

OLE BESS' BAIT SHOP

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. BAIT SHOP - DAY

HOWARD, 60s, crusty old fisherman, approaches a dilapidated, lakeside store.

A sign hangs crooked from the roof: OLE BESS' BAIT SHOP.

INT. BAIT SHOP - DAY

Howard stands at the counter. An elderly WOMAN, 80s, leans lazily against the register.

He tosses a couple cans of bait and a few small supplies on the counter, reaches for his wallet.

HOWARD
You Bess?

WOMAN
Excuse me?

HOWARD
Bess' Bait Shop.

WOMAN
I don't do small talk. 'Less it's a fishing question.

HOWARD
Anything biting today?

WOMAN
With the right bait, it is.

She glances at the bait cans, rings them up.

WOMAN
Try the north side. That's where the big stuff is.

She reaches under the counter, pulls out a FLARE GUN.

WOMAN
First sign of trouble...

HOWARD
Trouble? Should I -- ?

WOMAN
Nothing my boys can't handle.

She slaps the gun into his hand.

WOMAN
Just point and pull.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

Howard loads a small fishing boat. He tucks the flare gun under the seat, hops into the boat and heads out.

EXT. BAIT SHOP - DAY

On the front porch, the Woman bobs gently in her rocking chair. She reaches for a radio, keys the mic.

WOMAN
Thought we'd work the north side today.

MAN (V.O.)
Roger that. We'll be ready.

WOMAN
Just keep an eye out for the flare.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Howard fishes on the still waters of a beautiful mountain lake. He pops a beer, leans against the boat motor.

The sun glistens off the water, casting long shadows of Howard, his fishing pole, and the boat.

A new shadow appears. Formed by the scaly hump of a creature, slithering in the water behind him.

Howard turns at the small SPLASH of water as the creature slides back under.

He only sees the ripples.

Another SPLASH. Behind him. Howard spins.

Again, only ripples.

He grabs his pole, casts a new line in that direction.

HOWARD
Gonna catch something big today.
Yessir.

EXT. LAKE - SUNSET

The sky glows orange as the sun sets over the mountain.

Howard yawns, stretches.

He closes the lid on a bait can, reaches for his gear.

HOWARD

Guess we'll try again tomorrow.

The line catches, pulls tight.

The rod bends.

Snaps.

EXT. BAIT SHOP - SUNSET

The Woman, asleep in her rocking chair, jolts awake as a bright, red FLARE arcs in the distance, over the lake.

She grabs the radio, keys the mic.

WOMAN

Did you see it?

EXT. LAKE - SUNSET

Two MEN, 30s, backwoods mountain tough, brace themselves as their boat speeds across the lake.

One holds a radio mic.

MAN

I told you, we're on it.

Ahead, they see Howard, in the water, arms flailing. Bits of his boat and gear bob in the water around him.

The Men cut the motor and drift a short distance from Howard.

HOWARD

Help. Please!

The Men ignore Howard as they scan the surface in all directions.

A large tentacle breaches the water behind Howard.

Both Men grab harpoons, tethered to coils of rope.

Soon, the full scale of the creature is evident as it rises from the water. It's massive, with dozens of tentacles creating giant waves as they slap at the water.

Howard is but a dot against the gaping mouth full of crooked teeth that clamps over him.

The Men spear the creature.

It thrashes wildly and jets backward with a burst of energy.

The Men grab at the ropes and brace against the hull of their boat. The ropes pull tight as the creature surges away.

Their boat bounces along, powered by the creature's escape.

Eventually, the ropes snap and the creature dives.

The water calms.

EXT. BAIT SHOP - NIGHT

The Woman stands to greet the Men as they approach the shop.

WOMAN

No luck?

MAN

Finally hooked her. Rope snapped.

WOMAN

Ole Bess ain't going down easy, I guess. Good fishin' up north, though. We'll try there again tomorrow.

The three head inside.

A flickering light illuminates the sign above the shop:

OLE BESS' BAIT SHOP.

FADE OUT.