

THE MYSTERIOUS MONSTERS OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY

by  
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FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

PETE MCCOY (15), RONNIE HATFIELD (14), and MIKE MCOY(13) run down a dark trail in the even darker woods. The large rising full moon provides their only light, the long shadows it creates dance in the soft breeze.

Ronnie glances over his shoulder.

RONNIE  
Think we lost 'im?

PETE  
No way old Mc Gregor would follow us in here.

They slow to a walk. Ronnie looks around nervously.

RONNIE  
Why? Why wouldn't he follow us?

MIKE  
Because of the monsters.

RONNIE  
Monsters?

PETE  
Just some crap my mom made up to keep us out of the woods.

MIKE  
It's not crap! Jimmy Butts', cousin's friend saw one once, and Tammy Wag --

PETE  
It's crap! Let's go.

Ronnie and Mike shoot a serious look at each other before they follow Pete who forges ahead.

RONNIE  
What did Auntie Jan, um, your mom say 'bout 'em?

MIKE  
You haven't heard about them in Buford?

RONNIE  
Nup.

Mike looks both ways before speaking in a hushed tone.

MIKE

Kids have disappeared here, lots of them. Mom says they live in the shadows. Sometimes, when Pete and I are bad, Mom says she'll send us to the woods where the monsters belong.

RONNIE

Bad, like soapin' mister Mc Gregor car?

Mike nods. Ronnie gulps. A branch snaps. Ronnie jumps. Mike hides his smile.

RONNIE

What's that?

MIKE

It's just Pete.

PETE

Didn't mean to FRIGHTEN you.

RONNIE

I reckon we oughta head back, go 'round the woods. Maybe Mike's --

PETE

Ronnie's a scaredy baby.

RONNIE

I'm not ascaresd. But --

PETE

There's no monsters! It's all bullshit!

Ronnie cowers from Pete's aggressiveness.

MIKE

Leave him alone, Pete.

PETE

Ok. I will. I'll leave him alone. I leave both of you alone.

Pete bolts off, Mike shouts after him.

MIKE

Pete no! Wait! I didn't mean...

Mike shoots a worried glance toward Ronnie and then runs off after Pete. Ronnie doesn't wait to follow.

EXT. CLEARING - LATER

The shadows of the dark forest crowd the clearing's edges.

Out of breath, Mike and Ronnie enter a patch of moonlight, then both stop to examine their surroundings. They huddle close together as call out for Pete.

RONNIE  
I reckon he's gone.

MIKE  
He wouldn't, Mom would kill him.

RONNIE  
You know the way home?

MIKE  
Nope. I stay out of the woods.

RONNIE  
Shoot! Just my luck.

MIKE  
What?

RONNIE  
I'm lost in the woods with a  
mama's boy.

MIKE  
I am not a mama's boy!

Mike pushes Ronnie. Ronnie pushes back.

RONNIE  
You are!

MIKE  
I am not, you dumb h--

PETE (O.S.)  
You are too!

MIKE AND RONNIE  
Pete?!

They search for his voice but find only dancing shadows.

MIKE  
Where are you?

PETE (O.S.)  
Over here.

They approach his voice with caution. As they near the edge of the clearing, the shadows seem to reach out for them.

MIKE  
I can't see you.

PETE  
I'm right here.

Pete appears from the darkness. Mike and Ronnie breathe a sigh of relief.

RONNIE  
We thought you'd run out on us.

PETE  
Would I do that to --

Pete struggles, jerking his arms and legs. Mike and Ronnie take a step back.

PETE  
What's going on? Hey! Let go.

Pete screams and flails wildly as he falls back into the darkness.

Mike and Ronnie shout with fear as they back up toward the center of the clearing. They hug one another tightly.

MIKE  
Oh god! They got him. The  
monsters! Did you see them? We've  
got to help him.

Mike tries to tear away from Ronnie but Ronnie holds tight.

RONNIE  
Are you plumb crazy? He's dead!

MIKE  
He's my brother.

Mike tugs himself away and runs off toward the edge of the clearing. Ronnie doesn't budge but shouts after him.

RONNIE  
Mike no! Don't go! Mike!

Ronnie hugs himself nervously as he scans the clearing. Mike has disappeared into the shadows.

RONNIE  
Stupid. Mike?

A scream as Mike barrels out from the shadows. He shouts at Ronnie as he passes.

MIKE  
Run, it's them! Run!

Ronnie's stare follows Mike, perplexed.

PETE (O.S.)  
Mike? Come back!

Ronnie snaps his head toward Pete's voice. A dark boy-sized figure is just distinguishable inside of the shadows at the edge of the clearing.

RONNIE  
Pete? That you?

PETE  
It's me.

RONNIE  
You trying to scare us?

PETE  
I'm trying to help. Come with me  
now and I'll show you the way.

RONNIE  
Mike? He --

PETE  
He's taken care of.

The boy shadow separates from the larger shadow of the clearing's edge. Ronnie gasps.

RONNIE  
You -- you're one of 'em!

Shadow Pete drifts closer. His black arms extended. He reaches toward Ronnie.

PETE  
Don't be afraid, Ronnie. You'll  
feel better after you join us.

Ronnie bolts away from Pete. As he reaches the opposite edge of the clearing a smaller boyish shadow drifts toward him.

MIKE  
Join us.

Ronnie, frightened and uncertain, runs perpendicular to both. The shadows follow him at a steady pace.

PETE AND MIKE  
Join us...Join us...

Ronnie runs into the shadows at the edge of the clearing.

THUMP!

PETE  
What was that?

Mike yanks off his black Balaclava and runs to the edge of the clearing.

Ronnie lies flat on his back. A big gash on his forehead. Mike shakes him.

MIKE  
I think he hit a tree -- I think he's dead.

Pete pulls off his Balaclava and one of his black gloves as he arrives. He feels Ronnie's neck for a pulse.

PETE  
Shit!

MIKE  
Play a joke on the dumb hick you said. He'll fall for it you said. He's dead Pete! Dead!

PETE  
I -- I didn't mean --

MIKE  
How we gonna tell Mom!?

The wind picks up and the leaves rub together in a rustle that sounds like an ever growing growl. It catches the black clad boys' attention.

An undulating man-sized shadow reaches out for them, MC GREGOR.

MC GREGOR (O.S.)  
Thought you'd get away with soapin' up my car, didn't ya?

The boys tremble and stare at Mc Gregor.

MC GREGOR (O.S.)  
You little monsters ain't never gonna learn...

Mc Gregor's shadow devours their horrified expressions with its darkness. A rifle cocks.

BLACK

MC GREGOR (V.O.)  
Don't go in the woods.

BANG!

FADE OUT.