SHADOWS

by Julian Singleton

Julian Singleton Geist Pictures EXT. SHADOW REALM - UNKNOWN

A boy of about 15 wakes up in...somewhere. Wind howls off in the distance.

He gets up to view his surroundings.

It's an abandoned hanger. It's run down and rusty, but the equipment looks recent. But something doesn't feel right.

A rattle. Nick turns around and sees nothing. A shadowy figure whooshes by. Then another. And another. Nick rapidly turns to see them all, but he can't.

Nick feels something on his shoulder: a hand. He turns to see it, and his eyes widen in horror. He is about to scream...

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - MIDNIGHT

Nick Dyer wakes up in bed, screaming. He gains his composure and walks into the bathroom.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) - MIDNIGHT

Nick picks up a glass and fills it up with water. He picks up a bottle of pills and places one in his hand.

As Nick takes his medication, the camera focuses on a doctor's note, with some words highlighted: "intense dreams", "shadow people", "mirrors", and "trouble discerning reality from dream."

Nick finishes taking his pill and turns out the light.

But somebody remains in the bathroom...

EXT. PARK - DAY

Nick walks in a park to clear his mind of the night before. He enjoys the day in all its splendor. The birds are singing, the flowers are blooming, and life seems better.

And then Nick hears the voice.

VOICE

Nick...

Nick turns around, hoping to see somebody there. Nobody.

The voice sounds again. Nothing.

A cacophony of voices starts to build up around Nick. He clamps his ears to make the voices stop. He can't take it anymore.

## NICK

STOP IT!!!

Nick faints.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

Nick wakes up on a park bench, alone. No--a boy is standing at one end of the bench. This is Eric.

ERIC You know the shadow people, right?

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - AFTERNOON

Eric sits down in a chair next to Nick and places a digital camera on the coffee table.

NICK You said you know about them.

ERIC

Why would I come over here if I didn't?

NICK Whatever. I just want them to go away.

ERIC It's not your choice for them to go away. They stay with you...until they find somebody else to torment.

NICK Where do they come from?

ERIC The world beyond the next. All the anger, the torment, the hate of humanity becomes bottled up in this realm and out of that darkness, they emerge. (MORE)

## ERIC (CONT'D)

They prey on unsuspecting victims with susceptable minds. I was one of them, but they stopped as soon as the dreams ended. I went through the door in the dream.

NICK But there's other people. Why was I picked?

## ERIC

I don't know. They found new prey and they picked you. That's all I know.

Eric passes Nick the camera.

ERIC (CONT'D) This is proof you're not crazy.

Nick turns on the camera and looks through the photos. They seem to be of ordinary items and picturesque scenes, but how is it related to what Eric's talking about.

> NICK What is this?

ERIC You know. I have to go.

Eric gets up and walks to the door.

NICK But what about the hangar? The dreams?

ERIC They're different for all of us. They show us what we want to see. That way they can cross over to our world. Now, like I said, I gotta go. Here's my phone number.

He hands the slip of paper to him. He's about to leave, when:

ERIC (CONT'D) Have you been taking any medication?

NICK Yeah, Gamprolin.

ERIC Night terrors? NICK Yeah. Doctors think they can solve a problem like this...they're dead wrong.

Eric exits through the front door, leaving Nick with the camera.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - EVENING

Nick hooks up the camera to his computer and loads up the pictures. The pictures, again, show normal scenes without any subjects at all. But something lurks in the reflective surfaces in the photos: shadow people.

Proof that Nick isn't crazy and Eric isn't lying.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Nick is asleep on his bed. He has a few flashes of the hangar dream, but then the dream is interrupted by a phone ringing. He wakes up and answers his cell phone.

NICK (groggily) Hello?

ERIC

Nick?

NICK Eric. What's up?

ERIC Are you still taking the Gamprolin?

NICK Yeah. Why?

ERIC

Don't take it. I was looking up the med on the Internet and it turns out they were involved in a big placebo fraud. The medicine's a placebo. It didn't do anything.

Nick is speechless. He does the only thing possible. He hangs up the phone and walks to the bathroom. INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) - NIGHT

Nick picks up the bottle filled with the faux medicine and places it resolutely in the trash.

CUT TO BLACK.

NICK (V.O.) The incidents stopped after that.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - UNKNOWN

Nick paces around with the cell phone.

NICK (V.O.) I tried calling Eric again, but he never answered. It's like he disappeared completely.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

A boy of about 15 watches TV. We don't see what's on it, only the TV glare about the boy's face. He's in his bedroom, which is a typical teenager's bedroom. He glances at a digital alarm clock: it reads 12:28 AM.

He grabs a remote and turns off the TV. He goes out of his room and walks to the kitchen.

A figure is reflected in the TV screen, but Nick doesn't see it.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - NIGHT

Nick reaches into a cabinet and pulls out a glass. He walks to the sink and fills the glass with water. He stops the sink and drinks his glass. Suddenly, a dark figure passes by with a spectral "whoosh". Nick looks to where the figure came from, but nothing's there.

He finishes his glass and walks back to his room. Another figure is reflected in the glass back door, but again Nick misses it.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BATHROOM)

Nick enters his bathroom and looks the pills on his vanity. He looks up in the mirror with a determined yet evil look on his face.

Suddenly, Nick's expression turns painful. He places his palm on his forehead and looks downward. The lights flicker above him. The same shadowy figures are seen briefly in the mirror as the lights flicker, but when Nick looks up, they aren't there anymore.

Nick turns off the bathroom light and exits. In the darkness, the shadowy figures lay in watch...

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Nick sits down on his bed and continues to watch TV. He turns on the TV and resumes an apathetic-type stare.

CLOSEUP: THE TV

The TV starts to static...barely noticeable at first, but increases in measure. Soon the transmission ceases completely. The TV then shuts off by itself. A shadow figure is in the TV screen yet again, but this time sitting right next to him. He doesn't notice this, either.

The doorbell rings. Nick runs out.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (FOYER) - NIGHT

Nick opens the door and Eric rushes in.

ERIC Nick, you've got to do something. Now.

NICK I thought you were dead, Eric!

ERIC (screaming) YOU HAVE TO DO FIND YOUR DOOR!

NICK What's going on?! ERIC They're real now. They're gathering outside.

EXT. NICK'S HOUSE - EVENING

A neighbor walking by looks at the two boys. Nick notices this.

## NICK

GO AWAY!

Nick runs to the window and looks outside.

EXT. NICK'S HOUSE - EVENING/NIGHT

The view of the outside world becomes dark and foggy. A glimpse or two of shadow people are breifly seen reflected in the window.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (FOYER)

Nick rushes away from the window.

NICK So what do we do?

ERIC Take shelter. Find flashlights. They lurk in the darkness.

They do so.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Eric and Nick pile their stuff in Nick's room and sit down.

NICK Now what?

ERIC They'll send you signs.

NICK

What?

ERIC They'll send you signs. NICK But I thought we were defending ourselves against these things.

Eric's face turns dark.

ERIC You still don't understand, do you?

NICK No, I don't.

ERIC How is it you were able to find me so quickly? How would I know you were experiencing this? Your report said you had trouble with recognizing dream from reality.

A flash: a camera clicks.

Close up on Nick's face: his face is without color, in deep fear.

There's a split second shot of Nick asleep in his bed, tossing and turning, accompanied with the sound of a heartbeat.

Another heartbeat: Nick snaps a picture, blankness in his eyes.

Another heartbeat: Nick looks at the photos containing shadow people. The shadow people are gone.

Another heartbeat: the neighbor passes by the arguing boys. Nick is shown talking to himself.

Eric smiles at him evilly, knowing the truth.

And then he's gone.

NICK No. I can't be dreaming.

He gets up and runs to the kitchen.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - NIGHT

Nick runs to the kitchen counter with his pills and doctor's note. He flips through the note, which is heavily distorted. He can make out a few words-

"Door = waking up", "Mirror = your fears", "Phone = test"

Taking this as a sign, he runs to pick up the phone.

Listening intently, Nick presses the phone to his ear. The noise sounds like a cold wind, accompanied by omniescent screeching noises. One screech becomes ear-piercingly loud and Nick throws the phone to the side. He falls to the floor.

More shots of Nick tossing and turning in bed.

Almost immediately, Nick gets up.

NICK This isn't happening. I'm dreaming. They'll be coming soon.

Nick shuts his eyes and thinks hard.

NICK (CONT'D) Anything can happen in dreams, right? I need a flashlight. I need a flashlight.

A flashlight appears in his hand.

NICK (CONT'D) At least something worked. Doors. Doors can let me wake up.

He runs to the front door, turning on the flashlight. The darkness seems to repel from the light. Nick runs for the front door.

However, something else is in the darkness...people. One of them is Eric.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (FOYER) - NIGHT

Nick reaches the front door, turning on the front porch light. He looks outside and sees it's pitch black. Even the flashlight cannot penetrate the darkness.

Suddenly, a pale, white hand slams against the door. Nick recoils in fear and screams. He turns around to see a painting, covered in glass, adequately reflecting the scene. There's a shadow person in the reflection, opening the door. He turns around and falls. The door hasn't budged one bit, but a shadow extends past the tile and up the foyer wall, to the ceiling and up against the foyer light. The hand makes a motion, as if trying to grab the light, and the light goes out. Nick turns on the flashlight and sees shadow people walking around in the living room. He runs to his room, the only sources of light coming from the hall and his room. Once he reaches his room, the lights in the hall shut off, and Nick is trapped in his room.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Nick paces around in his room, thinking about what to do.

NICK Why did I have to fall asleep? Why now?

More pacing.

NICK (CONT'D) Never mind. How can I wake up?

He goes to his bed and lies down, gripping his eyes shut.

NICK (CONT'D) Wake up...wake up...wake up...WAKE...

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Nick jolts up from his bed.

NICK

...UP!!!

NICK'S POV INTERLAPPING WITH NORMAL CAMERA:

Nick's vision is blurry. He stumbles to the bathroom where the bottle of pills lay in the trash can. He falls and starts crawling to the bathroom. Once he gets the bottle, Nick's vision fades to black.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Nick wakes up, screaming. The flashlight is by his side.

He drops to the floor and starts pounding it.

NICK

NO!!!

Offscreen there's a whisper. Nick looks, and gets up. He grips the flashlight and turns it on.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (HALLWAY) - NIGHT

Nick steps out in the hallway, his flashlight shining into the camera. The house is completely dark, save for his room and his flashlight.

> NICK (muttering) God, what am I doing? I just need to wake up. Wake up.

The darkness of the house starts to move towards him. He starts to back away, but notices the darkness move at him from the other end as well. There are also faint shadows of people moving in the darkness, slowly...like ghosts. The flashlight starts to flicker, becoming overpowered by the darkness. The shadows of people start to walk towards Nick, who backs into his room and slams the door.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Nick's room is silent. The door is unmoving. Then, without warning, the door shakes violently and the darkness begins to pour into the room. It shatters lightbulbs, creating even more darkness. Nick looks to a mirror on his wall, which shows a gathering of ghosts starting to circle around Nick. He backs away, unable to see his attackers. He eventually gets into his closet, filled with light.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (CLOSET) - NIGHT

He shuts the door and backs into the other side of the closet.

Silence.

Then, in what seems to be loving gesture, the darkness begins to creep into the closet. The light begins to flicker at the top of the closet. The shadow takes the form of a hand, which grabs at the light. The closet becomes dark.

Nick still has his flashlight.

He turns it on, his only source of illumination...the only thing protecting him from the darkness. Nick breathes rapidly, terrified. Suddenly, the flashlight flickers and dies. Nick screams horribly. The flashlight flickers a bit again, revealing numerous arms grabbing Nick. Eric is in front of Nick, grinning.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BATHROOM)

Nick's eyes are wide open and darting back and forth...then they are still. Nick is dead.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (CLOSET)

The flashlight flickers still...

Nick's body is seen, eyes still as well.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BATHROOM)

Next to Nick's body is his bottle of pills, scattered across the floor.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (HALLWAY)

As we leave the scene, we pass through the hall and into Nick's room.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE (BEDROOM)

The staticky TV is still blaring, black and white dots racing across the screen. Suddenly, the TV resumes its transmission, as if nothing ever happened.

FADE TO BLACK.

"...Monsters are real, and ghosts are real too. They live inside us, and sometimes, they win." --Stephen King

The End. Credits unaccompanied by music.