

A SOUTHERLY BLOWS

Written by

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EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

SUPER: "Lake Bledisloe, 1978."

A beautiful day. The lake water reflects the sun. On the outskirts of the beach, large willows sweep the surface.

Groups of KIDS frolic. Some bash sticks together. Loud laughs penetrate the serene view.

Two kids, JOE (10) and MARK (10), scruffy hair, the ones who were stick fighting before chase each other onto a jetty that protrudes out over the lake.

EXT. JETTY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A pair of small, grubby feet dangle over the jetty edge, touching the surface of the water.

AMANDA DUFROE (9) settles on the fringe. She's a sorry sight, her face hollow and tired, grub and muck smeared all over.

She glances down at the lake, where a large fish nibbles at her feet. She smiles, wryly.

JOE (O.S.)

Hey Amanda, what're you doing?

Amanda doesn't look up as the two boys appear behind her.

Mark glances down at her feet, spots the fish.

MARK

Playing with the fishies again?

Amanda doesn't respond.

Mark picks up a splintered bit of wood. He throws it at the lake. The fish quickly swim away.

MARK (CONT'D)

This is boring. Let's go.

The two boys disappear.

Amanda glances down at her feet. No life.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Amanda! Time to come inside, dear!

Amanda looks to a calling woman on the other end of the jetty: CLAIRE DUFROE (38) beautiful woman, a gentle, yet tired look about her. She smiles warmly.

Amanda raises to her feet, shuffling towards her mother.

INT. DUFROE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Amanda sits at a simple dining table, a plate of food in front of her.

DAVID DUFROE (40) rests opposite her, a well built man, also with a somewhat fatigued look about him. His mane is flecked with two-thousand too many grey hairs.

Claire shuffles in, takes her seat next to David. She casts a worried glimpse at Amanda.

CLAIRE
You okay, sweetie? You've barely touched your food.

Amanda twirls her fork.

David peeks at Claire, shrugs. Claire isn't so quick to give up.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
If there's anything happening with the other kids, you need to tell us sweetie.

AMANDA
Why does no one like fish?

Her parents are a bit taken aback.

DAVID
Fish?

CLAIRE
You mean to eat? If you want I can make you...

AMANDA
I mean in general. I could watch the fish all day, but no one else cares.

David places his fork down.

DAVID
Amanda... It's not the other kids that are weird.

AMANDA
What do you mean?

CLAIRE
Nothing, dear. He means nothing.

Claire glares at David - A look of death.

AMANDA

I'm going to my room.

Amanda hops up, grabs her plate and leaves.

Claire continues to glare. David notices.

DAVID

What?

CLAIRE

Why'd you have to do that?

DAVID

Do what?

CLAIRE

Make her feel strange.

David sighs. He smiles, to himself.

DAVID

Claire, she's a ten year old kid
who stares at fucking fish all day.
If I don't make her feel strange,
you can damn well guarantee the
kids at school will.

He returns to his meal, without a glance at Claire.

INT. DUFROE HOUSE - AMANDA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Neat, tidy, but dark. The entire room seems to be dedicated
to fish: posters, hand-drawn pictures and books.

Amanda sits on her bed, watching a tiny goldfish in a bowl.
She taps the glass. Amanda reaches for a small pill bottle.

AMANDA

Here you go, Betsy.

From the pill bottle she takes a pinch of fish flakes, drops
them into the water. Betsy rushes to the food.

Amanda tries some fish flakes for herself before replacing
the bottle.

EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

Another beautiful day. Kids run around, the odd adult basks
in the sun on the pebbled beach.

A few play water volleyball in the lake.

A southerly blows.

EXT. JETTY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Mark and Joe sit on the edge of the jetty, fishing rods out before them. They wait for a catch.

MARK

C'mon. C'mon! You got a bite, yet?

Joe shakes his head.

EXT. LAKESIDE - CONTINUOUS

Under a willow tree, Amanda sits. She watches the two boys on the jetty -- pure hatred.

EXT. JETTY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, Joe's line starts whizzing. He laughs.

JOE

I've got something! I got a fish!

MARK

Reel it in, reel it in!

Joe furiously attempts to reel the fish in. He grits his teeth as he fights.

JOE

She's a big one!

EXT. LAKESIDE - CONTINUOUS

As the scene unfolds, Amanda develops a frown on her brow.

AMANDA

Hey!

She darts to her feet, races towards the jetty.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Stop it!

EXT. JETTY - CONTINUOUS

Joe starts to win his battle. The line is getting shorter.

JOE

Here we go!

AMANDA (O.S.)

Stop it!

Amanda charges forward, pulls Joe's shoulder back. His hand slips and he loses his rod. It quickly flies into the water.

Joe turns, furious.

JOE
Look what you did!

AMANDA
Leave them alone!

Amanda attempts to snatch Mark's rod as well. He snaps it out of reach. She tries to get it.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
They didn't hurt no one!

JOE
Whatever. C'mon Mark, let's leave
weirdo and her fishies alone.

As Joe steps forward, he foot trips Amanda, sending her hurling into the lake.

Amanda splashes around in the water.

Joe continues marching. Mark is reluctant to leave.

AMANDA
Help!

Amanda splashes around more, struggling to stay above water.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
I can't swim!

Mark races to the edge.

MARK
Grab my hand! Reach for it!

Amanda reaches for Mark's hand. As she does, she sinks.

AMANDA
Help me!

MARK
I can't swim.

Mark looks to Joe, who keeps walking.

MARK (CONT'D)
Help us! Anyone!

EXT. LAKESIDE - CONTINUOUS

A few adults look towards the ruckus. As they realise what's going on, they rush towards the jetty.

EXT. JETTY - CONTINUOUS

Mark tries to reach for Amanda.

Behind him, a large MAN makes his way up the jetty.

Slowly, Amanda sinks below the surface, her arms unable to keep her afloat.

MARK
Amanda! HELP!

The situation more urgent, the Man dives into the lake. He swims to where Amanda was, dives underwater.

UNDERWATER

The Man looks to and fro -- nothing. No one in sight.

EXT. JETTY - CONTINUOUS

The man breaks the surface again.

MAN
Little Girl!

He dives under, again.

Mark waits in anticipation. He looks at the water, focused.

The man breaks the surface again.

MARK
See her?

The man shakes his head.

UNDERWATER

Deeper underwater, where the water is murky, a body floats -- Amanda's corpse drifting in the current.

EXT. JETTY - CONTINUOUS

The man swims around.

MAN
Amanda! AMANDA!

He glances around, frantically searching. No movement.
Mark, on the edge of the jetty, stares in anxiety.
The Man shakes his head.

MAN (CONT'D)
Call the police!

SNAP TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. LAKE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

SUPER: "Lake Bledisloe, 2013."

Witching hour. Not a single car in sight.

Headlamps light a path for a battered station-wagon as it
cruises into view. The driver cuts the engine.

INT. STATION-WAGON - CONTINUOUS

CARSON SMIT (28) cuts the engine. He's a solid man, rugged
face, greasy hair. Not a picture of anything too great.

To his left is RANDAL WHITHERS (26), a picture of pure fugly.

CARSON
You guys sure you're up for this?

RANDAL
Yeah.

Carson looks over his shoulder to JASON SMIT (22), decent
looking, seems nervous.

CARSON
What about you, little bro?

Jason nods.

JASON
As ready as ever.

Carson opens the car door.

EXT. LAKE PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Carson shuts the door, followed by his two companions.

He saunters around to the back of the station-wagon, opens the back door.

Randal looks out towards the lake, which he can just glimpse.

RANDAL
Anyone fancy a swim?

Carson rummages around in the boot of the car. He withdraws an assortment of fishing equipment: rods, nets, bait.

Jason joins him. He taps Carson's arm.

JASON
Dude, what if the cops roll up?

CARSON
Shit, man. You're not still worried about that are you?

Carson dumps the fishing gear on the ground.

JASON
I don't fancy going down for poaching, bro.

CARSON
Listen, will ya? The cops ain't got a reason to be here. We'll be sweet.

JASON
What if one of the neighbours report us?

Carson glances around.

CARSON
There is no one to report us, dumbass!

Jason looks ready for a response.

RANDAL
Hey you two! Come on, we ain't got all night!

Jason looks uneasy. Carson puts a reassuring hand on his shoulder.

CARSON
Relax, will ya? Nothing's gonna happen.

Carson grabs the equipment.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Randal, wait up!

EXT. LAKESIDE - NIGHT

Quiet, dark, misty. The lake water mirrors the moon. Water trickles onto the beach. Droopy trees lean over, touching the lake surface. A southerly blows.

A jetty extends towards the middle of the water, disguised by the mist. The same lake as before.

Carson, Randal and Jason march onto the beach. They stop when they reach the jetty.

Jason takes a huge intake of air.

JASON
Shit, it's beautiful out here.

Carson and Randal look at him, eyebrows raised.

JASON (CONT'D)
What?

CARSON
Shut up, you hippie.

Randal sniggers. They make their way to the jetty.

EXT. JETTY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

A small boat bobs up and down in the wavy water. It's quite old, the paint flaking off the side.

The three men approach. Randal spots the boat.

RANDAL
What the fuck is this thing?

Carson smiles, proud.

CARSON
Our boat. Friend made sure it got here safely.

Jason looks uneasy.

JASON
You mean we're actually going out?

CARSON
Well, we're not fishing from the jetty! Get in!

The other two seem more reluctant, now.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Jason and Randal row, as Carson sits back in the boat. It's eerily quiet. Only the splashes of water as the boat drifts out.

Behind the boat, a large shadow follows beneath the water.

The men continue on, oblivious.

LATER

More rowing.

CARSON
This should do.

Carson rummages through the equipment.

The boat rocks as a southerly blows.

Jason clutches to the edge.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Will you relax?! A bit of wind
isn't gonna kill ya!

A creaking noise sounds from the boat's bottom.

JASON
What was that?

Carson laughs.

CARSON
It's just the wood. Relax.

Carson taps the boat's side -- BUMP BUMPETTY BUMP BUMP.

Carson laughs.

Suddenly -- BUMP BUMPETTY BUMP BUMP from under the boat.

Carson's smile drops.

SMASH! The boat is hurled from underneath, all the men sent flying into the water.

Carson plunges face-first into the water. He quickly breaks the surface. He swims over to Randal, when he spots him.

Randal, shaken up screams when Carson approaches.

RANDAL
What the fuck was that?

Carson, terrified, shakes his head.

CARSON
I don't know. Let's get back to the boat.

They spot the boat, drifting upside down.

RANDAL
Where's Jason?

CARSON
We'll worry about that when we get back above water.

Within a few moments, the two are back at the upside-down boat. Carson clutches the side.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Flip the boat over on three?

RANDAL
Yeah.

CARSON
One...

A low growl echoes around the lake. A vividly terrified Carson tries to heave the boat.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Three! THREE!

With a massive heave the boat is thrown back to its right side. There, in the boat's old place, lies Jason. He stares at the stars, his face white. He breathes heavily.

Carson looks on in horror. He takes it all in, until he spots the gash in Jason's torso.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Jason? Are you alright, buddy.

No response from Jason.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Jason? Look at me. What happened?

Jason's head slowly swivels to make eye contact with Carson.

JASON
Amanda says...

Jason stops to cough up some gooey red gunge.

CARSON
What? Amanda who?

Jason splutters, coughs.

JASON
Amanda says "Leave them alone."

Carson, confused has no response to give.

Jason moans as he struggles. From both sides of his waist, two bony white hands protrude from the water. They crawl up the torso.

Jason moans.

Carson screams as he darts back.

The hands make it to Jason's wound. The fingers dig into the gash. Jason screams. He fights back tears.

JASON (CONT'D)
Amanda says: "A southerly blows."

Then, without warning, the hands pull Jason under, snatching him from our view.

Carson and Randal stare on in horror. Both let rip blood-curdling screams.

EXT. LAKESIDE - NIGHT

On the beach, the screams can still be heard, as the wind disrupts the leaves in the trees.

FADE OUT.