

LAKESIDE

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - SUNSET - 1989

SUPER: 1989 Somewhere in the Northwest

A station wagon climbs a twisting mountain road. An eighties rock song pounds faintly as tires claw gravel.

INT. STATION WAGON - TRAVELING

The rock song plays loud on the dashboard cassette player. DARLEEN, 18, sits curled up against the front passenger door, head leaning on the glass. She stares dreamily through the window at a sunset-tinged forest. Giggles and guffaws from a teenage girl and boy spill over from the back seat.

IAN, 18, Darleen's boyfriend, drives a little too cocky for the curves he negotiates. He turns to Darleen.

IAN

Hey.

Darleen doesn't respond. The sunset has all her attention.

IAN

I said hey. You with me?

Ian reaches out to tickle Darleen's ribs. She shrinks away. The girl in the back seat sings along with the song, in a bad way. Annoyed at this, Darleen cranks up the volume even more and settles back into her nest.

MOE, 18, leans over the seat, shirtless and stoned silly. CAROLYN, 18, pops up, just as stoned, leaning amorously against him. Moe shoves a fat joint between Ian's lips.

Ian sucks it up, holds. Noisily exhales even more cannabis into the hazy air.

Ian snatches the joint from Moe. Offers it to Darleen.

IAN

You want? You could use it.

Darleen sinks lower, trying to melt into the upholstery.

Ian holds out the joint, insistent. Darleen refuses with a headshake. Ian returns it to Moe, who drops out of sight.

IAN

Be that way. You know? Darleen -- this was supposed be a party. A big frigging celebration. My mom's letting us stay at the lake house because YOU turned up your nose to PROM, because YOU don't DO proms --

DARLEEN

Leave me alone.

MOE (O.S.)

(taunting)

Darleen got her period! Perfect timing, Darleen!

(Moe and Carolyn giggle)

IAN

Fuck off, Moe!

Darleen, gazing, ignoring the nonsense...

SUBLIM

INT. LAKEHOUSE - NIGHT

IAN AND DARLEEN COWER IN TERROR AS SOMETHING MONSTROUS OUTSIDE SMASHES AGAINST THE FURNITURE-BARRICADED WINDOWS!

END SUBLIM

Darleen frowns, puzzled. She returns to her reverie.

EXT. LAKEHOUSE - DUSK

The station wagon pulls up to the lakehouse. The sun has already set behind verdant hills. Fading light lingers on an idyllic lake. A wooden dock juts out from shore, with a motorboat tied up to it.

A small pine-covered island in the middle of the lake broods over a dark expanse of water.

Everyone climbs out, stiff and weary from the long drive.

Moe and Carolyn reach into the back of the wagon for their duffel bags. Six-packs of Coors take up as much room as the food coolers. As they pull the duffel bags out...

IAN

That all can wait. Everybody
come to the lake.

THE DOCK

The teenagers sit on the dock, legs dangling. Ian gazes at the peaceful lake.

IAN

Hasn't changed a bit.

Darleen turns to Ian. She's loosened up. Moe slaps a mosquito off of his neck.

MOE

Neither has the skeeter population
apparently. Can we go inside?

IAN

You're a pisser, Moe. I've been
coming here every summer up until
my dad died. If you want to ruin
my moment go ahead, but spare his
memory. Would ya do that?

Moe grows silent. Darleen stares at Ian concerned.

CAROLYN

(shoves Moe)

Say you're sorry, you putz!

MOE

Okay sorry. I'm sorry, Ian.
(slaps another skeeter)
Now?

Ian pulls out a house key. Tosses it to Moe. Moe and Carolyn head for the station wagon.

Ian turns to Darleen. She's enraptured by the sleeping lake.

She looks beautiful in the fading light, like a nature spirit. He grasps her jacketed shoulder and massages it, then nuzzles her neck with his nose. She's indifferent.

IAN
Feeling better?

DARLEEN
I don't know where I am, Ian.

Ian stops nuzzling.

IAN
What do you mean? You're at my lake.
Can't you just loosen up and enjoy
your life?

DARLEEN
I might, when you start telling
me about yours.

He thinks on that.

IAN
You know? You're absolutely right.
Maybe it's the right time.

DARLEEN
(brightens)
Really? Really really?

IAN
Really.

She hugs him.

Ian leads Darleen up to the front door. He steps inside, but Darleen hesitates. She turns back. Glances uneasily at the lake.

Peaceful, as dusk falls upon it...

Darleen steps inside. She closes the door behind her.

Lake water laps the dock, bathed by a peaceful moon...

We quickly glide across the water to the island...

...close in on the tree-studded bank...

The sound of a heartbeat...louder...louder...

...a solitary tree trunk bathed in moonlight...

*...with a gaping hole in the bark...blood bursts from it,
streaming down in pulses like a punctured artery...*

...the lakehouse, across the water. Its windows glow...

...the heartbeat grows louder still...

A *GREAT SPLASH*. The heartbeat cuts off.

Dark waves surge against the island's bank.

INT. LAKEHOUSE - LATER

The foursome sit on living room couches, chowing down hero sandwiches and guzzling from soda bottles. A cozy fire crackles in the fireplace. A single table lamp fills the living room with soft yellow light.

Darleen finishes her last bite. She walks over to the fireplace. Reaches for a framed family photo on the mantle and studies it.

INSERT - PHOTO

Twelve year old smiling Ian, his five year old pouting sister, their pretty mother -- and Dad. Happy parents in their mid-thirties.

LIVING ROOM

Darleen returns to Ian. Puts the photo on the coffee table.

DARLEEN

So how did it happen, Ian?

Ian's face goes grim. Nothing comes out of him.

MOE

Maybe Ian's not ready.

DARLEEN

Ian'll never be ready. Nobody's ever ready for this kind of stuff.

CAROLYN

I thought this was going to be fun trip, Darleen.

DARLEEN

There's plenty of time for fun, Carolyn. And from the sound of it, you two got quite a jump on us on the way up. Besides, this was Ian's idea.

Moe smacks his soda bottle onto the coffee table.

MOE

Here it comes. We shoulda waited for Halloween.

IAN

Too cold up here by Halloween. Darleen's right. I promised I'd tell my story. Best get it off my chest before some monster comes creeping out of the woods.

Moe suddenly raises clawed hands and growls. Carolyn jumps.

CAROLYN

Dammit Moe! You scared me!

Moe smirks. Carolyn stabs him with a dirty look. He stares back at her...

MOE

Come here.

Carolyn snuggles against Moe. All eyes turn to Ian.

Ian sighs. At first, nothing...

He lifts his soda bottle high.

IAN

To Pinecliff! We actually made it!

Moe and Carolyn grab their bottles. Raise them too.

MOE

Yay! Pinecliff! Done with you!
May the earth swallow you up!

CAROLYN

(giggles)
Ditto that!

MOE AND CAROLYN

Woo woo woo! Shoo shoo shoo!
Go-o-o-o-o *Redtails!*
(they laugh hysterically)

DARLEEN

STOP!

Darleen has everyone's attention.

DARLEEN

You guys...just--

CAROLYN

Chill out, girlfriend! What's your
problem? If Ian doesn't want to
do this--

DARLEEN

Then let fucking Ian decide!

Ian leans in close to Darleen.

IAN

What's eating you? You wanna go home?

DARLEEN

No.

IAN

So why can't you let things--

DARLEEN

Something's not right.

IAN

What? What's not right?

DARLEEN

Something is not right, Ian!

This startles everyone.

DARLEEN

On the way here. I saw something.
In my head. It went by too fast.
I can't remember. I can't remember
but it was bad.

Silence, heavy as lead, for a long beat.

IAN

Time to get serious, guys.

Ian puzzles Darleen, because he's heading for the kitchen.

A fridge door opens and closes. He returns triumphantly with a six-pack of Coors in each hand. Moe and Carolyn cheer. Darleen, not so much.

IAN

Pride of the Rockies!

MOE

Now you're talkin'!

Ian snaps cans off and passes them around. He opens Darleen's for her. She takes it half-heartedly. Darleen slumps against Ian, resigned. She sips while everyone else chugs and celebrates. We visit the crackling logs...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

The fireplace logs, burning low.

Empty cans of Coors litter the coffee table. Moe and Carolyn are busy exchanging saliva. Darleen's fallen asleep on Ian's chest. Ian stares at the fire.

He turns toward the coffee table. Reaches for his family photo, picks it up and gazes at it pensively...

THUD!

The entire house shudders like a desk-sized boulder just smashed against it!

Everyone bolts upright. Looks around with alarm. Ian rushes to the window.

DARLEEN

What? What is it?

IAN

Fuck if I know! Anybody see headlights?

DARLEEN

That was no car, people!

MOE

A meteor! Maybe it was a meteor!

IAN

We'd all be fucking crushed, Moe!
No way!

CAROLYN

Maybe somebody should look outside?

Ian heads for the front door. Darleen blocks him.

DARLEEN

No! Don't do it, Ian!

CAROLYN

If it's a meteor it could've
started the house on fire!

Ian shakes his head, annoyed by Carolyn.

But nobody makes a move...

The wall phone rings. They look at each other dumbfounded.

The phone rings five more times. Finally Ian rushes over to it and picks up.

IAN

Hello?

BILL (O.S.)

Ian, That you? I saw lights in your windows! I still live across the lake, little guy!

IAN

Hi Bill. I'm not so little any more.

BILL (O.S.)

Yeah right! Six years fly fast!
How's your mother?

IAN

She's good. Bill--listen. Something just happened here and we were about to check it out--

BILL (O.S.)

DON'T GO OUTSIDE!

INT. BILL'S JEEP - TRAVELING

BILL, 70s, tough, grizzled survivalist, tools his Jeep along a dark lakeshore road. Think Morgan Freeman if he was crazy enough to do this movie. He holds a flip phone against his right ear. A shotgun rests between the seats. CLEMENTINE, Bill's hunting dog, rides next to him.

BILL

Now stay put, all of you! You hear me, Ian? I know you didn't listen much growin' up, but now is definitely the time to start!

IAN (O.S.)

I hear you. You want to tell me what the hell is going on?

LIVING ROOM - ON IAN

BILL (O.S.)

It's come awake again.

IAN
What's come awake?
(static)
Bill? You there?

Ian stares at the receiver. Clicks the cradle a few times.

IAN (CONT'D)
(turns to the rest)
The phone's dead.

BILL

frowns at his phone. Pissed, he tosses it onto the dash.

OUT THE JEEP'S WINDSHIELD - TRAVELING

The Jeep pulls up behind the teenagers' station wagon. Bill shuts the engine and lights, grabs his rifle, climbs out. He opens Clementine's door. She jumps out and immediately heads for the water.

BILL
Heel!

Clementine obediently falls in behind Bill as he quickly trudges up to the house.

BILL
Not now, girl. Too dangerous.

LIVING ROOM

Bill locks the front door behind him. He turns to Ian.

BILL
You grew up fine. Now check the
back door.

Ian complies. Bill eyes the beer cans still in their loops.

BILL
Spare any?

Darleen pulls off a Coors and tosses it to Bill. He snaps the tab, takes a serious swallow. Clementine sniffs around.

BILL
Thanks. Sit, Clementine!

She obeys. Ian returns. Bill eyes him.

BILL
You tell them?

Ian starts to shake his head no.

BILL
And you brought them here? Now?
This year?

IAN
We graduated, Bill.

BILL
Well ain't that fine and dandy!
Get a full education between your
ears so our sleepy friend can
squeeze your brains out of them
like toothpaste?

Carolyn moans like a little child.

MOE
Can you stop that kinda talk?

DARLEEN
What do you mean 'this year'?

That freezes the room.

BILL
You all need to sit down.

*A DEEP, PROLONGED GROAN, LIKE THE BEDROCK UNDER THE LAKE
CRYING OUT IN PRIMORDIAL ANGUISH -- SHUDDERS EVERY JOINT OF
THE HOUSE.* Windows rattle in their frames. Clementine howls
as everyone casts dread-filled glances...

LIVING ROOM - LATER

The fireplace blazes again. The teenagers sit on the
couches. Bill is propped on a stool between them and the
flames, his shotgun close. Clementine dozes at his feet.

He pops open another can of Coors, swigs and begins.

BILL

I was good friends with your dad,
Ian. He and your mother started
coming up to the lake since before
you and your sister were born.
I've lived here over twenty years.
I got to know the land. The forest.
The weather...and the lake.

Bill swigs more beer. Wipes his mouth.

BILL (CONT'D)

Ah yes, the lake. This lake of legend
no history book describes. I learned
about it from the local Indians after
I lost my first dog. Esmerelda was
her name. A lovely coon hound...

DARLEEN

What happened to her?

BILL

I found her crushed to death by the
lakeshore. No rational explanation.
No boulders. No *nothing*.

IAN

That's how I found my dad!

Ian's friends turn to him concerned. He's in teary-eyed shock.

BILL

There's clearings in the hills.
Big stones the Indians placed
in groups of six. I should have
asked. There's been unexplained
deaths here for centuries that
never made the papers--

Bill slowly stands. Something outside a window distracts him.

BILL (CONT'D)

Six years. Every six years
something comes alive out on
this lake.

Bill holds up three fingers for all to see.

BILL (CONT'D)

And it kills in threes. Elk.
Bears. People...

Bill lunges for his shotgun. Fires off a deafening round through one of the windows facing the lake. The teenagers duck and cower.

Beyond the shattered window, a huge dark shadowy shape hovers, as if watching. Clementine barks at it ferociously.

A BONE DEEP, HORRENDOUS ROAR. SOMETHING MASSIVE CRUNCHES HARD AGAINST THE HOUSE, OVER AND OVER.

Everyone stands and stares in fear at the onslaught. Carolyn hugs Moe. Darleen grips Ian's arm.

Silence.

Bill gestures insistently at the furniture.

BILL

Get those couches up against the windows! All the furniture too!
Move your asses!

The teenagers lug the two couches and a love seat over to the windows, barricading them.

Darleen and Carolyn pick up the heavy coffee table. Tilt the cans and bottles off. They carry it over to the windows and add it to the rest.

Ian and Moe quickly drag a china cabinet, dishes clattering and shattering, over to the last unprotected window.

They stand catching their breaths looking over their work.

MOE

I have to pee.

CAROLYN

I'm going with you!

Moe clasps Carolyn's shoulders. Looks into her face.

MOE

It's just a quick pee. I'll be
back in no time. Promise.

Moe heads for the bathroom. Carolyn stares miserably at him.

BATHROOM

Moe switches on the light, shuts the door. Quickly lifts the
toilet seat. Unzips. Starts to pee with a great sigh of
relief. Finishes up. Flushes...

LIVING ROOM

Bill checks his watch. Crouches to stroke Clementine.

MOE'S HIDEOUS UNENDING SCREAM FROM THE BATHROOM!

Everyone goes wide-eyed.

OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM

The horrible screaming goes on and on behind the bathroom
door. Violent thuds and crashes. Shattering porcelain.

Everyone rushes to the closed bathroom door just as the
screaming abruptly cuts off.

CAROLYN

Moe! Tell me you're all right!
Moe!

None of the teenagers have the guts to go in. They all look
at Bill. He gestures for Clementine to stay.

Bill has to shove hard on the door. Something's leaning
against it from the other side. He pushes through.

An agonizing wait. Carolyn hangs off of Darleen moaning...

They look down at the floor.

Blood mixed with pee water--and a matted mass of pine
needles--gushes over the threshold.

CAROLYN (O.S.)

No no no NO!

Bill comes out grim-faced, his hunting boots splashing in Moe's blood. He shuts the door firmly behind him.

BILL
I'm sorry, kids.

Carolyn drops to her knees. Sobs out her guts.

Suddenly she stands. Rushes toward the bathroom.

CAROLYN
I wanna see him!

Bill grabs Carolyn. He holds her close, her back against him as she struggles. Ian and Darleen stand helpless, pale with shock.

BILL
You can't. You can't. You can't.

CAROLYN
(tearfully)
Why? Why? Why can't I see him?

Bill turns Carolyn around, not letting go of her.

BILL
Whatever this was--*whatever this was*--tried to pull him outside.

CAROLYN
Through the window? So what?
Did Moe get cut?

BILL
It wasn't through the window.

She breaks free of him.

CAROLYN
What? What do you mean? What's left?
Through the toilet? Through the
fucking drainpipe?

BILL
Come away from here.

Bill walks Carolyn back toward the living room, an arm around her shoulder. Ian and Darleen follow.

She collapses. Bill lifts her up in his arms.

LIVING ROOM

Darleen sits against a living room wall with Carolyn's head in her lap, comforting her. Carolyn stares at nothing. Bill and Ian drag the massive dining room table over the girls to shelter them.

BILL

Under the table, Ian.
Anybody else need to shit or piss,
I'll bring you a kitchen pot.
You all good?

Ian and Darleen nod. Carolyn is out of it. Darleen tosses a glance down at Carolyn's pants. Soaked in the crotch. Bill sees that.

BILL

Well then--it's all right.
It's all right. I've done that
plenty of times myself...

Ian joins the girls under the tabletop. Bill plants himself in front of them holding his shotgun. Clementine settles in faithfully next to him.

THE GROUND SHUDDERS AGAIN, SHAKING THE HOUSE.

The dining room chandelier quivers violently. Bulbs burst. The teenagers cower. Suddenly Carolyn comes alive.

CAROLYN

Are we gonna just let this thing
kill the rest of us?

MASSIVE ANGRY THUDS PUMMEL THE HOUSE, OVER AND OVER.

Bill cocks the shotgun. Reveals the big handgun stashed in his pants under his hunting vest.

Ceiling plaster smashes onto the table. Bill flinches. The teenagers start to crawl out.

BILL

I told you kids to stay put!

IAN

We're not kids, Bill! You spend any more time coddling us, none of us is gonna make it out of here!

BILL

You've got your father's chutzpah.

IAN

If my dad had so much chutzpah, how come this thing was able to kill him?

BILL

Because he knew there was something evil on that damn island. Your dad was going to blow it up!

IAN

That trip he took, right before he died! He came back with a full trunk and wouldn't let me help him unload it...

BILL

That would be ten cases of dynamite. He never got the chance to use it!

IAN

Why not?

BILL

When animals sense danger, they often strike first!

MORE DEAFENING THUDS CRACK WALLS. Carolyn clasps her ears.

CAROLYN

I can't stand it anymore!

Carolyn grabs Bill's handgun. Leaps up with it and stomps over to the living room windows. Takes on a firing stance. Empties the entire clip methodically at every window. Big bullets blast right through the furniture.

ANOTHER DEEP SHUDDER. Carolyn falters. Fights for footing. She throws the heavy gun at the windows with an angry cry.

CAROLYN
Eat--shit--and--die!

Everything goes quiet...and the electricity goes out. The lakehouse plunges into darkness. Carolyn yelps.

Carolyn stares panting at the barricaded windows. A little moonlight oozes through them--it's nearly dark inside now. She glances timidly back at the others. Slowly turns with dread...toward...

...A TERRIBLE FORCE STRAINING AGAINST THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE THAT PARALYZES HER WITH FEAR!

WOOD SNAPS...GLASS IMPLODES...

The explosion of wall and glass and splintering furniture bursting into the room catches Carolyn by surprise. She screams a gut-wrenching scream...

A HUGE SHADOWY HULK SNATCHES CAROLYN UP AND DRAGS HER KICKING AND SCREAMING OUT INTO THE NIGHT!

Bill doesn't hesitate. He heads for the front door hefting his shotgun. Clementine faithfully follows. Darleen lunges to hold the dog back.

BILL
Lock the door. And don't come out,
whatever you do!

Bill rushes out into the night.

BILL AT HIS JEEP

Bill opens the back hatch of the Jeep, revealing the ten cases of dynamite.

AT THE DOCK

Bill loads another case of dynamite into the motorboat. Eight already there. He turns to go get another...

Ian and Darleen approach carrying a case apiece.

BILL

I told you two to stay inside!

IAN

You need our help.

BILL

Then come back with the detonator.
Snappy now!

ON THE ISLAND

All of them hastily plant dynamite in the center of the island and wire it together. Bill drags the main line back to the boat. Ian and Darleen follow...

Hordes of pine tree roots burst out of the ground, seeking them out!

A thick root grapples Ian. He struggles to break free. Darleen yanks him loose. Another root surprises her, dragging her back to...

...the menacing tree trunk with the gaping hole in its bark. Blood pulsates out of it...

...the root lifts her up to the bloody maw...

SHOTGUN BLAST! The shattered root drops Darleen to the ground. Ian pulls Darleen clear. Bill aids them, shotgun in hand. They all flee for the boat.

They step quickly into the boat, piled with excess wire. Bill tosses the shotgun aside. Yanks the pullcord but the motor won't start. He tries again and again as Ian and Darleen watch in horror.

Darleen turns toward the island...*and sees something that absolutely terrifies her!*

DARLEEN

Jump!

BILL

We can't!

DARLEEN

Jump! In the water! *Push the
fucking boat!*

The guys get it. All three of them plunge in at once, Ian and Darleen on one side of the hull, Bill on the other. They start treading water, guiding the boat away from the island. Wire starts to play out into the water as they gain distance.

A MENACING PRIMORDIAL ROAR SHAKES THE MOUNTAIN! Bill stops treading and turns toward the sound with dread.

DARLEEN (O.S.)

Keep moving!

A swelling wake of water surges under the boat, lifting it high. They tread faster.

They guide the boat ashore. Ian and Darleen clamber out onto land. Bill grabs the detonator, already hooked up. Scrambles to cover the teenagers with his body...reaches for the detonator...puts his face close to Ian's...

BILL

This is for your daddy.

...and presses it. A loud click...then dead silence.

DARLEEN

What happened?

BILL

The phone. The lights.
It killed everything electric!

Bill turns toward the water. His eyes go wide. Ian can't see what Bill sees. Darleen buries her face into Ian's chest.

IAN

Tell us!

Bill's face goes grim.

BILL

It's not something on the island.
It IS the island!

THE HORRID SOUND OF SOMETHING HUGE LIFTING OUT OF THE WATER FORCES ALL OF THEM TO STAND UP AND CONFRONT IT WITH PETRIFYING FEAR...

Bill knows what's coming. He surrenders to it.

BILL

Will you both...take care of
Clementine...

Suddenly Bill is snatched away. A great whooshing splash cuts his wail short.

Ian and Darleen look out over the dark, seething water. A large wave surges toward them. It breaks on the shore. There is no sign of Bill in it...

Darleen buries her head in Ian's chest. Racking sobs well out of her. Ian comforts her.

Clementine bolts to the water's edge. Ian goes to grab her but she slips from his grasp, sniffing Bill's scent. She looks toward the water and moans. Teary-eyed Ian and Darleen drop to their knees to comfort Clementine...

THE DOCK - DAWN - SLOW MOTION EPILOGUE

Ian and Darleen stand on the dock. He hugs her close to him. They are bathed in an eerie dawn light shrouded with mist. A supernatural wind gently tugs at their matted hair and their dripping wet clothes. She stares toward us with a haunted look, straight out over the water.

In the distance behind them, the lakehouse. The lights flicker back on inside. We slowly swing around, revealing the beached boat...the lapping water...and the foreboding island...

A heartbeat...louder...louder...closer...closer...the island seems to stare back at us...the sound of something huge...

Breathing...

PLUNGE TO BLACK.

FADE OUT.