

THE MORGUE MUSEUM PRESENTS :  
THE SHARK MAN

by

Chris Bodily

FADE IN:

INT. MORGUE MUSEUM - NIGHT

Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" plays in the background.

A silhouette appears on a white wall, in front of a superimposed outline, a la Alfred Hitchcock Presents.

The silhouette belongs to M.T. GRAVES, pale skin, Romanian accent, dressed in a Hugh Hefner-style robe. He carries an empty pipe to accentuate his upper-class appearance.

GRAVES

Good evening. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm M.T. Graves. Ah-ah. This is The Morgue Museum, and I bid you welcome.

Mr. Graves walks down a corridor of paintings until he stops at one. A Rembrandt-style painting of a half-man, half-shark creature.

The title "The Shark Man" is engraved under the portrait.

Mr. Graves grins with glee as he eyes the artwork.

GRAVES

This is one of a kind, this one. A wonderful story behind it.

INT. JURY ROOM - DAY

Twelve JURORS sit at a table. One of them, KLUGMAN, reads the ballots.

KLUGMAN

Guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty...

He pauses when he reaches the next one.

KLUGMAN

Not guilty?! Fuck, we'll be here all day!

The jurors argue indistinctly.

KLUGMAN

Shut up!

The arguing quiets down, stops.

KLUGMAN

Let's review who we're dealing with here.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

LONNIE QUINT, a Jack Lemmon type in his forties, relaxes in the water.

SHARK'S P.O.V. - LONNIE'S LEGS

A shark draws near.

BACK TO SCENE

Lonnie lies back and soaks his hair and arms in the water. He sighs in contentment.

SHARK'S P.O.V. - LONNIE'S LEGS

The shark gets closer.

Closer.

Closer.

BACK TO SCENE

Lonnie is in the same position as before. CHOMP! CRUNCH! Lonnie screams in pain and horror.

The OTHER SWIMMERS scream and sprint out of the water. They yell "Shark!"

Lonnie swims with all his might, a prominent bite ripped across his left arm, leaving a trail of blood in his wake.

A WOMAN helps him. CHOMP! This time, his leg.

LONNIE

Ow!

Lonnie makes it out of the water. Only a minor leg bite, at least compared to his arm.

WOMAN

Are you alright, sir?

LONNIE

I don't know. I...

Lonnie trembles uncontrollably.

WOMAN

Sir?

Lonnie continues.

WOMAN

Sir. Help!

The other beachgoers panic.

The FEMALE LIFEGUARD races toward the scene.

Lonnie's wounds begin to heal themselves.

WOMAN

What the hell?

Lonnie starts to transform into something.

LIFEGUARD

What... the...?

The lifeguard takes five steps back.

Lonnie grows a fin and a long, shark-like snout.

And now, the teeth. Lonnie growls.

He is now a full-fledged SHARK MAN.

INT. JURY ROOM - DAY

Klugman concludes his review of Lonnie Quint.

KLUGMAN

He bit, ate, or outright killed  
fifteen people. He's guilty as sin.

Another juror, BALSAM, interrupts.

BALSAM

How so? Mister Kloogman--

KLUGMAN

Klugman.

BALSAM

Mister Klugman, can you seriously  
blame a man for what nature has  
inflicted upon him?

KLUGMAN

He didn't choose to become a shark  
man, but he did choose to kill.

BALSAM

But did Lonnie choose to kill or  
did the shark choose for him?

KLUGMAN

What the hell does that even mean?

Juror COBB interrupts the two gentlemen.

COBB

Balsam has a point, Klugman.

KLUGMAN

Let's not forget, Mister Cobb, that  
Mister Quint was already a serial  
killer. He killed sixteen people  
last year alone.

COBB

But he was acquitted. Wouldn't that be double jeopardy?

KLUGMAN

Don't ask me. I didn't write these stupid laws! I just obey them.

BALSAM

Yeah! Looks like it!

COBB

Look, Mister Klugman, as long as Mister Quint stays away from salt water, he's a law-abiding citizen.

KLUGMAN

Sixteen people!

Juror MARSHALL chimes in.

MARSHALL

Nixon got away with far worse.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The Shark Man eats the lifeguard, starting with the stomach. She screams in horror.

INT. JURY ROOM - DAY

Klugman fumes and points his finger at Marshall.

KLUGMAN

You're defending a coldblooded killer, Mister Marshall. You people make me sick.

BALSAM

It was an act of God.

KLUGMAN

Don't bring Jesus into this. Let's get this damn thing over with and go home.

COBB

Who the fuck put you on the jury?

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The POLICE arrest the Shark Man. He repeatedly bites at the air.

He's down on his knees and slowly transforms back into Lonnie Quint.

LONNIE

What happened?

INT. JURY ROOM - DAY

The jurors argue over each other.

Balsam raises his arms to silence the men.

BALSAM

Gentlemen!

Silence. One could hear a pin drop.

BALSAM

Mister Quint claims that he doesn't remember the events in question. Let's suppose he blacked out. Let's say he wasn't in control of his mind or his actions.

KLUGMAN

Let's say the Son of Sam was affected by the heat wave. Let's say Manson simply took his Beatlemania too far. How are you gonna prove diminished capacity?

COBB

A shark doesn't know what it's doing.

KLUGMAN

Actually, a shark's brain is roughly the size of a human's.

COBB

Even so, if a shark bites a human, it's because they mistake it for a seal.

KLUGMAN

But Mister Cobb, whether man or shark, knows that his victims aren't seals.

COBB

How would you know? Have you ever been a "wereshark" or whatever the hell?

KLUGMAN

That's not the point.

COBB

You seem to have an agenda against Mister Quint.

KLUGMAN

You would, too, if he killed your wife and daughter!

COBB

How do you know he wasn't framed  
for those prior murders?

KLUGMAN

Why would he be framed?

COBB

From observing Mister Quint, he  
doesn't seem to fit my description  
of a "coldblooded killer," as you  
like to call him.

KLUGMAN

Neither did Norman Bates.

COBB

That was a movie!

KLUGMAN

And a damn good one too. Now, are  
we gonna find this son of a bitch  
guilty and go home? A guy's gotta  
eat.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The Shark Man eats a MAN'S leg. Blood gushes from the limb.  
The man screams.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The police put Lonnie in the backseat of their car. The red  
and blue lights flash wildly.

INT. JURY ROOM - DAY

Balsam leaps from his chair, towering over Klugman.

Klugman takes a step back.

BALSAM

Due to your quite apparent bias  
against, and history with, the  
defendant, it's clear you need to  
be disqualified from the jury.

Klugman POUNDS on the desk.

KLUGMAN

Who died and made you judge?

Balsam does the same.

BALSAM

Mister Klugman, I order you to go  
home. I'll report you to the court.

KLUGMAN

Fuck the court. I just want to watch Lonnie Quint die. And I'll see to it that he does.

BALSAM

I thought you said you obey the laws?

KLUGMAN

Be a smartass on your own time.

BALSAM

You're hellbent on Mister Quint dying. What are you gonna do, kill him?

Klugman stands frozen, speechless.

BALSAM

I rest my case.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

No lifeguards.

There's a sign stating that the area is closed for the next 48 hours.

Klugman stands in the water, waving his arms slowly. He seems calm and happy for once.

SHARK'S P.O.V. - KLUGMAN

The shark slowly approaches his target.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Klugman croons to himself.

KLUGMAN

We were sailing along, on Moonlight Bay...

SHARK'S P.O.V. - KLUGMAN

The shark is mere feet away.

KLUGMAN

(singing)

You could hear the voices ringing, they seemed to say...

Closer.

KLUGMAN

You have stolen my heart, now don't go 'way...



EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Klugman is unaware of the shark.

KLUGMAN

And we sang--

CHOMP. CRUNCH.

KLUGMAN

Ow! What the--

Klugman splashes and jerks around violently.

KLUGMAN

Help! Help! Somebody! Please!

Klugman, out of breath, cries and moans as her jerks to the right, then the left.

He catches his breath before the onslaught continues.

CHOMP. SQUISH.

The shark pulls Klugman down into the water indefinitely.

INT. JURY ROOM - DAY

The eleven remaining jurors, plus a new one, GORMAND, deliberate the Lonnie Quint case.

GORMAND

It's clear to me that Mister Quint was under the influence of something and, therefore, cannot be held liable for his actions. That's like telling a blind man to see.

BALSAM

Exactly. It's just nature.

GORMAND

Well, gentlemen. I think we've reached a unanimous verdict.

BANGING on the door.

COBB

Who the hell's that?

KLUGMAN (O.S.)

Let me in!

GORMAND

You were dismissed. I'm in charge now.

KLUGMAN (O.S.)

Says who?

GORMAND

We're not supposed to be communicating with anyone during the trial.

KLUGMAN (O.S.)

Lionel "Lonnie" Quint is innocent.

GORMAND

We've already reached that verdict, Mister... Klugman, is it?

The jury fill out their ballots and turn them in.

GORMAND

Now that the ballots are in, I guess you're clear. But then again, I'm no judge.

Gormand lets Klugman in.

Klugman, holding a cup of water, has a horrified look on his face. He shakes slightly.

KLUGMAN

You've gotta help me! You've gotta--

Klugman trembles violently and uncontrollably.

The jurors react in horror.

Klugman gradually transforms.

Dorsal fin. Snout. Teeth. Klugman is now a Shark Man.

BALSAM

Mister Klugman?

KLUGMAN

Help me!

COBB

You're one of them, too?

Klugman inches toward Balsam's arm.

BALSAM

Don't you dare.

Instead of biting him, Klugman reaches into Balsam's pocket and pulls out a Swiss Army knife.

BALSAM

The hell are you doing with my knife?

Klugman SLITS his wrists. Blood gushes from them.

KLUGMAN

I don't deserve this fate, and  
neither does Lonnie Quint.

Klugman slowly returns to his original human form.

He clutches his heart, as if he's having a heart attack. He  
trembles violently.

GORMAND

Mister Klugman?

Klugman foams from the mouth and collapses on the table,  
dead. Gormand reads the verdicts.

GORMAND

Whatever is written on these  
ballots is final. Not guilty...

He reads the next one.

GORMAND

Not guilty, not guilty, not guilty,  
not guilty...

INT. MORGUE MUSEUM - NIGHT

The words "Not guilty" echo three times.

GRAVES

Not guilty, not guilty, not guilty,  
not guilty. That's the American  
criminal justice system for you. Ah  
ah.

Graves clears his throat.

GRAVES

And with that, I am afraid The  
Morge Museum is closing for the  
night. Shall we meet again soon?

FADE OUT.

THE END