

REMAINS

Screenplay by

Parker Francis Degree and Robbie Young

Based on the short story

"The Food Button"

By Mr. Michael Squid

1st draft

11.10.21

OVER BLACK

Torrential downpour. 100 mph winds. Distant yelling manages to break through the overwhelming noise of what must be a massive HURRICANE. LIGHTNING CRACKS and THUNDER BOOMS as we-

FADE IN:

INT. A WOOD CABIN - AFTERNOON

SHEETS OF RAIN WHIP at the glass of a CABIN WINDOW.

MILLIE (18) is in a rain-soaked camp counselor's uniform. She looks shell-shocked and distracted as she watches lighting streak across the sky outside.

Behind her, about FIFTY or so CAMPERS (8-13 years old) are huddled around the cabin, taking shelter. OTHER COUNSELORS are making an effort to shuffle more campers into the Cabin.

All the while, Millie watches out the window as the shit-show outside continues. Then something catches Millie's attention:

OUTSIDE

On a nearby shoreline, a series of SMALL FISHING BOATS are arriving. FISHERMEN start running to help Campers get on the boats.

BACK INSIDE

Millie sees this. Then- BAM! The Cabin door swings open and a Counselor steps inside:

COUNSELOR

Okay everybody! We're gonna start loading the boats! Please remain calm! Campers, please come with me!

Campers begin shuffling out the Cabin door. Millie appears to snap out of her little trance and starts helping out the other counselors.

An ACHNE-SCARRED CAMPER speaks to his friend as they leave:

ACHNE-SCARRED CAMPER

Fuck this island, man. This place sucks.

On Millie as she grabs a survival-kit backpack off the back wall of the Cabin. She walks out with the scared Campers.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP GROUNDS - NEAR THE SHORELINE - MOMENTS LATER

THE LEAD COUNSELOR (26) is helping Campers onto the boats. She's stressed for obvious reasons.

Almost all of the Campers are now on the boats when the Lead Counselor spots Millie. She point-snaps at her:

LEAD COUNSELOR  
Millie! Millie! Come here!

Millie turns and runs to Tara.

MILLIE  
Yes?

LEAD COUNSELOR  
Go check the far end of the island-  
Make sure we have everybody, okay?

Millie nods and takes off.

EXT. CAMP GROUNDS - MIDDLE OF THE FOREST - A BIT LATER

Millie is running along a trail while rain pelts her. She nears a Two Camper Cabins on the far end of the woods. She runs up to the closest one and opens the front door, but there's nobody inside. The Campers must already be on the boats. Millie moves on...

... But as she's about to hurry to the other Cabin, a DISTANT BOAT HORN BELLOWS... The boats are about to leave...

Millie stops, weighs her options. She shoots a look to the far Cabin... it looks empty like the first one.

Hesitant at first, she then takes off towards the shoreline, leaving the second cabin unchecked...

... And as Millie leaves our view, we hang on the Cabin for a second longer as the storm rages around it...

EXT. CAMP GROUNDS - NEAR THE SHORELINE - MOMENTS LATER

Everybody is on the boats. The Lead Counselor looks out on the now vacant and desolated Camp Grounds.

Campers are curled up on the deck of the boat. Some are crying.

The Lead Counselor watches, waiting for something... Then she spots it:

MILLIE comes racing out of the woods, making a beeline for the last boat docked ashore. The Lead Counselor smiles, relieved. Millie hops aboard and the boat begins it's launch.

And soon enough, the Camp Grounds begin to shrink away in the distance...

I/E. FISHING BOAT (TRAVELLING) - MOMENTS LATER

The Island where the entire Camp Grounds calls home has become a speck in the distance.

Millie sits on the back deck, lifejacket on, staring out into the open water around her.

She wears that same distant, slightly distraught expression. A face of nervousness and regret... *something feels wrong...*

We stay on Millie's face.

MATCH CUT TO:

That same face, two years later. We are:

I/E. ANOTHER FISHING BOAT (TRAVELLING) - DAY

Millie is sitting in a near identical spot. She's older though, worn and world-weary. Bags under her eyes show a lack of sleep.

Around her, a perfect autumn day and blue waters. That horrible storm has long-since passed.

As Millie sits, a Deckhand named BEN comes and sits down next to her, tired from his work.

BEN

So... You used to work there? On the island?

Millie isn't in the mood to talk. But she relents.

MILLIE

Part time. Just through the summer.

BEN

Was it fun?

(beat)

I mean, *before* the storm?

MILLIE

... Yeah. I had fun. I like working with kids- It's why I'm studying education. I want to teach Kindergarten. Hopefully...

Ben is impressed.

BEN

Well ain't that something.  
(then the thought hits him)  
But what you doing all the way out here? Camp's been abandoned since the storm...

A nerve is hit with Millie. Ben notices.

BEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I can imagine the whole thing was quite traumatic, we don't have to speak about it. I mean, it was traumatic for me too- I actually used to go there when I was young and I would...

He's losing her. He takes the hint.

BEN (CONT'D)

You know what, I'll leave you to your business. I don't want to be nosy.

Ben walks away.

Millie looks up and watches as that once familiar island draws closer into view...

She let's out a nervous breath.

EXT. THE ABANDONED CAMP GROUNDS - DAY

STILL SHOTS of the now overgrown Camp Grounds. Trees and shrubbery have overtaken the surrounding area. Remnants of the storm linger: shattered windows, missing roof tiles, and an unrooted tree that has come to rest on top of a Cabin.

All is quiet. Only the gentle sound of wind and nature can be heard. It seems peaceful, if not a little eerie.

Near the Shore...

Millie's FISHING BOAT comes to a stop on the sands.

Millie, hiking backpack slung over her shoulder, hops off the boat and lands on the shore. She takes a moment to observe her surroundings...

From the boat, Ben comes over and throws Millie a FLARE. She somehow manages to catch it.

BEN

If anything goes wrong, light that baby and we'll make our way over, okay?

Millie nods and begins walking towards the Camp Grounds while Ben and the Boat start motoring away.

CUT TO:

INT. DESTROYED CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Looking out a shattered window: We see Millie trekking across the grounds. She seems to just be there on a nature walk.

MONTAGE - MILLIE EXPLORING THE ISLAND

- Millie finds abandoned lifejackets on the beach.
- Near the Beach, Millie comes across a few Canoes and small paddle boats crashed onto shore.
- A BIRD sitting in a tree watches Millie walk into a Cabin.
- In the Cabin, Millie looks at old framed pictures sitting on a shelf. Each one shows happier times of campers.
- Outside, a DEER wanders the woods.
- Deeper in the woods, Millie crossed a series of fallen trees. She's huffing and puffing.

END MONTAGE

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A DIRT TRAIL IN THE WOODS - A BIT LATER

Millie, tired, comes to rest on a dilapidated wood bench. She takes a few deep breaths - She's not used to the exercise, that's for sure.

*SNAP!*

A twig breaks nearby. Millie looks up and... It's that DEER, about twenty feet away, staring at her. *Weird*. Millie waves at the Deer. And, for no particular reasons, Millie says...

MILLIE  
 (to the Deer)  
 A lot has changed, right?

The deer doesn't answer. Obviously.

Millie smiles.

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
 It's strange coming back. I mean, I knew it *would* be, but not like this. Nothing like this.  
 (beat)  
 I thought coming back here would stop that nagging feeling I've been carrying with me. But I'm here... I've taken a look around... And it's still there all these years later.  
 (beat)  
 I've forgotten something... I know that- That's what I've been feeling... But... I don't know what exactly I've forgotten... No clue.  
 (sighs, sotto to the Deer)  
 You got any ideas?

Nothing from the Deer. It breaks eye contact and scampers off into the woods. Millie, alone now, laughs quietly to herself.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS ON THE FAR END OF THE ISLAND - SUNSET

The sun slowly descends on the horizon, beams of orange sunlight shine through the trees...

FOOTSTEPS can heard. Crunching leaves. Coming closer, it's...

Millie, on her way back to the main Camp grounds. But it's pretty clear that's she's been turned around...

She moves past some trees and finds herself...

EXT. CAMP GROUNDS - MIDDLE OF THE FOREST - CONTINUOUS

... At the same two cabins. Of course, they too are destroyed along with the rest of the Camp. Millie moves closer, terrified... This is what she feared... She looks to the unchecked Cabin. It's quiet and empty-looking. Just how she left it... but this time is different... this time she actually moves towards it... Step by step... *Closer...* Until-

INT. THE SECOND CABIN - CONTINUOUS

-She opens the front door and steps inside.

It's empty. All the camper's beds are in their place, just like they way they were years ago.

From a first glance, it's just like all the other destroyed Cabins. Yet, to Millie, this place feels more than a little ominous. Strangely nostalgic, like a long-forgotten memory.

Millie moves deeper inside, visibly relieved not find something sinister waiting for her. She sits down on a bed.

She puts her face in her hands...

MILLIE

(muffled thru her hands)

Oh my god- I'm crazy. I'm actually crazy. There is *literally nothing* here. What is wrong with me?  
Jesus...

Millie sits in silence for a long moment, contemplating her sanity...

Then, faintly, in the distance...

We begin to hear something...

A RISING SOUND... A BEEPING... Like a RADAR?

It's coming from nearby outside the Cabin.

Millie looks up- She hears it now. Confusion billows up.

EXT. WOODS ON THE FAR END OF THE ISLAND - MOMENTS LATER

Millie moves through the woods, getting closer to the source of the noise... She breaks through a patch of thick shrubbery and spots it- a SMALL BRICK BUILDING, nestled deep in the woods. A Radar antenna protrudes out the roof. A nearby sign reads: "CAMP RADIO STATION". Millie walks to the building...



INT. RADIO STATION - MOMENTS LATER

... The door of the Radio Station slowly CREAKS OPEN... And Millie walks inside, hesitant.

The Radar noise is coming from a CENTRAL CONSOLE on the backend of the station. A RED LIGHT BLINKS on it.

Millie crosses to the console and looks over it...

MILLIE

... How is this still working?

... Then a YOUNG BOY'S VOICE answers Millie-

YOUNG BOY (O.S.)

(raspy, barely audible)

... Did you hear the button?

MILLIE WHIPS AROUND TO SEE THE SOURCE OF THE VOICE-

In the corner of the room, sitting in the dark, is a YOUNG BOY (maybe 8, looks older). He's hunched over and skinny as hell. Has he been there the whole time??

Millie stares in horror as the Young Boy slowly crawls into the light... And no surprise here, he looks god awful.

YOUNG BOY (CONT'D)

Are you here for the Food Button?

A beat.

MILLIE

The... The what?

(beat)

Who are you?

The Young Boy stares at her for an unnerving moment.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

(trying to sooth)

Have you been here long?

He nods slowly. Closer, we can see that he's wearing the shredded remnants of a CAMPER SHIRT... Millie notices it.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

(it dawns on her)

Oh god... You were a camper, weren't you? Did you go here?

The Young Boy crawls closer, moving like a feral animal...

YOUNG BOY  
... I think I did...

Millie's caring nature comes in. She kneels down to get on eye level with him.

MILLIE  
You were forgotten here... I'm so sorry... Where are your parents?

The Young Boy just shakes his head- No idea.

For a moment, a tear comes down Millie's face. She becomes emotional as she finally knows what she forgot all those years ago...

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
... I... I am so so sorry... I didn't... I had no idea you were...  
(wipes away a tear)  
What's, uh... What's your name?

A beat.

YOUNG BOY  
... Ethan.

MILLIE  
(it finally hits her)  
How did... How did you make it?  
Where do you go to eat?

Ethan gives a weird little smile. Too much teeth.

ETHAN  
I don't have to worry. I just use the Food Button...

MILLIE  
... The Food Button?

Ethan nods.

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
And where is that, Ethan?

He points over Millie's shoulder. The red light blinks. Millie walks over to the console again and looks over all the buttons. She turns to Ethan.

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
Which one?

Ethan points to a button which is placed right underneath a RADIO MICROPHONE. Millie looks at him, confused. She presses it and we hear static. Curious, she moves closer to the mic.

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
 (into mic)  
 ... Hello?

Silence. Then, a CRACKLE. And a VOICE:

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)  
 (quiet, thru static)  
 ... U.S. Coastguard? Copy? Over?

As Millie stares in shock, Ethan rises to his feet behind her. He's taller than you'd expect.

ETHAN  
 I press the button. Food comes every time.

Millie turns...

ETHAN (CONT'D)  
 But it's never come this fast before...

MILLIE  
 ... What?

SUDDENLY ETHAN ATTACKS! He pounces on Millie like a wild chimpanzee, tarring and scratching at her face. Millie FIGHTS BACK, but somehow manages to get pushed to the ground.

PUNCHING BACK, Millie hits Ethan off her. He falls back and scurries away for a moment. Millie gets up and makes a DASH for the door. She makes it through-

OUTSIDE THE RADIO STATION

-But she's GRABBED BY THE LEGS by Ethan, sending her crashing into the dirt.

And then he's back on her, slashing at her with his overgrown nails.

Panicking, Millie tries to wrestle with Ethan, but he's surprisingly strong. She reaches for something to hit him with... Her hands grasps a strange rock half buried in the dirt... She rips at it until it comes loose... And she uses it to BASH ETHAN IN THE HEAD WITH. Ethan, knocked out, crumples to the floor.

Millie catches her breath, a wild look in her eyes... Then, looking at her makeshift weapon, she discovers that it's not just a rock...

IT'S A HUMAN SKULL!

She drops it and SCREAMS, getting to her feet.

She looks around her... most the ground around her is filled with weird, slightly misshapen white rocks... But they're not rocks...

Millie gets a closer look... She pulls out a long and narrow rock burred in the dirt... And it turns out to be a HUMAN LEG BONE!

She's not surrounded by rocks...

Millie is standing in a mass grave.

CUT TO:

A FLARE IS STRUCK AND IGNITES! RED FIRE AND SMOKE.

EXT. CAMP GROUNDS - NEAR THE SHORELINE - NIGHT (A BIT LATER)

THE BURNING FLARE is lying on the ground.

Millie sits on a rock, shell shocked. She has the passed out Ethan laying next her, tied up with some rope.

A FISHNG BOAT is coming her way.

But we PUSH IN CLOSE on Millie's face. On her terrified expression.

Then as the Fishing Boat's HORN BLARES in the distance...

BLACKOUT.

Over black, all we hear is a gentle wind blowing...

THE END.