

BRAIN

FADE IN:

EXT. HILLY LANDSCAPE - DAY

Mist flows above meadows and acres. Remnants of snow linger in the furrows.

In the midst of this solitude sits a longish two-story mansion. TAHIR TALEB (25), Middle Eastern guy, little facial hair, with a shovel clears slush off its gravel driveway.

NARRATOR V.O.

In 2016 immigrant Tahir Talib, the younger brother of rucksack bomber Sabri Talib, has been sent to a sanatorium in the arse-end of nowhere; somewhere in the United Kingdom. By providing his scientific expertise, he must prove a sincere commitment to the Union Jack to refute the hypothesis he could follow the path of his deadly brother. It turned out that the responsible agency's promises of a new identity and the recognition of Tahir's Middle Eastern study periods is less at stake than his return to civilization in general.

Tahir scatters salt over several icy areas.

He steps onto the narrow porch, places shovel and bucket below the plate "Neurologic Sanatorium Cornelius", and enters through the front door.

INT. SANATORIUM - STAIRWAY HALL - DAY

Oriental rugs lay on parquet, a dimly lit but homely place. Tahir removes his bomber jacket, hangs it on the cloth rack.

From within the darkness of an adjacent room, gleam of wall tiles and metallic objects pierce through the left ajar door into the hall.

Tahir strolls into the opposite direction, passes the stairway, and enters an opening.

INT. SANATORIUM - CORRIDOR - DAY

At eye level along the walls, brightly lit display cases create a small exhibition into the world of brain research.

- A calvaria (top of the skull)

- A cross section brain model
- Trepanation instruments (tools for drilling into the skull) from bygone times

Tahir sedately walks along the exhibition.

INT. SANATORIUM - TAHIR'S ROOM - DAY

Tahir takes a seat on a camp bed, where the room's only illumination, a bedside lamp shines.

He slips off his shoes, revealing the electronic tag around his ankle. He facepalms with a sigh.

From somewhere near, an enthusiastic male voice sounds:

ENTHUSIASTIC VOICE

Tahir. Is it -- Is it melting
outside?

In socks Tahir trudges into the room's darkened side. As he reaches the rear wall, he sinks to the floor, and stretches out his legs.

He sits right beside some bars. It's a cage and the Voice must've been coming from the occupant within.

Tahir reaches out his hand, holds it close to the cage.

From between the bars a DEFORMED HAND EMERGES. The wrong way up its palm sits on the dorsal side of the forearm.

Tahir and the Man entwine fingers and shake hands that way.

Adjusting to the darkness, the man behind the bars becomes more and more visible: He uses the same sitting position as Tahir, back to the wall, legs stretched out.

His face consists of several flaps of skin, slightly different colored each, separated by fat scars.

As the man turns his head toward Tahir, asking...

CAGE OCCUPANT

Is it melting outside?

... he reveals his most noticeable disfiguration: Out of his nostril, a swollen blue artery, uncovered at the outside, runs upwards along his frontal bone and divides his face into two equal halves.

TAHIR

It is. He wants me to perform the trepanation tomorrow.

The Inmates eyes twinkle.

ADAM

I'd loved it when the snow melted and the river rose - Soil and dirt everywhere.

TAHIR

Did you hear what I just said, Adam?

ADAM

It's okay, boy. It's okay. Tomorrow you perform a perfect surgery and before you can say the snow is melting you're leaving this bunker.

TAHIR

No. We're going together. One day.

A tiny tear runs down his cheek.

TAHIR

Promise. AHHH! That damn shackle.

He rolls up his trouser leg.

TAHIR

I can't sleep anymore.

As he pulls off his wet socks and throws them at the camp bed on the other side --

A walkie-talkie lying over there goes off and the sharp voice of Dr. Cornelius turns them to dead silence:

DR. CORNELIUS (O.S.)

I meet you at the operating theater at nine-thirty.

INT. SANATORIUM - SURGERY - NIGHT

The only light comes from a projection screen. It illustrates a YOUTUBE VIDEO of a BRAIN SURGERY ON A LAB RAT.

Tahir and DR. CORNELIUS watch the video while sitting on folding chairs placed among operation table, monitors, and other surgical equipment.

Dr. Cornelius wears a lab coat. His white hair below the big bald patch as well as his sideburns extremely sticks out, as only a crazy would wear these days.

ON THE PROJECTION SCREEN

The anesthetized RAT is laid with the belly downwards, its head fixed in a stereotactic apparatus (metallic frames that operate like a vise with only more fine mechanics, adjusting screws, gadgets above).

The rat's skin of scalp is already opened up.

A RUBBER GLOVE emerges and carefully drives a scalpel along the rat's milky periosteum, exposing a small spot of the skull bone beneath.

A soft hum resonates from a drill handpiece as the SURGEON on screen carefully bores into the rat's top of the skull.

DR. CORNELIUS

Look how carefully the surgeon acts
around the dura mater.

The Surgeon puts the drill away. With a pincette he collects the remaining bone splinters.

The rat's brain pulses with its heartbeat.

With the help of the stereotactic rotary knobs, the Surgeon adjusts a needle mounted on the curved frame, exactly above the borehole.

The syringe behind the needle contains a green substance.

DR. CORNELIUS

For artificial amnesia, the
injection's exact coordinates must
be determined.

TAHIR

Which one?

DR. CORNELIUS

We will try his hippocampus, as
they do with the rat. Shoot it
right in his limbic system and
block his protein building
synthesis. Sending him to
Neverland. Never tested on a human
being, but obviously it works with
rats, so...?

(MORE)

DR. CORNELIUS (CONT'D)
 And if we succeed, bring his memory
 back. Yahtzee. Nobel Prize.

TAHIR
 Why? He's your son? Why?

DR. CORNELIUS
 Because I can. He's not only my son
 - he also is a son of a whore.

He laughs at himself.

DR. CORNELIUS
 (rhetoric)
 How do you believe people will
 commemorate the achievement of the
 pioneers in fighting dementia?
 Parkinson's? And what else not?
 They'll build big statues. And you
 belong to the elitist people who
 sit behind the curtain right now.
 We research for millions - damn
 billions of people at this moment.

ON THE PROJECTION SCREEN

the needle electronically moves down into the rat's brain.

DR. CORNELIUS
 You're opening his skull and I push
 the trigger. Fair share. You want
 to be free, do as you are told.

The green liquid goes into the rat's brain.

EXT. SANATORIUM - DAY

Mist flows over the deserted meadows.

INT. SANATORIUM - TAHIR'S ROOM - DAY

The cage door's left open. Nobody there.

INT. SANATORIUM - CORRIDOR - DAY

The spotlights shine on the display cases of the brain
 research exhibition.

INT. SANATORIUM - STAIRWAY HALL - DAY

The homely hall, abandoned.

INT. SANATORIUM - SURGERY - DAY

Adam sits in an operating chair.

In this shadow-free illumination, his disfigurements look even more hideous.

Around his head, the stereotactic apparatus for surgical interventions on the human brain is ready to fix his head.

ADAM

It's okay. I just want you to live on. You're not lost as I am. Just give me the anesthesia.

TAHIR

No.

ADAM

Please. They won't give you any peace.

TAHIR

And what do I do if he erases your memory? If this monster succeeds with its plan, so that you can't remember me?

ADAM

I'm sure I will.

INT. SANATORIUM - SECOND FLOOR - BATHROOM - DAY

Behind the fogged door, Dr. Cornelius takes a shower.

INT. SANATORIUM - SECOND FLOOR - DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Dr. Cornelius' well-kept hand adjusts the knot of his slim tie. He examines himself intently in the mirrored closet door. He he opens a drawer.

A single white coat laid in there. He unfolds it, slips it over his blue shirt. He buttons it up, checks the sleeves.

A serious look in the mirror questions for perfection.

INT. SANATORIUM - SECOND FLOOR - DR. CORNELIUS' OFFICE - DAY

The literature in the shelves lines up the universe of neuroscience and brain research.

A steaming mug of tea sits at the wooden desk in front of the window.

Dr. Cornelius approaches and sneaks a peek outside. Gray. Mist. Nothing. He takes seat, sips from the cup while turning on the walkie-talkie. He gives an order:

DR. CORNELIUS
I hope you're ready to make
history. Have you stunned him?

A MECHANICAL HUM DRONES OUT THE SPEAKER while Tahir replies:

TAHIR (O.S.)
I have.

DR. CORNELIUS
Tahir! What are you doing? I hear
that you're boring. You can't
perform a trepanation without my
supervision!

CLOSE UP

We only see that Tahir's finger pushes the button of the mobile radio and that his other hand holds the HUMMING, rotating brain surgery drill...

INT. DR. CORNELIUS' OFFICE

... Dr. Cornelius hears the humming through the walkie-talkie speaker. He jumps up, crosses the office. As he opens the door...

INT. SECOND FLOOR - STAIRCASE LANDING

... the door opens. The raging Dr. Cornelius rushes out the door.

TAHIR COMES FROM THE SIDE RAMS THE ROTATING ELECTRIC DRILL INTO THE DOCTOR'S FACE.

Lunatic. Again and again Tahir strikes the super sharp rotating drill bit into the doctor's face. Each time a slim stream of blood squirts out in any imaginable direction.

Tahir breaks down beside the Doctor.

Dr. Cornelius is lifeless.

Tahir breathes heavily. His face is completely red, full of the Doctor's blood. Only his white eyes shine clear.

The rage in his dilated pupils lets off. He gives a self-affirming nod.

INT. SANATORIUM - SURGERY - DAY

Adam sits in the operating chair.

He awakes, still dazed.

Tahir bends over him, freshly washed.

TAHIR

I cut the electronic tag. How far
is the next village?

ADAM

When I was small, it's been four
hours by foot.

Tahir smiles sarcastically.

ADAM

You killed my father?

Tahir nods.

Adam looks him into the eyes - not as the monster he looks
like - as a deeply grateful man.

TAHIR

Perhaps we should visit your river
until they start to search us. It
rose because...

He swallows.

TAHIR

... the snow is melting, Adam.

EXT. HILLY LANDSCAPE - DAY

Tahir and the limping Adam arm in arm cross the acres.

Leaving the sanatorium behind, they trudge through remnants
of snow, mist, and grayness, appearing as if their life
begins at this very moment. Just a seldom seen birthday.

FADE OUT.