

UNTITLED MONSTER PROJECT

by

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INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

We move in on a child's bedroom. Books, toys, games, all things that bring us back to our own memories of childhood.

In bed is a little boy, SIMON BAKER (6) with bright round eyes and a button nose. Cute as can be. His father, RICHARD BAKER (30's), tucks him in.

RICHARD
Brush your teeth?

SIMON
Yes.

RICHARD
You sure? Let me smell your breath.

Simon exhales and his father curls his nose and pulls back.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Smells like a monkey's foot!

SIMON
I did!

Richard laughs and pulls the covers tight around Simon's shoulders, we can tell this father loves his son.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Dad - tell me a story.

RICHARD
Okay. One story. Then it's definitely bedtime.

SIMON
Tell me the story of the Beast of Whitechapel woods.

RICHARD
I promised your mother I wouldn't tell you that one anymore. It gives you nightmares.

SIMON
Dad, please!

RICHARD
No way - I'll have to tell you a story about a pretty, pretty princess all alone in the highest tower of a castle, waiting for her prince charming to come and give her a kiss.

SIMON
Dad!

Richard grins and turns towards the open doorway leading into the quiet hallway. He turns back and lowers his voice.

RICHARD
Is your mother asleep?

Simon nods enthusiastically.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Promise not to tell and to go straight to sleep afterwards?

Simon nods again and snuggles deeper into the blankets. We can tell this a story he cannot get enough of.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Okay - if your mother finds out it will be no dessert for a month.

SIMON
Okay.

Richard settles in, we can tell he enjoys telling the story just as much as Simon loves hearing it.

RICHARD
A long, long time ago...past the green sloping valleys and the deep dark forests, all the way up to the very top of those high mountains...

We follow Richard's voice like a wavering breeze, over Simon's wide eyes and out the window, towards the imposing dark silhouette of the massive mountains in the distance....

FADE TO:

EXT. TINY VILLAGE - DAY

We focus back in on a tiny village. It's difficult to pin down the year, but it could be anywhere from one hundred to two hundred years ago. Regardless, it fits the bill of a "long, long time ago."

RICHARD (V.O.)
There was the tiny, sleepy village of Whitechapel. All of the villagers were poor and simple folk, but good folk at that. Except for one man named Artemus Crouch.

We focus in on an old man, this is ARTEMUS CROUCH. A face like a weathered rock, no kindness in his eyes. He moves through the town like Ebenezer Scrooge, sneering at those that cross his path.

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

No one could ever figure out why Artemus Crouch was so terrible. Some said it was after his wife fell ill and died. But one thing remained, Artemus was truly a mean spirit. Now Artemus lived at the top of the village, at the very tip top of the mountain deep in the woods. The story goes that one day Artemus was walking along the river near his property when he noticed a small glint of something in the water.

Artemus stops at the bank of the river, indeed something shiny is reflecting back at him from the bottom of the water. He squints his eyes in curiosity and then notices something else a few feet away..another speck of something shiny..

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He noticed these small shiny specks leading all the way down the river and he followed it deep into the mountain until he arrived at where the water disappeared under the mighty rock.

Just as Richard describes, Artemus follows the river into a cave leading deep into the mountain.

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

To his surprise there were no longer tiny specks glimmering back at him, but huge glowing rocks. Gold! It was enough gold that he could have made himself and every resident of Whitechapel rich beyond their wildest dreams and they would have all lived happily ever after. However, Artemus didn't share the gold, in fact he didn't tell anyone. But as is in a small town, word has a way of traveling. He kept it all to himself and soon he became paranoid that others would come seeking his gold.

We see time moving forward and Artemus getting older, the glint in his eye becoming wilder and wilder. The golden glow from the water reflecting the ever growing madness on his face.

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He sat in the cave, day after day, week after week, month after month until his greed consumed him and he went completely mad. The story goes that Artemus became so obsessed with his treasure that he struck a deal with the devil himself.

We see this all play out as Richard describes it. (In silhouette lit by firelight - this is a kid's movie come on!)

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In exchange for his soul he was granted immortality to reign over his earthly possessions. But the deal came at a cost. He became frail and weak, though he never died. During one brutal winter, food was especially scarce. A lone wolf stumbled into the cave. Starved and crazed, it devoured Artemus in no more than a few snaps of his jaw. But Artemus could not die and his remains began to take over the wolf's form, transforming it into a horrible beast that was neither animal nor man. Its heart withered into ash, teeth and claws grew like rusted nails, the beast formed huge red eyes as dark as blood that could pierce the night for miles. They say, since that dreadful day, the monster has roamed the woods of Whitechapel high in those mountains...doomed to eternal life, craving flesh as Artemus once craved his gold...

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Simon lays in bed with wide eyes as Richard finishes the story with gusto.

SIMON

Do you think he's still up there in those mountains waiting for people?

RICHARD

It's just a legend Simon. It's not real.

SIMON

Michael from school said his cousin's friend's brother went into the mountains and never came back. He said that Artemus Crouch ate him and took his soul.

RICHARD

Now that's a load of bologna. It's just a story okay? I promise.

SIMON

Okay.

Richard kisses Simon on the forehead and gives him one last good tuck.

RICHARD
Goodnight Simon.

SIMON
Night Dad.

RICHARD
I love you.

SIMON
Love you too.

Richard flicks off the hallway light and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. BAKER HOUSE - DAY

Richard is getting into a pickup truck as Simon bounds through the door.

SIMON
Dad! Wait!

Richard turns and snags him in a hug. Out on the porch steps ANNETTE BAKER (early 30's) -- the beauty queen that has transformed into the perfect mother.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Can I come?

RICHARD
Not today - I have to check some equipment down at McMillan's. Grown up stuff. Besides, your mother needs some help around the house.

Simon's face falls in disappointment.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Hey - you're the man of the house today okay? I need you to take care of your mother while I'm gone.

SIMON
Okay Dad. I will.

RICHARD
That a boy. See you soon.

SIMON
Bye Dad.

Simon goes running off back to his mother. Richard gets in and pulls away from the house with Annette and Simon waving in the rear view mirror. It's such the perfect picture of the American life that we know immediately something is off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The clouds have pushed in quickly and rain pours from an angry sky overhead. Richard is listening to something appropriate on the truck radio as he squints through the wiper blades and the rain.

We see a stop sign in the distance -- not expecting much as he slows to a stop...but the tires skid.. Just enough. The shrill emergency horn of a big rig comes blaring from all directions -- then it's the piercing sound of shattering glass, crunching metal, the sickening crunch of Richard slamming against the windshield..Then everything goes dark..

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - MORNING

..As if it were all just a bad dream..but the title card tells us it isn't.

Title: 5 years later.

We focus in on a PHOTOGRAPH of happier times, Richard, Simon, and Annette. We move further into the apartment. Nothing glamorous - a little run down - but it's obvious that a lot of love exists here.

We push around the corner and into the cluttered kitchen where a small television on the counter broadcasts the morning news.

Trying to clean what she can is Annette. We recognize her from before and in the photograph, but the vibrant joy that came through has been slowly reduced over the last few years to a noticeable weight that she carries around her shoulders and in a pair of tired eyes that hide behind black rimmed glasses. We overhear the NEWSCASTER.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

...It's a sight we haven't seen in over two years in the Western Hemisphere. The lunar eclipse, a wonder of astronomy. Scientists have calculated we'll get the chance to view our very own in just a few short days...

Annette makes a disgusted face as she lifts a glass into view. It looks as if the Swamp Thing might pop out of it at any moment.

ANNETTE BAKER

Simon...

CUT TO:

INT. SIMON'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room looks like the discovery store if it were managed by a ten year old boy. Experiments, maps, books, and odd knick-knacks fill every nook and cranny. Science fair awards and ribbons also decorate the room.

We pan across his desk, petri dishes, models, and a BROCHURE reading CHAUNCEY TEMPLEBERG'S ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND WONDER! Pictures of smiling faces, lush and green scenery in the background - this place looks like fun.

Out of the closet comes Simon (now 11) - a bit clumsy, a bit nerdy, but someone that is going to break a few hearts come high school.

SIMON

Mom! Where's the flashlight?

Annette appears in the doorway.

ANNETTE BAKER

In the hallway closet...

She holds up the glass filled with moldy liquid.

ANNETTE BAKER (CONT'D)

Can we keep the mad scientist stuff away from the kitchen?

Simon lights up and snags the glass from her.

SIMON

I've been looking for that!

ANNETTE BAKER

Are you sure we can't throw that out?

SIMON

No way - it's just starting to get good.

ANNETTE BAKER

It's not going to start eating anything is it?

SIMON

Of course not. I'm introducing different types of mold to see which survive the longest in an aquatic environment.

ANNETTE BAKER

Makes sense.

Annette smirks as Simon puts the glass on his cluttered desk - clearly this is usual routine.

ANNETTE BAKER (CONT'D)

Did you pack your toothbrush?

SIMON

Yes.

He moves past her and starts fumbling around in the hallway closet..

ANNETTE BAKER

How about enough clean underwear? You know it's gross to wear the same pair two days in a row.

SIMON

Yes! Aha!

Simon retreats from the closet with a battered flashlight in hand. He flips it on and off to make sure it still works. Good as new.

As he moves past her again, she grabs him lovingly.

ANNETTE BAKER

Come here, let me look at you.

SIMON

Aww mom, come on.

ANNETTE BAKER

Let me just look at you. I'm going to miss you so much.

She fixes his hair, brushes his shoulders - all motherly things that Simon is quick to unfix.

SIMON

Mom it's only two weeks!

ANNETTE BAKER

What? A mother can't be worried about her son going to camp for the first time? You promise me you'll be safe right?

SIMON

It's science camp, mom. What could happen?

ANNETTE BAKER
I don't know, you could mix some
chemicals together and blow something up.

SIMON
Awesome.

ANNETTE BAKER
Hey - don't get any ideas. You ready?

SIMON
Yep.

ANNETTE BAKER
Okay, load it up.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Over the credit sequence we follow Annette's old, beat up station wagon through winding mountain roads. Massive, thick forests surround the road on both sides.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Annette focuses on the road as Simon has his nose buried deep into the brochure for the camp. A bright smile is spread across his face.

SIMON
Look at this - it says campers will have the opportunity to explore the local wildlife and catalogue the various species. This is going to be so cool. And I can't believe I'm going to be there during a lunar eclipse! And you know - Dr. Chauncey Templeberg was one of the most famous scientists and explorers to ever live. But then you know, he just disappeared one day.

ANNETTE BAKER
Disappeared?

SIMON
Yes - the lead theory is that he had an accident on one of his expeditions - possibly buried in an excavation in Cairo. It doesn't matter, it will be an honor to study in his academy.

Annette smiles.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Do you think we'll have to use optical microscopes with refractive lenses or do you think they'll have a functional electron microscope with electromagnetic wavelengths and a phosphor screen.

ANNETTE BAKER

Honey - I don't even know what that means.

SIMON

Yeah - they probably will Mom.

ANNETTE BAKER

Hey - maybe you'll also get to track down the legendary Artemus Crouch...

SIMON

Mom - please. It's just a stupid story that doesn't make any sense.

ANNETTE BAKER

You used to love that story. You used to beg your father to tell it to you. He had zero willpower and you would end up in bed with us for the rest of the night...

Simon rolls his eyes.

SIMON

Well I was little. I didn't know better.

Annette looks back at the road and then glances again at Simon.

ANNETTE BAKER

Can I talk to you about something important?

SIMON

Sure, mom.

ANNETTE BAKER

I know you've really wanted to go to this camp for a long time.

SIMON

Duh - like since forever.

ANNETTE BAKER

I know - and I'm sorry that I was never ready to let go. Your father, he was so much better at this stuff than I was, and ever since..

She pauses... gathers herself quickly.

ANNETTE BAKER (CONT'D)
 Ever since, it's been tough for me.

SIMON
 I know mom.

ANNETTE BAKER
 I'm so proud of you and you've done such
 a good job of taking care of me. Now it's
 your turn just to go have fun. Just go be
 a kid okay?

SIMON
 Okay.

ANNETTE BAKER
 Like maybe meet some friends -- or even
 kiss a girl.

SIMON
 Mom!

ANNETTE BAKER
 Sorry. Just remember even Einstein went
 to parties.

EXT. WHITECHAPEL - DAY

The station wagon rolls into town through a small main
 street. This is the kind of place that only has one
 traffic light that barely even serves its purpose. A
 derelict sign with faded font reads WELCOME TO
 WHITECHAPEL POP. 376. Someone has sprayed graffiti
 underneath. BEWARE THE BEAST.

ANNETTE BAKER
 Looks like I'm not the only one.

SIMON
 What a bunch of loonies.

ANNETTE BAKER
 Simon - be nice.

Annette pulls the car into a rundown gas station.

ANNETTE BAKER (CONT'D)
 I'm going to go inside and get some
 directions. The place should be right
 around here. Don't go too far away okay?

SIMON
 Of course Mom.

Annette exits while Simon checks out the surroundings.
 Something catches his eye across the street -- a rare
 looking plant for these parts.

It juts out of a clearing on the side of the street,
behind it the dense woods just seem to suck in the light.

SIMON (CONT'D)

No way!

Simon clamors out of the car, making sure to bring his pen and paper. He makes his way across towards the plant and starts to jot down copious notes on the paper as well as starting to sketch the plant.

CAW! CAW!

Simon jumps a foot in the air and spins to see only a FAT BLACK CROW sitting on top of a large WOODEN SIGN. He takes a deep breath, calming his nerves. He smiles - stupid bird.

Simon's eyes drift to the sign -- BEWARE. DANGEROUS WILDLIFE IN AREA. KEEP OUT. It's oddly creepy and on cue the trees around him begin to shake as an eerie wind passes through. His eyes dart around and notice that there are more of these signs all along the border of the woods - enough to make it very unsettling..

Then - something begins to move deep in the forest.. The branches and leaves begin to shake..something is slowly moving in his direction.

RIPP (O.S.)

Best to mind the sign.

Simon, spins around, startled. Standing a few feet away is RIPP. He looks more like a mechanic, greasy hair and dirty clothes - the slight twang of a cockney accent.

He leans against a large beat up VAN a few yards off. Simon can't believe he didn't notice him before.

SIMON

Sorry, I was just...

RIPP

I don't own the forest. Just a friendly warning is all.

Simon nods.

RIPP (CONT'D)

Name's Ripp.

Ripp sticks out a dirty hand to shake, the fingernails filled with black. Simon reluctantly shakes it.

SIMON

Simon.

RIPP

Pleasure to meet you Simon. Haven't seen you around here before.

SIMON

I'm going to science camp.

RIPP

Well then, welcome to Whitechapel Professor. My brother and I work up at the old academy. Knuckles, come out here!

KNUCKLES, similar in appearance to Ripp, stands up revealing himself behind the car. In his hands is a grease covered rag.

RIPP (CONT'D)

This is my brother. We call him Knuckles This is Simon. He's going to science camp.

KNUCKLES

Well then, pleasure to meet you professor!

Knuckles moves forward and sticks out his right hand. Simon goes to shake it, but stops short when he realizes the man's fingers have been removed at the knuckles.

KNUCKLES (CONT'D)

Oh. Sorry about that, had a little accident a few years back.

Knuckles and Ripp both laugh as if this was an old joke.

KNUCKLES (CONT'D)

Let it be a warning to ya. Stay away from the woods around here. You know...

Knuckles leans in...

KNUCKLES (CONT'D)

..the Beast of Whitechapel.

Simons blurts out a laugh.

SIMON

What? It's just a stupid story.

Ripp eyes darken and he leans in with menace.

RIPP

Be careful what you say. A lot of people go missing in these woods.

SIMON

Over the last ten years there has been a massive reduction in the deer population in this area. If people went missing it was most likely due to Wolf or Cougar attacks in an effort to find another food source.

RIPP

Let me tell you. A friend of mine had too much to drink a few years back and went missing. They found him a few days later at the bottom of a ravine, split in half..his bones licked clean. Does that sound like a Cougar or Wolf to you?

SIMON

Kind of.

RIPP

Well it wasn't...it was the beast. I know it exists. I've seen it myself. We've got proof. Pictures we took ourselves..

KNUCKLES

Twelve feet tall, with massive blood red eyes...

RIPP

Teeth like sharp daggers, could cut through your bones with a single bite.

KNUCKLES

Claws that could cut a man in half!

Ripp leans back in to finish it off with a satisfied smile.

RIPP

Some people say that Artemus Crouch is the devil himself.

OLD MAN (O.S.)

Don't listen to him!

They all turn to see an OLD MAN sitting in a chair on a porch. Weathered face, front teeth missing. An odd whistle coming out of his mouth each time he speaks...

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Those two have cooked up a hundred phony photos. All fakes. Ain't nobody buying their stories.

RIPP

Well maybe -- or maybe people just don't want to believe.

The old man snorts and waves them off. Good riddance.

RIPP (CONT'D)
See you around Professor.

Simon shakes his head as Ripp and Knuckles depart. Nothing but loonies.. Simon hears a faint growl and spins to the forest - nothing there. He lets out a breath and turns back to face the car and directly in front of him is the FACE OF A MONSTER!! Holy shit!!!

SIMON
Ahh!

He jumps back and that's when we realize it's just a wooden sculpture of the alleged beast's face. The old man is standing there with the wooden head in hand.

OLD MAN
What do you think? I whittled it myself!

We can tell things might just be starting to get to Simon.

ANNETTE BAKER (O.S.)
Hey -- buster. What happened to not too far from the car?

Simon snaps out of it and makes his way back to the car.

EXT. THE ACADEMY - AFTERNOON

The station wagon pulls into the main drive of an old estate. Ivy covered gates block the driveway. A very large, medieval looking mansion sits in the distance. Imposing - reminiscent of a cold castle. Tall trees surrounding the estate block out the sun, overgrown foliage has taken over the landscape. This place is pretty creepy.

Simon looks at the brochure - complete 180.

SIMON
Are you sure this is the right place?

Annette gets out of the car and walks towards one of the large stone pillars that holds up the ancient iron gates. Engraved in the stone -- WHITECHAPEL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE. No warmth at all..Annette pushes away some ivy that covers the rest of the engraving...In smaller font - DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF CHAUNCEY TEMPLEBERG.

ANNETTE BAKER
This is it..Sure looks a lot different than the brochure.

The gates suddenly creep open, the iron screaming out.
Annette and Simon share a look.

EXT. THE ACADEMY - CONTINUOUS

The car pulls up to the front of the academy. The front facade of the building is ancient (as is everything else surrounding it) This place has been around for a lot of lifetimes..

TWO MEN - stand outside the large doorway. Stone cold faces - sunken in features. One steps forward with a clipboard. This is FRANKLIN.

Simon and Annette step out.

FRANKLIN
Simon Baker?

Franklin's delivery is cold as ice - zero emotion.

SIMON
Yeah - that's me.

FRANKLIN
You're late. The rest of the children are already inside.

Annette steps in - trying to be cordial.

ANNETTE BAKER
Oh yeah - sorry. We got a bit lost coming over the mountains..

FRANKLIN
Ma'am.

Franklin cuts her off and motions to the other man who moves and grabs Simon's bags - this is MUTE (for obvious reasons.)

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
Please - Mister Baker..

He motions for Simon to follow the man with his bags.
Simon turns to say goodbye to his mom.

SIMON
Bye mom! See you in two weeks!

ANNETTE BAKER
Okay honey! I love you. Are you sure you don't want me to come inside?

Franklin cuts her off again.

FRANKLIN

Ma-am...

His voice deadens the air - it could subdue a Cobra.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Let me assure you he is in good hands.

Franklin points for her to be on her way.

Annette nods - completely unsure, but there is a strange sort of presence that this place and these people have that causes her to back down from ripping Simon away, jumping back into the car, and driving far away.

SIMON

Bye mom!

Simon walks towards the entrance as Annette looks on. He gives one final wave and then he is through the door.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - AFTERNOON

Simon follows Mute through the main lobby area. Extending from the lobby are poorly lit, longer than normal corridors.

Mute sets down the bags and points down one of the corridors. Simon hesitantly takes his bags and begins to walk forward. He continuously looks back over his shoulder - Mute remains statuesque, staring almost through Simon as he continues down the hallway.

Simon rounds the corner..

INT. HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

...and bumps directly into GEOFFREYS, a strange old maintenance man with a mop in his hand. A wicked scar runs down the right side of his face and over his eye which is completely white and blind.

Simon steps back, nervous..

GEOFFREYS

One twenty four is back that way - around the corner.

His voice is deep and scratchy. He speaks with a slight accent as well. It takes Simon a moment to realize he is staring at the old man.

SIMON

Sorry?

GEOFFREYS

Room one twenty four. Around the corner.

SIMON

Sorry. Thanks.

Simon steps back and then quickly takes off the opposite direction. He turns back suddenly realizing..

SIMON (CONT'D)

Oh hey...

By the time Simon turns around, Geoffreys is gone. Very strange.

INT. DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Simon turns the corner and faces the doorway into his room. Two beds sit across from each other. DAVE (11) lies on the bed to his right, staring up at the ceiling. Is this guy sedated? Things have been weird enough already - Simon is just praying that Dave is a normal kid.

Simon clears his throat and enters the room with his suitcase and back pack.

SIMON

Hey.

Without so much as a glance in Simon's direction Dave responds...

DAVE

Hey.

SIMON

Guess we're going to be roommates.

Still staring at the ceiling - clearly sounds sedated or brainwashed. What's the worst you can think of?

DAVE

Yes. Roommates.

Dave suddenly floats up to a sitting position like a Vampire arising from his coffin and turns his head towards Simon with all the fluidity of a robot.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Roommates forever..

Simon backs away towards the door.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Come join us....

Simon reaches for the handle just as Dave bursts out laughing and falls back on the bed.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Oh man! I got you so good. You should have seen your eyes. Totally buggin' out dude.

Simon lets out a huge breath.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Figured those weirdos at the front probably got you thinking you'd be turned into a zombie or something.

SIMON

Yeah - a little weird.

DAVE

Forget about it. It's just for show. They try to scare you the first couple of days -- tends to keep people in line.

Simon waves the camp brochure around.

SIMON

I guess I was expecting something a little different.

Dave snags the brochure and looks through the glossy pictures of kids having fun.

DAVE

Oh man - so cheese-ball.

He tosses the brochure.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Well don't just stand there, put down your stuff and show me the goods.

SIMON

What goods?

DAVE

The goods. The bounty. The snacks.

SIMON

Oh, I guess I forgot to bring snacks.

DAVE

Ohhh.. I get it, first time at camp?

SIMON

Yeah.

DAVE

That's okay, guess we're going to have to stick with whatever your mom hid in your bags.

SIMON

My mom didn't put anything in my bags. Sorry.

DAVE

Amateur. Open up your suitcase.

SIMON

What?

DAVE

Just do it.

Simon puts his suitcase on his bed and unzips it. He opens it - nothing but clothes and books.

SIMON

See, nothing.

DAVE

Side pockets.

Simon sighs and reaches into one of the side packets. He feels around and his eyes light up as he pulls out a bag filled with cookies and tied at the top with red ribbon. A small note is taped to it.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Score! Chocolate Chip too. What did you say your name was?

SIMON

Simon.

DAVE

I'm Dave. Mind if I have some?

SIMON

Not at all.

Dave digs in.

SIMON (CONT'D)

How did you know those would be there?

DAVE

I've been to a million of these camps. Parents always hide something in their kid's bags. Especially for first-timers. Parents have a difficult time letting go.

Dave reaches down and unzips his suitcase as if he were a weapons dealer displaying his wares.

The suitcase is lined with snacks, candy and bottles of soda. A nutritional nightmare.

SIMON

Holy cow, your mom put all that in there?

DAVE

No - but I come prepared. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are standard at all summer camps, but what happens when your stomach starts growling at you in between?

SIMON

I don't know.

DAVE

Don't worry, I have plenty for both of us.

He tosses a few bags of chips towards Simon.

SIMON

Thanks.

Dave sits back and continues eating the chocolate cookies. Simon pulls out textbook after textbook from his suitcase.

DAVE

Are those textbooks??

SIMON

Yeah. Why?

DAVE

We're in a camp of nerds - are you already running for king nerd?

SIMON

No - I'm just here to learn. Aren't you?

DAVE

No way, I come to camp for the girls.

SIMON

Really?

DAVE

Do you know how easy it is to pick up girls at science camp?

SIMON

No.

DAVE

Of course not. I'll tell you, I've kissed so many girls at science camp I can't even keep count anymore. I'm already on to frenching.

SIMON

What's that?

DAVE

Ah - to be young. Have you ever even kissed a girl before?

Simon suddenly finds himself oddly embarrassed by the question and his reply.

SIMON

Uhh.. No. Not yet anyway.

Simon, quick-thinking.

SIMON (CONT'D)

But my Mom gave my permission...

Dave looks on with shock.

DAVE

Are you serious? Do you know who gave me permission? My lips.

SIMON

Oh man - I can't believe I just said that.

DAVE

Dude don't worry about it. You're definitely in the right place. Just stick with the D-man and I'll teach you everything you need to know.

CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL - AFTERNOON

A small lecture hall is filled with about fifty kids. A row of teachers at the front of the room are seated and ready to do introductions. Franklin and Mute are there as well as DR. CHARLES LUSK and MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN - a stern disciplinarian - makes her way to the podium. She's got the looks to make her a perfect candidate for this odd place.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN

SILENCE!

The entire lecture hall clams up and looks on wide eyed.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN (CONT'D)
There will be no talking when addressed by a camp director. That is not a rule that is just common courtesy. Now that I have your attention welcome to the 38th year of Professor Chauncey Templeberg's Academy of Science, Wonder, and all things Natural.

Professor Chapman continues the introduction, but we've moved in on Simon and Dave in the audience.

Dave leans over to Simon and whispers.

DAVE
Check it out - to your left. Two rows back. That's Samantha Byrd. I go to school with her. Never seen her at camp though.

Simon slowly follows Dave's gaze to SAMANTHA BYRD - and if it's not too cliché, it's love at first sight for Simon.

Samantha smiles at him and brushes her golden locks to the side -- Simon flashes a goofy smile back.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN
Now, speaking of rules. We do have a few in place and please bear in mind they are in place for your safety.

Professor Chapman begins to emphasize her words and things become much more cryptic..

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN (CONT'D)
Some of you come to this camp in Whitechapel for reasons other than scientific exploration and you might be tempted to venture off the premises. However, you are not to leave the premises without permission! You are not to leave the premises without a chaperone! You are to stay a good distance away from the woods, you are not to go into the woods, and you are not to ask any questions about the woods. Should we find that you have breached any of these policies, you will be immediately expelled - no questions asked.
(under her breath)
At least what is left of you...

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN (CONT'D)
That being said - all gates, doors, windows will be locked, you children will be clean and inside by sundown. Lights out will occur at 10pm sharp.

ASTHMA KID raises his hands..inhaler in his other hand.

ASTHMA KID
What time is sundown?

The professor snorts.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN
You will know because when you look
outside, the sun will be going down.

Simon furrows his brow and raises his hand. Dave tries to stop him.

SIMON
They are anticipating the first lunar
eclipse in over two years in two days,
will we be allowed outside the premises
for that?

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN
Wow - if this is the type of questioning
I am receiving from future scientists, I
am very sorry for the field. As I just
finished saying - you will NOT be allowed
off premises after sundown.

SIMON
Then how are we suppose to see the
eclipse?

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN
You have windows don't you?

All eyes are awkwardly on Simon. He tries to break the tension.

SIMON
So what happened to Dr. Chauncey
Templeberg?

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN
NO MORE QUESTIONS! Now - if you will all
please follow Madame Gustafsdotter. She
will give you a tour of the grounds.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ACADEMY - CONTINUING

The group of kids follow Madame Gustafsdotter - a humorously heavy woman with a bit of a lost puppy look to her - down the long stone hallways of the massive building.

MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER

Now, most of this building was built in the early 1900's by famed scientist and explorer Dr. Chauncey Templeberg as a summer home. Historian Boris McBorington..

Giggles from the kids...

MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER

(CONT'D)

Yes, believe it or not that was his name. He compared this building to one of the most impressive Gothic structures ever constructed from its swooping buttresses to its complex tunnel system underneath.

Dave and Simon are near the back. Simon looks around and his eyes fall on Samantha. Sunlight filters in through the gothic windows casting an angelic glow on her. Probably all in Simon's head, but it looks good nonetheless.

Samantha turns and catches Simon staring. He doesn't turn away and there is an awkward moment between them.

Dave notices him staring and leans over.

DAVE

Don't stare.

Simon averts his gaze immediately.

MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER

Now, if you'll follow me I'll take you to the East side where the Mess Hall and the classrooms are...

DAVE

I know you were the big man on campus asking the Professor all those crazy questions, but there are still some important things you need to pick up - fast.

SIMON

Okay.

DAVE

Like for one, you shouldn't walk around with a backpack on. It makes you seem like the slow kid.

Dave points at Simon's multi-colored backpack that he has slung over his shoulders.

DAVE (CONT'D)

And two, when you like a girl just be cool okay? You need to really start working on your game.

SIMON

My game?

DAVE

Yes, your game. You're never going to get a girl by staring and drooling like some sort of cartoon animal. Watch..

A RANDOM GIRL is walking close to Dave. He leans over to her.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Hey baby - this must be science camp because you and I definitely have chemistry.

The girl shakes her head - not really getting it and walks off.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Did you see that?

SIMON

What -- her walking away?

DAVE

It's not about that. I'm just planting the seed right now. I'm not looking to score on my first conversation here.

Simon nods and out of the corner of his eye he notices something out the window.

It's Geoffreys, the creepy old janitor from before. Ripp and Knuckles are also out there, carrying chopped firewood. Geoffreys hacks away at the thick branches with a long and sharp machete.

SIMON

I saw those guys in town.

Dave turns and sees, a look of dread crosses his face.

DAVE

Danger alert. Stay away from those guys.

SIMON

They definitely fit right into this place.

DAVE

Dude - not even like that. Those guys are pirates.

SIMON

What?

DAVE

Not like "arrghh matey" eye patch pirates. We're talking real pirates here - - mercenaries, murderers. They went from port to port pillaging and setting fire to towns. One night, those three conspired for mutiny on their ship. They killed the Pirate captain and those loyal to him in the middle of the night and took off with the gold. Now they are bound to each other by mercenary code. They moved here and this is where they've been hiding out since.

SIMON

Seriously?

DAVE

Dude - you don't lose fingers and eyes by raking leaves.

As if on cue, Geoffrey's stops hacking and turns to stare right at them!

Dave and Simon duck under the window and scurry away. Geoffrey's eyes narrow.

CUT TO:

INT. MESS HALL - NIGHT

Dinner. It's a bit muted for a gathering of kids. Close to library decibels, but after Professor Chapman's speech it's no wonder. There is music playing, but not for kids. It's a strange mix of classical and something old people would get on with.

Simon and Dave sit at a table by themselves. Dave is entirely way too overdressed in practically a cocktail outfit.

Dave has his head down, trying to attract the attention of a group of a girls at a table opposite them.

DAVE

Are they looking now?

Simon looks up, the girls are in their own world.

SIMON

No.

Dave looks off to the side in a feigned emo - "I am so tortured look."

DAVE
How about now?

SIMON
No.

Dave stretches his biceps out, trying to act cool while flaunting his non-existent guns.

DAVE
Now?

SIMON
No. I thought you said this would work?

DAVE
Look, these things take time okay. You should have put more cologne on -- I knew it.

SIMON
I was getting a headache with that stuff...

DAVE
Small price to pay my friend... small price..

Simon looks off to the side and catches something.

SIMON
Oh wait. Someone is coming over here.

DAVE
Over here?

SIMON
Yeah, straight for us. A girl.

DAVE
Okay, okay. Just be cool. Be cool.

Dave turns and flaunts a huge smile, but then suddenly scowls and tries to hide his face.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Oh no.

SIMON
What? What is it?

DAVE
That's Emily Spud.

SIMON
Like a potato?

DAVE

I don't know. The point is two years ago in school I switched out the tuna in her sandwich with cat food. I got grounded for a month.

SIMON

Ouch.

DAVE

Just keep your distance, she might very well be the devil in disguise.

Emily approaches the two boys. She has a thick notebook in her hands.

EMILY

Dave...

DAVE

Emily...

EMILY

I don't know anyone else here and my roommate hasn't been assigned to me yet so I'm going to try and hold my upchuck reflex and sit next to you.

DAVE

Nice to see you too.

She gives him a snotty smile and sits down across from them.

EMILY

What is that smell? Did you two take a bath in gasoline?

Dave smells his clothes. He shrugs and points to Simon.

DAVE

This is Simon, my roommate.

Simon sticks out a friendly hand and smiles. She doesn't take it.

EMILY

Hi Simon. You'll have to excuse me, I'm not here to make friends with someone that's chosen to associate with this mass of utter uselessness.

She looks down at her notebook and begins to scribble notes. Dave makes a crazy signal towards Simon.

Simon notices something that Emily is writing and perks up.

SIMON

You know about the microbiotic structuring of E.coli bacterial strains?

Emily looks up - suddenly interested in Simon. Dave notices.

DAVE

Oh no...

EMILY

How did you know?

SIMON

I've recently been concentrating on bacteria too. Bacterial strains that is that are harmless to humans but can provide some use to their environment.

EMILY

That's great. You know last night, I was catching up on the physiology in a few species of fowl that I've really been intrigued with...

Dave mouths the word "fowl" with a confused expression.

EMILY (CONT'D)

And I actually discovered that there's a very distinct relationship between the microbiotic structuring of a few strains of bacteria that is harmless to them yet very potent to us. It's rather fascinating.

SIMON

That's great.

DAVE

Excuse me while I go bash my ears in.

EMILY

Dave, for once you should feel proud that you didn't associate with someone that has pudding for brains.

DAVE

Oh good, I'll make sure to pick up my blue ribbon for that one.

EMILY

By the way Simon you'll appreciate this. Because of the unfortunate superstition of people around here, I'll be holding a private lunar eclipse viewing in my room in a few days. It won't be as good as seeing it from the rooftop, but it should suffice.

SIMON
I would love that.

DAVE
What is this looney thing you keep
talking about?

EMILY
Dave - seriously? Did your parents sell
your brain for scrap metal when you were
a baby?

DAVE
Did your parents sell your face to the
ugly farm?

EMILY
That doesn't even make sense.

Simon notices Samantha walk into the room and look around
as if she is expecting to meet someone. His eyes
immediately light up.

She approaches a teacher who points her towards Simon's
table. His enthusiasm suddenly turns into absolute panic
as she smiles and walks in his direction.

He elbows Dave.

DAVE
Ow, what the hell?

Simon frantically nods in Samantha's direction and Dave
cowers and looks to the floor as well. Emily watches the
entire interaction.

EMILY
Never mind. The two of you should get
along perfectly.

Samantha approaches the table.

SAMANTHA
Emily?

EMILY
Samantha?

SAMANTHA
I just got assigned your roommate!

Emily jumps up with a yell and her and Samantha both jump
around yelling at hugging.

EMILY
I can't believe it! We are going to have
so much fun!! I thought you weren't
coming?

SAMANTHA

I convinced my Dad to let me!

They scream again and jump around. Simon and Dave exchange the most confused glances on the face of the planet.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - NIGHT

The hallways have cleared out and most everyone has returned to their dorms. The four of them turn the corner into a long empty hallway.

EMILY

I can't believe we actually get to spend two whole weeks in this place. It's my favorite two weeks of the whole year.

Dave nudges Simon and flashes a goofy "psycho" face in regards to Emily.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Samantha, you're going to have such a good time.

SAMANTHA

Is it true that Dr. Templeberg used to invite the Queen of England to stay here in the summer?

EMILY

It's definitely old enough. But who knows - they say Dr. Templeberg disappeared mysteriously before he had much of a chance to use this home.

DAVE

Well - I don't know about the Queen, but this is where they say Artemus Crouch used to stay. Where he started to lose his mind...

EMILY

Artemus Crouch? Are you kidding? That's just a stupid story that parents tell their kids to keep them from wandering into the woods.

SIMON

Finally someone else is on the same page with this.

DAVE

What -- you don't think it's real??

SIMON

Of course not. My Dad use to tell me that story when I was little.

DAVE

You wouldn't know. Last year at camp two kids went snooping outside the building after curfew and never came back.

EMILY

Oh please - I was here last year. That didn't happen.

DAVE

They kept it secret of course.

EMILY

Then how do you know?

DAVE

A reliable source.

EMILY

Making things up is not a reliable source. Besides, no one has ever been able to prove the existence of Artemus Crouch so even if the kids did go missing - it had nothing to do with him. Trust me.

DAVE

He is real, I've seen pictures before.

SAMANTHA

Really?

EMILY

Don't encourage him...He's probably just talking about the freak-show twins. If they had a dollar for every stupid fake photograph that they have tried to hawk they'd be the richest guys in town.

SIMON

They work here.

SAMANTHA

The freak show twins work here?

SIMON

We saw them earlier and I met them in town.

SAMANTHA

Gross. Those guys are total creeps.

SIMON

You know them?

EMILY

We all do. Everyone in town does. Every summer those guys come into town trying to sell their phony junk. This year it was more photos, last year they were selling tourists "genuine beast snacks" guaranteed to lure the beast out of the wilderness.

SIMON

(to Dave)

I thought you said they were mercenary pirates?

EMILY

What are you filling this kid's head with? He's probably getting dumber by the second around you.

DAVE

Can it bookworm.

EMILY

Bring it weirdo..

KACHUNNNNG...The lights shut down completely and the hallway goes dark, except for a few emergency lights - it's like a prison lock-down.

SIMON

What happened?

EMILY

It's 10pm, we're past curfew.

SIMON

So they shut off the lights?

EMILY

Yes, that would be the key in the phrase lights out at ten.

All of a sudden a figure steps out of the shadows. It's Ripp.

RIPP

Evenin' Professor. You and your friends lost?

SIMON

No - we were just getting back to our rooms.

KNUCKLES (O.S.)

What's your hurry?

Knuckles steps out of the shadows behind them. Both of the brothers look extremely threatening in the dim light.

RIPP

Why don't you introduce us to your friends?

EMILY

We should really go, it's past curfew.

RIPP

Looks like we got a smart one here Knuckles.

Knuckles chuckles.

RIPP (CONT'D)

You know, last year a couple of kids went snooping around after curfew. They found their bodies in the woods a few weeks later. Something had eaten them.

Knuckles smacks his lips.

KNUCKLES

Licked them clean to the bone from head to toe...

A collective gulp from the gang. Dave nudges Michael - I told you so...

Ripp flashes a creepy smile and begins takes a step towards the gang.

GEOFFREYS (O.S.)

Ripp.

Everyone turns to see Geoffreys standing like the lone ranger at the end of the hallway. The dim light shines off of his scar and blind eye.

There's something in his gaze and stature that causes everyone to yield the floor to him.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

I need that boiler fixed by morning.

Ripp looks over at Knuckles. For a brief moment they look as if they may challenge him, but in the end they back down to the older man.

RIPP

Sure thing, boss.

Ripp turns back to the kids.

RIPP (CONT'D)

Be seeing you soon, Professor.

Geoffreys watches them go with a suspicious eye.

The gang stand frozen in place as the old man's gaze returns to them. There is a moment of tense silence before Geoffreys taps the antique watch resting on his wrist.

GEOFFREYS

10pm. Lights out.

The kids nod in unison and scurry away.

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Simon is getting ready for bed - Dave comes in still excited.

DAVE

Dude - check it out. We just stared down a couple real live pirates. It's a good thing too because I'm an expert level black belt.

SIMON

Aren't you a little young to be an expert level black belt.

DAVE

When your Dad is a secret agent in the CIA you have to be prepared.

SIMON

Are you serious?

DAVE

What, my Dad getting kidnapped and tortured by Russian spies? Why would I lie about something like that?

Dave stares at him hard. Simon shrugs it off. Dave lies back on his bed and stares up at the ceiling.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I'm stoked. This is going to be an awesome summer. I'll be making history as usual. You'll finally get to kiss a girl...

SIMON

I don't know about the girl kissing thing.

DAVE

Oh come on, what about Samantha? I can tell she really likes you.

SIMON

What? No way. She just met me.

DAVE
Keep telling yourself that Romeo.

Simon rolls over and smiles to himself while Dave continues staring up at the ceiling reliving his few seconds of imagined glory.

INT. LABORATORY - MORNING

The night has passed without another incident. Dave and Simon walk into a classroom -- diving into their first day of real science camp. Just think formaldehyde jars filled with god knows what - giant metal instruments - tubes and beakers up the wazoo. It's creepy though. Old school classic monster movie laboratory.

DAVE
Yeah! Science class, I am pumped!

Another random FEMALE CAMPER walks past them.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Is that a test tube in your pocket or are you just happy to see me?

The female camper turns around and reaches into her pocket..She pulls out a test tube.

FEMALE CAMPER
It's a test tube. This is science class - idiot.

She walks away. Dave shrugs it off and they take their seats.

A teacher, MISS NICHOLS -- the description is quirky - comes in and stands at the front of class.

MISS NICHOLS
Campers -- quiet down now. My name is Miss Nichols. Welcome, welcome. Today we will delve into one of the oldest traditions in scientific exploration.

Simon leans on the edge of his seat - he's digging this stuff.

SIMON
Finally..

On the table next to Miss Nichols is some sort of object covered up by a sheet - the big reveal...she throws the sheet back, revealing..

MISS NICHOLS
Baking soda volcanoes!

Simon sits back - what!? All kinds of confusion runs through his face. He leans over to Dave who is already half asleep.

SIMON
Is she serious?

DAVE
Yeah dude, what did you expect?

SIMON
I don't know. I mean -- I made baking soda volcanoes when I was like three years old.

DAVE
Wow - only three years old and you were already
(ala Miss Nichols)
Delving into the oldest tradition in scientific exploration.

SIMON
I don't know - I thought we'd be studying physics or biology.

DAVE
Oh that's good.

Dave leans over to another female camper.

DAVE (CONT'D)
I'd love to study your biology.

The girl rolls her eyes and scoots the desk away from Dave. Dave turns back to Simon.

DAVE (CONT'D)
That was awesome.

Dave goes for a high five - Simon does not return the affection.

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Simon is reading a Chemistry book while Dave sits on his bed with two of Simon's dinosaur figures. He begins to make them fight.

SIMON
Could you not do that?

DAVE
Why not?

SIMON

Because the one in your left hand is a Nodosaurus and it was very hard for me to find.

DAVE

Seriously?

SIMON

Besides, it was a plant eater and would never have attacked another dinosaur like that.

Dave mimics the Nodosaurus speaking.

DAVE

Too bad he tastes so good..

Simon rolls his eyes and goes back to reading.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Ugh! I'm so bored. This stupid curfew thing sucks. At least at home I've got video games. What are you doing over there?

SIMON

If today is any indication and they are going to teach at such an elementary level then I've really got to keep sharp in my off time. The state science fair is only five months away.

DAVE

Five months! I can't even remember what we ate for dinner last night! Why do you care so much about science?

SIMON

I don't know. I guess I always have.

DAVE

Always? What about when you were little. You couldn't have been born a total nerd.

SIMON

Well I guess not. I liked books and stories about fantasy and mythical creatures.

DAVE

Yeah - me too! Comic books?

SIMON

Yeah - I used to have boxes full.

DAVE

Which ones?

SIMON
Spider-man, Batman. X-Men...

DAVE
Oh yeah - so cool.

SIMON
And then..well. My Dad died. And I
guess.. I don't know. I guess I realized
there were more important things in life
than silly stories.

DAVE
Oh. Sorry about your Dad.

SIMON
It's not your fault.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Dave snores in the bed next door. Simon's eyes dart open -
something is wrong.

SIMON
Dave?

No response.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Dave - I have to use the bathroom. You
awake?

No response. Dave is out cold. Simon slinks out of bed.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - NIGHT

Simon checks each door for the bathroom to no avail. He
sees a sliver of light up ahead coming from a slightly
ajar door.

Simon quietly approaches and peeks in.

CUT TO:

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

The teachers are sitting around sofas and mixing
themselves drinks and getting loose after the first full
day of camp.

The room is wood paneled and lined with large oil paintings from past generations. The room is lit solely by the glow of a fireplace tucked away against one of the walls.

We catch one of the male teachers mid-sentence. We recognize him from the lecture hall - Dr. Charles Lusk

DR. CHARLES LUSK
I'm telling you - it's true..

Miss Nichols cuts him off.

MISS NICHOLS
Charles - you can't possibly expect us to believe all of this.

DR. CHARLES LUSK
Believe what you will.

Miss Gustafsdotter chimes in.

MISS GUSTAFSDOTTER
Let me just understand what we're talking about here.

The male teacher leans forward, tumbler in hand, the light from the fire dances on his face.

DR. CHARLES LUSK
The beast...

Professor Chapman chimes in - not doubting, but not fully believing the testimony.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN
You're sure of that?

Charles still leans forward, intensely lost in his own world..

DR. CHARLES LUSK
The thing I'll never forget about it...Blood red eyes..

The door creaks open - Simon has leaned too far in. All heads turn towards the door.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN
What was that?

She moves to the threshold, but by the time she makes it there, Simon is long gone.

INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING

The kids shuffle inside another classroom - clear that this is becoming the usual trend. Simon finds a seat and realizes he is sitting directly next to Samantha. It's the first time they've really been forced to have a conversation.

SIMON

Oh.. hi.

SAMANTHA

Hi Simon.

SIMON

Ummm..Did you sleep okay last night?

SAMANTHA

Took us awhile after the run in with the freak-show twins.

SIMON

That's good.

Simon looks down, running out of things to say - short of blurting his absolute mad love for this girl. Thankfully he's saved by the arrival of Dave...we just overhear him hitting on another girl..

DAVE (O.S.)

It's okay..we can experiment with a lot more than just science..

There is an audible scooting of desks and then Dave plops into the desk on the other side of Simon.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Tough crowd this year.. Hey Samantha.

SAMANTHA

Hey Dave.

In walks Dr. Charles Lusk. Simon recognizes him from the night before.

DR. CHARLES LUSK

Good morning children. Today - we have a very special outside project for you all. You will all be given a list of the local foliage in the area and you will go out and photograph and catalogue your findings. Keep in mind this is a very special excursion, lets not squander this privilege by doing something stupid.

Asthma kid raises his hand.

ASTHMA KID

What do you mean by stupid?

DR. CHARLES LUSK

I don't know. Like wandering off..
"making out" or going near the woods. DO
NOT go near the woods... Now - we will
be keeping track of your numbers as you
will be paired in twos. I have enlisted
the help of Mr. Franklin and Mr. Conway
to keep things in order.

Franklin and Mute (Mr. Conway) stand in the corner -
clipboard in hand.

DR. CHARLES LUSK (CONT'D)

Please get your cameras from Mr.
Geoffreys, round the corner, and line up
against the East wall.

For a shining moment - Simon and Samantha share a look.
Partners? Nope - Dave butts in and grabs Simon's
shoulder.

DAVE

Great! Let's get the hell out of here.

INT. HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

The kids line up in front of a cart stock full of digital
cameras. Geoffreys checks them out, one by one. Simon and
Dave are last to get their camera.

Geoffreys gives them a look as he hands the camera over.
For a moment we expect him to tell them to beware or that
their days are numbered or that he can smell their b.o.
But his eyes travel back to his clipboard and he mumbles.

GEOFFREYS

Number 23.

Simon and Dave nod and round the corner to meet up with
the rest of their classmates. Simon immediately begins
inspecting the camera.

SIMON

The shutter speed is off.

DAVE

Who cares?

SIMON

This could significantly effect our
ability to catalogue our findings.

DAVE

Holy moly. Come on let's get another one.

Dave walks off and Simon reluctantly follows. This goes unnoticed from both Charles Lusk and Franklin who are speaking in private.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Dave and Simon catch up with Geoffreys and the cart of cameras.

SIMON

I think our shutter speed is off.

Without a word, Geoffreys takes the camera and adjusts one of the switches. After handing the camera back to the boys he continues down the hallway.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Lusk is now counting the kids by pairs.

DR. CHARLES LUSK

Eighteen total.

Charles makes his way back to Franklin and whispers in his ear.

DR. CHARLES LUSK (CONT'D)

Keep a close watch. Nowhere near the woods.

As they confer, in the background we notice Simon and Dave reentering the line.

EXT. THE ACADEMY GROUNDS - LATE AFTERNOON

The day has dragged on, we can tell by the waning light that evening is fast approaching. Most of the kids have returned to the academy with their lists fully checked off.

We move in on Dave and Simon, they are in the distance, closer to the forest than they probably should be...but there is a great deal of foliage and wildlife over here..a small pond attracting all of Simon's attention.

He scribbles notes furiously and we immediately can see his excitement at all of this and Dave's utter boredom. We notice Simon has kept his backpack on.

SIMON

Dave! Get a picture of this!

Simon points at a water plant, bugs skipping off the top of the water nearby. Dave, who really could not care less, snaps a picture.

DAVE

We've been out here for hours Simon -- how many more of these plants are on the list?

SIMON

We finished the list two hours ago.

DAVE

This is all extra work!? Ugghhh!

SIMON

Dave -- come on.

DAVE

No way..my feet hurt and now we are just wasting time. All the other groups are done for the day. Besides, it's getting late.

Simon perks up -- he's noticed something near the massive wall of trees leading into the "off limit" woods.

SIMON

Oh my God. Dave look.

DAVE

Yippee -- another freakin' plant...

He stops short when he sees what Simon is looking at. A fully grown DEER is grazing near the forest.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Whoa.

Despite Dave's cynicism towards all things learning - there's something magical about seeing a live animal this close in its natural habitat.

SIMON

Come on - let's get a picture.

Simon slowly creeps towards the animal. Dave follows - a bit hesitant, noticing that the trees seem to reach out at them like skeletal fingers.

DAVE

Simon...

But Simon is off, creeping along the tall unkempt grass towards the creature that still has not sensed their presence. But it slowly begins to walk past the border of trees and into the woods.

Simon follows it into the trees...

CUT TO:

INT. THE ACADEMY - CONTINUOUS

Franklin and Charles are looking over clipboards and cameras on Geoffreys cart.

FRANKLIN
Eighteen total. We have them all.

DR. CHARLES LUSK
Very good. Geoffreys?

GEOFFREYS
I'm missing camera 23.

DR. CHARLES LUSK
Well we have all the children here. You should have nine checked out.

GEOFFREYS
I have ten checked out.

DR. CHARLES LUSK
It must be a mistake then.

Geoffreys looks out towards the woods suspiciously - he quickly hides it.

GEOFFREYS
Must be a mistake on my part.

DR. CHARLES LUSK
Very good. Franklin please lock down the gates.

INT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The treetops begin to cut out the remaining daylight into thick shafts of light that barely reach the leaf covered floor.

Dave finally catches up to Simon who waits behind a rock, no more than ten feet away from the deer that has stopped again.

DAVE
Simon..we shouldn't be here. We're out of bounds.

SIMON

Since when do you care about the rules?

Dave looks around as if spies were hiding in the trees.

DAVE

Since Artemus Crouch. The legend of the Beast of WhiteChapel woods. These, of course, being the WhiteChapel woods -- Remember that little footnote?

SIMON

Don't tell me you really believe in that stuff.

DAVE

Of course I do.

SIMON

I thought you were just telling Emily that as one of your pickup lines?

DAVE

How is that a pickup line??

SIMON

I don't know. Just snap a picture and we'll go back okay.

Dave looks around again -- he's really nervous about this place and it is beginning to unsettle Simon a bit.

DAVE

Okay. Fine. Where is it?

SIMON

Through the clearing there...Come on, just past those trees.

Simon pushes through some thick brush, Dave reluctantly follows..It seems like the foliage goes on forever..

DAVE

Simon? Where are you?

No reply.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Simon?

And then Dave pushes through the last bit of the thick foliage to see Simon just standing frozen looking downward at something we cannot see.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Simon.. What's wrong? Some sort of plant mecca over here?

And we are next to Simon, staring down a deep ravine at a DEER CARCASS that has been ripped apart. It's not the same one we were following, this one has been dead for a few days..Flies still buzz overhead the gruesome remains, maggots crawl over the bits of remaining flesh.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Oh man.

(wishful)

Was that the deer? Did he just fall down there?

SIMON

No. It's another one. I think a cougar or pack of wolves got it.

They stare - they've played a lot of video games, seen a lot of violence on television, but it's nothing close to the first time you see and smell death in person.

DAVE

Simon - we should go.

SIMON

Okay.

They slowly back away...but something odd has happened. Whether in their imagination or not - the forest has closed in around them..Which way did they come from? Which way did the deer go? Suddenly everything looks the same.

DAVE

Which way was it? Which way did we come??

Simon begins to panic a bit as well.

SIMON

I don't know. It all looks the same.

DAVE

Oh no...oh no..oh no...

SIMON

Just relax for a second. We're freaking out here. We need to just sit and think for a second.

DAVE

There's no time! The sun is going down.. I'm going to die in the mouth of Artemus Crouch.. I knew it. I knew this would happen.

SIMON

Dave -- drop it. Artemus Crouch doesn't exist. It's impossible..

DAVE

Tell that to the undertaker when he's trying to figure out what body parts belong to you and what belongs to me.

SIMON

Come on - this way.

DAVE

Are you sure it's this way?

Simon looks around them again - not really, but someone has to pick a direction.

SIMON

I think so. Come on.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - SUNDOWN

Dave and Simon still trudge through the forest.. Clearly lost. The last few minutes of daylight are quickly disappearing.

DAVE

I thought you said you knew which way!

SIMON

I thought I did.

DAVE

Well you didn't! It's almost dark. We're in so much trouble.

SIMON

What are we going to do?

DAVE

No! You brought us out here! You figure it out!

The sun is almost gone...

SIMON

Okay - okay. Just relax. You know, you seemed a lot cooler before. Besides even if there is something out here I thought you said you were an expert black belt.

DAVE

Well maybe I'm not...

Simon turns and looks hard at Dave.

SIMON

Wait a minute...you made all of that up!
Have you even kissed a girl before??

DAVE

Fine! No I haven't. But neither have you
so don't act like you're better than me.

SIMON

At least I don't go around telling people
I do!

DAVE

Fine. You're right. I'm sorry okay. No -
I've never kissed a girl before.

SIMON

I can't believe it! Then what about all
that talk about pickup lines and that
garbage?

DAVE

I don't know, that's as far as my parents
got before my Mom started yelling at my
Dad. What does that even mean - pick up?
Birds and bees, picking up? The whole
thing is ridiculous.

SIMON

And what about your Dad?? Does he really
work for the CIA?

DAVE

He sells washers and dryers.

SIMON

Washers and dryers??

DAVE

Yes, he's a washer and dryer salesman.
Occasionally refrigerators. And I'm a
screw-up. My parents send me to this
stupid camp every single year because
it's the only thing in town to do during
the summer and I'm terrible at math and
science and they think somehow I'll
finally make friends and get better
grades.

SIMON

There. Doesn't that feel better?

DAVE

If feeling like a complete dork is
better, then yes.

SIMON

Good. And you're not a screw-up. You're still one of the coolest people I know.

DAVE

Really? Thanks. Still friends?

SIMON

Still friends.

Simon and Dave shake hands, but the sweet moment is short lived as Dave looks over Simon's shoulder..

DAVE

Oh no.

SIMON

What?

DAVE

The light!

Sure enough -- darkness has crept in. They literally have only a few dying minutes before they will be cast into total darkness.

SIMON

Come on!

They run...run...run...

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

And now..darkness...Simon and Dave are still most certainly lost. We hear fumbling around..

DAVE

What are you doing? We have to keep moving?

SIMON

Just hold on a sec.

Light! A shiny beam of light comes from Simon's flashlight which he pulls fully out of his backpack. Simon shines it over the trees that seem to be alive all around them. It was way less scary in total darkness.

DAVE

What now?

SIMON

They must have already realized we are missing. They probably sent out a search party...

Then, as if perfectly on cue, SOMETHING large shakes the brush no more than ten yards away. They both spin and stare wide-eyed into the darkness. The beam of light suddenly looks puny against the dense foliage.

DAVE
Maybe the deer?

Simon's flashlight suddenly shuts off.

DAVE (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

SIMON
It just shut off.

DAVE
Let me see. Let me see!

SIMON
Hang on.

DAVE
Just let me see!

SIMON
I've got it!

In the shadows behind them, a dark figure flashes across. It's too quick to tell exactly what it is. They both freeze..Simon slowly reaches down and fiddles with the flashlight.

The light returns..Just in time to see..

A DARK SHAPE crossing behind them again - rattling the branches and bushes. The leaves crunching beneath heavy footsteps. Simon spins around with the light in the direction of the sound, but only illuminates branches that still sway from being pushed aside.

Suddenly the flashlight begins to flicker out again.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Oh no! Not again!

The flashlight dims and flickers more violently

DAVE
Did you find this in a dumpster!

Simon fiddles with it in the darkness and then it comes back on full power.

SIMON
There!

But then they both freeze.. A low guttural sound emits from the CREATURE in the shadows no more than five feet away.... Some sort of a growl, but nothing we've ever heard before. It's freakin' scary! Both boys stare at the thick grove in front of them. The branches begin to shake..whatever IT is, it's in there.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Dave...Run.

DAVE
Where?

SIMON
Anywhere...

We can feel the monster's massive presence even though it's hidden in the darkness as if it were about to spring upon them.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Now!

Dave and Simon take off into the forest - the flashlight bobbing up and down as they run for their lives. They turn the corner and the light illuminates BRIGHT RED EYES AND SHINY TEETH!! Simon and Dave both scream!!

DAVE
Run!!

Dave and Simon run blindly for less than five feet before Dave trips over himself and falls to the ground! The camera goes sailing into the darkness... Simon pulls up and looks back at Dave.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Leave me! Save yourself!

Simon turns on instinct and takes off into the woods..

DAVE (CONT'D)
Ah!!

Simon hears Dave yelling and continues running -- but it's short lived as he trips over an unseen object and falls to the ground, hitting his head on a large rock with a sickening crunch.

He's out cold -

His face is eerily lit by the trail of the flashlight. Slowly, by unseen hands, Simon is dragged away from the light and into the woods...

INT. BUNKER - LATER

Dave's eyes flutter open, everything blurry at first. Slowly his eyes focus in on a warmly lit room.

It's reminiscent of a wizard's library. Old books are stacked everywhere, odd objects and artifacts litter the room. Candles and lanterns light the place and maps and scrolls are tucked into nooks and crannies in one giant unorganized, but fantastic mess.

And then Dave notices Geoffreys standing off in the corner.

DAVE

Where am I?

Geoffreys moves towards him with frightening quickness.

GEOFFREYS

What were you doing in the woods?

Dave backs up - scared out of his mind.

DAVE

I don't know.. We just..we got lost. I'm sorry. Where's Simon??

Geoffreys steps back and looks around the room as if there might be spies hiding in the walls.

GEOFFREYS

You're absolutely certain you were merely "lost" in the woods.

DAVE

Yes - I swear. Don't tell my parents I'll be in so much trouble.. We saw a deer and followed it..and then..we got lost and it got dark...

Geoffreys waves his hand. Dave shuts up.

Geoffreys abruptly stands and moves quickly out of the room. Dave gets up and scurries behind.

Geoffreys pulls back a thick steel door that connects the larger room with the rest of this underground bunker. Dave follows him into the steel tunnels. It's fairly obvious right away that this is not part of the academy.

GEOFFREYS

Come with me.

They pass by numerous rooms off of the main corridor. Dave looks into a few of them - wishing he didn't immediately.

Freakish objects and statues fill the rooms, one full of skeletons of what looks like mutated animals -- a full suit of armor, a human skull still residing in the helmet. Dave moves quicker..

Geoffreys stops abruptly and turns to Dave.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

What I'm about to show you might terrify you. It could very well change everything you know or you think you know or believe about this world. Some men have been known to look upon this and die from the shock of it. I'm sorry this had to happen to you and your friend.

Dave looks towards the door - eyes as wide as saucers.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

Prepare yourself.

Geoffreys throws open the door. We expect to see Simon's mangled body... But instead we were not expecting..

THREE CREATURES are inside the room that has been set up as a makeshift cage for them. They are ridiculous looking and completely bordering on the edge of fantasy and comedy. About three feet tall, a mixture of fur and lizard-like skin, they are like an odd mix of a Tasmanian Devil and a tiny mythical Dragon. Tiny horns and small wings that barely look like they could lift the creature off the ground complete the package. Most of all they are immediately endearing like Muppets.

Simon lays still on the ground where the creatures are huddled around him and look to be caring for him.

Dave's mouth drops to the floor - he's speechless.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

They pulled your friend here after he knocked himself out. They have refused to leave his side since.

DAVE

Is he - dead?

GEOFFREYS

No. But he'll have quite a nasty bruise from that fall.

Simon starts to come back to reality..

SIMON

Owww...my head...

The creatures scurry away into the darkness as Simon sits up.

DAVE

Simon!

Dave rushes to his side.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Oh man - I thought I lost you buddy.

SIMON

Where are we?

DAVE

Well.. I don't know. He...Mr. Geoffreys.

Geoffreys steps into the room.

GEOFFREYS

You're safe..for now.

Slowly - out of the shadows, the creatures move forward towards them again. Simon and Dave react with panic.

SIMON

What....

GEOFFREYS

It's okay - they seem to have taken a liking to you Simon.

Both boys look on with awe. Geoffreys points them out one by one.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

The wild one is the boy, Ildiko -- Iko for short. The smaller one is Aurora, the baby girl. Oona, in the corner, is their mother.

Geoffreys gently claps his hands.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

Aurora - Iko.

They both raise their head on cue and swiftly move towards Geoffreys. Iko lowers his head as Geoffreys scratches behind his ear.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

Go ahead. You can pet him. He won't bite.

Dave's eyes go wide with delight as he slowly runs his hand along Iko's furry head and gets a grumbling purr in response. Simon begins to pet Aurora, who also rubs up against his leg. They're like dogs, only way more awesome.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

And this is Oona...

Oona stands from her resting place -- there is something much different about her, a sort of grace and charisma that the younger ones don't quite have yet.

SIMON

It's impossible..

GEOFFREYS

Yes - it should be my boy. But the two of you are now very unfortunately part of something much bigger than you ever could imagine. You have seen what men are not suppose to see. You know what must happen next?

Dave and Simon both gulp.

DAVE

You let us go and we never tell anyone about any of this?

GEOFFREYS

Not quite my boy.

Geoffreys moves in.

CUT TO:

INT. BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

An old KNIFE slams down hard into the center of a wooden table - and sticks straight up on its own.

Simon and Dave sit at the table, wide eyed and pale. Geoffreys stands above them. They've moved into another room, this one full of books and clutter - an ancient stove is tucked into the corner with a kettle on it.

GEOFFREYS

Now - my friends. For me to tell you anymore you must take the oath to never speak of this again. To complete the oath you must cut an X into the palm of your hand. Now who is first?

Simon and Dave both look at each other. Simon reluctantly grabs the knife out.

SIMON

I'll go...

DAVE

Good luck.

Simon holds the knife above his open palm - hands shaky.. Just as he about to plunge it in, Geoffreys lets out a monstrous laugh! Simon and Dave look at each other, bewildered.

GEOFFREYS

Relax my boys. I needed to know if I could trust you. You have proved yourselves. Put the knife down and I'll put on a kettle.

INT. BUNKER - LATER

The boys sit around the small table -- obviously acting like a kitchen, but it's as warm and comfortable as a Hobbit's den. Both Dave and Simon sip steaming liquid from large mugs.

The little monsters are curled up and sleeping nearby - like sleeping dogs (but much more awesome).

GEOFFREYS

I'm sure you both know the legend of Artemus Crouch.

DAVE

Of course - everyone does.

GEOFFREYS

Well the legend isn't all fiction. There's more to the story that very few people know. There was a man by the name of Chauncey Templeberg.

SIMON

Dr. Chauncey Templeberg? The scientist?

GEOFFREYS

Yes. The very same. Extremely brilliant. He paved the way in a variety of fields - one of which was archeology. He was the first to settle in this area and built the academy as his home - do you know why?

DAVE

Cheap real estate?

GEOFFREYS

I wish it were that simple. No, you see this all goes back a long time. Before you were born. Before your parents were even born.

Dave and Simon share a look - that IS a long time ago.

CUT TO:

EXT. EXCAVATION SITE - FLASHBACK

We are in what looks to be the ruins of Machu Pichu, when it was still very much a new discovery. We push in on DR. CHAUNCEY TEMPLEBERG. Younger than we would have thought, total Indiana Jones type.

He's instructing a few DIGGERS with maps in hand.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)

Though it isn't widely known - Dr. Templeberg was one of the first to discover that there were burial sites in the mountains of Machu Pichu. During one of the excavations they began uncovering a particularly large airshaft. It continued into the mountain for miles...

Row after row of DIGGERS come out of the narrow shaft carrying handfuls of rocks - we can tell it is a long and tedious process.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)(CONT'D)

Finally they broke through to a chamber no bigger than this room. On one of the walls there was the most ornate mural that Dr. Templeberg had ever seen.

We see Dr. Templeberg looking upon a fascinating drawing on the wall of the underground room.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But then he noticed something else..A tiny crack in the wall where he noticed a source of bright light emanating from.

Dr. Templeberg leans in and looks through the crack that is just wide enough to see through to the other side. His eyes go wide....

SIMON (V.O.)

What was it?

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)

He didn't know at the time - as soon as he looked upon it. The airshaft began to collapse and then the whole mountainside caved in, ruining any chance of reopening the chamber.. He barely escaped with his life. But that threw the doctor into an obsession to find out what he had looked upon.

INT. LIBRARY - FLASHBACK

We see Dr. Templeberg doing piles and piles of research.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)

He knew he had looked upon something very special. Slowly he began to uncover secrets of the past that the mystics of the old world had hidden away for centuries.

We see this play out as Geoffreys describes it. Ancient, ancient people doing ancient, ancient things.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He discovered that since the beginning of time, there have existed tears in the very fabric of time and space that allow access from one world to another. Portals, if you will. They are extremely rare, perhaps no more than five have ever existed. Thousands of years ago, the mystics discovered their existence. In order to protect the delicate balance between our world and the world beyond - they hid them. They hid them so well they knew that no one could ever find them and even if they did, they built enormous caverns and chambers full of traps and mazes that would make it nearly impossible for anyone but them to safely make it to the portals. Through years and years of research, Chauncey discovered that one such portal existed in Whitechapel.

INT. BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

Simon and Dave look on with shocked faces.

SIMON

How can that possibly be true?

GEOFFREYS

I know it to be. Because I knew Dr. Templeberg...You see, in my younger days I was a traveler of the world. In some circles I became known as the man who could "find" certain things that were difficult to obtain.

Dave looks over to Simon and mouths the word "Pirate!"

EXT. BAR IN MORROCCO - FLASHBACK

We are in a colorful and crowded bar. Geoffreys sits at the bar, strong drink in hand. He's younger for sure, but still carries the wicked scar over his eye. Dr. Templeberg approaches him and takes a seat.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)

Dr. Templebeg tracked me down and enlisted my help. By that time he was already obsessed with the mystics and the idea of these portals. He told me an old legend that in order to buy your way into the devil's lair and reclaim your soul, you had to present the gatekeeper with a piece of gold. It was just a legend, but Dr. Templeberg believed that it held the key to the portals for the mystics.

We see Dr. Templeberg remove a ripped out piece of paper from his jacket pocket and presents it to Geoffreys.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Dr. Templeberg had discovered a simple drawing in an ancient book of the gold piece that opened the gateway.

MONTAGE: GEOFFREYS AND DR. TEMPLEBERG EXCAVATING DOZENS OF TOMBS, TREASURE TROVES, ETC. LOOKING FOR THE GOLD.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)

We sailed around the world searching for years for the coin - but never found it. Finally we uncovered an ancient document in the Library of Alexandria that said the mystics had destroyed the gold piece long ago in fear that someone would steal it and open up the portals for less noble means.

INT. BUNKER - FLASHBACK

Dr. Templeberg's sits with old welding equipment painstakingly trying to carve a piece of gold into a very specific design - on the face of the coin is an unfinished head of a DEMON.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)

But Dr. Templeberg would not be deterred. He decided he would try to recreate the piece. After a year he nearly did.

We see the doctor hold up what looks to be a perfect recreation.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVES - FLASHBACK

In typical archeologist fashion, Geoffreys and Dr. Templeberg traverse through deep caverns and tunnels with torches and pick-axes in hand.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.)

We tracked down the gateway - in these very woods and came upon a massive doorway.

Exactly as Geoffreys describes. A huge doorway obviously leading to something important. In the center is a long and stretched face of a DEMON. It's mouth wide open, but there is a small slot where a GOLD COIN would fit perfectly.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We waited for just the right moment.

We look above the door to see that a small opening leads up and up and up..and out of the caves. We can see the night sky overhead and a giant, full moon. Suddenly a lunar eclipse begins to take place! As the full moon goes nearly completely dark it suddenly transforms into a bright red full moon. The red glow trickles down the cave and creates an amazing effect. It bounces off the gold coin and begins to light up various points around the cave until it eventually causes hundreds of tiny locks on the door to open on their own as if the light from the moon were casting a magic spell.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We thought we had done it.. But the gold piece wasn't perfect. It wasn't exact.. And as soon as the doorway opened...it began to close..

The gold piece begins to wobble in place and then breaks in half..As the door begins to close Dr. Templeberg jams his pick axe into the doorway..stopping it enough for them to slip through...We can tell it's not secure, the pick axe wobbling under the weight of the massive door.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

Doctor! It's not going to hold!

DR. CHAUNCEY TEMPLEBERG

If you're afraid then don't follow me!

Dr. Templeberg slips past the doorway into the darkness. Geoffreys watches him go and then looks up at the pick axe which is begin to bow in the middle..

GEOFFREYS

Dr. Templeberg!

No reply..Dr. Templeberg isn't stopping now. All of a sudden the pick axe snaps in half! The sharp axe piece gets jammed into the doorway, grinding deep into the stone. The rumbling stops, but the doorway is now only stuck open about a foot wide.. Not nearly wide enough for a human to slip through.

GEOFFREYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I waited at the doorway for days, but
there was no sign of the doctor. I knew
something had happened and he wasn't
coming back. But then, to my utter
surprise, something did come through.

We see Geoffreys sitting on the stone floor outside the
door - his beard days overgrown. All of a sudden the
three little creatures come out of the doorway! Geoffreys
looks up in shock.

CUT TO:

INT. BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

We are back to the real world.

GEOFFREYS
These creatures came through the doorway
and that's when I knew that we had opened
Pandora's box and I knew right then that
I was morally obligated to shut it. It
was no longer about finding what was in
there, it was about returning what had
escaped from it. I have an obligation to
return these creatures home and close the
gateway forever. Who knows what else is
in there or what else could come out of
there.

DAVE
Then who was Artemus Crouch?

GEOFFREYS
Artemus Crouch and Dr. Templeberg were
one in the same. We created the legend to
keep people away from the forest all
these years. The doctor built this bunker
out in the forest to hide away all of our
findings from years of searching the
world for the truth about the portals.

DAVE
So all this time - it was just you and
these little guys in the forest?

GEOFFREYS
At first we had some very close calls
with the locals..People told stories
about things they thought they saw,
whispered about terrible things in the
forest, before you knew it the whole
thing was blown out of proportion. But I
did nothing to stop it. It was better to
have people be frightened of this place.
(MORE)

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

But we made sure to leave clues in the legend. Just in case.

DAVE

So what are you going to do?

GEOFFREYS

Odd as they were, the mystics were very good at keeping records. It was just a matter of discerning them correctly.

Geoffreys smiles and reaches into his shirt pocket.. He pulls out a solid gold coin - the face of a DEMON on it.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

This arrived from a friend in the Caribbean six months ago. You see - the translation that the doctor read years ago said that the gold coin to enter the gateway had been destroyed. But it was translated incorrectly. Only the cast had been destroyed -- the actual coin remained intact. They must have known that there could one day come a time when the portals were needed, perhaps for the very survival of the human race.

DAVE

That is so cool..

GEOFFREYS

The last piece of the puzzle rests in Aubrey Holes.

DAVE

Aubrey wazzah?

GEOFFREYS

Aubrey Holes. 56 chalk-filled holes that served as counters to the mystics that built Stonehenge. They help mark the cycles needed and helped them predict lunar eclipses.

SIMON

The lunar eclipse - That's happening tomorrow night!

GEOFFREYS

Yes - my boy! And the lunar eclipse is the key. It's the only time the gateway to the caverns can open. The mystics built Stonehenge so that they would always know when the doorway could be opened.

DAVE

Just in case they needed it.

GEOFFREYS

Exactly. And that is why I must go. There hasn't been one in the last two years and if the mystics calculation is correct, we will go another fifteen years without seeing one in this area. I may not have that long to wait.

DAVE

We could go with you. We could help.

GEOFFREYS

I wish, but I cannot let you. You see, where that portal lies is a dark and dangerous place. They aren't the only creatures that come from the world beyond. Who knows what is down there, lurking in the darkness. Besides, like this place, it is not meant for that portal to be found.

Geoffreys pockets the gold coin - keeping it close to his heart.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry boys. Now - we must get you back to your rooms.

EXT. THE ACADEMY - EARLY MORNING

The light is barely peeking over the mountain range and casting the academy in an early morning orange bath. Geoffreys and the boys quickly make their way up the steps and Geoffreys unlocks the front doors.

INT. THE ACADEMY - CONTINUOUS

Geoffreys places a hand on both of their shoulders and speaks in a hushed voice.

GEOFFREYS

Now - Remember this is our secret. Right?

Both of the boys nod.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

And stay out of the forest! It's the only way to keep them safe. After tomorrow promise you won't come looking for me. No matter what.

DAVE

Okay. We promise.

GEOFFREYS

Simon?

SIMON

Okay.

GEOFFREYS

Thank you boys. Hopefully someday we will meet again.

Geoffreys pushes them on their way and he exits the building. We push around the corner and realize that someone was listening in on the entire conversation - Ripp!

His eyes narrow in suspicion.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Another lecture, this time it is Madame Gustafsdotter standing in front of the class.

She is in the middle of her lecture and in front of her is a liter of soda and pack of SPREE candies.

MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER

Now - I'm about to teach you a fascinating trick that shows the very fundamentals of chemistry. The soda pop volcano. Now first, you take a bottle of soda and secondly you need a stack of highly sugared candies.

We notice Simon staring out the window - completely uninterested for once in science. The far off trees of the forest gently sway in the breeze. Dave leans over and whispers.

DAVE

Hey - you okay?

SIMON

How can we sit here knowing those things are out there.

DAVE

What are you talking about?

SIMON

I've spent my entire life so far focused on science. And now I find out that there are creatures that haven't been discovered yet that are literally less than a mile away. How can I sit here knowing that?

Dave shrugs and we go back to listening to McGilroy.

MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER
...water molecules that strongly attract
each other and link together in to form a
tight bond around each bubble of carbon
dioxide gas in the soda.

Dave shakes his head and looks back at Simon.

DAVE
I don't know - this is all like Japanese
to me anyway.

MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER
..now, when the candy goes, the surface
tension is broken, carbon dioxide bubbles
form and the gas is released all at once.

McGilroy drops the candy in and the soda shoots out of
the bottle and ten feet into the air. The class oohs and
awwws and then claps.

MADAME GUSTAFSDOTTER
(CONT'D)
Voila!

Simon sighs and goes back to staring out the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ACADEMY - NIGHT

Night has fallen once more - under the cover of the
moonlight we see Geoffreys lock the front doors of the
Academy from the outside, check his surroundings to make
sure no one is following, and make his way towards the
forest.

We hold back for a moment more -- as Ripp appears out of
the shadows and follows him.

CUT TO:

INT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Geoffreys continues through the forest, the leaves barely
crunching under his thick boots. He pauses -- looks
forward. He knows.

GEOFFREYS
If you thought I was going to lead you
right to it - I'm sorry to disappoint.

Ripp appears out of the shadows. The moonlight barely
illuminating his sinister face.

RIPP

All those years, all around the world...
You didn't think we'd figure out
eventually what you were up to?

GEOFFREYS

I knew you were aware - that's why I kept
you under my nose. Exactly where I could
keep an eye on you.

RIPP

They should have been ours. We had them
right in our hands.

GEOFFREYS

The mother should have taken more than
your brother's fingers.

RIPP

An unfortunate accident and even more
unfortunate that they got away. But we're
past all that now. Just tell us where
you've been hiding them.

GEOFFREYS

Go to hell.

RIPP

Fine by me. We have other ways we can
make you talk.

Knuckles steps out from the shadows behind Geoffreys. In
his hands is a thick metal pipe. Geoffreys turns around
just in time to catch it full in the chest, cracking his
ribs. He spins to the ground and Knuckles brings the
metal weapon crashing into Geoffreys skull -- everything
goes black.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ACADEMY - MORNING

Simon turns the corner - right into Samantha almost
knocking the books out of her hands.

SIMON

Oh .. Sorry Samantha.

SAMANTHA

No it's okay. It's fine.

They share a nervous laugh.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Yeah..Cool. Well, I'm going to get to
class.

SIMON

Okay. Yeah. I'm just heading to the library.

SAMANTHA

Oh. Okay. Well bye I guess.

Samantha turns to go.

SIMON

Oh wait - Samantha...

She turns back around.

SIMON(CONT'D)

Ummm - we could maybe eat lunch today, together, only if you want.

SAMANTHA

I'd like that...

Simon's goofy smile gives his feelings away.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

See ya Simon.

Samantha walks off with a final wave and Simon exits with a super huge grin - king of the castle. He makes his way towards the library.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Simon moves along in the massive private library of the Academy. Books upon books. Simon moves down a row and overhears whispers coming from the other side. He carefully slides a book off the shelf opening up a view of...

Ripp and Knuckles conversing in the corner - making sure to keep their voices low so that no one can hear them. Simon has to lean in to catch everything..

RIPP

Listen to me - we're close now, we just need to be patient.

KNUCKLES

Just get the kids to tell you where they are.

RIPP

No - we can't risk scaring them off just yet. Kids are unpredictable, they might go crying to the Professor. Try the old man again.

KNUCKLES

He isn't talking - I don't know what else to do.

RIPP

Get him to talk. And make sure you keep that boiler room locked. The last thing we need is for someone to walk in and start asking questions. I'll keep my eye on those kids.

The ominous threat lingers in the air as Simon quickly scampers away.

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

Simon sits on the bed and Dave paces around nervously. He's obviously just broken the news to Dave about his run in with the freak show twins.

DAVE

I can't believe this. What are we going to do? A teacher? Maybe Professor Chapman could help?

SIMON

Oh yeah - that will work. Hey Professor, remember the legend of Artemus Crouch. Well it kinda, sorta is true and there are these creatures that really do exist and they have been living with the school janitor for the past fifty years in an old war bunker in the forest and now he's been kidnapped by the freak show twins and we have to get him out so he can find the portal to this other world to send the monsters home...

DAVE

Good point.

An answer finally comes to Simon...

SIMON

I know who can help, but you're not going to like it.

Dave's face begins to drop as he realizes that Simon is referring to...

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

At lunch - Simon and Dave sit across from Emily and Samantha.

The incredulous looks on the girls' faces would lend itself to the fact that the boys have just spilled the beans about everything.

EMILY

And you actually expect us to believe all of that?

Simon motions for her to keep it down and looks around to make sure no one overheard.

DAVE

It's true and you're going to eat it so hard when you realize it.

Simon puts up his hand to stop Dave.

SIMON

We need your help. We don't know what to do.

Samantha and Emily fall silent in thought. Finally Emily speaks up.

EMILY

We have to get Geoffreys out of the boiler room.

DAVE

What?

EMILY

If what you have just told us is true -- then Geoffreys would be locked away in the boiler room. So let's put your little story to the test.

SIMON

Okay. Tonight. Meet us outside of our room at eleven sharp. Bring what you can - we may be in for a long night.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - NIGHT

The four of them sneak along in the shadows - trying to stay as quiet and as hidden as possible with the threat of possibly running into a teacher, or even worse, the freak-show twins. It's important that we see each kid is wearing a backpack. Dave turns to Emily and whispers.

DAVE

So Emily, I was thinking. Since you still don't believe us maybe you would be willing to put a little bit of a wager down.

EMILY

How about a wager on whether or not
you'll ever shut-up? I put fifty on "no".

DAVE

The only fifty you've put on are
pounds...from last year.

SIMON

Guys - can you stop it?

Emily sticks her tongue out at Dave - he returns the
favor with a taunting face. KACHUNG! Metal - hitting
metal. Simon raises his hand and they all freeze.

He carefully looks around the corner and we see KNUCKLES-
emptying a garbage can. He whistles and goes into the
adjacent bathroom. Headphones cover his ears and a wire
goes down to an old school walk-man on his waist.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Emily and Samantha keep an eye out.

DAVE

What about me?

SIMON

We have to get his keys to open the
boiler room.

DAVE

What!?

SIMON

Shhh... Come on.

Emily and Samantha duck into the shadows and Dave
reluctantly follows Simon into the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's a large bathroom - Knuckles is on the opposite end,
facing the wall and emptying a trash can. We see that the
keys are firmly attached to his belt. Simon motions
towards them - Dave shakes his head.

DAVE

You're insane..

Knuckles stops - as if he senses their presence in the
room. He spins around...The bathroom appears empty. He
goes back to work.

We move in on the far stall. Simon and Dave have ducked
inside.

Knuckles moves to the sinks and starts giving them a once over scrub while whistling. In the mirror right in front of Knuckles -- we see Simon sneak out of the stall and creep along towards Knuckle's belt.

He reaches out slowly to try and lift the keys away. His fingers just touch the tips - jingling it ever so slightly...almost...almost. A HAND clamps down on Simon's!

He looks up to see Knuckles staring right at him.

KNUCKLES

Nice try.

Simon thinks quick and stamps on his foot! Knuckles hollers in pain and Simon takes off.

KNUCKLES (CONT'D)

You little punk! I'll kill you for that.

Knuckles and Simon both go charging towards the door. WHOOMP! Knuckles is stopped dead in his tracks by a solid bathroom stall door. He drops to the ground -- completely dazed.

Dave peeks out at Simon from behind the stall door. He and Dave high-five.

SIMON

Good one! Come on!

Simon snags the rings as Knuckles moans on the floor and the boys take off.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

The girls join Simon and Dave and quickly move off down the hall. Dave stops for a moment outside the bathroom - thinking quickly he picks up a sturdy broom that Knuckles has left near the door. He wedges it into the handle, effectively locking Knuckles inside.

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

The heavy door to the Boiler Room scrapes open and out comes Ripp. He looks around carefully. Satisfied that no one is watching, he closes the door and locks it.

He moves off down the hall. As soon as he is out of sight -- the gang come from around the corner. Simon begins trying keys while the other keep a lookout.

DAVE
Come on Simon.

SIMON
I'm going as fast as I can!

Finally a key clicks - yes! He shoves open the door and they slip inside.

INT. BOILER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's much larger than we ever would have thought from the description. A jungle of pipes snake in and out of the walls and ceiling. Steam rises from the floor and we can see the heat emanating from a row of furnaces lining the wall.

Then - in the far corner - Geoffreys! He's bound and gagged, his head nodding off towards the floor, his legs splayed at an awkward angle. Simon undoes the gag as the others look on.

SIMON
Geoffreys!

He looks up -- his face caked with blood and covered in bruises.

GEOFFREYS
Children! What are you doing here?

SIMON
We're getting you out of here. You have to take the creatures home.

GEOFFREYS
No - no. My legs. They took the pipe to them, I'd barely be able to hobble out of this room under my own weight.

DAVE
Then what are we going to do?

GEOFFREYS
They know about the creatures. They know that you both know about them as well. They aren't safe anymore. You have to take them home.

DAVE
What?

SIMON
Us?

GEOFFREYS

You can do it. You were able to find me here. You can find the portal.

SIMON

What about you?

GEOFFREYS

I've spent nearly my whole life protecting those creatures - there's nothing they can do to break me of that.

SIMON

But we can't leave you. They'll kill you.

GEOFFREYS

Simon. It's up to you now. You can save them.

He looks up at all of them.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

You can all save them. You must make it to the gateway before the lunar eclipse. It's the only way to enter.

Simon nods -- understanding.

SIMON

We'll get them home safely.

GEOFFREYS

I know you will. In my left sock - quickly.

Simon bends down and pulls Geoffreys pant leg up - there is the imprint of a round coin in his sock. Simon quickly pulls it out. It's the same gold coin we saw earlier - demon face and all.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

Follow the river to where the water meets the rock. You will find what you are looking for. And boys - if you find the doctor, give him a proper farewell for me.

Simon nods again.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

Now go - before it's too late!

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The four of them tromp through the forest towards the bunker.

SAMANTHA

This is insane!

SIMON

I know it all sounds a little crazy right now.

SAMANTHA

Not only crazy - but completely dangerous. And what about the teachers? Once they find out they'll call the police.

DAVE

Or worse - our parents.

EMILY

And completely whacko - how does he know what they built Stonehenge for? And not to mention - how the heck would he know everything else in this crackpot explanation?

Simon stops.

SIMON

Listen to me - it's not going to be easy. All you can do is trust us. Please trust me.

DAVE

Since when did you become the fearless leader?

SIMON

Since right now.

Emily chimes in.

EMILY

I'm in.

SAMANTHA

What?

DAVE

Seriously?

EMILY

Dave may be a complete and utter failure and one of the biggest liars I know -- but if they were right about Geoffreys then I have to believe they were right about everything else.

DAVE

Finally a female with some logic.

Emily stares daggers at Dave.

EMILY

Seriously Dave?

SAMANTHA

I'm in too.

Simon smiles at Samantha.

SIMON

Thanks. Dave?

DAVE

Fine. I'm in..I'm in.

Simon smiles and with his foot clears a pile of leaves on the ground to reveal -- the bunker.

INT. BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

It's the same fascinating place we saw earlier. All of the artifacts and books littering the place and everything - but even more amazing to Emily and Samantha are the three creatures in the corner of the large room.. Monsters!

SAMANTHA

Oh my god...

SIMON

Samantha, Emily - meet Aurora and Iko.

Iko immediately moves towards them to greet them.

EMILY

Is it friendly?

DAVE

Yes, he is very friendly.

Emily puts out a hesitant hand, but once Iko begins to make his purring noise and delight in the attention, they realize he is far from dangerous.

EMILY

This is amazing. What about that one?

SIMON
That's Oona.. Their mother.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Ok - spread out. Take anything that looks
like it might be of value.

They spread out and begin to ransack the place. Emily
stuffs her bag with various items, Samantha pulls a
flashlight off a shelf.. Dave turns to Simon in sudden
realization.

DAVE
Simon. They aren't exactly dogs - how are
we going to get them to the portal?

Simon thinks for a moment.

SIMON
I've got it.

Simon takes off his backpack and begins to empty it. Some
food, a few other handy outdoor items.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Unpack your bag.

DAVE
What? What if we need this stuff?

Emily raises bags of chips and soda.

EMILY
What if we need junk food?

DAVE
Provisions...

SIMON
I can carry my flashlight. They're more
important.

DAVE
Fine..but I'm taking at least the
essentials.

Dave raises a liter of soda and a few bags of candy
defiantly.

SIMON
Okay fine. Just make sure there's enough
room for them.

DAVE
For who?

Simon makes his way over to Oona and leans down to talk
to her.

SIMON

You're going to have to trust me okay?

Oona seems to understand. Simon nods and gently lifts her up and places her in the backpack. Perfect fit -- snug enough with her head sticking over Simon's shoulder as Dave helps him position it on his back.

DAVE

Genius!

SIMON

You should do the same with Aurora and Iko. It will keep them much safer.

SAMANTHA

Don't look at me.

EMILY

Fine. I'll take her.

Emily scoops up Aurora in her backpack and receives a sloppy kiss in return. Samantha scrunches her face.

SAMANTHA

Gross.

EMILY

I think she's cute.

Simon points to Iko.

SIMON

Dave - he's yours.

DAVE

No problem.

Dave scoops up Iko and puts him into his backpack..but we immediately get a sense that Iko is the troublemaker. He starts to squirm and move around in the back, doing small somersaults inside the tiny space.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Whoa there! What the heck!

SIMON

Dave - get serious.

DAVE

What!? It's not me, this guy is a mess.

Iko really is making life difficult for Dave.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I can't handle it - this is ridiculous.

Dave sets the bag and Iko back down on the floor. The monster jumps out and starts running around everywhere like a crazed Tasmanian Devil.

DAVE (CONT'D)
This guy is nuts.

SIMON
We're never going to make it like this.

DAVE
Wait - I have an idea.

Dave sorts through the bags of junk food that are now on the table and pulls out a few bags of CHEETOS.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Nothing in any universe can resist these.

He tosses a CHEETO towards Iko who stops immediately and sniffs it. He then scarfs it down, barely chewing and looks up towards Dave with a greedy glint in his eyes.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Told ya.

Simon nods and turns to the troops.

SIMON
Listen - before we do this. We can't tell anyone about this. Even if we make it, afterwards no one will believe us. It has to be a secret, only the four of us will ever know.

Everyone nods in agreement.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Okay - Good. Let's do this.

They all begin to walk out as Dave tosses the Cheetos every few steps and Iko snatches them up in his little paws and scarfs them down...following Dave like a smitten puppy.

DAVE
Come on boy.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ACADEMY - CONTINUOUS

The front of the doors rip open to reveal Ripp and Knuckles. Knuckles holds a towel to his bleeding nose and Ripp burns with anger and carries a shotgun in his hands.

Ripp stares towards the distant woods and cocks the shotgun.

RIPP

Come on.

INT. FOREST - NIGHT

Simon and Samantha both have flashlights. Emily follows behind and Dave follows behind them all with Iko.

Iko continues to rub his snout against Dave's backpack, smelling the Cheetos inside.

DAVE

You know these things don't grow on trees!

Emily eyes the dark forest around them that seems to be moving in closer and closer.

EMILY

I sure hope Geoffreys is right about this.

SIMON

You heard what he said. Follow the river to where the water meets the rock.

Iko tries to climb up on Dave's back to get to the Cheetos like some sort of crazed monkey. Dave swats him off.

DAVE

Can you stop it? I swear to God! You know this seemed like a much better idea before we started getting lost in a spooky forest at night.

EMILY

God, you're the biggest baby I know.

DAVE

Oh please, don't pretend you aren't a little nervous about this.

He shines his light on the trees above that stretch out at them like claws.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I mean, who knows what is in these woods. Bears....Giant Spiders...Monsters.

EMILY

We're with the only monsters here idiot.

Iko jumps up to get at Dave's bag again.

DAVE
Yeah, some monster.

A lone WOLF howls in the distance. They all stop for a moment, clearly perturbed.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Did I mention wolves?

Simon tries to shrug it off.

SIMON
It's okay. It sounded at least a half a mile away.

Another HOWL. This one much closer...

DAVE
How about that one Davy Crockett?

More HOWLS take over.. These seem to come from multiple directions..The wolves have caught their scent.

EMILY
Simon....

SIMON
Run!

DAVE
Where??

SIMON
This way!

They begin to follow Simon -- Dave picks up Iko in his arms and takes off with the rest of the gang.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Over the hill, large shapes begin to form -- beastly WOLVES.. At least half a dozen..Much more sinister in the light of the moon, eyes glowing, claws digging into the ground as they speed closer and closer to their newfound prey.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The gang speeds through the forest as quickly as possible.

DAVE
Not good Simon! Not good!

Simon cuts through a thick grove and when they emerge they find themselves near the bank of the river. Simon makes his way to it.

SAMANTHA

The river!

SIMON

Come on - across the river. They won't be able to cross it.

EMILY

They'll find a way around.

SIMON

At least it will buy us some time.

Simon hesitates for only a second before he steps into the cold water. He sinks down to his waist and does his best to keep his upper half above the water to protect Oona who looks on with concern.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Come on - it's not that deep, we can make it.

The rest of the gang follows. As Dave steps into the water, IKO starts making loud chirps and climbs from his arms, up his back and then tries to steady himself on Dave's head, half blocking his eye sight with his tiny butt.

DAVE

Oh come on!

The gang makes it to the opposite bank just as the hungry wolves reach the river. More howls and whines from the creatures before they back up and head towards somewhere to cross.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The gang continues along the river, the howls begin to fade away until BAM! A gunshot shatters through the air followed by a high pitched yelp of a hurt creature in the distance.

They freeze in their tracks.. BAM! BAM! More yelps and whines as the wolves retreat. They've got company.

EMILY

Someone followed us!

SAMANTHA

The freak-show twins!

SIMON

Come on - we need to keep following the river. Samantha turn the flashlight off. The moon will be enough light.

Samantha immediately switches the light off and we are left with the blue glow from the moon lighting everything around them.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - LATER

The gang hits the river's end -- the water disappearing into a large underground cave.

SIMON

Guys, this is it! Where the water meets the rock. This is what Geoffreys must have been talking about.

DAVE

So where's the door?

They all look around.

SIMON

It's the cave. The doorway must be inside the cave. There's nowhere else.

They stand for a moment - debating. Emily starts towards the cave.

DAVE

Where are you going?

EMILY

Whether it's the cave or not, we don't have any time. The freak-show twins will be here any minute.

SIMON

She's right. Come on.

They enter into the cave where the sound of rushing water echoes all around them. Samantha and Simon flick their lights on and illuminate the large cavern.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The river continues to get more and more narrow and shallow as they continue further into the cave until it soon becomes a tiny stream that babbles along the natural rock formations.

Soon they come to a dead end - the remainder of the stream disappears underneath a small crevice in the cave wall.

DAVE

Great. All of this and a dead end.

Dave lets a squirming Iko down to the ground. He begins sniffing around -- possibly for any "natural" cheetos.

SIMON

Geoffreys must have covered it up.
Everyone start looking for soft spots in the walls!

They spread out and begin tapping, kicking, pushing, anything they can do to find an opening. Dave mutters under his breath.

DAVE

Well this has been a fun adventure so far, what with the almost getting devoured by bloodthirsty wolves and shot by two psychos, but it's fine because the icing on the cake is there's no dooooooooooooo!!

In his ranting and raving Dave has taken a step forward and gone crashing through a weak spot in the ground.

SIMON

Dave!!

The three rush to the edge of the hole and peer down. It's about an eight foot drop.

SAMANTHA

Dave are you okay??

DAVE

Ohhh..my back...

SIMON

Dave, talk to us! We're going to drop a light down. Tell us what you see.

Samantha hands over the flashlight and Simon drops it into the hole.

INT. HOLE - CONTINUOUS

We follow Dave inside the dark hole, he slowly reaches over and picks up the flashlight that illuminates a cave wall. We can hear falling water, but haven't located it yet.

DAVE
 Okay..Guys, there's something moving down
 here...

Dave shines his light down and realizes there are
 hundreds of small, black moving bodies. RATS! An entire
 sea of them.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Rats!!! Ah! Get me out!

Simon leans over the hole.

SIMON
 Hold on! What else can you see?

DAVE
 Son of a...hold on.

Dave shines the light around...He locates the sound of
 the water. It's the remains of the river, it flows out of
 the crevice in the rock high above and into a large
 stagnant pool of about twelve feet in width.

The other walls are solid rock, there doesn't seem to be
 any other way out.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Water..It's the river. It ends down here.

SIMON
 Don't move. We're coming down!

SAMANTHA
 We are?

DAVE
 No! Don't come down, get me out!

Simon turns to the girls.

SIMON
 This is it guys - this is the entrance to
 the tunnels. It has to be.

The girls aren't so sure.

SIMON(CONT'D)
 Fine - I'll go first.

Simon gets himself to the edge. He looks back at Oona.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 Hang on.

He lets himself go and drops down with a grunt.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You okay?

DAVE

Yeah, never been better.

They both look down at the rats who don't seem to care much about them.

SIMON

Okay Samantha, you're next.

Samantha drops down as Simon halfway catches her.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You okay?

SAMANTHA

Yeah.

SIMON

Okay Emily, send Iko down.

Iko comes down like a hilarious mix between an odd bird and a crashing plane. His little wings barely keep him afloat and his tubby belly sends him straight to the depths.. But he ends up, thankfully, in Dave's arms and rewards him with a sloppy kiss.

DAVE

Oh come on.

Almost immediately after, Emily drops down like an expert with Aurora strapped to her back.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Whoa.

Dave looks at her in awe for a moment, but immediately shakes it off when he realizes it.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I've seen better.

EMILY

You wish.

Was that a bit of flirting we detect?

SAMANTHA

So what now?

SIMON

That water is running constantly. This pool must lead somewhere underground or else this entire room would be flooded to the top.

EMILY

He's right.

DAVE

Yay for Science! But seriously, now we're all stuck down here.

Simon sets his backpack and Oona down on the ground.

SIMON

Watch her. I'll go.

SAMANTHA

In the water?

DAVE

Whoa - you have no idea what's down there. Could be the freakin' Lochness Monster for all you know.

SIMON

No one else is planning on volunteering are they?

No takers. Simon shrugs and steps to the edge of the water.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Samantha -- I need you just to hold the flashlight over the water. Light up as much as you can.

SAMANTHA

Okay. Simon -- be careful.

Simon and Samantha share a sweet moment - Dave steps in and pats Simon on the shoulder.

DAVE

Nice knowing you buddy.

SIMON

Thanks for the encouragement.

Simon takes one last deep breath and then steps out into the water and disappears underneath the murky surface...

Iko bends down and comes up holding a rat in his jaws by the tail. He flings it up in the air and catches it in his mouth with a crunch.

DAVE

That's so gross.

Iko happily chomps away.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

We follow Simon in the murky water - the light reflecting off the surface allowing him to see just enough in front of him, but we cannot tell how deep it goes.

Simon swims along through an underground opening. Even underwater we can tell this is a place that hasn't been disturbed in a long, long time.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLE - CONTINUOUS

Everyone stands over the water's edge with nervous faces.

DAVE

Do you see him? How long has he been down there? Do you think he's okay?

EMILY

It's only been a minute.

DAVE

Can you hold your breath for a minute? I can't! What if he's drowned and we're stuck in this hole until we shrivel up and die of hunger!

Simon surfaces with a splash and a huge breath.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Great work - never doubted you buddy.

Samantha and Emily roll their eyes. Simon climbs ashore and bends over, out of breath.

SAMANTHA

What did you find?

SIMON

It goes through - the cave continues on the other side.

DAVE

So we're going...

SIMON

In the water. I hope these little guys know how to hold their breath...

Off of that we..

CUT TO:

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The gang coming up out of the water on the other side. The little creatures shake like dogs, flinging the water out of their fur.

Simon shines the light around illuminating a tunnel that continues further into the earth. They gather themselves and continue down.

EMILY

We're sloping downward.

SIMON

Geoffreys told us they built this place and buried it so that no one would ever find it except for them.

DAVE

And let's not forget what else he said.

Simon and Dave share a knowing look.

SAMANTHA

What is it?

SIMON

Even if people did find it, they set traps to keep people out.

EMILY

Great.

SIMON

Listen, we're going to be okay. We just need to keep a close eye on everything.

Simon's flashlight picks up the trail. Thick cobwebs spread like blankets across the tunnel that leads down further.

They continue to slope downwards until they reach the remnants of cracked and broken stone steps that lead towards a massive door from floor to ceiling.

THE DOOR -- an amazing sight to behold. Easily ten feet tall and is covered with the most intricate locking system ever imaginable. Hundreds of tiny locks, all interconnected to each other make it seem like a fortress not penetrable by human means. In the center is the massive carving of the face of a DEMON. It's mouth open wide - a slot for one specific gold coin... We recognize it all from the flashback with Geoffreys and the doctor.

Sure enough - wedged in between the door and the wall, keeping it open just wide enough for the tiny creatures to slip through, is the sharp blade from the pick-axe.

The kids look on in awe.

SIMON (CONT'D)

This is it.. The doorway..

EMILY

Look.

Emily is pointing up, they all raise their eyes and see that there is a small air vent that goes up, and up, and up and just at the top there is a hole.. probably no more than three feet in circumference that leads out into the night and further above, directly overhead.. A full moon in the night sky.

SIMON

The lunar eclipse! This is what Geoffreys was talking about.

EMILY

It can't be too much longer.. Maybe half an hour at the most.

SIMON

Then we wait..We have to trust Geoffreys.

The rest of the gang nods in agreement.

INT. CAVE - LATER

Ripp and Knuckles have arrived at the opening of the hole to the caverns below.

They crouch over the hole, their flashlights illuminating the rat infested floor of the cave below.

KNUCKLES

I hate rats.

RIPP

Don't be a baby. Come on.

We watch Ripp and Knuckles descend into the cave before we...

CUT TO:

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The gang sits around in front of the door -- mostly bored. Aurora cuddles up to Emily who holds her like a baby. Dave tries to keep Iko away from the bag of food. Oona sits off with Simon.

Simon looks up.

SIMON
Look! It's happening...

DAVE
Simon - the gold coin!

Simon fumbles it out of its hiding spot and brings it up to the iron mouth of the demon.

SIMON
Here goes nothing..

He places it gently into the slot at the bottom of the open jaw and stands back.

They all stand and look. Sure enough, the round moon is slowly transforming. Unlike a solar eclipse, it does not go completely black, instead the lunar eclipse goes almost completely black and then in the last moment it becomes full again and takes on a completely blood red hue. Don't ask me how -- it's science stuff.

As the moon goes red - the eerie reddish light creeps into the cave and splashes across the door. Then - we see that the light reflects off the coin and begins to reflect off of dozens of points in the room like an intricate light show.

DAVE
It's working!

As if by magic, the hundreds of tiny locks begin to unlock as if the moonlight were coaxing them open!

The eclipse and the coin is the key!

They all back away in awe as the door unlocks and with a mighty rumble - slowly opens inwards revealing a hallway lined by TORCHES that ignite on their own one after the other, illuminating the long hall. As the door opens wide enough, the remains of the pick axe drops and clatters to the floor.

SIMON
Whoa.

DAVE
We did it!

Even though they really didn't do anything, but witness the brilliance of the mysterious mystics of the past -- it gives them a good cause to slap high fives and have a bit of a celebration.

SIMON
Come on - lets go!

Simon moves forward and grabs a torch off the wall, the fire casting an orange glow on the walls. This hallway is no longer made of crude rock, but is definitely man-made with smooth stone and they all move forward with renewed energy.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

We are back with the gang and looking at two tunnels that veer off in opposite directions. We can see that one leads into a nice looking chamber, the other is swallowed by the darkness of a frightening looking hole.

DAVE

Well this is obvious.

Dave takes a step towards the "nicer" looking path.

EMILY

Dave, wait!

Dave stops and turns around - annoyed.

DAVE

What is it this time?

EMILY

Listen to me - when the Egyptians built the pyramids they'd often confuse grave robbers and throw them off track by making it seem like they were headed towards the riches when in actuality the pharaoh and his treasure was buried in very plain and unappealing areas of the pyramid.

DAVE

Enough with the science stuff! You guys are killing me.

EMILY

That's history dork and my point is that if this place was designed specifically to hide something then they probably want you to be drawn to the left because the right is the way we want to go.

DAVE

Down there? You've got to be kidding me. It's fine, I'll even go first.

Dave takes another step into the left tunnel.

SIMON

Dave, hold on. Emily's right. Something doesn't feel right about this.

Simon picks up a rock and throws it down the tunnel. It hits the floor with a clatter. They wait for a moment - nothing.

DAVE

See?

All of a sudden three foot metal spikes spring from the floor, ceiling, and the walls of the tunnels creating what would have effectively been a 'Dave pincushion.'

Dave's face goes white. Simon pats him on the back.

SIMON

Looks like you won the privilege of being the first down the hole.

Simon points towards the dark opening.

SIMON(CONT'D)

That would be the correct way. Down there.

Dave turns and stares at Simon.

DAVE

There's something wrong with you.

SIMON

Just go.

Simon pushes him towards the tunnel.

DAVE

I'm going, I'm going.

Emily can't help but smile in victory towards Dave who rolls his eyes, takes a deep breath, and goes down the darker tunnel.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVES - CONTINUOUS

They open into a larger cavern with a strange ceiling and walls...Suddenly they realize they are walking through the RIB CAGE of a gigantic creature.

DAVE

Ummm guys.. These are bones.

They look up and around, careful where they step. The bones have long been picked clean. Samantha screams and they all turn to see..

A GIGANTIC SKULL staring back at them. The eye holes almost big enough for them to crawl through. The skull has been decapitated from the rest of the body.

EMILY

That's a dragon? A dragon...How is that a dragon? Dragons aren't suppose to be real they're just a fairytale!

DAVE

Well what do you think these little monsters are!

Dave turns to Simon and whispers with quiet panic.

DAVE (CONT'D)

She's right, that's a freakin dragon man. Do you think Dr. Templeberg killed this thing to get through.

SIMON

Who knows.. Thank god we're closing this place up.

Emily is reaching out to touch the giant skull.

SAMANTHA

Don't touch it! You'll get some sort of disease.

EMILY

I have to.. I have to see if it's real.

She places her hand on the skull..

EMILY (CONT'D)

Oh my god..guys, this is totally...

Out of the eye socket of the skull slithers the most disgusting CREATURE you've ever seen. Legs and eyes of a spider and a giant circular mouth filled with rows and rows of teeth like a giant leech. It makes a strange hissing noise that would give you nightmares for weeks.

SIMON

Emily - look out!!

She backs away quickly..MORE INSECT CREATURES begin to come out of the skull and openings in the cavern walls above them. Iko and Aurora begin to make high pitched squeaking noises - a warning signal.

DAVE

Simon! What are they?

SIMON

Don't ask me!

Simon waves the torch in the direction of the disgusting creature that attempts to strike at him like a snake. He jams the torch into the creature as it slides closer. It lets out a high pitched squeal and scurries away.

More creatures continue to come at them. Emily stumbles over loose rocks. She picks one up and tosses it towards one. It crashes straight into its slimy head and purple goo sprays everywhere.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Good one!

Dave and Samantha take note and begin tossing more rocks at the deadly creatures. They begin to retreat as rock after rock crushes slimy body after slimy body, peppering the walls and the stone floors with purple goo.

Simon sets one completely on fire and it retreats back into a crevice in the walls.

The gang takes a breath and wait for it. No sign of the creatures returning. They seem to be in the clear.

DAVE

Guys - if I die down here, make sure my brother doesn't get any of my stuff.

SIMON

Come on, let's get out of here.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNELS - LATER

Some time has passed and the gang comes upon an odd looking structure underground. Three different tunnels veer off, but they are carefully sectioned off by man-made walls. If we could float above it all we could see that it is a gigantic maze.

SAMANTHA

Which one?

SIMON

I don't know. They look the same to me.

EMILY

Then let's pick and be done with it.

DAVE

I'm not choosing this time.

EMILY
Fine. This one.

Emily walks off into the far right tunnel. The rest of the gang shrug and follow behind her.

INT. STONE MAZE - CONTINUOUS

The maze is massive, twisting and turning.. Eventually ending in nothing but a dead end..One after the other.

Finally they turn the corner and come across a skeleton, laying stretched against the wall..cobwebs cover the faded bones. It's important to note that the skull is faced the opposite way.

Simon and Dave share a look.

DAVE
You think this is Dr. Templeberg?

SIMON
It must be.

DAVE
Wow. Somehow killed the dragon, got past the giant slugs..probably came so close.

EMILY
Lets hope this is close.

SIMON
I feel like we should say something.

DAVE
Like what?

SIMON
Geoffreys wanted us to give him a proper farewell. So - Dr. Templeberg. An amazing scientist and an amazing human being.

DAVE
You don't know that.

EMILY
Shutup..

DAVE
I'm just saying..

SIMON
We wish we could have known you. But hopefully we can finish what you started.

DAVE
Amen brother.

Simon nods and they continue along..As we pass by the skeletal remains we move around to the side where the kids could not see, the skull only has one eye, perfectly centered - A CYCLOPS!

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERNS - CONTINUOUS

The kids continue to traverse the maze, clearly with not much luck.

DAVE

Simon - we've been walking around here for hours. My feet are killing me. We should take a break.

EMILY

For once I agree with him.

SIMON

Guys - we have to keep going.

DAVE

Come on - just ten minutes.

Simon takes a step and a square block of the floor gives way - a trap!

Simon just catches the edge in time as everyone rushes to help. They haul him and Oona back up to safety.

SIMON

Okay..maybe we should take a little rest.

CUT TO:

INT. STONE MAZE - CONTINUOUS

Dave, Samantha, and Emily are out cold. Emily and Aurora are curled up together. Iko sleeps close to Dave on his back, with his tiny feet up in the air.

Simon stares forward in the orange glow of the surrounding torches. He notices Oona also staring, a lonely glow in her eye.

SIMON

What's wrong girl? You're a family aren't you? Where's their Dad?

Oona lowers her head.

SIMON(CONT'D)

I know what it's like to lose somebody you care about.

(MORE)

SIMON(CONT'D)

Sometimes it feels like nothing will ever fill up the hole inside of you.

Simon stares off into nowhere for a moment - remembering good times and then difficult times. He snaps back into the present and moves closer to Oona.

SIMON(CONT'D)

We'll get your family home. I promise.

Simon suddenly becomes self-conscious.

SIMON(CONT'D)

Look at me - I'm talking to you like you understand me.

Oona nuzzles her head into Simon. Simon smiles with genuine happiness.

SIMON(CONT'D)

Thanks...

Simon rolls over on the cold cave floor and tries to get some sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNELS - LATER

We slowly come up from darkness to the sound of Dave's voice.

SAMANTHA

Simon.. Simon.

Simon slowly stirs and then his eyes pop open when he remembers his surroundings.

SIMON

Uhhh.. How long was I out?

SAMANTHA

I don't know - an hour at the most?
Dave's already freaking out.

Dave notices Simon is awake.

DAVE

Simon- it could have been a few hours -
it could have been a few days!

SIMON

How is that possible?

DAVE

I don't know, there's no sun! How can we tell? We could have been down here weeks, months!

(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)

I could be old and not even know it! It's like that story about the guy that fell asleep at that tree for a hundred years! That could be us!

EMILY

Stop freaking out dork. You still can't even grow peach fuzz and the story is Rip Van Winkle.

DAVE

Oh my god, I think I feel a bald spot. Simon look at this - I'm losing my hair.

RIPP (O.S.)

It's bound to happen eventually...

Everyone turns with a rush to reveal Ripp and Knuckles!

SIMON

No..

RIPP

I must admit professor - you made it quite difficult for us to track you down. And now we know all of this is down here, we'll take the little monsters and make millions unearthing this place.

SIMON

You can't!

Ripp raises the shotgun. We see that they haven't noticed IKO who has crept along the ground towards Ripp.

RIPP

Sure we can.

KNUCKLES

Hand over the monsters.

SIMON

No.

RIPP

Ok.. We'll take them dead. Just like you're about to be.

Ripp fingers the trigger, but just before he pulls it.. A little furball comes flying towards his crotch. Iko! All we hear is a crunch as Ripp sensitive bits get a cruel introduction to Iko's teeth.

Ripp hollers and falls backwards - taking Knuckles with him. The gang doesn't miss a beat.

SIMON

Come on!

They take off down the corridor.

 KNUCKLES
What happened? What happened?

 RIPP
It bit me in the nuts!

 KNUCKLES
What should I do?

 RIPP
Just go - go after them!

Ripp and Knuckles fumble over each other and take off after the kids. Ripp limping a bit with a hand covering his jimblies...

INT. STONE MAZE - CONTINUOUS

The kids twist and turn through the maze at full speed. Emily is in the front leading the way -- Dave is close behind.

 DAVE
Emily!

Dave reaches out and snags her -- pulling her back to a dead stop. Everyone else behind pulls up. Dave points down at the ground where there is a web of taut old ropes inches off the ground, perfect to trip someone up.

They follow the rope which leads to two six foot swinging metal plates high above -- designed to swing down and completely pancake the unfortunate soul that trips the wires...

Emily looks at Dave with admiration.

 EMILY
You saved my life...

Dave blushes - not sure how to respond.

 DAVE
Instincts I guess. Take it at face value.

On another planet - there might be a hug happening here - but we're not.

 SIMON
Come on - this way!

They take off down another corridor..

INT. STONE MAZE - CONTINUOUS

The gang finally break free of the maze and much to their chagrin the way out is not what they expected. It opens into a gigantic open area - easily a few hundred feet in diameter.

The giant courtyard is littered with statues. They don't provide much relief as the stone is carved to depict human figures with faces of death and decay. They are incredibly lifelike and we notice that there are tiny slots in the mouth and eyes of each one.

DAVE

Well the creepiness of all of this just jumped about ten million points.

SAMANTHA

They look so real.

SIMON

Maybe they are..Medusa isn't too far out of the question.

SAMANTHA

Medusa?

EMILY

You know - the snake lady that turns people into stone.

Dave smiles.

DAVE

Oh - so the two science geeks are finally buying into it all? I was expecting...

Dave stops mid-sentence. He's stepped on a stone panel with a giant EYE carved into it. We can hear the grinding and shifting of gears beneath their feet.

SIMON

Dave...what did you do?

DAVE

Oh man - why is it always me?

They all freeze - not sure what to expect. The gears stop grinding below their feet and suddenly the two closest statues to them slowly pivot until the faces are staring directly at them..

DAVE (CONT'D)

Ummm...

WHIP! WHIP! Miniature darts start shooting out of the open slots in the statues! Dave catches one on the hand.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Ah!

SIMON

Run! Towards the door!

The gang takes off, ducking and covering as best they can from the pint sized arrows.

As they move through the courtyard statue after statue pivots and continues the onslaught.

Simon moves to the large door and pulls it open -- the kids duck inside as the tiny projectiles stick into the wood.

The courtyard falls silent and the statues reposition themselves.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVES - CONTINUOUS

The kids come out from the door into a small tunnel that opens up to a large narrow rock bridge that stretches the length of a football field. Below is a massive chasm that continues on for what seems like eternity. The gang stands at the tiny precipice, holding their breath in fear that the slightest breeze could blow them into oblivion.

DAVE

Holy cheese...

Emily grabs a loose stone and drops it over the edge. They listen -- but the clank never comes! No bottom, or it's so far down that the sound of the rock hitting the floor never made it back up.

A collective gulp from the gang.

SAMANTHA

Look...

Samantha points all the way across the bridge towards the other side where we can barely make out the RUINS OF AN ANCIENT CITY in the distance. A collective gasp of amazement.

All of it is illuminated by the strange orange/reddish glow that comes from surrounding torches that never extinguish in this magical place.

They all take a look at the narrow stone bridge again. No rails, nothing...just a quick and easy drop into the black depths. Back to a collective gulp.

DAVE
I think I'll wait here - you guys go ahead.

EMILY
It's either the bridge or back to the freak show twins.

DAVE
I'm up in the air on this one.

EMILY
Fine. I'll go first..

Emily grits her teeth and takes a step out onto the narrow bridge. She pats Aurora on the head.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Ready girl?

A whispered squeak is the response and Emily takes another step out and she is now standing directly over the gigantic void below.

SAMANTHA
Emily - be careful please!

EMILY
It's okay, it seems like a solid structure.

Dave leans over to Simon and whispers.

DAVE
Yeah, until it crumbles to pieces.

Simon elbows him.

SIMON
Quiet...

Emily picks up the pace once she gets the hang of it and she is soon safely across the bridge.

EMILY
Okay! Next.

Dave steps in front with Iko in his hands and makes his way across the bridge -- not wanting Emily to show him up.

DAVE
Don't look down..don't look down..don't look down.

Dave makes it over the other side with a cheer.

SIMON

Okay Samantha, you're next.

Samantha nods and continues out on the bridge. Suddenly, Samantha's foot slips on a loose rock and she tumbles to the edge of the bridge.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Samantha!

Simon is quickly on the bridge to grab her.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Hang on!

Simon grunts as he grabs a hold of Samantha and hauls her back onto the bridge.

They sit for a moment, gathering their senses and calming their pulses.

EMILY

Samantha - are you okay!?

Samantha doesn't even respond, she and Simon are staring into each other's eyes.. He's just saved her life and this could finally be the kiss he's been waiting for...BAM!

Rocks shatter near Simon's legs and they both turn to see Ripp and Knuckles - again!

RIPP (O.S.)

Sorry to ruin the moment....

Knuckles looks to his shoulder and slaps away a few tiny arrows as if they were an obnoxious fly.

DAVE

Simon - run!

SIMON

Go!

Simon and Samantha quickly move across the bridge.

Ripp and Knuckles begin to shuffle their way across as well.

Simon and Samantha make it to the other side of the bridge. Another blast from the shotgun shatters rocks around their heads.

DAVE

Wait! I have an idea...

Dave hands Iko off to Samantha.

DAVE (CONT'D)

If I don't come back - take good care of him.

Dave takes off his backpack and kneels to the ground.

SIMON

Dave, what are you doing!?

Dave fumbles around in his bag and pulls out the large bottle of soda and a roll of Spree candies that he so valiantly fought to keep.

SAMANTHA

Guys, come on! They're coming!

Simon looks at Dave...

DAVE

Trust me!

Simon nods and heads off towards the girls while Dave goes back towards the bridge.

Ripp and Knuckles are halfway across the bridge as Dave waits at the opposite precipice.

He starts to undo the top of the soda bottle, it goes toppling off into the void. Then, with sweaty hands, he does his best to unwrap the candies and position them over the soda. He loses one to the blackness below.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Oh no..come on..come on.

Ripp and Knuckles close in..5 feet, 4 feet, 3 feet..

RIPP

Better run, kid.

DAVE

Come on...

Dave finally positions the candy perfectly over the opening of the bottle (just as we saw the teacher do in the classroom) and slams the candy in at once.

A large hand grabs around his collar at the same time.

KNUCKLES

Gotcha..

Dave looks up into Knuckles sinister face, but then smiles as he lifts the opening of the bottle towards Knuckles's face...

The soda erupts in a full on jet of carbonated glory directly into Knuckles's eyes!

Knuckles hollers and lets go of Dave. Momentarily blinded and knocked off balance by the force, Knuckles crashes into Ripp and they both go tumbling over the edge - the gun goes sailing over the side as well.

Dave pauses for a moment and then faints.

SIMON

Dave!

INT. TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

We pull back to reveal Ripp and Knuckles struggling on the edge of the cliff.

They are clinging by their fingertips to the rock face dangling over the drop that could very well take them to the center of the Earth.

Knuckles struggles as he can only cling to the rocks with his good hand.

KNUCKLES

Help me! I'm slipping!

Ripp slowly looks over at him.

RIPP

Sorry mate, if I let go then you'll pull both of us down.

Knuckles's eyes go wide.

RIPP (CONT'D)

You were always a good brother though.

Ripp begins to pull himself to safety.

KNUCKLES

Nooo!!!!

That's the last we hear as Knuckles slips and falls into oblivion...

CUT TO:

INT. CAVES - CONTINUOUS

The gang reaches Dave at the edge of the abyss as he comes to.

SIMON

Dave! You okay?

EMILY

That was amazing! You actually learned something from class.

They help Dave sit up.

DAVE

I may actually be able to say that science camp saved my life...

Dave slowly gets to his feet with the help of the rest. They pause for a moment to catch their breaths - but it's short lived.

RIPP

Aha!!

Ripp has climbed his way back to the surface and he grabs Dave by the back of his shirt.

RIPP (CONT'D)

The game is over. I win.

Ripp pulls Dave by the back of his shirt like he has a kitten by the scruff of the neck. He takes him directly to the very edge of the drop.

RIPP (CONT'D)

Now. Hand over the monsters or your friend gets the big drop.

Ripp pauses for a moment..

RIPP (CONT'D)

Now that I think about it - I'm going to kill you all after I have the monsters anyway - so this will save time.

SIMON

No!!!

Ripp grabs hold of Dave - ready to send him over the edge. He whispers into Dave's ear.

RIPP

Say hello to my brother....

It all happens so fast - Ripp readies Dave for the drop, but just before he sends him over.. OONA!! She comes flying out from behind Simon and crashes directly into the back of Ripp..

He's caught with such surprise that he literally goes face first over the edge -- thankfully letting go of Dave in the process.

Oona and Ripp both go over the edge and disappear into the darkness.

The gang rushes the edge of the cliff to grab Dave and with a shred of hope that Oona might still be okay.

Dave is okay - Oona is nowhere. Simon leans back from the edge - complete defeat in his face.

DAVE

She saved me...

Then, at the moment when all seems lost, we hear the slight fluttering of leathery wings coming from the swirl of darkness in the abyss.

SAMANTHA

Wait! Look!

Out of the darkness comes Oona! Her small wings beating the air quickly - enough to keep her floating out of the very clutches of death!

She crosses over the edge and Simon takes her in his arms and lays her gently on the ground to safety. Iko and Aurora rush her, planting sloppy licks all over her face.

DAVE

You saved me..Thank you.

Dave pats her head - we can immediately tell that she has expelled nearly the very last of her energy. She lays exhausted on the ground.

And she's not the only one. Everyone else looks as though they are about to cry/pass out. We have to remember, they are still only kids.

Simon is the first to pull himself together.

SIMON

Come on everyone..We have to keep going.

Emily is staring at Oona.. Dave is deep in thought, contemplating his near death experience, Samantha is almost in tears.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Come on guys.

EMILY

Simon...It's too much. This is too much.

Simon looks around - it really does look like his team has finally been defeated.

SIMON

Don't you guys realize, this is a family. Their mother, her children.. They made it out of here once.

(MORE)

SIMON (CONT'D)

I don't know what happened to their father, he could be dead or he could be on the other side of that portal. I don't know. But I can't let them lose each other...we're so close.

Simon lets it fall into silence. Dave is the first to pick himself up - he picks up Iko and begins to walk towards the ruins.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Dave?

DAVE

I'm still alive aren't I? Besides, I definitely owe her one.

He flashes a smile towards Simon and continues on. Emily gathers up Aurora.

Samantha walks right up to Simon and without a word - kisses him! It's sweet and innocent, not hot and dirty - but boy are we happy for him.

Simon is speechless.

SAMANTHA

Just in case we don't make it. I didn't want to miss out.

Samantha smiles and picks up Oona.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Come on Simon. Let's finish it.

The biggest smile possible spreads across his face and he follows the gang towards the ancient city ruins.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND RUINS - CONTINUOUS

The gang walks under a gigantic stone arch into the underground ruins - as if at some time this were the entrance to a mighty city. Some of the ruins are still standing, others have crumbled to the ground.

SAMANTHA

Who built all of this?

EMILY

I don't know...

SIMON

It's like a whole city down here.

As they continue further into what is reminiscent of an underground Pompeii they come upon an even stranger and more frightening sight.

BODIES OF THE DEAD..lay out in various positions. The skeletal remains of hundreds dot the landscape.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Dave - how's your creepiness scale now?

DAVE

I think we were already off the charts a long time ago.

They slowly move past the skeletal remains that appear to be everywhere. Some are still covered with dusty, ornate clothing. We also notice rusty WEAPONS laying all around. We suddenly get the idea that a great battle must have taken place here.

SIMON

Look at this. Swords and shields
...arrows..It was a battle. A huge battle.

DAVE

Probably the last battle to save mankind from whatever evil resides on the other side of that portal.

They all look at Dave.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Hey - I'm just throwing things out there.

In the center of the city of ruins is a large CATHEDRAL. The kids continue in to the courtyard. Old paintings and statues litter the grounds and a gigantic stained glass window with an angelic figure on it is still intact. They move towards the giant Cathedral doors.

On each side of the doors there is a large coffin like container. They are made of heavy steel with sharp spikes jutting out from the sides and a skull decorates each one almost as a warning that the contents are extremely sinister.

SIMON

What do you suppose those are?

SAMANTHA

I don't know.

EMILY

They look like a sarcophagi.

DAVE

Sarcapho - wa?

EMILY

It's what the Egyptians buried their dead in.

DAVE

What is it with you and Egyptians?

The four slowly move towards the odd containers, but stop immediately as the sounds of screeching and clanking metal begins to take over and the metal bolts in the coffins begin to mechanically and systematically pull out as if the cases were being unlocked by an unseen hand.

They all turn towards Dave.

DAVE (CONT'D)

No way - not me this time.

As each coffin slowly opens we see a nightmare to behold. TWO GIANT MONSTERS, covered with barbs and chains from head to toe. Small bits of their hands and body are exposed but it is nothing more than skeletal!

The creature's faces are also hidden behind a mask of barbs and wrapped chains, one glowing eye pokes through and we can partially see a set of rotting, spiked teeth.

Each creature steps forward with a terrible clanking of chains and they let out a load groan that has been contained from thousands of years of being locked up.

A single chain drops to the floor from each monster's right hand with a sharp metal scythe on the end - clearly the skeletal guardian's weapon of choice.

The gang slowly backs away.

SAMANTHA

Simon- what do we do??

SIMON

I don't have a plan. Emily?

EMILY

I got nothing.

The two skeletal guardians stretch their bony bits for a moment and then upon noticing their intruders, they immediately position into attack mode with rigid instincts.

SIMON

Split up!

Simon grabs Samantha by the hand and they take off to the right while Emily runs to the left. Dave scoops Iko up and takes off after Emily.

The monster guardians are confused for only a moment and then the two of them pursue in opposite directions.

Simon and Samantha duck behind a large statue. Simon takes a moment to breath and then checks around the corner - just in time to see one of the large metal chains come flying in his direction. He ducks in the nick of time and the chain and scythe go crashing into the statue, spraying chunks of rock everywhere!

Simon pulls Samantha forcefully by the hand.

SIMON(CONT'D)

Come on!

Simon and Samantha continue ducking behind rubble and ruins as the huge creature pursues.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERNS - CONTINUOUS

Emily and Dave are winding their way at a sickening pace through the maze of rubble and sidestepping skeletal bodies on the ground. It's like an ancient Nascar race as the creature pursues them.

DAVE

Is it still behind us!?

EMILY

Just keep going!

They turn a corner and run smack into Simon and Samantha coming from the opposite direction.

DAVE

Simon! Need a plan here!

SIMON

I'm working on it!

DAVE

You mind working a little quicker?

Dave nods back towards the direction they just came from and we see one of the creatures rounding the corner.

SIMON

Go!

The gang takes off together.

Simon looks around for an answer and then grits his teeth in determination. He points towards the Cathedral doors.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Guys - make a break for the door!

SAMANTHA

What about you!?

SIMON

I'll be fine! Go now!

He pushes them off towards the door. Emily steps back.

EMILY

Do you have a plan?

SIMON

We'll see...

Emily nods and takes off with the others. Simon rushes to meet the monster guardians head on. It looks like a suicide mission from where we are sitting.

The others make it to the large door safely and look back towards Simon rushing head on towards the monsters.

DAVE

He's a hero. He's a dang hero...

Simon seems to be winging it as he runs directly in between the two oncoming monsters.

He ducks and rolls in between them just in time as the two weapons come sailing inches over his head!

He rolls back to his feet and finds himself standing dead in the center of both of them - a monster Simon sandwich.

SIMON

Come on - let's see what you can do.

Both monsters swing their weapons high in the air, ready to launch them at the helpless boy.

Simon stands his ground..waiting...waiting...

Both monsters unleash their weapons at the same time - both heading straight at Simon's head!

Then, at the last possible second, he dives to the ground... The weapons go sailing over him and both hit the target!

Unfortunately the monster's targets are now each other. Both chains wrap around each monster's waist like a python curling up on its victim and the large scythes come in last and hard - completely digging deep into the monsters.

Both monsters howl to the high heavens in pain and collapse to the ground with a rumble. As they topple to the ground, their brittle bones collapse and break apart into a heap of thousand year old dust. Simon retreats victoriously back to the gang.

DAVE

That was amazing!!

Samantha hugs him tight.

SAMANTHA

Are you okay?

SIMON

I'm fine. Is everyone else okay?

Everyone nods, obviously shaken up, but still alive. They turn their attention to the large Cathedral doors before them - obviously the doorway that the skeletal guardians were enlisted to protect.

They enter inside.

CUT TO:

INT. CATHEDRAL - CONTINUOUS

The basic remnants of a church cathedral are here. Paintings, artifacts, pews, but it has all been trashed as if the next step was for it all to be turned into scrap wood.

In the center of the Cathedral - they come upon a grand staircase that leads further down into the Earth.

They continue down and at the bottom, in the center of the room, there sits the most fascinating thing we've seen yet. It looks like a motionless lightning bolt cutting through time and space itself. This is the tear between dimensions that Geoffreys spoke of... The entry way into another world -- the portal.

It glows with a supernatural intensity and tiny glowing particles float around it - giving it a mesmerizing sheen.

Oona climbs down from Samantha's arms..It's as if the glowing aura from the portal has suddenly rejuvenated her with life.

DAVE

I suppose I don't have to ask what that is...

No one can speak - it's breathtaking. Oona lets out a loud, but deep barking noise. We can only guess it is a call to her kind.

Iko and Aurora also make the sound - but it is more high pitched..

Iko moves past Simon and he pats his head.

SIMON

Be safe boy - good luck.

Samantha and Emily hug Iko with tears in their eyes.

SAMANTHA

Bye Iko, we'll miss you.

Iko comes to Dave last. They look at each other for a moment and then Dave hugs him as tight as a bear.

DAVE

I'll miss you boy. You're the best
Monster I ever could have asked for.

Dave pulls out the last remaining chips from the bag and hands them over -- Iko tears the bag apart and grabs handfuls in his tiny fists.

DAVE (CONT'D)

For the road.

And then Oona comes past them all. She stops at Simon.

SIMON

Thank you for trusting me.

She lowers her head as if bowing in thanks. Simon nods back and she continues on her way.

Emily and Samantha hug her tightly as well.

Dave finally manages to pat her head.

DAVE

Take care.

The three creatures now stand before the portal.

The remaining gang looks on with tears in their eyes. They turn and walk through the lightning bolt shaped portal, which wades around them as the portal opens and they disappear from view in one last flash of light.

Then all is still and the only sound we hear is the tiny sniffles of our heroes and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A massive shot of the four kids - weary and dirty exit the woods to see a huge search party coming their way. All of the teachers and most important - Geoffreys! He's leaning heavily on a cane, but alive nonetheless and leading the pack. He makes it to them first...

GEOFFREYS

Are they safe?!

The kids nod.

GEOFFREYS (CONT'D)

And the doctor?

Their eyes say it all. Geoffreys nods, solemn.

Geoffreys takes a step back as Professor Chapman and the rest of the administration reaches them - the face she wears is enough to tell us that these kids might have survived caverns full of traps and monsters, but she could very well be the end to them.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN

I can't believe it! Where have you all been?

The four exchange glances - how do they cover this one? Geoffreys stares at them hard. Finally Dave steps forward.

DAVE

Well...

Dave struggles for an answer... Simon steps in.

SIMON

Well..we heard about this place. This place called Make-out Cove.

Emily and Samantha catch on.

EMILY

Yeah.. We just thought what would camp be without making out with boys?

Geoffreys smiles.

SAMANTHA

You really should have seen it Professor. It was pretty hot.

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN

Well I never!!! In all my years!!

DAVE

What do you expect? All of this talk of
test tubes and beakers boiling over.
Science is pretty sexy.

Professor Chapman nearly explodes, but then calms herself
and continues...

PROFESSOR CHAPMAN

I hope you understand that you are all
immediately kicked out of this camp and
banned no less. Making out in the woods.
What will your parents think!?

SIMON

Something tells me my mom will
understand.

Simon shares a knowing smile.

FADE OUT.

Epilogue.

INT. SIMON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We're back in Simon's bedroom, just as we remember it.
Simon lays in bed sleeping peacefully. We pan up to see
his wall calendar which has been marked with two weeks of
"grounded" and then the following week is marked with
"visit Dave."

We push in on the door of the bedroom - the knob slowly
turns and the door creaks open.

Simon begins to stir in his sleep and before we can
react, heavy hands are on him!

Simon's eyes bolt open immediately and he finds himself
staring into the face of Geoffreys.

SIMON

Geoffreys?

Geoffreys hair is matted - his face dirty and caked with
dried blood. He looks as if he has come through hell and
back...

GEOFFREYS

Simon! It's Dr. Templeberg!

Off Simon's look we..

CRASH TO BLACK.