

Night Fishin'

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## Night Fishin'

FADE IN:

1 EXT. CAMPFIRE - PRAIRIE - NIGHT

1

Crackle of burning logs. Guitar and harmonica. A horse whinnies nearby. Harmonica playing stops.

(1)

STUMPY

Well bless my soul! Howdy, stranger! Sit down, take a load off. Brisk tonight, ain't it? My fire's nice and warm. Name's Stumpy, by the way. I'm just blowin' on my harp dreamin' of a nice breakfast. You know how sometimes you start thinkin' about what you gonna eat for your next meal and then you get real hungry thinkin' about that meal and next thing you know, you're havin' yourself a midnight snack? Well... unfortunately, I don't have anything to snack on. You don't happen to have any jerky or anythin' on you do ya? No? Well... it was worth a shot. Tomorrow I'll wake up bright and squirrely and trap us a coupla jackrabbits to roast. ...what's that? You ain't never had jackrabbit for breakfast? Well... we ain't got much choice in dinin' out here. Rabbit meat ain't too bad... think of it like a chewier chicken. Pairs well with a cup of black coffee. ...Truth be told, jackrabbit ain't my first choice for breakfast either, you know... if it were up to me, I'd have some catfish! My oh my! Nice roasted catfish to start the day now THAT'S some good eatin' Heeheeheehee!! It's darned shame we ain't near a lake cuz some night fishin' would be a fun way to pass the time. You ever gone night fishin'? I highly recommend it! Only thing is, don't go alone, cuz... well, you don't wanna get stuck out on that lake all by yourself. You never know what lurks beneath those waters. Reminds me of a story I heard once about three friends who were out on Lake Misellasawwy.

(MORE)

STUMPY (cont'd)

They's just sittin' around passing around a bottle of hooch and telling each other stories, much the same way we're sitting 'round this very fire tonight, 'cept they had no fire and they were on a lake... anyways, there they were fishin' under a full moon...

CROSSFADE

2 EXT. LAKE MISELLASAWWY - MIDNIGHT

2

Gentle lapping of water against a wooden boat. Fishing reels. Bottle of hooch being passed around. Laughter. Two men and a woman.

(2)

JEB

(Laughing into the line)

Alright, alright, I got one... now there was these two fellers one from California, one from Arkansas... and they's standin' on a bridge over a crick, and they's a peein' into the crick, you know... and the Californian feller he turns to the Arkansas feller and he says, "man, water's pretty cold this time a year." And the man from Arkansas says, "yep. Pretty deep too."

JEB and ODIE burst in juvenile laughter. ANNAMAE is not amused.

(3)

ANNAMAE

That's disgusting.

(4)

JEB

(Continuing to laugh)

Pretty deep too!

Jeb and Odie burst into another round of juvenile laughter.

(5)

ODIE

(Coming off the laughter)

Wait... wait... I don't get it.

(6)

ANNAMAE

You don't get it?? Why you is laughin' then??

- (7) ODIE  
I dunno... it sounded funny.
- (8) JEB  
I'll explain it to you later, Odie.
- (9) ANNAMAE  
You boys are filthy.
- (10) ODIE  
Awww, c'mon, Annamae, is just a  
little bit of fun.
- (11) JEB  
Yeah, Annamae. You don't gotta tell  
on us or nothin'. You should feel  
honored we invited you on this  
fishin' trip. You's one of the boys  
now!
- (12) ODIE  
Yeah! 'Xactly!
- (13) ANNAMAE  
Lucky me.
- (14) JEB  
You's the one who's always wantin to  
come with us!
- (15) ODIE  
Yeah, ain't our fault you's in town  
only a few days each month.
- (16) JEB  
Well, this is what we do. We drink  
hooch and we tell each other stories.  
It's a package deal.
- (17) ODIE  
Yeah! Package deal!
- (18) ANNAMAE  
(dryly)  
...pass me that bottle.

Jeb and Odie cheer her on.

- (19) JEB  
There you go! Now you're getting into  
the spirit!

Annamae takes a swig of hooch. She coughs.

- (20) ODIE  
Strong stuff, ain't it, Annamae? My pappy cooks it out in the barn. Huh-huh.
- (21) ANNAMAE  
No shit, Pappy Drew done this? Dayum. Is some good shit.
- Jeb and Odie gasp in mock surprise.
- (22) ANNAMAE (cont'd)  
...what?
- (23) ODIE  
You done said shit! We ain't never heard you cuss before.
- Jeb and Odie chuckle immaturely.
- (24) ANNAMAE  
So what? You said I'm one of the boys now, ain't I?
- Jeb and Odie cheer.
- (25) JEB AND ODIE  
Yeah! One of us! One of us! One of us!
- (26) ANNAMAE  
Okay, okay, simmer down, you'll scare off all the fish.
- Jeb and Odie simmer down.
- (27) JEB  
Alright Odie, your turn to tell us a story.
- (28) ODIE  
Me?
- (29) JEB  
Yeah!
- (30) ANNAMAE  
But hey! Don't just tell a filthy joke! If you'sa gonna tell a story, then tell a proper story, with a beginning, middle, and end, k?

- (31) ODIE  
Umm... a proper story, huh?
- (32) ANNAMAE  
Yeah.
- (33) ODIE  
Uhh... aw, shucks, y'all. I ain't sure I know any PROPER stories.
- (34) JEB  
C'mon, Annamae, don't confuse the poor boy, can't you see he ain't got two cents in that head of his?
- (35) ODIE  
Yeah, Jeb's right, I ain't got no cents.
- (36) ANNAMAE  
Hogwash. Anyone can tell a story, you just put one word front the other till you find yourself an endin'.
- (37) JEB  
Just tell us a joke, Odie. Tell us the one about Mau Mau!
- (38) ODIE  
Yeah! I know that Mau Mau!
- (39) ANNAMAE  
Naw-naw. You can do better'n that. Give 'im a chance to find his tale.
- (40) JEB  
We'll be waitin' here all night.
- (41) ODIE  
...Well... uh... I did hear a story once... about this lake...
- (42) ANNAMAE  
There you go! Story about Lake Misellasawwy. Sounds promising. Whatcha hear, Odie?
- (43) ODIE  
I, uh, it was about this catfish that lives in this here waters. Big feller.

(MORE)

ODIE (cont'd)  
 Whiskers as long as your arms... and,  
 uh... well, it swims up to ya when  
 you's all alone fishin' neath the  
 moon... and, uh... well it opens up  
 it's big ol' mouth, you see... and  
 uh, well it swallows you whole right  
 where you stand... or, uh, sit,  
 rather.

There is long beat as the others wait for him to finish.

(44) ODIE (cont'd)  
 ...that's all there is, I reckon.

Jeb burst out in laughter.

(45) JEB  
 (Through the laughter)  
 That's it?? That's your story??  
 Hahahaha!!! Told ya, Annamae! Boy  
 ain't got no cents! Hahahahah!

(46) ANNAMAE  
 Oh, hush! Least he didn't peddle any  
 of the filth you seem to revel in.

(47) JEB  
 Least my stories have a proper endin'  
 to 'em! His just stopped! There  
 wasn't even any characters or  
 nothin'!

(48) ODIE  
 There is too characters! The catfish  
 has a name. Catfish Sally, I think it  
 was.

(49) JEB  
 (Laughing into the  
 line)  
 Catfish Sally. Say, Annamae, ain't  
 that your middle name? Annamae Sally?  
 Odie, you done named your killer  
 catfish after our here Miss Goody Two  
 Shoes! Hahahahaha!

(50) ANNAMAE  
 Well, maybe I am a catfish. You don't  
 know!

(51) ODIE  
 No... Jeb's right. I ain't no good at  
 tellin' stories.  
 (MORE)

ODIE (cont'd)  
I did just name the catfish after  
you, Annamae... I jus' couldn't think  
of nothin' else...

Jeb's laughter dies down as he breathes deep and sighs.

(52) JEB  
You're mind's half as empty as that  
bottle of hooch, I tell ya what.  
Speakin' of which, pass that shit  
over here.

Bottle is passed, Jeb takes a big swig and sighs harshly  
from the drink.

(53) ANNAMAE  
Now, don't you pay Jeb no mind, Odie.  
It was a fine beginning of a story.  
You just gotta... flesh it out a  
little bit... add some color. Twists  
and turns.

(54) ODIE  
Oh yeah? You think so?

(55) ANNAMAE  
Sure! See, the way I heard it...  
Catfish Sally ain't just your run o'  
the mill mudcat. I heard she used to  
be a real woman, just like me, 'til  
tragedy struck. In fact, some say she  
can still turn into a woman when the  
moon is full.

(56) ODIE  
Really? Oh, jeeppers! The moon's done  
full tonight!

(57) ANNAMAE  
Yep. So you best keep your eye on  
what you reel in, cuz you might just  
catch yourself a woman.

(58) ODIE  
But... how did Sally turn into a  
Catfish in the first place?

(59) JEB  
Odie, you kumquat, this is YOUR  
story, she's just adding to it! She's  
makin' it up as she goes!



(60)

ODIE

Nuh-uh! I did hear about a killer catfish, I swear! I just don't remember all the details. You know 'em, don'tcha, Annamae?

(61)

ANNAMAE

(Pace gets more deliberate as she tells her story)

I sure as heck do! I know exactly all the details. You see, Sally used to be a real woman. Nothing more and nothing less. She loved the lake. And she loved fishing. One day she decided she wanted to fish at night, just like all her friends. Thing of it is... nobody wanted to take her out on the lake on account of she was just a girl. They was afraid they wouldn't be able to carry on like they usually do on these fishin' trips... so night after night, and year after year, she watched as all the boys went out on the lake, and she stayed home, dreamin' of casting that line under the midnight moon. Then one day, she met this nice young man who made her feel real pretty. Made her feel like she could do anything she put her mind to. He started courtin' her, and one night he asked her to name whatever her heart desired "you want the moon?" he said, "I'll give you the moon." But she didn't want no moon. All she wanted was to fish at night, like everybody else. She told him, if he really loved her, he would take her with him next time they set out... And so he did. He and his best friend took her out on their boat, right on out into the middle of the lake, right beneath that big ol' moon... Out of respect for having a woman on board, no one drank any hooch, no one told any dirty jokes, no one sang any songs, or laughed any laughs, or spoke any words... they just sat around in silence and fished for hours... But no one got a single bite that night. The men grew restless.

(MORE)

## ANNAMAÆ (cont'd)

Usually they least caught themselves a fish or two, but that night they caught nothin'. They started blamin' poor Sally. They never spoke it aloud, but they was thinkin' it, and she could tell they blamed her too. She could feel their anger. As the night drew on their anger grew, and all the love that once was had by Sally's suitor was gone, and in its place was a dark and seethin' resentment... Just before dawn, in the last light of the full moon, they pushed Miss Sally overboard, right into the lake. She gasped and grasped, pleading for help. But all her pleadin' was ignored. They watched her head bob up and down, and up and down... 'til she bobbed no more, and the water turned back into its calm quiet self. Now, the funniest thing happened. Soon as Miss Sally drowned in that water, all the other catfish came to feed. The men caught more fish that night than they'd ever caught before. Clearly, they thought, it was Sally's sacrifice what made the catch such a success. So every summer, during the full moon, the men would take a young woman out to the lake, and drown her to make the fish come out... This went on for many years. Down at the bottom of the lake the corpses of the women stacked up on top of each other... and the catfish came to feed. But catfish weren't the only thing feedin' 'neath the lake... for you see, over time, the sacrificed women fed Sally's decaying corpse... and one night she awoke, transformed into a giant catfish, the largest one of them all. Catfish Sally. She was a fish most of the time, but under the full moon she turned back into a woman. And when she saw what the men had done to all those poor, innocent women, she swore her revenge... she vowed she'd wait until the next night fish... she'd tug on their lines...

(MORE)

ANNAMAE (cont'd)  
 they'd reel her in, and once she'd  
 climb into their boats and gasped in  
 shock at the sight of the woman  
 they'd caught, that's when she'd open  
 up her big ol' mouth and swallow 'em  
 whole... Every. Last. One.

A beat as she finishes her story.

(62) ANNAMAE (cont'd)  
 See? Now THAT'S how you end a story.

(63) ODIE  
 (Impressed)  
 Wow...

Jeb takes another swig of hooch.

(64) JEB  
 Yeah, that was alright, I guess.

(65) ANNAMAE  
 You guess?? That was amazing. I gave  
 myself chills tellin' that.

(66) ODIE  
 I sure wish I could tell a story as  
 purdy as you, Annamae.

(67) ANNAMAE  
 Why, thank you.

(68) JEB  
 You're too easily impressed, Odie.

(69) ODIE  
 Do you really think Catfish Sally's  
 swimmin' underneath this lake?

(70) JEB  
 You dummy, it's a story! She made it  
 up. None of it's real.

(71) ODIE  
 She got some of it right.

(72) JEB  
 (Under his breath)  
 Shut. Up. Odie.

(73) ANNAMAE  
 What are you talking about?

- (74) ODIE  
Oh shoot. I done goofed now.
- (75) ANNAMAE  
What do you mean I got some of it right?
- (76) JEB  
Why do I even take you anywhere, Odie?
- (77) ODIE  
I'm sorry, Jeb, I didn't mean to, it just slipped.
- (78) ANNAMAE  
What are y'all blabberin' about?
- (79) JEB  
Well... you see... you did get part of your story right, Annamae... the fish on this here lake do seem to have an appetite for lady flesh... Why'd you think we invite you out here in the first place?
- (80) ANNAMAE  
...what?
- (81) ODIE  
We's gonna use you as bait heh heh heh heh.
- (82) ANNAMAE  
No...
- (83) JEB  
'Fraid so, Annamae... You're story's 'bout to come to fruition.
- (84) ANNAMAE  
No!
- (85) JEB  
No point puttin' up a fight. This is just the way it is... a time-honored tradition one might say.
- (86) ANNAMAE  
(Breaking into tears)  
Screw your tradition, I'm a person!

(87) ODIE  
Aw, don't cry Annamae... I'll always  
remember your story long as I live...

(88) JEB  
It'll all be over soon. Now, Odie!  
Grab her!

They grapple with her as she struggles.

(89) ODIE  
Hold still, Annamae! We's gonna throw  
you o'er the side!

Annamae's tears slowly turn into laughter, soft at first,  
then full throated.

(90) JEB  
What's so funny?? Shoot, you gonna  
die, girl!

(91) ANNAMAE  
You boys clearly weren't paying  
attention to the story...

(92) JEB  
...what do you mean?

(93) ANNAMAE  
Don't you remember? Catfish Sally  
turns into a real woman when the full  
moon glows. A real woman set on  
revenge.

(94) JEB  
Yeah, but we ain't never caught  
ourselves no catfish woman, and we  
ain't 'bout to start now.

(95) ANNAMAE  
You already have.

(96) ODIE  
...YOU?

(97) JEB  
That's impossible. We've known you  
half our lives.

(98) ANNAMAE  
Yes, I'm always in town three days  
outta the month. You don't find that  
strange?

(99) ODIE  
I always thought you was a travellin'  
saleswoman.

(100) ANNAMAE  
You said it yourself, Jeb. My middle  
name is Sally. Catfish Sally. Every  
summer during the full moons I seek  
vengeance against those who drowned  
me. Tonight, that's y'all. Now hold  
still, I'm hungry, and Imma fancy  
myself a midnight snack.

Jeb and Odie scream in terror as Annamae opens up her mouth  
and swallows them whole...

CROSSFADE

3 EXT. CAMPFIRE - SAME AS BEFORE

3

Peaceful, Crackling fire.

(101) STUMPY  
Heeheeheehee! Yessir, that Cat fish  
Sally sure had a mighty appetite for  
dishonorable men. Funny thing is, now  
that I've told that story, I don't  
fancy myself that hungry anymore.  
Good stories have a way of satisfying  
cravings. Next time you go night  
fishin', whatever you do DO NOT throw  
anyone overboard. They might come  
back to swallow you whole! Anywhoo, I  
reckon it's about time I hit the hay.  
Y'all are welcome to stay here for  
the night of course. Don't worry,  
there ain't nothin' out here that'll  
eat you up tonight... not unless 'em  
Jackrabbits get hungry for a midnight  
snack.

Stumpy cackles.

(102) STUMPY (cont'd)  
Nighty night.

The fire continues to crackle as Stumpy, cackling, walks  
away into the night.

FADE INTO:

END TITLES AND  
MUSIC

THE END