

**taxi vidéo brousse**

**présente**

**IN SEARCH OF THE COELACANTH**

**00:54**

**It all began like a detective story. On 22nd december 1938 the phone rang somewhere in a quiet forgotten small town in South Africa.**

**01:12**

**That year, on the other side of the world, a cult film was just finished shooting in the splendour of Hollywood studios.**

**01:34**

**It was a great romantic epic about love and war. Real war however was already roaring over Europe ready to devastate it all.**

**On that December morning the far end of Africa was far from war threats. Marjorie Latimer's office was hot and stuffy. She picked up the phone. Marjorie Latimer was the young curator of the East London museum. She did not yet know that her name was just about to enter history.**

**02:05**

**Miss Latimer :**

*"When the phone rang that day, it was 10 a.m.. It was M. Jones of the Fishing Company calling. He was informing us that a trawler had just got in with an interesting fish for the museum collection. So I went down to the harbour and dropped in to say hello to Mr. Jackson. He said to me : "Oh, Miss Latimer, there isn't a ton of it*

*but I think something will interest you". I clamb up on the trawler's deck and there I saw a remarkably superb blue fish with white shiny spots like silver. I didn't know what it was, but I knew one thing : I had to save it."*

**03:01**

Miss Latimer's strange blue fish was going to astound paleontologists the world over. They only knew of its fossilized relics imprinted in stone. This one was called the COELACANTH.

**03:18**

Its origins date back to the dawn of time, 350 million years ago. The COELACANTH first appeared thousands of years before the first trees, the first dinosaurs, and the first human beings. It was believed to have disappeared forever.

**03:33**

**"Radio off voice "**

*"A chain link was missing, humankind's ancestor has finally been identified. A chain link was missing, humankind's ancestor has finally been identified. A chain link was missing, humankind's ancestor has finally been identified. A chain link was missing, humankind's ancestor has finally been identified. A chain link was missing, humankind's ancestor has finally been identified..."*

**04:02**

We are in South Africa. It's morning in March 1994. Blacks are getting ready to vote for the first time in their country's history . Everything can topple over. Change may be near. But that morning we have set out to find the main witness to another story : the hero of our search.

It's a white person living somewhere in a residential area in East London. We only have an address to find her : 6 Lake Street..

**05:36**

She is waiting for us. We hardly recognize her. Miss Latimer is the woman who discovered the blue fish, the

young museum curator who first brought the fossil fish out of time and oblivion.

05:52

**Miss Latimer :**

*"I always have a lot of visitors, I cannot forget the COELACANTH, I cannot forget the museum."*

06:13

Marjorie Latimer was born in England and now lives in South Africa. She never married. Life decided otherwise. Marjorie has remained the museum's maiden, the lady of 1938.

06:38

**Miss Latimer :**

"That evening, I said to myself that this fish looked strangely like a fossil fish, but that a fossil could not be alive. So I brought it back to the museum, put it on the table, observed it thoroughly and began looking for references".

07:07

After hours and hours of research, Marjorie found no reference to the fossil fish, no scientific annotation whatsoever. Intrigued by this and determined to clarify the enigma as quickly as possible because her specimen was already beginning to deteriorate, Marjorie wrote off to Professor Smith, a naturalist well-known in his country for his knowledge of fish. She sent him a hasty sketch, rather naïve, on which she detailed the form of the fish's strange fins.

Professor Smith was deeply disturbed. He believed he could identify the living fossil. But Smith lived over 300 kms away from East London. The roads turned out to be bad that year, Professor Smith could not get to the museum until two months later. He found Marjorie waiting for him.

07:52

**Miss Latimer :**

*"And during all that time I kept thinking maybe I was all wrong, maybe I had asked him to come over and the fish was not at all as interesting as all that. I was young then, so young. Smith finally arrived, again it was 10 a.m., the fish was on a table in my office. He walked straight to it and told me : Miss Latimer, in a few days ' time the name of this fish will be on scientists' lips the world over !"*

**08:42**

**Proffessor Smith' s off voice :**

*"It was a COELACANTH. It was as though something had exploded in my head, as though I had met a dinosaur out on the street".*

**08:50**

**Back in 1939 the prehistoric fish made all the headlines. World War II had just been declared and everyone, absolutely everyone forgot the strange creature except for John Smith and Marjorie.**

**09:06**

**Miss Latimer :**

*"Nobody wanted to believe in Mr. Smith, they thought he was mad, but he believed in what he said. As for myself, I always believed in him ..."*

**09:32**

*"It's true, people don't like the idea they come down from fish, they don't like to think we all descend from fossils".*

**09:50**

**Miss Latimer's fish, the first COELACANTH, has been resting all these years behind the museum display windows. It has long lost its blueness. In 1939, when Proffessor Smith identified the living fossil, he**

dedicated his discovery to Marjorie. To pay tribute to the young woman, he named the COELACANTH :  
LATIMERIA. The fish still bears her name.

10:42

Professor Smith's life then toppled over. The fish became his life's obsession. He set out on a long search for the COELACANTH in an attempt to track it down. He was resolute to bring this mystery to light. In what unknown depths could so strange an animal manage to hide away? To support his theory, Smith had to find a second freshly-fished-out piece of evidence to dissect and analyze. A lot was at stake. The professor was persuaded that the fish was one of our remote aquatic ancestors, perhaps the missing link.

After five years of searching, not a single piece of evidence was found. Smith had circulated missing information notices on all East African coasts. Fourteen years of searching went by, and the ghost animal was still haunting the professor's nights.

10:50

On the Comoro Islands, in the volcanic Archipelago of the Indian Ocean, 3 000 kms away from South Africa and from Professor Smith, there are people who have always known the strange sea creature, ever since the world has been the world.

12:27

On the village square of Iconi, fishermen spend long hours under the shadow of banana trees. Facing their village, the ocean opens up on deep sea pits over 300 meters long. With long fishing lines, they fish for the Nessa, the Mougies and other deep waters sea animals. By chance, and only by chance, once or twice in the year, they bring up a COELACANTH. They call their lines "Tsit-Tsit". These are made out of cotton spun amongst men, several strands skilfully twisted for hours. The Tsit-Tsit is strong, much stronger than any other thread. When fully spun, it can measure up to 200 meters and can resist to catches the size of a human being.

13:13

**A FISHERMAN :**

*"My father's father already used to spin these lines. This ancestral work is intrinsic to the fishermen's daily life here. You see this line, I'm going to work it for another three days. It takes time to make it strong".*

**13:43**

Once spun and rubbed with tree bark, the Tsit-Tsit are ballasted with stones. The fishermen drop them just above the sea beds.

**14:02**

Amadi Soufi has long deserted his lines. He is tired. He is wise too. He is the only one in the Comoro Islands to have fished out five COELACANTHS.

**14:14**

**Amadi Soufi :**

*"Before calling it COELACANTH, we fishermen used to give it another name : the GOMBESSA. The GOMBESSA is large and big. Long ago, it was valueless, because we do not eat it. Its flesh is too fatty, it's not good to eat. The whites didn't use to look for it. No one came to take it from us. When I used to fish, I would throw my line out thinking each time I was going to catch something else. But the GOMBESSA, it's mere luck that brings it out !"*

**15:10**

The fishermen of Iconi form part of a cast, outside the village. They have their own district, their own mosques giving out right on the ocean shore. They're poorer than other villagers. That's the reason why they sail out on the waves each evening.

**15:38**

**A VILLAGE DWELLER :**

*"Here look, this is a piece of RUDI, the fish with which we fish for the BESSA, and sometimes we use the same*

*bait to catch a GOMBESSA.*

**16:00**

At night, deep water fishes come up looking for food. Atoumeni knows that well. Years ago he too pulled a GOMBESSA out of the sea.

**16:23**

He wants to tell us his story over there on his pirogue GALAOUA. He takes us to the place where the great trees lie down, to the place where sea animals hide away, as it says in his song.

**17:02**

**Atoumeni :**

*"The first year I fished a GOMBESSA, I immediately felt something very heavy at the end of my line, so I pulled, pulled, pulled at the end of my line, then I saw it, I took my hook like this and put it in its mouth to get it out of the water and pull it over on the pirogue. It was huge. You know, the GOMBESSA can frighten you. When it comes out of water, it makes noises like a frog. If you're not strong enough, you can get pretty scared."*

**17:47**

After a long night's waiting, the second COELACANTH was brought out of darkness. In 1952 the English captain Hunt recognized the fish from a poster on a Comoran market place. He contacted Smith to come over as soon as possible. The professor negotiated his trip for three days and succeeded in convincing the South African government of what was at stake. The COELACANTH became a political matter. The army was put at Smith's disposal.

**18:13**

**Pr Smith's off voice**

*"The Dakota plane took off at 07:10 a.m. Prospects were doom and uncertain, as though a cloud of doubt and anxiety was hovering over the COELACANTH's identity. And what if I came across some ordinary fish. I was*

*extremely tense and nervous. Hunt finally pointed out to a large container, I was as though paralyzed, I understood it was there. God, yes, it was true, it really was a COELACANTH. As I was stroking it, tears were falling flat on my hands. I was crying, I had finally won."*

**18:59**

After fourteen years of searching and doubting, John Smith fell asleep next to his COELACANTH. A strange sort of a coffin was laid at the foot of his bed. He now knew of a land where blue fishes dream.

**19:26**

The fish's arrival in South Africa was a national event. The corpse was never out of Smith's sight. The professor was finally able to reveal his discovery to the whole country. In the COELACANTH's fins, Smith saw the first beginning of legs which could have permitted the fish to first come out of the ocean. But his specimen quickly proved to be deceiving. Its decay process was already too far advanced, another fresher one would have been needed. The professor was never to have it.

For at the time the Comoro Islands were French, and the French were quite upset to have been robbed of such an important discovery. They banned all foreign scientific expeditions. Years later, Professor Smith committed suicide in his laboratory.

**20:23**

After 1952 the French launched a search for the COELACANTH, promising a high reward to Comoran fishermen. Each COELACANTH was to be put aside for Natural History Museum scientists in Paris, and for Professor Milo.

**20:38**

Professor Antony

*"All the fishermen then took part in the search, so much so that already by the end of 1953, M. Milo triumphantly*



*brought back by plane a magnificent well-preserved fish.*

**20:54**

**Radio off voice :**

*"By bringing up in his nets this extraordinary animal, a Comoro Island fisherman has made an invaluable gift to science : the COELACANTH, whose fins foretell legs first appeared on earth 500 million years ago. From fish to amphibian, then to reptile, and finally to human form, a link was missing, humankind's ancestor has at long last been identified."*

**21:05**

**Proffessor JEAN ANTONY**

*"He told me, Antony, he was always so very polite, Antony could you not spend some of your time, however little, to the study of the COELACANTH's anatomy. I was overwhelmed and delighted.*

**21:39**

**We have tracked down Jean Antony in the 5th arrondissement in Paris. In the 1950's Jean Antony's only interest was the study of apes' brain. The COELACANTH drastically changed his scientific career.**

**22:00**

**When the COELACANTH first arrived in Paris, Antony was Proffessor Milo's young assistant. Proffessor Milo was one of the first French anatomists to study the fossil fish.**

**22:17**

**Jean Antony :**

*"It's extraordinary to see that a DEVOLIAN family still has a representative in our times. It is very important*

*that one day we are able to define human origins at the stage of fish. One day nature pulled up this fish. It could have reacted and pulled it up sooner because scientists have been on earth for a long time. But at least it was a wonderful gift."*

**24:00**

The adventure went on in the secret of laboratories. Next to the study of human anatomy, the COELACANTH's anatomy deserved the greatest attention. In 1953, Professor Milo and his young assistant were looking for evidence confirming some remote relationship with the human species. Each specimen was fervently dissected.

**24:30**

**Jean Antony :**

*"I opened up the skull and began dissecting it inside. I found nothing but fat. I was rather surprised, not that it's unusual to find fat in a head cavity, it can happen, but there was a fantastic amount of it. In fact I noticed that the brain's volume was minimal. It weighed only 3 grams for a 40-kilo fish, or something near that !"*

**25:03**

**Archives off voice :**

*"The COELACANTH's skeleton brings to light the jointed bones linked to the animal's body in the form of fins, as well as a very characterizing tail. Once widespread on the surface of the planet, as testified by the very numerous fossilized remains, its origins go back to the Primary Age, well before any batrachian (nuvactile) appeared on earth."*

**25:26**

**A scientist**

*"If we are searching for our nearest fish ancestors, then these ancestors must be equipped with lungs. In living groups today, there are two kinds of fish fit with lungs : the Dipneuste, on the one hand, and the COELACANTH on the other. The COELACANTH's relics confirm its earlier attempts to come out of water but this fact remains*

*a clue, and a clue only for the COELACANTH renounced to conquer firm land. Contrarily to what Smith supposed, yet another fish, named the DIPNEUSTE or the RHIPIDISTIAN, would have given birth to the first earthly tetrapods''.*

**26:06**

On the evolution tree, the RHIPIDISTIEN has disappeared and the COELACANTH remains its only living cousin. It is a key witness, fit with the beginning of a spine and a primitive heart linked to lungs. But its fins, needed essentially for crawling on the ground and thus permit its evolution to terrestrial vertebrate, are different. The RHIPIDISTIANS' fins show the beginning of a leg form. But it does not yet do so on the COELACANTH. And so the COELACANTH remained living in the sea.

**26:37**

**Jean Antony :**

*"The COELACANTH is the cousin of the fish from which we could be descended. Proffessor Smith was obviously wrong in pointing out that the COELACANTH could be at the root of human evolution''.*

**27:14**

**Archives off voice**

*"The path from the anatomic age to the antideluvian age goes through the Comoro Archipelago. In its exhibition, the Natural History Museum in Paris has two COELACANTHS, humankind's distant ancestors''.*

**27:26**

Whether or not the Coelacanth is our cousin, great uncle or direct ancestor, cinemas and wide circulation newspapers of the time did not trouble themselves with scientific scruples and subtilities. The COELACANTH became the monster of the decade'.

**27:55**

In the cold of February 1954 the medias clang to such a marvellous story. Roving photographical enthusiasts

set off to track down the mythical fish.

28:19

Jack Stevens was one of them. He ventured off looking for a scoop. He wanted to be one of the first to film the Coelacanth under water. He took off for the Comoro Islands and waited there for three months before approaching the fish.

28:43

Jack Stevens :

*"At 5 a.m. someone woke me up and told me - there is a live one . So I put my film camera on the pirogue, and my photo cameras too, took my diving suit and dove in. First I wanted to film its fins, the way it moved about. So I put the camera lens on the fin. The camera started filming and after a second, half a second, "pop", nothing happened. But I had seen it, do you see ? I wasn't left off with total disappointment because I had seen it move about, and that pleased me. I was the first one to see it move. Oh, it didn't have a pretty face, in fact it shows on photographs. Its mouth is big, it opens up quite wide, its eyes are protruding, slightly luminous green. It does not look usual, that's for sure. I would have liked to try again. Maybe I'll go back there one day, but in a different way".*

29:50

Perhaps Jack Stevens was victim of a curse from the coelacanth : his camera had suddely broken down. He was unable to film the fish. He saw it swim around near the end of a fisherman's line only a few meters deep, and not in the deep waters where it usually hides.

30:08

Scientific expeditions to the Comoro Islands succeeded one another. Anatomists from the world over came to dissect on the spot freshly-fished specimens and give off rewards to the Comorans. Ever since Proffessor Smith's trip, the ancient fish has become a symbol of money on the islands.

**30:30**

**A Comoran**

*"First we have our pirogue, and with it, we have gained access to a form of wealth, the Coelacanth, which is also very interesting. If, since the 50s, the coelacanth can sell for 5000 Comoran Francs, it means it's very important at all levels, historical, scientific and economic."*

**30:58**

Amadi Soufi has never believed that human beings descended from fish, a "white man's idea", a strange idea far remote from his own traditional beliefs. With the money he has earned, he was able to hold a grand wedding and have a house built in the village for his eldest daughter.

**31:13**

**AMADI SOUFI**

*"We knew there was money to be earned from this fish. We knew the whites were looking for medicine or I don't know what in this fish. The first one I fished out, a Frenchman bought it. He gave me only 1000 Francs for it, 1000 Francs only ...And then an American and an Englishman bought one I had fished over there, they gave me 4000 francs for it. They cut it out there in front of me, and then took it away. Nobody knows whatever they've done with it."*

**32:10**

Creased notes, Coelacanth notes, are exchanged on the market place. The market is uncontrollable and the market place still represents to this day the living fossil's only known territory.

In the back shops of Moroni, the capital city, Professor Smith's prehistoric monster, the "four-legged old timer" as he fondly called it, is being converted into gold.

**32:50**

Intricately formed jewels are delicately worked to please foreign tourists' eyes.

33:00

**JEWELLER**

*"A lot of tourists come over here to buy coelacanths, so we make them in all sizes, medium, large, it's a good business, I sell them and take money in."*

33:20

Over 200 coelacanths have been fished out, studied and dissected. Today the species is protected by the Washington Convention that forbids the search for Gombessas.

33:40

Those taken by luck are sent to western laboratories or elsewhere. Immediately upon our arrival on the island we are told of illicitly fished coelacanths sold for the highest bid. A strange rumour has it that an eventual traffic supplies the East with the fish because scientists there are working on a secret and wild research for new signs of mythical life.

34:11

One week later we are finally able to get near the cold chambers of an import-export firm. There is a coelacanth in the middle of frozen meats. We ask to take a look at it.

34:47

The animal is huge. It weighs nearly 70 kilos. It is one of the last caught Coelacanth in the Comoros. The catch belongs to the cold chambers' owner : an Indian-born Madagascan.

35:05

**THE OWNER**

"We bought it for 250.000 Comoran francs."

**REPORTER**

"What if i want to buy it off you..., for instance, can I buy it off you ?"

**THE OWNER**

"Well no, yes, you can buy it ..."

**REPORTER**

"How much are you selling it for ?"

**THE OWNER**

"I don't exactly know".

**REPORTER**

"You mentioned 250.000 francs, could you sell it for more ?"

**THE OWNER**

"Sure !"

**REPORTER**

"About how much more ?"

**THE OWNER**

"I don't exactly know the price for it".

**REPORTER**

"Who can make you such offers ?"

**THE OWNER**

"Well I don't know, Europeans, Japanese."

**REPORTER**

"You think it can interest the Japanese ?"

**THE OWNER**

"Yes, it can interest them."

**REPORTER**

"Why ?"

**THE OWNER**

"I don't know. Maybe they analyze it, it's a very rare fish. It's only found here, in Comoran waters.

Nowhere else !"

**REPORTER**

"Do you know that the Japanese are trying to make an elixir of life with the Coelacanth ?"

**THE OWNER**

"Yes, we've heard about that and so now we're waiting, we're waiting for offers."

**36:20**

An elixir of life for long life expectancy. A fish as old as this must behold a secret. But we are left with the rumour, unable to learn anything more about the Japanese scientists. And so our Coelacanth is returned to its cold chamber before its final journey.

We have an appointment at the Presidential Palace. The fish's reputation for long life expectancy has become a symbol. The Coelacanth has become a prestigious gift to offer. On his last trip to the Comoros Islands, French President Mitterrand was given a prehistoric fish.



37:10

#### A PRESIDENTIAL PALACE REPRESENTATIVE

*"The Coelacanth is offered to friends of the Comoros Islands. President Mitterand is a great friend of our president and France is a friend of our country. There is no present more precious to offer to the president than the Coelacanth. To some Japanese scientists, it symbolizes long life expectancy. They are in the process of studying it to uncover the secret of longevity. This present was made to wish President Mitterand and Franco-Comoran friendship a long life."*

37:55

Several travelling days later, we are meeting at last with one of the last characters in the Coelacanth's adventure story. In April 1994 he is waiting for us in Germany at the end of a Bavarian lane.

38:33

#### HANZ FRICKE

*"The first time I saw the word Coelacanth was in Professor's Smith's book. I remember its title : THE PAST HANDED OVER FROM THE SEA. I must have been fourteen when I read that book. And that fish has never left my mind ever since. I had to see it. I wanted to be the first one to see it. That was my dream, my dream, yes."*

39:10

Hanz Frick was a teen-ager in then-East Germany when he first dreamt of the blue fish. There he made his first undersea camera and carried out his first divers in the cold Baltic Sea.

Hanz then decided to become both biologist and film-maker. But to explore oceans he had to flee RDA on a bicycle. He was eighteen. Since then the thought of the Coelacanth has never left him. At the bottom of the Scientific Institute's garden in Seeweisen, Hanz has found shelter for his secret weapon, his youthful dream, a tiny yellow submarine.

40:00

**It has taken Hanz years to save the thousands of Deutschmarks needed to build this pocket-sized submarine. He has found patrons to help him and has also drawn personal debts to put up his first expeditions.**

**40:39**

**The first plunge occurred in 1987. Diving to the bottom of the sea and of time, in a world of lava flows and darkness off the Comoro Islands, during three weeks men and submarine watched out for the yet unobserved fish's secret. After three weeks of searching, nothing was found ...**

**Both furious and disappointed Hanz Fricke returned to Germany, letting the expedition carry out its search without him.**

**41:10**

**HANZ FRICKE**

*"Those days of searching were rather difficult to endure. We kept looking for the Coelacanth and it was nowhere to be found. If I didn't return with photographs of the fish, I'd have my head cut off".*

**41:30**

**Finally one night, Jürgen shouted out.**

**41:42**

**The first Coelacanth was filmed for the first time during this expedition 198 meters under water. Jürgen was never to forget it.**

**41:55**

**JÜRGEN**

*"I remember when I first saw it I screamed with joy and I am sure the fish must have heard us but he was not interested in us. He did not react at all. As for us, we were very nervous, excited and happy all at once."*

**42:22**

Hanz discovered the first Coelacanth on a video screen.

42:27

HANZ FRICKE

*"It was very important for me to know if the fish was really using its fins. That was the first time it could be observed. The book told how the Coelacanth could crawl on the ground, but in fact we see it uses its fins to swim around and nothing else. It's a professional swimmer. See there, the Coelacanth has spread apart its two fins like an airplane's wings and look, it's beginning to hover. In fact that's the way it rests off. Now it's using its fins like a horse trotting, in a synchronized crossed movement. This fin with that one."*

43:26

The yellow submarine man returned twice to the Comoran deep waters to dive. A second bathyscaphe was built that could dive down as deep as 400 m. This time Hanz was there filming.

43:50

These lava caves are the coelacanths' homes. These giant fishes spend long peaceful days together there without ever moving rapidly except when flapping their rear fins. These fins seem to be useful to recognize each other at a distance without touching. The monster that Smith never saw move is a peaceful and slow-moving fish. It saves up on its energy as though it knew how to slow down time.

44:30

At the time of his last expedition over to the Comoran Islands, Hanz branded five coelacanths. With the help of transmitters the fishes' moves could be followed from the submarine. At nightfall, it leaves its cave, always slowly hunting for food. It swims searching for sparse catches. One night a coalacanth swam into the spotlight. Perhaps that's the nicest picture taken of the fish. It is a female. It is turning over onto its back showing its full belly. It's about to give bith to already-formed offsprings since it is oviparous. Avoiding human presence that night, the female fish swam off secretly to the confines of deep waters, 700 m. below where the submarine could not follow it. The birth of the young coelacanths has remained a mystery.

45:34

Hanz :

*"When people get near to this fish, they become 'coelacanthophiles', it becomes an obsession."*

46:03

This obsession takes us yet elsewhere again, still pursuing this fish we can't leave alone.

46:15

Raphaël Planck :

*"It's a bit like a detective story, and a bit scientific too. It's not sentimental, simply emotional. It's sort of a passion. Yes, I think we can call it that. It's not falling in love with the coelacanth, that's a bit strong an image, it's not a desirable object as such !"*

46:45

Raphaël Planck is a French zoologist searching out for the fish in Spain. In the box he carefully carries around, Raphaël Planck has in his possession a piece of evidence that could well change drastically the coelacanth's history . Today he is going to San Sebastian to have it identified. It's a precious object, a work of art. Made over a century ago, it could confirm the existence of a new species of coelacanth still living today in another ocean. Raphaël's appointment is fixed in the old part of the city.

48:15

The object is made of silver. It's a coelacanth made from a mysterious living model. It does not look like a Comoran coelacanth.

The man examining the object is a pre-Hispanic jewelry expert. He is expected to give a firm opinion. If the object was made before 1938 when Miss Latimer discovered it, it means other coelacanth species exist elsewhere.

48:40

The expert :

*"I don't think this jewel was made recently. It isn't modern. It's several years old. I don't know why exactly, it reminds me of American craftsworks."*

49:10

Raphaël Planck

*"If from this work of art we could find a new living coelacanth species, I would be fulfilling a sort of dream. That's what we have been searching for from the beginning. That idea existed somewhere. An unknown coelacanth was seen and represented by an unknown artist somewhere in a country we don't know. That's quite fantastic really."*

49:54

Fishes of the coelacanthian family have been living under the sea surface for over 350 million years. Human beings first appeared some 3.000.000 years ago. We are quite young compared to it. But the rhythm of human transformation is generally much faster than the coelacanth's which has retained a sort of ancient longer self-prolongating model. Homo Sapiens has remained the way it is, but that is another story. Maybe we'll be extinct before it is.

50:54

Today we are leaving South Africa. Miss Latimer has waited for us till the end of the century, till the temporary end of history. Evolution still remains an enigma. There is one man Marjorie Latimer has not forgotten.

.

51:20

MISS LATIMER

"This sculpture is of Professor Smith's face. I had started working on it before he died. Since his death, I never could touch it up again ... They should leave the Coelacanth alone now. It should be left to live in The

**Comoros. Enough is enough. There must be other fossil fishes elsewhere."**

**THE END**

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**MUSIC**

**Fara Thème (JM Jarre - Polydor)**

**Enotti Dell'Ambre (N Piovani - Milan)**

**Jamon-Jamon (N Piovani - Milan)**

**Noote Disan Lorenzo ( N Piovani - Milan)**

**Caont's Web (P Doyle - Varese Sabine)**

**Leasure Drive (R. Farnon - Chapell)**

**Henry V (P. Doyle - EMI)**

**Droken ice (D. Moton - Varese Sabine)**

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