

TIMBER LODGE

Written by

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Ext. The Lodge Porch - Day

MASON (35) sits on the Timber Lodge Ranger Station porch where a camera crew interviews him.

Mason

Life in the city can be rough for a boy who was raised in the backwoods. I used to be a garbage man before dropping everything and enlisting with the rangers.

CAmera crew interviewer (O.S.)

What made you want to become a forest ranger?

MASON

Well, this job was an opportunity to escape the city. Plus, I've always wanted to help people, so this seemed like a logical choice.

SGT. BUSKER (44) quickly exits the main entrance to the Lodge and waves towards the cameras to cut the interview.

SGT. Busker

Hey guys, cut this out. Come on Thorp, we got a call.

MASON

Well, duty calls.

MASON waves goodbye to the camera crew and jogs towards the patrol vehicle. MASON and SGT. BUSKER enter the vehicle.

MASON Cont.

What's the call?

SGT. BUSKER

Probably just a prank call, but some dipshit said they saw an alligator in the lake.

MASON

Pfft, we don't have alligators here. It's probably just a prank call.

SGT. BUSKER drives the pair of forest rangers down a dirt road away from the camera crew.

Ext. Timber lake boat ramp - Day

A short, heavy set, ELDERLY WOMAN (62) struggles her way up the boat ramp to speak with the forest rangers.

ELDERLY WOMAN

It's about time you showed up. My grand kiddos were swimming by the boat dock and started screaming bloody murder after they saw an alligator surface near them.

SGT. BUSKER

Sounds to me like it's just kids being kids.

BYSTANDER 1

They went back to camp to get some hot dogs. Can you just do your job and take a look around?

SGT. BUSKER mocks the ELDERLY WOMAN. He walks to the shoreline, holds his right hand over his eyes to block the sun, and starts to examine the water.

SGT. BUSKER

Well, ma'am...No alligators here.

MASON quickly catches the attention of the angered ELDERLY WOMAN.

MASON

Don't worry ma'am. If there is something out here, we'll find it.

ELDERLY WOMAN pulls out a lighter and a half smoked cigarette out from her rear jean-shorts pocket. She tries to light the cigarette with her broken lighter. She stares down SGT. BUSKER.

SGT.BUSKER walks back towards the ELDERLY WOMAN and MASON.

SGT. BUSKER

Don't worry ma'am. We'll take care of it.

SGT. BUSKER motions for MASON to follow him down the boat ramp. The rangers walk to the edge of the boat ramp.

SGT. BUSKER takes out a notepad and starts jotting some things down with a golf pencil.

MaSON

What are you writing? Did you find something?

SGT. BUSKER

Groceries, that's what. Sometimes if you look busy, that's all these people want.

MASON

You're kidding. Shouldn't we actually try to look into what spooked the kids?

SGT. BUSKER

That lady is on a high horse and wants to feel like she has some sort of authority in her mundane years of retirement. Why don't you try to kill a few minutes by walking the shoreline.

MASON hesitantly nods and walks towards the boat dock.

SGT. BUSKER continues to write irrelevant notes in his notepad.

ELDERLY WOMAN walks over to a camping chair on the dock and starts to fan herself with a mustard smeared paper plate while she smokes her cigarette.

EXT. Boat Dock. Day

The camera crew interviews SGT. BUSKER as he fiddles with his pencil. His sunglasses hide his eyes. SGT. BUSKER does break glance with his notebook.

SGT. BUSKER

I was a police officer in the city for almost a decade. Mason is too nice and a bit slow to understand how things need to be dealt with.

CAMERA CREW INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Is being "too nice" a bad thing?

SGT. BUSKER

Well, in this line of work, it can definitely be used against you. He might be easy to manipulate, but he's got heart.

SGT. BUSKER tilts his pencil to point MASON out to the camera crew. Across the water, Mason stands ankle deep in the lake water as he scouts for anything suspicious in the water.

EXT. Timber Lake Shoreline. day

The camera crew interviews MASON at a picnic table along the shoreline.

MASON

Well, I've looked up and down the boat dock and didn't see anything. Sarge told me to patrol the shore line just to keep that lady quite.

A pair of mountain bikers pass by MASON. The interview is interrupted as one of the bikers crash within frame of the camera crew's interview.

MASON runs to the INJURED BIKER (30s) who is trapped under their bike and clutching their leg.

Like a pointer hound, MASON stops and looks in the direction of a loud shriek. He clutches his radio.

MASON

2-1-4 to Dispatch. I have a woman screaming at the shoreline and will be making contact.

INJURED BIKER

W-wait, what about me?

Mason ignores the INJURED BIKER and darts down the shoreline bike path to the scene.

Ext. Timber lake Shoreline - Day

WORRIED MOTHER (27) cries from the shoreline.

Worried Mother

Help! My baby! Oh, my poor baby.

MASON runs down the hill and trips over a rock. He tumbles his way towards the shoreline and lands near the WORRIED MOTHER. He stands and straightens his attire. He tries his best to ignore the pain.

MASON

What is the problem ma'am?

WORRIED MOTHER points towards a dog in the water desperately trying to swim to the shoreline.

A large lizard-like creature floats on the surface of the water, slowly making it's way closer to the dog.

WORRIED MOTHER

Paddle Warf!

WORRIED MOTHER starts to gesture a mock doggy paddle to her English Bulldog trying to swim it's way to shore.

MASON runs into the water. He creates large splashes with his hands to try to gain the alligator's attention.

SGT. BUSKER stampedes his way down the hill that MASON ran down. He performs a semi-heroic leap and lands in a foolish pose at the finish. He adjusts his sunglasses and looks to MASON who is thigh-deep in the water.

MASON

Hey, leave that dog alone. I'm a lot bigger and more tasty.

MASON continues to dramatically splash his way towards the alligator.

SGT. BUSKER uncaps the holster of his 457. Magnum, blows the muzzle to show off for the WORRIED MOTHER, and let's lose an unaimed shot, almost hitting the paddling English Bulldog.

SGT. BUSKER

Oh shi-

The Alligator unusually starts to flail around as if it were a person. ALLIGATOR MAN (25) pokes his head from the water. He removes his goggles and breathing tube from his mouth.

ALLIGATOR MAN

Whoa dude, don't shoot. It's just a costume.

SGT. BUSKER keeps his firearm trained on the ALLIGATOR MAN as he swims his way to shore.

MASON reaches ALLIGATOR MAN and grabs him.

MASON

You are under arrest. You have the right to remain silent.

As MASON continues reciting the Miranda rights to ALLIGATOR MAN, SGT. BUSKER holsters his firearm and folds his arms. He wears the look of one who is impressed.