

Flush

Adaptation of the best selling novel

By

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Screenplay

By

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EXT. FLORIDA KEYS BEACH SUNRISE- MORNING

The bright sun rises with the towering cumulous clouds of summer. The CAMERA tracks a flock of birds flying along the shoreline, landing on a large sign THUNDER BEACH CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. The CAMERA pulls back revealing dozens of unhappy kids with beach gear and bikes staring up at the sign.

EXT. MARINA HARBOR - VERY LATE -NIGHT

CAMERA tracks through a marina full of older pleasure boats and fishing boats. Everything sits very still. The CAMERA leaves the dock and moves out to a large multi-deck gambling boat THE CORAL QUEEN adrift in the harbor.

INT. CORAL QUEEN - NIGHT

A series of QUICK CUTS over music tell the story.

TIGHT on a wrench opening a drain bolt. Water gushes in. A knife cuts through a large hose. Water rushes over hatches and down the carpeted halls spraying everywhere. As water and electricity get to know each other, sparks and short circuits light up all the slot machines in the dark casino. The boat begins to list, chairs and card tables slide across the deck. A wave of water washes away cards and chips as the ship continues to sink.

WIDE shot reveals bow of the boat with its name THE CORAL QUEEN as it disappears below the water line.

INT. MARATHON JAIL - DAY

The LOUD BUZZ of the cellblock door closing. A nervous young boy, NOAH UNDERWOOD, 14, blond, tan and a typical Florida youngster, goes to a table, empties his pockets in front of a uniformed OFFICER. Two sticks of gum, some grip tape and two quarters are placed on a table. The officer leads him by the arm into an interrogation room where he sits and waits.

TIGHT on Noah's face looking around the room and at the two way glass. He takes a deep breath. The clock ticks loudly. The door opens and a large OFFICER escorts PAINE UNDERWOOD into the room., Paine is in his forties, wearing jeans and a fishing shirt. His face, weathered by years in the sun, is expressionless. Slowly he pulls out a chair and sits across from Noah. They stare at each other for a moment, then Noah speaks up.

NOAH
Happy Father's day, dad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAINE

(a beat)

Thanks, son.

NOAH

They let you keep your own clothes? I figured they'd make you wear one of those dorky jump suits.

PAINE

They're outta my size. You doing okay?

NOAH

How come you won't let mom bail you out?

PAINE

Because I need to be here right now.

NOAH

Mom says you'll lose your job if you stay locked up!

PAINE

She's probably right. It won't be much of a loss. I hate driving that cab.

NOAH

I know.

PAINE

(brightly)

Did you see what I did?

NOAH

Not yet.

PAINE

(giving him a wink)

Its impressive. You got to know what you are doing to sink a 75 footer.

NOAH

I'll bet.

The guard holds up two fingers to indicate time left.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PAINE

Noah, I know right from wrong, I just got carried away... Is mom still ticked off?

NOAH

What'ya think? She asked if she should call the same lawyer.

PAINE

Yeah, he's alright. I tried to explain it to her but she wouldn't listen.

NOAH

Then maybe you could explain it to me, I'm old enough to understand.

PAINE

I believe you are, Noah.

Paine looks around then leans closer and starts to explain.

EXT. ROAD - A BIT LATER

The road runs along the bay, where fishermen cast lines, sailboats and jet skis skim along the water. Noah, deep in thought, pushes his rusty beach cruiser along the road. He jumps as ABBEY UNDERWOOD, his mature, lanky and beautiful younger sister, skids her bike to a stop in front of him.

ABBHEY

So, what's the deal?

NOAH

He says he got carried away again.

ABBHEY

No, duh. But why is he staying in jail? Its Father's Day!

NOAH

I guess he's trying to make a point.

ABBHEY

All he's making is a jackass of himself

NOAH

Abbey, hush.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

Well, if mom leaves, where does that leave us?

NOAH

I don't know...Come on.

Noah jumps on his bike and peddles fast. Abbey chases after him.

EXT. MARINA-- MOMENTS LATER

They ride up and stop. What they see shocks them. Several small coast guard inflatables, filled with crewmen, are circling the half-sunk bow of the wrecked Coral Queen. It looks like a big ugly apartment building has been dropped in the center of the marina basin blocking the channel as angry boaters look on.

NOAH

Whoa, he really did it this time.

ABBEY

He's lost his marbles.

NOAH

The casino boat has been dumping its holding tanks into the water.

ABBEY

Yuk. You mean the poop?

NOAH

Dad says he does it in the middle of the night when nobody's around.

ABBEY

That's so gross.

NOAH

And totally illegal. Dad said he's a cheapskate and has been doing it for years. That's why Thunder beach is closed all the time.

ABBEY

Why didn't he call the Coast Guard?

NOAH

He tried, but Dad thinks someone is tipping him off. If you swim in that water you can get really sick..from both ends!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

ECCH! I don't want to hear any more.

The Coast Guard boats continue to put yellow floating bumpers out to contain the mess from spreading.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

So now what?

NOAH

Dad wants me to help him.

ABBEY

Help him what? Break out of jail?

NOAH

Yeah...Get serious.

ABBEY

Then what?

NOAH

He wants me to help him nail Dusty Muleman the guy who's doing all this.

Noah smiles and they get on their bikes and ride away.

EXT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE DOCK - EVENING

Across the bay, an old shrimp boat cuts a silhouette through the setting orange sun as Noah, Abbey and their mother, DONNA UNDERWOOD sit on their dock eating crabs. Donna, mid thirties, athletic and strong, although the lines on her pretty face shows the years of worry.

ABBEY

Do you think grandpa could be out there somewhere?

DONNA

Honey, its been ten years now since he disappeared. Your father is still fighting with the state department over what they say happened down there.

ABBEY

That old shrimp boat made me think of him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

I know honey. Me too.

(changing the mood)

Now who wants some key lime pie?

Their faces brighten, and they jump up and run in the house.

EXT. MARINA DOCKSIDE- MORNING

A small crowd watches as scuba divers, boats and men are making the last preparations to raise the Coral Queen. Looking on from the dock, JASPER MULEMAN JR, Dusty's 15 year old bully of a son, buzz cut, mean and mad at world for being named Jasper. Noah, sporting a fishing cap and trying to keep a low profile, also looks on. As the work continues around the boat, Noah gets a strong shove from behind, the bully has found him.

JASPER JR.

Your crazy father sunk our boat!

NOAH

What are you talking about?

JASPER JR.

You're going to pay for this Underwood...I'm going to kick your butt from here to Miami.

NOAH

I don't think so.

JASPER JR.

Yeah? And why don't you think so, dorkface?

NOAH

Because your dad's about to come over here and kick yours.

JASPER "Dusty" MULEMAN SR. short, bald and out of shape is down the dock yelling and waving his arms at Jasper.

JASPER JR.

Crap!

(threatening)

I'll see you later.

He runs up the dock. Noah looks out at the Coral Queen as it pops to the surface, inflated by bladders that force out the water. The crowd applauds. Abbey walks up and hands Noah the other half of a mango.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

How can dad be sure that's the boat doing the dumping?

NOAH

Because there was never poop in the water until the Coral Queen got here.

Jasper Mulemen and Dusty argue in the lot by a black SUV

ABBEY

Is that Muleman?

NOAH

Yeah. He and dad used to be fishing guides together but ever since he partnered up with the Miccosukee Indians on that boat, he's been raking it in.

ABBEY

If dad was serious, why didn't he burn the darn thing down to the water line?

NOAH

Don't give him any ideas.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Off an old road that parallels the highway, Noah crosses up to a rusty, rundown trailer. He knocks a few times at the door. SHELLY, mid 30's tall, slender, with bright blond hair and a barbwire tattoo around her bicep, comes to the door.

SHELLY

What?

NOAH

Does Lice Peeking live here?

SHELLY

(annoyed)

Hang on.

After some yelling from the inside, Shelly pushes LICE PEEKING to the door. Lice is a walking combination of beer and body odor, nursing a major hangover, about forty but looking like a sick iguana.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LICE
 (looking down and
 grunting)
 This better be good.

SHELLY
 I'm goin' to the store.

LICE
 Shelly, get me some smokes.

SHELLY
 You quit! And I ain't gonna tell
 you again.

INT. TRAILER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lice heads to the couch and Noah follows him

LICE
 Who are you again?

NOAH
 Noah Underwood.

LICE
 Paine's boy?

NOAH
 That's right. He asked me to come
 see you.

LICE
 About what?

NOAH
 Mr. Muleman

Lice starts to hack hard and then digs in the couch and
 pull out a half smoked, mushed up cigarette. He lights it
 and takes a satisfying draw then hacks some more.

LICE
 What do you want, boy?

NOAH
 Its about the Coral Queen. Dad
 said that you worked on her and
 they are dumping her holding tanks
 into the marina at night.

LICE
 Really? Well, let's just say that's
 true. What's it got to do with me
 or the price of potatoes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

My father's in jail, for sinking
it.

Lice starts to laugh which turns to a hack, which turns
to a near asthma attack.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Please, will you help us?

LICE

Now why would I do a dumb fool
thing like that for?... Help you
do what?]

NOAH

The pollution is killing Thunder
Beach, and kids are getting sick,
and turtles are washing up dead.

LICE

(thinking about it)
What's in it for me?

NOAH

We don't have much but Dad said he
would give you his truck.

LICE

I already got wheels besides they
yanked my license. What else?

NOAH

...let me talk to my dad, but will
you at least think about it?

LICE

You listen here. What do I care
about baby sea turtles? I got my
own survival to worry about.

Noah gets up and walks to the door. Lice follows him out.
Finding his nerve, Noah turns back to him.

NOAH

How come you don't work for Mr.
Muleman anymore?

LICE

Because he fired me...for
stealin'.

NOAH

How much?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LICE

It wasn't money, it was Shelly.

NOAH

Really?

LICE

What can I say? I needed a lady with a big heart and a valid driver's license.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE - DAY

Donna Underwood is busy in the kitchen chopping onions, then throwing them in the trash. Tears run down her face, as Noah enters. She grabs a dish towel to hide the tears.

DONNA

Damn onions!

NOAH

(seeing through her)
Mom, nobody here eats onions.
How's dad?

DONNA

Oh, he's just dandy.

NOAH

When's he getting out?

DONNA

Well, that's entirely up to him. I've offered to put up his bail but he would rather sit alone in a cramped roach-infested cell than be home with his family. Maybe the lawyer can talk some sense into him.

NOAH

Think they'll let me visit him again?

DONNA

I don't see why not. It isn't as if his social schedule is all booked up. Your Uncle Del wanted to send some hotshot Miami attorney down here to handle his case but I told him not to bother.

NOAH

You're right. It's not such a big deal

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

(snapping at him)

That's not what I said Noah. It is a big deal. I am at the end of my rope with your father

NOAH

Mom, everything's going to work out...

DONNA

...you children need food on the table! The mortgage needs to be paid!...He could of taken some of the money that grandpa stashed, but no he wouldn't have anything to do with it. Meanwhile he's sitting in jail, talking about fighting for principles. He wants to be a martyr, Noah that's fine, but not at the expense of this family. I won't stand for it.

NOAH

It's a rough time---

DONNA

(cutting him off)

Go clean your room!

As Noah walks out and down the hall, he sees Abbey with her finger to her lips. She waves him to follow her to her mothers room. Lying on the bed is a large plaid suitcase.

NOAH

Uh-oh

ABBEY

She's serious this time, Noah. We've got to do something.

INT. MARATHON JAIL- INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Noah and Paine sit alone in the room.

PAINE

No way! How'd he float it so fast?

NOAH

They must have had twenty guys working on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAINE

I should've sunk it way out in the Gulf Stream.

NOAH

Mom said you might get transferred to the stockade in Key West.

PAINE

Nah, the lieutenant here likes me. I'm teaching him to play chess.

NOAH

Since when do you play chess?

PAINE

Shhhh, he thinks I do. Did you see Lice Peeking?

NOAH

Dad he didn't want the truck, he wants money instead.

PAINE

See if Lice will take the bonefish skiff. I know you love it but its all we got. Did you meet Shelly?

NOAH

Yes, she's kind of scary...Dad, when you coming home?

PAINE

I need to stay here to show I'm totally committed to the cause. Prisons are full of people who spoke up and lost their freedom. Look at Nelson Mandela, twenty seven years in prison in South Africa. A couple of weeks won't hurt me.

NOAH

But mom misses you,
(fighting a lump in
his throat)
and Abbey and I miss you.

PAINE

(caught off guard)
I wish it didn't have to be like this.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Noah knocks at the door but no one answers. As he turns to leave, Shelly comes around the corner, startling him. She's barefoot, with a long rusty shovel.

SHELLY

What do you want now?

NOAH

I need to speak to Mr. Peeking again.

SHELLY

Well, he's not available.

NOAH

(nervous)
I'll come back another time.

SHELLY

Don't worry, it wasn't Lice I was burying. Lobsters are out of season, and the stink of the shells is a dead giveaway. Follow me.

They go inside the trailer where Lice lays passed out on the couch. Noah is uncomfortable.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Don't worry, he ain't dead, yet.

She opens the fridge and hands Noah a beer.

NOAH

No thanks.

SHELLY

I've known your daddy since he and Dusty used to fish charters. He was always a gentleman- your daddy, not Dusty.

NOAH

(not comfortable
here)
Yes ma'am.

SHELLY

Why you actin' so skittery?

NOAH

I'm going to be late for my violin practice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHELLY

Now, Noah, that ain't the truth,
is it?

NOAH

No, ma'am.

SHELLY

Please don't grow up to be one of
those men who lie for the sport of
it, like most men. That's why this
world is so messed up. History
books are full of liars. Kings,
politicians, those phoney baloney
preachers. Don't you dare grow up
to be like that.

She sits on the couch, and puts her feet on Lice's head
like a footstool.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

I'd like to find an honest guy, or
at least one that don't drink.

NOAH

I better be going.

(standing)

Shelly, you worked on the Coral
Queen, right?

SHELLY

I tended bar there for three very
long years.

NOAH

Did you every hear of anything
crooked going on with that boat?

SHELLY

Crooked how?

NOAH

Like dumping sewage into the
water.

SHELLY

The only sewage I ever saw was the
human kind...This has something to
do with your old man, doesn't it?

NOAH

Maybe...OK. Yes.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE - DAY

Donna is in the kitchen with MR SHINE, a weathered old attorney, mopey and gray, who might have slept in his suit.

MR. SHINE

I've tried to convince him to make bail, but he doesn't seem interested.

Abbey and Noah stroll in and start picking at the food that on the table.

DONNA

You kids run along, we need to talk.

Abbey grabs a bagel and Noah takes his spinning rod out of the closet and they are out the door.

EXT. BRIDGE - LATER

Noah rides up looking up under the bridge for drifters sees no one and parks his bike by the water. He starts to cast, when he spots a small row boat full of trouble on the beach. On the bow is CHARLES "BULL" WILLIAMS, overweight and in bred, which would also describe his passenger, Jasper Jr. Noah tries to duck behind a tree but it's too late.

BULL

Hey buttface you better run for your life, Jasper's got a spear gun!

NOAH

Yeah, right.

JASPER JR.

I told you I was gonna find you.

NOAH

Yeah well you found me.

Jasper struts over, hauls off and punches Noah right in the face, it hurts but he doesn't fall down.

BULL

You got a hard head for a butt face.

Jasper shakes his throbbing hand but instead of hitting him again, he spits right in his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASPER JR.

Now we're even. Let's go, Bull

They walk to the boat, Bull laughing like a hyena and Jasper tending to his hurt hand. As the boys push the small boat out in the channel, Noah pulls up his shirt and cleans off the spit. He picks up his rod, with a heavy weight attached, and casts it hard at Jasper, hitting him square in the back of his head. The hook catches his shirt. Noah jerks the rod, sending him crashing down in the back of the boat. As Bull jumps back to cut the line, the outboard submerges and gurgles to a stop. While the boys scramble to get free, the water rushes in over the stern of the sinking boat. The screaming boys dive into the water and swim for the pier as Noah rides off.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE NOAH'S BEDROOM - LATER

Noah sits on the couch with an ice pack, while his mom and sister look him over.

DONNA

Who gave you the black eye?

NOAH

It doesn't matter.

DONNA

We'll see about that. In the meantime, wash up. There's someone here to see you.

NOAH

Who? Is it a cop?

DONNA

No, a reporter. Your father thought it would be a good idea to have an article written about him.

ABBEY

You're joking?

DONNA

I wish.

Noah gets up to go.

ABBEY

We'll put some makeup on that shiner.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The reporter MILES UMLATT, thin and blotchy, is looking at family pictures on the mantle. Noah enters, his black eye is covered by powder.

NOAH

Hello.

MILES

Hello, young fella, how you doing?

NOAH

Fine.

MILES

I understand you have been out to visit your father. Was that tough?

NOAH

No, not really.

MILES

Well, this isn't his first run in with the law, is it?

NOAH

No sir.

MILES

Tell me about the Carmichael family.

NOAH

That was a long time ago, and besides it was awful how that guy was treating those animals.

MILES

Nonetheless, your dad was arrested.

NOAH

He just lost his temper that's all. He's got to work on his self control.

MILES

Are you ever afraid of him?

NOAH

(laughing)
Afraid?... You serious?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILES

You have to admit his behavior has been erratic and unpredictable..

NOAH

(cutting him off)
Dad would not hurt a flea.

MILES

What can you tell me about the incident with Derek Mays?

NOAH

Not much. He was running illegal gill nets, dad chased him down and caught him red-handed.

MILES

The Coast Guard called it an assault.

NOAH

Yeah, gill nets are against the law too, but the Coast Guard didn't do anything about that, instead they took away dad's captain's license.

MILES

...Let's talk about the Coral Queen.

NOAH

Dad doesn't lie. If he said they're dumping their sewage, I believe him.

MILES

Your father claims he is a political prisoner.

NOAH

I don't know much about politics but he is definitely a prisoner.

Miles get a chuckle out of that. He stops his tape recorder and packs up to leave.

MILES

Thanks, Noah. That's all I need.

Miles exits. Noah walks down the hall and stops outside his sister's room when he hears her crying.

INT. ABBEY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah slowly enters, as a teary eyed Abbey looks up.

NOAH
What's wrong?

ABBEY
(sniffing)
It's Mom.

NOAH
But I just saw her. She seemed
okay.

ABBEY
(trying to catch a
breath)
That lawyer. Sh-Sh- Shine

ABBEY (CONT'D)
I heard mom ask him...

NOAH
(impatient)
Ask him what?

ABBEY
She d-d-didn't know I was standing
by the d-d-door.

NOAH
Abbey, calm down, okay?

ABBEY
(swallowing hard)
Okay.

NOAH
What was Mom asking Mr. Shine
about?

ABBEY
(whispering)
The d-word.

NOAH
(mouthing it)
Divorce?

Abbey's lips trembled as Noah puts his arms around her
and tries to act stronger than he feels.

EXT. TRAILERPARK - MORNING

Lice Peeking sits on the stoop dripping wet, smoking the last fraction of a cigarette Noah rides up

LICE

(a wormy smile)

Well, lookie who's here, So how's the jailbird?

NOAH

(not amused)

Oh, that's real funny.

LICE

What'd he say? Can he come up with some money or not?

NOAH

We don't have any money, but he'll give you his flats skiff. It's worth twelve thousand dollars.

LICE

(squinting)

Says who?

NOAH

See for yourself. It's on a trailer behind our house, the engine only has a hundred hours on it.

LICE

Seriously? Let's go have us a look.

NOAH

It's a long walk.

LICE

Who's walkin', boy? Hop up on the handle bars

Noah cautiously gets on and Lice awkwardly pedals along wheezing under the strain.

EXT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE- BACKYARD - LATER

Noah and Lice walk around the boat, Lice is smiling, but Noah is not very happy about losing his boat.

LICE

We got us a deal. I'll be back to git it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Hold on, it's not free.

LICE

Chill out junior, I know that.

NOAH

My dad wants you to sign a statement telling about the dumping you saw when you worked on the Coral Queen.

LICE

Sure, no sweat.

NOAH

You need to write it all down.

LICE

(admiring the skiff)

You bet. Comes with the trailer, right?

NOAH

Yes, sir, but you have to bring the statement back, and it has to be signed and witnessed. That's the deal.

LICE

Geez, you're quite the young hard ass, ain't ya?

NOAH

My dad's in jail, and I want to get him out. That's all.

EXT. BIKE PATH - MOMENTS LATER

Noah rides along on handlebars as Lice pedals. They pass Jasper Jr and Bull straining to push a wheelbarrow with muddy outboard motor from their john-boat laying in it.

JASPER JR.

You're dead, you little piece of...

Lice slams on the brakes and spins around, almost sending Noah flying off.

LICE

(menacingly)

What was that you just said, boy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASPER JR.

(mumbling)

I wasn't talkin to you.

NOAH

He was talking to me. Come on,
Lice, let's go we don't need any
more trouble.

LICE

Sounds like you got your daddy's
potty mouth, Jasper. Keep it up,
you'll need a whole new set of
choppers before you're eighteen.

BULL

He didn't mean nothin', Lice.
That's the truth.

LICE

Shut up, Bull. You wouldn't know
the truth if it stung you on your
fat butt. Now, Jasper, how 'bout
you apologize to me and my friend.

Jasper shoots Noah a vicious glare.

LICE (CONT'D)

I'm waitin', boy

JASPER JR.

I'll 'poligize to you, but not
him.

BULL

Underwood's old man sank his
pappy's boat.

LICE

Like I care.

Lice puts his foot on the wheelbarrow and gives a push.
The outboard topples sideways with a crunch onto the hard
asphalt and an oily gray fluid gushes out.

LICE (CONT'D)

Don't call people names, it ain't
polite.

As they pedal off, the two bullies look on speechless.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE DINING ROOM - EVENING

Noah and Abbey sit at the dinner table. Sheryl Crow's
song "My Favorite Mistake" plays in the living room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noah wants to talk but doesn't. Donna finishes clearing the table as Abbey and Noah look at each other.

DONNA
 (giving Abbey a hug)
 I'm going to read in bed, good
 night kids.

The mood is somber as the kids sit motionless.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE DINING ROOM - LATER

The house is dark. Abbey and Noah tiptoe past and sneak out the kitchen door. They slip away on their bikes.

EXT. MARINA - NIGHT

The moonlight illuminates the dock as passengers file off the quickly refurbished Coral Queen. The remaining gamblers walk up the dock past Dusty Muleman's black Escalade, laughing and heading for their cars. Peering up from the stern of a nearby sport fishing boat, Noah and Abbey spy on the scene.

ABBEY
 (whispering)
 How long are we going to wait? Mom
 will freak if she wakes up and
 we're gone.

NOAH
 We'll give it till two then we'll
 go.

Time passes and the kids sit, waiting and watching. Finally, a sound gets their attention. Two men drag a hose from a large tank to the stern of the Coral Queen.

ABBEY
 Look!

NOAH
 It's a hose to the sewer tank.

ABBEY
 Do you think Dad made a mistake?
 What if the pollution is coming
 from somewhere else?

NOAH
 (deep in thought)
 I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

Noah?

NOAH

Abbey, I said *I don't know*.

ABBEY

(gasping for air)

NOAH!

As Noah looks up, he sees a big greasy arm grab Abbey's neck. A bald, crooked nosed guy in overalls has her in his grasp till she chomps down on his forearm. He thrashes to get free. He's about to smack her, when Noah lands his best punch to the thugs kidney. He falls to his knees in pain. In a blur, the two kids jump free and bolt down the dock.

EXT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE - LATER

Noah and Abbey sneak up and find a light on in the house.

ABBEY

Mom's up. We're toast.

NOAH

Maybe she's just reading.

ABBEY

So what's our story gonna be?

NOAH

No story... We'll tell her the truth.

ABBEY

Great plan, Noah. You tell her and I'll be hiding in the closet when she goes ballistic.

NOAH

Just be quite, Mom has the ears of a panther.

They tip toe into the dark house and both make their ways safely into their rooms undetected. The last sound we hear from the hall is Abbey gargling hard and loud, but the door never opens.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE DINING ROOM - MORNING

The newspaper lays on the table. Headline reads LOCAL CABBIE DEFENDS SINKING OF CASINO BOAT. Noah and Donna eat breakfast.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

(looking at paper)
How bad is it?

DONNA

Well, you came off like a sensible young man. Your father thinks he's Nelson Mandela and beginning a hunger strike.

NOAH

No way.

DONNA

See for yourself.

Noah picks up the paper and reads as Abbey, comes in and sits. She does not look rested.

NOAH

Mom, half the article is Muleman saying Dad's a liar and a crackpot.

DONNA

Dusty plays golf with the newspaper's publisher. He has a right to defend himself. Your dad's made some serious charges.

Abbey and Noah share a look over what they saw last night at the dock. Abbey picks up the paper

ABBEY

(reading)
Hunger strike! What's wrong with him? Is he dense or what?

DONNA

Abbey, don't talk that way about your father, and the word is 'deluded' not dense.

ABBEY

But this is so embarrassing. Can't he understand that?

DONNA

Apparently not.

EXT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE- BACKYARD - DAY

Noah sits in the skiff and Abbey comes out the back door and walks over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

What are you doing?

NOAH

Waiting for Lice, he's late.

ABBEY

Maybe he chickened out.

NOAH

For twelve thousand bucks? No way.

ABBEY

Maybe Dusty offered him more if he kept his mouth shut.

NOAH

How do you think of this stuff?
He is probably still working on
his statement or his hangover.

ABBEY

Maybe we should go check?

NOAH

No, I'll go. You stay here in case
he shows up for the boat.

ABBEY

If you're not back in an hour, I'm
either telling mom or calling the
cops. Your choice?

NOAH

Can I pick later?

Noah dashes off.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Noah knocks at the door in the pouring rain.

NOAH

Hellooo. Anybody home?

INT. TRAILER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Noah steps inside. The TV blares a
country music video but no sign of life. Noah stands at
the ready to bolt when he hears the thump of footsteps
from the back

NOAH

Hello, Mr. Peeking?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shelly appears limping towards him. Her foot is bandaged with tape and she is holding a baseball bat.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(nervous)

Sorry, I knocked but nobody answered.

SHELLY

I'm busy redecorating. What do you want?

NOAH

Lice was supposed to stop over with some papers.

SHELLY

And he didn't show up? My darlin' Lice? What a surprise.

NOAH

Is he here?

SHELLY

Nope. Gone.

NOAH

Gone where?

SHELLY

Wherever it is that gutless, lazy, lowlife boyfriends go. He bolted last night while I was in the shower. Took my Jeep, too. The cops found it abandoned this morning near the Cutler Ridge toll plaza.

NOAH

He told me he didn't have a drivers license

SHELLY

A minor technicality for a weasel like him. Have a seat.

NOAH

I really better be going.

SHELLY

I said have a seat.

Noah sits uncomfortably, Shelly is holding a bat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHELLY (CONT'D)

A man came by to see Lice last night, just before he ran off. A big bald-headed guy with a weird foreign accent- French or Russian or something.

NOAH

He was bald?

SHELLY

Like a bowling ball. It looked like someone gave him a nose job with a socket wrench. He took Lice outside to talk and Lice came back white as a ghost. Didn't say a word, either. Waited till I was in the shower, then he bolted with all my cash, a hundred and eighty six bucks!

NOAH

That stinks. I've really got to go now.

SHELLY

Remember what I told you about lying. Now tell me everything.

She swings the bat then sets it down.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

I might be able to help if you start telling me the truth.

NOAH

(reluctantly)

Well, Dad cut a deal with Lice and...

EXT. ROAD TO MARINA - VERY LATE AT NIGHT

Noah rides his bike towards the marina. The lights of an approaching vehicle catch his eye. He rides his bike down the culvert, lays it over and lies flat as it passes. He leaves his bike and continues on foot.

EXT. MARINA-- MOMENTS LATER

The bald guy is asleep in a beat up station wagon next to the Coral Queen ticket office. Noah slips past the snoring thug, and down the dock to the Coral Queen.

INT. CORAL QUEEN - CONTINUOUS

Noah hunts for evidence in the wheel house. A bait boat roars into harbor waking the bald thug. As he steps out of the car, a panicking Noah rushes down to the casino deck. As he runs along he grabs a rack of poker chips, and tosses them out an open side window onto the deck. The racket is impressive as they roll in a hundred directions.

EXT. MARINA DOCK - CONTINUOUS

Hearing this, the bald thug runs down the dock and towards the bow, his flashlight waving. From the stern, Noah runs off the boat, and up the dock. Looking back, he sees the light moving about the boat. He gets to the ticket booth when the bright lights of a patrol car pulls into the marina. He dives to hide from its bright lights, and bangs his head hard on the sewage storage tank. It echoes an empty thud.

BALD THUG

(yelling)
Quick down here!

The cop runs down the dock and Noah moans and holds his head. He taps the tank, it sounds very empty. He looks down and sees a lot of rust. He taps it hard and opening a big hole in the rust line.

NOAH

(realizing)
Empty...rusted out...it's all a scam.

Noah gets up, stuffs a handful of rust in his pocket and runs off.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Noah sits at the table, holding ice on the lump on his head. Abbey holds a video tape.

ABBEY

The whole island is talking about dad's interview. Somebody left this at the door for mom.

Noah grabs it and pops it in the VCR.

TIGHT ON TV SCREEN (NEWSCAST)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAINE

(in to camera)

I sunk the Coral Queen as an act of civil disobedience and to stop the blatant disregard for our oceans.

ATTORNEY

My client is an experienced boat captain, and a pillar of our community. He would never pollute the water that his own children play in. I challenge the mentally unbalanced Mr. Underwood to prove his "reckless and slanderous allegations."

A loud knock on the door, Noah pauses the tape and goes to the door. He opens it to find Mr. Shine.

MR. SHINE

Hello, Noah. I have some important news. Is your mother here?

NOAH

No. Is it about Dad? Tell me. Please?

MR. SHINE

I wish I could.

NOAH

Can I ask one question?

MR. SHINE

Of course, Noah.

NOAH

Is my mother going to divorce my dad?

MR. SHINE

(nervously)

Noah, quite frankly, I'm not comfortable with this conversation.

NOAH

Hey, I'm not comfortable with my mom and dad splitting up. Don't Abbey and I have a right to know?

MR. SHINE

Please tell your mother to call me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Mr. Shine hustles off to his car and Noah turns to Abbey who heard all of it

NOAH

I wonder what he wanted to talk to mom about?

A HONK gets Noah's attention as a green Jeep whips in the driveway. Shelly pokes her head out.

SHELLY

Noah, quick, let's go. I ain't getting any younger.

NOAH

(to Abbey)
I'll be back as soon as I can. You better lock the door.

INT. SHELLY'S JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

They drive along, Shelly wears dark glasses but we can tell she has been crying. Noah looks down to see a silver-barreled gun on the console between them.

NOAH

(alarmed)
...What's going on?

SHELLY

Member what I told you about Lice running off?

NOAH

Yes ma'am. Did he come back?

SHELLY

They towed my jeep back this morning. Know what I've been doing?

NOAH

No Ma'am.

SHELLY

Scrubbing bloodstains off the upholstery?

NOAH

Blood! You sure?

Noah sees a few spots of blood still on the dash. Shelly turns left and the gun shifts closer to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHELLY

I don't think Lice ran off. I think he got snatched and killed.

NOAH

What?

SHELLY

Yep and I think it's all 'cause of your daddy and that gambling boat.

Noah looks at her tattoo, and then down to the gun.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Relax it ain't real. It's a lighter. It'll scare anybody off that tries to give me trouble.

NOAH

But who would kill Lice? And what's it got to do with dad?

SHELLY

You got any idea how much Dusty makes off the Coral Queen?

NOAH

No Ma'am.

SHELLY

Between fifteen and twenty grand just from the casino tables. Subtract the food, and the crew pay, and he's still clearing ten thousand minimum a night.

NOAH

(shocked)

Ten thousand dollars?

SHELLY

Gambling is a mega-huge business, kid. The world is crawling with suckers. Don't forget Lice had a big mouth and if he blabbed he was helping your daddy, Dusty wouldn't let that happen. Think about it, Noah, you're a smart boy.

NOAH

I don't know what to think right now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHELLY

Don't worry, I'm gonna keep my promise and help you clear your daddy's name.

NOAH

Why?

SHELLY

Maybe cause its the right thing to do. Or maybe 'cause now I've got a dog in this fight. If he harmed one hair on that lazy, worthless, lice covered head of his.

She gets out of the car with the gun stuck in her belt.

EXT. PIER - CONTINUOUS

Shelly walks out on the bridge where people are fishing and taking pictures. Noah follows her.

SHELLY

This morning I went to see Dusty.

NOAH

Alone? That's nuts!

SHELLY

We were engaged to be married for God's sake. Anyway, I gave him a big sob story about Lice running out on me and how I was hurtin' for money and I asked for my old bar tending job back. I start to tomorrow night.

NOAH

Don't do it! Please, stay away from that boat.

SHELLY

Nothing's gonna happen to me.

NOAH

Then why you carrying around that fake gun?

SHELLY

Don't worry, Noah. I know how to handle Captain Muleman.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE NOAH'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Noah and Abbey sit talking, the rust from the tank is in a baggy.

ABBEY

You're saying the same guy who grabbed me, got rid of Lice?

NOAH

Could be.

ABBEY

We got to tell the police.

NOAH

They'll think we're whack jobs, like dad. We need witnesses, not just a hole in the sewer tank. Shelly and I are working up a plan.

ABBEY

Noah, if there's a killer out there, there's only one possible plan.

NOAH

Which is?

ABBEY

We pack up and move to Antarctica.

NOAH

Good night, Abbey.

As Noah turns off the light, they hear a loud thud, and a shadow passes the window. The kids freeze. Slowly, a hand slides the window open. Noah grabs his spear gun. A figure jumps in through the open window. Noah turns on the light.

ABBEY

Dad!

They all embrace Payne in his orange jumpsuit.

PAINÉ

Sorry if I scared you.

NOAH

What are you doing here? I almost speared you!

PAINÉ

I escaped.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

From jail?

ABBEY

Does mom know?

PAINE

Not yet.

NOAH

Here's an idea. How about you try
the story out on us before you go
see Mom?

PAINE

I knew I could count on you kids.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE NOAH'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Payne sleeps on the floor, Noah wakes him up and they
start to stir.

NOAH

You can't put this off any longer.

PAINE

Maybe Christmas would be a better
time.

NOAH

Dad!

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Noah, Abbey, Donna and Payne sit eating breakfast, all
seems back to normal.

PAINE

Look, I want to apologize for the
grief I've caused. My judgement
was clouded because I was angry.

DONNA

And tell me why you thought
breaking out of jail was a good
idea?

PAINE

The sheriff got a lot of flak from
Dusty's buddies after I went on
the news. None of the deputies
would talk to me anymore.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAINÉ (CONT'D)

So I sat alone in my cell thinking about, how this country was founded by people who were determined to be free.

NOAH

Unless you were a slave.

PAINÉ

Good point.

ABBEY

How did you break out?

PAINÉ

Last night after what they called dinner, there was a car accident in front of the jail. The deputies ran out to help. It was one of those moments that called for a split-second decision. I needed to let people know what's going on.

DONNA

Paine, there's something you ought to know. Mr. Shine got some interesting news yesterday about the Coral Queen case.

PAINÉ

(dryly)

Like what-Dusty confessed?

DONNA

No, but he agreed to drop all the charges if you promise to stop spreading stories about him. He also wants you to get some psychological counseling.

PAINÉ

He wants me to play like I am crazy?

DONNA

(tersely)

It shouldn't be hard. Whatever it takes, I want you home. And so did the sheriff, he planned to release you this morning, they needed your cell. He was waiting on a judge to sign the order.

PAINÉ

What!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNA

Paine, we are going to call Mr. Shine and make arrangements for you to turn yourself in. So you don't end up in prison for good.

PAINÉ

But there are principles at stake, basic human rights.

DONNA

I need to speak to your father alone, please?

Outside a car door slammed.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Noah, see who that is.

ABBEY

(anxiously)

It's a cop.

Paine jumps up and runs out the back door, Donna calmly picks up his plate and puts it in the sink.

DONNA

You kids clean up.

She heads toward the door, as Abbey and Noah exchange looks of concern.

EXT. THUNDER BEACH - DAY

Noah comes through the pines to find his dad sitting shirtless at the water's edge. Noah sits besides him.

PAINÉ

You learned to swim here, Abbey too. Know how Thunder Beach got its name? A man was killed here in 1947 by a bolt of lightning. Bright clear day not a cloud in the sky. All of a sudden...ba-boom! That's why they call it Thunder beach.

NOAH

They should have called it Lightning Beach...Dad, come on home.

PAINÉ

But what if it's a trap? The sheriff setting me up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Dad, the sheriff doesn't want to lay eyes on you again. He sent the deputy over with all your stuff.

PAINE

Noah, I'm right about Dusty.

NOAH

I know you are. I saw them faking to hook up the hose.

PAINE

I figured it was something like that I bet Lice knows all about the scam.

NOAH

Bad news, Lice is gone.

PAINE

What?

NOAH

Shelly thinks one of Dusty's men killed him to shut him up.

PAINE

(his voice is shaky)

I can't believe that...If Lice is dead, its my fault.

NOAH

No, Dad, he was greedy, if he'd gone to the Coast Guard, Dusty would have been shut down a long time ago. Let's go home. Please?

They get up and start to walk along the beach.

PAINE

The water looks clean today...
Your grandpa Bobby and I sure had some good times right here. We used to catch all kinds of fish.

(he looks out to the sea)

Not any more. That's what some people do when they find a special place full of life, they trample it to death.

NOAH

Mom wants you to come home right now. She said it is not open for debate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PAINE

Aw, she'll settle down.

NOAH

Dad, listen to me. Mom's thinking about filing for divorce.

PAINE

No way!

NOAH

I heard her tell Grandma Janet.

PAINE

She used the word. *Divorce?*

NOAH

Loud and clear. She's already spoken to Mr. Shine. Abbey was eavesdropping.

PAINE

Oh man, what a mess.

NOAH

Come on let's go.

Paine reached down and picks up a baby blue crab. As he looked closely at it, the crab hooked its claw on Paine's nose and hung there. They both have a well needed laugh together. They walk along Paine with his arm around Noah.

EXT. ROAD -LATER

Noah rides along. Just ahead, Jasper and Bull hide along the side of the road. As he approaches they spear a tree branch into his front spokes, sending Noah flying over the handlebars. Noah rolls and lays flat on his back.

JASPER JR.

Hey, dorkbrain, where's your training wheels?

NOAH

(looking at his bike)
That's original.

Bull grabs Noah by the shirt and drags him into the trees, pinning his arms behind his back and holding him up for Jasper Jr, to get in his face.

JASPER JR.

So where's your body guard?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

He wasn't my body guard, he was my chauffeur.

JASPER JR.

You're a real comedian See what you think of this joke.

Jasper Jr. slugs him hard right in the stomach.

JASPER JR. (CONT'D)

That's for sinking my john-boat.

Jasper slugs him again and Noah falls to the ground. He gives him one last kick, but catches his bare toe on Noah's belt buckle. Jasper hops and hollers in pain, as Bull laughs and follows him up to the road, leaving Noah laying in a heap.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah lays on the couch, nursing his bruise, while Abbey sits playing checkers with Paine. His new electronic ankle bracelet is clearly a bother to him.

ABBEY

How much longer do you have to wear that thing?

PAINE

(not happy)
Until the case is resolved, or I can pry it off.

NOAH

They'll know if you cut it off.

A car drives up. Abbey looks out the window to see Shelly getting out of her jeep. She is dressed as a bartender complete with high heels and fishnet stockings.

ABBEY

(mumbling to herself)
This oughta be good.

Shelly comes in and gives Paine a brisk business like hug.

SHELLY

Long time no see. How you doing?

PAINE

Doing fine. So how's work?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHELLY

Work is work. Paine, what's that thing?

PAINE

I'm under house arrest. You believe it?.

NOAH

Any word from Lice?

SHELLY

Nope. But I got some other news.

Abbey brings in a pitcher of tea and some glasses. She looks closely at the tattoo on Shelly's arm

ABBEY

Why do you have barbed wire on your arm?

SHELLY

It was a long night and a bad party. Anyway, they're at it again, dumping the toilet tanks into the water. Last night I stayed late to restock the bar, and I saw them. Dusty was gone with the money, and I guess the crew didn't know I was still there.

Paine tightens up he's not happy about the news.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Here's what else. The big bald guy who came to see Lice before he went missing? His name is Luno and he's Dusty's main muscle.

Abbey and Noah exchange a knowing look but say nothing.

NOAH

What if they get suspicious and start hassling you?

SHELLY

Why would they? They got no idea I know they're mixed up in Lice's death. Dusty bought the whole sob story. Besides, I need the money.

She heads to the door.

PAINE

Be careful, Shelly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHELLY

Yeah, well, don't go sinkin' that boat again, especially if I'm on it.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Paine, Donna, Abbey and Noah sit around the dinner table. Abbey starts to clear the dinner dishes.

DONNA

Did you call the taxi company?

PAINE

Tomorrow, I promise... I thought maybe I can get my Captain's license again and do some back country fishing trips.

DONNA

You can't be serious.

PAINE

Why not?

DONNA

You honestly believe the Coast Guard will let you take people back out on the water? Honey you'll be lucky to get your cab back.

Paine stabs at his pie not very happy about things.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Somebody from the Herald phoned while you were in the shower. I explained that you won't be giving anymore interviews. Right?

PAINE

(mumbling)

Yeah... You know , he started flushing his tanks again, It's true. Ask Noah.

DONNA

How do you know this?

PAINE

We have our sources.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

I see. Then this source of yours should go straight to the authorities and make a report.

PAINE

Dusty's got connections with the Coast Guard and the cops, they won't do diddly unless someone catches them red handed.

DONNA

And maybe some one will, but whoever that 'somebody' is, they don't live in this house. I've made my last visit to the jailhouse. Understood?

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE NOAH'S BEDROOM- - NIGHT

Noah is in bed reading, Donna enters and sits on the foot of the bed.

DONNA

Noah, I'm sorry about all this.

NOAH

Did you mean what you said to Grandma Janet about a divorce?

DONNA

You heard me? I'm so sorry Noah-I love your father dearly but sometimes he drives me bananas.

NOAH

I know, Mom.

DONNA

I know he gets upset by certain things he sees in this world-greed, injustice and cruelty to nature. That's one of the things that first attracted me, seeing how deeply he cared. But he is a grown man and he needs to start behaving like one.

NOAH

So you were serious about divorce.

DONNA

I'd never bluff about something like divorce.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They hug and Donna pulls the cover up and gets up.

NOAH

Goodnight.

She turns out the light and heads across the hall and opens Abbey's door.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE ABBEY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

DONNA

(whisper)

Abbey...

She moves closer in the moonlight and pulls back the covers to find an empty bed.

DONNA (CONT'D)

ABBEY!...PAINE!! NOAH!

Noah and Paine run in together to find Donna trembling with tears in her eyes. The window is open and the screen lies against the wall.

DONNA (CONT'D)

She's gone! Abbey's gone!

PAINE

(calmly)

Okay, everybody take it easy.

DONNA

(frantic)

Somebody kidnapped her Paine!
Somebody broke in and took her!

NOAH

No, Mom, nobody took her.

DONNA

How do you know? How?

NOAH

A kidnapper wouldn't bother to put the screen against the wall. He'd just cut through with a knife.

PAINE

Noah's right, this is way too neat and tidy. It's pure Abbey.

DONNA

Why in the world would she run away?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

I don't think she ran away.

DONNA

Noah get to the point

NOAH

She probably had something she needed to do.

DONNA

In the middle of the night? All by herself? Paine, what's going on here?

PAINE

(rushing out)

I'll be back!

Donna spins around and grabs Noah by the ear.

DONNA

Young man? Does this have something to do with that boat?

NOAH

(weakly)

Maybe

DONNA

Has this whole family gone insane? Paine, you get back in here right this second!

Paine appears at the door, dressed with his spotlight in hand.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Where do you think you're going?

PAINE

To find Abbey.

DONNA

Paine, you are under house arrest.

Paine sheepishly lifts his leg to reveal a bare ankle with no bracelet.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Oh, that's just terrific. I'll go pack your bags for prison.

PAINE

Donna, please. There's no time to argue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNA

Oh, really? Our little girl is roaming around alone in the dead of night, and you've tripped off some fugitive alarm at the sheriff's station. Any minute a dozen squad cars will come screaming up here...

NOAH

I'll go get Abbey by myself, don't worry I can handle it.

DONNA

No, we'll go together and if we get into a jam, I want both of you wise guys to keep your lips zipped and let me do the talking. Is that understood?

Noah and Paine glance helplessly at each other.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Noah, grab some bug spray and Paine go find my car keys.

EXT. ROAD-NIGHT

They drive along, Paine holds up the spotlight searching the mangroves for Abbey.

EXT. MARINA - MOMENTS LATER

They pull up and look down to Dusty's SUV under the lamppost. They sneak quietly down and hide behind the sewage tank. Paine grabs a rusty gaff in case of trouble.

PAINÉ

You two stay here. I'll go scope it out.

DONNA

You'll do no such thing.

PAINÉ

Shhssh!

Laughter comes from the ticket booth

NOAH

What if he's got Abbey?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

Then we'll politely ask him to
give her back. Come on.

Donna leads the way to the shack, knocks once and barges
in, the boys follow. DUSTY MULEMAN, counts money with the
phone under his chin.

DUSTY

(hanging up phone)
Why look who's here!

DONNA

Dusty, have you seen Abbey?

DUSTY

Abbey? What would she be doing
hangin' around here?

NOAH

She was looking for pilchards.

DUSTY

At this hour?

DONNA

Have you seen her? We're getting
worried.

DUSTY

(chomping his cigar)
Nope. Let me check with Luno.
(into walkie talkie)
Luno, come up here... Paine, I'm
surprised to see you out. Sheriff
said you were under house arrest.

PAINE

I was until my daughter went
missing.

DONNA

Dusty, listen, Paine's got
something he wants to say.

PAINE

I do?

DONNA

Yes, you do. Remember? You wanted
to apologize for what happened.

PAINE

What!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNA

Yes, we had this discussion. You and Dusty have known each other too long to let this get out of control.

DUSTY

Donna's right, all those years we fished out at Ted's, we never had a problem.

PAINE

(stiffly)

Fine, I'm sorry for sinking your boat.

DUSTY

Apology accepted. Oh, and son I heard that you've been giving Jasper Jr. a hard time.

NOAH

You're kidding! It's the other way around. He and Bull...

DONNA

He and Bull what?

NOAH

Nothing.

DUSTY

I know its getting more like Miami but a boy ought to be able to go fishing without having to fight his way home. Don't you folks agree?

DONNA

(not buying it)

Absolutely.

NOAH

(picking up on it)

Tell Jasper it won't happen again.

DUSTY

That's the spirit.

The door swings open and Luna struts in. Tall and ugly, with a dirty gauze bandage on his branch sized forearm.

LUNO

What's up, boss?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DUSTY

You seen a young girl hangin
around the dock tonight?

LUNO

Girl?

DUSTY

Little kid, curly brown hair.

DONNA

Ash blond.

LUNO

No girl here tonight.

PAINE

We want to look around for
ourselves.

DUSTY

Luno says she's not here, she's
not here.

DONNA

We won't be long.

DUSTY

Suit yourself. I got nothin to
hide. So Paine, how's the anger
management classes goin?

PAINE

(snapping)
Fine!

NOAH

Dad, can we go look for Abbey?

They walk down the dock calling her name. Luno follows
after them as they look around the casino boat.

LUNO

See? No girl here. You go now.

PAINE

(in a low voice)
If anything's happened to my
little girl. I'll be back for you
and your boss man.

LUNO

Is that right?

DONNA

Paine let's go!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

They turn and go back up the dock, away from his glare.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

They drive along

DONNA

Alright, Noah, where should we
look now?

PAINE

Let's just drive around.

NOAH

Maybe she went home already.

DONNA

Yes, that's where we should go.
She'll worry if we are all gone.

PAINE

And what if she's not there? What
then?

DONNA

Then we call the police, Paine.

They drive along in silence, Paine tries to get the light
going. Noah looks along the road and then he spots
something.

NOAH

Mom, slow down!

DONNA

What?

PAINE

Donna stop!

There in the headlights, stands Abbey wearing a backpack
and white reflective sneakers. A video camera hangs from
her shoulder, she grins and sticks out her thumb.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - MORNING

They all sit and watch the video tape. It's dim and shaky
and hard to see what's going on in the wide footage.

ABBEY

There's the hose! See, they're
dropping it right in the water!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAINÉ

Where were you hiding- up a
telephone pole?

ABBEY

Tuna tower. On the "Sea Fury."
(pointing to things
on the TV)
See! That's the hose... right
there.

NOAH

(trying to help)
Now I see it.

PAINÉ

(joining in)
Me, too.

ABBEY

All we have to do is show this to
the Coast Guard and he's toast.

Donna, Paine and Noah exchange a doubtful glance.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

I know what you're thinking, but
there're ways to enlarge the
pictures and make them crystal
clear. The FBI do it all the time.
They can count the zits on a
terrorist's nose from a mile off.

A car door slams outside. Donna glances out the window

DONNA

Paine, it's a deputy.

ABBEY

Oh, not again.

PAINÉ

Stall him. Noah, come with me. I
need your help.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE- PAINES BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The two of them are frantic to re-attach the electronic
ankle bracelet. They work with tools to put it back
together.

PAINÉ

Hold extra still. One slip and I
could break the transmitter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the hall, we can hear Abbey and Donna trying to feed some breakfast to the deputy. A moment later, they're startled by a knock on the door.

DONNA (O.S.)

Paine, are you up yet? There's a deputy here to see you.

PAINÉ

Be out in a minute.

Paine is frantic and sweaty, he does not want to go back to jail. Heavy footsteps come down the hall, another knock, sharp and impatient.

DEPUTY

Open up, sheriff's office...Mr. Underwood?

They almost have it. There is another hard knock. Paine gives the okay sign to Noah who grabs all the tools and rolls under the bed. Paine goes to the door and opens it.

PAINÉ

Sorry to keep you waiting officer, I was putting on some clothes.

DEPUTY

(no nonsense)
Step this way, sir.

INT. MARATHON JAIL - DAY

Noah enters, and sits across the table from his father

PAINÉ

I bet your mother is really ticked off now.

NOAH

You think!

PAINÉ

They are only keeping me for forty eight hours this time for messing with " a court ordered monitoring device."

NOAH

What about Abbey's video?

PAINÉ

God bless her for trying but the Coast Guard would laugh if we showed em that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

(brightly)

So what now?

PAINE

It's over, Noah. I am done with
Dusty and the Coral Queen. I just
want to come home and live a quiet
life

NOAH

Really?

PAINE

I know when I'm beat... Abbey's
little adventure was the last
straw. If anything bad had
happened to her I would never
forgive myself.

(leaning in quietly)

Listen my plan backfired, but--

DEPUTY

Times up!

PAINE

Things'll be different when I get
home. That's a promise.

EXT. THUNDER BEACH - AFTERNOON

Abbey and Noah eat sandwich and sit by the shore.

ABBEY

I know, the tape stunk.

NOAH

You had a cool plan, it's not your
fault it didn't work out

A loud red powerboat with a muscle bound guy wearing gold
chains, comes close in to check out a tall blond woman
sunning herself down the beach. She signals him closer,
then beans him with a full can of beer.

ABBEY

Whoa, she could play quarterback
for the Dolphins.

NOAH

I think I know who that is.
Follow me.

They walk up to find Shelly standing and shaking the sand
off her towel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHELLY

Well, if it isn't the amazing young Underwoods.

ABBEY

What did the guy in the boat say to you?

SHELLY

He needs to work on his manners

NOAH

Your sure nailed him good.

SHELLY

He deserved it.

(winking at Abbey)

Now if he was Brad Pitt and not some loser gym monkey, it'd be a different story. I'd be sitting next to him on our way to Bimini.

NOAH

Dad's back in jail.

SHELLY

That bites. You guys want something to drink.

Abbey grabs a Coke from the cooler. Noah spots the beer can she threw floating twenty yards out. He wades out

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Where do you think you are going?

NOAH

To get the can, it's no big deal.

SHELLY

It is too a big deal, check out the water, Noah.

Noah glances down. The water had a darkish yellow tint. Clots of foul matter and tissue float all around him.

ABBEY

What's that?

SHELLY

Something seriously gross and it stinks.

ABBEY

Get out!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHELLY

And Pronto. I told you Dusty was dumping again, didn't I?

ABBEY

Go up and rinse off quick!

Just then a logger head turtle appears in the water near all the filth.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

Noah! Look. He'll get sick from all that yuck. Do something!

Noah wades back in. He claps and yells, scaring the turtle out to deeper water. He runs out and they all walk up towards the outdoor showers.

SHELLY

Promise me you will go home and get a proper bath?

NOAH

Yes, ma'am

SHELLY

And, Abbey, promise me you'll keep your brother out of trouble.

ABBEY

Like that'll be easy.

SHELLY

I'm going to tell you something, but you don't know where you heard it, okay? There a man who works at the Coast Guard station, a civilian named Billy Babcock. He's got a major gambling problem. He's regular on the Coral Queen, like five nights a week. You see where this is heading?

NOAH

So he owes Dusty a lot of money?

SHELLY

Big time. So much he can never pay it all back.

NOAH

So he's repaying him another way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SHELLY

You got it, Noah. Every time the Coast Guard gets ready to pull a surprise inspection, Billy calls him the day before to warn him. That's why they never catch em' dumping.

ABBEY

So Dad was right. Dusty is being tipped off.

A white truck pulls in. They all freeze

SHELLY

Hey, you didn't hear it from me. Shhhh!

A big man in uniform steps out and starts posting signs. DANGER: CONTAMINATED WATER in red print SWIM AT YOUR OWN RISK

ABBEY

Maybe you should check where it's coming from?

PARK RANGER

It's hard to tell young lady. Sorry. I suggest you try Long Key or Harris Park.

They all walk away Shelly gets in her Jeep

NOAH

Shelly, thanks. Be careful.

SHELLY

Get home and wash up!

She pulls away as the kids walk to their bikes.

ABBEY

Noah, what you did back there for that turtle, that was very...

NOAH

Dumb? I know.

ABBEY

No. Cool, in a really twisted way.

NOAH

Thanks, I guess.

ABBEY

We can't give up on this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

NOAH

Now you sound like Dad.

She gives him a smile, hops on her bike and rides off.

EXT. TRAILER PARK-DAY

Shelly opens the door to the blinding light of morning. Noah and Abbey are already there and ready to go.

SHELLY

What time izzit?

ABBEY

Seven- thirty.

SHELLY

AM? You gotta be kiddin'me.

ABBEY

It's important.

SHELLY

(hung over)
Killer headache.

NOAH

We need your help. Remember how you said you had a dog in this fight, too?

SHELLY

If they killed Lice, do you think they'd hesitate to do the same thing to me or you?

NOAH

Shelly, I know but I have a plan.

INT. TRAILER LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Shelly lies on the couch with an ice pack. Noah pitches his plan.

NOAH

Does this mean you will help us?

SHELLY

Does your daddy know about this?

NOAH

No and we're not telling him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHELLY
Probably a good idea.

EXT.DIRT ROAD- - LATER

Noah and Abbey pedal along on the old dirt road. A thick patch of Australian pines run between the road and the shore. Out of nowhere, they are both jumped and dragged with their bikes by Bull and Jasper Jr. into the woods.

NOAH
Hey what the...?

ABBEY
Let me go... You asked for it.

Noah is knocked to the ground just as Abbey sinks her teeth into Bull's left ear.

BULL
AHHHHH!!!

JASPER JR.
Make her let go!

NOAH
I can't.

JASPER JR.
Make her let go, or I'll snap you like a twig.

Abbey is still hangin on like a starved alligator, drawing blood.

JASPER JR. (CONT'D)
Make her stop! He's bleeding.

NOAH
Abbey, is Bull really bleeding?

She nodded causing Bull to crank up the volume on his pain. Jasper Jr. squeezes Noah into a head lock.

JASPER JR.
Your sister stops, or I start pounding your head with a coconut.

NOAH
One condition, you guys let her go.

BULL
The girl let's go of my ear and she walks. I swear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASPER JR.

No way.

BULL

You shut up.

NOAH

Do we have a deal?

BULL

Deal.

NOAH

All right, Abbey, you can let go now.

ABBEY

Nhh-ugh.

BULL

I think I'm gonna barf.

Jasper tightens his grip on Noah's neck.

JASPER JR.

Now, listen girlie, if you don't spit out his ear by the count of three I'll break your brother's neck.

Noah face is red as a tomato.

JASPER JR. (CONT'D)

One...two...

NOAH'S POV

Just as things start going blurry, a figure appears from the trees. An OLD SAILOR, weathered with a huge scar on his face

OLD SAILOR

(sternly)

Let him go!

Jasper releases Noah, who falls to the ground confused by what is happening. The blurriness clears and we see a silver haired, lanky man, shirtless, barefoot with a gold coin hanging from his neck.

JASPER JR.

We was only joking around.

OLD SAILOR

That right?

(turning to Abbey)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLD SAILOR (CONT'D)

Now it's your turn Abbey. How
'bout you let loose of that boy?

Abbey releases her bite and Bull falls to the ground,
holding his throbbing ear.

NOAH

Who are you? How do you know my
name?

The old sailor grabs Jasper by the shirt. Jasper trembles
in his shoes, he takes his knife off his belt.

OLD SAILOR

You ever bother these two kids
again, I'll slit your throat from
ear to ear. Comprende?

(turning now to Bull)

You ain't got anything better to
do than hassle some helpless
little girl? That's flat out
pathetic, son.

BULL

Helpless? She nearly took off my
ear!

OLD SAILOR

I'd say you got off lucky.
(winking at Abbey)

Y'all run on home. Hurry up, now.

NOAH

Who are you?

OLD SAILOR

Nobody. Now get going, both of
you. Me and the boys are gonna get
acquainted.

Noah and Abbey quickly push their bikes back to the road.

EXT. TROPICAL RESCUE TUGBOAT - LATE AFTERNOON

Paine throws out the anchor past the word RESCUE, written
in red on the bow. He wears a work shirt with the company
logo TROPICAL RESCUE on the pocket. Donna, Abbey and Noah
are enjoying the boat ride.

MONTAGE with Music, Noah reels in a red snapper. Paine
pulls up a big grouper. Abbey tries to shake a puffer
fish from the hook, They pass around some snacks while
the kids dangle their feet in the water, and Donna points
at the flock of pelican flying just off the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The sky changes from gold to blazing pink, Paine and Donna hold hands. Abbey nudges Noah to check it out. Another spectacular day in the Florida Keys ends with everyone's staring at the sun as it drops below the horizon.

PAINÉ

Watch for it...watch for the green flash.

NOAH

You always say that.

They all sit in silence and stare as the sun dips into the sea. Beautiful, but nothing unusual.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WINN-DIXIE MARKET - MORNING

TIGHT on money being counted into a hand. Pull back Abbey and Noah are in the aisle of a grocery store.

NOAH (O.C.)

Fifty-seven dollars.

ABBEY

You think it's enough?

NOAH

It's all we got.

ABBEY

Blue won't work, right?

Noah reaches for food coloring in the cake section.

NOAH

Won't show up, do they make orange?

ABBEY

No, but here's fuchsia.

NOAH

I don't know what that is but it sounds like something I wouldn't want to step in.

ABBEY

It's a hot reddish purple. Perfect for operation Royal Flush.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH
 (to a stockboy)
 You got any more of this in the
 back?

EXT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE - LATER

They turn the corner with their bag full of dye. Waiting
 in front of the house is a very shaken Bull. His ear is
 all puffy and red.

NOAH
 What to you want?

BULL
 Uh, I just came by to say I was
 sorry, real sorry.

ABBEY
 Is this some kind of joke?

BULL
 No. I'm really sorry for all the
 times Jasper and I hassled you, it
 was wrong, okay?

NOAH
 Where's Jasper?

BULL
 Oh, yeah, He's sorry too.

NOAH
 Really? Then where is he?

Bull raises his shoulders, dark half moons of sweat
 circle the arm pits of his Harley Davidson t-shirt.

BULL
 He couldn't come, but he wanted me
 to tell you that he won't beat on
 you no more.

NOAH
 That's nice. Next you'll be
 sending me flowers.

ULL
 (slowly)
 Underwood, who's the freaky old
 guy in the woods?

NOAH
 (going with it)
 A friend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BULL

Where'd he get that wicked scar on his face?

NOAH

He doesn't like to talk about it.

BULL

He said he'd be watching us and not to screw up again. So you'll tell him, won't you? Tell him I came by and said we were sorry.

NOAH

Sure, Bull. I'll tell him when I see him.

Bull runs off and Noah grabs the bag from Abbey.

ABBEY

What was that all about?

INT. TRAILER PARK - KITCHEN- DAY

Shelly shaves her legs at the kitchen sink while Noah and Abbey go over the plan.

SHELLY

Now lemme see what you got?
(looking in the bag)
Those are puny little suckers.
Sure it'll do the job?

NOAH

It's concentrated..

SHELLY

I know its concentrated. I've baked a few cakes in my time.

ABBEY

There's thirty four bottles. Is that okay?

SHELLY

No problem, I've got a purse big enough to carry a Honda Civic. Ever use this stuff before?

ABBEY

No!

SHELLY

Well, it doesn't just pour out like water.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHELLY (CONT'D)

It's gooey like sunblock, so you've really gotta squeeze...Thirty four bottles, that'll take some time. See, it's just me working solo behind the bar, and I only get two short potty breaks. Dusty don't like thirsty customers.

NOAH

Does that mean you can't help us?

SHELLY

Don't get your shorts in a knot. I'll just tell Dusty I got sick off his shrimp salad.

NOAH

Change in plans. I'll take half the dyes, and flush it from a different head. You just gotta help me get on the boat.

SHELLY

Oh, no you don't James Bond Jr.

ABBEY

What about me?

NOAH/SHELLY

No way!

ABBEY

You don't bring me, I rat you out to Mom and Dad.

SHELLY

If you two brats get caught...

NOAH

Don't worry we won't mention your name. That's a promise.

ABBEY

Double promise

SHELLY

I must be outta my mind.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Abbey watches Paine going over the court papers. Donna gets dinner out, and Noah lays on the couch reading.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAINE

So much for the first amendment. I might as well walk around with a cork in my mouth.

DONNA

Since Dusty agreed to drop the charges, you can't talk about it. Any of it, anywhere.

PAINE

Every body thinks I'm crazy.

ABBEY

Who cares if you are crazy, Dad? As long as its a good crazy.

DONNA

Noah, can you stay home and watch Abbey tomorrow night?

NOAH

(faking annoyed)
What for?

DONNA

We're going out for dinner and a movie to celebrate dad's new job.

ABBEY

Woo-hoo, a hot date!

PAINE

Oh, yeah my exciting new career, towing the broken down boats of numbskull tourist's.

NOAH

It beats driving a cab.

PAINE

True enough, pal.

DONNA

And I want you both in bed by eleven sharp. You hear me?

NOAH

Absolutely.

ABBEY

Double absolutely.

EXT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE- LATE AFTERNOON

At the front door, Noah and Abbey wave good bye.

NOAH
Have fun and don't worry.

As they pull out of the drive way, the kids watch, then slowly move to their bikes, hop on and ride off.

EXT. RADO'S HOUSE BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Abbey and Noah climb over a fence into a friend's overgrown back yard, only to meet GODZILLA part Rottweiler, part Newfoundland, and part grizzly bear.

NOAH
(calmly)
Good dog.

ABBEY
Nice try, but we're gonna die.

Godzilla snarls and backs then up against the fence.

NOAH
(holding out his
hand)
Here boy.

ABBEY
Are you crazy?

NOAH
Dogs never forget the smell of
someone they met.

ABBEY
Say's who?

NOAH
Says Animal Planet, that's who.
They did a whole thing on dog's
noses.

ABBEY
Well you must have missed the
episode on dog's teeth.

Godzilla sniffs, a string of drool hangs from his mouth.

NOAH
Easy girl. I got something for ya.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noah pulls out an apple and the dog chomps down on it in his trembling hand. He takes it and walk off with his tail wagging.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Quick, let's go.

They hustle down to the canal and hop in a blue dingy. Noah throws Abbey a life jacket to put on, she resists but puts it on while Noah jerks the starter rope a couple times and finally brings the engine to life. Abbey unties the bow and they are off.

EXT. MARINA- EARLY EVENING

It's still light as the small skiff pulls into the mangrove, just out of sight of the Coral Queen and cuts the motor. Abbey pulls out some Gatoraide, bug spray, a book and a flashlight. Noah ties the bow to the tree then Abbey tosses up his backpack.

NOAH

Sure you're okay with this? I'll be gone a while.

ABBEY

Of course I'm okay.

NOAH

Stay right here until I yell Geronimo! Then you know what to do.

ABBEY

Why Geronimo?

NOAH

I saw someone do it in a movie.

ABBEY

What does it mean?

NOAH

It means, hurry up and rescue me before I get my butt kicked by Dusty's big ugly goon. No more questions. Just keep out of sight.

Noah walks off.

ABBEY

(loud whisper)
Be careful.

EXT. MARINA DOCK - MOMENTS LATER

Cars are parking and people lining up to board the Coral Queen. Noah slips down behind the ticket shack where two crates are lined up. Noah pries open the first one and it full of liquor bottles. He closes it and moves to the second one. It's empty. He climbs in and closes the lid on top.

INT. CRATE - CONTINUOUS

Noah folds himself in with his back pack, just as he hears voices outside.

LUNO

Grab those crates, getta move on.

Inside Noah is bounced about as the crates are taken on board and dropped. Noah waits inside. It's hot and uncomfortable. Finally, there are three taps on the crate, Noah taps back.

INT. CORAL QUEEN- STORAGE AREA CONTINUOUS

Shelly is dressed for work. She puts her finger to her lips and motions for Noah to follow her. They moved down a hall near where a crowd of gamblers are playing, and a Caribbean band is butchering Jimmy Buffett's Margaritavile. As they pass a guy at the card table.

CARD PLAYER (BUFFETT CAMEO)

God, I am so sick of this song.

They continue through casino and slip into a door marked MERMAIDS.

INT. CORAL QUEEN LADIES ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The cramped ladies room consists of three small stalls and sink.

SHELLY

Where's the stuff?

NOAH

(shaking back pack)
You got the sign?

SHELLY

Yep. Guaranteed privacy.

She holds up a card board sign that reads TEMPORARILY OUT OF ORDER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

What about you?

SHELLY

There's another head up front. I gotta get back to the bar. Good luck.

Shelly steps out and tacks the sign on the door. As she walks away, the sign falls to the floor. Slowly, Noah oozes the food dye into the toilet, one by one, then flushes.

EXT. MARINA - NIGHT

Abbey sits in the skiff reading her book by flashlight. She checks the time, looks around and continues reading.

INT. CORAL QUEEN LADIES ROOM

Shelly uses her foot to block the door to the other ladies room, she dumps the dye bottles four at a time.

INT. CORAL QUEEN LADIES ROOM - LATER

Noah squeezes the bottles into a toilet when he hears the door open and someone walk in. He freezes and listens. A old woman goes into the stall next to him and sits. As he continues to squeeze the bottle they make a loud squirt noise. Noah stops

OLD LADY

You okay over there?

NOAH

(high pitched voice)

Yes.

Noah blasts out three more squirts as the old lady grimaces, as he finishes he hears a loud fart from her side he takes a painful whiff and sneaks quickly out the stall and crashes into another woman.

WOMAN

Hey, you're not a Mermaid! Get out of here. Security!

Noah dashes through the casino, under legs, table and past the bar, where Shelly's eyes are as wide as saucers.

BILLY BABCOCK

Hey what's a kid doing here?

EXT. CORAL QUEEN UPPER DECK - CONTINUOUS

As Noah runs up the steps to the upper deck, two huge bouncers give chase. Noah gets to the bow, no where to go, cornered by the approaching thugs.

THUG

Games over. Let's go.

Noah climbs over the rail and looks down at the dark water. Its a long way down.

THUG 2

Chill out, shrimp. Don't try anything stupid.

THUG

(into walkie)

Luno, you better get up here.

(pleading)

Come on, kid. You're gonna break your fool neck.

NOAH

I wasn't planning on it.

As the thugs reach to grab Noah, he jumps out and goes down feet first to the freedom of the dark water below.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(yelling)

GERONIMO!

EXT. MARINA BASIN

The thugs look down he is gone. CAMERA is low in the water, a beat no sign of Noah. Another beat then suddenly BURSTING into frame Noah swims frantically away from the Coral Queen. He looks up into the darkness, looking for the Abbey's skiff. Looking back, Luno joins the thugs on deck.

LUNO

Stop, boy! You stop now!.

Noah swims away from the boat, just off the dock, swimming blind in the darkness. From the dock, Luno shines a bright spotlight on Noah.

LUNO (CONT'D)

There he is!

Noah ducks under water and swims long and hard. As he pops up again, Luno finds him with the bright light again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH
(quite desperation)
Abbey!

Noah ducks under again and swims head first into a huge wall of moving blubber. A large manatee kicks its fin and sends Noah spinning to the surface.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Ahhh! What the heck!

Panic and general fear subside and Noah continues to swim. Finally as he begins to peter out, he hears the chug-a chug of the skiff's motor.

NOAH (CONT'D)
ABBEY!

Abbey whistles, but Noah can't whistle back. He swims over to the boat struggles to get in.

ABBEY
You okay?

NOAH
(breathing hard)
Why'd you cut the engine?

ABBEY
I didn't, it stalled out. It took forever to get the stupid thing started.

Noah goes to the back and continues pulling the starter rope.

NOAH
Come on, come on!

The engine stutters, coughs and goes silent. Suddenly the skiff lights up like a movie stage. The kids shield their eyes from the blinding light. The boat has drifted closer to the dock where Luno holds the spotlight.

LUNO
You again! This time you two punks no get away!

ABBEY
Should we jump?

NOAH
Not yet. Paddle!

Luno paces and zaps them with light to disorient them. Abbey tries to paddle away from the dock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LUNO

I get you punks now.

ABBEY

Noah, look, quick!

Dusty Muleman, with his cigar and loud shirt, joins Luno on the dock. Luno pulls out a stubby looking gun and aims it at the boat. Noah keeps tugging on the starter rope.

NOAH

(rasing his arms)

Don't shoot! We give up!

LUNO

You kids make bad mistake, now
must pay.

Noah dives to cover his sister, almost capsizing the boat. Very afraid, they wait for the worse.

EXT DOCK - CONTINUOUS

LONG SHOT FROM WATER to the dock, a third man runs down and a fight breaks out between Luno and him. Dusty's, flip flops clatter, as he runs away from the fight. The kids squint to see the old man from the woods with the scar, pounding Luno into a sweaty lump of Jell-O.

ABBEY

(whispering)

The pirate guy!

NOAH

Don't you move.

Noah jumps up and yanks the rope with all his might. The rickety engine purrs to life. He twists the throttle open and they speed away, looking back to see the old pirate kick Luno's gun into the water.

EXT. OPEN WATER - MOMENTS LATER

Abbey sits on the bow watching for obstacles as Noah drives along. The full moon lights their faces.

ABBEY

We did it! We are so hot!

NOAH

(salute)

Adios, Captain Muleman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

Hard right!

Noah turns to avoid some junk in the water.

NOAH

Good eyes.

ABBEY

Thanks, what's that clanking? Why are you slowing down?

NOAH

I'm not, not on purpose.

The motor conks out with a sickly rattle. They drift.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Toss out the anchor.. No wait!

The anchor splashes and disappears with rope attached.

ABBEY

You might have said check the rope.

They drift in silence for a bit.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

Now, what?

A CRACK of THUNDER and flashes of lightning appear in the distance.

NOAH

Hope that's not coming this way.

ABBEY

Maybe it will miss us.

NOAH

(not convinced)
Yeah... Well, as Dad always says,
"stay with the boat".

They hunker down and prepare for the coming wind and rain.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OPEN WATER- HOURS LATER

The storm is in full swing, the boat bounces about in the large swells, the rain pounds at them, thunder and lightning is everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 ABBEY
 Hey Noah?

 NOAH
 What?

 ABBEY
 My butts underwater.

 NOAH
 (glumly)
 Mine, too.

 ABBEY
 Shouldn't we, like, do something?

 NOAH
 Yeah, start bailing.

Noah grabs a can and starts bailing the water, Abbey joins in.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OPEN WATER - LATER

Time and the storm have passed. Abbey lies sleeping, she snores slightly. Noah sits watch holding the flashlight and scanning the distant lights, looking for a passing boat. His eyes grow heavy and close.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OPEN WATER - MORNING

Seagulls circle above as Noah and Abbey open their eyes to the bright morning sun.

 NOAH
 One juice box. That's all we got?
 What happened to the Gatoraide?

 ABBEY
 I drank it. I'd brought a whole cooler if I'd known we getting lost at sea. Want some juice or not?

A seagull drops a prize right on Noah's shoulder. Abbey can't hold her laughter back, after almost falling overboard trying to wash it off, Noah joins her in a laugh and the rest of the juice box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

We should have saved some of that rain water. Remind me not to try out for Survivor.

ABBEY

I used to think Dad was the psycho in the family, but look at us! No water, no food, no shade.

NOAH

At least we can still see the shore.

ABBEY

Noah, when am I allowed to get scared?

NOAH

...like in about three or four hours.

A plane flies over, a freighter in the distance, deep sea fishing boat on the horizon, but no one heads their way.

ABBEY

I just thought of something, if we're stuck out here, who's going to call the Coast Guard on Dusty?

NOAH

Good question.

ABBEY

Know what? This really bites.

NOAH

Yeah, it does. I'm sorry, Abbey.

ABBEY

For what?.. Noah, are you listening?

He isn't. He's squinting towards a spec on the horizon.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

What are you staring at?

NOAH

A boat...or a mirage.

ABBEY

(scanning the horizon)

Nope, it's a real boat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They stand up, wave and holler like dweebs. The boat gets closer, as it slows and banks around, the large orange letters on the side read OCEAN RESCUE. Two figures stand under the top.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

Noah, is that who I think it is?

NOAH

The one and only.

ABBEY

You want me to start sobbing and shaking.

NOAH

Not yet. First, let's see how pissed off he is.

ABBEY

Is that Mom with him? Please tell me it's not Mom.

NOAH

No...Mom usually wears a shirt.

ABBEY

Who is it?

NOAH

Check out the scar.

The boat pulls up close and the old pirate from the dock, throws a line to Noah.

PAINÉ

Hey, guys, long night?

They climb on board. After a long hug, Paine looks them over.

PAINÉ (CONT'D)

Are you two okay?

NOAH

Yeah, just thirsty, that's all.

The old sailor hands them each a bottle of cold water.

ABBEY

It's driving me crazy. Who are you?

He takes off his sunglasses and looks to Paine

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PAINÉ

Kids, say hello to your Grandpa
Bobby.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE KITCHEN- DAY

Noah is alone and whispers into the phone.

PETTY OFFICER REILLY (O.C.)

United States Coast Guard. Petty
Officer Reilly speaking.

NOAH

Yes, I'd like to report a boat
dumping sewage.

PETTY OFFICER REILLY

Name of the vessel?

NOAH

It's the Coral Queen.

PETTY OFFICER REILLY

Did you witness this violation?

NOAH

Look for a bright purple trail
leading to the Thunder Beach. But
you'd better hurry.

PETTY OFFICER REILLY

Who am I speaking with?

NOAH

Underwood...Paine Underwood.

Noah hangs up and dials another number.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Miles Umlatt, It's Noah Underwood.

MILES

Hello, Noah. I'm very busy. A bait
truck flipped over and there's
live shrimp all over the highway.

NOAH

Want a real story? A front-page
story?

MILES

You bet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

You know all that stuff my dad said about Dusty? Well, if you want to see the truth get over to Dusty's marina right away.

MILES

What's going on?

NOAH

Ask the Coast Guard.

Noah hangs up and walks out.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paine, Donna, Abbey and Grandpa Bobby sit looking at some pictures as Noah enters.

GRANDPA BOBBY

Noah, I want to show you something.

Noah sits between his dad and his grandfather, who pulls a picture out of his shirt pocket.

INSERT SHOT- YOUNGER BOBBY AND 2 YEAR OLD NOAH

GRANDPA BOBBY (CONT'D)

You were only two years old... Lord, where do I start? I guess by saying how bad I feel about being out of touch these last ten years.

ABBEY

Out of touch! Everybody thought you were dead!

GRANDPA BOBBY

I'm sorry. I truly am. Paine, Donna, believe me when I say I had good reasons for stayin' out of your life.

Donna and Paine sit quietly, happy to have him back.

GRANDPA BOBBY (CONT'D)

It's not a happy story. A man came along that needed a boat captain, someone who didn't ask any questions for some runs to South America.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Were you smuggling?

GRANDPA BOBBY

Yes, champ, but not dope. Little green stones, Emeralds. But smugglin' is smugglin and stupid is stupid.

(pointing to scar)

That's how I ended up with this. It got serious ugly, and yours truly had to disappear.

PAINE

What happened to your boat?

GRANDPA BOBBY

They stole the Amanda Rose, the night they tried to kill me and I been tracking those rat bastards, pardon the language, ever since.

DONNA

Why did the State Department tell us you were dead?

GRANDPA BOBBY

A man in Columbia rolled me and stole my wallet, he ended up dead. I had to pay off a police captain to make sure they didn't ship the body back.

(grinning slyly)

See I didn't want to miss my own funeral.

ABBEY

Why didn't you at least call?

NOAH

Or send a letter?

GRANDPA BOBBY

Kids, let me tell you something about your daddy. He's a good man, but sometimes his brain takes a nap and his heart takes the tiller.

NOAH

Oh, come on, Pop.

GRANDPA BOBBY

In school they called him Paine in the butt Underwood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Everyone but Paine has a good laugh.

GRANDPA BOBBY (CONT'D)

See, he had a habit of doing the first thing that popped into his mind, no matter how foolish. Now whaddya think he do if he'd found out I was still alive and scramblin' to stay that way? He'd a hopped a plane and come looking for me! Am I right son?

Paine stares at his shoes

GRANDPA BOBBY (CONT'D)

And likely gotten himself killed in the bargain.

DONNA

What made you come back?

GRANDPA BOBBY

I was following a lead on my boat in the Grenadines when I looked up at the satellite TV and who do I see on the tube? Mr. Paine Lee Underwood, wearing the latest jailhouse fashions. My boy in jail!

NOAH

Then what'd you do?

GRANDPA BOBBY

I stowed away on some rich guys yacht headed to Key West. Before Customs came aboard, I slipped over the side and swam into the Mallory Square docks. Hitched a ride this way and I been keeping a low profile trying to figure out how to help my boy's court case.

NOAH

Why did you start tailing me and Abbey?

GRANDPA BOBBY

Call it a hunch. I knew if you were like your pappy, you might try something crazy.

DONNA

Thank goodness you did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PAINE

When Mom and I got home from the movie, there he was in the middle of the road flailing his arms.

NOAH

What'd you do?

PAINE

I turned calmly to your mother and said, "Either that's a ghost or the government has given us some bad information.

GRANDPA BOBBY

When I saw you kids leaving in the dingy I knew you wouldn't get far with the motor sounding like a bucket of nails.

NOAH

You saved us at the dock with Luno and the gun.

DONNA

Gun! What gun?

GRANDPA BOBBY

Donna, it was a flare gun. He probably wanted to scare the you-know-what out of them.

ABBEY

(disappointed)

Just a *flare* gun.

GRANDPA BOBBY

The main thing is nobody got hurt except for Baldy. Now I believe it Noah's turn to tell us his story. You ready champ?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THUNDER BEACH - LATER

Grandpa Bobby, Paine, Donna, Noah and Abbey stand looking out at the fuchsia colored water.

PAINE

I'm impressed, this was your idea, Noah?

NOAH

Abbey's too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

I picked out the color.

Bobby puts his hand on Paine's shoulder.

GRANDPA BOBBY

Paine, you and Donna lucked out with these youngsters. They're true champs, both of 'em.

PAINE

...Most of the time.

GRANDPA BOBBY

Gotta admit, this is a whole lot neater than sinkin' the man's boat.

PAINE

Yeah, Pop, thanks for bringing that up.

GRANDPA BOBBY

Well someone probably ought to notify the Coast Guard while the tide's right.

ABBEY

Listen guys! You hear that?

POUNDING THUMP of helicopter blades, then around the bend, a orange dot grows larger as it approaches.

PAINE

Look.

A HH-60 Jayhawk helicopter comes into view. The whine of the engine grows louder as the chopper drops over the water. As it gets closer, we see COAST GUARD on its belly and a door slides open. A crew member hangs out and video taping the scene along the shore.

Tight on VIDEO MONITOR the purple trail to the marina is very clear. The chopper banks hard and heads off in direction of the Coral Queen.

Abbey whoops, Paine hugs Donna, Noah and Grandpa hug, everyone is happy. Grandpa Bobby takes off his necklace with the big Spanish coin and puts in on Noah.

GRANDPA BOBBY

I believe you've earned this.

NOAH

Woa, thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNA

By the way, you are both grounded.

ABBEY

Grounded for how long?

DONNA

I'll let you know.

ABBEY

But we saved Thunder Beach.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Shelly sits on the step to her trailer, a bottle of beer and a rake in her hand. Noah and Abbey are with her.

NOAH

What's wrong?

SHELLY

Love is a strange deal.

NOAH

What happened at the boat when I jumped over board?

SHELLY

Nobody heard a thing over the band. Or didn't seem to care.

NOAH

But our plan worked, the Coast Guard got it all on tape.

SHELLY

No kiddin?

ABBEY

We couldn't have done it without you.

NOAH

Yeah, you did awesome. But what about Dusty's secret spy at the Coast Guard?

INT. TRAILER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two men lay face down on the floor, the place is a mess, a fight clearly took place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHELLY

You asked about Billy Babcock?
Well there he is.

She uses the rake handle to roll him over. He doesn't move.

ABBEY

What'd you do to him?

SHELLY

Let's just say, some high octane
cocktails, made him the perfect
gentleman.

NOAH

So who is the other guy?

SHELLY

You don't recognize him?

She rolls him over with the rake. Noah is blown away.

NOAH

Lice Peeking!

SHELLY

In person! I told you love is a
strange deal.

ABBEY

Is he alive?

SHELLY

More or less.

NOAH

Wait a minute. What about the
blood stains in the Jeep?

SHELLY

Ketchup from his burger, the big
slob got so scared by Luno when he
ran out of gas, he ditched the car
and hitched North.

ABBEY

Why'd he come back? Did he run out
of money or something?

SHELLY

You're a sharp young lady. Yeah,
he ran out but deep down in his
heart he missed me. Least that's
what he said before I hit him with
the rake.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Abbey and Noah ride their bikes fast.

ABBEY

We got twelve minutes to get home,
or we're grounded for life.

Ahead on the road, pushing a bike are Jasper Jr and Bull.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

Noah, don't stop. No matter what.

JASPER JR.

(yelling after him)
Hey, Butt face weasel.

Noah slams on his brake and skids his bike to a stop.

ABBEY

Are you whacked? Keep going. I'm
not kidding.

Noah stands his ground and waits for them.

JASPER JR.

You're so dead. So dead.

Noah pulls the big spanish coin out that is hanging from
around his neck. It's clear the coin strikes fear into
the two bullies.

NOAH

I'm still waiting for my apology.

Jasper turns and spits on the pavement.

JASPER JR.

(mumbling)
I'm sorry Underwood.

NOAH

Keep talking.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - - DAY

The papers lies on the coffee table, the headline reads

CASINO BOAT BUSTED IN POLLUTION PROBE. A color photo
makes it easy to see the purple trail to the Coral Queen.
The telephone rings and Paine unplugs it.

EXT. THUNDER BEACH - LATER

Noah and Grandpa walk along in the water up to their knees.

NOAH

How you gonna get back?

GRANDPA BOBBY

Same way I got here.

NOAH

You sure about this?

GRANDPA BOBBY

Oh, I'll be fine. Your mom even packed me a suitcase.

NOAH

(laughs)
Not the plaid one?

GRANDPA BOBBY

Yeah. What's so funny?

NOAH

That's the one she takes out whenever she's thinking about dumping Dad.

GRANDPA BOBBY

I think that's not in the plan anymore.

(pulls out a picture)
There she is, the Amanda Rose. That was taken in Cat Cay the summer before you were born.

NOAH

Wow. She's a classic.

GRANDPA BOBBY

She's a beaut. Twin diesels, eight hundred horses. I'm gonna find her.

NOAH

I know you will.

GRANDPA BOBBY

Don't be surprised, if one sunny day a magnificent forty-six footer comes haulin' ass over that pearly blue horizon with yours truly up in the tuna tower.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH
 (closing his eyes)
 I can see it in my mind.

They continue to walk as a logger head turtle scurries down into the water behind them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAYS LATER

Early morning light pours in as Grandpa drops the plaid suitcase by the door. Noah, Abbey, Donna and Paine sit at the breakfast table.

GRANDPA BOBBY
 Donna, I'm counting on you to keep that hot-headed husband of yours from coming after me.

DONNA
 Don't worry bout that, but we're gonna miss you.

ABBEY
 Why won't you stay with us?

GRANDPA BOBBY
 It's tempting, tiger, it truly is, but a lot of folks think I'm dead and it has to stay that way till I get some business cleared up and I can come home for good.

Abbey starts to cry and runs for her room but Bobby grabs her and gives her a hug.

ABBEY
 I don't want anything to happen to you.

As she sobs, he pulls something out of his pocket.

GRANDPA BOBBY
 Don't you worry, now... Hey I got something for you. It's only fair since your brother got the queen's coin.

ABBEY
 (looking in his hand)
 Whoa!

GRANDPA BOBBY
 They're emeralds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

I won't ask where you got them.

PAINE

Oh, probably some 'poker game.

GRANDPA BOBBY

I earned them fair and square.
I've been carrying them around for
years hopin' to meet the right
girl. Now I have.

Donna helps a smiling Abbey put them on.

GRANDPA BOBBY (CONT'D)

Abbey, you're as lovely as your
grandmother was. I only wish you
could've known her. And, son I
wish...

He can't finish, he grabs his bag and goes out the door.
Paine follows him out. Through the window, the kids watch
Paine give his father a long hug goodbye.

EXT. FLORIDA KEYS - DAY

The passage of time is marked by sunrises, sunsets and
the various images of summer.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE WEEKS LATER

Noah rides up to the house to find a hole the size of a
fist in the front door. He goes inside and finds another
hole in the kitchen door. Donna emerges in a hurry.

NOAH

What happened?

DONNA

Your dad got some bad news.

NOAH

Not about Grandpa Bobby?

DONNA

It's about Dusty Muleman. His
lawyers worked out a sweetheart
deal. He's reopening the Coral
Queen tonight,

NOAH

(taping the hole)
Did dad do this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

Oh, yeah. The counselors told him to let the negative energy go the moment it enters his head. I don't think this is what they had in mind.

NOAH

How bad is it?

DONNA

Why don't you go have a talk with him? I have to pick up your sister from her piano lesson.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM- MOMENTS LATER

Paine is in bed watching TV, each of his hands are in buckets full of ice. Noah enters.

NOAH

Hey, dad. You alright?

PAINE

You know what Dusty's fine was? Ten thousand lousy dollars. Ten grand. He makes that in one stinking night. It's chump change to that maggot!

NOAH

Dad, take it easy.

PAINE

No, you need to hear this. Last month some hotshots from the federal prosecutor's office in Miami had a private bachelor party on the Coral Queen. Anyway, the party gets a little wild and Dusty sneaks out his camera and gets some pictures. The kind you wouldn't want wives to see.

NOAH

Hold on, you're telling me Dusty blackmailed the government lawyers?

PAINE

Let's just say, all of a sudden the feds cut a deal.

NOAH

That's not fair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAINE

And now, to show how much he cares about the oceans, he's throwing a party tonight to benefit the Save The Reef Foundation on the Coral Queen. That hypocrite has to pay.

NOAH

How?

EXT. MARINA- EARLY EVENING

The party is in full swing, the boat is packed as the band plays, people drink and gamble and fireworks shoot into the air high above the marina.

ANGLE on a pretty Latin REPORTER, talking on camera.

REPRORTER

The party here is winding down with a huge fireworks display as over 200 people celebrate the grand re-opening of the floating casino.

TIGHT ON VIEWFINDER of cameraman

Live from the Coral Queen back to the studio...

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Paine, Noah, Abbey and Donna watch the news in silence. Paine struggles to move his hands and shut off the TV. They are badly swollen and he can barely move them.

PAINE

I'm numb. There's no justice in the world.

DONNA

Honey, you need to get those X-rayed. Let's go.

PAINE

I'll be fine.

INT. UNDERWOOD HOUSE NOAH'S BEDROOM- MIDDLE OF NIGHT

Noah's bedroom comes alive with flashing lights and the blare of sirens. Abbey comes in and shakes Noah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBEY

Wake up...that was the third
firetruck that went by.

NOAH

What?...What time is it?

ABBEY

It's after one. And mom and dad
are gone.

The screech of another siren goes by the house.

EXT. MARINA BASIN- VERY LATE

The parking lot is empty and the party is over. The Coral Queen is at the dock, fully engulfed in flames. Fire engines are on scene and more arrive, as the explosions, and fireworks shoot from inside the boat in every direction. The fire continues to burn out of control. Locals arrive to watch the ship burn.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MARINA BASIN - - LATER

The smoldering remains of the Coral Queen sit at the dock. It has burned to the waterline and investigators and firemen mill about. Dusty Muleman paces on the dock, not happy. Local folks look on, Donna and Paine, stand away from the crowd looking over the action. Noah and Abbey ride up on bikes. Paine waves his bandaged hand at Noah.

NOAH

(looking)

Holy....cow. Dad what did you do?

ABBEY

Oh no. Dad, dad?

DONNA

Hold on, you two. Your father had
nothing to do with this...Right,
Paine?

PAINE

(a beat)

It wasn't me, I swear.

NOAH

What about Grandpa Bobby?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

Oh, God. He wouldn't have, would he?

PAINE

I don't know. I don't know.

Two detectives approach Paine and stare at the large bandages on both his hands.

DETECTIVE

What happened to your hands? You didn't happen to burn them, did you?

PAINE

No, I didn't burn them. I broke them.

DETECTIVE #2

Where were you between 12 and 2 this morning?

DONNA

He was with me. At the hospital.

DETECTIVE #2

Mr. Underwood, you have the right to remain silent.

PAINE

You're arresting me? For what?

DETECTIVE

Burning down Muleman's Coral Queen. Now, let's go take a look at those hands.

The detective struggles to handcuff Paine's big wrapped hands. The cuffs won't close over the bandages. He gives up and leads him by the arm down to an ambulance. Dusty Muleman runs over.

DUSTY

You couldn't let it go, could you? This time they'll lock you up for good.

PAINE

It's a pretty sight.

DONNA

Paine was at the hospital with me since 11:45. Here's his notice of admission, it's right there, 11:45p.m. plain as day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DETECTIVE

(to paramedic)

Let's just see. Take off the bandages.

DONNA

Tell me how he'd light a match with all his fingers swollen and taped up.

Everyone looks on as the paramedic starts to unwrap his hand. The tension mounts as the hand is finally revealed to be only bruised and not burned.

ABBEY

I believed you, daddy. I did.

A couple Coast Guard crewman, in a rubber boat, pull up to the dock with two wet figures in blankets. Dusty and the detectives walk over. Bull and Jasper Jr. soaked and exhausted climb out of the boat.

COAST GUARDSMAN

We found these two hanging on the buoy across the channel. Looks like they've been there a while.

BULL

(breaking down)

It was all his idea. I had nothing to do with it.

JASPER JR.

Shut up, Bull.

BULL

No, you shut up, It's all your fault and I'm not taking the fall for the fire.

DUSTY

You better start talking, boy.

Jasper breaks down sobbing, as the detectives pull him up on the dock and start to handcuff both boys. The Underwoods head back to their car.

EXT. MARINA DOCK- NEXT MORNING

The clean up at the dock continues. Positioned in front of the burnt out shell of the Coral Queen, several news reporters file their reports. We cut between the newscasts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER #1

In a plea agreement, 17 year old Charles "BULL" Williams gave police full details on the origin of the fire.

REPORTER #2

The initial cause of the blaze was two young men with cigars who ignited a storeroom full of fireworks.

REPORTER #3

A mix of alcohol and first time smoking by minors can be blamed for the complete destruction of the boat.

REPORTER #1

Also uncovered at the crime scene, was a hidden watertight safe with a large, undisclosed amount of cash.

REPORTER #2

State gaming officials and members of the Miccosukee tribe are launching a full investigation into the situation and more serious charges may be forthcoming.

In the background, some of the Indian partners and government types look through the records at the ticket booth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OPEN WATER - DAY

The family enjoys a boat ride. They sit and gaze at the beauty of a Florida Keys sunset. Noah plays with his necklace, reflecting the sunlight off the coin.

PAINÉ

Noah, I got a check in the mail today for one thousand dollars.

NOAH

What for?

PAINÉ

It's a reward from the Marine Sanctuary for phoning in a pollution report.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

No kidding.

PAINE

Funny, huh? I don't remember making that call.

ABBEY

(jumping in)

Dad, do you think we might see it tonight?

PAINE

See what honey?

ABBEY

The green flash, you always talk about it?

PAINE

You never know, honey. They're pretty rare.

Abbey looks towards the setting sun and Noah stares southward.

NOAH

Hey dad, which direction would Grandpa be coming from?

PAINE

Probably from the southwest. Out that way somewhere.

Noah scans the horizon, the ball of sun begins to set.

ABBEY

Get ready! Whoa! Look at that.

DONNA

Quick, hand me my camera.

As the large orb of an orange sun makes its way below the horizon all eyes take it in. When the last bit drops into the sea, a green flash magically appears. It lasts for only a brief moment in time. TIGHT on their faces as they stare in awe at the rare sight. Donna snaps a picture, Abbey hoots, Noah smiles and looks over to his father, who puts his hand on his sons shoulder and gives a squeeze. Everyone is content and at peace for this moment in time.

The boat's engine roars to life and the bow turns sharply in the waves and heads home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Noah squeezes his coin that Grandpa gave him and looks back southwest squinting to see the empty horizon wondering if his Grandpa has just enjoyed the same magical sight.

The CAMERA RISES and WIDENS to reveal a few other boats making their way towards the harbor in the enchanting light that remains.

FADE TO BLACK.