

THE STARVING SEA

EXT. THE GULF OF MEXICO - DAY

Blissful solitude, as only the ocean can provide.
Endless water meets endless sky beneath a blazing sun.
And somewhere out here, a girl is sobbing.

KAREN

Late teens. Very pretty. A fresh black eye.
Her hair is askew. Tears streak her delicate cheeks.

KAREN
You can't do this. I did
everything you said.

WIDER

Karen is perched on the bow of a small boat.
She is nude. Her arms bound tight behind her back. Her legs
pulled up to her chest to conceal her nakedness.
A cinder block is chained to her ankle with a padlock. The
block rests dangerously near the hull.
Karen can hardly take her eyes off it.

DIRK (O.S.)
'Course you did, sugar.

WIDER STILL

DIRK grins at Karen. Dirk is typical beach trash, tan with
sandy, sun-bleached hair and chipped front teeth.

DIRK
They all do. One way or another.
Ain't that right, Charlie?

Dirk turns to CHARLIE, a bloated warthog of a man whose face
is all but buried beneath his unkempt whiskers.

He wears stained boxer shorts and a baseball cap turned the
wrong way round. And that's it. The complete ensemble.

Charlie casts a fishing line with lazy, practiced ease.

CHARLIE

Ayup.

Dirk shrugs, as if that were all that need be said.

DIRK

It ain't nothing personal.

Karen rips her gaze away from the cinder block to meet Dirk's eyes. One final chance to plead, with everything she's got.

KAREN

I'll never tell anyone. I swear!
You'll see! Just...please...
please don't push me in.

CHARLIE

This one bores me. No fight in her
at all. Didn't even scream, for
Christ's sake.

DIRK

Hear that? Ol' Charlie says you're
a boring fuck. Got no character.

KAREN

I can scream! Please! Let me
scream for you. I'll be amazing!

CHARLIE

See? No fight at all.

DIRK

(shrugs)
What's a man to do?

As Dirk places his hands on the brick, Karen closes her eyes and braces for the inevitable.

ZING! Charlie's got a bite, his rod bent near to snapping.

CHARLIE

Whoo! Fish on, brother!

Dirk turns to Charlie, annoyed.

DIRK

Really? Now, Charlie? I'm kind of
in the middle of something here.

CHARLIE

Fish don't care. Something big,
too. Might be a tarpon!

DIRK
 Tarpon, my ass.
 (to Karen)
 He always thinks it's a tarpon.

KAREN
 You guys are real assholes. You
 know that, right?

Another shrug from Dirk. His response to damn near anything.

Charlie continues to reel. Whatever he's got on his line hits the boat with a heavy thump.

The boat shudders at the impact. Karen cringes as the block creeps ever closer to the edge.

Dirk steps to the gunwale and peers over the side.

A pink, pulsating blob of goo, nearly the length of the boat, undulates in the water. It looks like a wet balloon.

CHARLIE
 What the fuck is that?

DIRK
 Sure as shit ain't a tarpon,
 Charlie. Some kind of jellyfish
 shit or something. I'd say cut the
 line and set her loose.

CHARLIE
 Like hell! That's a brand new jig!
 Cost me 17 dollars. Get the damn
 net and free up my line.

Dirk sighs, but grabs the net and dips it toward the water.

And like the damned fool that he is, he pokes the blob.

A pink pseudopod of protoplasm shoots up the handle of the net to cover Dirk's hand and wrist with terrifying speed.

Dirk screams. He tries to wipe it off, only to have his other hand consumed.

DIRK
 What the fuck, man? Get this off
 of me! GET IT OFF!!

The blob continues to feed itself onto the boat, onto Dirk, coating his chest and legs within seconds.

Dirk continues to scream until -- abrupt silence -- his head finally disappears beneath the ooze.

Now the blob collapses, fully-formed and filling the stern of the boat. It stretches and pulses as Dirk flails within.

Charlie scrambles toward the bow, nearly staggering into the brick chained to Karen.

She kicks him away at the last moment.

He turns to her with an angry glare.

CHARLIE
Watch it, girly!

KAREN
You watch it, jackass!

Charlie decides they've got bigger problems.

CHARLIE
What do you think that is?

KAREN
I don't...AHHH!

Karen shrieks as Dirk's head bursts out of the blob.

His face is now little more than a skull with strips of dangling flesh. One eye socket an empty crater, but his one good, pleading eye fixes on Charlie.

Dirk's mouth moves, but his only sounds are insane jibberings before he is sucked back into the heart of the blob.

KAREN
Oh, my God! It's going to fucking eat us?! What the fuck?!

Grim and determined, Charlie stoops and picks up the anchor, a Danforth type with sharp, pointed flukes.

CHARLIE
Like hell it is. Munch on this, you sorry sack of sea snot!

He swings the anchor back, then hurls it forward. It sails into the guts of the blob with a wet SCHLORP.

KAREN
Did you hurt it?

CHARLIE
Damned if I know.

The anchor shoots out of the blob with the force of a cannon.

Charlie gazes in astonishment at the anchor, the pointed flukes now embedded in his bloated, pasty abdomen.

He collapses to the deck with a groan. A large pool of blood quickly forms around him. The blob smells it.

Charlie can only watch in horror as the blob follows the trail of blood to his feet. And engulfs them.

CHARLIE
Ahhh...Christ, it burns!

He struggles and squirms as the blob devours him, bottom to top. He turns his head and reaches back to Karen.

CHARLIE
Help me, girl!

CHARLIE'S P.O.V.

Karen looks on, but her eyes are dead to him.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Don't just sit there!

The last thing Charlie sees are the grim traces of a smile curling Karen's lips -- as the ooze covers his eyes and the world goes pink.

BACK TO SCENE

Karen is now alone with the blob. Hands tied behind her back and her foot chained to a brick. It's her lucky day.

The blob just sits there for a moment. Blobbing. Digesting. Whatever the hell it's doing. Karen screams at the beast.

KAREN
Well...what are you waiting for,
you disgusting fuck?!

The blob starts making its squishy way forward.

Karen scrambles backward. With her free leg she kicks whatever she can find at the oozing menace.

A tackle box. A flip-flop. Sunglasses. An ice chest.

The ice chest topples over and icy water spills out.

And as the cool water reaches the blob, it recoils.

Karen notices.

KAREN

You don't like that?

She stands, tentative, moving forward with slow steps, dragging the cinder block behind her.

KAREN

Too cold for you, is it?

She kicks more water at the blob. It continues to pull back, away from this icy assault.

A bag of ice, from the cooler, rests near Karen's feet.

KAREN

Well, I've got a little something for you, then.

She soccer-kicks the ice full on -- with a grimace as her toes crunch into the heavy bag -- but her aim is true.

The ice sails straight into the guts of the monster.

The blob unleashes an unearthly WAIL -- like the highest notes from a tuba -- as it bubbles, spasms, and writhes.

The blob abandons ship. It clamors out of the boat and flops back into the warm waters of the Gulf with a splash.

Karen peers over the side and watches its bubbling retreat as it returns to the depths from which it came.

Then she relaxes. Exhausted. It's over.

With a BLURP, something bubbles to the surface. A small oval of orange, plastic foam. Something is written on it.

Karen squints to make out the words.

It says "Hooters" on it. It's the logo from that stupid wings and beer place.

Karen's eyes grow wide as realizes what she's looking at.

KAREN

No! No, no, no...

She turns to the console. The ignition. No keys.

She turns back to the water. The keys, of course, are dangling from that damned, floating Hooters keychain.

Karen straddles the gunwale and dangles her leg over the side. Stretches as far as she dares.

She nearly hooks the keys, but the splashes from her flexing toes only serve to drive it farther away.

And the tide does the rest, as the keychain floats hopelessly beyond her reach.

KAREN

No! Goddammit, NO!

She ROARS like a bear in frustration as she struggles against the ropes that bind her arms. But they are too tight.

She kicks at the chain on her ankle, with even less success.

She SHRIEKS at the sky in rage. A squawking gull swoops low in response. Its cries mock her.

It's no use. Any of it.

She collapses, sobbing, to the bloodstained deck.

EXT. THE GULF - SUNSET

As the sun sinks, the key ring bobs on the water right in front of us. We could almost reach out and grab it.

The boat is now quite a bit off in the distance.

But we can still hear Karen as she screams.

The anguished wails of the hopeless, as they echo across these utterly empty, open waters.

Ours are the only ears that will ever hear them.

FADE OUT.