

EXT. LOUISIANA RIVER - DAY

A 1969 13ft Boston Whaler cuts through slow moving muddy water.

JOSH V.O.

My Granddad used to hunt this land. He taught my dad and uncle. My dad taught me. He said it's OK to be nervous. It's OK to be scared. It's how you deal with it in situations that determines who you are as a man. Now keep that rifle tight on your shoulder boy and squeeze that trigger.

JOSH(23) shirtless, patchy beard. Greasy disheveled hair swirls around his eyes as he holds the trolling motor accelerator steady. He takes a drag from a cigarette and studies CHRIS.

JOSH

Keep scanning the water.

CHRIS(15) YOUNGER than his years, stands at the bow of the boat holding a fishing bow steady. He looks back at Josh. Following his instructions, he scans the water.

SONNY(23) sits beside Josh. Best friends since grade school. Black musician, hipster, unaffected. Cool, real cool. He lights up a decent size joint and starts to puff it lit.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Make sure you aim under the fish, keep one eye closed and get ready to draw -- I've seen some big ones back here.

Sonny exhales smoke, choking and laughing.

SONNY

That's what she said.

Chris laughs, throwing his concentration.

JOSH

Hey, what's that?

Josh points at a shadow 8 feet in front of the boat. He eases off the throttle. The boat creeps forward. What was a shadow now stews the water a little.

CHRIS

Holy shit!

JOSH

Shoot it!

Chris draws the bow back and releases an ARROW. It torpedoed into the water and pierces the fish. The fish darts the line trying to swim deep.

Chris STUMBLES and pulls back, fumbling with the reel.

CHRIS

Whoa, this thing's big man-

JOSH

You got this, keep reeling it in --
I got you.

Josh holds down the throttle in pursuit.

Chris plants his feet and rips down, fighting harder. The fish jumps out of the water, a prehistoric MONSTER. 6'4" Alligator Gar. It nearly pops the line.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Damn!

Josh motions to Sonny to grab the throttle.

SONNY

Yo! Cut the line man, fuck that!

JOSH

Fuck that. Push the throttle.

Sonny holds the trolling motor steady.

Josh bends down to ready his bow.

Chris' drag is winding out. He grabs it with his hand, BURN. He tries to reel. STRUGGLE.

CHRIS

He's going to snap the line.

SONNY

Good.

JOSH

(yelling to Chris)
When I tell you to, I want you to
reel as fast as you can-

Josh studies the fish. He pulls his draw as he walks up to join Chris in the battle.

JOSH (CONT'D)

--- NOW!

Chris cranks down fast, the Alligator Gar rolls and fights.

CHRIS

Damn, he's going to snap this line
man.

Cigarette hanging from his mouth, Josh holds his draw, closes one eye, and aims the arrow.

JOSH

(under his breath)
No he's not.

The Alligator Gar erupts from the surface. Josh shoots the arrow through his head.

CHRIS

Fuck yeah dude!

SONNY

Ya damn right, that's what's up.

CHRIS

Nice shot.

They both reel it up to the boat.

JOSH

(to Chris)
Dude this is your kill.

Josh playfully jabs him on the arm.

JOSH (CONT'D)

If it wasn't for your shot, we
wouldn't be reeling this thing in
now would we?

Chris smiles reluctantly.

CHRIS

I guess so.

The Gar THRASHES against the boat. Josh grabs some duck tape and wraps it around it's blood-soaked mouth- it's fangs are razor sharp.

He takes a gaff hook and viciously stabs the gar's belly to hoist it over the edge. Chris and Sonny shift to the other side of the boat so not to capsize.

BOOM, the boat shifts as the Gar falls lifeless on deck.

Josh takes a deep breath and smiles.

JOSH
Well I'd say that right there
deserves a notch, yeah?

He holds the gaff hook out to Chris.

SONNY
You damn right it does.

CHRIS
You damn right!

Chris takes the hook.

Josh notices where to scratch a line out on the inside hull.
A hand full of jagged lines tell of previously won battles.

JOSH
Right here.

Chris starts to scratch. He is struggling.

JOSH (CONT'D)
No man almost, look.

He takes the hook and forcefully stabs the boat, sliding the
hook up and down creating a metal line in the clear coat.

JOSH (CONT'D)
Stab and up and down, one time.

Chris makes another weak attempt.

JOSH (CONT'D)
There you go, you'll get it-

Josh gets behind the wheel.

JOSH (CONT'D)
Dude, you caught a monster fish --
hell yeah.

Chris looks at the fish in awe.

CHRIS
Damn. So what'd we do with it now?

Josh smirks at Sonny as he cranks up the Whaler and revs up
the 35 Johnson outboard.

SONNY
We fuckin' eat it.

JOSH
Hang on!

The boat turns around. Josh stands up and leans forward as it planes out.

Music

Footsteps - JJ Grey & Mofro