

SNUFFY

Short Screenplay

by

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FADE IN:

INT. OLD MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Candle lit. Combo living room-kitchen, single bedroom, bathroom. SIX ADULTS, sad faces all, wear jackets, shiver under blankets before a roaring fireplace.

BRUTAL WIND HOWLS (O.S).

LONNIE, early-20s, bone-skinny, pets a shaggy old dog fit with a collar: "Snuffy." OTIS, 30ish, Black, trigger-temper. MARIA, 30s, Hispanic, attractive, holds court.

MARIA

... that covers Day 26.

Glances around. PAUL, late-30s, command presence, grounded, bit rough around the edges.

PAUL

Takes two months to stave to death,
and we're almost there.

Maria hesitates, nods. Otis seethes.

OTIS

How nice. Food supply ran out,
snow's our only source of water.
We're all doomed!

MARCO, 30s, a handsome specimen, chips in.

MARCO

Paul was merely suggesting what
could happen, Otis.

OTIS

And he nailed it, Marco. I'm so
hungry I ate tree bark last night,
puked my guts out!--

Otis lunges at LENNERT, 70s, grey hair, bandaged forehead. Marco grabs Otis by the arm, holds him back.

OTIS (CONT'D)

We can thank a dumb Swede who made
a wrong turn in his van.

(fumes)

That now has a dead battery!

Marco and Otis go eye-to-eye. Paul moves between them.

PAUL

I knew it'd reach this point.

Expressions of the others imply Paul is well respected. All eyes turn to Lonnie.

LONNIE

I can't do it to Snuffy, fellas.

Paul pats Lonnie's arm father-like. Lonnie fights back tears, treks to the bathroom. Snuffy tags along at his side.

Jeb saunters over to the fireplace.

JEB

That's the real issue at hand.
We've been stalling on making the
decision.

PAUL

Jeb's right, people. Our vote fell
one short.

MARIA

Two, Paul. Lonnie's vote also
counts. We all agreed it must be
unanimous.

PAUL

Yes, I know. But that can change.
Are you still locked-in on casting
another 'no' vote?

Maria nods politely. Otis whines.

OTIS

Nice, Maria... If the next vote
fails we'll all face excruciating
pain and inevitable death!

Grim expressions plastered across all their faces.

Maria turns to Paul, breaks the ice.

MARIA

Mind getting that old typewriter
for me?

Paul looks like he was caught off-guard.

PAUL

Uh, sure, Maria.

BEDROOM

Maria and Paul enter. He closes the door. Grabs her around her waist - slams her against the wall--

Lays a passionate kiss on her mouth - they're in to it hot and heavy... Couple beats later they break.

MARIA

Been dying for that since we left the office!

PAUL

Ditto, girl.

NOISE (O.S.) They glance at the door.

MARIA

Better get the typewriter. It's on the closet shelf.

Paul nods. Maria straightens her blouse and hair.

NEXT MORNING

They're all seated at the long kitchen table but for Paul. Sleeping bags scattered on the living room floor in the b.g. Maria takes a stab at levity.

MARIA

How was breakfast, Jeb?

JEB

Bacon was a little burnt.

Mild chuckles. Front door bursts open - wind and snow explode into the room. Paul enters, shivers. Slams the door.

PAUL

Damn wind's brutal.

Rubs his hands together. Beats a path to the fireplace, warms himself near the flames.

PAUL (CONT'D)

SOS marker was covered with about three feet of snow. Took forever to clear it.

Goes to the living room-kitchen table, sits down. Otis moans, grabs his stomach.

Jeb squawks to Paul.

JEB
He did it again, Paul.

They glare at Otis.

PAUL
You ate some bark again?

OTIS
Get off my back!

MARIA
Okay, fellas. Seems we reached the
desperate stage.

They're all stressed. Maria jots something in her notebook.
Paul studies their faces. Zeros in on it.

PAUL
What've you been putting in your
log, Maria?

Maria quick-glances around the table.

MARIA
Daily history of our so-called
retreat, though ended up hundreds
of miles off course.

OTIS
Thanks to that dumb Swede--

Paul holds up his hand, clearly an order. Otis cowers.

MARIA
The Boss's order was quite clear.
No phones, computers nor any other
form of communication.
(bad-eyes Otis)
But Otis sneaked in his phone
anyway... Sadly, he's unable to
get a signal.

JEB
True. At least we'd know if people
are looking for us.

PAUL
Surely there's a search party out.
(shrugs)
But not likely around here.

Maria fishes a note pad out of her purse.

MARIA

Brought this and a few envelopes,
guys...

(tears up)

Maybe some of you'd like to...

The others solemnly consider the implication.

PAUL

Say farewell to loved ones?

(Maria nods)

Include in the log that Otis is the
guy who sucker-clubbed Lennert.

Otis makes a face. Maria looks at the Swede.

MARIA

Sure. Poor man needs stitches to
close that cut.

(softly to Paul)

Shall I also mention what's been
going with us?

Their eyes lock. Maria grimaces, clutches her stomach. Paul
tries to help her.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I'm okay... It comes and goes.

PAUL

(glances about)

We can't continue like this, guys.
I'm afraid it's D-Day.

Seeing the handwriting on the wall, Lonnie nudges Snuffy.
They head to the fireplace. Make themselves comfortable in
front of the dancing flames.

Paul and the others cast their votes at the table. Maria dabs
her eyes with a tissue.

Paul approaches Lonnie. They converse, Lonnie renders an
occasional nod. Maria STEPS UP, gives Lonnie a hug. He hands
his note to her.

Maria collects notes from her other colleagues. Jeb gives her
two. She spots a name. An awkward moment.

Jeb takes a deep breath.

JEB

Second one's for a friend, Maria.

MARIA

Okay, Jeb. But forgive me, I saw the name, Pat. Is that Mr. Jason's daughter, Patrice?

JEB

No. It's Patrick, Ann filed divorce papers on me last month.

Maria's stunned.

MARIA

Oh. I'm sorry, Jeb. Is there any chance... sorry.

Paul hands Lonnie a revolver. Snuffy accompanies them out the door. The others sit stone-faced around the table.

Wind stops blowing (O.S.). Seconds tick off...

GUNSHOT echos (O.S.). They bolt up from their chairs.

Moments pass. They relax, until the guilt sets in...

TIME LAPSE

Paul's sullen, sits alone at the table.

OTIS (O.S.)

Meals are ready. Anyone gonna join me and Paul?

Paul angrily shoves himself away from the table.

PAUL

Can't do it.

Sits next to Maria on the couch. Snakes his arm around her. They stare blankly at the fireplace flames.

THE MEAL

LOUD MUNCHING. CAMERA PANS to Otis - Jeb - Lennert - then SNUFFY who gobbles down his "food" at full speed from a bowl on the floor. Relative calm sets in...

BAM! Cabin shakes and rattles violently when a HELICOPTER swoops in overhead (O.S.) - LOUD VOICE BOOMS.

AIRMAN (O.S.)

Wyoming Search and Rescue Team!
Anyone down there alive?

They all freak!

Paul springs up, bolts to the door--

Maria crosses herself--

Jeb vomits into a bucket under the table--

Otis coughs, gasps for air--

Snuffy continues to "enjoy" his master...

FADE OUT.