

SPOOKY U

Written by

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Based on the writings of H.P. Lovecraft

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TEASER

EXT. GARDNER'S FARM OUTSIDE OF ARKHAM, MASSACHUSSETTS - NIGHT

TITLE ON SCREEN:
GARDNER FARM
WEST OF ARKHAM, MA

A meteor flashes through the sky and impacts in the field behind the Gardner's house. The smoldering meteorite glows an eerie array of colors. NAHUM GARDNER, 50 years old, steps tentatively onto his front porch with a lantern. He squints into the glowing embers of the crater in his yard.

TITLE ON SCREEN:
3 DAYS LATER

Three men are standing in the crater poking at the meteor. Nahum is grimacing at the men as they conduct their experiments. Nahum's wife NABBY and his three sons THADDEUS, ZENAS, and MERWIN watch on from a safe distance with their neighbor, AMMI PIERCE.

The meteor cracks open. The three men step back and watch as a glowing globule swells from the center of the meteor. The three men look at each other and shrug. The one closest to the meteor takes a pointer and pokes violently at the globule. It pops and sends the "color" in all directions but seemingly most of the force borroughs through the ground towards the well.

A pause as everyone looks around bewildered. Then the man who pokes the meteor starts scraping bits of the goo into a specimen jar.

NAHUM
Where'd you boys say you were from?

The man in the crater straightens up and looks at the jar.

MAN
Miskatonic University, over in
Arkham.

NAHUM
(Nodding.)
Thought so.

OPENING CREDITS

INT-MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY - BRIAN CARTER'S LECTURE HALL

TITLE ON SCREEN:
ARKHAM, MA
PRESENT DAY

BRIAN CARTER, a 29 year old studious looking man, is walking down the steps of a small boarding house. He stops to look at the painting on the wall. A horrific looking landscape with giant tentacles ripping a mountain apart whilst worshipers flee for their lives. He is almost entranced by it. SILVIA TURNER, a 35 year old woman in a nurse's uniform enters the front door and stops when she sees Brian.

SILVIA

Oh!

This startles Brian.

BRIAN

Ah!

SILVIA

Sorry...

BRIAN

No... don't be... I was just...
This painting... it's very...

SILVIA

Yes... it is...

BRIAN

I'm sorry.... I'm Brian. I just
moved in yesterday.

SILVIA

Silvia. I've been here forever it
seems.

BRIAN

Really? Do you know who plays the
music so loud on the sixth floor?

SILVIA

Sixth floor? No.... Haven't a clue.

BRIAN

That's all right... It's nice
meeting you... Your name again?

SILVIA

Silvia Turner.

BRIAN
Brian Carter.

She nearly gasps.

SILVIA
Carter?

BRIAN
Yes. I'm starting at the university
today.

SILVIA
Are you?

BRIAN
On my way out the door when this
painting caught my eye.

SILVIA
I try not to look at it.

BRIAN
I understand...

SILVIA
Well... I really must be going.

BRIAN
Yes, of course... have a good day.

SILVIA
Good luck.

BRIAN
Thanks.

Silvia leaves, Brian watches her. STRAGGER, an elderly man,
appears behind the counter.

STRAGGER
Mr. Carter?

BRIAN
(Alarmed)
Yes?

STRAGGER
Message for you, sir. It's from the
university.

BRIAN
Yes, thank you...

Brian is uneasy around Stragger because of a strange affliction of the skin that Stragger has. Blisters on his arms and strange discoloration peeking out from beneath his collar.

STRAGGER

Where'd you say you were from?

BRIAN

Denver, Colorado.

STRAGGER

And how long will you be staying again?

BRIAN

I was just hired on as a professor at the university...

STRAGGER

So... not long?

BRIAN

Well... I don't really know.

STRAGGER

It is Carter, right?

BRIAN

Yes.

STRAGGER

Carter.... Carter.... Car....
ter.... Car....

Stragger whispers the name to himself as he slowly walks away. Brian watches him with a wary eye.

BRIAN

Mr. Stragger?

Stragger hisses as he turns.

STRAGGER

What?

BRIAN

Last night there was some music in the room above mine.

STRAGGER

Yes?

BRIAN
It was pretty loud.

STRAGGER
And?

BRIAN
I was wondering if you could ask
the person staying in that room not
to play music so loudly.

STRAGGER
Is that all?

BRIAN
Um... yeah... that's all...

Stragger starts moving threateningly toward Brian.

STRAGGER
You'd better get out of here....

BRIAN
What?

STRAGGER
You don't want to be late on your
first day at Miskatonic University,
do you?

Brian looks to the wall clock and rushes out the door.

CUT TO:

INT-MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY - BRIAN CARTER'S LECTURE HALL

Brian nervously rehearses his first lecture to the empty
seats.

BRIAN
Archeology is more than the study
of old things and old places, it is
the study of human existence....
dammit... Archeology is more than
the study of old things, it is the
study of who we've been, who we
are, and who we will become....
they're going to eat me alive...

MANDY TANNER, a quirky young woman, has somehow made it into
the room without detection.

MANDY
That usually happens in the
Anthropology classes.

BRIAN
(alarmed)
Whoa!

MANDY
(alarmed)
I'm sorry!

BRIAN
It's all right... I didn't see
you...

MANDY
Yeah... it's a bad habit of mine...

BRIAN
Are you.... Is this your... um...
Are you taking this class?

MANDY
Archeology?

BRIAN
Right.

MANDY
Yeah.

BRIAN
You're early...

MANDY
I'm trying to make a mental map of
the place so I won't get lost.

BRIAN
That's a good idea... I haven't
seen most of the campus as it is...

MANDY
Well, I doubt anyone can see the
whole campus...

BRIAN
It's a big place.

MANDY
You're young.

BRIAN

What?

MANDY

You're young to be an archeology professor.

BRIAN

Well, yes... I should be out there digging, I know...

MANDY

Yeah... Doing all that mummy stuff...

Brian laughs at this. He turns to put some papers on his desk.

MANDY (CONT'D)

I need to finish my mental map before class.

Turning around he only notices that she is gone when he finishes his statement.

BRIAN

Right... see you in the... lecture.

He looks around. He takes a deep breath.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Okay... you can do this... Archeology is not just the study...

CUT TO:

INT. FACULTY LOUNGE - DAY

Brian has the look of someone who has been through war. He is dazed and twitchy. ATLER PENDELTON, late 30's early 40's - fit and handsome Professor of Anthropology walks in and pours a cup of coffee. He looks over to Brian and smirks.

ATLER

You look like someone who has just taught his first class at Spooky U.

BRIAN

I can't do this...

ATLER

Exactly what I said after my first class.

BRIAN
Does it get easier?

ATLER
Definitely... and infinitely more
difficult. Adler Pendelton.

BRIAN
Brian Carter.

ATLER
Carter?

BRIAN
Yeah... Is that a big deal?

ATLER
What do you mean?

BRIAN
You're the third person I've
introduced myself to who has made
it seem like my name has some
significance. It's a regular name,
common even...

ATLER
It's a prominent name in these
parts. And surprisingly hard to
come by...

Adler stares at Brian with intensity.

Uncomfortable silence.

BRIAN
So what do you teach?

ATLER
Anthropology.

BRIAN
I heard you can get eaten alive in
that department.

ATLER
(Gravely serious)
That was only one time...

Uncomfortable silence.

BRIAN
I teach archeology.

ATLER
Really?

BRIAN
Yes.

ATLER
Excellent. I certainly hope you
manage better than our last
archeology professor.

BRIAN
What happened to him?

ATLER
He went mad.

BRIAN
Mad?

ATLER
Insane.

BRIAN
Crazy?

ATLER
Stark raving mad.

BRIAN
Great.

SILVIA DESMUND, secretary to the Dean, WALTER PICKMAN, enters
the lounge.

SILVIA
Professor Carter?

BRIAN
Yes?

SILVIA
Dean Pickman would like to see you
in his office.

BRIAN
Right... Nice to meet you.

ATLER
Until we meet again.

CUT TO:

INT. DEAN PICKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The interior of Pickman's office is a ominous horror show of a room. Behind a terrifying desk sits Walter Pickman. He is reading from a large horrific book. Brian enters intimidated by the room.

PICKMAN

Don't lurk, Professor Carter, no one likes a lurker.

Brian walks up to the desk.

PICKMAN (CONT'D)

I believe I discussed with you earlier that your job might entail investigation and research on behalf of the university.

BRIAN

Yes sir, you mentioned it.

PICKMAN

Excellent. I think we may have something for you to investigate.

BRIAN

Oh? Some archeological dilemma?

Walter stares at Brian severely.

PICKMAN

Let me show you something.

Walter stands and walks to the bookcase. Brian follows him. Walter reaches up and pulls on a copy of "The Unnamable" and the bookcase swings open.

BRIAN

Are you kidding me?

PICKMAN

No.

BRIAN

This is awesome.

Walter stares at Brian.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Lead on.

Walter walks into a vast warehouse of artifacts. He walks over to a large glass bell. The small card on the glass bell reads GARDNER FARM METEOR 1892. The bell is empty.

PICKMAN

In 1892 a meteor struck a farm just west of here.

Brian looks at the empty glass bell. He reaches out for it and Walter smacks his hand.

PICKMAN (CONT'D)

The last time that someone lifted that glass three students died rather painful and disturbing deaths.

Brian slowly withdraws his hand.

BRIAN

So... Is there a specific reason for bringing me into this hidden chamber?

PICKMAN

After the meteor strike there was strange phenomena reported throughout the region.

BRIAN

What kind of phenomena?

PICKMAN

Strange...

BRIAN

Right.

Walter hands Brian a small piece of paper.

PICKMAN

I need you to go to this address and interview the woman living there.

BRIAN

About what?

PICKMAN

The phenomena...

BRIAN

The 'strange' phenomena?

Walter rubs his eyes.

PICKMAN

Yes! We haven't really spoken of
any other phenomena, now have we?

BRIAN

We haven't really spoken about any
phenomena...

Walter glares at Brian.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I'll just... go... interview...
(reads)
Miss Gardner....

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDNER RESIDENCE - AFTERNOON

Brian steps out of his car. He senses he is being watched. His eyes dart from window to window until he sees the curtains of the upstairs window quickly shut. He slowly walks up to the front door. He pauses briefly to look at the farm. Sparse and sinister, the land seems to be a sickly representation of the mood. His finger timidly depresses the doorbell. He waits. After a few moments the door slowly creaks open. A gaunt woman, ALICE, entirely disinterested stares at Brian.

ALICE

Yes?

BRIAN

Miss Gardner?

ALICE

No.

BRIAN

Is Miss Gardner in?

ALICE

In what?

BRIAN

In the house?

ALICE

Oh...

BRIAN
May I speak to Miss Gardner?

ALICE
You may. I suppose it's possible.

BRIAN
Who are you?

ALICE
Alice Nahue.

BRIAN
Nahue?

ALICE
Yes.

BRIAN
I'm from the university.

ALICE
Miskatonic?

BRIAN
Yes.

Alice squints at Brian.

ALICE
I don't think so.

BRIAN
I am.

ALICE
No.

BRIAN
Look... see... here's my faculty
i.d...

Brian holds up his i.d.

ALICE
How long have you been there?

BRIAN
Today's my first day.

ALICE
Oh... that explains it.

BRIAN
Explains what?

ALICE
You don't have the Miskatonic feel
to you.

BRIAN
And what exactly is the "Miskatonic
feel"?

ALICE
I don't know... it makes me
twitchy.

BRIAN
Right. Miss Nahue?

ALICE
Alice.

BRIAN
Alice. Do you think it would be
possible for me to see Miss
Gardner?

ALICE
I don't think you really want
that...

BRIAN
Why not?

ALICE
She hasn't been herself lately.

BRIAN
The university sent me out to speak
with her.

ALICE
I see... well... come on in...

BRIAN
Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. GARDNER HOME - DAY

The interior of the house is dark. All the curtains are drawn allowing no outside light. Candlelight illuminates the parlor in small pools of dancing light.

The house is akin to a tight maze of narrow hallways. Brian looks around uneasily as he is led to the very back room. Alice quietly knocks on the door. A tremendous squeal emits from behind the door.

ALICE

Natty? There's a man here from the university.

Another ungodly squeal.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I'll send him in.

Brenda turns to Brian who is frozen in place.

ALICE (CONT'D)

She'll see you now.

BRIAN

What?

ALICE

You can go in.

BRIAN

In there?

ALICE

Yes. Natty Gardner is waiting for you.

BRIAN

Natty?

ALICE

Yes.

BRIAN

She's a... um... person... right?

ALICE

What kind of question is that?

BRIAN

I....

Alice walks away.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

It's a question you didn't answer...

Brian stares at the door. There is a strange groaning from behind the door.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
All right...

He places his hand on the doorknob and slowly turns it. It creaks loudly as he pulls it open.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Hello?

There is a terrifying wheeze followed by a voice just above a whisper.

NATTY
Come in, Mr. Carter.

As Brian enters the room he is nearly frozen with fear. The room has only a bed and a bedside table with a candelabra. On the bed is a woman wearing a long veil.

BRIAN
Miss Gardner?

NATTY
Please... call me Natty.

BRIAN
Natty? uh... right... Natty...

NATTY
Pickman sent you?

BRIAN
Yes.

NATTY
You must be new.

BRIAN
First day.

NATTY
Oh? How very... unfortunate.

BRIAN
Unfortunate?

NATTY
You would do well to go home...
Leave Arkham, leave Miskatonic...

BRIAN

I can't...

NATTY

There is nothing you can't do, Mr. Carter, the sooner you accept this, the better off you will be.

BRIAN

I was told to ask you about some strange phenomena?

NATTY

Of course you were... What do you know about the Gardner farm?

BRIAN

A meteorite hit the farm back in the 1800's?

NATTY

Is that all?

BRIAN

Pretty much...

NATTY

I see... Well, Mr. Carter... Tell Dean Pickman that the Color is back.

BRIAN

The Color?

NATTY

Yes.

BRIAN

The Color is back.

NATTY

Yes.

BRIAN

All right...

He turns to leave.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(Turning back.)

Did I tell you my name?

NATTY

You did not.

BRIAN
That's what I thought.

NATTY
Good day, Mr. Carter.

BRIAN
Good day to you.

He walks out.

INT. PICKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Pickman is sitting at his desk staring blankly at the wall. The phone rings. He looks at the phone with an air of disdain. He lifts the handset from the cradle and rests it next to his head.

PICKMAN
Hello?

INT. CARTER'S CAR - DAY

Brian is driving and speaking on the phone.

BRIAN
Dean Pickman?

INT. PICKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

PICKMAN
Mr. Carter. Did you speak with Ms. Gardner?

INT. CARTER'S CAR - DAY

BRIAN
Yes I did. Thank you for warning me that I was visiting the Addams Family!

INT. PICKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

PICKMAN
What did Ms. Gardner say?

INT. CARTER'S CAR - DAY

BRIAN

She says "The Color is back"...
does that mean anything to you?

INT. PICKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

PICKMAN

It does indeed, Mr. Carter. Did she
touch you?

INT. CARTER'S CAR - DAY

BRIAN

What? Did she what? No... she
didn't touch me.

(Pause.)

No... I didn't touch her.

(Pause.)

Yes I'm sure. We didn't touch each
other.

INT. PICKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

PICKMAN

All right. Please get back to the
campus as soon as possible.

CUT TO:

EXT. MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY - DAY

Brian pulls up to the campus and pulls into his parking spot.
He is met immediately by a team of men in full body biohazard
suits. They pull him protesting into a makeshift shower. They
hose him down and scrub him to within an inch of his life.

FADE TO:

INT. PICKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Brian is wrapped in a towel. Sitting in an uncomfortable
chair. Pickman walks in and sits at his desk.

BRIAN

What the hell was that?

PICKMAN

A precaution.

BRIAN

A precaution for what? What are we being so cautious about?

PICKMAN

There was a chance that you were exposed to hazardous material.

BRIAN

What? You... what? Did you send me somewhere that might get me killed?

PICKMAN

That is something you will have to get used to.

BRIAN

What?

PICKMAN

Mr. Carter, you have a class in eighteen minutes.

BRIAN

I'm soaking wet.

PICKMAN

Should make for an interesting class.

CUT TO:

INT. CARTER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

The classroom is sparsely populated by a handful of students who are fidgeting in their seats. Brian comes running in which alarms the students and they watch the door for whatever was chasing Brian.

BRIAN

Sorry I'm late.

CHASE FORD, an athletic young man nervously looks out the door.

CHASE

What's chasing you?

BRIAN

What?

CHASE
What's chasing you?

BRIAN
Nothing... I'm just late...

CHASE
You're wet.

BRIAN
That is true...

BROOK DOWER, a bookish young woman sits upright.

BROOK
Will this be on the test?

BRIAN
Will what be on the test?

BROOK
You being wet.

BRIAN
Why would... how would that.... No.
This will not be on the test.

Three other students raise their hands.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Nothing was chasing me either...
that won't be on any tests.

Mandy is smiling from the back row. Brian nods to her.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I see you made it...

The other students, JAKE TALBOT, JUDY SAXON, and FRED PALMER,
look back at Mandy with confusion and suspicion.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
So... this is a small class.

BROOK
Not many people want to risk it.

BRIAN
My first class of the day was
pretty full.

CHASE

Yeah... Your first class were Freshmen... so... they don't know better.

BRIAN

Better than what?

CHASE

Well... the last professor...

BRIAN

Right, right... he went insane.

Uncomfortable silence.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

It happens, there are a lot of pressures out there... family, work, money issues....

CHASE

We were all in his class.

BRIAN

All of you?

CHASE

Yeah.

BRIAN

Well, then, you know a lot more than I do.

BROOK

Professor Collins was a good teacher.

JAKE

He was intense.

BROOK

But good...

BRIAN

What happened?

FRED

It was the dig.

BRIAN

The dig?

FRED
Yeah... You'll have a dig with the
freshmen class.

BRIAN
Where was this dig?

FRED
The ruins.

BRIAN
Ruins?

FRED
Are you an archeology teacher?

BRIAN
Yes....

BROOK
The ruins are in Vermont.

BRIAN
Okay... And something happened?

BROOK
We found some interesting
artifacts.

BRIAN
Really?

FRED
Yeah... You didn't hear about it?
It was all published in the
Miskatonic Journal.

BRIAN
To be honest with you all... I'd
never heard of Miskatonic before
this summer.

The students are stunned.

JUDY
What?

BRIAN
I got this offer out of the blue...
I couldn't turn it down.

JUDY
You've never heard of Miskatonic?

BRIAN

No.

FRED

What about the Miskatonic Expedition?

BRIAN

Sorry.

CHASE

Well, that's just freaky, man. I didn't think there was anyone alive who hadn't heard of Spooky U.

BRIAN

I haven't even heard the nickname Spooky U until today... why is this place called Spooky U?

CHASE

This guy's unbelievable! You need to quit.

BRIAN

What?

JUDY

He's right... you need to get out of here.

BRIAN

Why?

FRED

If you don't know why this place is called Spooky U, you are going to die.

BRIAN

Die?

FRED

Yes. Die.

BRIAN

I don't get it... are you hazing me?

CHASE

This university is the largest depository of unexplained phenomena and occult artifacts in the world.

JUDY

One out of three students loses
their minds completely before
graduation.

FRED

One out of ten students dies
prematurely and horrifically.

BROOK

I cried when I got my acceptance
letter.

JAKE

We all did.

BRIAN

Then why did you come.

BROOK

The same reason you did... we
couldn't refuse.

CHASE

But at least we knew what we were
getting into.

BRIAN

And what was that?

JUDY

Miskatonic! If you make it through
this institution, there is nothing
you can't do.

BROOK

I'm just glad I made it through
freshman year.

Brian looks to Mandy who has been watching the scene.

BRIAN

You're awfully quiet.

The students look to Mandy with confusion.

MANDY

I don't have anything to add.

BRIAN

Fair enough.

CHASE

So... if you don't know anything about this school... What exactly are you planning to teach us?

BRIAN

Archeology.

FRED

And what exactly does that mean to you?

BRIAN

It is the examination of cultural and environmental remnants of human societies. In the history of mankind only 10% of it has been around for written documentation. The other 90% is in the art and structural remnants left behind by countless societies.

FRED

So... no incantations?

BRIAN

What? No...

CHASE

Are you going to teach us how to read R'lyehian?

BRIAN

What?

BROOK

R'lyehian? The lost language? The glyphs of the elder gods? The scrawl of the unknown terror?

BRIAN

I have no idea what you are talking about.

JAKE

So... we're going to die.

BRIAN

What? No! No one is going to die.

JAKE

Really? Can you stop the crawling chaos? The goat of a thousand young? Can you stop a moon vampire?

CHASE
A night gaunt?

FRED
The Color out of space?

BRIAN
Wait... what? What was that?

FRED
The Color out of space? You don't
even know what it is?

JUDY
How are you going to teach us to
fight these things if you don't
even know what they are?

BRIAN
Archeology isn't about fighting.

CHASE
It is here. It's about survival.

Brian is frustrated and a little frightened. He looks to Mandy.

BRIAN
Tell me this is all a joke.

The students look to Mandy and back at Brian.

JUDY
This is no joke, Mr. Carter.

CHASE
I thought you were going to be a
kick ass professor.

FRED
I know! A Carter teaching us!

BRIAN
What is it with my name?

The students are dismayed.

BROOK
We should just go...

CHASE
Yeah...

The students start grabbing their things.

BRIAN
Wait... I just started... help me
get up to speed.

FRED
What?

BRIAN
Teach me what I am supposed to
teach you.

The students look at each other.

CHASE
You want us to teach you?

BRIAN
Yes.

BROOK
What do you need us to teach you?

BRIAN
Let's start with the Color.

JUDY
What do you want to know?

BRIAN
What is it?

The students look at one another in disbelief.

FRED
Okay... A meteorite hit a farm not
far from here.

BRIAN
I got that much. The Color was in
the meteorite?

JAKE
As near as anyone can tell.

Judy opens a book and flips through it. She reads:

JUDY
"The globule that issued from the
meteorite glowed with a
multicolored haze. Miskatonic
scientists attempted to measure the
depth of the globule and the
results were inconclusive."

BRIAN
What does that mean?

CHASE
They poked it with a stick.

BRIAN
What?

FRED
They poked it with a stick and they
couldn't find the other end.

BRIAN
Ok... so... what happens if this
"Color" touches you?

JUDY
You die.

CHASE
Well... you don't just die... you
get a type of rash... it's like
rust for the skin.

FRED
Yeah, it eats you up and turns you
to a pile of grey ash.

BRIAN
Grey ash?

BROOK
They say it's incredibly painful.

BRIAN
Right.

Brian looks at his hands.

JAKE
What are you doing?

BRIAN
What? Nothing.

JAKE
Wait... why are you so interested
in the Color?

BRIAN
No reason...

JUDY

Oh my god! Are you trying to tell me that the Color is back?

BRIAN

No!

BROOK

Perfect... we're all going to turn to ash!

BRIAN

No... I won't let that happen!

BROOK

How are you going to stop it?

BRIAN

I don't know. But I will not let it hurt you.

The classmates look at one another warily.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I will figure it out.

CUT TO:

INT. PICKMAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Pickman is reading a book when Brian comes bursting into the room.

BRIAN

You willingly put me near some kind of killer goo from outer space?

PICKMAN

I sent you to discover the level of threat.

BRIAN

And the level of threat is?

PICKMAN

Very high.

BRIAN

I did not sign on for this!

PICKMAN

On the contrary. This is exactly what you signed on to do.

(MORE)

PICKMAN (CONT'D)

I have no doubt that you are a terrible teacher. You are impetuous, frazzled, and prone to fits of anger. However, we are not relying on you for your teaching prowess. We counting on you to curb the unsettling increase in peculiar activity around here.

BRIAN

What?

PICKMAN

You need to speak with your benefactor.

BRIAN

My what?

PICKMAN

You were referred to us.

BRIAN

Who referred me?

PICKMAN

Come with me.

Pickman opens a door in the back of his office. He gestures to Brian to enter.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL ROOM - NIGHT

Brian goes into the small room. Pickman closes the door behind him. Brian looks around. There is a small circular table in the center of the room. He walks over to it. The table is covered with intricate and foreboding symbols. From the shadows steps a SHROUDED FIGURE.

FIGURE

Have a seat.

Brian nearly jumps out of his skin.

BRIAN

Oh god! I didn't see you there.

FIGURE

Please. Sit down.

Brian sits. The Figure walks slowly around Brian. Soaking in his presence. Finally he sits opposite Brian.

BRIAN

Who are you?

FIGURE

Not important. Each step you have taken has been taken before. And you need not know why. Nor do you need to know who I am.

BRIAN

That isn't going to work. Being all mysterious just makes me want to know more. And it makes me more skeptical about going along.

FIGURE

Naturally. You knew nothing of this place. You knew nothing of what was expected of you. You know that you have no talent for teaching. And yet, here you are. You came here. You know why you are here, you merely kept it secret from yourself.

BRIAN

I am not interested in games. I want answers!

FIGURE

You feel like this is all a bad dream. Every since you set foot in Arkham. You have been accepting things far beyond your scope and belief as reality.

BRIAN

Yes.

FIGURE

Well, I promise you that you are awake. I won't bother with the cliché of saying that for the first time in your life you are awake. But... well... for the first time in your life you are awake.

BRIAN

Why did you seek me out? What am I doing here?

FIGURE

You're here to save the world.

BRIAN

What?

FIGURE

In his house at R'lyeh, dead
Cthulhu waits dreaming.

The phrase weighs on Brian. He shakes off the feeling of destiny.

BRIAN

What the hell does that mean?

FIGURE

There is a gathering of forces here
in Arkham. Dark and powerful forces
bent on setting fire to the waking
world.

BRIAN

I am tired of riddles and vague
references, what is happening here?

The Figure puts a strange spike on the table. It is akin to a wooden stake with a very ornate handle and cap. It is obviously some form of weapon. The Figure's hand is a terrible wart covered claw.

FIGURE

Use this to kill the Color. Is that
clear enough for you?

BRIAN

Why should I listen to you? There
is nothing you can say or do that
will convince me to go through with
this! I am heading to the boarding
house and packing and heading home!

The Figure reaches up with his good hand and pulls back his hood. We cannot see what his face looks like but the expression on Brian's face is one of horror and astonishment. He is taken aback. We never see the Figure.

FIGURE

Now listen to me...

CUT TO:

INT. BRIAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Brian is frozen in shock. He is staring at the wall. Whatever he was told has changed his life. Strange music wafts onto his room. He looks up and listens carefully to the peculiar music. He shakes his head and collapses back onto the bed. He looks at the strange weapon he has been handed. He is uncertain of his next move. In the window behind him Mandy is watching Brian. He senses her there. He turns to look out the window and there is nothing there. He lies back in his bed. As if drugged he falls asleep.

FADE TO:

EXT. GATEWAY TO THE DREAMLANDS - NIGHT

Brian is on the ground in a graveyard. It is a Gothic and near cartoon-like graveyard. He sits up. Alarmed at his surroundings. He looks to his left and sees strange beasts with kangaroo like legs hopping from grave to grave. They are GHOULS: Humanoid, hound faced creatures with ferocious appetites. They bound in twenty foot bounces. One lands dangerously close to Brian. It snarls at him. Brian scrambles to his feet. The ghoul growls low and begins circling Brian.

BRIAN

Easy now... easy boy...

A ghoul appears behind Brian. This ghoul seems different. It is TERRENCE COLLINS, in ghoul form. He is still human, only monstrous in proportion. He lets out a roar that scares the other ghoul away. Collins approaches Brian. He sniffs at him.

COLLINS

Miskatonic?

BRIAN

I... yes...

COLLINS

Miskatonic is a bad place.

BRIAN

So it seems... where am I?

COLLINS

The gateway.

BRIAN

Gateway to what?

COLLINS

The Dreamlands.

BRIAN
Right... what were those things?

COLLINS
Ghouls... they feast on the dead.

BRIAN
Of course they do.

COLLINS
I joined them.

BRIAN
You did?

COLLINS
Better than being trapped in a
world of humans.

BRIAN
I could see the appeal.

COLLINS
You could join us...

BRIAN
And jump around graveyards all
night?

COLLINS
Beats trying to teach something you
know nothing about.

BRIAN
Good point.

Collins leads Brian toward a crypt. He beckons Brian to follow.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLINS' TOMB - NIGHT

Collins has made a small apartment in the tomb. He dusts off a seat for Brian and gestures for Brian to sit. Brian sweeps away a few skulls and sits.

COLLINS
Have you thought about tomorrow's
lesson?

BRIAN
What?

COLLINS
Tomorrow's lesson... It's fast
approaching.

BRIAN
Who are you?

COLLINS
Professor Terrence Collins.

BRIAN
My predecessor.

COLLINS
Quite.

BRIAN
They said you went nuts.

COLLINS
Do I look like a sane man?

BRIAN
Right.

Collins digs through bones and muck and produces a book.

COLLINS
Here... This is the lesson plan for
this quarter.

Brian takes the book.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
If you see Mandy... tell her I am
sorry.

BRIAN
Ok...

A jolt of light.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIAN'S ROOM - MORNING

Brian bolts upright in bed. The sun is pouring through the window. He looks around confused. He sees the weapon on one side of him. And the muck covered book on the other. He rushes to change his clothes.

CUT TO:

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE - MORNING

Adler is sitting in the lounge sipping at coffee. Brian walks in and sits down. He lets out a heavy sigh.

ADLER

Second day any better?

BRIAN

I just told my freshmen class that I have no idea what I am going to teach them this quarter.

ADLER

Honesty. It's an interesting tactic. I don't know if it is going to help you.

BRIAN

I don't understand this place. There are things that are happening that make no sense what so ever... and yet...

ADLER

You accept them.

BRIAN

Yes!

ADLER

Don't worry. It'll pass.

BRIAN

Will it?

ADLER

Yes.

BRIAN

What do you know about what happened to Professor Collins.

ADLER

He went mad.

BRIAN

Is he... dead?

ADLER

No... but he may as well be. He's catatonic.

BRIAN
Where is he?

ADLER
Right here on campus. In the
psychology department.

BRIAN
There's a hospital on campus?

ADLER
Of course there is! We have one of
the foremost medical schools on the
east coast.

BRIAN
Why is it I have never heard of
this place?

ADLER
Perhaps you simply ran in different
circles.

BRIAN
I guess.

ADLER
So, rumor has it that you are
tracking down a new exhibit in
Pickman's private museum.

BRIAN
What does that mean?

ADLER
Oh, just that the Dean has a habit
of preserving things that should be
destroyed.

BRIAN
What does he have you do?

Adler shifts uncomfortably.

ADLER
I research and occasionally reenact
arcane rituals.

A silence.

BRIAN
Sounds like fun. I think I need to
talk to the Dean.

ADLER
I would imagine so.

Brian exits. Adler smiles slyly.

CUT TO:

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Pickman is examining an ornate knife. Brian walks in.

BRIAN
You want me to find the Color?

PICKMAN
I do.

BRIAN
You want me to contain it or
destroy it?

Pickman puts down the knife and looks at Brian.

PICKMAN
Do you dream that you have the
ability to destroy it?

BRIAN
I just need to know what you want
from me.

PICKMAN
To contain it. Or stop it. However
possible. I do not collect horrors
for my own delight Mr. Carter. I
keep them from the populace at
large. It is the institute's policy
that all of our knowledge be put to
the task of uncovering what is
hidden and protecting the innocent
from harm.

Brian tries to read insincerity in Pickman.

PICKMAN (CONT'D)
I assure you, Mr. Carter. If it
were as easy as setting this
building on fire I would do it
without pause. But nothing in my
experience has suggested that it is
possible to destroy these...
curiosities.

BRIAN
We'll see about that.

PICKMAN
I suppose we will.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The students have gathered and Brian is staring them down.

JAKE
You okay Professor Carter?

Silence.

BROOK
Professor Carter?

BRIAN
I am okay. Today we'll be
discussing the works of Abdul
Alhazred.

The students perk up.

JUDY
That's senior level stuff.

BRIAN
Well, we're starting here.

JUDY
Why?

BRIAN
Because it's all I got.

JAKE
All right... Let's have it.

BRIAN
At the core of what we are facing
here in Arkham is the prophetic
works of the "mad Arab" Abdul
Alhazred. He detailed a race of
beings that came to be known as old
gods.

BROOK
Every child in Arkham knows the
stories.

BRIAN

Well. This is our starting point.
Abdul Alhazred wrote a book of
incantation and evocations to both
summon and repel ancient horrors.

Brian picks up the book. The students realize that this is serious.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

We are going to learn how to fight.

CHASE

Awesome! You got any weapons?

Brian thinks a moment.

BRIAN

Right... has any of you seen one of these?

He pulls out the weapon.

FRED

Is that what I think it is?

BRIAN

I don't know? What do you think it is?

FRED

That's a Ghatanothoa Dagger.

JAKE

The Ghatanothoa Dagger.

BRIAN

All right... pretend I don't know what that means....

JUDY

Ghatanothoa is one of the Great Old Ones...

FRED

Gods before there were gods.

BRIAN

Right.

CHASE

That dagger is supposed to paralyze anyone. Even if you just scratch them with it.

JAKE

Not just paralyze. I turns them into a living mummy. Petrified and preserved. Maintaining your consciousness, but in a mummified state.

BRIAN

Nasty.

JUDY

It's the tooth of an ancient god. Bound in gold and silver to protect the wielder.

BRIAN

You're better than Wikipedia.

CHASE

Look... if you're going after the Color... we want in.

BRIAN

What?

CHASE

We want to help.

FRED

We're pretty sure you'll die.

BRIAN

Thanks for the vote of confidence.

FRED

Are you saying you don't want our help?

BRIAN

No. I am definitely not saying that.

JUDY

Then it's settled. Where should we meet?

BRIAN

I'll see if I can get a van from the Dean. Where's Mandy?

The students sit upright as if they have a collected chill.

CHASE

She's gone...

BRIAN

All right... Meet me at 7pm outside
the library.

CUT TO:

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Brian is driving. Chase, Jake, Fred, Judy and Brook are in
the Van.

CHASE

So... why'd you want to be an
archeologist?

BRIAN

Indiana Jones.

CHASE

Who's that?

BRIAN

What?

FRED

Is that some famous archeologist?

BRIAN

It's Indiana Jones! Raiders of the
Lost Ark? Temple of Doom?

JUDY

Are those expeditions? Is that
going to be on the test?

BRIAN

You've never heard of Indiana
Jones?

They shrug.

BROOK

But he's the reason you wanted to
be an archeologist?

BRIAN

Well... I suppose he's the short
answer... but really... I love the
idea of it. Walking in the tracks
of our ancestors. Uncovering their
secrets. You'd be amazed at what
gets buried.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Not just the artifacts, but the story, the true story of history. It's waiting under the dirt out there somewhere. You just got to dig.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDNER HOME - NIGHT

The van pulls up and Brian and the students step out.

CHASE

So this is the Gardner home?

BRIAN

Yes. I think the Color is here.

FRED

Makes sense. The meteor landed on the Gardner farm...

JUDY

But that farm is at the bottom of a reservoir now.

BRIAN

What?

JUDY

After the meteor the valley that the Gardner farm was on was flooded.

BRIAN

Ok... when I saw Natty Gardner she was entirely covered up... think maybe she was touched by the Color... maybe she's harboring it...

JAKE

Ok... so... going into a creepy house in the middle of the night to fight an alien force of unknown strength. Sounds more like Anthropology class.

BRIAN

Remind me to not sit in on any of Professor Pendelton's classes.

BROOK

Good luck.

The group tiptoes toward the door. They move in mocking military fashion. Just as Brian gets to the door and the group feels they are at their stealthy best. The door opens abruptly. Alice is standing in the doorway.

ALICE

Mister Carter?

Brian quickly stands upright and tries to recover.

BRIAN

Miss Nahue.

ALICE

And who are your companions?

BRIAN

My students.

ALICE

From Miskatonic?

BRIAN

Yes...

Alice looks at all of them.

ALICE

Please come inside.

Alice retreats into the house. Brian and the students are stumped.

CUT TO:

INT. PARLOR ROOM OF GARDNER HOUSE - NIGHT

Brian and the students are having an awkward tea time moment. Alice enters the room after a long silence.

BRIAN

Right! Hi! Uh... can I speak to Miss Gardner.

ALICE

She is... not taking visitors at this hour.

BRIAN

Ok... Perhaps you could point us in the direction of the Color.

ALICE

The Color?

BRIAN

Yes.

ALICE

You came here looking for the Color?

BRIAN

We did.

ALICE

And if it were here, what exactly were you planning to do with it?

BRIAN

Well... I was... uh... we have... I... Guys?

The students shrug.

ALICE

I commend your bravery. But surely you know that the Color is noncorporeal. There's no body, or even substance to it.

BRIAN

You know a lot about it.

ALICE

We all have our interests.

BRIAN

When I came by earlier, Miss Gardner was... She made noises. Strange noises.

ALICE

Yes. She's ill.

BRIAN

She sounded...

A figure appears in the doorway.

NATTY

Sounded what?

BRIAN

Oh... I...

NATTY

Inhuman, Mr. Carter?

BRIAN

Well... yes...

Natty slowly makes her way to a highbacked chair.

NATTY

That was not me, Mr. Carter. That was the sound of my tormentors.

BRIAN

Tormentors?

Natty slowly reveals her face. A terrible disfiguration of blisters with eyes inside of them. It is horrific to behold.

NATTY

I am host to a great many tormentors, Mr. Carter.

BRIAN

That's horrific.

NATTY

Is it? I couldn't tell from this angle.

ALICE

Miss Gardner has maintained her humor.

JUDY

She's been shambling.

ALICE

Aren't you a bright one?

BRIAN

Yeah, well I'm not... what does it mean?

JUDY

She's been travelling to other dimensions. But it's so dangerous. Why?

NATTY

Sometimes you have to take great risks for great results.

BROOK

You've been containing the Color in another dimension?

NATTY

I have... done my best...

BRIAN

But why?

NATTY

The meteor crashed into my family's farm. It attacked my family first. We have been saddled with the damned thing from the start.

ALICE

The Gardner family has stood a watchful eye against the Color since it's first arrival on earth.

CHASE

And what about you?

ALICE

I serve the Gardner family.

CHASE

That clears that up.

BRIAN

Wait... I was told to use this against the Color....

He holds out the dagger. Natty screeches and there is a terrible thrashing. the windows shatter and there is a terrible shadow writhing in the corners of the room and outside.

ALICE

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT?

The lights go out. The students scramble behind Brian.

NATTY

The Ghatanothoa Dagger! Give it to me quickly!

ALICE

No! Give it to me!

There is a violent shaking in the walls. A crack appears in the wall behind Natty. A strange glowing light starts to emanate from the crack.

JUDY
It's a dimensional rift!

BRIAN
A what?

FRED
A crack in time and space!

The light spills into the room. It glows a myriad of colors. The colors start vibrating with a pulse. They form into a glowing mass. A near human shape. The glow is hypnotic.

BRIAN
Is that the Color?

CHASE
I don't know...

ALICE
Give me the dagger!

The form shoots tentacle at Alice and she is instantly reduced to gray powder. Natty is transforming into a blobby, writhing mass of leathery skin and eyes. Brian rushes up and throws the dagger right at the center of the Color's mass. An explosion of light knocks the students to the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. VAN - NIGHT

All passengers are in shock. They are covered in soot and smoke rises from them. They sit in silence as Brian drives.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark. The door opens and Brian flips on the light. Each of the classmates file into the room. They sit in their desks and take a moment to gather themselves.

BRIAN
Anyone.... want to... can you...
explanations?

JUDY
Gardner was not trapping the Color
in another dimension. She was
incubating it.

BRIAN
Right. And uh... why?

FRED
It's... them.

A deep dread falls over the students.

BRIAN
Them?

CHASE
We can't fight them.

BRIAN
Who?

Long silence.

BROOK
We've been told all our lives that
there was a secret society here in
Arkham.

JAKE
A cult.

BROOK
Secret society...

JAKE
She's afraid to say what they
are... they are a cult! And while
it would be easy to be afraid of
monsters here... we're more afraid
of them.

JUDY
They were giving the Color a
body...

CHASE
They are trying to wake the
dreamer.

BRIAN
The dreamer?

MANDY
In his house in R'lyeh.

Brian jumps a little. The students react and turn.

BRIAN
I didn't see you there!

CHASE
Who are you talking to?

BRIAN
Mandy.

FRED
What?

BRIAN
Mandy... I'm talking to Mandy...

BROOK
Mandy died last year, Professor.

Brian scoffs.

BRIAN
She's right there.

JAKE
There's no one there.

Brian looks at Mandy. She looks sadly at Brian. And then turns into a twisted contorted figure that rushes at him at speed screaming.

FADE TO BLACK