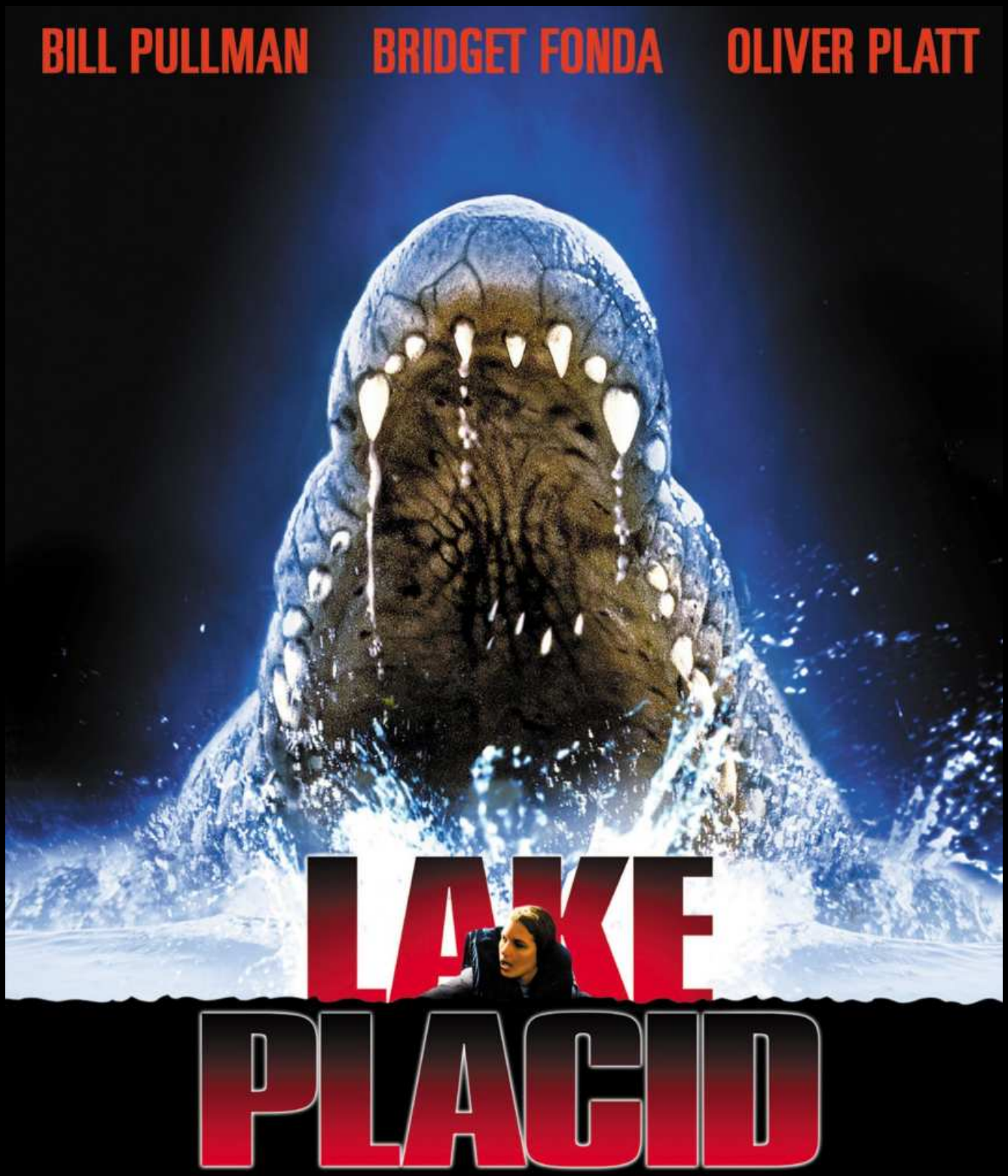


A Jumpchain CYOA by Random One-Shot

Black Lake, Maine. 1999.

Come enjoy the lovely woods, small-town charm and serene waters… well, maybe not that last one. You see, Black Lake has had a bit of a corpse problem recently. A diver went down and not all of him came back up.

Now, don't panic, help has been sent for. United States Fish and Wildlife Service officer Jack Wells, American Museum of Natural History paleontologist Kelly Scott and Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife officer Walt Lawson are all on the case, along with many of our own Aroostook County deputies. This is almost certainly a case of someone getting too close to a boat propeller or something like it. A month should be enough time for you to sort this mystery, right? This is a small town and things are likely to wrap up before hunting season starts. We hope, anyway.

You arrive in town one day before Dr. Scott. How you go about meddling from this point on is up to you.

Then again, maybe you would rather not? Black Lake is a nice place to enjoy a vacation, current problems notwithstanding. Perhaps your touch is not needed to have things come to a satisfactory conclusion. Really, how bad can things be? It's Maine.

Everything will be fine.

Probably.

Take these +1,000 CP to equip yourself just in case.

Location

Please roll 1d6 to determine your starting location. Doing so will gain you +100 CP to add to your stipend. If you would rather choose your starting location yourself you certainly can, but you will receive no extra CP to spend.

1. Black Lake – A serene patch of wilderness in the forests of Maine. There appears to be no human presence nearby. Why then do you feel like something is watching you? Something… close by?

2. Bickerman Farm – A lake shore farm kept by an old widow with the sweetest disposition. She always appreciates visitors and will surely have a glass of lemonade and some cookies if you would like to stop in for a chat.

3. Aroostook County Sheriff's Department – More activity than is usual can be seen here. Things have been unsettled over the last few days, what with the dead diver and all. Maybe you could lend a hand?

4. Lodge – A small cabin for rent. It would make for a nice place to enjoy the locale, if you phoned the number on the door and came to an agreement with the landlord. Or you could just squat? What are the odds anyone is going to bother coming here before hunting season starts?

5. Fort Kent – The closest town to Black Lake. Has a population of roughly 4,000 people and a few creature comforts.

6. Your Choice – You can pick freely from any of the above.

Species

What are you?

Human [FREE] – The basic mostly-hairless biped commonly found on this planet. They tend to think they are smarter than they actually are, but they can generally get things done.

Crocodile [200 CP] – Specifically, an Asian Pacific Crocodile with a body length of 30 feet. As a reference, most crocodiles do not exceed 20 feet. These creatures have remained unchanging for millions of years, for the simple reason that nothing has yet arisen that can force them to change. Equally terrifying on land or in water, one of these is the closest thing you can find to a dragon or a dinosaur in this day and age.

Perks

The following Perks are discounted by 50% for those who signed on under the associated species. Any discounted 100 CP Perks are free. Please note that FREE Perks are not the same as mandatory Perks. Only take what you wish to take.

General

Bolstered Immune System [FREE] – All this travel usually means a long list of needles to defend against local illnesses. Not for you. While this does nothing to prevent you from contracting any mundane disease, this will help you fight them off before they ever begin forcing you to experience symptoms. Even suffering from multiple microbial invasions at once will not affect this. You would have to be on the brink of death before something like the Black Death would even begin to affect you. You also will not shed any microbes that could infect others, ensuring that you will never be case zero for any outbreak. Please note that this only works on natural, mundane illnesses – any disease designed by intelligent life or supernatural in nature will still affect you in full.

That Aquatic Lifestyle [FREE] – You are a strong and skilled swimmer. This will hold true for you no matter what form you currently wear. You always instinctively know exactly how to quickly, efficiently and easily propel yourself through any water. Holding your breath to the limit of your physical capabilities is always easy. You can see through water at least as easy as you can open air and it will never irritate your eyes to do so.

Human

Steel Spine [100 CP] – You have a strong spine. And a lot of guts. And not much yellow in you. This is all metaphorical, of course. What we are trying to say is that you do not become panicked, terrified, unhinged or so on from fear, shock or surprise. Nothing gives you more than a bit of the willies and you can react to any sudden situation as quickly as if you had known it was coming beforehand.

Outdoorsman [100 CP] – You are bonafide hill-billy. Or wildman. Or frontiersman. Whatever term you prefer to go by, you seem to be at least as home in the wilderness as you are in civilization. You can instinctively identify all flora and fauna in a given area, as well as know their potential habits, behaviors, uses and more. You are adept at wilderness survival in all environments a human can expect to deal with, and can generally be thrown into the middle of nowhere with nothing but a pocket knife and expect to come out fine.

Dragonology [200 CP] – Rather, the closest thing that comes to it in this world. You now have the equivalent of a PhD in herpetology, as well as another in zoology. Basically, you know all things scaley to be found on Earth. You can rattle off information on reptiles and amphibians the way most people know their address. This also includes a small perception filter that ensures people will never ask to actually see your reptilian credentials, given that you do not physically have them.

Country Charm [200 CP] – You have the underrated benefit of being a decently well-adjusted, reliable and warm person. You can deal with bad events and unpleasant people in a mature and sensible manner, are able to empathize with anyone you put an effort into doing so for and are generally happy. All of this combined tends to draw others in to your social circle. Who knew being a decent person was so useful?

Marksmen [400 CP] – You are a fantastic shot with all personal firearms, able to draw, aim and fire in a fraction of a second. You hit your mark with 100% accuracy, barring truly exceptional circumstances. Finally, your shots that do connect seem to punch through any defenses your target has with more force than they should. Useful, if you are trying to take down a biological tank with a revolver or something like that.

Up Close And Personal [400 CP] – Wildlife is very disinclined to attack you for some reason. Indeed, they seem to like you. This is of course no absolute guarantee – if you attack their children it would be a rare parent that did not take a chunk out of you – but as long as you keep your actions and behavior non-threatening you can generally be assured that you will not be mauled.

Take The Wheel [600 CP] – Or the stick. Or the levers. Anything that offers control, really. From speedboats to helicopters to airplanes to submarines to jet skis and more, if it is possible for you to pilot it, you now instantly know how and at a master's level.

Back To One [600 CP] – It can be annoying to think everything is wrapped up and then be immediately proven wrong when a hitherto unknown second monster arrives to kill you and yours. It was, anyway. Now you have a 100% accurate sixth sense for when your current series of events is finished or not. If there is anything lurking in the background that you are unaware of or mistaken about, you will know what it is as soon as everyone else starts celebrating the end of their troubles.

Crocodile

Environmental Endurance [100 CP] – You are immune to the hazards of extreme cold or heat. As far as you and your body are concerned, it is always a mildly warm day out.

Biological Tank [100 CP] – Have you ever tried to shoot a fully grown crocodile? You can put it up there with doing the same to a grizzly or a rhino, i.e. there's a very high chance that it is just going to get angry at you. Now, you embody that same spirit of 'that was a poor decision' in that your body is utterly impervious to any kinetic damage at or below the level of small-arms gunfire.

Nautical Nightmare [200 CP] – You are just as adept in water as you are on land. Water pressure and resistance no longer negatively affect you, allowing you to move and fight at your best no matter which of the two you find yourself in.

Cold-Blooded Hunter [200 CP] – Going from zero to a hundred is no longer a problem for you. Neither are long periods of stillness. In addition to being able to fire all of your cylinders instantaneously when needed, you no longer suffer any negative consequences from remaining perfectly still for any period of time. Your body will not lock up, grow painful or degrade, nor will your mind wander, your patience grow short or your determination waver. Even your sanity will never degrade for lack of stimulation. This could make you one hell of an ambush predator… or you could just use it as a meditation aid.

Sudden Appearance [400 CP] – Regardless of your size, you are phenomenally hard to notice when you put some effort into being stealthy. You could get right up next to someone actively looking for you and they would not notice until you felt like showing yourself to them. Perhaps they just thought you were part of the landscape?

Croc Vs. Grizzly [400 CP] – When you get the drop on someone, things like mass and physics do not seem to matter so much anymore. As long as you can surprise your enemy or prey and keep them on

the back foot in a fight, you can throw them around, drag them off and generally beat them like a kettle drum even if it does not make a lick of sense when considering how big you are compared to them. The moment they manage to even things out, this will fade.

There's Two?! [600 CP] – Well, not really, but it certainly seems that way. You can generate a second body. It is a perfect match for your current, primary body in every way. It has all of your powers, abilities, Perks, modifications, etc. Upon your elimination from the Jump – whether through death, inescapable capture, locked into time stasis or anything else that cannot be returned from – your consciousness will immediately and seamlessly transfer to this new body, which will spawn in a location of your choice. You can only preform this action once per Jump or once per decade, whichever comes first.

Something Miraculous [600 CP] – You are a magnificent specimen of your kind, a unique treasure in this world and you are precious beyond description because of it. At least, that's what your enemies think. With this, all those who should rightfully want you dead will instead seek to capture you alive. Of course, this may not necessarily be much of an improvement depending on who they are and how they are inclined to treat prisoners, but where there is life there is hope and now you will never be knowingly targeted for termination by any sentient, sapient being. Happily, no one will ever question this, so do not worry about any awkward questions over your sudden endangered species status.

Items

If any of these are lost, destroyed or stolen, they will respawn good as new in a location of your choice 24 hours later. The exceptions are the replenishing Items, which will respawn in a manner listed in their description.

All of these Items are fiat-backed to accept any upgrades/modifications you apply to them and will carry those upgrades/modifications forward into future Jumps. If you have any similar Items you would like to import into your new purchases to give them their qualities, feel free to do so. They will never need upkeep or maintenance and the vehicles will never need refueling.

The properties can be placed in your Warehouse/equivalent or in-Jump as you wish at the beginning of each Jump.

General

Bug Repellent [FREE] – A 12oz can of insect repellent that works flawlessly on all bugs. Spraying it on your skin or belongings will ensure any insects that get a whiff of either will decide to head for greener pastures instead of moving closer. Refills 24 hours after becoming empty.

Cash [FREE] – A wallet containing $5,000.00 cash. This currency does not update to the setting, but does refill at the beginning of every Jump.

Black Lake [400 CP] – The fictional setting of Black Lake and its surroundings, as seen in the film. Includes the lake and the surrounding area for thirty miles out in all directions. Does not include any humans or domesticated animals.

Lake Placid, NY [400 CP] – The actual Lake Placid and its surroundings, as seen in the modern, real world. Includes Mirror Lake, the town of Lake Placid and the surroundings for thirty miles out in all directions. Does not include any humans or domesticated animals.

Maine [600 CP] – The state of Maine. All of it. Can be either pristine, untouched wilderness or you can include all current infrastructure in place as of 2024. Does not include any humans or domesticated animals.

Human

Boat [100 CP] – Can’t go far on the water without this. This small motorboat has a collapsible roof, sonar and seats for six.

Job [100 CP] – It can be full-time or part-time, but you have some kind of contract employment that allows you to work wherever you wish and make a decent amount of money in each paycheck, enough to comfortably maintain a middle-class lifestyle. Your mysterious employer will never fire you if you need to take any kind of leave for any length of time, though they do not seem the understand the idea of PTO either.

Cabin By The Lake [200 CP] – A cozy one-room cabin that overlooks the shoreline. All utilities are guaranteed by fiat and there is a paper trail proving your ownership of it if you need one.

Jeep [200 CP] – This vehicle has a soft-top, four-wheel drive and seats five. Comes in any color you wish and seems to slowly clean itself overnight if left alone.

Semi-Truck With A Flat Bed [400 CP] – A large hauling truck with an attached flatbed trailer. Interestingly, the flatbed seems to be able to handle any load that you can fit on it. Simply make sure it is secure and off you go. The cab includes a small bed and two electrical outlets behind the seats. It seems to slowly clean itself overnight if left alone.

Laptop [400 CP] – This laptop (circa 1999) can somehow locate and maintain a wireless signal to the world wide web (or its local equivalent) no matter where you take it. The battery never runs out, the hard drive is somehow without limit and it is utterly impervious to hacking. No matter their method, anyone who you have not personally and willingly given the password to will ever be able to access or utilize this device. Any kind of malware that does somehow get inside fails to take hold and is harmless partitioned off to be examined at your leisure. It has a very user-friendly assistant in the form of an animated paperclip if you have any questions about the operating system.

Helicopter [600 CP] – Seats four with pontoons on the struts to allow for flotation if need be. Seems to slowly clean itself if left alone and is utterly impervious to kinetic damage.

Revolver [600 CP] – Your force equalizer. A standard six-chambered revolver in a caliber of your choice, this comes with a box of unlimited ammunition. It will never misfire and can be used in any environment without issue. Like, say, underwater? Finally, it has the unique quality of always being on hand when you need it.

Crocodile

Severed Human Head [100 CP] – Gross. It could be a good snack if you are very desperate. Or maybe you just want to throw a head at someone.

Grizzly Bear [100 CP] – Now what's this doing here? A grizzly should not be in Maine and yet one is. This one is as tamed as a grizzly can be, but take that qualifier as the grain of salt that it is. Still, it might come in useful somehow.

Hidden Lair [200 CP] – Your home away from home. Or maybe just your home. This underwater cave has a supply of oxygen to keep you comfy while you wait for your pursuers to give up. No one will ever stumble over this by themselves.

Deployable Electrical Fence [200 CP] – A set of electrified chain-link that stretches long enough to encircle a decent sized lake. Strangely, there does not seem to be any kind of generator or power supply, but it still reliably functions as if there is. You can place this down anywhere you like at the start of each Jump to either keep your territory safe or contain something. That said, it is still just electrified chain-link. There are plenty of things that might figure out a way through or simply break it if they are motivated enough.

Cow Herd [400 CP] – A replenishing herd of Jersey heifers and one bull. They are all supremely docile and can be led towards a starving predator without any fuss at all.

Secret Lab [400 CP] – A scientific facility dedicated to… weaponizing crocodiles? Or any kind of wildlife, really. The equipment and leftover notes here will instruct you on how to best turn any kind of

animal you can wrangle in for testing into a trained attack beast. Creatures who undergo this process gain a boost to their intelligence, will be very obedient to you and seem to be much harder to kill than they should be.

Willing Minion [600 CP] – Not a true Companion (at least not yet), this NPC is nonetheless a fantastic addition to anyone who needs an extra set of hands. Appearing no different than a regular individual of the setting, this minion will always begin the Jump as a trusted member of the community. They are perfectly willing to cover for your activities to the best of their abilities.

Perfect Blood Orchid Side Effects [600 CP] – This collection of papers was recovered from the shores of Black Lake. It seems to be only a single part of some kind of field report, but it is a very interesting part. It details how, in the course of combining anaconda blood with crocodile physiology, the research team stumbled onto a method of combing two genetically different creatures to create a viable hybrid with all of their strengths. By learning this process, you too can do the same. You will be able to create perfect hybrids of any two biological creatures.

Scenarios

Cleanse Black Lake – What you were probably expecting to do when you arrived here. Crocodiles should not be found in the wilderness of Maine and it is your job to remove this invasive species before it permanently damages the local ecosystem! And also before they kill any more humans. Whether you kill them all, relocate them to their natural habitat or take them for yourself, by the end of your stay here Black Lake must be 100% crocodile free.

Should you manage to do this, you can take the two fully grown crocodiles as Followers for free, regardless of whether or not they are alive at the end of the Jump. They will be given a slight intelligence boost, just enough to follow simple commands, and will feel a deep sense of affection and loyalty towards you. That said, they are still just crocodiles. If you want anything more, you should probably import them as Companions in the future or something along those lines.

Creature Feature [Crocodile Species Only] – This is supposed to be a horror film, right? Go on a rampage in town. Don't worry, you don't have to actually kill anyone. But since this is supposed to be an animal attack film, by gum you are going to go on the attack. You will have to make your way through the wilderness towards town, then do at least $100,000 worth of damage to the infrastructure and personal property there. They think a dead diver is something to talk about? You'll give them a much more interesting experience.

Should you manage to do this, you can take this offensive ability: you can now locate and assess structural weak-points by sight, allowing you to know where the least amount of force can do the most amount of damage to any given structure.

Just A Little Old Lady [Human Species Only] – Delores Bickerman is a national treasure! She never meant to harm anyone, she was just protecting a frightened, starving animal as best she could. Why should she go to jail for that? If it was not clear, you need to end this Jump with Delores Bickerman's reputation intact. She cannot be exposed as a ~~probable serial killer~~ extreme animal lover. If she continues to fly under the radar by the time you are making your final choice here, then you have succeeded.

For completing this scenario, you gain the ability to tell with 100% accuracy when someone is knowingly lying to you. If you believed any of the previous, you probably need it.

Companions

Import [100 CP] – Bring in your full roster of Companions. Each of them will receive a +600 CP stipend to make their own purchases and they can each take up to +400 CP worth of Drawbacks.

Export [100 CP] – Would you like to take a setting native along with you when you leave here? With this you simply obtain their consent and they will follow you further along the chain.

Create [100 CP] – Pay this 100 CP price now and you can create a custom Companion from the options given above. They will have +600 CP to spend on their build and you can inflict up to +400 CP worth of in-Jump Drawbacks on them.

Betty White [FREE] – This is Betty White, circa 1999. A skilled actor and comedian, she will surely be good company.

Drawbacks

You can take up to +1,000 CP worth of Drawbacks. If you want to take still more after that you certainly can, but you will receive no more CP for doing so.

While your own Benefactor's house rules will certainly trump whatever this document says, for those who prefer to follow local law we have the following – these Drawbacks are not insurmountable. They are intended as challenges, not stumbling blocks. Unless you have something that ensures your efforts to mitigate and work against Drawbacks fail (such as the **Everything Is Worse!** Drawback from the Universal Drawback Supplement), these can be at least managed.

All of these Drawbacks will vanish at the end of the Jump.

Early Exit [+0 CP] – If you want to leave the second that the events of the film end or are resolved to your satisfaction, take this.

Bought On Credit [Variable] – If you have some patience, you might be interested in this. For everything you buy and are willing to not receive until the end of the Jump, you will gain half its value back in CP. Temporarily forgoing a 100 point Perk would see you getting 50 points back, as an example.

Extended Stay [+100 CP] – By taking this once, you extend your stay here from one month to a full decade from your starting date. Each further purchase adds another decade to your stay here.

The Budget Lowers [+100 CP] – This Jump now takes place in one of the many sequels to the original film. You may be asking, why is this worth points? Well, the sequels are pretty bad. Actually, not pretty. They're just bad. Bad characters, bad plot-lines, bad effects – lots of bad. You can adjust the scenarios to fit your chosen film, but they should remain broadly the same.

Form Locked [+100 CP] – What you start as is what you stay as. You are stuck as either a human or a crocodile for your time here, with all access to your other alt-forms cut off until the end of the Jump. You can only take this as a human if you have at least one alt-form to lose.

He's A Prick [+100 CP] – Wow! You are incredibly obnoxious. I mean, stunningly so. You cannot speak for more than thirty seconds without saying something mortifying, insulting, condescending or some combination of all three. Perhaps related to this, people tend to find you irritating to be around.

Rumbly In The Tumbly [+100 CP] – You might have a small black hole where your stomach used to be. It seems like you now need twice as much food as normal to become satiated with a meal.

I'm From New York [+100 CP] – Or somewhere out of the woods, anyway. You are not suited for wilderness life at all. You constantly forget to bring important things along, like a compass or bug spray. You are allergic to more than a few things out here. Large animals scare you. You have no idea how to cook on a campfire. You get bored without technology to entertain you. These and more will cause you irritation and stress for your time here.

Dumped [+100 CP] – Ouch. Looks like you're suffering from a broken heart, Jumper. You had a bad breakup before you got here and it is affecting you emotionally. You can still do your job, but you are

irritable with anyone who tries to be more than professional with you and you are in no mood for any kind of romance at all.

Never Saw The Film [+100 CP] – At least, that's what you think. You have forgotten the details of this setting, including what you have read from this document. Any attempts to remind yourself of this knowledge will fail.

Boot Skin [+200 CP, Crocodile Only] – What's this? You have other hunters on your ass. Seems that dead diver had some friends and they pulled up to the lake on the first day with quite a lot of guns. You now have an extra dozen humans looking for you and these ones will not even entertain the thought of taking you alive.

Wonderland [+200 CP] – The film takes place in winter now and if that sounds like nothing, you have clearly never seen a Maine winter. Enjoy blizzards, subzero temperatures and icy roads every day you are here.

Injured [+200 CP] – You begin with a painful, but not debilitating injury. It has been given appropriate medical treatment, but you will be weeks in recovering. For a lesser +100 CP, it is already healed but some pain will linger for the rest of the Jump.

Short Tempered [+200 CP] – Well, the crocodiles are much more aggressive now. Expect there to be a lot more gore now, as they are actively seeking out humans.

Red Herring [+200 CP, Human Only] – You have some investigating to do, because it is no longer a crocodile that is killing people. It is certainly an animal, though the jury is currently out on what kind.

Red Herring Swarm [+200 CP, Requires Red Herring] – There now seem to be multiple killers. Like, a lot of them. Are they all the same animal? Are they rabid or was it all just a load of bad timing? Who knows? You have to find out.

Red Herring Hybrid [+200 CP] – Here's a change. The Jump now takes place in the crossover film with Anaconda. You now have some gigantic snakes to deal with as well. There are also mercenaries from Wexel Hall Corporation for what I am sure someone thought were perfectly sensible reasons. And possibly a crocodile-anaconda hybrid, if you are not quick.

Framed! [+200 CP] – How horrible! The sheriffs think you are the killer and will focus on capturing you to the exclusion of all else. If a human, they think that you managed to disguise your murderous activities as an animal attack. If a crocodile, they think you are the only one killing humans and will (if necessary) believe Mrs. Bickerman's lies that the other crocodiles are largely harmless.

Bait [+200 CP] – Did you wash with bacon grease today? The crocodiles want you specifically and will ignore all others until you are in their stomachs, even if you are a crocodile yourself. They have also gotten much better at finding you wherever you go.

Powers Removed [+300 CP] – All out-of-setting Perks and abilities are disabled. You can only take this if you have any out-of-setting Perks or abilities to lose.

Companions Removed [+300 CP] – All of your out-of-setting personnel are forbidden from entering this setting, although they can still make their purchases if you are still willing to pay the importation fee. You can only take this if you have any out-of-setting personnel to lose.

Items and Warehouse removed [+300 CP] – All of your out-of-setting Items are banned for the duration of the Jump. You cannot access your Cosmic Warehouse or any of its equivalents until the Jump has ended. You can only take this if you have any out-of-setting Items and/or a Cosmic Warehouse or any of its equivalents to lose.

Crippled [+400 CP] – You begin with a debilitating injury. It will permanently impact your life here. Blind, deaf, missing a limb, missing an organ – your choice. It has been given appropriate immediate medical treatment, but you will be a long time in healing and adjusting. For a lesser +300 CP, it has already healed and you must simply learn to live with it.

As You Were [+1,000 CP] – You lose everything. EVERYTHING. You will enter this Jump as if it were your first, with nothing to your name but whatever body you originally began in. You have no Perks, no supernatural powers, no alt-forms, no Warehouse/equivalent, no Items, no Companions, Followers or Pets, no acquired or purchased experience in anything since beginning your chain – if you picked it up after saying yes, you lose it. The only exceptions are the things you purchase here and now. How well can your original self handle this world, Jumper? Think carefully. You cannot take this if this is your first Jump.

Final Choice

Well, you managed to make it to the end. Good job. You have one last decision to make here.

Stay – This is hardly the worst world to build a life in. If you would rather remain, please take these +1,000 CP to make your final purchases and do enjoy your remaining years.

Go Home – Maybe you have seen enough? This is hardly the worst of the worlds to come, so if even this is enough to break you perhaps it is better to take what have gained thus far and go home for good.

Leave – The journey goes ever on and on, and therefore so do you. You continue along your Jumpchain.

Notes

08/31/2024 – V0.9 done. Doing a read through to see what else needs tweaking.

09/08/2024 – V0.99 Done.

09/15/2024 – V1.0 done and uploaded to the SB folder.