



THE VISITOR



A SHORT FILM BY SCOTT PICKUP

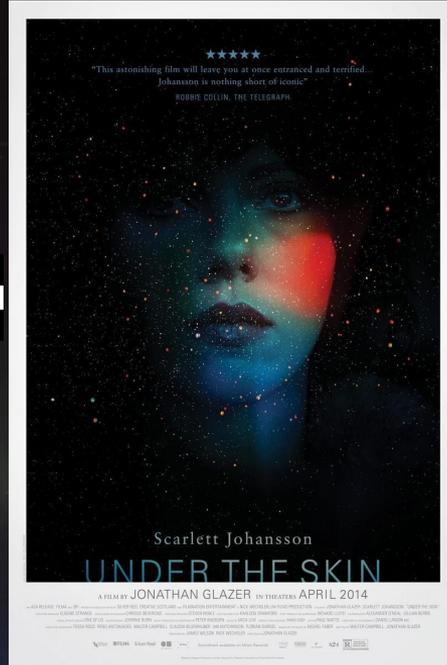


LOGLINE:

1901- When an otherworldly visitor arrives at an isolated farm, the owner's hatred leads to devastating consequences.

*Short film: 8min
Sci-fi Drama- with a touch of horror*

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(with a dash of "The Outer Limits")





FX

SYNOPSIS:

It's a cold & misty night, lit only by the moon. **GERALD**, an old farmer bitter from too much hard work, sees a flickering light overhead. He goes to investigate & finds an unexplainable glowing ball. Out steps the **VISITOR**- as plain & unmemorable a man that you're ever going to meet. There's something off about him though, something you can't put your finger on.

Gerald's on the defensive, he would never admit it but he's scared, *scared to death*. The Visitor is dressed like him, looks like him but Gerald is still deeply suspicious. Gerald needs answers, the Visitor can't give them though, as much as he tries- he cannot speak.

Gerald's anger builds & builds until **MARY** (Gerald's wife) arrives. The Visitor is desperate for her help, but she seals his fate. Her own *anger & fear* feeding into Gerald's.

'GO BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM!'

Gerald lashes out. He smashes the Visitor round the head with his shovel, over and over again until he's a *bloody mess*. Gerald had no choice, he felt threatened, it was the only thing to do...

Gerald realises it wasn't some strange man he was attacking but his *own wife*. Mary lays bloody beaten & dead by his feet. The Visitor is watching this all play out, not a scratch on him. He leaves Gerald to his misery & walks toward town- expect it's not 1901 anymore, it's 2022. The Visitor is a timeless presence, steadily making its way to the here and now- ready to meet all of us.

This story is about *fear, prejudice & toxic male violence*. The politics of division, us against them & what it feels like to be in a strange place you don't understand & be desperate for help.

An urgent tale of how we treat strangers, those in need, when we feel our own needs are far from being met.



SETTING & THEMES:

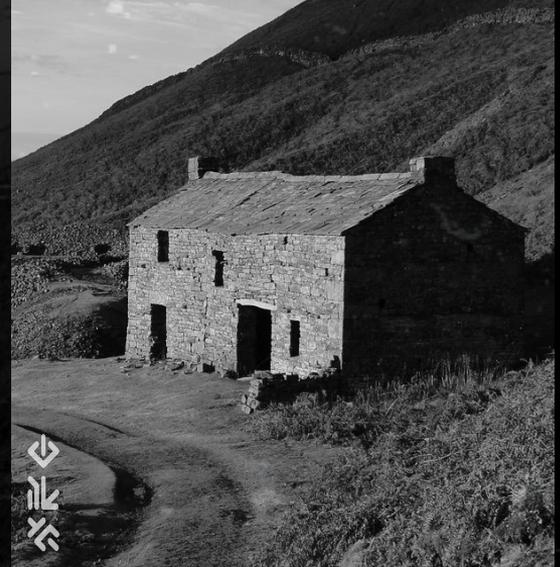
It's 1901. The dawn of a new century but no one told the good folk struggling in the harsh conditions of the *North Yorkshire moors*. They're used to a life in which every morsel counts & always being one step away from starvation. There's *no salvation on the horizon* either- just more hard graft & freezing nights. People don't take kindly to *having what's theirs threatened* in any way... Our minds would be blown if we met an alien now, we'd likely be terrified- imagine if you'd never even seen a bar of chocolate.

'YOU'RE NOT FROM ROUND HERE, ARE YOU LAD?'

In walks a stranger... A stranger coming with open arms? Coming to take? Needing help? Needing shelter? Why should anyone give it?...Would it be possible to see past your own fears & prejudices to find the person at the other side of the divide? Even as a child arriving from Australia I remember *the rejection, the isolation, the abuse*- & I could blend in seamlessly. White skin, brown hair, the right accent. *An alien in plain sight.*

This story is set in the past but that's designed to make you feel like it's someone else's problem, that it represents attitudes long since dead. It's really about *here & now*- How do we respond to strangers in our land? Can we open our hearts to the desperate needs of others? *Do we deserve our fate* when we can't find any space to welcome a visitor into our own backyard? Big questions in the classic sci-fi tradition of *'The Outer Limits'* or *'The Twilight Zone'*.

The last shot of a modern town is there to remind us that nothing has gone away. That *we still face a daily battle to do better for our fellow man*... wherever they might hail from.



STYLE:

Imagine *mist covered hills*, lit only by the moon. A dark & *achingly lonely solitude*. Cold & permanently wet to the touch stone buildings. Oil lamps & itchy well worn woolen clothing. No cars, no electricity, no running water. A place where life & death have to be faced on a daily basis.

FILM NOIR MEETS THE MYSTERY OF SCI-FI. SWEEPING LANDSCAPES WITH AN INTIMATE FEEL

This world will be brought to life in high contrast *black & white*- stark and brutal. *Film noir* meets the *mystery of sci-fi*. Beautiful & purposeful compositions. Backlit characters whose real feelings and intentions are hard to read. Great stillness but yet with the more *intimate feel of hand held camera work*. Unfilled spaces, a clawing tension, a delicate hopefulness- desperate not to be stomped out.

The necessary FX will be mostly done in camera, created using practical rigs, carefully chosen camera angels & outstanding make-up. We'll have a real ball of glowing light that the actors can interact with and someone on standby with loads of fake blood!

The world will feel real, the time period brought to life with simple but rich detail. *We'll feel the dirt on people's hands*, under their fingernails while at the same time being filled with an *unknowable wonder*.

The Third Man- meets- The Assassination of Jesse James, through the lens of Ben Wheatley.



CHARACTERS:



THE VISITOR:

An alien? A scout party? A lost soul?

There's lots of mysteries about the Visitor that will never be explained. What we do know is that they are here to test us, find out what kind of people we are. They want to understand us, in a peaceful way and to build bridges...

Even such a forgiving soul has its limits. These are firmly met in our story and we get to see first hand just how powerful and destructive they can be.

The Visitor represents *every person we've ever stepped over and forgotten about* out of convenience. Everyone who ever needed our help and didn't get it.



GERALD:

He's a hard man. Forged in bitter winds and thankless toil. He's been running this sheep farm since his father passed when he was 14yrs old. He can't remember a single day of simple happiness in his whole life. While others enjoy xmas morning-not Gerald. He's up at dawn, tending to the sheep. Even Mary was a consolation prize. The older sister of the girl he really wanted to marry. He wasn't deemed good enough for that.

This life of no reward has made him angry. He doesn't take kindly to strangers. Everything he's got he's had to fight for. He's not about to stop now.

He's the bitterness in all of us. Why does everyone else get theirs when I'm not getting mine?



MARY:

Mary barely gets to leave the farm. She'd be keen to do more outside too but Gerald deems woman's work to be inside the house- cooking on an open fire and cleaning with a homemade broomstick.

She's been deeply sad since the moment she looked into Gerald's eyes on their wedding day and saw only contempt. He has no affection for her. He respects her though as she can graft but there's no love.

She longs for something else in her life in theory- but would never take an opportunity if it arose. She's institutionalised now. The outside world has scorned her, even her own family wanted rid. *She hates the world right back.*

TEAM:



SCOTT PICKUP- WRITER / DIRECTOR

Scott is a multi-award winning writer & director who has worked in TV & advertising for 15 yrs.

He currently runs a small creative agency **Duck Thunder** and has been the Lead Creative for major international broadcasters including- Sony Pictures, NBC UNiversal, ITV & Paramount.

His award winning short film *Boy in the Back Seat* is currently on the festival circuit but you can see it here-

<https://vimeo.com/718352766>

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