

MONSTER'S NIGHT OUT

A weird tale by Cthulhu

FADE IN:

INT. CHASE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A typical boy's bedroom. Messy. Space-themed.

CHASE (6), small but chubby, squirms in bed as his MOM (40s) gently tucks him in.

MOM

You want me to check the closet again?

CHASE

Moms can't see him.

Mom laughs softly.

MOM

I'm sorry. I forgot.

CHASE

Can't I just sleep with you tonight?

MOM

It's okay, sweetie. I got a surprise for you. You don't have to be afraid of the Boogeyman anymore.

Chase gulps.

CHASE

He ate the Boogeyman.

MOM

Goodnight, sweetie.

Mom kisses Chase on the cheek and heads for the door. Chase stiffens as she switches off the light and shuts the door.

He looks up at the ceiling. It's covered in glow-in-the-dark stickers of stars and planets. He utters a heavy exhale.

The sound of scraping wood nearby. A guttural groan followed by inhuman gurgling.

Chase looks across the room at the closet door as it swings slowly open. He whimpers.

MONSTER (V.O.)

Don't cry yet, boy.

A single yellow eye with a thin snakelike pupil appears in the darkness beyond.

MONSTER (V.O.)

You've still got one more day.

A second eye opens beside the first.

MONSTER (V.O.)

Besides. I love the taste of tears
dripping down my gullet.

Monstrous purring. Saliva spills out from the darkness. It bubbles like acid on the floor.

Chase pulls his bed sheets over his head.

CHASE

Why can't you just pick another kid?

Three more eyes appear in the darkness. They are red. The donut-shaped pupils resemble those of a squid.

MONSTER (V.O.)

I eat a new child every Halloween. This
year, I've chosen you.

Chase starts to cry.

MONSTER (V.O.)

So enjoy your tricks and treats for
they shall be your last.

Several more eyes appear. They glow bright green with no pupils.

MONSTER (V.O.)

Do not make me come looking for you on
my only night out.

Slimy tentacles grope at the closet's threshold.

MONSTER (V.O.)

I've spent the last year feasting on rats and lizards. Snakes and spiders. That leaves one with quite a temper.

The monster takes a deep breath. A strong wind sucks the closet door shut. The monster utters a sinister chuckle.

INT. CHASE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Chase and ELLIOT (11) sit and eat breakfast in a picturesque kitchen. Elliot is tall and lanky. He wears baggy clothes.

Mom flips pancakes at the stove.

CHASE

Mom, can I sleep over at Timmy's tonight?

MOM

I thought you wanted Timmy to sleep over here tonight.

CHASE

I changed my mind.

MOM

I guess that's okay. I'll have to call Timmy's mother first.

Mom walks over to the table and serves pancakes to her sons from a plate.

MOM

Elliot, Chase wants to go to the Halloween Festival today. I want you to take him before you go trick-or-treating.

ELLIOT

Why can't you take him?

MOM

You want to stay here and give out candy to the other kids? We can switch.

ELLIOT

Oh sh—

MOM

I warned you, Elliot. Don't swear.

Elliot groans.

ELLIOT

Shoot.

MOM

That's better. The festival starts at five. You'll have plenty of time to go out with your friends.

Mom returns to the stove.

Elliot leans across the table and whispers in Chase's ear.

ELLIOT

Taking you out means less candy for me.
I'm taking some of yours.

EXT. CHASE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Elliot and Chase emerge from the front of a stereotypical suburban house.

Chase wears a silver spaceman costume, complete with spray-painted helmet. Elliot is a zombie. He is covered from head to toe in fake blood and grey makeup. Duct tape wrapped around his neck simulates a reattached severed head.

Chase holds a plastic pumpkin. Elliot holds a massive pillowcase in his hand and a real pumpkin under his arm, carved in a cutesier variation of Jack O'Lantern.

MOM (O.S.)

Have fun, you guys. Don't forget,
Elliot. Chase is sleeping over at
Timmy's house tonight.

INT. CHASE'S ROOM - NIGHT

The closet door swings open. Green slime spills out onto the floor.

MONSTER (V.O.)

Timmy's house? I think not.

MONSTER'S P.O.V.

The monster drags itself out of the closet. Brief glimpses of tentacles and clawed reptilian hands as it drags itself toward the window.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Elliot and Chase proceed down the street. Far behind them, a large dark mass dives from a second story window in Chase's house and lands in a pile of bushes.

ELLIOT

So is that monster still bothering you?

CHASE

Shut up, Elliot.

ELLIOT

You don't have to take his crap, you know. You just have to throw something heavy at him and he'll leave you alone.

CHASE

I said shut up!

ELLIOT

Fine. If you want to be eaten, go ahead. Be my guest.

EXT. BUSH - NIGHT

A large snail crawls across the grass near a bush in front of a neighboring house. A slimy grey tongue covered in oozing yellow warts shoots out and catches the snail. A single crunch and gulp follow.

MONSTER (V.O.)

That's right, boy. Be eaten.

EXT. FESTIVAL GROUNDS, ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Booths decorated in bright lights and colors span the festival grounds. They are all crowded with PATRONS, mostly parents with small children.

A large banner of orange and black marks the festival entrance. Elliot and Chase proceed beneath it. A GREETER calls to them from a simple wooden booth straight ahead.

GREETER

Welcome to the County Halloween
Festival! Would you like to guess the
number of candy corns in here?

The greeter produces a large jar filled to the brim with candy corn.

CHASE

Yes!

GREETER

Winner takes home the jar.

Chase runs to the booth. Elliot groans.

GREETER

What do you think, son?

Chase eyeballs the jar melodramatically.

CHASE

Five hundred and...

Elliot catches up.

CHASE

Five hundred and...

Elliot tugs at his brother's costume.

ELLIOT

Make a guess, will ya? I thought you
wanted to bob for apples.

CHASE

Five hundred and three!

GREETER

Five hundred and three! Very good.

The greeter produces a pen and clipboard.

CHASE

Let me just write your name down with
your guess.

MONSTER'S P.O.V.

The monster breathes heavily as he watches Chase from an
indistinct location.

EXT. APPLE BOBBING BOOTH

Apples float in barrels filled with water. The barrels are
arranged in a circle, each with a bucket next to them.
Three larger barrels sit off to the side of the booth. Two
are filled to the brim with apples. The third, empty.

A slimy fishlike tail slides into the empty barrel as a
group of KIDS and their PARENTS enter the booth. Chase
stops behind a barrel in front of the larger one containing
the monster.

A tentacle shoots out of the barrel toward Chase just as
Elliot appears behind him. The tentacle flies over his
shoulder and retracts immediately back into the barrel.
Elliot doesn't notice.

Kids take their places behind the barrels. Their parents
stand directly behind them. Elliot ties Chase's hands
behind his back with a ribbon. The other parents do the
same with their kids.

The BOOTH OPERATOR appears at the head of the booth. He
holds a whistle inches from his lips.

BOOTH OPERATOR

On your mark. Get set.

The booth operator blows the whistle. The kids dive
furiously into their barrels as their parents cheer them
on. Chase is surprisingly fast, latching on to each apple
with ease.

A tendril protrudes from the empty barrel. It opens up at the end and sprouts a yellow, alien-like eye. It watches Chase intently but Elliot keeps blocking its view as he urges Chase to go faster.

After a moment, Chase chomps down on the second-to-last apple and drops it into the bucket beside him.

The whistle a second time.

EXT. FESTIVAL GROUNDS - NIGHT

Chase and Elliot walk away from the apple-bobbing booth. Chase wears a blue ribbon on his chest and carries a package of caramel apples under one arm.

ELLIOT

Good job, kid. Too bad caramel apples
suck as Halloween candy.

EXT. APPLE BOBBING BOOTH - NIGHT

The booth operator adds new apples to each of the water barrels. His back is turned to the empty barrel containing the monster. It tips over. Scampering offscreen.

The booth operator whirls around. The monster is nowhere in sight. He scratches his head at the sight of the empty barrel lying on the floor.

EXT. STAGE - NIGHT

An illuminated stage with an elongated table draped in plastic Halloween-themed tablecloth. A banner above the stage reads BEST JACK O' LANTERN 2009. A crowd of spectators watches from the grass beyond.

The monster's scaly tail disappears under one end of the table.

Chase sits at the table with several other KIDS spaced out around him. Each one has a carved pumpkin displayed in front of them.

Chase hears a gurgle from beneath the table. He looks down just as the monster's hand bursts out of the back of his

pumpkin and gropes at him with sharp talons. Several of the kids scream as Chase falls out of his chair.

Chase lies on the floor and looks straight ahead at a mouth full of rows of shark-like teeth under the table. He whimpers just as a hand reaches down from above and picks him up off the floor.

Chase turns to look at the CONTEST ANNOUNCER who holds him by the shoulder. Some kids look at them with shock in their eyes. Some cry. Others are simply unnerved.

ANNOUNCER

You took a nasty fall there, kid. Are you alright?

Chase looks down. He sees motion under the table as the monster scuttles away beneath it. Slime drips from the edge of the tablecloth.

ANNOUNCER

Say, you've got your Jack O'Lantern backwards.

Chase looks at his pumpkin. A perfect replica of the monster's hand is imprinted in its center.

ANNOUNCER

(fake, melodramatic)
Wow! Scary!

The announcer turns the pumpkin around to face the audience.

ANNOUNCER

Alright, ladies and gentlemen! Let the contest begin!

EXT. DUNKING BOOTH - NIGHT

The SCHOOL PRINCIPLE (50s) sits atop a dunking booth in a bathing suit.

Chase stands across from him with softball in hand. He turns to Elliot who stands beside him. Elliot holds Chase's Jack O'Lantern, now with a blue ribbon on it.

CHASE

What do I win here?

ELLIOT

Nothing. That's the principle. Don't you want to dunk him?

CHASE

I'll get in trouble.

ELLIOT

No, you won't.

PRINCIPLE

Come on, Chase. I've been up here all night. I could use a dip.

Chase shakes as he takes aim.

PRINCIPLE

(to self)

Oh boy. Another shaker. Please not the face this time.

Chase's eyes lock on the target just as one of the monster's tentacles slithers over it. Chase squeals and hurls the ball. The tentacle retracts out of sight as the ball hits the bullseye. The principle lands in the pool below with a splash.

ELLIOT

Way to go, kid! I didn't think you were gonna make it this time, you being a spazz and all, but wow!

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Chase and Elliot walk alone down the darkened neighborhood street. Chase carries the candy corn jar from the entrance.

ELLIOT

Seems like you had a good day, kid.

MONSTER (O.S.)

BOY!!!

The two boys jolt upright as a huge bush beside them sprouts legs and tentacles, unearths itself from the house lawn and leaps in front of their path. Eyes glow within the foliage as slime drips from the leaves.

MONSTER (V.O.)

I thought I told you not to—

ELLIOT

You're not getting my brother, you monster son of a—

The monster roars. Corrosive saliva sprays out of the bush and sizzles on the concrete. Chase cowers behind his brother.

MONSTER (V.O.)

Elliot. It's been ages. You're much too big for my taste now. But just because I didn't get you doesn't mean I won't get your brother.

ELLIOT

Not a chance! Chase! Throw the jar.

Chase hurls the jar as the monster. One of its tentacles catches it and sucks it into the bush. A loud gulp follows.

MONSTER (V.O.)

(laughs)

Surely, you didn't think throwing things at me will save you out here...
Oh no.

The monsters' extremities simultaneously shrivel and turn pale. The bush utters a gurgly groan.

MONSTER (V.O.)

Not candy—

A steaming load of orange vomit pours out from under the bush. The monster retracts its claws and tentacles as it moans and retches.

ELLIOT

Come on!

Elliot grabs Chase's hand and runs with him around the bush and down the street.

MONSTER (V.O.)

Next year...

Sickly yellow filth spews out of the bush and incinerates the leaves.

TWO BLOCKS DOWN

Elliot and Chase slow down to catch their breath.

ELLIOT

I told you. Just throw things at him.
He'll leave you alone.

CHASE

How did you—

ELLIOT

All monsters hate candy. Everybody
knows that.

Elliot winks at his brother. Chase smiles back.

INT. CHASE'S ROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

Chase lies in bed, out of costume. Mom stands by the door.

MOM

Goodnight, Timmy.

CHASE

Goodnight, Mom. I love you.

MOM

I love you too, sweetie.

Mom flips the light switch and shuts the door. Chase looks up at the glow-in-the-dark stars. He utters a sigh of relief and closes his eyes.

FADE OUT.