

Mothman!

by

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Based on True Events

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ACT I

Prologue

Darkness.

But then!

Red.

Two red eyes burn in the dark, and we hear the sound of a sped up phonograph, faster and faster, until it's just a high pitched squeal. And then the sound cuts out and the the eyes blink off.

Darkness, again.

Appalachian music.

Scene 1

November 15th, 1966.

Point Pleasant, West Virginia.

Tuesday. A little after midnight.

Tiny's Drive-In Diner.

Everyone speaks with a West Virginian accent, unless otherwise noted.

Gary sits at the diner's counter. Connie stands on the other side, flipping through a heavy textbook.

GARY
Gettin' late.

CONNIE
Yeah.

GARY
Gettin' to be about that time.

CONNIE
Yeah.

GARY
You're here late, Connie.

CONNIE
Well, I--

(CONTINUED)

GARY

School night for you, that right?

CONNIE

Yeah. I'm supposed to close out, though. So--

GARY

Oh, sure. Well, I won't keep you long.

CONNIE

Thanks. 'Cause I did sorta want to do some studying tonight, if you don't--

Gary holds out his coffee mug, and Connie refills it.

GARY

Those spacemen landed today, did you hear that?

CONNIE

(alarmed)

Spacemen?

GARY

The whatsit. Splashed right down into the ocean.

CONNIE

Oh, the--

GARY

Yeah, our boys, the, you know, Jiminy ship--

CONNIE

Gemini.

GARY

That whole set up. Next stop the moon or Jupiter or some far flung thing.

CONNIE

Yeah, I read--

GARY

S'pose you're up on all the latest news, though, from your auntie.

CONNIE

Yeah. I guess. She's a bit more local--

GARY

Boy, is that the time? Shoot, it's getting late.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

Yeah. And it's a Tuesday--

GARY

I don't think you could pay me to go up in a tin can like that. How about you, Connie, would you go up in a tin can like that?

Connie tries in vain to read her textbook.

CONNIE

I don't think they'd ask me to.

GARY

No, well, 'course not. But I wouldn't, not even if they asked me to.

CONNIE

(quietly)

I don't think they'd ask you to.

GARY

Didn't think you would, anyways, you aren't much for the, whatsit, the racing, with the other kids--

CONNIE

What, the drag racing? Up at /TNT--

GARY

/Up at the TNT Area, yeah.

CONNIE

Not really. Don't think it's quite the same as going up in space, though--

GARY

No, you're not much for the racing.

CONNIE

Keith--that's my boyfriend--does, sometimes with the others. But /I'm more--

GARY

/You're more the studying type, huh, Connie?

CONNIE

(despairing)

I try.

GARY

That's important. Powerful weapon, books.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

Yeah.

GARY

Sure is getting late.

CONNIE

Yeah.

GARY

Think I'll be heading back in a minute.

CONNIE

Yeah.

GARY

What d'you think they're looking for on the moon,
anyway?

CONNIE

I don't think they're really looking /for something.

GARY

/Can't say I see the point, going all that way, unless
they're looking to shoot some moon men.

CONNIE

I don't /think--

GARY

/Don't reckon they're likely to find any moon men,
though.

CONNIE

No.

GARY

But suppose we'll have to wait and see.

CONNIE

I've got your bill here, Gary, if you'd like--

GARY

Y'all got any pies left?

CONNIE

Just blueberry.

GARY

Blueberry? No, never did particularly care for
blueberry.

(CONTINUED)

CONNIE

Well, then, I guess I'll start cleaning up--

GARY

But shoot, I'll have a slice of blueberry if that's all there is, don't mind blueberry too much, now that I'm thinking about it--

CONNIE

Gary!

GARY

What's that?

CONNIE

Nothing. Blueberry pie, coming right up.

A scream from offstage. Connie jumps.

GARY

Can't rightly say the last time I had a slice of blueberry pie, if I'm being honest, might be I'm misremembering how I feel about the whole situation--

CONNIE

Hold on a minute, Gary, hold that thought--

We can hear Roger, Linda, and Steve arguing, their voices overlapping.

ROGER

(offstage)

--think we're crazy if we tell--

LINDA

(offstage)

--We can't just leave it, Roger, we can't--

STEVE

(offstage)

--It's OK Nancy, it's OK--

Linda, Roger, Steve, and Nancy enter, all speaking at once. Nancy is crying.

ROGER

Gary!

LINDA

Gary, we--

STEVE

Thank the Lord, we need someone to--

LINDA

We saw--

(CONTINUED)

ROGER
Linda, let me--

STEVE
It killed a dog!

LINDA
Dog mighta been dead
already, Steve--

ROGER
Linda, please, let me
tell Gary--

LINDA
How come only you can
tell Gary?

STEVE
It went so fast!

*Nancy screams at the top of her lungs, and
dissolves into sobs. Steve and Linda rush to
support her.*

*Roger opens his mouth to speak to Gary, then
closes it.*

A beat.

GARY
You kids been drinking?

LINDA
No!

STEVE
I wish.

ROGER
No, Gary, honest.

NANCY
(sobbing)
It was horrible.

CONNIE
What was?

All four jump, noticing Connie.

ROGER
Oh, hi Connie.

CONNIE
Hi.

LINDA
We saw this--

STEVE
The dead dog--

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

We were up by TNT, right?

GARY

Race tonight?

LINDA

No, it was just us all in one car--

GARY

Oh. *Oh*. I see.

ROGER

Not *that* way, Gary!

LINDA

We're all *married*, anyhow--

ROGER

But we weren't doing anything funny, we were just driving--

STEVE

--chasing parkers--

ROGER

Steve!

STEVE

We *were*!

LINDA

Looking to see if /anyone was around.

ROGER

/Right, just seeing if anyone was around TNT tonight, and--well, so we were up near the old powerhouse, and--

STEVE

--and--

GARY

And?

LINDA

We saw...something.

GARY

You were driving and you saw something?

NANCY

The *devil*.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER
No.

STEVE
Maybe.

LINDA
Steve saw it first.

STEVE
I yelled for them to look--

ROGER
It was huge. Six feet at least.

STEVE
Seven! It was a bird, or--

ROGER
No, it was like a man--

STEVE
--with wings!

LINDA
Like angel wings.

GARY
And y'all kids weren't drinking even a bit? Or
smoking...whatever it is you smoke?

STEVE
No, Gary, listen!

ROGER
It was like a huge, gray man with wings. *Big wings.*

LINDA
And it had--

Linda starts shaking.

ROGER
Linda!

Roger shakes her.

CONNIE
Don't shake a shaking person!

Roger stops shaking her.

ROGER You don't have to talk, Lin, it's ok.

(CONTINUED)

LINDA

I'm--no, I'm alright. It had red eyes.

All four look to Gary and Connie in utter horror.

GARY

Just...red eyes?

LINDA

No, not just. They were--they--he looked at--

Linda starts shaking again.

ROGER

Sort of like, glowing red.

NANCY

Horrible, horrible eyes!

STEVE

They sorta--you get stuck looking at 'em.

ROGER

And we were all screaming, "Go, go, go!" But...

STEVE

But we couldn't move.

ROGER

I couldn't drive.

LINDA

It was stuck--

NANCY

Oh God, I can still feel it looking, I can see it--

Nancy resumes sobbing.

STEVE

It's alright, Nancy, hush--

CONNIE

Stuck?

LINDA

Yeah, its wing was stuck in a guy wire, and it was pulling to get loose. Pulling at it with a hand, like a--a *big* hand.

ROGER

But the face--

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

It didn't have a goddamn *face*!

ROGER

It was too dark to see the face--

LINDA

The eyes just sort of...consume you.

Nancy screams again.

ROGER

Nancy, please--

NANCY

It's the Cornstalk Curse!

ROGER

Don't be stupid--

STEVE

Leave her be, you were scared too!

ROGER

I didn't say--we were all scared.

LINDA

Fear like...nothing I ever /felt before.

ROGER

/Damn near jumped out of my skin.

Linda is looking into the middle distance.

LINDA

It was so scared.

GARY

So you kids were in a car at TNT, and a flying Boris Karloff jumped out and scared you?

STEVE

It didn't jump--

ROGER

No, Gary, it ran--

LINDA

--waddled--

ROGER

--waddled away when it saw us, least at first.

(CONTINUED)

GARY

Uh huh. And you're sure nobody else was up there,
chasing parkers?

CONNIE

Chasing...?

GARY

Scaring couples in parked cars while they're...well...

CONNIE

Oh. *Oh.*

STEVE

Nuh-uh, it was just us--

GARY

Y'all didn't drink the water up there, did you?

CONNIE

Lotta industrial runoff from the ammunition plant--

GARY

Yeah, government left chemicals all in the water.

ROGER

No, Gary, listen. The thing--

NANCY

It *chased us!*

ROGER

It scratched my paint job!

STEVE

We were yelling, "DRIVE! DRIVE! DRIVE!"

Steve yells right in Connie's face. She jumps.

ROGER

So I drove--

STEVE

We laid a patch--

LINDA

He was scared stiff--

ROGER

I took off quick enough, and we were driving back to
town--

(CONTINUED)

NANCY

It chased us!

ROGER

I was pushing a hundred miles, but the thing--

STEVE

It hauled ass!

ROGER

--right behind.

CONNIE

It followed you?

LINDA

Right over the car. It--we saw it go straight up, not even flapping--

ROGER

One-hundred-and-five--

STEVE

Bookin'!

ROGER

--but we couldn't shake it.

LINDA

Not 'til we got to the Lewis farm--

ROGER

It *scratched my paint*, on the doors--

LINDA

Yeah, but then it turned back--

STEVE

It freaked out the lights--I mean, the lights freaked it out--

LINDA

So we drove into town--

STEVE

--by Dairyland--

NANCY

We told them to call the damn police!

STEVE

Nancy! It's alright, now--

(CONTINUED)

NANCY

I said to go straight to the police, Steve, but you--

ROGER

The girls were crying, so we stopped--

STEVE

--by Dairyland--

LINDA

You were crying too, Roger--

ROGER

I wasn't!

NANCY

I *told* them--

STEVE

Nance said to go to the cops, but we didn't want them to think we were blitzed--

NANCY

He wanted to go *back*!

ROGER

Yeah, make sure we'd seen what we'd seen--

LINDA

Back up the road, just outside town--

STEVE

And there was the dog.

GARY

Dog?

LINDA

A big dead dog, by the road.

STEVE

I don't like seeing dogs dead.

ROGER

And the thing jumps out from behind it and flies right over the car--

GARY

The bird man?

STEVE

Yeah, it cut out into the field.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

So we came straight here.

LINDA

First place with lights on.

ROGER

We gotta go to the police, Gary.

GARY

And say...what? That y'all saw a funny bird?

NANCY

No! No! Not a bird, not a man, a demon straight from Hell.

STEVE

Calm down, Nance, it's--

NANCY

You calm down, Steve! I don't even want the damn police anymore, I want a minister!

LINDA

We can't just leave it up there, we need to find it--

STEVE

Shoot it--

LINDA

--find out what it's doing here.

NANCY

(crying)
The eyes!

GARY

Now, maybe we should wait 'til y'all calm down first--

STEVE

This *is* calm, Gary! Shoulda seen us before--

LINDA

We saw it. Honest to God, I wish we hadn't.

ROGER

Gary, you've known us our whole lives. Connie too.
Would we make this up?

Gary looks at them a moment.

(CONTINUED)

GARY
I'll call the Sheriff.

ROGER
Thank you, Gary.

GARY
'Course. Connie, you better go round the corner to your Auntie, don't try anything funny with this thing on the loose.

CONNIE
Wasn't gonna. Phone's in the back.

ROGER
I'll come with.

Roger and Gary rush offstage. Connie starts pulling her coat on.

STEVE
Can I get some water for Nance?

CONNIE
Get her a whole blueberry pie. I'm going to my Aunt Mary's before I have any sort of science fictional encounter tonight.

Steve leads Nancy offstage.

CONNIE
You alright, Linda?

LINDA
(not listening)
Yeah, you too, Connie.

CONNIE
...Ok.

Connie exits.

Linda alone. She is not alright. Suddenly, we hear a sound like a sped up phonograph.

Her head hurts. She holds it and cries out. She's suddenly frightened, very frightened--

Roger enters, and the sound cuts out.

ROGER
Linda!

(CONTINUED)