

THE GATEWAY EXPERIMENT

**BY
ANTHONY HUDSON**

(Based on the Creepypasta - Gateway of the mind)

This screenplay may not be used or reproduced without the consent
of the author.

buckrogers_10@hotmail.com

FADE IN:

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - CONFERENCE ROOM

A single naked bulb provides only adequate light in the small confined space. The tiled walls have no windows and only a single door.

A table, far too big for the room, is occupied by Doctor JONAS HENRIK (45), bearded and portly. He casually flicks through a pad of paper while shaking his head.

Doctor PETER RHOADES (40), thinning hairline and waist, sits to Henrik's left. To his right, Doctor ISABELLE KINGSTON (25), short hair and slender. All three share a disappointed look.

A tap on the door draws their attention.

HENRIK

Enter.

Slowly, WALTER BENNETT (68) enters. A mop of shaggy unkept hair which, along with his cheap suit, is in need of a good wash. He sits before the three white coated doctors.

HENRIK

Walter Bennett, is that right?

Walter nods.

HENRIK

Hello, I'm doctor Henrik, this is our neurosurgeon, doctor Rhoades and psychologist, doctor Kingston.

WALTER

Pleased to meet you all.

HENRIK

Mr. Bennett, may I call you Walter?

Another nod from Walter.

HENRIK

Walter, this is a, shall we say, controversial experiment which has had its fair share of opposition but we here strongly believe it would be a valid insight into the workings of the human mind and the power to communicate through thought itself.

Rhoades and Kingston nod agreement. Walter though shows little emotion.

HENRIK

Are you a religious man, Walter?

WALTER

Not especially. I mean I was married in church but that's about as far it goes.

HENRIK

I see.

Henrik scribbles something down on the paper.

WALTER

Doctor, I have been told of what you want to do to me and I am happy to take part. I have little to live for since my wife's passing. I have no siblings or other family and few friends. I am retired with little savings and lead a mundane life. Is that what you want to hear?

Henrik stares at Walter's blank expressionless face.

KINGSTON

Would you say you feel depressed, Walter?

WALTER

What would give you that idea?

He relents his firm persona and lets out a little chuckle which seems to lighten the mood for all.

HENRIK

We just want to make sure you fully understand what the experiment entails and that there is no guarantee that you will make contact.

Walter's face wilts back to nothing and he nods.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM

Clean and sparse.

Walter lies on the operating table, a sheet covering his torso. His vitals keep a small monitor busy.

Doctor Rhoades works on Walter's exposed brain, while Henrik observes with interest.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - OBSERVATION ROOM

SUPER: DAY 1

Blank and devoid of any furnishings except a single chair, on which Walter sits. He wears a hospital gown, his head bound in bandages and a drip provides him with fluids. His hollow empty eyes stare into nothing.

Henrik and Rhoades stand in the corner and converse.

Kingston enters with a clipboard tucked under her arm.

KINGSTON

How did it go?

RHOADES

No complications and all nerves were severed.

Kingston approaches Walter and stands over him.

KINGSTON

And now we wait?

HENRIK

And now we wait. The brain suffered no trauma so we assume his memory is unaffected.

Kingston looks round to her colleagues.

KINGSTON

Well lets hope so.

She turns back and stares at Walter, transfixed by his stillness.

KINGSTON

And the tests have been done, to be sure?

Henrik nods.

HENRIK

That they have.

RHOADES

Feel free to double check.

Kingston cautiously places her hand on Walter's shoulder but he doesn't respond or react at all.

Rhoades marches forward and loudly bangs his hands together causing Kingston to flinch but Walter remains unmoved.

RHOADES
Satisfied?

Kingston composes herself and nods.

HENRIK
I hope you're not having second thoughts, Doctor Kingston?

KINGSTON
Not at all but I can't help feeling a little strange about...

Walter lets out a deafening scream causing Kingston to cover her ears, while Rhoades and Henrik look on with excitement.

HENRIK
The test begins.

Walter's eyes fleet back and forth and never settle.

WALTER
Hello, hello!

His head jerks up, down, left and right as panic engulfs him.

WALTER
I...I...hello? I see nothing, hello?

His breathing quickens and his arms begin to flail, searching for something, anything. The drip topples and the needle is yanked from his arm. Blood spurts free.

Clearly shocked, Kingston looks to Henrik.

HENRIK
He's just confused. Imagine not knowing if you are awake or asleep, dead or alive. It would unsettle any of us.

She nods but clearly is having second thoughts. Rhoades seems genuinely entertained by the old mans disturbed actions.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - OBSERVATION ROOM

SUPER - DAY 2

Walter sits calm on the chair. His eyes stare at Kingston, who stands nervously in the corner.

Henrik enters and walks up to Walter.

KINGSTON
It's almost as if he knows I'm here.

Kingston joins Henrik and waves a hand across Walter's eyes, but again he doesn't react.

HENRIK
Perhaps it's his sixth sense?

He jokingly grins at Kingston to put her at ease, but it doesn't help.

HENRIK
Has he said anything today?

KINGSTON
Nothing much. He said he see's nothing and later asked for his mother.

Henrik nods.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR

SUPER - DAY 6

Rhoades and Henrik walk and talk.

RHOADES
The dressing will require changing and we may need to up his dose of supplements.

Henrik nods agreement.

RHOADES
We don't want him starving to death do we.

They stop at a door, Henrik's hand poised to push it open.

HENRIK
Let's hope for better news today.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - OBSERVATION ROOM

As Henrik and Rhoades enter, Kingston is sat crossed legged on the floor, in the corner of the room. Her clipboard lies a few feet away.

Rhoades and Henrik address the scene.

HENRIK
Everything alright, Doctor
Kingston.

Her expression suggest otherwise.

KINGSTON
Not really, I'm not sure of his
mental state. I can only imagine
it has become fractured.

Rhoades approaches Walter, who is silent, his bandaged head hanging down.

RHOADES
Sounds interesting.

He raises Walter's head and starts to unravel the bandage.

HENRIK
What has he said today?

Kingston slides the clipboard to the feet of Henrik. He looks down at pages of scribbled notes.

HENRIK
You would prefer me to read it
rather than you to tell?

KINGSTON
I need some air.

She stands and exits.

Rhoades removes the bandage and looks at the grotesque stitching that holds Walters head together.

RHOADES
What does it say?

Henrik reads from the clipboard.

HENRIK
He started to communicate at nine
twenty seven with a few mumbled
words, maybe help me but I'm not
sure. This continued until nine
forty one when he said the name
Mary.

Both doctors look to Walter.

RHOADES
The wife.

Henrik continues.

HENRIK

He spoke of his wife and the life they had shared but soon became agitated. It then became clear to me that I had misunderstood the context of the situation and it was not Walter addressing me or us, but that he was in conversation.

Rhoades peels back Walter's eye lids and stares deep into the man's empty mind.

RHOADES

If true, this is a good sign.

HENRIK

It is, if true, but we must not jump to conclusions. Kingston could be right?

KINGSTON (O.S.)

I hope I am.

Kingston stands by the door, clearly not wanting to venture further.

HENRIK

You state here he was in conversation.

KINGSTON

But can he really be?

Rhoades drops Walters head.

RHOADES

Is that not the whole purpose of what we are doing here?

KINGSTON

Then maybe I'm not ready for the results?

She goes to speak again but instead looks to the floor.

Henrik becomes visibly intrigued.

HENRIK

What are you not telling us, Doctor Kingston?

With a look to Walter, Kingston shakes her head.

KINGSTON
I don't want to believe because
what he said isn't possible.

RHOADES
Spit it out, woman.

Kingston hesitates and twitches her fingers.

KINGSTON
He spoke of voices telling him I
was watching him. The voice said
I looked tired but well.

HENRIK
What voice, who was speaking to
him?

Kingston shakes her head, in a vain attempt to convince
herself she must be wrong.

KINGSTON
Edna, my grandmother. How did he
know my grandmother? How?

RHOADES
Could be any, Edna?

Henrik nods.

KINGSTON
No, it was her, she said things
only my grandmother would know.

HENRIK
She? As if she was speaking
through Walter?

Kingston hesitates a response.

KINGSTON
I don't know, I...need some air.

Visible shaken, Kingston exits in a hurry.

HENRIK
Remarkable.

Rhoades slaps Walter across the face, startling Henrik but
not a flinch from the patient.

RHOADES
I'll up his meds.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - CANTEEN**SUPER: DAY 12**

Doctors Henrik and Kingston sit at table, surrounded by coffee and notes.

HENRIK

So his communication is becoming less coherent?

A tired and distressed looking Kingston shuffles some of the papers.

KINGSTON

Less coherent but more distressed. I really don't know how much more he can take?

HENRIK

And he continues to ask for sedatives?

KINGSTON

Yes, and still we give him none.

Henrik scratches his chin and sighs in thought.

HENRIK

I'll see he receives some light sedatives.

KINGSTON

You're too kind, Doctor Henrik.

She bolts from her chair, sending a wave of coffee over the notes.

HENRIK

Careful, we still need to keep a record of all the results.

Henrik rescues the drowning paper.

KINGSTON

Oh don't worry I can tell you exactly what he has been saying. I can remember every word, every scream. His nightmares are now mine.

She storms out, leaving Henrik with the soggy notes.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - OBSERVATION ROOM

Doctor Rhoades wrestles with the flailing bloody arms of Walter, who sits in the chair.

WALTER

Make them stop, make them stop!

Frantically, Rhoades tries to wrap a bandage around an open bite wound on Walter's forearm.

WALTER

Make the voices stop! Can you hear me, make them stop!

Rhoades aggressively pins Walter to the chair with a strangle hold.

Kingston enters and is shocked at the scene before her.

KINGSTON

What the hell is going on?

RHOADES

Damn fool has taken to biting himself.

WALTER

I beg you, if there is anyone there, I beg you, I need to sleep. I need the voices to stop, they torment me.

KINGSTON

Sedate him.

Rhoades looks for confirmation.

KINGSTON

Henrik gave his permission.

Rhoades releases Walter and throws the bandage to the floor.

RHOADES

Gives me a chance to clean him up I suppose.

He stomps out.

Walter calms his limbs. His head jerks back and forth, up and down before his dead eyes fix on Kingston, who becomes uneasy.

WALTER
(whispers)
No more, I can take no more.

KINGSTON
I know, I'm sorry but...

Walter bolts from his chair and runs at speed, yanking his IV drip from his arm. He charges into the wall, smashing his face into the plaster and collapses to the floor.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - HENRIK'S OFFICE

SUPER: DAY 16

A calm looking Henrik is seated behind an immaculately tidy desk, upon which is a neat tower of manila folders and a few family photos.

Opposite sits Doctor Kingston, who looks flustered and agitated.

KINGSTON
His night terrors are much worse,
he can no longer sleep, even with
the sedatives.

Henrik leans forward.

HENRIK
I see, but has he mentioned
anything about making contact
yet?

Kingston throws up her arms in frustration.

KINGSTON
Jesus, don't you think this is
now beyond what was agreed?

HENRIK
He knew the procedure and the
potential outcome, so no, I don't
think this has gone beyond the
agreement.

KINGSTON
Doctor Death is in there now,
patching him up again. And he
doesn't seem to give a shit about
the man's mental state.

Henrik leans back to emphasize his relaxed state.

HENRIK
That's your job, is it not?

KINGSTON

And that's why I'm telling you to stop this madness.

HENRIK

Madness? Surely our evidence shows we are close to proving the gateway is possible. Walter has demonstrated that he has made contact with the deceased. A little more time is all that's needed.

Kingston stands.

KINGSTON

I seriously doubt he's got a little more time, judging by his mental and physical state this morning.

She stands and grabs the door handle.

HENRIK

Must you storm out of our every meeting.

Kingston pauses as if to say her retort, but instead leaves without a word.

Henrik's eyes burn into one particular photo on his desk, a photo of himself and a young girl. The image the source of concern now visible across his face.

INT. RESEARCH HOSPITAL - OBSERVATION ROOM

SUPER: DAY 18

Grey, gaunt and with heavily bandaged arms, Walter mumbles to himself. The IV drip swings as he occasionally jerks and spasms.

Kingston sits on the floor and observes, but writes nothing on her pad. She studies the poor shell of a man.

WALTER

(whispers)

No heaven, no forgiveness.

Doctor Kingston stands and edges closer to hear better.

WALTER

(whispers)

No heaven, no forgiveness.

Henrik and Rhoades march in to the room.

HENRIK
How is the patient?

KINGSTON
Patient?

HENRIK
Let's not start this again,
Doctor Kingston. We are close to
concluding this experiment.

KINGSTON
And then what?

Henrik and Rhoades share a quizzical look.

KINGSTON
What do we do with the patient?

RHOADES
We can't reverse the surgery if
that's what you mean?

HENRIK
You know what we plan, as did he.

Kingston nods her head.

KINGSTON
Well he's asking now.

Rhoades inspects the bandages.

HENRIK
Asking what, to terminate the
experiment?

Kingston exhales a mock laugh.

KINGSTON
Terminate the experiment, he's
asking to die, Doctor Henrik. He
wants us to kill him.

RHOADES
But we're so close.

Kingston eyes Rhoades with disgust.

KINGSTON
What do you care, it's not your
experiment.

RHOADES
I'm part of it, and so are you,
or have you forgotten.

Walter swings his arms skyward, sending Rhoades back on his heels.

WALTER

No heaven, no forgiveness.

All three doctors glare at Walter. Two with anticipation, one with remorse.

Rocking back and forth in his chair, Walter begins to bang his fists against his head.

WALTER

No heaven, no forgiveness.

HENRIK

No heaven, has he made contact?

Walter's fist crash harder and harder against his own skull.

WALTER

(screams)

No heaven, no forgiveness!

Kingston shuffles away as Henrik moves closer.

Unclenching his fists, Walter plunges his thumbs into his eyes and begins to push them inside their sockets.

Doctor Kingston screams in shock and turns to avert her gaze from the sickening sight. In contrast, Rhoades appears excited by the act of self violence.

HENRIK

Calm him, Doctor Rhoades.

Rhoades looks disappointed at the order.

HENRIK

Don't let him kill himself!

Kingston sneaks a glance through her fingers.

KINGSTON

Stop him, stop him you fool!

Rhoades grabs Walter by the wrists, and with a struggle, extracts his bloodied thumbs from the depths of his face.

Kingston turns and dry heaves, leaving Henrik to stare into the abyss of Walters eye sockets.

HENRIK

Maybe it's time to...

Walter jerks his hands free from Rhoades' grasp and clasps them to his ears, shielding out his own screams.

WALTER

No heaven, no forgiveness. No
heaven, no forgiveness.

Doubled over with sickness in her stomach, Kingston turns back to the shouting patient.

Rhoades stares transfixed by Walter.

HENRIK

Doctor Rhoades, a sedative for
the patient. Doctor Rhoades?

Rhoades is unmoved.

WALTER

(louder)
No heaven, no forgiveness!

The lights begin to flicker as Walter's screams intensify.

WALTER

(repeatedly screams)
NO HEAVEN, NO FORGIVENESS!

KINGSTON

What's happening?

Rhoades is frozen in the commotion.

Walter's sockets seep blood and despite his ongoing screams, he seems strangely calm.

Henrik grabs Rhoades by the shoulder and tries to wake him from his trance.

HENRIK

Rhoades, Doctor Rhoades, can you
hear me?

KINGSTON

Can't you sedate him, you are a
doctor aren't you?

Shrugging off Henrik, Rhoades moves closer to Walter. Now within arms length, Walter releases his ears and grabs the jacket of Rhoades.

KINGSTON

Jesus Christ! Stop this, stop
this madness now.

Walter's screams cease, as do the flickering lights. All is quite and calm.

Standing from his chair, Walter is almost nose to nose with Doctor Rhoades.

WALTER
(whispers)
I have spoken with God, and he
has abandoned us.

Walter releases his grasp and crumples to the floor with a sickening thud.

Dead eyed, Rhoades remains still and silent.

KINGSTON
Is he...

With an eye on Doctor Rhoades, Henrik checks for a pulse in Walter's neck. He gives a shake of his head.

HENRIK
No pulse.

Rhoades slowly raise his hands over his ears.

HENRIK
Doctor Rhoades?

Concern and fear are prominent in the faces of both Henrik and Kingston.

Slowly, Rhoades' mouth opens and he expels a deafening scream of terror. He collapses to the floor and every nerve begins to twitch and spasm.

RHOADES
Make them stop, make the voices
stop!

FADE TO BLACK: