JACKSON

ALASKA

by

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. ALASKA - THE HIGH ARCTIC - DAY 1 *

A vast expanse of solitude and light; a land of elements: snow, ice, rock, wind. The sun travels almost horizontally around the dome of the sky. Then, moving across the ice: *

1A A POLAR BEAR 1A*

approaches. The largest land carnivore on earth. Massive and graceful, she glides swiftly over the ice, a creature of legend, impossibly white, her long neck swivelling this way and that, breath smoking, sniffing out enemies or prey. Then we see: *

1B ON A SNOWY HILLSIDE 1B*

a small WHITE PAW punches out from under the snow... carves out a HOLE... A BLACK NOSE pokes into view... it's a YOUNG POLAR BEAR. He struggles to pull himself out... no luck... *

THE MOTHER BEAR appears outside the hole... reaches down and grabs the Young Bear by the scruff of the neck... lifts him out into the open... PLOPS him down onto the snow... lumbers down the hillside... she peers back up the hill... *

The Young Bear stares at his mother below... studies the steep downward SLOPE. Reluctantly, he starts toward his Mother... suddenly, he slips and SLIDES downhill... *

2 YOUNG BEAR'S P.O.V. 2

As he CAREENS down the snowy slope... tumbles <u>under</u> his Mother's legs... somersaults headfirst into a SNOW DRIFT...

3 MOTHER BEAR 3

watches her son as he WRIGGLES out of the snow... she SHAKES her head... the kid's got a <u>lot</u> to learn. Suddenly the mother bear looks up as:

3A A YELLOW SUPER CUB 3A*

the quintessential bush plane, blasts overhead and we: *

BEGIN MAIN TITLES and *

CUT TO:

4 INT. SUPER CUB - DAY 4

THE ARCTIC HORIZON REFLECTS OFF A PAIR OF AVIATOR SUNGLASSES. We PULL BACK to see the pilot, JAKE BARNES, a rugged forty year old. He takes in God's splendor around him.

4A THRU 4D OMITTED 4A THRU 4D

5 EXT. ALASKA RANGE - DAY - AIR TO AIR 5

The tallest, most majestic PEAKS in North America... massive granite SPIRES piercing the crystalline BLUE SKY... utterly breathtaking.

5A EXT. THE SUPER CUB - AIR TO AIR 5A

soars past the snow-capped peaks, framed by this visual feast of nature's glory. As we follow the Cub through the spires:

5B EXT./INT. SUPER CUB - DAY 5B

The plane's radio crackles to life as Jake pilots through the mountains.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Quincy Air Service to Super Cub Niner Zero Niner Tango, do you copy?

Jake talks into his RADIO HEADSET as...

JAKE
Roger that, Quincy Air. Read you crystal clear.

CHARLIE *
How was Nome? *

JAKE *
Balmy. They were having a heat wave. *
Almost hit freezing. *

CHARLIE (V.O.)
That's a long haul, Jake. How you * holding up? *

JAKE *
A little ragged after <u>five</u> hours. *
You know, Charlie, I tried to kick * her into Auto-Pilot, take a little * nap, but she kept banking into a * vicious roll. *

(CONTINUED)

5B (CONTINUED) 5B

Charlie chuckles. *

CHARLIE (V.O.)
That's my fault, Jake.. I put your * Auto-Pilot in my helicopter. It's * out running some errands for me now. *

JAKE
(grinning) *
You scoundrel. Now I'm gonna have to * stay awake, stare at the view. *

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Sorry, partner. Still on schedule? *

JAKE *
You bet. ETA Quincy is...about 1700. *

CHARLIE *
See ya in a couple hours, partner. *
This is Quincy Air Service, clear.

Jake moves the stick hard over and:

5B (CONTINUED) 5B

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Sounds great. What's your ETA? You still on schedule?

JAKE
Ah, roger that. My ETA is around 1700 hours. See you then, Charlie. Cub Three Niner Echo clear.

CHARLIE
Okydoke, partner. This is Quincy Air, clear.

5C EXT. ALASKA RANGE - THE SUPER CUB 5C

banks hard and THUNDERS toward another MOUNTAIN RANGE in the distance... and we go back to:

5D EXT. ARCTIC SHORELINE - DAY 5D

Ice floes UNDULATE on the sea... the Mother Bear pads across the frozen terrain, followed by the Young Bear... accidentally, he KICKS a piece of ICE... it SKITTERS along... the Young Bear stops... this looks interesting...

As the Mother Bear lumbers over a RISE, the Young Bear sticks around to play a spirited game of ICE HOCKEY... slapping the piece of ice around with gusto... worthy of the N.H.L

5E A LONG SHOT - THE MOTHER BEAR 5E

ambling along... she STANDS and sniffs the air... we FOCUS to see we're looking through a RIFLE SCOPE, the cross-hairs on the polar bear... we PULL BACK to see...

5F A MAN 5F

crouched behind a rock... rifle butt jammed against shoulder... his name is PERRY...and the polar bear is now REFLECTED IN THE LENSE OF THE RIFLE-SCOPE. A sleek, dark grey BELL JET RANGER is parked on a ridge in the b.g. His partner and guide, a local named KOONTZ, crouches behind him.

PERRY
Outstanding, Mr. Koontz... She must go eight, nine hundred pounds, at least.

KOONTZ
More like nine-fifty. Ain't she a beauty?

(CONTINUED)

5F (CONTINUED) 5F

PERRY *
Magnificent creature, the polar bear... *
Nature's perfect carnivore, adapted *
to the most hostile climate on earth. *

KOONTZ *
Oughta fetch us ten, maybe twenty *
grand, just for the skin. God, I love *
this kinda huntin'. *

PERRY *
The trouble with you, Mr. Koontz, is *
you have no appreciation for the finer *
things in life. *
(locks in on the target) *
Hunting is when you don't use a *
helicopter. Hunting is when you don't *
have to put up with people such as *
yourself. No. This.... *
(levers a shell into *
the chamber) *
...is business. *

Perry's finger SQUEEZES the trigger... BLAM! and we *

CUT TO:

6 THE YOUNG POLAR BEAR 6 *

as he reacts suddenly to the distant sound of the shot, and we *

CUT TO:

6A EXT. ALASKA COASTAL WATERS - DAY 6A

Smooth as glass... the silver water reflects wondrous snow-capped SPIRES stretching toward the SKY. TWO KAYAKS slice across, RIPPLING the mountain's REFLECTED IMAGE...

6B A GIRL 6B

in one kayak -- JESSIE BARNES, one firecracker of a 12 year-old. She rhythmically drives her PADDLE into the water, wide-eyed as she takes in her surroundings...

(CONTINUED)

6B (CONTINUED) 6B

In the other kayak is her friend, CHIP, a 13 year-old native boy... *

6C EXT. A SEA LION ROCK 6C*

Granite carved by a thousand years of waves... a pack of sea lions cavorts on the rocks as the KIDS guide their kayaks past the sea lion rookery... Then they look up to see... * * *

7 EXT. QUINCY - DAY 7

Welcome to QUINCY, ALASKA... home to 759 hearty souls. A solitary outpost about as far in the middle of nowhere you can go and still have a zip code. A fishing village... docks cluttered with net-lined BOATS... houses on FLOATS and STILTS...

END TITLE SEQUENCE

7A JESSIE AND CHIP 7A

sitting in the water, gazing at Quincy...

JESSIE
Race you back to shore.

CHIP
Think you can handle it? *

She considers the distance... peers at Chip...

JESSIE
Well... it is a long way.

Out of nowhere, she SHOVES her paddle into the water - splashing him, nearly capsizing him... GIGGLING, she paddles away... *

JESSIE (cont'd)
Last one back buys the ice cream!

Smiling, Chip steadies himself...

CHIP
I wanna start again! *

He takes off after her... and the race is on!

7B A GRINNING JESSIE 7B

driving her paddle through the water... she's good, churning through the current... then out of the corner of her eye, she

(CONTINUED)

7B (CONTINUED) 7B

spots the BOW of Chip's kayak as he catches up... her grin disappears as Chip FLICKS a paddle full of water on her face...

CHIP
Now we're even.

They both crack up and paddle on...

7C EXT. ON THE SHORE - KAYAK SHOP 7C

all kinds of kayaks propped up against a WORK SHED. The proprietor, CHIP'S FATHER, is putting the finishing touches on a new TWO MAN ALEUT BAIDARKA he's built... snow white, it is a thing of speed and beauty. He hears Chip and Jessie LAUGHING... he turns and SMILES as they head for shore...

7D SHORELINE 7D

The two kayaks glide up onto the beach... the kids huffing and puffing out of breath...

JESSIE
I won!

CHIP
You nuts? Anybody could see I won.

Chip's Father steps up...

CHIP'S FATHER
I'd say it was a tie.

The kids peer at each other...

CHIP/JESSIE
Okay, tie.

CHIP'S FATHER
She's getting pretty good, Chip.

CHIP
Yeah, not bad for a girl. *

Jessie springs out of her kayak, oblivious to the fact she's ankle high in water...

JESSIE
We paddled past the sea lion colony. And we surfed some waves out by the islands. It was awesome!

(CONTINUED)

7D (CONTINUED) 7D

CHIP'S FATHER
I don't know, Chip. You must be some teacher. I think she's hooked.

Chip stares at Jessie... obviously smitten by her...

CHIP
Yeah.

Chip's Father SMILES and pulls the kayaks up on shore...

8 THRU 22 OMITTED 8 THRU 22

22A EXT. QUINCY DOCK - DAY 22A*

Chip and Jessie walking side by side down the busy fishing docks of QUINCY. Fishermen unload their catch from a fishing boat nearby. *

JESSIE
Hey, Chip, you wanna come over tonight and have dinner?

Chip's eyes POP open with excitement...

CHIP
Well, yeah.

Chip grins... his walk has a little extra bounce to it... then his smile CRUMPLES...

CHIP (cont'd)
Aw, man, I can't. I gotta help my grandfather at the store 'coz we're leaving first thing in the morning.

JESSIE
Where you going?

CHIP
On a caribou hunt. Everybody goes this time of year. My grandfather, my uncles, my cousins... it's like this ritual. I go out a boy, come back a man. *

JESSIE *
Good. *

Chip smiles, slows to a stop... *

(CONTINUED)

22A (CONTINUED) 22A

CHIP
I'd rather just stay home and watch TV. *

Then Jessie's watch alarm BEEPS... she checks the time...

JESSIE
Oh my God, I'm late. *

CHIP
Late for what?

Jessie calls out over her shoulder as she sprints away...

JESSIE
I'll see you when you get back, Chip.

23 OMITTED 23

24 EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE DOCKS - DAY 24 *

Jessie tears past a line of FISHING BOATS... hurdling ROPES and HOSES...

A burly fisherman, BURL, and his BOAT MATES work the controls on Burl's FISHING TRAWLER... they guide a CONTAINER full of squirming FISH over the dock... Jessie races up and barely DUCKS under the net...

BURL
Hey, watch it Jessie! *

Just as the container opens, DUMPING the fish onto the deck...

25 OMITTED 25 *

26 EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY 26

A Native woman, MRS. BEN, SWEEPS the wood-planked walkway. * Jessie SPRINTS by, leaping over the BROOM...

JESSIE
Hi, Mrs. Ben. *

BEN, an ancient Eskimo, appears in the doorway shaking his * head.

BEN *
That girl is always in a hurry. *

As she disappears, Mrs. Ben smiles...

(CONTINUED)

26 (CONTINUED) 26

MRS. BEN
(at Jessie)
Boots!

27 EXT. BARNES HOUSE - DAY 27

Jessie sprints down the gangway toward a STILT HOUSE on the water... stops to remove her boots before entering:

28 INT. BARNES HOUSE - DAY 28

Rustic, but livable. The front door flies open and Jessie barrels inside...

29 OMITTED 29

30 LIVING ROOM 30

Jessie zips by... plops in front of an elaborate AVIATION RADIO SET, with a large Aviation chart on the wall above. Her hands fly, flipping SWITCHES... then studies her watch...

JESSIE
Three... two... one...

The radio CRACKLES to life... We intercut:

JAKE (V.O.)
This is Super Cub Niner Zero Niner Tango to Home Fire. Do you read me, over?

Jessie beams and jams a piece of BUBBLE GUM into her mouth... picks up the radio MICROPHONE and clicks in...

JESSIE
You're right on time, Dad.

JAKE (V.O.)
Aviator rule number one...

JESSIE
A pilot sticks to his schedule.

She POPS a gum bubble and studies the map...

30 (CONTINUED) 30

JESSIE (cont'd)
What're your numbers?

JAKE (V.O.)
Left Nome at 11:55. Course 170 degrees magnetic. Average air speed 120 knots. Winds aloft: estimate 25 knots from 277 degrees.

Jessie measures an angle on a large MAP OF ALASKA on the wall above the radio, then punches the numbers into an AVIATOR'S CALCULATOR.

She POPS a gum bubble as she runs her finger down a LONG RULER on the map, clicks on the radio again.

JESSIE
You should just be hitting...Devil's Thumb.

31 INT. JAKE'S PLANE/MOUNTAINS - CONTINUOUS 31

Jake peers out the window, smiles at seeing...

JAKE
That's a roger.

Outside the window, there it is...

32 DEVIL'S THUMB 32

A glacier carved SPIRE of jagged rock... the mountain utterly dwarfs the Super Cub, framed against the magnificent backdrop of snow and granite...

JESSIE (V.O.)
But I suggest you go around it.

33 INT. SUPER CUB - CONTINUOUS 33

Jake grins, clicks on. *

JAKE
Whatever you say, Sweetheart. Dinner smells good from here. Is your brother helping you like I asked him to? *

JESSIE (V.O.)
That's a big negative, Niner Echo.

JAKE
Well? Where is he? *

34 INT. BARNES HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 34

Jessie looks around, pops a bubble. She clicks on to answer.

JESSIE
My guess is he's probably out shooting the rapids. Or wrestling Grizzly Bears. You know. Just being the Alaskan Mountain Man we know and love.

CUT TO:

35 "STREET FIGHTER" THE VIDEO GAME 35

Video THUGS wailing on each other. In the REFLECTION of the game, we see thirteen year-old, SEAN BARNES... CHICAGO CUBS CAP jammed on his head backward... definitely not a native Alaskan. We PULL BACK to see we're...

36 INSIDE/GENERAL STORE 36

Sells everything from potato chips to shotguns... country music on a tinny RADIO. Sean frantically works the video game buttons, but no luck -- GAME OVER. He spins away from the game... peers outside... he's waiting for something...

He paces around the store... passes by a COUNTER display of hand-crafted figurines -- all of them BALD EAGLES. Almost a shrine to the magnificent bird...

Oblivious as he stares out the window, Sean moves toward the end of the counter... suddenly, a loud SCREECH splits the air... frightened, Sean stumbles back into a rack of POTATO CHIPS. He stares up in amazement... at the end of the counter is a BALD EAGLE!

BALD EAGLE
Sqquuuaaaawwwk!

Sean doubles back into the cookies, nearly knocking down the entire shelf.

OLD BEN barely looks up as he sorts the MAIL while his wife, MRS. BEN, shakes her head behind the counter.

BEN
Don't worry. His squawk is much bigger than his bite. *

MRS. BEN
I wish you would leave that darn bird at home.

(CONTINUED)

36 (CONTINUED) 36

MRS. BEN (cont'd)
You can't keep a small dog? Or a parakeet?

Ben comes out from behind the counter, where he was sorting the mail. *

BEN
Don't say that in front of him.
(grinning)
You're making him hungry.

Old Ben pets the bird's head, feeds him scraps from a CAN OF MEAT which the bird devours with relish.

Sean watches, distracted for a moment from the mail.

SEAN
Um. Can you just sort out any mail for me from Chicago? *

But before Sean can finish his sentence, the large bird flaps its wings sending LETTERS flying everywhere.

SEAN (cont'd)
Hey!!! Easy there, big boy. *

Sean picks some off the floor, check their addresses. Old Ben takes the letters from Sean, looks at him closely, whispers.

BEN
(gesturing to the eagle)
He was there, you know. *

Sean looks around.

SEAN
Where?

BEN
In the great fires of 1935, up on the Yukon River.

MRS. BEN
You're getting younger. Last week it was 1929.

BEN
I was a very young man, hunting alone... *

(CONTINUED)

36 (CONTINUED) (2) 36

Sean, frustrated by the slow rate of mail sorting, notices Mrs. Ben rolling her eyes up into her head, pretending to tip over at hearing this again.

BEN (cont'd)
...when the forest fire jumped the ridge. The winds were high and the flames were moving faster than I could run. There was no way out of the fire storm and I prayed to die quickly. *

Old Ben steps closer to Sean who steps back in turn, eyes the pile of unsorted mail.

BEN (cont'd)
Then, I looked up and through the * smoke I saw... an eagle, flying in a * circle. Something said to me, trust * the eagle. Well, he flew through the * smoke and I followed. The heat seared * my face. My feet burned but I kept looking at the eagle, until the sky was clear and the fire was behind me.

Old Ben continues sorting the mail. Sean looks at the BIRD skeptically.

SEAN
You been watching too much TV. He was just trying to get away from the smoke, that's all.

Old Ben looks shocked, surprised as if he'd never thought of that before.

BEN
(to the eagle)
Was that it? You were trying to get away from the smoke?! And all this time I thought you were my Tornak. *

SEAN
Tornak? *

MRS. BEN *
He means his pet. *

BEN *
My spirit guide. He's free to leave, * any time he likes.

SEAN
You got any mail for me or not?

(CONTINUED)

36 (CONTINUED) (3) 36

BEN
(smiles sympathetically) *
Sorry. Not today, Sean.

Sean simmers at the thought, backs out of the store.

He slings the door open just as Chip enters... shoulders past Chip and exits.

CHIP
Hey, Grampa. What's the matter with him? *

Ben stares at Sean through the window... shakes his head sadly.

37 AND 38 OMITTED 37 AND 38

39 EXT. DOCKS - QUINCY - DAY 39

Sean walks down the dock, depressed, his hands deep in his pockets.

But life goes on in Quincy, no one pays much attention to this displaced city boy.

Sean stops at seeing some TEENAGERS-his age, older and younger-grabbing fishing gear and loading up a SMALL BOAT as if it were the most exciting thing in their lives.

Sean continues, kicks over a FISH BUCKET filled mostly with water.

He kicks over a small TRASH CONTAINER in front of the Fueling Station. A QUART OF OIL pops out, spills over the dock.

A blast of WIND knocks his CAP off. Sean lunges for it as it tumbles to the ground... picks it up and angrily brushes dirt from the Chicago Cubs insignia...

SEAN
I'm stuck in the boonies.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Well, you're stuck in somethin'..

Sean turns to see SGT.GRAZER, an Alaskan State Trooper, staring hard at Sean over his sunglasses, flicking a TOOTHPICK around his mouth as he picks up the spilled OIL CAN.

(CONTINUED)

39 (CONTINUED) 39

GRAZER
...but trust me, it ain't the boonies.

CUT TO:

39A EXT. GLACIER - "ICE GORGE" -- DAY 39A

A panorama of CLIFFS sloping into a narrow gorge; on one side, a wall of white GLACIAL ICE...on the other, steep GRANITE WALLS. The SUPER CUB SIDESLIPS through and:

39B EXT. FJORD -- DAY 39B

The Super Cub veers through a mammoth Fjord, skimming over water and chunks of ice...banks and heads out over the COASTAL SEA.

39C EXT. COASTAL ISLANDS -- DAY 39C

The Super Cub buzzes low past ISLANDS thick with trees.

40 THRU 42 OMITTED 40 THRU 42

43 INSIDE/JAKE'S AIRPLANE 43

Jake peers out the front windshield... spots Quincy up ahead...

44 EXT. LANDING DOCK - DAY 44

Crossing to the landing dock, 39 year old CHARLIE tugs at his worn AIR FORCE FLIGHT JACKET... he watches Jake's Super Cub fight a crosswind, YAWING back and forth... *

Jake expertly brings the plane to a landing, its FLOATS churning up water as it glides to a stop... Charlie ties the plane to the dock with a ROPE... Jake pops open the door...

CHARLIE
Nice landing, Jake. That's a stiff crosswind. *

JAKE
Any landing you can walk away from is a good one.

CHARLIE
That's what Amelia Erhardt said. Right before she and her airplane disappeared... * * *

They swap a smile, then start UNLOADING goods from the plane... *

(CONTINUED)

44 (CONTINUED) 44

JAKE
Listen, compared to landing a 747 bucking like a bronco in a Chicago snowstorm where you can't even see the runway and, most importantly, you can't spill the drinks in first class... this kind of flying's a piece of cake.

CHARLIE
Sounds to me like you miss it.

JAKE
Not for a second.

Jake ducks back inside the SUPER CUB... Inside the cockpit, Jake's eyes fall on a PHOTOGRAPH on the dash... Jake, Sean, Jessie... and a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN. The photo couldn't be more than a year old. Jake stares at it... Charlie studies him...

He snaps out of his reverie... yanks a package outside...

44 (CONTINUED) (2) 44

JAKE (cont'd)
Up here Charlie, I fly in wide open skies, beautiful scenery, and besides... what pilot wouldn't be satisfied with the important work he does for his community?

He plops the package into Charlie's arms... it's filled with rolls of TOILET PAPER. Charlie grins...

CHARLIE
The citizens of Quincy are forever in your debt.

The dock phone RINGS... Jake picks up the receiver...

JAKE
Hello? Yeah, this is Jake Barnes...

Jake's face clouds over...

45 OMITTED 45

46 INT. ALASKA STATE TROOPER'S OFFICE - DAY 46

Not Mayberry, but a far cry from L.A.P.D. A lone secretary, FLORENCE, pecks out a report on an old manual TYPEWRITER.

Sean sits in a chair, waiting, watching as TROOPER HARVEY, his legs kicked up on his desk, spits SUNFLOWER SEEDS into a trash can. Next to him, Grazer sorts through some papers.

GRAZER
We got three notes here from your school. They say you haven't dropped by in over a week.

Harvey raises his eyebrows, grins.

SEAN
(simmering)
It's not a school. It's a beat-up old trailer with a flag in front.

HARVEY
A truant and a vicious kicker of trash cans. Maybe we should cuff him to the dock with a sign: Big-City Juv-e-nile Delinquent.

Harvey spits some seeds into the can... PLUNK!

(CONTINUED)

46 (CONTINUED) 46

GRAZER
Now that's something folks might pay to see.

SEAN
Hey, I was born in Anchorage. My dad was in the Air Force there till I was three.

HARVEY
You? A native Alaskan?

Sean nods. Grazer steps over, unconvinced

GRAZER
Hold out your hands.

Sean does. Grazer turns them over, inspects them.

GRAZER (cont'd)
My wife would kill for hands this soft.

Sean pulls back his hands. He knows when he's being insulted. Grazer grins.

GRAZER (cont'd)
Well. At least you'll look like a real Alaskan by the time you finish scrubbing the oil off the dock.

Grazer tosses Sean a TINY TOOTHBRUSH.

SEAN
With *this*? It'll take forever!

GRAZER
(playing serious)
Just long enough for you to appreciate the fragility of our delicate eco-system.

Sean looks at the meager cleaning tool in his hand, looks back at Grazer and Harvey. They bust a smile, can't help but laugh.

On cue, the door CHIMES open... it's Jake...

(CONTINUED)

46 (CONTINUED) (2) 46

GRAZER (cont'd)
Hey, Jake. *

JAKE *
Sorry about this, Sheriff. *

Jake peers at Sean... the boy can't bear to look his father in the eyes. An awkward silence fills the station... * *

JAKE (cont'd) *
Can he go now? *

Grazer pardons him with a nod and a backhanded wave. *

GRAZER
Go on. Get outta here. *

JAKE
C'mon, Sean.

Sean reluctantly stands up... still avoids eye contact with Jake... shuffles toward the door...

47 EXT. DOCKS - DAY 47

Tracking with Jake and Sean as they walk home down the now deserted docks.

SEAN
I think I'm ready to go home now.

JAKE
We are going home.

SEAN
I mean Chicago. I hate it here.

Jake sighs... he knows where this is going...

JAKE
Look, I know this move's been tough. But sometimes people just need to make a fresh start.

(CONTINUED)

47 (CONTINUED) 47

SEAN
Well, I didn't.

48 EXT. JAKE'S HOME DOCK - DAY 48

They walk up to the front of the Barnes' house...Sean leans on the rail, stares out to sea.

JAKE
Stay with it, Sean. It'll get better. *
I guarantee it. *

Jake PATS Sean's shoulder, trying to encourage him...

JAKE (cont'd)
What did your mom say to you after you struck out ten times in a row that year?

Sean winces... he's heard this routine too many times. *

SEAN
Never give up, never give up,

SEAN & JAKE
...never give up. *

JAKE *
Well? Do I have to drag out that big *
batting trophy you won the next year? *

SEAN *
That's little league. This is life. *

Sean turns and strides up the RAMP toward the house slamming * the door. The sky darkens, dark CLOUDS swallowing up the SUN...

49 INT. BARNES HOUSE - DAY 49

Jake, Jessie and Sean at the table. Jessie serves them poached salmon. Sean's sulking and doesn't take a bite...

JESSIE
I guess offering seconds would be a waste of time.

(CONTINUED)

49 (CONTINUED) 49

JAKE
It's delicious, Jessie... I brought something for you guys, from Nome.

Jake reaches into his jacket pocket takes out two small tissue wrapped packages, passes them to Sean and Jessie... Jessie opens hers first: It's an Eskimo carving of a SEAL, in soap stone. She smiles with delight at the simple figure.

JESSIE
Thanks dad. It's beautiful.

Then Sean opens his: It's a COMPASS, an elaborate orienteering model. He's not impressed.

SEAN
Gee thanks, Dad. A compass... What am I going to do with a compass?

JAKE
You might try finding your way with it, for a start.

The thick silence returns...

JESSIE
Chip and I went Sea Kayaking nearly eight miles up the coast today.

SEAN
Oooooh. Eight miles. Stop the Presses.

JESSIE
His dad says I'm a really fast learner. *

JAKE
That's great, honey. I'll have to * start teaching you to rock climb pretty * soon. *

Jessie GRINS happily... Jake SMILES at her... Sean looks at Jake and Jessie in disbelief...

SEAN
What's wrong with you guys?

JESSIE
Don't start.

Sean FLINGS his fork onto his plate...

(CONTINUED)

49 (CONTINUED) (2) 49

SEAN
Dad. C'mon! You said we'd try it here and if it didn't work out for us, as a family, we'd move back to Chicago. *

Jessie is uncomfortable with this conflict. Jake shrugs, a last attempt to put this off. *

JAKE *
Give it a chance, Sean. *

SEAN *
It's been six months! *

JAKE
Well, I don't think we're doing too * badly. We've got our own business * going, waterfront property, room to * breathe, and-- *

SEAN *
Dad. You used to fly 747's. Now you're delivering toilet paper.

Jake smiles, a little embarrassed.

Sean stares angrily at his father, then looks to his sister. No help there. The phone RINGS... Jake answers it.

JAKE
(on the phone)
Hey Charlie. Uh-huh. Right... Up in * Douglas? Get the ampicilin from the * clinic and I'll meet you on the dock in fifteen minutes.

Jake hangs up...starts gathering up his things...

(CONTINUED)

49 (CONTINUED) (3) 49

JAKE (cont'd)
I gotta make an emergency run up to Douglas. They got five kids laid up with pneumonia.

JESSIE
Dad, you just got home!

JAKE
Come on Jessie,if you or Sean got sick...

JESSIE
But it's getting dark.

JAKE
(touched by her concern)
There's plenty of daylight left, pumpkin.

Jake heads for the front door...

SEAN
Maybe I won't be here when you get back! Maybe I'll just buy myself a one-way ticket back to Chicago.

JAKE
I don't have time for this, Sean.

Sean SCREECHES his chair back from the table...

SEAN
Mom would've had time.

This stops Jake cold...

SEAN (cont'd)
She would never have moved us here in the first place.

JESSIE
Stop it, Sean!

SEAN
No!

Sean stalks toward his Dad...

SEAN (cont'd)

None of this would be happening if she was still here.

(CONTINUED)

49 (CONTINUED) (4) 49

JAKE
But, Sean... she's not here. I'm sorry, but nothing you or any of us can do will change that. We all miss her just as much as you do, but we've just got to get on with our lives as best we can. You know that's what she would have--

SEAN
Well, I wish you had died instead of mom!

Sean's face red, fighting back TEARS... the statement slices through the air, stabbing Jake in the heart... his face TREMBLES with hurt, then he collects himself...

JAKE
Jessie, I'll radio at nine tonight, sharp. I'm taking Devils Thumb pass.

He turns and strides outside... the door BANGS shut... distant THUNDER rumbles through the sky...

50 EXT. LANDING DOCK - DAY 50

Jake behind the stick of the Super Cub about to start the engine... Charlie loads boxes of medical supplies, secures the doors...

CHARLIE
That's a bad storm brewing out there.

He NODS in the distance toward the mountains... THUNDERCLOUDS billow into the sky.

JAKE
I'll sneak her through before it hits.

Charlie SLAMS the door shut... Jake CRANKS up the engine...

51 EXT. QUINCY - DAY (STORM SKY) - JAKE'S SUPER CUB 51

takes off from the water and veers HIGH into the air...

52 INT. SUPER CUB - DAY 52

As Jake passes over Quincy, he glances down... spots Jessie WAVING to him from the front porch... no sign of Sean. In the distance, STORM CLOUDS gather...

CUT TO:

52A EXT. DOCK - JESSIE 52A

Watching her father fly into the storm looking doubtful.

53 THRU 61 OMITTED 53 THRU 61

61A EXT. ISLANDS / INT. HELICOPTER - LATE DAY 61A*

Thunder RUMBLES as the dark clouds make it feel closer to night than day... a dark grey HELICOPTER churns upstream...

At the stick, KOONTZ. PERRY rides shotgun. *

61A1 OMITTED 61A1*

61B EXT. FJORD - AN ENCAMPMENT - LATE DAY 61B

Koontz flairs, lands the chopper... Perry grabs his rifle and hops out with Koontz. *

61C OMITTED 61C

61D EXT. POACHER'S CAMP - CONTINUOUS 61D*

They contemplate the little bear, cramped in a tiny CAGE... scared... alone. Koontz with a big ear-to-ear grin... drags out a large POLAR BEAR SKIN from the chopper. *

KOONTZ
Figure it's a shame to separate mother and child. *

He snickers at his sick joke, which Perry ignores. The Bear WHIMPERS... pokes a paw through the cage, reaching out for its mother... *

KOONTZ (cont'd)
We could plump him up a bit, then we've got two furs to sell. Mama bear and baby bear, nice huh?

(CONTINUED)

61D (CONTINUED) 61D

Perry shakes his head at Koontz...

PERRY
You're a fool, Koontz. *

The Bear WHINES, desperately trying to stay close to its mother... Perry takes out an ANTIQUE LIGHTER, and lights a small cigar with it, contemplates the little bear with pleasure. * *

PERRY (cont'd) *
Do you have any idea what my contacts in Hong Kong will pay for a live polar bear cub?

Koontz shakes his head, his nascent greed reawakened.

PERRY (cont'd)
Higher than you can count.

KOONTZ
I can count pretty high. On both hands if I have to.

Perry smiles knowingly, evil.

PERRY
You'll have to.

The sound of an AIRPLANE approaching, coming up the gorge.

Perry holds up his hand for Koontz to stay still. Neither moves as they watch Jake's SUPER CUB PASS NEARBY.

PERRY (cont'd)
It's nothing. Just a puddle jumper.

Perry looks intently to Koontz. *

PERRY (cont'd)
Get this bear under cover. And put a net over the chopper. * *

Perry walks away, disappears into his tent. *

61E EXT. FJORD -- DUSK (STORM) 61E

The weather is looking worse and worse as the "little Piper Cub that could" makes its way up the fjord toward the mountains.

CUT TO:

62 INT. BARNES HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DUSK 62

Sheets of RAIN cascade against the ROOF, punctuated with LIGHTNING. "TRAP-LINE CHATTER", the radio bulletin board show, plays softly in the b.g. ("*Henrietta down in Ruby, says she got her moose, the dogs are okay, and she'll be coming up to the fish camp next week...*" etc.) A GALE WARNING for the Gulf of Alaska finishes the program, and Jessie shuts it off. *

Gnawing on bubble gum, Jessie turns to the AVIATION RADIO which is fired up and ready for action. She counts the seconds ticking away on her WATCH...

JESSIE
Three... two... one.

Her watch BEEPS... Jessie fingers the MICROPHONE, waiting for Jake to call... but nothing happens...

63 SEAN'S ROOM 63

Splayed in his chair, Sean bounces a nerf BALL off the ceiling... the storm winds HOWL outside. He glances at his clock... it FLICKS to 9:00...

He moves out of his chair... inches open his DOOR and peers into the living room... just STATIC on the radio...

64 LIVING ROOM 64

Jessie CLICKS the radio microphone on...

JESSIE
Home Fire to Three Niner Echo, come in. *

No response... Sean edges inside. The wind BANGS the front screen door shut...

SEAN
Aren't you gonna do anything about that banging? *

Jessie glances at the clock... 9:10. She tries to call again...

JESSIE
Do you read me Niner Echo? *

Nothing...

65 EXT. HOUSE - DUSK 65 *

Sean opens the front door... greeted by RAIN, LIGHTNING, and gusting WIND... the storm is a big one... *

66 INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 66 *

He tugs the screen door shut, then stares outside... the wind whips away into the darkening sky. He listens to Jessie's radio call again and slowly CLOSES the door. The room is filled with the eerie, crackling static...

CUT TO: *

67 EXT. MOUNTAINS - DUSK (STORM) 67

The weather has turned violent at this altitude... a howling gale whips SNOW horizontally across the sky... trapped in the middle of the storm is Jake's Super Cub...

68 INSIDE/JAKE'S SUPER CUB (STORM) 68 *

Jake struggles with the plane's controls... VISIBILITY out the windows is terrible... fleeting images of jagged MOUNTAIN CLIFFS behind ghostly clouds of blowing snow and the gathering gloom. He's on the RADIO...

JAKE
Home Fire, do you read me, over? *

Nothing but static... then: *

Jessie's voice crackles, terribly broken up. We INTERCUT BETWEEN JESSIE AND JAKE AS: * *

JESSIE (V.O.) *
(distant, on radio) *
Dad.....are.....there? *

JAKE
I'm here, Home Fire. I have less than * ideal visibility. I'm going to deviate * from the flight plan, try another * pass. Over. *

He pulls back on the STICK as Jessie's voice barely breaks through the ROAR of STATIC. * *

JESSIE *
Say again Dad?... I can't hear you, * over... *

69 EXT. DEVIL'S THUMB CANYON - DUSK (STORM) 69

The plane BANKS a hard right and heads into a one-eighty turn... barely avoiding the looming spire of DEVIL'S THUMB. The plane pitches into a steep DESCENT...

69A ANOTHER CANYON 69A

Jake's plane slips into another canyon, flying up toward another gap between the peaks... ominous ROCK WALLS on either side...

69B INT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 69B

Jessie has her face close to the radio, the MIKE in her sweating hand.

JESSIE
Dad? Dad! Are you there? OVER?!!

Nothing. Just roar of static.

JESSIE (cont'd)
Sean! I think something's wrong with dad.

SEAN
No kidding.

Her head even closer to the static. She calls again. *

JESSIE
Zero Niner Tango. Do you read me?

70 INT. SUPER CUB - NEAR DEVIL'S THUMB (STORM) 70

The STORM and TURBULENCE intensifies... Jake TAPS instruments on the panel... WIPES condensation from the window with his coat sleeve. He squints outside through the CLOUDS ahead... they part for just an instant revealing -- he's heading straight for the side of a MOUNTAIN!

Jake JERKS back on the STICK... pulls it with all his might as:

70A THE SUPER CUB 70A

Veers up and away from the mountain in a wicked HAMMERHEAD STALL, and:

70B JAKE - IN THE CUB 70B

fights to control the plane as it begins to SPIN toward the cliffs below.

JAKE
Mayday! Mayday! Niner Echo -- *

70C EXT./INT. SUPER CUB (STORM) 70C

The plane PLUNGES OUT OF CONTROL, twisting and turning through clouds, as the mountain zooms closer and closer and we:

CUT TO:

70D INT. BARNES HOUSE/LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT 70D

CLOSE ON - THE RADIO

as the STATIC peaks suddenly in pitch and volume - is it someone shouting? - then CLICKS off to an even SHHHHHHHH.

Jessie looks back to call her brother, but he is already standing in his doorway, trying not to look scared by what he's heard.

Jessie glances at the clock: it's 9:30pm.

DISSOLVE TO:

71 *ARCTIC DREAMLAND - DUSK* 71

NORTHERN LIGHTS dance and flicker in the vast sky... then the sound of footsteps... faster and faster... boots crunch the snow and: *

SEAN stumbles into view... frantically searching... but for what? We HEAR nothing but the sound of Sean's labored BREATHING... he stops... slowly turns around...

Now as he finishes his circle, he looks up... face to face with a POLAR BEAR! Sean tries to SCREAM... no sound... fear frozen in his throat...

Sean TUMBLES to the ground... he peers up at a FIGURE silhouetted against the STRANGE SKY... a HAND appears and helps Sean to his feet... the Figure pulls back the HOOD of his animal skin coat... it's BEN from the store... he SPEAKS in his native tongue, pointing over Sean's shoulder...

(CONTINUED)

71 (CONTINUED) 71

Sean turns around... the Bear rears up to its massive height and ROARS...

SMASH CUT TO:

72 INT. BARNES HOUSE/SEAN'S BEDROOM HOURS LATER - NIGHT 72

Sean bolts up in his bed, jerking awake from his nightmare... SWEAT streaked across his face. Gathering his senses, he glances at the clock... it's 3:00 AM...

73 THE LIVING ROOM 73

The STORM rages outside... the RADIO on, nothing but the dull HISS of static. Jessie stretched out, asleep on the couch... the fire has faded to glowing EMBERS...

Sean enters... stands there for a moment... then he hears the radio CLICK to life for a second. He eyes the radio... it CLICKS again. Sean's eyes grow wide... hurries to the desk... grabs the mike...

SEAN
This is Home Fire, do you read me, over. Dad, is that you?

A final CLICK... then static...

74 OMITTED 74

75 INT. STATE TROOPER'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY 75

The station's secretary, FLORENCE, is answering phone calls while TROOPER HARVEY comes in and out, loading up equipment onto his truck.

At the far end of the station, GRAZER listens to SEAN and JESSIE with a sympathetic but disbelieving stare.

SEAN
It was all fuzz after that, then it suddenly got louder and cut off...

GRAZER
And you're sure you recognized it as your father's voice shouting?

75 (CONTINUED) 75

SEAN
Yes. Well, no. But...

JESSIE
But I had just talked to him... He was headed for Devil's Thumb...

GRAZER
A lot of people use that channel, Jessie.

SEAN
He didn't check in after that, either.

GRAZER
Maybe he did and you didn't hear it... Florence --

But Florence is already dialing at her desk.

FLORENCE
Hi, Elvira. This is Florence, down in Quincy... did Jake Barnes come in last night?
(a beat)
Did he make contact by radio at all?

Grazer picks up the radio:

GRAZER
(simultaneously with Florence)
Super Cub Niner Zero Niner Tango, this is Quincy, over...
(checks his watch)
Zero Niner Tango, this is Quincy do you read, over?

Only ether static answers. Florence shakes her head to Grazer.

FLORENCE
(on phone)
Okay... Okay, thanks.
(softly, to Grazer)
They haven't seen him.

JESSIE
Sergeant Grazer, please...

As Florence hangs up, Grazer looks to Sean and Jessie more sympathetically, ominously. Then:

(CONTINUED)

75 (CONTINUED) (2) 75

GRAZER
All right, Florence. Call Search and Rescue at Elmendorf.

FLORENCE
After this storm? They'll be swamped.

The door chimes as CHARLIE enters the small station.

GRAZER
Hey, Charlie. You heard from Jake at all?

Charlie ominously shakes his head. Clearly, he's been worried himself.

CHARLIE
That's why I came to see you.

Seans face brightenes and we:

CUT TO:

76 EXT. FJORD/GLACIER - DAY 76

With a roar, Charlie's HELICOPTER sweeps past camera and over the water up the ICE GORGE then over COOGAN'S GLACIER.

77 INT. HELICOPTER - DAY 77

State Trooper HARVEY rides shotgun, scans the horizon with BINOCULARS as they pass over the massive glacier.

HARVEY
Nothing. Let's try Coogan's Pass.

The chopper veers toward the MOUNTAINS in the distance...

78 EXT. MOUNTAINS - NEAR DEVIL'S THUMB - DAY 78

The helicopter slices through the sky, gargantuan PEAKS looming on all sides.

78A INT. STATE TROOPER'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS 78A

The office is now bustling activity as the PEOPLE from the town look over maps and talk on the telephones. We hear over the RADIO.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Quincy this is Rescue One. No contact on Coogan's Pass.

Sean sits on a folding chair to the side - anxious, distraught - while Jessie makes distance calculations on a MAP OF ALASKA.

She punches some numbers into her flight calculator, then runs her finger over the MAP OF ALASKA.

JESSIE
He should be just past there! Near Devil's Thumb!

Sergeant Grazer looks skeptically across the room at Jessie with her finger on the map. He burns under Jessie's stare; he raises the mike to his mouth.

GRAZER
Be sure to take a good look around the Devil's Thumb area.

78A1 INT. HELICOPTER - DAY 78A

Charlie guides the aircraft toward a JUNCTION of two canyons... to one side, the familiar granite spire, DEVIL'S THUMB...

(CONTINUED)

78A1 (CONTINUED) 78A

Trooper Harvey scans the mountainsides with the binoculars.

HARVEY
That's a big negative on Devil's thumb.

78A2 INT. ALASKA STATE TROOPER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 78A

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Nothing but rocks and snow.

Sean and Jessie look distraught hearing that.

SEAN
No! He has to be there! They're not looking hard enough!

Grazer takes a deep exasperated breath, clicks on the radio again.

GRAZER
Why don't you guys take another pass. Just to be sure.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Ah, roger that. We're getting low on fuel, but we'll give it another look.

78B EXT. DEVIL'S THUMB - CONTINUOUS 78B

Charlie's HELICOPTER comes around again, VEERING back to the left (the way Jake tried to go), we leave it, instead BANKING to the right into the other canyon...

We WEAVE through the pass... now that we can see it clearly, the jutting ROCKS seem almost impenetrable... nothing but jagged CLIFFS...

But then we see a speck of YELLOW... we PUSH IN closer... there embedded precariously in the side of the mountain is the snow- covered WRECKAGE of a SUPER CUB -- Jake's plane, bent and battered... *

79 INT. JAKE'S PLANE - CONTINUOUS 79

Tilted onto its side facing DOWNHILL... the front WINDOW shattered... one door ripped off its hinges... SNOW drifts inside across strewn WRECKAGE. And then we see him -- JAKE! Sprawled in his seat, motionless in the still mountain silence...

At first, we think he's dead... BLOOD caked dry on his forehead, eyes SWOLLEN shut... then miraculously, his body STIRS. He hears something outside... the dull THUNK-THUNK of Charlie's helicopter on the other side of the peak... he forces his eyes open...

JAKE
Help. Help!

His hand FUMBLES around what's left of the cabin... each movement causes him to grimace with pain. Finally, he finds his FLARE GUN... drops the shells, finds one, his hand shaking, loads up...

80 OMITTED 80

81 EXT./INT. HELICOPTER 81 *

Charlie twists past a jagged CLIFF, obscuring their view. * Trooper Harvey shakes his head, clicks on his mike. *

CHARLIE *
Sergeant. We've seen a beer can, an * old boot, and a gum wrapper - but no * plane, thank God. *

81_1 INT. ALASKA STATE TROOPER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 81_

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Ah...We're gonna continue searching on up toward Douglas, and refuel. This is Rescue One, clear...

SEAN
No!

GRAZER
(with authority)
Sean!... That'll do.

Sgt. Grazer puts his hand on the boy's shoulder.

He looks compassionately at Jessie and Sean who still sits slumped in his chair.

GRAZER (cont'd)
Why don't you two go on back to the house? We'll call you when we've heard something. There's nothing you can do here.

Jessie takes a step back, still frustrated, but realizing the sad truth in what he's said.

81 (CONTINUED) 81

CHARLIE
If we don't get back to Quincy soon, they're gonna need to send a search party for us, too.

Charlie swoops the chopper into a U-turn...as: *

81A INT. JAKE'S PLANE - JAKE 81A*

turns to where his side window used to be, now blocked with snow...he SCOOPS out a hole, peers up into the blue sky, aims the gun...PFOOM! * * *

81A1 EXT. MOUNTAINS - WIDE ANGLE 81A1

In the extreme b.g., the flare arcs up and POOFS into a cloud of smoke as Charlie's chopper SWOOPS by in the foreground...No way they could have seen it. * * *

82 INT. JAKE'S PLANE 82 *

Jake hears the chopper DISAPPEAR into thick silence... he tries to pull up, but GROANS in pain... peers down... his leg is TWISTED, obviously broken. He wrenches his leg back to try to straighten it... pain SPASMS through his body...

83 EXT.JAKE'S PLANE - WIDE SHOT 83 *

Jake's SCREAM echoes against the mountain... *

WE MATCH DISSOLVE TO: *

83A EXT. JAKE'S PLANE - DUSK 83A*

We can just make out the yellow Super Cub teetering on the rocks above the huge precipice, dwarfed by the immensity of nature - a tiny light illuminates the cabin windows, a single spark of life in a howling wilderness of rock and ice... * * * *

83B INT. JAKE'S PLANE -- NIGHT 83B*

Jake turns his flash-light off to save the batteries. Pulls his parka around him, settles in for the long, cold night ahead... * * *

DISSOLVE TO: *

84 EXT. LANDING DOCK/OFFICE (QUINCY) - DAY 84 *

NEXT MORNING. Sean hurries up... about to enter when he hears VOICES from inside... *

(CONTINUED)

84 (CONTINUED) 84

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Well, we just can't write him off.

Sean edges around the door and peers in...

85 INT./EXT. LANDING DOCK OFFICE 85

Charlie and Grazer...

GRAZER
We're not writing anybody off, but we gotta face facts. Search Rescue has made three trips up to Devil's Thumb.

Sean inches in but stays back in the shadows...

GRAZER (cont'd)
You saw that storm. Nobody's picked up any signal from his emergency beacon.

CHARLIE
Maybe he set it down somewhere to wait it out, or...

Charlie doesn't want to finish the thought... Grazer does for him...

GRAZER
Or that plane's in a million pieces on the side of a mountain.

Sean leaps up and SCREAMS...

SEAN
I can't <u>believe</u> this!

Surprised, Charlie and Grazer whirl toward the boy...

SEAN (cont'd)
He's a survivor! He'd <u>cling</u> to life, no matter what, and you guys are just going to give up on him!

Sean turns and stalks outside...

CHARLIE
Sean, wait!

But the boy is gone...

CUT TO:

86 EXT. DOCK - DAY 86

Sean RUNNING... exhausted... angry... scared. Finally, he STUMBLES to the end of the dock... hands clasping his knees, he peers up... in the distance, the dim outline of a MOUNTAIN RANGE...just clearing the clouds... where Jake has gone. Sean stares at the mountains and:

87 INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - DAY 87

Sean throws a BACKPACK onto the bed - throws down a ROLLED-UP TENT from the closet along with some other camping equipment.

88 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY 88

JESSIE

lifts her head from where she sits on the floor, her back tight against the wall in an upright fetal position, the AVIATION CALCULATOR tight in her hand.

She wipes her eyes, watches as Sean rummages through the kitchen, pulling down cans and bags of food.

What?!?!

Her face reveals anger as she watches Sean carry the food back to be packed.

89 EXT. BARNES HOUSE - DAY 89

Sean throws his backpack out first, then drops from the window to the ground. He turns to start away only to bump into -- JESSIE! She's carrying her own backpack, with a climbing rope and other gear, lashed to the outside

JESSIE
Where are you going?

SEAN
Nowhere.

He marches away... Jessie follows...

JESSIE
For somebody who's going nowhere, you sure packed a lot.

Sean nods at Jessie's bulging BACKPACK... Sean just keeps walking...

(CONTINUED)

89 (CONTINUED) 89

SEAN
You're not exactly traveling light yourself.

JESSIE
This is stuff which might actually be useful trying to find dad. *

She waves the aviation chart and BINOCULARS in his face. *

SEAN
(stops)
No. No! You're not coming with me.

JESSIE
(keeps walking)
Why would I want to go with you?

Jessie marches past Sean, he catches up.

SEAN
Jessie, you have to stay here.

JESSIE
Who says?

SEAN
I do.

JESSIE
Who?

SEAN
With dad gone, I'm the man of the house.

JESSIE
Then stay in the house. I'm going.

SEAN
Fine. I'll see you there.

JESSIE
No you won't.

SEAN
Why not?

JESSIE
Because you don't even know where he is.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

89 (CONTINUED) (2) 89

JESSIE (cont'd)
Because in case you didn't notice, we live on an island. What were you going to do, swim to Devil's Thumb? Even if you got a ride on a fishing boat, with what you know...you'll die.

Sean eyes her... he knows she's right...

SEAN
What I know is Dad's still alive. He would survive out there. I can't just leave him, Jess. I gotta try.

JESSIE
You'll never make it.

SEAN
You got a better idea?

She smiles, looks down on the kayak shop below them.

JESSIE
Of course I do.

CUT TO:

90 OMITTED 90

91 EXT. COASTAL WATERS - DAY 91

-- A 2 man BAIDARKA KAYAK emerges ghost-like from a swirling cloud of MIST. Jessie paddles swiftly in front, Sean in back...

JESSIE
One TWO, one TWO, one TWO. Stay in sync! Let the boat wobble under you. One TWO!

Sean's paddle falls out of sync, clashes with Jessie's. Sean concentrates on the paddling again with sharp and focused determination.

91A EXT. COASTAL WATERS - CONTINUOUS 91A

Jessie and Sean are dwarfed by a massive MOUNTAIN, its sheer rock face met by the sea, reflecting the brilliant afternoon SUN...

91B EXT. ISLANDS -- DAY 91B

-- The kayak weaves a course past tiny ISLANDS, choked with thick FORESTS...a world of water and light and grandeur.

91C EXT. ISLANDS - LATER 91C

SEAN is clearly fatigued, but his eyes are wide open as if he were seeing a new world for the first time.

92 EXT. COASTAL WATERS - A ROCK GARDEN - DAY-LATER 92

JESSIE suddenly stops paddling. Sean slumps over, relieved, while Jessie takes a bearing with the compass, checks the MAP tucked in a plastic ziplock on her deck.

SEAN
(winded)
Thank God. My arms are killing me.
(adjusting himself)
My butt is REALLY killing me.

Jessie points up the fjord, between TWO ISLANDS, where GIANT WAVES break over a region of huge black rocks and treacherous currents.

JESSIE
We have to go through there.

Sean's eyes widen with fear, dread, and disbelief.

SEAN
(catching his breath)
Now you're killing me. Can't we just go around?

Jessie looks back at Sean.

JESSIE
Not without paddling like 25 miles out of our way...dad flew up that fjord, and that's where we gotta go.
(pointing to the map)
If we make it through the rocks, we'll paddle up the fjord as far as we can, then hike up the glacier to Coogan's Pass and then across the mountains to Devil's Thumb.

(CONTINUED)

92 (CONTINUED) 92

SEAN
If...? IF? What if we don't make it through the rocks?

Jessie is watching the swells again, counting.

JESSIE
Then we won't have to worry about getting up that mountain, or finding dad, or explaining how we stole this kayak from Chip's father. We won't have to worry about anything...
(looking at the waves)
Except how painful it is to drown in cold water.

SEAN
Thanks Jessie, I feel much better.

Jessie readies her paddle.

JESSIE
Let's go...Now! Paddle!

And with that, they paddle like hell. Sean gives it everything with an

SEAN
Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

We follow the Sea Kayak as it cuts across the water into where the waves are breaking over rocks.

92A OMITTED 92A

92B JESSIE & SEAN - CLOSE ANGLES 92B

A wave catches them perfectly from behind and they squeak through a NARROW GAP between two rocks.

SEAN
Yahoo!

A big grin breaks out on Jessie's face as well until the Kayak starts to slow as the wave peters out.

JESSIE
Paddle hard, we're not out of this yet! One TWO, one TWO.

The kayak maintains its fast speed as the two paddle between the rocks.

As they paddle, Sean is fit to be tied he's so excited.

SEAN
That was incredible!

92B1 CLOSE ON SEAN 92B1*

Sean raises his paddle out of the water, causing the kayak to wobble and: *

JESSIE
Sean! No!

Jessie whips around, as:

92C THE KAYAK CAPSIZES 92C

Silence. All we see is the HULL. Bubbles. Sean's PADDLE floats on the surface... and finally Jessie's blade sweeps across the surface of the water as she executes an ESKIMO ROLL, bringing Sean up with her, gasping.

JESSIE
You idiot!

SEAN
I didn't do it! You did!

92C (CONTINUED) 92C

JESSIE
Paddle for shore. We gotta dry out. *

Sean grabs his rogue paddle then they paddle for shore.

93 EXT. ON SHORE - A POINT OF LAND - DAY 93

Soaking wet, Jessie and Sean drag the kayak onto the sandy beach. Jessie throws down her paddle.

SEAN
Great. This is really great.

Sean turns over the kayak to empty out the water. Jessie pulls out her backpack.

SEAN (cont'd)
We're going to freeze to death.

JESSIE
What's the big deal? We'll make a fire.

SEAN
Good. I hope you brought the matches.

Searching through the pack, Jessie stops dead. Her face falls.

JESSIE
Oh, no...

SEAN
What now, Pocahontas? Rub sticks together?

Furious, Jessie searches for matches. Suddenly, she stops, looks inland:

A whispy trail of SMOKE drifts into the sky above the timber.

JESSIE
Hey... what's that?

SEAN
Looks like somebody who didn't forget the matches.

JESSIE
Maybe they saw dad's plane...

(CONTINUED)

93 (CONTINUED) 93

They share a glance, then plunge around the rocks to the far side of the promontory on which they have landed.

94 EXT. POACHER'S CAMP - DAY - MOVING 94

Still soaking wet, Sean and Jessie approach the CAMP.

SEAN
Hello?

No answer. No response. Jessie notices that a grey HELICOPTER is parked nearby covered with a CAMOUFLAGE NET, and several TENTS, FUEL DRUMS and other gear all netted.

SEAN (cont'd)
Is anyone here?

No answer. Quiet. Eerie.

JESSIE
I don't like this.

Sean approaches Koontz's tent cautiously.

SEAN
Knock knock.

Sean lifts the FLAP to look in.

He doubles back suddenly -

SEAN (cont'd)
Aaaaaaauuuuuuuggggggg!

at coming face to face with a POLAR BEAR.

JESSIE
Sean!

Jessie rushes over and they both see at the same time that it is a fresh POLAR BEAR PELT hanging out to dry inside the tent.

SEAN
Oh God.

JESSIE
That's a polar bear skin. That's illegal. You can't hunt polar bears in Alaska!

SEAN
Really?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

94 (CONTINUED) 94

SEAN (cont'd) *
Why don't you write 'em a note, Jessie? *
"Dear Poachers, this is very, very *
bad. I'm telling."

Jessie looks at the poor dead animal; she shivers from cold *
and disgust. *

JESSIE *
Let's get out of here. *

SEAN *
Wait. *

94A INT. THE TENT -- CONTINUOUS 94A*

Sean goes deeper inside the tent filled with other ANIMAL *
HIDES as well as a pile of WALRUS TUSKS and CARIBOU ANTLERS. *

Spots a FANCY ANTIQUE LIGHTER on a camp chair. But, as he *
grabs Perry's lighter, he suddenly hears the PLAINTIVE CRY of *
an ANIMAL.

He rushes out quickly, unsure what it was. *

94B EXT. THE CAMP -- CONTINUOUS 94B*

Sean flashes the LIGHTER in front of his sister. *

JESSIE *
What was that? *

Another WHIMPER. Heather looks around, past the two tents. *

SEAN *
Jessie, come on. *

He follows her around the tent... stops by a CULVERT TRAP...

SEAN (cont'd) *
Jessie, what're you doing?

Something's inside SCRATCHING the wall... Jessie reaches up *
to a WINDOW... unlatches it and swings it open. A WHITE SNOUT
pops out! Sean and Jessie YELP and trip over each other,
falling to the ground...

They ease around the trap... peer through the METAL GRATE
DOOR at: *

95 THE YOUNG POLAR BEAR 95 *

restless in his prison, pacing back and forth...

(CONTINUED)

95 (CONTINUED) 95

JESSIE
(softening instantly)
It's a polar bear!

She edges closer to the Bear... afraid, he shuffles to the back of the cage...

JESSIE (cont'd)
Don't be afraid, we're not gonna hurt you.

SEAN
Get away from there, Jessie.

JESSIE
We can't just leave her. That's her mother hanging back there. *

SEAN
How're you so sure it's a girl? Come on let's get out of here. What if those guys come back?

Sean TUGS Jessie away... the Young Bear WHINES... the sound stops Sean. He turns around and stares at the bundle of white fur with its sad, dark eyes... helpless... trapped...

JESSIE
A polar bear can travel 50 miles a day. They'll never find her. * *

CUT TO:

95A EXT. COASTAL WATER - DAY 95A*

We're looking out to the ocean from the beach as the Zodiak driven by Koontz comes into view as it rounds a rock. * *

Tired from the day, they say nothing to each other as they approach the beach; but the load of endangered animal pelts they're carrying speaks clearly about what they've been up to. * * *

96 EXT. POACHER'S CAMP - CULVERT TRAP -- CONTINUOUS 96 *

The Bear peers up through the BARS at Jessie and Sean STANDING on top of the TRAP... the kids slowly tug open the trap door... the Bear SNIFFS the opening... doesn't move...

SEAN
All right polar bear. Run like hell...

(CONTINUED)

96 (CONTINUED) 96

The Bear cautiously CREEPS out of the trap, but doesn't run away... instead, he STANDS up on his hind legs and rests his front paws on top of the trap... Sean and Jessie lean back...

JESSIE
He's not going away.

SEAN
(to the Bear)
Anytime now.

(CONTINUED)

96 (CONTINUED) (2) 96

The BEAR looks up to the brother and sister standing above it.

JESSIE
Go! Run! You're free!

SEAN
Get out of here! Get a job! Write us a letter! The bus is leaving!

The bear cocks its head, hops onto its hind legs to put its paws on the trap.

SEAN (cont'd)
Hey!!

Sean and Jessie huddle to the other side as the bear tries to reach them when, from the water, they hear the MOTOR of the Poacher's approaching Zodiak.

Sean throws his sister an angry, "I told you so" stare.

SEAN (cont'd)
(whining)
'They'll never find her, Sean. She'll be fifty miles from here.'

JESSIE
What're we gonna do?

The bear climbs higher - the trap tilts - Sean and Jessie fall off, landing with a THUD.

SEAN
Run!

They scamper to their feet, take off running toward the water, the young bear not far behind.

97 EXT. THE SHORE - CONTINUOUS 97

Sean looks back at the bear as he struggles to put both legs inside the kayak.

SEAN
Well. She's got 49.9 miles left to go.

Jessie looks back at the baby polar bear who stands there in the water, ruefully watching her liberators disappear.

98 LONG SHOT - THE KAYAK - BEAR'S POV 98

as the kids paddle off...

The Bear looks back at the Poacher's Camp through the trees where Koontz can be seen pulling the Zodiak onto dry land. *

The Young Bear softly pads away, disappears from view, into the woods. *

98A EXT. POACHER'S CAMP - DAY 98A*

A hand SLAMS the empty culvert trap door shut -- it's Perry and Koontz. The bear is gone - no doubt about it. They look in all directions. *

KOONTZ *
We've been robbed! I can't believe * this. Isn't there <u>any</u> place safe * anymore?

Perry simmers, squats down to study the tracks in the ground. *

PERRY *
There were two of them. *

KOONTZ *
You don't think it was Fish and Game, * do you? *

He shakes his head, gravely. *

PERRY *
No... They would've taken everything. * (looking around) *
These were amateurs. Very impolite amateurs. *

KOONTZ *
Yeah. Well. They're one bear up on * us now. *

Koontz shrugs, pulls the day's catch off the Zodiak. *

KOONTZ (cont'd) *
Let 'em have it. We got the biggest * haul in three seasons. My chopper * can hardly lift the skins alone.

Perry stands up, burns through Koontz with his stare. *

(CONTINUED)

98A (CONTINUED) 98A

PERRY
Refuel the Zodiak.

KOONTZ
Whoa. Wait a second. If you think I'm gonna go traipsin' all over Alaska just to find some damn bear cub.

PERRY
They left on foot. They're not far from here.

KOONTZ
I don't care where they are. I'm not spending my time--

PERRY
--Your time is mine, Mr. Koontz! I pay for it. I'll decide how to use it.

Perry stares into Koontz's eyes, evaporating all remaining resistance.

PERRY (cont'd)
I want that bear.

Koontz takes a deep breath, picks up his gear, throws it in the Zodiak.

KOONTZ
All right. But don't expect pleasant company. I'm gonna be wicked irritable when I catch up with these guys.

Perry looks angrily out into the wilderness, as Koontz pulls the Zodiak back into the water.

PERRY
I'm counting on it.

DISSOLVE TO:

99 INT. BARNES HOUSE - DAY 99

Charlie opens the unlocked door wearing grave expression of someone who's about to break bad news.

CHARLIE
Hey, kids. It's me. Charlie.
(a beat)
I need to talk to you. Hello?

(CONTINUED)

99 (CONTINUED) 99

Charlie walks into the house that still has its lights on.

CHARLIE (cont'd)
Sean...? Jessie?

No answer. He peers into Sean's room, then Jessie's. Empty. No sign of life. A mantle CLOCK GONGS...

This is strange... Something catches his eye: THE MAP OF ALASKA is mising from the bulleting board...

Charlie's face falls as he looks from this to the KITCHEN CUPBOARDS open, food pulled halfway out.

CHARLIE (cont'd)
Oh no...

He looks into Jake's bedroom -- mountain climbing and camping equipment are strewn everywhere.

Fully realizing the situation, he walks quickly out the door.

100 OMITTED 100
THRU THRU
102 102

102A EXT. SHORELINE - DUSK 102A

One small polar bear lopes awkwardly along the shore, a furry white creature galumping over rocks and logs...a very determined little bear.

102B EXT. THE WILDERNESS - DUSK - WIDE SHOT 102B

The nearly full moon illuminates a LONE WOLF howling on the high ridge over the great fjord, where a tiny dot of ORANGE LIGHT suggests a CAMPFIRE.

103 EXT. SEAN AND JESSIE'S CAMP - NIGHT 103

The KAYAK is pulled up near the fire so that WET CLOTHES can be dried off in its heat.

While Jessie settles herself around the fire in her clean dry clothes, Sean reaches into his backpack, holds up a BOX OF MACARONI AND CHEESE.

SEAN
Dinner, chez Sean.

Jessie looks at him, can't believe he's serious.

JESSIE
What're you going to cook it in? Your hat?

Sean takes out a full-sized ALUMINUM SAUCE PAN from his back pack. Jessie rolls her eyes. *

SEAN *
It's the only thing I know how to make; but I make it good.

103A SEAN -- MOMENTS LATER 103A

drains the water out of the pan, using the cardboard box to hold the macaroni in. Pulling the top off the cheese flavor packet, then stirring in the goopy contents with the rolled up box. *

Jessie watches all this with absolute amazement and disgust.

Sean holds up a clean FORK and SPOON from his pack.

SEAN
Choose your weapon.

Jessie grimaces, takes the fork. Sean puts the pan between them.

SEAN (cont'd)
All right. Stay on your side of the pan.

(CONTINUED)

103 (CONTINUED) 103

JESSIE
Don't worry.

Sean digs right in. Jessie waits to make sure he doesn't die, then tastes the tiniest portion with her fork.

Her eyes widen. She takes another, bigger bite

JESSIE (cont'd)
This is good. This is really good.

SEAN
I told you. No one does junk food like Sean Barnes. What's that?

All of a sudden, they stop eating, having both seen something at the same time.

JESSIE
The Northern Lights...isn't it awesome?

They stand in awe of the spectacle, as the AURORA BOREALIS shimmers in the night sky... But suddenly they both jump as:

104 OMITTED 104

105 THE BEAR 105

mounts a boulder, and stands upright... silhouetted against the NORTHERN LIGHTS... She looks huge, ominous...

The bear drops down onto all fours...then charges forward!

105A SEAN, JESSIE & THE BEAR 105A

SEAN & JESSIE
The bear!!! Ahhhhh!

They jump backward in either direction as the BABY POLAR BEAR dives its head into the nearly finished PAN OF MACARONI.

SEAN
Oh man? He better be eating off your half.

The bear quickly licks the pan clean, then starts to bite on it.

SEAN (cont'd)
Hey. Hey! That's our kitchen!

Sean loses all fear and grabs the handle of the pan, wrestles with the bear to get it back.

(CONTINUED)

105A (CONTINUED) 105A

Jessie quickly digs into her pack, pulls out a BOX OF MARSHMALLOW PIES.

JESSIE
Here girl, look what I got.

Jessie shakes, unwraps a PIE, throws it on the ground and jumps back. The bear lets go of the pan to take the marshmallow pie. It scampers off with the dessert into the cover of darkness.

SEAN
Great. That should keep him away. For 10 seconds.

Sean plops himself back down where he was sitting, holds his other pie out to Jessie.

SEAN (cont'd)
Here. We better eat the rest before he gets back.

Sean tears open a PIE, crinkles the cellophane, but then looks up to see his sister's face transform with fear. *

He looks around to see: *

106 A MAN - ON THE ROCKS BEHIND HIM 106

A HUNTING RIFLE hanging from his shoulder. The man remains practically faceless until he comes down the rocks into the fire-light.

PERRY looks down at the two, smiles.

PERRY
Mmmmm...something smells good.

(CONTINUED)

106 (CONTINUED) 106

Perry stands next to Sean, but just a little behind him. He looks over the two kids who are petrified by the sight of him.

PERRY (cont'd)
Oh, go ahead. Don't mind me. I've already eaten.

But Sean and Jessie just sit there, nervous as all hell. Sean furtively scans the darkness for the bear.

PERRY (cont'd)
My partner and I saw your fire from the river. Well, I said, it just wouldn't be polite not to say "hello".

JESSIE
Hello.

SEAN
Hello.

Perry looks them over thoroughly, notices their KAYAK nearby.

PERRY
That's a fine looking kayak. Don't see those native boats around much these days. Which way are you taking it?

SEAN
Up country. *

Jessie backs up slowly, and suddenly bumps into KOONTZ emerging from the other direction. She jumps.

KOONTZ
(smiles)
Evenin' little lady.

Jessie looks over her shoulder to see KOONTZ squatting down next to her, a big grin tight across his face. She looks away. * * *

PERRY
If you came up the coast, you must've seen our camp.

SEAN
We didn't see anything.

(CONTINUED)

106 (CONTINUED) (2) 106

PERRY
Really.
(a long beat)
I find that difficult to believe.

Perry looks over the two. A friendly smile slowly rises on his face.

PERRY (cont'd)
My name is Perry. This is my pilot, Mr. Koontz. You're...?

JESSIE
Jessie.

SEAN
Sean.

SEAN'S POV - THE ANTIQUE LIGHTER

lying in plain sight by the campfire.

PERRY
So, Jessie and Sean. What's up country?

SEAN
Our father.

Sean looks straight at Perry after saying that. Perry stares him down, unimpressed.

PERRY
Really...

Koontz smiles... Jessie cringes as Koontz suddenly leans over her to grab something: the bear-bitten ALUMINUM PAN. *

KOONTZ
My, my, Grandma. What big teeth you have.

(CONTINUED)

106 (CONTINUED) (4). 106

PERRY
And what a powerful jaw...
(glancing around)
Your dog?

Sean feels the heat of Perry's gaze, looking down on him; he turns to face them directly.

SEAN
(re: the polar bear)
A bear bit it.

PERRY
Really.

SEAN
Right before my dad shot him.

KOONTZ
Your dad shot a bear for biting his pan?

SEAN
For interrupting his dinner.

Perry smiles. Koonts laughs oddly, a disquieting sound in the forest. Perry casually walks over and picks up his lighter. He seems to grow very calm, as he considers what he's seeing.

Without missing a beat, he lights his usual cigar.

PERRY
You know, Sean, if there's one thing I hate worse than a thief, it's a liar...

He suddenly tosses the EXPENSIVE LIGHTER back to Sean, who fumbles and catches it.

PERRY (cont'd)
A trade. For the bear cub. Tell him to come home when you see him.
(tips his hat)
Good night young people... Don't be afraid of the dark.

Perry smiles slightly, unsettling the two kids, and with that, the two men disappear into the dark, leaving Sean and Jessie frozen where they sit.

We GO WITH PERRY AND KOONTZ:

(CONTINUED)

106 (CONTINUED) (4) 106

Koontz can't believe what he's just seen as he follows Perry down the beach to the Zodiac.

KOONTZ
I thought you wanted to-- *
(mimicking) *
"get the bear." *

PERRY
They didn't steal it.

KOONTZ
What do you mean? You saw that pan!
And you think that wasn't your lighter?

Perry stops at the Zodiak, looks at Koontz as if he were stupid.

PERRY
They let it go.
(scanning the dark
landscape)
That bear could be anywhere right
now. We're not going to find it in
the dark.

Perry climbs into the Zodiak as:

106A IN THE FOREST - THE BEAR 106A

watches, listens to Sean and Jessie by the fire, scared. *

JESSIE *
(frightened) *
You think... they're gonna come back *
here?

Sean stares at the shadows of the Poachers starting up the * Zodiak to motor away. *

SEAN *
I don't plan to be here, to find out. *

The Bear backs away, disappears into the darkness. *

106B OMITTED 106B

107 INT. JAKE'S AIRPLANE/MOUNTAINSIDE (POS. #1) - NIGHT 107

Jake on the plane RADIO...cold, tired, scared, alone.

JAKE
Mayday, mayday. This is Super Cub Four Zero Three Niner Echo... I've crashed about three miles east of Devil's Thumb pass. Mayday, Mayday...

The radio static FADES... the red "on" light DIMS... now nothing but darkness and empty silence. Jake FLINGS the mike down...

JAKE (cont'd)
Damn.

Realizing he's going to be here for a while, he opens up an EMERGENCY KIT... searches through it for anything to eat... discovers a single ENERGY BAR... takes the smallest of bites... wraps it back up and stows it in his pocket...

A gust of frigid wind BLASTS through a gaping hole in the plane's metal frame... Jake jams a SEAT CUSHION into the hole to block the chill. But still the wind BLOWS through. Jake strains to reach a SLEEPING BAG... finally, he grabs hold of it, but it's SNAGGED on something. Jake gives it a JERK...

His body's motion causes the DOOR to spring open... debris FALLS out of the cabin into the night, skittering down the side of the mountain...

Jake stares down into the deep darkness and gulps... carefully reaches over... SWINGS the door shut.

107 (CONTINUED) 107

He gingerly pulls the sleeping bag over his body... this is going to be one sleepless night...

CUT TO:

108 OMITTED 108
THRU THRU
120 120

121 EXT. FJORD - DAY - HIGH ANGLE 121

Towering CLIFFS on either side block the SUN, enveloping the huge GORGE in a shadowy twilight... The tiny kayak turns up the fjord and cuts into the Alaskan heartland.

121A SEAN AND JESSIE - IN THE FJORD 121A

navigate the kayak between immense ICEBERGS, jagged blue shards of glacial ice floating by...

The kayak rounds a BEND... Sean and Jessie's heads swivel up as they spot...

122 COOGAN'S PASS - THEIR POV 122

A snow-covered summit saddled between two rocky peaks...

123 SEAN AND JESSIE 123

peer up at the formidable obstacle...

JESSIE
(checking her map)
That's Coogan's Pass. Let's park it. *

SEAN
Can I stay in the car?

They PADDLE toward shore...

124 EXT. END OF THE FJORD - A BEACH - DAY 124

Waves LAP against the kayak which has been pulled onto the low, sandy promontory... A small river flows into the sea, winding back up into the country of mountains and glaciers.

SEAN
Now what?

JESSIE
(unpacking the boat)
We climb.

(CONTINUED)

124 (CONTINUED) 124

SEAN
Up that thing?

JESSIE
(checks the map)
Dad had to fly this way, to get to Devil's Thumb, right?

Sean nods...

SEAN
Then this is the way we gotta go.

Sean and Jessie shoulder their packs, leaving the kayak pulled up on the sand bar... and head up toward the pass.

124A EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY - WIDE SHOT 124A

The two kids trek across this magnificent country, heading up out of the timber, into a region of ice and rock. Huge and terrible mountains rise up into the sky above them... Sean and Jessie leave the frame, and after a long pause...

THE BABY POLAR BEAR climbs up onto the ridge and lopes after....

124B OMITTED 124B

124C INT. STATE TROOPER'S TRAILER - DAY 124C

Sgt. Grazer speaks into the phone.

GRAZER
Roger that Elmendorf. Be advised we also got two kids missing, possibly in a kayak, headed up the coast... I'd be obliged if you'd keep an eye out for 'em... Okydoke. Thanks.

Grazer turns to a worried Charlie.

GRAZER (cont'd)
The S&R plane has been out twice. They haven't seen any sign of Jake's plane, or the kids.

CHARLIE
But they'll keep looking, right?

-GRAZER
It's a longshot.

CHARLIE
(puts on his flight jacket)
Sean and Jessie couldn't have gone far in twenty-four hours.

GRAZER
Do you know which way they went?

(CONTINUED)

124C (CONTINUED) 124

CHARLIE
(puts on his flight jacket)
Sean and Jessie couldn't have gone far in twenty-four hours.

GRAZER
Do you know which way they went?

(CONTINUED)

124C (CONTINUED) 124

CHARLIE
Nope. But I got a pretty good idea...

He zips up the jacket and we:

CUT TO:

124D EXT. HELIPAD - DAY 124

CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER revs into action, lifts off and roars over the water toward the distant mountains, watched by Mrs. Ben, who shields her ancient eyes from the sun, shakes her head...

125 EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY - A HELO SHOT 125

of the TWO KIDS scaling the pass... a pair of dots framed against snow and granite...

126 THRU 126B OMITTED 126 THR 126

127 OMITTED 127
THRU THRU
129 129

130 EXT. COOGAN'S PASS - BELOW A RIDGE - DAY 130

Sean and Jessie trudge up the mountain. Above them, a SNOWY RIDGE...

Sean is lost in thought, his mind somewhere else.

SEAN
What I would give, right now, to be at a Cubs game...

Sean continues climbing, breathless.

SEAN (cont'd)
I can smell the fresh-cut grass. And the foot long hot dog just out of the wrapper...

Sean savors the fantasy as he trudges upward.

HEATHER
What's the big deal? It's only a game.

Sean stops climbing, angered by the sacrilege.

SEAN
And this is only a big stinking slab of muddy ice called Alaska.

Sean continues climbing, fueled by resentment.

SEAN (cont'd)
By the time I ever see another Cubs game, I'll have gray hair and a cane.

He continues climbing.

JESSIE
You think by then, they'll have won the Pennant? *

Jessie grins. Sean angrily marches ahead of her.

A small CHUNK OF SNOW plops directly onto his head.

SEAN
Hey! What the--?

(CONTINUED)

130 (CONTINUED) 130

JESSIE *
What the what? I didn't do anything.

SEAN
The hell you didn't.

Sean picks up some snow to throw back at Jessie when-- *

SPLAT! More snow smacks Sean from above. They look upward. Nothing. Then-- *

A BLACK NOSE *

appears as the young POLAR BEAR lowers his PAW from his face. *

SEAN (cont'd) *
Oh no...

Jessie smiles with relief as the BEAR leans out over the ledge as if taunting Sean. *

JESSIE *
See? She heard you were a Cubs fan.

SEAN *
Not that kind of cub, you dumb animal.

Sean throws his snowball up at the Bear. It misses.

The bear ducks away and disappears from view. A long moment then-- PHWOMP! A huge shower of SNOW lands right on Sean. Jessie busts up laughing. *

JESSIE *
I think that means "chill out".

131 EXT. BELOW COOGAN'S PASS - FURTHER 131 *

Sean and Jessie pick up their pace as the Bear is now following along behind. *

SEAN *
What do you think he wants from us?

JESSIE *
She probably wants more food.

SEAN
Yeah. Probably thinks you're lunch. *

Sean looks back at the bear who keeps his distance.

(CONTINUED)

131 (CONTINUED) 131

SEAN (cont'd)
Check out the way he's looking at us. Hoping we'll fatten up on Macaroni and Marshmallow Pies. Then as soon as one of us drops... it's snack-time. *

131A OMITTED 131A
AND AND
131B 131B

132 EXT. FJORD - DAY 132

Koontz navigates an inflatable boat, a ZODIAK, up the ICE GORGE, and then through a maze of small ICEBERGS... Perry at the bow. Dead ahead: COOGAN'S PASS *
*

133 EXT. END OF THE FJORD - DAY 133

THE KAYAK on the beach. PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

PERRY & KOONTZ

standing over it, studying the TRACKS in the soft sand beside the boat. Two sets of footprints, and one set of BEAR TRACKS. Perry glances up the mountain side. So does Koontz, with his binoculars.

KOONTZ
No sign of 'em up there...
(points to the tracks)
But that's their tracks alright, and that damn bear's followin' 'em.

PERRY
Let's get rid of this kayak before it invites unwanted company.

Koontz easily manhandles the kayak over his shoulder, takes it up toward the forest and dumps it into the trees. Then:

THWUP-THWUP-THWUP: a distant helicopter.

Kontz looks up then over at Perry on the beach.

KOONTZ
What the hell is that?

133 (CONTINUED) 133

PERRY
Unwanted company... Give me one of those paddles.

Koontz chucks him one of the finely crafted light-weight wooden paddles. Perry catches it in one hand, deftly breaks it over a rock with his foot, throws one end of the paddle back to Koontz, who hides it with the kayak under some branches. Perry throws the other end of the paddle into their Zodiac, as:

134 CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER 134

lands on the beach. Perry waves, friendly.

Charlie cuts the engine, hops out, approaches Perry and Koontz.

CHARLIE
Howdy.

PERRY
Hello.

Charlie notices Koontz coming out from the trees, zipping up his fly.

KOONTZ
Mornin'. How goes it?

CHARLIE
Well, not so good. I'm looking for a couple of kids - a boy and a girl, who may have headed out this way.
(hands them a photo of Jessie & Sean)
Their dad's plane went down a couple nights ago, and I think they went after him.

Perry considers Charlie, doesn't answer right away.

PERRY
Alone?

CHARLIE
I'm afraid so. Have you seen anyone...? *

Perry shakes his head, feigning concern.

PERRY
These young people. Weaned on Cable T.V. and Video games. There's no knowledge, no respect for the real brutality of Nature.

(CONTINUED)

134 (CONTINUED) 134

CHARLIE
Yeah... Right. What are you guys doin' up here?

PERRY
We're with the Sierra Club.

CHARLIE
Tree huggers, eh?

PERRY
(laughs, good-naturedly)
That's us. We're working on next year's calendar.

Charlie smiles, intrigued.

CHARLIE
No kidding.

PERRY
Say, those two kids, they weren't traveling by kayak, were they?

CHARLIE
I think so, why?

PERRY
Oh, dear God...

He retrieves the broken paddle.

PERRY (cont'd)
Some poor souls wrecked their kayak on the rocks about twenty five miles up the coast, one of those native boats. We couldn't get close to the wreckage, but we pulled this out of water. * *

134 (CONTINUED) (2) 134

Perry hands the PADDLE PIECE to Charlie who looks at it closely, seems to recognize the woodwork.

His face drains of life as he realizes.

PERRY (cont'd)
Was it theirs?

CHARLIE
Yeah...

PERRY
I'm sorry to hear it.

Charlie backs away quickly toward his Helicopter.

CHARLIE
Twenty five miles north of here?

Perry nods solemnly.

PERRY
Could be a little farther.

Charlie gets in his helicopter, fires up the engine, lifts off over the two poachers.

Perry watches him leave, then turns his gaze up the Fjord toward--

134A EXT. COOGAN'S PASS/SUMMIT - DAY 134A

Sean and Jessie struggle up onto the airy summit of Coogan's Pass... the BEAR WATCHES as Jessie reaches into her backpack and pulls out her BINOCULARS... *

JESSIE
(out of breath) *
Look, Sean, there it is.

She hands the binoculars to Sean... he peers through them...

134B SEAN'S P.O.V. -- DEVIL'S THUMB 134B

Off in the DISTANCE, BEYOND A GLACIAL VALLEY, stands DEVIL'S THUMB: a jagged mountain PEAK against the horizon... * *

134C COOGAN'S PASS - BACK TO SEAN AND JESSIE 134C

SEAN
Devil's Thumb.

Jessie NODS...

(CONTINUED)

134C (CONTINUED) 134C

JESSIE
See anything?

SEAN
Afraid not. We're too far away. How are we gonna get off this pass? That's a pretty steep drop.

They peer down... an almost vertical gully of snow - A COULOIR - drops down to the broad VALLEY below...

JESSIE
You want the crampons, or the ice ax?

She reaches into her backpack, dumps out the CLIMBING ROPE, a short ICE AXE, and a pair of spiked CRAMPONS.

SEAN
I'll be the axe-man.

CUT TO:

134D THE COULOIR - A FEW MINUTES LATER 134D

Luge-like... a steep drop... Sean and Jessie are roped up, Jessie wearing the crampons on her boots, Sean wielding the unfamiliar ice axe.

JESSIE
All right, axe-man. I'm gonna go down about a hundred feet, anchor the rope; then you follow me. If you slip, you can stop yourself with the axe.

Sean looks at the steep decline, then at his sister, skeptically.

SEAN
You sure this is how they do it?

JESSIE
It's how they do it on ESPN.

Sean shrugs.

SEAN
Then it must be right.

Jessie takes a deep breath, hands Sean the rope to let out.

JESSIE *
Belay me... *
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

134D (CONTINUED) 134D

JESSIE (cont'd) *
(off Sean's look) *
Hold the rope if I fall.

134E THE COULOIR - ON JESSIE 134E

As she downclimbs, the crampons biting into the snow.

134F ON THE SUMMIT - SEAN 134F

pays out the rope, ready to brace himself if his sister falls.

134G IN THE COULOIR BELOW - JESSIE 134G

reaches the end of the rope, stamps out a little platform in the snow, puts the rope around her shoulder, braces herself to bring Seth down. Wind whips at her hair, and she has to shout:

JESSIE
Hey, Axe-man! Your turn!

134H SEAN AND CUBBY 134H

share a look.

SEAN
What're you lookin' at?

The Polar Bear shakes his head - disapproving?

SEAN (cont'd)
Oh? And you have a better way?

The Polar Bear cub doesn't waste a second.

He dives over the ridge and SLIDES DOWN ON HIS PAWS, past a startled Jessie, until he rolls out at the bottom shaking his coat off like a dog in from the rain. No problem.

Sean turns around, yells down--

SEAN (cont'd)
Show off!!

--then: he loses his footing, takes one step and:

134J SEAN FALLS BACKWARD OFF THE COULOIR 134J

JESSIE
Sean!!

As Sean tumbles head over heels, sliding head-down past her, Jessie frantically pulls in the rope, bracing herself to stops Sean's death tumble.

The rope tightens, stretches, as: *

134J (CONTINUED) 134J

Suddenly the smile is wiped off his face as THE SNOW COLLAPSES AROUND HIM AND SEAN DISAPPEARS INTO THE VOID. *

JESSIE *

SEAN!! *

and: *

134K OMITTED 134K

135 THRU 143 OMITTED 135 THRU 143

143A SEAN CONTINUES TO TUMBLE DOWN THE COULOIR 143A*

Sean tumbles down the steep incline, finally coming to a stop at the bottom of the snow slope as the rope comes tight, HITTING HIS HEAD HARD ON A ROCK and with a BRILLIANT FLASH OF LIGHT WE:

CUT TO:

143B OMITTED 143B

143C AND 143D OMITTED 143C AND 143D

144 EXT. ARCTIC DREAMLAND - DUSK 144

As before, the NORTHERN LIGHTS ripple across the sky. Sean wanders across the frozen wasteland, a tiny figure in an immense wilderness of ice. He stops, feeling, inevitably, that something is behind him, he turns to see:

THE POLAR BEAR - standing erect behind him. He drops to all fours, and starts off in another direction, then stops to look back, as if asking Sean to follow him. Then the bear walks off again, up toward the distant mountains. Sean watches the bear go, and the WIND begins to pick up, obscuring him from our view with driven snow... The Bear slowly disappears into the spindrift, and as Sean begins to fade away, as well, into the bright whiteness of the wind, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

145 THRU 147 OMITTED 145 THRU 147

148 OMITTED 148

149 EXT. BOTTOM OF COULOIR - DAY 149

Sean lurches in his UNCONSCIOUS state, looks up to see a big OPEN MOUTH and a TONGUE, as the Bear licks his face.

SEAN
Auuuggghhh!

JESSIE
Sean... Sean! Oh-God-oh-God.

The Bear Cub steps back as Jessie climbs down, drops to her knees beside her brother. *

JESSIE (cont'd)
(desperate)
Are you okay?! Sean?! SEAN!!!

Sean rolls, annoyed, grimacing in pain, rubbing his head.

SEAN
Yes! God.
(wincing, hurt)
Could you scream a little louder? I can still hear on this side.

JESSIE
I thought she was gonna--

SEAN
What? Take a bite outta me?

Jessie nods her head. Sean struggles to sit up.

SEAN (cont'd)
It's not a "she" anyway. It's a he, believe me.
(disgusted)
I got a good look.

JESSIE
Come on. We gotta get you off this mountain.

Sean takes a deep breath, forces himself onto his feet; half delirous, he surveys the valley below.

(CONTINUED)

149 (CONTINUED) 149

SEAN
(checks the compass)
It's all down hill isn't it?

Sean stumbles forward. Jessie catches him. Together, they move down the mountain.

150 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - LONG SHOT - DUSK 150

Hiking down the mountain, huddled together, Jessie helps her brother with every step.

151 EXT. FOREST - DUSK 151 *

Further down, in the timber, Sean is shivering as he and Jessie splash across a stream. Jessie is flustered, worried, exhausted.

JESSIE
Oh God... Sean. We have to stop somewhere. Build a fire. Get you in a sleeping bag.

SEAN
(shivering)
No. I'm fine.

JESSIE
Yeah. Right. Have you ever heard the expression "hypothermia"?

SEAN
I don't want to stop.

Jessie stops walking, sees something through the trees. *

JESSIE
Sean, look. There it is. *

Up ahead of her is a decrepit, ramshackle LOG CABIN barely distinguishable from the background of trees.

SEAN
Good. I told you I-- *

Sean wavers, falls - right onto the ground.

JESSIE
Sean!

Jessie kneels down to hold his head but he is unconscious, sleeping, cold. Jessie panics, rips open her backpack.

151A EXT. THE CABIN - MOMENTS LATER 151A

Jessie is practically in tears as she uses all her strength to pull a barely conscious Sean inside the SLEEPING BAG along the ground toward the cabin.

151A (CONTINUED) 151A

Closer, we see that this log structure is at least a hundred years old. Jessie approaches it, tentatively. It is built partly into the mountain, the roof sagging.

JESSIE
Hello...? Is anybody here?

151B INT. THE CABIN - CONTINUOUS (FORMERLY SC. 154A - SORRY) 151B

She pushes open the door, enters warily. It is dark, dirty, empty, save for a few dusty artifacts from another time.

Scared, apprehensive, Jessie looks back down to Sean lying asleep in the sleeping bag. She grabs the bag and pulls him inside.

152 OMITTED 152 *
THRU THRU
154C 154C

152A OMITTED 152A*

154E	OMITTED	154E*
154F THRU 154E	OMITTED	154F THRU 154E
154F AND 154G	OMITTED	154F* AND 154G
154H	OMITTED	154H*
155	OMITTED	155

156 AND 157 OMITTED 156 * AND 157

157A EXT. THE COASTAL ISLANDS - DUSK 157A

Charlie's helicopter makes one more low pass.

157B INT. HELICOPTER -- CONTINUOUS 157B

Charlie on the radio with Grazer:

CHARLIE
I've gone up and down the whole of the damn inside passage, and I don't see a thing. I'm gonna head back and refuel.

(CONTINUED)

157B (CONTINUED) 157B

GRAZER (V.O.) *
Roger, Charlie, you been out all day.
Take a breather.

Charlie banks the helo into a sharp turn, and heads for home.

158 OMITTED 158

159 INT. CABIN - DUSK 159 *

The pot belly STOVE glows with fire in this damp and dirty log cabin, many years abandoned. Jessie has a can of soup heating on the stove.

While Sean sits up in his sleeping bag near the stove, Jessie sits by the open door, her finger on the crumpled MAP. *

She clutches the map, trembling, seemingly lost as she sees something moving outside in the trees. *

It's the BEAR CUB moving in what's left of the light. He comes closer, stops outside the cabin door, staring at Jessie huddled with her map.

JESSIE *
Well, we can stay here tonight. At *
least we have a fire. *

SEAN *
What do you mean "stay". There's plenty *
of daylight left. *

JESSIE
You should lie down. Get a good *
night's sleep. You're not thinking
straight.

Sean stops, points through the dark window.

SEAN
Dad is out there now. You think he's
gonna get a good night's sleep?

JESSIE
I think he'd want you to. After
hitting your head like that.

SEAN *
He's not worrying about me.

JESSIE
What am I supposed to tell Dad after *
you die from exposure? *

SEAN *
Tell him I died trying to find him. *

JESSIE
I'm sure that'll make him feel real
good. Sean. *
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

159 (CONTINUED) 159

JESSIE (cont'd)
Look, you gotta get some rest. We've got at least two days of walking along this river, and then we still gotta climb Devils Thumb.

SEAN
You can walk if you like, Jessie. I'm taking the canoe.

Sean takes a cracker from the box, chews it, points up to the ceiling from where he lies.

Jessie looks up into the dark, dusty rafters where a CANVAS CANOE rests on the cross beams along with snow shoes, old wooden skis, and years of other collected junk.

Sean smiles a wide smile and stands as tall as he can and uses an ax handle to lever the CANVAS CANOE down from the rafters. Dust falls in his face. Sean gives the stick one last frustrated shove causing everything to fall.

Jessie rushes into Sean, pushing him out of the way of--

CRASH!!!!!

Snow Shoes! Skis! All the collected JUNK AND THE CANOE CRASH DOWN to the floor.

The two kids cough from the dust.

JESSIE
Oh, God. Yuk!

SEAN
Really, Jessie. I brought the compass. I found the canoe. I mean - where would you be without me?

Sean pulls the canoe from the junk revealing HOLES in the canvas. Jessie puts her hand through one of them.

JESSIE
Pretty much where I am now. Sean.

Sean's face falls as he sees how damaged the canoe is. Jessie digs into her backpack, tosses Sean a roll of DUCT TAPE.

JESSIE (cont'd)
I packed it just in case I had to tape your mouth shut.

Jessie tears off a stretch, covers one of the holes.

(CONTINUED)

159 (CONTINUED) (2) 159

JESSIE (cont'd)
I hope there's some left.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

159 (CONTINUED) (2) 159

*

160 AND 161	OMITTED	160 * AND 161

162 THRU 165 OMITTED 162 * THRU 165

166 EXT. VALLEY/RIVER - DAY 166

The two plop the patched CANOE onto a LAKE, near the outlet of a SMALL, SWIFT RIVER. It floats! Jessie beams, pridefully.

JESSIE
Look at that. Perfect. Where would you be without me?

SEAN
Probably back home in Chicago.

As they load their things into the patched canoe, Sean notices the Polar Bear Cub approaching tentatively, almost as if he wanted to get in with them.

SEAN (cont'd)
You're outta luck, Klondike. We're full up.

Jessie gets in the boat. Looks at Sean. Looks at the Bear.

JESSIE
"Klondike"? Where did you get <u>that</u> name?

Sean doesn't answer right away as he climbs into the boat, paddles away from shore, watches the Bear Cub make his way along the wooded bank.

SEAN
It's what his mother called him.

Jessie rolls her eyes, keeps paddling as the canoe picks up speed toward the main river.

(CONTINUED)

166 (CONTINUED) 166

*

167 OMITTED 167 *

168 OMITTED 168
THRU THRU
170 170

171 INT. JAKE'S PLANE (POS. #1) - DAY 171

Wind BUFFETS the twisted wreckage... wrapped up in his sleeping bag, Jake is exhausted... bitterly cold... hungry. His eyes fall on the FAMILY PHOTO in the dashboard...

JAKE
Well, guys, whaddya say we eat a little dinner.

He opens his ENERGY BAR... already gone. He scoops up a handful of SNOW which has collected inside the plane and eats it...

171 (CONTINUED) 171

Jake glances up... a gust of wind about to blow the family PHOTO from its place. He strains to reach it... his movement causes...

172 THE FUSELAGE 172

to pitch over... it SLIDES down the CLIFF, thundering over ice and rocks... metal fractured off...

173 INSIDE/FUSELAGE 173

Jake SPUN and SLAMMED by the fall... the PHOTO drops from his hand, DISAPPEARING into a sea of swirling snow outside. Suddenly, what's left of the plane jerks to a stop on...

174 A PRECARIOUS LEDGE 174

The plane caught between TWO ROCK OUTCROPPINGS WHICH HAVE JAMMED THE TAIL between them, the plane hanging by a thread above the abyss after the plunge...

175 JAKE 175

dangling from the plane... below him, a terrifying fall of a thousand, treacherous feet... he struggles back into what's left of the plane...

He pulls himself inside... shudering with pain, cold and fatigue...trapped in the metal sarcophagus.

JAKE
(the mantra sounds hollow now)
Never give up... Never give... Never...

CUT TO:

175A EXT. ALASKAN RIVER - DAY - HIGH WIDE SHOT 175A

Sean and Jessie paddle down this beautiful watercourse, winding between GLACIATED PEAKS towering above. The canoe looks small and insignificant far below in this grand wilderness. And it is.

176 EXT. RIVER - DAY 176

The water tranquil. Sean and Jessie guide the CANOE downstream... Marlowe runs along the bank, occasionally swimming short stretches, keeping up with them easily. Jessie's eyes drift toward her brother... *

JESSIE
She's amazing, Yelena. *
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

176 (CONTINUED) 176

SEAN
Look at him. He's relentless.

JESSIE
We're the only family he has now.

Jessie plaintively watches the Bear Cub making his way along the bank, doing his best to keep up.

JESSIE (cont'd)
He's got nowhere else to go.

176A FOLLOWING KLONDIKE -- CONTINUOUS 176A

as he makes his way along the rocks and swims through the water, tireless, doing everything he can to keep up.

DISSOLVE TO:

176B EXT. RIVER - DAY 176B

Sean & Jessie lazily paddle the canoe downstream. *

177 OMITTED 177

178 KLONDIKE - ON THE RIVER-BANK 178

Klondike moves along at a fast clip until he stops suddenly, catches himself before toppling down some steep rocks.

He looks back up the river to where the kids approach, makes his little WHUFF sound. *

178A THE CANOE -- CONTINUOUS 178A

Jessie looks up, sees Klondike diving from the shore to swim out to them.

SEAN
What now, Klondike?

An OMINOUS ROAR drifts up from downstream. Sean and Jessie look at each other.

JESSIE
Uh-oh...

Jessie looks up to see they're heading into...

179 OMITTED 179

180 CLASS FOUR WHITEWATER 180

The river choked with ROCKS, HAYSTACK WAVES, CHUTES AND SOUSE HOLES.

181 SEAN AND JESSIE 181

paddle through the waves... the current drives the canoe toward a ROCK LEDGE... Jessie takes charge...

JESSIE
Brace! Brace! Backpaddle! Left! Left!

(CONTINUED)

181 (CONTINUED) 181

Jessie LEANS out and jams the paddle into the water, BRACING the canoe... Sean follows suit... the canoe VEERS away, just missing a ROCK as:

182 MORE WHITEWATER 182

The canoe bobs and weaves downstream...

183 SEAN AND JESSIE 183

Jessie works her paddle furiously, guiding the craft along, BARKING out orders...

JESSIE
Forward now! Hard!

183A KLONDIKE - IN THE WHITE WATER 183A*

Swimming as best he can through the waves, gamely paddling along. *
*

184 OMITTED 184
AND AND
185 185

186 THE CANOE 186

plunges into a HAYSTACK... the surging water picks up the canoe like a twig... flings it HIGH into the air...

The canoe TIPS down... and it HITS the water with a jarring PHWOMP! The canoe glides between two final ROCKS and swirls into calmer water downstream...

JESSIE
(in disbelief)
We made it?

SEAN
We made it Jessie!

They GRIN at each other, savoring the moment...

SEAN (cont'd)
You did it!

JESSIE
We did it.

They smile at each other, brother and sister united. Then Sean's face goes blank... his gaze focused up ahead. Jessie turns around to see...

Jan 12 '96 9:46 P.04/14

187 A WATERFALL AHEAD 187

Ghostly mist swirling over the roiling river... as if the bottom drops out of the river. It's far too late to make the shore.

188 OMITTED 188

189 THE WATERFALL 189

SEAN
Paddle for shore!

JESSIE
No! It's too late! Come on! We gotta go for it! FORWARD HARD NOW! *

SEAN & JESSIE
OH NNNNOOOOOOOO...

The canoe goes over the edge... PLUNGES HEADFIRST OVER THE FALLS and:

189A SEAN AND JESSIE - CLOSE ANGLE 189A

as they GO OVER THE FALLS SCREAMING, their mouths open wide with fear as:

190 THE CANOE LANDS 190

in the river... disappearing into a FOAMY HOLE... a long pause and:

190A SEAN AND JESSIE REAPPEAR DOWNSTREAM 190A

gasping for breath... SWIMMING in vain against the powerful current...

Over a cascading WAVE, Sean catches sight of a FALLEN TREE at a right angle over the river... he swims hard to reach it and:

As they approach the tree, Sean reaches up and clutches onto...

191 THE TREE 191

SEAN
Hang on! Climb up onto it!

Sean grabs Jessie's arm, helps Jessie climb up out of the raging water... safe, she reaches down for Sean's hand still clinging to a branch. Just then, the BRANCH SNAPS... Sean cascades downstream...

JESSIE
Sean! SEEEAAAAAN!!

Her SCREAM swallowed up by the river's ROAR as Sean vanishes around a bend...

192 SEAN - IN THE RIVER GORGE 192

tumbling and twisting in the savage torrent... gulping for air, swallowing water... arms helplessly flailing against the sheer walls of the riverine gorge. Suddenly, he's pushed toward...

193 A ROCK 193

He grabs hold of the boulder... the current pressing him against it... he tries to scale the rock... fingers SLIPPING... about to plunge back into the river again when...

194 A HAND 194

appears out of nowhere... reaches down to him and GRABS him by the shoulder... drags him up onto the rock. Sean squints into the bright sunlight at his rescuer. The figure pulls back his hood - its:

195 OLD BEN 195

He grins at Sean... Sean lies GASPING on the ground... stares up in disbelief at Ben. Then another head leans into view... it's CHIP!

CHIP
Hey Sean, what are you doing here?

CUT TO:

196 EXT. NATIVE HUNTING CAMP - DAY 196

Two tents, a big FREIGHT CANOE with an outboard motor pulled up on the bank, hunting gear. Wrapped in blankets before a FIRE, Sean and Jessie sit beside Chip. Old Ben and Chip's Father, who is called JOHN WOOD, approach. They are soaking wet from the waist down. Ben tosses a drenched BACKPACK onto the ground...

BEN
We saved some of your gear, but your canoe's history.

JOHN
You guys are an awful long way from home.

(CONTINUED)

196 (CONTINUED) 196

JOHN (cont'd)
You said they couldn't find your father, with planes and helicopters?

SEAN
They were looking in the wrong place.

JOHN
And you were expecting to find them on foot?

John stops himself, can't believe what he's hearing. He looks down on the two kids, very parental.

JOHN (cont'd)
I'm sorry to hear Jake's missing. But whatever happened to his plane, you two going up there alone, isn't going to help him. I'll take you back to town tomorrow in the boat.

SEAN
(with certainty)
No. We can't go back.

JOHN
And I can't be responsible for your death. What do you want me to tell--

JESSIE
(interrupting)
--Tell them we never gave up looking for our father.

Sean looks to Jessie gratefully.

JOHN
You kids have no appreciation for this country. Nothing you've seen so far will test you like what you'd find up there, on Devil's Thumb.

BEN
That's why they need to go.

John rolls his eyes.

BEN (cont'd)
(with sudden authority)
You listen to me, young man.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

196 (CONTINUED) (2) 196

BEN (cont'd)
We've gone to great pains creating a ritual for Chip, to make him a man, like we did for you twenty years ago. In my father's time, a young man had to hunt a bear with only a spear in his hand, and so he took on the bear's power. Or died trying. Only now we go on hunting trips mostly to get out of town for a couple of days, and get away from our wives.

Chip catches Jessie's eye, embarrassed.

Ben looks at Sean and Jessie as if he could see more than what's there.

BEN (cont'd)
But these two are on a spirit journey. *
They've come too far. It'd be wrong for us to stop them now.

John looks crosswise at his father.

JOHN
Are you finished, Dad?

BEN
Yes.

John looks pointedly at Sean and Jessie.

JOHN
Their spirit journey's at an end. *
This is the 90's old man. We'll head *
home first thing in the morning.

John wipes his hands, leaves the fire where the others sit silently. Ben shrugs, then eyes Sean and Jessie... *

197 OMITTED 197 *

(CONTINUED)

197 (CONTINUED) 197

Jan 12 '92 9:4? P.11/14

198 OMITTED 198

199 AT THE EDGE OF THE CAMP - DUSK - LATER 199 *

Sean staring into the night, facing DEVIL'S THUMB...a million stars ablaze in their magnificent celestial dance... *

Sitting on a rock, Sean is wrapped in an Eskimo PARKA... he looks totally different from the boy we first met... *

199 (CONTINUED) 199

He raises a bit of meat to his lips and CHEWS on it... then a MOVEMENT in the shadows... Marlowe appears like a whitephantom... he looks at Sean, then gazes off at the mountain...

Sean STANDS...holds out some FOOD to the animal. Marlowe hesitates... Sean INCHES his hand closer to him... Marlowe sniffs the morsel... stretches out and takes the food...

200 OMITTED 200

201 INT. BEN'S TENT - DAWN 201

Just before daybreak. Sean and Jessie, asleep... no sign of Ben or the eagle. A zipping noise wakes Jessie. She looks up to see Chip's head appear through the zipper.

Chip glances around outside the tent to see if the coast is clear...

CHIP
Hi... *

JESSIE *
Hi... *

CHIP *
My dad says he's going to get the two *
of you home safely if he has to tie
you to the boat.

Jessie glances at Sean, who doesn't look too happy.

CHIP (cont'd)
So hurry up. We gotta get you outta
here before my Dad wakes up.

202 EXT. NATIVE CAMP - DAWN 202

The sun about to edge over the horizon... Sean, Jessie and Chip at the outskirts of the camp. Chip hands them their BACKPACK...

CHIP
I packed some food and stuff for you
guys. Cariboo Jerky. *

Jessie takes the backpack Chip offers and SMILES at Chip... he smiles back...

JESSIE
Your dad's going to kill you. *

(CONTINUED)

202 (CONTINUED) 202

CHIP
Then you can come to my funeral. Don't be late.

JESSIE
Thanks. This is very... manly of you.

(CONTINUED)

202 (CONTINUED) 202

She kisses him on the cheek, and he grins hugely, blushing.

BEN (O.S.)
There's a white bear over there staring at you.

The kids are startled to see Ben standing next to them... he smiles. Sean & Jessie look up, relieved to see KLONDIKE up on a rock nearby.

JESSIE
Klondike! He made it!

Klondike runs down to Jessie and playfully jumps up and gives her a big wet smack!

SEAN
He's been following us since the day before yesterday.

JESSIE
His mother was killed by poachers.

Old Ben looks out at the bear, then back to Sean and Jessie.

BEN
This sort of thing doesn't happen every day, you know. I'd say he's looking out for you two.

SEAN
He's "looking out" for more food. He had dinner with us the last two nights.

Ben shakes his head, smiles at Sean's skepticism.

BEN
Some things, Sean, you can only see by opening your heart...

Ben and Sean look at each other for a moment. There is a glimmer of belief in Sean's eye.

SEAN
Or a box of Marshmallow pies.

Ben smiles, laughs, shuffles closer to the bear. He squats down and smiles at Klondike...gently rubs his hand across Klondike's head...

BEN
Little Nanook.

(CONTINUED)

202 (CONTINUED) (2) 202

He looks up at the kids, gravely.

BEN (cont'd)
In the old days we called him "the one who gives power". To touch him is a gift. Don't throw it away.

Ben CLASPS Sean's hands together tightly...

Ben pulls away... Sean glances down at his hands... his brow arches up... there's something in his hands.

He slowly opens his hands revealing the FIGURINE Ben was whittling the previous night -- a POLAR BEAR on a piece of rawhide...

BEN (cont'd)
Hang him from your neck. Close to your heart.

Sean smiles gratefully, but still skeptically.

SEAN
Thanks...I won't forget what you did for us. *

JESSIE *
Bye! Come on Klondike. *

Sean puts the figurine into his pocket as he backs away to join Jessie and Klondike. They head off toward Devil's Thumb...Chip calls after them. *

CHIP
Bye...

But his words are born away by the wind... *

CUT TO:

203 EXT. COASTAL WILDERNESS - DAWN 203

Miles and miles of miles and miles... Charlie's HELICOPTER choppers into view...

204 INT. CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER - DAWN 204

Charlie talking on the RADIO MICROPHONE...

(CONTINUED)

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204 (CONTINUED) 204

CHARLIE
...Quincy, come in.

GRAZER (V.O.)
Quincy, here, over. *

Just then, he spots something out the window... *

CHARLIE
Hold it. I think I found something. *

205 EXT. POACHER'S CAMP - CHARLIE'S POV 205 *

Charlie's helicopter passes over the camp. Deserted. *

206 INT. CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER 206 *

Charlie peering out the window... still on the radio... *

CHARLIE
Some sort of camp. I'm gonna go in *
low to take a look... It's a mess... *

He buzzes low... spots TENTS, FUEL TANKS...

GRAZER (V.O.)
Is it a kid's mess? *

CHARLIE
Nope. I'm gonna set her down. *

206A EXT. POACHER'S CAMP - CONTINUOUS 206A*

Charlie sets the chopper down... he hops out... his eyes widen as he sees -- piles and piles of ANIMAL FURS. Then he spots an inflatable boat, a ZODIAK. Charlie recognizes it -- Koontz and Perry's!

CHARLIE
Poachers... *

He races back to the chopper... grabs the MIKE...

CHARLIE (cont'd)
Sgt. Grazer, you better send somebody *
out here pronto. Those guys were *
poachers - sent me on a wild goose *
chase... I'm heading back up towards *
Devil's Thumb. *

(CONTINUED)

206A (CONTINUED) 206A

The chopper RISES into the air and banks into a sharp one-eighty turn...

CUT TO:

206B EXT. ALPINE ZONE (TRANSITION) WIDE SHOT - DAY 206B*

Two kids climbing (not roped). *

207 EXT. RIDGE/BELOW DEVIL'S THUMB - DAY 207

Sean and Jessie CLIMBING up the mountain below Devil's Thumb... Cubby in front of them. Sean looks back to Jessie... she's trying her best to keep up, but she can't... Sean helps to pull her up into the teeth of a stiff WIND... She collapses on a rock, takes out the now well-worn MAP. She points up the ridge to the right. *

JESSIE
Dad went up that way. If we follow this ridge--

Suddenly, Jessie loses her grip on the MAP... it blows away down the mountain, disappearing into snowy nothingness...

JESSIE (cont'd)
Sean, the map!

SEAN
Never mind. We gotta keep going. *
Northeast. That way. *

JESSIE *
Sean, you wouldn't know the difference *
between North and South without a *
comp - *

SEAN *
Compass? *

He dangles a brand new Silva COMPASS by its cord, the one his father gave him. *

JESSIE *
You had that all along? *

SEAN *
Of course. *
(smiles) *
How do you think we got <u>this</u> far? *

He checks the needle, turns the bezel and follows the bearing. *

(CONTINUED)

207 (CONTINUED) 207

JESSIE
(mimicking Sean)
"A compass, Dad? Duh, what'm I supposed to do wit' a compass?!"

Sean gives her a look, holds out his hand, and together they continue up the mountain, where CUBBY waits impatiently.

208 EXT. RIDGE BELOW DEVIL'S THUMB - DAY 208

Higher up, they come to a promontory... looking up, they see the jutting spire, DEVIL'S THUMB, along the ridge to their right. To their left, a long GLACIER drops down and then rises up into ANOTHER PASS. Jessie YELLS over the wind...

JESSIE
(points to the right)
That's Devil's Thumb pass.

Sean and Jessie plunge ahead into the teeth of the wind... but Cubby heads in the opposite direction toward the other pass. Sean spots Cubby and calls out...

SEAN
Where does he think he's going?

Cubby continues toward the other pass...

JESSIE
Hey!

Cubby peers back over his shoulder directly at Sean...

(CONTINUED)

208 (CONTINUED) 208

SEAN
I think he wants us to follow him.

JESSIE
No! Dad wouldn't have flown that way.

SEAN
Maybe he did...

209 OMITTED 209

210 SEAN 210

torn between logic and feelings, head and heart... watches as Cubby drops to all fours... continues up the other pass, * stops, turns and looks back to see if they are following, just like the bear in his dream.

SEAN
Maybe... Maybe Cubby knows something * we don't.

JESSIE
Sean! I know dad's route. I know how far he could have flown. He has to be somewhere in Devil's Thumb pass. Not over there. You have to trust me.

SEAN
No... we gotta trust the bear.

Jessie stares at Sean... he means it. She looks up Devil's Thumb pass one last time... sighs... then gives in. They back down and head toward the other pass...

210A OMITTED 210A*

210B OMITTED 210B*

211 EXT. GLACIER - DAY 211

Cubby leads the way up... he looks back... waits for Sean and Jessie to come into view around a corner... then he continues on... *

212 EXT. GLACIER - FURTHER - DAY 212

Cubby scours the terrain... he picks up a faint noise beneath the sound of the wind. Suddenly... *

213 A HELICOPTER 213

blasts into view! Is it Charlie? No, there's Koontz behind the stick! The chopper WHIRLS around and follows CUBBY, who runs like mad over the snow... Perry positioned out the side door... RIFLE in hand... *

214 SEAN AND JESSIE 214

spot Perry AIMING the rifle at Cubby... *

SEAN
NO!!!

Perry SQUEEZES the trigger... BANG!

215 CUBBY - RUNNING 215 *

collapses in a heap...

216 SEAN AND JESSIE 216

race toward Cubby... *

217 PERRY 217

jumps off the hovering chopper... SCOOPS up Cubby and ROLLS his limp body into the helicopter. He clambers aboard... smiles at Sean and Jessie. *

PERRY
Morning, Sean! Jessie! Small world, isn't it? Have a nice hike!

JESSIE
No! NOOOOOOO!

(CONTINUED)

217 (CONTINUED) 217

And as the chopper POWERS away, whipping up wind and snow... *

218 SEAN AND JESSIE 218

stare in stunned silence as the helicopter disappears into the sky. Now there's only the wind. Sean gasps... Jessie sobs...

JESSIE *
He's gone, Sean.... Those bastards *
took him away... for no reason... *

Seething with pain and anger, Jessie GRABS up a ROCK and FLINGS * it at the sky...

JESSIE (cont'd) *
Why'd it have to be him! He didn't *
do anything wrong! It's not fair!

Her voice echoes into the wind. Jessie drops to the ground... *

JESSIE (cont'd) *
What do we do now? *

Sean stares up the pass... then grabs his sister by the * shoulders. *

SEAN
We keep going. Mom would have wanted *
us to keep going. Never give up! Never! *
Can't you hear her? *

JESSIE
But where do we go?

Sean points up the pass...

SEAN
This way. We keep going where Marlowe *
was taking us.

Sean pulls her up... *

SEAN (cont'd)
We have to.

She stares at him... *

JESSIE *
Sean, I can't climb anymore. I'm
tired.

(CONTINUED)

218 (CONTINUED) 218

He peers at her... the girl is utterly spent... she's put up quite a fight, but there's nothing left to give...

SEAN
I know. Come on. I'll carry you if I have to.

She wipes her eyes with her freezing hand, starts to drag herself up the glacier, then suddenly sees something in the snow, throws herself down.

She pulls at something sticking out of the snow near her, revealing... the family PHOTOGRAPH from Jake's airplane!

Jessie blinks in disbelief...

JESSIE
He's here... He's here!

Sean's face brightens as he sees the photo. The two of them rush forward now, hurrying up the mountain with renewed energy.

CUT TO:

219 INT. KOONTZ'S HELICOPTER - DAY 219

Koontz piloting... Perry sits with his rifle...

PERRY
One way or another, if you're persistent, fortune always smiles on you.

Perry looks back at Marlowe's motionless body in the backseat... *

KOONTS cowboys the helicopter between the RIDGES AND PINNACLES. *

KOONTZ
Yahoo! I love this job! *

Perry leans back and pulls out a TRANQUILIZER DART from the Bear's side... the Bear isn't dead, just drugged! *

219A MARLOWE'S P.O.V. 219A*

hazy, out of focus as Marlowe's eyes flitter open. They begin to make out Perry and Koontz... *

219B PERRY AND KOONTZ 219B

PERRY *
How much tranquilizer did you put in *
the dart? *

KOONTZ *
Four CCs. Why? *

Marlowe starts to get his senses back as he tries to lift his body up... *

PERRY *
Well, it wasn't enough. Set her down, *
I'll have to dart him again! *

219C EXT. POACHERS HELICOPTER - MOUNTAINS - CONTINUOUS 219C*

The chopper descends in a hurry... sets down at the base of the mountains...

219D INT. THE HELICOPTER - ON THE GROUND 219D*

Perry loads up another tranquilizer dart into his rifle... He steps outside the chopper and: *

219E MARLOWE 219E*

A white ball of fire leaps on Perry! Clawing, scratching and biting... Perry tries to fight him off, as *

KOONTZ - comes around the other side of the chopper with a SAWED OF SHOTGUN, and: *

MARLOWE CLAMPS DOWN on Perry's KNEE... he SCREAMS in pain... *

PERRY
Ahhhhh!

Perry FIRES the TRANQUILIZER GUN, hitting: *

KOONTZ - in the side of the neck - he FIRES HIS SHOTGUN reflexively: BLAAAAAM! and: *

219F THE CHOPPER INSTRUMENT PANEL 219F*

EXPLODES IN SPARKS, and SMOKE! And: *

219G MARLOWE LEAPS OVER PERRY 219G*

bounding off his injured KNEE... Perry SCREAMS again... and Marlowe scampers off up the mountain... Perry limps after him, but it's hopeless. *

PERRY *
Damn it! *

Koontz suddenly keels over like a tree falling down and we: *

CUT TO:

220 AND 220A OMITTED 220 AND 220A

221 THRU 229 OMITTED 221 * THRU 229

230 EXT. GLACIER - WIDE SHOT - DAY 230 *

Sean and Jessie scaling the mountain... two very tiny dots, now connected with the climbing rope... *

231 EXT. GLACIER - CLOSER 231 *

Even higher up. Sean pulls Jessie onto a ledge... their eyes search the mountainside... Sean points... *

SEAN
Look!

They spot AIRPLANE WRECKAGE! A BROKEN WING, Super Cub yellow... They run up the hill - more wreckage - a twisted metal float torn off. They survey the wreckage at the impact point... metal fragments, but no sign of Jake. Sean calls out... *

SEAN (cont'd)
Dad! DAAAD! *

JESSIE
Daddy, where are you?!

Jessie horrified at the wreckage... nobody could have survived this crash. The howling WIND slaps her across the face...

232 INT. JAKE'S AIRPLANE 232 *

Jake's body stretched out... no movement... his eyes closed...

232 (CONTINUED) 232

SEAN & JESSE (O.S.) *
DAAAAAAAAAAAAAD! *

Barely discernible above the noise of the wind. Jake's eyes flutter open... was that Sean's voice? It must have been a dream... his eyes drift shut... *

SEAN (O.S.)
Dad!

The voice is unmistakable now... Jake tries to sit up... too painful. He calls out... his voice cracked with exhaustion. He FUMBLES around the cabin... locates the FLARE GUN... aims it through a crack in the wall... and musters enough energy to SQUEEZE the trigger...

233 SEAN AND JESSIE - BELOW THE PASS 233 *

Jessie points... *

JESSIE
Sean, look!

Sean spots the FLARE as it billows up into the sky...

SEAN
Dad's alive!

They spot SKID MARKS in the snow, the path of the sliding fuselage... disappearing over the CLIFF. *

WE CRANE UP AND AROUND WITH THEM as they run to the CLIFF-EDGE, and kneel, peering over the edge, where they spot... * *

234 THE REST OF THE PLANE - GIDDY DOWNSHOT 234 *

still lodged between the rocks, barely held in place... nothing but a plummeting drop below...

234A JESSIE AND SEAN - ON TOP OF THE CLIFF 234A*

SEAN
Hold on, Dad! I'm gonna come down there to get you! * *

JESSIE
No you're not. I'll go down. You can lower me, I'm lighter. * * *

SEAN
No way. Remember what happened the last time you went first? * * *

(CONTINUED)

234A (CONTINUED) 234A

Jessie looks at him for a beat - it's hard to argue with that logic, and so we:

CUT TO:

235 EXT. CLIFF EDGE - MINUTES LATER 235

A NYLON WEBBING SLING knotted around a ROCK... Jessie clips the rope into the makeshift anchor, pulls the rope taut, then puts the rope across her shoulders, braces to lower Sean in the "belay" position.

JESSIE
Go for it Sean!

SEAN
Just like ESPN...

Sean stands with his back to the cliff, holding onto the rope, his feet spread wide... slowly, he takes a deep breath, smiles feebly, and backs over the edge and down the cliffside... and WE BOOM WITH HIM, revealing THE PLANE WRECK FAR BELOW...

236 ON THE CLIFF FACE - SEAN 236

carefully jams his feet into the rockside as he descends. Another step... Small ROCKS break off and fall... it PINGS off the fuselage of Jake's plane below... a long way down...

Foot by foot he is lowered toward the plane... the WIND buffeting him from side to side. Finally, he reaches...

237 THE WRECKED FUSELAGE - ON THE LEDGE 237

Sean peers inside... sees Jake...

SEAN
Dad!

Exhausted, Jake looks up at Sean...

JAKE
Sean... no. Stay away. The plane's slipping.

SEAN
I'm gonna get you outta there!

The weight of Sean's FOOT causes the plane to shift and GROAN... Sean UNCLIPS the rope from his climbing harness, feeds the end of the rope to Jake...

(CONTINUED)

237 (CONTINUED) 237

SEAN (cont'd)
Tie this around you.

Jake reaches for the ROPE... nods his head... loops the rope around his body.

JAKE
The ascenders...

SEAN
What?

JAKE
Your ascenders! Those yellow things, clip them onto the rope.

Sean looks down - he has no idea what they were for, but cliped to his climbing belt, are two square yellow rings of metal, called ascenders, and they are about to save Sean's life, as:

The plane starts to SLIP, now sliding from its precarious perch...

Sean clips one ascender onto the rope, clipping the other end onto his harness, making a vital connection and:

SEAN
Dad, hurry up!

Jake's frozen FINGERS fumble with the rope, FINALLY GETTING IT TIED AROUND HIS WAIST JUST AS:

238 THE FUSELAGE FALLS 238

The plane DROPS, Jake is PULLED OUT THE OPEN DOOR as the plane CAREENS through the frozen abyss until it SMASHES against jagged rocks below! An enormous CRASH! And:

238A SEAN AND JAKE 238A*

dangle from the rope, as they PENDULUM helplessly across the cliff - Sean dangling with one hand from the single ascender - the two of them BOUNCING off the rock face... spinning over the abyss below them, while:

239 JESSIE - ON THE CLIFF EDGE 239 *

flinches from the crash as the ROPE COMES TIGHT ON HER WITH A THWANG! and she is pulled suddenly off her feet and sucked up hard against the nylon anchor point as the new weight comes on the rope, slamming her into the rock. She holds desperately onto the rope, gets to her feet.

(CONTINUED)

239 (CONTINUED) 239

JESSIE
Sean, Daddy! Are you all right?! *

Nothing...

JESSIE (cont'd)
Daddy?!

240 SEAN AND JAKE 240 *

dangle, still spinning dizzily. *

JESSIE (O.S.) *
I can't hold you! *

JAKE *
Seth! Clip the other ascender in! *
Climb up the rope! Go on! Now! *

And now Seth sees what they are for as he clips in the other * ascender and shakes out its nylon sling, puts his foot in it, * and takes the weight off the other ascender, which he can now * begin to SLIDE UP THE ROPE, like Batman! *

241 JESSIE 241 *

Straining with the rope... it starts to slip through her * fingers - and there is only so much of it left and, even worse: * JESSIE IS STILL TIED INTO THE OTHER END. *

JESSIE
I can't hold both of you! *

And, worse still: *

241A THE KNOT IN THE NYLON SLING 241A*

starts to slip, and: *

242 SEAN - ON THE CLIFF 242 *

swings over to the side of the mountain and, still spinning * around and around beneath the overhanging lip, starts to SCALE * back up the rope, using the ascenders, sliding them up one at * a time... Jake hanging on below. Every inch up is a struggle * for Sean... SWEAT pours down his face despite the cold... * While

243 THE NYLON SLING 243 *

slips further, and *

243A JESSIE 243A

strains to hold the rope, which now begins to slip faster through her shaking hands, she, looking down over the cliff edge, oblivious to the impending disaster of the knot behind her and:

244 SEAN 244

finally makes it up to the cliff edge, as:

245 JESSIE 245

holds onto the rope desperately as:

THE NYLON SLING suddenly COMES UNTIED AND JESSIE IS WHIPPED AROUND SCREAMING, DRAGGED TOWARD THE ABYSS AS THE SLACK COMES OUT OF THE ROPE and her mechanical advantage is lost, while:

246 SEAN 246

falls back down the cliff about ten feet as does:

247 JAKE 247

who slips back down toward the abyss, helpless...

JAKE
Jessie! Hold on!

248 JESSIE 248

still holding onto the rope, DRAGGED headfirst toward the edge of the cliff... SLIDING toward oblivion - scrabbling to get a grip with her boots - as the rope runs through her hands and the remaining slack is almost gone and when it does it will pull her over for sure...

JESSIE
Sean! Help! I can't hold-- *

Suddenly, she's JERKED to a stop... inches from the edge! She BLINKS in disbelief, gulping in the frigid air. Then ever so slowly, she glances back and sees...

249 MARLOWE 249

The rope loop in his MOUTH... his claws dug deep into the ground, struggling to hold onto the rope!

JESSIE
It's Marlowe!

250 SEAN 250

pulls himself up and over the cliff edge... throws himself onto the rope, looking over his shoulder at the little polar bear, adding his critical weight to the balance, and it's enough to tip the scales as

250A KLONDIKE, JESSIE AND SEAN 250A*

pull on the rope... straining with all their might, they haul

250B JAKE 250B

up the cliff face, foot by foot... he's able to use his good leg and one hand to help - finally yarding him up and over

250C THE CLIFF EDGE 250C

JESSIE
Daddy!

She dives tearfully into his chest, HUGS Jake... he drapes an arm around her... squeezes her tight, his eyes closed... nothing has ever felt this good.

Sean eyes his father as they all gasp for air, asking for unspoken forgiveness.

He pulls Sean in close... they embrace, a family reunited. Jake kisses both of them... then he pulls back...

JAKE
I just want to know one thing... *
What took you guys so long?

He smiles... the kids smile, but Sean is still troubled. *

SEAN *
Dad. Before you left... I said *
something-- *

JAKE *
(interrupting) *
Don't worry. I didn't hear it. *

Jake smiles to his son that it's "okay", then seals it with another embrace. They hear a playful GRUNT. Heads swivel to see... * *

251 KLONDIKE 251 *

sitting on his haunches... how come he's not included in the action? Jake is flabbergasted... *

(CONTINUED)

251 (CONTINUED) 251

JAKE
Either that's a polar bear... or the whitest dog I've ever seen.

Sean grins, whispers close.

SEAN
It's a dog, Dad. Can we keep him?

Suddenly, far over the ridge, they hear distant ROTORBLADES choppping up the thin air. The look at each. Shout in unison.

SEAN, JAKE, & JESSIE
HEY!!!! OVER HERE!!!

Sean springs into action, pulling out the SMOKE FLARE from his pack while CUBBY scampers up toward the top of the ridge. *

Jake's eyes bug out at the sight of his son positioning his hand to light the dangerous flare. *

JAKE *
Whoa! Sean! Let me do that. *

Sean and Jessie look at each other, then their father. *

SEAN *
Dad...<u>This</u> is nothing. *

Sean grabs the string to launch the flare. *

252 INT. CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER - DAY 252

Charlie sees nothing below in the pass Jake was supposed to go up. He swings around to go back, sees something remarkable on the next ridge.

A POLAR BEAR CUB standing on its hind legs on the top of the ridge!

CHARLIE
Hey... little guy. How'd you get up there?

ORANGE SMOKE billows up from behind the ridge. Charlie flies over, sees -- *

JAKE, JESSIE, AND SEAN shouting, waving frantically from the cliff, the FLARE smoking away in the wind. *

His jaw drops open...

CHARLIE (cont'd)
Oh, my God!

He fumbles for the radio MICROPHONE... talks into it...

CHARLIE (cont'd)
You guys ain't gonna believe this.

253 INT. STATE TROOPERS DEPARTMENT (QUINCY) - CONTINUOUS 253

Grazer manning the RADIO... locals huddled around him, including Mrs. Ben, Burl, his Mates, etc.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
It's them! Jake and the kids! Sean and Jessie found him! On foot! They rescued him!

The place erupts with a CHEER... Mrs. Ben bursts into tears of joy...

GRAZER
You have got to be kidding.

Shocked, Harvey SWALLOWS his sunflower seeds...

254 INT. CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS 254

Charlie wearing a grin as wide as Alaska... gives the THUMBS UP out the window at Jake, Sean and Jessie...

(CONTINUED)

254 (CONTINUED) 254

CHARLIE
Not bad for a couple of city kids!

He LAUGHS...

255 EXT. MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - DAY 255

Bruised and battered, Koontz and a limping Perry PLOD through the endless Alaskan wilderness...

KOONTZ
It's at least a week, ten days to the nearest road.

Perry doesn't answer, just keeps limping along.

KOONTZ (cont'd)
But you had to keep on with that bear, didn't you?
(mimicking)
"I want him a-liiive, Mr. Koontz! He must be a-liiive."

Perry simmers, but still says nothing.

KOONTZ (cont'd)
But I knew. I told you that animal would be a lot easier to handle *skinned, cleaned,* and *neatly folded.*

Perry finally looks at Koontz, from head to toe.

PERRY
Yes, Mr. Koontz.
(grins slightly, homicide in his eyes)
So would you.

Koontz shuts up suddenly, keeps walking.

CUT TO:

256 EXT. PASS NEAR THE CLIFF EDGE - DAY 256

Charlie helps Sean and Jessie carry Jake to the helicopter...

They slide Jake into the back...

CHARLIE
You're sure one lucky son-of-a-gun.

Jake smiles up at Sean and Jessie...

JAKE
Yep, I sure am.

With Jake inside, Charlie helps Sean and Jessie on board... SLAMS the door shut...

257 EXT. HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS 257 *

Charlie throttles up the engine...

SEAN
Wait.

He points at Klondike... *

SEAN (cont'd)
What about Klondike?

JESSIE
Can we keep him? Please Dad? *

Jessie looks at Jake hopefully... he shakes his head...

257 (CONTINUED) 257

JAKE
Honey... He's a wild animal.

SEAN
Well, we can't just leave him, Dad. We owe him, big time.

Jake stares at his son, looks to Charlie. *

CHARLIE *
Load him up. But if he tries to get * in the front seat with me, I'm walking * home. *

Sean runs over to the bear. Jake turns to Jessie *

JAKE *
That's funny he called him Klondike... *

JESSIE *
Why? Who's Klondike? *

JAKE *
That was the name of his stuffed bear * when he was a kid... His mom gave it * to him. He could never let go of the * thing... *

Sean comes up with the bear and we: *

CUT TO:

258 AND 259 OMITTED 258 AND 259

260 EXT. ARCTIC PLAIN - DAY 260

Where we started it all... the utterly flat expanse of WHITE stretches out to weird PEAKS on the endless horizon. Suddenly Charlie's HELICOPTER thunders into view overhead...

260A OMITTED 260A

261 INT. CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS 261

Charlie piloting... Jake bandaged and cleaned up, his leg in a cast (it's a couple of days later)... Sean and Jessie in the back. Jake looks down spots:

261A JAKE'S P.O.V - A MOTHER POLAR BEAR 261A

with a CUB walks across the ice below.

(CONTINUED)

261A (CONTINUED) 261A

JAKE
Set her down over that ridge, Charlie.

262 OMITTED 262

263 EXT. ARCTIC PLAIN - DAY 263

The helicopter lands... everybody piles out. Sean and Jessie stare into the Bear's dark eyes... the Bear's face mirrors the sadness in the kids' eyes.

Excited, Klondike SNIFFS the snow... yeah, he's home. Jake glances at Charlie, then to the kids.

JAKE
Well... we'll be waiting for you when you're ready to leave.

Jake and Charlie disappear back into the chopper...

JESSIE
You think he'll find a new family?

263 (CONTINUED) 263

Sean eyes the Bear... nods...

SEAN
Yeah, he'll be okay. He belongs here.

Jessie kneels by Marlowe... Marlowe lays a PAW on her shoulder... she smiles and fights back tears...

JESSIE
Goodbye, Marlowe.

She hugs Marlowe...

JESSIE (cont'd)
You'll be okay... I promise...
(as she stands)
I love you.

She lets go... wipes away tears and sprints into the helicopter...

Sean peers down at Marlowe... so much has happened during the last few days... but he knows what he has to do. He puts on the hard guy act...

SEAN
Go on, get outta here.

Marlowe doesn't budge...

SEAN (cont'd)
Go on, you're free. Get a job. Get a life...

Marlowe cocks his head at Sean, then reluctantly turns and pads away... Sean watches Marlowe... Marlowe glances back, then continues on... and Sean's heart finally busts through...

SEAN (cont'd)
Wait!

He rushes up to Marlowe.. reaches into his pocket, pulls out a MARSHMALLOW PIE.

Marlowe gazes at Sean, the boy's eyes watering up... he unwraps it, gives the pie to the bear who wolfs it down.

SEAN (cont'd)
Don't tell anyone.

Tears well up in Sean's eyes... he EMBRACES Marlowe, burying himself in the warmth and comfort of Marlowe's fur...

(CONTINUED)

263 (CONTINUED) (3) 263

SEAN (cont'd)
Come back any time if you want another...

And TEARS trail down his face as he squeezes Klondike tight... * Klondike pulls back... LICKS the tears from Sean's face... *

264 INSIDE/HELICOPTER 264

Sean hops in... buckles up... Smile, satisfied. *

SEAN *
Let's go home, Dad.

Sean, Jake and Jessie smile... the family together again. Charlie shoots them the "thumbs-up"... GUNS the engine... and the chopper takes off. *

Softly fingering the BEAR CARVING, Sean stares out the window. * He runs his hand along the rawhide, then quietly, almost * instinctively, puts it over his head so that it hangs over * his heart. *

Ascending quickly, Sean gazes out the window and spots...

265 KLONDIKE 265 *

who raises up onto his two feet to say a final farewell... then pads over a RIDGE... *

265A OVER THE RIDGE 265A

Klondike noses around, smells something familiar... scampers * over to find another POLAR BEAR CUB... instant soul-mates. They ROMP around in the snow...

They stop playing to see a MOTHER POLAR BEAR trudge up... she approaches Klondike and SNIFFS him... Klondike's found a new * home. She pads off... Klondike and his new brother follow * her off into the neverending Arctic horizon... as CHARLIE'S HELICOPTER roars overhead, and climbs into the glistening Alaska skies, and we:

BEGIN END TITLES AND

FADE OUT:

266 THRU 266B OMITTED 266 THRU 266B

THE END