

PROJECT CURLLOW

inspired by the story by
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EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Early spring. The leaves are green, the forest lush. But for all it's beauty the forest is deathly silent. Not one leaf stirs. Something isn't right. Not even the crickets are out.

Twigs SNAP.

Heavy BREATHING.

TIGHT ON scrambling feet as they CRASH through the underbrush.

WOOSH! A DARK SHAPE dashes across the frame.

It's a middle aged WOMAN dressed in a jogging suit. She's terrified, out of breath, and her hair is a mess.

After a short distance she slows, looks behind her, sees SOMETHING, then lets out a terrified SCREAM.

She turns, bolts into the forest, and WE FOLLOW.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

--she ducks under branches

--careens around a tree trunk

--navigates a fallen log

--glances over her shoulder

A REVERSE ANGLE shows us that the SOMETHING that follows her is actually a SOMEONE.

Shrouded in shadows we see that the SOMEONE holds an odd shaped GUN in their hand.

The SOMEONE fires the GUN and let's out a maniacal, cackle of a LAUGH.

The gun emits an odd RAY OF FOG that slams into a tree trunk.

The SOMEONE fires the gun again.

One bolt hits the ground behind the woman, another a rock next to her.

The woman continues to run.

The two of them continue to crash through the forest trees and the CAMERA FOLLOWS.

WOMAN
Help! Somebody help me!

Abruptly she trips. Out of breath, and too tired to continue, she turns, struggles to her feet, and puts her hands up in front of her.

WOMAN

Please, please don't hurt me.

Her pursuer LAUGHS, and steps out of the shadows.

This is DR. EZRA CURLLOW, dressed in a lab coat and holding the odd shaped GUN that he points at her.

DR. CURLLOW

(maniacal laugh)

Say cheese!

--ZAP!--

The RAY OF FOG slams into her.

Suddenly, all is still. The woman has a distant glazed over look in her eyes.

DR. CURLLOW

Now. You're going to stay calm, refer to me as Master, and follow my every instruction. Do you understand?

WOMAN

Yes, Ma...

(she twitches)

Yes, Ma...

Another twitch.

DR. CURLLOW

What's that? I'm having trouble hearing you.

WOMAN

Ye...yes,

(another twitch)

Ma...

DR. CURLLOW

(crazed)

Well? Spit it out!

WOMAN

Ye...Ye...

Frustrated, Dr. Curlow takes a step toward the woman, then stops. His frustration and anger turn to confusion, then disgust.

We hear a strange SWELLING sound just out of frame.

Dr. Curlow looks alarmed by the sound. He takes a few steps back, brings his hands up to shield his face--

SPLAT! Wet, blue goo rains down from the sky, some falls on Dr. Curlow.

He takes a few more steps backward as he tries to get out of the way.

When the shower of goo is over, Dr. Curlow surveys his surroundings.

An arm, dripping the blue goo, sails through the air past his head. He watches it, then turns his gaze back to--

POV - DR CURLOW

We see a pair of shoes, with a pair of feet in them that end in blue gooey stumps just above the ankles.

One of the stumps tips over.

BACK TO SCENE

Dr. Curlow frowns, looks at the RAY GUN, and spots some goo on his sleeve.

He notices more on his lab coat, pockets the gun, then swipes some of the goo off.

DR. CURLOW

...hmmm.

He pulls a small notebook and pen out of the other pocket on his lab coat and clicks the pen open.

He flips through several pages in the book then scribbles on one of them.

DR. CURLOW

(as he writes)

Experiment number six. Almost, but
still not right. Adjustments need to
be made.

He clicks his pen shut, puts the notebook and pen back in their pocket, takes one last look around him, then vanishes back into the forest.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A star filled sky fills the frame. We PAN DOWN to a warehouse on the outskirts of the city.

A dirt road leads up to two massive doors. Next to the warehouse is a large field.

Dr. Curlow, dressed in a fine suit and overcoat, makes his way across the field toward the warehouse.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Dr. Curlow, walks through the near empty warehouse, he looks around; cautious.

DR. CURLOW

Hello?

(nervous laugh)

Anyone home?

Silence.

Dr. Curlow continues into the warehouse.

CLOSE ON his eyes as they dart everywhere.

After a few more steps a deep RUMBLING emanates from all around him. Dr. Curlow freezes.

A silvery fog lazily creeps across the floor hanging low at about ankle height.

Dr. Curlow's gaze turns toward a pallet of tarp covered containers blanketed in shadows.

A DARK SHAPE emerges from the shadows that surround the pallet. We can only see the DARK SHAPE's silhouette as it's just visible via a BACK LIGHT, but it's enough to tell us this thing isn't human.

DARK SHAPE

(inhuman voice)

Was the test successful?

The voice of the DARK FIGURE is stilted and intensely deep. The words come out in a herky-jerky paused cadence that only heightens the otherworldliness of the entire situation.

Dr. Curlow is visibly shaken by the voice that is barely fit for human ears; all but wincing at every word.

DR. CURLOW

Th-There were...complications.

DARK SHAPE

(inhuman voice)

Explain.

Sweat begins to trickle down Dr. Curlow's forehead.

DR. CURLLOW
Nothing to concern yourself with.
It's nothing I can't fix. I'll keep
my end of the bargain.

DARK SHAPE
(inhuman voice)
This disappoints us.

DR. CURLLOW
I can fix it. I'm very close to
perfecting it.

DARK SHAPE
(inhuman voice)
*Promises were made. Payments
exchanged.*

As if the sweat and wincing wasn't enough to show us that
the voice wasn't meant for humans, Dr. Curlow begins to bleed
from his ears. Just a trickle of blood, but it's there.

DR. CURLLOW
I haven't forgotten. I know my
business. I just need more time.

There's a short beat, then more RUMBLING accompanied by a
strange NOISE that sounds like a demonic horn emanating from
the bowels of the Abyss.

Dr. Curlow covers his ears, glances all around him. Eventually
the strange sounds stop. Dr. Curlow lowers his hands.

DARK SHAPE
(inhuman voice)
*Time is granted. Do not disappoint
us again.*

DR. CURLLOW
I won't. I swear to you, I won't.

Dr. Curlow turns, takes a step, stops then turns back to the
Dark Shape.

DR. CURLLOW
I-I hate to bother you with such a
minor trifle, but is there any chance
you could remove the evidence again?

He puts on a slight smile.

DR. CURLLOW (CONT'D)
The local authorities have already
come 'round asking questions about
(MORE)

DR. CURLOW (CONT'D)
my previous caretaker and I really
wouldn't want them to get involved,
not when I'm so close.

More strange NOISES. Dr. Curlow covers his ears, lets out a small GRUNT. The noise stops and he lowers his hands.

DARK SHAPE
(inhuman voice)
It will be done.

Dr. Curlow forces a smile.

DR. CURLOW
Thank you.
(bows)
For everything.

He bows again and backs into the shadows.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

WHOOM! Dr. Curlow exits the warehouse in a hurry.

He takes a few steps and places a hand against the outside wall. He's visibly shaking.

His knees give out but he's able to recover before he falls.

He turns, leans his back against the wall, exhales heavily then slides down the wall, sits on the ground. He looks up at the night sky.

A few deep, ragged breathes later, and he removes a handkerchief from his overcoat, then wipes away the blood that comes from his ears.

After a bit of cleaning up, he regains control of himself then pockets the handkerchief.

With a look of determination he stands and exits frame.

EXT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - DAY

A small single car garage home in a relatively middle class neighborhood. A nondescript sedan is parked in the driveway.

INT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - DAY

CU - BLAKE MCCALLUM, late 40's grizzled, close cropped hair opens his eyes.

Blake lies in a bed. His eyes shift to a clock that reads:
5:45 am.

He reaches over presses a button, then pulls the sheets off and gets out of bed.

IN THE KITCHEN

Blake sits at a breakfast bar eating a bowl of cereal as he reads a news paper.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

The house is fairly Spartan. A TV and stereo are on one wall faced by a couch.

On a another wall we see a framed photo of a woman, and an end table with a pretty arrangement of silk flowers that sit beneath the photo. The photo looks like it's from the 60's. Black and White, an obvious reprint.

IN THE BEDROOM

Blake ties a tie. His movements a methodical, precise. He smoothes it out and places a clip on it, pinning it to his shirt.

On his bureau we see a sidearm and a badge. Each one is very carefully clipped to his belt and readjusted until they are just the right distance from each other.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Blake stands in front of the photo of the woman. He stares at it for a beat, exhales, and gives it a slight smile.

EXT. DOWNTOWN POLICE STATION - DAY

Establishing shot of the police station.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Sparsely populated, this is a small police station by most standards. Only a few desks.

A uniformed police officer escorts a handcuffed man over to a desk where a detective in a cheap suit is waiting.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

CU - of hands as they open a desk drawer, pull a holstered side arm out and hastily clips it to their belt. The hands pull a badge out of the desk as well and clip that next to the sidearm. The badge is slightly askew.

Blake sits at a desk a short distance away from the other officers listening to a laptop though a pair of earbuds. The desk is extremely well organized.

CU - of the hands pouring a cup of coffee. Some of the coffee slops onto the counter. The hands grab a packet of instant coffee, tearing it open and adding it to the cup.

Blake scribbles on a note pad, then rifles through some papers and files, both organized into symmetrical stacks perfectly spaced apart from each other.

CU - of a hand scooping a file off a desk.

Once he finds the information he seeks Blake writes it down then carefully straightens the papers back into the stack.

CU - of boots walking across a tiled floor.

CU - of the file as it is walked up to Blake's desk.

BACK TO SCENE

Over all of this we hear catchy MUSIC, and--

NED (O.S.)

Greetings internet! This is your ever faithful watchdog, your eye on the night sky, and you're purveyor of all things truth! This is...the Voice of Reason.

(beat)

So has anyone else noticed the strange lights hovering over the outskirts of the East Ridgewood Hills? Because I have! You hear that government eavesdroppers? I know you're listening, and I know about your deal with these intergalactic carpetbaggers!

(beat)

In other news, several eyewitnesses claim to have seen bigfoot in and around the Poodle Creek area of Noti, which brings the Squatch sightings for this month up to a staggering forty three. And why, you may be asking, is the pacific northwest legend himself gracing the Poodle Creek area with his presence?

(beat)

Harp towers!

A large file flops onto Blake's desk. He looks down at it, slightly perturbed that it unsettled a few papers off one of his perfectly arranged stacks.

He looks up at ETHAN RYAN, late 20's, handsome, dressed for action. Ethan smiles down at him.

Blake exhales, pauses the live stream, then pulls the earbuds out of his ears.

Ethan glances at the laptop screen.

ETHAN

Why do you listen to that nutball?

He takes a sip of coffee. Blake straightens his wayward papers.

BLAKE

He's funny.

Ethan raises an eyebrow.

ETHAN

I thought you didn't believe in aliens or government conspiracies?

BLAKE

I don't. Which is why he's funny.

Blake's eyes shift to the file on his desk.

BLAKE

You wanna tell me why there's a cold case on my desk and not in the file cabinet it belongs in?

ETHAN

(smiles)

Because our cold case just got warm.

Blake lets out a small irritated exhale.

BLAKE

Ethan, we interviewed everybody we could, even people who had only ever heard of 4278 Lancaster Drive. Her husband, relatives, co-workers, grade school classmates; nobody knows what happened to Susan Owens.

Ethan nods, still smiling.

BLAKE

We had forensics comb that entire forest. Every tree trunk, every leaf; pulling double shifts for a week straight. Nothing. They said it was almost too clean.

(beat)

And now the lab guys won't invite me back to poker night.

Ethan nods again and still smiles.

BLAKE

Mind explaining how it is our cold case suddenly got warm?

ETHAN

Because I'm not talking about Mrs. Owens.

BLAKE

Don't toy with me Ethan, you know how badly I want to nail Curlow. If you have something...give.

Ethan leans forward.

ETHAN

Forty two year old divorcee, Hanna Miller went for her daily two mile walk last night and never came home. Daughter called it in. Just got off the phone with her.

Ethan sits in the chair next to Blake's desk.

ETHAN

She said her mom normally takes her walk in the afternoon, but yesterday was super hectic, a parent teacher conference, her nail appointment got bumped and her daughter had an out of town soccer game that mom wanted to watch, so she had to put off her walk until that night.

Ethan sits back in the chair, takes another sip of his coffee.

BLAKE

A fascinating tale of middle class suburban life and first world problems. Is there a point to it?

Ethan grins again.

ETHAN

Guess whose house her daily walk takes her past?

A beat.

BLAKE

...Curlow's.

Ethan nods.