

## Screenplay excerpt from JAWS

### EXT. OCEAN AND PIER - NIGHT

Selectman Denherder and his buddy, Charlie, a professional angler, row towards a tumble-down jetty that leads fifty feet out into the black water.

#### DENHERDER

You wanna call it a night after here?

#### CHARLIE

It's only two-thirty. What, are you tired?

#### DENHERDER

Yeah, Charlie, I got my second wind three nibbles back.

Denherder hefts a blood-stained laundry bag from the wheelbarrow, revealing about a hundred feet of coiled dog chain and a large patched inner tube. Charlie takes out a monster hook and together they push the wheelbarrow onto the rickety pier that is only about five feet across.

#### DENHERDER

(reaching into the bag)  
Leg of lamb this time?

#### CHARLIE

Screw lamb -- let's shoot the sirloin!

#### DENHERDER

(a hyena laugh)  
We're blowin' half the bounty on bait --

The splintered pier sways to and fro as the men reach the end and start to work. Charlie baits the hook with a massive chunk of sirloin while Denherder secures the loose end of chain to a skinny piling. Charlie then fastens the inner tube to the chain five feet from the end of the hook.

**DENHERDER**

One more after this, then I'm going home.

**CHARLIE**

Set?

Denherder tugs the chain against the piling to prove that it is. Charlie heaves the bait. Splash! The inner tube follows and both men eagerly watch as it floats seaward, the chain playing out from the wheelbarrow.

**CHARLIE**

Tide's taking it right out.

Charlie lights his pipe and sits back against a piling. He turns on his transistor radio and loops one end around a fractured board. Denherder paces, bored to death.

**DENHERDER**

You do this all the time, right, Charlie?

**CHARLIE**

Twenty years.

**DENHERDER**

I can't believe that people pay money to go fishing. This is really dumb. This isn't even relaxing... it's just boring.

**CLOSE - CHAIN IN WHEELBARROW**

Suddenly zipping out, faster and faster, as both men straighten.

Denherder is goggle-eyed.

**DENHERDER**

Hey! What's this?

The chain is coming out so fast that it begins to drag the

wheelbarrow to the end of the jetty. A section of chain tangles around the handle and flips the entire machine into the air. Both men watch dumbfounded as the inner tube, racing out to sea in a wake of white water, suddenly dips under.

**CHARLIE**

Look at him take it!

**DENHERDER**

Do I set the hook?

**CHARLIE**

Let him do it! Go-go-go-go-go!

It is then that the chain whips taut against the narrow pilings.

**CLOSE - PILING**

A lineup of five decrepit 2 x 4 inch pilings SNAP with a resounding CRACK.

**ANGLE - JETTY**

The end of the jetty is yanked loose. Denherder is flipped like a chip over the side and into the cold night water, where he manages to snag hold of a splintered timber.

**DENHERDER'S POINT OF VIEW**

The severed section of jetty, a joined platform of footboards, is being dragged seaward with Charlie sitting dazed on top of it, his lit pipe still going.

**DENHERDER**

**CHARLIE! JUMP!**

Charlie rolls into the water, sputters, turns to watch the flotilla of wood draw away.

**CLOSE - CHARLIE**

looking seaward.

## **CHARLIE'S POINT OF VIEW**

The end of the jetty makes a 180-degree turn and heads back in his direction.

### **CHARLIE**

Holy Jesus Christ!

Denherder steps up on the broken-off piling just to be out of the water.

### **DENHERDER**

Get the hell out! Charlie! Swim!

Charlie, inhaling terror, trying to slog to shore. The jetty is getting closer. Suddenly, an enormous black fin breaks water like a periscope, making course corrections as it comes for Charlie.

Denherder jumps from piling to piling, almost losing his balance on his way to help Charlie. Charlie has reached the last pylon toward open sea, and his hands clamber for a hold. But --

## **INSERT - CHARLIE'S HANDS**

The algae is too slippery, and his fingers keep sliding back.

That's when the fin behind him seems to reach up to the sky and Charlie manages, with Denherder's desperate help, to make it safely to shore. The remains of the pier float belly-up in the inlet.