SCRIPT TITLE

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INT. GENTLEMAN'S CLUB - DAY

It is late afternoon as the setting sun filters through the windows into the Kirkwick Club at Miskatonic University. The club is decorated with the best that old money can buy.

At this late hour the Kirkwick Club is hosting the wake of Herbert West. Somber looking gentlemen circulate talking in hushed tones. At the front of the room the NARRATOR a serious looking middle aged man taps his glass with a spoon to gather everyone's attention. The Narrator clears his throat.

NARRATOR

Umm. I wanted to thank you all for coming tonight. Herbert, I mean Dr. West, was known to all of us but I doubt that any of us really knew him. Many things have been said of him, most of them negative, some of them true, but of him I will say one thing, his was a genius to big to be contained in one body or in one age.

The Narrator raises his glass.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

To Dr. Herbert West.

The guests glance at each other nervously before raising their glasses in unison.

GUESTS

To Dr. West.

Soft music begins playing and the guests break into small conversation groups. The Narrator circulates among them. PROFESSOR ELLERY, PROFESSOR LAKE, and "OLD" WALDRON stand in a tight cluster talking in hushed tones.

PROFESSOR ELLERY
You know they say he's not quite right, you know, in the head.

PROFESSOR LAKE

Who? West or him?

PROFESSOR ELLERY
Both of them. Odd pair really.

"OLD" WALDRON
Still West was a brilliant one.

PROFESSOR ELLERY

But one what?

PROFESSOR LAKE

I guess we'll never know.

The Narrator wanders over and joins the conversation which quickly grind to a halt.

NARRATOR

Know what?

The others glance at each other nervously.

"OLD" WALDRON

Uh, know whether Dr. West would have...

PROFESSOR LAKE

...made great discoveries.

PROFESSOR ELLERY

I mean he was a brilliant doctor.

A long awkward pause follows broken when the Narrator clears his throat.

NARRATOR

Well thank you very much for coming.

There is a tap on the Narrator's shoulder and he turns to find himself faced with DETECTIVE WHITBY and a younger junior officer.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Hello there Detective, it's nice to see you here.

DETECTIVE WHITBY

I only wish it were so.

NARRATOR

What do you mean?

DETECTIVE WHITBY

Would you mind coming with us. There are some questions we'd like you to answer.

NARRATOR

Really? Can't this wait?

DETECTIVE WHITBY

No. I'm afraid these are questions of a most pressing nature.

NARRATOR

Just like all the other times?

DETECTIVE WHITBY

Please if you'd just come with us. You wouldn't want to cause a scene.

NARRATOR

(mocking)

Oh no we wouldn't.

(loudly to partygoers)
Please continue to have a wonderful
wake while I am once again
interrogated without cause or
reason. Party on!

(to Detective Whitby)

Well I don't think that caused much of a scene. Let me get my coat and we'll be off.

The Narrator followed by Detective Whitby and the officer leave the party while stunned partygoers look on.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

The Narrator and Detective Whitby have been in the Interrogation Room for several hours.

DETECTIVE WHITBY

So let me get this straight, you did not initially seek out the company of Dr. West?

NARRATOR

No like so many things in life it just happened.

DETECTIVE WHITBY

Really? And exactly how did it just happen?

NARRATOR

By now you probably know the story better than me.

DETECTIVE WHITBY

Humor me.

NARRATOR

(sighing)

Fine. It was our third year of medical school...

The scene dissolves.

TNT. ANATOMY LAB - DAY

On this first day of class the room is filled with dissection tables each with a covered cadaver. At the front on a raised stage is another covered cadaver on a dissection table as well as chalkboards and a lectern.

The students, studious looking young men in suits fill in and begin pairing off into groups around the tables. HERBERT WEST is the last to enter and stands by himself at a table.

The bell rings and DR. RICHARDSON steps onto the stage.

DR. RICHARDSON

Hello students. This is the day that you cease to be gentlemen and you begin to be doctors. Don your gowns, gloves, and masks and let us begin.

The students are busily donning the unfamiliar garb when the door at the back of the classroom bangs open and an out or breath and disheveled Narrator runs in. For a moment all eyes are on him.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

And who might you be?

NARRATOR

I'm...

DR. RICHARDSON

Nevermind, you're late. Go partner with...

Dr. Richardson looks around and settles his gaze on Herbert West.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

You! Who are you?

HERBERT WEST

Herbert West sir.

DR. RICHARDSON

(to Narrator)

Go partner with Mr. West.

The Narrator goes to West's table.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

And since you're late you'll just have to dissect in your suit. Pity it's a nice looking suit.

Dr. Richardson returns to pacing the stage as the Narrator joins West. West picks up his tattered coat and hands it to the Narrator.

HERBERT WEST

Here swap coats. This thing's destined for the rubbish heap anyway.

Surprised, the Narrator quickly changes coats and gets ready.

NARRATOR

Thanks. I'm...

HERBERT WEST

Don't bother. Never had much need for names. Can't remember them anyway.

NARRATOR

So you are?

HERBERT WEST

Herbert West if you insist on knowing.

From the stage Dr. Richardson loudly clears his throat annoyed.

DR. RICHARDSON

Now that you are done playing social hour, can we please dissect these corpses before their souls haunt us for wasting their flesh?

Herbert West glares at the Narrator. Dr. Richardson turns his attention to the corpse on the stage.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

Now before you is a male corpse. Women are pretty much the same only more complicated, so for now we'll focus on men.

(MORE)

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

The most important tools you have as a doctor are your senses. For the first half of the class I want you to learn as much as you can about your corpse without touching it. For the second half you may touch your corpse. Take notes, you'll need them.

INT. ANATOMY LAB - DAY

The end of the first day of the class has approached. The students are weary from observation and have pages of notes.

DR. RICHARDSON Congratulations you've survived your first day.

The students begin packing up their materials.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)
You're homework for next week, take
your notes and write me a case
report about everything you know
about your patient. I expect them
in my box by Wednesday.

The students protest under their breath as they file out of the room. Herbert West quickly rushes out and the Narrator looks for him among the crowd. CHARLES, a fellow student stops the Narrator.

CHARLES

Tough luck drawing West.

NARRATOR

(distracted)

Huh? Have you seen him?

CHARLES

Wouldn't get lost to him if I were you.

NARRATOR

What'd you mean?

CHARLES

He's different.

NARRATOR

So. That's no bad.

CHARLES

For him it is.

DANIEL another student comes up behind Charles making scary faces.

DANIEL

Oh come on Charles you're just mad because now you're not the resident genius.

(to Narrator)

Just ignore Charles he sees evil in every dark corner. A drink always cheers him up. Care to join us?

NARRATOR

Perhaps another time. I think I'll get a start on the paper.

DANIEL

It's not due for two whole days. Come have a drink.

NARRATOR

Thanks but maybe next time.

The Narrator turns and walks away.

DANIEL

Your loss. A good drink reminds us why we'd rather be alive than dead.

INT. WEST'S ROOM - NIGHT

It is late at night and Herbert West os busy at work in a makeshift laboratory he has set up i one corner of his room. There is a knock at the door which West ignores. A second more urgent knock breaks West's concentration and he stomps over to the door.

HERBERT WEST

(angrily)

What?

From the other side of the door the Narrator's voice can be heard.

NARRATOR

I hope I didn't wake you. Can I come in?

HERBERT WEST

No.

NARRATOR

Please. I'll only be a minute.

HERBERT WEST

No! Time is of the essence and I'm wasting it standing here talking to you!

NARRATOR

The time that you've spent telling me you can't answer my question is longer than the time to actually answer my question.

Herbert West unbolts the door and lets the Narrator in. The Narrator is in awe of the laboratory in West's room. West points to an unkempt bed shoved in one corner.

HERBERT WEST

You, there. No questions. No sounds. I don't even want to hear you breathe.

The Narrator sits on the bed and places his books and papers beside him. Herbert West bolts the door and returns to his experiment oblivious to the Narrator.

The Narrator glances around the room which is under the sloped roof. The walls are covered with scientific diagrams and a large bookcase sags under the weight of books and papers. The whole room appears to be in a state of general neglect except for the laboratory portion which is clean and orderly. Candles and lamps augment the pale moonlight filtering through the window. Bored the Narrator clears his throat.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

What part of no sound was confusing?

NARRATOR

I was just wondering...

HERBERT WEST

If your mundane academic question had an equally mundane academic answer.

NARRATOR

(taken aback)

It's about the paper.

HERBERT WEST

It's a report, people read those. People don't read papers they rot in some moth ridden library.

NARRATOR

Very well the report.

HERBERT WEST

How's yours going?

NARRATOR

Not well. I can't figure out what conclusions to draw. Waht about you?

HERBERT WEST

Very nearly started it.

NARRATOR

(shocked)

You haven't even started it? You do realize that it's due in a few hours?

HERBERT WEST

And in a few hours it will be done. Now return to your question about conclusions.

NARRATOR

Yes?

HERBERT WEST

There's only one conclusion to be drawn.

NARRATOR

Which is?

HERBERT WEST

That the patient died! All evidence points to this conclusion.

NARRATOR

But isn't that stating the obvious?

HERBERT WEST

It's obvious to you and it's obvious to me, but there are a lot of stupid people in the world and some of them have M.D. after their name.

Herbert West returns to his experiment.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

No the real question isn't if he is dead, but what we can do about it.

NARRATOR

(confused)

Do? He's dead, nothings going to change that.

HERBERT WEST

But what if I could?

NARRATOR

Huh?

Herbert West spins around surprised to see the Narrator still sitting on the bed.

HERBERT WEST

What are you still doing here?

NARRATOR

My question?

Herbert West quickly gathers the Narrator's things and shoves him out the door.

HERBERT WEST

You've got your answer. Now go I've got a report to write.

NARRATOR

But you said people didn't read reports.

HERBERT WEST

Oh they'll want to read mine. Clamoring to get it in their hot hands.

Herbert West slams the door and bolts it leaving a confused Narrator to gather his papers and walk down the darkened stairway.

INT. ANATOMY LAB - DAY

Dr. Richardson paces up and down the aisle thrusting papers covered in red ink back at the students.

DR. RICHARDSON

Your first attempts were woefully childish. Let the blood stain of my ink serve as a reminder that this is medical school gentlemen. We're not in grammar school anymore.

All of the papers have been returned except for West's and Dr. Richardson leans close to him to whisper.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)

My office after class.

EXT. COLLEGE BUILDING - EVENING

The Narrator is pacing nervously outside of the brick building when West rushes out of the front door enraged. The Narrator rushes to catch up.

HERBERT WEST

The nerve! That pompous idiot has never had an original through and yet he dares to criticize mine!

NARRATOR

What happened?

HERBERT WEST

You want to know what happened? I'll tell you what happened! That idiot!

NARRATOR

Yes I got that he's an idiot.

HERBERT WEST

Oh he's no idiot! He's a doctor idiot!

NARRATOR

Okay! Okay! Look let's have a drink and sort this out. Come on a drink will help calm your nerves.

West stops in his tracks suddenly calm.

HERBERT WEST

Yes a medicinal drink, just what the doctor ordered. But where on a Sunday?

NARRATOR

The Gentlemen's Club?

HERBERT WEST

That refuge of wannabe doctor's?

NARRATOR

Happens to have the best brandy around.

Herbert West ponders this for a moment before deciding.

HERBERT WEST

Agreed, but only for medicinal purposes.

INT. GENTLEMAN'S CLUB - NIGHT

The Gentlemen's Club is a bastion of rich leather and polished wood. A long bar at one end is stocked with expensive liquor. Clusters of formally attired students sip their drinks and engage in deep discussion. When Herbert West, dressed in a worn tuxedo, and the Narrator enter all conversation stops and everyone focuses on them.

HERBERT WEST

Well it's nice to see I cam still stop a party. You look as if you'll die of shock. Guess that would save the school the trouble of getting corpses for next semester.

(to Narrator)

Shall we?

The Narrator still shocked follows West and calls over his shoulder to the WAITER.

NARRATOR

Two brandies please.

HERBERT WEST

Just get the whole damned bottle.

Herbert plops unceremoniously into a leather wing chair and the Narrator sits opposite him. The Waiter brings over an expensive bottle of brandy and two glasses.

WAITER

Here you are gentlemen.

The Waiter pours the brandy and then melts into the background. West and the Narrator raise their glasses.

HERBERT WEST

To great minds, forever ahead of their times.

The Narrator takes a sip of his brandy while West tosses his back in a single drink. West slams his glass on the table and begins pouring another drink.

NARRATOR

We have all night, you can pace yourself. It's vintage brandy, it's not going anywhere.

West polishes off another glass and begins filling his glass again.

HERBERT WEST

It may not, but I am.

NARRATOR

I'm afraid I don't understand.

West finishes off another brandy and pours himself another.

HERBERT WEST

Don't worry my dear friend no one else here does. It's a blessing and a curse.

The Narrator gives West a guizzical look.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

It's a blessing because none of the simple minds that inhabit these hallowed walls could ever steal my work. After all what good would a Gutenberg Bible be to an illiterate pheasant.

Several patrons of the club turn to look at West displeased.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

And it's a curse because I find myself adrift in a sea of ignorance and superstition. The men here. If you can call them that, profess to worship at the alter of science yet run to the protection of superstition at the merest mention of anything new or novel.

By now West's tirade has drawn the attention of the entire club which watches with disapproval.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

In fact the only difference between these so called men of science and a snake oil salesman is the salesman knows he's a fraud.

The Waiter hurries over and leans close whispering loudly.

WAITER

Perhaps the gentleman has had enough for the evening.

HERBERT WEST

And perhaps he has just begun.

A STUDENT pushes forward.

STUDENT

Look we'd all prefer if you and your companion would leave.

NARRATOR

West I think we'd better leave.

STUDENT

Yes you'd better.

West looks around at the angry disapproving faces before polishing off his drink.

HERBERT WEST

Very well this party's dead anyway.

West and the Narrator stand up to leave. As they are leaving West turns and grabs the brandy bottle.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

You can't come to our party emptyhanded. In fact you can't come to our party at all.

The crowd parts to let West and the Narrator leave.

EXT. BELL TOWER - NIGHT

West and the Narrator sit in the Bell Tower relaxed passing the brandy bottle back and forth and looking down at the university and town below.

NARRATOR

And that was when my father decided to send me to medical school.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The parent's would have me, maybe the professors would.

The Narrator takes a drink.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

What about you? You're almost too smart to be a doctor. What's your story?

HERBERT WEST

Almost?

NARRATOR

You're certainly the most brilliant clinician here, but you don't like dealing with the patients. You've said so yourself. How can you be a doctor if you don't see patients?

West takes a drink.

HERBERT WEST

But we see patients everyday.

NARRATOR

But they're dead. They don't talk much.

HERBERT WEST

But what if they could?

NARRATOR

But they don't.

Herbert West stands up and begins pacing around.

HERBERT WEST

The living don't interest me because we all know what it's like to be alive. But the deceased, now there's a story. Imagine if we could peel back the veil of death as easily as the wind parts a curtain.

NARRATOR

But it can't be done.

HERBERT WEST

Can't or shouldn't?

NARRATOR

Well both I suppose.

HERBERT WEST

Shouldn't because some dusty old book says it? God gave us death as the ultimate puzzle to solve. If he weeps when we die than why would he want us to die?

NARRATOR

But it can't be done!

HERBERT WEST

Can't just means not yet, but who better than a doctor, who better than me to do it?

NARRATOR

But...

HERBERT WEST

It's just a matter of physiology. I've already made great progress.

NARRATOR

But what about the rules and regulations?

HERBERT WEST

Edicts made by narrow-minded men blind to true progress.

NARRATOR

That may be true.

HERBERT WEST

So what then can they really do?

EXT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The Narrator and Herbert West make their way toward West's room slightly drunk. On West's door they find an official notice which West reads.

HERBERT WEST

Mr. West, your presence is requested before the Miskatonic University Student Ethics and Scientific Review Committee. A hearing has been scheduled for Friday the fourteenth at nine am to answer charges of unlawful and unregulated scientific experimentation.

Herbert West lowers the paper and stares into the distance.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

And so it goes.

NARRATOR

That's insane! You're experiments are no worse than anyone elses!

HERBERT WEST

They're not punishing me for what I have done. They're prosecuting me for what I will do.

The Narrator gives West a questioning look.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Nevermind.

Herbert West enters his room and shuts the door on the Narrator.

INT. ANATOMY LAB - DAY

Hushed sounds of students intently dissecting bodies hang in the background. Herbert West and the Narrator are busy dissecting their corpse.

NARRATOR

Nervous about tomorrow?

HERBERT WEST

Not especially.

NARRATOR

What's your plan?

Herbert West is silent for a long moment.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

So?

HERBERT WEST

You like your life in the dorms?

NARRATOR

It's alright I guess. As long as you don't mind the cold in the winter, the heat in the summer and the general annoyance of paper thin walls and loud neighbors.

HERBERT WEST

Come to the ethics committee meeting.

NARRATOR

I was planning on it.

HERBERT WEST

And I'll solve both of our problems.

Dr. Richardson approaches West and the Narrators work station.

DR. RICHARDSON

(clears his throat)

Mr. West prepared for tomorrow?

HERBERT WEST

Yes sir.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Morning sunlight filters into the courtroom. Herbert West sits at a table facing a long table filled with the five members of the Ethics Committee. Behind West in the empty spectators gallery sits the Narrator.

The members of the Ethics Committee are Dr. Richardson, DEAN HALSEY, PROFESSOR WINGATE PEASLEEE, "OLD" WALDRON, and PROFESSOR LAKE.

DEAN HALSEY

This session of the Miskatonic University Student Ethics and Scientific Review Committee has been called into session. The agenda for this session is to discuss the charges leveled against Mr. Herbert West regarding unlawful scientific experimentation. Mr. West how do you plead?

HERBERT WEST

I don't.

PROFESSOR WINGATE PEASLEE

But you must.

HERBERT WEST

I have the right to judged by my peers.

PROFESSOR WINGATE PEASLEE

This is an academis hearing not a legal hearing.

HERBERT WEST

Than legally I don't have to be here.

West turns to leave.

DEAN HALSEY

But if you want to continue your studies you'll stay.

West stops considers this for a moment and turns around.

HERBERT WEST

What exactly is your problem with me?

"OLD" WALDRON

We have no problem with you. It's more a problem with what you do upstairs in that room of yours.

HERBERT WEST

And what exactly is it that I do?

"OLD" WALDRON

Animal experimentation.

PROFESSOR WINGATE PEASLEE

Organ transplantation.

PROFESSOR LAKE

Embalming.

HERBERT WEST

(Cavalier)

Oh, is that all?

DEAN HALSEY

And the general manner with which you conduct yourself.

HERBERT WEST

Ouch that one hurt.

DEAN HALSEY

Your dorm mates are terrified of you. No one will be your roommate for over a week. You're too brilliant to expel and too terrifying to live with.

(MORE)

DEAN HALSEY (CONT'D)

Frankly we're at a loss when it comes to you.

HERBERT WEST

What exactly do you want from me?

DEAN HALSEY

We want you here...

"OLD" WALDRON

...but not really here.

HERBERT WEST

What if I moved into the town?

The committee looks back and forth at each other.

DEAN HALSEY

I think we could accept that arrangement.

PROFESSOR WINGATE PEASLEE

Of course living in town is different than within the university walls.

"OLD" WALDRON

Are you sure you have the financial resources to set yourself up properly?

PROFESSOR LAKE

As a young gentleman...

"OLD" WALDRON

...a future doctor should.

HERBERT WEST

I think I'll manage.

DEAN HALSEY

From time to time we may check on you to make sure that things are alright. And I think I speak for everyone here that we'd feel better if you we're alone.

HERBERT WEST

My lab partner and assistant would also like to share lodgings with me.

DEAN HALSEY

That satisfies the committee.

HERBERT WEST

Professors, dean, I bid you good day!

DEAN HALSEY

Where are you going? We haven't finished yet.

Herbert rushes out of the room banging the doors behind him.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

West stands outside a house whose sign advertises a room for rent. He is talking to a portly HOUSEKEEPER who is blocking the door.

HOUSEKEEPER

Sorry we're full.

HERBERT WEST

But the sign says...

HOUSEKEEPER

That sign's for honest folk, not you shifty university men.

HERBERT WEST

Please we've tried every place in town.

HOUSEKEEPER

You stay on your side of the river and leave us honest folks to ours.

The Housekeeper slams the door. West turns to face the Narrator.

NARRATOR

Better luck tomorrow?

West turns down the street as the Narrator follows.

EXT. CEMETERY ROAD - NIGHT

West and the Narrator are walking by the cemetery when West spots a house abandon but in good condition. West looks at it excitedly.

HERBERT WEST

That's it!

NARRATOR

That?

West spots a smaller house up the road. He rushes up and knocks on the door. A YOUNG WOMAN answers the door.

YOUNG WOMAN

Hello?

HERBERT WEST

Ahh, yes, good evening. I was wondering if you could tell me who owns that house.

YOUNG WOMAN

My pa. Why'd you ask?

HERBERT WEST

Because I was wondering if it was available.

YOUNG WOMAN

To rent?

HERBERT WEST

Yes. I have money. I can pay, say twenty dollars a month. Three months in advnace.

YOUNG WOMAN

Just a minute.

The Young Woman closes the door and returns a moment later.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

Thirty dollars, six months in advance.

West pulls out the money and hands it to the shocked girl.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

Oh and pa says no single renters, safer that way.

Herbert pulls the Narrator by the sleeve toward him.

HERBERT WEST

This is my cousin.

YOUNG WOMAN

Here are the keys. If I find the coppers up there you're gone no questions asked.

The Young Woman shuts the door.

NARRATOR

Cousin? But I look nothing like you.

HERBERT WEST

I never said by blood. Shall we check out the place?

Herbert West and the Narrator start up the hill to the house.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

By the way you owe me ninety dollars.

NARRATOR

What?

HERBERT WEST

Your half of the rent of course.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

West and the Narrator stand at the entrance to the house.

HERBERT WEST

Ready?

NARRATOR

Not really.

HERBERT WEST

Welcome home.

Herbert opens the door and they enter.

INT. LIVING AREA - NIGHT

The darkened first floor reveals old furniture covered in dust and a kitchen in need of repair in the corner. Two large fireplaces stand at either end while a pair of staircases one leading to the second floor and one leading to the cellar are in one corner. West enters theatrically throws his hands in the air and turns to face the Narrator framed in the doorway

HERBERT WEST

Absolutely perfect don't you think?

NARRATOR

Perfect wasn't my first word.

West goes and puts his arm around the Narrator's shoulder and sweeps his hand wide pretending to paint a picture.

HERBERT WEST

You're just not seeing the potential.

INT. LIVING AREA - NIGHT

West's potential has been realized as the house has been transformed into a cozy, and clean house lit with warm light.

The Narrator comes down the stairs rolling his sleeves down. At the same time Herbert West comes rushing in the front door disheveled and clutching a newspaper. West's frantic gaze meets the Narrator's.

HERBERT WEST

There you are!

NARRATOR

Where else would I be?

West grabs the Narrator's wrist and begins dragging him out the door.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

HERBERT WEST

Nothing.

NARRATOR

Then where are we going?

HERBERT WEST

Out.

NARRATOR

But dinner's almost ready.

HERBERT WEST

Nevermind dinner. Grab some shovels.

NARRATOR

Why do we need shovels?

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

West drops the Narrator's wrist long enough to grab two shovels. He shoves a shovel into the Narrator's hands.

NARRATOR

What's the matter?

West rushes off toward the graveyard occasionally glancing at the newspaper in his hand and muttering to himself.

HERBERT WEST

Come. We haven't much time.

NARRATOR

Time? What happened?

The Narrator stops abruptly and forces West to stop and meet his eyes.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

I'll have you know that I won't be a party to murder. I go along with what you do in the basement, turn a blind eye to what I cannot begin to understand, but murder is too much. Man has no right to decide who dies.

HERBERT WEST

(shocked)

I'm not deciding who dies, I'm ensuring everyone can live!

West and the Narrator regard each other for a long moment before West glances at the newspaper once again frantic.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Potter. Jack Potter he's the one. Look for the fresh dirt.

West spots the fresh grave and runs up to it. He compares the newspaper to the headstone excitedly.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

There you are Mr. Potter! No time to waste.

West plunges his shovel into the fresh grave and begins digging. The Narrator grabs his arm and looks at him horrified. West shrugs him off and continues digging.

NARRATOR

What are you doing?

HERBERT WEST

Conquering death my dear man. What else?

NARRATOR

But you can't do that!

HERBERT WEST

Can't?

NARRATOR

The veil between this life and the next is not man's to part.

HERBERT WEST

Did some wrinkled bag of bones preacher tell you that lie?

The Narrator stares in shocked disbelief.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

You're fed that lie to keep you in fear. As long as you fear something you can be controlled. I'm not giving life, I'm giving freedom.

West's shovel hits the wooden coffin lid.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Well hello Mr. Potter! Tonight's your lucky night!

West opens the grave and stares down at the corpse of Mr. Potter.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Not the best looking, but we can't really be choosy.

West starts passing Mr. Potter to the Narrator who is horrified.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Oh come on. You weren't any help digging. Now grab him by the shoulders.

The Narrator clumsily grabs Mr. Potter's shoulders and pulls. He drops Mr. Potter and falls back on the ground.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

(sharply)

Careful! He's damaged enough already.

The Narrator gets up and West and him get Mr. Potter's corpse out of the grave. They clumsily carry Mr. Potter out of the cemetery.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The Narrator staggers through the front door clutching Mr. Potter's feet and leaving a trail of mud and grass behind him. He is followed by Herbert West carrying the other end of Mr. Potter's body. West uses his foot to shove the door shut.

The Narrator and West put the body on the floor and catch their breath.

HERBERT WEST

Water?

NARRATOR

Sure.

Herbert West heads into the kitchen.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

So what now?

HERBERT WEST (O.S.)

Well we need to get Mr. Potter downstairs. Anything beyond that isn't your concern.

NARRATOR

Well...

There is a knock at the front door.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Are you expecting anyone?

HERBERT WEST

Beyond Mr. Potter?

The knock at the front door is louder and more insistent. West pops his head out from the kitchen.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Who is it?

NARRATOR

How the hell should I know!

This time the knock is very loud and angry.

HERBERT WEST

Don't just stand there! Answer the

The Narrator stares frantically between Herbert West and Mr. Potter's corpse. After a long moment West gets the hint.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Oh him? Umm, in the closet.

West and the Narrator struggle to move Mr. Potter's corpse to the closet as the knocking continues.

DEAN HALSEY (O.S.)

Mr. West we're in the neighborhood and thought we'd drop by.

West and the Narrator stop and stare at each other before redoubling their efforts.

DR. RICHARDSON (O.S.)

Mr. West is everything alright?

West frantically waves the Narrator to the door. The Narrator goes to the door.

NARRATOR

Can I help you?

DEAN HALSEY (O.S.)

Can we come in?

NARRATOR

Uhh...

The Narrator turns to see West frantically shaving Mr. Potter's corpse into the closet and slamming it shut.

DR. RICHARDSON (O.S.)

Is everything alright?

NARRATOR

Yes, yes.

The Narrator opens the door to find himself facing Dean Halsey and Dr. Richardson.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Come in. Can I offer you some water?

Dean Halsey and Dr. Richardson enter to find themselves backed against the wall by Herbert West and the Narrator.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Can we help you?

DEAN HALSEY

Uh. We're just in the neighborhood...

DR. RICHARDSON

Thought we'd drop in and say hi.

HERBERT WEST

Hi.

DEAN HALSEY

So how are you settling in?

HERBERT WEST

Fine.

Dr. Richardson spies the mud on the floor.

DR. RICHARDSON

Gardening?

HERBERT WEST

Huh?

DEAN HALSEY

Mind if we come in?

HERBERT WEST

You already are.

DR. RICHARDSON

So what are you up to these days? We hardly see you on campus anymore.

HERBERT WEST

Nothing there for me.

Dean Halsey escapes and begins wandering around the room. He reaches the closet and begins to turn the knob. West rushes over to stop him.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

DEAN HALSEY

No. Just looking around.

HERBERT WEST

Well you've looked. Now please go we're busy.

DEAN HALSEY

What are you up to?

HERBERT WEST

Nothing.

DEAN HALSEY

It's impossible for you to be up to nothing. Half the school is in awe of you, the other is terrified.

HERBERT WEST

And which are you?

DEAN HALSEY

Neither. I see the darkness in your soul and I will stop it.

HERBERT WEST

You're a scared old man, you can't begin to know what's in my soul.

The Narrator speaks up loudly.

NARRATOR

Well thank you very much for stopping by. Sorry to cut your visit short but we're getting ready for dinner. If we'd known you were coming we'd have made more.

Herbert West forcefully escorts Dean Halsey to the door and the Narrator and he roughly pushes Dean Halsey and Dr. Richardson out.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Great to see you! Have a good evening!

HERBERT WEST

Good night.

Herbert West slams the door shut leaving a bewildered Dean Halsey and Dr. Richardson to walk away.

The Narrator collapses to the floor and Herbert West rushes to open the closet door and pull Mr. Potter out.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Don't just sit there! Help me. Time is of the essence!

Slowly the Narrator gets up and goes to help Herbert West more Mr. Potter to the basement.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Herbert West follows the Narrator struggle to get Mr. Potter's corpse down the stairs and onto a wooden table.

The basement is filled with laboratory equipment and other scientific equipment. Rows of specimen jars line one wall while a bookcase groans under the weight of books along another wall.

Once Mr. Potter is on the table West begins rushing around manically talking to himself.

HERBERT WEST

Phosphorus, spirits, mercury...

NARRATOR

What are you doing?

HERBERT WEST

Why bringing him back to life.

NARRATOR

But he's dead.

HERBERT WEST

That's the point. Keeping a living person alive isn't much of a challenge. Bringing life to the dead, now that's a challenge.

NARRATOR

You're going to reanimate Mr. Potter?

HERBERT WEST

I'm reanimating his corpse. How much of Mr. Potter remains we'll see.

NARRATOR

But...

HERBERT WEST

Silence! Time is of the essence! Stand over there and do exactly what I say.

The Narrator stands mutely where West points and stands as a silent witness. Herbert West continues rushing around gathering his materials. In quick order West light Bunsen burners and begins making his potion.

West takes his newly completed elixir and turns to Mr. Potter's corpse. He grabs a large syringe and fills it.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Hold his arm.

The Narrator holds Mr. Potter's arm.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Tighter. He won't jump at you... yet.

Herbert West plunges the syringe deep into Mr. Potter's arm and injects his elixir. West and the Narrator step back staring at the corpse.

NARRATOR

Now what?

HERBERT WEST

We wait. Even I cannot change time.

Time passes slowly as Herbert West paces occasionally stopping to put his stethoscope to Mr. Potter's and makes notes in his lad book. The Narrator paces eventually sitting on the stairs falling asleep.

It is the early hours of the morning, the Narrator is asleep on the stairs and Herbert Wet's back is turned to Mr. Potter mixing a new elixir.

MR. POTTER (hellish cries)

The Narrator leaps up terrified and West faces Mr. Potter with a look of fear and triumph. West becomes horrified and looks toward the Narrator. The Narrator and Wet rush up the stairs knocking lab equipment over, and run out into the night.

INT. WEST'S ROOOM - NIGHT

Exhausted and terrified the Narrator climbs through the window into West's room. He then helps West into the room and they tumble onto the floor.

HERBERT WEST

Shh! Turn the gas up!

The Narrator turns the gas up to illuminate West's very messy room.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D) Only a few hours until dawn.

INT. LIVING AREA - DAY

Exhausted the Narrator gets the paper from the doorstep. He glances through it as he walks to the table where West is sitting eating breakfast.

HERBERT WEST

I figure we'll start our search tonight over by the mill. With any luck we'll find him there.

The Narrator looks at the paper horrified.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

You look as through you've seen a ghost.

NARRATOR

I have.

West grabs the paper and reads.

HERBERT WEST

So the house burned. What a waste of equipment.

West reads further on and looks up a bit shaken.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

It sounds like Mr. Potter tried to return to his grave. Let's hope that's the last we her of him.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Several years have passed. West has matured into a young doctor with grey hair at his temples and haunted possessed look in his eyes.

The other men of his class, DOCTOR #1, DOCTOR #2, DOCTOR #3, and DOCTOR #4 talk in small groups casting disdainful looks at West as he walks past them.

DOCTOR #1

Yeah old lady loaded and bored.

DOCTOR #2

I'm telling you socialites...

DOCTOR #3

...are the way to go.

DOCTOR #4

Nah. Nothing wrong with him.

DOCTOR #1

Just gave her some rose water.

DOCTOR #4

Swears it cures him every time.

As West walks past him he trips dropping a book. He bends to pick it up but Doctor #1 snatches it up and beings to tease West loudly in front of the other doctors.

DOCTOR #1

What do we have here?

HERBERT WEST

My book.

DOCTOR #1

Oh it's your book?

DOCTOR #3

And what's it about?

HERBERT WEST

Nothing you'd understand. I have no time for your childish pranks.

DOCTOR #3

Thinks he's too good for us.

West snatches his book back.

HERBERT WEST

I don't think, I know.

West stalks off down the hall and down the stairs. The Narrator jumps up from his place on the stairs and rushes to catch up to West.

EXT. QUAD - DAY

The Quad is the lush center of the Medical Building. West stalks across it in a rage as the Narrator to keep up.

HERBERT WEST

Imbeciles! Morons! Not a brain
among them.

NARRATOR

They only tease you because you react.

HERBERT WEST

I'm not some damned experiment, poked to see if I react!

NARRATOR

But that's what they think.

HERBERT WEST

Ha! I doubt they think at all, and not like this school's taught them to.

As they pass by an open window Dean Halsey leans out and calls them.

DEAN HALSEY

Mr. West just the man I wanted to see!

HERBERT WEST

Now you see me, soon you won't.

West turns to walk away.

DEAN HALSEY

About that talk we were supposed to have. I think now is the perfect time. Don't you?

HERBERT WEST

Actually I was on my way...

DEAN HALSEY

... to rounds. I know a few minutes won't matter to them. Come in and have a seat.

West trudges up the steps into Dean Halsey's office and the door closes with a thud.

After a few minutes the door flies open and an enraged West storms out of the office with an angry Dean Halsey behind him.

DEAN HALSEY (CONT'D)

Look here young man! I've tolerated all your eccentricities long enough! Fall in line and behave like a gentleman or so help me!

Don't make threats you cannot keep. I'm the best damned doctor here! If I choose to change the world on my own time then why the hell should you care!?

DEAN HALSEY

Because I'm the dean...

Everyone falls silent and looks toward the bell tower as the bell begins tolling.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

All the doctors in the school are gathered on the main floor of the hospital donning gowns, gloves, and masks. Nurses, patients, families work busily on the background. The doctors talk in nervous whispers. West calmly prepares as Dean Halsey in medical attire calms the doctors and addresses them.

DEAN HALSEY

Now young men today is the day you become doctors. I have no grand speech prepared, just know that what started as one case a day ago has spread to the entire second floor.

Doctor #2 raises his hand.

DOCTOR #2

What is it?

DEAN HALSEY

Typhoid. Nervous fever. However you call it, it's here. Dark times are among us. Go to your wards. The nurses there will direct you.

The doctors disperse. As the Narrator and Herbert West start up the stairs, Dean Halsey grabs West's arm and stares into his eyes.

DEAN HALSEY (CONT'D)

I put you in the worst ward not because I hate you, but because you're the best doctor here. I've no doubt you have the clinical mind for it. I only hope you can find some of the humanity and compassion you seem to be lacking.

I am a doctor. The rest needn't concern you.

West breaks free of Dean Halsey's grip and starts up the stairs with the Narrator.

DEAN HALSEY

That's what concerns me the most.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

The hospital ward is lined with beds, everyone of them full. Exhausted nurses move among the patients who moan in delirium.

Occasionally morgue nurses will carry a corpse away, its empty bed immediately filled with another patient.

The Narrator moves among the patients exhausted, but West soldiers on not showing any signs of exhaustion. West and the Narrator find themselves at the bed of a dying man.

NARRATOR

How are you holding up?

HERBERT WEST

Not bad. Yourself?

NARRATOR

I don't even know what day it is.

HERBERT WEST

July twenty-fifth.

NARRATOR

You're joking.

HERBERT WEST

What a boring thing to joke about.

NARRATOR

It's only been three weeks.

Herbert drops the wrist of the patient.

HERBERT WEST

And the last thee weeks of his life.

The Narrator pulls the sheet over the patient.

NARRATOR

Such a waste.

HERBERT WEST

What?

NARRATOR

This. So many futures lost.

A NURSE approaches.

NURSE

Take a break. You've been on your feet for hours.

NARRATOR

But...

NURSE

No buts. We need more doctors not more patients. Now go.

West and the Narrator leave the ward.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

The main staircase is crowded with more typhoid patients as West and the Narrator step around them.

HERBERT WEST

Hey I've got something to show you.

NARRATOR

Does it involve food and a place to sit?

HERBERT WEST

It could.

NARRATOR

Than I could be interested.

West and the Narrator reach the bottom of the stairs and leave the hospital.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The grounds of the hospital have been covered in tents and turned into a makeshift extension of the hospital. The moans of the sick and dying can be heard.

West and the Narrator walk through the tents dull to their surroundings.

NARRATOR

So much suffering. So much death.

HERBERT WEST

Certainly makes one contemplative.

NARRATOR

I'd contemplate if I weren't dead on my feet.

HERBERT WEST

(under his breath)

Once again death intrudes on life.

NARRATOR

What'd you say?

HERBERT WEST

Oh nothing. Just remarking what a pity all this suffering a death is.

NARRATOR

Yes, but right now the tragedy I'm concerned with is not getting some food and a place to rest.

HERBERT WEST

Patience is a virtue.

NARRATOR

One I do not have.

HERBERT WEST

We're almost there.

NARRATOR

Where?

HERBERT WEST

The dissection lab.

NARRATOR

Why there? It hasn't been used in months.

HERBERT WEST

That's precisely why.

Herbert West and the Narrator approach the door of the Dissection Lab and West opens the door with a flourish.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Central location. Perfectly equipped. Complete privacy. Absolutely perfect.

NARRATOR

For what?

West leads the Narrator toward a dissection table which has a corpse covered by a sheet on it.

HERBERT WEST

Why reanimation of course.

NARRATOR

(yelling)

Are you kidding me!?

HERBERT WEST

I never kid about matters such as this.

NARRATOR

But?

Herbert West pulls the sheet back to reveal a greying corpse.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

A bit ripe, don't you think?

HERBERT WEST

Best I could do on such short notice.

NARRATOR

What do you want me to do?

HERBERT WEST

Stand back and watch.

West wipes the injection site clean and injects a large syringe filled with fluid into the corpse. He monitors the corpse for signs of life.

NARRATOR

Anything?

HERBERT WEST

Silence! It doesn't work that

fast.

Several tense moments pass.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

There we go!

NARRATOR

Is it working?

HERBERT WEST

Perfectly.

West mentions to the Narrator who rushes over. They watch as the corpse's eyes open and stare into the distance in utter terror. After a moment the corpse dies for the final time.

HERBERT WEST (CONT'D)

Interesting.

NARRATOR

What did he see to scare him?

HERBERT WEST

Nothing. He saw nothing.

NARRATOR

Whatever he saw scared him to death.

HERBERT WEST

Nonsense. I'm shocked to hear such superstitiousness nonsense from you.

NARRATOR

Than what killed him?

HERBERT WEST

Typhoid, of course.

NARRATOR

But what just happened now?

HERBERT WEST

He wasn't fresh enough. You said so yourself. Now let's get rid of him before he stinks the place up.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Herbert West and the Narrator struggle to carry the wrapped corpse to the incinerator. A stern NURSE stops them.

NURSE

Stop!

Us?

NURSE

Of course you!

HERBERT WEST

What's the matter?

NURSE

Gloves!

NARRATOR

Gloves?

NURSE

Gloves! You're not wearing any gloves!

West and the Narrator look down at their hands.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Are you trying to catch your death?

HERBERT WEST

Such an oversight.

NARRATOR

So tired.

The Nurse pulls gloves from her pocket and shoves them toward West and the Narrator.

NURSE

Here! You're never too tired to protect yourself.

HERBERT WEST

True. True.

The Nurse spots something she must attend to.

NURSE

Please. You must excuse me. Put him there with the others.

The Nurse rushes off. West and the Narrator head off toward the incinerator.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

West and the Narrator are tending to a ward of sick patients when there is the sound of running and screams. West and the Narrator continue their work ignoring the commotion.

NARRATOR

What's the damned noise about?

HERBERT WEST

Don't know. Don't care.

A NURSE rushes in and taps West on the shoulder who ignores it.

NURSE

Dr. West! Dr. West! Come quick, we need you!

HERBERT WEST

There's a bed at the end. Put them there.

NURSE

But...

HERBERT WEST

There is an order to this madness and I intend to keep it. Bed at the end. I'll see him when I'm finished here.

NURSE

It's...

HERBERT WEST

(annoyed)

It's who? The mayor? He's partially to blame...

NURSE

Halsey.

West and the Narrator look up shocked.

NURSE (CONT'D)

He collapsed in the stairwell.

HERBERT WEST

Exhaustion?

NURSE

'fraid not. We; ve taken him to his room.

Let me examine him before you proclaim the fever.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Halsey's bedroom is carefully appointed and dominated by a large four poster bed. Halsey lies on the bed unconscious and near death.

The nurse, Herbert West, and the Narrator stand crowded around his bed as West completes his examination.

HERBERT WEST

Well...

NURSE

(whispering)

We should go outside that way he won't hear.

HERBERT WEST

No use. He's too far gone to hear us.

NURSE

What?

HERBERT WEST

When did you first notice symptoms?

NURSE

I... I don't know.

HERBERT WEST

Well it's no matter now. I give him a few hours at most.

NURSE

I'll see what I can arrange.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

The last few rays of sunlight are fading. A small group of mourners huddle around an open grave. Herbert West and the Narrator are two of the pallbearers carrying a simple pine coffin to the grave. A PASTOR speaks.

PASTOR

At times like these I find no words can comfort the pain of such a loss.

(MORE)

PASTOR (CONT'D)

Dean Halsey was amazing and giving until the end. He will be missed. Let us observe a moment of silence.

After a brief moment of silence the coffin is lowered into the grave and covered with dirt. The mourners disperse. As the Narrator walks away Herbert West grabs his sleeve holding him back. They walk out of the graveyard.

NARRATOR

No.

HERBERT WEST

No to what?

NARRATOR

No to what you're thinking.

HERBERT WEST

How do you know what I'm thinking?

NARRATOR

Because I know you too well. The answer's no.

HERBERT WEST

Why not? Not like he's using it anymore.

NARRATOR

(angrily)

Because he is...

HERBERT WEST

...was...

NARRATOR

Dean Halsey. There are some lines you don't cross.

HERBERT WEST

If you never cross the line you'll never do anything new.

NARRATOR

But we knew him! You hated him! (pause) That's why you want to do it! He wouldn't let you do your experiments so your revenge is to make him one.

HERBERT WEST

Hadn't thought of it that way, but it does sound good.

NARRATOR

You are a horrible person with no morals or conscious! How can you live with yourself?

HERBERT WEST

Wow! I've never seen you react like this.

NARRATOR

That's because you never see anyone! This whole world is one big experiment to you! Humans are just test subjects to you!

HERBERT WEST

I never forced you to do any of this! You have been a willing participant in everything. If you want to put the blinders on, pretend you know nothing that you know and join the ignorant masses, be my guest. You're either with me or you're in my way.

West begins digging up the grave. After a long pause the Narrator picks up a shovel and begins digging alongside West.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

West and the Narrator have Dean Halsey's corpse hung between them and are trying to sneak the corpse up the stairs. The room is dimly lit and West bumps into a table.

The LANDLADY, dressed for bed opens her bedroom door and peers out.

LANDLADY

Whose there?

HERBERT WEST

West m'am.

LANDLADY

Huh. I've told you to be quiet. You'll wake the dead with the noise you're making.

West and the Narrator look at each other and Dean Halsey's corpse.

LANDLADY (CONT'D)

Whose that?

NARRATOR

Uh...

LANDLADY

You know I don't allow ladyfolk in lodger's rooms. Then again I've never had that problem with you fellows. Still...

HERBERT WEST

He's a friend of ours.

NARRATOR

Had a bit too much to drink.

HERBERT WEST

We're just watching him.

LANDLADY

Well... he can stay the night. Any longer and he pays. And he'd better be quiet.

HERBERT WEST

No problem there.

LANDLADY

Night.

West and the Narrator drag Dean Halsey's corpse up the stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The living room is still and dark. A grandfather clock strikes three times. Soon after panicked screams are heard coming from inside West and the Narrator's room. Chaos ensues as the Landlady, her husband MICHAEL, and other tenants rush to the room. Michael tries to open the door and finding it locked pounds on the door.

MICHAEL

What's the matter? Are you alright?

The screams continue and Michael breaks the door open.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

West and the Narrator's bedroom is a mess of broken furniture and destroyed lab equipment. The window has been broken open. West and the Narrator lie in the corner beaten and bloody. The Landlady pushes her way in and stares in shock.

LANDLADY

What in heaven's name happened? My chairs! My linens!

HERBERT WEST

Not to worry we have everything under control.

LANDLADY

The state of this room makes me disagree.

HERBERT WEST

Not to worry...

Screams from outside.

LANDLADY

Tomorrow, you two out.

NARRATOR

But we're paid through the end of the month.

LANDLADY

Which should cover the cost to repair the room, if I'm lucky.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY - MONTAGE

A shadow can be seen running through the city as a growing mob chases it. The pace grows more frenzied as each fresh body is discovered.

Just as the sun sets shoots ring out. The mob surrounds the wounded body of what used to be Dean Halsey. He is almost unrecognizable and the only emotion in his dead eyes is fear. Halsey lies wounded in the street staring up at the crowd. Finally a POLICE OFFICER pushes through the crowd horrified at what he sees. A TOWNSMAN speaks up.

TOWNSMAN

What is it?

POLICE OFFICER

I dunno.

Two MEDICS push through the crowd.

MEDIC

We'll take it from here.

TOWNSMAN

Where will it go?

MEDIC

The asylum.

POLICE OFFICER

Will it get out?

MEDIC

No one ever gets out.

The medics load Halsey onto the stretcher and into a waiting ambulance. As the ambulance pulls away Herbert West and the Narrator can be seen on the background.

HERBERT WEST

Damn it, it wasn't quite fresh enough.