

THE MOONBEAM FISHERMAN

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SCREEN CARD: "Big Musky Lake, Wisconsin - 1915"

EXT. BIG MUSKY LAKE - NIGHT

A big northwoods lake, two miles across, ringed by pines. Moonlight shimmers off the water, under a dome of stars.

EXT. LAMB'S FISHING CABINS, LAKESHORE

A dozen tiny log cabins, lakeside. A SIGN out front reads: "LAMB'S FISHING CABINS." Also nestled amongst the pines, a two-story log cabin home. Warm light shines from a window.

INT. THE LAMB CABIN, DINING ROOM

The Lamb family: DAD, MOM, 9-year-old LILY, GRAMPA and GRAMMA huddle around the dinner table, singing.

ALL
...Happy birthday, dear Jimmy,
happy birthday to you!

GRAMPA
What're you waiting for, the fire
marshall? Blow 'em out!

JIMMY LAMB, a sturdy golden-haired lad, blows out 14 candles on his birthday cake.

Dad sets a shoebox-sized present in front of Jimmy.

DAD
Better open mine first.

Jimmy tears off the wrapping.

JIMMY
A new tackle box. Thanks, Dad!

GRAMPA
Look inside.

Jimmy opens the tacklebox and his eyes light up. He pulls out a huge FISHING LURE, a gnarly wooden thing armed with hooks.

DAD
It's one of Grampa's.

GRAMPA
Well, I can't sell every lure I
make. The special ones I gotta save
for someone special...

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

The family relaxes on wicker furniture.

Sprawled on the floor, Jimmy carves his initials into his new lure. REX, the family's cocker spaniel, looks on.

Dad peers over his newspaper.

DAD

Think you're ready to go after Old Snaggletooth?

GRAMMA

Old Snaggletooth! That monster'll pull him right out of the boat.

Grampa fiddles with a homemade radio receiver, pulls in STATIC.

LILY

Are you getting anything on your crystal set tonight, Grampa?

GRAMPA

Had Rhinelander in a while ago...

MOM

Rhinelander! That's sixty miles!

GRAMMA

Sure, 'n next he'll be pulling in the war news from Paris, France.

GRAMPA

Jimmy, did you see? Just got my new issue of "The Electrical Experimenter" in the mail.

Grampa hands Jimmy a magazine.

ON THE MAGAZINE COVER

a man in 18th century garb sits on the moon and aims a large SPOTLIGHT attached to an electronic gizmo back toward earth.

Jimmy reads the CAPTION under the picture.

JIMMY

"Munchhausen on the Moon, Signaling the Earth."

GRAMMA

Posh, a man on the moon. Why, your head would explode!

MOM

Be awfully lonely up there all
alone, Jimmy.

GRAMPA

Quiet now, I'm getting something.

Grampa dials, fighting STATIC. Sounds like...a SINGER. More
fine-tuning...the signal grows clear...an OPERA SINGER.

DAD

Opera? Where do you suppose...

The SINGING ends.

ANNOUNCER (ON RADIO)

That was Enrico Caruso performing
Puccini's "E Lucevan Le Stelle,"
coming to you from the Metropolitan
Opera House in New York City.

DAD

New York City!

Looks of amazement and HUBBUB all around.

GRAMPA

Well, I'll be. Will you look at
that...

Grampa looks out the window. The others do too.

OUT THE WINDOW

the night sky is alive with SHIMMERING CURTAINS OF COLORED
LIGHT -- the "Northern Lights" in spectacular display...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BIG MUSKY LAKE, SHORE - NIGHT

The property, quiet now. The Lamb cabin, windows dark.

The back door opens soundlessly and Jimmy slips out, rod and
tacklebox in hand.

FROM A BEDROOM WINDOW

Grampa spies Jimmy tiptoeing across the lawn. Grampa smiles
and turns away from the window.

Jimmy slips down to the pier. Unties a rowboat. Climbs in.

Back at the house, Rex pokes through his doggy door. He races down to the pier and stands hopefully by the boat.

JIMMY

Well, c'mon if you're coming.

The dog jumps in and Jimmy pushes off from the pier.

EXT. BIG MUSKY LAKE - NIGHT

Jimmy rows out toward the middle of the large lake.

Nothing to hear but the CREAKING of the oars and the LAPPING of water against the boat.

OUT IN THE MIDDLE

Jimmy sets his oars.

He puts his new lure on his line and begins to cast. Again and again he casts the heavy lure out and reels it smoothly back in.

Overhead, the Northern Lights SHIMMER eerily.

Jimmy reels in slowly, enchanted by the skies. Even Rex looks upward...

...POW! Something hits on the end of Jimmy's line!

JIMMY

Old Snaggletooth!

Jimmy tugs mightily and reels. Rex BARKS... Suddenly --

THE MUSKY BREACHES!

frightfully large, 60 pounds! Fierce and ugly, the fish is a monster indeed, EXPLODING from the black water!

Jimmy fights on, overmatched.

The LIGHTS in the sky grow fierce. Jimmy looks up as --

A METEOR-LIKE OBJECT

appears in the midst of the NORTHERN LIGHTS, screaming down like a BALL OF FIRE...

...and it's headed their way! Jimmy and Rex duck as the fiery object ROARS down --

-- SLAMMING into the water just in front of them. A great DELUGE of water rains down...

Jimmy sputters, wipes water from his face. Rex wipes his muzzle. Boy and dog peek cautiously over the side.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Wow...

Beneath the boat, a FAINT GLOW emanates from the depths.

Jimmy tugs on his rod. The line is frozen on that thing below.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Well, that's the end of Old Snaggletooth.

(realizes)

Oh no, Grampa's lure!

Jimmy deliberates only a moment. He strips off his shirt.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Watch the boat, okay boy? I gotta get Grampa's lure.

Jimmy takes a deep breath and dives in.

The dog peers over the gunwale, into the water, and WHINES.

An eternity goes by...

THE LAKE

The whole sparkling wide expanse of it, and the dome of heaven above, as the Northern lights...

DISSOLVE TO:

SCREEN CARD: "Town of Big Musky - 1969 (54 years later)"

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

A FLYING SAUCER

hovers over an alien landscape --

on the cover of AMAZING STORIES MAGAZINE. The magazine sits atop a stack of schoolbooks in the lap of

KIT BUSSIE

a shaggy-haired 14-year-old in jeans and a plaid wool shirt one size too big.

He's in a school bus filling up with ROWDY STUDENTS whooping and cheering in celebration of the end of the school year.

Kit ignores the hubbub. He pulls a manila envelope from his stack of books and opens it. Inside, a thin manuscript and

A LETTER

with a return address from "AMAZING STORIES" in New York.

Kit braces himself and reads the letter.

KIT

"Dear Kit, We regret to inform you...

(a big sigh)

"...that your story, 'Flight to the Stars,' does not meet our current needs."

OUTSIDE THE BUS

The last stragglers clamber aboard. The bus pulls out of the lot and down a forest road.

BACK INSIDE

Kit's classmate GARY plunks down next to him.

GARY

News bulletin, Shakespeare -- school's out! Put the books away!

Gary flings Kit's textbooks out the window. Kit is too bummed to care.

KIT

Hey Gary.

GARY

Another reject?

Kit shrugs. Gary checks out the manuscript.

GARY (CONT'D)

(a dramatic reading)

"The Earthling cursed his crippled craft. Beyond the porthole, distant worlds beckoned like moonglow on a pitch-black sea..."

(beat)

Any bug-eyed monsters?

KIT
It's Sci-Fi, not a horror story.

GARY
Maybe he needs a love interest.

Kit grabs his manuscript back.

KIT
He's in a space capsule rocketing
through the outer reaches of the
Andromeda Galaxy -- there literally
is no room for a love interest!

GARY
I thought every story had a love
interest.

KIT
Not this one. He's very focused.

GARY
Where's he going?

Kit stares gloomily out at the sun-dappled forest, and a lake
glittering just beyond.

KIT
I don't know. Away...

EXT. BUSSIE RESORT - DAY

The bus stops on the forest road. Kit gets off, near a SIGN
that reads: "BUSSIE CABINS."

He walks down a pine-shaded lane to a TWO-STORY LOG CABIN --
the same home the Lamb family owned 54 years before...