

ARKHAM SANITARIUM

Written by

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Based on 'The Hunter of the Dark', 'The Shunned House'
& 'The Thing on the Doorstep' by H.P. Lovecraft

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"I have seen the dark universe yawning. Where the black planets roll without aim. Where they roll in their horror unheeded. Without knowledge or lustre or name." Nemesis

FADE IN:

INT. 1950'S SEDAN - DAY

ALICE CROW sits with one gloved hand on the wheel of a 1950's sedan. The lush New England countryside flashes by as she glances at a folded map held in her other hand. The map is for Arkham, Massachusetts.

Alice is fashionably dressed in a tailored shirt, grey pencil skirt, a matching jacket, seamed stockings and patent heels. she glances to the right as she passes a painted wooden sign marked 'Welcome to Arkham - home of Miskatonic University'.

On the passenger seat is a paperback novel - 'The Feaster from the Stars and other tales' by Robert Blake and a leather-bound hardback 'Azathoth and Other Horrors' by E.P. Derby. Both books have numerous scraps of paper acting as bookmarks.

Under the books is a folder filled with notes, newspaper clippings and photographs. Alice glances at the gloomy skies above then looks back at the map - a location is circled - Arkham Sanitarium.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - DAY

DOCTOR WEST walks along a tiled corridor with a black and white linoleum floor. Along the walls are large, grey metal doors with peep-holes and nameplates. NURSES pass by as West flips through a clipboard hanging on one of the doors.

West is a tall man, in his late fifties - he has silver hair and is clean-shaven. He wears a white doctor's coat, neatly pressed grey trousers, a white shirt and an expensive silk tie. On his coat is a name badge - Dr. H. West.

DOCTOR WEST
(Looking up from the
notes)

Excuse me - nurse.

One of the nurses is standing next to a metal trolley and is preparing medication for the patients - she's wearing a white uniform with a white apron and a starched, white hat - she hands over the trolley to the ORDERLY next to her.

NURSE CHAPMAN
(Approaching Doctor West)
Yes doctor?

DOCTOR WEST

(Pointing to a note on the clipboard)

Why hasn't Mr. Gilman received his prescription? I left specific instructions yesterday.

NURSE CHAPMAN

(Examining West's notes)

I'm sorry doctor - there was some drama in the East wing this morning - we're running a little behind schedule. We'll do him next.

DOCTOR WEST

Make sure you do - he's in surgery this afternoon and I don't want to have to explain to Doctor White why his patient isn't ready...

CUT TO:

EXT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM - DAY

Alice's sedan pulls through the elaborate wrought-iron gates of the Sanitarium. A worn brick road flanked by bare, autumnal trees, anaemic grass and bleached wooden benches leads towards the imposing, Gothic structure.

The Sanitarium looms over the tiny vehicle - a vast red-brick building dominated by a tower over one-hundred feet tall. The complex is split into administration, facilities and four radiating wings for housing the patients.

CUT TO:

INT. 1950'S SEDAN - DAY

Pulling the car to a stop, Alice gazes up at the imposing building with a mix of wonderment and apprehension. She removes her gloves and drops them on the passenger seat, grabbing her bag then opening the driver's door.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, ADMINISTRATION - DAY

DOCTOR CARTER

(Looking at some charts)

He's been responding poorly to the treatment - it looks like he's built up a resistance to the insulin...

West is standing in a painted white corridor talking to DOCTOR CARTER - he takes the charts from his younger colleague and flips through them. A SECRETARY wearing glasses, a skirt and a smart blouse hurries up to them.

SECRETARY

Doctor West!

DOCTOR WEST

(Turning to the secretary)
What is it Eunice?

SECRETARY

I'm sorry Doctor - you've got a visitor.

DOCTOR WEST

(Frowns)
I'm not expecting anyone.

SECRETARY

It's a reporter - she was supposed to be meeting with Doctor White.

West sighs and hands the charts back to his colleague.

DOCTOR WEST

(To the doctor)
Increase the dose and keep me informed of his progress.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR WEST'S OFFICE

West swings the door to his office open - it's filled with books and medical charts. On his desk sits several folders filled with notes and an anatomical skull. Alice is standing by the window, browsing one of the patient files.

DOCTOR WEST

Excuse me - those files are confidential.

ALICE CROW

(Extending a hand)
Doctor Howard West?

West ignores her hand and takes the file from her. He sets it down on his desk before walking around to sit in his chair.

DOCTOR WEST

You have me at a disadvantage
Miss..?

Alice reaches into her bag and produces a press card which she hands to him.

ALICE CROW

Crow - Alice Crow - Boston Telegram
- I was expecting to meet Doctor White..?

West studies the card for a moment before handing it back.

DOCTOR WEST
Unfortunately he's otherwise
engaged - he's asked me to take
your meeting for him.

ALICE CROW
He's an elusive man.

DOCTOR WEST
(Irritated)
He's a very busy man. But I'm sure
I can answer whatever questions you
may have. Please - take a seat.

Alice sits down opposite Doctor West and pulls a notebook and
pencil from her pocket.

DOCTOR WEST (CONT'D)
So what can we do for the Boston..?

ALICE CROW
Telegram. My editor's running an
article on some of the more...
colorful stories that have come out
of Arkham and its neighboring
towns.

DOCTOR WEST
So this visit was your editor's
idea?

ALICE CROW
No... but seeing as many of these
accounts have come from former
patients of yours, it seemed a good
place to start.

DOCTOR WEST
(Goes to stand)
I'm sorry Miss Crow, but you've
wasted your time. We're doing
serious work here. I'm far too busy
to entertain you with ghost
stories.

ALICE CROW
Then perhaps you'd like to comment
on the medical enquiry surrounding
the death of Robert Harrison Blake?

DOCTOR WEST
(Sits back down)
That's a matter of public record -
all the facts are readily
available.

ALICE CROW

(Glancing at her notes)

Except that you contested the need for an enquiry and only relented under pressure from the Mayor's office - due to a very public campaign by Robert's parents.

DOCTOR WEST

All that enquiry achieved was the release of my notes to the public - it was a police matter - there's a reason these things are kept privileged.

ALICE CROW

Then perhaps you could explain why you were chosen to perform Robert's autopsy rather than the state medical examiner?

West rearranges some pens and papers on his desk before replying.

DOCTOR WEST

Given my familiarity with Blake's case history, the Mayor was happy to accept my services - it was also an opportunity to better understand where we failed Robert.

ALICE CROW

But several prominent physicians questioned your findings - including the Dean of the Miskatonic Medical School.

DOCTOR WEST

Holding a high-profile position in a public investigation will always draw criticism. The Providence police and the Mayor's office were satisfied with my findings.

ALICE CROW

What about Ambrose Dexter?

West frowns and says nothing for a moment, trying to figure out where this line of questioning is going.

DOCTOR WEST

Perhaps you'd enjoy a tour of our facility Miss Crow?

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - DAY

Alice and Doctor West walk down the cracked and stained tiled corridor as PATIENTS, orderlies and nurses pass them.

DOCTOR WEST

The Sanitarium can house four-hundred patients - construction was begun in 1879 and it opened in 1883 - it was built to...

ALICE CROW

To serve the local communities of Arkham, Kingsport, Bolton and Innsmouth. It was designed by Samuel Peaslee and features separate administration and facilities buildings plus four wings extending from the main complex. Female patients are held in the East wings, male patients in the West.

DOCTOR WEST

I see you've done your research.

ALICE CROW

But I thought we were talking about Ambrose Dexter?

An orderly passes by pushing a gurney with a struggling patient strapped to it. West watches the patient for a moment before speaking.

DOCTOR WEST

Ambrose was a British physician living in Providence - he was a close friend of Blake's parents - they helped him come to terms with the death of his wife.

ALICE CROW

Who passed away during the yellow fever outbreak of 1926?

The pair pass a large, metal door with a sign marked 'Treatment Room' - muffled screams can be heard from inside.

DOCTOR WEST

Yes - Dexter was very grateful to them for the kindness they showed - when Robert was admitted here Ambrose visited him often to check on his progress.

West stops walking and turns to Alice.

ALICE CROW

This was after the incident where
Blake burned down that tenement
building?

DOCTOR WEST

(Nods)

When Robert was discharged, he
returned home to Milwaukee to
convalesce - for the sake of his
health, both Dexter and myself were
hoping he'd stay there.

FADE TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - NIGHT

Silver moonlight spills into the darkened study - ROBERT
BLAKE frantically searches his desk.

ROBERT BLAKE

(To himself)

Where are they??

He finds the box of matches he's looking for and with
trembling hands, lights a church candle.

Thunder rumbles outside and Blake moves to the window,
pausing to study the angry skies above. His gaze is drawn to
a dark church on a distant hilltop.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

(To himself)

Everything depends on the
lightning...

Backing away from the glass, Blake lights candles until the
room is filled with flickering amber light - he stands for a
moment - streaked with dirt and sweat and wearing only a pair
of grubby pajama trousers.

Wiping the sweat off his face, Blake reaches around the back
of his pajamas and pulls a small revolver from the waistband -
he sits on a chair and cradles the gleaming gun in his hands.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

(To himself)

My name is Robert Harrison Blake...
and I am on this planet.

Across the room from Blake sits AMBROSE DEXTER - smartly
dressed in an expensive suit, his hands and feet are tied
with rope - he says nothing but looks apprehensively at
Blake.

AMBROSE DEXTER (V.O.)
Robert Blake returned to Providence
in the winter of 1934.

FADE TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - DAY

AMBROSE DEXTER (V.O.)
He took the upper floor of a
dwelling in a grassy court off
College Street.

The Georgian-style study is clean and sparse - beneath the
only window a worn oak desk sits next to a dresser. Against
an adjacent wall leans a large, empty bookcase.

AMBROSE DEXTER (V.O.)
It was a cosy place, in a garden
oasis of village-like antiquity
where huge, friendly cats sunned
themselves atop a nearby shed.

The door to the study swings open and Blake enters the room
followed by the LANDLADY. He's in his late twenties, wears a
hat and is dressed in a crumpled shirt and a loose tie - his
coat is slung over one arm. He carries a faded leather
valise.

LANDLADY
(Pointing)
The bedroom's through there and
there's a communal bathroom in the
hall. The rent's due on the first
of each month.

The Landlady is a care-worn, grey-haired spinster - she wears
plain but once-fashionable clothes and one or two items of
expensive jewelry. She waits expectantly as Blake glances
around the room. He sets his valise down on the desk and
studies the black church on the distant hilltop.

ROBERT BLAKE
This will do just fine.

LANDLADY
I'll fetch you some fresh linen and
towels - if you need anything else
don't hesitate to ask.

ROBERT BLAKE
(Turning back from the
window)
Do you have a telephone I can use?

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Blake stands in a wood-panelled hallway, a leather pocketbook in one hand and the telephone receiver awkwardly tucked between his shoulder and chin as he dials a number.

ROBERT BLAKE

Hello? Yes - Doctor Ambrose Dexter please...

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - EVENING

The study is cluttered with Blake's hastily deposited possessions - old books, a typewriter, sculptures, photographic equipment and a large easel.

Dexter, a physician in his mid-thirties holds a oil painting in his hands - the grisly scene depicts a disturbing, amorphous creature devouring a terrified human victim.

AMBROSE DEXTER

I see your imagination is as vivid as ever.

He sets the canvas down on the desk alongside a number of other, similarly horrific paintings. Blake hands him a glass tumbler which the doctor eyes with bemusement.

AMBROSE DEXTER (CONT'D)

Champagne?

Blake sits in a tatty leather armchair and gestures to his guest to sit in the chair across from him.

ROBERT BLAKE

I could hardly toast my return to Providence with water now could I?

Blake's dressed in a moth-eaten smoking jacket and slippers, Dexter wears a smart suit, waistcoat and tie. The doctor dusts his chair with a kerchief before sitting down as Blake sips his champagne and smiles mockingly at his friend.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Well... considering the consequences of your last visit, I'm surprised to find you celebrating your return.

ROBERT BLAKE

(Angrily)

You couldn't wait could you? It's always the same - people dragging up the past and throwing it back in my face.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Robert... I know how hard the last few years have been on you - your parents stayed in touch after you returned to Milwaukee... I know what a long road it's been... and I'm concerned. Why here? Why now?

ROBERT BLAKE

I'm fine Ambrose - I know that I was sick - that I needed help.

AMBROSE DEXTER

It wasn't just that - do you have any idea of how lucky you were? They wanted to charge you with arson - you could've gone to prison...

ROBERT BLAKE

(Ashamed)

I know... but I... I can't keep running from my past.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Have you spoken to Doctor West?

ROBERT BLAKE

No... not since I was discharged.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Well perhaps you should - he knows your better than anyone.

ROBERT BLAKE

Look... I know you're worried - and you've had reason to be, but please... we've been friends for a long time - you have to believe me - I'm fine. Things are finally taking a turn for the better.

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Nods)

So what brings you here?

ROBERT BLAKE

Besides the opportunity to catch up with a good friend?

Blake raises his glass and Dexter smiles reluctantly - they clink the two tumblers together.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

I'm researching a new book - it's about the survival of some old witch cults in New England.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Just the sort of cheerful subject matter I've come to expect from you.

Blake pulls a sour face.

ROBERT BLAKE

Perhaps I should turn my hand to those formulaic detective stories you're so fond of - if only to finally gain your approval.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Well at least you'd find an audience for your work. Sometimes I wonder how you survive on the pittance those pulp magazines pay you.

ROBERT BLAKE

Actually, I've had quite the run of luck recently - a fellow in Arkham commissioned some paintings for his book - he paid handsomely - and in advance too.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Anyone I might have heard of?

Blake gets up and sifts through a pile of books before producing a black, leather-bound volume with gilt lettering on the cover - he passes it to Dexter.

ROBERT BLAKE

I doubt it - I think he was self-publishing - not sure how many copies he ran off.

AMBROSE DEXTER

'Azathoth and Other Horrors'?

ROBERT BLAKE

It's mostly poetry and a few short stories - the chap's quite gifted - I offered to introduce him to some publishers but he didn't show much interest.

Blake fetches the champagne bottle and refills his glass whilst Dexter thumbs through the book.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Have you had any interest in your latest stories?

ROBERT BLAKE

'The Stairs in the Crypt' and 'The Burrower Beneath' were well received - I'm waiting to hear from the publisher on the others. Did you get a chance to read them?

AMBROSE DEXTER

I did - I thought 'The Feaster from the Stars' was a bit - excessive - but 'In the Vale of Pnath' was rather good.

ROBERT BLAKE

(Smiles)

You never did have the stomach for my darker tales.

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Handing the book back)

I'm a doctor - I see quite enough suffering thank you. Honestly, sometimes I wonder where you get your ideas.

ROBERT BLAKE

Dreams mostly - well - nightmares I suppose. You know I've always had a fascination with the macabre.

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Glancing at his watch)

An unhealthy fascination if you ask me. I'm sorry, but I need to get going - how long are you planning to stay?

Blake fetches Dexter's coat and walks his friend to the door.

ROBERT BLAKE

Oh, a while yet - until the book is finished at least. Dinner tomorrow night?

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Putting on his coat)

That's a splendid idea - give my secretary the details.

ROBERT BLAKE

It's good to see you again Ambrose.

The friends shake hands.

AMBROSE DEXTER

And you Robert - but please - be careful - the mind is a fragile thing... you know that more than most.

ROBERT BLAKE

I will - and thank you. For standing by me.

Dexter nods and turns to leave. After closing the door, Blake picks up Dexter's still full glass - as he goes to take a sip, he finds himself gazing out the window at the dark church in the distance.

FADE TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Blake lies in bed, his forehead beaded with sweat - he mumbles incoherently and twitches, lolling his head from side to side.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Blake's eyes snap open, he tries to sit up but he's tied to a gurney with leather straps - he struggles against his bonds, squinting at the bright lights that pass overhead as an ORDERLY wheels him down the tiled corridor.

DOCTOR WEST

Try to relax Robert.

DOCTOR WEST leans over the gurney and smiles reassuringly at Blake.

ROBERT BLAKE

What - what's happening?

DOCTOR WEST

It's better that you don't struggle - this will all be over soon.

ROBERT BLAKE

What? What will be over? What are you doing?

The gurney is wheeled into a side room - Doctor West enters last, pulling the door closed behind and revealing a sign on the door marked 'Treatment Room'.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, TREATMENT ROOM - NIGHT

The orderly wheels the gurney into the center of the room where a waiting NURSE applies conductive gel to Blake's temples.

ROBERT BLAKE

No! Wait!

The orderly holds Blake down as the nurse places a rubber headband on him. Two electrodes run from it to the ECT machine next to the gurney.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

Please! Don't do this!

Blake gags as the nurse tries to get a rubber bite-block into his mouth. West's hand hovers over the 'shock' button on the device.

DOCTOR WEST

We're only trying to help you
Robert.

West pushes the button and the charge induces a violent seizure.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Blake leaps up screaming. It takes him a moment to realize where he is - looking around, his sheets are covered in sweat and his hands are shaking. He runs his fingers through his bedraggled hair and reaches for a cigarette.

ROBERT BLAKE

(To himself)

You're all right now.

CUT TO:

INT. BROWN UNIVERSITY JOHN HAY LIBRARY - DAY

Blake wanders amongst the silent stacks in the library - towering wooden bookcases hold a wealth of volumes on witchcraft and the occult. In his hand he carries a scrap of paper with the names of several books he's looking for.

Reaching up to grab a book, Blake examines the cover then returns it to the shelf - seemingly unable to find what he's looking for. Not watching where he's going, he bumps into PHILLIP WHIPPLE knocking the pile of books he's carrying to the floor.

ROBERT BLAKE

I'm terribly sorry!

Blake stoops down to help the man gather his books.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
Are you all right?

The young, slightly built man is visibly shaken - his face and expensive clothes covered with dirt and sweat.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
(Flustered)
Yes - yes, I'm fine. Don't trouble yourself - I'll get this.

ROBERT BLAKE
You don't look at all well - I have a friend that's a doctor if you'd...

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
That's very kind of you but please - if you don't mind...

Blake watches as Phillip carries his books to a wooden table and sets them down with a thump. Unsure what to do, Blake examines his list and glances back at the shelves.

CUT TO:

INT. BROWN UNIVERSITY JOHN HAY LIBRARY - DAY

Blake stands beside a large, panelled desk - behind the desk a LIBRARIAN shakes her head and passes his list back to him.

LIBRARIAN
We did have these in our collection but it looks like they were checked out and never returned.

ROBERT BLAKE
And you say these were all checked out by the same person?

The young librarian wears glasses and a smart skirt and blouse - she nods and pulls an index card from a wooden box in front of her.

LIBRARIAN
That's right - a mister E. Lillibridge. I'm sorry I couldn't be of more help.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SILK DOLL CLUB - EVENING

Ambrose sits at a table in the club - he watches the stage as a SINGER and her BAND begin to perform.

The air is filled with smoke - other patrons are sat around tables drinking and talking.

The singer wears a provocative dress and holds a gleaming chrome microphone. The audience quietens down as the she begins to sing - a sultry, smouldering number laced with melancholy. Ambrose glances at his watch.

ROBERT BLAKE (O.C.)

What would your patients say if
they saw you in an establishment
like this?

Blake pats Dexter on the shoulder and drops into a chair next to him.

AMBROSE DEXTER

They'd most likely assume I'm
making a house call on the sort of
delinquent that frequents these
places.

ROBERT BLAKE

Harsh! Very harsh. Excuse me -
miss!

Blake waves to a pretty, young COCKTAIL WAITRESS.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

What can I get you gentlemen?

ROBERT BLAKE

I'll have a scotch and soda and my
friend will have..?

AMBROSE DEXTER

Just water please.

ROBERT BLAKE

(Turns back to Ambrose)
You are aware prohibition's over?

AMBROSE DEXTER

I think I read about it. Robert -
what are we doing here? I thought
we were going to dinner?

ROBERT BLAKE

Don't be such a bore Ambrose -
there's plenty of time for that -
besides, I haven't been here in
ages.

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Sighs)
So - how did your research go
today?

ROBERT BLAKE

It was... interesting. Have you ever heard of a group called the Starry Wisdom?

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Shakes his head)

Doesn't ring any bells - one of your witch cults?

ROBERT BLAKE

(Nods)

They were active here in the 1800's. I'd hoped to find some articles on them in the university library.

AMBROSE DEXTER

And?

The cocktail waitress brings their drinks.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Here you go.

ROBERT BLAKE

(To the waitress, then turns back to Ambrose)

Thank you. Well - everything they had related to them was checked out forty years ago by a reporter from Boston. It looks like he was investigating the cult when he vanished without trace.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Really? Was there foul play involved?

Blake takes a sip of his drink.

ROBERT BLAKE

It's difficult to say - the police investigated the matter and the newspaper offered a reward for information but his body was never found.

AMBROSE DEXTER

That's rather ominous. Did you find anything else?

ROBERT BLAKE

I was going through the library's newspaper archive when I found an article on a Professor Enoch Bowen - apparently the professor returned from an expedition to Egypt in 1844.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Is that relevant?

ROBERT BLAKE

It's said that members of the Starry Wisdom worshipped an ancient Egyptian artifact known as the Shining Trapezohedron.

AMBROSE DEXTER

And you think this professor brought it back with him from Egypt?

ROBERT BLAKE

(Nods)

If my theory is right, it was Bowen himself who founded the cult.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Have you got any proof of that?

ROBERT BLAKE

Sadly not - with those books and records missing there's nothing else to link Bowen to the Starry Wisdom.

AMBROSE DEXTER

So you've hit a dead end?

ROBERT BLAKE

Not quite - I had a look in the town records and discovered that in July 1844 Bowen bought the old Free-Will Church.

AMBROSE DEXTER

The church on Federal Hill?

ROBERT BLAKE

That's the one - if I'm correct, that's where the Starry Wisdom held their ceremonies.

AMBROSE DEXTER

So what's your next move?

ROBERT BLAKE

I'm going to take a look around the church in the morning - see what I can find.

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Concerned)

Are you sure that's wise?

ROBERT BLAKE

What do you mean?

AMBROSE DEXTER

Well... if what you say is true - one man's already disappeared investigating this group...

ROBERT BLAKE

(Grinning)

Ambrose - that building's been abandoned since the late 1800's - at the very worst I might find some vagrants there.

AMBROSE DEXTER

I must say I'm concerned Robert. This sounds like the sort of reckless behavior that landed you in trouble last time.

ROBERT BLAKE

I'll be careful - I promise. Now - will you please have a drink?

The band finish their song to a round of enthusiastic applause from the patrons.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - NIGHT

Moonlight spills through the window as Blake enters the study. He walks to the desk and turns on a lamp before shrugging off his coat and loosening his tie.

He goes to the dresser and grabs the bottle sat on top. Finding a grubby glass, he polishes it with a kerchief before filling it with whiskey. He sits at the desk and looks out the window, sipping from the glass.

In the distance the black church sits ominously on Federal Hill - Blake gazes at it for a while before setting down his glass and reaching for his valise - he sets it down on the desk and pulls it open.

Reaching inside, Blake produces a flashlight - he flicks it on and off to test the batteries before reaching back into the bag and pulling out a revolver and a box of bullets. He snaps open the empty barrel and loads the gun.

AMBROSE DEXTER (V.O.)

It was then that Blake made his journey into the unknown. Plodding through endless downtown streets, he came finally upon a grim, titan bulk whose identity was beyond dispute.

FADE TO:

EXT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM - NIGHT

Blake climbs over a rusted iron railing into the courtyard. The church looms over him, its oily black stone gleaming in the moonlight.

The courtyard is strewn with chunks of black masonry and ancient, weathered gravestones. Brackish weeds tug at Blake's coat as he approaches the giant wooden doors.

On reaching the doors, Blake finds them padlocked with a thick iron chain - he pulls at it ineffectually then glances around, pondering what to do next.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM, CELLAR - NIGHT

Weeds are pushed aside as Blake crouches by a small window - he wipes away dirt with his sleeve and shines his flashlight into the gloom. Trying the window, he finds it unlocked and lowers himself carefully into the darkness.

Flicking his flashlight back on he surveys the room. Rotted chests and barrels are crammed into the small space - Blake finds a barrel that's still intact and rolls it over to the window to provide a means for escape.

Across the room, a narrow stone staircase leads to a large wooden door - Blake cautiously makes his way up the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM, NAVE - NIGHT

The decrepit interior of the church is covered in dust and cobwebs. The wooden box pews are rotted and in disarray, their horse-hair cushions stained and mouldy. Broken plaster and masonry litters the floor.

Weak moonlight filters through grimy stained glass windows depicting grotesque shapes and creatures - one window features a dark void striated with reddish hues.

Above the altar sits a large, cobweb-shrouded wooden symbol, somewhat reminiscent of an Egyptian ankh. Blake enters the Nave in awe, shining his flashlight into the dark recesses and pausing by the dusty altar before moving on.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM, VESTRY - NIGHT

Broken furniture blocks the door and Blake has to force his way in. Against the walls are large bookcases filled with crumbling tomes, in the center of the room is a rotting desk.

On a set of folding wooden steps Blake finds an old oil lamp - Pulling a matchbox from his pocket he lights the wick, casting a dirty amber glow into the room.

Glancing at the books, a number of volumes catch Blake's eye - he pulls one off the shelf.

ROBERT BLAKE
(Whispering)
Liber Ivonis...

He opens the book and thumbs through a few pages before placing it on the desk. Finding another volume he scans the cover.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
Cultes des Goules...

Setting the book down, he runs his fingers over several other volumes on the shelf - the Book of Dzryan, Unaussprechlichen Kulten and the Pnakotic Manuscripts.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
Incredible.

Backing slowly away from the shelves, Blake bumps into the desk - on it sits another dusty, leather-bound book. He sits at the desk and hesitantly opens the cover.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
It can't be...

The page reads 'Necronomicon - Ye book of Alhazred' - below the title is a cryptic glyph. Blake turns to a page marked with a silk bookmark - the heading reads 'Nyarlathotep'.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
(Reading from the book)
Ye Crawling Chaos, ye Black
Pharaoh, ye Haunter of ye Dark - it
came from ye desert, risen from ye
darkness of centuries past.
(MORE)

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
 Ye messenger and ye servant of
 Azathoth, as dead Cthulhu dreams
 and Yog-Sothoth waiteth at ye gate,
 so dost Nyarlathotep walk in ye
 world of men.

Blake turns the yellowed page with a trembling hand.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
 It tempteth man with ye promise of
 knowledge - of which, all that is
 known is known unto it.

Blake turns the page and a passage catches his eye.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
 In shadowy Khem didst ye pharaoh
 Nephren-Ka covet ye wisdom of ye
 stars and in summoning ye Hunter
 of ye Dark didst that which maketh
 his own kin cast him down and
 destroy ye monuments and temples
 built in his name.

Blake glances at a woodcut on the facing page - it shows a dark chamber, painted with hieroglyphs where seven faceless robed figures are seated around a pedestal which has an ornate box placed on it.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
 (Tapping the illustration)
 The Shining Trapezohedron.

Blake closes the book and examines the desk. Opening one of the drawers he pulls out parchment, dusty quill pens and dried-up bottles of ink before finding a leather-bound notebook. It's filled with a strange, cuneiform-like script.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
 I'll be damned...

Picking up a magnifying glass from the desk, Blake wipes the dust from it before peering intently at the text. A creak sounds out from behind him - grabbing his flashlight, he shines it towards the source of the noise - in one corner sits a large pile of cobwebbed, broken furniture.

Pocketing the notebook, Blake approaches the debris - spotting something behind the rotting pews and chairs, he pulls them away uncovering a staircase leading up. Blake peers into the gloom then tentatively begins to climb.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM, TOWER - NIGHT

Wooden steps creak underfoot as Blake climbs past windows fitted with louvres - shining his flashlight upwards, the stairs spiral off into darkness.

As he nears the top of the tower, Blake is startled as his light illuminates the face of a giant stone Moai - he edges nervously past the sentinel into the room beyond.

Silver moonlight cuts through the louvres casting sinister shadows from several more stone Moai. In the middle of the room seven cobweb-covered chairs surround a dusty seven-sided pedestal on which sits an ornate box.

ROBERT BLAKE
(To himself)
Oh my God!

Blake shines his flashlight into the darkened corners of the room. Bolted to one of the stone walls is a splintered ladder which leads to a trapdoor above. Something at the foot of the ladder catches Blake's eye.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
What the..?

Shrouded in dust and cobwebs is a skeleton in a tattered grey suit. Blake tears at the cobwebs revealing a charred skull with a gaping hole in the forehead. Searching the suit pockets, Blake pulls out a wallet with a press card inside.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
(Reading the card)
Edwin M. Lillibridge.

Setting down the wallet, Blake continues to search the corpse - he finds a pocketbook and flips through it, shining his flashlight on the pages.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
(Reading from the pocketbook)
29th December 1844, Doctor Drowne of 4th Baptist warns against Starry Wisdom. Congregation ninety-seven by end of '45. 1846 - three disappearances. 1848 - seven disappearances - stories of blood sacrifice. Father O'Malley tells of devil-worship with box found in great Egyptian ruins - says the Shining Trapezohedron shows them other worlds and the Haunter of the Dark tells them secrets in some way.

Turning his flashlight to the strangely-angled box, Blake slips the pocketbook into his coat and approaches the pedestal. It's carved with crude, disturbing images of quasi-human creatures performing shocking rituals.

The box is covered in a thin layer of dust that Blake wipes away with his handkerchief - it's made from a yellowish metal with a polished onyx lid. The sides feature strange bas-reliefs of beings clearly not of this planet.

Blake runs his fingertips across the box - as he does so, there's a 'click' and the lid hinges upwards slightly. Opening the box reveals a gleaming black stone with red striations, suspended by seven queerly-designed supports.

As Blake looks closer, the red markings begin to glow softly, swimming across the surface of the stone like smoke - the room darkens around him and the distant sound of flutes can be heard as Blake stands captivated.

CUT TO:

EXT. THROUGH THE SHINING TRAPEZOHEDRON, R'LYEH

Silt and detritus drift serenely by as the infinite black of the void gives way to grimy blues and putrescent greens. The ocean floor is littered with cracked stone tablets featuring crude carvings of anthropoidal fish-like creatures.

Out of the murk loom cyclopean columns - entangled with cancerous black seaweed and carved with alien hieroglyphs, they distort and shift as if governed by otherworldly physics. The vast necropolis is completely devoid of life.

Beyond the columns is a cathedral-like doorway. The huge, open doors are elaborately carved with images of a winged, octopoidal being. From the darkness within, giant bubbles escape rhythmically, stirring up murky clouds of silt.

FADE TO:

I/E. THROUGH THE SHINING TRAPEZOHEDRON, IREM - DAY

Darkness gives way to blinding light at the end of a low-ceilinged stone tunnel. The crumbling plaster walls are painted with faded hieroglyphs and elaborate depictions of strange, reptilian creatures.

At the end of the tunnel, the window overlooks a desolate scene - the abandoned city of Irem sprawls below, it's Arabesque minarets in ruins, it's deserted streets choked with desert sands.

Surrounding the city are towering obsidian pillars carved with mystical symbols and inscriptions.

They number in their thousands, eroded and splintered but still gleaming blackly in the blistering desert sun.

FADE TO:

EXT. THROUGH THE SHINING TRAPEZOHEDRON, AZATHOTH

Somewhere in the nethermost depths of space. The sound of flutes rises to a maddening crescendo as scorched, dead moons - visible only as voids against unfamiliar stars - orbit lazily around an amorphous, leviathan creature.

The bubbling mass of tentacles and quivering flesh - larger than any planet or star - slumbers at the center of the universe, lulled by daemonic flutes and surrounded by remnants of the devastation its mere existence has wrought.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM, TOWER - NIGHT

Blake recoils in horror from the box. His brow is beaded with sweat, his face a mask of fear - trying not to look at the Shining Trapezohedron, he extends a shaking hand and snaps the lid of the box shut. The maddening flutes abruptly cease.

ROBERT BLAKE
(Shudders)
God help me...

From somewhere above comes a scraping sound - Blake shines his flashlight at the wooden beams overhead. Dust rains down on him as some... thing drags itself towards the trapdoor. Blake frantically digs in his pocket for his revolver.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
Who... who's there? I've got a gun!

For a moment there's silence - then the trapdoor begins to shake violently. Blake holds the pistol in front of him but his hand is trembling uncontrollably. As the banging sound becomes deafening, Blake drops his flashlight and flees.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

A fist pounds on Blake's door.

AMBROSE DEXTER
Robert? Robert! Are you in there?
Open the door!

The landlady hurries up, sorting through a big bunch of keys.

LANDLADY

He's been acting awfully strange -
he hasn't been out of his room in
days - and he's had all his meals
delivered...

The landlady unlocks the door and turns the door handle -
Ambrose steps in front of her.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Wait here.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - DAY

Ambrose slowly swings the door inward - the room is in
disarray. Strange symbols and scrawled writing cover the
walls, half-finished canvases litter the floor and sheets of
paper, covered in a spidery script are strewn everywhere.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Dear God... Robert!

Blake is slumped on the floor, dressed in grubby pajamas -
his hair is matted and he hasn't shaved in days - next to him
is an empty whiskey bottle. As Dexter crouches down to check
for a pulse, Blake mumbles incoherently.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - DAY

Ambrose holds one of the half-finished paintings - it depicts
a monstrous silhouette with a single, burning, three-lobed
eye. He sets it down next to a crude painting of the Church
of the Starry Wisdom.

AMBROSE DEXTER

That's... that's quite a story
Robert.

Blake lights a cigarette and runs his fingers through his
unkempt hair - he's sat in his armchair wearing his tatty
dressing-gown.

ROBERT BLAKE

(Angrily)

It's not a story Ambrose - look...

Blake fumbles around on the dresser and produces the notebook
he took from the vestry. He places it on the desk and opens
it to a page he's marked.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
This is Aklo - it's a secret
language used by some cults - it's
incredibly old... and not many
people know how to read it.

Ambrose puts on his spectacles and studies the pages.

AMBROSE DEXTER
You never struck me as the
scholarly type...

ROBERT BLAKE
Well... this... this isn't the
first time I've seen this kind of
writing...

AMBROSE DEXTER
(Looks up)
What do you mean?

ROBERT BLAKE
The last time I was in
Providence... I... I was looking
for help translating a book.

AMBROSE DEXTER
(Concerned)
What kind of book?

ROBERT BLAKE
It... it was an old grimoire... De
Vermis Mysteriis...

AMBROSE DEXTER
Mysteries of the Worm. Robert -
listen to me... it's obvious you've
seen or... heard something that's
upset you but... the things you're
describing... it's fantasy. And the
drinking...

ROBERT BLAKE
Dammit Ambrose - this isn't some
drunken hallucination... I was
there - I saw the room where Bowen
used to summon this... thing.

AMBROSE DEXTER
Monsters Robert? Really?

ROBERT BLAKE
I'm not crazy - this... this
Shining Trapezehedron... It doesn't
belong here - look...

Blake traces his finger along the pages of the notebook as he
translates.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
 A... window on all... space and
 time. Fashioned on dark... Yuggoth -
 before ever the Old Ones brought it
 to Earth. Treasured and placed in
 its... curious box by the...
 crinoid... things of Antarctica.

AMBROSE DEXTER
 Robert... please.

ROBERT BLAKE
 It's real Ambrose - when I looked
 through that stone... something
 looked back - this... creature...
 this Hunter of the Dark.

AMBROSE DEXTER
 I'm not going to let you to do this
 to yourself again - let me call
 Doctor West - he can...

ROBERT BLAKE
 I'm not going back there Ambrose!
 West can't help me - and neither
 can you. I think it's best if you
 leave... I... I need to think...

AMBROSE DEXTER
 Robert... you're not well...

ROBERT BLAKE
 (Shouts)
 I said get out! Please... just...
 just go.

Dexter nods and walks to the door - he turns to glance at his
 friend and is about to say something but thinks better of it.
 Alone, Blake stands silent for a moment then picks up an
 empty whiskey bottle and smashes it against the wall.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
 (To himself)
 I'm not crazy...

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Blake lies in bed, sleeping fitfully - he's covered in sweat
 and talking in his sleep.

ROBERT BLAKE
 What... what are you doing? No!
 Wait! Don't do this!

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, TREATMENT ROOM - NIGHT

Blake's eyes snap open. He's lying on a gurney dressed in grubby pajama trousers - above him a light bulb flickers dimly. The room is covered in dust and several skeletons sit propped up against the walls.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The door to the treatment room swings open and Blake tentatively steps into the corridor - overhead, the lights flicker and the hallway is covered in dust and cobwebs.

Making his way slowly down the corridor, Blake stops by a door - wiping the dust away, he reveals a nameplate - it reads 'Blake, Robert H.' - he grasps the handle and turns it, cautiously swinging the door open.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM, NAVE - NIGHT

The door opens onto the dust and debris-strewn interior of the church - Blake glances behind at the flickering lights in the tiled corridor before silently crossing the decrepit, moonlit nave.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH OF THE STARRY WISDOM, TOWER - NIGHT

Blake stoops to retrieve his discarded flashlight - it's covered in dust and when he tries to turn it on, the batteries are dead. He approaches the pedestal and touches the bare, stone top - the Shining Trapezohedron is gone.

Glancing around - confused, something in the corner of the room catches Blake's eye.

Shrouded in dust and cobwebs is a skeleton in a tattered but familiar suit. Blake tears at the cobwebs revealing a charred skull with a gaping hole in the forehead. Besides the corpse is broken pair of spectacles - it's Ambrose.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Blake leaps up screaming. It takes him a moment to realize where he is - he holds his head in his hands then fumbles for the light switch on his bedside lamp - the bed is covered in dust and dirt, Blake's hands bear traces of cobwebs.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Blake cradles the telephone receiver in his hands, listening impatiently to the clicks on the end of the line.

ROBERT BLAKE
(To himself)
Come on... come on...

AMBROSE DEXTER (O.S.)
Hello..?

ROBERT BLAKE
Ambrose? It's Robert...

AMBROSE DEXTER (O.S.)
Are you all right?

ROBERT BLAKE
Yes... well... not really... I... I
wanted to apologize for my behavior
earlier...

AMBROSE DEXTER (O.S.)
You couldn't wait until the
morning?

ROBERT BLAKE
It's not just that... Ambrose, I...
I'm not well... I need your help...

AMBROSE DEXTER (O.S.)
Get some sleep - I'll come over
first thing in the...

ROBERT BLAKE
No! I... I mean... I can't sleep...
and... and I'm scared... I'm really
scared...

AMBROSE DEXTER (O.S.)
Robert... there's nothing to be
scared of... I'll get you the help
you need but right now you need to
rest...

ROBERT BLAKE
Can you come over? Please?

AMBROSE DEXTER (O.S.)
(Sighs)
All right - but when I get there I
don't want to hear about that cult,
the church and your... monsters.
You need to concentrate on getting
well...

ROBERT BLAKE
I know... and... I'm sorry...

AMBROSE DEXTER (O.S.)
I'll see you soon.

Ambrose hangs up and Robert returns the receiver to the cradle. He stands in silence for a moment in the hallway.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - NIGHT

Thunder rumbles ominously outside and the door to Blake's study sits ajar - Ambrose enters slowly, looking for his friend.

AMBROSE DEXTER
Robert?

Blake closes the door behind him - in one hand he holds his revolver - pointing it straight at Ambrose.

ROBERT BLAKE
I'm sorry Ambrose.

AMBROSE DEXTER
Robert! What's the meaning of this?

ROBERT BLAKE
I've tried to find a way out - I really have... but... there's no other way...

AMBROSE DEXTER
Put that away Robert - I can help you - you just have to...

ROBERT BLAKE
No one can help me Ambrose - over there - sit down.

Blake gestures with the revolver to a chair - on it sits some rope. Ambrose stands his ground.

AMBROSE DEXTER
I'll do no such thing.

Blake pulls back the hammer on the pistol.

ROBERT BLAKE
I don't want to kill you Ambrose... please...

Ambrose looks at the gun then sets down his coat.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT BLAKE'S STUDY - NIGHT

Blake finishes tying Ambrose up and steps away from the chair - he backs away slowly, glancing at the revolver then tucking it in the back of his waistband. Ambrose glares at Blake.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Since I've played along with this ridiculous charade, you could at least have the decency to tell me what's going on.

Blake nods and walks over to the window - he glances out at the angry skies above and the ominous black church on Federal Hill before turning back to his friend.

ROBERT BLAKE

This... Hunter of the Dark... shows you things... the past, the future... other worlds. It talks to me... whispers to me... it knows where I am... and it's coming - for me...

AMBROSE DEXTER

Robert... we discussed this - it's not real... it's just a...

ROBERT BLAKE

Listen to me! Once it's seen you - through the stone - you can't escape it - it's just a matter of time. I found this though...

Blake pulls the notebook from his pocket and turns to a page filled with cryptic Aklo glyphs.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

(Translating the text)

This... avatar of Nyarlathotep... cannot exist in light - it flees a little light and is... banished by strong light - then must be summoned again.

Ambrose says nothing and watches Blake with a mix of pity and concern.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

Don't you understand Ambrose? As long as we stay in the light we'll be safe - it can't get to us...

AMBROSE DEXTER

Well... you'll forgive me if I don't share your optimism, but you're not the one tied to a chair with a gun being waved in his face...

ROBERT BLAKE

(Ashamed)

I wish there was some other way but... I don't have a choice...

AMBROSE DEXTER

What do you mean?

ROBERT BLAKE

I... I've seen where this thing is from... I've seen the horrors that exist out there - in the void. This creature... it's just a messenger - there's things out there more terrible than you possibly imagine... and I won't go with it... I can't...

AMBROSE DEXTER

I don't understand...

ROBERT BLAKE

If I'm wrong... or if it finds a way to get to me... there's only one way to appease it - it demands tribute... sacrifice...

AMBROSE DEXTER

Robert... you're not well... I can help you but you're going to have to trust me. Now please - untie me...

ROBERT BLAKE

I'm sorry Ambrose... I can't do that...

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Angry)

This has gone quite far enough! You're suffering from paranoid delusions - this is exactly what...

The lights in the room flicker and die - Blake rushes to the window and looks outside - the city streets go dark as the power goes out.

ROBERT BLAKE

(To himself)

It's coming!

AMBROSE DEXTER

It's just a power cut - it must be
the storm - Robert, please - listen
to me...

Silver moonlight spills into the darkened study as Blake
frantically searches his desk.

ROBERT BLAKE

(To himself)

Where are they??

He finds the box of matches he's looking for and with
trembling hands, lights a church candle.

Thunder rumbles outside and Blake moves to the window,
pausing to study the angry skies above. His gaze is drawn to
the dark church.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

(To himself)

Everything depends on the
lightning...

Backing away from the glass, Blake lights candles until the
room is filled with amber light. He stands for a moment,
wipes sweat from his face and pulls the revolver from his
waistband. He sits on a chair, cradling the gun in his hands.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)

(To himself)

My name is Robert Harrison Blake...
and I am on this planet.

AMBROSE DEXTER

(Softly)

What if you're wrong? What if this
is all in your mind? Have you
considered that? You've been here
before - and you got well again...
if you carry on down this path
we... we might lose you forever...

ROBERT BLAKE

I... I don't know what's real any
more Ambrose... and I'm scared...
I'm so scared...

AMBROSE DEXTER

We've been friends a long time...
you know I'd never do anything that
wasn't in your best interests - I
can help you - I will help you -
but you have to untie me...

Blake nods slowly and stands up - as he does so the window explodes inwards showering the room in glass and fragments of wood. The candles sputter and go out, plunging the study into darkness.

AMBROSE DEXTER (CONT'D)
(Shouts)
Robert!

Ambrose is on the floor, struggling against the ropes - the chair is broken and he manages to pull himself partially free. Somewhere in the room a scraping, shuffling sound can be heard.

AMBROSE DEXTER (CONT'D)
Robert! Where are you?

In front of Ambrose, a single three-lobed burning eye opens followed by a sliver of hellish orange light which becomes a maw as THE HAUNTER OF THE DARK looms in front of him. Dexter chokes on the sulphurous fumes from the creature's breath.

AMBROSE DEXTER (CONT'D)
Oh God! No!

The creature moves closer, a hideous bat-like, tentacled silhouette. Smouldering yellow saliva spills from between glassy, razor teeth as the creature extends its tongue - a sinewy tentacle with a vicious barb on the end.

ROBERT BLAKE
(Shouts)
No!

Behind the creature, Blake raises his pistol and fires a round off into it - before he can fire another, the monster is on him - crushing Blake to the floor and pinning him. The burning maw opens, spattering Blake with saliva.

ROBERT BLAKE (CONT'D)
Ahhh! Ambrose! Help me!

The creature clamps its jaws around Blake's head - his agonized screams are muffled as blood flows down the side of his face and smoke rises from his burning flesh. He thrashes as the monster holds him down.

Ambrose can only look on in horror as Blake continues to struggle then finally goes silent. The creature releases him and Blake's corpse slumps the floor.

Turning back to Ambrose, the creature half-slithers, half-crawls towards him - Ambrose frees himself of the ropes and tries to crawl away from it - he backs into a wall and stares into the face of the monster as it looms over him.

The creature's burning maw opens once again - Ambrose fumbles blindly, his fingers closing around one of Blake's cameras - the monster's barbed tongue is poised in front of Ambrose's face - about to strike as Ambrose raises the camera.

There's a burst of blinding light and an inhuman screech as the flash goes off - Ambrose sits for a moment with his eyes tightly closed. Slowly he opens them - the creature is gone, the room once again silent.

Ambrose scrabbles over to his friend - Blake's corpse is charred and his face is burnt clean off - in the middle of his yellow-stained skull is a gaping hole.

AMBROSE DEXTER

Robert...

The lights flicker back on and Ambrose slowly gets to his feet - he glances around the room and something catches his attention - on Blake's dresser sits an ornate, curiously-angled box engraved with strange, alien bas-reliefs.

FADE TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - DAY

ALICE CROW

Did they ever find the box?

DOCTOR WEST

Assuming there ever was a box - no. And Blake's apartment burnt down - presumably because of the candles - or perhaps an attempt by Dexter to conceal his part in Blake's death.

ALICE CROW

Conceal?

DOCTOR WEST

I'm assuming you read the notes from the inquest?

ALICE CROW

Yes. You stated that in your opinion, Blake had been shot by Dexter - either intentionally or in an attempt to escape.

DOCTOR WEST

The police found traces of burnt rope still tied to the remains of a chair - it seems likely that Dexter was telling the truth about Blake holding him captive.

ALICE CROW

Don't you think it's strange that you never recovered the bullet?

DOCTOR WEST

Bullets have been known to splinter on impact - that, combined with the heat of the fire was the most likely explanation for the lack of ballistic evidence.

ALICE CROW

So what did they find in the church?

DOCTOR WEST

The police found some evidence that a cult may have used the church at some point. And signs of a recent disturbance - most likely Blake. But they didn't find the reporter's corpse.

ALICE CROW

And the Necronomicon? The other books?

DOCTOR WEST

(Shakes his head)

Some titles of minor interest were recovered but none of the fanciful volumes mentioned in Dexter's testimony.

ALICE CROW

So what happened to him?

DOCTOR WEST

He was apprehended several days later - he claimed to have thrown the box into the Narragansett Bay and stated that he'd 'rid the Earth of something too dangerous to rest upon it'.

ALICE CROW

And the only thing that could prove his story... did they dredge the bay?

DOCTOR WEST

Extensively. If there was a mysterious 'Shining Trapezohedron' down there, the police would have found it.

ALICE CROW

So where's Dexter now?

West motions towards a metal door behind them - the nameplate on the door reads 'Dexter, Dr. A.'

DOCTOR WEST

Due to the incomplete picture of the events of that night, the police decided not to prosecute but... given the nature of his testimony, he was referred to us for treatment.

Alice looks through the peep hole into Dexter's cell then turns back to Doctor West.

ALICE CROW

Can I speak with him?

DOCTOR WEST

I'm afraid that's not possible.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, PADDED CELL - DAY

DOCTOR WEST (O.C.)

Dexter didn't respond well to the treatment... he was convinced this creature - this 'Haunter of the Dark' was coming for him. When he began harming himself... well... we had to resort to surgery...

Ambrose Dexter sits on the padded floor of his cell. He slowly lolls back and forth, his straitjacket stained with drool. Either side of his forehead are the distinctive scars of a pre-frontal lobotomy.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - DAY

As Alice continues to look through the peep-hole, one of the nurses approaches.

NURSE PICKMAN

Doctor West - can I trouble you for a moment?

DOCTOR WEST

(To the nurse then Alice)

Of course - if you'll excuse me, I'll be right back.

Alice glances around the corridor - sobbing and wailing can be heard from some of the cells. She watches an orderly mopping the floor before turning her attention back to West - the doctor's conversation is out of earshot.

Wandering to the next cell, Alice examines the nameplate - 'Whipple, P.' - she frowns as recognition dawns upon her and apprehensively leans towards the peep-hole.

DOCTOR WEST (CONT'D)
(Making Alice jump)
Is everything alright?

ALICE CROW
(Shaken)
God, yes - sorry.

DOCTOR WEST
I didn't mean to startle you...

ALICE CROW
No, it's OK - I'm just... that name... is that Phillip Whipple?

DOCTOR WEST
(Nods)
He was admitted twelve years ago.
Do you know him?

ALICE CROW
No - but I read about him in the Arkham Advertiser - he was a student here at Miskatonic University?

DOCTOR WEST
That's right - his father was a Harvard-educated doctor - I recall he was rather disappointed when Phillip chose to study here.

ALICE CROW
That was at the recommendation of his uncle - Elihu Whipple?

DOCTOR WEST
Yes - Elihu was a respected physician in the Providence community - he and Phillip were very close.

ALICE CROW
So how did Phillip end up here?

DOCTOR WEST
(Hesitating for a moment)
At a young age, whilst visiting his uncle in Providence, he developed a fascination with an abandoned house on Benefit Street...

ALICE CROW
The Shunned House.

DOCTOR WEST
I believe that's what the
newspapers called it...

FADE TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - NIGHT

A thick, sulphurous mist rises from a crudely dug pit in the sodden dirt of a cellar floor - around the pit lies broken scientific equipment, a discarded shovel and several large carboys lie on their side.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
From even the greatest of horrors,
irony is seldom absent. On his
visits to the ancient city of
Providence, Edgar Allen Poe had a
favorite walk that led him along
Benefit Street towards the hillside
churchyard of St. John's.

Beside the pit lies Phillip Whipple - he gasps and coughs as if the air is toxic. He's covered in mud and the same dirty yellow mist rises off him as he claws his way slowly and painfully away from the pit.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
On this walk, the world's greatest
master of the terrible and the
bizarre passed a house on the
Eastern side of the street. He
never wrote nor spoke of it and yet
- that house - to those in
possession of certain facts
outranks in horror the wildest
fantasy of the genius who so often
passed it unknowingly.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIHU WHIPPLE'S STUDY - DAY

A cluttered study is strewn with packing cases - a large wooden desk sits proudly in the center of the room with numerous notebooks piled upon it. Leaning against the walls are paintings and prints by the likes of Blake and Bosch as well as a framed medical diploma. The door to the study opens abruptly as Phillip and ELIHU WHIPPLE struggle with a heavy crate.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
Careful lad!

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
I've got it - where do you want
this?

ELIHU WHIPPLE
 (Glances around the study)
 Over there - by the chest.

The men shuffle awkwardly across the room before carefully setting the crate down and catching their breath.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
 (Gasping)
 You know... there... are people you
 can pay... to do this for you.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
 (Wipes his brow with a
 handkerchief and grins)
 And why would I do that?
 Particularly when I've got a nephew
 to do all the heavy lifting...

Phillip nods and smiles - he's in his mid twenties, his shirt sleeves rolled up and his tie loosened - he wears smart trousers and expensive shoes. His uncle is an elderly gentleman - white haired and clean shaven - he has a kindly face and despite his advancing years seems the more robust of the two. He's dressed in a shirt, waistcoat and plaid trousers with a black bow-tie.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
 How many more of these are there?

ELIHU WHIPPLE
 (Looking at their
 handiwork)
 One more crate then we'll start on
 the books.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
 (Groans)
 I shouldn't have bought you those
 encyclopedias!

ELIHU WHIPPLE
 Heh! What say we take a break lad?
 I'll see if I can find the tea
 service.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
 Excellent idea - I think I saw it
 over there.

Phillip gestures towards a box in the corner of the room - Elihu looks inside and pulls out a china teapot and a pair of matching teacups and saucers. Phillip digs around in another box and produces an iron kettle, some tea tongs and a brightly colored tea tin.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
(placing the china on an
ornate wooden tray)
So Phillip - how are your studies
progressing?

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
(Passes his uncle the tea
and other items)
Very well - Halsey's a bit of a
bore at times but I have to say you
were right - the library is quite
magnificent - their anatomy
collection is very impressive.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
(Scornfully)
Allen Halsey may be a bore but he
deserves your respect - what he
doesn't know about medicine isn't
worth knowing - we go way back you
know.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
I know - I'm sorry uncle - and I'm
really very grateful for your
endorsement.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
Well - you just remember that the
next time your studies bore you -
there's some great minds at
Miskatonic University - I suggest
you learn all you can from them.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
(Picks up Elihu's medical
diploma)
Oh, I intend to.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
Good. Now - let's hope they
remembered to turn the water on...

Elihu leaves the study to make the tea - Phillip meanders
around the room investigating Elihu's more esoteric
possessions - engraved tablets from lost civilizations, a
gleaming katana, various books on folklore and the occult and
a collection of antique medical instruments.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
Uncle Elihu was a conservative
physician of the old school - a
bachelor, he was an old-fashioned
gentleman - and a local historian
of note.

Moving to the desk, Phillip picks up one of the notebooks and begins to thumb through it - it's a genealogical history of the Whipple family replete with news-cuttings, photographs, duplicate birth certificates and hand-drawn family trees.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
 He surrounded himself with the
 relics and records of the Whipple
 family and would often talk proudly
 of his grandfather's exploits
 against the British in 1772.

Setting down the notebook, he picks up another - as he does so a photograph slips out of the book and lands on the floor - retrieving it, he glances at the picture and fear flashes across his face - the photo depicts an old Colonial-style house.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE - DAY

8 YEAR-OLD PHILLIP WHIPPLE stands outside the house in the picture - he gazes up at the dirty, cracked windows and the bleached, peeling wood.

Phillip hesitates a moment before tentatively approaching the house. The ground floor is brick and has a bleached and warped wooden door that sits ajar. Two small, grimy windows are either side.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - DAY

Phillip takes a few hesitant steps inside - the cellar is gloomy with only the light from the door and the two soot-smearred windows providing illumination. Piles of junk covered in dust-sheets make eerie silhouettes and the dirt floor is overgrown with twisted tree roots and unhealthy-looking fungi.

A breeze picks up, whistling eerily and blowing through Phillip's hair - he turns to face the door as the wind slams it shut, plunging him into darkness. Phillip rushes to the door and desperately tugs on the handle.

YOUNG PHILLIP WHIPPLE
 (Scared)
 Help! The door won't open! I'm
 trapped! Please! Help!

After pounding on the door for a few moments, Phillip glances around and his eyes widen - the cellar has an unearthly phosphorescence that's emanating from the bloated toadstools and Indian Pipes that grow from the dirt floor.

As he stumbles his way forward in the dim light, Phillip trips and falls to his knees - on the floor in front of him there's a large patch of mould that glows faintly - its shape resembles a person in the foetal position.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. ELIHU WHIPPLE'S STUDY - DAY

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Phillip?

Phillip turns in surprise and sees Elihu standing holding the tea tray looking concerned.

ELIHU WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

I... yes - sorry I...

Elihu sets the tray down on the desk.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I trust you haven't been studying too hard? I know first hand how demanding Dr. Halsey can be.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

No - it's uh - I found this.

Phillip holds up the photograph of The Shunned House - Elihu pulls a pair of spectacles from his vest pocket and puts them on before taking the picture and studying it.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Ah yes - the house on Benefit Street. You know it?

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

I uh... well - I went there once - when I was a boy.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Really? That old place is still standing you know - I know the owner - Carrington - he's the last of the Harris line. He and I have spoken about the place at great length.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Why the interest?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

You might say it was a hobby of mine - you are aware of the reputation that place has?

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

They uh... they say a lot of people died there.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Indeed - as a physician I was curious as to why that was and - well - you know my passion for history.

Phillip nods and sits down on a packing case as Elihu begins pouring the tea.

ELIHU WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

I had the good fortune to speak with Archer Harris - Carrington's father - before he passed away. Since then Carrington's been kind enough to loan me books and other items from the Harris estate.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

And?

Elihu pulls a dust sheet off an old leather armchair and sits across from Phillip.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Well - for one thing, the stories are true - people did die there - in alarming numbers.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Did you find out the cause?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Several of the deaths were attributed to an outbreak of yellow fever in 1804, but - given the nature of the other deaths, I'm not convinced it was the fever.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

What do you mean?

Elihu picks the notebook up off his desk and thumbs through it before removing some pieces of paper and handing them to Phillip.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I managed to obtain copies of the death certificates of some the people that died in the house - they make interesting reading.

Phillip looks at each of the pages in turn.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

It says here that they died from some rare undiagnosed form of anaemia.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Go on.

Phillip flicks back and forth between the pages.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

And that in each case, during the period preceding the deaths the victims suffered some sort of seizures causing hallucinations, paranoia and madness.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I'd assumed it was down to unsanitary living conditions - the house has always had a certain... unwholesome quality to it and I suspected the well water might be tainted.

Elihu opens a desk drawer and pulls out an old, rolled up map of Providence - he flattens it out in front of Phillip.

ELIHU WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

(Pointing to the map)

The land the house sits on used to be part of a cemetery you know.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

You think there could still be bodies buried under there?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I did - but when I investigated the town records, it seems that all the remains were accounted for when they were moved to the North Burial Ground in 1700 - the house wasn't built until 63 years later.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

So how many people died there?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

As far as I've been able to ascertain, the house has claimed 22 lives - the last death was in 1860.

Elihu turns to a page in the notebook - there's a newspaper clipping from the 'Daily Transcript and Chronicle' dated October 27th 1860 - the headline reads 'Local schoolteacher dies in Hell House'.

ELIHU WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

It's lain empty ever since -
Carrington planned to tear it down
and build an apartment block but
due to the reputation of the place,
he was unable to find any financial
backers.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

(Reading the newspaper
article)

It says here that before she died,
the schoolteacher was cursing her
doctor in French.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Yes - and that supposedly she
seemed quite fluent even though
she'd never learnt the language -
it wasn't noted on her death
certificate but the newspapers were
quick to pick up on it.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Was this reported in any of the
other cases?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Several actually - going right back
to the original occupants of the
house - William Harris and his wife
Rhoby Dexter - records were hard to
come by but Carrington lent me his
Great Great Grandfather's journals -
they proved interesting reading.

Elihu turns a few more pages in the notebook and stops at a
family portrait - it shows a husband and wife with four
children.

ELIHU WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

(Pointing to the picture)

There - that's the Harris family.
William Harris was a merchant
seaman in the West India trade and
master of the brig Prudence.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

(Studying the painting)

A wealthy man by the looks of
things.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Quite - and with a fifth child on
the way he wanted to move his
family into something more spacious
and befitting a man of his stature.

(MORE)

ELIHU WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

Sadly, from the moment they moved into the house they suffered ill fortune.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

What happened?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

It began in the winter of 1763 when Harris' fifth child was stillborn. The following April his daughters - Abigail and Ruth succumbed to what was recorded as 'infantile fever'.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

That must of been hard on their mother...

ELIHU WHIPPLE

It gets worse - in 1765, malaria claimed William Harris whilst he was overseas, and two years later his eldest boy - Elkanah - died from anaemia. The strain on William's wife was too much and in 1768 she was declared insane.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

What were her symptoms?

Elihu picks up the notebook and turns to a page full of handwritten notes - he hands the book to Phillip who begins reading aloud.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

'She gave voice to dreams and imaginings of the most hideous sort and often shouted for hours in a coarse and idiomatic form of French - at times she complained wildly of a staring thing that bit and chewed at her'.

Phillip looks up incredulously as his uncle nods.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Her sister, Mercy Dexter took over the running of the household and poor Rhoby was confined to the attic - she passed away four years later.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Did none of the family survive?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Rhoby's sister sent the only surviving child - William Jr.

(MORE)

ELIHU WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
to stay with his cousin, Peleg
Harris. He wouldn't return to the
house until 18 years later.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
And Mercy Dexter?

ELIHU WHIPPLE
Remained with the house until
William Jr.'s return - away from
the house, William grew into a
healthy young man - he enlisted in
1775 and in 1780 became a Captain
in the Rhode Island forces - he
also met his wife-to-be, Phebe
Hetfield and the pair moved into
the Harris family home a year
later.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
I'm assuming their fortunes didn't
improve?

ELIHU WHIPPLE
Sadly not - in the autumn of 1782
Phebe Harris gave birth to a still-
born daughter and the following
year Mercy Dexter - now uncommonly
frail for a woman of her age,
passed away.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
And the Harrises?

ELIHU WHIPPLE
Well - William Jr. - now thoroughly
convinced of the unhealthy nature
of the house, rented accommodation
for himself and his wife and
arranged for the building of a new
house in Westminster Street. It was
there that his son Dutee was born -
alive and well - in 1785.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
So what happened to the house?

ELIHU WHIPPLE
After his parents died in the
yellow fever epidemic of 1797,
Dutee was raised by his cousin -
Rathbone Harris. Rathbone was a
practical man and rented out the
house - the deaths however,
continued and eventually it became
impossible to let the place - the
house has stood empty ever since.

Elihu closes the notebook and takes Phillip's empty teacup. Phillip looks troubled and picks up the picture of the house.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

So... you never got to the bottom
of what caused these deaths?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Not for want of trying - despite
all my research the answer still
eludes me. Anyway - that's quite
enough history for one day - we've
got books to move.

Phillip sets the photo back down on the desk and nods.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE - AFTERNOON

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

For all my uncle's interest in The
Shunned House, he was not eager to
encourage thoughts towards the
abnormal.

Phillip stands apprehensively outside the blistered paintwork
and cracked windows of The Shunned House. It looks much as it
did in his youth but the passing of years has given it an
even more wild, weathered and ominous appearance.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

For my part, there seemed in the
place to brood a persistent evil
beyond anything in nature as I had
known it - an evil clearly
connected with the house and not
the family.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - AFTERNOON

The cellar door creaks open casting a shard of brilliant
light into the gloom. Phillip enters slowly and glancing
around, finds a brick to keep the door wedged open. Pulling a
handkerchief from his pocket, he holds it over his nose to
block out the nauseous smell of the place.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

Amongst the accounts my uncle had
collected, one thing stood out -
that the fungous and malodorous
cellar was of vast supremacy in
evil influence.

He pulls out a pocket flashlight and shines it into the darkest, cobwebbed recesses of the cellar before casting the beam across the deformed toadstools growing in the dirt floor.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
There had been servants who would
not venture into the cellar and
whispered of diabolic outlines
assumed by tree roots and patches
of mould in that region.

Phillip crouches down at the spot where he saw the faintly glowing mould as a boy - he glances around, perplexed - there's nothing there.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - DAY

Young Phillip falls to his knees - in front of him the glowing patch of mould begins to emit a luminous vapor that rises slowly into the air. Phillip nervously backs towards some steps behind him then climbs up and strains against a trap-door.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE GROUND FLOOR - AFTERNOON

The trap-door opens displacing years of dust. Phillip climbs out and shines his flashlight around illuminating peeling walls and floors littered with broken wood and plaster. Dirty yellow sunlight spills through boarded windows as he approaches a staircase.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
I can still recall my youthful
terror - a nameless air of
desolation hung around the peeling
wallpaper, falling plaster and such
fragments of battered furniture as
still remained.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE GROUND FLOOR - DAY

Young Phillip nervously begins to climb - the staircase creaks alarmingly with every step he takes.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE FIRST FLOOR - AFTERNOON

Philip reaches the top of the stairs and pauses for a moment - he shines his flashlight into a child's bedroom filled with dusty old toys then moves on, the floorboards groaning underfoot.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

The house was never regarded by the community as haunted - there were no tales of rattling chains, strange lights or faces at the windows. At most, the place was said to be unlucky and yet, in all the time it had existed, no child had been born alive there.

Finally arriving at an old wooden ladder leading to the attic, Phillip shakes it to test its strength and sends plumes of dust drifting lazily into the air.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE ATTIC - DAY

The trap-door to the attic inches open as Young Phillip peers into the room - his eyes are wide with fear as he throws the door open and climbs up. A grimy window casts ominous shadows from broken furniture and junk covered with sheets.

Phillip hastily makes his way towards the window but trips over something covered by a sheet. Tentatively, he reaches out and pulls the sheet away - under it is a stained straw mattress on top of which sits a pair of iron manacles.

Phillip crawls backwards away from the sight then rushes to the window. Peering through the grime, he tries to open it but it's stuck so he pounds on the glass.

YOUNG PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Help! I'm trapped! Please! Somebody help me!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE - DAY

Young Phillip continues to bang on the glass and cry out.

YOUNG PHILLIP WHIPPLE

I can't get out! Please! Somebody let me out!

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE ATTIC - EVENING

Phillip gazes out the same window for a while before turning away. He crouches down next to the filthy mattress and picks up one of the manacles, studying it momentarily before dropping it. Standing up, he glances around the attic.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
(To himself)
Where are you..?

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - EVENING

Phillip climbs back down the steps into the cellar. He looks disappointed and is about to leave when he hesitates. Stooping down, he removes the brick holding the door open and hesitates before pushing it shut.

In the near-darkness the fungal growths in the cellar emit a faint, ethereal luminescence. Phillip hurries to the spot where he saw the strange mould as a boy - the same mark glows dimly in the darkness.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
(Grimly, to himself)
Gotcha.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIHU WHIPPLE'S STUDY - NIGHT

The paintings now hang on the walls of Elihu's study and his esoteric items are proudly displayed around the room. A large wooden bookcase holds an impressive collection of works and the desk is covered with papers and notebooks.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
You're quite sure about this?

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
(Nods)
Exactly as it was when I was a boy.

Elihu pours them both a drink from a crystal decanter and hands Phillip his glass before sitting down behind his desk.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
(Doubtful)
Luminescence in nature isn't
unprecedented you know...

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
There's nothing natural about this -
and whatever it is... that house is
the cause of it.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

What makes you so sure?

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

I spent some time looking around the grounds - there's nothing like it outside of the cellar.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Even so - to assume that something abnormal is happening there seems rather rash.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

But with this, the stories - the deaths - it can't be explained away in rational terms - it's... got to be something else.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I think you've known me long enough to know my skepticism of such matters...

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

I know - but you can't deny that there's a... a corruption in that place that defies explanation.

Elihu looks at Phillip and sighs.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

So what are your intentions?

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

That shape only seems to manifest when it's dark - If there is a... presence there, it's probably most active at night. I was thinking of staying there tomorrow night.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Phillip... assuming I give any credence to your theories - and I'm not saying I do - if there's a... paranormal explanation to all this then - well - people have died there - you shouldn't enter that place unprepared.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

What would you suggest I do?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I know a professor at Brown University that may be able to assist us - I'll make some arrangements.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - DAY

Phillip enters the cellar by day and props the door open as he did before - under his arms he carries a pair of camp chairs and a roll of black paper. He rests these against a wall before going back out and retrieving a folding camp cot.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

Despite my uncle's initial reluctance, he approached the matter with all seriousness and was resolved to test and - if possible - destroy the horror by a joint night or nights of vigil in that fungous-cursed cellar.

Phillip unfolds the chairs and assembles the camp cot then begins blacking out the windows with the paper.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIHU WHIPPLE'S STUDY - DAY

Elihu opens a large wooden crate that's stencilled 'Property of Brown University'. Inside, protected by shredded paper is a dismantled glass instrument and a sealed envelope marked for his attention.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

What baffled us was the aspect in which we might encounter the thing. No sane person had ever seen it and as such, we surmised that it must exist in an ethereal form - outside the realm of substance.

Elihu opens the envelope and unfolds the pages he finds inside - it's a number of hand-drawn diagrams and notes showing how to assemble the device. He carefully removes the individual pieces and begins to fit them together.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

To combat this intangible enemy, my uncle procured a Crookes tube - of the type used to study X-rays. This particular device was fitted with peculiar screens and reflectors designed to emit destructive ether radiations.

The ornate device stands 5 feet tall, the bulk of it being glass with anodes, cathodes and filaments visible inside. Surrounding the brass pedestal the tube sits on are three large storage batteries.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - NIGHT

Phillip and Elihu carefully carry the assembled Crookes tube into the cellar - it's covered in a blanket so as not to attract any attention.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Good Lord!

Elihu gazes around the eerily glowing cellar. Once he's recovered from his initial shock, they slot the glass instrument into its pedestal and hook up the batteries.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

Our plan was a simple one - we would sit up together until very late and then watch singly in two-hour stretches, myself first and then my uncle.

Thunder rumbles outside as Phillip closes the door and Elihu explores the cellar. He looks in wonder at the luminous fungi and tree roots then crouches down to examine the strangely shaped patch of dimly glowing mould on the floor.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

(To himself)

Extraordinary.

Phillip settles into one of the camp chairs and pulls a flask out of his coat pocket - he pours himself and his uncle some tea as Elihu joins him.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

So..?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

(Taking the steaming mug)

I may be skeptical Phillip, but I wouldn't presume that science has explained all of life's mysteries - a wise man maintains an open mind.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Then you accept there's something unnatural happening here?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

That remains to be seen - but you don't reach my age without hearing some peculiar stories - Arkham, Innsmouth and even Providence have their share of myths and legends - sometimes there's truth to be found in them.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Well - the night is still young.

FADE TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - LATER

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

We talked - far into the night, until my uncle's drowsiness made me remind him to lie down for his two-hour sleep.

Phillip sits silently as rain pours down outside - he shines his flashlight around the damp cellar walls casting ominous shadows from the twisted tree roots. He turns his attention to his uncle who is sleeping beside him on the cot.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

Fear chilled me as I sat there in the small hours alone - for one who sits by a sleeper is indeed alone.

Phillip gets to his feet and paces around the cellar before walking to the door and swinging it open. The street outside is dark, empty and slick with rain.

He stands for a while, watching the rain come down. Behind him, Elihu moans in his sleep - Phillip turns to look then - concerned, closes the door and walks over to him.

Elihu's face is contorted and he's beaded with sweat as he's caught in the throes of a nightmare - as Phillip intently watches his uncle, the deformed fungi glow brighter.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

(In his sleep, in French)

No... No! Please - let us go! We've done nothing wrong! Please!

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Uncle..?

Elihu begins choking and gasping for breath - Phillip grabs and shakes him.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Uncle! Wake up! It's just a nightmare - wake up!

Elihu's eyes snap open with a look of terror as he continues to gasp for air - seeing Phillip, he calms a little and takes long, deep breaths.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Are you alright? What happened?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Phillip - I... I was... oh - it was horrible - I couldn't breath.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

You were shouting - in French...

ELIHU WHIPPLE

Really? I'm... I'm sorry - I don't remember.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

What do you remember?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I was in a house - but - not this one. It seemed... older. There was a man there but... I couldn't see his face. I was afraid - something about him...

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

Was there anything else?

ELIHU WHIPPLE

I saw the Harrises - William - his children - and poor Rhoby - she was somewhere dark - she couldn't escape. There were chains - she was locked away - afraid and alone.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE

(Nods)

There's chains and an old mattress in the attic.

ELIHU WHIPPLE

(Tears welling in his eyes)

She was so scared - so lonely.

Phillip sits next to his uncle on the cot and puts an arm around him - the only sound is the rain outside as the pair silently gaze at the grotesque cellar.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
 In time I took my turn at slumber.
 My uncle's dreams disturbed him
 greatly, and he welcomed his period
 of watching - even though the
 nightmare had aroused him far ahead
 of his allotted hours.

FADE TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - LATER

Elihu sits on one of the camp chairs - beside him, Phillip is asleep on the cot. Wisps of yellow smoke begin to rise from the strange patch of mould and Elihu goes to investigate.

ELIHU WHIPPLE
 What the devil..?

CUT TO DREAM:

EXT. PROVIDENCE FARMLAND - DAY

A crowd of 18TH CENTURY VILLAGERS surround a pit dug in the ground - the villagers are yelling and cursing as a man - ETIENNE ROULET - is dragged before them.

The townsfolk are a mix of peasants and local officials - leading the group is a PRIEST who's speaking in Latin.

Etienne's wrists and feet are tied and a sack is covering his head. He struggles with his captors but they push him to his knees at the edge of the pit before removing the sack.

18TH CENTURY PRIEST
 (Crossing himself)
 Omnis spiritus immunde, in nomine
 Dei Patris omnipotentis, Domini et
 Judicis nostri, et in virtute
 Spiritus Sancti, ut descedas ab hoc
 plasmate Dei...

ETIENNE ROULET
 (In French)
 No... No! Please - let us go! We've
 done nothing wrong! Please!

One of the villagers pulls up Etienne's sleeves to reveal arcane markings tattooed on his arms - he continues to struggle as the Priest chants.

18TH CENTURY PRIEST
 ...Quod Dominus noster ad templum
 sanctum suum vocare dignatus est,
 ut fiat templum Dei vivi, et
 Spiritus Sanctus habitet in eo.

A town official steps forward and savagely kicks Etienne into the pit - lying beside him is ETIENNE'S WIFE - she's heavily pregnant and cries as he reaches out to touch her face.

ETIENNE ROULET
(In French, turning to his captors)
With my last breath I curse this
land and those who stand upon it!
Centuries of blood will not dull my
vengeance!

The townsfolk pick up shovels and begin to fill in the pit - Etienne's wife screams in terror as dirt is cast down upon her and her husband.

ETIENNE ROULET (CONT'D)
(In French)
In the name of the Old Ones I
condemn you! Ia! Shub-Niggurath!
Ia! The Black Goat of the Woods!

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - NIGHT

Phillip's eyes snap open, the screams still echoing in his ears. It takes him a moment to realize, but the screams aren't coming from the pregnant woman in his dreams but from his uncle - who's doubled up on the floor.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
Uncle!

The fungi in the room glow intensely and a thick yellow mist emanates from the spot where Elihu is constricted in pain - leaping from the cot, Phillip crouches next to his uncle and places a hand on his shoulder.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
Uncle..? What is it?

Phillip recoils in horror as what used to be Elihu Whipple raises its head - his features are blackened and decayed, his fingers withered - the creature leaps at Phillip, snarling.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
Ahhhh!

Phillip is flung to his back by the ferocity of the attack - his ghoulish attacker grasps at him, trying to fasten its claw-like hands around his throat.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
(Choking)
Uncle! Uncle Elihu! Stop! Please!

The creature squeezes, pulling its grotesque face close to Phillip's - he looks around desperately and sees the Crookes tube nearby - fumbling for the power switch, he turns the device on.

The Crookes tube emits a low-pitched hum and a dim blue light - the life has almost been choked out of Phillip when there a blaze of light from the device and Elihu arches back howling in inhuman pain.

As Phillip crawls back from his writhing uncle, the fungous growths in the cellar seem to dim - the old man continues to thrash around then slumps to the floor - moments later, his body begins to liquefy.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

No!

For a while all seems silent then the sickly yellow mist that fills the room begins to coalesce into a vaguely humanoid form that towers above Phillip - it has an insect-like head with multiple eyes that glare at him malevolently.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

(Terrified)

God help me!

The apparition lashes out, sending Phillip smashing into the Crookes tube. Phillip stumbles to his feet and before the creature can close on him, runs for the door, fleeing into the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE - NIGHT

Rains pours down outside and an unearthly yellow glow can be seen behind the windows of The Shunned House.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

There was no one in the soaking street, and in all the world there was no one I dared tell. I walked aimlessly past College Hill to the business section - where tall buildings seemed to guard me as modern material things guard the world from ancient and unwholesome wonder.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE - MORNING

The rain stopped, and with the sun in the sky, the house now seems less menacing - there's no sign of the yellow glow from the night before.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
Then the grey dawn unfolded from
the east, beckoning me to the place
where my terrible work was still
unfinished.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - DAY

The door swings open, casting weak daylight into the darkened cellar - apart from the broken Crookes tube, there's no sign of the previous night's horrors - the fungi look pale and unremarkable and Elihu's body is nowhere to be seen.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
With the Crookes tube in ruins, my
only weapon against the horror was
lost.

Elihu's straw hat hangs from one of the camp chairs - Phillip picks it up and clasps it in his hands.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
My uncle and I were ill-prepared to
tackle such a force - I resolved
not to repeat our tragic mistake.

CUT TO:

INT. BROWN UNIVERSITY JOHN HAY LIBRARY - DAY

Phillip sets a pile of books and ledgers on a large wooden table and produces a notebook and fountain pen - across from him, Robert Blake watches Phillip with concern before turning his attention to the bookcases.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
Elihu's investigations into the
house were thorough, but began with
its construction. This evil clearly
predated the place, so I turned my
attention to early town records and
deeds.

Thumbing through the pages of a ledger, Phillip pauses and reads a spidery, hand-written entry intently.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
By chance, I came across a record
of a lease in 1697, of a small
tract of ground to an Etienne
Roulet and wife.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. PROVIDENCE FARMLAND - DAY

Lying in the pit beside Etienne is his wife - she's heavily pregnant and cries as he reaches out to touch her face.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. BROWN UNIVERSITY JOHN HAY LIBRARY - DAY

Phillip returns to the stacks and pulls down yet more books - 'The Witch Cult in Western Europe' and 'Cultes des Ghoules'. Phillip sets the books down and turns the pages until he comes to an entry on 'Jacques Roulet of Caude'.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
Beneath this discovery lay a deeper horror - this family were undoubtedly of the same lineage as an infamous murderer who - in 1598 - confessed to devouring the bodies of the children he mutilated.

He continues to study the journals and ledgers, pausing to rub his eyes and glance at his notes.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
Further research yielded little on the Roulets. Evidently, they were not welcomed on their arrival in Providence, and local gossip spoke of Etienne's obsession with strange books and diagrams.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. PROVIDENCE FARMLAND - DAY

One of the villagers pulls up Etienne's sleeves to reveal arcane markings tattooed on his arms.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. BROWN UNIVERSITY JOHN HAY LIBRARY - DAY

Phillip closes the ledger.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
Then - as quickly as the Roulets entered the annals of old Providence, they disappeared.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. PROVIDENCE FARMLAND - DAY

The townsfolk pick up shovels and begin to fill in the pit - Etienne's wife screams in terror as dirt is cast down upon her and her husband.

ETIENNE ROULET
 (In French)
 In the name of the Old Ones I
 condemn you! Ia! Shub-Niggurath!
 Ia! The Black Goat of the Woods!

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. BROWN UNIVERSITY JOHN HAY LIBRARY - DAY

Realization flashes across Phillip's face.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
 (To himself)
 They're still down there.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - AFTERNOON

Phillip throws a shovel down near the spot where the strange mould appears at night. Leaving the cellar, he returns moments later heaving a large carboy which he places next to two other bottles - labelling on the side of carboys reads 'H₂SO₄ - Sulphuric Acid'.

He looks to the street outside - it's late afternoon and there's not much time before nightfall. Grabbing the shovel, Phillip begins to dig.

FADE TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - EVENING

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)
 My hands shook, but still I delved.
 With the deepening of the hole, the
 evil smell increased and I lost all
 doubt of my imminent contact with
 the hellish thing that had cursed
 the house for over a century and a
 half.

Phillip stands knee-deep in the pit, dirt piled beside him. He stabs at twisted tree roots that block his progress before setting the shovel down and wrenching them out with his hands.

FADE TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - LATE EVENING

Up to his chest now, Phillip stands and wipes sweat from his face. He's covered in dirt and looks nervously outside - it's nearly sunset. Glancing around the cellar, the fungi have begun to dimly glow. Fear grips Phillip as he frenziedly resumes digging.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE
 (To himself, then
 shouting)
 Where are you? WHERE ARE YOU?!

There's a crunch as he strikes something in the dirt - he tosses the shovel aside and gets down on his knees, scooping the dirt away with his hands. Beneath the muck Phillip uncovers a human skull. He continues to wipe the dirt away, revealing the neck, collarbone, spine and then recoils in horror as he finds another skull - that of an infant.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
 (To himself)
 Oh God!

He reaches out tentatively to clear the mud from the baby's skull. Suddenly, out of the muck to the side of the pit a rotting hand reaches out and grasps Phillip by the wrist.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
 (Terrified)
 Ahhh!

As Phillip pulls away, the corpse holds tight - the struggling wrenching it free of the side of the pit. The UNDEAD ETIENNE ROULET is heavily decomposed and dressed in the tattered remains of the clothes he was buried in.

Phillip tries desperately to get away but the creature grasps him tightly with both hands - choking the life out of him. As the fungi in the cellar glow brighter, a luminous yellow mist begins to appear in the pit.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
 (Shouts)
 GET... OFF... ME!

Phillip wrenches Undead Etienne's hands free and pushes him away - he turns to climb out of the pit then cries out in pain as Etienne's corpse hits him in the back with the shovel. Phillip grasps desperately for a carboy of acid which sits just outside his reach. Another blow to his back drops Phillip to his knees in the mud.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)
 (Gasping)
 Get... it over with... you bastard.

Etienne raises the shovel above its head, poised to deliver a killing blow - Phillip fumbles in the mud at his knees, pulling out the infant's skull before hurling it into the air.

The creature howls an inhuman screech as the skull strikes the cellar wall and shatters - Phillip seizes his opportunity and scrabbles out of the pit, tipping a carboy of acid down on Etienne's corpse.

Etienne shrieks and writhes as the steaming acid eats into its fleshy remains - Phillip wrenches the other bottles into the pit before collapsing to the floor. He watches grimly as the corpse disappears beneath the boiling liquid.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (CONT'D)

Go to hell.

Overcome by exhaustion and pain, Phillip falls unconscious.

FADE TO:

INT. THE SHUNNED HOUSE CELLAR - NIGHT

A thick, sulphurous mist rises from a crudely dug pit in the sodden dirt of a cellar floor - around the pit lies broken scientific equipment, a discarded shovel and several large carboys lie on their side.

Beside the pit lies Phillip Whipple - he gasps and coughs as if the air is toxic. He's covered in mud and the same dirty yellow mist rises off him as he claws his way slowly and painfully away from the pit.

The fungous growths are dull and ashen, the eerie glow that illuminated the room now gone leaving the place bathed in silver moonlight. Phillip's coughing subsides as the foul yellow mist dissipates.

PHILLIP WHIPPLE (V.O.)

When I awoke, the dampness was less foetid, and the strange fungi had withered. One of earth's nethermost terrors had perished forever - and if there is a hell, it had received at last the soul of an unhallowed thing.

He looks back at the pit and then turns to the door - before he can react, a skeletal hand ravaged by the effects of the acid grabs him tightly around the ankle - Phillip just has time to utter a terrified scream before he's dragged into the pit.

FADE TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - DAY

ALICE CROW

Oh my God!

DOCTOR WEST

(Nods)

Phillip suffered terrible chemical burns... he's been with us ever since.

ALICE CROW

I don't understand... wouldn't he have been better looked after in a hospital?

DOCTOR WEST

When the police drained the pit, the only remains they found were those of Phillip's uncle...

ALICE CROW

The police thought he murdered Elihu?

DOCTOR WEST

There wasn't any evidence to suggest otherwise - and Phillip's account of the events was clearly the product of a disturbed mind.

ALICE CROW

(Thinking)

What about the Crookes Tube? Somebody at Brown University must have been able to confirm that Elihu borrowed it?

DOCTOR WEST

A device similar to the one described was reported as missing but no trace of it was found in the house.

ALICE CROW

And Phillip?

DOCTOR WEST

(Shakes his head)

There's very little we can do for him - he's in constant pain - most of the time we have to sedate him.

ALICE CROW

So what happened to the house?

DOCTOR WEST

It's still there - still empty as far as I'm aware. Now - if you don't mind, we should be moving on.

Alice nods and follows West as he leads her along the corridor - she stares in silent horror at a patient being pushed towards her in a wheelchair - a hideously scarred Phillip Whipple is slumped in the chair.

As the wheelchair passes next to her, Phillip raises his head and turns to face Alice - his eyes are missing - destroyed by the acid but his sightless gaze follows her as an orderly wheels him away.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR WEST'S OFFICE - EVENING

West is sat behind his desk with Alice opposite him.

DOCTOR WEST

So, is there anything else I can help you with Miss Crow?

ALICE CROW

Actually yes - I wanted to ask you about the death of Edward Pickman Derby...

DOCTOR WEST

(Shakes his head)

I'm afraid I can't comment on that.

ALICE CROW

You were his doctor though?

DOCTOR WEST

Yes. It was a dreadful shock - following the events of that night security was tightened to ensure something like that could never happen again.

ALICE CROW

(Checking her notes)

And Daniel Upton? I believe you knew him?

DOCTOR WEST

(Nods)

But only through his association with mister Derby - as I've already stated, I really can't comment any further.

ALICE CROW

What about Derby's wife? There's never been an official explanation as to her disappearance...

DOCTOR WEST

I never met her - during his time here, Edward's only visitor was Mister Upton.

ALICE CROW

Then perhaps you can shed some light on why so little information was released to the press?

DOCTOR WEST

I'm sorry Miss Crow but this was a terrible crime, and we cooperated fully with the Arkham police department - if you have any further questions, I suggest you speak to them.

ALICE CROW

Actually, I have spoken to them and they...

There's a knock on the office door and West's secretary, Eunice appears.

SECRETARY

I'm sorry to disturb you Doctor...

DOCTOR WEST

(Beckoning her in)

That's quite alright Eunice - what is it?

SECRETARY

It's Doctor Carter - he wanted you to speak with you...

DOCTOR WEST

(To Eunice then Alice)

Ah yes, of course - please excuse me for a moment.

Alice nods as West rises from his desk and leaves the room with his secretary. Alice sits for a moment before her attention is drawn to West's filing cabinet. She glances through the partially open office door then gets up.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, ADMINISTRATION - EVENING

West stands in the corridor talking to Doctor Carter.

DOCTOR WEST

I appreciate your enthusiasm Robert but there's simply not enough evidence at this point to suggest that our patients would be better served by these kinds of treatments.

DOCTOR CARTER

At the very least we could start a trial - Danvers has done some pioneering research which I could present to Doctor White...

West leans back to glance through his office door - he frowns when he sees Alice's chair is empty.

DOCTOR WEST

(Turning back to Pierce)

I assure you, Doctor White is very familiar with the work going on at Danvers - the simple truth is that they've yet to prove their drug therapies are any more effective than the techniques we use here...

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR WEST'S OFFICE - EVENING

Alice pulls lightly on the file cabinet drawer - it's locked. She pulls a pin from her hair and picks the lock, glancing over her shoulder as the drawer slides free. She thumbs through patient files until she finds one for 'Derby, E.P.'

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, ADMINISTRATION - EVENING

West walks along the white corridor to his office door - pushing it open reveals Alice once again seated at his desk.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR WEST'S OFFICE - EVENING

West enters the room and closes the door behind him.

DOCTOR WEST

I apologize for that.

ALICE CROW

Don't worry, it's fine.

DOCTOR WEST

So where were we?

ALICE CROW

(Standing up)

Actually, I think I've got everything I came for - thank you for seeing me Doctor West.

Alice extends a hands and West shakes it.

DOCTOR WEST

It's been a pleasure Miss Crow -
I'm sorry I couldn't be of more
assistance.

ALICE CROW

Oh, you've been extremely helpful.

West nods and opens the door for her - he watches her
intently as she departs down the corridor.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

In a cheap, sparsely-decorated hotel room, Alice paces around
in her shirt and underwear talking on the telephone.

ALICE CROW

No - I spoke with West... no - I
didn't see him... yeah - I'm sure -
something definitely doesn't add
up... no - I'm still in Arkham -
I'm staying in a hotel... I'm not
sure - I'm gonna go through these
files and see what I can find -
then I'll decide...

Alice sits down on the bed and - cradling the receiver under
her chin - reaches for her bag. She pulls out the files she
took from West's office and starts thumbing through the one
marked 'Derby, E.P.'

ALICE CROW (CONT'D)

Oh, they'll know - hopefully they
won't notice for a couple of days
though... don't worry - I can take
care of myself...

The folder is filled with charts, an admission form, a
photograph of Edward Derby and notes from West's sessions
with him. Alice scans the pages before setting down Edward's
file and picking up another one marked 'Upton, D.'

ALICE CROW (CONT'D)

I spoke to them... no... they
weren't any help... I know we don't
have much to go on - hang on a
second...

Amongst the contents of the folder is a faded letter,
spattered with dark stains - Alice pulls it out and holds it
under the light from the bedside lamp, gazing intently at the
hand-written script.

ALICE CROW (CONT'D)

I think I may have just found
something... no...

(MORE)

ALICE CROW (CONT'D)
 it's a letter - in Upton's file...
 I don't know yet - I'll call you
 back...

She sets down the receiver with a click and begins to read.

FADE TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

A thunderous storm rages outside as DANIEL UPTON hunches over a large oak desk in his drawing room writing feverishly with a fountain pen on a piece of paper.

DANIEL UPTON
 (V.O.)
 It's true that I have sent six
 bullets through the body of my best
 friend, and yet I hope to show by
 this statement that I am not his
 murderer. Rather I have avenged
 him, and in doing so purged the
 earth of a horror whose survival
 might have loosed untold terrors on
 all mankind.

He flinches and pauses for a moment as the intensity of the storm causes the house to shake. Reaching for a nearby glass of whiskey, with an unsteady hand he takes a gulp - his nervous gaze wanders to a shapeless form covered in an old overcoat that lies on the floor in front of him. He sits transfixed before turning his attention back to the page in front of him.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)
 (V.O.)
 There are black zones of shadow
 close to our daily paths, and now
 and then some evil soul breaks a
 passage through. When that happens,
 the man who knows must strike
 before reckoning the consequences.

FADE TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Daniel Upton is sat at his desk working on architectural plans for an Art Deco building - the sun shines brightly into the room as he smokes a pipe and meticulously adds notes and details to the drawing.

DANIEL UPTON
 (V.O.)
 I had known Edward Pickman Derby
 all his life.
 (MORE)

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Eight years my junior, we had much in common from the time he was eight and I sixteen. Our joint love of shadows and marvels was, no doubt, due to the ancient and subtly fearsome town in which we lived - witch cursed, legend haunted Arkham.

Three sharp knocks on Upton's front door rouse him from his work - after a brief moment another two knocks sound out - Upton puts down his pipe and grins as he walks towards the door and swings it open enthusiastically. Standing on his doorstep with a brown paper package tucked under one arm is EDWARD DERBY.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Derby you old devil! What're you doing here? I thought you were in Europe?

The old friends shake hands and Upton ushers Derby into his home.

EDWARD DERBY

Hello Dan - Actually I've been back for a little while now.

DANIEL UPTON

(Frowning playfully)

And you only drop by to see me now? Honestly Edward, I thought your parents did a better job of raising you than that.

EDWARD DERBY

In father's defence, he has been badgering me to come and see you...

DANIEL UPTON

Well at least there's some respectability left in the family!

EDWARD DERBY

But in my defense, I've been rather busy with something I wanted to finish first...

Derby hands over the brown paper package to Upton and reclines on his couch, grinning.

DANIEL UPTON

(Looks quizzically at the package)

Bribery won't let you off the hook you know.

EDWARD DERBY

It seems I'm not the only one
that's forgotten their manners -
you haven't even offered me a
drink!

DANIEL UPTON

Obviously your poor example is
rubbing off on me - what can I get
you?

EDWARD DERBY

Don't worry - I'll fetch the drinks
- you open your present.

Derby goes over to Upton's drinks cabinet and fixes them both
a scotch as Upton tears away the wrapping from his gift
revealing a black, leather-bound book with the title
'Azathoth and Other Horrors' embossed in gold - the author is
E.P. Derby.

DANIEL UPTON

You finished it!

EDWARD DERBY

Finally!

Derby hands Upton a glass of scotch and sinks back down on
the couch.

EDWARD DERBY (CONT'D)

Most of the editing was done whilst
I was travelling but when I got
back to Arkham I needed to sort out
the lithographs and the binding and
such.

DANIEL UPTON

(Thumbing through the
pages)

Are you publishing it?

EDWARD DERBY

Oh goodness no, I doubt anyone
except you would want to read it!
I've had a few copies made but
that's the first one - and I wanted
you to have it.

DANIEL UPTON

I don't know what to say.

EDWARD DERBY

(Grinning)

Well firstly, you can apologize for
giving your old friend such a hard
time!

DANIEL UPTON

Well, I...

EDWARD DERBY

Oh don't trouble yourself Dan - I feel dreadful for not stopping by sooner - I hope this small gift in some way makes up for that.

DANIEL UPTON

Hardly a small gift - it really is quite extraordinary - who did you get to illustrate it?

EDWARD DERBY

Well, obviously there was a problem with my first choice - talented chap but damned unreliable - can you believe that after being offered the opportunity to illustrate my life's work the ungrateful fellow took off to Boston to study as an architect?

DANIEL UPTON

(Blushing)

Really? That's... quite inconsiderate of him...

EDWARD DERBY

Oh, I don't blame him - rumor has it he's made quite a name for himself in architectural circles - I hear he has some very respectable clients in New York.

DANIEL UPTON

Alright Derby - enough about me - tell me about your book.

EDWARD DERBY

You remember that time I was in Milwaukee?

DANIEL UPTON

Yes - you stayed for a few days as I recall.

EDWARD DERBY

I didn't want to tell you at the time, but the reason I was there was to seek out an artist whose work I was familiar with - a fellow by the name of Blake.

DANIEL UPTON

Robert Blake? I thought I recognized the style - here - let me get you another.

Upton takes Derby's glass and goes to the drinks cabinet to pour them both another drink.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

So how was Europe? I hope you didn't spend all of your time working on your book?

EDWARD DERBY

Oh no - mostly towards the end of the trip. It was good to get away - father had the usual places he wanted to visit - I did manage to get him off the beaten path from time to time though.

DANIEL UPTON

Really? Anywhere interesting?

Upton hands Derby his drink and sits back down.

EDWARD DERBY

We travelled around Romania for a bit but I really wanted to visit that Hungarian village that Justin Geoffrey wrote about in 'People of the Monolith' - sadly I wasn't able to find any guides that would take us there.

DANIEL UPTON

Didn't he go mad after visiting that place?

EDWARD DERBY

Well that's what makes it so interesting - besides, you know me - always fascinated by the morbid and the bizarre.

DANIEL UPTON

(Smiles)

I remember when you weren't let out of the house without your nanny - now look at you - exploring the dark corners of the earth.

EDWARD DERBY

(Laughs)

Well I rather suspect that if mother were alive I'd still be accompanied by nanny everywhere - in fact she'd be sitting next to me right now.

DANIEL UPTON

How's your father coping?

EDWARD DERBY

He misses her terribly of course - we both do. The travelling helped but sooner or later you have to come home.

DANIEL UPTON

(Nods sadly)

I know what you mean. Still - it's good to have you back - it hasn't been the same around here without you.

The two men clink their glasses together.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

So what are your plans now?

EDWARD DERBY

Well, I did have some ideas for a second book but I must confess I've found myself rather distracted since I've returned to Arkham.

DANIEL UPTON

Distracted?

EDWARD DERBY

(Blushes)

Well... I... I don't really know how to say this old boy...

DANIEL UPTON

Say what? Spit it out man!

EDWARD DERBY

Well Upton I uh... I do believe I'm in love.

DANIEL UPTON

I knew it! I knew there was something you weren't telling me!

EDWARD DERBY

(Flustered)

Yes... well...

DANIEL UPTON

So who is this fortunate young lady? And where did you meet her?

EDWARD DERBY

Oh very well - her name is Asenath and I met her at the Miskatonic University library.

DANIEL UPTON

Go on.

EDWARD DERBY

Well, I wanted to check a few details before I sent my book off for printing so I stopped by the library and there she was - she was under the watchful eye of old Armitage who'd arranged for her to examine some of the rarer works and well... I waited for him to go off and attend to other matters and then I uh... introduced myself.

DANIEL UPTON

And?

EDWARD DERBY

It turns out she's a student of Mediaeval Metaphysics at M.U. and believe it or not, the book she was studying was the Necronomicon!

DANIEL UPTON

Surely not!

EDWARD DERBY

I swear to you! It was actually more a bundle of parchments than a book as such but the text was clearly Latin - I couldn't believe it at first but Asenath confirmed it!

DANIEL UPTON

So all those rumors we heard were true?

EDWARD DERBY

Yes indeed! The black book of Abdul Alhazred in the library of Miskatonic University!

DANIEL UPTON

So then what happened?

EDWARD DERBY

Well I have to say, my excitement got the better of me and I suddenly realized I was behaving like an excitable schoolboy - I think Asenath found it quite amusing though because she actually translated some of it for me.

DANIEL UPTON

Really? She reads Latin?

EDWARD DERBY

Oh yes - and speaks it too - you know me, other than French I'm a duffer at languages but she sounded quite fluent.

DANIEL UPTON

So what did it say?

EDWARD DERBY

Well, the passage she read out was a couplet - now how did it go? "That is not dead which can eternal lie. And with strange aeons even death may die." - she said it's a reference to the "Great Old Ones" - godlike creatures that walked the earth at the beginning of time.

DANIEL UPTON

Incredible. So what happened next?

EDWARD DERBY

Well, Armitage came back and didn't seem too happy with me hovering around those pages so I beat a hasty retreat.

DANIEL UPTON

That's it?

EDWARD DERBY

Not quite - I finished up my research but - well - I couldn't help but glance back at her a few times and every time I did she was looking right at me - I don't think I've ever blushed so hard in my life.

DANIEL UPTON

(Laughing)

Well you obviously made an impression Ed!

EDWARD DERBY

Well, I suppose - anyway, I left the library and stood outside for ten minutes cursing myself for not having the courage to ask her out to dinner when suddenly I had the feeling someone was watching me - I turned around and there she was - smiling this strange smile.

DANIEL UPTON

Strange? How?

EDWARD DERBY

Well I don't know - kind of like - she knew something about me that I didn't know myself. Does that make any sense?

DANIEL UPTON

I can't say it does old boy, but you're obviously quite taken with her.

EDWARD DERBY

Oh, she takes my breath away Dan - she has the most beautiful raven hair and she looks so delicate that she might break if you were to touch her. But she has the most amazing mind too - as sharp as a razor - and she's widely read - she can quote from books and tomes that I've only ever heard of as rumors.

DANIEL UPTON

So where is she from? Do her parents live in Arkham?

EDWARD DERBY

Well, uh - actually no, she's uh - she's a Waite.

DANIEL UPTON

As in the Innsmouth Waites?

EDWARD DERBY

Let me stop you there Dan - I know we've spent many evenings discussing the tales that come from that decrepit seaport - but Asenath assures me that whilst there are some unsavory elements in Innsmouth, there are many respectable families too.

DANIEL UPTON

I'm sorry Edward - I hadn't meant to imply anything - it's just well - you are aware of the stories surrounding Ephraim's death?

EDWARD DERBY

I read the article in the Arkham Advertiser and yes, I did mention it to Asenath - she doesn't like to talk about it but apparently the old man locked himself in the attic and then swallowed the key before taking a poison - she said he was quite mad at the end.

DANIEL UPTON

That must have been very hard on her.

EDWARD DERBY

That's why she came to Arkham - the memories of the old place in Innsmouth were too painful for her and she hoped by enrolling in M.U. and burying herself in her studies she could get away from the ghosts of the past.

Upton reaches out and pats Derby's shoulder.

DANIEL UPTON

Well she couldn't have wished for a more sensitive companion - so when do I get to meet the object of your affections?

EDWARD DERBY

Well obviously I've told her all about you old boy - I'll speak with her and arrange something - perhaps later this week?

DANIEL UPTON

You know you can stop by any time.

EDWARD DERBY

(Gesturing at the clock)

Speaking of time, I've already taken up far too much of yours Dan - I'm sure your clients in New York would be most distressed to know how much I'm costing them.

Derby gets up to leave.

DANIEL UPTON

That's the advantage of being in
Arkham whilst they're in New York.
It's damned good to see you again
Ed.

EDWARD DERBY

And you Dan - enjoy the book.

Upton closes the door and, still smiling walks back his desk - he pauses for a moment as a frown crosses his face and goes to the bookcase. Pulling out a large scrapbook, he thumbs through newspaper articles describing strange happenings in and around Arkham - he stops at a story that reads 'Local eccentric commits suicide' - below the article there's a disturbing picture of old Ephraim Waite scowling.

FADE TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - DAY

ASENATH WAITE sits on the couch glancing around the room - her posture is stiff and upright, her hands crossed in her lap - she looks distinctly uncomfortable.

DANIEL UPTON

So ah - Miss Waite - can I offer
you a drink?

Derby sinks down on the couch next to Asenath and squeezes her hand - he gazes at her adoringly but she ignores him.

ASENATH WAITE

No thank you Mister Upton.

EDWARD DERBY

I'll have the usual thanks Dan.

ASENATH WAITE

(Turns to Ed
disapprovingly)
What did we discuss?

EDWARD DERBY

(Flustered)
I, well...

ASENATH WAITE

Edward?

EDWARD DERBY

(Sheepishly)
That uh - alcohol dulls the mind.

ASENATH WAITE

Correct.

Asenath places Ed's hand back in his lap.

DANIEL UPTON
Could I - get you some tea perhaps?

ASENATH WAITE
We're perfectly fine thank you.

Upton nods, not knowing quite what to do then sits down in an easy chair across from the couple.

DANIEL UPTON
So - Ed tells me you're studying
Mediaeval Metaphysics at M.U.

ASENATH WAITE
Yes.

DANIEL UPTON
That - that sounds interesting.

There's an uncomfortable silence for a moment before Asenath finally responds.

ASENATH WAITE
The library is interesting - or
rather some of the volumes they
have there, but the dogmatic
bleating of simpletons like
Armitage turns my stomach.

DANIEL UPTON
(Stunned)
I ah - really?

EDWARD DERBY
(Laughs nervously)
I think what Asenath meant to...

Asenath fixes Derby with a glare and he shuts up immediately.

ASENATH WAITE
Let's not waste each other's time
Mister Upton - you invited us here
because you're curious about me -
if you have any questions then I
suggest you ask them.

DANIEL UPTON
Well - if you'll forgive me for
saying so Miss Waite, your family
does have a - well, a reputation.

EDWARD DERBY
Steady on now Dan!

ASENATH WAITE
(Turns to Edward)
It's alright Edward - Mister Upton
has known you a long time - it's
only natural that he'd be
concerned.

Asenath turns back to study Upton impassively.

ASENATH WAITE (CONT'D)
So - what exactly do you wish to
know?

DANIEL UPTON
Well uh, there's been a lot of
disturbing rumors about your father
- some people claim he was...

ASENATH WAITE
A wizard?

DANIEL UPTON
I was going to say...

ASENATH WAITE
(Interrupting)
I know my father's reputation -
'Old Wizard Waite' isn't that what
they called him?

DANIEL UPTON
Well - yes.

ASENATH WAITE
And what do you suppose that makes
his daughter?

DANIEL UPTON
(Nervous)
I uh, I didn't...

ASENATH WAITE
Do you think I'm a witch Mister
Upton?

DANIEL UPTON
(Sweating)
I - I didn't mean to imply...

ASENATH WAITE
(Leans closer)
Does that scare you?

DANIEL UPTON
I, ah...

Asenath leans back on the couch and smiles mockingly at
Upton.

ASENATH WAITE

Well you'd needn't worry - only a handful of people really knew my father, and those that did knew him as one of New England's foremost scholars.

DANIEL UPTON

What - what was it he studied?

ASENATH WAITE

Metaphysics and the occult.

DANIEL UPTON

You can understand how some may have found that disturbing.

ASENATH WAITE

Only those with preconceived notions. People associate the occult with black magic and witchcraft when in fact, like metaphysics, it merely seeks to understand that which exists beyond the physical world.

DANIEL UPTON

Is that why you've been translating the Necronomicon?

ASENATH WAITE

The 'Al Azif' to give it it's correct name - yes, I'm following up my father's research.

DANIEL UPTON

What kind of research?

ASENATH WAITE

You're not a religious man are you?

DANIEL UPTON

I uh, no - I prefer to put my faith in the sciences.

ASENATH WAITE

Well, ignoring the obvious contradiction, tell me - are you familiar with Darwin's theories?

DANIEL UPTON

Yes - his thoughts on natural selection make a great deal of sense.

ASENATH WAITE

Except that evolution only explains why we walk on two legs and why our brains are larger than our primate ancestors - it doesn't explain why we are as alien to them as they are to us.

DANIEL UPTON

I'm not sure I follow...

ASENATH WAITE

Consciousness Mister Upton. The mind, the soul - it separates us from all other life on this planet. We've created language, mathematics, philosophy and art, whilst our nearest genetic cousins have languished in the trees - evolution has no answers for why this is.

EDWARD DERBY

She's dashed clever isn't she Dan?

Upton glances at his friend but says nothing before turning his attention back to Asenath.

DANIEL UPTON

So what did your father think?

ASENATH WAITE

Like yourself, he was a man of science. Philosophy presents many theories, but can prove nothing. Religion is even worse, as any serious questions are met with the clumsy response that it's 'God's will'. For answers, my father turned to the occult.

DANIEL UPTON

But the Necro - uh, Al Azif - these books - they were written centuries ago by superstitious people that had a fraction of the knowledge we do now...

ASENATH WAITE

Whilst their primitive conclusions may have been false, there may be much truth in what they witnessed.

DANIEL UPTON

(Smiles and shakes his head)

(MORE)

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I find it difficult to accept there's anything they could have discovered that hasn't been explained by science.

ASENATH WAITE
Except that they were free to conduct experiments that modern society would find - distasteful, and in their crude observations may lie the secrets to unlocking life's mysteries.

DANIEL UPTON
That's what your father believed?

ASENATH WAITE
Belief is a half-truth Mister Upton - is sits uncomfortably between faith and fact. My father believed nothing - there was simply that which he knew to be true and that which he was yet to discover.

DANIEL UPTON
So what - truth did he discover?

ASENATH WAITE
A mind as closed as yours would struggle with even the most basic principles.

DANIEL UPTON
But...

ASENATH WAITE
Is there anything else you wished to know?

DANIEL UPTON
(Scratches his head)
I - uh - can't think of anything...

ASENATH WAITE
Then if you'll excuse us, I think it's time we were leaving.

Derby gets up to get Asenath's coat as Upton and Asenath regard each other silently.

DANIEL UPTON
It's - been a pleasure Miss Waite.

ASENATH WAITE
We really must do this again.

Asenath leaves but Ed hesitates before following her.

EDWARD DERBY

I ah - I think that went rather well.

DANIEL UPTON

Yes - she's uh - she's charming.

Ed nods and is about to leave when Dan stops him.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Listen - Ed...

EDWARD DERBY

What is it old boy?

DANIEL UPTON

You know I don't like to interfere in your business but - just - take things slowly...

Ed glances out the door and back at Dan.

EDWARD DERBY

(Whispers)

Of course - you know me Dan - I'm not some silly love-struck fool. Take care old boy.

Upton smiles weakly and nods as Derby departs - he closes the door behind him and goes straight to the liquor cabinet to pour himself a stiff drink.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUSTICE OF THE PEACE OFFICE - DAY

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

The wedding was performed a month later - by a justice of the peace according to the bride's request.

Asenath and Edward pose for a PHOTOGRAPHER on the steps of a red brick building with an impressive entrance flanked by white pillars. Asenath wears a flowing silk wedding dress and Edward looks gallant standing next to her in an expensive suit. Whilst Edward is brimming with pride, Asenath maintains her icy demeanor.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Edward's father offered no opposition and he and I attended the brief ceremony accompanied by some of Edward and Asenath's university friends.

Upton stands to one side with EDWARD'S FATHER, gathered around are other WEDDING GUESTS - all in their early-to-mid twenties and fashionably dressed. As the photographer takes a picture, the guests throw confetti into the air.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE CROWNINSHIELD PLACE - DAY

A dirty, grey motor-coach with hand-painted signage that reads 'Joe Sargent Taxi - Arkham - Innsmouth - Newb'port' sits alongside Asenath's 1930's Packard. Behind the vehicles looms a once-impressive, Georgian-style Colonial house which has fallen into a state of disrepair.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

Asenath bought the old Crowninshield place at the end of High Street. After a short trip to Innsmouth to retrieve books and other items, they settled there with two servants previously employed by her father.

The TAXI DRIVER helps Asenath's servants, MOSES SARGENT and ABIGAIL SARGENT unload suitcases and trunks from the motor-coach as Derby hesitantly approaches the decrepit building.

FADE TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Edward sits on Upton's couch, glass of whiskey in hand. He looks sad and tired, all traces of his cheerful exuberance seemingly gone. His mannerisms and gestures hint of despair as he talks and Upton silently listens.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

When Edward called on me after the honeymoon I thought he looked slightly changed. He looked sober and thoughtful, his habitual pout being exchanged for a look of genuine sadness.

FADE TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Upton sits at his desk working on architectural drawings of a new building - he glances up from his work and a framed wedding photograph of Edward and Asenath catches his eye. He picks it up and studies it for a moment.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

Over time I saw less and less of Derby. A fortnight or more would sometimes slip by without his familiar knock at the front door. And when he did call, he preferred not to talk of his wife.

The telephone rings loudly, jolting Upton from his thoughts - he sets the picture back down then crosses the room to pick up the receiver.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Hello?

EDWARD DERBY

(O.S.)

Dan?

DANIEL UPTON

Ed! Where've you been? I was beginning to worry...

EDWARD DERBY

(O.S.)

Dan - I - I have to be quick... Can we meet?

DANIEL UPTON

Of course - come right over.

EDWARD DERBY

(O.S.)

No - not at your house - can you meet me at the library?

DANIEL UPTON

(Concerned)

I'll come right away... Edward - what's this about? Are you alright?

EDWARD DERBY

(O.S.)

I'll explain when I see you - I have to go.

There's a click as Derby hangs up - Upton looks at the receiver for a moment before placing it slowly back on the hook - he then turns and grabs his hat and coat.

CUT TO:

INT. MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARY - DAY

Wooden shelves are packed with books on the sciences and philosophy. Several heavy tables have Miskatonic University students hunched over them as they quietly study.

Edward sits at one of the these, looking around anxiously as if he's being watched. Upton enters the library and removes his hat - spotting Edward he pulls up a chair and sits down.

DANIEL UPTON

(Quietly)

Edward - what's going on?

EDWARD DERBY

(Looking around furtively)

It's those damned servants of hers - they watch my every move. She doesn't like me coming to see you so I told her I was coming here to do some research.

DANIEL UPTON

I don't understand - what's happened?

EDWARD DERBY

It's what's happening Dan - you know that stuff Asenath told you about the mind - the soul?

DANIEL UPTON

Her father's research - what about it?

EDWARD DERBY

It's not just research - she really believes it. In fact it's not just her - I've - I've seen things - seen her do things that shouldn't be possible - not in a sane and rational world.

DANIEL UPTON

(Alarmed)

What kind of things?

EDWARD DERBY

Ephraim - he had a theory - what if the mind wasn't of this earth? What if, like the body it evolved over countless centuries - but separate to life on this planet! At some point the path of humans and this 'consciousness' crossed and the two became one.

DANIEL UPTON

Ed - I don't see what this...

EDWARD DERBY

(Raises his voice)

Just listen man!

Edward and Upton glance around to see several students looking disapprovingly in their direction - Derby leans forward across the table.

EDWARD DERBY (CONT'D)

(Whispering)

Now imagine, just imagine - if this creature - this mind - were able to break the bond with its host and find a new one. On and on it could travel Dan - discarding the shell when it's no longer of use. It would live forever.

DANIEL UPTON

It's - It's a fascinating theory - but it belongs in the pages of the Necronomicon and all those other superstitious books that we used to talk about. It's fantasy Ed.

EDWARD DERBY

(Nods and smiles weakly)

Yes. You're right of course old boy - there's no place for this sort of nonsense in the modern world. I'm - I'm sorry if I worried you.

DANIEL UPTON

Are you going to be OK?

Edward stands up to leave - he doesn't reply but nods unconvincingly.

EDWARD DERBY

Take care Dan.

FADE TO:

EXT. CHRISTCHURCH CEMETERY - DAY

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

About this time old Mr. Derby died, for which I was afterward very thankful. Edward was badly upset - he'd had seen little of his father since his marriage - his wife had encouraged him to cut most of his ties with his old life.

A group of MOURNERS dressed in black attend the funeral of Edward's father - Edward and Upton are there but Asenath is absent from the ceremony. A PRIEST reads from the bible as the party pays its last respects.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

After the funeral, Edward wished to move back into the family home but Asenath insisted on them staying at the Crowninshield place. Later, word reached me that he and his wife were travelling in Europe - several months passed before I saw Edward Derby again.

FADE TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Upton stoops by his front door to pick up a number of letters - thumbing through them he comes across a Western Union telegram which he opens and begins to read.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

Derby had been married over a year when I got the telegram from Maine.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHESUNCOOK COUNTY WOODS - DAY

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

The Chesuncook Marshal had wired me of a draggled madman who stumbled out of the woods with delirious ravings and screamed to me for protection.

The CHESUNCOOK MARSHAL and his DEPUTY look down at the shivering, delirious form of Edward Derby - he's naked, covered with cuts and bruises and painted all over him are strange runes and sigils.

CHESUNCOOK MARSHAL

(Removing his sunglasses)

Sweet Lord Jesus.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S CAR - EVENING

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

Chesuncook is close to the wildest, deepest, and least explored forest belt in Maine, and it took a whole day of feverish jolting through fantastic and forbidding scenery to get there by car.

Upton drives along narrow country paths, his headlights barely penetrating the mist ahead of him as bushes and hedgerows flash past.

CUT TO:

INT. CHESUNCOOK COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

I found Derby in the cells - he knew me at once, and began pouring out a meaningless, half-incoherent torrent of words.

Upton removes his hat as he enters the jail - Derby is dressed in jail clothes and is huddled on the floor of his cell. The deputy opens the door and Edward, recognizing his friend reaches out to hug him, sobbing like a child.

EDWARD DERBY

(Hysterical)

I was there Dan - the pit of the shoggoths! Down the six thousand steps - I wouldn't let her take me, and then I found myself there! The shape rose up from the altar and the Hooded Thing bleated Kamog! Kamog! That was Ephraim's secret name! I was there, where she promised she wouldn't take me! I can't stand it Dan - I'll kill her if she ever sends me there again!

Upton holds his friend tightly as Edward's rants subside and he shakes and sobs in Dan's arms. Upton looks up at the deputy with a look of bewilderment and fear.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S CAR - NIGHT

Upton's car speeds along twisting country roads as he leaves Chesuncook behind him and heads back towards Arkham. Edward sits in the passenger seat with a blanket wrapped around him - he gazes out the window and mumbles quietly to himself.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

On the journey back to Arkham I resolved to put Edward up at my house for a time - later I would help him get a divorce, for there were mental factors which clearly made this marriage suicidal for him.

EDWARD DERBY

(Mumbling)

Getting hold of me. Longer and longer. Won't let go - won't ever let me go.

DANIEL UPTON

(Glancing at his friend)

We're nearly home Ed - you're staying with me until you're well again - I'll deal with Asenath.

EDWARD DERBY

It's not Asenath - it's him.

DANIEL UPTON

Him? Who?

EDWARD DERBY

Don't you remember Dan? The wild eyes and his beard that never turned white? He looked at me once in the library and I never forgot it - now she looks at me that way - and I know why! He found it - in the pages of the Necronomicon!

DANIEL UPTON

What are you talking about?

EDWARD DERBY

(Hysterical)

Ephraim! He means never to die!

Edward suddenly howls in pain and clutches his head - Upton brakes hard to bring the car to a stop.

DANIEL UPTON

Edward! What's wrong!?

Derby continues to thrash and scream for a few moments before falling silent. Upton reaches out tentatively towards his friend.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Ed?

Derby sits up and looks at Upton - his posture seems strangely different and he speaks with a forethought and determination that makes him sound more like Asenath than Edward.

EDWARD DERBY

I do apologize for that Upton - I'm alright now.

DANIEL UPTON
 (Shocked by the
 transformation)
 I - perhaps we ought to take you to
 a doctor?

EDWARD DERBY
 That's not necessary - if you
 wouldn't mind, just take me home -
 I've been away for several days and
 doubtless Asenath will be
 concerned.

DANIEL UPTON
 (Uneasy)
 Well uh - if you're sure?

EDWARD DERBY
 Quite sure thank you.

Upton starts the car and they continue their journey towards
 Arkham.

EDWARD DERBY (CONT'D)
 I hope you'll forgive my attack
 back there - you know what my
 nerves can be. I'm very grateful
 for this lift of course.

DANIEL UPTON
 (Glancing nervously at
 Derby)
 You uh - you said you'd been away
 for a few days?

EDWARD DERBY
 (Nods)
 There are certain Indian relics in
 the north wood - standing stones
 and such - Asenath and I are
 following that stuff up. It was a
 hard search and it seems to have
 taken its toll on me.

DANIEL UPTON
 How - how is Asenath?

EDWARD DERBY
 Well. Which reminds me, please
 don't pay any attention to things I
 may have said about my wife - or
 any absurd things in general -
 that's what comes from over-study
 of bizarre concepts and
 philosophies.

(MORE)

EDWARD DERBY (CONT'D)
 I'll take a rest - you probably
 won't see me for a while.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CROWNINSHIELD PLACE - NIGHT

Upton's car pulls up outside the Crowninshield place.
 Lightning flashes across the night sky.

DANIEL UPTON
 (V.O.)
 We reached Arkham around midnight,
 and found the lights still on at
 the Crowninshield place. Derby left
 the car with a hasty repetition of
 his thanks and I drove home with a
 curious feeling of relief.

At the attic window, Asenath watches Upton's car pull away -
 her desperate, tear-stained face momentarily illuminated by
 the lightning outside.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

Upton sits in his easy chair thumbing through the pages of
 'Azathoth and Other Horrors'.

DANIEL UPTON
 (V.O.)
 Edward's transformation during that
 terrible ride from Chesuncook
 troubled me. That a man whom I'd
 known his entire life, could in an
 instant become a total stranger
 seemed beyond belief. I had grave
 concerns about his state of mind
 and wondered whether the matter
 should be handled by Derby's
 physician.

Three knocks sound out on the front door followed a moment
 later by another two - Upton closes the book and puts it to
 one side then hurries to open the door.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)
 Edward! It's been more than a month
 - are you..?

Derby looks shabby and anxious but glad to see his friend.

EDWARD DERBY
 I'm alright Dan - could I get a
 drink?

DANIEL UPTON

Of course - sit yourself down.

Rather than go to the couch, Ed wanders to the window and glances outside as if he's looking for something or someone.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

(Handing Derby his drink)

Are you sure you're alright?

Derby takes a nervous gulp of his drink and sits down - Upton goes to his easy chair and waits for Ed to speak.

EDWARD DERBY

Asenath's gone. We had a long talk last night - while the servants were out. I made her promise to stop... preying on me. She got frightfully angry - just - packed and walked out to catch the eight-twenty to Boston.

DANIEL UPTON

I'm - sorry Ed. What did you tell the servants?

EDWARD DERBY

I paid them off this morning when they got back. They were ugly about it but they went. They're her kind - Innsmouth people. I hope they'll leave me alone - I didn't like the way they laughed when they walked away.

DANIEL UPTON

So - what - happened to you?

EDWARD DERBY

It was horrible - she was making a prisoner of me. I had to save myself - she'd have got me for good at Hallowmass - they hold a Sabbat up there beyond Chesuncook, and that would have clinched things.

DANIEL UPTON

Edward - you're - you're not making any sense...

EDWARD DERBY

Some people Dan - know things - about the universe that nobody ought to know, and can do things that nobody ought to be able to do.

(MORE)

EDWARD DERBY (CONT'D)
 Knowing what I do now, I'd burn
 that damned Necronomicon and all
 the rest if I were librarian at
 Miskatonic.

Upton nods but says nothing and takes Edward's glass to fetch
 him another drink.

DANIEL UPTON
 (V.O.)

Edward was reluctant to answer my
 questions so I turned the subject
 to his immediate plans - we spoke
 of him moving back to the Derby
 mansion and rehiring his father's
 staff - I was glad when he asked if
 he could stay for the evening as I
 hated the thought of him returning
 to the Crowninshield place.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Upton's bedroom is illuminated by silver moonlight - he's
 unable to sleep and looks troubled - he grabs the clock on
 his bedside table - it's 3 am. He closes his eyes and tries
 to get some sleep but is suddenly startled by hideous screams
 from the drawing room downstairs. Leaping out of bed, he
 throws on his dressing gown and rushes to investigate.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Upton turns the lights on in the drawing room - Ed is curled
 up in a ball on the couch, clutching at his head and
 screaming horribly.

DANIEL UPTON
 (Horrificed)
 Edward!

Upton grabs his friend and holds him close - his screams turn
 into hysterical rambling as he shakes and convulses in
 Upton's arms.

EDWARD DERBY
 God help me! Again and again -
 she's trying! Kamog! The pit of the
 shoggoths! Ia! Shub-Niggurath! The
 Goat with a Thousand Young! I
 should have known Dan - nothing can
 stop that force - not distance nor
 magic, nor death - it comes and
 comes, mostly in the night - I
 can't leave - I can't leave! Help
 me! Help me Dan!

Upton holds his friend until the rantings subside then, with a mix of fear and pity in his eyes he goes to the telephone.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

I did the only thing I could and called Edward's doctor. The following morning he visited with two specialists and that evening a closed car took Derby's poor struggling body to Arkham Sanitarium.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, CORRIDOR - DAY

A gleaming corridor of tiled walls and heavy steel doors with a black and white linoleum floor. Upton is talking to DOCTOR WEST and stands next to a door that has 'Derby, E.P.' written on it.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

I was made Edward's guardian and called on him twice weekly - how much hope of recovery there was, no one could say, but I tried my best to remain optimistic.

Upton looks through a peep-hole into the padded cell and sees Derby, mumbling to himself and drawing arcane symbols on the walls with a piece of charcoal.

EDWARD DERBY

I had to do it - I had to do it -
it'll get me - it'll get me - down
there - down there in the dark -
Mother! Mother! Dan! Save me - save
me!

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Upton stands at the window in his drawing room, gazing sadly at the world outside - the telephone rings and he crosses the room to answer it.

DANIEL UPTON

Hello?

DOCTOR WEST

(O.S.)

Mr. Upton?

DANIEL UPTON

Doctor West? Is there any news?

DOCTOR WEST

(O.S.)

Actually yes - it's quite extraordinary but, well - I've just been to see Edward and there appears to have been a dramatic improvement.

DANIEL UPTON

That's wonderful!

DOCTOR WEST

(O.S.)

Indeed - by all appearances he's as sane as you or I.

DANIEL UPTON

Are you going to release him?

DOCTOR WEST

(O.S.)

We'd like to keep him in for a few days - just to be sure - but all being well, I expect he'll be out in a week.

DANIEL UPTON

Thank you so much Doctor! Can I pay him a visit?

DOCTOR WEST

(O.S.)

Of course - I'm sure he'll be delighted to see you.

DANIEL UPTON

I'll come at once!

DOCTOR WEST

(O.S.)

Then I'll see you shortly.

Upton sets the phone back on the hook with a look of relief and excitement - he quickly grabs his hat and coat then rushes for the door.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM - DAY

Upton hurriedly walks along the corridors of Arkham Sanitarium talking excitably with Doctor West.

DANIEL UPTON

So he's back to normal?

DOCTOR WEST

So it seems - his short-term memory is quite badly impaired though.

DANIEL UPTON

Impaired?

DOCTOR WEST

Yes - he doesn't appear to recall any of the events that led to his admission.

DANIEL UPTON

But no long-term damage?

DOCTOR WEST

Not that we've noted - he's been holding rational conversations with myself and the other staff and there's been no sign of the anxiety and delusions he was suffering.

DANIEL UPTON

That's incredible!

DOCTOR WEST

To be honest, we're at something of a loss to explain it - as you know, he hadn't been responding well to the treatment.

DANIEL UPTON

The important thing is that he's well again.

DOCTOR WEST

Yes - of course.

The pair arrive outside Edward's cell and West motions to an ORDERLY to unlock the door. Upton steps into the cell.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM, PADDED CELL - DAY

Upton smiles in anticipation of seeing his old friend, but the moment he sees Derby, the smile is replaced by a look of shock - Edward looks much older and has a tangled, iron-grey beard. That, and the intense look in his eyes makes him look uncannily like old Ephraim Waite.

EDWARD DERBY

(Extending a hand)

Hello Upton - how good of you to visit.

The voice betrays no hint of warmth and as before, sounds more like Asenath than Edward Derby. Upton says nothing for a moment before stammering out a greeting.

DANIEL UPTON

Edward - they - uh - Doctor West tells me you're feeling much better.

EDWARD DERBY

Yes - all that unpleasantness is behind me now - you might say I feel like a new man.

DANIEL UPTON

I uh...

EDWARD DERBY

The doctors tell me I'll be out within a week - an early liberty earned by an especially close confinement.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

We discussed arrangements for his release and there was nothing for me to do but give consent. Yet something was terribly, inexplicably wrong. This was a sane person - but was it the Edward Derby I had known? If not, who - or what was it?

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM - DAY

Upton stands in the corridor of the Sanitarium, arguing with Doctor West.

DOCTOR WEST

(Shaking his head)

We'll keep him under observation for a few more days but if there's no change then we have to discharge him.

DANIEL UPTON

(Desperate)

The man in that room is not Edward Derby - I don't know what's happened to him but it - it's not Edward.

DOCTOR WEST

As far as we can tell there's nothing wrong with him.

(MORE)

DOCTOR WEST (CONT'D)
We'll monitor his progress once
he's been released but there's no
reason to keep him here - you know
that.

DANIEL UPTON
But - but can't you...

DOCTOR WEST
I'm sorry Daniel. Look - you've
obviously been under a great deal
of strain - you really should get
some rest.

DANIEL UPTON
(Nods solemnly)
Yes. You're right - I'm sorry
Doctor - please keep me informed if
there's any change.

DOCTOR WEST
Of course.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Upton paces restlessly around his drawing room holding a
glass of scotch. He takes a sip and glances down at his desk -
on it sits his copy of 'Azathoth and Other Horrors' - he runs
his fingers across the gold embossed text that reads 'E.P.
Derby'.

DANIEL UPTON
(To himself)
Where are you Edward?

The phone rings making him jump - he sets down his glass and
picks up the receiver.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)
Doctor West?

There's no sound from the other end of the phone.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)
Hello?

A quiet, burbling, liquid sound can be faintly heard on the
line.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)
Hello? Who is this?

A pause and then the sound begins again - this time with more
urgency but still unintelligible.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

(Louder)

There's a problem with the line -
try calling back.

Upton sets the receiver down and watches the phone for a few moments - when it doesn't ring again he finishes his drink before hesitantly turning the light out and going to bed.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Upton lies in bed, once again unable to sleep - he tosses and turns and plumps up his pillow before lying back and sighing - a few moments pass then suddenly three knocks can be heard on the front door downstairs. Upton lies still for a moment, not sure if he imagined it when another two knocks sound out.

DANIEL UPTON

Edward?

Dan leaps out of bed and throws on his dressing gown before rushing downstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Upton flicks the lights on and rushes to the door, quickly unlocking it and flinging it open - there's no one outside.

DANIEL UPTON

Edward?

Dan takes a step out the door as a chill mist creeps across the threshold. The street outside is empty and the night is deathly quiet. He takes another step.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Ed?

Thunder booms overhead making Upton jump and he glances at the angry skies above. He looks back and is startled by a dark, shapeless form hunched in front of him.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

Jesus!

The mass lurches suddenly forward as if to grab or attack him and Upton struggles with it for a moment before flinging it to the floor of his drawing room - the mass lies there - motionless but making a gurgling, liquid noise that slowly expires.

DANIEL UPTON (CONT'D)

What the...

A large, dirty overcoat covers a diminutive, vaguely human shape. A hat and scarf conceals the face of the intruder and in an outstretched, blood and dirt-covered hand is clutched a grubby, folded piece of paper.

Upton crouches down next to the shape and looks under the hat and scarf - he recoils in horror, collapsing to the floor and clutching his hand over his mouth as he gags. Regaining his composure, he hesitantly reaches for the note and unfolds it.

Several long moments pass as Upton reads the note - the horror of what he's reading etched on his face. Finally he stumbles to his feet and grabs his hat and coat before walking to his desk and placing the note down.

EDWARD DERBY

(V.O.)

Dan - go to the sanitarium and kill it. It isn't Edward Derby any more.

From a desk drawer he retrieves a Colt 1911 semi-automatic and a clip which he slaps into the pistol before chambering a round. He takes a long look at the Thing on the Doorstep then walks into the storm outside.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. WAITE HOUSE ATTIC - DAY

Dirty light seeps into a dusty, decrepit attic full of shapeless junk covered in dust-sheets - EPHRAIM WAITE closes the sturdy wooden door and locks it securely with a brass key.

EDWARD DERBY

(V.O.)

I know now what devilish exchange was perpetrated in that house of horror - where Ephraim had his trusting, weak-willed child at his mercy.

Ephraim swallows the key then produces a vial with a clear liquid which he unstoppers and drinks from before settling into a dusty chair and gazing intensely at the door.

CUT TO:

INT. WAITE HOUSE CELLAR - DAY

Asenath is naked and bound to a heavy wooden chair in the basement. Moses and Abigail Sargent painstakingly paint arcane symbols on her struggling body.

MOSES SARGENT

(Chanting)

Ph'nglui mglw'nath Cthulhu R'lyeh
wgah'nagl fhtagn.

ABIGAIL SARGENT

(Chanting)

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

The chair sits in the middle of a chalk pentagram surrounded by bowls of incense and candles which sputter as the chanting grows louder.

EDWARD DERBY

(V.O.)

He took her - permanently. But that
wasn't enough - now he has me - and
he means to go on and on - body to
body.

Asenath arches her back and screams then suddenly stops struggling and falls limp - slowly she raises her head and her eyes blaze with the same determined glare that old Ephraim had.

CUT TO:

INT. WAITE HOUSE ATTIC - DAY

In the dusty attic, Ephraim - or what used to be Ephraim - claws at the locked door crying like a child - as the old hands fumble with the brass door knob the body contorts with a wracking cough as Ephraim/Asenath begins to spit up blood.

CUT TO:

INT. CROWNINSHIELD CELLAR - NIGHT

Asenath stands in the stone basement of the Crowninshield place - in front of her is a bench full of occult and chemistry-related paraphernalia.

EDWARD DERBY

(V.O.)

I lied when I said she'd gone away.
I killed her. I had to. We were
alone, I saw a candlestick and I
killed her with it.

Something distracts her attention and she turns to face Edward - he stands behind her, his arm raised clutching a heavy candlestick - he hesitates for a split second before smashing it into Asenath's head - she collapses to the floor but he continues to rain down blows on her, spattering himself with her blood.

BACK TO PRESENT:

EXT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM - NIGHT

Upton's car speeds towards Arkham Sanitarium as the storm rages.

EDWARD DERBY

(V.O.)

But the soul can flicker on for a while - even after the body dies. He found me - and pushed me out.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM SANITARIUM - NIGHT

Upton walks purposefully along the corridors of the Sanitarium, his gun clenched in his hand.

EDWARD DERBY

(V.O.)

I'm too far gone to talk. I couldn't manage to telephone but I can still write - I'll get fixed up somehow and bring this last word and warning - kill that thing Dan - kill it. Your friend - Ed.

Upton opens the door to Derby's cell and light falls across the inhabitant who now looks almost the twin of Ephraim Waite.

EDWARD DERBY (CONT'D)

Are you here to release me Upton?

DANIEL UPTON

(Raising his gun)

In a fashion. Goodbye Edward.

Edward/Ephraim laughs horribly as Upton pulls the trigger - the bullets slam through Derby's chest and spatter blood on the white padded walls but Edward keeps laughing cruelly - he finally goes silent when a bullet goes through his head. Upton keeps pulling the trigger until the gun runs out of bullets.

FADE TO:

INT. DANIEL UPTON'S DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

As the storm continues to rage outside, Daniel Upton finishes his hurriedly-written statement.

DANIEL UPTON

(V.O.)

Even now, I can feel the burning of the old wizard's glare - is it my imagination or does he still linger - not alive but never truly dead. Ephraim, Asenath, and Edward - who now? That is not dead which can eternal lie. And with strange aeons even death may die.

Upton sets his pen down then puts his gun to his head and pulls the trigger - his lifeless body slumps onto the desk. On the floor across from him, wearing a dirty overcoat, hat and scarf is the decomposing corpse of Asenath Waite-Derby.

FADE TO:

INT. ARKHAM HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Alice's hands shake as she sets the letter down on the bed. She runs her fingers through her hair and glances at Upton's file.

ALICE CROW

Jesus.

Grabbing the folder, she rifles through it, pulling out newspaper clippings and photographs before finding another letter - she holds it under the light.

ALICE CROW (CONT'D)

It can't be...

The almost unintelligible scrawl is Edward Derby's final letter to Upton - Alice quickly scans through it then drops it to the bed, shaking her head in disbelief. Out of the corner of her eye she notices a picture of Ephraim Waite.

ALICE CROW (CONT'D)

(Picking up the picture)

Oh God no!

She goes over to the dresser and grabs another file - setting it under the lamp she opens it, revealing employee records for the sanitarium - she casts a few aside including one for Doctor West before finding the picture she's looking for.

ALICE CROW (CONT'D)

(Holding up both pictures)

That's not possible!

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR WHITE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The shelves of Doctor White's office are heaving with artefacts and books - the Necronomicon and other tomes from the Church of the Starry Wisdom sit next to bizarre, alien tablets, disturbing sculptures and strange devices.

On one wall is Ambrose Dexter's photograph of The Haunter of the Dark. Beside it hang several of Robert Blake's canvases. In one corner of the room sits the reconstructed Crookes Tube next to a strange metal cylinder of otherworldly design.

There's a knock on the office door and moments later Doctor West opens it and tentatively enters. He glances around the room apprehensively before finally speaking.

DOCTOR WEST

We... we may have a problem...

He waits uncomfortably for a moment and, getting no reply continues.

DOCTOR WEST (CONT'D)

The uh... the girl... she stole the Upton file. I... I'm not sure there's anything in there she could use as proof - or if anyone would believe her, but... if it were to get out... if they were to publish...

Over by the window, DOCTOR WHITE stands with his back to West - he's dressed in a white doctor's coat and seems to be concentrating on something in front of him. When he finally speaks, his malevolent voice is eerily familiar.

DOCTOR WHITE

You're an imbecile West.

DOCTOR WEST

But I...

DOCTOR WHITE

Alice Crow is many things... but she's not a reporter.

DOCTOR WEST

Then why..? I... I don't understand...

DOCTOR WHITE

I want to know what she's up to... and who she's working with...

DOCTOR WEST

(Nods)

What should we do?

White turns away from the window - behind him is the pedestal from the Church of the Starry Wisdom - on it, the Shining Trapezohedron, gleaming brightly. White has the tangled, iron-grey beard and wolfish, saturnine eyes of EPHRAIM WAITE.

EPHRAIM WAITE

(Impassively)

Prepare her a room.

FADE TO BLACK: