

CAMP MOVIE

by

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SAMPLE

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CAMP MOVIE

FADE IN:

EXT. CAMPSITE-NIGHT

High in a mountain forest, the sun is setting and it's hunting time for the most ruthless of predators, those who swoop out of the dark flashing...dagger-sharp claws!

A SCREECH OWL CALLS with its nightmarish scream and RABBITS SKITTER into the bush. Passing them by, the owl launches into its nightly pursuit of dinner, casting a long shadow over the landscape.

While below,

Twelve young CAMPERS of assorted types huddle in a circle around an unlit stack of wood in a fire ring. They look up to see the Evening Star dot the wilderness sky.

MEDIUM CAMPER
(frightened)

This sucks.

TALL CAMPER
(battling his fear)

Yeah. It's getting dark...and we don't even have WiFi.

SHORT CAMPER
(quietly to another kid)

How fast can you rub two sticks together?

All are dressed in bright orange jackets sporting, "CAMP APPALOOSA" on the back, and all are jittery at the prospect of nightfall.

With the group is JAKE BRODERICK, Owner and chief counselor at Camp Appaloosa. Tall and lean, Jake is a ruggedly handsome man made more attractive by his devilish smile and air of self-confidence. He's at home in the woods – ANIMAL NOISES in the dark fail to make *him* jump.

JAKE
(businesslike)

So...it's sundown. What do we do, campers?

CAMPERS

Go home!

JAKE

C'mon guys. We light a campfire! Man's – and woman's – best line of defense against the savage jungle beasts!

ANDREW, a mousy little kid, shyly raises his hand.

JAKE

Andrew. This is vacation time. You don't have to raise your hand.

ANDREW

But...we don't have time to make it burn. And...and I'm scared.

MEDIUM CAMPER

There might be bats –

SHORT CAMPER

(scared witless)

Bats! That means...vampires!

TALL CAMPER

(still battling fear)

Vampires? Uh – wow!

JAKE

There's nothing to be afraid of –

But the campers still look petrified...

as,

again, we soar with the owl on its quest. Only this time it flies over a small clearing where...a dozen orange-clad humans stand frozen like baby deer.

The bird of prey screeches again and dives straight for the group.

Twelve youngsters scream, much like the bird, and scatter about the clearing, bumping into trees, then fighting each other for the opportunity to duck inside the lone tent.

Only Jake remains calm. He stretches out his arm and the owl lands on it...gently.

JAKE

Relax, guys! He's a friend!

The tent flap is released from inside and several young faces peer out.

ANDREW

A...a friend?

JAKE

(to the owl)

Bernie, you're early tonight. Bad bird! I didn't have time to tell the kids about you.

One by one the spirit of curiosity brings the children back to Jake's side.

JAKE

Bernie just stopped by for a snack.

SHORT CAMPER

Yeah, like we're take-out...

JAKE

Bernie here prefers Spam. Go figure. Now – how do we start the fire?

Simultaneously, the children dig through the pile, each coming up with two sticks. They hold them up for inspection.

JAKE

You guys have been watching too much *Yogi Bear*.

The kids lower their sticks and stare at him, puzzled.

From his BACKPACK, Jake pulls out a BLOW TORCH and fires it up. The light reflects in his eyes...or is that a glint?

JAKE

You all want to live in the Information Age – correct?

TALL CAMPER

Well, we do...don't we??!!

JAKE

Not me! Not on your life!

The campers are dumbfounded. They'd never considered such a thing.

JAKE (CONT'D)

But let me pass on one little piece of information, anyway.

In a single WHOOSH he blasts the wood stack.

JAKE
Before all else fails –

The FIRE blazes and our camp master hugs his torch like *The Terminator's Uzi*.

JAKE
 – Use what works.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT.-CAMP APPALOOSA-DAY

Jake waves farewell to his campers for another season. They ride off with their parents and he returns to his cabin.

INT.-JAKE'S CABIN

The wall is covered with pinned-on PHOTOS, such as...

A shot of timid little girl, holding a fishing pole and looking very scared.

The next photo shows her hoisting a rather large fish with an expression of glee spread across her face.

Then, exhausted kids at war with a sagging tent.

And finally, the surprised campers pose by Jake and a well-pitched tent.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.-JAKE'S CABIN-NIGHT

A driving-gloved fist hesitates, then KNOCKS SOFTLY at the cabin door.

No response.

The fist tries again...this time LOUDER.

Still no response.

The hand hesitates, then grabs a rope hanging by the door. The rope RINGS A BELL on the roof, loudly.

The door opens.

JAKE
(sleepily)

Hey!

He grabs the rope out of the visitor's hand.

JAKE
You don't have to wake the dead, you know.

Camera PULLS BACK to reveal SPITZ, a debonair British gentleman. He's a bit over-dressed for the rustic setting and seems quite uncomfortable there as well. However, he acts with great dignity in everything he does.

SPITZ
Sir, I am most sorry about the untimely hour of this call. However, my employer left several telephone messages, but received no response.

JAKE
You work for my cousin Ivan? No surprise.

Jake slams the door but Spitz nimbly sets his polished leather loafer in the way. To the visitor's surprise, his shoe is no match for the cabin's solid walnut door.

SPITZ
(in pain)
Oh my!

Jake looks down and discovers what has happened.

JAKE
Oops!

SPITZ
(stiff upper lip)
Yes, sir. I'm sorry sir, but might I please come in and sit down for a moment. It appears you've broken my foot.

Jake helps Spitz inside and lifts him onto the BED. The bed itself is interesting with FOUR POSTERS MADE OF TREE BRANCHES.

JAKE
Geez – Never pull that foot-in-the-door stunt unless you're properly geared.

He lifts his bathrobe to reveal bulky hiking boots.

Although he can't take his eyes off Jake's odd choice of sleepwear, Spitz nods politely.

JAKE

I got Ivan's message to call. And I have nothing to say to the mean little runt.

SPITZ

I work for Mr. Skyler Broderick, not his son. That young man was merely carrying out his father's order. However, when you didn't reply, I deemed it best to reach you in person.

JAKE

What does Uncle Skyler want?

Jake brings an extra pillow and helps Spitz lie back. Then he lifts the sore foot. Removing Spitz' shoe and sock, he proceeds with a careful examination.

It's not easy, but Spitz maintains that stiff lip.

SPITZ

He wants you to come to the studio tomorrow morning. Really, it's most urgent.

JAKE

It could be a hairline fracture.

(thinks)

If it's so urgent, why didn't he call me himself? He knows I can't stand Ivan.

SPITZ

This is difficult, sir.

(takes a breath)

Your uncle is dead.

Jake sits on the bed beside Spitz' foot. Clearly, he's stunned and saddened by the news.

JAKE

He was a good uncle. I'm going to miss him.

SPITZ

He asked me to be sure you received word of his passing. It was important to him.

JAKE

– Always thought I'd have time to thank him for the chance he gave me once...

SPITZ

Your presence is required at the reading of the will tomorrow morning, nine o'clock.

JAKE

– Probably was still angry at me for leaving the way I did. But...since it was his wish – I'll be there.

Jake grabs a bag and tosses some clothes into it.

SPITZ

Your cousin will be present as well.

The two fall into an embarrassed silence and Spitz painfully wiggles his foot back and forth.

Jake notices the distress on his guest's face. Fortunately, he knows just what to do...

JAKE

Take off your pants.

SPITZ

What?

JAKE

You heard me. And you'll do it, unless you want skunk juice on your fancy outfit.

The mention of "skunk juice" brings panic to Spitz' eyes.

Jack ducks under his sink, retrieving a pot of gooey-looking muck and two small animal skins. He plops everything on the bed.

They both hold their noses.

JAKE

Whew! Old Indian remedy...

(notices Spitz' expression)

Not from skunks! But almost as bad...skunk cabbage poultice.

Spitz tries to pull off his pants but – unable to face such indignity – rolls up the one pant leg instead.

SPITZ

Oh, I do hope this will suffice, sir.

JAKE

It's your wardrobe.

Spitz nods for him to begin and Jake swiftly encases the foot in muck and skins, tying it with sinew into a usable walking cast.

Jake discards the pot and the air clears. Spitz can wiggle his toes more comfortably and he's happily surprised.

SPITZ

Thank you sir! I do mean it.

JAKE

You're an okay guy. What did you do for my uncle, anyway?

SPITZ

I was his personal secretary.

JAKE

He ran a nice little movie studio. I don't go out to movies really. Not any more...just show some oldies to the campers now and then. How is the picture-making business?

SPITZ

I wouldn't know, sir. My assignment was to organize his personal engagement calendar.

At this, Spitz stands up and tries to put some weight on his covered foot.

Jake stops him.

JAKE

Skunk cabbage doesn't work that fast.

He leans out the front door and comes back in with a tree branch about the size and shape of a crutch. Whipping a pocket knife from his robe, he whittles the rough spots away.

JAKE

Here...use this.

Spitz grabs the stick. Wincing, he hops forward. Then he tries it again. Finally, he is able to hobble quite passably.

Better? JAKE

Yes, better. SPITZ

Spitz reaches for the door but pauses when Jake speaks.

JAKE
(nervous)
My name's Jake.

SPITZ
(gently, as to a child)
Yes, I know that, sir.

JAKE
Of course! But, what I mean is –

SPITZ
My name is Reginald Van Spitzervale. Your uncle simply called me "Spitz."

Jake double-takes and shrugs.

JAKE
Spitz, eh? Y'know, that's a famous dog breed for hunting moose in Finland. I had one for years. Took that animal on every hunting trip –

SPITZ
– No relation, sir.

JAKE
Well, you never know. Maybe one of your ancestors had a taste for moose. So I have to recommend this to you...Moose jerky!

Jake holds up a plastic bag with this exotic campfire treat. It resembles burnt bark.

SPITZ
Moose ... jerky?

JAKE

Real hard to get in most mountaineering stores. They all have the usual: elk and buffalo. Boring. This moose will keep you busy chewing all day. Go ahead, take one...

SPITZ

Perhaps some other time, sir.

JAKE

Just ask. You won't find snacks this good in the city.

He tosses the jerky into his travel bag, extends one arm for Spitz to lean on, and... together, they go out the door.

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