

IN THE DEEP

by

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Circle of Confusion
PARADIGM, Beverly Hills
First Draft, Sept 17 2014

Your monster will never come announced.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

In 2014, 248 shark attacks were confirmed worldwide.

244 were less than two hundred yards from shore.

- Center for Oceanic Studies

Sydney Australia

MILLS (V.O.)
*"I was paddlin' back -- sort of across
 the back of the surf..."*

UP FROM BLACK:

TELEGRAPH UK FOOTAGE OF DARRIN MILLS, HOSPITAL BED

The young British surfer attacked off New Zealand, 2011.
 Half his body in bandages.

MILLS
*And felt a big thump. THUMP from the
 shore side. And then I looked around and
 saw this -- yeah, saw this big shark hit
 me."*

CUT TO:

NBC NEWS FOOTAGE OF BETHANNY HAMILTON

17 year-old Maui-based teen. "Soul surfer girl".
 Parents beside her. No right arm.

HAMILTON
*"When it took my arm. Arm off... I could
 feel the pull. The weight?
 (mother holds her)
 There was pain, but the sting of the
 saltwater felt worse. If that makes any
 sense."*

Beat. She wipes an eye...

CUT TO:

CNN FOOTAGE OF MARK KENNING

Semi-pro Aussie surfer. You-Tube interview with CNN's
 Kristie Lu Stout, 2014.

KENNING
*"Uh, didn't register until it was
 happening. I mean, I saw Sean right
 there, my mate... beside me.
 (holds himself together)
 He didn't see it either at first.
 (MORE)*

KENNING (CONT'D)

*It wasn't until I was back on the board
that I realized the left -- the left leg
was completely gone.*

(long beat)

*And that's when the pain kind of came.
All at once. Sean was already dead. And
the--"*

He just stops, haunted. Thinks of something else to say.
Finally looks away...

SILENT TO BLACK

Beat.

Sound of panting, running...

UP FROM BLACK:

FOLLOWING A LITTLE BOY

RUNNING ACROSS BEACH SAND - MORNING

Hand-held, visceral. Sheets of rain fall onto isolated
BEACH AND ROCK. A dark, morning storm system.

The boy has the aura of some 3rd world, impoverished
fishing village. Cheap soccer shirt, ragged jeans.

He runs along the vast shoreline as a tidal surf creeps
into FRAME. Pushes floatsom out of the ocean.

The Boy stops, shouting in Spanish to SOMEONE following.
Points to the incoming surf.

PANNING TO HIS DISCOVERY:

DEAD BODIES WASHING ASHORE.

At least three. Mutilated. The human remains of a
horrifying shark attack.

BOY

Mira. La agua! La agua!

He points to something as of yet UNSEEN in the ocean.
Horrifying. Distant.

BOY (CONT'D)

En la profunda!

Another big sweep of surf hits the shore.

Sending HALF A WOMAN'S SEVERED LEG into FRAME. Off its bloody, half-visible STAR TATTOO...

Titles on black:

in the deep

Long beat.

UP FROM BLACK:

A STUNNING SUNSET

Lush tangerine, cinnamon reds. Seen from the vantage of an open truck window...

INT. TRUCK - DAY

NANCY (20s) watches the quiet, glorious sky.

Speeding along a bumpy jungle-laden path.

All we really know about Nancy is her name. Dressed for the beach, 3-day-old surf tee and shorts. Big Patagonia hiking backpack.

SURFBOARD in the pick-up's cargo bed, along with some local construction gear. The aura of a rural workman.

VOICE

Habla espanol?

Nancy turns to the DRIVER. A LOCAL MAN aged far beyond his 40 years. A hard life in the sun.

NANCY

Un poco.

The Man grins with a slight chuckle.

MAN

Un poco, si. Como te llamas?

NANCY

Nancy.

Man nods. Points to himself.

MAN

Carlos.

NANCY

(gringo Spanish)

Gracias por el paseo en coche, Carlos.

Carlos tips a faded baseball cap. Nancy smiles, turning back to the sky.

EXT. PATH - DAY

Truck rumbles by, coughing smoke and dust in its wake.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

THROUGH SMEARY WINDSHIELD. Nothing but dark jungle brush. Muck and tiny cracks of sunlight through the vegetation.

Nancy watches. Silently wonders if she's on the right track.

Big road BUMP. Jolts her a little.

Monkeys jump from branch to branch.

EXT. PATH - NEXT MOMENT

Truck climbs a final patch of jungle path. Some wandering goats clear way.

INT. TRUCK

And as road-hugging palms snap and part, it all becomes clear:

OPEN BEACH AND OCEAN. Spectacular blue. A newfound blue. Glitters in the under coral.

Restless sets of waves curl and pass on an outer break.

Nancy watches, stunned. Can't wipe the grin from her face.

CARLOS
Playa Pacifica. Bonita.

Nancy nods like she found her only love.

NANCY
Si, bonita.

EXT. BEACH PATH - NEXT MOMENT

Carlos helps Nancy pull her board out from the back of the truck.

NANCY
Gracias, Carlos.

CARLOS
(Spanish, subs)
12 miles from town, will you find a ride back?

NANCY
I might walk.

CARLOS
Dark in a few hours.

Nancy holds up her backpack.

NANCY
Sleep on the beach.

CARLOS
Muy bien.

Nancy pulls some money for the man. He politely deflects.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
No, no. Okay.

Nancy, a bit ashamed. Still on American mentality.

NANCY
Lo siento. Muchas gracias.

Carlos tips his cap again. Says something in Spanish about enjoying the surf.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Carlos?

(holds up her iPhone)

Una foto?

Carlos smiles, taking the phone. Nancy finds a spot of rock to stand on with her board. As Carlos snaps the shot:

BEACH - DAY

Sound of truck rumbles away as we FOLLOW Nancy down a rocky path onto the powder-white sand. She kicks the sandals off.

Sets her board and backpack down, reading the line of swells. Pure, perfect sets. 4-6 foot, gentle and accessible.

Has to visor her eyes from the setting sun. Spots TWO SURFERS paddling around the outside break. Dark tans.

Nancy pulls her phone. Snaps another photo of the ocean. Total silence. A gentle wind and nothing more.

She tucks the phone in the backpack. Does what most lone surfers do: buries the backpack a bit under the sand for security.

Pulls off her tee-shirt to reveal a black bikini top. Trades the tee shirt for a spongy, thin rash guard. Rubber, short-sleeved Local Motion.

Unzips her shorts, pulling them down...

CUT TO:

OCEAN - MOMENTS LATER

FOLLOWING NANCY. Starting a comfortable paddle-out.

Decked out in rash guard and bikini bottom. Kicks hard as the smooth water begins to get drunk and foamy.

NEXT CUT

She's paddling hard, clearing herself of the first foam surge. DUCK DIVES a swell as we FOLLOW HER UNDER.

Comes back up, paddling stronger. Does something that guys don't: giggles. Loves the feeling of the water.

NEXT CUT

Roughly 180 yards off-shore, closing in on the outer break.

Picks up the paddle pace as another SWELL slips under her. Holds the board as a spray of water fans over sky.

Slaps back onto the flat surface, paddling through the trough. Stops and turns around.

THE DISTANT SHORE beckons. White sand and dark jungle.

At once lovely and a little ominous.

She can barely make her lonely backpack sitting half-buried in the sand.

Loud ROAR of surf.

Nancy turns back, ducking a new swell. Comes back up, now safely having secured the outside break.

Exhales, a bit fatigued. Shakes her arms loose because they feel like lead pipes.

Loud *Whooohooo*.

Nancy spots the TWO SURFERS saddled on their boards, a good fifty yards away.

This means congrats, you made it to the outside break.

Nancy smiles, giving a little wave.

Surfer 1, dark in sunset silhouette. Shouts something in Spanish to her.

NANCY

Um, si, current dura, yo comprendo un poco.

SURFER 1

(broken English)

Hard paddle out with the foam.

NANCY
 (shouting back)
 Yeah, I didn't expect the drift!

SURFER 2
 You made it out now, all kinds of fun.

Nancy nods. Watches Surfer 2 say something to his friend. Obvious flirt attempt. *Ask her where she's from.*

SURFER 1
 (shouts back)
 You American?

Nancy nods.

SURFER 2
 California?

Nancy shakes her head. Nice try.

NANCY
 Texas.

Surfer 1 translates for his friend. Wearing a skater helmet with Go-Pro.

Nancy turns around to study the new lines. Spray rips across her face.

Surfer 1 shouts back:

SURFER 1
 They have surf in Texas?

NANCY
 Not like this.

SURFER 2
 This is secret break. How you find?

NANCY
 A friend told me.

Surfer shrugs.

SURFER 1
 Not so secret anymore.

Nancy smiles, working out some arm stretches.

NANCY
 (broken Spanish)
 Prometo guardar silencio. Anything I
 need to know?

Surfer 1 gestures to some areas around them.

SURFER 1
 Rocks right there, so watch out. Low
 tide, becomes island. Some nasty fire
 coral.

Nancy nods. Like her, we track each angle they mention.

SURFER 2
 Reef cincuenta... uh, 50 yard, yards out.

NANCY
 Any barracuda?

SURFER 1
 No. They're playing poker with the eels.

Nancy laughs. Surfer 1 gestures to the mid section.

SURFER 1 (CONT'D)
 Fast current. Makes the line slippery.

NANCY
 Gotta hang on.

SURFER 1
 Yes, hang on. Good left today though.

NANCY
 Awesome.

SURFER 2
 You make it just in time for final sets!

NANCY
 Gracias! So stoked!

Surfer 2 waves, punching his Go-Pro camera on as they race to set up for sets. Nancy does too as we FOLLOW her into the deeper water.

Never takes the first wave, slipping over it as we FOLLOW her into the smooth trough.

On the rise, a lovely swell forming. 6ft creeper. Nancy mutters something to herself, we never know what.

Gets into turn-around formation as the wave begins to pass and wall. She paddles hard, nearly catching it.

Exhales, hurriedly goes back into formation.

BIGGER WAVE on the rise. Like a bunny hill. This one's hers. Kicks hard, getting in line.

Pep HOLLERS from her fellow waveriders.

Nancy uses it. Big double-paddle as the wave propels her into departure.

Gets fast on her feet. Takes it left as it curls into a beautiful wall of water.

Off a huge water spray:

OCEAN - LATER

Magic hour.

Nancy on the outside. Red from the sun and effort. Big grin on her face. She's caught a few.

Dunks her head in the water, coming back up.

Spots the TWO LOCALS. Having caught some short riders into the shallow. They're heading out.

NANCY
(shouting)
NO MAS?

Surfer 1 turns around, gives a wave. Shouts from 50 yards:

SURFER 1
Long trip back. We return in the morning
before work.

NANCY
Dawn patrol.

Surfer nods, gives a Hawaiian Shaka hand gesture.

SURFER 1
Last set all yours!

Nancy smiles, giving one right back.

MOMENTS LATER

Nancy, alone in the break. Watches the two surfers head onto the sand, coiling up their boards.

WAVE breaks over Nancy. Spooks her a little.

Turns back to shore. The two Locals are already jogging off to a beat-up Jeep. Dark in late-day silhouette. A little eerie.

Nancy can't help but watch her backpack. The Locals give another wave, passing it without a glance.

Nancy smiles small. Pissed at herself for even considering their motives.

NANCY
Lose the paranoia, gringo.

The Locals head up to their jeep. Nancy turns back to the smaller, incoming sets.

NEXT CUT

Catches a nice 4-footer as we FOLLOW her down the slope. Gets a few cutbacks, falling back on her board.

Scans the shore. The locals are gone, as is their jeep.

Just her backpack and nothing more.

She stretches her arms in the sun. Off her back, silhouetted in the sun...

NANCY (V.O.)
It's so amazing, I can't even breathe.

ON THE BEACH - LATER

FOLLOWING NANCY. Strolling the shore, cell phone to her ear. All alone with the sinking sun and high winds.

NANCY

No, you see the shots I just took, the break's all left. Yeah. No, like it's heavy drift but the outside is sweet.

(listens)

No, I'm not telling you.

(laughs)

Because, you suck for not coming with me. Mom was right, secrets should stay secrets. This is my perfect break, not yours.

(beat)

Yeah, well, you can't talk shit if you're not here to prove it. Mr. Married Brother with the Honda Accord.

Giggles as she kicks sand around.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Yeah, I'm staying another week. It kicks ass here, the motel's so cheap. Dollar pork tacos, man. How's Kay?

Listens. Frees some sand from her bikini thigh string.

NANCY (CONT'D)

That's awesome. She totally wanted ER. Can she get me a job?

(laughs)

I will graduate!

TIME CUT

Nancy's hunched down on her board, smoking the last of a dying joint. Earbuds in. Enjoying the old-school tinny jazz-country of Patsy Cline's Heartaches.

Powdered donuts and Gatorade. Surf sugar.

Nancy stares at the bronzing sun and its colors on the water. Lowers her earbuds.

Takes in the quiet. The beautiful emptiness of this place.

A Hopper painting. A Malick image.

CLOSE ON NANCY

Watching a moment more. Checks her sports watch.
Considers calling it a day.

Looks back at the beautiful silk sets. All hers.

She kills the joint in the sand. Rises up, grabbing her board.

NEXT MOMENT

Nancy tucks her backpack deep into the sand, starting out for a final session. Her PHONE suddenly vibrates with a call.

Off Nancy's blurred form, heading into the surf...

BEACH - DUSK

Final high tide has crept in.

Foam surge sweeps over the wet sand as the first of many exotic crabs sprint across the beds.

IN THE OCEAN - SAME

Nancy, firmly planted on the deeper outside. 200 yards offshore. Looking spent but satisfied.

Searching for that final, last perfect ride in.

Does what a lot of surfers do when waiting on waves.
Nothing much.

Picks at some loose seaweed. Checks her bikini strap as we take note of her lower LEG.

An eerily familiar STAR TATTOO.

A silence haunts her. She stares into the sun. Watches the beauty of a sea all to herself.

And in the vast quiet of it all, Nancy quietly sobs. Not sure why, but it's something powerful and hers alone.

Wipes tears away.

Spots FLASHES in the turquoise water. Spooks her for a moment.

Then. DOLPHINS. Jumping out of the water a few yards away. Small pod for her alone.

Nancy laughs with a bright smile.

Watches as they playfully run past her, heading for the deeper ocean. Last two jump close enough to spray.

She watches, mesmerized, tear still running.

They skip the water's surface. Slipping away into further ocean. Disappearing into the sunset.

A faint storm system is barely visible on the horizon. Maybe a night rain or squall by tomorrow.

BELL ECHO.

Nancy spots a lone, old-school BUOY fifty yards out.

Red-and-white candy cane.

Timed RED BULB comes on for the evening. Blinks like a cranky toddler.

Nancy creaks her neck, fighting a slight cramp. Turns it right. Goes left. Right again.

Water SNAPS in b.g..

Nancy slightly reacts. Focuses on the area. Nothing now. Most likely a night school. A snappy barracuda.

Cry of gulls.

Nancy turns around, catching sight of a GULL FLOCK.

Bobbing around on the water. Huddled together. Some dive and swoop for an unknown feed.

They're beginning to fight for treasure. The jackpot of catches.

Nancy, curious. Starts a paddle...

NEXT CUT

Climbs over a small wave, moving through the crisp surge. As she gets closer, the gulls get louder.

Nancy paddles some water their way. Makes them scatter and bitch.

As she moves into their feeding ground, a tainted trail of BLOOD begins to appear.

Thin at first, growing into a thick, curvy red ribbon as she follows the line.

PASSING OVER ANOTHER WAVE RIPPLE

ON HER EYES. Following the trail into a huge swatch of RED BLOOD FOAM.

Has to hold a hand over her nose and mouth from the stench.

Just stops. Taking it in with stunned incredulity:

A HALF-SEVERED SPERM WHALE CARCASS

Thing has to be 30-feet from head to tail. Ripped, shredded apart. Feast for the birds for the next 3 days.

NANCY
(breathless)
Jesus.

The whale bobs up and down, its head half-eaten. DEAD EYE still staring into a dying sun.

A healthy scattering of parasitic fish, barnacles have already attached themselves to its blue-grey mass.

Swarm of beach flies like a buzzy mist.

Nancy paddles cautiously closer as another WAVE passes. Studies the BITE MARKS. Massive and thick. Like dagger stabs perfectly lined and contoured.

Chunks of flesh ripped out.

Nancy pauses on it. SHRIEK behind her. Feisty gull almost attacks her head, protective of his claim.

Another comes down, frenzied by the feed.

Nancy doesn't need another moment. Starts a hard paddle back.

NEXT CUT

With a blood-red sunset behind her, Nancy kicks it into high gear, paddling for a wave to bring her to shore. Slightly panicked but in control.

The sets are now calmer, few and far between.

FOLLOWING Nancy. Muttering to herself, pushing herself harder as a bum wave breaks around her but does nothing.

She looks back. Those gulls are back on their blood feast. Maritime buzzards out for the dead.

Nancy turns back ahead to synch up with a small but sufficient wave on the rise. She starts to short paddle and kick.

Wave starts its crest, not interested in her.

NANCY (CONT'D)

C'mon, c'mon!

Double-paddles, nearly getting it. Too late, almost goes over the falls.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Shit.

Exhausted, catching her breath. Turns back around. Scared eyes now on that kill area:

THE GULLS HAVE COMPLETELY VANISHED

Not a single one in the water or sky.

HARD ON NANCY

Silent in the confusion. Lone bell chimes off the buoy.

Beat.

SPLASH of water. She turns around, spotting some more surface-snapping, 20 yards away.

Dead silence.

AS A MASSIVE DORSAL FIN EXPLODES OUT OF WATER

PASSING A YARD FROM NANCY

A fat gray sail. A killer with a blade to your throat.

Slips back into water as quickly as it came.

Nancy, petrified. In hyper shock. Can't move, think.

BIG TAIL snaps up, following like a distant caboose.
Three-second lag. It's that big.

Something drives Nancy back into motion. Nods weirdly,
panic growing.

Starts out fast, quelling a delayed scream. Entire body
now shaking.

Trembling hands begin a huge paddle inward, never looking
back. She finally SCREAMS.

HER POV

Pointed to the distant shore, growing darker as we're
losing daylight.

Big WAVE roars over. She looks back to anticipate the
next one. Doesn't see the thing anymore.

NANCY (CONT'D)

C'mon -- oh, Jesus, c'mon!

Wave forming behind her. She fights to get in line. No
more energy to reset herself. Has to take this one in.

Wave crests as Nancy paddles hard. SCREAMS to propel
herself faster.

BOARD FINS catch the push. Nancy, relief in her face as
the wave takes her in one gulp.

Gets to her feet, taking it a little left so not to
collapse.

BIG FORM darts underneath. Scares us all.

Nancy fumbles, unable to sustain. Takes a hard dive:

UNDERWATER

All dark, violent and silent. Thick trail of wave cloud
passes over as she tumbles hard onto jagged coral rock.

BOARD smashes and dings on the outcrops. LEASH SEVERS.

Nancy, fighting heavy riptide. Rolls with the next passing wave. A HUGE BLACK EYE passes by.

She screams with no sound. Skin bumps thick shark flesh. Great white, big as a half bus.

Drift separates them as Nancy forces every muscle to pull herself back up --

ONTO SURFACE

Gasps big air, coughing out salt water.

Can't scream again, too in shock.

Works her arms to stay afloat, caught in the heavy white foam of the mid-break.

Spots her BOARD, a decent 20 yards away.

She starts a frantic swim. We're right with her as she has to dodge another 200lbs of pounding surf.

Now ten yards away. Has to race the next set or the board will run away in the sweep.

She kicks into overdrive, spitting out seaweed. Ducks her head in the water, coming up for another breath --

AS SHE'S VIOLENTLY PULLED BACK DOWN

UNDERWATER. A quick foam of red as the unseen thing tears into her leg. She SCREAMS, just a mesh of noise.

Feels the big patches of razor teeth as it digs into her lower leg.

It's all a haze of blood and visceral motion. A monster pitbull digging into flesh. Having its way with a favorite chew toy.

No music cues. It's silent and scary as hell.

WAVE rips by overhead, causing a violent shift. Turbulence breaks her free from the massive killer.

BACK ON SURFACE

Nancy gulps air again. Tries to kick, pure instinct. SCREAMS in pain. Realizes her leg is badly bitten, if not severed.

Can barely spot her surfboard, lost in the drift and surge.

The only play now is that outer buoy.

Nancy starts a hard, ugly paddle swim with one good leg.

THE BLURRED, MASSIVE FORM pops out of water. We barely catch a glimpse of that horrifying DORSAL FIN.

NANCY

Don't look back. Never look back. Just get to that:

BUOY

25 yards out. Using the riptide to pull her.

Leaving a blood trail from her leg.

THE FIN. In blurred background. SLAPS through a big wave, momentarily pressed against the currents and --

NANCY

Engaging that buoy. As the sky glitters with the last folds of a sunset. The grumpy CHIME of the automated bell is like a siren's song.

She heaves, now wondering if she's still alive. Imagining this.

Spits and coughs salt water, eyeing the small auxiliary ladder and tiny maintenance roost.

FIN coming up behind.

Sound of waves slapping against its razor-thin cartilage and --

NANCY

Reaching a desperate hand out. LATCHES onto the buoy. SCREAMS as she pulls herself up onto the cold, slippery ladder well.

Knows she's either alive or dead right here. Turns around --

TO REVEAL NOTHING THERE

The FIN having vanished back into dark, restless waters.

Nancy staggers, hoisting herself further up onto the small buoy. Winces in pain, having bought the moment to check out her GOUGED LEG.

Half the flesh torn. White-yellow bone materializing. Cartilage matter.

Nancy coughs, vomits.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Oh, God. Jesus, God.

Wipes her mouth clean. Takes note of the water, rippling around her. An unnatural eddy pushes the buoy around.

She has to cling hard, nearly slipping.

AERIAL SHOT

MAMMOTH FORM OF THE GREAT WHITE. Moving like a stealth bomber under Nancy and the dismal buoy. Slinks into further depth.

BACK ON NANCY

Remembers what it's like to blink. Breathe. Finally releases emotion. Cries, covered by intense pain.

Agony is the word.

Beach flies already swarming around her badly-bitten leg. Flesh dangling.

She closes her eyes to endure another bout.

Opens her eyes, glancing at the diminishing sun. Half-way submerged over the watery horizon.

Nancy swallows a breath. Quickly, clumsily pulls her rash guard over her neck. Fights to break free. Finally does. Almost falls back into water.

Steels herself for what she's about to do. Wipes any final tears away.

Breathlessly whispers the count of three.

And quickly wraps the rash guard over the bleed-out on her leg. SCREAMS as she does it. Flies buzzing around the open wound. Salt remixing with flesh.

NANCY (CONT'D)
GODDAMN SHIT.

Pulls it even harder, getting it into an ugly knot. Knows she has to make another.

NANCY (CONT'D)
One more. One more.

Nods like she's selling herself a used car. Forgets the count-down and just does it. Blood runs.

Ties the knot again and pulls.

NANCY (CONT'D)
AH, FUCK.

Coughs, but doesn't throw up. Takes deep breaths. Tears running.

Falls back onto the thin buoy roost. Struggles to move half-way around it.

Bumps every time she does and it hurts like hell. But she needs to get a look at:

THE BEACH

200 yards away. Two football-fields distance.

No one there.

Her BOARD still tangled-up in mid-break. Heading closer to shore.

Pushing around in the heavy drift. Off a lone cry of gull...

A SERIES OF SHOTS

The water. The waves.

The shallows and deeps. A feeding ground. A mine field.

CUT TO BLACK

Beat.

NANCY STAGGERING AWAKE

Bell tolling from the buoy.

Passed out for a few moments? An hour?

Feels a sick sensation on her leg.

CRAB ROACHES crawling over the bloody tourniquet. Army of creeping scavengers.

She screams as they dig into her skin. Sweeps them off.

Smashes a few on the metallic buoy, pulling herself away from the nest underneath.

Looks around, now realizing the sun's nearly set.

Wipes wet hair from her face, turning back to the distant beach.

Suddenly spots him: A FORM. Stumbling out from the vegetation. Throws a cheap, sickly bicycle down.

Local aura. A drunk.

Breaks a bottle on a rock.

Nancy, spotting water in the desert. Clings onto a bar to pull herself up more.

NANCY

Hell -- help --

Fights to find her voice. Coughing.

The Drunk's taking a piss by the wall of jungle. Back to her.

Nancy punches the buoy to get herself fired up.

NANCY (CONT'D)

HELP. HELP ME.

Uses her sports watch to BANG on the metal.

NANCY (CONT'D)

HELP.

BANGS sound off. She SCREAMS as loudly as she can.

Drunk finally reacts. Turns around, still hasn't spotted her.

NANCY (CONT'D)

AQUI. THE BUOY.

Drunk follows her distant cries. Now spots her on the buoy.

Nancy waves him down, nearly smiling so relieved.

The drunk waves back. Says something she can't hear.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Sha -- shark. TIBURON.

Drunk just stares back, dark in silhouette. Can't hear.

NANCY (CONT'D)

BACKPACK. MI -- MI MOCHILA.

Points to her backpack, now buried in wet sand from high tide.

Drunk looks to where she's pointing. Heads over, trying not to stumble.

Nancy, tear running from her eye. Nods.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Si. TELEFONO. Telefono celular.

The Drunk gets to her backpack. Pulls it out.

Nancy nods aggressively. To herself:

NANCY (CONT'D)

Yes.

Distant form of the Drunk. Zipping open her backpack. Looking through it.

Nancy's grin suddenly dies.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 No. TELE -- TELEFONO.

The Drunk's now digging for the money. Pockets it. Checks her phone and some clothing. He's stealing it all.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 THERE'S A SHARK, HELP ME.

Can't hear a thing over the surf.

Drunk looks back at her. Decides to take the whole backpack, throwing it over his shoulders.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 OH GOD, HELP.

Drunk now spots her SURFBOARD, having drifted more into the shallow.

He checks the jungle, making sure his theft is secure.

Nancy shakes her head frantically. Furious and afraid for the pathetic man.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 NO. TIBURON. SHARK.

The Drunk can't hear. Sets the backpack down into the deep sand. Waddles into the shallow, fighting some of the last rip current.

Starts to swim for the surfboard. So drunk, doesn't even think about it.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 NO.

The Drunk, now 20 yards out. Gets to the board. Quickly gets on it, starting back to shore.

Nancy watches him paddle away.

He gets on his knees to stroke more efficiently. Waves bye again --

AND IS INSTANTLY SUCKED BENEATH THE WATER

CLOSE ON NANCY

Terrified, mouth left open. Has no words for it.

BACK ON THE SHALLOW

Silent a moment more.

The SURFBOARD explodes out of the water. Missiles twenty feet into the sky before smashing back into water.

No more Drunk. Big spray of water can be seen as the thing feeds underneath. A turbine spinning.

HARD ON NANCY

Watching a moment more. Dry-heaving. Spots that grim DORSAL FIN make its appearance.

Submerges again like a submarine top.

Nancy closes her eyes, trembling from fear and exhaustion.

Nearly forgot about the extreme pain in her lower leg. Winces, staggers, struggling to hold onto the here. Now.

Off the water, growing calmer... aggressively darker...

CUT TO:

A BLEAK HORIZON - LATER

The sun's well set. Only glass-like fragments of some yellows and orange-cream remain.

ON NANCY

Now shivering from the falling temps. Huddles herself in the wind. Reacts to SNAPS in the water. Too dark now to scan.

She stares up at that pathetic little buoy light.

A small idea forms.

She fights a rash of pain, stumbling up on one leg. Reaches for the RED GLOWING BULB, encased in thick glass.

Gets both hands on the encasement, checking for any loose ends. Feels the screws.

Another SNAP in the water.

Nancy pulls a barrette from her wet hair. Just flat enough on the bent tip to be managed as a:

MAKESHIFT SCREWDRIVER - NEXT MOMENT

Fitting into the groove. Turning hard. Finally loosens a small bolt.

Nancy, working quickly, carefully.

Trembling HAND continues to turn the screw loose. Finally has enough leverage to unwind the rest of it by hand.

MOMENTS LATER

Three screws removed.

Nancy puts the barrette between her teeth, using both hands to separate the LIGHT SCONE from the bulb.

NANCY
(hushed whisper)
C'mon.

Fights it like pulling a tooth. She nearly screams, finally pulling it loose from the BULB. Momentum kicks back:

SENDING HER PLUNGING INTO THE OCEAN

UNDERWATER, ALL DARK AND SILENT

Foam of red as her mangled leg burns from the salt water.

THE LIGHT SCONE, heavy glass, nearly slips into the dark void.

Nancy clumsily grabs for it. Holds it like a tucked football, using her one good leg and free arm to propel her:

BACK TO SURFACE

Gasps air. Clumsily, violently clutches back for the buoy.

DORSAL FIN appears in the dark, reflecting in the red bulb light.

Nancy hears the razor incision of water as the vicious killer roars up to her.

She grabs the rusty little maintenance ladder, climbing back onboard.

BANGS her gouged leg on the heavy metal. SCREAMS, pulling herself up as two tons pass right beneath her.

Rocks the entire buoy.

Nancy gets back on the small roost. Angles the glass scone against the glowing bulb.

Now has a REFLECTOR OF LIGHT.

SHINES it on the dark water. Nothing. Another angle.

A GIANT BLACK EYE AND WHITE TEETH

Nancy SCREAMS as it descends back into the dark water.

Goes for another angle.

Can't spot it anymore.

Crashes back against the rocking buoy. Gauges her bad leg. Reflects light on it. Now turning a sickly blue.

Nancy coughs, tears streaming.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Calm down.

(beat, angry with herself)

GIRL, STOP CRYING.

And she does. Wipes her face clean. Moves her body half-way around the buoy to face the:

OPEN OCEAN

Moon's now taking its night shift in the growing dark. Nancy absorbs the far-off horizon where she can barely spot it:

INTERNATIONAL CARGO SHIP. At least ten miles out. Already too far to see anything.

But it puts the idea in Nancy's head.

She holds the light scone up to the BULB.

Winks it back and forth, creating a blinking red glow on the water. Reflects across her face.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 Like you even know this shit.

Almost chuckles.

Terrified, but still in some type of control.

Holds the glass saucer up again.

Gives it two quick passes across the bulb. One slow pass.

Light flashes reflect on the water and horizon.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Help.

Does it again. Faster, more assured. Nancy watches the dark a moment more. Puts down the glass scone.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 Wait for the next one. Wait for the next one.

LONG SHOT

NANCY'S DARK FORM ON THE LONE BUOY

A glowing beckon of red in ink-black water. Off a sinister lapping of waves...

Beat.

CUT TO:

NANCY'S GROGGY FACE FILLING FRAME - NIGHT

Paler now. Succumbing to the loss of blood, weak body. Fights the sleep as her eyes begin to close, wink out.

CHIME of the automated bell sounds off.

Nancy, listless, ready to crash.

CHIMES again.

Distant Euro rave sounds off.

Nancy stirs. For a moment, seems like a dream.

Music grows louder, but still distant.

Nancy's eyes dart open. Snaps alert. Can barely see the distant, twinkling white lights of a CRUISE SHIP.

Club Med set. Far off on the outer bank.

She fumbles the light scone, putting it to the BULB. Fans it back and forth to make those flashes.

Ship keeps moving on, either too far or faint to register.

NANCY

C'mon -- oh, God, please.

Does it again. Frantic, more aggressive.

The ship continues its frivolous journey.

Nancy tries again. Furious, in pain.

Beat.

A RESPONSE. Two blinks back.

Nancy reacts, bight-eyed.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Yes, yes. HELP.

She goes to signal again. BIG ROCKING from a wave. Nancy strikes her head, dropping the scone saucer.

NANCY (CONT'D)

NO.

It hits the water, plunging into watery depths. Can't be recovered. Gone.

The SHIP signals again, for confirmation.

Nancy violently swings her hands up to the RED BULB.

Can't reach for a full flag.

Fingers barely send a flash on the water. Won't reflect off 20 yards.

THE DISTANT SHIP signals a final time.

NANCY (CONT'D)
HELP. HELP ME.

Beat.

Ship's running lights FADE OUT. Cheesy euro-glitter taking its place again. Continues into deep ocean --

NANCY (CONT'D)
No. NO.

-- disappears into the darkness.

HARD ON NANCY

Eyes closing. Taking deep breaths. Endures another BANG from the waves.

And SCREAMS.

CUT TO BLACK

Long beat.

UP FROM BLACK:

RAIN POURING DOWN HARD

Loud and heavy.

OCEAN - NIGHT

NANCY, DRENCHED IN IT.

Still hasn't fallen asleep. Braces as another cold WAVE strikes the buoy. Breathes heavy, deeply.

Her HANDS now chaffed and red from clinging to the thin, wet roost. Has to time the rocking of the buoy.

Constantly searching for new places in the rafter grating to stick her fingers in.

SCREAMS as another WAVE strikes. Can't hear the scream over the waves and flash downpour.

Tries to see the shore through the darkness and heavy night surf. Nearly invisible.

LONG SHOT - THE BUOY

Just a piece of candy cane in the dark surge. Consumed in the rain band.

FADE OUT.

Beat. Total silence.

The sound of creaking...

NANCY IN A FERRIS WHEEL CAR - NIGHT

Surfer parka and jeans. Observing the glitter of an unseen carnival as the wheel rotates back to the top.

Flashing bulbs and shadows dance across her face as the car swoops down, starting its fast journey back to the top.

Nancy turns into an unseen FORM sitting beside her. The eerily blurred form of her mother.

Frail, cancer-ridden, passed on.

Nancy takes her hand as their car follows the rest, heading back for the top.

She reacts to the night breeze, the new chill.

The car abruptly STOPS at the high point. Nancy looks back at her mother, no longer there.

Something sad and haunted in her face. As if already knowing it. Stares at her bloody leg, ripped open from the attack.

Realizes she's the only one on the lonely Ferris wheel. Cart creaking like buoy chains.

Trapped at the top amid a desolate carnival.

Off surly thunder...

CUT TO:

NANCY'S SLEEPING FACE FILLING FRAME

Trembling in the cold morning wind. Crashed out on the small buoy roost.

Having fallen back asleep, shivering.

Another crackle of thunder.

Groggily stirs her awake. Twitches. Rubs tired eyes. Staring into:

A DARK MORNING SKY

Tinges of eerie red. More beckoning storm clouds. A formidable squall approaching.

Lightning flashes streak the horizon like erratic carnival glitter.

Nancy lifts her head, coughing out pain and sleep. Pulls herself up, carefully not to rock the buoy.

Shivering like hell. Hypo's set in.

Shaking wrist holds up her WATCH: 7:20 AM.

Stares out into the OCEAN. Heavy bands of rain on the ghostly horizon. Like dark, thick curtain sheets. Drifting closer.

Nancy swallows a breath. Turns around back to the SHORELINE.

No one and nothing. She feels her throat. Realizes how thirsty she is.

Drip-drops of rain on the buoy metal remain from that passing night storm.

She moves her head under it, catching the drops. Begins licking the rusty metal for more.

Drinks it in, spitting out the corrosion.

Coughs hard, almost gags. Closes her eyes.

Crisp cry of GULLS.

Nancy reacts, turning to the sound. GULLS huddled together in the deep. Close to the whale carnage.

Seem undeterred by any intruders. Nancy thinks about that. Reading the narrative.

NANCY
(a whisper)
Are you gone?

The ocean keeps its silence.

Crisp waves rocking against the buoy. An eerie song of creaking metal and under-chain.

Nancy spots a small band of ROCKS about 30 yards away. A reef spot with low tide.

*SURFER 1 (V.O.)
Rocks right there, so watch out. Low
tide, becomes island. Some nasty fire
coral.*

Nancy absorbs the reminder. Has to take a beat before staring down at her LEG. Pussing and blue with some caked-on blood.

Incredibly, the rash-guard tourniquet's still holding up.

She struggles to turn it a little. Fights to move one toe. Succeeds.

Keeps pressure on her body, urinating out of her bikini. Feels the burn as it slips down her thigh. Mixes with the big run-off of blood from her leg.

A small, painful victory.

New cry of gull.

Nancy spots a GREY GULL in the sky, searching for a new scavenge. Pilots the incoming storm thermals with excellence.

Nancy, silently impressed.

The gull, as if piqued by her interest, cries again. Almost to her alone.

Nancy manages a faint grin.

NANCY
I'm calling you Sid.

The gull, "Sid" hovers in place. Using the thermal winds as a brace mechanism.

Nancy watches, quietly impressed. A distraction from the pain.

The gull. Suddenly darts down for his feed.

Swooping... all the way down...

PLUNGING INTO WATER RIGHT BESIDE HER SURFBOARD.

Board must have been pulled back by low tide. Floating, creaking in the water between the buoy and rock island.

She looks back around. Gulls don't seem worried.

Nancy winces, feeling part of her leg. Becoming calcified, worse by the hour. She feels another wash of nausea. Succumbing to extreme blood loss.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Can't stay here. Gonna bleed out.
You're gonna bleed to death, Nance. Have
to get to shore.

NEW ANGLE

Nancy steels herself.

FOLLOWING her as she pushes herself along the small roost. Takes a deep breath, staring down into dark water.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Gonna go deep. Gonna sting like a bitch,
but we know that. See the color blue.
Lots of blue. Just work our way back up.
Hold our breath, Nance -- work back up.

Nancy nods to assure herself. Takes a deep breath.
Closes eyes.

AND PLUNGES UNDERWATER

SCREAMS from the sting of salt. Scream is just a blur in the depth. Quickly pumps arms, propelling herself upwards in the dark...

BACK ONTO SURFACE

With hushed, manic breath, she begins a steady and smart stroke. Carefully not to splash too much.

FOLLOWING HAND-HELD every gut-wrenching, battered stroke. We're right with her in the watery tomb. The silence.

GULLS screech close-by. No shark, just a pack fight.

She hones in on SID. Swimming to himself, close by her board.

Nancy keeps the strokes going. Has to cough out the pain.

Sid, bobbing up and down in the growing tides. Thunder ripples in the distance.

CLOSE ON NANCY

Smoothing out her strokes. LIGHTNING FLASHES filling the background. Now ten yards from the surfboard and --

THE GULL PACK

Suddenly SCATTERS. A few are pulled underwater. Water snapping like whip cracks and --

NANCY

Sees it from out of the corner of her eye. Begins whimpering, staggering. Keeping the stroke going.

SID

Hasn't moved. Matches his flock's cries.

NANCY

Now yards from the board as it crackles and smacks on passing waves.

One washes over us as we SEE the underwater depths for only a moment. Acres of sharp reef. Like hiding corners for a killer.

Passes back over, taking note of Nancy's scared but resilient eyes.

Sid, still bobbing there. Unfettered by Nancy as she latches onto the surfboard, throwing herself on its face.

Begins a hard paddle as that ENORMOUS DORSAL FIN pushes out of water. Now ten yards behind her. Slips back into dark depths.

Nancy spots the trail of blood left from her wounded leg. Spots Sid still bobbing there in the water.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Get away! Shoo! Go!

Sid cries again. Starts to flap up.

THE FORM LUNGES FROM BELOW

Nearly takes the gull down, RIPPING a wing.

NANCY (CONT'D)

NO.

The gull cries, flying haphazardly into the dark sky. Like Nancy, using every inch of strength to work distance from their killer.

Nancy can't make the drift to get her clear. Starts for that small outcrop of ROCK ISLAND, now visible in the low tide.

Hyperventilating, shivering hard. Two more big arm paddles --

AS VICIOUS TEETH SNAP OUT FROM WATER

Nancy SCREAMS, falling off the board. It instantly SNAPS in two as the shark fights for her body.

Momentarily blocked by the severed board.

WE'RE RIGHT WITH NANCY

Fights the brutal currents. Stares ahead at:

Sid crashing onto the rock island. Crying, as if urging her on and --

NANCY

Somehow inspired by the bird.

Two fragile creatures in the same horrible limbo. Strokes harder as the SHARK'S BLURRED FORM spears through the currents, tracking the blood.

Nancy SCREAMS to give herself the final push. SLAMS onto the rock outcrop, feeling the craggy coral beneath her.

Foot passes over some stinging FIRE CORAL.

She screams, curses under her breath, throwing herself onto the wet rock.

In BG, the DORSAL FIN slips back into darkness.

She collapses onto the middle of the rock island, immediately hugging her badly-stung foot. Glimmers like a 3rd-degree burn.

She turns around, spotting that MAMMOTH FORM submerge. BIG TAIL kicks out, spraying water in its wake.

Nancy, half-crazed, pumped on adrenaline.

NANCY (CONT'D)

FUCK YOU.

Coughs, nearly throwing up again. Catches the pained, but curious eyes of Sid. Flapping around with a broken wing on the edge of the rock bed.

The only thing Nancy can do is manage a damaged smile.

NANCY (CONT'D)

(hoarse, breathless)

We showed him, right?

Sid just stares back. Blinking slowly. Confused, in pain.

Nancy swallows a breath. Extends a hand.

The gull instinctively draws back. Too close to the water.

NANCY (CONT'D)

No. Stay with me. Sid. Stay with me.

Sid cries for his flock. They're gone into the sky. A scatter of blood and feathers lap the water. Moratorium to the less fortunate.

Nancy feels his fear and confusion. Takes another breath.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Hey.

(beat)

We're gonna make it. Sid and Nancy, together again.

The bird barely glances her way. Still crying into the wind. Flaps again, but it's painful and clumsy.

Nancy notices the small blood trail from the shark's flash bite. Drags herself a few feet toward the animal.

It waddles around, but doesn't run.

Nancy finds a small, dead crab in one of the crags. Picks it out, throwing it to the gull.

He ignores it for a moment. Then quickly attacks. Devours it in one gulp.

NANCY (CONT'D)

That good, huh.

The gull ruffles itself as thunder ripples across the sky.

Nancy takes note of the storm growing closer.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Another one coming. Squall.

Sid blinks slowly, working through the pain. Nancy puts an arm out, finding another piece of crab. Chucks it to him.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Might have to -- batten down the hatches.

Gull looks at her with passivity. Cries like he wants more crab.

Nancy shakes her head, compassionate.

NANCY (CONT'D)

No mas, mi amigo. When we get back to shore, the clambake's on me.

Thinks about that. Can't help but break a sad laugh.

NANCY (CONT'D)

The hell am I saying? I'm fucking broke, Sid. Between school and this trip.

Laughs again through the pain. Coughs. Listens to the distant ripple of thunder.

Stares at the shore, some 180 yards away. Frustratingly close but a million miles away.

LONG SHOT

The tiny rock island with its two stranded creatures. Off the slow, unsettling purr of thunder...

ROCK ISLAND - LATER

Nancy's drifted to sleep again. Fat drops of rain tap at her skin.

She groggily pulls herself out of a draining sleep. Spots Sid, plumped over near her. Roosting in his pain.

Nancy can barely hear some distant voices. Makes an effort to turn around, staring back at SHORE.

Where those TWO SURFERS have returned into the water. A mere 100 yards. Fighting the new storm currents.

Nancy immediately shakes her head no. Tries to call out. Winces in the pain.

NANCY

-- No --

Sid twitches at her voice. Flaps his injured wing and --

THE TWO SURFERS

Still haven't spotted her. One records his friend on that Go Pro and --

NANCY

Drags herself among the rocks as the rain begins to fall faster, harder. Her FOOT covered in red sting boils from the fire coral.

NANCY (CONT'D)

(louder)

Get out. Get out of the water.

(screams)

GET OUT OF THE WATER.

SURFER 1 reacts. Turns to the deep. Suddenly spots her on the small rock island.

NANCY (CONT'D)

GET OUT.

Surfer 2's just caught a wave. Closer to shore now than his friend.

SURFER 1

(distant)

Hola.

NANCY

(struggling over the rain and surf)

SHARK.

They may or may not have heard it. Nancy watches them signal to one another.

Surfer 1 turns back to her. Shouts through the wind:

SURFER 1

HOLD ON, OKAY.

Nancy tries to shout back. Can't. Voice cracked, drained. Shakes her head no.

LONG SHOT - THE MID-SECTION

Surfer 2 breaks away, paddling back for shore as Surfer 1 starts for Nancy and the deep outside.

NANCY
NO, GET HELP.

Surfer 1 continues a firm paddle. Either doesn't understand or thinks it's some pathetic little thresher shark.

Hero going to save the girl and --

NANCY

Shaking her head, equal parts angry and grateful at his attempt.

NANCY (CONT'D)
No, get out of the water.

Surfer 1 climbs over a big wave, smacking back on the surface. He's close. Turns around the check on his friend --

SURFER 2

Now in the mid-break, on his way into shore and --

SID

Flaps his wing. Cries, as if warning with Nancy and --

SURFER 1

Now a mere 15 yards from the rock island.

Nancy summons the strength to half-stand. Puts two arms up to make a MASSIVE DORSAL FIN.

Surfer 1 just stops. Realizes she's signaling a huge fucking shark.

Thunder ripples. More rain falls in stinging sheets.

Surfer 1 looks back to the shore.

HIS FRIEND HAS COMPLETELY VANISHED

Abandoned surfboard tumbles in the white foam, gravitating back to shore.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(horrified)

No.

Surfer 1, Go-Pro helmet on. Spots the wild snapping of chum fish where the young man had vanished.

NANCY (CONT'D)
PADDLE.

Surfer 1 powers back into formation, scrambling for the rock island. Shouts something, pointing to the BUOY.

Nancy can't make it out.

WAVE passes over FRAME, momentarily eclipsing visibility.

Passes again, revealing the young man's scared face. Closer than ever.

Every surfer muscle in those lean arms working. 8 YARDS from the rock island.

Another WAVE passes, cutting off Nancy's visibility.

He's now 5 yards.

Third WAVE rips past FRAME, obscuring Nancy's view. Jagged SCREAM as the wave smooths over --

REVEALING AN OVERTURNED SURFBOARD

HARD ON NANCY

Trembling, rain pouring down her face.

No sign of Surfer 1.

Sid, slow-blinking. Flapping his injured wing in tedium and --

NANCY

Taking a deep breath. EYES still scanning, hoping.

CHIME sounds off from the old buoy.

A wave smacks into the rock island.

Beat.

AND THE SURFER SCREAMS OUT OF THE WATER

Bloody and white with shock, latching desperate hands onto the jagged coral.

Nancy reaches out. They lock HANDS.

He SCREAMS amid a buzzsaw of water and blood.

In the horror of a shark attack, we rarely FRAME the face of the victim.

But that's just what we do. HIS HORRIFIED EYES telegraph every piece of torn flesh, bone. Eye capillaries burst. What doctors term *adrenaline crack* and --

NANCY

Has no words to express the horror. Just holding on to the poor kid's hand. The Go-Pro helmet cam capturing her terrified face.

NANCY (CONT'D)

OH, GOD.

The Young Man, so shocked with adrenaline. Hasn't bothered to look down at his torso, severed from the rest of his body.

Nancy SCREAMS as the creature viciously pulls the rest of him into the deep.

NANCY (CONT'D)

NO. NO.

The WATER snaps and foams for another sickening moment. BIG WAVES crashing onto the rock island.

When they pass, the deep water is silent once again. Just a slight foam of red dissipating in the stormy surge.

CLOSE ON NANCY

Shaking. Face pressed against the wet rock basin. Whispers something. Maybe a prayer to the dead. Eyes tearing up.

LIGHTNING STREAKS light up the morning sky. Huge wave CRACKS against the rocks.

Sid cries. Clumsily bats his wing around, trying to keep leverage.

Another crash of water on the rocks as the storm system enters. Flood of water pours over the inlay, nearly taking Sid with it.

Nancy reaches out, grabbing hold of the bird. Shelters it from the next crash of water on rock.

Sid cries again, drenched in the growing downpour.

Nancy staggers, holding onto the rock outcrop. Presses her hand down on the bird to keep it in place.

Shuts her eyes, bracing for the next water strike. Wave SMASHES into rock.

Nancy SCREAMS, but it's drowned out in the heavy rain and wind.

THE BUOY

Just a small sentinel lost in the storm. 40 yards away and --

NANCY

Staring back into the dark water. Horrified eyes now spot bits and pieces of bodies floating on the turbulent surface.

Another WAVE hits, spraying liquid mortar over the rock island.

In the low tide, it's still above water but vulnerable in the crashing surf.

Nancy coughs out salt water, holding onto Sid. Stares at those grim, human remains drifting out with the storm currents.

Then. Spots it at the edge of the rock: THE SURFER'S GO-PRO HELMET. Camera still attached. Bobbing up and down on the restless water.

Nancy, terrified eyes, watching as a NEW WAVE comes in. Sweeps up the helmet.

Nancy braces for impact as the wave pounds into the rock island. Discharges the helmet, smashing onto the rocks beside her:

THE DECAPITATED HEAD OF THE SURFER STILL IN THE HELMET

SLAM TO BLACK

Beat. Dead quiet.

NANCY'S FACE FILLING FRAME

Crashed out upon the sharp rocks. Opens her eyes. Pushes wet hair from her face. Smiles small at:

HER MOTHER, LYING BESIDE HER

Body frail and thin. Product of cancer. They stare into each other with only moments between them.

Nancy's mother gently takes her hand. Boney fingers grasping her daughter's. Tries to speak. Saltwater pours from the woman's dry lips.

Tear slips from Nancy's eye. Horrified for her mother.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(breathless, torn apart)

Mom.

Her mother swallows a painful breath. Finally mutters it:

MOTHER
Drowning.

BACK ON NANCY

SUBMERGED DEEP, DEEP UNDERWATER

Hair floating around her terrified face. Choking in the depths.

Has to finally open her mouth as death pours in. Eyes sink in pain and pressure --

SMASH TO:

NANCY'S DROWNING FACE

Coming awake, completely submerged.

She gags, flailing her arms. Forgot where she is for a moment. Pulls herself up --

OUT OF A SHALLOW TIDAL POOL

ROCK ISLAND - DAY

The storm, still rippling in the distance. Having passed.

Nancy staggers, coughing out more water. Realizes she fell asleep again from blood loss, was lying on the rocks when the tide began to rise.

NEW ANGLE

Sid, nesting on the center of the small island, its highest point. But water quickly developing around it.

Nancy pulls herself out of the growing tidal pool.

The sea very quickly beginning to reclaim their temporary sanctuary.

She drags her body to the island's center.

Sid, twitching in slight pain. Nancy can see the blood trail from his broken wing.

Thunder echoes in the distance.

Nancy scans the water. The beach. No one and nothing.

She swallows a breath. Says it in a dry, painful whisper:

NANCY

High tide.

Sid blinks. Ruffles his feathers, shivering in pain.

Nancy winces as the water pours over her body. Gently extends a hand to inspect his wing.

Sid flaps ugly. She puts a hand out.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 Hey, shhh. It's okay. I'm a nurse.
 (thinks about it)
 I mean, once I graduate. If I graduate.

Sid, unmoved. Twitches again.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 (a whisper)
 Shhhh.

She gently touches his wing. Pets it. Then lifts it up. Under a thick of feathers, half the bird's lower body is ripped apart.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 (humane)
 Sid.

Puts a hand over her face.

The bird breathes low and slow. No longer able to cry out.

Nancy looks down at her own wound.

The leg appears dramatically worse. Half the makeshift tourniquet now drenched in water and blood. Entire lower half is a grotesque blue.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 (dry, hoarse)
 Blue's not good, Sid.

More water pouring over the tiny island as a new tide comes in.

Then. Sound of hard plastic scraping rock.

Nancy turns to the sound: THE GO-PRO HELMET. Still with us. Trapped by one of the fatter rocks.

Nancy closes her eyes at the horror. Face is a mixture of fear and rage. Hates herself for not having been able to save them.

Opens her eyes again. Gently runs a hand over the trembling bird. Steels herself.

NANCY (CONT'D)

(a whisper)

Camera.

She moves back into the water surge rushing over the ugly rock. Using the jagged rocks like a climber uses crags.

More water pouring over her as she nears that FAT ROCK where the helmet's wedged in.

Teeters around as a wash of water pours around.

Nancy drags another two feet forward. Presses down as more water floods. Moves her hand to a new crag. FIRE CORAL.

She SCREAMS. Pulls her hand away, checking the slight burn. Forgets the pain for a moment, working out another path --

NOW CLOSE TO THAT HELMET

Trapped in the rock right before a deep, NATURAL TRENCH. Where fast water gushes through the rock.

Water washing over Nancy's face as she reaches out, grabbing onto a new crag. Pulls with effort, dragging the rest of her body.

There's a big underwater trench of tidal water between her and the half-submerged rock. The HELMET wedged against it.

Nancy looks around her, spotting only growing high tide and the buoy. No sign of it.

She takes a deep breath --

GOING UNDERWATER INTO THE TRENCH.

Floating in space as she swims across the four-yard span, reaching up and grabbing the HELMET.

Surfaces for only a moment as the tidal surge is fast and wicked in the rocky trench. Takes another fat breath --

SUBMERGING UNDERWATER

Loud wind and wave crashes disappear again, replaced by the whirl of restless tidal surge coming through the channel.

Nancy's face, bloated from breath. Squirms in the saltwater sting. Holding the helmet.

THE SURFER'S EYES staring back. Hair floating in dark space around the helmet.

Nancy holds her breath, struggling to unlatch the helmet strap.

Finally gets it. Has to use hands to dig, dig into the cold flesh, finally releasing the head from the helmet.

It falls into the watery trench, setting a crucifix chain free. She grabs for it before it can descend.

Turns back around --

INTO THE ENORMOUS JAWS OF THE SHARK

SCREAMS as its TEETH SNAP. Fighting to get passage through the thin trench.

NANCY falls back onto the higher rock as its MASSIVE FORM hugs the side of the rock island.

CLIMBS OUT OF THE TRENCH

Back on the craggy rock. Gasping breaths as she spots the shark's IMMENSE BODY.

It SLAMS against some of that FIRE CORAL.

Instantly JOLTS from the sting. Violently snaps around like a two-ton mountain lion.

HARD ON NANCY

Learning something big. Watches as its BIG DORSAL FIN turns hard, snaking back into the deeper water.

She winces at the new fire coral sting in her hand and foot. Starts back for the:

HIGHEST POINT

Now really treading water. Stumbles through the crags, enduring the new lacerations to her skin. SURF pouring over her bruised body.

Sid, perched on a wet rock at the top. Head snug deeply into its hind feathers.

Nancy feels her way up to the high point, clutching the camera. Checks the camera's PLAYBACK.

Eyes sharpen in fear at the:

PLAYBACK: SURFER'S POV

Getting sucked back into the depths. Quick CUTS of the shark as it tears into flesh and bone.

Tear burns down Nancy's face, watching the horror transpire.

ON PLAYBACK:

Hands grappling, last moments of life before TEETH gnash FRAME.

We're now floating, released of body and limb.

As the helmet rises up to surface, we SEE the thing for what it really is:

MASSIVE 28-FOOT GREAT WHITE.

Devouring the last of the poor man as --

CAMERA BOBS UP TO SURFACE

Still RECORDING. Catching a partial of the rock island and Nancy on its edge.

BACK ON NANCY

Lowers the camera. Huffing, exhausted and nearly spent. Stares back into the dark waters, now advancing from the high tide.

HALF HER BODY fully submerged. Can barely sustain a few more moments. Stares down at the camera.

Knows what she has to do.

NEXT CUT - GO-PRO'S POV

FRAMING NANCY in selfie mode. Her final testament.

NANCY (CONT'D)

This is Nancy Adams of Galveston, Texas. I'm -- I'm trapped on a rock island just off a beach 20 miles north of (BLEEPED OUT). There's a -- there's a shark. And it's already killed at least three people. My leg, my leg is badly bitten and torn. It's getting worse, and unless I can cauterize it or -- or amputate, I can only swim so far, I can't -- I can't make it to shore. If anyone finds this, please. Get this to my family.

(thinks about it)

I don't know what else to say, I -- I'm bleeding out. I've never felt so much pressure in my leg and head. The next time --

(wipes tears from her eyes)

Oh, God, the next time I pass out, I don't think I'll wake up. I just want, I want to let you know, David -- I love you so much.

(beat, laughs under tears)

I hate to stroke your ego, but you're such a wonderful brother. Oh, God. And I miss Mom. I want her here with me, I'm so alone. David. I'm so alone.

(thinks about it)

I remember what you told me. When we were kids. It's with me. Here. I'll try, David. But I'm scared. I've never been so scared. I just. I just want to see you and Kay again.

(breaking apart)

I want to hold and kiss little Marie, Oh God. She smells so good, David. She's so beautiful.

Breathes hard, fighting the new winds and water spray. Closes her eyes for a moment. Stares back into FRAME.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Tell her. Tell her about the pier. The Ferris wheel. When you were there with me. When you made sure I was okay. You're such a good brother, David.

(MORE)

NANCY (CONT'D)

I love you.
 (nods, committed)
 Love you.

Wipes the final tears away. Confused. Drunk off blood loss.

NANCY (CONT'D)

I guess that's all. There's other things, but I don't have time. Hurts to swallow. To breathe. There's always other things. I can't even remember. I. I just love you all. That's enough to say... that I love you.
 (beat)
 Good bye.

She shuts it off. CAMERA BLACKS OUT.

ON NANCY

Coughs from a new bout of pain. Looks down at her waist. WATERLINE AGGRESSIVELY RISING.

She stares out to the ocean, now having claimed 85 percent of the rock island.

A big SWELL on the rise.

Nancy takes a deep breath to summon the strength. Gonna throw it into the surf like the message in a bottle.

Wave BREAKS on submerged coral.

She throws the CAMERA into the ocean as the white-foamed swell takes it. Sends it into the mid-break and possibly to shore.

Nancy fights another rush of water. Clings to the rocks. Swallows a breath, turning back to Sid with a small smile.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Hey. Break time's over-

Her smile suddenly drains.

SID

Lies on his side. Head and neck curved over in quiet death. Blood running onto rock.

Beat.

Nancy's optimism deteriorates, putting a hand over her mouth.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(broken)

Sid.

She runs a trembling hand over its wilted feathers. Breaking apart again.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Sid, please don't leave me.

Wind roars across its body, wilding the feathers like wheat in a field.

CLOSE ON NANCY

Eyes wet. Gently moves in, kissing the bird's lifeless body.

NEXT MOMENT

Nancy, her back set against the submerged rock peak. Holds the bird in her arms.

Breathes deep and heavy.

Stares at the small run of blood from her leg tourniquet, seeping into the compounding water.

She looks back to the SHORE. Barely visible now from the pounding surf.

WAVE crashes against her, nearly sending her off the last bit of rock.

She latches onto the crags, freeing Sid into the sea.

Clutches the rock, staring at the bird's small form, slipping away into the surge.

Lost forever.

Given back to the sea.

NANCY'S EYES

Some weird state of zen. Seeing beyond.

In a roar of new surf and accumulating water, she appears immune. Accepting of death.

A vast silence overtakes. A ringing of the ear.

The solitary beats of her heart.

She scans the BUOY. Bumping around in the high tide.

A LARGE SCHOOL OF MAN-O-WAR have swept in with natural residual.

Hundreds upon hundreds.

Fat and puffy purple balloons reflecting in the eerie afterglow of the storm. Extending to the buoy.

An image haunting, beautiful, final.

DORSAL FIN suddenly cracks out of the water, slapping against the vanishing rock island.

UNDERWATER

Its velvety surreal form, fights to get over the rock barrier that is quickly submerging.

BACK ON NANCY

Frozen, dying from blood loss. Watches the fin retreat once again. Tail SNAPPING over wave.

The turbulent waterline now having reached her chest.

In moments, will be overhead and the shark shall have its feed.

Nancy looks up to the sky. In the dark storm, she sees a crack of daylight. A hint of light shining down on deep water.

Shining near the buoy.

CLOSE ON HER EYES

Something small and significant forming.

FLASH TO:

THE SURFER IN THE WATER

Shouting something to her moments before his death.
Can't hear him in the heavy surge.

BACK ON NANCY

Absorbing the memory. Trying to put any clue together.

FLASH TO: THE SURFER

Shouting again. Pointing to the buoy.

BACK ON NANCY

Thinks about it. Painstakingly turns around, trying to
put a fix on:

THE BUOY. Tossing around in the heavy surge. The light
fades as new clouds roll in.

But Nancy's quietly struck with some semblance of
revelation.

Was he trying to communicate something more than just a
place to go?

NANCY (CONT'D)

(a whisper)

Something there? On the buoy?

Stumbles a little to get a better look. Can't see any
compartment on the steel hulk. Too far.

Has to brave the swim or die here and now.

She looks back to the ocean. Can no longer see the
shark.

Maybe submerged. Deep.

Nancy thinks about the choice. There is no choice. Try
or die.

Regards the big school of Man-O-War between her and the
buoy.

Mutters something to herself. Becomes lyrical, surreal in this horror.

As we realize she's humming that Patsy Cline. Using it to steel herself for the impossible.

Throws the surfer's crucifix around her neck. Braces herself for the next big wave to hit the rock crop.

Digs cut and worn FINGERS into the crags.

Wave SLAMS the high point. HUGE SPRAY.

Nancy nearly sustains the impact, barely able to cling on. Hums louder, more defiant. Prepping herself for the big one.

Spots it coming right off the deep -- HUGE SWELL.

Nancy hums a final bar, taking a deep breath. Will be thrown off the rocks. Will hurt.

The wave forms.

Nancy, torso submerged. Swallowed in its dark shadow.

The WAVE STRIKES.

DROWNING THE ISLAND WHOLE

UNDERWATER

Nancy's bounced around, rolling with the surf, ducking the sharp reef edges. Uses every ounce of lingering strength to pull herself back up --

ONTO SURFACE

As we FOLLOW her through the treacherous high waves.

Thick, lumpy and fat. Pumping her arms to increase speed, never looking back.

(For the purposes of this sequence, there are no CUTS. This is one long, sustained SHOT)

Moves with a dire energy, pushing herself further into the deeper waters and that buoy now thirty yards out.

As we MOVE AROUND her. Spotting what she can not:

THE ENORMOUS DORSAL FIN.

Pushing out of the ocean waters, cutting through the slap of waves.

A steady freight train heading for:

NANCY

As she strokes like a drowning dog. Working her way into that strange, surreal body of MAN-O-WAR. An open mine field.

Winces and cries out as their poison tentacles make contact with skin.

WE MOVE UNDERWATER

Seeing them wrap and flow around her body. In the thousands.

RETURNING TO SURFACE

Right with Nancy as she endures the horrible stings -- but she's not retreating from them either.

Pushing through the big, purple jellyfish bulbs.

Pausing at the halfway point between the rock island and buoy. Turns around.

Spotting the DORSAL FIN gravitating closer. 15 yards... ten...

Nancy, unmoved. Some kind of plan in motion.

And as a big, smooth wave passes over our FRAME, Nancy DESCENDS...

GOING UNDERWATER

We're right with her in this dark dream of ocean and tentacle. Long, iridescent piano wire dangling into black depths.

Nancy descends deeper, deeper, expending oxygen to make herself sink. And we sink, too.

CLOSE TO HER FACE as the tentacles lash her skin. But she doesn't wince. Instead, surrounds herself with them.

Staring into the ABSOLUTE DARKNESS.

Bits of eerie, sacred afterglow find their way into the depths, shimmering across that HUGE FORM now swimming into view.

The SHARK. All muscle and marble blue. Pushing through the currents, right for her.

A relentless machine of teeth and gills. Black eyes reflecting the purple light off the Man-O-War.

Nancy, her body wrapped up in the mesh of tentacles. Floating in space as the shark roars toward her.

SUDDENLY SNAPS AWAY

Shocked by that sting of the Man-O-War. Abruptly shifts direction, looking for a new way in.

PAN BACK: TO NANCY

Tightly holding her breath. Covered in red rash from the stings.

But relishing the small, precious victory.

Watches as the shark is stung again.

Snaps at the big bed of jellyfish, treading back into the darkness. Will find a new route as:

NANCY

Pushing herself back up, through the dark web of Man-O-War. A weird, soft light drifts across her face as she strokes harder than she ever has --

RETURNING TO SURFACE

Gasps loud and painfully. Having used the jellyfish for cover, she clutch-swims for the BUOY, now a short but brutal 15 yards.

Working her way through the last of the Man-O-War as we PAN AROUND --

TO THE ENORMOUS FIN

Cutting back to surface. Now cleared of the jellyfish bed. Honing in on:

NANCY

Who doubles stroke, leaving a slim blood streak from her leg. Fighting, clawing for the buoy.

Waves comes up, obscuring FRAME. When it dissipates, the fin is gone --

BACK ON NANCY

Using a big wave to swoop her up to the buoy.

Goes under for a moment, LATCHING onto the ladder. Grabs it hard, pulling herself up --

JUST AS THE SHARK EXPLODES OUT OF WATER

Tears a chunk out of the ladder, ripping some of the skeletal metal from the bracket.

Nancy SCREAMS, dangling from the skinny auxiliary ladder.

Grabs back onto the buoy roost as the shark bites and gnaws for her injured leg. Frenzied by the blood.

Nancy clamors for the slippery railing, hoisting onto the roost just as the shark tears down the rest of the bloody ladder well.

Powers back into the depths as a wave passes just under.

(END OF NO-CUT SEQUENCE)

CUT TO:

OCEAN - LONG SHOT

Nancy. Back on the dreaded buoy, now surrounded in heavy white caps.

NEW ANGLE

Nancy watches that BIG DORSALS FIN roar by four feet below...

She gets a firmer grip on the roost, dragging herself around the metallic podium. Searching for anything that resembles something.

An emergency phone.

A compartment box or outline.

Water SNAPS under her as another big wave passes.

She continues to drag herself around the buoy. Suddenly spots it just under her steel roost:

COMPARTMENT OUTLINE. Barely visible and obscure in the rust.

NANCY
(panicked)
There.

She reaches down, underneath the roost to feel out the contours. Gets her hand around a latch. Has to really stretch to pull it open.

It's firmly snug from years of rust and calcination.

She pauses to think. Pulls the surfer's SILVER CRUCIFIX from around her neck. Fits it into the tight latch. Pushes hard.

Latch finally cracks open, but she drops the crucifix into the ocean.

BIG WAVE PASSES, spraying her face.

When it recedes, she returns to the COMPARTMENT.

Folds the creaky door open to reveal TWO INFLATABLES and a small Orion FLARE GUN.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(breathless)
Yes, yes.

Diligently pulls up the two inflatables.

Companct yellow lifevests with automatic inflate cords.

Goes back to retrieve the FLARE GUN. Has to really yank on the hanger to set it loose.

A WAVE passes under, forcing her patience. When it recedes, she attempts again.

Finally gets it, along with the small box of FLARES.

Wave begins to rise.

THE SHARK EXPLODES FROM WATER

Goes for her arm. Nancy SCREAMS. Drops the open box of flares into the dark water.

NANCY (CONT'D)

NO.

Shark lunges for her, SLAMMING its steel-blue nose against the metal roost.

Nancy scrambles back, snatching the flare gun before it can tumble off the roost. SCREAMS.

NANCY (CONT'D)

YOU FUCKER.

Shark SLAMS body against the buoy. Two animals at war.

Rocks it hard, nearly sending Nancy over.

Slaps back into ocean. Vanishing once again.

Nancy, hyperventilating. Sees a scattering of FLARES still bobbing on the choppy surface. Has to use the precious moment.

Digs her swollen foot into the roost like a vice clamp, BENDING DOWN.

She can die right here. SCREAMS to kill the fear as a WAVE sends the flares high.

And Nancy SNATCHES a few. Practically gym-bends back up, latching onto the roost.

Screams once more for the fuck of it.

Reacts to the new drops of wind rain. Endures another heavy wave passing.

She abruptly changes positioning, lying against the buoy and roost for support. Checks her hands.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Oh, God, please.

Hands open to reveal FIVE SMALL FLARES.

Nancy closes her eyes to think and endure a new bout of pain.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Five. Five little flares.

Opens her eyes, staring up into the dark sky. Rain getting worse. Visibility for shit.

Looks out to the horizon. Nothing but storm darkness.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(painful whisper)
Gonna be another. Gonna be another.

LONG SHOT

Nancy's small form, hunkered down on the roost. Staring off into the deep sea.

OCEAN - LATER

HEAVY SURF now pounding. The rock island totally submerged.

ON NANCY

Lying flatly on the metallic roost. Fighting every impulse not to pass out.

Numbness all over her body.

Knows she's dying. Will be gone in an hour or less.

Staring weakly into the distant rain on the horizon. An ugly, gun-metal gray.

She closes her eyes. Snaps back as another turbulent WAVE passing under.

Sees herself dead in the water. Torn limbs. Eyes staring back.

Succumbing to delirium brought on by extreme blood loss, hypothermia.

Nancy shows little emotion.

Maybe because it's not real.

Maybe because it's so simple and disturbing, her fear hasn't caught up with the element of shock.

Instead, she stares down at her body with the half-interest of a child watching her face in water.

Her mangled body parts pass by as another wave crashes against the buoy.

She turns around, cowering before a new vision of her MOTHER.

Lying in death on the buoy roost. Fragile and thin in hospital nightgown. IV tubes dug into her skin. Still wears the catheter.

CLOSE ON NANCY'S FACE

Staring at her. Horrified, in turmoil.

NANCY

Mommy. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Beat.

The woman's grizzled FINGER enters FRAME. Runs down Nancy's face.

MOTHER (O.S.)

You weren't there. With the pain.

Nancy, hyperventilating. Shuts her eyes.

MOTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Pain all over.

NANCY

(voiceless)

You're not real.

MOTHER

Body ripped apart-

NANCY
YOU'RE NOT REAL.

WAVE slams into the buoy.

Nancy hangs on. Practically convulsing in fear and blood loss. Opens her eyes.

When she does, nothing's there.

The waves smooth back over.

Nancy, staggering. Breathes low and deep. Big, wide eyes. Fighting the brutal hallucinations. Faces the horizon.

Can barely spot a FREIGHTER about 5 miles off. Coming through the rain surge. Nancy blinks hard.

Wipes her eyes, making sure she's not deluded.

The ship, visible for only a few seconds in the distant storm sheen. Her only chance.

NANCY (CONT'D)
There. IT'S THERE.

Forces herself up, crashing against the buoy podium.

Shudders from the pain and cold, moving back around to face the deeper water.

NEXT MOMENT

Nancy, trembling hand, works to pull back the gun's bolt, loading the first flare. Extends it into the dark sky with both hands. FIRES.

A DUD ROUND. Snakes and pops into the ocean.

Curses the dud in a frantic whisper.

Fumbles to reset. Pull and load as a wave EXPLODES on the buoy. The ocean's getting dangerously higher.

Clicks the gun back into mode. The SHIP, appearing like a ghost in the distant cloud of rain.

Nancy aims the gun into the sky. FIRES.

Delivers a shot 400 yards into the rain. Pops and crackles, emitting an eerie red fire glow.

Nancy watches like a fireworks-starved kid on the 4th.

The burn or "nightfire" lingers for only a few seconds before it starts to dissipate.

ON THE HORIZON - THE SHIP

Not registering. Continuing its journey.

NANCY (CONT'D)

No.

The red trail is now just vapor in the rain.

The ship churns onward, too far to see the weak flare in the storm.

NANCY (CONT'D)

NO. GODDAMN IT.

BUOY'S ROCKED HARD

Nancy SCREAMS as it suddenly topples.

SHARK'S FORM ascends for only a moment, SLAMMING body against the buoy.

Nancy holds tightly, bracing for the next hit.

WAVE hits.

SHARK emerges, lashing out. Big teeth gnash at her.

Nancy FIRES a flare into its eye. Momentarily blazes, sending it back into the depths.

Nancy crashes back onto the buoy, now realizing it won't sustain. Checks her leg, grotesquely blue and covered in blood.

She looks back at the ship, just an apparition fading into vapor storm.

More rain lashing Nancy's face. Drowsy eyes. Eyes of defeat.

She turns around, taking a last glance at the lonely shore. No one and nothing.

The buoy now beginning to sink and drift from a snapped chain.

Nancy. About to turn away, possibly plunge into the high waters. Suddenly catches it out of the corner of her eye:

SOMETHING SMALL on the northern shore.

She wipes her face. Blurred vision barely spots the small form of a BOY. Local aura.

May have spotted her flare.

May have simply been there to fish.

He's got something in his hands, staring down at it.

Nancy, wild eyes. It's the Go-Pro cam. She tries to call out. Too tired and hoarse. Couldn't hear her anyway.

She slams her watch against the buoy for noise. Can't rise about the heavy wave surge.

ON THE DISTANT SHORE - THE BOY

Staring down into the camera. Checking out the playback. Understands enough to look up, trying to spot the submerged rock island.

NANCY (CONT'D)

No. Here. OVER HERE.

She fumbles the flare gun, FIRING a clumsy shot into the sky.

The Boy reacts to the fizzle. Turns toward the buoy.

Nancy SCREAMS, voice now broken.

The Boy definitely sees her. Not sure what to do.

NANCY (CONT'D)

HELP. GET HELP.

The Boy stands in dark silhouette a moment more.
Suddenly darts away. His small form vanishes into that
wall of jungle.

CLOSE ON NANCY

Whispers something. A prayer. Words to let her know
she's still alive.

Looks back at the SHORE. Desolate again.

More rain beginning to fan the sky.

Nancy checks her FLARE GUN. One more cartridge left.

Another BANG on the buoy. The entire manifold drowns
another foot into the ocean.

Eerie creak of warping metal. The shark's mangled the
underside.

Scary BUMP. Almost throws her in the water.

It's right below her. Destroying the last of the
undercarriage.

Nancy knows she won't survive this. Can't linger
anymore. Can't wait for a rescue.

Looks around like a person desperately trying to put some
equation together.

HARD ON HER EYES

Having initiated some final plan.

Quickly tears off a side strap of her bikini bottom,
using it as a makeshift lace.

Aggressively puts lace through the flare gun's trigger
hole, tying its ends into a knot. Throws the whole thing
over her hair and neck.

Now has a NECKLACE with FLARE GUN.

Grabs up the two unused INFLATABLES.

Another SHOCK of pressure. Rattles the whole buoy.

Nancy keeps focused, reaching down for the busted LADDER.

Has to really extend. Any moment, that fucker can explode out of the water and take off her arm.

She takes the chance. Has to. Pulling hard on the half-severed ladder.

SCREAMS for the final strength, yanking the rusty base free.

Almost loses it as another WAVE rocks the buoy.

Controlling the panic, Nancy begins to fasten the yellow inflatable straps around the ends of the ladder.

Tying into knots.

Gets one finished. Goes to the other.

Reacts to a strange moment of silence.

Ignores the horrific image of HERSELF, convulsing beside her. Body torn in two.

Turns away from it, catching a reflection HERSELF in the water. Still alive, drowning, decapitated from the rest of her body.

She turns away again, SCREAMING out the hallucinations.

The water has quieted.

The surf still restless, but no sign of the shark.

She looks back to the distant shore. The Boy is long gone. Was he even there?

She quickly starts to work the other inflatable around the opposite portion of ladder. Cuts herself on the rust.

Feeling numb, ready to die. Ripley in the ejection pod moments before the Alien teeth.

The buoy suddenly CHIMES.

Nancy looks up to the sky. Beginning to open up with more light. The storm nearly passed.

The Man-O-War pack has drifted out of the deep.

The buoy chimes once more.

Nancy ties the final knot --

JUST AS THE ENTIRE BUOY CRASHES TO ITS SIDE

Nancy SCREAMS as its undercarriage, freed from the chains, slams belly-up into the water.

Like a child clinging to a slippery log, Nancy scrambles to hold onto the upended roost.

SCREAMS as we REVEAL her injured LEG. Now caught in the metallic rafter. Can't get it out. Has to be pried out.

She can only move it down, not up.

The BIG DORSAL FIN explodes from the water, slicing through a heavy wave.

Like a demolition crew proud of its work, boasting that the whole thing is ready to come down and --

NANCY

No chances left. The BUOY is now slowly turning in the heavy surf like a funhouse barrel.

In moments, she will be fully submerged.

Drowned or torn apart.

Can't pull her mangled leg out from that buoy rafter guard.

CLOSE ON NANCY'S FACE

Trembling. More from rage and will to live.

Suddenly, horribly knows what she has to do. Closes her eyes. Mutters something to herself. Nods to convince herself.

This the human condition. Survival at any cost.

Opens her eyes.

Braces as the FIN passes on the other side.

Shark's vague body BANGS into the buoy, sending it further off course, into the deep tread.

Two tons of killing machine coming back around for:

NANCY

With body trembling, she holds onto the torn ladder with the tied-down inflatables.

Grinds her teeth, preparing for the flash pain.

Or better yet. Stuffs the rubber-coated gun butt of the flare into her mouth to protect her tongue from her reflex bite.

Steels herself for the moment. Thinking of a past and a future. Whispers it into the wind:

NANCY (CONT'D)

Mother. Help me.

Beat.

And as another wave passes, Nancy LOWERS HER CAUGHT LEG INTO THE WATER.

Clutches buoy. Swallows a breath.

A break of sunlight.

Nancy pulls on the inflatable cords, sending the two lifevests FULL OF COMPRESSED AIR.

YELLOW FLOATS tied to the ladder now resembling the surface of an Olympic skeleton sleigh --

NANCY'S JUST MADE A SURFABLE RAFT.

Chucks it into the water, grabbing the sinking buoy with both hands. Stares at her own reflection in the glowing bulb.

A reflection.

A moment of peace.

AS THE SHARK BURSTS OUT OF THE WATER

TEARS INTO NANCY'S LEG

She SCREAMS as skin and blood fill the water.

FRAMING IT ALL FROM THE BULB'S MYRIAD REFLECTION

Shark doesn't get the full bite at first. Tears more into her, using its 400lbs-per-muscle body to wrestle her down.

Nancy's nearly pulled out of her body as it finally TEARS OFF HER MANGLED LEG, but freeing her from the buoy.

Shark SLAMS back into the water as a big wave takes the whole buoy.

Nancy SCREAMS, falling into water, CRASHING onto the RAFT as the wave roars over.

Big surge propels her and the raft into the blood-drenched white foam.

With two good arms, she beats the crash and gets the raft into an ugly body-boarding ride.

Nearly goes under and crashes.

Steers it hard, screaming from the fresh amputation.

There is no shock or calm.

She can feel every piercing burn of open cartilage and nerve.

HER POV

Sloping and slapping down the white surge, finding a new path on the ugly wave that can give her another 10 or 15 yards.

Heaves her arms, no longer able to see in the surge.

Doing this blind.

Mouth bleeding from a cut tongue. Still, focusing on that SHORE. Still a good 200 yards away.

THE WAVE finally breaks apart as she's found herself in the dangerous midsection.

Bad sweep of current is keeping her glued to it.

Has to wait for the next big wave. Turning back to gauge the shark.

NOTHING THERE

Can't spot it, see it. Another lightning flash covers the lavender sky.

Nancy, hyperventilating from the phantom pain of a lost leg. Blood covering the water.

Uses the next flash of lightning to scan the deep. Suddenly spots its DORSAL FIN submerge.

Coming at her with ramming speed some 30 yards out and --

NANCY

Paddles heavy, trying to catch another passing wave. Gets it but nearly tumbles over.

Wave gets her another 40 yards before it dies into foam and jettison.

SCREAMS as the saltwater stings into her newly-severed leg.

Suddenly goes faint. Can't paddle, struggle anymore.

Stares down into water that's colored a filthy ink-black.

Nancy's dazed eyes scan the foamy surge around her. Lifts her hand up to reveal OIL on her skin.

The WHALE CARCASS she first spotted in the deep has drifted into the mid-break.

A huge run of blood and black, whale oil residue skims the surface.

Nancy staggers on it. Is this for her?

She looks back at the SHARK. HEAVY FIN now cutting through the break, 15 yards away and --

NANCY

Haggard stare. Lies flatly against the makeshift raft.

Staring into something we can't see. Something hers alone. The vision comforts her.

She grasps the raft, pulling the FLARE gun from around her neck.

Closes her eyes for a moment. Opens them, turning back to the SHARK'S FIN --

THAT HAS NOW COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED FROM VIEW

Another wave surge tumbling from the outside, heading for us and --

NANCY

Takes a final breath.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(a whisper)
No more.

Beat.

THE SHARK EXPLODES OUT OF WATER

Nancy FIRES FLARE. Into the oil.

WATER IGNITES. FIRE CONSUMES THE SURF.

THE SHARK, CAUGHT IN THE FLAMES, SLAMS INTO NANCY --

AS THE WAVE CRASHES AGAINST THE RAFT --

SLAM TO BLACK

Long beat.

UP FROM BLACK:

BEACH - DAY

Wind rain blowing across the sand. Darting into it is a BOY. The one who spotted Nancy on the buoy.

FOLLOWING him as he runs along the shoreline. Feet slapping across the wet shallow.

We've returned to that opening teaser.

The Boy calls out to the unseen man following him...

As we REVEAL his FATHER (CARLOS, THE FRIENDLY MAN WHO HAD GIVEN NANCY A RIDE).

Rifle in hand, he follows the boy's path.

Up to those torn, mutilated body parts. Teeth-shredded clothing still on parts of the skin.

Carlos stops, taking it in with quiet horror.

LABOY

Mira. En el agua! La agua!

His son points to something UNSEEN in the mid-break.

Another big sweep of surf hits the shore as Nancy's SEVERED LEG hits the wet sand.

Her STAR TATTOO barely recognizable in the blood and multiple bite marks.

BOY

PAPA, AGUA PROFUNDA!

Carlos finally up, toward where his Son is pointing.

THAT DEEP MID-BREAK SECTION

Flames still lick the surface.

Some GULLS are now diving around the area, having come in for a feed. On exactly what, we're not sure.

Carlos steps forward, putting his EYE to the rifle's optical scope.

THROUGH THE SITE

He SEES the gulls feasting on something.

The shark? Nancy?

Carlos lowers the rifle, looking on with scared eyes. Before he can blink --

BOY (CONT'D)

PAPA.

Carlos turns around to his son, pointing to a BODY shuddering on a makeshift raft in the shallow water.

Leg severed, some skin burned. But still alive.

Carlos throws the rifle around his back, darting into the water for --

NANCY

Heaving breath. Eyes open but dying. Still staring at something she refuses us to see.

The distant, weird noise of Chain-gun Spanish echoes as Carlos' FORM rushes over.

Calls for his son as they both work to pull the raft from the water.

CLOSE ON NANCY'S FACE

Immune to the pain, their comforting voices. Still staring into the haunting afterglow of the storm.

Waves gently lapping over her body and face.

Carlos and his son pulling her and the raft from the water like a medic's gurney.

Sliding it across the wet sand. Heading fast for Carlos' pick-up truck.

Carlos shouting Spanish. The words unintelligible but unmistakably about life and holding on.

Nancy looks up, having only spotted it now: her BACKPACK, retrieved by the boy from the deep sand.

Soaked from some of the high tide along the shore, but still intact.

Through the side pocket, she can SEE a small flash of light. The signal for NEW VOICEMAIL.

Off a heavy roar of surf...

NANCY (V.O.)

(phone filter)

You see the shots I just took, the break's all left.

INT. HOUSE - (FLASHBACK TO YESTERDAY)

Rustic beach-house with the old 70s distressed wood.

FOLLOWING DAVID out of the kitchen. Nancy's older brother. Big and fit, weekend surfer and Harley man.

We're now on his end of that phone conversation.

DAVID
(phone to his ear)
Completely left, looks like heavy drift.

NANCY (O.S.)
Yeah. No, like it's heavy drift but the outside is sweet.

DAVID
Looks that way. About three-foot overhead judgin' from the photos. Now tell me where that sweet spot is.

Nancy laughs on the other line.

NANCY (O.S.)
No, I'm not telling you.

DAVID
Why?

NANCY (V.O.)
Because, you suck for not coming with me.

David smiles, getting a hand signal from his wife in the living room. Dinner in 10.

NANCY (V.O.)
Mom was right, secrets should stay secrets. This is my perfect break, not yours.

DAVID
Nance, you don't want me out there showing your shit up.

Nancy laughs a little as David moves out onto the rustic PATIO DECK. Old boards staked up against the salt-smearred patio glass.

Wetsuits dripping on the pine railing.

NANCY (O.S.)

*Yeah, well, you're not here to prove it.
Mr. Married Brother with the Honda
Accord.*

DAVID

Ain't that the truth.

Sound of his little sister giggling.

David gives a little gesture to Marie, his eight year-old daughter. Spraying off a Boogie board with the hose.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Amanda left yesterday, huh.

NANCY (O.S.)

*Yeah, I'm staying another week. It kicks
ass here, the motel's so cheap. Dollar
pork tacos, man. How's Kay?*

DAVID

Good, she got the night station position
at the hospital.

NANCY (O.S.)

That's awesome, she totally wanted ER.

DAVID

Yeah, double shifts starting Monday.
I'll put her on in a sec, she wants to
say hi.

David lopes around the patio with a beer. Suddenly revealing a BEACH-SIDE AMUSEMENT PARK hugging a misty coastline of Galveston, Texas.

That haunting Ferris wheel mirrors Nancy's dreams, glittering on the dusk.

NANCY (O.S.)

Can she get me a job?

DAVID

You gotta graduate nursing school first,
surfer girl. Good luck with that.

NANCY (O.S.)

I will graduate!

David smiles, taking a sip of beer. Stares into the mesmerizing lights of the seaside carnival.

DAVID
I know you will.

CUT TO:

DIGITAL PHOTOS FILLING FRAME

Nancy's recently emailed shots of the ocean and beach.

INT. HOUSE - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

David clicks through a batch of Nancy's goofy selfies. The pretty shot Carlos took of her.

Clicks to the shots of the water and waves. Admires the setting sun. The roll of crisp sets.

But his eyes suddenly narrow.

Goes back to one of the blurred shots. Double-clicks the image to magnify.

For a moment, his face is frozen. Needing to convince himself it's there and real. Suddenly darts out of the chair, racing back to his phone.

PANNING TO: THE LAPTOP SCREEN

That one image now enlarged.

In the mid-break, a distant fuzzy image of a MASSIVE DORSAL FIN.

EXT. BEACH - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

And Nancy's PHONE suddenly vibrates with David's call.

As we PAN AWAY...

To her already too far to react. Heading for the water with her surfboard. Missed it by seconds.

Off the listless stir of wind and wave...

EXT. TRUCK'S FLAT BED - DAY

NANCY, lying in the truck bed. Covered in filthy construction blankets.

Carlos' SON is knelt over her. Whispering prayers in Spanish. Little HAND holding her own.

CLOSE ON NANCY'S FACE

Eyes distant. Struggling to remain in the here and now.

SURFER (V.O.)

Fast current. Makes the line slippery.

NANCY (V.O.)

Gotta hang on.

SURFER (V.O.)

Yes, hang on.

Nancy, profoundly struck by the memory.

She stares up at the SKY. Rays beginning crystallize from the dark clouds.

A sun shower like no other, gently blurring FRAME.

NANCY (V.O.)

(dying whisper)

Hang on. Hang on...

Her eyes, scared but strong. A sacred silence.

Off the glints of sunlight streaking through the tree tops...

CUT TO:

NANCY'S FORM, SITTING IN THE FERRIS WHEEL CAR

FRAMING her from over-the-shoulder.

The only rider on the glittering, haunting ride.

As it slowly, grumpily rotates toward the bottom.

NEW ANGLE

Blades of shadow pass upon Nancy's face as her car moves down the line. Stares at her legs, healthy and tan.

A cool wind passes over her face.

She feels something all around her, but can't quite understand.

Looks down, staring at the desolate amusement park that she's gently coming back down to earth upon.

Bathed in a sad, white carnival glow.

Off-sets the darkness, the night.

NEW ANGLE

Nancy's CAR comes to the bottom.

Abruptly stops. Swings for only a moment.

Metallic GUARD RAIL mechanically pulls open, freeing her of the ride. If she so chooses.

She pauses. Eyes wet. Still unsure. On that threshold.

Gazing into the darkness.

Barely lit in glittering white light stands a FEMALE FORM. Face too dark to see. Arms at her side.

Perhaps the silhouette of her mother. Or possibly herself.

A vision both haunting and beautiful.

CLOSE ON NANCY'S FACE

Tear slips from her eye. Unsure. Still confused. But no longer afraid.

THE FORM

Stands there a moment more. Gently turns around. And walks silently into the darkness.

CLOSE ON NANCY

Still sitting there. Haunted. The tear, still streaming down her face.

Shadows and carnival lights across her face.

A gentle stir of night wind.

The slow creak of an abandoned Ferris wheel.

Then... in the distance... the lone cry of a gull...

SILENT TO BLACK

Beat.

Titles: **in the deep**

END