

PRIMEVAL
(a.k.a. "Sasquatch Hunters")

Screenplay by
Alain Matz

Story by
Fred Tepper
Tom Zimmerman
Alain Matz

©2002 Fred Tepper
flickerscope@hotmail.com
7.6.03/19

Things are very quiet. We see the woods from a few angles. Suddenly, a shotgun goes off! We hear it again, and then again!

Three hillbillies come out from behind a bush-- TAYLOR, a man in his mid-thirties, EARL, a young man in his twenties and BOYD, a grizzled old man.

TAYLOR
Crap! He got away.

EARL
Fast mother, too. Where the hell'd he get to?

TAYLOR
Man, an' that's the first damn thing I seen at all in the last two days.

BOYD
With the way you two queens keep yappin' on, I'm surprised we even seen anything at all!

EARL
What the hell crawled in your out door?

BOYD
Yer sister. Now shut the hell up and c'mon.

Boyd walks by the other two. He's obviously here more for the hunt than drinking beer and shooting at moving targets.

Taylor and Earl regain their composure and look around as Boyd moves ahead. Taylor pulls some ammo out of his pack and begins loading his shotgun.

TAYLOR
You see how big that thing was on its hind legs?

EARL
I ain't ever seen a bear that big.

BOYD
An' you ain't ever gonna see it again if you don't get a move on.

Earl ignores Boyd.

EARL
How many times did you shoot at it?

TAYLOR
Unloaded the whole damn thing.

EARL
An' you didn't hit nothin'?

TAYLOR
Well I ain't seen you even take a shot yet, Earl.

EARL
That's 'cause I don't shoot at nothin' if I don't think I'll hit somthin'!

TAYLOR
Yeh, sure. You ain't gonna hit nothing with that pussy little nine-millimeter.

EARL
We'll see about that. And you best make the next ones count, 'cause I ain't walkin' back for no more shells.

TAYLOR
You ain't gotta do me no favors, 'cept pass me another one of them beers.

Earl pulls a warm beer out of his pack and tosses it to Taylor, who takes a swig and continues loading his gun. Earl then looks around, over his shoulder.

EARL
Where the hell'd Boyd get to?

Taylor looks around too.

TAYLOR
I dunno, screw that guy. Killin' stuff ain't fun with him. I say we don' invite him anymore.

EARL
Boyd!

There is no answer.

EARL (CONT'D)
(screaming)
Yo, Boyd!

Taylor is shocked by the scream and turns, smacking Earl on the shoulder.

TAYLOR

Jeez, man!

Boyd then pops in, shocking both Earl and Taylor.

BOYD

What are you guys doin'?

EARL

Where the hell you been?

BOYD

Tryin' to track that som'bitch Taylor here done let get away. Now both you guys need to zip it before you get some rangers on our butts.

TAYLOR

Ah quit bitchin'! Ain't no rangers out this far anyways.

Taylor puts his gun down and begins drinking his beer. Earl notices a big pile, more like a puddle, of crap.

EARL

Dang, check it out Boyd. Some bear done took a crap here. Must a been a big ol' sucker, too!

Boyd comes over and looks at it.

BOYD

Still looks kinda wet. Think this one might still be 'round here?

EARL

Don't know.

TAYLOR

(looking at Earl)
Sure it wuddn't Maggie?

Boyd and Taylor laugh.

EARL

Hey lay off, hair-hole. Least I don't gotta shave my wife's back!

Now Boyd and Earl laugh at Taylor. Taylor looks angry, but he's just playing. He quickly smiles and laughs as well.

TAYLOR
I'll drink to that!

EARL
Yeah, you'll drink to anything.

TAYLOR
(with a smile)
I'll drink to that too!

Boyd then notices something on a tree near the poop.

BOYD
Hey, check this out.

There is a big swipe on the tree. Three or four long, deep gashes. It looks like claw marks.

EARL
What's that?

BOYD
Dunno. Looks like somethin' took a swipe at the tree. Claw marks or somethin'.

Taylor approaches from the other side of the tree.

TAYLOR
(laughing)
Maybe the bear takin' that crap had to grab on to somethin'.

EARL
Yeah, maybe.
(turns back to Taylor)
Well, you freakin' ready yet?

TAYLOR
Hold on.

Boyd and Earl take a few steps away as Taylor looks down at his shotgun as he loads it. Then, Taylor hears something.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
What the... You hear something?

He turns his head sharply and looks past us and... a blur of fur rushes in, throwing us into blackness.

Quick flashes--

-- A gorilla-like creature's face fills the frame, all anger and sharp teeth.

-- Taylor's arm is ripped out of its socket.
 -- Taylor's arm hits a tree and falls.
 -- Taylor's guts are ripped open.
 -- A claw slashes Taylor's neck, sending blood spraying.
 -- Earl and Boyd turn towards the sounds.
 -- The creature's eyes dart toward Earl and Boyd's direction.
 -- Earl and Boyd turn and run.
 -- Earl and Boyd run through the woods.
 -- Through the creature's eyes we see it approach and catch Earl. Earl screams!
 -- Boyd runs through the forest, disappearing around some trees while Earls screams ring out.

1 EXT. WASHINGTON STATE FOREST -- MORNING

1

The forest is vast. It's beyond vast, it's endless. The sun is about to break the horizon, sending streaks of color across the sky.

Amidst the dense, towering trees, there is a dirt road. It is about two cars wide and fairly smooth (for a dirt road). The sound of an engine pierces the quiet. Soon a JEEP appears, cruising down the road.

GORDON (O.S.)

You know, if you told me where we were going it would have made it a lot easier to pack.

LANDON (O.S.)

Ah, but it would have spoiled the surprise.

GORDON (O.S.)

I don't like surprises.

LANDON (O.S.)

It's not that kind of surprise.

GORDON

It's always that kind of surprise.

2 EXT. RANGER STATION -- DAY

2

A bright red Jeep pulls up to the Ranger Station outpost. Driving it is CHARLES LANDON, a rugged man in his late forties. He wears the uniform of a State Forest Ranger.

ROGER GORDON stands at the roadside. He's in his early forties, and just as rugged-looking. He is in amazing shape, clearly he takes care of himself. Both men are obviously the "out doors" type.

Gordon looks up as Landon exits the Jeep.

GORDON
Nice day for a hike.

LANDON
It'll clear up in a few hours.
(looking at Gordon's
gear)
Why'd you pack so much?

GORDON
You know if you'd have told me where
we were going it would have made it
a lot easier to pack.

LANDON
But that would have spoiled the
surprise.

GORDON
I don't like surprises.

LANDON
It's not that kind of surprise.

GORDON
It's always that kind of surprise.

Landon shakes his head.

GORDON (CONT'D)
You could have at least given me a
little more notice.

LANDON
Sorry about that.

GORDON
Yeah, well you owe me one.

Landon smiles.

LANDON
No my friend, you owe me one.

GORDON
I thought you owed me one.

Landon shakes his head.

GORDON (CONT'D)
You sure?

LANDON
Absolutely. Remember? You and the thing...

GORDON
Right, right, right.

LANDON
Are we ever going to be even?

GORDON
Not the way you keep score.

They laugh.

LANDON
Well, this is gonna be fun. It'll be like old times.

GORDON
What makes you think that's a good thing?

LANDON
Yeah, yeah. You about ready?

GORDON
Let's go.

They smile and get into the Jeep. The engine roars to life and they drive off, down a long dusty road.

3 EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- DAY

3

Two Forest Ranger pick-up trucks sit by the side of the dirt road at the edge of the forest. DR. HELEN GILBERT, an attractive woman in her early thirties, unpacks her gear from one of the trucks. Standing next to her is DR. ETHAN EDWARDS. He's easily in his early fifties but is in such good shape, he covers it up well.

Also unloading the truck are two State Forest Rangers, SPENCER and JANET COMBS, brother and sister who are about 30 and 25, respectively. Spencer is a well built guy.

He could easily take care of himself in the wild.

Also, present are LOUISE KEATON (Lou), a beautiful college student, and BRIAN STRATTON, a State Forest ranger who doesn't look much older than Lou, if at all.

Everyone is unloading backpacks and gear for a hike, as the pick-up truck drivers, RANGER 1 and RANGER 2 look on.

Brian pulls some gear from the back of a pickup truck.

BRIAN
Ugh, it's too early!

SPENCER
Come on, Brian. Where's your spirit?

BRIAN
Back home, sleeping.

Helen pulls her pack out of the truck and almost hits Ethan in the head with it.

ETHAN
Whoa! Helen, I know you're excited to get there, but just remember, to get there we actually have to *get there*.

Helen chuckles.

HELEN
Sorry.

LOU
She always like this, Dr. Edwards?

ETHAN
Pretty much. But that's okay.
(to Helen)
It kind of reminds me of myself when I was your age.

HELEN
Uh oh, nostalgia alert.

ETHAN
You do. I used to be all full of piss and vinegar on my way to a new site too.

LOU
And you're not anymore?

ETHAN

I've been dragged to enough digs that turned out to be nothing, that I know not to get excited until I actually find something.

HELEN

Yeah, but this *is* something.

ETHAN

Not yet, it isn't.

HELEN

We'll see.

ETHAN

(smiling)

But it's still nice to see you excited. You remind me of a puppy I once had.

LOU

Oh, that's nice!

HELEN

A younger you and a puppy. Anything else I remind you of?

ETHAN

You know, you do remind me of my third grade teacher.

Ethan smiles. Lou carries her backpack away.

4	OMIT	4
5	OMIT	5
6	EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- DAY	6

The team continues to check their gear. Brian and Janet are off to one side, away from the others. Brian looks over toward one of the trucks and sees Lou bending over to check something in her backpack which is on the ground.

BRIAN

College babe. Nice.

He suddenly remembers that he's with Janet, and looks over at her. She looks at him with a sarcastically stern face.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

What? Come on, ya gotta admit, she's pretty friggin' hot. Chicks like that don't usually come out here.

JANET

"Chicks?"

BRIAN

Yeah. I mean, you should see the fat tree-hugging Plain-Janes we're usually stuck with.

JANET

What's the difference? You're supposed to be working. According to the regulations, a Ranger on duty is supposed to be--

BRIAN

Yeah, yeah, whatever.

JANET

OK Mr. Raging Hormones.

Gordon and Landon's Jeep pulls up and they turn to it.

7 INT. JEEP -- DAY

7

Landon turns off the ignition. Gordon turns to him.

GORDON

What the hell is this?

LANDON

This is the crew.

GORDON

The crew for what?

Landon smiles at him.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Baby sitting? You brought me along to *baby sit*?

(shaking his head)

Oh, that's low Charles, even for you.

LANDON

What baby sit? These are all experienced people. Mostly.

GORDON

You were paying attention when I said I didn't like surprises, weren't you?

Landon laughs and opens his door.

LANDON

Come on. Let's meet the troops.

8 EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- DAY

8

Gordon remains in the Jeep, but Landon approaches the group and shakes hands with Helen and Ethan. It's obvious he knows everyone here pretty well.

Gordon takes a deep breath and steps out of the Jeep. He approaches the others.

Janet sees him and nudges her brother, Spencer.

JANET

(quietly)

Mmm, who's the stallion with the Chief?

Spencer looks at her like she's insane. She smiles. Brian leans close to her.

BRIAN

OK Miss Raging Hormones.

Janet gives him a "very funny, mister" look.

Landon sees Gordon approaching.

LANDON

Ah, good.

Landon smiles and makes the introductions.

LANDON (CONT'D)

Dr. Helen Gilbert... Dr. Ethan
Edwards... Roger Gordon.

They shake hands.

LOU

Louise Keaton.

(cocking her head toward
Helen and Ethan)

I'm their slave.

They shake.

ETHAN

Lou's one of my top students.

BRIAN

(holding out his hand)

Brian Stratton.

GORDON

Roger Gordon.

They shake.

LANDON

This is Spencer Combs and his sister,
Janet.

Janet stares at Gordon, wide-eyed. Instant crush.

JANET

Hi.

SPENCER

Nice to finally meet you. Landon's
told me so much about you.

Gordon shoots a glance at Landon.

LANDON

Keep an eye on Spencer. He's one
of the best I've worked with. He's
just like you when we were young.
(quietly to Gordon)
Except he wouldn't give up so easy.

Gordon laughs off the comment, though it clearly bugs him.
Helen notices it.

LANDON (CONT'D)

OK everyone listen up, Gordon is
here because I think he'll be
invaluable to our trip. He listens
to me, you all listen to us.

Everyone nods in understanding.

LANDON (CONT'D)

What we're basically here to do is
help the good Doctors--
(reacting to Lou and
smiling)
--and Lou, get to where they need to
be. So snap it up.

GORDON

Sounds easy enough.
(to Helen and Ethan)
What exactly are we looking for?

HELEN

Bones or fossils.

GORDON

Of what?

HELEN

That's what we're hoping to find out.

Baby sitting and looking for fossils. This is not Gordon's idea of a fun trip.

GORDON

Great.

Gordon walks back to the Jeep and takes out his pack.

9 OMIT 9

10 EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- DAY 10

The rest of the crew walks over to Gordon at the Jeep. Brian is the last to approach.

BRIAN

What do you say, Pops? Almost ready?

Gordon just looks at Landon.

GORDON

Yeah.

JANET

I can't believe I finally get a chance to get out in the field.

Gordon throws Landon a quick, "what?!" look. Landon waves it off.

SPENCER

Yeah, well just remember who got you here, and don't blow it.

JANET

Don't you worry about me. Look at this pack. Perfect. Wait till you see my tent.

Gordon notes the holstered sidearm that each Ranger wears.

GORDON

I see everyone's got standard issue.

LANDON

Yeah.

GORDON

(to Ethan, Helen & Lou)
You guys?

Ethan shakes his head.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Want one?

LOU
 (holding up her camera)
 I shoot with this.

Gordon pulls a rifle out of the Jeep. He looks at Helen.
 She shakes her head.

HELEN
 I'm not much of a gun person.

Gordon tosses a rifle to Brian.

GORDON
 You know how to use one of these?

BRIAN
 Sure. Rifles, pistols... I even run
 with scissors once in a while.

GORDON
 That's dangerous. Stick with guns.

HELEN
 What do we need rifles for?

GORDON
 Well, sometimes you need something
 to stop a charging bear or wolf.
 Doesn't happen often, but it does
 happen.

HELEN
 So you kill them?

Gordon shakes his head and pulls a small box out the Jeep.

GORDON
 Tranquilizers.

LANDON
 We're Park Rangers, Helen. We're
 supposed to *protect* the integrity of
 the forest. Not kill it.

GORDON
 Well, *you* are Rangers. *I'm* cautious.

ETHAN
 Do those really work?

GORDON
 Not always.

Gordon reaches into the Jeep and turns around with a shotgun.

GORDON (CONT'D)
That's what this is for.

Helen stares at the gun, then at him.

GORDON (CONT'D)
(smiling)
And it always works.

HELEN
Got'cha.

Helen has to duck as Gordon slings the gun over his shoulder.
He then tosses another rifle to Landon.

LANDON
Are we ready?

BRIAN
Let's go.

11 EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- DAY 11

The pick-up truck drivers, Ranger 1 and Ranger 2, get in their respective trucks and start them up. Ranger 1 leans out of his window and calls to Landon.

RANGER 1
Don't forget to write! And bring
back souvenirs!

Landon smiles and gives him a thumbs-up. The trucks drive away, leaving just the team and Landon's Jeep.

12 EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- DAY 12

Landon turns to the team.

LANDON
All right folks, let's try to keep
it together. We've got a lot of
hiking over the next few days. We
follow the river first, then go deep.

SPENCER
Real deep.

LANDON
Exactly. Now let's go.

The group files into the forest and it isn't long before we can't see them anymore.

13 EXT. FOREST -- DAY 13

The group makes its way through some of the thickest forest you've ever seen. Gordon leads the way, followed by Landon, the doctors, and then the Rangers.

They go up and over hill, through gullies, and cross an occasional stream.

Along the way, Lou snaps pictures with her digital camera.

16 EXT. FOREST -- AFTERNOON 16

The trek through the forest continues. Gordon and Landon are in the lead.

LANDON
How do you think we're doing on time?

GORDON
You're asking me?

LANDON
I don't know the area.

Gordon glances at his watch, then tries to see the sky through the thick trees.

GORDON
If we don't lose any more time we'll be OK.

LANDON
Good.

GORDON
Just keep the newbies moving.

Farther back in the line, Helen walks up to Spencer.

HELEN
(nodding toward Gordon)
So, what's the story with Wild Bill?

SPENCER
Gordon? He and Landon go way back. They used to lead the squad together. Not really sure why he's here though.

HELEN
What about you?

Spencer gives a smile, like he's laughing a little on the inside.

SPENCER
 Janet's first time out. I convinced
 Landon to let her jump out from behind
 the desk and play the field.

Helen smiles-- she gets it now.

HELEN
 And he wanted you to tag along and
 keep her out of trouble?

SPENCER
 Something like that. Little
 sisters... whadda ya gonna do?

JANET (O.S.)
 I can hear you.

Spencer and Helen chuckle.

GORDON (O.S.)
 So can I.

That wipes the smile off their faces like they've been scolded
 by the teacher.

They all continue walking as the sun sets.

14 EXT. FOREST -- LATER

14

Gordon is in the lead. His eyes constantly scan the
 surroundings. Ethan walks next to him.

ETHAN
 I never realized how big this place
 was.

GORDON
 They don't have maps at the museum?

ETHAN
 Well, yeah, but until you actually
 see it... it's amazing.

They take a few more steps in silence.

GORDON
 I just don't get it. A four day
 hike into the woods to see if you
 can find something that's been dead
 for a zillion years.

ETHAN
 It's how we learn.

GORDON

I get *that*, I just don't get why anyone would be so excited about it.

ETHAN

I guess you could say the same thing about a man who babysits scientists.

GORDON

Who says I'm excited about it?

Gordon suddenly stops. He grabs Ethan's arm to stop him.

ETHAN

What's going on?

Gordon raises his hand quickly, silencing rest of the team.

He drops his backpack and motions to Landon. Landon takes his rifle and hands it to him.

At the sight of this, Brian also takes his rifle and loads a dart. Spencer quickly grabs his side arm and looks around. Janet looks pretty frantic-- this is the first time she's pulled her gun and she looks a little awkward.

Gordon quickly loads a tranquilizer dart and holds the rifle up. He looks through the scope. No one can see anything out of the ordinary.

Helen and Ethan look at each other and shrug.

LOU

(quietly to Helen)

This is a great start.

Gordon scans the forest through the scope. Everything is eerily quiet.

There is a sudden rustling of branches and everyone turns quickly. There is nothing there.

A twig snaps, and while everyone turns in the direction of the sound, Gordon quickly turns the other way and fires. There is a loud roar from the bushes nearby.

Everyone turns and looks at Gordon. He is already loading the second dart and aiming.

There is another roar, quieter, then a huge thud.

Gordon looks over and sees that Spencer was the only other one who was looking in the right direction. He's impressed.

Gordon gives an all clear gesture.

15 EXT. FOREST -- DAY

15

The team walks over to the direction Gordon fired and stands by the body of a large bear.

ETHAN
Where'd that come from?

GORDON
It was watching us.

ETHAN
How the hell did you even know it was there?

GORDON
You spend enough time out here, you pick up on things.

LANDON
I told you he was good.

BRIAN
No shit.

ETHAN
Was it going to attack?

GORDON
Looks like a female... probably got some cubs nearby.

HELEN
I never even heard her coming.

GORDON
That's the plan. Hunting or protecting, when you're this big, you have to be quiet.

LANDON
Yep, you wouldn't know she was around till she was right on top of you.

Helen shakes her head in amazement.

LANDON (CONT'D)
Well, she'll only be out for a few minutes so let's move on. She's bound to be pretty grumpy when she wakes up.

BRIAN
It wasn't the tranquilizers, it was beauty killed the beast.

Gordon starts to move on, walking past Spencer and Janet. Janet watches him go by, then tugs on Spencer's shirt sleeve.

JANET
(dreamy)
Isn't he the best?

SPENCER
My heart is all aflutter.

Everyone moves on. Brian approaches Lou.

BRIAN
You know, I would have protected you.

LOU
My hero.

Spencer is right behind Brian and throws his arm around Brian's neck.

SPENCER
Who's gonna protect you?

Lou smiles and moves on.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
Try to stay focused on the job, OK?

Brian smiles and nods as they walk off.

15A EXT. FORREST -- DAY

15A

The area is pretty quiet. But the silence is broken by someone breathing, terribly out of breath. Then, Boyd stumbles into view and falls. He's dirty and has a few scratches on his face.

He looks around as he tries to catch his breath. A twig snap nearby puts him on even heightened alert. He listens but doesn't hear anything else.

Cautiously, he moves on. He walks slowly, trying as hard as he can to move quietly and scan the area with his eyes and ears.

But unseen by him, a massive shape darts past in the background.

Then something grabs his attention. Off in the distance he sees Gordon and the rest of the crew, heading deeper into the woods, away from him. He runs a few steps to get a better view.

A look of relief comes over him and he takes a few deep breaths and opens his mouth to scream. But a massive, hairy hand swipes his face before he can get out a single word. His body is tossed to the ground. Then the massive hand picks him up and swings him like a rag doll slamming him against a tree.

There is a terrible growl, the sound of bones snapping on impact and a muffled gurgle of death. Blood slings across a tree and some bushes.

Off in the distance, we can still see Gordon and the crew disappear into the dense forrest. Our focus then shifts to the foreground, where the body of the creature stands, looking out at them.

22 EXT. FOREST -- DAY

22

The crew continues its hike through the thick forest. Brian manages to position himself next to Lou, in front of Spencer and Janet. He looks at her as if he wants to say something. She stares ahead.

After a few more steps, Brian looks away and bites his lower lip, getting his courage up. Finally, without looking over, he speaks to Lou.

BRIAN

So, think me and you could, maybe,
get some dinner or something when we
get back?

He turns back to Lou but she's not there. Spencer has stepped up and is walking along side of him.

SPENCER

Are you asking me out on a date?

Brian looks up, and sees that Lou has sped up.

BRIAN

I... thought...

SPENCER

Uh-huh.

Spencer walks away with a laugh.

BRIAN

Shit.

Janet passes him, reveling in the fact that she can now laugh at his expense.

JANET
Smooth. Did he say yes?

She continues past Brian. He stops.

BRIAN
Shit.

17 EXT. CAMP -- NIGHT 17

It's pitch black around the campsite. The tents are set up in a circle, and a nice sized fire blazes in the center.

18 EXT. CAMP -- NIGHT 18

Janet's tent is absolutely perfect. You could bounce a coin off the side of the thing. She brushes a fallen leaf off the side of it then proudly turns to Spencer.

JANET
So?

SPENCER
So what?

JANET
What do you think of my tent?

SPENCER
Looks fine.

JANET
Fine? It's the best tent here. I told you I could do this.

SPENCER
Yeah, I know.

JANET
I'm a born Ranger.

SPENCER
Mm hmmm. Well, come on Ranger Janet, let's get some food.

She smiles and follows Spencer off.

19 EXT. CAMP -- LATER 19

Everyone sits around the campfire eating oh-so-scrumptious dehydrated camping food. Landon walks up and sits down.

LANDON
We made good time today. You guys hold up a nice pace.

HELEN
Well, we've had some practice.

ETHAN
Speak for yourself, my legs have
seen better days.

JANET
Where'd you say you were studying?

HELEN
Southern Africa.

BRIAN
What the hell's in Africa?

HELEN
Gorillas.

SPENCER
Really?

JANET
Wow that must have been great.

HELEN
It was.

BRIAN
Jungles like that probably make this
seem like nothing.

HELEN
It's strange, this area reminds me a
lot of where I was in Africa... well,
except we don't have 10 inch, poisonous
spiders jumping off trees here, so
yeah it has its perks.

GORDON
You spent six months in the jungle,
with 10 inch spiders, watching
gorillas, and you didn't have any
guns with you?

Helen shrugs.

JANET
Were you there too, Dr. Edwards?

ETHAN
In and out. Helen's the
anthropologist so she pretty much
ran the show.

(MORE)

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I'm a paleontologist, so I don't get very excited unless they find something dead.

GORDON

So you were babysitting too.

ETHAN

(smiling)

I don't know that I'd call it "baby sitting" but as long as you get us there you can call it whatever you want.

JANET

(to Ethan)

Where are we going anyway? No one tells me anything.

ETHAN

Actually this is Helen's parade.

Everyone looks at Helen. She takes a moment to gather her thoughts, then:

HELEN

Well, about two months ago, just after we got back from Africa, a colleague of mine came to the museum with some kind of bone she found. At first I thought it was a gorilla. But then she told me she found it out here, and...

GORDON

And the only gorillas in North America are in cages.

HELEN

Exactly, it made no sense. So I brought the bone to Ethan, but he couldn't identify it either.

SPENCER

Really?

ETHAN

Other than that it's definitely some sort of ancient primate.

BRIAN

So what do you think it is?

ETHAN

A gorilla.

BRIAN

You just said it wasn't a gorilla.

ETHAN

Just because I can't identify it as one, doesn't mean it isn't. If you found the Elephant Man's bones, would you think it was a man?

SPENCER

But how would you explain finding a gorilla bone here?

ETHAN

Well, it's quite old. The gorilla probably escaped from a zoo or circus and died out here.

BRIAN

That's it?

ETHAN

That's what I suspect.

BRIAN

Well, that's pretty damn boring.

HELEN

Well, *I'm* hoping to find something else.

GORDON

Like what?

HELEN

Like a full skeleton. We searched the museum's records for anything like it and came up with something from 1898.

BRIAN

Damn, they got records for shit that old?

ETHAN

The museum keeps everything.
(smiling)
It's like a museum.

Brian laughs.

HELEN

So, back in 1898, this trapper, Horace something-or-other brought in this strange bone he found. No one could figure out exactly what it was though. It looked like the femur of a gorilla, but it wasn't. So they put it in a box and locked it up.

SPENCER

Why?

GORDON

Yeah, I thought you digger types were always looking for something new.

ETHAN

Well, us digger types are, but back in 1898, if you weren't finding T-Rex bones, no one really cared.

HELEN

But since now we had two bones, the museum thought it was interesting enough to let us come out and investigate.

LOU

Maybe it's one of those man-bear things.

SPENCER

What?

LOU

You know the thing the Indians are always freaking about. Wendo... Windo... some thing.

BRIAN

Window washer?

LOU

Yeah--no! Come on.

BRIAN

What?

LOU

I'm serious.

BRIAN

You never heard of the legendary window washer?

LOU
And you never heard about spending
the rest of your life alone?

BRIAN
Ouch.

GORDON
Wendigo.

LOU
That's it.

JANET
So these trappers, did they ever
find anything else?

ETHAN
According to the records they said
they could find more, but never came
back.

JANET
I wonder why?

LOU
Probably because it would take them
two weeks to walk back home from the
city, find some and walk two weeks
back to the museum. I'd say screw
that, too! It wasn't putting money
in their pocket or food on the table.

ETHAN
And I don't think it mattered to
anyone that much. Wasn't a big find.

Brian turns to Landon.

BRIAN
I thought you said no one lived this
far out.

LANDON
Not now. But in the 1800's this was
trapper heaven.

SPENCER
Well, great stories. All of them.
But I'm tired.

JANET
Not me.

LANDON

But Spencer's right, let's all hit the sack. We have a few more days of hiking before we make our mark. Sleep tight.

The campers stand and head to their tents.

20 EXT. CAMP -- NIGHT

20

Brian walks with Lou up to her tent.

LOU

Where are you going?

BRIAN

I just thought, maybe you'd feel a little better if I protected you from the big, bad woods.

LOU

Uh, I'll be fine. Thanks.

Brian smiles and steps aside.

BRIAN

Okay, but you know where to find me if the Window Washer comes.

He goes to his tent, walking past Spencer and Janet. He gives a little jokey salute to Spencer as he passes. Spencer eyes Brian, making sure he goes to his tent.

JANET

Hey.

SPENCER

Yeah.

JANET

What's...
(checks if anyone's
around)
What's an *Elephant Man*?

Spencer laughs and shakes his head.

SPENCER

I'll tell you some other time. Good night.

21 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

21

Lou is taking a shower with the compact portable shower near the river bank. She's not naked, but wearing a bikini.

Brian is nearby, and sees her. He smiles as he approaches.

LOU
Can I help you?

BRIAN
You just did.

LOU
Huh?

BRIAN
Oh, I was gonna just offer to do
your back.

LOU
Already did it.

BRIAN
Okay. Can I do your front?

LOU
I got a better idea. Why don't you
go tell Helen she can have the shower.

BRIAN
Okay.

Brian turns to walk away as Lou starts to towel off, then stops and looks at her.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Are you sure? 'Cause I could really--

LOU
(interrupting)
Already did that too.

Brian shakes his head and walks away. Lou laughs and watches him. It's just possible that she's starting to like him.

23 EXT. FOREST

23

Moments later, Janet bounces along, making her way to the lead to be by Gordon. Her crush is reminiscent of a young schoolgirl.

JANET
Hi Roger.

Gordon is still on the alert for trouble, and is a bit bummed she has come to talk. He can sense the crush, and feels a bit awkward but plays along.

GORDON

Hey, Janet.

JANET

So, how do you think I'm doing?

GORDON

I don't know, Janet. How the hell are you doing?

Janet laughs a bit too much for his little joke.

JANET

You know what I mean. How do you think I'm doing on the trip? Look at this pack.

GORDON

Very nice. And your tent looked good too.

Janet is thrilled that Gordon noticed.

JANET

You saw that? My tent was the best one.

GORDON

Yep, you're a real Ranger Janet. Hey, look at that.

Gordon points to a large tree they walk by.

GORDON (CONT'D)

I've never seen one of those in this part of the forest.

Janet becomes as excited as he is and runs over to the tree.

JANET

Really? I mean, I can't see a difference in this than any of these other trees. What's so special...

She turns around and sees that Gordon has kept walking. In fact, so has the rest of the group, and some of them noticed the trick he played on her, and laugh softly. Even Gordon laughs. Janet is a bit embarrassed by being duped, but takes it all in stride. ("Hey, they're treating me like one of the gang-- I'm really fitting in!")

As she walks back to the group, Brian is waiting, a big smirky smile on his face.

BRIAN
How'd that go?

JANET
Whatever.

FADE OUT

24 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

24

Day three. The team takes down their tents and packs up for the rest of the hike.

Lou comes out from behind some trees, carrying the portable shower. Her wet hair drips onto her shirt. She hands the shower to Helen.

LOU
Here. The river bank's right back there.

LANDON
Enjoy it while you can, we leave the river today.

Helen takes the shower contraption from Janet.

HELEN
Thanks. Is the water cold?

LOU
Yeah, but it feels good.

BRIAN
Looks good.

Lou jokingly gives him the finger. He laughs it off and walks away.

25 EXT. FOREST -- DAY

25

Again the team has a rough day trudging through the forest. Eventually the sun goes down once more over the endless forest.

26 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

26

Landon stops near the edge of a clearing and looks at his compass and the map.

LANDON
Well, we're still about two miles out. Let's camp here and we'll finish up in the morning.

ETHAN

What? You said we're only two miles away.

LANDON

Yeah, and it's dark.

ETHAN

So let's just go. If it's dark, it's dark.

LANDON

Bad idea.

ETHAN

Look, we've all done this sort of thing before. I know there's all sorts of little things that can bite or sting us, but at this point, I'll take that risk, just to get there.

GORDON

Listen, we should have stopped an hour ago but we gave you this much, OK? Now it's too dark and everyone's tired. This is when accidents happen.

ETHAN

Yeah, but listen, we're not--

GORDON

But nothing. We're here to tell you what to do, and we're telling you right now.

Landon squints to see in the dark. Even with a flashlight it's hard to see anything.

LANDON

There's a clearing right over there. Don't bother to unload everything, we'll get up extra early to make up the time.

They wearily make their way to the clearing and remove their packs.

FADE OUT.

27 INT. HELEN'S TENT -- MORNING

27

Helen is startled awake by Ethan clawing at her tent.

ETHAN

Helen! Wake up. Wake up!

HELEN
What?

ETHAN
Come out here.

HELEN
What's wrong?

ETHAN
Quick!

HELEN
Okay, okay, I'm coming.

Helen unzips her tent and goes out.

28 EXT. BONEYARD -- MORNING

28

Helen rubs her eyes, and looks around. She's lying in a small clearing in the woods. All around her are mounds of dirt that seem to be methodically placed. Everyone is wide-eyed. Ethan is as giddy as a school boy on his first day of summer vacation.

HELEN
What the...

ETHAN
We completely missed this coming in in the dark.

HELEN
What the hell is this?

ETHAN
Look.

He helps her up and walks with her to one of the mounds. A bone is partially sticking out of the dirt.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
And I found this one too. From a mound over there.

He shows her another bone.

GORDON
So what do you think, Doc?

ETHAN
Well it's obviously a burial ground.

GORDON

Yeah, I get that. I mean who is buried? And more importantly, who buried them?

ETHAN

Not really sure.

JANET

Indians? An ancient burial ground?

LANDON

This is too recent to be Indians. Well, some of it.

BRIAN

Maybe some crazy hillbillies.

Helen inspects a bone.

HELEN

I don't think so. These aren't human bones.

GORDON

What?

Helen looks up at Ethan. Lou is taking pictures of the site.

ETHAN

What we have here are the same types of bones we have back at the museum.

HELEN

Only way bigger. The other samples must have been juveniles.

BRIAN

So what does it all mean?

ETHAN

Well until we bring some back and run some tests, which is gonna take a while, we--

HELEN

It means that up until sometime very recently, there was an entirely unknown species of mammal out here.

LANDON

Unknown?

HELEN
Well, some kind of... gorilla...
sort of.

Gordon shakes his head in amazement. Helen looks up at Ethan with joy in her eyes.

HELEN (CONT'D)
My god, Ethan. This is the find of
the century!

Spencer calls from the edge of the woods, then appears and waves them over.

SPENCER
Hey! Come here!

LANDON
What is it?

The group walks toward Spencer.

SPENCER
Check this out.

They all walk off into the woods.

29 EXT. FOREST -- DAY

29

Spencer stands in front of a tree, pointing up. There is a big, hairy, bloody mess slung up on a branch about 10 feet up. It's a mutilated bear.

Lou snaps some pictures.

BRIAN
Oh Jesus.

JANET
That is so gross.

LOU
What the hell happened to it?

They look in silence. No one can really come up with an answer. Gordon starts inspecting the area around the tree.

BRIAN
Poachers?

LANDON
Nah. The pelt is still there.

LOU
Besides, that thing's been torn apart.

ETHAN

Another bear?

HELEN

(not buying it)

Would a bear throw it up in a tree like that?

BRIAN

Maybe another bear killed it, and then something else dragged it up there.

JANET

Maybe wolves.

This finally makes Gordon look up at the team. He stands.

GORDON

Good work team. So the theory we're going with, is it's a homicidal bear with tree climbing wolves for accomplices.

JANET

Well maybe...

Spencer quickly shakes his head at her.

JANET (CONT'D)

Well, I don't see anyone else offering up any suggestions.

GORDON

It wasn't a wolf, and it wasn't a mountain lion. It had to be a bear, and a pretty fucking big bear too, 'cause this one is pretty fucking big.

BRIAN

Well, I'm glad we missed what went down here.

GORDON

Yeah, which leads me to my next point. The other bear may still be around here so stay close and stay alert.

JANET

No argument here.

GORDON

Good. Anything that has the strength to do this, I don't ever want to meet.

There is a sudden sound that gets everyone's attention. It sounds like a large tree being bent and swaying dramatically.

HELEN
What the hell is that?

They listen some more, but the sound stops.

GORDON
Well I'm no scientist, so I don't know the technical term, but it's what we Rangers call "the wind."

Helen laughs.

ETHAN
OK, let's start digging.

He turns and motions back toward the mounds.

LOU
I didn't come here to dig. I'm here to document.

ETHAN
So come on.

Ethan, Lou and Helen start walking.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
We need to see how many more of these graves there are.

HELEN
And see if we can find a complete skeleton.

Ethan, Helen and Lou disappear, heading back to the mounds. Brian and Janet follow.

Gordon approaches Spencer.

GORDON
Spencer, look around the perimeter of the clearing. See if you can find anything else we should be aware of.

SPENCER
Okay.

GORDON
And be careful.

SPENCER

Darn, you mean I shouldn't have smeared honey all over myself?

Spencer walks off into the woods. Landon moves to Gordon.

LANDON

Playing it safe huh?

GORDON

Playing it smart.

Landon turns to walk away but suddenly stops and turns back to Gordon.

LANDON

Can you do me one favor though? Try not to be so cryptic. I think you're freaking everyone out. Okay?

Gordon nods.

LANDON (CONT'D)

Good.

He walks away toward the dig site, leaving Gordon alone. He scans the woods.

30 EXT. BONEYARD -- AFTERNOON

30

Ethan and Helen have been digging for a while.

A few of the mounds have been dug up, but there's one in particular that has everyone gathered around it. It's much deeper than any of the others.

A collection of bones lie around the hole.

ETHAN

This is amazing. Utterly fantastic.

GORDON

Give it up for the plain folk, Doc. What are we looking at?

ETHAN

These bones are all from the same species. And the deeper we dig, the more bones we find.

GORDON

So, whatever these things are, they've been getting buried here for a long time.

ETHAN

Exactly.

GORDON

Any idea how old they are?

ETHAN

Well, I can't be sure without carbon dating. But I would guess that these bones here near the top...

(he shrugs)

At least a couple hundred years old. But there's a lot of layers-- it just seems to go on and on.

LANDON

And we still have no idea what we're looking at?

HELEN

I can't place them. I mean *exactly*.

ETHAN

Yeah, I've never seen anything like them.

HELEN

The closest I can guess, based on the skull is *maybe* some kind of descendent of Gigantopithecus.

GORDON

Is that a gorilla?

HELEN

Sort of. Think of a gorilla and double the size.

BRIAN

Jeez.

ETHAN

But the only known fossils are from China.

HELEN

(smiling to Brian)

And don't worry, they're almost six million years old.

JANET

So, what's the next step?

ETHAN

Well, we take a few samples back with us. And come back with the proper equipment.

GORDON

So you wanna go back?

ETHAN

There's not much we can do here with just a few shovels. We weren't expecting something like this.

HELEN

I've never even heard of anything like this.

ETHAN

But we'll be back soon.

LANDON

Alright, I guess we pack up our gear and leave first thing in the morning.
(to Brian)
Why don't you let Spencer know.

ETHAN

Okay, where the hell is he?

GORDON

He's checking the perimeter.

BRIAN

What, for six hours?

Everyone looks around.

JANET

Oh my god. Do you think he's alright?

LANDON

He's a professional, Janet. I'm sure he's fine. We'll go get him.

31 EXT. FOREST -- DAY

31

The entire group scatters through the woods and searches for Spencer. They call his name but he never answers.

Very soon the sun begins to set and they head back to the boneyard.

32 EXT. BONEYARD -- EVENING

32

The team stands near the tents at the boneyard.

JANET
I'm really scared now. Where the hell is he?

BRIAN
He's probably playing a joke.

JANET
No. He wouldn't do that.

GORDON
Well there isn't anything we can do in the dark. We'll have to look in the morning.

JANET
But what if he's hurt? He's all alone out there...

Gordon grabs her and stops her from freaking out.

GORDON
Janet, there's nothing we can do until morning. Spencer knows what to do if he gets hurt or lost. We'll find him. I promise.

That calms her. She stares up at Gordon.

Helen takes Janet from Gordon and walks her back to her tent. She nods to Gordon that she'll take care of her.

HELEN
Come on. You should try and get some sleep.

JANET
But Spencer's probably in real trouble. What if the thing that killed that bear got him?

HELEN
Relax. I've got just the thing.

Helen and Janet walk off to Janet's tent.

33 INT. JANET'S TENT -- NIGHT

33

Janet is in her sleeping bag. Her eyes are tearing a bit. Helen pulls a small bottle from her pocket. She opens it and pours out two pills, handing them to Janet.

HELEN
This'll get to you sleep. It works for me out here.

JANET
He's dead. Isn't he?

HELEN
He's not dead.

Helen pushes Janet's hand up so she'll swallow the pills,
then hands her a canteen. Janet takes a swig.

JANET
He was gonna be thirty next month.

HELEN
I didn't know that.

JANET
I've been planning a huge surprise
party for him. Friends from all over.
I even got our parents to agree to
come and sit in the same room together,
and trust me, that's no easy feat.

Helen smiles a little, but it's hard.

JANET (CONT'D)
It was going to be a great party.

HELEN
It will be.

JANET
Now, I have to call everyone and
tell them it's canceled.
(crying)
And I have to tell them why.

HELEN
Hey come on, have a little faith in
him, huh? Your brother's a pro and
you know that.
(an idea pops up)
Gordon thinks he's the best he's seen.

That does the trick. Janet smiles slightly. Helen gives
her a hug then lays Janet back in her sleeping bag.

34 EXT. BONEYARD -- NIGHT

34

Helen comes out of Janet's tent and walks over to the rest
of the group at the dirt mounds.

HELEN
Poor thing. At least she'll sleep
now.

She notices the stern faces around her.

HELEN (CONT'D)
What, what's up?

ETHAN
Look.

Ethan points to the dirt mounds.

HELEN
The graves are filled in. What the hell'd you do that for?

ETHAN
We didn't.

HELEN
Well who did?

GORDON
That's the question of the hour.

HELEN
(looking around)
The tents are OK. Our food's still here.

They are startled by the sounds of twigs snapping and branches breaking.

LOU
What was that?

They listen. Nothing.

LANDON
Spencer!

There is no answer.

Dead silence.

GORDON
Doc.

ETHAN
Yeah?

Gordon pulls the shotgun from his pack.

GORDON
Start a fire.

35 EXT. BONEYARD -- NIGHT

35

Gordon, Helen, Ethan, Lou, Landon and Brian sit around a small campfire.

LOU

I don't get it. Why would he just pick up and leave? Don't you guys have to check in with each other or something?

LANDON

He didn't leave. He wouldn't do that. Something happened to him.

Helen motions to Janet's tent and puts a finger to her lips to signal them to talk quietly. They understand.

HELEN

You sure he's not just messing with us?

LANDON

He's not like that. He's the best Ranger I have.

They sit quietly for a minute.

HELEN

What do you think those sounds were?

LANDON

The forest has sounds. Animals, trees get old and fall over, wind... it could have been anything.

LOU

Do you think Janet was right? What if the thing that killed that bear got him?

GORDON

And what thing would that be? We don't know what did that.

Everyone is silent, staring at the fire. A thought strikes Helen.

HELEN

You know, it's strange. How long ago do you think it was killed?

LANDON

Looked about two days to me.

Gordon and Helen both shake their heads.

GORDON

Three.

Gordon and Helen exchange a glance-- they were thinking the same thing.

HELEN

Right. From what I've seen, when something dies in the wild, it only takes minutes for the first scavenger to show up.

BRIAN

And?

GORDON

And that bear wasn't even touched.

ETHAN

So?

GORDON

What Helen is saying--
 (he glances to her
 and smiles slightly)
 --is why isn't anything eating it?
 A dead bear is a smorgasbord out here. That thing should have been reduced to bone by now.

BRIAN

So, why isn't it?

GORDON

I guess we can just add that to our list of questions.

LOU

In fact, has anyone noticed a complete lack of any animals at all around here?

They all glance around, their confusion and nervousness clearly showing.

FADE OUT.

36 EXT. BONEYARD -- MORNING

36

Gordon and Brian are away.

The others at the camp have almost everything packed up for the trek home.

Janet paces around, making everyone a little nervous.

JANET

I wish Gordon let me go with them.
Why wouldn't he let me go? It's my
brother.

(pause, then shouting)
Spencer!

HELEN

Janet, please. I'm sure everything
will be okay.

Janet lets out a frustrated sigh. Helen puts her arm around her.

37 EXT. FOREST

37

Gordon and Brian are about twenty yards apart, slowly walking through the woods.

Gordon grips his shotgun tightly. His eyes intently scan the surrounding area.

BRIAN

Spencer! Spencer!

Gordon looks around as Brian's long "Spennnncer's!" Fill the air.

After a few minutes of searching, Gordon suddenly realizes something: He no longer hears Brian's cries of "Spencer!"

He looks around. Brian is no where to be seen.

GORDON

Brian?

No response.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Brian?!

Still, no response. Gordon holds his shotgun up and pumps it. His eyes scan the area.

Suddenly there's a huge ROAR and something huge and dark jumps out at him from behind. He spins with his shotgun but a huge hairy hand swings out and flings him against a tree. He hits the ground hard but still has the shotgun in hand. He fires, without really being able to aim. But the creature is gone. Everything is over as quickly as it started.

He relaxes back against the tree, trying to catch his breath.

Brian appears and sees Gordon and rushes to him.

BRIAN
What happened, was that you shooting?

GORDON
Did you see it?

BRIAN
See what?

GORDON
That "thing."

BRIAN
All I've seen is trees and dirt.

He leans down to help Gordon up but Gordon waves him off. Gordon stands. He's a little bruised, but OK.

GORDON
Come on, we gotta get out of here.

His eyes scan the area.

38 EXT. BONEYARD -- DAY

38

The rest of the team stand nervously and look out in every direction.

LANDON
No, there's nothing else.

LOU
What was he shooting at?

HELEN
Do you think they're okay?

LANDON
Everyone just calm down. Panicking won't help.

HELEN
Well, Christ, Charles. Gordon just shot at something and we're missing some of our team. That's worth panicking about!

ETHAN
Over there!

Gordon comes rushing out of the woods with Brian.

HELEN

Gordon!

LOU

What happened?

They all rush to them and help.

LANDON

What happened?

GORDON

Drop your gear, we're getting the hell outta here!

LANDON

What are you talking about?

GORDON

I was attacked, that's what happened!

LANDON

A bear?

GORDON

It wasn't a bear. I don't know what the fuck it was, but it was no bear.

JANET

Did you find Spencer?

LANDON

Calm down Roger, you're not making any sense.

GORDON

I'm making perfect fucking sense! There's a fucking monster out there!

Landon turns to Brian.

LANDON

What happened out there?

BRIAN

I don't know. I came over and found him on the ground. I didn't see anything.

Gordon shoves the others aside.

GORDON

Dammit, listen to me! There's something out there and it almost killed me!

JANET
I'm getting scared.

ETHAN
What attacked you?

Gordon reaches down and picks up the skull of one of the creatures.

GORDON
This! This is what it was! It was a ton of fucking Evil, that's what it was!

JANET
Did it take Spencer, too?

GORDON
(continuing, to Landon)
It came out of nowhere, attacked me, and ran off after I shot at it.
(to Janet, lighter)
And we never found Spencer.

The others are quiet.

HELEN
Okay... so what do we do?

GORDON
It's real simple. We get the hell outta here.

LANDON
But we're not all packed up yet.

GORDON
Leave it.

ETHAN
But I have to take some of these samples back. We need evidence to make a report so we can come back with proper equipment.

GORDON
Let me make this real clear. There's some kind of gorilla, bear, I don't know what the fuck, kind of thing out there. But it's big, it's fast, and it sure as shit didn't flinch when I fired at it.

(MORE)

GORDON (CONT'D)

Now we have a three day hike back to the Jeeps, and I suggest we bring as little as we can and move as fast as we can. Or fuckin' "Bigfoot" out there is gonna make sure there ain't anyone left to report this find of yours.

The others take a moment to let that sink in. Landon looks at Gordon. Gordon nods.

LANDON

Okay, we're out of here.

Everyone walks off toward the tents. Brian watches Janet then walks toward her.

39 EXT. BONEYARD -- DAY

39

Brian approaches Janet near her tent. His normal high spirits have sunken completely. For once he talks to her quietly and with sincerity.

BRIAN

Hey. Janet, I'm...

He looks her in the eyes, then looks down at the ground, unable to continue.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I'm... real sorry, about Spencer. But I'm sure he's OK... probably just took a wrong turn. We'll find him.

She wipes a tear from her eye and gives him a hug.

JANET

Thanks Brian.

But the look in Brian's eyes as they hug shows that he doesn't have any hope for Spencer's return.

39A EXT. FOREST -- DAY

39A

Montage. The team makes their way through the forest. They move quickly, though Janet is obviously still depressed.

40 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

40

It's pretty dark now. The group continues walking, now looking pretty worn out. They are all pretty quiet, cautiously looking around as they walk.

At the front of the line Janet talks to Gordon. As they approach we start to hear their conversation.

GORDON
But he knew that. That's his job.

JANET
It's not fair.

GORDON
Look, Janet, I'm sorry too, I really am, but you wanted to be a Ranger and your responsibility is to the civilians.

JANET
But you don't need me. I could go back and look for him.

GORDON
(shaking his head)
We're not splitting up. If we stay together we're safe.

JANET
Spencer's all alone.

GORDON
There's nothing we can do about that. We'll come back for him, I promise.

Janet doesn't respond. She knows there's no use arguing and she's too upset anyway.

As the group continues to walk she falls back to the end of the line, head-down the whole time. Pretty soon she's fallen back to the point that the group is a good ten yards ahead.

Suddenly she comes out of her daze and realizes she's behind. But just as she's about to run ahead something catches her attention off to the side. She stops, trying to see into the darkness. Her flashlight doesn't offer much help.

She walks off the path and past some trees, cautiously scanning around with her eyes and ears. She stops for a second, scared, thinking she's heard something, but it turns out to be nothing.

She continues searching. Soon up ahead she spots something. Her flashlight is dimming but she can make out someone standing next to a tree up ahead, facing away from her.

JANET
(whispering)
Hello?

No reply. She takes a few steps forward.

JANET (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Spencer?

Still no reply but she's moving more quickly now. As she nears the person she sees that he's wearing a Ranger uniform! Her eyes light up, though from the way he's leaning on the tree he's obviously hurt or exhausted.

She runs up, full of excitement and joy and grabs his shoulder to turn him around.

JANET
Spencer!

Spencer's body rolls around, revealing that his front is slashed and hacked to ribbons, oozing blood. He falls onto Janet, who collapses under his weight.

His bloody face comes right down onto hers and she's too horrified to scream. She pushes the body away, only to reveal the huge snarling face of the creature lunging down at her. Blackness.

Gordon and the team stop as they hear the blood-curdling screams of Janet. Gordon reacts immediately, slinging his shotgun swiftly into his hands.

GORDON
Don't move.

He runs off at top speed down the path they've just created. The rest of the team look at each other, scared out of their minds.

Gordon quickly reaches the point near where Janet left them and hears the creature roaring and grunting. He follows the sound and sees something on the ground.

He runs in looks down. Spencer's body is lying in the leaves and dirt.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Damn it.

But Janet is nowhere to be seen.

Gordon doesn't have time to linger though because suddenly the forest rings out with the sounds of screams from the rest of the team followed by a roar and a gunshot!

He races back to the team but when he gets there everyone is gone. He looks around in all directions but can't see anyone.

With no other alternative, he picks a direction and moves off in search of the team.

41 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING 41

The group has been broken up. Everyone took off in fear. And now it is dark.

Helen is with Landon. Brian, Ethan, Lou and Gordon are each on their own.

Gordon keeps his shotgun ready as he slowly walks through the woods, looking for anyone.

GORDON

Brian? Doc?

The sounds of the woods surround him and are downright creepy.

42 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING 42

Helen and Landon stop to catch their breath. Landon turns and looks at her.

HELEN

Where is everyone?

LANDON

I don't know. But we need to find them, we're safer in numbers.

HELEN

Are you so sure?

He tosses her the tranquilizer rifle he has slung over his shoulder.

LANDON

You know how to use this?

She is clearly very uneasy about having a gun.

LANDON (CONT'D)

You only have one shot at a time, so if something comes, try not to miss.

The rustling of bushes grabs their attention.

HELEN

I think we should keep moving.

43 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING 43

The sounds of the rustling also get the attention of Brian. He takes a sharp breath and holds his sidearm ready.

The noise from the trees and brush seems to come from every direction. He looks around.

BRIAN
Gordon. Gordon?

There are no answers.

Bushes begin to rustle violently, heading in his direction.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ!

Brian begins firing his sidearm as he runs. Something is following him and gaining quickly!

44 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

44

The others in the woods can hear the gunshots, but can't tell where they are coming from.

LANDON
Come on!

They run through the woods.

HELEN
Gordon!

LANDON
Brian!

45 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

45

Gordon also hears the gun shots.

GORDON
Brian!

He pumps the shotgun and heads in the direction he thinks the shots are coming from.

46 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

46

Brian keeps running. The creature is close behind, hidden in the thicket.

Brian's gun empties. Silence; no sound of the creature either.

Brian takes a second to catch his breath and reloads. The creature seems to have gone away.

Suddenly it jumps at him, but he dives away as he fires at it. Rolling back onto his feet, Brian turns and runs. The creature quickly chases.

Brian jumps over a log and lands on the mangled remains of Janet. He is shocked and slips, falling to the ground into a puddle of blood and entrails.

Suddenly the creature jumps out at him, but Gordon appears and unloads with the shotgun.

The creature quickly turns and leaps back into the foliage. Gordon keeps firing, unloading 12 gauge lead.

Gordon helps Brian up. They look at Janet's corpse.

GORDON

Shit.

Her body has been pulled apart at the limbs-- all of them-- and everything was just left in a pile. Brian is at a crossroad between tears and nausea.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Come on.

He leads Brian away. Brian looks back at Janet's remains until he's out of view.

47 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

47

Meanwhile, Ethan has heard all the noises made by the creature and the guns. He's out of breath and stops. He drops his backpack to the ground.

ETHAN

Somebody! Help!

The rustling of plants catches his attention. It sounds as if something is circling him.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Shit. Anybody?

Things get very quiet.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Helen?

He picks up his pack and starts backing up. He trips, dropping the pack, and falls backwards into a big pit.

48 EXT. DIRT PIT -- EVENING

48

The pit is about seven feet deep and a few feet wide. Some kind of animal bones lie on the floor. Ethan is a bit dazed but manages to stand.

ETHAN

Great.

The pit is just deep enough that he can't reach the edge to pull himself out, though he tries. He sees his pack sitting on the edge of the pit. He reaches for it, but just misses.

Then he hears the sound of leaves crunching.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Guys I'm down here!

The sound of crunching leaves stops. Ethan looks at his pack on the edge of the pit. It is slowly pulled away from the edge.

He looks relieved-- someone has found him. He tries to make his way up the wall again. Suddenly the creature's face roars into view over the edge of the pit sending Ethan right back down.

The huge hairy hand of the creature comes down after him. He tries to crouch down as low as he can to avoid being grabbed, but it keeps swinging its way closer.

Finally he's as flat down to the bottom of the pit as he can get, but the hairy paw is still getting closer!

It seems to reach its limit just inches away from Ethan's neck. He looks relieved. Then suddenly it lunges down and grabs him by the shirt! Ethan struggles but is quickly lifted up and up. Soon he's completely out of view.

BANG! A shotgun blast rings out. A deafening pained roar screams out and Ethan drops back into the pit. He looks up just in time to see the dim outline of the creature jump over the pit.

A moment later, Gordon peeks over. There is a silent moment.

GORDON

Doc?

He reaches down to help Ethan out of the pit.

49 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

49

Ethan wipes himself off. Brian is there too, and he picks up Ethan's pack and hands it to him. It is completely torn apart.

BRIAN

This yours?

ETHAN

Dammit.

He throws it to the ground.

GORDON

Come on.

Ethan notices the blood on Brian's clothes.

ETHAN

What happened to you?

Brian looks upset and just walks off. Gordon leans close to Ethan.

GORDON

(quietly)

We found Janet.

Off Ethan's reaction, Gordon nods dejectedly.

GORDON (CONT'D)

And I found Spencer right before you all separated.

This is almost too much for Ethan. He's speechless.

They head off.

50 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

50

Helen and Landon look for the others in the woods. They keep low, trying to be as quiet as possible. They stop.

LANDON

Did you hear that?

HELEN

I'm hearing all sorts of stuff. I don't need you freaking me out more than I already am.

A nearby twig snaps.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Shit, I did hear that.

LANDON

Come on.

They continue making their way through the dark forest.

51 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT 51

Lou is still all alone. She wanders around, desperate to find any one-- preferably all-- of her friends.

52 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT 52

Helen and Landon continue through the woods, searching for the others. They stop when they hear rustling bushes near them.

HELEN
What's that?

LANDON
Shhh.

They listen quietly.

LANDON (CONT'D)
Gordon?

BAM! The creature jumps out at them.

LANDON (CONT'D)
Run!

They break into a sprint as the creature runs in hot pursuit. Landon pushes Helen ahead.

LANDON (CONT'D)
Keep going!

She sees that he's intending to decoy it.

HELEN
No!

LANDON
Go!

He turns back and pushes her on, then turns and fires a few shots from his pistol. The creature stops for a second. Landon runs in a different direction than Helen, making sure the creature follows him.

53 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING 53

Helen is now alone. She hears the sounds of Landon firing his pistol. She has no idea where she is, or where to go.

54 EXT. FOREST -- EVENING

54

Landon continues running as the creature chases him. His gun clicks after the last bullet is fired but he keeps running as the creature bears down on him.

Landon trips over a log and falls down into a ravine. Something drops down behind him. He rolls over and screams!

GORDON
It's me! It's me!

He looks up and sees Gordon leaning down to help him up. Brian helps Ethan over to them.

LANDON
Oh, thank God.

GORDON
You okay?

LANDON
Yeah.

He pauses, then looks at Gordon, fear in his eyes.

GORDON
Spencer's dead.

Landon reacts to this horrible news.

GORDON (CONT'D)
And we found Janet, too.

This is too much for Landon but he tenses up and pulls himself together.

LANDON
Are you okay, Ethan?

ETHAN
I think so. Where's Helen?

LANDON
She, took off while I distracted
that... that...

GORDON
"Bear?"

Everyone knows what he means. He was right.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Well, Lou's still out there, too.

Gordon takes a deep breath and looks around.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Hold on, what's that?

He takes a few steps and points his flashlight over at something. Anyone else that has a flashlight, shines it over as well. It's an old cabin. Very old.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Come on.

They all start walking.

55 EXT. CABIN -- EVENING

55

The cabin is weather-beaten and half broken. No one has lived here in a long, long time. The door is slightly ajar.

They walk toward the front door.

Suddenly there's a metallic noise, a loud SNAP, and Landon drops to the ground, screaming. An old bear trap clings to his leg.

Gordon and Brian pry the trap open while Ethan grabs Landon and drags him away, trying to keep him from screaming too loud. His leg is bleeding profusely.

Gordon stands and looks around.

GORDON
What the hell is all this?

The beam of his flashlight reveals that the cabin is surrounded by bear traps. Some have been sprung, but most are still set, half covered in leaves and dirt.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Watch your step.

They help Landon to the cabin.

56 INT. CABIN -- EVENING

56

They walk in.

The place is a mess. It looks as though it has been ransacked. The furniture is smashed up and there is a massive hole in the roof. One part of the back wall has even been torn down.

BRIAN
Yeah, this place is friggin' great.

To everyone's horror, there are human bones strewn on the floor.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Aw, Jesus.

Gordon is quick to close the door. Brian and Ethan sit on the bed.

GORDON

How's it look?

BRIAN

Pretty fucking bad.

(to Landon)

How's it feel?

LANDON

Pretty fucking bad.

ETHAN

You're lucky that thing wasn't in better shape. Your leg would probably still be sitting out there.

LANDON

Thanks, I feel so much better.

GORDON

Doc, you think you can find something to fix him up with?

ETHAN

(glancing around)

I think so.

GORDON

Good.

ETHAN

It's not really the kind of bones I'm used to working with.

Gordon heads to the front door.

LANDON

(through the pain)

Where are you going?

GORDON

Helen and Lou are still out there.

LANDON

How do you even know they're alive?

GORDON
I don't. But I'm not leaving anyone
out there if there's a chance.

LANDON
Roger, it's suicide.

GORDON
Then leaving them out there is murder.
Now, when was the last time any of
you saw them?

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN
Back when we were all together.

ETHAN
Yeah.

Landon realizes it's useless to try stopping Gordon.

LANDON
I lost Helen about two hundred yards
straight back from where I found
you. And she ran north from there.

Gordon thinks for a moment, then nods in understanding.

ETHAN
I'm coming with you.

GORDON
You stay right here and fix that
leg. Brian, watch the door. Landon,
keep an eye on things.

Gordon walks towards the door.

LANDON
Roger.

He turns and looks at Landon.

LANDON (CONT'D)
Good luck.

Gordon nods to him and goes outside. Ethan looks around for
something to make a bandage out of.

BRIAN
That guy is crazy.

ETHAN
Brian, help me with this.

Brian helps Ethan tear up an old sheet.

57 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT 57

It's inky black in the forest, and the only sounds are from Helen as she walks quietly through the woods. She is scared out of her mind. Every time a twig snaps or the wind blows some leaves, she clumsily points the rifle in that direction.

58 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT 58

Gordon carefully makes his way through the dense black forest.

He checks the ground for footprints to make sure he's still on the right track.

59 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT 59

Lou staggers around the dark woods. She's having a hell of a time seeing. She holds her camera in front of her and sets the flash off to see.

She gets a view of the area in front of her for an instant.

LOU
Gordon? Landon?

She sets the flash off again. Nothing.

60 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT 60

Gordon continues searching. He makes sure to never let his guard down. He looks at some broken branches on a bush he's standing next to, then looks left and right. He shines his flashlight on the ground. A trail of small hiking-boot footprints leads off. He follows.

He walks on, trying to be as quiet as possible, something that's hard to do with all of the leaves and twigs covering the ground. Then a mistake: he steps and snaps a twig loudly. Suddenly a shape rises before him, about a hundred feet ahead. It's the creature, and it's heard the snap! It rises up onto its hind legs, a towering mass of fur and muscle, then looks around and moves toward the sound.

It walks through the area where Gordon was standing, but he's nowhere to be found.

Then it moves near a tree, carefully scanning the area. The top of its head is only three or four feet from Gordon as he looks down on it, right below him.

As it moves away, Gordon tries to reach for his gun, but he's too precariously perched to get hold of it without risking a noise, or worse, falling.

The creature stands below him, sniffing the air. As it looks around, Gordon struggles to keep his gun and from not falling. He acts quickly and takes flashlight, and throws it far off into the bushes.

The creature quickly darts toward the noise.

Gordon takes the moment and steadies himself and gets a grip on his gun.

But before he can get into firing position, the creature stands, it's attention drawn to something as it sniffs the air. And in an instant it disappears into the woods.

61 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

61

Lou continues walking.

LOU
(to herself)
Come on guys, where are you?

No reply.

62 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

62

Helen comes to a stop and turns around. She holds the tranquilizer rifle ready.

63 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

63

Gordon lowers himself from the tree and immediately brings his gun up, ready for trouble. But all is quiet. He cautiously moves away from the tree and continues his search.

64 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

64

Helen sits by the tree, rifle in hand. She is absolutely terrified, but tries to keep herself together. She's certainly not about to go down without a fight. Something grabs her attention.

She points her rifle into the darkness. Then the sounds come from somewhere else. She slowly stands and starts backing up. She's sure to constantly look around.

The sounds begin to bombard her, as though they might only be in her mind. They're driving her crazy. The world seems to start spinning around her. The damn noises! She begins to laugh and cry uncontrollably.

The snap of a twig nearby snaps her out of her delirium. Then something catches the corner of her eye. She nervously raises her rifle and pulls the trigger.

FWAP!

Gordon comes out of the darkness and grabs her. She's still freaking out.

GORDON
Helen. Helen, it's me. It's me!

Helen starts to calm down.

GORDON (CONT'D)
There you go. Calm down, it's just me. You're okay now.

She starts to laugh a bit and hugs Gordon.

GORDON (CONT'D)
It's alright. You're okay. Damn, I ought to rescue women more often.

As she hugs him, she notices the dart from the rifle sticking out of his arm. She pushes away.

HELEN
Oh my god!

Gordon looks down. The dart went into the sleeve of his shirt. It hangs, missing his skin by less than a hair. He plucks the dart out and hands it back to her.

GORDON
That's as close as it gets, lady.

Helen laughs a bit, out of sheer relief.

GORDON (CONT'D)
You don't get too many second chances with these. Make the next one count.

Gordon takes the rifle and reloads it then hands it back to Helen.

HELEN
Did you find anyone else?

GORDON
Yeah, and we found a cabin. Come on.

They walk but Helen stops suddenly and looks around, nervously.

HELEN
Is it safe?

GORDON
Sure, it's not here now.

HELEN
How can you tell?

GORDON
Because we're still alive.

They start walking.

65 INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

65

Landon pulls a few glow-sticks from his back pack and places them on the floor, like a glow-stick campfire. They pretty much offer up the only light in the room, besides the dim moonlight coming in from the hole in the roof. But it's an eerie, other-worldly glow and it certainly does nothing to raise the spirits of the cabin's new tenants.

Landon moves back and painfully props his leg up on the sofa.

Brian stands by the window, looking out. Ethan is covering the broken wall at the rear of the cabin.

ETHAN
Maybe one of us should go look for them.

BRIAN
Oh that's a great fucking suggestion, Doc. Got any more ways you could screw us?

ETHAN
What the hell does that mean?

BRIAN
We're all gonna die and it's your fault.

ETHAN
My fault?

LANDON
Guys, shut up! It's not anyone's fault.

BRIAN
Bullshit. If these guys didn't wanna come looking for some fucking bones, we never would have come out here!

ETHAN
That's the dumbest thing I've ever
heard!

LANDON
I said shut--up! It's no one's fault,
OK? And even if it was, who cares?

He looks at Brian, who is obviously still angry.

LANDON (CONT'D)
Fine, it's all Ethan's fault. There,
OK? Are we magically saved now? So
can it already. That's an order.

Brian shakes his head and looks back out the window.

66 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

66

Gordon and Helen slowly make their way through the woods.

HELEN
You sure you know where you're going.

GORDON
Trust me.
(looking around)
I think so.

They walk on in silence for a while. Finally, Helen breaks
the silence, speaking quietly.

HELEN
I'm glad I'm not very good with guns.

GORDON
Huh?

Helen motions with the tranquilizer gun.

HELEN
(with a smile)
You'd be asleep right now.

GORDON
I wish I was.

HELEN
I know what you mean.

GORDON
We'll be alright though.

HELEN
I hope so.

GORDON

I know so. Give yourself some credit--
I sure as hell am, and I'm a tough
sell.

Helen smiles warmly and puts her hand on Gordon's shoulder.

HELEN

Thanks.

Gordon smiles.

GORDON

Just stick close and pay attention.

HELEN

Landon was right, you should have
stayed on the force.

This stops Gordon in his tracks.

GORDON

You don't know the whole story.

HELEN

About the fire and the hikers?

Gordon reacts. He doesn't like thinking about this.

HELEN (CONT'D)

He told me. And there was nothing
you could have done. The fire was
spreading too fast and you'd have
been killed before you even got to
them.

GORDON

Tell that to their families. I took
the easy way out.

HELEN

So what are you doing here? Give
yourself some credit-- I sure as
hell am and I'm a tough sell.

She smiles at him and his mood brightens visibly.

GORDON

Tell ya what, let's hold the applause
till we get out of here.

Helen gives him a "yeah, I know what you mean" look.

They walk on a few seconds in silence. Suddenly Gordon stops
and puts his hand up for Helen to stop.

There is no sound, not even crickets.

HELEN
(very quiet)
What is it?

GORDON
Do you hear that?

HELEN
I don't hear anything.

GORDON
Exactly.

He motions to her gun and she raises it while he intently scans the surroundings, straining to hear. Helen looks scared again. But the crickets and other night sounds resume. Helen and Gordon look at each other with relief.

Suddenly a flash goes off, far in the woods.

HELEN
Lou.

GORDON
Come on.

They move off.

67 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

67

Lou continues trying to find her way to safety. She still uses the camera flash to see. Flash. Nothing. Flash. Nothing.

She sets the flash off again. This time, we see a shape behind her for a micro second. When the flash goes off again, it's gone.

Flash. Nothing. Flash. Nothing.

LOU
Come on.

68 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

68

Gordon and Helen run through the forest. The flashes out in the trees get brighter.

GORDON
Lou!

69 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

69

Lou looks in every direction and flashes the camera to see.

LOU
Where are you?

GORDON (O.S.)
We're coming, don't move!

LOU
I can't see you!

She turns and sets the flash off again. Nothing. Flash. Horror. The creature is right in front of her, gaping jaws glistening with drool!

70 EXT. FOREST -- NIGHT

70

Gordon and Helen run through the woods. They can hear a deep growl and a blood curdling scream for help that's cut horribly short.

GORDON
Lou! Lou!

They get to where the flash seemed to have come from. Gordon is ready with the shotgun.

But there's nothing there. Silence. No Lou. They look around, cautiously, using hand signals to communicate.

Gordon walks over to some bushes and looks behind them. He's shocked to see Lou's mangled remains there.

GORDON (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shit.

He bends down to see if she's still alive, but he first has to move part of the bush out of the way.

Meanwhile Helen approaches. We can clearly see that something is upsetting her. And then we see what it is: she holds up Lou's camera.

HELEN
Look.

Gordon turns toward her. The sight of the camera upsets him too.

HELEN (CONT'D)
What's that?

Gordon is uncomfortable at having to break the news.

GORDON

Lou. But I can't--

Suddenly Lou's hand grabs Gordon's and her eyes flash open! Gordon turns to her. Lou tries to talk but she's too ripped up to do anything but make some short choking sounds. Her face is covered with blood and tears fall from her eyes.

Helen jumps in and tries to help Gordon as he breaks the bushes away from Lou. But in a moment Lou's choking stops and her grip loosens letting her hand fall away from Gordon. Her dead eyes stare at the night sky.

Helen slumps back while Gordon gently closes Lou's eyes. Gordon looks over to Helen. She's in tears. She looks at Gordon.

HELEN

(crying)

It's my fault. She wouldn't have been here if it wasn't for me.

GORDON

It's not your fault.

HELEN

I killed her. I killed her.

She stands.

HELEN (CONT'D)

It's all my fault.

Gordon stands and moves to Helen.

HELEN (CONT'D)

She's dead!

Gordon grabs Helen.

GORDON

Helen.

She ignores him, lost in thought.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Helen it's not your fault, do you hear me? It's not your fault.

HELEN

She's just a kid. Just a kid and I killed her.

GORDON
No, Helen look at me, you did not
kill her, you understand?

Helen, still in tears, shakes her head continuously while
looking down at Lou.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Do you hear me?

He turns her head to look at him.

GORDON (CONT'D)
This is not your fault, do you
understand? Just... calm down.
It's gonna be OK.

Helen pulls away.

HELEN
It's not gonna be "OK", it's never
gonna be "OK!"

She walks away. Gordon follows. He catches up to her and
stops her.

GORDON
Listen to me.

Helen's head is down.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Listen to me! This is not your fault,
you did not kill her. There was
nothing you could have done.

HELEN
She was doing me a favor, being here.
She didn't want to come but she knew
I'd need help. And now...

GORDON
And now it's up to us to help the
others, which we can't do if we get
killed, understand?

Helen wipes her eyes.

GORDON (CONT'D)
We have to get back to the cabin and
help them. We are gonna beat this
thing. For Lou and Janet and Spencer
we are going to beat it.

Helen and Gordon eye each other for a moment. Gordon raises his brow as if to say "OK?" Helen's lips tighten into almost a smile.

But their little moment is short-lived. The sounds of the crickets dies down, throwing them into complete silence. Gordon looks around. Something catches his attention near Lou's body.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Run!

He pushes Helen in the right direction and the two of them race off.

The creature bursts through the bushes, stepping on Lou as it goes, and bounds off after them.

The following montage is intercut with POV shots from Helen and Gordon, plus ones from the creature in its distinctive "creature vision."

- Helen and Gordon race through the woods at top speed.
- The creature races through the woods.
- Helen and Gordon...
- The creature...
- Gordon turns and fires his shot gun.
- The creature keeps coming.
- Helen and Gordon climb over a fallen tree, wasting precious seconds.
- The creature is gaining.
- Gordon fires again.
- The creature keeps coming, easily leaping over the fallen tree.
- Wild fear shows in Helen's eyes.
- The creature's feet stomp on everything in their path.
- Gordon tries to get a clear shot as he runs.
- The creature keeps coming.
- Gordon and Helen jump over a deep gully.
- The creature roars.

-- Helen and Gordon race for their lives.

-- The creature bounds over the gully.

-- Helen and Gordon reach a dead end. They're standing at the edge of a deep ravine, with nowhere to go. Gordon pumps his shotgun and turns to face...

-- The creature runs toward them at top speed.

-- Gordon tries to get the creature in his sights but the erratic movement of the creature as it runs makes it difficult. He shoots. BANG!

-- The creature keeps coming.

-- POV down the barrel of the shotgun.

-- Gordon's eyes in intense concentration

-- POV down the barrel of the shotgun. The creature's head is perfectly lined up in the sight.

-- Gordon pulls the trigger. Click!

GORDON (CONT'D)

Damn!

-- Gordon lowers the shot gun only to see the creature is nearly upon them. BANG! He looks over to see Helen with the tranquilizer gun aimed right at the creature!

-- The creature barrels down on them, the tranquilizer dart clearly sticking out on its chest.

-- Gordon turns the shot gun around, grabbing it by the barrel, ready to use it as a club.

-- The creature is nearly upon them, but now is slowed down a little and as if its focus is lost. The tranquilizer is clearly taking effect but it might be too late.

-- Gordon and Helen brace themselves.

-- The creature, having trouble staying on foot hurtles toward them but passes right between them, falling into the ravine!

Gordon and Helen hear branches breaking as the creature falls. Then silence. They peer over the edge but can't see anything.

HELEN

Is it dead?

GORDON
I don't intend to find out, let's
go.

Helen still looks down the ravine.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Come on!

He grabs her arm and they run off.

71 INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

71

Brian, Landon, and Ethan are very quiet.

ETHAN
He's been gone awfully long.

LANDON
He'll be back.

ETHAN
I hope Helen and Lou are okay.

Suddenly Brian straightens up.

BRIAN
Something's coming.

LANDON
Someone or something?

BRIAN
I can't tell.

With Ethan's help, Landon hobbles over to the front window.

Soon, they can make out the dim shapes of Gordon and Helen coming out of the woods.

GORDON (O.S.)
Hey, in the jail, open up!

ETHAN
Get the door.

Landon opens the door and Gordon and Helen come in. Ethan and Helen are quick to embrace each other.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Oh God, Helen. Are you okay?

HELEN
I'm fine.

ETHAN

You sure?

HELEN

Yes, I'm just glad Gordon found me.
Are you okay?

ETHAN

Yeah, fine. Where's Lou?

Gordon shakes his head and tosses the camera down. Landon pats Gordon on the shoulder.

Brian is visibly shaken by the news. Gordon turns to him.

GORDON

Keep an eye out front.

Brian seems to have a new respect for Gordon.

BRIAN

You got it.

Brian gets back to his post at the front window.

GORDON

Alright. We need to start figuring out what the hell is going on out there and what we can do.

He looks at Ethan and especially at Helen.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Now, what the fuck is that thing?

HELEN

I don't know.

GORDON

Well you gotta have some *ideas*, right? Smart girl like you? Come on, what kind of animal would hunt a human?

ETHAN

You think it's hunting us?

GORDON

Well it sure as shit ain't baking fucking cupcakes.

(to Helen, softer)

So, ideas.

HELEN

If it is Gigantopithecus, or a relative, that would explain some things. This thing's hunting skills are downright... scary. It actually seems to be using some sort of tactic.

GORDON

Definitely. Is that normal gorilla behavior?

HELEN

No. I mean, I've seen gorillas and other apes defend territory and hunt, but not like this.

BRIAN

Now hold on, lot's of animals defend territory.

HELEN

Beating off an intruder is one thing. Methodically stalking them is another.

ETHAN

Why would it be hunting us? Clearly not for food.

Gordon turns and looks at Ethan.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

And if it was territory, aren't we out of it by now? Otherwise, why didn't it attack while we were on our way in?

GORDON

Why do you think?

HELEN

Because we disturbed sacred ground.

LANDON

Sacred?

BRIAN

What the hell does that mean? They're fucking animals. They wouldn't know what fucking sacred is.

GORDON

Obviously they do.

LANDON

What makes you think the ground was sacred?

HELEN

Look at the facts. We are dealing with an obviously intelligent creature.

BRIAN

What?

HELEN

Intelligent enough to bury it's dead consistently-- the same way every time. And we came in and pulled those bones right from the ground.

BRIAN

That doesn't make it intelligent.

LANDON

Right.

GORDON

Well maybe you geniuses haven't noticed the way this thing is hunting us. It hides, grabbing whoever is the easiest target. And that was a god damned trap, that Ethan fell into.

ETHAN

Well our solution is simple. We stay close together the rest of the way. If this thing's taking us one at a time, we just won't give it the opportunity.

GORDON

That's a good theory, Doc. And we'll be able to try your little gamble at first light. Till then, I suggest we keep a rotating watch.

BRIAN

I ain't sleeping.

72 EXT. CABIN -- NIGHT

72

The moon is out and the cabin looks downright eerie in its glow.

73 INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

73

Landon and Ethan both sit on the edge of the bed. Brian is at the broken back wall of the cabin. Gordon stands by the front window.

Helen looks at pictures on Lou's camera. They are images of everyone from the team, as well as shots of the wild. Some pictures make her smile, like a picture of Spencer and Janet, and other people from the team laughing and smiling.

The pictures also evoke a sense of sheer sadness and fear. The shots of the mangled bear, for example, make her cringe.

At one point, she looks up and notices Gordon watching her, and looking over her shoulder at the pictures. They exchange a glance, acknowledging each other. Gordon smiles slightly and moves away.

Then Helen comes across the pictures Lou took when she was alone. The woods at night as she tried to find her way. Then the image of the creature as it is about to kill Lou.

HELEN

Oh my god, we got a picture of it.

She shows the picture to the others.

GORDON

Yeah, that's it. Mean son of a bitch.

Helen takes the camera and places it down.

BRIAN

This forest sucks, Landon. As soon as we get outta here I'm on the first plane back to P.A.

Landon turns to Gordon.

LANDON

What's it look like out there?

GORDON

Dark.

BRIAN

Do you know how to get back to the road from here?

GORDON

I got a pretty good idea.

Helen looks at the old bones that lie on the floor of the cabin.

HELEN
I wonder what happened in here.

ETHAN
Who knows?

HELEN
Look at this.

She points to one of the skeletons.

HELEN (CONT'D)
The clothes are all ripped up. These poor people must have been beaten to death.

LANDON
I wonder who they were?

Helen stands and begins looking through more of the junk in the place.

ETHAN
Well, I can tell you they've been here for at least 75, maybe 80 years. Probably more.

LANDON
(massaging his wounded leg)
Yeah, well someone should have told them leaving all those bear traps out there is a bad idea.

BRIAN
Fucking hillbillies. What the hell would they need that many for, anyway?

GORDON
Depends, were they trapping, or defending?

They look at the skeletons. The bones are really mashed up.

ETHAN
You think it was that thing out there?

GORDON
Whatever it was, they went out pretty bloody and painfully.

Helen grabs a dusty picture from some rubble near the fireplace.

HELEN

Hey, Ethan, do you remember the name of those people that brought the first bone to the museum?

ETHAN

The fur trappers?

HELEN

Yeah. Wasn't it Horace something?

ETHAN

Peasley. Horace J. Peasley and his wife.

HELEN

Oh shit.

She shows him the picture. It's of a couple, probably in their late forties. The man has a long beard and wears a ragged black suit. The woman wears a dark full length dress that looks extremely uncomfortable. They stand proudly in front of a cart loaded high with pelts.

There is a sign hanging on the side of the cart: "Peasley's Pelts."

BRIAN

Are you saying that thing out there is a hundred years old.

GORDON

What makes you think that's the same one that killed them?

HELEN

More importantly, What makes you think there's only one of them?

The thought finally hits everyone that there may be more.

BRIAN

As if I wasn't shittin' enough before.

LANDON

No kidding.

Ethan walks to the desk and does some rummaging.

LANDON (CONT'D)

If there were more than one, wouldn't they just all come down and kill us?

HELEN

Not necessarily. With gorillas, the only one that does any territory fighting is the alpha male. Unless things get really ugly, then the others come to help.

BRIAN

Great. So they have a sense of community only when it comes to war. Lovely.

ETHAN

We're no different.

Helen looks at the picture again. This hundred year-old picture is very upsetting to her.

HELEN

I guess we know why they never went back to the museum.

(looking around)

They must have barricaded themselves in when they realized what they were up against.

LANDON

Imagine being all alone out here with those things.

GORDON

I think I got a pretty good idea.

Ethan notices something in the rubble and picks it up. His eyes light up.

ETHAN

Hey, look at this.

GORDON

What is it?

Gordon takes it. It's a crude, hand-drawn map.

GORDON (CONT'D)

It's a map. It's a God damned map of the area.

HELEN

Is it right? Would the road be on there?

LANDON

Well, it can't be too far off. This place hasn't changed in years.

GORDON

Nah, this is good. Look, The river,
the lake. That would put the...
just imagine the radio towers here.
And it looks like we're about here.

LANDON

Right. That puts the road over here.

They look at the distance between where Gordon points to the cabin, and where Landon points to the road.

BRIAN

We're screwed.

GORDON

Nah, we can do this in a few hours.

SNAP! Their attention is drawn to the loud snap of one of the traps outside. Followed by a blood curdling growl.

Everyone jumps to the back of the room.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Shit!

BRIAN

It's here!

GORDON

Get down!

Things become very quiet. Gordon grabs his shotgun and points it at the window.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Anybody else got a flashlight?

BRIAN

I lost mine.

GORDON

Great.

It's too dark outside to see anything. Brian is at the back wall, looking out.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Brian?

BRIAN

(shaking his head)

Nothing.

ETHAN

It's out there.

Suddenly, from the hole in the wall, something grabs Brian and yanks him out! Gordon runs over and looks out, shotgun ready, but there's nothing to see. He looks back at the others, who are now sticking close together in the middle of the room.

Suddenly, a blood curdling roar, followed by the snap of a bear trap springing and a shattering human scream.

Silence.

A growling roar, then SNAP! Another scream, this time from another side of the cabin.

Everyone turns.

SNAP! Another scream, this one weaker. Everyone is a hair's breadth from uncontrolled panic. Except Gordon. He's listening intently, following the sounds with his shotgun.

Two more traps snap shut.

HELEN

Shoot it!

GORDON

I can't see it!

There is more growling as the traps continue to be sprung! With each snap of a trap, there is a monstrous growl and the blood-chilling screams of a man being tortured.

Landon hobbles to the front door and opens it. He begins firing shots into the darkness. The flash from the muzzle reveals the shape of a huge beast out front.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Shut the door!

With each flash, Landon sees the creature in a different place, but by the time he fires, it is someplace else.

Gordon sees something in the darkness at the rear of the cabin and fires. A shape runs by in the flash from the gun.

GORDON (CONT'D)

It's back here!

Landon continues to shoot blindly out the door.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Shut the door!

LANDON
Come on you son of a bitch!

GORDON
Shut the door!

Gordon moves to Landon and throws him to the side. A bear trap comes twirling in at them. Gordon quickly slams the door.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Save your god damned ammo!

LANDON
It was right there.

GORDON
You're seeing things. It's out back.

LANDON
I'm telling you, I saw it!

Another growl and another SNAP! But no scream...

There is an eerie silence. Helen looks up at Gordon.

HELEN
There's more than one of them out there.

GORDON
Coming in to help the alpha male.

LANDON
War.

There is a loud thud on the wall of the cabin. Gordon points the gun at the wall.

Then two more traps are sprung and the growling seems to circle the cabin.

Gordon follows it. He slowly spins in the room. He tracks with the gun, now pointing at the others, aiming at the wall behind them. Turning slowly. He completes his turn with his gun pointing at the front window.

There is dead silence again.

GORDON
Get down!

Gordon ducks just in time-- the front window crashes in as something huge is flung through it.

He quickly rises and fires out the broken window, then looks out but can't see anything.

Finally he turns back to his friends. Their faces are frozen in horror, staring down. He looks down and is met with an unimaginable sight: Brian's mangled, body lies on the floor, a bear trap clamped across his face. Huge chunks of flesh have been torn out of him.

There is an awful growl, a roar that fades off outside as it seems to disappear into the woods. Then there is nothing but the soft howl of the wind coming in through the shattered window.

FADE OUT.

74 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING 74

The sun hasn't quite broken the horizon, and the valleys of the deep forest still sit in darkness.

75 INT. CABIN -- MORNING 75

Landon is perched by the remains of the front window as the others prepare to leave. Brian's body lies on the bed, covered as well as possible by the remnants of a sheet.

GORDON

How's it looking out there?

LANDON

I haven't seen anything.

HELEN

Well, that's good, right?

GORDON

Doesn't mean something isn't watching us.

ETHAN

Jesus. A little optimism might help us, you know?

GORDON

Okay, how's this for optimistic? We still have at least a full day before we get back to the road, your head's still messed up, and Landon's leg sure as hell ain't gonna make things go any faster. Did I forget anything?

LANDON

Well, we have the map.

(MORE)

LANDON (CONT'D)
That's a plus. At least we know
which way to go for sure.

GORDON
Hey, there ya go. Optimism. Okay,
come on. I want everyone to stay
sharp.

ETHAN
I don't know about this.

GORDON
You wanna quit Ethan?

ETHAN
That'll be the day.

Gordon at Helen and Ethan.

GORDON
Okay. You two help Landon.

LANDON
I think I'm okay to walk on it.

GORDON
Yeah, well lets keep you off it till
it's time to run.

HELEN
Oh, wait.

Helen turns and grabs Lou's camera.

76 EXT. CABIN -- MORNING

76

Gordon slowly steps out from the front door, shotgun pumped
and ready. He looks around and signals to the others that
the coast seems clear.

The others cautiously follow, Helen and Ethan helping Landon
walk. Landon takes one last sad look back into the cabin at
Brian's body, then continues on.

ETHAN
Where are they?

Gordon looks around.

GORDON
I don't know.

LANDON
Maybe we scared them off?

GORDON
Not likely.

HELEN
They won't stay out in the open.

GORDON
Look at this.

He points to the ground. There's some blood and hair in the dirt. The area near it looks like something has been dragged across it.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Something was dragged away here.

LANDON
Think I got one?

GORDON
Looks that way.

As they walk, they notice all the sprung bear traps. They have dried, sticky blood on them. Pieces of flesh and torn clothes dangle from the clamps. Pieces of Brian.

Helen forces her eyes shut and turns away. Ethan, Landon and Gordon look at the trap and at another nearby.

Gordon points to a trap with blood and thick, dark hair on it.

GORDON (CONT'D)
This look like one of our boys, Doc?

ETHAN
Could be-- you've seen more than I have.

GORDON
Well, chalk one up for the fur traders. I bet they're smiling somewhere.

HELEN
I'm glad.

They walk away from the cabin.

77 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

77

The small group walks slowly, cautiously. Landon is doing better now and just needs Ethan's help.

They walk and walk, and walk, constantly scanning the surrounding area for any movement. As they walk even more, Gordon turns to Ethan.

GORDON
Hey Doc, I got a question for you.

ETHAN
Yeah?

GORDON
What was in your backpack?

ETHAN
My gear, what do you think?

GORDON
That's it?

ETHAN
Yeah. Gear, a few samples from the site, canteen... the usual.

GORDON
Samples? You mean bones.

ETHAN
Of course.

GORDON
Un huh. Where were they?

ETHAN
I don't follow.

They stop.

GORDON
Your backpack and everything in it was torn to shreds. Where were the bones?

HELEN
You think it's been looking for the bones?

GORDON
Well, it wasn't doing anything until we started messing with those bones.

ETHAN
Damn, I'm such an idiot!

LANDON
But if they got the bones, why are
they still after us?

ETHAN
They must think we have more.

HELEN
I don't think so. I think it's
because we're a threat.

LANDON
Us?

HELEN
Yes, we've drawn their blood. As
long as we're even close to their
territory, we're a threat they've
got to eliminate.
(to Gordon)
So what's that again, that bringing
guns is a good idea?

She raises a brow to Gordon. His eyes speak for him: point
taken.

LANDON
Well let's get the hell out of their
territory.

They start walking again.

78 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

78

They continue. Everyone is exhausted, but at least Landon
is now able to hobble around on his own.

Something gets their attention. The trees in the woods around
them sway.

GORDON
What the hell...

ETHAN
Now what's going on?

GORDON
Huddle up!

They all come together, standing back to back. They've got
their guns pulled and watch, looking for anything to happen.

ETHAN
What the hell are they doing?

GORDON
Stay quiet. Just keep your eyes
open.

The sounds in the woods stop. They wait and listen.

HELEN
I think they're gone.

LANDON
We should keep moving.

GORDON
(quietly)
Nobody fucking move.

This only makes everyone more nervous. They stare off in every direction.

They wait a few seconds more.

HELEN
Gordon?

He doesn't answer. He just stares out into the woods.

HELEN (CONT'D)
How far from the road are we?

Landon sees that Gordon is too busy to answer.

LANDON
About a mile.

Then it happens. From high above, the creature jumps down on them. We can get a better look at it now. It's light gray mane, seen clearly over the rest of its brown body.

Everyone jumps out of the way and Gordon fires. Before the creature can grab anyone, it disappears into the brush.

GORDON
Go!

Gordon helps them up and they run off in the direction he pushes them.

79 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

79

Helen, Ethan and Landon stop running as a creature jumps across the path they are on, right in front of them. Ethan fires his sidearm, but he's not very good and the creature is gone too quick.

GORDON (O.S.)

Don't stop!

But before they can start gain, the creature suddenly reappears and grabs Landon and takes off into the woods!

With lightning speed, Gordon runs in, takes aim and shoots. The creature is hit and does a face plant to the ground. It staggers up and runs away, without Landon.

HELEN

You got it!

They all run to Landon. He's hurt even more, but alive.

GORDON

Can you make it?

LANDON

I don't know.

Gordon turns to Helen and Ethan.

GORDON

Help him. I'll cover.

Helen and Ethan lift Landon to his feet. He puts his arms around their shoulders for support, wincing in pain.

The sounds begin around them again. Everyone looks around.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Move!

Gordon pushes them in the right direction. He looks behind them and can see dark shapes, running behind the trees, towards them.

80 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

80

Gordon runs behind the others. Bushes shake along side of them as they run. He opens fire.

As the dense undergrowth disappears and the trees thin out, the others can see the creatures running along side them. These are solid brown, no light gray mane.

As they run, Gordon fires around them. Ethan and Helen drag an almost unconscious Landon with them.

An occasional shape darts down in front of them, then dives away from the gun shots.

81 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

81

Gordon drops back, trying to give Ethan, Helen and Landon some cover as they make a break for the road.

The large creature with the mane comes running behind him. It is on two legs, and doesn't stop even as Gordon fires directly at it! Then it drops into it's, by now, very familiar animalistic gate on all fours!

GORDON (CONT'D)

Shit...

Gordon turns and runs.

82 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

82

We're running along with Ethan and Helen now as they scramble for safety. All around are the shrieks of the creatures, and it's deafening.

The forest ahead suddenly gets brighter, and almost without warning they're out!

83 EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- MORNING

83

The Jeep is there, only a couple hundred feet ahead, and they race toward it.

ETHAN

(to Helen)

Start the Jeep!

Helen lets go of Landon and runs ahead to start the Jeep. The engine roars to life!

Meanwhile, Landon slips from Ethan's grasp and they fall to the ground. Ethan struggles to lift the unconscious Landon.

Helen sees them on the ground and runs to help. Ethan looks back at her.

ETHAN

Get back!

Helen continues to run toward them, suddenly a creature grabs her from behind and darts to the woods with her!

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Helen!

Gordon comes running out of the thick foliage just in time to see the creature disappear with Helen.

GORDON
Get him in the Jeep!

Gordon turns and hightails it into the forest.

84 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

84

Gordon runs at full speed. Ahead of him he can see the creature carrying Helen.

Gordon fires.

The creature stops and turns. It growls with rage and uses the only weapon it has at hand: it throws Helen at Gordon!

GORDON
Shit!

Gordon braces himself to help cushion Helen's fall. They both hit the ground hard.

The creature rises up to its full height and roars as it stands above them. Gordon fires! The creature falls back, dead.

Gordon and Helen scramble to their feet and start running back to the road.

The large creature with the gray mane sees them run and has seen them kill the other creature. It roars in anger and takes off after them.

85 EXT. FOREST -- MORNING

85

It's a race for life, and Gordon and Helen have just enough of a head start to possibly make it. A moment later they make it out of the forest!

The Jeep is ready for them, but the creature is gaining fast.

GORDON
(to Helen)
Go! Go! Go!

Helen scrambles toward the jeep while Gordon stops and turns around.

ETHAN
It's coming!

The bushes part and the creature races for them.

Gordon's shotgun rises. The creature is nearly upon him.

BAM! The creature is hit but keeps coming.

BAM! It keeps coming! It leaps, racing through the air toward Gordon!

BAM! A solid shot to the head but the creature's momentum carries it through its arc and Gordon barely manages to roll out of the way in time.

The creature is dead and Gordon jumps to his feet, shotgun pumped and ready just in case.

But the victory is short-lived. The trees begin to rustle again and the shrieks of the creatures begin again, this time with more ferocity, if such a thing is even possible.

HELEN

Come on!

ETHAN

Let's go, let's go!

Gordon takes a last quick look down at the bloody heap in front of him then runs into the Jeep and jumps into the back.

Ethan spins around and steps on the gas, just as a group of the creatures emerge from the woods. Gordon barely has time to dive into the Jeep.

But the creatures stop at the body of the dead one.

Gordon watches from the bouncy back of the Jeep. It's hard to make out, but it looks like the other creatures are taking the dead one away.

86 EXT. FOREST ROADSIDE -- MORNING

86

The Jeep speeds away, down the winding road.

87 EXT. ROAD -- MORNING

87

The Jeep pulls into view from around a curve and stops. Helen and Ethan breathe a big tense sigh, and turn to Gordon, who's only halfway in the back of the Jeep.

Gordon puts down his gun and climbs the rest of the way in. He looks at Helen and Ethan.

GORDON

You guys OK?

ETHAN

Yeah.

Helen just nods. She's a trooper, but it's obvious that she's having a hard time coping.

Gordon looks down at Landon, who has regained consciousness.

LANDON
Man, I really owe you one.

GORDON
Let's not start that again, we're even.

LANDON
Right.

HELEN
I owe you one though.

GORDON
Well that we can talk about.

Gordon and Helen's eyes meet and they exchange a smile.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Ethan you OK to drive?

ETHAN
I'm fine.

He turns to Helen.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Let's go home Debbie.

HELEN
Debbie?

ETHAN
(smiling)
Never mind.

Ethan throws the Jeep into gear and it drives away.

DISSOLVE TO:

88 EXT. FOREST -- DAY

88

The dead creature lies in a shallow grave as dirt and leaves are pushed over him.

FADE OUT

THE END