

ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ

Written by

Gary J Rose

Groes1@pacbell.net
(530)613-9232

FADE IN:

EXT. EVERGLADES - DAWN

A stunning aerial panorama - sunlight bleeds over the sawgrass and winding river channels. Egrets, herons, and ibises erupt into flight.

CAMERA SWOOPS LOW over mirror-still water.

A frog rests motionless on a log.

SPLASH! A gator erupts - devouring it.

EXT. DEEP SWAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Coiled around a tree - a BURMESE PYTHON, thick and silent.

Multiple pythons slither unseen in the brush. A hidden threat.

EXT. SKY ABOVE EVERGLADES - LATER

A sleek, unmarked DRONE carves through the clouds.

It leaves behind white vapor trails, unnatural and deliberate.

INT. BLACK OPS MONITORING STATION - UNKNOWN LOCATION - SAME

Banks of monitors. Drones track flight paths over SECTOR 12.

A stone-faced SUPERVISOR watches satellite feeds.

SUPERVISOR

Trail Alpha-One deployed. Begin drift.

A tech taps a keyboard.

TECH

No chatter. Locals think it's condensation.

SUPERVISOR

Let them.

He turns to a monitor. Below the clouds - a gator glides.

But beneath the surface – something bigger moves with it.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD:

ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ

EXT. ABANDONED AIRFIELD – SOUTH FLORIDA – DAY

A rusted sign:

“EVERGLADES STRATEGIC AIRFIELD – U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPERTY –
NO TRESPASSING”

Weeds crack the tarmac. Vultures circle.

LENNY (30s) and CRUZ (40s) – state workers – step from a
pickup. They carry clipboards, swat mosquitoes.

LENNY

This place is creepy as hell.

CRUZ

Government built it. Then ghosted.

LENNY

You hear about the two guys that
vanished?

CRUZ

Rumors. Gators, maybe.

A branch SNAPS nearby. They freeze.

LENNY

That ain't no hog.

A massive shape lunges from the reeds–

CUT TO:

EXT. STATE HQ – TALLAHASSEE – ONE WEEK LATER

A black SUV pulls up. Out steps AGENT TYSON (50s), DHS.

INT. STATE CONFERENCE ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

Tyson briefs a circle of FLORIDA OFFICIALS.

A map of the Everglades glows on screen. A red circle pulses on a remote island.

TYSON

We call it Alligator Alcatraz.
Detention without walls. The swamp
is the fence.

Murmurs. Concern. But heads nod.

COMMISSIONER

You're proposing a swamp-based
Guantanamo?

TYSON

Not a prison. A deterrent.

CUT TO:

EXT. SWAMP ISLAND - UNDER CONSTRUCTION - DAY

SUPER: A FEW YEARS LATER - 2025

Crews arrive by barge. Bulldozers blaze trails. In the trees
- unseen - glowing eyes watch.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - FERRY DOCK - DAY

A grim sign reads:

"FEDERAL DETENTION FACILITY - TRESPASSERS WILL BE DEVOURED"

A ferry docks. ARMED GUARDS escort tired DETAINEES off:

MATEO (20s, MS-13 TATS, EYES DEAD INSIDE)

"DREAD" JACKSON (30s, FLORIDA GANG SHOT CALLER, TENSE AS A
COILED VIPER)

LUPE GARCIA (40s, CARTEL ENFORCER, STARES AT THE GUARDS LIKE
HE'S MEASURING COFFINS)

GUARD

You run, you swim - you die.

LUPE (WHISPERING TO OTHER DETAINEES)

Guantanamo had lawyers. This is
just a grave.

INT. WATCHTOWER - NIGHT

Two GUARDS sip coffee. Monitors flicker.

GUARD 1
Something triggered Perimeter 4.

GUARD 2
Probably just a snake.

Camera static. Then—

SMASH! A tower light is knocked over.

GUARD #1
What the fuck!

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - CONSTRUCTION ZONE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Heavy heat. Mosquitoes swarm.

A WORKER slashes at brush with a machete.

HISS. He freezes.

Behind him — a massive shadow slithers.

WORKER
Jose? Tell your pet snake to quit
messin'—

CRACK! He falls into a sinkhole. Bones. Mud. Then — GATOR
EYES.

SCREAM.

EXT. COMMAND TENT - MOMENTS LATER

TORRES (40s, supervisor) hears the scream.

TORRES
That's the third this week.

Another WORKER runs up.

WORKER 2
Radio's dead in Sector 5.

TORRES
Then we don't go in. Let 'em come
out... or not.

INT. SECURE TRAILER - NIGHT

A government TECH replays drone footage.

He zooms in:

One gator – the size of a mini-van

Another – a python slithering over a carcass

He leans back, pale.

Hits a key labeled: "BLACKSTAR OPS - RED"

EXT. SWAMP EDGE - NIGHT

A ripple in the reeds.

Dozens of glowing reptilian eyes blink in sync.

Then – an unholy ROAR.

INT. SECURE TRAILER - NIGHT

The TECH leans closer to the monitor.

ON SCREEN – a blurry frame grabs his attention.

He enhances the image:

A MASSIVE GATOR, half-submerged.

Behind it – what looks like eggs in a flooded nest... but too large to be normal.

TECH

Jesus...

He quickly clicks a red-marked window labeled:

"BLACKSTAR OPS - PRIORITY RECALL"

CUT TO PRESENT:

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - BARRACKS COMPOUND - DAWN

Whistles blow. DETAINEES line up for roll call under the watchful eye of ARMED GUARDS.

Lupe scans the area.

LUPE
Something's off here. There's no
sound. No birds. No bugs.

MATEO eyes the silent swamp.

MATEO
It's like everything's already
dead.

KEVIN, weary, mutters from behind them:

JACKSON
We're in a prison they don't expect
us to survive.

EXT. MESS HALL - LATER

The detainees eat bland slop under a steel canopy. Guards lounge nearby.

In the treeline - a rustle.

A DETAINEE sneaks off with a spoon tucked in his sleeve.

INT. TENT - MINUTES LATER

The detainee crouches, digging at the floor with the spoon.

Suddenly - a low growl from behind.

He turns - too late.

A HUGE SHAPE crashes through canvas. A SNAP of jaws. Blood spatters the tent wall.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

AGENT TYSON storms in.

TYSON
Another missing detainee? That's
six this month.

GUARD CAPTAIN
Most likely escaped into the swamp.

TYSON
No one escapes. Not from this
island.

Tyson eyes a wall of surveillance monitors.
Several are showing static.

TYSON (CONT'D)
Run thermal scans. Check soil shift
patterns. And get me Blackstar
Command on satlink - now.

EXT. PERIMETER FENCE - NIGHT

Floodlights scan the fog. Mosquitoes swarm in golden beams.
A GUARD lights a cigarette. Burns a mosquito on his forearm.
He hears a splash behind him.
Turns. Nothing.
He exhales smoke—
And suddenly, from behind:

CRUNCH!

Something yanks him into the dark. Blood sprays the fence.

CAMERA PANS TO:

A warning sign nearby:

"DO NOT APPROACH FENCE - GATOR ZONE"

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - DETAINEE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Crickets. Fog drifts through razor wire fences. Mateo lies
awake, eyes wide.
He hears something - soft splashing beyond the walls.
CLOSE ON - his face tightening.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - SAME

Detainees snore. Jackson paces, restless. He peers through
slats in the wall.

JACKSON
(to himself)
Ain't right. Something's out there.

INT. GUARD SHACK - NIGHT

Two guards sip coffee.

GUARD 1

You ever notice how the cameras
always glitch right before someone
goes missing?

GUARD 2

Yeah. Either it's the humidity...
or the gators figured out where the
cables run.

GUARD 1

You're saying they're smart now?

GUARD 2

I'm saying they ain't dumb.
(takes a sip)
And we're the ones fenced in, not
them.

They chuckle. Then - a deep THUMP outside.

Silence.

GUARD 1 opens the door slowly - peers into the dark...

Nothing.

INT. COMMAND TRAILER - SAME

Tyson stands over a tech watching thermal scans.

TECH

Something's moving near the
southern bank. Large. Cold-blooded.
But the signature's off.

TYSON

Show me.

ON MONITOR a blurry outline. Then another. Then three.

They vanish.

TYSON (CONT'D)

Boost coverage grid. I want to know
what's coming before it gets here.

He stares at the monitor.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. GUARD SHACK - LATER THAT NIGHT

Two guards play cards. One shuffles, the other looks distracted, glancing at the flickering monitor.

GUARD 1

That's the third feed out this week.

GUARD 2

I say we blame it on union gators. They want shorter hours and tastier inmates.

GUARD 1

Funny. You joke, but I swear I saw one just watching me. Like it was sizing me up.

GUARD 2

Relax. They eat tourists, not payroll.
(a beat)

GUARD 1

Tell that to Baker. He went out for a smoke and came back in a Tupperware.

INT. GUARD SHACK - NIGHT (CONT'D)

A small TV plays static. One GUARD munches jerky, the other scrolls on a dusty tablet.

GUARD 1

How come we don't get hazard pay for swamp monsters?

GUARD 2

Because officially they don't exist. Like UFOs, deep-state, and overtime.

GUARD 1

Right. And Baker's leg just...fell off and crawled away on its own?

GUARD 2

Yeah. Probably unionized too.
(a beat)

GUARD 1

Place gives me the creeps. Even the gators act like they know something.

GUARD 2

They do. We're the side dish.

INT. BLACKSTAR OPS - BRIEFING ROOM - NIGHT

A sleek, windowless underground bunker. Scientists and military types gather around holographic projections of the island.

COLONEL WYATT (60s, stone-faced) leads the briefing.

WYATT

The genetic residue from the trail dispersal has bonded with reptilian DNA. What we're looking at isn't evolution - it's accelerated mutation.

He taps a file.

WYATT (CONT'D)

These creatures are territorial. Aggressive. Intelligent. And they're nesting inside the island now.

Gasps.

SCIENTIST

How many?

WYATT

Some of them are pushing prehistoric dimensions - over 16 feet. But it's not the size that's the problem.

(pause)

They're breeding in coordinated clusters. It's a behavioral leap we've never seen in reptiles.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - ISLAND CORE - NIGHT

Inside the swamp interior - a nightmare nest.

Half-digested human bones litter the muck.

A mother gator, grotesquely oversized, slithers back into the water.

Behind her – eggs hatching. Dozens of them.

One of the hatchlings already has two heads.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. PERIMETER TOWER – NIGHT

Wind whips through the trees. Crickets fall eerily silent.

A spotlight pans across dense reeds.

INT. GUARD TOWER – SAME

GUARD RILEY (30s) scans the dark swamp with a thermal scope. He chews sunflower seeds, eyes bleary.

GUARD RILEY
(to himself)
Come on, Bigfoot... show me them
sexy toes.

The scope flickers – a heat signature flashes.

GUARD RILEY (CONT'D)
(into radio)
Got movement. Sector Nine.
Something big.

INT. COMMAND TRAILER – NIGHT

Tyson leans in.

TYSON
Is it bipedal?

RILEY (V.O.)
Negative. Low to the ground. Fast.

TYSON
Deploy spotlights. Confirm visual
before anyone pulls a trigger.

EXT. SWAMP – CONTINUOUS

Floodlights stutter on, sweeping the undergrowth.

A massive shadow lumbers into view—

—A wild boar bursts from the reeds, squealing, eyes wide.

GUARD RILEY (V.O.)
Son of a-goddamn pig.

Relieved laughter across radios.

GUARD 2 (V.O.)
Guess we're eating bacon for
breakfast.

TYSON (IN TRAILER)
Sweep the rest of the sector. If
pigs are spooked, something else
scared them.

Tyson stares hard at the screen — troubled.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. DEEPER SWAMP — NIGHT

Silence. Then... a large gator tail disappears beneath the water.

INT. GUARD SHACK — NIGHT

RILEY enters, tossing his rifle onto a rack.

RILEY
Pig damn near gave me a stroke. I
nearly painted the inside of my
boxers tactical brown.

GUARD BRIGGS (40S, JADED, EATING BEEF JERKY)

That's why they issue you three pairs, hero.

Riley slumps into a chair, checks the monitor bank.

RILEY
Swear to God, if that's what
tripped the sensors... I want
hazard pay in pork chops.

BRIGGS
(chuckles)
You know what this place reminds me
of?

RILEY
Jurassic Park meets Guantanamo?

BRIGGS
Nah. That time we ran over a python
in Okeechobee... thing kept moving
like it was pissed off we
interrupted its nap.

They laugh – then one of the monitors flickers.

RILEY
Wait—sector 6... Did you see that?

Briggs leans forward. The camera glitches, briefly showing...
...a shadow behind the fencing. Low. Wrong shape.

BRIGGS
Probably a vine.

RILEY
A vine that moves against the wind?

He rewinds, freezes frame. Blurry. Obscured. But... the
outline could be a gator. Or something else.

BRIGGS
Alright, stop doomscrolling. You're
gonna see Bigfoot next. Go take a
leak and breathe.

RILEY
(laughing, but unsettled)
Yeah, maybe I'll run into a vine
that eats back.

EXT. OUTSIDE GUARD SHACK - NIGHT

Riley steps out. Lights a cigarette. The swamp crackles with
distant frogs.

Then silence.

Suddenly – a faint thud from the treeline.

He peers into the dark, hand drifting to his sidearm.

RILEY
(calling out)
If you're a gator, blink twice.

Silence.

He takes one step forward—then stops. Something moves. A ripple.

His radio crackles to life — a garbled voice.

STATIC
(zzt) ...low frequency...
not alone... (zzt)

RILEY
What the hell?

He backs toward the shack — then sees it.

Just eyes.

Dozens of them. Reflected in the faint glow of the perimeter lights.

Low to the water. Unblinking.

RILEY (CONT'D)
(numb whisper)
Oh... shit.

He rushes back inside—

INT. GUARD SHACK - CONTINUOUS

RILEY
Get Tyson. Now. We got
movement—real this time.

NT. GUARD SHACK - NIGHT

BRIGGS
Movement?

RILEY
Eyes. Dozens of 'em. Not deer. Not
hogs. Low to the water. Just...
staring.

Briggs grabs binoculars, hurries to the window.

BRIGGS
(grumbling)
You sure you didn't dose your MRE
with mushrooms?

Riley yanks open the secure radio channel.

RILEY

Command, this is Perimeter Post
Echo—possible breach near Sector 6.
Recommend infrared sweep and
backup.

COMMAND (V.O.)

Copy, Echo. Dispatching drone now.
Hold position.

EXT. SWAMP TREELINE - SAME

Silent. Motionless.

A faint buzz as a surveillance drone whirs into view
overhead. Its night vision lens swivels toward the marsh.

INT. DRONE FEED - COMMAND CENTER

Techs monitor the feed – green-tinted vision scans the trees.

At first – just ripples. Nothing alarming.

Then – a mound rises from the shallows. Not a gator. Too
broad. Too armored.

TECH

Jesus. Zoom. Zoom right now.

The drone hovers closer – but the shape suddenly vanishes
beneath the waterline.

The screen flickers. Static.

TYSON (O.S.)

Where the hell did it go?

TECH

It knew the drone was watching.

TYSON

They're learning.

EXT. DETAINEE BARRACKS - DAWN

Fog hangs low. Dew glistens on razor wire. Detainees gather
for headcount, bleary-eyed.

MATEO scans the treeline, more tense than yesterday.

MATEO
Something was out there last night.

LUPE
(smirking)
Something's out there every night.

JACKSON
No. This is different.

The GUARD CAPTAIN barks orders.

GUARD CAPTAIN
Anyone missing?

An AIDE checks a clipboard – frowns.

AIDE
Cellblock Three – short one.

GUARD CAPTAIN
Name?

AIDE
Ortiz. Armored car heister. Was
here last night.

They all glance toward the woods.

GUARD CAPTAIN
Fan out. Check the latrines, med
tent—everywhere. If he's gone, he
didn't swim.

Beat.

LUPE
Maybe something swam to him.

INT. DETAINEE YARD - DAY

The compound bustles – detainees mop, haul water, lounge in
the heat.

LUPE, JACKSON, and MATEO lean against a post, eyes tracking
guards and towers.

A cocky voice interrupts.

TICO (30S, WIRY, TWITCHY, VENEZUELAN CARTEL RUNNER)

TICO
 You boys waste your breath whining.
 Me? I'm already gone.

They turn to face TICO, who tightens his shoelace with a smirk.

LUPE
 The hell you talking about?

TICO
 A storm's coming tomorrow. That
 fence? Cheap Cuban scrap. Weakest
 near the drainage trench. I cut
 through, hit the water, gone by
 dawn. Maybe Miami. Maybe Nassau.
 But free.

MATEO
 You're insane.

TICO
 Better insane than dead behind
 wire.

Tico taps the fence casually.

GUARD (O.S.)
 HEY! Hands off the perimeter!

Tico turns, flips the bird.

TICO
 File a report, asshole.

CUT TO:

INT. SOLITARY CONTAINER - NIGHT

Tico sits alone in a hot metal box - one overhead bulb, a rusted drain.

A torn spoon in his hand. He grins.

TICO (V.O.)
 They put me in solitary to shut me
 up. But they gave me what I needed
 - quiet. And time.

He kneels at the floor - a rusted vent grate. Loosens bolts with the spoon.

EXT. REAR PERIMETER - NIGHT

Fog. Rain starts to fall. Heavy. Lighting and thunder.

A panel in the cyclone fence has been pried loose near the swamp trench.

TICO slithers through mud, soaked, breathing hard.

The swamp opens ahead like a black mouth.

TICO (WHISPERING TO HIMSELF)
Free... free...

He steps into waist-high water. Something ripples.

A low hiss.

He freezes. A python slinks silently from the reeds and coils around his waist. Tico thrashes - chokes out a scream.

TICO (CONT'D)
NO! HELP-!

Suddenly, the water explodes.

A massive gator lunges from beneath.

BONE-SNAPPING CRUNCH. Blood floods the surface.

The python and Tico both vanish beneath the ripples.

Silence returns.

EXT. GUARD COMPOUND - NIGHT

Flashlights sweep the perimeter as a group of guards return with SANCHES' BLOODY SHOE in a biohazard bag. Tension high.

INT. GUARD BRIEFING ROOM - LATER

A grim mood.

CAPTAIN REED (50s, ex-Marine) tosses the shoe onto the table.

GUARD #1
Think we should, uh... tell the detainees?

GUARD #2
Hell no. Last thing we need is panic. Or worse - hope.

They chuckle nervously.

GUARD #3
(chuckling)
Bet the gators leave more evidence
than the cartels ever did.

CAPTAIN REED
Enough jokes. Get drone eyes on the
northwest sector. Triple rotations.
Nobody walks alone – not even to
take a leak.

Beat.

GUARD #1
So what if we run out of guards?

REED
Then we start feeding them
bureaucrats.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ – FRONT GATE – MORNING

A polished black SUV kicks up dust as it arrives. Out steps a
congressional delegation:

SENATOR ALTHEA GREER (60S, LIBERAL LIONESS)

CONGRESSMAN RAY LEBLANC (40S, IDEALIST, SHARP-SUITED)

Two AIDES with cameras and clipboards

They're met by AGENT TYSON and ARMED GUARDS.

SENATOR GREER
We are here under full legislative
authority. I want eyes on your
operation.

TYSON
This isn't a petting zoo, Senator.
This is a classified federal site.

CONGRESSMAN LEBLANC
We have families writing us –
asking about loved ones who
vanished into this swamp. You can't
just deny–

TYSON
I can. And I am.

He hands them a thick folder – heavily redacted.

TYSON (CONT'D)
Everything you're cleared to know
is right here. Now if you'll excuse
us, we have a security breach to
contain.

A guard gently, but firmly, ushers them back toward their
vehicle.

SENATOR GREER
This place smells like Vietnam all
over again. Black sites, missing
people...

As they drive off, the camera lingers on the WELCOME SIGN:

"TRESPASSERS WILL BE DEVOURED."

INT. PENTAGON – SECURE CONFERENCE ROOM – NIGHT

A hush-hush meeting in progress.

A map of Alligator Alcatraz on screen. Photos: blurred
surveillance stills of creatures. Memos stamped "CLASSIFIED."

Present:

GENERAL HASTINGS (AIR FORCE) CRISPY UNIFORM

DHS DIRECTOR VALENTINE (OVERWEIGHT, BALDING)

FEMALE EPA ANALYST – LIBRARIAN – LOOK.

DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY

VALENTINE
We're looking at over 30 detainees
unaccounted for in the last six
months. Most tagged "escaped," but
none made landfall.

EPA ANALYST

Chemical dispersal may have triggered a reproductive surge. They're nesting faster than expected.

GENERAL HASTINGS

Then we need boots on the ground. A cleanup op. Quiet and fast.

DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY

You mean send in more bodies?

HASTINGS

Call them infrastructure inspectors.

They nod grimly.

EXT. SWAMP - NIGHT

Back on the island.

Wind howls. Trees sway. A loud SNAP in the woods.

From a distance - we see glowing eyes watching the fence line.

Then - the alarms blare.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Detainees jolt awake. GUARDS shout, herding them inside.

INT. GUARD TOWER - SAME

A panicked tech points at the screen.

CAMERA VIEW - Something huge brushing the outer fence. Leaves a dent like a car hit it.

TYSON stares at the image. Then turns.

TYSON

Get Blackstar back online. And arm every tower.

EXT. SWAMP EDGE - NIGHT

Deep in the reeds, we glimpse a nest - dozens of eggs. Some already hatched.

Something huge slithers into the water.

FADE OUT.

EXT. D.C. CAPITOL HILL - DAY

A group of suited LIBERAL LAWMAKERS stands at a podium, flashes pop from cameras. PROTESTORS chant behind barricades.

SENATOR HASTINGS (D-CA)
We demand transparency. Where are
the detainees? Families deserve
answers!

AIDE whispers in his ear.

SENATOR HASTINGS (CONT'D)
(turning back to mic)
We've received zero cooperation
from DHS. Zero.

INT. DHS BRIEFING ROOM - SAME

A high-level CLOSED-DOOR MEETING. TYSON sits across from COLONEL WYATT and a panel of government officials.

TYSON
They want a tour? Let 'em visit
after the gators digest.

Muted chuckles. But eyes are tense.

COLONEL WYATT
We can't delay. This thing's
spiraling. If one of those
creatures makes it inland-

DIRECTOR MILLER (NSA)
Then we scrub it. Whole site. No
survivors.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - NIGHT

Tension. Detainees whisper. LUPE leans against the fence, watching one man pacing.

MARCUS (30s, wiry, wild-eyed) carves something into the dirt with a sharp spoon.

MARCUS
 Fuck this place. You'll see. I got
 a plan.

LUPE
 (chuckling)
 You? They can't bury you fast
 enough.

MARCUS
 (snarling)
 Keep watch tomorrow night. Solitary
 fence has a gap near the utility
 duct. I slip under, I'm gone. Fuck
 these gators.

EXT. SOLITARY COMPOUND - NIGHT

Marcus lies awake, eyes darting. A guard walks by... then passes.

MARCUS (V.O.)
 Timing. Everything's timing.

He slithers through a torn mesh, crawling under the fence into the swamp brush.

EXT. SWAMP EDGE - MOMENTS LATER

Marcus wades silently. Moonlight casts jagged shadows.

A rustle. Then - SLITHERING. He freezes. The thick coil of a python wraps his leg.

MARCUS
 Shit-no-

The python coils tighter. Then - a sudden SNAP!

From the dark, a gator lunges - jaws wide - clamping both in one terrible crunch.

Silence.

EXT. GUARD TOWER - NIGHT

Two GUARDS scan monitors. One munches jerky.

GUARD 1
Another quiet night in paradise.

GUARD 2
Till the damn lizards unionize.

GUARD 1
Nah. They're Republicans. Eat the weak.

They laugh. Below them, the grass ripples.

EXT. BARRACKS - NEXT MORNING

ROLL CALL. A name is called. No answer.

GUARD
Marcus DeSoto?

No response.

LUPE
Guess the gators voted.

LUPE stares into the jungle. The silence grows deeper.

LUPE (CONT'D)
They're getting closer. Every night.

EXT. ISLAND INTERIOR - SAME

A hidden NEST - gator eggs crack open. One hatchling is missing eyes. Another has a forked tail.

Nearby, the remnants of Marcus's boot.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - BARRACKS COMPOUND - LATE NIGHT

Storm clouds gather overhead. Thunder rumbles.

Inside the barracks, detainees toss and turn. LUPE lies awake, staring at the corrugated ceiling.

Suddenly - a low ALARM BLARE echoes across the compound.

EXT. GUARD SHACK - SAME

RED LIGHTS spin. GUARDS scramble from bunks and armory lockers.

DISPATCH (RADIO)
Sector Seven perimeter breach.
Unknown signature.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - SAME

TYSON and a tech huddle over a live drone feed. The image stutters with static.

TECH
Damn tropical storm is fucking everything up. Thermals offline again. (Pause) Look! Something's moving fast through the treeline. Big.

TYSON
Sound the lockdown. Light the island up.

EXT. SWAMP PERIMETER - NIGHT

Floodlights ignite. Jungle hums with life.

THWIP. A guard is yanked into the dark - gurgling.

Another fires wildly - the brush explodes with motion.

EXT. DETAINEE COMPOUND - SAME

LUPE
(shouting)
What the hell is going on?

A distant SCREAM echoes. The detainees panic.

MATEO
They're inside the fence!

JACKSON
Fuck this-I ain't dying in no zoo!

Suddenly - a GIANT TAIL sweeps the fence. Sparks and metal shriek as part of the compound wall collapses.

GUARD (O.S.)
BREACH! BREACH!

EXT. BARRACKS COMPOUND - MOMENTS LATER

TYSON and COLONEL WYATT arrive in a jeep, armed. Chaos everywhere.

TYSON
(to Wyatt)
This wasn't supposed to happen.

WYATT
And yet here we are.

They look up - in the distance, a hulking gator shape lumbers through firelight, vanishing into mist.

EXT. BLACKSTAR OPS - DRONE LAUNCH BAY - NIGHT

Technicians prepare a high-tech RECON DRONE under dim red lights. Its rotors hum to life.

TECH #1
Flight path is locked. We're sticking to high-altitude perimeter sweeps only.

COLONEL WYATT (V.O.)
(intense, filtered through headset)
If we lose this one too, I want a satellite scramble over the entire Everglades. Understood?

EXT. SKY ABOVE ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - NIGHT

The drone soars across the canopy. Infrared cams scan heat signatures. On a monitor feed:

- Glowing gator bodies, still.

- Then... one shape larger than all the rest emerges from the water.

- It looks up. Almost as if it sees the drone.

Suddenly-STATIC. Then:

ON MONITOR - The last frame: rows of glowing eggs in the shape of a spiral.

TECH #2

Did it just... look at us?

EXT. DETENTION COMPOUND - NEXT DAY

Detainees whisper, on edge. Tensions rising. A GUARD pushes a detainee down roughly.

MATEO

They keep disappearing. You think this place still has rules?

LUPE

No. We're just food with names.

GUARD CAPTAIN (O.S.)

Yard's closed till further notice. Anyone not inside in ten gets zip-tied and posted as bait.

Gasps. Detainees rush back inside.

INT. MED TENT - SAME

A HALF-DEVOURED WORKER - miraculously alive - lies strapped to a gurney. Skin shredded. Delirious. Left leg missing. Right shredded.

TYSON stands beside the camp medic.

SURVIVOR (WEAKLY)

It's not the gators... not just the gators...

TYSON

What then?

The man grips Tyson's collar.

SURVIVOR

Something else is down there... it nests beneath the island... it's calling them...

He flatlines. Tyson stares, shaken.

TYSON

(to medic)

Burn the body. No trace. No report.

FADE OUT.

INT. MESS HALL - LUNCH - LATER

Storm passes. Steam rises off steel trays of unidentifiable mush. The detainees eat in silence, eyes scanning every shadow. Guards still on edge.

MATEO

It's not the guards we're scared of anymore.

JACKSON

No. They're scared too - just better at pretending.

LUPE

If we don't move soon... we're next.

A loud THUMP outside. Silverware clatters. Everyone freezes.

GUARD CAPTAIN (O.S.)

Shut it down! Everybody back to barracks!

The hall empties fast - guards gripping rifles tighter than before.

INT. INFIRMARY TENT - THAT NIGHT

A gurney is overturned. BLOOD smeared across the floor. No sign of the medic.

TYSON (V.O.)

(muttering into radio)

They're breaching reinforced zones. These aren't reptiles. These are tacticians.

INT. GUARD BRIEFING TRAILER - NIGHT

WYATT slams a fist on the table.

COLONEL WYATT

No more recon. No more scans. I want air assets ready.

GUARD SUPERVISOR

With respect, sir - what are we fighting?

WYATT stares at a grainy image on the wall monitor:

A mutated gator – bone plating down its spine, two sets of eyes.

WYATT

Whatever the hell this is... it's learning.

EXT. EDGE OF THE SWAMP – SAME NIGHT

A DETAINEE, Gomez, runs – bleeding from the shoulder. He scrambles through brush, breath ragged.

He thinks he's made it. Then – SNAP. The ground gives way.

He plunges into a pit of eggs.

A CHORUS OF HISSING.

A single SCREAM... then silence.

EXT. GATOR ALCATRAZ – AIRSTRIP LANDING PAD – DAY

A black military helicopter touches down. Out steps DR. EVELYN HARROW (40s, exobiologist, sharp, no-nonsense) flanked by ARMED ESCORTS.

TYSON

We didn't request a civilian.

DR. HARROW

I'm not here for coffee. You're incubating an extinction-level event. I'm here to stop it.

She walks past him toward the command center.

INT. COMMAND TRAILER – MOMENTS LATER

DR. HARROW flips through enhanced satellite photos – hot zones of reptilian activity, thermal spikes.

DR. HARROW

You dosed half a biosphere with untested mutagens and didn't expect adaptation?

COLONEL WYATT

We expected deterrence. This is evolution on meth.

She looks closer at a screen – paused on something in the brush.

DR. HARROW
Wait... zoom in. There.

An unnatural pattern on a gator's hide – looks almost like letters.

DR. HARROW (CONT'D)
They're developing camouflage. With pattern mimicry.

TYSON
That's impossible.

DR. HARROW
Not anymore.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - LATE DAY

Tension builds. Jackson and LUPE sit quietly as Mateo paces, twitchy.

JACKSON
They're testing us. Every night they get closer to the fence – like they're watching who panics.

MATEO
They're not just hunting. They're planning.

A distant ROAR rolls across the compound – too deep to be normal.

Everyone freezes.

INT. TEMP MEDICAL CLINIC - SAME

A GUARD lies on a stretcher, leg mauled, eyes wide with terror. A NURSE tries to calm him.

MAULED GUARD
It didn't kill me... it looked at me... like it was... deciding.

He begins convulsing.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - LATE NIGHT

A LUXURY TOWNHOUSE - inside, an urgent meeting. SENATOR HASTINGS and two other lawmakers sit around a low-lit table.

SENATOR HASTINGS

They shut us out. Blackstar, DHS,
even the White House.

STAFFER

Then we leak it. Photos, sat intel
- we make the public demand an
answer.

SENATOR HASTINGS

God help us if we're too late.

EXT. SECTOR 9 - DAY

Thick fog rolls across this isolated corner of the island. Female guard, HARROW, steps cautiously through tangled brush, her rifle slung, radio clipped to her vest. She swats mosquitos.

She reaches a rusted gate marked:

"SECTOR 9 - RESTRICTED - NO ENTRY"

She unlatches it. The gate CREAKS open.

INT. SECTOR 9 - OVERGROWN TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

Branches claw at her. The sun barely filters through. It's quiet... too quiet.

She kneels - finds a half-melted surveillance drone, shredded by claws.

Next to it: gnawed human bone fragments. Blood still fresh.

HARROW (INTO RADIO)

Command, this is Echo-2. You seeing
this?

STATIC.

She taps the radio - nothing.

Suddenly, she hears something - a soft, low CHUFFING sound.

She turns.

Bushes rustle – something massive moves just out of sight.

HARROW
Easy... Easy...

She slowly backs away – hand tightening on her rifle.

A LOUD SNAP!

A branch breaks behind her.

She spins – NOTHING THERE.

Just the sound of... breathing?

HARROW
(to herself)
Not worth it.

She retreats, faster now.

Something follows – low to the ground, never seen. Just sound. Presence.

EXT. SECTOR 9 GATE – MOMENTS LATER

Harrow SLAMS the gate shut, panting. The fog behind her curls unnaturally.

She bolts the gate, backs away.

Suddenly – a THUD against the gate from the other side.

And then... nothing.

She stands frozen. Then quietly mutters:

HARROW
Yeah... something's nesting.

EXT. COMMAND TRAILER – DAY

Harrow bursts in, straight to TYSON.

HARROW
Sector 9's compromised. Dead tech,
dead drone, human remains.
(silence)
(MORE)

HARROW (CONT'D)

Something's watching in there.
Something smart.

TYSON

We already know.
(points to monitor)
You're not the first to see it.

HARROW

Sir. There's eggs everywhere.

ON SCREEN:

A THERMAL IMAGE – multiple cold-blooded shapes... circling Sector 9.

Tyson hits pause – one of the shapes has a long, vertical scar and a metal tag embedded in its skull.

TYSON

We tagged that one in 2022.
(beat)
It chewed through three inches of steel in the old holding pens.

HARROW

And you left it alive?

TYSON

Didn't have a choice.
(beat)
This island belongs to them now.
Guess the quick fix of turning it into a prison has backfired.

EXT. DOCK LANDING – LATER THAT DAY

The supply barge arrives – crates of rations, diesel drums, and caged dogs meant to "scare off the gators."

TYSON supervises. HARROW stands nearby, watching a pair of GUARDS unload.

HARROW

Where's Bravo Patrol? They were due back hours ago.

TYSON

Probably drinking swamp water and jerking off. They'll crawl in.

HARROW

Two of them had Satlinks. They'd
ping.

TYSON gives her a look. Knows she's right. Doesn't like it.

TYSON

Alright. Take a unit and check
Sector 3.

EXT. SECTOR 3 - LATE AFTERNOON

The jungle is denser here - towering cypress trees, hanging
moss.

HARROW leads a two-man SEARCH TEAM, rifles up.

SEARCHER 1

This feels wrong.

SEARCHER 2

Always does.

They push forward.

Suddenly - something glints in the brush.

HARROW kneels - finds a splintered helmet.

Nearby - a severed radio mic, bloodied.

HARROW

Weapons up.

The team fans out.

CROWS burst from the trees.

Then - a SHREDDED UNIFORM hanging from a low branch.

SEARCHER 1

Oh shit...

A GROWL.

HARROW

Go! Go!

Suddenly - from the muck - a GATOR LAUNCHES! It slams one of
the searchers against a tree - violent, fast.

Gunfire erupts. Leaves explode.

HARROW dives, rolls, fires twice – the gator disappears into the murk.

SEARCHER 2
Charlie's down! He's gone!

HARROW pants, bleeding from her arm.

HARROW
Back to base. Now.

She fires on a charging gator and it's body explodes.

HARROW (CONT'D)
How do you like that fucker?

EXT. SWAMP TRAIL – NEXT DAY

HARROW leads another SEARCH TEAM through the muck. The air is thick with humidity and dread.

One of the GUARDS pulls up short.

GUARD
Found something.

He holds up a partially chewed inmate bracelet – the name barely legible: M. DeSoto.

Nearby, half-submerged in roots – a human foot, cleanly severed, no signs of struggle.

HARROW
No drag marks. No blood trail.
Whatever took him... didn't need to
fight.

A GUARD spots something – tangled in the reeds: a shed snake skin longer than a man.

GUARD #2
Jesus... is that a python or a damn
anaconda?

Suddenly – a SSSSSS from above.

They look up. Draped from a branch – a python thicker than a sewer pipe, coiled and still.

Then its eyes blink.

GUNFIRE erupts. The python drops like a stone, slithers off into the brush.

HARROW
(to comms)
Tag the site. Pull back. No more
solo sweeps.

INT. PENTAGON - BIO-SURVEILLANCE OPS CENTER - NIGHT

A dim room of glowing screens and analysts.

DR. FISCHER (40s, CDC) speaks to a small cluster of high-level personnel.

DR. FISCHER
These DNA fragments aren't just
reptilian anymore. There are cross-
species anomalies - regenerative
markers we've only seen in lab
models. Some... amphibian. Some
viral.

NSA TECH
Could it go airborne?

Fischer hesitates. That hesitation says everything.

DR. FISCHER
If any of these carriers made
landfall... yes.

Stunned silence. Then-

NSA OFFICIAL
Time to move up the timetable.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - LANDING ZONE - DAY

A BLACKSTAR TRANSPORT CHOPPER kicks up a hurricane of swamp dust as it sets down. Six elite COMMANDOS disembark, clad in tactical gear. Leading them - LT. ROZAK (40s, no-nonsense, scarred face).

COMMANDO 1
Sector Twelve's quiet too long.
It's never good.

They fan out, infrared scanners sweeping the thick vegetation.

INT. SWAMP TRAIL - MOMENTS LATER

Tense. Muffled footsteps in muck. FLIES buzz over something unseen.

A low beep on the scanner - heat signature: 40 meters.

Suddenly - from the underbrush - a python whips around Commando 2's neck. He fires wildly.

LT. ROZAK

Hold fire! Get a clean shot!

It's too late. From the opposite side - a gator explodes from the water, taking Commando 3 to the waist. Screams vanish into the splash.

LT. ROZAK (CONT'D)

(retreating)

Fall back! Back to LZ! Now!

They run. Behind them - rustling in stereo. Too many. Too close.

EXT. EVERGLADES CHECKPOINT - DAY

A motorcade of BLACK SUVs is met by ARMED GUARDS at a heavily reinforced gate.

A polished government sedan pulls up - SENATOR HASTINGS and two other congressional staffers step out.

SENATOR HASTINGS

We have legal authority to inspect this facility.

The GUARD lifts a tablet - shows a signed DHS DECLARATION:

"NO CIVILIAN ACCESS - SECTION 48: BIOHAZARD QUARANTINE IN EFFECT."

STAFFER

There's no record of a biohazard.

GUARD

Exactly.

Beat. The Senator fumes. But turns and leaves.

STAFFER (O.S.)

How are they hiding this from the press?

SENATOR HASTINGS

They won't be able to... for long.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

Storm clouds brew. LUPE sits with JACKSON and a small group. MATEO watches warily from the fence line.

LUPE

We can't keep waiting to be picked off.

JACKSON

We ain't soldiers, Lupe. We're bait.

LUPE

Then we stop being bait.

JACKSON

(grinning)

You planning a prison break... through a swamp full of prehistoric monsters?

LUPE

They bleed, they die. Same as us.

Mateo steps closer.

MATEO

Except they don't die easy.

LUPE

Then we find something that kills easy.

INT. COMMAND TRAILER - SAME

TYSON watches a satellite feed. An OVERLAY blinks:

"RECON TEAM ALPHA - INFILTRATION IN PROGRESS"

EXT. ISLAND SHORELINE - NIGHT

A BLACK OPS Air-BOAT slices through reeds. Four BLACKSTAR OPERATIVES disembark, faces masked, rifles ready.

LEADER

Sweep and tag. One live specimen.
That's it.

They vanish into the foliage.

EXT. JUNGLE PATH - MINUTES LATER

Quiet. Too quiet.

OPERATIVE #2 scans heat signatures. Nothing.

OPERATIVE #3

You see that?

Ahead - a half-eaten deer. Its ribcage is arranged like a warning sign.

Suddenly -

A branch SNAPS.

Then - HISS.

From both sides - movement.

Screams. Gunfire. Blood mist in the moonlight.

One operative bolts through vines, gasping -

Something huge MOVES beside him.

EXT. DETAINEE FENCE LINE - NIGHT

The surviving operative collapses against the outer fence -
hands torn, eyes wide.

LUPE sees him from across the yard.

LUPE

What the hell-?

GUARD SPOTLIGHTS flood the jungle.

IN THE BRUSH - shapes scatter.

OPERATIVE

(into radio)

They're hunting in packs now. It's
coordinated. You don't understand-

A SNAP.

Something pulls him backward into the dark.

Silence.

INT. BLACKSTAR OPS - NIGHT

A lone DRONE TECH rewinds helmet cam footage.

ON SCREEN -

Multiple glowing eyes.

Then a wide mouth.

Then darkness.

TECH
(to himself)
They're not hunting. They're
planning.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ISLAND INTERIOR - DENSE BRUSH - DAY

A SQUAD OF GUARDS sweeps the jungle - rifles raised, nerves frayed.

SQUAD LEADER
Eyes sharp. Command wants a thermal
recon of Nest Sector Three.

They fan out.

INT. MONITORING TRAILER - SAME

TECH watches their body cams.

CAM FEED - GUARD #1

Pushes through vines. Nothing. Then static.

CAM FEED - GUARD #2

Steps in something - it's *Marcus's ribcage*. He gags.

CAM FEED - GUARD #3

Turns - something behind him. WHAM! Feed cuts.

INT. COMMAND TRAILER - SAME

Tyson SLAMS his fist on the console.

TYSON
They're picking us off like it's
sport.

He turns to COLONEL WYATT, who's already tapping a command tablet.

TYSON (CONT'D)
Seal the island. No one leaves.
Nothing leaves.

COLONEL WYATT
Understood.

EXT. D.C. NEWSROOM - NIGHT

A late-shift JOURNALIST, MEGAN LI (30s, sharp, persistent), stares at a FLASH DRIVE just slid across her desk by a shadowy figure.

FLASH CUT - CLASSIFIED DRONE FOOTAGE

Infrared showing hundreds of heat signatures. Some in human shape. Others... massive and cold-blooded.

INT. DHS HEADQUARTERS - NEXT MORNING

The footage now airs on a muted TV screen in the corner. Red-faced officials argue.

DIRECTOR MILLER
Jesus Christ - it's on the goddamn
news!

SENATOR HASTINGS (VIA TV)
What else is the government hiding?

COLONEL WYATT
(to Tyson)
If they send investigators, we're
screwed.

TYSON

Then we make sure no one comes.

EXT. SWAMP - LATER THAT DAY

A Blackhawk helicopter approaches the island perimeter.

Inside - JOURNALIST MEGAN LI in body armor, flanked by her camera team and an overconfident STATE LIAISON.

PILOT (V.O.)

Per protocol, you have ten minutes
boots-on-ground. Don't wander.

As they descend -

Something moves beneath the water. Large. Fast.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ISLAND PERIMETER - DAY

A BLACKHAWK hovers over the edge of the island. Wind lashes the canopy.

ONBOARD - JOURNALIST MEGAN LI holds a mic, flanked by a CAMERAMAN and two CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS. A grizzled MARSHAL briefs them.

MARSHAL

Remember. You get ten minutes. Got it?

MEGAN LI

What if we see something
classified?

MARSHAL

You won't. Not if you want to make
it home.

EXT. LANDING ZONE - MINUTES LATER

The team disembarks. Soldiers escort them through a cleared path surrounded by razor wire and spotlights.

CAMERAMAN

(to Megan)

Place smells like copper and piss.

From the treeline - a faint growl.

They all stop.

SOLDIER
Keep moving.

MEGAN'S POV - a BLOODY PATCH of soil is hastily shoveled over. She snaps a picture anyway.

EXT. GUARD TOWER - SAME

TYSON watches the group through binoculars.

TYSON
(to Wyatt)
What idiot authorized this PR
stunt?

COLONEL WYATT
The same ones that'll hang us if
footage leaks.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - SAME

MATEO watches the press group from behind the fence.

MATEO
(smirking)
Looks like someone brought dessert.

LUPE
Nah. They won't last long enough to
get eaten.

Nearby, Jackson tosses a rock at the perimeter camera.

JACKSON
They shut off half the lights last
night. You feel that? Like... quiet
has weight now.

LUPE
Every night's quieter. The swamp's
holding its breath.

EXT. DEEP SWAMP - SAME

A rustle. A deer darts out-

SNAP! A gator ambushes it from above - not below - having used a low branch to *launch* itself.

PREDATORS LEARNING.

INT. BLACKSTAR OPS - NIGHT

Col. Wyatt presents a new 3D render to officials.

COLONEL WYATT
They're adapting. Coordinating.
This isn't natural behavior.

SENATOR (O.S.)
So what are you saying, Colonel?

WYATT
I'm saying nature's turned against
us. And we trained it.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTRICTED TRAIL - ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - DAY

MEGAN LI walks briskly behind the soldiers. Her CAMERAMAN lags, filming the razor wire, scorched earth, and perimeter towers.

MEGAN
(into mic)
...no official comment from DHS,
but from the look of things, this
facility isn't just off the grid -
it's off the map.

CONGRESSIONAL STAFFER #1
You'll blur our faces in post,
right?

MEGAN
(smiling, not promising)
Sure.

They pass a half-buried WARNING SIGN - letters faded, claw marks gouged deep.

CONGRESSIONAL STAFFER #2
Was that... blood?

The guide ignores him. The cameraman zooms in.

Suddenly, a LOW RUMBLE.

Everyone freezes. The brush shifts nearby.

SOLDIER
Eyes forward. Don't break the line.

CONGRESSIONAL STAFFER #1
(to himself)
This was a mistake.

Something HISS-SNAPS in the distance – maybe a snake? Maybe not.

They continue walking... faster now.

EXT. WATCHTOWER - SAME

COLONEL WYATT watches the tour through binoculars. Tyson stands beside him.

TYSON
I give them twenty more minutes
before one of 'em pisses their
slacks.

WYATT
This island's a powder keg. Press
sniffing around won't help.

TYSON
Then make sure they don't smell
smoke.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - SAME

LUPE sharpens a piece of fence wire against a concrete step. Nearby, JACKSON rolls dice with two other detainees, trying to stay casual.

MATEO sits apart, eyes locked on the treeline.

JANINE approaches with a dented metal tray.

LUPE
You notice anything... different?

MATEO
There's no birds anymore. Not even
bugs.

JANINE
Even the flies stopped coming. Not
normal.

MATEO
Nothing here's normal.

CRACK – a branch snaps in the distance.

Everyone stiffens.

LUPE
It's watching us again.

The yard falls dead quiet. The jungle breathes.

INT. GUARD SHACK – NIGHT

GUARD 1 pours a shot of cheap whiskey into his coffee.

GUARD 2
You hear about Marcus?

GUARD 1
Yeah. Took the Express to Darwin-
ville.

They both laugh – but it fades quickly.

GUARD 2
You think we'll be next?

GUARD 1
Buddy... we're already on the list.

EXT. JUNGLE RIDGELINE – NIGHT

A GATOR, covered in mud and moss, inches toward the perimeter. It pauses... eyes blinking. Intelligent.

Just behind it – a second one. Then a third.

All of them watching.

FADE OUT.

INT. NEWSMAX NEWSROOM – NIGHT

ON AIR – breaking footage of Senator Hastings shouting.

ANCHOR (V.O.)
DHS officials declined to comment
after today's fiery press
conference on Capitol Hill...

A screen graphic: "WHERE ARE THE DETAINEES?"

INT. DHS OPERATIONS ROOM - SAME

TYSON watches the footage with clenched jaw.

TYSON
Turn that off.

He walks to a whiteboard - an island schematic covered in red Xs.

TYSON (CONT'D)
Tell Blackstar: if those reporters
get close again - we cut satellite
feeds. Full radio silence.

INT. DETAINEE BARRACKS - NIGHT

The lights flicker. Then - complete BLACKOUT.

Shouts. Metal clanks. The guards scramble.

GUARD CAPTAIN (O.S.)
Backup generator! Get the yard
locked!

LUPE moves through the chaos, eyes focused.

MATEO
What's happening?

LUPE
I don't think this was us.

A loud CLANG echoes from the mess hall.

INT. MESS HALL - CONTINUOUS

Two detainees brawl - one bleeding, the other wielding a tray.

GUARDS storm in, breaking up the fight.

EXT. PERIMETER - SAME

In the treeline, just beyond the fences-
Something watches. Several somethings.

Low breathing. Heavy. Intent.

INT. WATCHTOWER - SAME

GUARD 1 flips through static-laced monitors.

GUARD 1
Camera 12 just died. That's the
third one today.

GUARD 2
Maybe rats are chewing wires again.

GUARD 1
I'd feel better if it was rats.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - LATER

The yard is dimly lit under backup floodlights.

Lupe walks slowly along the fence, scanning the jungle.

JACKSON
You're wasting your time.
Whatever's out there already picked
its targets.

LUPE
You ever seen something wait? Plan?

JACKSON
Not a gator. But this ain't no
normal swamp.

He turns. The trees sway unnaturally.

Offscreen - a distant gurgling shriek.

They both freeze.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
That wasn't a bird.

SMASH TO:

INT. COLONEL WYATT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A thick dossier thuds on the desk. Wyatt flips to a thermal
image: multiple heat signatures around the island's core.

WYATT

They're spreading. Nesting in zones
we didn't think they'd reach for
weeks.

TYSON (O.S.)

We're out of time, Colonel.

TYSON steps into frame, stone-faced.

TYSON (CONT'D)

Prep the evac codes. In case this
thing breaches containment.

FADE OUT.

EXT. SWAMP INTERIOR - DAY

Thick vines. Waist-high water. A four-man BLACKSTAR STRIKE
TEAM moves in tight formation, infrared scopes scanning.

SERGEANT VALE

Command, we're approaching grid 5-
G. Movement minimal.

RADIO CRACKLES (O.S.)

Copy. Maintain visuals. Priority:
biological samples.

They wade forward - eyes sharp.

Suddenly - VALE halts.

SERGEANT VALE

Hold. You see that?

In the murk - a DRONE. Half-submerged. Bent rotors.

TECH (O.S.)

That's Blackstar Recon-3. Been
offline three days.

They pull it out. Covered in slime.

DRONE CAM FOOTAGE - STATIC... Then flickers to life.

ON SCREEN - infrared shows dozens of heat signatures. Too big
for gators. Moving fast.

SERGEANT VALE

Jesus... They're coordinated.

CRASH! From the trees - something massive moves.

BLACKSTAR #2
Contact right!

GROWL – wet and guttural.

A tail WHIPS through frame, snapping a soldier's spine with a sickening crack.

Chaos.

RADIO (O.S.)
Team 5-G, respond. Team 5-G-?

Static.

INT. COMMAND TRAILER – NIGHT

Tyson watches the recovered drone footage on loop. Wyatt stands behind him, grim.

ON SCREEN – the creatures don't just attack. They flank. Surround.

TYSON
They're hunting in packs now?

WYATT
They're learning.

INT. MED BAY – SAME

JANINE gets her arm stitched up – a bite wound from the scuffle the night before.

DOC HARRIS (50S, TIRED, CHAIN-SMOKING)

DOC HARRIS
We got two detainees with infected wounds. Another disappeared last night. I'm running out of antibiotics – and answers.

JANINE
You think it's the swamp?

DOC HARRIS
It ain't the swamp. It's what we put in it.

EXT. BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

LUPE and MATEO sit in the shadows, whispering.

MATEO

If the guards don't run first,
we'll be next.

LUPE

Nah. Guards are too dumb to run.
They'll die holding coffee mugs.

INT. GUARD SHACK - SAME

GUARD 1 pours coffee into a dented thermos.

GUARD 1

We're basically gator snacks with
dental.

GUARD 2

I'd rather be eaten by a python. At
least they hug you first.

They laugh - until the power cuts again.

Total blackout.

OFFSCREEN - a soft hissing.

Then - SCREAMS from the far perimeter.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - GUARD STAGING AREA - NIGHT

Floodlights hum. Armed GUARDS gather around a makeshift table
with satellite maps and coffee-stained printouts.

SERGEANT MCKINLEY (50s, buzzcut, Gulf War vet) slaps down a
thermal map.

MCKINLEY

Something's off in Grid 9. That
heat bloom ain't normal.

GUARD #3

Might be a hot spring.

MCKINLEY

Hot springs don't move.

A younger GUARD flips through missing persons reports.

YOUNG GUARD

That's the seventh missing this month. Eight, if you count the dog.

MCKINLEY

Screw the dog. Start prepping the flare drones. If it's breeding season, we're already late.

INT. DHS SAFE COMM ROOM - NIGHT

TYSON is on an encrypted sat-call with DIRECTOR MILLER.

TYSON

They're nesting faster than projections. The mutations--whatever we cooked into those trails--has them doubling down.

DIRECTOR MILLER (V.O.)

Can they swim off-island?

Tyson hesitates.

TYSON

Not yet.

Beat.

DIRECTOR MILLER (V.O.)

Then make sure "not yet" stays "never."

CLICK. Line goes dead.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - NEXT DAY

Mateo watches a GUARD toss scraps into a burn barrel. He approaches Lupe quietly.

MATEO

Something's wrong. The trees are too quiet.

LUPE

They've been watching. We're not prisoners. We're feed.

Behind them, DREAD JACKSON steps out from the shadows.

JACKSON

No one's making it out alive unless we make a move. And I ain't dying with a spoon in my hand.

He holds up a map – torn from a guard's clipboard.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

There's a service tunnel near the cremation pit. Runs beneath the north wall. We hit it tonight.

Lupe and Mateo exchange looks. They nod.

INT. BLACKSTAR OPS - GENE LAB - NIGHT

A white-tiled sterile room. A team of SCIENTISTS examine fetal gator specimens in fluid tanks. One floats, twitching – even though its heart isn't beating.

DR. LI watches, pale.

DR. LI

Their neural mass is increasing – even post-mortem. We're not just mutating them... we're accelerating cognition.

SCIENTIST

You mean they're thinking?

DR. LI

I mean they're learning.

She turns to the glass.

Inside a secure cage – a juvenile gator stares back.

It blinks. Once.

Then again.

On the second blink, the lights flicker.

EXT. D.C. CAPITOL HILL - DAY

A press conference in full swing. A sea of microphones. LIBERAL LAWMAKERS at the podium, flanked by protestors and banners reading "WHERE ARE OUR FAMILIES?"

SENATOR HASTINGS (D-CA)
 We demand transparency. Where are
 the detainees? Families deserve
 answers!

A young AIDE whispers urgently into his ear.

SENATOR HASTINGS (CONT'D)
 (turning back to the mic)
 I'll say it again. We've received
 zero cooperation from DHS. Zero
 accountability. Zero humanity.

Flashbulbs. Chants intensify: "SHUT IT DOWN! SHUT IT DOWN!"

INT. DHS BRIEFING ROOM - SAME

A sterile, secure chamber. TYSON sits across from COLONEL WYATT and a panel of tight-lipped defense brass and intelligence officials.

TYSON
 They want a tour? Let 'em visit...
 after the gators digest.

Dark chuckles ripple through the room. But eyes are wary.

COLONEL WYATT
 This containment strategy was never
 designed to last. If one of those
 things makes it to the mainland-

DIRECTOR MILLER (NSA)
 (quietly)
 Then we scrub it. Whole site. No
 press, no survivors. We deny it
 ever existed.

Silence. A decision has already been made.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - NIGHT

Spotlights flicker overhead. Detainees huddle in tense clusters. LUPE watches a pacing figure nearby - MARCUS (30s), wiry, eyes twitching like a trapped animal.

MARCUS
 (under breath)
 They think they own us. Fuck that.
 I'm gone tomorrow.

LUPE
Yeah? You and what miracle?

MARCUS
(grins)
Solitary fence. Utility duct. I got
eyes. I got time. Let 'em chase
ghosts.

Lupe shakes his head. DREAD JACKSON watches from a distance,
expression unreadable.

EXT. SOLITARY COMPOUND - LATER THAT NIGHT

MARCUS crouches in the shadows, eyes locked on the passing
GUARD.

Footsteps fade. He slips through the warped cyclone mesh,
belly-crawling into the dense underbrush.

EXT. SWAMP OUTSKIRTS - MOMENTS LATER

He trudges waist-deep through murky water, teeth chattering.

A hiss.

He freezes. A PYTHON lashes from the reeds, wrapping his leg.

MARCUS
No no no--shit--!

He hacks at it - but from the blackness, a MASSIVE GATOR
bursts forth, jaws wide-

CRUNCH. Python, detainee, everything - dragged under in an
explosion of water and blood.

EXT. GUARD TOWER - SAME TIME

Two GUARDS sip bad coffee. One watches a flickering monitor.
The other munches jerky.

GUARD 1
Another quiet night in paradise.

GUARD 2
Till the gators start voting.

GUARD 1
They already do. Eat the loud ones
first.

They chuckle. Unseen in the grass below – movement.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD – NEXT MORNING

ROLL CALL. Names shouted. Detainees shuffle into lines.

GUARD
 Marcus DeSoto?

Silence.

LUPE
 (low, darkly amused)
 Guess the gators voted early.
 (softly, more serious)
 They're getting closer. Every
 night.

His eyes drift toward the trees.

EXT. ISLAND INTERIOR – SAME

A hidden nest. GATOR EGGS tremble. One cracks open – a malformed hatchling with milky eyes and a split jaw.

Just beyond – MARCUS'S half-digested boot, sinking into the mud.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. DHS BRIEFING ROOM – SAME

A high-level CLOSED-DOOR MEETING. TYSON sits across from COLONEL WYATT and a panel of government officials.

TYSON
 They want a tour? We should just
 let them take a tour of the glades
 around the prison.

Muted chuckles. But tension lingers.

COLONEL WYATT
 We can't delay. This thing's
 spiraling. If one of those
 creatures makes it inland–

DIRECTOR MILLER (NSA)
 Then we scrub it. Whole site. No
 survivors. No trace.

DHS OFFICIAL #2
 (grumbling)
 These detainees snuck in, now they
 snuck out – so what?

TYSON
 That “so what” might show up in
 Tampa with human bones in its
 belly.

Silence. Eyes flick to each other. No one laughs this time.

EXT. D.C. CAPITOL HILL – DAY

A group of suited LIBERAL LAWMAKERS stands at a podium,
 flashes pop from cameras. PROTESTORS chant behind barricades.

SENATOR HASTINGS (D-CA)
 We demand transparency. Where are
 the detainees? Families deserve
 answers!

AIDE whispers in his ear.

SENATOR HASTINGS (CONT'D)
 (turning back to mic)
 This is a coverup of gigantic
 proportions.

EXT. ISLAND INTERIOR – NIGHT

A military-grade DRONE HUMS overhead, scanning with infrared.

INT. BLACKSTAR MOBILE OPS VAN – SAME

A TECH monitors feeds. One thermal screen shows erratic
 motion near the marsh.

TECH
 Something's moving east of Grid 7.
 Large. Cold-blooded. And not alone.

He zooms in. Figures flicker – multiple gators. But one...
 oddly still.

TECH (CONT'D)
 Wait... that's not a gator. That's
 a den.

He overlays enhancement. NESTED SHAPES. Pulsing. Breeding.

TECH (CONT'D)

Jesus... they're multiplying faster
than predicted.

He slams a button.

TECH (CONT'D)

Priority alert to Blackstar and
DHS. Now.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - NEXT DAY

LUPE and MATEO huddle at the fence. Whispering.

MATEO

That thing last night—

LUPE

Wasn't a dream.

MATEO

We wait, we're meat. We move, we
die.

LUPE

So we make noise. A distraction.
Three go left. One climbs.

MATEO

You got gear?

LUPE

We improvise.

They glance toward the watchtower. A GUARD yawns, distracted.

MATEO

Tonight, then.

They nod. Planning begins.

EXT. DETAINEE YARD - NIGHT

The moon casts harsh light through the cyclone fencing. LUPE,
MATEO, and JANINE crouch near a makeshift latrine trench.

LUPE

Tonight's the window. Storm
clouds—no drones.

MATEO

What about the cameras?

LUPE

Feed's been glitching since that
thunderhead rolled in.

He pulls out a smuggled bolt cutter – small, rusted.

LUPE (CONT'D)

We cut at the drainage gate. Twenty
seconds to breach. We split into
the cane field. No sound. No second
chances.

MATEO

If we make it past the waterline?

LUPE

We follow the channel. There's an
abandoned ranger post near the
inlet.

They nod. A beat of nervous breath.

EXT. OUTER PERIMETER FENCE – LATER

A heavy storm builds. Thunder rumbles. Guards rotate shifts.

The trio slips out under cover of rain. Mud sucks at their
feet.

LUPE hacks at the chain link near a drainage culvert. It
bends.

A klaxon WHINES – half-hearted. Faint. Then cuts out.

They sprint into tall cane.

EXT. SWAMP CHANNEL – NIGHT

They reach the murky edge. MATEO peers into the water.

MATEO

This is suicide.

LUPE

(stern)

So is staying.

MATEO

Wait – what's that–

A faint splash. A ripple. Then silence.

LUPE steps forward—

—SUDDENLY A PYTHON rears up from the mud, fangs bared!

MATEO stabs at it with a sharpened spoon handle.

It coils around Lupe's leg—

Then — CRUNCH! A GATOR bursts from the water and clamps the python, dragging both under.

Mateo, wide-eyed, yanks Lupe free. They scramble up the bank.

INT. GUARD OPS TRAILER - SAME

Guards stare at failing monitors. The techs can't stabilize the feed.

GUARD #1

We got motion on Sector Nine. It's off perimeter.

GUARD #2

Probably another deer or detainee turned appetizer.

An alarm briefly flashes red — then dies.

EXT. HELIPAD - SAME

A BLACK OPS CHOPPER descends. Blades whip the palms.

COLONEL WYATT steps off with a tactical team in BLACKSTAR gear.

WYATT

(no nonsense)

Sweep the interior. Burn nests if found. Any escapees—lethal force authorized.

They fan out.

EXT. DEEP SWAMP INTERIOR - LATER

LUPE, MATEO, move quietly through the brush. Bruised. Bleeding. Alive.

They reach the abandoned ranger post — more ruins than shelter.

MATEO
Think they'll follow us this far?

LUPE
We're not the ones being hunted
anymore.

Suddenly – a drone BUZZ overhead.

JANINE
Shit. Down!

They duck under debris. The drone passes.

INT. DHS SATELLITE OPS – NIGHT

TECH
Picking up anomalous bio-heat
signatures again. But... too many.
Multiples.

TYSON stares at the feed, grim.

TYSON
They're not escaping. They're
spreading.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY – NIGHT

A DELIVERY TRUCK rumbles along a dark stretch of two-lane
road outside the Everglades. Music hums from inside.

Up ahead – a SHAPE crosses the road.

SCREEECH! The truck swerves violently and crashes into the
ditch.

The DRIVER stumbles out, bleeding.

DRIVER
Jesus... what the hell was–

He stops.

There, bathed in the truck's flickering headlights... a LARGE
GATOR stands. Not just big – wrong. Deformed. Scarred.
Intelligent eyes.

Behind it – another. Then another.

Then a MASSIVE SNAKE drops from a tree.

The driver runs. He doesn't get far.

INT. STATEHOUSE - TALLAHASSEE - EMERGENCY BRIEFING ROOM - NIGHT

Governor's aides, DHS officials, and military brass huddle in a tense emergency session.

SATELLITE FOOTAGE flickers across a wall of monitors - heat signatures in motion near the facility... and beyond it.

GOVERNOR

They got off the island?

TYSON

We don't know how many. The swamp's full of water corridors. They're spreading faster than we anticipated.

COLONEL WYATT

We either quarantine the entire region or start neutralization immediately.

Lawmaker SAM WEXLER slams his fist on the table.

WEXLER

You're talking about firebombing American soil!

WYATT

I'm talking about containing a biological insurgency before it hits Miami.

TYSON

If this leaks, the press will crucify us.

(beat)

Initiate Blackstar Protocol - Stage 4. Full lockdown. Full denial.

INT. GATOR PIT - NIGHT

Inside the now-compromised island, what's left of the guards and detainees fight together, holed up in a makeshift stronghold.

LUPE clutches a bandaged arm. JACKSON wipes blood off a stolen rifle.

MATEO peers out through shattered blinds.

MATEO

They're in the trees now. The pythons. They're everywhere.

LUPE

(low)

It's not just them. I saw something in the water. Something... smarter.

MATEO

We need a new plan. This island's lost.

LUPE

We get to the comms station. Broadcast a signal. Anything. They left us here to die - we're taking that secret with us if we don't act.

A distant SCREAM echoes outside.

They grab weapons and move.

INT. NEWSROOM - NIGHT

A YOUNG REPORTER flips through photos sent anonymously - drone shots of bodies, gator nests, the wrecked ferry dock.

She stares, pale.

REPORTER

(to editor)

I need twenty seconds of airtime. Now. Before they shut us down.

INT. EVERGLADES - NIGHT

A family of CAMPERS sits near a fire - laughing, roasting marshmallows.

The father hears something behind the tent. Gets up.

A low hiss.

Then chaos erupts.

EXT. COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Sirens WAIL. Spotlights crisscross the compound.

An armored BLACKSTAR CHOPPER descends onto the helipad. A detachment of SPECIAL OPERATIVES in matte black gear pours out, rifles raised.

TYSON meets them at the pad, jaw clenched.

TYSON

Shoot anything that's not tagged.
That includes detainees. We contain
this now or it hits the mainland.

COMMANDER

Understood.

They fan out into the mist.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS STATION - NIGHT

LUPE, MATEO, sneak through the ravaged interior. Screens spark. Blood trails lead down side halls.

LUPE

Almost there. Keep watch.

She kneels at a terminal, fumbles through exposed wiring, searching for an uplink.

MATEO

You better be faster than the damn
things outside.

From outside the shattered window - faint, rhythmic
SPLASHING.

MATEO peers into the blackness-

TWO GLOWING EYES blink back.

MATEO (CONT'D)

Move. Now.

They barricade the door as a shadow looms behind the glass-

INT. PENTAGON - SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

A GENERAL points to satellite images of rural towns near the Everglades.

GENERAL

We've got unconfirmed civilian attacks. A gas station wiped out. A motorhome shredded on I-75. Something is moving, fast.

SENATOR WEXLER

We've lost control. This isn't a security issue - it's a goddamn extinction event.

SECDEF

Then treat it like one.

He picks up a RED PHONE.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - THE NEST - NIGHT

CAMERA GLIDES over the central swamp basin.

A horrific super-colony has formed - gators and pythons nesting side-by-side. Some of the offspring... are not natural.

An albino gator with partial scales. A python with bony ridges along its spine. Dozens of eggs throb in the moonlight.

Above, a drone BUZZES...

Suddenly - a massive mutated gator SNAPS it out of the air.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS STATION - CONTINUOUS

LUPE finally sparks the comm system to life. Static hums. Then-

LUPE

(on mic)

This is detainee 402-A. Facility compromised. Multiple fatalities. Non-human hostiles. We need extraction. Anyone read?

Silence.

Then - a reply. Faint. Garbled.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S., RADIO)

...classified... Alligator Alcatraz doesn't exist...

CLICK.

Dead air.

EXT. FORTRESS WALLS - NIGHT

The Blackstar troops hit the nest perimeter.

At first - nothing.

Then - an explosion of reptilian violence.

They fire. Creatures swarm. Heat-vision goggles malfunction. Screams fill the comms.

TYSON watches the monitors in horror as entire units are overrun.

EXT. SWAMP INTERIOR - NIGHT

Crackling radio static. Boots squish into muck.

A BLACKSTAR TEAM - elite, armored, six men and one woman - creep through the gnarled trees and fog.

Infrared goggles scan for heat. Guns drawn.

TEAM LEADER (V.O.)
Sector 9. Thermal anomaly
confirmed. Move silent. Move tight.

They sweep forward - vines slapping, insects hissing.

IN HELMET CAM POV - murky outlines pulse in infrared, just beneath the surface.

SNIPER (WHISPERING)
Movement. Left flank.

A thick branch drops behind them. No one reacts.

Suddenly - a scream. One soldier VANISHES into the dark.

TECH
Shit! Echo-Four's offline!

TEAM LEADER
Eyes up! It's in the trees!

A shadow drops from above - a MASSIVE PYTHON coils around another trooper, yanking him up into the canopy.

Gunfire erupts – muzzle flashes split the dark.

A GATOR BURSTS from the water, jaws wide – clamps down on a soldier's leg – YANKS him into the mud.

FEMALE OPERATIVE
We're compromised! Full retreat!

They backpedal toward a ridge –
– when TWO MORE GATORS lunge from the reeds.

TEAM LEADER
Flashbangs, now!

BOOM – the jungle lights up.

Smoke. Screams. Chaos.

Only two soldiers remain – the TEAM LEADER and TECH. They race to higher ground.

TECH (GASPING)
We need evac! We need–

A THICK TAIL smashes through a tree – crushes TECH like a rag doll.

The TEAM LEADER turns – face bloodied, weapon gone –

Stares as the alpha gator, enormous but realistic, stares him down.

He pulls a grenade.

TEAM LEADER
Welcome to Florida.

He drops it. Boom.

INT. BLACKSTAR OPS – COMMAND CENTER – NIGHT

Screens go black. Silence.

COLONEL WYATT watches the final footage on repeat.

WYATT
They're adapting.

The GENERAL beside him frowns.

GENERAL
Pull the plug. Burn it all.

WYATT
You'll kill the detainees.

GENERAL
Then don't call it a prison. Call
it pest control.

He walks off.

WYATT stares at the screen.

ON MONITOR – a still frame of the nest. The eggs are hatching
faster.

FADE TO:

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ – MAKESHIFT BARRACKS – NIGHT

LUPE, MATEO, and a few DETAINEES sit in a loose circle,
tense.

LUPE
That wasn't thunder earlier.

MATEO
No. And that ain't no normal nest
out there.

DETAINEE #4 (NEW GUY)
I got a plan. Tunnel starts under
the piss drain in solitary. Got
tools. Got time.

They stare at him.

LUPE
You're not right in the head.

NEW GUY
Maybe. But I'm getting out. All I
need is water and darkness.

They glance at each other.

MATEO
Fine. Dig. We'll watch the gators
eat your dumb ass.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ – SWAMP EDGE – NIGHT

Jackson, Mateo, and two others crouch silently near a shallow
depression – a tunnel exit hidden behind brush and logs.

MATEO

We made it... I can't believe we made it.

LUPE

(sharply)

Shut up. Not yet.

One of the detainees – RICO (20s, cocky) – doesn't wait. He bolts from the tunnel mouth.

RICO

Freedom, baby!

He splashes into the swamp –

– then suddenly vanishes under the water.

A horrific SNAP. A geyser of blood.

MATEO

Oh shit! Oh shit!

They backpedal fast into the tunnel. Jackson stays frozen, staring at the rippling surface.

LUPE

He made noise. We won't.

SMASH TO:

EXT. ISLAND INTERIOR – NIGHT

A BLACKSTAR RECON TEAM – four men in tactical gear – slogs through dense brush.

THERMAL CAMERAS sweep the area.

RECON LEADER

Stay tight. Watch the canopy.

A PRIVATE stumbles into a sunken pit – a nest.

BABY GATORS, dozens of them, eyes glowing faint blue.

PRIVATE

Jesus... they're everywhere.

Suddenly, a mother gator explodes from the side – vicious and fast.

GUNFIRE. SCREAMS. Night vision goes haywire.

Only one BLACKSTAR OPERATOR – wounded and limping – makes it back.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

The techs and officers stare at the lone returning operative on-screen, bleeding heavily.

AGENT TYSON

How bad?

TECH

Three KIA. One MIA. Zero visibility. Island's gone hot, sir.

TYSON

Shut it down. All outbound feeds – kill 'em.

CAPTAIN

Sir, that's protocol breach.

TYSON

(steely)

Then consider it amended.

He grabs a red key from around his neck.

TYSON (CONT'D)

Initiate Silent Curtain.

INT. ISLAND INTERIOR - NIGHT

A monstrous python coils around a juvenile gator.

The gator thrashes – BITS INTO THE PYTHON'S NECK – blood sprays.

They battle – brutal, primal. Nature turning on itself.

Nearby, detainees watch in horror from behind the fence.

LUPE

Even the monsters are at war.

EXT. SKY ABOVE ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - LATER THAT NIGHT

A small civilian DRONE zips into restricted airspace.

It dips below radar, weaving through fog.

Its camera captures everything:

- MUTILATED GUARD BODIES
- GATORS PULLING A TURRET GUN INTO THE WATER
- DETAINEES SCREAMING BEHIND FENCES

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM - SAME

A 19-year-old hacker, KEV, sips Mountain Dew as he monitors the drone feed.

KEV
Holy... what the f-

He hits "UPLOAD."

INT. NEWSROOM - WASHINGTON D.C. - EARLY MORNING

Senior editors at a major network huddle around a screen.

EDITOR 1
Is this real?

EDITOR 2
It's trending in forty-two countries. The Pentagon just flagged it.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SITUATION ROOM - SAME

Aides whisper. The Secretary of Defense clutches a tablet.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Alligator Alcatraz is no longer containable.

STAFFER
What's the move?

VICE PRESIDENT (O.S.)
(ominous)
We bury it.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PENTAGON - STRATEGIC OPERATIONS WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Generals, CIA liaisons, Blackstar executives, and cyber defense officials circle a massive table. Glowing screens display satellite images of Alligator Alcatraz.

GENERAL BRIGGS (60S, STEEL-JAWED)
We execute an incendiary strike.
Napalm grid pattern. Burn the
entire island.

CIA DIRECTOR
There are civilians inside.

BRIGGS
Collateral.

BLACKSTAR REP (40S, SLICK, CORPORATE)
We've spent \$4.2 billion building
the experiment. What happens when
it leaks the U.S. made apex
predators?

SECDEF
Too late. It's already leaked.

PRESIDENT (V.O.) (FROM SECURE LINE)
Keep my name off everything. Bury
it.

EXT. DETAINEE COMPOUND - ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - DAY

Guards shout orders. Detainees pound the fence. A massive fire burns in the swamp beyond.

JACKSON
They're not just coming out of the
swamp now. They're coming out of
the damn ground.

MATEO (POINTING)
They're nesting under us!

Suddenly, the earth gives way - a sinkhole opens. Two detainees vanish screaming.

Lupe pulls a machete from a dead guard.

LUPE
We make a run for the helipad. Or
we're food.

Lupe, Jackson, and Mateo hunker low behind mangroves, caked in mud, watching in horror.

EXT. EVERGLADES MARSH - MORNING

A low HUM of swamp insects.

A news HELICOPTER flies overhead, keeping distance from the island perimeter.

INT. NEWS CHOPPER - CONTINUOUS

A REPORTER in a vest leans over the camera op.

REPORTER

We're being told to maintain a five-mile distance, but you can see it - that smoke? That's the detention facility.

CAMERA OP

And the movement in the water?

They zoom in - long black shapes slither under the surface.

CAMERA OP (CONT'D)

Those aren't logs.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - DETAINEE COMPOUND - DAY

The yard is half-empty.

A few GUARDS pace, rifles ready, tension in every motion.

LUPE, JACKSON, and MATEO - muddy and exhausted - peek out from a drainage pipe beneath an old generator shack, hidden from the others.

MATEO

If we move now, we reach the tree line.

LUPE

(eyes scanning)
And die tired.

Suddenly - a RUMBLE in the distance.

They turn toward the sound - smoke rising.

A loudspeaker blares:

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)
All detainees, return to quarters.
This is not a drill.

EXT. FLORIDA STATE CAPITOL - TALLAHASSEE - DAY

Democratic lawmakers stand at the gates, microphones shoved
in their faces.

CONGRESSWOMAN GATES (40S, FURIOUS)
We demand access to the island!
Pregnant women are being held in
cages. No oversight. No due
process.

REPORTER
Congresswoman, do you believe the
footage was real?

GATES
If half of it's real, it's a
humanitarian catastrophe.

EXT. DHS BRIEFING ROOM - D.C. - LATER

AGENT TYSON stands before a wall of reporters.

He looks like he hasn't slept.

TYSON
There is no confirmed breach. The
drone footage was digitally altered
by foreign actors. I
repeat—fabricated.

Flashes from cameras.

REPORTER
What about the missing detainees?
The missing guards?

TYSON
We have no comment at this time.

INT. BLACKSTAR OPS - UNDERGROUND VAULT - SAME

COLONEL WYATT reviews satellite overlays.

AIDE

We've lost contact with Perimeter
South and North. Eight guards
unresponsive.

WYATT

Where's the alpha?

They bring up thermal – a glowing red behemoth moves beneath
the surface, heading toward the inner compound.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Get me a nuke option.

AIDE

Sir?

WYATT

Not to drop it. To show them we
have it.

EXT. DETAINEE COMPOUND – NIGHT

SIRENS BLARE. The floodlights short out in rapid bursts.

A mass of DETAINEES RIOT – punching, kicking, using fence
poles as makeshift battering rams.

GUARDS fire warning shots.

MATEO

(leading the charge)

Now or never!

MATEO grabs Lupe's hand, pulling him toward the chaos.

EXT. DETAINEE COMPOUND – NIGHT

SIRENS BLARE. The floodlights short out in rapid bursts.

A mass of DETAINEES RIOT – punching, kicking, using fence
poles as makeshift battering rams.

GUARDS fire warning shots.

Guards fall back as several detainees breach the gate.

EXT. SWAMP BERM - CONTINUOUS

A few dozen detainees sprint for the tree line - tripping over vines, sinking into mud.

A SPOTLIGHT cuts on - too late.

From the water - multiple GATORS lunge, jaws wide.

SCREAMS.

BLOOD.

Bodies vanish into the reeds.

LUPE ducks as a gator barrels past.

LUPE
Split up! Stay out of the water!

MATEO
Where the hell do we go!?

INT. COMMAND CENTER - SAME

TYSON watches the monitors - chaos unfolding.

TYSON
We're past containment. Initiate
Delta Sweep.

TECH
Sir... that's a full purge.

TYSON
You want them getting off that
island?

He slams his palm on the console.

EXT. JUNGLE PATH - NIGHT

A loudspeaker crackles across the compound:

LOUDSPEAKER (V.O.)
All personnel evacuate east dock.
Code Delta in effect.

Lupe, panting, wipes blood from his face. He sees a gator struggling to swallow a dead detainee.

He locks eyes with Mateo.

LUPE

We're rats on a burning raft.

MATEO

Then we swim through the fire.

INT. MEGAN LI'S RENTAL SUV - MOVING - NIGHT

Megan grips the wheel, phone to her ear.

MEGAN

(to phone)

You have the drone footage. They're killing people. I want a live interview—hell, I'll do it from the tarmac.

CALLER (V.O.)

They're jamming the feed. The Pentagon's gone dark.

MEGAN

Then I'm going to the press gate. They'll have to arrest me on camera.

She veers off the road toward a checkpoint.

EXT. EVERGLADES AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

BLACKSTAR OPS load crates onto a stealth chopper. A final failsafe package is wheeled on — sealed in lead.

COLONEL WYATT

We bury the island. Air, water, signal — everything.

AGENT TYSON

And what do we tell the press?

WYATT

That it never existed.

Tyson hesitates — looks toward the swamp horizon.

TYSON

Then God forgive us.

EXT. ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ - TUNNEL MOUTH - NIGHT

Detainees inch through the damp tunnel. Water drips. Insects crawl. A faint metallic clang echoes.

MARIA
(low)
Something's ahead.

LUPE
Could be the generator. Or a nest.

They exchange a look. Silence tightens.

Mateo, Lupe, Jackson, and one other scramble into the hidden exit.

MATEO
Almost there...

LUPE
Wait—where's the boat?

The inflatable raft they stashed is shredded.

They turn — hear a hiss.

A MASSIVE PYTHON drops from a tree. Its mouth opens wide—

BOOM!

Mateo fires a guard's shotgun point-blank.

The snake writhes and dies.

LUPE
Swim or die.

They dive into the murky current.

EXT. COASTAL MARSH - EARLY DAWN

MATEO
So what now?

MARIA
We testify. We burn this place down
with the truth.

She stares back at the swamp as the sun rises behind her.

Exhausted, filthy — the trio washes up near mangroves.

In the distance – helicopters hover over the island.

LUPE
We're alive...

MATEO
Yeah. But for how long?

INT. NEWSROOM – LATER THAT DAY

MEGAN LI goes live on national broadcast, the drone footage behind her.

MEGAN
What you're seeing may be the
greatest human rights atrocity on
U.S. soil this century...

Phones buzz. Hashtags trend.

INT. WHITE HOUSE – NIGHT

The PRESIDENT watches silently as the footage loops on a monitor.

PRESIDENT
God help us.

EXT. EVERGLADES – NIGHT

Back at the island... the jungle is silent.

A nest of broken gator eggs glistens under moonlight.

One egg stirs.

CRACK.

A mutated hatchling emerges – glowing eyes, razor teeth.

It slithers toward the swamp...

FADE OUT.