

MONSTER MANSION

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CARNIVAL - DAY

A sparse crowd scattered about a dreary small-town carnival.

BOBBY SLATER, age 15, finishes his corn dog as he wanders the midway. He wipes mustard from his mouth, growing bored.

Walking beside him are REBECCA, his 18-year-old cheerleader sister, and DREW, 20, her preppie boyfriend.

Drew laughs loudly while Rebecca giggles. Bobby frowns, annoyed, keeping his distance from them.

Bobby looks over and sees "Bobo the Clown" in a dunking booth, sadly awaiting customers.

Drew points at something in the distance.

DREW  
Hey, check it out!

They see a haunted house located a bit off the beaten path.

Drew hurries toward it, pulling Rebecca by the hand. Bobby follows begrudgingly.

As they approach this "Monster Mansion" attraction, recorded sounds of "scary" laughter and "terrifying" screams BLAST from speakers. The ride features mechanical carts for transporting passengers inside.

Bobby examines the cheesy hand-painted mural on the outside wall, which depicts gnarly monsters, witches, demons, and other menacing creatures as they terrify humans.

BOBBY  
(to himself)  
This is so lame.

Bobby notices the ticket taker sitting nearby. Haggard, tired-looking and grim, the old CARNY stares stoically at the ground.

DREW  
C'mon! We can't not do this!

Drew eyes Bobby.

DREW  
How 'bout it? You ready to face  
the ultimate experience in terror?

Bobby sighs, irritated.

BOBBY  
Just go. And hurry up.

REBECCA  
You need money for ice cream or  
anything?

Bobby shakes his head no. Rebecca nods, then excitedly  
follows Drew.

A family of four, with a LITTLE BOY and LITTLE GIRL, approach  
and gaze up at Monster Mansion. Bobby notices them.

LITTLE BOY  
Can we ride this?!

LITTLE GIRL  
No! That's too scary!

Their parents chuckle. They depart.

Drew and Rebecca take their seats in a cart.

REBECCA  
Oh, wait! I just remembered: I'm  
afraid of the dark.

Drew sticks out his chest.

DREW  
That's okay, I'll protect you!

He puts his arm around her as they both snicker.

The stoic Carny pushes a button, and the cart begins to move.

Drew and Rebecca gaze out in Bobby's direction, feigning  
terror, making faces. Bobby just shakes his head, annoyed.

As the cart nears the entrance, Drew and Rebecca notice a  
sign above: "Please stay inside cart - For your own safety."

Bobby watches the cart disappear inside, Rebecca and Drew  
giggling all the way.

Bobby sighs, scanning the fairgrounds for anything  
interesting. No such luck.

A slight WHIMPERING nearby. Bobby notices a stray dog.

The dog eyes the haunted house, disturbed by something, its tail bending between its legs. It whimpers a bit more and then runs away.

Bobby turns his attention back to the haunted house. The fake LAUGHTER emitting from the speakers gradually gets on his nerves. He eyes the Carny, who seems oblivious to it, lost in his own world.

A few HIGH SCHOOL KIDS approach, examining Monster Mansion. Bobby notices them.

HIGH SCHOOL KID #1  
Let's ride it!

HIGH SCHOOL KID #2  
Nah, it sucks big time. Let's ride  
the Avalanche again.

The kids quickly move on.

Bobby returns his gaze to the haunted house... waiting.

Finally the exit door opens and the mechanized cart emerges. But the cart is empty. Bobby watches as the cart rolls to a stop.

The Carny remains motionless, still staring at the ground.

Puzzled, Bobby wanders closer. He steps toward the exit doors, expecting another cart to emerge. It doesn't.

Growing impatient, Bobby eyes the Carny, nervously clearing his throat.

BOBBY  
Is, uh... there something wrong  
with the ride?

The Carny shows no reaction as the recorded laughter and screams ECHO all around. Bobby steps closer.

BOBBY  
Um, excuse me? How long does this  
ride take?

The Carny doesn't look up.

CARNY  
(grumbling)  
One minute.

BOBBY

Um, my sister and her boyfriend  
have been in there for several  
minutes. They haven't come out.

The Carny raises his head. He methodically turns toward  
Bobby, staring blankly at him, looking right through him.

A bit unnerved, Bobby swallows hard.

BOBBY

I think there's something wrong  
with the ride. Can you maybe check  
it out?

CARNY

It's working. Just like it always  
has.

Suddenly a muffled, distant SCREAM.

Bobby looks all around, puzzled, attempting to determine the  
location of the sound.

Then another SCREAM -- and a girl's voice calling out:  
"Bobby!"

The hair stands up on Bobby's neck.

BOBBY

(to himself)  
Rebecca?

He gazes up at the haunted house.

The Carny stares at the ground, showing no reaction.

As thoughts race through Bobby's mind, he has a sudden  
realization. He relaxes a bit, irritated.

BOBBY

Very funny.

He shakes his head, not amused.

DREW (O.S.)

(distant muffled scream)  
Help! Somebody help us!

Bobby crosses his arms and waits.

BOBBY

Stupid jerk.

A young couple approach. The GUY checks out the haunted house, while the GIRL focuses on her cotton candy.

GUY  
I haven't been in one of those  
since I was a kid.

The girl seems uninterested, and they quickly depart.

Bobby glares toward Monster Mansion. Finally he cups his hands together and gazes into the darkened entrance.

BOBBY  
(yelling out)  
Yeah, really funny guys. C'mon,  
let's go!

Bobby notices the Carny suddenly staring at him with an odd expression.

BOBBY  
Uh, I think my sister and her  
boyfriend are pulling a prank.  
Where are they at in there, anyway?

The Carny glares at him.

CARNY  
(matter-of-factly)  
There are no people inside.

Unnerved by the Carny's tone, Bobby examines the building closer. He wanders around in search of another exit.

BOBBY  
Where the heck are they?

He walks to the side of the building and then behind it, finding no other doors.

Unlike the front of Monster Mansion, with its paintings of monsters, the back of the structure is plain, black, dreary.

Bobby notices something in the grass -- the skeletal remains of a small animal. He grimaces, not keen to investigate further.

A few feet away he notices something else on the ground: a small glob of greenish slime. He studies it, perplexed.

A bit weirded out, Bobby returns toward the front.

When he returns, he notices the Carny staring at him.

CARNY

What do you think you're doing?

BOBBY

Looking for my sister. I know they're in there somewhere.

CARNY

You must be mistaken.

The Carny calmly returns his gaze to the ground.

Confusion sweeps over Bobby. He glances up at the mural again, studying the wall of monsters. One of the demon-like creatures has greenish slime dribbling from its mouth.

Frustrated, Bobby reaches into his pocket and takes out four ride tickets. He strides over to the Carny. He holds out the tickets, and the Carny methodically takes them and then leads him to a cart.

As Bobby gets in the cart, the Carny gives him a grave look. Bobby shudders.

The Carny walks over and pushes a button, setting the cart in motion.

As the cart advances, Bobby looks out toward the carnival. No other people in sight. But the stray dog has returned. It looks directly at Bobby, whimpering, barking.

Bobby glances up as the doors open, welcoming him into Monster Mansion.

INT. MONSTER MANSION - DAY

The cart rolls down a dark hallway. Bobby curiously looks all around, unable to see anything.

Suddenly a loud BUZZER and an explosion of LIGHT as a demon mask appears in front of him, its eyes glowing red.

Unfazed by the cheap-looking mask, Bobby searches for Rebecca and Drew.

BOBBY

Hey, where the heck are you guys?!

As the cart turns a corner, a SIREN blares as a werewolf-like beast in a cage LIGHTS UP. The mechanized creature shakes the cage bars, as if trying to escape.

The cart quickly moves on to the next scene.

Bobby looks down toward the tracks, determining his next move.

A light FLASHES in front of him as a mechanical witch JUMPS out, CACKLING. Bobby pays it little attention.

As the cart moves past the scene, the witch returns to its previous position, motionless.

The cart turns another corner as a distant, muffled SCREAM of a man is heard. Bobby listens, irritated.

BOBBY  
You guys think you're--

A HORN blares as a large grotesque clown hovers over Bobby, all lit up. It LAUGHS with evil glee and HONKS its squeaky horn.

Bobby hears another muffled SCREAM -- this time a female.

REBECCA (O.S.)  
Bobby! Bobby, help us!

Bobby searches for their hiding spot. He examines the floor.

A GROWLING sound and BURST of light as a mechanical frog man springs up out of the darkness, startling Bobby.

REBECCA (O.S.)  
(distant muffled scream)  
Bobby!

Bobby looks all around but sees nothing.

BOBBY  
Okay, that's it!

Fed up, Bobby crawls under the arm bar and jumps out of the cart.

EXT. MONSTER MANSION - DAY

The exit door opens and a cart rolls out. The Carny notices the cart is empty. He drops his head, a grave look on his face.

Meanwhile, near the back of the haunted house, Drew and Rebecca crawl out from underneath the building.

They stand, dusting themselves off. Drew laughs.



DREW  
You think he could hear us  
screaming?

Rebecca shakes her head, amused but feeling guilty.

REBECCA  
Now he's gonna hate you even more!

Drew chuckles. He takes her hand and leads her to the front.  
They look for Bobby.

DREW  
Where'd he go?

Rebecca shrugs.

REBECCA  
Probably getting a funnel cake or  
something.

INT. MONSTER MANSION - DAY

Bobby stands motionless in the darkness.

BOBBY  
How can you even see in here?

Nearby, the mechanical witch suddenly twitches. Its head  
tilts oddly and creepily in the direction of Bobby's voice.

Bobby takes a step, but is uncertain of his footing.

Further down the track, the mechanized beast remains  
motionless in its cage... until it quietly pushes the cage  
open.

BOBBY  
I'm gonna kill you guys!

Nearby, the frog man is crouched motionless. Then it slowly  
opens its bulging eyes... and sticks out its long, grotesque  
tongue, making a "RIBBIT" sound.

EXT. MONSTER MANSION - DAY

Drew and Rebecca search for Bobby.

DREW  
You don't think he got pissed and  
walked home, do you?

Rebecca shrugs. She approaches the Carny.

REBECCA

Have you seen the brown-haired boy  
who was with us? He was waiting  
out here when we went inside.

The Carny doesn't look up. He shakes his head "no."

INT. MONSTER MANSION - DAY

Bobby hears something behind him -- a CREAKY floor board.  
Then: slow, heavy FOOTSTEPS.

BOBBY

Rebecca?

From another direction: a HISSING sound. Then more  
FOOTSTEPS. Bobby turns, squinting into the darkness.

BOBBY

Drew?

An eerie, low-pitched GROANING sound emerges. Followed by a  
loud, ear-splitting clown HORN, along with a BURST of  
automated light.

The light allows Bobby to see momentarily. His eyes widen  
when he sees what's in front of him: A cackling witch; a  
snarling, werewolf-like beast; a frog man, its long tongue  
springing outward excitedly; a hissing demon with green slime  
dribbling from its mouth; a groaning, white-faced ghoul; and  
the towering clown, smiling, saliva dripping from its broken  
teeth.

The creatures gaze at Bobby with great anticipation.

Bobby stands frozen, stunned, as the light fades and the  
darkness returns.

EXT. MONSTER MANSION - DAY

Rebecca and Drew search everywhere, becoming concerned.

Two TEENS approach the haunted house, holding out their  
tickets, but the Carny shakes his head, refusing them  
entrance.

The Carny puts up the "Closed" sign. The two teens shrug and  
walk away.

The Carny peers out toward the carnival. He sees Rebecca and Drew searching desperately for Bobby.

Finally the Carny glances up at the mural on the outer wall of Monster Mansion. He studies it.

With a resigned expression, the old Carny finally turns, sits, lowers his head, and stares at the ground.

He sighs.

CARNY  
(to himself)  
Sometimes they get hungry.

CLOSE ON the mural, which depicts monsters -- the beast, the witch, the frog man, the clown, and other creatures -- pursuing horrified humans, one of which now has the face of young Bobby Slater.

FADE OUT.

THE END