TRAPPED

by

Steve Nazarian

stevenaz226@comcast.net

WGA Registered

Copyright 2009

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

A beat up station wagon with handicap plates is parked on the side of a dirt road lined with trees. The road leads to a

EXT. SALTWATER MARSH - DAY

The secluded marsh is surrounded by woods. A path leads to a

EXT. WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY

About thirty feet long. Five ropes are tied to its guardrails. Each rope leads down into a stream running underneath the bridge. The stream is about four feet deep.

Near the center of the bridge sits a large blue cooler. A long crabbing net and a plastic bucket rest beside it.

CHARLIE, 75, short, frail, leans over one of the guardrails at the far end of the bridge. He is dressed in his Sunday's best. A faded Red Sox cap sits atop his head.

Charlie holds one of the ropes gently in his fingers as he peers down at the murky water below.

Charlie waits. Squints his eyes. A disappointed look.

CHARLIE

Slow day, Matilda. Bait's losing its bite.

VROOM! VROOM! VROOOMMMMM!

The old man's head cocks up at the sound of AN APPROACHING MOTORCYCLE. He eyes the dirt road. Frowns. He grabs a cane propped on the railing. Limps over toward the next rope.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The motorcycle's tires SKID to a stop beside the wagon.

A black leather boot kicks the bike stand down.

The motorcycle shifts as the weight of its rider gets off.

RAY, 30, tall, built, stares at the bridge and the old man, removes his helmet. A scar from the corner of his mouth up to his ear. Ray slams the helmet down on the bike's seat.

EXT. WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY

Charlie glances at the mammoth biker as he approaches.

RAY

How goes it, old timer.

Ray removes his black leather jacket. His arms are covered in freaky looking tattoos.

CHARLIE

Slow.

Ray lumbers over to the plastic bucket. Kicks it.

Several angry BLUE CRABS stir inside. Their arms extend, pinchers flaring, clearly unhappy being caught.

Ray takes a pack of smokes and a lighter out of his jacket. He folds the jacket over the bridge's guardrail.

RAY

Doing alright for your age.

Ray glances at the large blue cooler.

RAY

You got any beer in there?

CHARLIE

Bait.

Ray grimaces. Lights his cigarette.

CHARLIE

Matilda and I used to fill that bucket by noon.

Ray glances up from the lighter's flame.

RAY

Matilda here now?

Charlie gives up on the rope he's checking.

CHARLIE

She ain't.

Ray takes a long drag from his cigarette. Exhales.

RAY

Just you and the crabs.

Yup.

RAY

All alone. Middle of nowhere.

CHARLIE

Yup.

Ray strolls over to Charlie. Leans over the guardrail. He's so big he blocks out the sun, casting Charlie in shadow.

RAY

I passed a sign about five miles back. Said there was gas.

CHARLIE

No gas around here. Used to be a station. Sign's still there.

RAY

False fucking advertising.

CHARLIE

I suppose.

Charlie crosses to a rope on the opposite side of the bridge.

Ray turns and leans his back against the guardrail.

RAY

You got any money I can borrow?

CHARLIE

Nope.

RAY

How 'bout that shit-can wagon over there? You got any in there?

CHARLIE

Sorry.

RAY

I've been riding a long time. I could sure use a few bucks when I find some gas.

CHARLIE

I told you I ain't got none.

Ray turns and leans his massive forearms on the guardrail. He looks out at the beautiful, yet ominous surroundings.

RAY

You know... bad things happen in the middle of nowhere. People go missing.

Charlie looks up from the rope he's checking.

RAY

Heard a hitchhiker went missing a few months ago. A couple of kids camping the month before that.

Charlie heads for a rope near the foot of the bridge, eyes on the station wagon.

RAY

Authorities are hoping for the best, but the chances of any of them being alive are slim and none.

Charlie checks the rope but his focus is clearly on Ray.

RAY

It doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out that someone around here has taken to killing. Probably someone strong. Male. Maybe a drifter...

Ray turns around. A big shit eating grin.

RAY

... or a biker.

Charlie fishes into his pocket for something.

CHARLIE

Yup. I heard as much. There was a story in the paper, and a young deputy came by the house asking if I seen anyone suspicious.

Charlie pulls a small knife out of his pocket. He unfolds it. Heads straight for Ray, knife in hand.

Ray sees the knife. A nervous laugh.

RAY

Now, me myself, I'm not one for stereotypes. Shit. Just about anyone can take to killing.

Charlie stops at the rope right before Ray. He shortens the slack end with the knife.

Yup.

Charlie SNAPS the knife shut.

Ray snorts, relieved. He takes one last drag from his cigarette. Ashes it into the quardrail.

RAY

A man needs to be careful out here. You never know who you might run into.

Charlie passes Ray on his way over to the next rope. Ray reaches into his back pocket for something...

CHARLIE (O.S.)

That's why I carry a permit.

RAY

Damn. You packing, old timer?

Charlie checks the rope. No bites. He turns to the biker.

CHARLIE

Never leave home without it.

Ray pulls his hand out of his pocket slowly. It's a comb.

Ray raises his hands a la "don't shoot". Another nervous laugh as he runs the comb through his long black hair.

RAY

What kind of heat we talking?

CHARLIE

Peacemaker.

RAY

An S.A.A.? Shit. You a good shot?

CHARLIE

Killed seven men in the war. Could of killed seven more. Damn claymore took my leg.

Charlie pulls up one of his pant legs revealing a prosthetic leg. Strapped around its ankle is the gun.

RAY

Fuck me. That must of hurt.

(beat)

My daddy did a tour in Nam.

Charlie lowers his pant leg. Leans over the guardrail.

CHARLIE

I used to walk this stream barefoot with my father. He would scoop the crabs up with a net when they went after my toes.

Ray chuckles. Leans over the guardrail beside Charlie.

RAY

You use traps now?

CHARLIE

Yup. Never was much good with a net. Too busy watching my toes.

RAY

No shit. I would be too.

CHARLIE

Matilda was good with a net.

Ray glances thoughtfully at the nearby net.

CHARLIE

I'd lure them in with a chicken leg on a string. The trick is to let 'em eat for a bit. Let 'em get comfortable. Let 'em think they're at the buffet, not on it.

Ray laughs.

CHARLIE

Sometimes they'd spot me. They can see your shadow on the water. But they'd never see that net creeping up behind them. Matilda was so quiet. You'd never know she was there.

RAY

Sounds like you two made a good team.

Charlie sniffles. Wipes his forearm over his eyes.

RAY (O.S.)

Name's Ray.

Charlie takes Ray's outstretched hand. He shakes it.

Charlie.

Charlie looks out longingly at the water.

CHARLIE

After Matilda got sick... things changed. Seemed like soon as she stopped coming here the crabs did too. Damn cancer takes everything.

Ray nods. He scratches the scar on his face.

RAY

Took my old man too. Watching him wither away... I almost missed him being strong enough to--

Ray turns, spooked by something.

RAY

You hear that?

Charlie stares back at Ray, confused.

RAY

Thought I heard something... sounded like crying.

Charlie sighs.

CHARLIE

I sometimes hear Matilda crying... it's probably just the wind.

Ray turns back to the guardrail. He laughs.

RAY

Yeah. It's probably just the wind.

The rope in Charlie's hand suddenly jerks.

Charlie's eyes widen. He licks his lips excitedly.

RAY

Got something?

The rope jerks again. Charlie nods his head, "yes".

RAY

You still use chicken legs?

Charlie shakes his head, "no".

The few crabs left here are real picky eaters.

Charlie grabs hold of the rope with both hands. He yanks up on the rope sharply.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

The steel trap shuts on its unsuspecting prey.

EXT. WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY

Charlie pulls the rope up swiftly, hand over hand.

RAY

Hey, you need help with that--

Charlie lifts the dripping trap up over the guardrail and SLAMS it down on the bridge's floorboards.

Ray grins, impressed with Charlie's vigor. The old man is not as weak as he looks.

Charlie kneels beside the trap. Looks up at Ray. Makes a shooing motion with his hands.

CHARLITE

Family secret.

RAY

What? The bait?

Ray gets a whiff of it. He grabs his nose.

RAY

Whatever it is, it stinks!

CHARLIE

Go on. Get.

RAY

You're serious?

CHARLIE

It's time for you to depart.

RAY

Crazy old loon. Must be one hell of a secret.

Oh... it's a doozie.

RAY

Come on, Charlie. I ain't leaving 'til you show me.

Charlie sighs.

CHARLIE

Alright, Ray. But if I show you... I'm gonna have to kill you.

RAY

Fine. Kill me you old bastard! I'm dying to know.

Charlie releases a latch on the trap and it springs open.

A pair of Blue Crabs fight over a half-eaten human hand.

RAY

What the fuck...

Ray takes a step back.

SHTICKKKK!!!

Ray's eyes bulge.

A thin line of blood trickles from his mouth.

He looks down at his chest.

A dark red spot blossoms as blood seeps into his shirt.

The tip of a knife pokes out through the center of his chest. Sunlight dances off it. It disappears back inside his chest.

Ray falls to his knees. MATILDA, 75, stands behind him.

She is soaking wet from the waist down. A trail of wet footprints left behind her from the foot of the bridge.

Matilda looks as unimposing as Charlie... except of course for the giant hunting knife she's holding covered in blood.

Ray looks up at Charlie.

RAY

Charlie?

CHARLIE

You're on the buffet, Ray.

Charlie raises his cane above his head with both hands.

CHARLIE

A man needs to be careful out here. You never know who you might run into.

Charlie brings the cane down hard. A sickening CRACK as it collides with Ray's skull.

Ray slumps over in a heap on the dock. Blood pools around his massive, lifeless body.

Charlie tosses his cane aside and reaches his hand out to Matilda. She takes it as she steps over Ray's body.

MATILDA

I cried during the part about me being sick. Will you really miss me that much when I'm gone?

CHARLIE

I miss you that much when you're under the bridge.

MATILDA

Oh, Charles... I was so worried he heard me and was going to get away.

Charlie holds a finger to her lips. He kisses her softly.

CHARLIE

There, there, Matilda... he never saw you coming. They never do.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNDERWATER - LATER

SPLASH!

The steel trap comes to a rest on the stream floor.

Ray's severed head sits on a metal spike in its center... eyes still bulging... probably worried more about his missing toes than the approaching Blue Crabs.

FADE OUT.