

Ur so 3000 and late, I'm SCP-3008

SCP-3008

Today's topic...

We've talked about familiarity before, when it comes to buildings. If you go back to my Liminal Spaces episode, Ben and I have a brief discussion on spaces over large distances that still feel familiar to you. Target, Walmart, Whole Foods, and all these other food and retail shops.

It gives you a sense of comfort, at times, to know that even if you're in a different American city, you might walk into a Target and not feel lost. It's all the same for the most part.

How then, does that become sinister?

Today, let's talk about SCP-3008 – an IKEA gone *incredibly* wrong.

What is IKEA?

Okay, so we're talking about the sweet sweet SCP that my brother's girlfriend told me about because she knows how much I appreciate an IKEA trip. Though now, maybe I and some other folks in the audience will absolutely think twice (for many reasons) before stepping inside of an IKEA without a rope tied around their waist.

If you don't know what IKEA is, let me gift you this knowledge for the first time in your life and be solely responsible for maybe ruining it. IKEA (or IKEA) is a Swedish furniture retail company, founded by Ingvar Kamprad in 1943. If you didn't know, IKEA actually stands for **I**ngvar **K**amprad, **E**lmtayrd [elm-tah-reed] (where Ingvar grew up), **A**gunnyard [ao-gee-un-nah-reed] (village near where Ingvar grew up)¹. When it started, it sort of seesawed between innovating (inventing the flat pack, ordering furniture from a catalogue) and stealing some designs and just tweaking it a little bit and borrowing without intent of paying royalty to innovators².

Anyway, IKEA is this large warehouse with two storeys or so that is currently notorious for being this never ending maze-like place that could swallow you up, gargle you, and spit you out hundreds of dollars poorer than you were several hours prior to your entry.

Perhaps it's this idea and feeling about IKEA that spawned prolific SCP author MORTOS's SCP-3008.

What is SCP-3008?

¹ [The history of IKEA](#)

² [The history of IKEA, the furniture and the designers. And what does IKEA stand for in Swedish?](#)

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SCP-3008³ has *parts* to it. 3008 is, from what I understand, the storefront of IKEA. It's recognisably IKEA and there's nothing weird about it. 3008-1 is where things go awry - this is the "IKEA" that folks get transported to upon entering 3008. On the foundation wiki, it is classified as a euclidean SCP, meaning that it exhibits unpredictable behaviour⁴. This random behaviour could be due to the intelligence/sentience of the creature or due to the lack of general or scientific understanding of it. Basically, it acts weird and we don't know why – maybe cos it's too smart for us or we just can't comprehend it just *yet*.

3008-1 is basically just an IKEA but in that way that we all describe it. Eternal, everlasting, perpetual, and goes on forever. According to the file's measurements, it could be infinite or as far as physically measured 10km². Think of it this way, Christopher Robin has the 100 acre woods right? 3008-1 is like... 24 times that. An American football field is 1 acre and 3008-1 is 2471 acres so... that's a lot of football fields. Ew.

Other characteristics of it is that upon your entry into 3008-1, you will not be able to distinguish a difference between it and where you entered from. You will navigate this place as if it is the same IKEA you entered, until you finally realise what has just happened to you. There is a day and night cycle, seemingly almost according to the opening hours of any IKEA (8am to 10pm-ish) dictated by the warehouse's lighting - if it's off, it's night and etc.

The warehouse itself is, according to the file, something you can't break through. If you go through a wall, you're just back inside. When it comes to the doors... this is where it gets extra funky - they appear randomly throughout the warehouse. They are euclidian, you cannot predict them.

But to get to know this better, we need to get into the journal found on one of the escapees from 3008-1. It's pretty long but I'll summarise it for you. I've included a summary on the script for this episode for you, just in case you're not into reading much. Me too, bestie.

In this journal, we read from the point of view of an individual who found themselves trapped in 3008-1. It's fortunate that SCP got access to this journal, however, spoiler alert [TURN AWAY NOW IF YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR] the author dies in their attempt to escape from 3008-1.

Here it goes – our hero finds himself trapped in 3008-1, at first convinced that it's some strange joke. However, after some time he realises that he is trapped. He finds himself exploring 3008-1 and running into 3008-2.

3008-2 is a creature that dwells within 3008-1. Many iterations of this character on the internet imply that it's a short Slenderman like creature wearing an IKEA uniform but according to the foundation page "they possess exaggerated and inconsistent bodily proportions, often described

³ [SCP-3008](#) (for the whole section "What is SCP-3008?" unless there is a different citation, the source is only this)

⁴ [Category:Euclid - Official SCP - Containment Breach Wiki](#)

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as being too short or too tall"⁵. Further in the journal, the author describes them as such – “they’re just skin, or something that looks like sin, all the way through. No muscle, no bone, no organs. Are they even really alive in the first place?”⁶ According to the journal entry, which is how we get most of the information about 3008-2, in the morning they are passive creatures but they do attack when provoked and at night, they repeatedly chant *the store is now closed, please exit the building*. Kind of mocking, huh?

Throughout the author’s initial stay, we get a look of what 3008-1 is like. It goes on for miles and miles and miles and is ever changing. However, on the 6th night of his ‘stay’ at 3008-1, he finds a town called “Exchange” – named as such b/c it is under the IKEA Exchange section sign.

At this town he finds many others who have been stuck in 3008-1 for long periods of times. He discusses how people have been in there for days or even years. At this point, the author and I start to wonder the same thing – how are these people missing but there’s no sort of alarm at the large amounts of people missing?

The author lives inside of 3008-1 for some time, encountering large attacks from 3008-2, named “STAFF” by the inhabitants of Exchange and it’s semi-normal as can be when you’re seemingly permanently stuck inside of a larger than usual IKEA.

We learn a lot about 3008-1 and -2 in this and I encourage you to read the journal entries b/c I am now getting to the end point and skipped so many cool world building things.

The last entry of the journal notes that Exchange was severely damaged in an attack by the Staff. This pushes out the remaining inhabitants of Exchange and forces them to go to another town that they frequently trade with. It is assumed by SCP and us that it is during this time that the author is separated from the Exchange occupants and finds the exit from 3008-1.

Unfortunately, despite finding the exit and making it out of 3008-1, he is attacked by 3008-2 and killed. Shortly, SCP also kills 3008-2. To quote teen filipina queen Olivia Rodrigo, God... it’s brutal out here.

Now, you might wonder after hearing that the author escaped nearly, “were there any other escapees?”. Yes! However, the foundation follows the MIB protocol when it comes to this – question then click that neuralyzer and send them on their way. 14 people escaped and lived to tell the tale to the Foundation and were quickly mind wiped.

This whole thing is an exercise of wonderful world building set in a real life backdrop that many of us are aware of. Both SCP-3008 and the journal are amazing at storytelling, in my opinion, and that’s what makes SCP so cool.

⁵ [SCP-3008](#)

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How can we read into this?

So, now that you and I are so intimately aware of 3008, how can we rip this apart as a story and then talk about it? Well, we won't rip it apart but instead attempt to read into this using some existing stories that you and I might be aware of.

Let's consider the Labyrinth.

In Greek Mythology, we know that Thee Labyrinth was built by Daedalus for King Minos of Crete. He built a labyrinth so good that even he almost couldn't escape it. So kudoss to the dude for building it so good. Inside of this labyrinth is THEE MINOTAUR who was imprisoned by King Minos as punishment.

To apply it to 3008, let's get into the story of it. Basically King Minos requested a bull to sacrifice to Poseidon. Minos ended up liking the bull so much b/c it was pretty and ended up letting it live. Poseidon's wife was pissed at this and ended up enchanting/cursing Minos's wife PASIPHAË to be truly, madly, deeply in love with the BULL so much so that uh, you know, they made the beast with two backs— literally, she was disguised as a cow and then they... ya know. This results in a MINOTAUR (named Asterion)⁷.

If we think of 3008-1 in this context, we might think that the people that go missing are sacrifices to the staff, 3008-2, similarly to how there are people sacrificed to Asterion. We might also think that staff is perhaps a creation imprisoned in this IKEA - as a punishment or for containment. Maybe the creator of the staff is being punished, so they trapped his babies in this terrible ikea.

Additionally, maybe it isn't a labyrinth and instead a maze. The distinction is as follows, even if at several points in time they were used for one or the other – a labyrinth has a clear specific route to the centre, no matter how many twists and turns. You get from point A to B in the same way. A maze on the other hand has multiple choices and branches of paths that may or may not lead you absolutely anywhere⁸.

Another read could come from Dante's *Inferno*. If we consider it in this context, perhaps this could be *limbo*⁹. In *Inferno*, the first third of Dante's *Divine Comedy* there are levels of hell and *limbo* is one of them. If we work off this assumption or thread of thought, this could be seen as a "resting place of souls who 'never sinned' but whose 'merit' falls far short,"¹⁰.

However, in this thread of thought - we make an assumption on the merit, values, and lives of the people who end up in 3008-1. We could consider then the other levels of Dante's hell and

⁷ [The monstrous Minotaur riveted ancient Greece and Rome | National Geographic](#)

⁸ [What's the difference between a maze and a labyrinth? | English Heritage.](#)

⁹ [First circle of hell - Wikipedia](#)

¹⁰ #7

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posit that any single one of these levels could be IKEA. We don't know if the author was a completely normal dude or if he was a secret serial killer or cheater or whatever.

Another one Greek mythology lean could be that of the Elysian fields... but just like the other reads, it makes quite an assumption w/o further context, on the characters of the creator of 3008-1, -2, and the people inside of it. The Elysian fields are where those (with merit, perhaps higher than that of those who end up in *limbo*) end up "to live a blessed and happy afterlife, and indulge in whatever enjoyment they had enjoyed in life"¹¹.

If we do consider this, we could consider the Asphodel Meadows as well, or Tartarus but again - these are assumptions on the character of those who end up in the IKEA.

We don't know the purpose of 3008, -1, or -2. It's Euclidian. Consider the people in it as well!

The author of the journal wonders to himself – hundreds of people are apparently inside 3008-1, why don't people notice? Is no one looking for them? What the fuck is going on?

We may then go back to this thing he says – “some of the people here have some seriously odd gaps in their knowledge. 3 of them had never heard of the International Space Station, 2 of them seemed to think [unnamed] was the Prime Minister, and one of them had apparently never heard of the Statue of Liberty. I believe them, too. They seemed just as confused as the rest of us.”

Let's consider this – the ISS was launched in 1998¹². The Statue of Liberty was constructed in 1876¹³. Without knowing who the PM they're talking about, you could safely assume with these other facts that it was also an incredibly out of place PM. So not Jacinda Ardern or Boris Johnson. IKEA became a thing in 1943¹⁴.

These people are either out of time or losing memory the longer they're in this space. If this was a real thing, I'd say – this is some sort of “hell” in the sense of the Good Place. It's a strange sort of punishment to be stuck in this space perhaps. Maybe everyone here *is* a sinner of some sort. Maybe the fact there's no fighting between towns in 3008 is less a sign of goodness restored but repentance for the crimes, horror, or violence they committed as living beings? Maybe the torment under the Staff *is* Tartarus in a way.

What is so scary about this?

Now, what's so scary about being trapped in an IKEA, beyond the attacks from the staff. From the journal author's story, it seems like there's restaurants 3008, villages, people, medicine, things to do. Other than the bizarre normality of it all, what's so scary?

¹¹ [Elysium - Wikipedia](#)

¹² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ISS>

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statue_of_Liberty

¹⁴ [The history of IKEA, the furniture and the designers. And what does IKEA stand for in Swedish?](#)

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Let's look at *mazeophobia* – the fear of being lost, due to the idea of being in an unknown place¹⁵. It is the fear of leaving your house or place of comfort and ending up being lost or in an unfamiliar place. Although the term is not currently in medical dictionaries as of this moment, it is something that people experience – different from agoraphobia, in the sense that agoraphobia is more “a fear of being in situations where escape might be difficult or that help wouldn't be available if things go wrong”¹⁶. You might think that agoraphobia could tie into the fear of 3008, but call to mind the fact that people who go into 3008 do not *know* they're about to go in it. They don't have the anticipatory fear just yet. This could also apply to mazeophobia in the context of 3008, but as a general thing – what we might fear about 3008 is the possibility because we *are* aware of it as readers.

Think about this: if you know that somewhere out there is a randomised IKEA where if you step inside of it, you might get transported to 3008-1 and never find a way out. If that was a fact, we would be going to IKEA with ropes tied around our waists or not at all. It would be some sort of game to go to an IKEA and find out if you're finally at the IKEA that randomised for the day.

I went to an IKEA two months ago with my brother. If this was a thing, I wouldn't have gone. At the moment, I am having the worst bits of my mobility issue. I would not have been able to outrun Staff. I could beat them with my very strong cane but... you know? The idea that any IKEA out there could just send me to 3008-1 is terrifying.

Potentially leading us to Cleithrophobia, the fear of being trapped in a small space, not to be confused with the fear of enclosed spaces¹⁷. But then again, the key here is *small space* which is exactly the opposite of 3008-1 and any IKEA ever.

So what then? Could it be the human fear of getting lost?

Michael Bond's WIRED article called “Getting Lost (Why Humans Totally Freak Out When They Get Lost)” touches on our fear of being absolutely lost and how it's ingrained into our culture from childhood fairytales down to fear filled podcast readings of Missing 411 stories. Bond states the following:

“Lost is a cognitive state. Your internal map has become detached from the external world, and nothing in your spatial memory matches what you see. But at its core, it is an emotional state. It delivers a psychic double whammy: Not only are you stricken with fear, you also lose your ability to reason. You suffer what neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux calls a ‘hostile takeover of consciousness by emotion’ 90 percent of people make things a lot worse for themselves when they realize they are lost—by running, for instance. Because they are afraid, they can't solve problems or figure out what to do”.

¹⁵ [Don't Fear The Unknown by Escaping Reality | The Edinburgh Reporter](#)

¹⁶ [Overview - Agoraphobia - NHS](#)

¹⁷ [Cleithrophobia: The Fear of Being Trapped](#)

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For the first section of the journal found on the man who escape from 3008-1, you read about him wandering and losing himself and approaching the staff. He's at a loss and is lost in this space. He *knows* he's in IKEA, but he's also lost inside of an IKEA.

If you've gone and read the journal, you might think of the author when I discuss the study done by Kenneth Hill of St. Mary's University in Halifax, Canada. Hill looked through 800 cases of search and rescue reports and identified the following: when someone is lost they have a tendency to move. People walk in circles, attempting to go in a straight line and retrace your steps – the problem lies in the fact that when you are lost and cannot orient yourself to something, you are unaware of what a straight line is. To borrow from Fefe Dobson's "Round and Round", as popularised by Selena Gomez, "round and round, we'll never get where we're going".

What's so scary about SCP-3008? Maybe it's the feeling of being trapped? Maybe it's becoming lost? Maybe it's helplessness? Maybe it's the Staff and the never ending

Who knows, I guess.

On SCP...

What I find most interesting about it is the holding of what is considered "canon". I think it's mentioned on the SCP website that time is just a casual thing - if you need SCP to have been founded in a certain year, it was founded in that year. Even if it was first started as a writing exercise in 2007, it doesn't mean a thing. With so many stories, and various authors, I think it *is* hard to manage a timeline for the most part.

Consider this – think of your favourite fandom and consider all the fanfiction written in it. Do you sometimes get confused about timelines, canon, and characterisation? I know I do, whenever I'm looking over someone's work. It's important that the person, for the most part, establishes an in-world canon that I can follow for the most part – especially if they want me to check for certain things.

Sometimes, on author notes for AO3 posts, you'll have people outright say they're disregarding certain parts of canon or altering it to better fit their story. In the thousands and thousands of fanfiction for The Witcher or Our Flag Means Death or Star Wars – there are alternate universes that exist, even if it *isn't* directly an alternate universe. As said on the Guide for Newcomers "To reach over ten thousand articles onsite, we had to let go of the idea of a singular 'canon'¹⁸.

This is what really interests me about the flexibility of the foundation stories. It allows for imagination and doesn't constrict you too much. While there is a possibility for stories to coexist in a single universe or space, authors are not stuck to a single idea.

¹⁸ [Guide For Newcomers - SCP Foundation](#)

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I also really enjoy that there's a note on this being fiction and that none of these things can hurt you, not sure how I can say that about Ben's topic though. They note that "we are not a roleplaying site, and users are asked to not act in-character while conversing with other users"¹⁹ as well as a very important note about the "memetic hazards" not being able to hurt you in any way. As you've seen on some of the memes and myths we discussed on the podcast, authors find themselves without control when it comes to the hazards of the Momo Bird, the Clown Takeover, and any other scary thing – outright saying that this is not real is interesting for me and can even lend to some credence to the stories. Think about it – if your story says that SCP is real, saying that SCP is trying to protect everyone by saying it's not real... it's kind of interesting.

I'm actually now a member so who knows... maybe you'll see my name on there some day. Or not.

RECOMMENDATIONS

What to say at the beginning: hey ben my co host from ISYMPOD... i've got a recommendation for you, you ready?

Tooth Fairy

- The Tooth Fairy is a 2006 American horror film directed by Chuck Bowman.
- When first watched (as a teen)
- Why it was scary (light/darkness, the tooth fairy)

Eerie

- Eerie is a 2018 Philippine horror film written and directed by Mikhail Red.
- When first watched (with my parents on netflix)
- Why was it scary (religious horror, jumpscares)

El Orfanato

- The Orphanage (Spanish: El orfanato) is a 2007 Spanish gothic supernatural horror film and the debut feature of Spanish filmmaker J. A. Bayona.
- When first watched (in college for a sex & gender film class)

¹⁹ [Frequently Asked Questions - SCP Foundation](#)

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- Why it was scary (the idea of getting locked up and just dying without anyone finding you and becoming the haunted figure of that location/returning to your childhood home and having it be scary/and then the idea that no one believes you)