HEROES AND VILLAINS
ENTERTAINMENT



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the mayor of shark city

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"All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles, have strengthened me... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you."

-- Walt Disney

"Shooting *Jaws* was really a living nightmare. I dreamt about it at night. I'd wake up with that sick feeling in the pit of my gut. I felt that I was the eye of the hurricane. All this fell on me. It was the hardest production I've ever experienced... And I still have nightmares about it to this day."

-- Steven Spielberg
2010 interview

EXT. MOVIE THEATER -- DAY

A MARQUEE advertises DeMille's *The Greatest Show on Earth.*

Below the sign, a line of people wait for tickets. A grand day out for post-war nuclear families. A TITLE fades up:

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
1952

Farther down the line, we find STEVEN (5), gangly and shy. He tugs on the hand of a grown-up beside him. ARNOLD (35), his father, kneels down. Kind eyes behind round glasses.

STEVEN
Is it going to be scary?

ARNOLD
You're going to love it. I promise.

INT. THEATER LOBBY -- DAY

Arnold, popcorn and soda in hand, leads Steven into a... **DARK CORRIDOR.** Swinging doors at the end. Steven stops.

ARNOLD
Go ahead, Steven. Don't be afraid.

Steven's hand pushes the door open. LIGHT shines out, turning him into a tiny SILHOUETTE. A SHADOW in the doorway.

INT. MOVIE THEATER -- THAT MOMENT

Steven enters, overwhelmed by the cavernous art deco chamber. A UNIFORMED USHER smiles as father and son take their seats.

Moments later, Steven gasps as the curtain slides open... THUNDEROUS MUSIC comes up as the huge Paramount logo appears.

And we see something happen in Steven's face. Something magical. A wonder in his eyes that only belongs to a child.

ON SCREEN: As the movie plays out, we see Jimmy Stewart as Buttons the Clown... Death-defying acts... A majestic herd of elephants... Two circus trains COLLIDE in a huge crash.

Finally, the picture ends. Arnold gets up, but Steven stays.

STEVEN
Again. Please.

Arnold can't resist. He sits down. The curtain opens and the movie begins again. Steven giddy with delight. Then...

CREAKING. From the rafters. A sound like TWISTING METAL. Or an old ship at sea. Then, a new sound... DRIP... DRIP...

An AIR CONDITIONER leaks water. Droplets fall from above.

A CRACK OF THUNDER draws Steven back to the screen, where... A VIOLENT STORM rages on a ROLLING SEA. Confusion sets in.

STEVEN
What happened to the circus?

BOOM! Something POUNDS on the screen from the other side.

The screen CRACKS as if made of glass, slowly from top to bottom. Leaking like a broken aquarium. It holds for a beat... Then SHATTERS as a TIDAL WAVE fills the theater.

In seconds, it floods the room. Seats RIPPED from the floor. Steven clings to his floating chair. Frantic. Looking for...

Arnold. Floating in his seat. Drifting to the far side of the theater. Eyes still on the screen. Enjoying the show.

Then... A BLACK SHAPE, thirty feet long, spills out from behind the screen. <u>There's</u> <u>something</u> <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>water</u> <u>with</u> <u>them</u>.

And it's MOVING. A slithering black SHADOW. Steven cries.

ARNOLD
(still smiling)
Don't be afraid.

Something BUMPS Arnold from beneath... <u>Then</u> <u>pulls</u> <u>him</u> <u>under</u>.

STEVEN
DADDY! NO!

A churning wake EXPLODES from below. A flash of gaping JAWS. Rusted BOLTS and GEARS. Metal teeth CHOMPING down hard as...

SMASH TO:

INT. CABIN / BEDROOM -- DAWN

Steven (27), grown up with full head of shaggy hair, jolts awake from the nightmare. Gasping for breath. A beat. He looks out the window toward a quiet HARBOR in the distance.

BLACK OUT.

OVER BLACK, a TITLE:

BASED ON ACTUAL EVENTS

Then, still OVER BLACK...

STEVEN (V.O.)
No rest for the wicked.

ALVES (V.O.)
Thirty six hours and counting.
Figure I'll sleep when I'm dead.

INT. BOAT HOUSE -- DAY

WORKER BEES loiter. Guys in tool belts. Days of stubble, grungy T-shirts. All GLARING at STEVEN as he confers with...

JOE ALVES (38). Curly hair, beard. Part artist, part carpenter, all workhorse. Came out of the womb with a pencil behind his ear.

STEVEN
How's it coming?

ALVES
All the king's horses, all the king's men...

He's talking about the FISHING BOAT with a THREE FOOT HOLE in her hull. Alves and crew patching up the battle damage.

A single word painted on her stern: "ORCA."

EXT. CABIN -- EARLIER THAT MORNING

Cold. Stark windblown morning. Steven exits the house. Walking toward the harbor in the distance. All the while...

ALVES (V.O.)
Talked to Z. Studio's ready to burn him at the stake for this one.

STEVEN (V.O.)
And they actually <u>like</u> him.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- EARLIER THAT MORNING

Steven still walking. Passing sleepy store fronts.

ALVES (V.O.)
We all got targets on our back now. Way this is going, I'm surprised they're still talking to us at all.

Down the street, a gang of TEAMSTERS gathers at the bakery. Breakfast on the go. Steven tenses at the sight of them...

Makes a hard turn on his route. Best to avoid them right now.

EXT. OAK BLUFFS HARBOR -- EARLIER THAT MORNING

Steven trudges past a hand-painted sign: SHARK CITY. Hanging above an encampment of shacks and work benches in the harbor.

STEVEN (V.O.)
So how much longer ‘til we’re up and running? Two days? Three?

A few more WORKER BEES gather. Smoke break. Chatting. Staring hard at Steven... Who hangs his head as he passes by.

No eye contact. He just keeps walking...
To the BOAT HOUSE where Joe Alves has been working all night.

ALVES (V.O.)
Steve... You don’t understand.

INT. BOAT HOUSE -- NOW

Back to Steven and Alves. Steven chewing his nails.

ALVES
I think we're getting shut down.

A heavy silence. Finally...

STEVEN
Fuck.

ALVES
Everybody’s asking me when we’re going home, and I don’t know what to say... I don’t have an answer.

There's only one answer...

STEVEN
We go home when we're finished.

EXT. DOCKS -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven heads back the way he came. Feeling every sideways stare. Every pissed-off look. A marked man.

And then he sees it... A custom DRY DOCK in the water. Occupied by a SHAPE DRAPED IN CANVAS. The shape of a certain GREAT WHITE SHARK. Drape partially pulled back to reveal...

SHARP TEETH. Row upon row. Like the ones in his nightmare.

Steven brushes it off, heading back up the dock when...
A PASSERBY SHOULDER-BUMPS him. Whips him around to reveal...

A HULKING FIGURE heading the other way. Military jacket. Fisherman's cap. Tufts of mutton chops. He whistles a tune some may recognize about good-byes and fair ladies of Spain.

The figure TOSSES something in the water. Never looks back.

Shaken, Steven walks on, passing an AVIS DELIVERY VAN. White gaffer's tape has been used to turn the word "AVIS" into...

"JAWS"

We CRANE UP to REVEAL, for the first time...

EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD -- DAY

A normally sleepy resort town, now mobbed with trucks, trailers, crew, and the inherent chaos of film production.

Steven disappears into the crowd as a TITLE fades up:

MARTHA'S VINEYARD
SEPTEMBER 23, 1974

A beat, then below that, another TITLE:

85 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

The CAMERA rises until all we can see is the ATLANTIC OCEAN.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS LOT -- DAY

The calm waters of the Falls Lake tank on the Universal backlot. A STUDIO TRAM TOUR drives by with a clearly visible Universal logo on the side. As the tram passes, we REVEAL...

STEVEN walking past the lake. Crossing the lot. Full of energy, like a schoolboy who just got straight As. TITLE:

ONE YEAR EARLIER

Steven ducks into a bungalow marked: ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY.

INT. ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven hangs around the outer office as a cute young SECRETARY makes copies of MANUSCRIPTS on a Xerox machine.

SECRETARY
He shouldn't be too much longer.
Want a glass of water or something?

He waves her off. She goes about her work.
As Steven peers around, a MANUSCRIPT catches his eye...

"JAWS"
a novel by
PETER BENCHLEY

He pulls it from the pile. Stumped by the title.

STEVEN
Jaws?
(to the secretary)
What's this? A dentist story?

SECRETARY
No, I think it's about a fish.

Steven flips to the first page of the manuscript. As he reads, his face changes. Engrossed. Maybe even a little disturbed by what he's discovered. A few LINES jump out...

"Jaws snapped shut... Crushing bones and flesh and organs into a jelly... The boy's legs were severed at the hips..."

STEVEN
Definitely not a dentist.

He flips pages, getting more and more into this, until...

STEVEN
Hey, could you... Listen, do you think I could get a copy of this?

SECRETARY
Mr. Zanuck says it doesn't leave the office. He was clear on that.

STEVEN
Crystal clear or kind of murky?

She takes it back with a scolding grin. Crystal.

STEVEN
I'll just grab that glass of water.

He ducks down the short hall, passing a half-closed DOOR...

STEVEN'S POV -- JOE ALVES, a lifetime less haggard than the previous scene, buzzes around a desk. Showing off sketches.

ALVES
(to someone off-screen)
These are just initial concepts...
30 feet proportional, man to shark.

BACK TO STEVEN -- Realizing something big is happening. He grabs water. Heads to the OUTER OFFICE. In his haste...

He BUMPS the secretary. Water and manuscripts go flying.

STEVEN
Oh, geez... Sorry. I'm so sorry.

As he helps her gather papers...

STEVEN
Look, uh... Tell Mr. Zanuck I'll catch up with him tomorrow, okay?

And he's out the door... Moments later, RICHARD D. ZANUCK (38) enters from the back hall. Motion picture royalty with a maverick's edge. A synthesis of old and new Hollywood.

ZANUCK
Marilyn, will you bring me the *Jaws* proof? I need to go over it before I call Mr. Brown. And a cup of coffee, too, please. Real coffee, not that instant shit that tastes like something I put in my engine.

As she checks the pile, Zanuck looks around, confused...

ZANUCK
Where's Steven? I just heard him.

SECRETARY
It's not here.
(off his look)
The *Jaws* manuscript. It's gone.

PRE-LAP an intense PIANO RIFF. "Sinnerman" by Nina Simone.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS LOT -- MOMENTS LATER

MUSIC continues as Steven moves across the backlot. He pulls the *Jaws* manuscript from under his shirt as we **BEGIN MONTAGE.**

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Steven takes a seat in the sand. In full view of the ocean.

In a SERIES OF DISSOLVES, Steven devours the book. DOUBLE EXPOSURE SHOTS from his mind's eye laid over turning pages.

STEVEN'S IMAGINATION -- This is the *Jaws* movie that Steven pictures in his head. The version we never got to see...

A YOUNG WOMAN swims in the ocean. Behind her, a DORSAL FIN cuts the water. The SHARK dives beneath her, then ASCENDS...

Recreating the iconic *Jaws* cover art in full LIVE ACTION.

Only here, the behemoth EXPLODES from the water. CRUSHES the young woman in its massive JAWS. This shark is a flesh-and-blood creature. More terrifying than any movie monster.

Steven continues flipping pages...
A mock *JAWS* ONE-SHEET in the vein of Drew Struzan shows...

GENE HACKMAN as POLICE CHIEF BRODY...
JEFF BRIDGES as MATT HOOPER, the marine biologist...
LEE MARVIN as SAM QUINT, the shark hunter...

A mini-trailer plays in Steven's head...

Quint, Brody, and Hooper (played by the actors in the poster) sail the high seas on Quint's boat *Orca* to battle the shark. The beast LEAPS onto the deck. CHOMPING the boat to pieces.

The shark hunters fight back with ropes and harpoons. Quint blasts away with a Tommy gun as the *Orca* sinks beneath him.

BACK TO REAL LIFE -- Steven turns the last page. **END MONTAGE.**

CUT TO:

EXT. STEVEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Steven pulls into his driveway in Laurel Canyon. Still on a creative high. Until he sees SOMEONE on his front porch...

ZANUCK
You must think you're a pretty clever son of a bitch.

Zanuck snatches the *Jaws* manuscript. Calm but still pissed.

STEVEN
Dick, I have to direct this.

ZANUCK
Look, you're a good kid...

STEVEN
You don't understand. This is the one. The one that's been living in my head since I was seven. Pure adventure. Still needs work, but --

ZANUCK
Steven!
(off his look)
We've already got a director.

A gut punch. All Steven's hopes crushed.

ZANUCK
IFA reps Benchley. They wanted one of their guys. We're meeting him in New York. It's out of my hands.

Steven paces. Mind in overdrive. Not ready to let go.

STEVEN
Benchley's gonna be there?
(off his nod)
So you can drop my name in his ear.

ZANUCK
You telling me how to negotiate?

STEVEN
Just keep me in the game. Think of it like, I don't know... insurance.

Silence. Zanuck doesn't like being told his business. But there's something about this kid... He can't tell him "no."

STEVEN
You don't see what I see here. I'll do anything to make this movie, Dick. It has to be me.

ZANUCK
Good night, Steven.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

VICKI (23), a pretty brunette, sits on the couch, paging through a screenplay titled "*Earthquake*." Steven enters.

VICKI
Who was that?

STEVEN
Nobody. A colleague.

ELMER and ZALMAN, two Cocker Spaniels, greet him. As he passes Vicki, she takes his hand. He barely seems to notice.

VICKI
Wanna get something to eat?

STEVEN
Maybe later.

He grabs a notebook. Starts scribbling. Lost to his work. The frown on Vicki's face says this is a familiar scenario.

VICKI
Yeah. Maybe later.

Her gaze drifts to a FRAMED PHOTO on the side table. She and Steven at the beach. Arms around each other. Happier times.

CUT TO:

INT. 21 CLUB RESTAURANT -- DAY

A SCRIPT drops onto the table...

"JAWS"
a screenplay by
Peter Benchley

PETER BENCHLEY (33) slides it across the table. Strong, confident, movie-star handsome. Exeter and Harvard educated.

Zanuck sits across the table with his producing partner, DAVID BROWN (57), a savvy businessman and grandfather type.

ZANUCK
We didn't commission a draft yet.

BROWN
(quick, diplomatic)
But we're impressed with your enthusiasm for the project all the same. We'll get to it right away.

Benchley checks his watch. A glance at the door.

BENCHLEY
He knows the meeting was at noon?

ZANUCK
Hard to get a cab at this hour.

Benchley grows more irritable. Zanuck fills the dead air:

ZANUCK
Like I was telling you earlier, we just finished shooting a picture down in Texas. *Sugarland Express*.

BENCHLEY
You making kids' movies now?

ZANUCK
Hardly. It's a Bonnie and Clyde thing. Young couple on the lam. You wanna talk directors, this kid Steven is a crackerjack talent. Visual style like nobody I've seen.

BENCHLEY
Hold on... You're auditioning a new director? I thought we had a deal.

Brown shoots Zanuck a look: *what are you doing?* Then...

BROWN
As producers, Mr. Benchley, it's our job to find the <u>right</u> director. If it has to be someone from your agency, Dick Richards is our man.

BENCHLEY
(looking up)
We'll find out soon enough.

DICK RICHARDS (37) makes his entrance. A straight shooter. Nothing flamboyant about him, but nothing memorable either.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. 21 CLUB RESTAURANT -- LATER

Empty plates in front of them. Benchley downs the rest of his third martini. Sets the empty glass next to two others.

BENCHLEY
...no, my grandfather wasn't just part of the Algonquin Round Table, he was a charter member. You could find him holding court right over there with Dorothy Parker and George Kaufman, trading quips over whiskey sours and lamb medallions.
(beat)
Well, I think I've bored us all long enough. Shall we move ahead?

His eyes now on Richards: *impress me*.

RICHARDS
First, let me say how excited I am about this, Mr. Benchley. Ever since I saw *Moby-Dick*, I've wanted to make a picture about a whale.

Benchley laughs, thinking Richards has made a joke. Richards pauses. Lights a smoke. Makes his pitch...

RICHARDS
We open on our tiny fishing village. People going about their lives. Then, out on the ocean, we reveal a titanic whale of a beast...

Benchley frowns. It's not a joke. Zanuck scrambles...

ZANUCK
A shark, of course. Not a whale.

RICHARDS
Of course, but whale-like proportions. Makes the whale that swallowed Jonah look like a guppy.

Benchley's blood boils every time he hears the "w" word...

RICHARDS
...this magnificent creature is a living, breathing terror. A whale that will give people nightmares...

BENCHLEY
For the love of God, what's <u>wrong</u> with you? You blundering ass, it's not a whale, it's a <u>FUCKING</u> <u>SHARK</u>!

Benchley punctuates the outburst by SLAMMING a thunderous fist on the table. It's like a bazooka blast in a library.

EXT. 21 CLUB RESTAURANT -- DAY

Zanuck and Brown exit into the Manhattan sunshine.

BROWN
I thought that went well.

ZANUCK
Jesus ever-lovin' Christ. If they want somebody from IFA to direct this picture, Benchley's agent better get his goddamn act together. I can tell you this: I'm not going on the ocean with a guy doesn't know a shark from a whale.

Benchley follows. Fuming. A bit drunk. A beat, then...

BENCHLEY
Tell me about this *Sugarland* kid.

INT. EDITING SUITE -- DAY

A scene from *The Sugarland Express* plays out on a flatbed MOVIOLA. Ben Johnson shoots out the tires on a news van.

VERNA FIELDS (55) sits in front of the Moviola, the scene reflected in her glasses. Matronly but serious about her work, she's known affectionately as the "mother cutter."

VERNA
Hand me that last shot, will you?
(silence, then...)
Steven, are you listening to me?

She turns. He's across the room. On the phone.

STEVEN
(into phone)
Just tell him Steven called. Again.

He hangs up. Trying not to show it, but he's depressed.

VERNA
Don't act like you're surprised. You think Zanuck's got nothing better to do than sit around waiting for your call? Right now, just be happy that you're working.

STEVEN
That's the point, Verna... This one doesn't feel like just another job.

KNOCK-KNOCK. RICK FIELDS (20s), Verna's son, a shaggy-haired SoCal kid, strolls in with a bag lunch. Hands it to Verna.

RICK
One tuna salad sandwich, ma.

As Rick takes a seat, Steven paces. Thinking. Planning.

STEVEN
I could go over his head.

VERNA
Think about that. Dick Zanuck doesn't like being pushed around. God's sake, the guy fired Kurosawa.

STEVEN
Sid will take my call. He's the boss. Zanuck has to listen to <u>him</u>.

Out of nowhere, the phone RINGS. Rick answers.

RICK
Sugarland slave labor department.

He listens for a moment, then holds out the phone to Steven.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS -- DAY

A gleaming onyx building. The Black Tower.

INT. SHEINBERG'S OFFICE -- DAY

As Steven enters, we find... SID SHEINBERG (38), President and COO, standing behind his desk. Law degree from Columbia. A born academic, but a man who knows how to work with people.

He's wrapping up a conversation with LEW WASSERMAN (60), Chairman and CEO. Gray hair, big black glasses. Power, Inc.

SHEINBERG
Come in, Steven. Mr. Wasserman and I were just finishing up here.

Wasserman drops a MANUSCRIPT on Sheinberg's desk, then silently exits... Casting a stern look at Steven as he goes.

STEVEN
I hear he only shows up when there's a green light. Or when somebody's getting shut down.

SHEINBERG
Seems like there's a lot more red lights than green ones these days.

Steven spies the manuscript... ***JAWS***. Shit. It all clicks: Wasserman's look, the "red light" comment...

SHEINBERG
So... Let's talk.

STEVEN
(scared)
Listen, this was... I know what you think, but I didn't steal it, I... Please don't cancel my contract.

A tense beat. Sheinberg stares him down. Finally smiles.

SHEINBERG
Steven. If I fired you, I'd be a bigger fool than you take me for.

A KNOCK at the door... Then Zanuck and Brown enter. With a crafty grin, Zanuck drops a SCREENPLAY into Steven's lap...

Peter Benchley's screenplay for *Jaws*.

Steven is speechless. His dream project now in his hands. His nervous gaze bounces around the room. Is this for real?

SHEINBERG
Mr. Zanuck's vote of confidence says a lot. But you've still got a long road ahead of you here, sir.

STEVEN
I've made this movie before, Sid. Only this time, it's a shark instead of a big rig truck, right?

He nods to an autographed poster of *DUEL* on Sheinberg's wall. A menacing big rig looms over a tiny car like a steel demon.

STEVEN
(holds up the script)
But if this is anything like his book, it's gonna need some work...

SHEINBERG
Then don't sit here talking to me.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A RED PEN slashes through DIALOGUE and STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Steven makes notes on the *Jaws* script in RED INK. Vicki sleeps next to him on the WATERBED as he works.

A LINE OF DESCRIPTION jumps out at Steven: "The shark explodes from the water, seizing Alex and the raft in its jaws... A foam of blood and water spews from its mouth..."

Steven seems shaken. The moment clearly disturbing him. He shifts in bed, making a small WAVE. Looks over at...

A MOVIE POSTER on the wall. Gently BOUNCING up and down.

Steven LAYS DOWN. And just as his head hits the pillow... SPLASH! He falls back, THROUGH the mattress of the waterbed.

UNDERWATER -- Steven swims up. Clawing for the surface... But it's BLOCKED by a thin, skin-like layer. He can see VICKI through the plastic... And HIMSELF. Asleep beside her.

Steven is trapped inside his waterbed.

Fear and dread overwhelm him... He's losing control. Then... A FLICKER OF LIGHT below. Steven swims down as...

A SUPER 8 CAMERA floats by.

Steven keeps swimming. Follows the faint flicker until...

THUD! He runs into a WALL. Covered in moss, mud, and barnacles. The FLICKERING LIGHT shines through a pinhole.

Steven brushes the muck aside to widen the FLICKERING LIGHT. Not a wall... A window. He peers through the glass, into...

AN OLD TIME MOVIE THEATER. The same one from the opening.

STEVEN'S POV -- A LITTLE BOY and his FATHER sit watching the show. Staring right at Steven, but seemingly unaware of him.

The flickering light is from the PROJECTION BOOTH above them.

Steven POUNDS on the glass to get their attention... CRACK! The screen SPLINTERS from top to bottom, spider-webbing as...

A SHADOW looms behind Steven. He whips around to see...

THE MECHANICAL HORROR. Bolted steel beneath ripped flesh. Razor sharp metal teeth. Steven stares deep into its JAWS...

INT. STEVEN'S BEDROOM -- THAT MOMENT

Steven bolts up from the nightmare. Sweating. Gasping.

He picks up the script from beside him. Looks at the fresh RED INK. He swipes his hand across it. Streaks like blood.

CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL / POLO LOUNGE -- DAY

Steven and Benchley. McCarthy salads in front of them.

BENCHLEY
There's got to be human drama on the island. This can't be three men out on a boat chasing a fish.

STEVEN
But that's the draw of it! Hell, the shark is the best character.

Benchley seethes just below the surface. Watching as Steven flips through the script. Every page slashed with RED INK.

STEVEN
Take Hooper, the marine biologist. The chief needs him to help kill the shark, but you're more interested in him harpooning Brody's wife. And then you have him asking her if she fantasizes about being raped by black guys?!

Benchley can't tear his eyes away from those RED MARKS.

BENCHLEY
I didn't set out to make him sympathetic. I wanted a sense of suburban blight, middle class ennui. People with real problems.

STEVEN
Audiences want an escape from their problems. A theme park ride. That screen's not a mirror, it's a window. We're here to entertain.

Benchley says nothing. Just slowly nods.

STEVEN
Boil this thing down to its essence. Three guys, one shark. High adventure. That's a movie.

Benchley drains his martini. Forces a "fuck you" smile. PRE-LAP the CLICK-CLACK sounds of typewriter keys as...

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE -- DUSK TILL DAWN

Steven pounds out new script pages. Working fast. He doesn't even notice Vicki watching him from the doorway.

Pages pile up beside him in a TIME LAPSE as he diligently works out his own set of revisions to Benchley's screenplay.

Vicki brings a plate of food... He still doesn't notice.

TIME LAPSE as more pages pile up. Vicki stands watching again. Staring at Steven... And the food he hasn't touched.

INT. ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY -- DAY

Steven hands Zanuck and Brown a stack of pages.

STEVEN
I worked up some new pages, got Benchley tackling another rewrite. But we need a fresh set of eyes...

EXT. GOTTLIEB'S HOUSE -- DAY

CARL GOTTLIEB (36) signs for a package. Affable guy, stout, walrus mustache... And then there's those RED NANTUCKET PANTS.

STEVEN (V.O.)
There's a friend of mine. Actor, writer. Works on *The Odd Couple*. He's pretty deadly with a red pen.

Gottlieb opens the package to find... Benchley's script with a NOTE attached: **EVISCERATE IT - S.**

INT. ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY -- DAY

Back to the same meeting...

ZANUCK
Maybe he's got some casting ideas, too, since we're shit out of luck.

Zanuck rips down head shots from a CASTING BOARD as...

ZANUCK
Hackman passed on the chief. So did Duvall. Bridges was interested in Hooper, but had a scheduling snafu. Bottoms and Voight passed.

STEVEN
I talked to Lee Marvin's agent. He doesn't want to play a shark hunter. Rather go fishing for real... And Sterling Hayden's got the IRS so far up his ass, he'll never see a dime from this thing.

ZANUCK
This is ri-goddamn-diculous. I'm ready to pull some kid out of the community theater down the street...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOME -- NIGHT

Steven sits alone on the patio. Drinking a bottle of Coke while guests mingle at the festive Christmas party inside.

ZANUCK (V.O.)
Just find me one decent actor for this picture. That's all I want.

STEVEN'S IMAGINATION -- As he stares into the pool, a SHARK appears in the water. A primal demon, twisting and stalking.

BACK TO REAL LIFE -- An UNSEEN MAN approaches from behind.

UNSEEN MAN
You okay, chief?

Steven looks up at... ROY SCHEIDER (41), a worldly guy but mellow as they come. He grins at Steven. A little drunk.

SCHEIDER
Didn't you hear? Pool's closed. No swimming. Order of the LAPD.

INT. ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY -- DAY

SCHEIDER'S PHOTO is tacked on the board under "CHIEF BRODY."

CUT TO:

INT. GOTTLIEB'S HOUSE -- DAY

Gottlieb pages through the script. Marking with a RED PEN.

STEVEN (V.O.)
Plumbing the depths of character works fine for Melville, but this is mass entertainment. We've only got two hours to tell our story.

BENCHLEY (V.O.)
That doesn't concern me as much as this new ending you talked about...

Slashing dialogue. Scribbling notes. TRANSITION TO...

EXT. BEL-AIR HOTEL -- DAY

Steven pages through the marked-up script as he enters.

STEVEN (V.O.)
Peter, we need a rousing ending. Something people will cheer for.

INT. BEL-AIR HOTEL RESTAURANT -- DAY

Benchley sits across from Steven. Staring at the RED MARKS.

BENCHLEY
A shark doesn't just <u>blow</u> <u>up</u> like a refinery. It simply can't happen.
(frustrated)
I understand that it's my book and your movie. And I'm trying to stay objective. But I feel that I've taken this as far as I can go.
(MORE)

BENCHLEY (CONT'D)
I have a new novel I'm trying to work on and... I'm just all written out.

STEVEN
If that's how you feel, I can ask the studio to pay out your contract.

Benchley mulls it over. Still not wanting to let go.

STEVEN
The movie will still get made. And you'll get your production bonus. My lawyer can work out the details.

Benchley nods. Relieved. Their handshake is cordial, but still cold on both ends. As Benchley exits the restaurant...

He passes Zanuck and Brown on their way in. Nods to them.

BENCHLEY
Best of luck, gentlemen.

Off their confused looks...

STEVEN
We're gonna need a new writer.

CUT TO:

INT. BEL-AIR HOTEL RESTAURANT -- LATER

Carl Gottlieb eats a massive breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage, pancakes, and hash browns as he gives his opinion.

GOTTLIEB
Boys, every now and then, you gotta just buck the rules. I'm telling ya, this is a two act movie. Act one: we're on dry land and shit goes bad. Act two: let's go catch us one big son-of-a-bitchin' fish!
(takes another bite)
Least that's the way I'd do it.

ZANUCK
Let's say you were doing it.

Gottlieb nearly chokes on a bite.

GOTTLIEB
You guys serious?

ZANUCK
I don't joke about motion pictures. Just know that we don't have the budget for this kind of appetite.

Steven puts an arm around his buddy. In this together.

STEVEN
Now all we need's a place to shoot.

ZANUCK
As you requested, Mr. Alves is freezing his ass off as we speak...

EXT. FERRY -- DAY

Joe Alves, bundled up against the New England cold, rides a ferry across calm seas. A flurry of snow whirls around him.

ZANUCK (V.O.)
Honestly, kid, I don't see the point. Studio feels shooting on the lot is the most sensible plan.

The ferry docks beside a SIGN that reads: MARTHA'S VINEYARD.

STEVEN (V.O.)
Come on, Dick. When have you ever known me to do anything sensible?

Old sea captain's homes. White picket fences. A gorgeous harbor. Alves raises his CAMERA and takes some pictures.

As he snaps pictures, the PHOTOS pop up ON SCREEN, one right after another, until they're all we can see. MATCH CUT TO...

INT. SHEINBERG'S OFFICE -- DAY

Sheinberg stares at the same PHOTOS laid out on his desk. Alves, Zanuck, and Brown hover. Waiting for his response.

STEVEN
Sid... This place is Amity.

SHEINBERG
I'm not saying it's not beautiful, sir. I'm saying it's not practical.
(pushes the photos aside)
This is a shark picture. We'll save a lot of time and trouble, spend a few weeks in the tank...

INT. STAGE 12 / UNIVERSAL STUDIOS -- DAY

The largest soundstage on the lot. 29,500 square feet.

SHEINBERG (V.O.)
...and build the rest on a stage.

Steven walks with Sheinberg. Alves, Zanuck, and Brown trail behind them. The men dwarfed by the humongous, empty stage.

SHEINBERG
Stage 12. We can build the docks right here, all practical interiors.

Steven paces, looking around. Picturing in his mind's eye...

STEVEN'S IMAGINATION -- BEHIND STEVEN, we see a TIME LAPSE. WORKERS building Amity Island on this gigantic stage. Steven walks and talks in real time as the IMAGINARY SET goes up.

STEVEN
Sure. We control the weather. The sunset. The tides. And it'll be everything we want it to be. But there's still one little problem...

When the set's done, they're standing on the AMITY DOCKS at sunset. An incredible backdrop of stylized, man-made beauty.

SHEINBERG
Don't say it.

STEVEN
Sid, it just won't look <u>real</u>.

He's right. It's beautiful, but nothing close to reality.

STEVEN
If people don't buy into the world, then they won't buy into the shark.

His conviction is contagious. His energy undeniable. Sheinberg takes in the faux Amity, like he can almost see it. Moments later, it FADES AWAY, bringing us back to **REAL LIFE.**

STEVEN
We need to shoot this on the ocean.
(off Sheinberg's look)
You know it's the right move, Sid. Trust me. You won't regret this.

A tense beat. Sheinberg weighing his decision. Finally...

CUT TO:

HEADLINE in *DAILY VARIETY*:

“JAWS” TO FILM THIS SUMMER IN MARTHA’S VINEYARD
NEW SCRIBE REPLACES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

INT. LAW OFFICE -- DAY

Benchley sneers at the headline. Tosses it aside as... BRUCE RAMER (40s), smile as slick as his suit, slides a stack of papers across his large oak desk for Benchley to sign.

BENCHLEY
I still don’t see why Steven needed to involve his own lawyer in this.

BRUCE
My client just wants to be sure there’s no miscommunication here. You’re giving up creative control.

BENCHLEY
At this point, that’s a blessing. Seems <u>your</u> client has very little understanding of the real world.

Bruce stews at that. Silent. Hands Benchley his CHECK.

BRUCE
I believe we’re all settled then.
(beat)
And by the way... <u>My</u> client thinks <u>your</u> book is a piece of shit.

Benchley hides his disdain under a sardonic smirk.

INT. LOBBY -- DAY

Benchley dials a pay phone. Waits, scowling, as it rings.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
New York Times.

INT. ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY -- DAY

Steven slams the *Times* Arts section on a desk. A headline says: **“JAWS” AUTHOR BITES BACK.** Steven yells into the phone.

STEVEN
You told Benchley I hate his book?!

He drops the paper in the trash. Listens for a beat. Smiles.

STEVEN
You're a real shark, Bruce, you know that? I'm gonna ditch the fish and make this movie about you.

Steven hangs up, heads into the outer office, where there's a buzz of excitement. Zanuck greets him. He's followed by...

BILL GILMORE (40s), a casual but serious studio executive. Steven bear hugs him. So tight, Gilmore wheezes.

STEVEN
Bill Gilmore! The *Sugarland* gang's all here! You cut the checks, I'll put 'em on screen. Sounds like a good plan, don't you think?

GILMORE
Shooting on the lot sounds better. Studio's got me watching your ass here, kid. If you were wondering.

STEVEN
(smiling)
I wasn't... But thanks for asking.

Steven pats him on the arm as he walks toward the CAMERA. The CAMERA swings around him to REVEAL that he's now in...

INT. SOUNDSTAGE -- DAY

The *Jaws* creature shop. Without missing a step, Steven greets Alves, observing as a work crew assembles three different SHARKS, for now nothing but SKELETAL WOOD FRAMES.

Alves gives a few instructions to one of his guys, a BURLY CARPENTER with TATTOOS, while Steven inspects the sharks.

STEVEN
You have everything you need?

ALVES
To build 'em all, sure. To bring 'em to life, we called the expert.

Alves leads him to a work bench, where BOB MATTEY (62), the most humble special F/X legend you're ever likely to meet, tinkers with a control board. Mattey shakes Steven's hand.

MATTEY
Bob Mattey.

STEVEN
I know who you are, Mr. Mattey. I saw *20,000 Leagues* when I was eight. That squid is still the most amazing thing I've ever seen.

Mattey smiles modestly. As Steven and Alves walk away...

STEVEN
I thought he was retired.

ALVES
I told him we were building the biggest shark ever put on film. Suddenly, he wasn't retired anymore.

Rick Fields, Verna's son, meets Steven at the soundstage door. Hands him an ENVELOPE. Inside: a ticket to BOSTON.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The ticket sits next to an open suitcase. Steven packs. He doesn't notice Vicki watching from the doorway. Until...

VICKI
Were you even gonna say good-bye?

STEVEN
Of course. I was hoping you'd come visit the set once we got up and...
(off her look)
You know I care about you, Vick.

He reaches out to her. She pulls away.

VICKI
If you have to say it, then you don't. You're <u>obsessed</u>, Steven. You're in love with a bunch of imaginary people... And a shark. And the saddest part of it is, I really believe you wanted me once.

She almost laughs at the absurdity of it...

VICKI
Now you're just too busy fucking your movie to bother with anyone else.

She walks out. Much as he wants to, he can't tell her she's wrong. So he sits there on the bed with the dogs. Silent.

EXT. LAX / INT. 747 -- DAY

A TWA 747 lifts off into smoggy L.A. skies.

PUSH IN through the window to find Steven and Gottlieb. Steven's nose in a book called "*Sharks of the Pacific Ocean.*"

Thoughts gnaw at Gottlieb as Steven devours his book...

GOTTLIEB
Steve, you realize we're less than a week from shooting and we've got no script, no cast... and no shark.

STEVEN
No problem.

PRE-LAP "The Real Me" by The Who as we **BEGIN MONTAGE.** A kinetic sequence like a live-action SCRAPBOOK. It should resemble SUPER 8 FOOTAGE with film perforations on the sides.

IN THE AIRPLANE -- Steven and Gottlieb work on the script. Animated discussions. RED NOTES all over the current draft.

A TELEGRAM SLIDES across the whole screen. Brownish-yellow stock, from the days before email and cell phones. It reads:

Z, LAYOVER IN NEW YORK.
POTENTIAL HOOPER CASTING. - STEVE

It WIPES off the screen to reveal... **NEW YORK CITY.**

THE WARWICK HOTEL -- A hallmark of big city class and sophistication. Steven and Gottlieb knock on door #2074.

RICHARD DREYFUSS (26) opens the door. Grinning like a fool with his shaggy beard, glasses... and long madras nightshirt?

He leads them into his **SUITE,** where there are pillows on the bare floor... Candles burning... Half-naked people snoozing.

Steven pitches the movie to Dreyfuss. Animated and excited... But Dreyfuss is clearly <u>not</u> interested. He shows them out.

Once they're gone, he heads over to the window. Stares outside with a smile at the **ZIEGFELD THEATER.** Marquee reads:

OPENING FRIDAY
"THE APPRENTICESHIP OF DUDDY KRAVITZ"
introducing RICHARD DREYFUSS

PUSH IN on a LIGHT BULB on the marquee. The light FLARES... Becoming a bright New England SUN that shines down on a SIGN:

WELCOME TO MARTHA'S VINEYARD -- Steven tours the island in a car like a kid in a candy store. This place truly <u>is</u> AMITY.

One by one, Joe Alves's LOCATION PHOTOS become real as...

Steven visits downtown **EDGARTOWN...**
MENEMSHA HARBOR...
CHAPPAQUIDDICK FERRY...
The Brody residence at **EAST CHOP...**

...finally arriving at a real life **LOG CABIN.** His home for the shoot. He greets Rick Fields... And his beloved DOGS.

NEW YORK PUBLISHING HOUSE -- Copies of *Jaws* slide off the presses. In DOUBLE EXPOSURE, it climbs the best seller list.

AT THE 21 CLUB -- Benchley pops the cork on a bottle of champagne. Toasts his success with a crowd of literati.

AT THE CABIN -- Gottlieb types by the fire as Steven paces atop the dining table, phone to his ear. SPLIT SCREEN with...

ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY -- Zanuck on the phone, Brown at the casting board. Brown shuffles HEAD SHOTS of new actors...

LORRAINE GARY as "Ellen Brody"...
MURRAY HAMILTON as "Mayor Vaughn"...
Even CARL GOTTLIEB as "Meadows" is on the board.

AT THE CABIN -- Steven hangs up. Consults his own casting board. Two roles still remain blank: QUINT and HOOPER.

NEW YORK CITY -- A line of people buy tickets for *Duddy Kravitz* at the Ziegfeld... Richard Dreyfuss among them.

IN THE THEATER -- ON SCREEN, Duddy Kravitz smiles like a jackass as he acts like he's jerking off with a pipe and rag.

Nobody laughs. Dreyfuss cringes in his seat. Mortified.

AT THE CABIN -- LIGHTS shine as a car pulls up...

The front door opens... It's DREYFUSS. Seaman's bag in hand. With his knit hat, beard, and glasses, he <u>is</u> MATT HOOPER.

ZANUCK/BROWN COMPANY -- His HEAD SHOT goes on the board. Brown looks at the empty spot under Quint's name. Sighs.

He turns to say something to Zanuck, who's got his eyes fixed on... A framed one-sheet for *THE STING* hanging on the wall.

AT THE CABIN -- Steven hangs up. Pumps his fist in victory. He tacks a new head shot up under "QUINT"... ROBERT SHAW.

DAY-PLAYER AGREEMENTS -- Universal contracts SLIDE across screen, DOUBLE EXPOSED with a casting call for TOWNSPEOPLE.

ON THE UNIVERSAL LOT -- TIME LAPSE as the SHARKS are built. THIRTY FOOT MONSTERS grow from SKELETONS to full LEVIATHANS.

ON THE BACKLOT -- Sheinberg, Zanuck, and Brown watch a team of F/X GUYS lower the FULL SHARK into the Falls Lake tank.

Alves and Mattey work the controls as the SHARK explodes out of the water, attached to a metal JIB ARM. JAWS chomp down.

A TELEGRAM SLIDES across the screen:

SHARK TANK TEST SUCCESSFUL. SEE YOU MONDAY. -Z

It WIPES off as the SHARKS are CRATED and loaded onto FLATBED BIG RIGS. GATES open as THE SHARK FLEET rolls off the lot.

U.S. INTERSTATE MAP -- A RED LINE traces the truck route to the east. DOUBLE EXPOSURE shots of big rigs on the road.

ON THE HIGHWAY -- A bored LITTLE GIRL stares out the window of a station wagon as the trucks roll past. She notices...

SHARP TEETH and a BLACK LIFELESS EYE through the slats in one of the truck crates. Her eyes widen. Chilled to the bone.

EDGARTOWN -- Steven's army has arrived. Zanuck and Brown accompany a massive FLEET of trucks, trailers, and equipment.

Steven hands out custom-made *JAWS* T-SHIRTS to the crew.

PRODUCTION OFFICE -- TIME LAPSE as desks, Xerox machines, and phones are set up in the PRODUCTION OFFICE. Mission control.

OAK BLUFFS HARBOR -- A mini-city of SHACKS and WORK BENCHES goes up. Big rigs with SHARK CRATES roll in beside a SIGN:

SHARK CITY

IN THE BOAT HOUSE -- Alves supervises the BURLY CARPENTER with TATTOOS as CREW MEMBERS make final touches to the sharks.

Steven sets a hand-painted sign inside one shark's mouth. The menacing beasts have earned a single collective name...

"BRUCE"

AROUND EDGARTOWN -- Various crew members set up generators, run cable, and finish construction on mobile dressing rooms.

A HIPPIE GRIP finishes changing a tire on the "JAWS" AVIS TRUCK. The DRIVER happily pays him with a SIX PACK OF BEER.

Crew members haul gear into the historic KELLEY HOUSE hotel.

THE KELLEY HOUSE -- Steven and Rick Fields help Verna turn a pair of large adjoined rooms into a full EDITING SUITE.

PRODUCTION OFFICE -- Steven, Zanuck, and Brown lay out the PRODUCTION BOARD as the island shooting schedule is made.

The board notes 35 DAYS ON LAND, then 20 DAYS AT SEA.

CLOSE PAN across the board, made of moveable CARDBOARD SLATS. Each slat contains written info for one full day of shooting.

The info on each slat DISSOLVES into a LIVE-ACTION MOVIE that shows Steven filming that particular scene. A visual diary of the shoot similar to moving CHAPTER SELECTIONS on a DVD menu.

ON THE DAY 1 SLAT -- Steven directs Scheider and a college boy, JONATHAN FILLEY, discovering the first shark victim.

PRODUCTION OFFICE -- Steven moves the DAY 1 SLAT (with the tiny movie still playing) to a board marked "COMPLETED."

Steven moves **DAY 2** and **DAY 3** (both playing scenes with Scheider and Dreyfuss in Amity) over to the "COMPLETED" side.

He's got it all under control... Like he was born to do this.

Before you know it, STEVEN has moved 27 DAYS of land shooting to the COMPLETED BOARD without breaking a sweat. **END MONTAGE.**

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EDGARTOWN -- DAY

Gottlieb walks the busy streets, going over the script. MURRAY HAMILTON (51), mayor of Amity in *Jaws*, finds him.

HAMILTON
Carl! Look what I bought in town! I'll wear it for the ferry scene!

He holds up a SPORT COAT covered in tiny white ANCHORS. The same one we see him wearing in the finished film.

GOTTLIEB
You run it by wardrobe, Murray?

HAMILTON
Goddamn right I did! If you think you're gonna upstage me with those fucking red pants, forget about it.

As he storms off, we fly around town, amid cast and crew, to find... Steven. Talking to a REPORTER on a downtown street.

REPORTER
You've been on the island nearly a month. When do we see the shark?

STEVEN
Soon. Soon enough. I promise.

REPORTER
Has it been daunting for you adapting such a successful novel?

Steven has a chance to snipe back at Benchley... Takes it.

STEVEN
Mr. Benchley's take on the story was different from ours. His characters just weren't appealing. He had us rooting for the shark to eat everyone.

WIPE TO:

HEADLINE in *THE BOSTON GLOBE*:

***JAWS* DIRECTOR CALLS NOVEL "UNAPPEALING."**

INT. BENCHLEY'S STUDY -- DAY

Benchley tosses the paper aside. Goes back to pounding typewriter keys. After a beat, he stops. Picks up the PHONE.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHARK CITY -- DAY

Steven rips a canvas tarp off a shrouded MASSIVE SHAPE.

STEVEN
Ladies and gentlemen... meet Bruce.

It's our first full look at the incredibly realistic GREAT WHITE. Held above water by a series of ropes and pulleys.

ALVES
Oh yeah. He'll make a nice snack out of that Chrissie girl tomorrow.

STEVEN
He better or we don't have an opening. Let's give him a bath.

GRIPS slowly lower the shark into the water...

Floating there, just under the waves, it looks so real. Then... An odd grey LIQUID seems to be pooling around Bruce.

Everyone seems curious... Puzzled... Except for... Bob Mattey, the F/X guru. He knows this is not good.

MATTEY
Pull it up! Now!

As the shark comes up, the entire COAT OF PAINT comes off. Running like mascara to reveal the yellow neoprene beneath.

ZANUCK
Looks like a great white turd.

From inside Bruce, a series of HISSES and POPS.

MATTEY
Goddamn salt water just ate through him like battery acid. We'll have to recalibrate, repaint, reseal...

Bill Gilmore, the studio production exec, spits out a breath.

GILMORE
Great. How much will that cost?

ALVES
Couple days at least. Maybe three, four. If we can bump Chrissie --

GILMORE
No. We move her back, it pushes us into July and we're over schedule. And once that summer crowd rolls in, we're gonna be paying summer prices. We can't afford to stall.
(to Steven)
We can shoot her back on the lot.

Steven does not want to hear that. Brown pulls him aside.

BROWN
This is your picture. Your call. Dick and I stand by your decision.

Steven paces. Thinking hard. Then, back to the others...

STEVEN
We're shooting her tomorrow.

ALVES
Steve, I need a couple days --

STEVEN
We'll shoot her without the shark.

He storms off. Gilmore runs to catch him. We're now on...

EXT. COW BAY BEACH -- DAWN

Steven and Gilmore walk side by side along the shore as the crew makes preparations to shoot the opening scene of *Jaws*.

GILMORE
Think about what you're doing.
God's sake, it's a shark picture,
and you wanna leave out the shark.

STEVEN
We're implying it. Playing up the
tension. It worked for Hitchcock.

GILMORE
Jesus, Steve, you're not Hitchcock!

That was a huge ego blow. Zanuck steps in...

ZANUCK
Goddammit, Bill, that was out of
line.

Steven walks it off. Finding his focus. As he paces...

DOWN THE BEACH -- SUSAN BACKLINIE (26), a gorgeous blonde stuntwoman, stands in a bikini top and cutoff jeans. She's playing the girl who's eaten by Bruce in the opening scene.

The CREW attaches METAL CLAMPS to her jeans, threading CABLES through them. Six Pack, the hippie grip, makes adjustments.

SIX PACK
I built in a safety catch here.
You get in trouble, just pull.

IN THE WATER -- Steven wades in with BILL BUTLER (52), his no-nonsense director of photography. Both men in wet suits. Butler mans a watertight CAMERA BOX as Steven directs.

STEVEN
Keep it close to the water line. I
want the audience swimming with her.

BUTLER
Shark's POV. Smart thinking, kid.

The AD calls "picture's up" and the usual litany of "roll sound," "roll camera," begins. The CLAPPER holds the slate.

CLAPPER
Marker!

The traditional clapsticks have been altered to resemble a mouth full of SHARK TEETH. The “jaws” SNAP SHUT as...

We dive **UNDERWATER** to see the cables threaded through Susan’s harness, wrapped around pylons, then stretching back to...

THE SHORE -- Two teams of FIVE MEN each, Six Pack included, hold the ropes. INTERCUT between land and sea as we hear...

STEVEN
Action!

The two teams start a tug of war with Susan in the middle. She’s DRAGGED back and forth, SCREAMING bloody murder. A brutal assault on the senses. The entire crew taken aback.

GOTTLIEB
She’s acting... right?

But Steven lets it play out. Then, to Bill Butler...

STEVEN
I like it, but it’s still missing that final punch... Keep shooting.

Steven dives into the water. We FOLLOW...

STEVEN’S UNDERWATER POV -- Like a shark. Looking up at Susan. The shot from the film. Swimming toward her as...

ABOVE WATER -- Susan JERKS. A look of horror, then... Something violently PULLS HER UNDER. A tense beat, then...

Steven finally emerges with her. Susan gasping for air.

SUSAN
Jesus, you scared the living shit out of me, Steven! Don’t do that!

STEVEN
If you’re not scared, the audience won’t be scared. It needs to be <u>real</u>. First positions, let’s go!

The SLATE comes back into frame. As it SNAPS DOWN...

EXT. OAK BLUFFS HARBOR -- DAY

SLAP! Roy Scheider takes a hand across the face from LEE FIERRO (45), a local actress dressed in black mourning garb.

They're shooting the scene from the film where Scheider gets slapped by a dead boy's mother... But Lee breaks character.

LEE
Oh my God, Roy, I'm so sorry!

STEVEN
(from behind the camera)
Don't be sorry! That was great!

Scheider scowls at Steven's cavalier attitude toward his face. Still, professional that he is, he reassures Lee...

SCHEIDER
Don't worry, Lee. I was a boxer.

STEVEN
Yeah, he knows how to take a punch.
Let him have it. We're going again!

Scheider shoots him a glare just before we JUMP CUT TO:

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER -- As the SLAP repeats five or six times. Scheider takes it hard. But Steven wants more...

STEVEN
Harder! Do it again! Make it <u>real</u>!

More JUMP CUTS, back in action. Lee SLAPS Scheider again... And this time, she knocks the glasses clean off his face.

STEVEN
One more!

Furious, Scheider grits his teeth: *is this kid for real?*

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER -- Lee puts on a grieving face again.

LEE
Chief Brody?

SCHEIDER
Yes?

SLAP! The hardest hit yet. Everyone's stunned. Especially Scheider. But he <u>does</u> <u>not</u> break character. Nor does Lee.

LEE
My boy is dead. I wanted you to
know that.

Hold on her a beat until...

STEVEN
Cut! Print! That's the one!

The crew packs up. Steven pats Scheider on the back, though he still seems more fixated on the shot than his actor.

STEVEN
Nice work, Roy.

SCHEIDER
Hope that was real enough for you.

Scheider storms away, rubbing his cheek. Dreyfuss grins.

DREYFUSS
Want some ice?

Scheider collapses into a chair. Rubbing his sore face with both hands. As he moves his hands away, we're now in...

INT. BRODY HOUSE -- NIGHT

Scheider sits at a kitchen table on the Brody house set. He and his character both tired and frustrated after a long day.

With him sits JAY MELLO (5), a mop headed kid who plays his son, Sean. The boy also hides his face in his small hands.

BEHIND THE CAMERA, Steven films the tender family moment.

As the camera rolls, Scheider's movie son cleverly mimics his every gesture in a playful manner. Scheider leans toward him.

SCHEIDER
Give us a kiss.

JAY
Why?

SCHEIDER
Because I need it.

Jay moves in to kiss his cheek, but hesitates...
He just sits there. Frowning with uncertainty.

STEVEN
Cut! Everybody take five!

Steven guides Jay to a quiet part of the set. The two sit next to each other on the floor like they're best buddies.

STEVEN
What's wrong, Jay?

JAY
My dad's not supposed to be scared.

Scheider watches them closely. Noticing how much better Steven relates to this kid than to any adult he works with.

STEVEN
Your dad's seen some terrible things. He's worried about holding his family together. He's lost and alone, like a little boy wandering in the woods. He needs you to help him find his way home. That's what that kiss means. It means he knows you love him and he won't ever be alone as long as he's got you here.

The whole crew is watching now. A beat... then Jay nods.

JUMP CUT -- Filming again. Scheider leans in toward his son.

SCHEIDER
Give us a kiss.

JAY
Why?

SCHEIDER
Because I need it.

Jay kisses his cheek. Such a tender gesture, Scheider almost breaks character. Steven seems lost in the moment. Then...

STEVEN
(almost a whisper)
One more time.

As the scene repeats, we hear the dialogue, but we're only watching Steven's reaction. He puts his eye to the CAMERA...

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER -- And now it's a different KITCHEN...

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Arnold (37) sits at the table with Young Steven (7), the former tinkering with a CIRCUIT BOARD as he eats. TITLE:

PHOENIX, ARIZONA
1954

Steven leans in for a closer look...

YOUNG STEVEN
How does it work?

ARNOLD
Starts with the transistor... Here. Current trickles to the node. An offshoot of the bigger one. Makes it so the chain can keep on going...
(smiles at him)
Just like you.

Arnold rubs his head. Steven smiles with pride. But Steven's mother, LEAH (34), chortles from across the table.

LEAH
He's nothing like you.

She grabs the dirty dishes. Heads to the sink.

ARNOLD
Don't say that in front of him.

LEAH
Then don't work at the table!
That's all you do is work all day!

Steven cringes. Hating this. But his look says this has happened before. Arnold squeezes his hand. A sad smile.

ARNOLD
Go to your room, Steven.

He does as he's told. Once he's gone...

ARNOLD
I'm sorry, Leah.
(no response)
I said I was sorry.

SMASH! Dishes SHATTER in the sink.

LEAH
Well say it again, goddammit!
(throws the circuit away)
You can't fix us with your tools!

Arnold snaps back. We pull away, into the **LIVING ROOM**, where Steven's sisters ANNE (5) and baby SUE watch *Ozzie and Harriet*. Crying softly, little Anne turns up the volume...

The argument intensifies as we move down the **HALL**, into...

THE HEATING VENT -- In here, the NOISE from the fight is amplified in echoes. Almost unbearable. We soar up into...

STEVEN'S ROOM -- Steven at his desk. Listening to the argument coming through the vent. He wipes away a tear.

Trying to focus, he loads film into a SUPER 8 CAMERA.

Sprawled on the desk, an elaborate layout of ARMY MEN. Placed around the set-up are PAPER CUT-OUTS. Each with a letter on them: A... B... C... CAMERA PLACEMENTS.

Steven lines up his Super 8 with the "A" placement. The argument still raging, he loses himself in his own reality.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

All is dark. A crooked tree casts an eerie shadow through the window. Young Steven sleeps, until he's stirred by...

ARNOLD
Steven... Wake up.

Groggy, the boy opens his eyes. Arnold turns on a FLASHLIGHT. Motions for Steven to get out of bed.

INT. ARNOLD'S CAR -- NIGHT

Arnold drives down a lonely highway, Steven beside him.

YOUNG STEVEN
What time is it?

ARNOLD
(with a smile)
Middle of the night.

From outside, glaring LIGHTS wash over them as they crest a small hill. Sprawled before them, Steven can now see...

EXT. FARM FIELD -- NIGHT

Rows of cars sit parked with their headlights on. A mass of people gathered. Sitting on blankets like a communal picnic.

All of them watching the skies above... <u>Waiting</u>.

MOMENTS LATER -- Arnold and Steven wander through the crowd. Mainly families. Smiling and laughing. Having lots of fun.

Most of the crowd has gathered around a young COLLEGE PROFESSOR type dressed in a blazer and turtleneck. Steven tries to get a look, but the professor's got his back to us.

THE PROFESSOR
Tonight, as ever, we look to the sky
and ponder its mysteries.
(MORE)

THE PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
And for a fleeting moment, we see a glimpse of its power. The power of the unknown. An unyielding power that demands not just respect, but fear. We may think we're in control, but that's merely an illusion we have created to free us from self-doubt. We are not the masters of our fate, nor are we innocent observers. Nature, my friends, is a mortal predator. All of us are her prey...

The professor turns... And we see his FACE.

PETER BENCHLEY
And once she's got our scent, we have no hope of holding her back.

The sky LIGHTS UP with the most SPECTACULAR METEOR SHOWER ever seen. COLORFUL ROCKETS race across the blackened sky.

Arnold takes Steven's hand as they stare up in amazement. A beautiful moment shared by father and son. Until...

CRASH! Across the field, a meteor SLAMS into the earth.

People OBLITERATED in a crater. CRASH! Another meteor falls. Shock turns to panic. Screaming. Crying. Running like hell.

Through the madness, Benchley smiles at Steven. Demented.

ARNOLD
Run, Steven!

CRASH! Meteors SLAM DOWN in a celestial barrage. Steven and Arnold sprinting. Dodging debris. Others alongside them...

Gottlieb... Vicki... Alves... Fleeing for their lives.

Arnold fires up the car. Steven peers up... A huge METEOR bears down on them. They peel out just in time as... CRASH!

But the meteorite BURROWS underground, chasing after them.

The highway CRACKS. Raining chunks of pavement as the UNDERGROUND FORCE burrows after them with relentless fury.

EXT. STEVEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Arnold's car SKIDS to a halt in front of the house.

DOWN THE STREET -- The meteor BURROWS toward them.

IN THE CAR -- Steven wraps his arms around Arnold. Both crying. A tender moment, but still frantic and urgent.

ARNOLD
Give us a kiss.

Steven kisses his cheek. Right where his tears fall.

ARNOLD
Go! Don't look back!

ON THE STREET -- Arnold ushers him out. Steven trips, falls down. Jumping up as the CRUMBLING EARTH reaches the car.

YOUNG STEVEN
DAD!

A huge CRATER opens up beneath the car. Steven can only watch in horror as his dad's car is SWALLOWED from below.

The crumbling earth BURROWS toward Steven. He runs into...

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Steven bolts inside. Past his mother. The foundation BUCKLES. A HUGE CRACK spreading across the floor as...

A SHARK FIN splits the hardwood. SURFACING through the floor. Tearing up floor boards as it chases Steven into...

THE BEDROOM -- Steven leaps onto the bed. Safe for now.

CRUNCH! CRUNCH! Two more FINS crash up through the floor.

The THREE FINS circle the bed. Ripping through hardwood. SAWING away the floor until... The bed DROPS through it.

BLACKNESS -- FALLING. Like Alice down the rabbit hole...

INT. OLD MOVIE THEATER -- NIGHT

SPLASH! The mattress lands in the old theater. Tossed about on the waves that fill the room, just like the opening scene.

THE MECHANICAL HORROR explodes out of the water right beside Steven. And it's here we get our first real look at it...

A grim nightmare. Part GREAT WHITE SHARK, part steam-punk Frankenstein. Patches of skin have been ripped away to reveal BOLTS and METAL underneath. A living machine with...

METAL TEETH. Rows and rows of metal teeth.
The horrific MECHANICAL JAWS open wide. CHOMPING DOWN as...

INT. CABIN -- DAY

Steven (grown up) jolts awake. Gasping. Sweating.

INT. CABIN / LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Gottlieb, Gilmore, and Rick Fields gather. Morning coffee.

All snap to attention as Steven enters. Still recovering from the nightmare, and now everybody's just staring at him.

STEVEN
What?

From his desk, Gottlieb picks up a copy of the *L.A. Times*.

GOTTLIEB
Ahem... "A finer hand than mine is at work on the film project," says Benchley. "Someone who is doing a dialogue polish or some such thing, which I imagine is like referring to gang rape as heavy necking."
(smiles)
At least he mentioned me this time.

GILMORE
Gang rape. He said gang rape. When Wasserman sees this, he's gonna shit a can of creamed corn!

STEVEN
Fuck me. Somebody needs to stuff this guy in a box and seal it shut...

INT. JAWS PRODUCTION OFFICE -- DAY

Zanuck. On the phone. Ringing on the other end.

STEVEN (V.O.)
...or this is just gonna get worse.

BENCHLEY answers. SPLIT SCREEN.

ZANUCK
Peter! Dick Zanuck.

BENCHLEY
Dick. Tell me something, Mr. Producer. Just what in the fuck are you doing to my book out there?

A PANEL slides up from below for a THREE-WAY SPLIT SCREEN.

AT UNIVERSAL STUDIOS -- Spit-polished shoes march down a hallway. TRACK UP to a hand clutching the same *L.A. Times*.

ZANUCK
I don't know what you mean.

BENCHLEY
Don't play dumb with me, Dick. It doesn't flatter either one of us.

ZANUCK
Peter, I didn't call to discuss the art of adaptation. What I need... What I'd <u>like</u> is if you'd call off the editorial artillery. What's it gonna take to make that happen?

AT UNIVERSAL STUDIOS -- The newspaper gets SLAMMED down on the desk of Sid Sheinberg by... WASSERMAN. <u>Not</u> <u>a</u> <u>happy</u> <u>man</u>.

The third panel SLIDES off screen. Now back to...

BENCHLEY
I want to see a script.

ZANUCK
(winces, then stalling...)
You know I can't do that, Peter. I... I don't even <u>have</u> a script.

Yes, he does. Right on the desk in front of him. He drops it in a drawer. SLAMS it shut. In case Benchley can see it.

ZANUCK
That's how Steven likes to work. Only the actors have a script...

BENCHLEY
Then put <u>me</u> in the goddamn movie. Find me a part and get me a script!

Benchley hangs up. His image SLIDES off the screen. Zanuck left staring into space. Brown watching him from the doorway.

ZANUCK
Like I don't have enough shit, now this asshole thinks he's Bob Redford.

A beat later, the phone RINGS. Before Zanuck can answer, an ASSISTANT grabs it. She covers the mouthpiece. Calls out:

ASSISTANT
Mr. Zanuck? Mr. <u>Sheinberg</u> for you.

BROWN
Better let me handle this one.

As Brown takes the call, Zanuck wanders over to the PRODUCTION BOARD. Location for today: QUINT'S SHACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. MENEMSHA HARBOR -- DAY

Quint's shack towers over the harbor like a witch's lair.

INT. QUINT'S SHACK -- DAY

Cramped and minimalist. Maritime theme. Shark jaws on crossbeams. Few more BOILING in a pot. STEAM fills the air.

Steven sits behind the camera while Scheider and Dreyfuss go over their lines. Dreyfuss paces. Working himself up.

DREYFUSS
"I'm not talking about hooking some poor dogfish or sand shark. I'm talking about finding a great white."

STEVEN
Slow it down, Ricky. Let's keep it fresh for when Mr. Shaw gets here.

DREYFUSS
If he ever gets here.

Nobody responds... Until a disembodied VOICE sings:

VOICE
What do you do with a drunken sailor/
What do you do with a drunken sailor/
Early in the morning...

The haze over the boiling pot of jaws parts to reveal...

ROBERT SHAW (46). A shark of a man. Gentleman and scoundrel. Churchill meets Hemingway meets Teddy Roosevelt, shaken not stirred. He sips from a FLASK. Like he means it.

SHAW
Chief... Mr. Hooper... Stevie.

He steps toward Dreyfuss. Guts him with a glare.

SHAW
You got somethin' to say, Hooper, or you gonna stand there like someone just fucked your mother?

The room goes silent. Dreyfuss on the spot. Intimidated. He sniffs the air. Summons a dose of courage, whispering:

DREYFUSS
I can smell a bottle of bourbon.

SHAW
What do you want for that, Hooper? A Mother Teresa medal? Name me one great actor who's not a drunk.

Dreyfuss stares at Steven, who shrugs: *just go with it*.

MOMENTS LATER -- Cameras rolling. **IN THE VIEWFINDER,** Shaw stomps across the room toward Dreyfuss like a thunderstorm.

SHAW
Give me your hands.

CLOSE ON: DREYFUSS'S HANDS as Shaw grabs them. In his monster grip, they turn bone white. Dreyfuss wincing.

SHAW
Dogfish? When you got a $5,000 net, you got $2,000 worth of fish in it, along comes Mr. Whitey...

As Shaw continues, Dreyfuss strains to keep his composure. Trying to wrench free, but Shaw's got him in a death lock.

SHAW
You got city hands, Mr. Hooper. Been countin' money all your life.

Finally, he lets go. Dreyfuss backs away. Out of character.

DREYFUSS
Goddammit! Jesus Christ, Bob, what the fuck are you doing to me?! We gotta shoot this ten more times!

STEVEN
All right, okay, let's cut please!

Steven pulls Shaw off to the side for a one-on-one talk.

The others watch from behind the camera. Gilmore seems a bit shaken, but Zanuck loves this. He gives Brown a nudge.

ZANUCK
He's still a mean son of a bitch.

Dreyfuss watches Steven and Shaw from a distance. Still fuming. Rubbing his hands. Scheider can't help but laugh.

SCHEIDER
Want some ice?

DREYFUSS
Fuck you. This is bullshit. Just because he played Henry VIII doesn't mean he is Henry VIII.

In a series of JUMP CUTS, we watch THREE MORE TAKES. The SLATE CLAPS each time. The last line repeats three times:

SHAW
You got city hands, Mr. Hooper. Been countin' money all your life.

And each time Dreyfuss yanks his hands away from Shaw's, it's even worse. His hands go from WHITE... To RED... To PURPLE.

EXT. MENEMSHA HARBOR -- DAY

Dreyfuss drops down on a bench. Bags of ice on his knuckles.

A moment later, Shaw strolls past, whistling the "Drunken Sailor" sea shanty. As he passes Dreyfuss, without a look:

SHAW
All hands on deck!

From the other end of the dock, SHAW'S FAMILY comes running to meet him. He's assaulted by a gaggle of SIX KIDS of all ages. The younger ones climb him like apes on a skyscraper.

The kids are joined by Shaw's wife, actress MARY URE (41), and a pretty young NANNY. Shaw kisses Mary on the cheek.

MARY
Don't get too attached. We're taking the ferry to McDonald's.

When Shaw speaks now, it's with a British accent:

SHAW
Well... There goes another $200.

Mary gives him a light-hearted smack. Shaw pulls the kids down off his back. Ushers them toward the waiting nanny.

SHAW
Get down off of there, you. I'll see you for supper. Go with nanny.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Gottlieb works at his typewriter, suddenly jolted by... A HELLISH SCREAM from the next room. He runs back to find...

STEVEN. Sitting up in bed. Cold sweat. Another nightmare.

STEVEN
I need to get out of here.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLEY HOUSE BAR -- NIGHT

Steven and Gottlieb enter to find more people who can't sleep.

MOVING THROUGH THE BAR -- Steven and Gottlieb notice... Shaw sitting with some TEAMSTERS. He points to a SCAR on his chin.

SHAW
See that? Sean Connery. *From Russia with Love*. Kick! Ba-boom!

AT A NEARBY TABLE -- Bob Mattey and Six Pack, the set grip, nurse a couple of brews. As Steven and Gottlieb pass them...

SIX PACK
Jungle Cruise? The one inside Disneyland? You designed it?!

MATTEY
Alice in Wonderland, Haunted Mansion, the Submarine Voyage...

SIX PACK
The submarine?! That's my daughter's favorite! Right on!

MOVING ON -- They find Dreyfuss alone at the end of the bar.

STEVEN
Ricky? How's the hands?

DREYFUSS
Why don't you ask the great storyteller himself down there?

He nods to Shaw, who bids a theatrical "good night" to the exiting Teamsters... Then retreats to a table with his drink.

STEVEN
Come on, Ricky. We're all taking our lumps here. Scheider got slapped seventeen times yesterday.

DREYFUSS
That supposed to make it better?

As he talks, Steven sees a couple PRETTY GIRLS at the other end of the bar. Making eyes at Dreyfuss. Starstruck.

STEVEN
I didn't want it to get out of hand. I told him not to hurt you.

DREYFUSS
You told him to come after me?! What's wrong with you?! I'm a professional. I have a real career. I don't need this shark bullshit.

He motions for the PRETTY GIRLS to join him as he exits.

The bar seems a lot more quiet now. From nowhere, Murray Hamilton wraps his arm around Steven. Blind stinking drunk.

HAMILTON
Christ in a canoe. What the hell did you guys say to Little Ricky?

GOTTLIEB
Go get some fresh air, Murray.

Hamilton protests but Gottlieb ushers him out the door. Alone now, Steven quietly makes his way over to Shaw's table.

SHAW
Stevie! Let's go talk to the manager. See if he'll give us a spare key to Dreyfuss's room. We'll scare the shit out of him!

Hesitating, Steven takes a seat.

STEVEN
I think... You were hard enough on him today. And I really don't think that, uh... this is helping.

He picks up Shaw's drink. Shaw snatches it back.

SHAW
We all have our own ways of blowing off steam, lad. Scheider suntans. Me, I drink. And Dreyfuss... well, Dreyfuss talks. He talks to you, so you talk to me, and we go round and round with it. I didn't come here to talk. I came here to work.

STEVEN
I need you to respect me on this.

Shaw smiles. Might be the drink. Might not.

SHAW
Tell me something, Stevie. How many pictures have you directed?

Voice slowly CHANGING from Brit accent to Quint's growl as...

SHAW
I know you spent your time arsing around in TV land, making your little Bonnie and Clyde shoot 'em up, but out here in the real world, we take our work seriously. That's been my life since nineteen bloody fifty-two. I don't need some goddamn child all green in the pants telling me how to act in front of a camera or what's good for my character. And if I decide that involves a wee nip of the grape from time to time, then what will be, will be, as the lady says.
(full Quint voice)
This may be your picture, young fella, but Quint... Quint is <u>mine</u>.

Shaw's wife Mary enters the bar. None too happy. Looking for her drunken Englishman... And <u>there</u>. She's found him.

Shaw meets her gaze. Drains his drink. Growls at Steven:

SHAW
Don't you tell me my business again.

Shaw storms off. Steven stares at the empty glass. There may be other people left in the bar, but he's totally alone.

CUT TO:

EXT. KELLEY HOUSE -- NIGHT

Hamilton pisses into the bushes. So drunk he can barely stand. He spots something in the shrubs... A TINY BLACK DOG.

HAMILTON
Hey, pup. What'cha doing, huh?
(reaching to pet it)
C'mere, you little bastard...

We now see the WHITE STRIPE on the animal's back. Not a dog.

Before Hamilton realizes it's a SKUNK, he gets SPRAYED. A beat, then he sniffs the air... His clothes... Wrinkles his nose in disgust. Then he pulls off his jacket as we...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON: STEVEN. FULL FRAME as he whispers:

STEVEN
Murray... C'mon, wake up, Murray.

CLOSE ON: HAMILTON. Blinks his eyes. Slowly coming around.

INT. KELLEY HOUSE / LOBBY -- DAY

And now we REVEAL... Hamilton's been sleeping on a couch in the lobby. His tacky anchor sport coat draped like a blanket.

He slowly sits up. Wraps the sport coat around him. Oblivious to the GASPS and MURMURS from off camera.

STEVEN
Rough night?

HAMILTON
My goddamn room smells like an outhouse full of dead cats and dirty diapers.

As Steven leads him away, we see <u>Hamilton</u> <u>is</u> <u>BARE</u> <u>ASS</u> <u>NAKED</u> from the waist down. Wandering through the CROWDED LOBBY.

HAMILTON
I'm fine from here, Steve.

He walks by some elderly guests having continental breakfast. Steven motions for Rick Fields to handle him. As they go...

They pass a stunned Zanuck and Gilmore coming the other way.

GILMORE
Oh, sweet Mother of Jesus...

STEVEN
He'll still make his call time.

ZANUCK
We've got bigger problems than Murray's winky. Sheinberg's been chewing my ear off about you and Benchley pissing all over each other in the press. This stops now.

STEVEN
Talk to Benchley about that.

ZANUCK
I'm talking to you.

A tense beat. We've never seen him this serious.

STEVEN
Fine. How do we fix it?

ZANUCK
Mr. Brown asked Benchley, as a favor, to come play a bit part.

We can almost see the steam shooting out of Steven's ears. He pulls them into an alcove. Trying to stay cool. Failing.

STEVEN
That's your solution? Bring him on set so he can beat me up in person instead of in print? No offense, but your diplomacy skills need work.

ZANUCK
I'm not running some fucking artists' commune! This is business. I have people to answer to, kid, and guess what: so do you!

GILMORE
You're lucky they're letting you get away with this... this circus!

He motions down the hall as naked Murray Hamilton steps into the elevator. Casually smiling like just another tourist.

GILMORE
Sid's coming to visit in a few days. We can't have any of this shit going on or we'll all be selling used cars by next week.
(not a request)
You will get this under control.

He storms off. Steven in panic mode. His only solution...

STEVEN
We just won't give him a script.

ZANUCK
He's got a speaking part, Steven!

STEVEN
I don't care. I'm not giving this guy any more rope to hang us with, so this is how it's gonna be...

EXT. FERRY LANDING -- DAY

Rick Fields waits at the landing. Watching as the ferry sails toward the dock. A piece of paper rolled in his hands.

STEVEN (V.O.)
Benchley does not get a script.

THE FERRY -- Docks at the landing. Waiting at the bow is PETER BENCHLEY. As he steps off, he only has one question:

BENCHLEY
Where's the fucking script?

Rick hands him the single piece of paper.

BENCHLEY
What the hell is this?

RICK
Your lines, sir.

Benchley glares: *one fucking page?!* He storms off into town.

CUT TO:

EXT. STATE BEACH -- DAY

Cloudy skies. Heavy winds. Rows of cabanas. EXTRAS line up along the shore. Cold and impatient. Shivering in swimsuits.

Despite the chilly temperature, there's one soul braving the air. Roy Scheider lays out in Speedos. Soaking up the sun.

LATER -- Extras run from the water. Screaming as they stampede. A BOOMING VOICE bellows out from LOUDSPEAKERS:

LOUDSPEAKERS
Shark in the water! He's killing people! Legs are bitten off! There's blood! Run, run, run!

Steven, in a wet suit, films from the edge of the shore.

STEVEN
And... cut! Let's go again!

Again? Nobody wants to get back in that freezing water.

GILMORE
You're turning this into a death march, Steve. People are storming off after every take. This isn't *Hamlet*. I think it's good enough.

Behind him, Steven notices Zanuck and Brown heading to the beach from atop a sandy bluff... And Benchley's with them.

STEVEN
I need more than "good enough."

Gilmore thumbs through his SCRIPT. Steven pushes it down.

STEVEN
Put that away. Now.

LATER -- Steven checks the viewfinder for another shot.

STEVEN
Action!

Peter Benchley stands on the other side of the camera. His big acting debut, playing a REPORTER. He holds up his mike.

BENCHLEY
But in recent days, a cloud has appeared on the horizon of this beautiful resort community. A cloud in the shape of a killer shark.

STEVEN
Cut. Print that.

BENCHLEY
I want to try that end again.

STEVEN
We don't need another take. It was perfect. You're a natural, Peter.

The crew starts moving equipment for the next set up. Benchley subtly nudges Steven aside for a private talk.

BENCHLEY
I know what you're doing. I've seen how you work, Mr. Director.

QUICK CUTS -- Benchley watching Steven shoot beach footage over and over. All day long. Take after take. OVER THIS:

BENCHLEY (V.O.)
Ten takes of this, fourteen takes of that. And now, all of a sudden, it's perfect? One take, that's it?

BACK TO -- Steven and Benchley on set. Steven holds firm.

STEVEN
We have a lot of pages to shoot.

BENCHLEY
You think David Brown asked me out here so I could get a SAG card and a free lunch? I don't give a shit about that, and neither does he. What he needs, what <u>you</u> need, is someone to inject a dose of credibility into this disaster. That's why I'm here. Your ship is sinking. And it scares the shit out of you. Because you know that you've got nothing. Why else would you be hiding a script from me?

Usurping Steven completely, he directly addresses the crew:

BENCHLEY
Set that up, I'm doing it again.

Butler, the DP, looks at Steven: *is he serious?* Steven wants to say no. But he feels helpless. Defeated. He simply nods.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLEY HOUSE / VERNA'S SUITE -- DAY

Benchley's face is projected on the KEM EDITING MACHINE.

BENCHLEY
On Amity Island, I'm Al --
Cut that, I wanna go again...
(new take, cut to:)
Alan Craig here in Amity, where the public seems to making up its --
Fuck! Let's do that one more time.

The KEM freezes on Benchley's smug look. Verna marks the sync point. Assembling a rough cut with Steven beside her.

VERNA
He seems like a real peach.

STEVEN
That's not the word I would use.

Verna digs into the trim bin. Crammed with COILS OF FILM. She sorts through fistfuls of twisted, tangled celluloid.

VERNA
Studio politics. Nothing you can do. Don't let him get to you, kid.

He's biting his nails. Agitated. Verna touches his cheek. A calming gesture. Motherly. And a soft smile to go with it.

VERNA
Steven... I'm the one putting this thing together and I see all of it. Good takes, bad takes, everything. I don't need to tell you this is good work. You already know that. Now get out there and make a movie.

That brings him back to life. He kisses her cheek. Grateful.

VERNA
And tell Scheider to stop tanning! That asshole's a different shade of orange in every scene!

EXT. EDGARTOWN -- DAY

Steven exits the Kelley House. On his walk to the production office, he notices Benchley giving an INTERVIEW. All smiles.

BENCHLEY
It's really something to see it all coming to life...

EXT. STATE BEACH -- DAY

Fierce winds blow. Steven sets up a shot with the crew. Miserable EXTRAS on the beach all clad in big winter coats.

BENCHLEY (V.O.)
True, sometimes it feels like we spend a lot of time doing nothing. But it gives me a chance to relax.

Benchley watches as extras shed their coats with reluctant groans. Swim trunks and bikinis. Holy shit, it's cold.

Benchley pokes around the set. Looking for a script. He grabs a pile of papers... But it's a BUDGET SHEET. No luck.

INT. KELLEY HOUSE / BENCHLEY'S ROOM -- DAY

Benchley pounds away at his typewriter.

REPORTER (V.O.)
What's your opinion of the script?

BENCHLEY (V.O.)
I haven't read the latest draft.
Steven and I had different visions
for the movie, so we parted ways.
In any case, it's out of my hands.

He stops typing. Distracted. Digs into his briefcase. Finds one of his old drafts marked up with Steven's RED INK.

And all it means now, all it's ever meant to him, is pain. Resentment. Bad memories. He hurls it across the room.

EXT. EDGARTOWN -- DAY

Back to the LIVE INTERVIEW. Benchley still smiling.

BENCHLEY
And I'm completely fine with that.

Benchley notices Steven watching from afar. Nods to him.

CUT TO:

EXT. FERRY LANDING -- DAY

Amid the buzz of tourists getting off the ferry, one man stands out in his sharp suit... SID SHEINBERG has arrived.

EXT. JAWS PRODUCTION OFFICE -- DAY

Steven greets Sheinberg with a handshake as they begin a tour... From EDGARTOWN... To the STATE BEACH, where filming wraps up... To SHARK CITY, where the boss man meets Bruce.

Sheinberg seems impressed. He pats Steven on the back.

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Sheinberg, Steven, and Gilmore have dinner. Verna serves up fresh pasta. Steven sips a Coke while the others drink wine.

SHEINBERG
The shark looks great, Steven.
I can't wait to see it in action.

From his look, his tone of voice, he wants to know <u>when</u>.

STEVEN
Neither can we. We're heading out
on the ocean for a big test
tomorrow. You should come with us.

SHEINBERG
If I didn't have an early flight...
(looks at Gilmore)
I'm sure it will be spectacular.
I'll expect a full report as usual.

Steven and Gilmore trade a look: *let's not fuck this up*.

Moments later, Gottlieb approaches Steven with script pages in hand. Whispers to him. He nods. Gets up from the table.

STEVEN
Duty calls. Excuse me.

SHEINBERG
Last minute polish?

GOTTLIEB
New scenes for tomorrow.

Sheinberg doesn't understand...

SHEINBERG
What happened to the <u>old</u> scenes?

STEVEN
Worked fine on paper, but not on set. We just scribble out new scenes the night before and hash it out in front of the camera. Let the actors improv it, you know...

Sheinberg chokes down some Chianti. Glares at Gilmore as...

EXT. BACK PORCH -- NIGHT

Two Alka Seltzer PLOP into a glass of water and FIZZ. Sheinberg chugs it back. Nobody but Gilmore with him now.

GILMORE
Casablanca worked the same way, you know. That turned out pretty well.

SHEINBERG
I don't give a shit about *Casablanca*. I don't even <u>like</u> *Casablanca*. What I do like is when things go by the book.

He's flustered, caught off guard. And afraid, too, because...

SHEINBERG
If Wasserman finds out...

The implication is clear: *he'll pull the plug*.

INT. KELLEY HOUSE BAR -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Gilmore broods alone. Smoking. A little drunk. Staring at the bane of his existence... The *JAWS* SCRIPT.

He STUBS out his cigarette on the cover. Storms away.

Moments later... BENCHLEY emerges from an alcove. Martini in hand. He's been watching. Not Gilmore... but the script.

INT. JAWS PRODUCTION OFFICE -- DAY

Half-asleep, still sipping coffee, Zanuck is startled as the *JAWS* SCRIPT is dropped on his desk by a fuming Benchley.

BENCHLEY
You call this a movie, Dick?
This... This is ritual slaughter.

ZANUCK
You waived creative rights when we paid out your contract. Handsomely.

BENCHLEY
That's no excuse for this hatchet job! You turned Hooper from a literate scientist into a pedantic schmuck, and that's just the start of this litany of formulaic drivel!

ZANUCK
Do you honestly think we're setting out to make a shitty picture?! Steven knows what he's doing here!

BENCHLEY
I'll believe that when I see it.

ZANUCK
Then let's go make you a believer.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY

A BARGE sits anchored a mile off shore. Loaded with F/X gear, work benches, and a big shed. A sign dubs it: *SS GARAGE SALE*.

While at the control bay with Alves and Mattey, Steven hears...

SIX PACK (O.S.)
Son of a bitch! Goddammit!

Six Pack hovers over the exposed engine of a motor boat moored to the barge. Steven shrugs at him: *having problems?*

SIX PACK
Loose spark plug shocked the hell out of me. I got it handled, boss.
(twists a torque wrench)
Just like the motor pool in Da Nang.

Vietnam? This hippie? Not what Steven expected.

SIX PACK
What about you? You in the shit?

STEVEN
I had a number. Didn't get called.

SIX PACK
Charmed life. Me, I volunteered. Needed a good kick in the ass.

A subtle nod from Steven. A new sense of respect. Moments later, Zanuck's VOICE comes booming over Steven's RADIO...

ZANUCK (V.O.)
We still on schedule?

STEVEN
(into radio)
Got a front row seat for you, Z.

A new VOICE answers back:

BENCHLEY (V.O.)
I'm glad to hear that, Steven. We're all ready for the big show.

Benchley. The last thing Steven needs right now.

Knowing this, David Brown jumps up from a chair on the barge. Speaking into his own radio as he's on the move:

BROWN
Peter, it's David. I'm on my way.
(off radio, to Steven)
I'll keep him out on the water. Just stay focused on your shark.

Steven walks him over to Six Pack at the motor boat.

STEVEN
You mind flying Mr. Brown out to pick up Z and his special guest?

SIX PACK
I'll do it for a six pack.

STEVEN
You deep six that asshole on the way back, I'll buy you a brewery.

Six Pack speeds away with Brown. Steven confers with Mattey.

STEVEN
Pump up the juice on this one.

MATTEY
We need to make adjustments. I got a shift in the Gulf Stream that's --

STEVEN
Just make it work. I want to scare this guy so bad, he forgets his name.

UNDERWATER -- We DIVE down to the sandy bottom to find... BRUCE. The big star of today's action. Menacing JAWS agape.

The great shark is connected to a metal JIB ARM below its belly. A crane attaches the arm to a massive SEA SLED fixed to a DOLLY TRACK. DIVERS connect HOSES to the sea sled.

ON THE F/X BARGE -- Steven watches as Six Pack picks up Benchley and Zanuck from the dock. The boat starts back.

STEVEN
Wait until they're right on top of Bruce, then bring him up.

MATTEY
(uneasy)
Aye aye, Cap'n.

Steven peers off the bow. Sees the boat. Closer now. Benchley on board. Steven waiting for the perfect moment.

STEVEN
Here they come... Steady... <u>Now</u>!

Mattey hits a BUTTON on the control bay.

UNDERWATER -- A GREEN LIGHT on the sea sled sets the divers in motion. SLIDING the massive cradle along the dolly track.

BRUCE glides along. The sled TRIGGERS a checkpoint as...

ON THE F/X BARGE -- A light BLINKS on the control bay. Mattey SLOWLY DIALS the air pressure, easing a CONTROL LEVER.

ON THE OCEAN -- A pool of WHITE WASH BUBBLES in the water.

Six Pack brings the boat closer. Everyone moves to the edge for a better look... And even our Mr. Benchley seems curious.

ON THE F/X BARGE -- Steven watches the bubbles. Anxious now.

STEVEN
Bring him up!

Steven TWISTS the dial full tilt. Pushes the lever forward.

ON THE OCEAN -- BOOM! An EXPLOSION of white water BLASTS everyone on the motor boat. From out of the water emerges...

A SHARK TAIL. Bruce is surfacing backwards.

ON THE F/X BARGE -- RED LIGHTS. Pressure gauges SPIKE.

ON THE OCEAN -- The soaked passengers watch the shark tail submerge into the sea as... BOOM! All of them soaked again.

A beat, then... Bruce BURSTS through the surface once more...

Only now the shark is completely inverted. Tail in the air. He holds steady for a beat... Then sinks like a lead weight.

UNDERWATER -- Divers swim clear as the sea sled TOPPLES OVER. Bruce careens off the track. CRASHES to the ocean floor.

ON THE OCEAN -- Drenched, Benchley rips off his glasses.

BENCHLEY
Take me back to shore.

CUT TO:

INT. JAWS PRODUCTION OFFICE -- DAY

Steven, Alves, and Mattey stand in front of Gilmore's desk like a group of teenagers called into the principal's office.

GILMORE
Somebody make me understand exactly what the fuck happened out there!

Steven knows he has to fess up. But just as he's about to...

MATTEY
Well, you see Bill, ocean currents being what they are...

EXT. JAWS PRODUCTION OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven, Mattey, and Alves exit post-haste.

STEVEN
Thanks, Bob.

MATTEY
Aye aye, Cap'n.

A TELEGRAM SLIDES across the screen from left to right:

SID, UNEXPECTED SHIFT IN GULF STREAM.
BRUCE BADLY DAMAGED.
QUICK REPAIR POSSIBLE, BUT COSTLY. --W.G.

WIPE TO:

A CHECK from the studio SLIDES across from right to left:

PAYABLE TO: JAWS PRODUCTION C/O WILLIAM GILMORE
AMOUNT: $300,000.00
SIGNED: LEW WASSERMAN

CUT TO:

EXT. SHARK CITY -- NIGHT TO DAWN

In a SERIES OF DISSOLVES, Alves and his F/X crew rebuild Bruce. Strip him down. Gut him. Patch him up. Then repaint him. He hangs over a FIRE in a barrel, drying off.

The BURLY CARPENTER with the TATTOOS confers with Alves, all while three suns RISE and FALL off the coast in TIME LAPSE.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAWN

Quint's fishing boat *ORCA*, a salty looking vessel, heads to sea with a fleet of smaller boats trailing. A TITLE rises:

1 DAY OVER SCHEDULE

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY

The boats reach the site of the anchored F/X BARGE.
On board the *Orca*, Steven checks his watch.

CLOSE ON: THE WATCH FACE. In DOUBLE EXPOSURE beneath it...

TIME LAPSE as the crew anchors down all the boats. Prepping for the first shot. We see 4 1/2 HOURS go by in 15 SECONDS.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- LATER

Steven on the *Orca*'s deck. BOBBING up and down. Behind him, the cast preps. Dreyfuss looks as GREEN as Kermit the Frog.

DREYFUSS
Whose bright fucking idea was it to shoot on the ocean?

SHAW
Belay that whining, Mr. Hooper.

Shaw bounces with the boat, which makes Dreyfuss woozier.

SHAW
Here, let me help you out, lad.

He hands a bucket to Dreyfuss... It's full of bloody CHUM. Dreyfuss PUKES into the bucket. Shaw cackles.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- LATER

The first day on the ocean plays out in a SERIES OF DISSOLVES and JUMP CUTS. One by one, the sea gets the better of them.

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER -- Rolling camera. The whole frame bouncing as Dreyfuss hefts a scuba tank toward Scheider.

DREYFUSS
Dammit, Martin! This is compressed air! Screw around with these and --

Dreyfuss PUKES again. And we roll into JUMP CUTS...

JUMP CUT -- New take. Same shot. Bobbing as Dreyfuss struggles. Just off camera, Shaw puffs out his cheeks...

And Dreyfuss PUKES. Again.

JUMP CUT -- New take. Dreyfuss nails it, but Scheider PUKES.

JUMP CUT -- *Orca* BOUNCING. Shaw struggles to hold a fishing pole upright, reeling in the monster shark as...

SHAW
He's gone under the boat. Yeah, too easy. He's a smart big fish.

Bill Butler, the DP, can't take it anymore. He PUKES.

JUMP CUT -- New take. Still BOUNCING. Shaw still fishing.

SHAW
Hooper, you may be a big yahoo in the lab, but out here you're just super cargo!

The BOOM OPERATOR pukes.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DUSK

The *Orca* and the camera boats come back to shore. Cast and crew hanging over the sides. Sick. Asses kicked by the sea.

Steven exits the head. He's 100% fresh. Dreyfuss glares.

STEVEN
I have a waterbed. I'm used to it.
(off his look)
What? It's only a few more weeks.

Dreyfuss turns green again. In the distance, the lights of Martha's Vineyard twinkle in the dark. A safe harbor. Home.

DREYFUSS
(smiles, singing)
Show me the way to go home...

STEVEN
(singing along)
I'm tired and I wanna go to bed...

The crew joins them as they head in. SONG CARRIES OVER to...

EXT. SHAW'S COTTAGE -- NIGHT

A quaint cottage high on a bluff. We peer in THROUGH A WINDOW as Mary and the nanny serve dinner to the kids.

Moments later, Shaw enters through the back door. The young ones attack him once again. He obliges with airplane rides.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Clips of PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON play on TV.

REPORTER
President Nixon continues to be dogged by the Watergate scandal, with Congress now considering articles of impeachment. And while American troops may be gone from Vietnam, the spectre of war still looms over his tarnished legacy...

RETROSPECTIVE FOOTAGE of the Vietnam War on the tube now. American troops under fire at Ia Drang Valley, Khe Sanh...

Steven watches. Caught up. Gottlieb typing away behind him. The dogs lie on the floor. Glum from lack of attention.

STEVEN
How's that comparing scars scene?

GOTTLIEB
It's okay, but it's still not...
(thinking, then...)
Quint. Something about him... He's gonna kill this shark no matter what. But why? What's driving him?

Steven gets sidetracked again by the TV. Footage of DESTROYERS in the Gulf of Tonkin. Triggers a memory.

He ducks into his room. Back in a flash with the "*Sharks of the Pacific Ocean*" book he read on the plane.

STEVEN
Think about it... Quint, he's Ahab.

QUICK CUTS -- Shaw causing trouble... He shoulder bumps Dreyfuss at lunch, spilling his food... Pounds back shots at the bar... Karate chops a picket fence... OVER THIS...

STEVEN (V.O.)
He's a tyrant. A maniac. Obsessed. Only he's lost a hell of a lot more than just his leg...

BACK TO -- Steven shows Gottlieb a photo from the book.

STEVEN
USS Indianapolis. Japanese submarine took her out. Nine hundred men died from drowning, exposure... and shark attacks.

An electric moment of discovery. Steven full of new energy.

STEVEN
This guy saw his best friends and shipmates eaten by these things! That gives him one sole purpose...

QUICK CUT -- Shaw broods on set. A fire behind his eyes.

STEVEN (V.O.)
"From hell's heart, I stab at thee."

BACK TO -- Gottlieb studying the *Indianapolis*.

GOTTLIEB
Great idea. But I don't know enough about this kind of stuff.

CUT TO:

EXT. EMPTY LOT -- NIGHT

A MANNEQUIN wearing a VIET CONG OUTFIT stands in a dirt covered empty lot... And gets BLASTED TO PIECES in seconds.

JOHN MILIUS (30) stands across the lot. Smoking 12-GAUGE on his hip. Cigar in his mouth. Empty beer cans next to him. A self-proclaimed Zen anarchist with an itchy trigger finger.

INT. MILIUS'S HOUSE / STUDY -- NIGHT

A phone RINGS as we slowly explore a wood-paneled study...

MOVIE POSTERS on the wall: *Magnum Force, Jeremiah Johnson*. A desk holds a dog-eared copy of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

PAN DOWN a display case filled with WWII memorabilia to the ringing phone. Milius's MEATY HAND picks up the receiver.

MILIUS
Milius.

SPLIT SCREEN. Steven's face slides into half the frame.

STEVEN
Johnny! It's Steve.

MILIUS
Stevie boy! The young soldier gone off to war! What's the good word from the battlefield, General, sir?

STEVEN
How'd you like to write a monologue about the *USS Indianapolis*?

Milius grins like a five year old on Christmas morning.

MILIUS
Does the Pope shit in the woods?

In a SERIES OF DISSOLVES, Steven and Milius talk through the night. Milius waves his hands, the grand storyteller. Steven takes notes, passing them to Gottlieb, who types them.

INT. KELLEY HOUSE / DREYFUSS'S ROOM -- NIGHT

THUNDERSTORM rages as Dreyfuss sleeps, arm around a PRETTY GIRL. Then... POUNDING above. Then... THWACK!... THWACK!

EXT. KELLEY HOUSE ROOF -- NIGHT

Dreyfuss opens a door to the roof. Aghast as he sees...

SHAW. Standing in the RAIN with a spilled bucket of GOLF BALLS and a FIVE IRON. He tees up another shot... THWACK!

The ball sails... SMASHES through a downtown window. With a devilish grin, Shaw takes a long pull from his flask.

INT. DREYFUSS'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Dreyfuss grabs the phone. Punches in a number. A beat.

DREYFUSS
Put Steven on the goddamn phone.

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Steven listens to the SCREAMING VOICE on the phone. Hangs up.

RICK
Problems, boss?

STEVEN
Shaw.

GILMORE
That lug needs a kick in the ass.

STEVEN
No. What he needs is a babysitter.

Steven's eyes go right to Rick Fields. The kid cringes as...

CUT TO:

INT. CHILMARK TAVERN -- DAY

Rick Fields joins Shaw at the bar. Shaw smiles.

SHAW
Young Fields! Have a drink!

RICK
I really shouldn't, Mr. Shaw...

Shaw pours him a round from his flask. Glasses clink.

INT. CHILMARK TAVERN -- LATER

Empty shot glasses. Shaw's drunk but in control. Rick is trashed. Can't sit up. He stares at another shot. Nauseous.

EXT. CHILMARK TAVERN -- LATER

Rick staggers out. Almost falls. Catches sight of Six Pack walking by. Rick grabs him. SHOVES him toward the tavern.

RICK
Your turn.

INT. CHILMARK TAVERN -- LATER

Six Pack is full-tilt blotto. Beer cans in both hands. A PROSTHETIC ARM, an obvious movie prop, extends from his fly. Another beer clutched in its plastic hand. Shaw cackles.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY

Sunrise over blue vista. A windy day in paradise.

UNDERWATER -- Divers pull BRUCE'S SEA SLED along its track. CRUNCH! GRINDS to a halt. BARNACLES on the track. TITLE:

3 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

TOPSIDE -- The *Orca* floats alongside the *SS Garage Sale*.

ON THE F/X BARGE -- Steven bobs with the boat. Watching the rolling rough sea. Lost in deep thought, just staring.

ALVES
Weather's kicking our ass today.

Steven is silent. Just bobbing up and down. Then... He pushes past, down deeper into the barge. Moving into...

THE HEAD -- The door closes. We stay outside for a beat.

Moments later, Steven emerges a new man. Whatever was on his mind now just a memory. He's refreshed. Back on deck...

STEVEN
Don't worry about the weather, Joe. We'll ride it out. Let's knock out some close ups while we wait on F/X.

CUT TO:

EXT. EDGARTOWN DOCKS -- DUSK

TIME LAPSE as boats come in from sea. The crew unpacks.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- NIGHT

Steven and Gottlieb stroll among downtown storefronts.

GOTTLIEB
Dreyfuss only puked four times.
And you knocked out a couple pages.

STEVEN
A couple pages of no shark.

GOTTLIEB
Pages are pages at this point. Take what you get. Anything else is gravy.

Steven stops. Notices something in the liquor store window.

INT. LIQUOR STORE -- NIGHT

Steven finds a pair of DARK SUNGLASSES. His trademark metal rims worn in all the real-life *Jaws* production stills. Tries them on. Checks his look in the mirror. Perfect.

(NOTE: He will <u>always</u> be wearing these out on the ocean.)

CUT TO:

EXT. EDGARTOWN -- DAWN

Buzz around town. SIGNS flip. PRICE BOARDS going higher.

AT THE HARBOR -- TOURISTS spill out of the ferry like troops at Omaha Beach. Flooding the streets. SUMMER has arrived.

AT A SMALL CAFE -- Gilmore runs numbers in a ledger. The waitress brings his check. And he knows it's summer...

IN HIS NOTEBOOK: "BREAKFAST" has always cost $3.75
ON HIS CHECK: The same meal now costs him... $8.00

Gilmore does some quick math. NUMBERS appear all around his head, *Beautiful Mind* style, as he COMPARES daily costs...

YESTERDAY: $55,000. **TODAY:** $73,000.

He orders a SCOTCH. Holds out TWO BUCKS. The waitress shakes her head. Holds up all FIVE fingers. Gilmore sighs.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY

The mini-fleet drops anchor for another long day. TITLE:

5 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

ON THE *ORCA* -- Scheider plays solitaire while Steven blocks out a scene with Dreyfuss, Shaw, and DP Bill Butler.

STEVEN
And you're both watching, following Bruce around the boat...

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER -- We see the shot from the film as...

DREYFUSS
You ever have one do this before?

PAN over to Shaw, who shakes his head, grim.

SHAW
No --

BUTLER
Cut! We need to cut!

Far in the background, he points out a TINY SAILBOAT that has entered frame right. Already moving well inside their shot.

STEVEN
Let's swing the boat around the other way. We'll shoot around it.

BUTLER
That means we have to re-anchor.

STEVEN
You wanna wait for them to pass? What if they drop anchor? Then what? We're supposed to be hunting a shark out in the middle of nowhere, not part of the goddamn America's Cup!
(to the crew)
We're losing daylight! Let's move!

A collective groan from the crew. This is a <u>pain in the ass</u>.

IN TIME LAPSE, all the boats lift anchor and reset positions. Another FOUR HOURS grind away in TWENTY SECONDS screen time.

SLOW DISSOLVES of Steven and the actors sitting in chairs. Waiting... And waiting... This is taking forever... Until...

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER -- The same shot is ready to go.

DREYFUSS
You ever have one do this before?

Shaw steps into frame, about to answer when...
TWO MORE SAILBOATS appear in frame, this time from the left.

STEVEN
Son of a bitch! Cut! Reposition!

The crew looks ready to mutiny, but they have no choice.
Steven drops into his chair. Pissed. Time crawls ahead...

Another SERIES OF DISSOLVES... BOATS slowly raise anchor...
STEVEN broods behind his dark glasses... CLOUDS roll in...

Steven starts to nod off. Then something SNAPS him to life.
RAINDROPS. On his hand. Looks like that's a wrap for today.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EDGARTOWN -- DUSK

Rain falls as the boats head in. Steven wanders back into town. Sullen. Moping on Main Street. Until he notices...

EXT. ISLAND MOVIE THEATER -- DUSK

Dr. Strangelove on the marquee. Steven smiles. But something's not right... As he greets the OLD CASHIER, he sees that she's crying. And holding a NEWSPAPER. HEADLINE:

U.S. HELICOPTER SHOT DOWN BY VIET CONG

And now he recognizes her ashy, wrinkled face... LEE FIERRO.
She's aged decades since we saw her slap Roy Scheider's face.

LEE
My boy is dead. I wanted you to know that.

She turns over the "CLOSED" sign. SLAMS down the shade.

VOICE (O.S.)
Steven!

Behind him. ARNOLD stands in the street. Still in his 30s.

STEVEN
Dad?

Arnold holds a crumpled LETTER. Steven takes it. Afraid to open it. The date at the top stuns him: **MARCH 14, 1965**.

A SELECTIVE SERVICE LETTER fills the frame. A DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SEAL stamps down with a GUNSHOT. More STAMPS:

STAMP: **REGISTERED 1-A**
STAMP: **ELIGIBLE FOR INDUCTION**

SIRENS. MILITARY POLICE CARS skid to a stop at the curb. MPs climb out. Hands on sidearms. VICKI is with them.

VICKI
That's him! Stop him!

Back to ARNOLD. He shoves a GUITAR CASE into Steven's hands.

ARNOLD
Take this and go, Steven! Run!

Tears in his eyes, Steven RUNS as the MPs give chase... Through the ALLEY and the STREETS leading out of Edgartown.

EXT. MOTOR POOL -- NIGHT

Town outskirts. Steven arrives at a makeshift garage. He recognizes a familiar HIPPIE in a U.S. ARMY UNIFORM working on a beat-up GREEN JEEP. Rows of more JEEPS parked outside.

STEVEN
Help me! Please!

Confused, SIX PACK peeks out from the engine as...

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! He's cut to SHREDS by GUNFIRE from the pursuing MPs. Stunned in horror, Steven stares down at him.

This would be gory, but instead of blood and guts, Six Pack's wounds have coiled celluloid FILM STRIPS spilling out of them.

FOOTSTEPS approach. Steven bolts out the back door, into...

EXT. WOODS -- NIGHT

Steven runs. Still holding his guitar case. MPs right behind him. Flashlights. Barking dogs. Closing in fast.

As he runs, the woods CHANGE around him. Growing thicker. More lush. Tropical. Like the jungles of Southeast Asia.

He TRIPS. The case spills open. A SUPER 8 CAMERA and REELS OF FILM fall out, all of it wrapped up in a DIRTY BROWN SUIT.

Steven gathers it all up. MPs closing in. And suddenly...

He's GRABBED from behind by ROY SCHEIDER. Dressed like a VIETNAM COMMANDO. KNIFE at Steven's throat. Whispering:

SCHEIDER
Don't fucking move, cherry.

Scheider's been hardened by war. EYE PATCH under his glasses. In lieu of a unit insignia, his uniform bears his "Amity Police" patch. He drags Steven into the bush...

Just as a VIET CONG PATROL walks by. FOUR GUERILLAS on the hunt. Faces obscured by rice hats. Finally, they pass as...

A HULKING SOLDIER jumps out from the bush. Slashes two VC throats at once. The other two VC rush him. AK-47s raised.

Steven panics. Scheider restrains him. Cool as a cucumber.

SCHEIDER
The Dentist has got this one.

PFFT! PFFT! The VC are DROPPED by two muffled shots to the back of the head that blow their faces out the front side.

The dead-eye marksman know as THE DENTIST emerges from the brush about fifty yards away. We know him by another name...

RICHARD DREYFUSS. Not the wiry, nervous Dreyfuss we know. He's more stone cold killer than any Hollywood assassin.

He joins up with the hulking soldier, who we now see is ROBERT SHAW. Scheider shoves Steven in Shaw's direction.

SHAW
Package secure.

Shaw kicks over the dead VC bodies. Steven chokes back a gasp as he sees their faces... All of them look like PETER BENCHLEY.

Steven follows Shaw and company deeper into the jungle. The sounds of civilization growing louder as they arrive at...

EXT. ARMY BASE -- PRE-DAWN

Barracks. Guard towers. Palm trees... And huge SOUNDSTAGES. Part Fort Bragg, part backlot. A dead accurate war movie set.

"Gimme Shelter" by the Rolling Stones rises as...

Twin AH-1 COBRA GUNSHIPS buzz over. Steven shields himself from the prop wash as a SERGEANT grabs him... Sid Sheinberg.

He takes Steven's guitar case. Opens it. FILM REELS inside.

SHEINBERG
General's been waiting for these.

He hands the case to GENERAL LEW WASSERMAN, Universal CEO. The General puffs on a cigar. Glares at Steven. Pure ice.

SHEINBERG
This goddamn war's swirling into the shitter, kid. Time for you to strap on a saber and lead the charge. You need to earn your own trophies, sir.

He shoves Steven toward a line of troops at a MAKE UP TRAILER.

INT. MAKE UP TRAILER -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven drops into a barber's chair. Head BUZZED clean.

EXT. ARMY BASE -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven stumbles out to join his PLATOON, which is made up of grips, crew, and cast members from *Jaws*. Shaw, Dreyfuss, and Scheider fall in as PLATOON SERGEANT Joe Alves leads the way.

ALVES
All right, ladies, let's saddle up!

The unit marches out. Double-timing across the "lot" to...

STAGE 12. The big stage at Universal. Pitch black inside. The platoon marches into the dark. Steven following into...

EXT. JUNGLE -- THAT MOMENT

Rain comes down in sheets. The platoon slogs through the weather. Steven peers up through heavy rain to the "sky"...

Dark rafters. Lighting rigs. Catwalks. Barely visible above the dense canopy. A living, breathing indoor jungle.

(NOTE: Through this sequence, we notice lights, dolly track and other film equipment randomly laying around the "set.")

The platoon halts at the banks of a narrow, murky river. Preparing to cross it. Steven sees something in the water...

A SHARK FIN breaks the surface. Quickly drops below.

STEVEN
S-S-Shark! Shark in the water!

Every last grunt bursts out laughing. Alves loudest of all.

ALVES
Hear that, boys? Ol' Mackie's back in town! Do the honors for us, kid.

Alves BUMPS Steven toward the water with his M-16. Steven inches along. Trembling. Other soldiers following.

EXTREME SLOW PUSH on Steven's terrified face. As we do...

In the BACKGROUND, one by one, each platoon soldier is suddenly and violently PULLED UNDER by SOMETHING UNSEEN.

Steven slowly turns back, catching sight of... DREYFUSS. He smiles wider than any human could, revealing...

A MOUTH FULL OF JAGGED SHARK TEETH.

SCHEIDER
(laughing it off)
Definitely not a dentist.

Then... Dreyfuss and Scheider are violently PULLED UNDER. Only Steven remains. He wades to the far bank. Lost. Alone.

Nothing but jungle ahead. As Steven takes a step forward, he almost falls over. Noticing something beneath his feet...

A HOLE in the dirt. Like a small cave. Covered by a makeshift lid of leaves and brush. An enemy bunker?

With nowhere else to go, Steven drops down into the hole...

INT. TUNNEL -- THAT MOMENT

Black as night. Steven explores the tunnel with only a flashlight and .45. He pushes ahead. Slogging along until...

SPLASH! A huge puddle. He waves the light to find... Another SOLDIER. Steven knows him by his BRIGHT RED PANTS.

GOTTLIEB. Steven grabs his leg. Pulls the body closer... And Steven's hand comes away SMEARED WITH RED. Gottlieb's pants are only red now because they're soaked with BLOOD.

Gottlieb JERKS FORWARD. Grabs Steven. His FILM COIL "guts" peek out from his waistband. Inches from death. Wheezing.

GOTTLIEB
...show me the way to go home...

STEVEN
Carl! Where are you shot?!

Steven searches for a wound. Finds it. Realizing that... Carl hasn't been shot. He's been BITTEN. By something huge.

GOTTLIEB
...it's here, Steven...

Steven slowly spins around with the flashlight as...
CHOMP! The MECHANICAL JAWS rush toward him in the dark.

Terrified, Steven drops the light. BLACKNESS.
Sounds of breathing. Crawling. The light CLICKS ON as...

A WALL OF RUSHING WATER barrels right at him. The wave SLAMS him. Carries him through the tunnel. Spilling into...

THE OLD MOVIE THEATER.

A churning ocean fills the room. Steven climbs onto the MATTRESS from his last dream. Clinging to it, he notices...

THE BIG SCREEN -- Where the *Orca* slowly drifts along. And Steven sits sound asleep in his director's chair.

BACK IN THE THEATER -- Steven just watches himself. Unaware of the MECHANICAL SHARK. Until it BURSTS up from below him.

SCHEIDER (V.O.)
STEVEN!

SLAM TO:

EXT. *ORCA* -- THAT MOMENT

Scheider brings him back to reality. Steven almost falls out of his chair. Shakes off the dream. Staring up at Scheider.

SCHEIDER
"Definitely not a dentist."
You were talking in your sleep.

Steven's vision comes into focus. The crew has re-anchored. They're ready to shoot but... More SAILBOATS on the horizon.

STEVEN
Roll! Roll the fucking camera!

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER -- A WHITE OUTLINE shows the actual film frame as a smaller area than our full view. The boats are outside the "white zone", quickly moving into the frame.

The CAMERA sweeps across Dreyfuss as...

DREYFUSS
You ever have one do this before?

The boats keep coming. Another second, they'll be in frame. Shot PANS over to Shaw, who shakes his head, grim.

SHAW
...no.

STEVEN
And cut! Gotcha!

The boats enter the frame. Steven and his actors all raise celebratory middle fingers toward their sails.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Steven tosses and turns. Another nightmare. He thrashes under the covers. Almost strangling himself in them.

MEMORY FLASH -- Monstrous JAWS open wide. MATCH CUT to...

EXT. F/X BARGE -- DAY

The menacing JAWS OF BRUCE stare us down. The mechanical shark floats beside the F/X barge out on the open ocean.

STEVEN
Please tell me it's gonna work.

ALVES
We're good to go. Mamma ocean's just a mean old bitch. This salt water'd eat through a goddamn tank.

STEVEN
No pressure, Joe. If it doesn't work, it's only my whole career.

ON THE *ORCA* -- Supervised by Butler, Rick Fields loads a fresh FILM MAGAZINE onto the camera. Secures it in place.

BUTLER
Now roll off a few feet to make sure it's locked in the gate.

Rick clicks off a few frames. Butler laughs at him. The DP holds down Rick's finger, advancing the film faster.

BUTLER
That's a 1,200 foot mag, kid. Twelve minutes. We got plenty to spare. Mark it and let's go.

Rick labels a piece of tape. Slaps it on the magazine. Date, production number, and TWO WORDS: "**BRUCE FOOTAGE**."

RICK
Ready to roll, Steve!

BEGIN MONTAGE as the spotlight now turns to BRUCE. For the next four minutes, he will make their lives a living hell.

A new SONG rises: “25 or 6 to 4” by Chicago.

ON THE OCEAN -- A wooden barge tows Bruce out to sea. Alongside him, a mini-fleet bounces through the chop. TITLE:

7 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

ON THE *ORCA* -- Steven, in DARK GLASSES and HAT, strikes a director’s pose as he blocks a shot with “camera hands.”

UNDERWATER -- The divers rig Bruce to the sea sled.

ON THE OCEAN -- Cameras rolling. All eyes watch the water. Across the way, Alves and Mattey man the giant control panel.

UNDERWATER -- The sea sled slides. The JIB ARM rises.

ON THE OCEAN -- Bruce bursts through surface. SMASHES nose-first into the side of the *Orca*. Steven throws down his hat.

SHARK CITY -- Bruce’s nose has a huge DENT.

Alves and Mattey fix it as NUMBERS appear ON SCREEN. Repair costs totaling. A big CHECK for $50,000 WIPES across screen.

ON THE OCEAN -- Divers lower Bruce into the water. TITLE:

10 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

ON THE *ORCA* -- Shaw, Scheider, and Dreyfuss. Bored to death. Playing cards. Scheider still working on his tan as usual.

ON THE OCEAN -- Cameras roll. Steven watches the water. Alves and Mattey man the controls. Summoning the beast.

UNDERWATER -- Divers raise the leviathan once again.

ON THE OCEAN -- Bruce bursts into view. His eye POPS OUT. Wires HISS and POP. ON SCREEN, REPAIR COSTS add up. TITLE:

20 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

CLOSE ON: CALENDAR. Days rapidly TORN OFF. Under this...

DOUBLE EXPOSURES. Long days at sea. Pissed crew. Sleeping cast. Nothing works. Camera roll. Watching the water as...

<u>No</u> <u>Bruce</u>. Instead, PNEUMATIC TUBING floats to the surface. Boats and crew reset positions to do it all again. TITLE:

30 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

CLOSE ON: THE CAMERA'S FILM MAGAZINE. Still loaded with the same cartridge that Rick Fields prepped: **"BRUCE FOOTAGE."**

The COUNTER shows 200 FEET shot. Two minutes in thirty days.

ON THE *ORCA* -- Steven, in director's chair and dark glasses, gives a quick press interview as the GUITAR SOLO kicks in.

STEVEN
Sea conditions have been so impossible that's it's really hurt our schedule and put a general somber note behind the scenes on the production, because we've been here a hundred and five shooting days when we only scheduled for something like sixty-five or seventy...

More DOUBLE EXPOSURES behind Steven. Longer days as sea. The shark is still not working. As the interview continues...

STEVEN
At times, especially when you're by yourself at night, it weighs much more heavily than it does during the working day...

SPLIT SCREEN. Steven's interview on one side. On the other:

STEVEN'S BEDROOM -- JUMP CUTS. Different nights. Nightmares.

STEVEN
...when your mind is on getting good film. At night, you realize that it's a great responsibility and that you're juggling a lot of cash and, uh... it's, um...

Steven springs up from his bed over and over again. The INTERVIEW half of the screen takes over the frame.

STEVEN
It's sometimes very frightening.

ON THE OCEAN -- BRUCE malfunctions over and over again as...

The screen splits into TWO. Both screens show the shark not working. The screens divide again. Two split into FOUR. Four into EIGHT. Eight into SIXTEEN. And again until...

The frame is composed of THIRTY TWO SQUARE PANELS:
In each, a new shot of the SHARK seriously fucking up a take.

Slamming into the boat. Belching steam. Surfacing tail first. Jaws not opening. A serious pain in the ass.

Every panel FLIPS over to reveal THIRTY TWO NEW PANELS: In each one, a new shot of Steven in serious frustration.

Swearing. Throwing things. Shouting. Hands in the air.

Every panel FLIPS OVER once more. Each now a tiny piece of the whole. A MOSAIC of the crew re-anchoring. Again. TITLE:

60 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

ON THE *ORCA* -- The CAMERA SPINS 360 degrees around Steven. New problems in the BACKGROUND with each revolution...

PASS 1... Bruce's skin BUBBLES up from his skeleton.
PASS 2... A seasick Scheider THROWS UP all over Bruce.
PASS 3... Bruce's jaws HYPER-EXTEND. Unhinged.
PASS 4... Shaw grabs Dreyfuss in a headlock. Laughing at him.
PASS 5... Bruce vomits BLACK GREASE all over Scheider.

As it spirals out of control...
CLOSE ON: STEVEN AND BRUCE. Nose to nose in a stare down.

The CAMERA FOOTAGE COUNTER says they've only shot about 400 FEET worth of film on the same **"BRUCE FOOTAGE"** magazine.

We dive **UNDERWATER,** passing Bruce's sea sled and SURFACE on the other side of the *Orca* as Steven directs, calling for...

BRUCE. He explodes from below, higher than the boat. Hovers in the air, suspended by his jib arm. The crew goes berserk.

Steven kicks over his chair. TITLE:

75 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

CLOSE ON: THE CALENDAR. More days... 76, 77, 78, 79...

ON THE CAMERA BOAT -- As the song winds down, Steven checks the camera viewfinder to see... A SAILBOAT on the horizon.

Steven hangs his head in defeat. **END MONTAGE** on final TITLE:

82 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

EXT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Steven lumbers toward the cabin. The door SLAMS OPEN as... The tattooed BURLY CARPENTER who works with Alves storms out.

BURLY CARPENTER
Hope your movie's a fucking hit.

He throws a T-SHIRT at Steven. Storms off. A beat, then... Steven notices Gilmore standing in the doorway.

GILMORE
Missed a custody hearing back in L.A. He just lost his kids.

Steven feels the guilt like a kick to the head. He looks down at the T-shirt. One of the *Jaws* shirts he made for the crew.

The "J" is crossed out, crudely replaced with "FL" - FLAWS.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLEY HOUSE BAR -- DAY

Shaw's wife Mary ducks inside. Stares around at the few patrons. Doesn't see her husband. Frustrated, she exits.

INT. CHILMARK TAVERN -- DAY

Mary pokes her head into the Chilmark... No Shaw.

EXT. EDGARTOWN -- DUSK

Mary enters a TRAILER marked with Shaw's name. A beat, then... She comes running out in tears.

A moment later, Shaw appears at the door. Clumsily pulling up his pants... And the half-dressed NANNY is beside him.

CUT TO:

EXT. KELLEY HOUSE / BACK YARD -- DUSK

A BANNER strung over the yard reads: "NIXON RESIGNS!"

Members of the cast and crew gather on the lawn for a BBQ. Laughing and chatting it up. A break from their stress.

Televisions stacked in a pyramid on the lawn show RICHARD NIXON giving his farewell speech to the White House staff.

RICHARD NIXON
Greatness comes when you're really tested. When you take some knocks, some disappointments, when sadness comes. Because only when you've been in the deepest valley can you ever know how magnificent it is to be on the highest mountain...

Steven sits on a lawn chair far across the party. Not really mingling with the group. A HIPPIE GIRL sits down next to him.

HIPPIE GIRL
Some party, huh? Fuck Nixon.

STEVEN
Yeah. I guess so.
(awkward beat, then...)
You local?

HIPPIE GIRL
Nah, I'm visiting from Albany.
Been hanging out with Ricky.

She nods at Dreyfuss across the way with a smile full of sex.

HIPPIE GIRL
What do you do? Carpenter? No,
you look more like... Accounting.

STEVEN
Something like that.

HIPPIE GIRL
Don't act so excited. Jesus, you
sound worse than he does. He <u>can not</u> <u>wait</u> to get off this set, man.

Steven didn't expect that. Tries to play it cool.

STEVEN
That, uh... That what he said?

HIPPIE GIRL
He got an earful from his agent.
Dude said people are talking all
over Hollywood. Talking like this
thing's gonna end careers. Like
it's all gone fucking radioactive.

Steven sets down his burger. Suddenly nauseous.

HIPPIE GIRL
Like it's nothing but a bad joke.

Steven looks around the party for a life preserver. In a surreal moment, all their heads turn toward him... <u>Laughing</u>.

Across the lawn, he sees BENCHLEY. Laughing hardest of all.

Steven grabs his head. Hyperventilating. He shakes off the VISION. Staggers to his feet. Moving past the TVs, where...

RICHARD NIXON
Always give your best. Never get
discouraged. Never be petty...

INT. CABIN / STEVEN'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Steven bursts into his room. Worse than before. He grips the edges of the night stand. Is he having a heart attack?

RICHARD NIXON (V.O.)
Always remember, others may hate you. But those who hate you don't win... Unless you hate them...

Steven EXPLODES. Destroying the room like Citizen Kane. Hurling the end table. Smashing lamps. Punching the wall.

Finally, he drops to the floor. Out of breath. Spent.

RICHARD NIXON (V.O.)
And then you destroy yourself.

A moment later, he pulls the phone down to him. Dials. On the other end, it rings... And rings... And rings...

STEVEN
Come on, Vicki... Pick up.

The other end picks up... but it's a MAN'S VOICE.

MAN'S VOICE
Hello? Hello?

Steven freezes. Dead silent. Then, he hears her:

VICKI'S VOICE
Hang up. Come back to bed.

Steven hangs up. Holds the phone in his lap. Devastated beyond hope. We PULL BACK, leaving him alone in the room.

EXT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Outside, it's a quiet night. A stunning view of the moonlit ocean. CAMERA carries us over the cabin. Flying toward...

EDGARTOWN... To the **KELLEY HOUSE...** Slowly moving into...

INT. DREYFUSS'S ROOM -- THAT MOMENT

Dark. Dreyfuss and the Hippie Girl asleep in bed. Then... Dreyfuss stirs. Something's not right. He slowly sits up...

And finds ROBERT SHAW sitting on the end of his bed.

Drunk. Bottle of whiskey clutched in his hand. He speaks... And he never once looks at Dreyfuss during the entire scene.

SHAW
I didn't want to make this picture. Thought the book was a piece of shit. I wrote better novels in my sleep. Mary convinced me to do it. And here we are. Bouncing ships and broken sharks. Days like that can kill a man, Hooper. Makes a bottle in your hand feel like a gift from the gods.

He gulps from the bottle. A beat, then...

SHAW
Thing about a bottle, you see, is it's got slippery insides. Easy to get in. Hard to get out. Stare into it long enough, all you find is a memory of who you used to be.
(beat)
God help me, Ricky. God help me.

Shaw doesn't even realize he's finally called Dreyfuss by his real name. But it's like a nuclear blast to the young actor.

SHAW
My wife left me this morning.

Dreyfuss almost says something until he sees Shaw is <u>crying</u>.

SHAW
Would have happened sooner or later, I suppose, even if she hadn't caught me with the nanny. She was tired of watching me lose control. Goddamn joke of it was, she's the one who kept me <u>in</u> control. She couldn't take the bottle from me, but she kept the demons at bay. Now she's gone, I hear 'em calling. And I tell myself I'd give anything for one last hurrah to make time stand still. Because that's the only thing shows you for sure you still matter. But that moment's come and gone. All's left is a tired old drunk with one foot in a pine box.
(long beat)
Quint might make it through the rest of this picture... Don't know if I can say the same about me.

Without another word, he exits. Dreyfuss stunned silent.

EXT. EDGARTOWN DOCKS -- DAWN

As Steven heads down the dock, he notices Six Pack anxiously waiting for the ferry to land. Tapping fingers on the rail.

STEVEN
What are you doing up so early?

SIX PACK
Special delivery for me, boss.

Moments later, an adorable SIX YEAR OLD GIRL sprints off the ferry into Six Pack's waiting arms. Soon joined by his WIFE.

A family reunited. Steven watches them. Hope in his smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY

Overcast. *Orca* and company anchored on rough seas. TITLE:

84 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

ON THE *ORCA* -- Steven, wearing his DARK GLASSES, blocks out a shot with toy boats as the vessel bobs around on the waves.

STEVEN
Bruce tugs the line underwater, and the entire *Orca* whips around...
(grabs his radio)
Where's my tow cables? I got a six pack for you if you're ready in ten.

ON A NEARBY DINGHY -- Six Pack gets the call over his radio. Bouncing around in rough water, he's sick to his stomach.

SIX PACK
Keep it. This chop's a nightmare. I don't know how you hack it, boss.

ON THE *ORCA* --

STEVEN
(into radio)
I sleep on a waterbed. I'm good.

He stares out at the ocean from behind his glasses... And suddenly grows distant. Off balance. Something's wrong.

MATTEY
Cable may show through all the chop.

ALVES
Steve... How wide we going on this?

Steven doesn't answer. A beat. He pushes past, down into...

THE HEAD -- Where we FOLLOW him inside for the first time.

Steven rips off his jacket. Deep breaths. Tears off his glasses. Stares into the mirror. Panting. Fighting it.

And we realize his eyes are completely bloodshot. Watering.

STEVEN
...c'mon... c'mon...

Covered in sweat. Trying to pace his breaths. Desperately staving off SEA SICKNESS. But it's too much to hold back.

He PUKES into the marine toilet like his guts are coming up.

Steven runs the water. Dousing his face. Regaining composure as he stares into his reflection. Into his soul.

STEVEN
...the fuck is the matter with you?
...what the fuck are you doing?

BELOW DECK -- Steven exits the head. On the move. Fully composed and professional. And we now understand...

He's been seasick the entire time.

Hiding it behind dark glasses and a smile. Knowing that in front of his crew, he needs to look like he's in control.

EXT. *ORCA* -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven emerges. Fresh. Amped up.

STEVEN
Go wide, Joe! Make it look good!

UNDERWATER -- Divers rig cables from the *Orca* to a motor boat.

ON THE *ORCA* -- Steven blocks as the motor boat arrives with the cast. Shaw makes a point of isolating himself.

Butler starts to break down the camera. Motions for Rick.

BUTLER
Hey, kid. Grab me the black bag, will ya? I wanna get rid of this albatross and swap out the mags.

He pats the attached mag, the one that says "**BRUCE FOOTAGE.**"

STEVEN
(stepping in)
We still got plenty of roll left.
Let's keep it running while we can.

Butler shrugs. No sense in arguing. As Steven greets the actors, Dreyfuss pulls him aside. Genuinely concerned.

DREYFUSS
We've got a problem with Shaw.

Shaw watches them talk from across the deck. Moments later, Steven slowly heads toward him, but before he says anything...

SHAW
Tell Hooper to mind his fucking mannerisms.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- LATER

The cadre of boats float among the rough chop, ready to roll.

MOTOR BOAT -- Six Pack mans the steering wheel for Alves and Mattey. Alves checks the cables. Thumbs up. All set here.

CAMERA BOAT -- Steven has moved here with Rick and a second CAMERA OPERATOR. He raises his radio and hits the button.

STEVEN
Action! Punch it!

MOTOR BOAT -- Six Pack SLAMS the throttle forward.

UNDERWATER -- The motor boat's wake pulls away. Tow cable drawing taut until it stretches out all the way and we go...

TOPSIDE -- A vertical SPLIT SCREEN. Both shots from the finished movie are put to film in a simulated attack as...

The shark RAMS the *Orca* from below. The boat spins around, almost capsizing as the unseen shark violently tugs it along.

And that's when it happens.

THE MOTOR BOAT -- hits a choppy WAVE. The boat catches air, DROPPING four feet before SPLASHING back to the sea.

UNDERWATER -- Tow cable PULLS super taut. RIPPING its EYEBOLT from the bottom. TEARING OUT a plank of the HULL.

ON THE *ORCA* -- Cast, crew, and equipment get tossed to one side as the boat LURCHES. She's taking on water. Fast.

CAMERA BOAT --

RICK
Jesus, did you see that?

STEVEN
(into radio)
Talk to me, boys! What's going on?!

ON THE *ORCA* -- The boat settles briefly. Bruises and cuts all around. Everyone scrambling to their feet. Then...

There's A VIOLENT SHUDDERING throughout the boat... She's listing... And she's listing bad. Jesus.

CAMERA BOAT -- Steven sees her mast at forty degrees.

BUTLER (V.O.)
(over radio)
We're going down! Holy Christ, the *Orca* is going down right now!

CLOSE ON: STEVEN. The world warps around him in a DIZZYING *VERTIGO* SHOT: *Oh, dear God, this is not happening.*

MOTOR BOAT -- Steven hops aboard as Six Pack swings past him.

STEVEN
Get the actors off the boat! Now!
(turns to Alves)
What happened?!

Alves and Mattey show Steven the end of the tow cable... And the broken chunk of the *ORCA*'S HULL attached to it.

STEVEN
What the hell are you guys, the special defects department?!

ON THE *ORCA* -- CREW MEMBERS bail over the sides.

Scheider is trapped in the pilot house. Banging on the glass. Frantic. Dreyfuss SMASHES a scuba tank through the window. He and Shaw helping Scheider out and overboard.

CREAKING and GROANING above. Shaw tackles Dreyfuss aside... Just as a hunk of the flying bridge CRASHES onto the deck.

IN THE OCEAN -- Dreyfuss surfaces. In a panic among the detritus. Shaw grabs him. Other arm clutching a life vest.

SHAW
I gotcha, Mr. Hooper. I gotcha.

MOTOR BOAT -- Six Pack swings in toward the *Orca*. Steven pulls Scheider aboard. Alves hops onto the listing deck.

ALVES
I'm gonna save her!

Steven follows him aboard the sinking ship.

ON THE *ORCA* -- Steven directs panicked crew members back toward the motor boat. Follows Alves up to the bridge.

Alves shoves the throttle full force into overdrive.

ALVES
We gotta ground her before she sinks!

Engines GRIND as the sinking ship heads toward shore. Steven finds a bullhorn, trying to manage some of the chaos.

STEVEN
GET THE ACTORS OUT OF THE WATER!

A lone voice screams out from the bow:

SOUND GUY
FUCK THE ACTORS! SAVE THE SOUND!

A grizzled SOUND GUY wades through rising water. He holds a NAGRA SOUND RECORDER high above his head like it's his child.

In that moment, Steven realizes something horrible...
And his entire face goes pale. He slowly turns to Alves.

STEVEN
Where the fuck is the camera?

SUPER SLOW MOTION:

Sounds like we're inside a sea shell. Alves slowly turns back to Steven. Their hearts sinking deeper than the *Orca*.

WAVES crest over the side of the listing deck as...
The *Orca* RUNS AGROUND on the sandy bottom, half-submerged.

FREEZE FRAME.

A song rises: "When the Ship Comes In" by Bob Dylan.

The bedlam of the sinking *Orca* now captured in surreal stillness like a photograph. The entire moment FROZEN.

CLOSE ON: STEVEN'S FACE... As he turns his head.

He's the only one NOT FROZEN. Wandering along the deck like it's a model ship. Touching the still wave cresting the bow. Walking atop the calm water on deck...

And finally, he finds it. Below the surface of the water. Sinking like a stone. Sinking along with his very soul...

THE CAMERA. Mag still labeled: **"BRUCE FOOTAGE."**

Eighty days of work. Submerged. Along with the hopes of a crew who just want to go home. Along with Steven's dreams.

All buried at the bottom of the ocean.

And that's when a NEW CREW walks out. Oblivious to Steven, they carry off pieces of the frozen set. Breaking down the real world around him like it's a life size jigsaw puzzle.

One takes Joe Alves... Another takes Six Pack... They break down the *Orca*... Then the OCEAN, just chunks of wooden facade.

Until only Steven is left, standing in...

INT. STAGE 12 -- DAY

The largest soundstage at Universal. Now a 29,500 square foot monument to Steven's loneliness. But he's not alone...

A DIRECTOR'S CHAIR sits in the balcony, near the rafters.

YOUNG STEVEN sits in the chair. Seven years old. Calling all the shots. Motioning for the crew. And they return...

The crew builds a brand new set around Steven in TIME LAPSE. Now he's in the middle of another still shot...

EXT. EDGARTOWN DOCKS -- DAY

The aftermath of the *Orca* sinking. Still-life crowd. Ambulances. A nightmare frozen in time.

From the director's perch, Young Steven motions Older Steven to his mark. Steven obeys without any question... ACTION.

SUPER SLOW MOTION RESUMES:

Paramedics tend to the crew... Cuts being patched...
Blankets placed around those pulled from the ocean...
And in the middle, Steven. Relegated to an audience member.

UNDERWATER --

DIVERS recover the sunken CAMERA.

ON THE DOCK --

Rick Fields fills a bucket from a “FRESH WATER” faucet.

Butler wraps a BLACK BAG over the camera. Removes the **“BRUCE FOOTAGE”** magazine. Gently eases it into the bucket of water.

Rick rushes the bucket into a waiting taxi.
Steven can only watch it drive away. Behind him...

Benchley. Rage in his stare. His worst fears realized.

PUSH into Steven’s face. In his DARK GLASSES, the reflection of the taxi speeding off with his future. PUSH IN closer...

As a lone tear streaks down his face from under the glasses.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIRPLANE -- DAY

Steven’s tear becomes a DROP OF WATER slowly running down the side of the bucket. Rick Fields holds the bucket on his lap.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY -- DAY

Rick springs out of a new taxi. Rushing the bucket into a building. SIGN outside the entrance reads: **PHOTO-KEM LABS.**

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

The song’s somber HARMONICA SOLO echoes. Steven collapses into his bed. Alone. Hiding from the whole world. Until...

Someone shows up to tuck him in bed... ARNOLD.

His father plants a kiss on his head. Steven shuts his eyes. As the solo continues, we revisit the OPENING DREAM SEQUENCE:

INT. OLD MOVIE THEATER -- DAY

Young Steven enters the theater... The screen SHATTERS... Rough seas fill the room... Young Steven adrift and alone.

EXT. MARTHA’S VINEYARD -- DAWN

Steven walks through town. Avoiding glares from crew members. A marked man. He continues toward the harbor to...

EXT. SHARK CITY -- DAY

And he’s back where we first met him, headed to the boat house where Joe Alves has been working all night. **END SONG.**

EXT. OAK BLUFFS HARBOR -- DAY

Boots THUMP onto the dock as Robert Shaw stomps along. Sipping from his flask. WHISTLING that same tune from the opening. A song about good-byes and fair ladies of Spain.

STEVEN walks up the dock from the other direction... The scene from the opening, now shown from SHAW'S POV.

Shaw SHOULDER BUMPS Steven. Keeps walking. Still whistling.

He tosses his FLASK in the water as he walks on. Lingering on the floating object, we note an INSCRIPTION:

TO A GLORIOUSLY LOVING, COMBATIVE,
THOROUGHLY AGREEABLE TO US
DISAGREEABLE RELATIONSHIP -- LOVE, M

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS -- DAY

The Black Tower looms over Lankershim Boulevard.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

Sheinberg checks the WHITEBOARD; Universal's upcoming slate:

Earthquake... The Hindenburg... Airport '75...
Dollar amounts. Charts. Graphs. All in BLACK MARKER.
In other words, the balance sheets are in perfect order.

SHEINBERG
Things look good on this side.
Wish I could say the same for...

He moves over a few steps. *Jaws* has its own whiteboard.
Delays. Setbacks. Cash problems. All inked in RED MARKER.

SHEINBERG
We opened a femoral artery, and the son of a bitch is hemorrhaging money. We patch it, it rips open again. And we're out of bandages.

Lew Wasserman stares back at him. Silently absorbing it all.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY

The *Orca* floats idle. Anchored off shore. Camera boats all around. A motor boat pulls up with a very drunk Robert Shaw.

He attempts to climb aboard the *Orca*, but it takes a few grips to help. And he's still got a bottle in hand. Shaw spots Dreyfuss watching the scene. Disgusted with him.

SHAW
Hooper, help me out here.

DREYFUSS
Sure. I'll help you out...

Dreyfuss takes the bottle from him. Hurls it overboard. Shaw LUNGES, grabbing at him, but the grips hold him back.

INT. *ORCA* PILOT HOUSE -- DAY

The set is being dressed for Quint's *Indianapolis* speech. Crew black out the windows. Shaw drops down at the table.

SHAW
Ready for my close-up, Mr. DeMille!

STEVEN
Bob? You want some coffee?

SHAW
Already had a drink. A drink gives poetry to life, young Stevie. Isn't that what we're doing here?

Shaw's ready, but Dreyfuss just shakes his head: *no good*. Steven settles in behind the camera and we...

JUMP CUT -- Dreyfuss feeds Shaw the intro to his big speech.

DREYFUSS
<u>You</u> were on the *Indianapolis*?

SHAW
Goddamn right I was...
(beat)
Slammed my torpedo up her ass!

He cackles like a madman. A very long day has just begun.

STEVEN
Heh... Good one, Bob. Let's try it again. A little more serious.

More JUMP CUTS as Shaw drunkenly MANGLES one of the most famous monologues ever captured on film...

SHAW
Didn't see the first shark for about an hour. Tiger...
(MORE)

SHAW (CONT'D)
Awww, this don't make no goddamn sense. The hell's a tiger doing in the ocean?!

JUMP CUT -- Same scene. Another part of the speech. Shaw stares into space. Dead silent. Has he forgotten his lines?

SHAW
We delivered the bomb. The Hiroshima bomb. Nagasaki bomb. Some goddamn Jap bomb.

JUMP CUT -- Another part of the speech. Shaw slurs:

SHAW
...Third day, bumped into a friend of mine. Robbie Herbertson... Herbie Herbison... Jackie Robinson.

DREYFUSS
(pissed)
Herbie. Robinson.

STEVEN
Just say, "Friend of mine. Baseball player. He'd been bitten in half."

SHAW
Baseball player. Bosun's mate. Bitten... Bit himself in half.

Steven's not watching Shaw anymore. He's watching the CREW.

Most glare back at him, as if to ask why he's putting up with this. A tense beat. Then Dreyfuss starts to SING softly:

DREYFUSS
Show me the way to go home...

SCHEIDER
I'm tired and I wanna go to bed...

And they're joined by...

THE CREW
I had a little drink about an hour ago and it's gone right to my head.

Everyone is singing. Except Steven. Looking around the room, he can see TEARS in the eyes of his crew members.

Not because they're happy... They all just want to go home.

EXT. OAK BLUFFS HARBOR -- DUSK

The *Orca* and camera boats are back on shore. Crew members off-load gear. Steven holds court with Zanuck and Brown.

STEVEN
We're just gonna cut it and move on.

The producers exchange a worried look. Then...

BROWN
You feel that's the right play?

STEVEN
Why not? In fact, let's cut the whole rest of the fucking movie.

He storms off down the docks.

EXT. EDGARTOWN -- DUSK INTO NIGHT

Steven wanders the streets. Avoiding everyone. As the sun sets, he's alone with his thoughts. Until he arrives at...

INT. KELLEY HOUSE BAR -- NIGHT

Steven enters. Finds crew members drowning their sorrows. All eyes on him. Alves tries to usher Steven back outside.

ALVES
Come on, Steve. This isn't the best place for you to be right now.

VOICE (O.S.)
MR. DIRECTOR!

Heads turn. The crowd parts to reveal SOMEONE at the bar...

Benchley. Martini glass in hand. Several empties around him. He's been at this a while. Alves pulls Steven aside.

ALVES
Go home. I'll handle him.

Steven glances around the room. The whole crew watching.

STEVEN
No. I'll deal with this.

With the room on pins and needles, Steven steps to him. Benchley smiles to himself. A long lost memory forming...

BENCHLEY
My father didn't believe in love. Strange thing for a man who wrote children's books. You know, he sent a letter back to every child that wrote to him, but he never made me feel like anything but a burden. When I finally got old enough to call him on it, he said he was teaching me self-reliance. Being a bull headed young man, I decided I'd help him prove his point. I brought home a straight A report card from Exeter the next semester. You know what he said?

Benchley's face cracks. Pain... Giving way to anger.

BENCHLEY
He said I only accomplished it because of <u>him</u>. From that point on, I decided to start living for me. And it led me to better things... the *Post*, *Newsweek*, speech writing for the White House. Then there was *Jaws*. At last, I had <u>my</u> first big success. He couldn't tear that away from me. But I suppose he didn't have to...

His eyes drill into Steven...

BENCHLEY
I had <u>you</u> for that.

He stands. Facing off with the young director.

BENCHLEY
You and your little "adventure story." The one that ends with you shoving a scuba tank in a shark's mouth and <u>blowing</u> <u>it</u> <u>to</u> <u>smithereens</u>!

Steven tries to stand his ground...

STEVEN
The book's ending was... weak.

BENCHLEY
The <u>book</u> is weak? <u>You're</u> weak.
(moving closer)
You were doomed to fail.
(MORE)

BENCHLEY (CONT'D)
And when I think of how I just handed it over to you, like some sacrificial lamb... God, I hate myself for it.
(rage building)
I'd sooner see the entire book burned from my memory than drawn and quartered into this farce with you holding the dripping blade! You... have destroyed... EVERYTHING!

He clenches his fist so tight, the glass SHATTERS in his hand. He doesn't notice the blood. He just keeps going.

BENCHLEY
For God's sake, look what you've done to these people! Look at them! They just want to go home, but you won't rest until you destroy them. And what have you got to show for all your ambition? A broken shark and a sinking ship.
(beat)
From this day forward, when people think of *Jaws*, they won't remember Peter Benchley. All they'll remember is a young director who grew too big for his own dreams.

Benchley points a bloody finger right at Steven.

BENCHLEY
You're no artist. You're no great storyteller. You're Icarus with a movie camera. And you flew too close to the sun this time.

Steven looks like a beaten dog. All conviction shattered.

Benchley snickers at the sight of him. Without another word, without a glance at anyone else, Benchley exits the bar.

Steven can feel everyone's eyes on him. But when he looks, nobody will meet his gaze. Not Scheider. Not Gottlieb. Even Alves has to look away. Head down, he exits... Alone.

EXT. EDGARTOWN HARBOR -- NIGHT INTO DAWN

Steven watches the sunrise. Millions of miles from everywhere in his head. A moment later, he arrives at...

FERRY LANDING -- Six Pack bids a tearful farewell to his WIFE and DAUGHTER. He kneels in front of his bawling little girl.

DAUGHTER
Why can't you come home with us?

SIX PACK
I'll be home soon. I promise.

DAUGHTER
You said that a long time ago!

SIX PACK
I mean it. Won't be much longer now. And we can go to Disneyland every day when I get back, okay?

She grabs him in a desperate hug. Won't let go. Crying.

DAUGHTER
I don't care about Disneyland! I just want you to come home, daddy!

All of them are crying now. He kisses her tenderly. Has to pry her away as they board. His heart breaking into pieces.

Steven watches. Devastated. A beat, then there's Gottlieb.

GOTTLIEB
Steve! Where have you been?!

STEVEN
I need to talk to Zanuck. We're going home, Carl. Every one of us.

Steven storms off... As Gottlieb runs for a PAY PHONE.

INT. JAWS PRODUCTION OFFICE -- DAY

Zanuck, phone held to his ear, stares out the window.

ZANUCK
Calm down, Carl. I'll handle it.

THROUGH THE WINDOW, he sees Steven coming up the walkway. FOLLOW Steven as he enters. Moving through the bullpen to...

ZANUCK'S OFFICE -- As Steven enters, Zanuck has his back to us. Button-down on the chair, he now wears a white T-shirt.

ZANUCK
I heard what happened in the bar.

Zanuck turns to reveal he's wearing a *JAWS* T-SHIRT. The same shirts Steven made for the crew. The sight jars Steven a bit.

STEVEN
I never should have taken this job.

ZANUCK
We all hit a rough patch, kid. Me, I had a nice run at Twentieth. *Sound of Music*, *Patton*, *French Connection*. Those are the ones everybody remembers. They don't talk about the failures. The ones that bleed the studio dry. My father had to fire me to keep the stockholders happy. My own father. You don't know humiliation, kid.

A quiet beat. The memory still stings. Then...

ZANUCK
Few years later, Mr. Brown told me something I'd never forget. He said success isn't about hitting a home run or being better than the other guy. Success is showing up. Putting in the hours until the job's done.

He points to his T-shirt. The *Jaws* shark logo.

ZANUCK
This right here? You made it happen. You wanted it bad enough because you knew you could do it. God's sake, kid, don't let that go.

STEVEN
If I don't go, I'm gonna be living this nightmare for the rest of my life. I... I want it to be over.

Zanuck offers nothing but a sad smile. He nods. It's done.

EXT. EDGARTOWN DOCKS -- DAY

Suitcase in hand, Steven boards the ferry. Alves, Gottlieb, Six Pack and other crew stand by like mourners at a funeral.

EXT. FERRY -- DAY

Sailing. Martha's Vineyard fading. Steven doesn't look back.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS -- DAY

The Black Tower looms over the lot like the Bastille.

INT. SHEINBERG'S OFFICE -- DAY

Steven stands in front of Sheinberg. Humbled and humiliated.

STEVEN
I don't know how to make this right. All I know is I failed you.

SHEINBERG
Kid, how can you say you failed me when you're not working for me yet?

Steven seems confused, until he looks at the CALENDAR: **1969**.

SHEINBERG
But we're about to change that...

He drops Steven's GUITAR CASE on the desk. The one from Vietnam. Sid POPS it open to reveal Steven's OLD FILM REELS.

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven exits Sheinberg's office. Starts a long walk down the hall. Actors and crew members PASS him going the other way.

We may recognize some famous faces... ROD SERLING from *Night Gallery*... JOAN CRAWFORD as her *Night Gallery* character... Robert Young as MARCUS WELBY, MD... DENNIS WEAVER from *Duel*...

And as Steven keeps walking... The hallway begins to change. More confined. Pipes line the ceiling. Steel vault doors.

More CREW MEMBERS pass, now wearing NAVAL UNIFORMS. A FEMALE OFFICER goes by. Reading from her script. And we know her...

VICKI
When I called you a son of a bitch, I didn't mean it.

She looks right at Steven as she passes...

VICKI
No... I meant it... Every word.

ALARMS sound. KLAXONS blare. RED LIGHTS flash. SAILORS scramble past. A uniformed RICK FIELDS grabs hold of Steven.

RICK
Battle stations, Captain!

EXT. OCEAN -- DUSK

Two SHARK FINS slice through the surface of the water. But we soon realize they're not sharks... They're TORPEDOES.

And now we can see their target... it's the *USS INDIANAPOLIS*.

INT. *INDIANAPOLIS* BRIDGE -- THAT MOMENT

Rick ushers Steven in amid chaos. The crew SALUTES him.

RICK
Torpedoes in the water! Orders, sir!

PING! SWISH PAN to... DREYFUSS. Manning the sonar. Not in a Navy uniform, but pin-striped old timey BASEBALL DUDS.

DREYFUSS
400 YARDS AND CLOSING!

SWISH TO... SHAW. At the window looking out to sea. The only one not scared. Smiling at Steven as he sings softly:

SHAW
Farewell and adieu to you, fair Spanish ladies...

PING! SWISH back to...

DREYFUSS
TORPEDOES AT 200 YARDS!

SHAW
(singing)
Farewell and adieu, you ladies of Spain...

SWISH BACK TO... Steven. Wracked by fear and anguish as... PING! And we're SWISHING rapidly between Shaw and Dreyfuss.

DREYFUSS
100 YARDS, SIR!

SHAW
(singing)
For we've received orders for to sail back to Boston...

DREYFUSS
BRACE FOR IMPACT!

SWISH TO... Steven. KA-BOOM! The bridge SHUDDERS as we...

BLACK OUT.

Sounds of violence, panic, chaos. RUSHING WATER drowns it all into silence. All but the sound of Shaw still singing:

SHAW (V.O.)
And so nevermore will we see you...
(whispers)
...again...

INT. OLD MOVIE THEATER -- THAT MOMENT

Same theater from before. Young Steven pleads with Arnold.

YOUNG STEVEN
Again. Please.

The curtain opens... And a massive TIDAL WAVE spills out. Behind the curtain, an endless OCEAN lies before us where...

The wreck of the *USS INDIANAPOLIS* sinks beneath the waves.

Young Steven is sucked underwater by the tidal wave... Emerging moments later as ADULT STEVEN. Gasping for air.

SHIP'S CREW float on the water. Burned, bleeding, drowning.

A YELLOW RAFT drifts by. SCHEIDER rides on it. Dressed like an old MOVIE USHER. CHUMMING the water from a popcorn bucket.

SCHEIDER
Slow ahead... I can go slow ahead.

SHARK FINS emerge. A brutal FEEDING FRENZY begins. The ocean turns red. Rick Fields is PULLED UNDER. Then Dreyfuss, but not before Steven sees the name on his jersey: ROBINSON.

STEVEN
"Herbie Robinson. Baseball player."

35mm FILM "GUTS" float to the surface. He's been bitten in half. Nearby, another sailor clings to a life vest... SHAW.

SHAW
Better if you don't fight it.

STEVEN
Help me, Bob. You can save us.

SHAW
Ain't me you want. Old Shaw's nothing but shark bait. You want the other fella. Only he can help.
(smiles)
But he might take some convincing.

A RESCUE CHOPPER flies in. Lowers a WINCH. Shaw hooks on.

SHAW
Farewell and adieu.

The winch hoists him up. Steven madly signals the pilot.

IN THE COCKPIT -- CLOSE ON: THE PILOT... Peter Benchley. He casts a smug glance down at Steven. Then flies away.

ON THE OCEAN -- Sharks circle Steven's raft. BUMPING him. Bolted metal under ripped flesh. Steven takes a deep breath.

STEVEN
Better if you don't fight it...

He shuts his eyes. Lays back in calm surrender as...

A massive GREAT WHITE surfaces. Larger than the rest. The huge metal JAWS open wide. Swallowing Steven and the raft.

SLAM TO BLACK.

MUFFLED MUSIC. Old-time radio plays the big band sound of Kay Kyser. A children's song: "The Three Little Fishies."

INT. AIRLOCK -- MOMENTS LATER

LIGHTS kick on. Steven floats inside a rusted PRESSURIZED CHAMBER. A beat, then water DRAINS. Steven HITS the floor.

Music STOPS with a scratch. Steel door RISES UP as... Alves greets him, clad in a '60s seafaring sci-fi JUMPSUIT.

ALVES
C'mon. You're holding up the show.

He tosses Steven a towel. Motions for him to follow into...

INT. SUBMARINE -- THAT MOMENT

A SUBMARINE right out of Jules Verne. Part steam-punk, part art deco, with a dash of Tomorrowland. Steven takes a seat.

The rows are filled with other PASSENGERS. Six Pack and daughter... Brown and Zanuck... Arnold and Young Steven... All of them staring outside through CRESCENT MOON portholes.

ALVES
All ahead full, Cap'n!

"Captain" Bob Mattey, also clad in sci-fi sailor garb, hits a lever. Gears GRIND and CHURN. The sub slowly moves forward.

STEVEN
Joe... Where are we going?

ALVES
On the ride of your life.

Alves sets a needle onto a record. “The Three Little Fishies” starts over as outside lights FLARE, illuminating...

UNDERWATER -- THAT MOMENT

And we can now see that Steven and his fellow passengers are aboard a Disneyland-style Submarine Voyage ride where...

All the submarines are huge MECHANICAL SHARKS like Bruce.

The sharks run along a track connected to their sea sleds. Passengers stare at the water through GILL-SHAPED PORTHOLES.

The sub passes over a model MOVIE STUDIO. A mini backlot like the Flight Over London from Disneyland’s *Peter Pan* ride.

From here, the sub will pass through UNDERWATER STAGE SETS depicting scenes from Steven’s life with ANIMATRONIC CHARACTERS in the fashion of an amusement park dark ride.

With each new set, Steven’s face reflects a new emotion: wonder, fear, sadness, regret, etc. The sub passes into...

STAGE SET 1 -- YOUNG STEVEN and ARNOLD at the movies...
STAGE SET 2 -- ARNOLD and LEAH argue in front of STEVEN...
STAGE SET 3 -- YOUNG STEVEN films Super 8 movies at home...
STAGE SET 4 -- A VIETNAM firefight, METEOR SHOWER above...

IN THE SUB -- SIMULATED LIGHTNING flashes across the windows.

ALVES
Bridge, Radar One! Looks like there’s a surface storm ahead!

KA-BOOM! BOMB BLASTS echo. FLASHING STROBES.
The water turns BLOOD RED as the shark sub passes through...

STAGE SET 5 -- The underwater wreck of the *INDIANAPOLIS*...

Steven peers outside. Startled as he sees an ANIMATRONIC SHARK ripping sailors to pieces. The sub continues on into...

STAGE SET 6 -- UNIVERSAL STUDIOS. Pre-production dioramas...
STAGE SET 7 -- *JAWS* PRODUCTION on the open Atlantic Ocean...

BRUCE. CAMERA BOAT. Tiny CREW MEMBERS at their stations. ANIMATRONIC STEVEN presides above it all like a movie god.

Bruce BREAKS. Bouncing on a spring. The moment plays on a constant loop of failure, the Animatronic Steven repeating...

ANIMATRONIC STEVEN
(angry)
CUT! RESET! DO IT AGAIN!

IN THE SUB -- Six Pack's daughter frowns.

DAUGHTER
He's a mean man, daddy.

STAGE SET 8 -- UNIVERSAL STUDIOS MAIN GATE...

ANIMATRONIC STEVEN slides off the lot. Head hung in defeat. A crowd of robotic ONLOOKERS laughing at his tragic failure.

IN THE SUB -- Steven SLAMS his hand against the window.

STEVEN
This isn't my life!

Steven rushes forward. Takes the controls from Mattey as...

UNDERWATER -- THAT MOMENT

The sub BREAKS from its sea sled. Zooming off the rails.

INTERCUT with **THE SUB** as Steven drives the shark sub from stage to stage. CHOMPING sets to pieces with massive JAWS.

Steven is having the time of his life. Finally in control.

Then... The ANIMATRONIC SHARK from the *Indianapolis* attacks. Steven fights back. Sends it CRASHING through the set wall...

...where YELLOW BARRELS slide on pulleys, operating the ride.

Steven slams the levers forward. The shark sub CHOMPS through the set. Biting through ropes and chains until...

The shark sub now tugs the yellow barrels along with it.

IN THE SUB -- Mattey puts a calming hand on Steven's shoulder.

MATTEY
Hell of a ride, son.

The TOP HATCH POPS open with a hiss. SUNLIGHT blinds us.

CUT TO:

EXT. FERRY -- DAY

Steven's eyes gently open. Not scared by the dream this time. He quickly sits up. Trying to get his bearings.

A HORN BLOWS as the ferry starts to pull away. Uh-oh...

Steven scrambles. Throws his suitcase over the rail. He jumps off the boat, leaping back onto the Edgartown docks.

CUT TO:

EXT. OAK BLUFFS HARBOR -- NIGHT

Shaw sits on the end of the pier. Alone and contemplative. For the first time, he doesn't have a drink in his hand. Steven approaches. Sits down next to him. Silence. Then...

STEVEN
Quiet night. I can't get used to it. No car horns, no airplanes. Nothing to hear but your thoughts.

Nothing from Shaw. A beat, then...

STEVEN
Ricky told me about your wife.

SHAW
What's done is done. Best to pick up the pieces and move on with it.

STEVEN
That's not the way I work.

SHAW
I said to let it go, goddammit! I had my chance and I shot it all to hell! Go back to your shark!

STEVEN
Without your scene, there's no reason to have a shark! You can bring this movie back to life!

SHAW
But it won't bring her back.

The sadness in his eyes... Pure heartbreak.

STEVEN
No, it won't. You're right. Only you can do that. Get Shaw out of your head. I need Quint. But you need him more. You need him to teach Shaw a thing or two about being a man. About not giving up.

Shaw fights back tears...

STEVEN
There's still hope.

Both men look up... And just like in *Jaws*, just like in Steven's dream, a SHOOTING STAR streaks across the sky.

SHAW
You believe in signs, lad?

STEVEN
Not until now.

EXT. *ORCA* BRIDGE -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Shaw sits up on the bridge. Pad and pen in hand. Script pages beside him. Working on the speech by lantern light.

Beside him rests a FLASK. The one with the inscription. The one from his wife. Retrieved... No... Rescued from the sea.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. *ORCA* PILOT HOUSE -- DAY

As the crew readies the boat for the shoot, everyone glares at Steven as he confers with Shaw. Nobody wants to be here.

STEVEN
You need a coffee?

Shaw waves him off. Don't need it. He sits at the table. Dreyfuss and Scheider share an uncertain look. Here we go.

The slate CLAPS. And we JUMP CUT into the scene...

DREYFUSS
You were on the *Indianapolis*?

Silence. Shaw says nothing. Like he's forgotten his lines again. But now we can see something happening in his face...

His features harden like concrete...
His casual gaze becomes a focused stare...
A transformation is coming about before our very eyes...

This isn't Robert Shaw forgetting...
This is Sam Quint remembering.

SHAW
Japanese submarine slammed two torpedoes into our side, Chief. We was coming back from the island of Tinian to Leyte, just delivered the bomb. The Hiroshima bomb...

As he speaks, all SOUND DROWNS OUT. Replaced by SOUNDS OF ECHOED HORROR. A torpedo blast. Alarms. Men screaming.

And Steven is mesmerized. We slowly PUSH IN on his face... Eyes open in silent wonder. The face of a child watching in awe. A face we'll see in many of his films in years to come.

LIVE SOUND comes back up as the speech draws to an end.

SHAW
So, eleven hundred men went in the water, three hundred sixteen men come out and the sharks took the rest, June the 29th, 1945... Anyway, we delivered the bomb.

Silence. All eyes turn to Steven. Waiting. Until finally...

STEVEN
Cut.

The crew ERUPTS in applause. Cheering. Shaking hands. Zanuck and Brown high five. Six Pack gives a huge whoop.

Back at the table, Dreyfuss grabs Shaw by the shoulder. A new respect on his face... And one hell of a delighted grin.

DREYFUSS
Smile, you son of a bitch. I think you might have just saved our ass.

As the crew celebrates, Steven grabs Six Pack. Dead serious.

STEVEN
Listen... I need you to get the crew together at Shark City. Now.

CUT TO:

EXT. JAWS PRODUCTION OFFICE -- DAY

Zanuck and Brown head to the production office, on their way back from the set. As they arrive, they find... Oh shit.

Sid Sheinberg waits on the steps. Bill Gilmore beside him. And a third party we didn't expect to see... Peter Benchley.

But it gets worse. BLACK DRESS SHOES exit the office as...

LEW WASSERMAN joins the somber looking crew. The boss man may as well be wearing a black hood and carrying an ax.

SHEINBERG
Where's the kid?

ZANUCK
Shark City. Talking to the crew.
(beat)
Sid. We had a breakthrough.
Robert Shaw just gave a speech...

SHEINBERG
I don't care if he gave the
Gettysburg Address. We've got a
broken shark. Wasted footage.
Gentlemen, there's nothing left.
(beat)
I'm sorry, but the Mayor of Shark
City's not in charge here anymore.

He nods for Zanuck to lead the way. Sheinberg and Wasserman right behind him. Benchley starts to follow after them...

But Brown stops him with a biting tone. No more Mr. Nice Guy.

BROWN
Where do you think you're going?

BENCHLEY
David... I thought we were friends.

BROWN
We stopped being friends the moment
you raked my director across the
coals just to satisfy your own
bloated ego. Now I don't care who
your father was or where you went
to school. You have a problem with
my director, then you have a
problem with me. And I have no
time for your petty insecurities.
(to someone off screen)
Mr. Benchley was just leaving...

Brown trails after the others. Benchley starts to follow, protesting... As a crowd of hard-ass TEAMSTERS blocks him.

TEAMSTER
We'll call you a cab.

INT. SHARK CITY BOAT HOUSE -- DAY

The entire cast and crew have gathered among the hanging model sharks. Nobody knows what's going on... Until Steven joins them. His eyes pass around the room to all of them.

STEVEN
This hasn't been an easy road. You
can blame yourselves.
(MORE)

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You can blame the studio. But the only person you should blame is sitting right in front of you. I came here to make a movie. I chose that above all else. Friends, colleagues, myself... Everything.

Nobody in the room expected this. Everyone just stares.

STEVEN
And for that, I am sorry.

Sheinberg and Wasserman arrive, appearing in the doorway behind him. Steven's got his back to the door. Unaware.

He's getting choked up. Fights it. Pushing through it.

STEVEN
I know you're tired. You miss your family, your friends, your old lives. You want to hop the next plane out. And if this was yesterday, I'd be strapping in right beside you. But not today...

A new tone in his voice. No more feeling sorry for himself.

STEVEN
What I saw on set this afternoon made me a believer. There's something here worth fighting for. You want to go home, I will never hold it against you. But I came here to make a movie. And what I've finally realized is that so did all of you. Somewhere along the way, I forgot why I was doing this. But now I know. I know that sink or swim, this thing has got to be finished. I owe that to all of you.

Moving around the room, we see the same look on the faces of the actors and crew that we saw on Steven during the *Indianapolis* scene. That same childlike sense of wonder.

Sheinberg looks over at Wasserman, who is himself watching all this with a very intense stare. Not sure what it means.

STEVEN
Right now, it looks like I may never get the chance to make another movie as long as I live. So I need to make goddamn sure I give them one they'll never forget.
(MORE)

STEVEN (CONT'D)
And I am <u>begging</u> you for your help.
(lowers his head, then...)
That's all.

He can't watch, expecting a mass exodus. But nobody moves. So quiet, it's disturbing. Until someone starts SINGING...

SHAW
Show me the way to go home...
I'm tired and I wanna go to bed...

Dreyfuss joins in... Then Scheider... Then everyone else...

CAST & CREW
I had a little drink about an hour ago, and it's gone right to my head.

Steven joins in as the song rises in volume. This isn't the mournful dirge we heard before. This is a song of rebirth.

And that's when Steven turns around to see... <u>Wasserman</u>.

Steven isn't smiling anymore. He stops singing. A long, tense beat hangs... Until Rick Fields sprints into the room.

RICK
We just got the Bruce footage back!

INT. KELLEY HOUSE / VERNA'S SUITE -- DAY

Verna feeds footage into the KEM. Steven and his usual gang gather around. Wasserman and Sheinberg hovering behind them.

The first bit of FOOTAGE appears on screen...
Scheider at the stern of the *Orca*. Chumming the water.

SCHEIDER
(on screen)
Slow ahead. I can go slow ahead.
Come on down and chum some of this shit.

BOOM! BRUCE leaps from the water. JAWS open wide.

Everyone JUMPS BACK about two feet with a GASP. <u>Holy</u> <u>shit</u>. This thing looks more terrifying than anybody ever imagined.

A long beat. Finally broken by a stunned Bill Gilmore:

GILMORE
We're gonna need a bigger budget.

Without a word, the boss man Wasserman silently exits.

EXT. EDGARTOWN HARBOR -- DAY

Wasserman heads back toward the ferry, Sheinberg following.

SHEINBERG
Lew?

Wasserman stops. Looks Sheinberg dead in the eye. For the first time in our picture, Wasserman SPEAKS. With authority.

WASSERMAN
Do you know how to make this picture any better than they do?

Sheinberg just shakes his head: *no*.

WASSERMAN
Then we let them keep going.

CUT TO:

INSIDE A 35MM CAMERA --

CLOSE ON: THE FILM GATE as fingers thread film inside.

PRODUCTION WRAP MONTAGE --

The film runs at high speed, looking like it's filtered through a SUPER 8 lens with film perforations on the sides.

Every so often, frames JUMP, slipping from the gate as...

ON THE *ORCA* -- Mattey and Alves motion to BRUCE in the water. Steven shakes his head. Off their looks, he reaches down...

And pats the YELLOW BARREL that he's been sitting on.

ON THE OCEAN -- Steven directs and Butler films as YELLOW BARRELS are TUGGED across the ocean by something below.

SUPER 8 EFFECT as the film SLIPS from the gate. In between the skipping frames, Steven changes before our very eyes into YOUNG STEVEN, wearing the DARK GLASSES. Directing his movie.

PRODUCTION OFFICE -- Young Steven moves another "living" piece of the production board over to the "completed" side.

ON THE OCEAN -- Calm and glassy beside the *Orca* as Young Steven directs the SPECIAL F/X CREW. He calls "action" as...

YELLOW BARRELS pop from below. Young Steven gives thumbs up.

SUPER 8 EFFECT. The film slips again, catching a flicker of FULL GROWN STEVEN, giving thumbs up in the skipping frames.

PRODUCTION OFFICE -- Zanuck and Brown help Young Steven move more “living” production slats to the “completed” side.

ON THE OCEAN -- The unseen shark drags THREE YELLOW BARRELS. Young Steven signals to Alves, who hits a few switches and...

The barrels SLIDE under the *Orca*. Tugged by the great white.

Young Steven clenches a fist in victory as Dreyfuss, Scheider, and Shaw high five with the crew. Loving it.

JUMP CUT TO -- The JAWS SLATE SNAPS numerous times. Young Steven directing shot after shot as he brings it all home...

SNAP! Scheider clings to the mast as the *Orca* sinks.
SNAP! Shaw smokes as he kicks back in Bruce’s open jaws.
SNAP! Scheider and Dreyfuss swim to shore on the barrels.

KELLEY HOUSE LOBBY -- A fantastic BUFFET spread laid out.

Young Steven hands Scheider a big piece of CAKE. Scheider SHOVES it back in the boy’s face. The young man returns fire.

And the lobby quickly explodes into a full-bore FOOD FIGHT.

OUTSIDE SHAW’S COTTAGE -- Shaw passes us, walking back up the road toward his cottage. Hat literally in his hand.

We watch through the window as his CHILDREN light up as he comes home. Even Mary relents... After all, she loves him.

PRODUCTION OFFICE -- Young Steven takes another piece off the board. Marks it complete. ONE DAY of shooting left.

SUPER 8 EFFECT. The film jumps a few frames revealing... FULL GROWN STEVEN staring at the last piece of the board.

Suddenly, the FILM BREAKS. Warping our view.
The projector SLOW DOWNS as we **END MONTAGE** and...

SLAM TO:

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Steven latches up his packed suitcase. Ready to go home.

Finished, he looks out the window, into the back yard... Rick plays on the grass with the dogs. Steven smiles at them.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY

Six Pack drives a POWER BOAT. Beside him stands Steven, clad in an ill-fitting BLUE SUEDE SUIT and WHITE CAPTAIN’S HAT.

SIX PACK
Fancy digs or not, the crew's still gonna dunk you in the drink today.

STEVEN
Just have this boat standing by.

ON THE LOCATION -- BRUCE sits atop a half-sunken *Orca* rig. F/X CREW stuff him full of DYNAMITE and clumps of CALAMARI.

CAMERA BOAT -- Steven checks the camera placement. He spots CREW MEMBERS whispering. Nodding to him, then to the water.

ALVES
Waiting for your signal, boss.

Steven nods. Shakes hands with Alves. There's a look between them that needs no words. A couple of old soldiers.

STEVEN
See you on the lot.

ALVES
Not if I see you first.

On Steven's subtle signal, Six Pack pulls up. Steven takes one last look at the set... His crew... Then boards the boat. He tosses his captain's hat to Alves, who dons it with pride.

A nod to Six Pack, then the boat speeds away. As they go...

STEVEN
I SHALL <u>NOT</u> RETURN!

Steven waves to the crew as the boat speeds into the distance.

EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT -- DAY

Steven meets Dreyfuss on the tarmac in front of a twin prop.

INT. COMMUTER PLANE -- DAY

Steven looks out the window as the plane takes off. Dreyfuss, happy to be leaving, can't help but shout:

DREYFUSS
Motherfucker!

Steven notes his buddy's choice of language drawing looks from some the more dignified Martha's Vineyard passengers.

DREYFUSS
Say it with me! It feels good!

EXT. SKIES OVER MARTHA'S VINEYARD -- DAY

The plane swings over the Atlantic. Heading up the coast.

STEVEN & DREYFUSS (O.S.)
MO-THERRRRRR FUCK-ERRRRRRR!

As the plane passes over, we TILT DOWN toward the ocean. The tiny *Orca* crew still at sea. Silence. Then...

BOOM! A small RED EXPLOSION. Bruce is no more. TITLE:

100 DAYS OVER SCHEDULE

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Steven enters. Kicks aside the mail. Drops on the couch. The house is silent. No barking dogs. No traffic outside...

And of course, Vicki is now long gone.

A FRAMED PHOTO lies face down on a table. Steven lifts it. The photo of he and Vicki from before. Glass now CRACKED.

The SILENCE overwhelms him. He's trembling. A full-on PANIC ATTACK hits. He shakes so bad, the actual FRAME shudders.

The film JUMPS. Skipping frames. The trembling intensifies, like an earthquake. Steven fighting for control. Until...

The FILM MELTS. The PROJECTOR LAMP blinds us as we...

MELT TO WHITE.

EDITING BENCH -- A GUILLOTINE CHOPS off a few frames.

VERNA (O.S.)
There. Let's get rid of that one.
That doesn't work for the ending.

INT. POOL HOUSE -- THAT MOMENT

A cluttered bungalow turned editing suite. Verna Fields makes the cut. Young Steven (7) watching over her shoulder.

VERNA
Keep it flush, edge to edge...

The boy lines up the film. Pulls tape across the strip.

VERNA
Great job. Let's see how it looks.

She runs film through an old Moviola. Turns the crank.

ON THE MOVIOLA -- The film runs at high speed. PERFORATIONS border the frame. Everything filtered through the SUPER 8.

POST PRODUCTION MONTAGE --

IN THE POOL HOUSE -- Verna and ADULT STEVEN cut the picture. Behind them, Rick teaches Elmer and Zalman a few new tricks.

AT THE STUDIO -- Zanuck, Brown, and Steven stand in front of an easel. Zanuck proudly yanks the cover away to REVEAL...

The finished *JAWS* POSTER. The same one we know so well.

OUTSIDE THE POOL HOUSE -- Night time. Steven wades in the pool with the camera box as Butler pours in gallons of milk.

Moments later, Joe Alves arrives, carrying... A SEVERED HEAD.

IN THE POOL HOUSE -- Verna and Steven watch the Moviola as Ben Gardner's severed head appears through a hole in a boat. Both of them JUMP at the scare... Then share an ecstatic hug.

Our background music comes to a jarring STOP, changing to... A FAMILIAR TWO NOTE STACCATO... DUMMMM-DUM.

ON A SCORING STAGE -- Composer JOHN WILLIAMS conducts the ORCHESTRA playing the terrifying TWO-NOTE *JAWS* THEME as...

THE SOUND BOOTH -- Young Steven, wearing dark glasses and HUGE HEADPHONES, signals the composer with a thumbs up.

SUPER 8 EFFECT to FULL GROWN STEVEN giving the thumbs up.

And as quickly as we heard the TWO NOTES of the *Jaws* score, the music jumps back into our original score once again as...

IN THE POOL HOUSE -- Verna and Steven hoist a couple SIX THOUSAND FOOT reels of film as they ready a work print.

AT THE PHOTO LAB -- Prints are struck. Reels packed away.

AT THE STUDIO -- Steven walks into the BLACK TOWER. Two LOCKED FILM CANNISTERS in each hand. Marching them into...

SHEINBERG'S OFFICE -- Sheinberg sits at his desk with Gilmore. Steven sets the cannisters down. Labels read:

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS
PRODUCTION #0002074
"JAWS"

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD -- NIGHT

Spotlights. Red carpet. Street abuzz as a line of cars arrive at GRAUMAN'S CHINESE. The marquee proclaims this:

"JAWS" PREMIERE

INT. LIMOUSINE -- THAT MOMENT

Steven sits alone in the back. Stares out at the massive CROWDS in front of the theater... But something's wrong.

Every FACE turns toward him... All of them LAUGHING at him.

Steven adjusts his collar. Getting hotter in here. He fumbles for the air conditioner switch. Flips it...

And WATER pours out. A DELUGE that starts to fill the limo.

The DRIVER turns, facing him through the open partition... And it's PETER BENCHLEY. Smiling, he ROLLS UP the partition.

Steven tries the doors. Locked. The limo now half full with water. Panic time. He looks back at the LAUGHING REPORTERS.

All of them are Peter Benchley.

Steven kicks the window. SHATTERS it. But to his horror... WATER spills in from outside. Steven gasping, overwhelmed...

SLAM TO:

INT. STEVEN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Steven jolts awake. Alone on his WATERBED. Once he's back to reality, he gets up... And LIFTS the sloshing mattress.

EXT. STEVEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Steven SLICES the mattress open with a knife. WATER pours out onto the lawn. He leaves the draining mattress in the dirt.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. MOVIE THEATER -- NIGHT

A grand old movie palace. Greek revival meets art deco. People massed in blue seats. This time, it's all real.

We recognize faces in the crowd... Scheider... Dreyfuss... Brown... Schmoozing in a decidedly about-town manner. TITLE:

CAST & VIP PRESS SCREENING
RIVOLI THEATER - NEW YORK CITY - JUNE 17, 1975

Steven watches from a closed balcony box. Zanuck waiting in the wings. Watching with concern as Steven chews his nails.

ZANUCK
Relax.

But it only gets worse as Steven sees... Peter Benchley. REPORTERS trail him as he escorts his wife WENDY inside.

ZANUCK
Off the record, we didn't make this for him. Who cares what he thinks?

STEVEN
I do.

Steven looks down from the balcony. HOLD on him as lights go down. He's bathed in BLUE LIGHT by the UNIVERSAL LOGO.

The movie has begun... But Steven's eyes are on Benchley.

The movie continues to play out in a series of DISSOLVES as we witness, along with the audience, key moments from *Jaws*...

BIG SCREEN: Chrissie gets violently dragged underwater.

Everyone in the crowd squirms. Gasps. Screams. Benchley remains stoic. Steven's eyes fixed on him from high above.

BIG SCREEN: The shark attacks Alex Kintner. Blood gushes.

Another round of screams from the crowd... But not Benchley.

One MOVIEGOER jumps up from his seat. Hand over his mouth. He's running up the aisle toward the back. Uh-oh. Not good.

IN THE LOBBY -- Zanuck arrives just in time to see the guy PUKE on the floor. But then, something unusual happens...

The sick moviegoer takes a deep breath. Wipes his mouth... Then heads BACK INTO THE THEATER to keep watching the movie.

BACK IN THE BALCONY -- Zanuck returns to find Steven right where he left him. A statue. Eyes still locked on Benchley.

ZANUCK
I'm no expert, but when a guy pukes his guts up and still wants to watch your picture, I think you sure as hell did something right.

In a final SERIES OF DISSOLVES, we see more key scenes...

The shark attacks Hooper in the cage... Quint stabs the beast as he's eaten alive... Moments that elicit gasps of terror...

Until finally, Scheider blasts the SCUBA TANK in the creature's mouth and blows the bastard to smithereens.

The entire auditorium ERUPTS in applause... Save one man.

INT. THEATER LOBBY -- LATER

A madhouse as the crowd spills out. Dreyfuss greets Zanuck. Ecstatic. Overwhelmed with joy for the movie he once hated.

DREYFUSS
The son of a bitch did it!

ZANUCK
The son of a bitch is still inside.

INT. THEATER -- THAT MOMENT

The theater is empty but for two people...
One in the balcony, one below. Author and director.

CLOSE ON: BENCHLEY. Staring at the blank screen. Silent as the grave. And a moment later, Steven sits down next to him.

BENCHLEY
Mr. Director.

STEVEN
Before you say anything, I...
(beat)
I never wanted to admit I was in over my head. Sometimes it's easier to just pretend you know what you're doing. That's been my failure as a filmmaker. Fuck, as a human being. This thing... just got caught in the hurricane. If it didn't survive, it's because I dragged it down. Not you, not anybody else. If it's a hit, well then... I guess we just got lucky.

A silent beat. Then...

BENCHLEY
I tried to tell myself that I wasn't even going to show up. That I didn't care how this came out. My book still lives and breathes without it, so why would it matter?
(beat)
(MORE)

BENCHLEY (CONT'D)
But my innate curiosity got the better of me. So I'm here. And...

He hesitates. Steven waits for the hammer to drop.

BENCHLEY
It's good, Steven. My God, it's really good. It's not my book, but it was never going to be. My mistake was not seeing that as a true benefit. An imagination like yours is exactly what this needed. Luck... Luck is just a cheap substitute for talent. You never needed it. There was no divine intervention at work here. You made this happen. You stamped your blood and sweat onto every frame and willed it to life. As long as you live, they can't take that away.

Stunned by emotion, all Steven can do is nod.

BENCHLEY
My father would have said you never could have done this without me...
(beat)
I say... I'm sorry I ever doubted you.

Benchley shakes Steven's hand with a genuine smile.

BENCHLEY
Congratulations, my friend.

STEVEN
Thank you, Peter. Thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS -- DAY

A beautiful summer morning in Southern California. Steven waves to a security guard as he drives onto the lot. TITLE:

JUNE 20, 1975
OPENING DAY

EXT. STUDIO COMMISSARY -- DAY

Steven walks across the lot, passing by the commissary...

Slowing as he notices VICKI sitting outside. Head buried in a script. She doesn't notice him... But he sure notices her.

He keeps his distance. Thinking about what he wants to say to her. A beat... Then he starts walking in her direction.

That's when a HANDSOME MAN (30s) walks up from behind her. Places his hands over her eyes. Peek-a-boo. She giggles like a little girl. Jumps up from her chair to embrace him.

Still watching, Steven can't help but smile as she walks away with this guy. Hand-in-hand. Happy to be alive and in love.

No reconciliation for them, but he knows they'll both be okay.

ALVES (O.S.)
Steve!

He looks up to see Alves, Gottlieb, and Rick Fields exiting the commissary. Gottlieb still eating. Big grins all around.

ALVES
We're catching a one o'clock in North Hollywood. You coming with?

STEVEN
Nah, it's okay. You guys go ahead.

GOTTLIEB
Don't you wanna know if it's a hit?

Steven just smiles. Hit or not, he's happy with his life.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S CAR -- DAY

Steven drives down Sunset Boulevard. A perfect sunny day until... TRAFFIC JAM. He turns onto a side street. Parks.

EXT. DRUG STORE -- DAY

THROUGH THE WINDOW, we watch as Steven pays for a small pile of groceries, then walks outside into the bright sunshine...

And as he does, a couple of hyper 11-YEAR-OLDS come running out of the store behind him. Almost knocking him on his ass.

KID #1
Come on, shark's gonna start again!

That grabs Steven's attention. He watches them run down the block. Following a LINE of people standing on the sidewalk.

Confused, Steven marches along the line. Takes a turn onto...

EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD -- THAT MOMENT

The grocery bag DROPS next to Steven's feet as he sees...

THE LINE continues all the way down Sunset. And it doesn't end until it hits the box office of the legendary PACIFIC CINERAMA DOME. A single red word dominating the marquee:

"JAWS"

INT. THEATER LOBBY -- DAY

Steven enters. Overwhelmed by the massive crowds. People chatting excitedly as they move in and out of the theater.

Moments later, Steven picks a familiar face out of the mob... ZANUCK. Stunned by the turnout, Zanuck hands Steven a ticket.

ZANUCK
Here, I bought one for every show.
(looking around)
You believe this shit? Last screening, people were yelling at the goddamn picture. Credits roll, every one of 'em got back in line.

STEVEN
I can't even... How did we do this?

ZANUCK
You did this. You showed 'em all just how big one guy can dream. I don't know, kid, but I think we may have just kicked open a new door.

Tons of people flow around Steven, but it's like he's not even there. Still just an unknown face in the huge crowd.

ZANUCK
One thing's for sure, though...
You're never gonna be the same.

Steven sees the huge *Jaws* poster hanging on the far wall.

He looks at his name inscribed at the bottom. His entire name. He's not just "Steven" anymore. He has now become...

STEVEN SPIELBERG
I don't feel any different.

Zanuck pats him on the shoulder: *you'll see, kid.*

Steven looks down at his movie ticket. Heads toward the theater. And just before he walks inside, he hears...

BOY (O.S.)
Is it going to be scary?

Behind him, a frightened BOY (7) is debating whether to go in and see the movie. His FATHER kneels. Comforting him.

FATHER
You're going to love it. I promise.

Steven smiles to himself. Cherishing an old memory. He walks toward the theater doors. Pushes them open...

LIGHT from inside shines out, turning him into a SILHOUETTE. A SHADOW in the doorway. Just like he was back in Philadelphia in 1952. Only now, he's not a boy. He's a man.

FADE OUT.

SUPER OVER BLACK:

BY THE END OF SUMMER 1975, *JAWS* HAD BECOME THE FIRST MOTION PICTURE TO MAKE MORE THAN $100 MILLION AT THE U.S. BOX OFFICE.

TIDAL WAVES OF MOVIEGOERS FLOODED THEATERS AS *JAWS* SMASHED EVERY BOX OFFICE RECORD IMAGINABLE, USHERING IN A NEW ERA OF HOLLYWOOD BY CREATING THE VERY FIRST SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER.

FOR ITS TIME, *JAWS* WAS TRULY THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH.