition digs at the site. Some sift soil while others sort, and others dig.

y) At night and by lamplight, Casey examines the fossils they have found using a dusting brush and a magnifying glass. She tells Jake and VILA about it and they pass it between them.

z) Everyone sits around on fold out chairs, having some port by the fires, and generally enjoying themselves.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

Vila examines a trap he has set for Crocodylidae Negros. Casey approaches.

CASEY

Any luck?

VILA

Morning. No. We would be lucky indeed to catch one I think.

CASEY

Phew. What's that bait?

VILA

Oh, flying fox. Crocs like it high.

CASEY

(jerking her head for him to follow)
Well, Juan is in charge of breakfast this morning.

VILA (following)

Oh? What's on the menu?

CASEY

Burritos, what else.

INT. KEMBLER'S OFFICE. MUSEUM -- DAY

THILBY

I feel like I'm betraying her, seeing she was kind enough to let me have Big Bend.

KEMBLER

Casey?

THILBY

Well, Dr. Solstein, Casey, has, ah, broken certain professional rules which I think it is, unfortunately, my duty to bring to your attention.

Kembler waits expectantly.

EXT. RIVERBANK. CAMP -- DAY

Casey, Jake, Vila, Sally, sit round, eating burritos, having a laugh, while Juan, wearing an apron, walks among them, handing out more from a skillet.

CASEY

These are really good, Juan.

JUAN

Ah, mucho gracias, senorita. Mucho gusto.

CASEY

Yeah, what he said.

Max is calling from a distance, running toward camp.

MAX

Hey, Vila, man, I think you've caught one, dude!

VILA

I caught a dude?

SALLY

He means a crocodile.

VILA

Oh!

Vila hurries toward Max. The others follow.

Juan, not understanding, and on his own in the make-shift kitchen, sees them going, looks at his burritos still on the stove, and waves the others away, deciding to stay with his food.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

SFX: A Crocodile distress call - a mature version of the high pitched bark of infants.

A small black CROCODILE is in the foreground, struggling to free itself from the snare. The expedition members approach, Vila in the lead. He halts nearby and approaches cautiously.

MAX

Wow. It really is black.

SALLY

Oh, do you think? You reckon that's why they call it a Negro?

MAX

Oh, hardy ha. Thought it might just be real dark puke green or something but it really is black, man, like Zorro.

Max moves too close and the crocodile snaps at him. He yelps in fright and falls over in his effort to spring away.

MAX

Whoa! Jeez, that thing's fast!

VILA

For heaven's sake, Max, it's a bloody crocodile! Where do you think you are?! Disneyland!

MAX

Sorry.

VILA

See the jaws on her. With the power she has she could bite your leg straight off, even though she's only little. So stay well clear.

MAX

You got it.

CASEY

Does it really have that much power?

VILA

Yes, a bite test on my last specimen was surprising. It was about one and a half times greater than the highest known bite strength.

CASEY

For crocodiles?

VILA

For anything.

JAKE

Look at the head, it's even broader than an alligator's.

CASEY

Yeah, and there's a lot more bone in there too. It really is unique. You want to go get the breath sampling gear?

JAKE

(heading off)

What, now? We'll do it straight away? Sure.

SALLY

Oh, the poor little fella really is scared. Listen to him.

VILA

It's a her. It's okay, girl.

CASEY (wondering to herself)

Why are they're all girls?

The crocodile continues her distress call.

EXT. JUNGLE CANOPY -- DAY

Various shots of the quiet jungle canopy. The distress call of the small black Croc echoes through the valley.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

PUKPUK POV: Surfacing, then on water level, beginning to move slowly forward.

The sound of the distress call is only faint in the distance.

SFX: PUKPUK'S deep, menacing growl. Note: water dances on the surface whenever the pukpuk growls, responding to the ultra low frequency.

EXT. CAMP -- DAY

Jake arrives back in camp. He gathers the breath analysis gear. As he does so he notices Juan is missing.

The skillet is smoking, overheating over the fire.

Jake takes the skillet off the fire, burning his hand on the hot handle. He picks up the breath analysis gear and hurries back to the river.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

The small Croc now has a large, cut down plastic bottle over its head and taped down. On the neck of the bottle is a large airbag being slowly inflated with her breath. The distress calls are still coming, but are muffled by the apparatus on her head.

BACK TO.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

PUKPUK'S POV: Still moving along the river, searching the banks. The sounds of the distress calls are louder.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

MAX

I told Juan I'd get some firewood.

Nobody notices Max leaving. He shuffles away, head down. Vila notices his manner.

VILA

Hey, Max.

Max stops and looks back.

VILA

Thanks for spotting the crocodile.

MAX (brightening)

Oh, that's okay, doc. Was in the area.

VILA

You did a good job.

Max grins and walks away more happily. Vila grins and goes back to watching them gather the croc's breath,

INT. KEMBLER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Kembler's fingers punch out a phone number.

INTERCUT:

INT. CARL FRAILEY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Carl answers the phone.

CARL

Carl Frailey.

KEMBLER

Carl, Steve Kembler, Boston Museum, how's it going?

CARL

Oh, hi, um, have we met?

KEMBLER

No, no, but I believe you're good friends with a subordinate of mine, Casey Solstein.

CARL

Oh, Casey, sure, yeah, we used to go together when she was at college. So, what, are you the chairperson, Steve?

KEMBLER (slight hesitation)

Yeah, how'd you know that?

CARL

Well, isn't she head of department now?

KEMBLER

Yeah.

FLASHBACK:

CASEY

Carl doesn't know about my promotion.

BACK TO.

KEMBLER

Yeah, listen, a little bird told me you may be considering a dig in New Guinea soon. I was wondering if you'd consider letting us in on it?

CARL

New Guinea? Don't know where you heard that, Steve. Going back to Amazonia in a month, but we already have partners for that trip.

KEMBLER

Oh. Well...must've been a liar bird.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

PUKPUK POV: Casey and Jake walk back along the riverbank toward camp, carrying the soft bag of croc breath. Sally is still standing near Vila, who kneels over the small Croc. The distress calls are louder.

SFX: A very deep, evil growl.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

Vila is preparing a syringe. Sally is watching.

SALLY

So what are you going to do?

VILA

Oh, take some blood, tag her, let her go.

SALLY

Aren't these supposed to be rare or something?

VILA

Yes. That's why it's best to let her go this time. We haven't caught a male yet so we can't breed them.

INTERCUT:

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

PUKPUK'S POV: Closer to Vila and Sally. The distress sounds are louder.

BACK TO.

SALLY

She certainly is crying a lot.

VILA

Yeah, maybe that's why they die. Go into shock or something.

PUKPUK'S POV: Closer to Vila and Sally. The distress sounds are louder.

Vila is about to take the blood sample.

SALLY (shuddering)

(leaving)

Ooh, can't watch this part. Can't stand needles. Comes from working in hospitals. I'm going to see what they're doing with that breath thing.

VILA

Okay.

Sally leaves.

VILLA

Oh, hey, save me a burrito or two.

SALLY

Okay.

PUKPUK'S POV: Closer to Vila, almost to the bank. The distress sounds are louder and growing more intense.

Sally is walking back, unconcerned.

Closer to Vila on the bank and moving forward. The distress sounds are reaching climax point.

EXT. RIVERBANK. CAMP -- DAY

Casey stands behind Jake at the table while he runs the breath analysis test. In the background, Sally strolls into camp.

Casey looks around.

CASEY

Where's Juan?

JAKE

Don't know.

CASEY

Well, where's Max?

SALLY

Said something about gathering firewood.

CASEY

I'm going to have to talk to the group about wandering off.

JAKE

That can't be right.

Jake watches numbers flicking on an LED screen, they slow down and come to a halt.

CASEY

Why?

JAKE

We didn't do anything wrong. Maybe this thing's faulty.

CASEY

What's wrong?

JAKE

Well, it's still in the reptilian range. But it's very high, approaching mammalian.

They exchange a look of confusion.

JAKE

Maybe we didn't take the sample right.

CASEY

High metabolic rate might be why they're never seen basking. (to Sally) He hasn't let her go yet, has he?

SALLY (shuddering)

No, he's taking blood.

CASEY (to Jake)

C'mon.

As they leave Sally steals a burrito off Jake's plate and tucks in.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

Casey and Jake arrive at where Vila and the Croc are supposed to be. They look around, confused.

CASEY

Look.

She picks up the end of the snare. It has been broken off. As Casey stands she notices Jake backing away from the water.

CASEY

What?

He does not turn. She moves round in front of him, looking up into his face. He is staring at the waterline, face tight with fear. He looks at her and directs her to the waterline with his eyes. Casey moves down to the water but can see nothing.

JAKE

You're standing in it.

Casey looks down. She is standing inside an enormous crocodile footprint.

JAKE

Tell me that's not a crocodile. Tell me that's not a giant crocodile's footprint.

CASEY

Jesus.

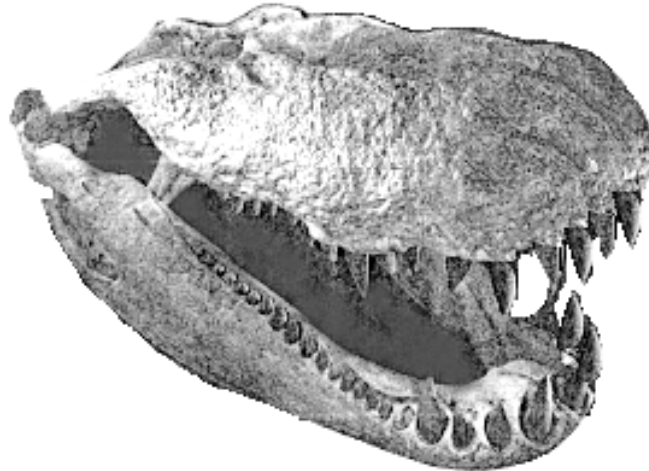
FLASHBACK: The image on the computer.



CASEY (to herself)

We've got to get out here.

FLASHBACK: The image on the computer screen.



CASEY

We've got to get out.

SFX: The sound of a tree cracking.

Casey and Jake snap to attention, spin round and face the nearby jungle. Something very big is coming their way. It moves an entire tree.

SFX: A deep, rumbling growl.

Casey and Jake freeze, terrified. They abruptly turn and run for their lives.

EXT. RIVERBANK CAMP -- DAY

Casey and Jake run into camp. Sally sits at a table by herself, eating a burrito.

CASEY

Get in the boat!

SALLY

What?

JAKE

Get in the boat!

SALLY

What boat?

CASEY

(hauling Sally to her feet)
Get to the river! Get in the boat!

SALLY

Why?!

CASEY

Don't argue just do it! (to Jake) Make her!

She looks round desperately

CASEY

Where's Juan?! Where's Max?!

SALLY

I don't know! What's going on?!

CASEY

You search over there! I'll look down there! (to Sally) I haven't got time! Just go to the boat, get in it! Wait!

Casey and Jake separate, following opposite paths into the jungle.

SALLY

So it'd kill you to give me a few details.

She shrugs, picks up another burrito, begins to go, but comes back and grabs another.

EXT. JUNGLE -- DAY

Casey locates Juan, trousers down, taking a crap, and reading a magazine. He is very embarrassed and she has difficulty getting him to respond quickly.

EXT. JUNGLE -- DAY

Max staggers under an enormous pile of firewood. Jake arrives and tugs his hand, causing him to drop the load. Jake drags him along. Max is upset about the firewood.

EXT. RIVERSIDE -- DAY

Sally sits in a zodiac on dry land, eating a burrito. She looks around at the water and mutters to herself.

SALLY

What if I got eaten by a crocodile sitting here. Then you'd look pretty silly.

She looks at the water. Tension builds.

Casey and Juan suddenly appear behind her. Casey makes him help her push the zodiac into the water. She hands him the bow rope and rushes back to look for Jake and Max.

Juan looks down at the rope in his hand. He looks questioningly at Sally, drifting in the boat on the other end of the line.

Sally shrugs her reply, not having the faintest idea what is going on, but offers.

SALLY

Hey, nice burritos, Juan.

JUAN

Ah, mucho gracias.

EXT. CAMP -- DAY

Casey encounters Jake and Max.

CASEY

Oh, thank God!

EXT. RIVERSIDE -- DAY

Casey, Jake and Max hurry down to the boat.

CASEY

(to Jake, pointing to the boat with Juan and Sally)
You take them!

Jake bustles Juan into the boat, jumps in and kicks up the motor. He looks round urgently to see if Casey is keeping up.

SALLY

So, where's Vila?

Casey already has Max sitting in the prow of her zodiac and is pushing it out. She sees Jake waiting.

CASEY

Go! Go!

Jake nods and guns the motor.

Casey throws herself into the second boat, switches the motor on and heaves on the starter cord. It does not start. She pulls the rope again and again, glancing at the water.

Finally the motor catches. Casey opens the throttle. Max is thrown back deeper into the well of the bow.

MAX

Hey, slow down, doc!

EXT. RIVER. JAKE'S BOAT -- DAY

The boat races close the far bank. Juan at the bow, Sally on the middle seat. Jake looks back to see if Casey is alright. He glances forward and does a double take. There is a branch from a tree hanging out over the river.

JAKE

Duck, Juan! Duck!

JUAN

(straightening up, looking skyward)
Where duck?! Where?!

The tree clobbers him. He is knocked face down into the boat. His fall also encounters Sally, knocking her off her seat. Her head comes to rest in Jake's lap.

SALLY

Will somebody tell me what in the goddamned hell is going on?!!

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

PUKPUK'S POV: In the water just near the riverbank where Vila was taken. There is the noise of an outboard, causing Camera to swing round. Casey's zodiac comes round the river bend. Camera submerges.

Underwater the zodiac is seen and heard powering by. Camera suddenly gives chase, surging after them at great speed.

EXT. RIVER JUNCTION -- DAY

There are upriver rapids on one side and a calm tributary on the other. The Expedition, in the calm tributary, moves forward with motors at full throttle.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

In a wider river now they still travel flat out, Jake's boat ahead. Max lies against the prow of Casey's zodiac, facing back toward her. Suddenly his eyes widen.

An enormous black crocodilian head, chasing them, raises out of the water fifty yards behind them, then disappears.

MAX

Whoa!!

Casey looks around, she decelerates.

MAX

Don't stop, doc!! Don't stop!!

Casey is still looking back, searching the water, hesitating, curiosity and fear conflicting emotions in her expression.

MAX

Doc, go now!! Now!!

Casey looks hard at Max. Spurred by the intensity on his face him, Casey guns the motor again.

INTERCUT:

EXT. UNDERWATER -- DAY

PUKPUK'S POV: Moving underwater at great speed, the outboard suddenly activates to full throttle and accelerates away. The PUKPUK'S POV stays with it for a while, beginning to catch up, but then the outboard slowly outpaces it. Eventually, PUKPUK'S POV gives up and comes to a halt, raising slowly up out of the water. The zodiacs speed away.

SFX: deep resentful growl.

BACK TO.

Casey's face, stunned, incredulous.

INT. MADANG POLICE STATION -- NIGHT

DETECTIVE OROBO comes from holding cells. There is a phone ringing in another office. He eventually gets to it.

OROBO

Ticky Orobo.

INTERCUT:

INT. KEMBLER'S OFFICE -- DAY

KEMBLER

Sorry, what?

OROBO

I am detective Orobo.

KEMBLER

Oh, detective, this is Professor Steven Kember. I'm chairman of the board at Boston Museum. I believe you've interviewed one of my staff, a Dr. Casey Solstein, about the death of a Dr. Vila Utala?

OROBO

Suspected death, yes.

KEMBLER

What, it's not confirmed?

OROBO

No, not at all. They thought it was a crocodile that took him but I seriously doubt that, plus nobody saw the attack. If Dr. Utala is not just lost and wandering in the jungle somewhere then he may have fallen victim to a local war.

KEMBLER

There's a war going on there?

OROBO

Highland war, tribal. I chewed Miss Solstein out before I put them on the plane this morning. She didn't get a permit before going into the Ramu. Anyway, I've sent some men in, but I doubt Dr. Utala will be found.

KEMBLER

You sure about the crocodile, detective? When she spoke to me Miss Solstein was adamant Dr. Utala was taken.

OROBO

Well, I'm not from around here, Mr. Kember, but I am told there's only a small breed of freshwater crocodile up there and they're not big enough to be man-eaters.

KEMBLER

Yes, I believe you're right. Thank you, detective.

OROBO

Mister Kember, I would like to express my disgust to you, sir, over this careless venture. I do hope your museum will take more care with its planning in the future. One of our most eminent scientists may be dead because of the cowboy attitude displayed by your staff.

KEMBLER

Yes...Well...thank you, Detective.

Kember is disturbed, coming to hard conclusions about Casey.

INT. AIRLINER -- DAY

Jake sits next to Casey. Juan, Sally and Max are located in the three central seats across the aisle.

JAKE

I don't get it. If that croc was as big as Max said, and there has to be more than one, then where are they all living and what are they living on?

CASEY (nodding)

Two possibilities. Either it's the last of the Mohicans, or a single sex species. There would be enough for one big animal.

JAKE

Single sex species?

CASEY

All females. They produce a single male only when they need to breed. The most dominant female produces testosterone and converts to a male. As she was already the most dominant then natural selection is still satisfied. It's a long bow, but, spontaneous sex change would explain a lot. Only other question is, did Max really see it?

JAKE

We saw it. We heard it.

CASEY

No, we saw something move in the jungle,
that's all.

JAKE

It moved a whole damned tree. And what
about the footprint?

CASEY

I believe it, but play devil's advocate. If
he's the only thing standing between
circumstantial evidence and a positive ID,
would you say he's credible?

Jake looks across at Max. He is rocking to the music on
headphones and is in the process of pulling his chewing gum
out in a long stream and feeding it back into his mouth.
Jake realizes Casey is right.

INT. MUSEUM BOARDROOM -- DAY

Kembler has his head down in irritation.

CASEY (OS)

I know there is no solid evidence.

Kembler looks up at her. The full Board is assembled.

CASEY

But you have my word. There was something
very big there. And we had an eyewitness.

KEMBLER

A scared guy who saw the head of a croc
surface fifty yards behind a speeding
zodiac. Oh, yeah, and who described it as
'totally bogus, dude'.

CASEY

And the footprint, seen by both myself and
a paleobiologist?

KEMBLER

A mark in the mud which you didn't bother
to plastercast. And a student
paleobiologist at that. You blowing smoke
up our asses or what?

CASEY

What was I supposed to do?! I had to take care of the people I was responsible for.

KEMBLER

Like you took care of Dr. Utala?! Casey, I am sick of the lies, the deceptions, the manipulations, and the downright unprofessionalism you have shown since taking over as director.

CASEY

"See...first we tell big lies, then we get the big money, then we advance science a tad."

KEMBLER

I was talking about the sponsors, not me!

He suddenly realizes he's made a major faux pas in front of Mrs. Foster, who frowns sternly at him. Kemberler makes a dismissive noise and tries to draw attention back to Casey.

KEMBLER

I rang Carl Frailey. He at no stage planned a trip to New Guinea. That was the whole premise on which we granted your funding for this trip. That is a major 'no no', before we even get to all the other lies and deceptions and the fact you're probably directly responsible for the death of one of New Guinea's finest scientists.

CASEY

Don't you even dare!

KEMBLER (to Thilby)

Help me out here someone?!

Casey's attention swings to Thilby. Thilby opens a folder, revealing the photocopy of the "Astonishing Science" magazine.

CASEY

Where did you get that?

THILBY

Your desk. Oh, everyone here has read it. About the big, black, crocodile, I mean.

CASEY

That's not...

THILBY

Oh, yes, it is the basis of your theory. I, unlike you, successfully researched the original publisher. And he told me that a Mister Vance Thurgold III sent him that story. Of course, he didn't believe it was taken from an authentic diary, he thought Mister Thurgold wrote it himself, and he gave me his address.

INT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE -- DAY

Thilby talks to a NEIGHBOR of Thurgold's. Thurgold's house can be seen through the window.

THILBY (VO)

But before I spoke directly with Mr. Thurgold, I took the precaution of interviewing some of his neighbors. You might be surprised to find his real name is John Palmer. He's an American just like you and me. His neighbors say he's always been an eccentric liar, likes to pretend he's some kind of English gentleman.

EXT. THURGOLD'S STREET -- DAY

Thurgold pushes his crippled brother, HARRY PALMER, in a wheelchair.

THILBY (VO)

His brother, Harry Palmer, was an amputee alright, and he cared for him all his life. Their father did fight in the airforce in New Guinea...

EXT. GRAVESITE -- DAY

Thurgold kneels over his father's grave in a war grave yard. He hold's his father's dogtags.

THILBY (VO)

...but it was John Palmer who went to New Guinea, not Harry. He didn't go into the Ramu valley either, just visited his father's grave in Madang cemetery.

INT. OLD AIRLINER -- DAY

The plane is in flight. Thurgold drinks tea, and reads a newspaper. It is the same article from the 'Madang Times' Casey was reading earlier.

THILBY (VO)

The information about the Ramu valley and Tom Cole and that patrolman, John Godson, he got from a local newspaper he bought in New Guinea. The same article you read. He'd obviously heard tales about the black crocodiles while he was there.

INT. DEN. THURGOLD'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Thurgold writes in the diary.

THILBY (VO)

The rest, he just put together using a very vivid imagination.

BACK TO.

MUSEUM BOARDROOM.

CASEY

You're lying. How could you know...

THILBY

Ah...it's called, 'research'.

Casey waits for the answer.

BACK TO.

NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE.

Thilby interviews the Neighbor as before, but now their attention is captured by an ambulance pulling up in front of Thurgold's house.

THILBY (VO)

You see, Mr. Thurgold is dead.

EXT. THURGOLD'S HOUSE -- DAY

Thilby is on the footpath, and the PARAMEDICS wheel Thurgold's shrouded body to the ambulance.

THILBY (VO)

Emphysema.

BACK TO.

Casey is now genuinely rattled.

CASEY

I don't believe you. You want to discredit me so that...

THILBY

You see, Casey, if you'd done your research...John Godson did disappear, as did many patrol officers of that era, and Tom Cole was a renowned crocodile hunter, but he was young, not old. Vance Thurgold III wouldn't have known that. He just made Cole old for the story. And by the way, Tom Cole wasn't on the same expedition as John Godson when he went missing. He was also only overdue. Walked back into Madang two weeks later. His jeep had broken down.

CASEY

Tom Cole died in 1949.

THILBY

Then how...did he write this?

He hands her a book titled, "Crocodile Tears" by Tom Cole. Casey flips it over to reveal a photograph of a middle-aged man with the caption 'Tom Cole' beneath it.

THILBY

That was published in 1979.

Casey checks inside. She sees he is right. She is completely confused.

CASEY

But...we saw the footprint. We saw something very big...I'm not lying.

The Board watches her in silent condemnation.

CASEY

I'm not lying.

INT. BEDROOM, CASEY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Jake enters the bedroom, eating ice cream straight out of the container. Casey, on the bed, is very depressed.

CASEY

Everything they said about me was right.

JAKE

What are you going to do now? Job-wise.

Casey shakes her head. Jake watches her.

MUSIC MONTAGE.

Casey in various stages of depression.

a) Curled up in a chair, wearing a dressing gown.

b) Lying in the hammock in the backyard. Jake watching her through the kitchen window. He shakes his head.

c) Casey dawdles through a park alone, on a windswept and overcast day.

d) Casey passes a coffee table on which rests the book by Tom Cole. She regards it for a long time. Finally, she picks it up.

e) Casey lies in the hammock again, glasses on, and reading the book. Jake is at the window once more, more interested now, sipping coffee.

f) Jake watches TV. Casey is nearby, under a lamp, reading. Jake looks at her, then back at the TV.

g) Night. Jake sleeps next to Casey in the bedroom. She is sitting up, reading.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Jake prepares breakfast. Casey sits at the table, reading.

JAKE

You know, I've only got two weeks of vacation left.

Casey looks at him.

JAKE

Well, I'd sort of like to spend it having some fun. You know...fun? Old Anglo-Saxon word meaning happy times.

Casey looks away.

JAKE

So what are you going to do, sit around beating yourself up for the rest of your life? C'mon, Jess.

CASEY

I didn't ask you to stay and watch.

JAKE

Maybe I won't.

EXT. GARDEN SHED -- DAY

Bare-chested and sweating, Jake tries to get a mower started, tools on the ground beside it. He's not having any luck. He curses the mower quietly.

CASEY

Jake.

He looks at her. She begins kissing him.

CASEY

There's good news and bad news. Here's the bad. I'm going to jump you 'til your eyeballs pop.

JAKE

Well, can't wait to hear the good.

They collapse out of frame, disrobing as they go.

EXT. GARDEN SHED -- DAY

Coated in perspiration, Casey rolls off Jake and rests exhausted against his chest. They recover their breath. Eventually...

JAKE

Wow...Why...?

CASEY

That's the good news. C'mon.

She helps him up.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

They enter from the backyard to the kitchen, still doing up their clothes. Casey picks up the book "Crocodile Tears".

CASEY

Listen. (reading) "After my parents died in the plane crash, I was lucky enough to be taken in by my only living relative in New Guinea, my aunt Meg. I was in fact named after her late husband, Tom Cole, a legendary crocodile hunter and my father's brother.

JAKE

He was Tom Cole's nephew?

CASEY

Named after him. (reading) "As some of my most formative years were spent growing up in the shadow of my famous uncle, surrounded by his memorabilia, it was obvious that at some stage I would consider being a crocodile hunter myself."

JAKE

So that guy at the museum, Thilby, got it wrong?

CASEY

Got it wrong my ass. (holding up the book) Just forgot a bit of 'research'.

EXT. BROADBEACH -- DAY

A high-rise apartment next to the beach.

SUPER: BROADBEACH, GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Casey and Jake are on a companionway overlooking the beach. They are before an apartment door. TOM COLE opens it.

COLE

Ah, you must be Casey.

CASEY

Hi. And this is my associate, Jake Williams.

COLE

Come in.

INT. COLE'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Casey, Jake, Cole and his wife, EMILY, are seated on the lounge.

COLE

I think I should make something clear to you. Emily and I have discussed it and we've decided we'll have to pass on your offer.

CASEY

But...this would be one of the greatest scientific finds of the century...

COLE

Oh, I...I read your message, and it certainly is intriguing. But you see, my wife isn't well, and as tempting as it is, I can't really leave her unattended.

CASEY

Oh.

EMILY

I'm sorry, I'm on the heart transplant program, you see.

CASEY

Oh, please, no, I'm so sorry. I didn't know.

EMILY

I know Tom wants to go, to solve that mystery about his uncle's disappearance, and because, well, he's a crocodile hunter, but I've been quite ill just this last week. Seems I'm more ill than we thought.

CASEY

Oh, please, your health is far more important.

EXT. MILITARY-STYLE COMPOUND, NEW GUINEA -- DAY

There is considerable activity as Casey assembles her expedition. BEARERS are readying supplies, an airboat, a zodiac, four wheel drives.

SUPER: MADANG, PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

HORST, a white South African appears carrying a high powered rifle.

HORST (to Bearers)
Get that damned thing tied down like I told you!

He is referring to straps tying the airboat to a trailer.

Jake is near Casey in another part of the compound. Casey packs her camera and long lenses.

JAKE
You sure about this guy? Sounds like some Nazi.

CASEY
I'm told he's the best croc shooter around.

JAKE
Well, that's another thing. Why are we going to shoot it?

CASEY
(referring to camera) I'm not setting out to shoot anything except this. But if that thing really is over fifty feet then I want some backup, Nazi or not.

She nods toward a jeep coming through the gate.

CASEY
And there's the other reason.

Detective Orobo is approaching.

EXT. COMPOUND --- DAY

Orobo draws the jeep up alongside Casey and Jake.

OROBO
Dr. Solstein.

CASEY

Detective.

OROBO

Thought I told you museum people not to come back.

CASEY

I'm doing this independently.

OROBO

So who's footing the bill?

CASEY

I am.

OROBO

I can still charge you retrospectively for going into the Ramu without a permit, you know.

CASEY

We didn't know about those permits.

OROBO

But now you do. I'm sorry, but if you're planning another trip into the Ramu I will refuse you all permits. Those highland wars have escalated.

CASEY

We don't need your permission, detective. Mr. Horst over there has a crocodile shooter's permit. That's Federal law, and we are all going on a crocodile shoot.

OROBO

Horst? So it is. Here's some free advice then. He is not the sort of man I would go into the jungle with.

JAKE

Why's that?

OROBO

He's killed several people.

JAKE

So why's he walking free?

OROBO

No witnesses. Besides, this is a very lawless place since independence.

Casey and Jake look worriedly toward Horst. He is still in the process of berating the BEARERS.

OROBO

Although, where you're going, you might need a man like that. Twenty-three dead this week up there. And it's only Wednesday.

Orobo drives out. Casey and Jake exchange a worried look.

INT. COLE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Cole sleeps beside Emily. Suddenly she sneezes, but her face is now covered in blood. Cole wakes. He sees she is dead.

COLE

Oh.....Oh.

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY

MOURNERS walk away from the grave. Cole stands alone, looking down at his wife's grave, tears on his cheeks.

INT. GUN ROOM, COLE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Blackness. A door opens before us. Cole stands in the doorway, still wearing the suit he had on at the funeral. His tie now hangs loose. He advances into the room and pulls on a light switch. The room is filled with gun racks and some impressive weaponry. Cole picks up a large rifle and looks at it thoughtfully.

EXT. DAM. RAMU RIVER -- DAY

The zodiac and airboat are being backed into the water. Suddenly a bracing strap gives way and the airboat topples off its trailer, smashing the protective cage of the propeller.

HORST

You stupid bastard!

He picks up a length of rope and begins beating one of the BEARERS we saw him abusing earlier.

HORST

Stupid good for nothing Kaffir-bastard!

His arm is suddenly seized by Jake.

JAKE

In case you haven't heard, the blacks are all free now.

Horst quickly turns the tables on Jake and slams him to the ground. He has his boot on Jake's throat, choking him.

HORST

You touch me again, boy, I'll rip your throat out.

CASEY

Stop it! Let him up!...Do you hear me?!

HORST

...In a minute.

CASEY

Let him up now! *Now!*

Horst finally takes his foot off Jake. Jake sits up, gasping for breath.

HORST

Well, looks like you're not just 'associates'.

CASEY

You're fired. You're fired right now.

HORST

No, missie. I'm not fired.

CASEY

Excuse me?

HORST

You can't go up there without my permits. And you've mortgaged you house to get this far. What's more, there's a highland war going on and I doubt you or this toy boy here could fire a pea-shooter. No, I'm not fired.

He walks away.

CASEY

You alright?

JAKE

Yeah.

Casey goes after Horst.

EXT. DAM -- DAY

Horst barks orders in pidgin at his men.

CASEY

Let's get one thing straight.

HORST

Yes, let's. I treat my men how I like. I know what makes the lazy bastards work and that's what I use, and your man, he touched me first. I'm allowed to defend myself.

CASEY

He was defending another man.

HORST

Then let that man defend himself. That's equality.

CASEY

Listen you racist pig, I don't want to see you beating anyone again. Is that clear?

HORST

Look, despite what you may have heard about me, missy, I'm not such a bad fellow. You may even like me better than that young pup before we come back.

CASEY

I seriously doubt that.

HORST

Oh, you'd be surprised. Here's some good advice. Out there, there's no more rules. What works, works, and scared men work harder, especially these black fellas. Right now we can take that smashed propeller guard back and get it repaired, but out there, a stupid accident like that can cost us our lives.

CASEY

We'll go without the propeller guard.

She walks off.

HORST

Well...You're the boss.

EXT. DAM -- DAY

The team packs the boats with supplies. Casey struggles with aqualung equipment which she puts into a zodiac.

HORST

What's that for? You want me to shoot your big croc underwater?

CASEY

I don't want you to shoot it at all. Only if it threatens us.

HORST

You really believe there's such a thing? A monster.

CASEY

Yes.

HORST

So why do you want to go swimming with it?

CASEY

This is for describing habitat. Crocodiles only react to noise above the water, not in it.

HORST

Teach your grandmother to suck eggs, missy.

Jake arrives with an aqualung. Horst slaps his face lightly.

HORST

How's the pretty face, boy?

Horst walks off, chuckling.

JAKE

Ever get the feeling you're making one really big mistake?

Casey looks at him, then at Horst.

EXT. DAM/RIVER SYSTEM -- DAY

TRAVELING MONTAGE: the zodiac and airboat making their way up into the river system. The airboat propeller no longer has a guard.

EXT. KILA'S VILLAGE -- NIGHT

Kila sits by a fire, smoking a pipe. His wizened eyes grow gradually wider with surprise.

Like a ghostly specter Tom Cole enters the field of light round the fire.

Kila gets up. As Cole finally appears by the firelight Kila comes forward and hugs him.

COLE

Hello, Kila.

KILA

Hello, big man.

COLE

Looks like we should have believed you all those years ago.

Kila nods. Overcome with emotion, he hugs Cole again.

INT. MADANG POLICE STATION -- DAY

A CONSTABLE enters Detective Orobo's office. He hands Orobo a piece of paper and Orobo looks up to see who is at the front desk. He stands and comes out.

OROBO

Come into my office, please.

It was Cole waiting at the counter.

INT. OROBO'S OFFICE.

Cole enters.

OROBO

Please, sit down.

COLE

Something wrong?

OROBO

You're not related to the famous Tom Cole
by any chance?

COLE

I *am* the famous Tom Cole.

OROBO (laughing)

The Tom Cole who disappeared in the Ramu
valley in 1949.

COLE

Yes, he was my uncle.

OROBO

And now, here we are a half-century later,
and here you are, asking for a permit to go
up there again. That's curious.

COLE

Why, it's just a hunting trip.

OROBO

I see that. Wouldn't have anything to do
with a certain young American scientist and
a certain fabled giant, black crocodile
would it? And a certain expedition that
happens to be on its way to the Ramu valley
right now.

COLE

You're clutching at straws.

Orobo laughs fully.

COLE

I wasn't going to go, but, my wife...just
died....

OROBO

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

COLE

...and now I really just want something
to...Plus, my uncle's disappearance has
always troubled me. The tale the boy told
when he got back, Kila Rono...

OROBO

Oh yes, I know him.

COLE

Well, he never changed his story. And my aunt, she always told me that my uncle's father had once seen a black crocodile hide with giant scales, big as your hand. And now, this young Casey Solstein, a scientist.

OROBO

Only, I think I'd believe in the Loch Ness monster first.

Coles head goes back, wanting him to explain.

OROBO

There's more water in that Loch than the whole British Isles combined. Something that big could hide there. But, the Ramu, quite small, populated. Where would fifty foot black crocodiles hide? What would they eat? Just not logical.

COLE

Well, one way to know for sure.

Orobo looks at him, considering what he is saying.

EXT. HOTEL -- DAWN

A four wheel drive vehicle is parked outside the same hotel that Casey stayed in. The sun just breaks the horizon and the streets are deserted.

Cole walks from the hotel and stops momentarily on the verandah. He carries rifles and ammunition which he then loads into the back of the vehicle. He becomes aware of a man's footfall coming down the quiet street behind him. He looks. Orobo approaches. He also carries a rifle, revolver and backpack. Cole nods. Orobo nods and smiles.

EXT. ROADWAY -- DAWN

Kila Rono stands in the middle of the road, carrying a small satchel of supplies.

Cole and Orobo are driving. Cole brings the car alongside him. They exchange a meaningful look. Cole motions with his head for him to get in. Kila does so.

EXT. CAMPSITE -- DAY

The zodiac and the airboat are approaching the abandoned campsite. It has been ransacked.

CASEY

We've had visitors.

HORST

The blacks would have found it by now.
Thieving bastards.

CASEY

Alright, that embankment up there, that's where I want our new camp. And I'd like to have the observation hide over there, okay?

HORST

You're the boss, boss.

EXT. AIRFIELD -- DAY

A DC3 touches down on a country airstrip.

EXT. AIRFIELD -- DAY

Cole, Orobo and Kila unpack cargo from the plane into the back of a four wheel drive. Hitched behind the vehicle is a zodiac.

Orobo picks up a box marked 'dynamite', realizes what it is, and puts it quickly back down.

OROBO

I should confiscate that.

Cole takes the box and puts it into the car.

COLE

You know as well as I do those highlanders will kill you first if they know you're a cop. So giant croc or not, and unlike my uncle, I'm not going in under-armed.

Orobo reluctantly agrees.

EXT. DAM/RIVER -- DAY

Cole, Orobo, and Kila motor along. Kila has control of the outboard. Orobo, hot, uncomfortable, swiping at flies, is checking a map. He shows Cole a mark on it.

OROBO

This is where Dr. Utala disappeared.

COLE

They got protection this time?

OROBO

Yes, a croc shooter and a few bearers.

COLE

Who's the shooter?

OROBO

A fellow called Benabeer Horst.

COLE

Horst?! He's a nutjob.

OROBO

Thought that was a pre-requisite for croc shooters.

Cole chuckles.

EXT. CAMPSITE -- DAY

Using a large, murderous hunting knife HORST eats a strip of beef jerky. He is in the makeshift kitchen and watching something below. Casey is leaning over, helping with the binding of shrubbery to ensure the hide is well camouflaged. Horst watches her with lustful desire.

The new camp is being constructed up on an embankment, higher than the last camp. The BEARERS work with machetes and axes to construct a camouflaged hide so that Casey will be able to observe the river.

Casey straightens up, turns and sees that Horst has been watching her. Annoyed, she goes inside the hide.

EXT. HIDE -- DAY

Horst appears at the doorway to the hide and hangs off the entry, leering desirously at Casey. She turns and sees him.

CASEY

Would there be wild pigs around here?

HORST

Maybe.

CASEY

We need bait for a croc.

HORST

You want pig? I bring you pig.

She turns away dismissively, scanning the river with binoculars. Jake appears behind Horst, wanting to enter the hide. Horst notices him and reluctantly leaves. Jake enters, having heard their last exchange. He comes in behind Casey and fondles her.

JAKE (imitating Horst)

You want pig. I bring you pig.

Casey grins but acts aroused.

CASEY

Oh, stop. Jake will be back any second.

JAKE

Oh. You know, you may even like me better
zan zat young pup before ve come back.

Casey laughs, closes her eyes, turns in his arms and kisses him.

CASEY

I like you better even now.

Casey relaxes into his arms and looks at him sexily.

CASEY

And you stink of BO and have green teeth.
Do you have any idea how that turns a girl
on?

They kiss.

EXT. HIDE -- DAY

Horst stands directly behind the hide. He has heard everything they have said about him. Bitter, he moves away.

EXT. RIVER FORK -- LATE AFTERNOON

The zodiac is stationary at a junction of the river recognizable from previous traveling montages with Casey. Orobo studies a map. He holds out his arm, choosing the

right fork of the river. Kila turns the boat and they proceed in that direction.

EXT. RIVER FORK -- EARLY DUSK

Cole is in the well of the boat, his back against one of the main floats. Orobo is on the prow seat, his chin resting on his elbow as it rests on the float. Kila still mans the outboard. There is a sense of boredom shared by all three at the journey's interminable length.

Suddenly Kila sits bolt upright. Cole notices. Kila is staring up at a nearby mountainside. Cole looks to see what Kila has seen. There is nothing obviously visible. Kila is so astonished that he releases the throttle and the boat drops to an idle. Orobo looks round, sees them staring at the mountain, and also looks. He can see nothing.

OROBO

What are we looking at?

COLE

Kila saw something.

OROBO

What?

There is no reply as the other two stare.

OROBO

Kila? What is it?

Kila rubs his whiskers and shakes his head.

OROBO

People?

Kila shakes his head.

OROBO

Well?

KILA

PUKPUK.

FX: To his astonishment he sees a small black Croc now holds the barrel, clamped between its jaws.

OROBO

Jesus!

Cole spins. He is amazed. He sees Orobo in a tug-of-war over the rifle. He takes aim, but hesitates.

OROBO

Shoot it!

COLE

Let the rifle go!

Orobo drops the weapon and crosses to Cole.

The men watch, fascinated, as the Croc crunches on the rifle, snapping it. It realizes it has nothing edible, then walks away. The men follow.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE, CLEARING -- LATE DUSK

The Croc moves forward. The men track it. Kila throws a lasso, snaring one of its legs, and ties it quickly to a tree. Cole has his shirt off. He races in quickly, throwing the shirt over its eyes. He forces its jaws shut and loops the rope rapidly around the snout, tying it off. Cole gets up and re-dons his shirt.

SFX: A Crocodile distress call (as heard before)

COLE

May as well camp here for the night. Like to have a good look at this thing in the morning.

The men move down toward the boat. As they leave Orobo looks back.

OROBO

Listen to that, sounds like a child crying.

EXT. JUNGLE -- NIGHT

Horst walks along, whistling, his rifle resting on his shoulder with an air of complete casualness.

HORST

Here, piggy, piggy, piggy.
Here, piggy, piggy, piggy.

He whistles again.

INT. NATIVE HUT -- NIGHT

Two Pigs walk around inside the hut. A NATIVE FAMILY is round a fire, cooking sweet potato. The Family stop talking as they hear whistling outside.

The FATHER of the family, frowns, and goes to the doorway to investigate. He backs back, though, as Horst enters.

HORST

Oh, so there you are little piggies.

The Family is apprehensive.

EXT. JUNGLE -- NIGHT

Horst is whistling, carrying his rifle as before. He leads the pigs with pieces of twine tied to a back leg. He halts.

HORST

Hold on there. Hold on there.

He deliberately breaks a twig.

HORST

Okay, c'mon pigs. C'mon.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE. CLEARING -- NIGHT

The small Croc, tied up as before. Cole, Orobo, and Kila approach, back from the boat with their gear.

Orobo throws his sleeping mat and bag down beside a huge fallen log.

OROBO

Let's get a fire going, I'm starving.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE. CLEARING -- NIGHT

A fire is going, and the remains of a meal are nearby. Cole and Orobo drink coffee while Kila smokes a pipe. Orobo leans against the log, examining the remains of the rifle.

OROBO

Jesus, must have a bite like a bear trap.
Hate to see what it would have done to my
head.

COLE

You'd be dead.

Orobo looks across at the Croc. It is staring at him.

OROBO

What's it staring at me for? (to the Croc)
Hey, I didn't tie you up, they did...Well,
least you stopped your crying.

ECU: PUKPUK'S giant evil eye. A campfire is reflected in the
mad stare.

EXT. CAMPSITE -- NIGHT

CLOSE on a fire. Horst and his Bearers sit round the fire.
Horst drinks coffee. He looks up and stares at the hide.

EXT. HIDE INT -- NIGHT

Jake looks through a pair of night vision binoculars.

Binocular fx: The two Pigs are tethered by the river as
bait.

Jake lowers the glasses. He stifles a yawn and hands them
onto Casey. He checks his watch, using the illuminator
light.

CASEY

What time is it?

JAKE

Wow. Eight o'clock. I must be getting old.

CASEY

Level off when you reach thirty.

She picks up a clipboard and notes the time.

CASEY

Tell you what, you get some shut eye then
relieve me in a couple of hours. Okay?

JAKE

No argument here.

He kisses her cheek and yawns once more before stretching out on the floor.

EXU: PUKPUK'S giant evil eye, a campfire is reflected in the mad stare.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE. CLEARING -- NIGHT

COLE

That's not like any croc I've seen.

OROBO

Well, they said it was a new species.

COLE

Whatever it is, it's not a croc.

OROBO

Why so sure?

COLE

Doesn't look right. Look at the front claws, how long they are. They're made to climb trees. It was sitting up that trunk when it attacked you. Know why we didn't see it? 'Cause it was on the dark side of the tree. That's why it's black. It's a hunter in a dark rainforest. See that tree over there, and that one, they're burnt up one side. A fire roars through and scorches the trees on one side. This thing lays on top of the black bark and you wouldn't see it until it fell on your head. Probably why the jaws are so powerful. Bite an animal's head straight off. Look at the teeth. Like railway spikes. If there's a bigger one around, we're in deep shit.

ECU: PUKPUK'S giant evil eye. A camp fire is reflected in the mad stare.

EXT. CAMPSITE -- NIGHT

Around the fire the Bearers are now asleep. Horst, however, is still awake, staring at the hide.

EXT. HIDE INT --- NIGHT

Jake wakes and stretches. He checks his watch, pressing the 'light' button, but frowns when he cannot make out the time.

CASEY

Ten thirty.

JAKE

Seen anything?

CASEY

No. But thanks for the sex.

JAKE

I miss something?

CASEY (gasping)

Thought you were just pretending to be asleep! S'why I found it so erotic.

Jake laughs. They kiss then hug.

JAKE

I wouldn't want to miss sex with you, babe. Just gets better.

CASEY

You're quite something yourself.

JAKE

Only as good as the material I work with. You know, we really are special, Case. As a pair I mean. Lennon and McCartney, Gilbert and Sullivan, Astaire and Rogers.

CASEY

Williams and Solstein. Does have a ring.

Casey looks at him seriously for a long moment, but cannot hold his eyes. She looks away. But Jake reaches out and draws her chin slowly back. He kisses her tenderly.

JAKE

Not lying, Casey.

CASEY

Don't say it unless you mean it, Jake.

JAKE

I'm thinking I'd like this to be
forever...I truly love you.

Tears roll down her cheeks.

ECU: PUKPUK'S giant evil eye. The eye narrows, becoming more
intense.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE. CLEARING -- NIGHT

The small black Croc stares at Orobo. He is looking back at
the Croc, bothered by it. He almost starts when Cole speaks.

COLE

How far on the map to their camp?

OROBO

Surprised we haven't seen them yet. Must be
close. Probably if we squeezed off some
shots they might even hear us. Trouble is,
so will anyone else.

He looks across at Kila.

OROBO

So Kila, tell me, what do you think of our
little black croc? Do you think it's just a
young one? Will it grow to be
enormous like the one you saw?

KILA

I don't know.

OROBO

Well, where do you think such a big pukpuk
could be? I mean, there is nowhere for him
to hide.

Kila shrugs.

OROBO

Haven't you thought about it?

Kila shakes his head.

OROBO

Why not?

Cole looks at Kila, interested to hear his explanation.

KILA

PUKPUK still here.

Cole and Orobo are amused.

OROBO

You really see that thing? Fifty feet long?
C'mon now, did you really see it?

Kila nods, looking him in the eye.

OROBO

So why did you want to come back if this
thing is so scary?

KILA

He kill my father, men from my village.

COLE

Must've been eating a hole in your stomach
all these years.

Kila nods, lowers his head sadly.

OROBO

Why wait until now? You're an old man.

KILA

I need silly white pela with dynamite
stick.

OROBO (to Cole)

I'm guessing that'd be you.

He laughs. He begins to make himself comfortable for bed,
taking off his belt, and with it his knife.

OROBO

Well, if you're finished scaring the hell
out of me with all these tall tales, and
that thing will stop staring at me, both of
which are bound to give me nightmares, I'm
turning in.

He takes the knife from its sheaf.

OROBO

But I'm keeping this handy just the same.

With a flourish he stabs it into the log beside him.

ECU: PUKPUK'S giant evil eye. The iris grows wide with rage.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE. CLEARING -- NIGHT

FX. With a huge roar of pain 20 tons of PUKPUK raises until it stands seven foot at the shoulder. Orobo's knife is protruding from its side.

Lying beside it, Orobo's jaw drops open as he follows it up.

The PUKPUK'S tails thrashes through the undergrowth as it wheels to face its attacker.

Cole and Kila dive to evade the tail.

Fully round, the PUKPUK roars at Orobo. The blast of breath and sound almost rolls him across the ground. Paralyzed with fear, he screams and holds up a protective hand.

The PUKPUK grabs Orobo in its jaws, throws its head back, and in a single gulp, eats him.

Cole has his rifle. Kila streaks past him, making his escape down the mountainside.

Cole flicks his rifle to fully automatic and raises it to his shoulder.

The PUKPUK'S head comes down.

Cole opens fire, advancing as he shoots.

Great hunks of flesh are torn from the PUKPUK. It roars in pain, spins round, averting its head.

Its tail comes on with the force of a giant scythe, felling saplings.

Cole's magazine gives out. He sees the tail coming and ducks.

The tail, as big as a tree trunk, whooshes overhead, barely missing him. In the process, Cole falls next to the small black croc, and it snaps at his head, barely missing him.

Cole gets up and runs. He is headed down the slope, in a different direction to the one Kila took.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE -- NIGHT

As Cole runs he ejects the magazine in his rifle, flips it round and tries to reinsert it (to access a further ten shots). A branch, however, knocks the weapon and magazine from his grasp.

Cole turns round and finds the rifle, he is scrambling for the magazine but can't find it.

FX: Crashing trees. The PUKPUK is coming.

Cole looks up. He drops the rifle and runs for his life.

Cole hurtles forward, unable to see in the dark, desperate to make his escape. The PUKPUK is gaining.

Cole suddenly steps into thin air.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE TO RIVER -- NIGHT

Cole falls a hundred feet.

EXT. RIVER -- NIGHT

Cole hits the water hard, penetrating deep. He recovers and hauls himself toward the surface.

He comes up gasping. He looks up.

COLE

Oh, shit!

EXT. RIVER -- NIGHT

FX: With the moon as a backdrop, 20 tons of angry lizard is falling silently toward him.

With a huge splash the PUKPUK hits beside him.

The impact propels the PUKPUK well across the river.

EXT. RIVER -- NIGHT

With a huge shock wave smashing into the bank in the background, Cole comes up gasping, and clutching his head from the pain of the impact to his ears. He looks round and locates the PUKPUK.

The PUKPUK whips round, looking for him. It sees him and surges forward at tremendous speed.

Cole's eyes widen and he puts his head down and swims for his life.

The PUKPUK is gaining rapidly.

Cole looks round. He sees he cannot escape. He pulls out his knife.

Kila in the zodiac suddenly cuts in front of him, pivoting in a tight circle. Cole sees his opportunity and reaches up, grabbing one of the rope loops coiled round the nearest float.

Kila opens the throttle.

EXT. RIVER. CHASE SEQUENCE -- NIGHT

Cole's body is flung alongside and he uses all his strength to hold on, the rush of water and erratic, bouncing hull almost dislodging him.

He slowly hauls himself up, half onto the float.

Kila looks back.

FX: He is being closely pursued by the PUKPUK.

Cole looks back and his eyes widen.

The PUKPUK snaps, just missing the outboard.

KILA

Get in!

With a doubled effort Cole climbs aboard. He hits the middle seat and looks back.

The PUKPUK surges, the underside of its snout hitting the top of the outboard. Cole and much of the supplies are thrown into the air.

Cole crashes painfully into the front of the boat.

The outboard sputters, threatening to die. KILA struggles to regain control.

Cole realizes he is beside the box of dynamite. A stick is protruding from the broken lid. He grabs it and activates the fuse.

Cole looks for the PUKPUK but cannot see it. The dynamite fuse is burning rapidly in his hand.

The PUKPUK surfaces suddenly, slamming against the side of the outboard.

This causes the zodiac to skid off at an extreme, almost perpendicular angle.

Cole has fumbled the dynamite. He looks for it desperately and sees it in the well of the boat. He dives for it.

Kila looks ahead.

The riverbank is looming.

Cole has the dynamite.

Kila throws the throttle hard over, barely avoiding impact with the bank.

Cole is thrown to one side, dropping the dynamite once more. He dives for it desperately.

They are running parallel with the PUKPUK. It sees them and narrows the gap separating them.

Cole grabs the dynamite. The fuse is almost out.

Without time to aim, Cole throws the stick toward the PUKPUK.

The dynamite explodes mid-way between them.

The PUKPUK roars and sinks back.

EXT. RIVER -- NIGHT

Cole and Kila look back in shock.

The PUKPUK submerges and is lost to the night.

SFX: A frustrated, distant roar.

COLE

Jesus.

The zodiac races on to freedom.

EXT. NATIVE HUT -- DAWN

The same native hut Horst visited. There are numerous NATIVE TRIBESMEN guarding the entrance to the hut. They await the arrival of their LEADER. He arrives, striding toward the hut, and enters.

INT. NATIVE HUT -- DAWN

There is the sound of buzzing flies. The Leader looks around. Every member of the Family seen earlier has their throat cut. The Leader's eyes grow fierce.

EXT. NATIVE HUT -- DAWN

The Leader comes from the hut. A NATIVE is shouting and gesticulating at the bushes where Horst entered the jungle. He holds up the broken twig that Horst deliberately left as a clue.

With a sweep of his axe the Leader signals for the Tribesmen to follow.

EXT. RIDGE -- EARLY MORNING

Up on the ridge can be heard the sound of whistling. Horst is on high ground, watching for the approaching Tribesmen. Suddenly he stops whistling.

Below, the Tribesmen follow his tracks down into the valley.

HORST

Ah, there's the little piggies.

EXT. HIDE -- EARLY MORNING

Casey, head still in Jake's lap, yawns and wakes. She looks at her watch. Jake leans down and kisses her.

JAKE

Morning, doctor.

CASEY

Oh, why didn't you wake me?

JAKE

Not much point in us both missing sleep. I can nap later.

CASEY

Anything?

JAKE

Saw three falling stars.

CASEY

Make a wish?

He kisses her.

JAKE

No, made three. All for the same thing.

She grins with love.

He hands her a cup.

JAKE

But now I wish I had a cup of coffee.

Casey laughs, kisses him, and gets up.

CASEY

Well no matter what you wished, I think today will be our lucky day.

As she is about to exit, Horst's rifle butt knocks her out. Jake springs to his feet. Horst wields the rifle butt direct to CAMERA.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. HIDE -- DAY

FADE IN to the ceiling of the hide, a mat of foliage.

Outside in the camp the screams of men can be heard.

Jake comes fully to. He has a head wound. He blinks several times, becoming aware of the sounds. He gets up and staggers outside.

EXT. CAMPSITE. RIVER -- DAY

Horst's Bearers fight a pitched battle with the Tribesmen, and are losing, with horrendous wounds being inflicted by machetes and axes.

Jake stumbles into sunlight. The last Bearer falls. Jake is alarmed to see two Tribesmen running at him with axes raised.

An explosion knocks them off their feet. It also knocks Jake down. He looks up, dazed, and sees Cole walking past him, casually hurling further sticks of dynamite.

The Tribesmen beat a hasty retreat.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Horst climbs the riverbank, an unconscious Casey over his shoulder. The airboat is tied to the bank below. Horst turns at the sound of the explosion.

HORST (surprised)
Bloody blackfellas got dynamite.

He laughs, shaking his head, and goes on.

BACK TO.

EXT. CAMP. RIVER -- DAY

Kila gives Jake a drink of water.

COLE
Where's Horst?

Jake only shake his head.

EXT. CAVE -- DAY

Horst enters and dumps Casey. She is now conscious. She tries to crawl away in fear, but there is no where to go.

HORST
So, I'm a racist pig, am I? No, I'm not.
I'll rape black or white.

He laughs.

HORST

You like reptiles?

He is undoing his pants.

HORST

I got the biggest python right here just
for you and no one else.

He exposes himself.

HORST

Want to pat the nice snake, missy?

He licks the air rapidly and laughs.

HORST

Huh?...Huh?

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Cole speeds along the river in Casey's zodiac. He has spotted the airboat and cuts the motor. He drifts in alongside and jumps out. He takes out his knife, the only weapon he has left, and moves forward in stealth.

EXT. CAVE -- DAY

Casey has her shirt torn but now has a dead branch in her hand which she is raising in an attempt to fight Horst off.

HORST

What are you going to do with that? Termite
me to death? You know I bet that bark is
worse than its bite.

She swings and he guards. The branch shatters but a shower of powdery rotten wood goes into Horst's eyes. Although blinded, Horst laughs as he wipes his eyes.

HORST

Well I was right about that, but...

He opens his eyes only to find Casey has a rock in her hand which she promptly slams into the side of his head. Horst staggers and Casey runs past him.

As she hurries to the mouth of the cave she runs straight into Cole's chest. She is astonished he is there, but grateful. Cole pushes her behind him.

Horst frowns, not able to make out the silhouette of the man in front of him. He shields his eyes from the glare.

COLE

Thought you'd start a little war, Horst?

HORST

Tom Cole. Well, well. All these coons kill 'emselves anyway, Tommy.

COLE

And you grab the girl while the rest get slaughtered. Then when you get back you blame it all on a tribal war. Still thinking with your dick, Horst.

HORST

(shrugging)

Just how I have fun. I'll share that pussy with you, man. What you say?

Cole pushes Casey away from him. He takes out his knife.

HORST

Oh, there's no need for that. I'm a man of peace.

Cole signals him to come on. Horst takes out his knife. The two men face off.

EXT. CAVE -- DAY

Cole and Horst engage in a fierce knife fight. Eventually Cole disarms Horst, but Horst gets past him. As he rushes past Casey she trips him. Horst hurtles over a small cliff but grabs a vine. Cole sees Horst can climb down to the river via the vine. He grabs a parallel vine and the two men trade blows all the way to the bottom, where they reach the riverbank.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

Horst fights Cole off and hurries along the riverbank. Cole sees that he is going for the airboat. He takes another route.

Horst reaches the airboat and clambers for his rifle, which is down out of sight. As he comes up with it Cole leaps onto the airboat. His impact knocks the rifle into the water but Horst manages to divert his momentum so that Cole also falls

into the river. Now with no weapons Horst decides to flee. He starts the motor and heads upriver. Cole grabs the side the boat.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Cole attempts to climb aboard the speeding airboat. Horst stomps at his hands. The boat hits a submerged tree and Horst is thrown off his feet. Cole takes the opportunity to climb aboard. They fight, the boat out of control and at high speed. Finally Cole and Horst are fighting right in front of the unguarded propeller. As this is happening they are heading straight for a cliff-face and, apparently, the upriver end of the watercourse. Horst tries to force Cole's head back into the whirling blades. When it seems he will succeed, Cole knees him in the groin, propelling him over his head. Horst is decapitated. The motor stalls.

The airboat slows quickly and drifts in for only a small collision with the rockface. Cole breathes a sigh of relief and falls back.

EXT. CAMP, RIVER -- DAY

Cole and Casey come slowly along the river in the airboat. Jake and Kila approach the riverbank.

JAKE (calling)

Thank God. What happened to Horst?

COLE

He headed off.

Cole cuts the motor and they drift in beside his zodiac with the dynamite in it.

Jake frowns, seeing something move in the water under the airboat, wondering what it is.

There is a huge dark shadow, starting to move rapidly.

There is a massive surge of water which lifts the airboat completely, then tips it, capsizing it.

The PUKPUK surges up the bank. It seizes Jake and backs quickly back into the river.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Cole and Casey are in the water next to the wrecked airboat.

CASEY

Jake! Jake!

Casey searches visually. Kila is in the water, helping them out.

The massive tail of the PUKPUK breaks the surface of the water momentarily, heading upriver.

CASEY

Jake!

She races for the zodiac, pushes it off and gets in. Cole grabs a rope on the zodiac, stopping her.

COLE

Where are you're going?!

CASEY

Let go, he could still be alive!

COLE

You've got to be kidding.

CASEY

He may be taking him to his lair. Let go, please, I have to know where the lair is. Please!

Cole reluctantly agrees. He signals to Kila to get in, and they head out in pursuit.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

The zodiac speeds along. Ahead of them, below the water, can be seen the huge dark shadow of the PUKPUK. It seems to be on a collision course with the cliff Cole ran into earlier, and which is the apparent end of the waterway.

Just as it seems the PUKPUK must collide with the cliff it disappears into it.

Kila throttles back, then cuts the motor.

The three are frowning, wondering what they just saw. Cole picks up a leaf that has fallen into the bottom of the boat. He drops it on the water. It flows away from the cliff wall.

COLE

It's an underground stream.

CASEY

I've got scuba gear back at the camp.

Cole frowns at her.

EXT. CAMP, RIVER -- DAY

Cole, Casey and Kila load the zodiac with the scuba equipment. There is enough for two people, plus spotlights. There is the sound of thunder and it begins to rain. Casey shakes her head, sick with worry.

EXT. UNDERGROUND STREAM -- DAY

It is raining heavily. Cole and Kila help Casey, already in scuba gear, into the water.

COLE

Good luck.

Casey nods, then dives. Cole shakes his head and looks at Kila. Kila shakes his head also, and they watch the water.

EXT. UNDERWATER -- DAY

Casey swims down to the mouth of the cave. It is large, black and foreboding. She activates her lamp, and enters the cave.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Casey swims through the blackness, her eyes wide and scared through her mask.

BACK TO.

EXT. UNDERGROUND STREAM -- DAY

Cole and Kila wait in the rain.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Casey enters a massive chamber full of dramatic, white rock formations. It is a prehistoric scene.

BACK TO.

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

COLE

We're sitting ducks here.

Kila nods, feeling just as exposed. They get the same idea simultaneously and paddle with their hands either side of the boat, moving it toward the cliff-face.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Casey is in a narrower section. She swims for a while then looks up. She stops.

There appears to be an airpocket above, with objects floating in it.

She begins to ascend.

As she rises there are the bloated bodies of pigs and dogs floating on the surface. Her flashlight beam sweeps past a set of human legs but she realizes what she has seen and comes quickly back to them. There is a cloud of blood around the legs. She hurriedly surfaces.

INT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Casey surfaces. Jake is clinging to the cave wall, barely alive.

CASEY

Jake. Jake, it's me.

She begins coughing.

CASEY

The air's bad. Here, breathe this.

She pushes her mouthpiece into his mouth and he breathes. She shines the flashlight around and sees there is a small rock shelf nearby.

CASEY

C'mon, you can rest up there, and we'll stop the bleeding. Okay?

Jake, barely conscious, nods.

Casey leaves the mouthpiece with him and submerges.

INTERCUT:

INT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Underwater, Casey awkwardly uses her flippers to push Jake along the wall to the ledge. They arrive near the ledge and she surfaces, gasping for air. She tries to push him up but he is too heavy.

CASEY

Can you help?....Hang on.

She reaches underwater and takes off her flippers, throwing them up onto the shelf. She starts to push him.

Underwater, her wetsuited feet skid across the rockface, unable to get a foothold.

FX: As her legs struggle, a giant, tooth-studded snout rises right beside them. Casey surfaces.

CASEY

Wait, I have to go under and find a foothold.

She takes the mouthpiece back, pulls her mask down and submerges. Underwater she shines the flashlight onto the rock shelf, looking for a foothold. As she looks she is unaware the giant snout is right beside her. Casey notices something from the corner of her eye and shines the light onto it.

She is looking straight at a huge array of fangs.

Casey flashes the light onto the eye.

The huge predatory catseye, with it's protective third eyelid, scopes down.

Casey screams and turns away.

The PUKPUK attacks. It grabs her tank and shakes her with tremendous force. Her buoyancy vest and tank are torn from her back. The PUKPUK continues to thrash. Casey, now free, hurries for the surface.

The flashlight is buoyant and has already surfaced, supplying the chamber with light. On the surface, now without anything to weigh her down, Casey shoots past Jake and pulls herself out of the water. She quickly heaves Jake up onto the shelf.

She has him up just in time as the PUKPUK surfaces and comes for them. Casey pulls Jake back into a crevice and the huge gnashing jaws snap inches from them. The PUKPUK seems to give up and sinks back, submerging. Casey's head goes back in relief, but this is premature.

The PUKPUK surfaces slowly, turns its head and tries to take them out with more finesse. For a moment it hooks some of the cloth of Jake's trouser leg, but Casey pulls the leg back and kicks the giant jaw.

The PUKPUK roars at them in frustration. Finally, it sinks back down. Casey is in a state of shock, hugging Jake.

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

Cole and Kila wait in the rain, now getting some shelter under the rock face.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Casey's torn buoyancy vest drifts out into the large chamber with the current.

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

Cole and Kila wait in the rain. The rain comes to a halt. Cole checks the sky. He looks down at the water once more. He spots the red vest underwater as it emerges from the cave mouth.

COLE

What's that?

Kila looks.

Cole slips overboard and dives down.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Cole dives down some twenty feet and grabs the vest. He begins to head up to the surface and as he passes the mouth of the cave, the PUKPUK emerges. Both have not seen each other.

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

Kila's eyes grow wide as he looks over the side of the boat.

The massive dark form of the shadow passes under him.

Cole surfaces and Kila slaps his hand over his mouth. Cole is trying to breathe after his exertion, desperate for air. Kila points emphatically with his head. Cole looks.

The PUKPUK has surfaced forty yards on, swimming downstream.

Cole nods, and much to his relief Kila takes his hand off his mouth. They wait, watching the PUKPUK.

BACK TO.

INT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Casey is frantically trying to reach the flashlight in the water without having to get into the water. Finally she succeeds in grabbing it.

She shines the flashlight onto Jake's wounds. They are horrific, huge puncture holes leaking blood.

CASEY

Oh, God...I'll, I'll put on the wetsuit,
stop the bleeding.

Jake stops her from undressing him by placing a hand on hers.

JAKE

You...came for me...

He nods, trying to thank her. She watches his face, he is beginning to lose consciousness, and she realizes he is about to die.

CASEY

No....no.

Jake succumbs. Casey breaks down crying, hugging him.

INTERCUT:

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

Cole is suited up (not in a wetsuit but wearing the flippers, mask, and tank). He is sitting on the side of the zodiac.

KILA

Have you breathed this way before, big man?

Cole shakes his head.

KILA

I don't think I would like to go down there
if I have not breathed that way before.

Cole rolls his eyes to himself, not appreciating the lack of encouragement. He turns to Kila and they shake hands solemnly. Cole slips over the side and is gone. Kila looks downriver.

The PUKPUK is not visible.

Kila looks back at the still water.

Cole suddenly bursts up, grabbing him.

He yanks the mouthpiece out, gasping.

COLE

Can you turn the air on there, please.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Cole comes to the mouth of the cave and peers in. He turns on his flashlight and enters.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Casey is watching her flashlight. The illumination in the bulb is fading fast.

CASEY

Oh no, please, no, no, oh God, no.

She is slapping it frantically. CUT TO BLACK.

Casey begins crying with fear.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Cole has reached the huge chamber.

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

Kila looks downstream uneasily. He checks the box of dynamite. He checks the river again, then looks down at the cave below.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Cole is entering the passageway where Casey found Jake. He shines the light ahead and pauses.

INTERCUT:

Casey is crying in the pitch blackness. A little bit of reflected light flicks across her face and she stops crying, looking down at the water in earnest.

Small shafts of light can be seen coming along the tunnel below.

Cole is advancing forward.

Casey watches with growing hope as the light grows brighter. Suddenly she sees the actual flashlight Cole is holding. She begins to slap the water with her hand.

Cole finds her aqualung on the bottom of the cave.

Casey puts her head into the water and yells underwater.

Cole hears her. He points the flashlight up and can make out Casey's face.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Cole surfaces beside Casey. She hugs him desperately.

CASEY

Oh, oh, oh, thank you for coming. Thank you for coming. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

She is inadvertently choking Cole. He gropes for something to hang onto. His hand grasps Jake's foot. He looks and realizes that she was right to follow Jake. He also sees that Jake is dead. He hugs Casey once more.

COLE

Oh, you poor, brave little thing. You poor, brave little thing.

BACK TO.

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

Kila watches the water. He glances up, checking downriver, then does a double-take, his face tight with fear.

The PUKPUK is coming toward him, stalking him.

Kila begins pulling the cord on the outboard. He pulls it again and again but it won't start.

The PUKPUK is getting closer, swimming faster.

Kila finally realizes what he has forgotten.

His finger flicks the kill switch over to the 'start' position.

He pulls the cord once more and the motor kicks up. The PUKPUK is about to bite, but at the last second Kila shoots away, straightens, and sprints by, narrowly avoiding the huge, snapping jaws.

He rounds the PUKPUK and it gives chase.

BACK TO.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Casey is in the water with Cole, her mask and flippers on. They nod to each other and submerge.

BACK TO.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Kila has the outboard flat out, the PUKPUK chasing him. Kila streaks past Casey's zodiac, still on the side of the river where Cole left it.

Back in the boat, Kila pulls the box of dynamite back with his legs and kicks the top of. He pulls out a stick and activates the fuse.

BACK TO.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE

Casey and Cole swim, sharing air, entering the great chamber.

BACK TO.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

In the camp with all the bodies of the slaughtered Bearers in the foreground.

The zodiac streaks by.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Casey and Cole swim, approaching the entrance.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Kila throws a stick of dynamite back toward the PUKPUK. The dynamite explodes.

EXT. UNDERWATER CAVE -- DAY

Cole and Casey hear the distant explosion through the water.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

The PUKPUK roars in pain, snaps its jaws, and accelerates toward Kila.

Kila activates another stick of dynamite.

EXT. UNDERWATER STREAM -- DAY

Cole and Casey surface. They look around.

SFX: a distant explosion.

COLE

Looks like our friend came back...Let's get to shore.

They swim toward the bank (campsite side).

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Kila hurls a stick of dynamite. It explodes. The explosions seem to do nothing but irritate the PUKPUK further. It comes on like a freight train.

EXT. RIVER JUNCTION -- DAY

The PUKPUK is closer behind Kila. As they enter the junction Kila finds it to his advantage to swerve upstream, the tributary noted previously as having rapids. The PUKPUK turns wider and follows him.

EXT. RAPIDS RIVER -- DAY

Kila hangs on for dear life as the zodiac bucks furiously, fighting its way up the rapids.

The PUKPUK attempts the rapids, but it soon gives up and sinks back.

Kila, unaware his pursuer has given up, and with little choice now, continues on. Calamity follows as the zodiac encounters a large wave and is thrown backwards, capsizing.

The zodiac is taken back down the rapids.

EXT. RIVER JUNCTION -- DAY

The zodiac comes tumbling back down the rapids. The minute it is down into the junction the PUKPUK surfaces and mauls it viciously.

EXT. RAPIDS RIVER -- DAY

Kila pulls himself out of the water. He is battered and bruised, but okay.

EXT. CAMP -- DAY

Cole searches the bodies, trying to find a weapon. Casey has found her camera.

COLE

No one else had a rifle but Horst?

CASEY

No.

COLE

Damn...C'mon, time we headed home.

CASEY

How?

COLE

The zodiac on the other side of the river.

They head toward the river.

EXT. RAPIDS RIVER -- DAY

Kila picks his way down over rocks. He stops as he sees something.

A single stick of dynamite is wedged between rocks.

He crosses to it, picks it up, and puts it in his belt.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- DAY

Cole and Casey cross down to the water opposite the other zodiac. Cole carries a face mask.

CASEY

Why the face mask?

COLE

I knocked Horst's gun into the river. If that thing's chasing Kila downstream, we'll have to pass it at some stage.

They climb down into the water. Casey hesitates.

CASEY

Oh, God.

COLE

Not too thrilled about it myself. C'mon.

Casey nods and enters the water. They strike out for the other side, Casey holding her camera high so it can't get wet.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

They reach Casey's zodiac. Cole helps her in. He spits in the mask and puts it on.

COLE

See if you can get the engine started.

Casey nods and gets to it. Cole takes a breath and submerges.

INTERCUT:

EXT. UNDERWATER -- DAY

Visibility is poor. Cole searches by feeling along the bottom.

Casey pulls on the motor cord. She cannot get it started. She looks closely at the motor.

There is a 'choke' toggle. Her hand pulls it out.

She pulls the cord again. The motor roars into life, racing loudly in neutral.

CUT TO.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

ECU: The PUKPUK'S eye narrows angrily.

SFX: and annoyed growl.

The PUKPUK surges forward.

BACK TO.

Casey releases the choke.

Cole surfaces, concerned at the racket she is making.

CASEY

Sorry. It's okay now.

Cole goes back underwater.

INTERCUT:

EXT. UNDERWATER -- DAY

Cole still searches without luck.

With the engine idling, Casey checks her camera and readies the flash mechanism. The flash can be heard charging.

Cole finds the rifle. He picks it up and examines it, shaking silt from the barrel underwater.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Just then, something catches Casey's eye. She looks up slowly. The PUKPUK is only twenty yards off, stalking her. She freezes in terror. It moves in on her.

Suddenly Cole surfaces.

COLE

Got it!

CASEY (screaming)

Shoot it!! Shoot it!! Shoot it!!

The PUKPUK lunges. Cole turns and fires. The automatic bullets rip into the PUKPUK, tearing off hunks of flesh. It roars with rage. Cole empties the magazine. It comes on again. He throws the rifle at it, raises his knife.

The PUKPUK lunges forward, grabbing Cole in its jaws. The momentum of the attack throws them both up onto the zodiac, tilting it violently.

Casey falls back into the boat as it is tipped. As she falls, the flash in her camera goes off. Cole is being bitten in half, yet his free hand continues stabbing at the enormous head.

Cole's head lolls back. He is screaming in pain. He is literally beside Casey. She grabs his hand, screaming, trying to stop him from being swallowed. But it is no use. The PUKPUK tosses back its head and Cole is gone. The PUKPUK slides back off the zodiac and into the water.

Casey realizes the motor is still running.

Casey dives for the outboard and opens the throttle. She shoots forward ramming the PUKPUK'S head as it surfaces. It is a glancing blow and the PUKPUK snaps, stopping the boat. It has grabbed the spinning propeller. The whirling blade is shattering the huge teeth and cutting its mouth. The PUKPUK lets it go and there is a glimpse of the damaged propeller blades.

The zodiac pulls away.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

The zodiac heads downriver, having a good lead. With a roar the PUKPUK follows.

Casey looks behind her and sees the PUKPUK coming.

The chase proceeds down various parts of the river, and the PUKPUK is gaining.

EXT. RIVER JUNCTION -- DAY

Kila MAKES his way over the rocks. He hears the sound of the outboard and stops.

Casey suddenly appears round a bend in the river.

Kila waves to her. Casey sees him. She calls ahead, motioning.

CASEY

Jump!! Jump!!

Kila does not understand, but then sees the PUKPUK round the bend behind her.

As Casey draws near she swerves the boat toward him. He jumps, and hits hard, but makes it.

Casey turns the boat downstream into the wider river.

EXT. WIDER RIVER -- DAY

The outcome of the race is becoming obvious as the PUKPUK is steadily gaining on them. Casey screams at the outboard.

CASEY

Come on!! Come on!!

Kila looks at Casey. She is looking back with concern at the PUKPUK.

Kila looks at the PUKPUK. It is gaining.

Kila's eyes go down to his belt and the stick of dynamite there. He knows what he has to do.

(Good opportunity to insert footage from "RAMU", of the boy, Kila, finding his father's body)

Kila takes a moment to compose himself, takes a big breath, then slides over the side.

Casey turns and realizes Kila has gone. She looks back, astonished.

INTERCUT:

EXT. WIDE RIVER -- DAY

Kila treads water. He raises the stick of dynamite and activates the fuse. It begins burning. He watches the approaching PUKPUK and prepares for his imminent death.

Casey sees the fuse burning, and incredulous, realizes what Kila is going to do.

CASEY

No, Kila!! No!! No!!!

She turns the boat back for him.

INTERCUT:

EXT. WIDE RIVER -- DAY

The PUKPUK and Casey are closing on Kila at approximately the same speed, the PUKPUK closer.

INTERCUT faster and faster as the race reaches its climax. Over the last seconds Casey shakes her head, crying, knowing she can't save him, and turns the boat away.

The PUKPUK opens its mouth, about to engulf Kila.

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

FX: Follow Kila down through the PUKPUK'S jaws and into its stomach.

BACK TO.

There is a hiatus.

The PUKPUK explodes.

FX: A ton of flesh containing the shoulder portion and one front leg skids across the water, narrowly missing Casey.

There is a huge crimson ring in the water where the PUKPUK used to be. Crimson water falls like rain all around.

Casey's shocked face is splattered with watery blood.

INT. MUSEUM BOARDROOM -- DAY

CASEY

And so I returned alone, the only survivor.

The BOARD is staring, shocked.

THILBY

And we're supposed to believe that?

Casey looks at him, detesting him. She crosses slowly to the door and opens it.

CASEY

Come in, please.

The BOARD looks in expectation at the doorway, wondering who will appear. Finally, Vance Thurgold III, assisted by Charlie (the computer nerd), enters.

CASEY (to Thilby)

I think you recognize, Vance Thurgold the third. You did go up and talk to his neighbors, and Mr. Thurgold did have an emphysema attack which necessitated paramedics. But you changed one small detail. Mr. Thurgold didn't die.

Thurgold hands her a large envelope. She tips it up on the table. A passport and a certificate fall out.

Birth certificate for Vance Thurgold, born Oxford, England. Passport, dated June, 1949.

Thilby realizes the jig is up, and lowers his head in shame.

CASEY

Thank you, Mr. Thurgold.

He nods and Charlie escorts him to the door. She looks at the Board, and Kember in particular.

CASEY

Oh. And one more thing.

She takes a large photograph from an envelope and, watching Kember, hands it to the nearest Board Member to pass along. The Board Member looks at the photograph and is shocked. He

passes it on. Each Member in turn looks at the photograph and is equally shocked. Finally, Kembler receives it. He takes his eyes from Casey, and looks.

KEMBLER (quietly)

My God.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, FLORIDA EVERGLADES -- DAY

Casey drives her sports car (the car seen earlier with Richard). Hers is the only car on the deserted road.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, FLORIDA EVERGLADES -- DAY

Casey draws the car to a halt in the middle of the road.

She reaches down thoughtfully and lifts up an envelope from the passenger's seat. She opens a letter and reads.

KEMBLER (VO)

Dear Dr. Solstein, I am sorry, Casey, that I must write you this letter. The board has voted unanimously not to reinstate you. It is considered that you acted unprofessionally throughout this affair, and that your reinstatement would do more damage to the prestige of this museum than it would do good. If it is any consolation, I wish to inform you that Wayne Thilby has also been dismissed from staff. As for your story regarding the fantastic events in New Guinea, we can only express amazement, and if it is true, shock. We do not regard, however, there can be any way to truly substantiate your claims. If a dominant female of the species *Crocadilae Negros* does transfer into a male when the niche becomes vacant, then I imagine it would also take fifty years or more to grow to the prodigious size you claim. In anycase, a fascinating story. Please find enclosed your photograph, and I personally wish you the best of luck in the future. Steven Kembler, Chair, Boston Museum.

Casey lowers the letter and raises the envelope once more. She reaches inside and slowly withdraws the photograph.

The photo is of Tom Cole, in the jaws of the monster, taken when her flash accidentally went off.

Casey pushes the photograph back into the envelope, and drops it back on the seat. She looks up.

There is a triangular road sign with an illustration of a crocodile on it, under which is written, 'GIVE WAY'.

Casey looks down at the road. She honks her horn.

CASEY

Come on. You're not going to hold me up all my life.

Sprawled across the road in front of her is a large bull alligator.

SFX: It growls resentfully.

FADE OUT.