

EXT. UNDERWORLD - DAY/NIGHT - THE DREAMLANDS

DEEP BLACK SEA.

Churning DARKNESS.

Shapeless bodies rub against each other beneath the surface.

An endless white BEACH.

SAND is blown away in the wind.

Pale and pallid as bone dust.

The RUINS of a lost, forgotten city.

INT. MONASTERY, UNDERWORLD - NIGHT

The derelict monastery of the HIGH PRIEST. He perches motionlessly upon his ivory throne. Starlight makes the shadows in the hall WANDER, revealing frescos of frightful scenes older than history.

Like a wolf about to leap he lurks.

Wrapped in pale, yellowish rags.

Suddenly he raises his HAND -- AND TIME STANDS STILL.

High up, betwixt the spiny struts of the roof, we see a LINE of LUMINOUS CELESTIAL BODIES.

The high priest slowly raises his obnoxious head.

REVEAL: Instead of a face he wears a MASK that is supposed to look human but isn't.

He reaches out his HAND.

On his COMMANDING GESTURE countless PARTICLES OF DUST dance around promiscuously through the otherwise empty hall, forming a massive roundel of infinite intricacy.

But a single FLECK heads towards him. Lands on his finger.

A sudden BLAST OF AIR empties the hall of all other starlike dust, floating back through the cracks in the ground.

At last, he blows the dust particle from his finger.

HIGH PRIEST

Time to dream.

EXT. MANSION - DAY (DAWN) - 1927

A RAINSTORM wages. Amidst: a neo-Gothic MANSION on the borderland between city and wilderness.

SUPER: "German Republic, May 1927"

INT. BEDROOM, MANSION - NIGHT

Sleet trickles down before the window.