

The Polymath  
By  
Christopher West

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[chriswest1973@gmail.com](mailto:chriswest1973@gmail.com)

FADE IN:

INT. CITY BUS - EVENING

Dusk sits behind a city that moves to the stop and go of a near empty city bus. The blight of the area comes into focus as the ride picks up pace.

POV on a youthful pair of hands as they slowly twirl a folded piece of paper, then suddenly stop and open it.

INSERT: Handwritten note which reads, LOOK FOR THE MEAN IN THE GOLD OF THE SUN, WHEN ASKED, THE ANSWER TO 50 IS 601. END OF THE LINE TUESDAY, AT 6:50 SHARP, FIND MR RICHARD HE'S WHERE YOU START.

ELECTRONIC VOICE (V.O)  
Next station, end of the  
line. Thank you for riding RTA.

Looking back at us in the mirror is the BUS DRIVER, (55), who brings the bus to a slow stop.

We follow CALVIN WATT, (14) not big, not small, just right, as he shoulders a unique backpack and heads for the door.

BUS DRIVER  
You sure you're on the right bus  
kid?

CALVIN  
Yes sir, 11th and Hazel right?

BUS DRIVER  
Yup. This is a rough spot this  
time of night kid, be careful.

CALVIN  
Thank you, I will.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - EVENING

A plume of heated exhaust pushes Calvin down the sidewalk and up to a trio of homeless men, LEON, JULES, and AL as they settle in for the night.

LEON  
Hey. Whatca got in that bag kid?

JULES holds up a bum wrapped bottle of whiskey.

JULES

Betcha ain't as good as I've got in mine.

AL steps right in Calvin's path and stops him with a challenging look and a near toothless snarl.

Calvin slowly backs up a step or two. He takes a quick look at the three men and grips the shoulder strap of his backpack.

AL

I believe my associate axed you a question, little man.

JULES

Don't go makin' my man ask you again, he don't like repeatin hisself.

Calvin stops.

In a quick motion he pulls the bag off his shoulder, unzips it, and pulls out two pieces of paper from a blank notebook.

Taking a knee, Calvin props the bag on his other knee and quickly sets to folding the paper in a myriad of ways.

The homeless men look at each other, perplexed.

With a quick pull of odd ends of the folded paper, Calvin reveals a perfect PAPER HOUSE.

It sits almost majestic on his palm as he hands it to the man blocking his way.

CALVIN

Here, you can have this sir... My grandfather used to tell me that the easiest way to tell the difference between a coward and a hero is by the number of worldly possessions they hide behind.

Naked to the world, the men are stunned by this kid's wisdom.

Jules drops the whiskey bottle in a SMASH of glass.

Al takes the house from Calvin as if were a bar of gold and steps back off the sidewalk.

LEON

Can I get one of dem?

JULES

Me too?

The homeless men sit and stare at one another as Calvin dons the backpack again and starts back up the sidewalk.

He continues to walk until he reaches a small building tucked away from the sidewalk.

A single bulb marks its presence.

EXT. CITY LIBRARY - EVENING

Overgrown weeds with an accent of trash help make the exterior facade of the Library the dull, drab place it is.

As Calvin walks up to the door he takes a quick look at a sign displaying the hours.

INSERT - Library Hours Sign. Every day reads CLOSED in an ugly font except Tuesday, which reads 6:43 pm to 7:09 pm.

Checking his watch, Calvin sees its 6:49 pm. Made it.

The Library door opens, and then closes with a nasty CREAK.

INT. CITY LIBRARY - EVENING

Silence, just as a library should be. There's not much to the place, a few rows of shelves house a sparse book collection, a few ugly tables are home to even uglier broken chairs.

The main counter is absent anyone, and it appears as though Calvin is here alone.

CALVIN

Hello?

Nothing. With a shrug, Calvin heads for the REFERENCE section and the scant collection of books it's made up of.

A quick scan of the titles and eureka. This could be it.

INSERT - Amazingly thick book titled, GREAT DISCOVERIES IN PHILOSOPHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC HISTORY.

It takes Calvin both hands to pull this one out, and just as he gets it off the shelf, we're startled to hear a crisp female voice in a Scottish accent come from behind him.

LIBRARIAN (O.S)

That is a reference book young man. You may not check it out, nor make a mark of any kind in its pages.

Calvin drops the book in a quick start, and spins to see who's there.

It's our LIBRARIAN, (40's), smart, beautiful figure, dressed like a 40's school teacher, including a pair of horn rimmed glasses that adorn a beautifully made up face.

CALVIN

Yes ma'am. I know. I'm researching a thing called the golden mean, and I think this book can help me.

LIBRARIAN

The golden mean?

CALVIN

Yes.

LIBRARIAN

Hmmm, do you have a library card young man?

CALVIN

Yes, I do.

Calvin reaches into a back pocket, produces a Library card, and hands it to The Librarian who quickly scans it, then raises an eyebrow.

Calvin bends down to pick up the book; he struggles but manages to set it down on a table.

He attempts to open the book, but no luck.

Tries again, same.

Quite confused, he looks back at the Librarian for help.

LIBRARIAN

Do you have a library card for this Library, specifically?

CALVIN

Uhm, aren't all the Library cards  
in the city connected?

LIBRARIAN

For all other Libraries, yes, but  
for this Library specifically, NO.

CALVIN

O...K... How do I get one for this  
library? Specifically?

LIBRARIAN

You must complete a library card  
application. Once it has been  
submitted for approval, somewhere  
around 600 months, you will receive  
a library card, for this library  
specifically.

CALVIN

I'm sorry ma'am. Did you say 600  
months?

LIBRARIAN

Correct.

CALVIN

That's like 50 years. That seems  
like a really long time for  
a... Wait.

LIBRARIAN

Yes?

CALVIN

50 years... May I see an  
application please?

LIBRARIAN

You may.

She hands him a piece of paper which reads APPLICATION in  
bold at the top, but is otherwise blank.

Calvin pulls a pencil out of his bag and writes 601 on the  
paper and returns it to the Librarian, who smiles  
delightfully in seeing it.

LIBRARIAN

Welcome Mr. Watt. I am the  
Librarian, Mrs. Somerville. Here  
is your card back.

Taking the card from her hand, Calvin is stunned to see it's now made of gold, his name embossed directly into it in silver.

He raises an eyebrow, then turns his attention to the book, which now opens with no effort.

MRS. SOMERVILLE

That is a fine work you've selected Mr. Watt, but I do believe I have another selection which would aid your search more precisely.

Looking around the shoddy room, Calvin looks back at her with doubt.

CALVIN

Uhhhm, I think this book should be-

MRS. SOMERVILLE

There is an exceptional volume penned by a certain Mr. Richard that will no doubt take you where you need to go.

On the words Mr. Richard, Calvin lights right up.

CALVIN

Do you know of his work? Mr. Richard?

MRS. SOMERVILLE

I am well acquainted, yes. Albeit penniless, wretchedly poor actually, Mr. Richard does possess a remarkable mind. Positively priceless.

Calvin glows in excitement.

CALVIN

Where is it?

MRS. SOMERVILLE

You'll find it located in section 601 of course.

Calvin leaps from the table and quickly runs by a few shelves, then back a few steps, looks up, down, left, right, then stops.

On the shelf we see an ancient volume titled, POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC 1752.

CALVIN  
Ugh! Of course!

Retrieving the book from the shelf, Calvin goes back to the table, pulls a notebook out of his backpack, and reaches for the book cover.

MRS. SOMERVILLE  
Two hands Mr. Watt.

CALVIN  
Excuse me?

MRS. SOMERVILLE  
Books in this library require two hands in opening them. One on the front cover, and one... on the back. If you would please.

Mrs. Somerville shows the correct motion with her hands as she talks.

Calvin grabs the book with both hands, gives a quick look to the Librarian and opens it with a squint as if something is going to jump out of it and hit him.

Nothing. Looking back at her again, she returns a knowing smile just as a bright light shoots from the center of the book.

As it gets brighter and brighter, the entire room starts to shake.

As Calvin continues to hold onto the book, a strong wind out of nowhere starts to blow the pages back and forth like a deck of cards in the hands of a magician.

Suddenly, the room begins to spin around Calvin and his book, round and round. The whole scene spins faster and faster.

Table, shelves, Mrs. Somerville, table, shelves, Mrs. Somerville, over and over.

That scene melts into just Calvin, the book and the table. Everything else is now an open field.

As the spinning slows, the table, chair and book also disappear until all that remains is Calvin, who is now wearing an 18th century style coat and breeches, along with a dark three point hat.

We're up close on Calvin, his arms swing out as he scans his new location and clothes in utter amazement.

CALVIN

Holy Shhh-

A CRACK OF THUNDER censors Calvin's speech as THE FRAME PANS WAY OUT to show the field is nearly endless and cloaked in dark, towering thunderheads that fill the sky.

In the distance, a man comes into focus, and it looks like he's flying a kite.