

The Writer

By

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An Original Screenplay

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FADE IN:

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

JOSHUA LEIGHTON (V.O)

I was born at midnight on the  
thirtieth of May, nineteen ninety  
as Joshua Leighton...

The hospital staff and JOHN LEIGHTON, late 20's are  
encouraging EMILY, late 20's to give birth.

JOSHUA LEIGHTON (V.O)

My mother has always told me that  
it was lucky to be born at twelve.  
But I always thought it was  
unlucky. Midnight is associated  
with ghosts and witches and beasts  
of a hellish nature. And unlucky  
black cats.

NURSE

Keep pushing Emily! You're doing  
great!

EMILY

I'm trying!

DOCTOR

OK. I can see the head.

Emily continues to push while screaming.

JOSHUA LEIGHTON (V.O)

I'd like to say a few words on  
luck, as it is closely associated  
with my story, or would be anyway,  
if it existed at all. Because  
that's just it. It doesn't exist.  
Or not in my opinion anyway. Just a  
figment of the imagination. What  
does exist. And what people are  
really referring to when they talk  
about luck is, statistics.

DOCTOR

Push Emily Push!

JOHN

Push honey!

(CONTINUED)

EMILY  
(screaming)  
ARRRGGGHHH!

JOSHUA LEIGHTON  
Waaaaaaa!

The NURSE, 30's, cuts the chord and carries the baby away.  
The couple look concerned.

JOHN  
What's wrong with him? The nurse  
turns to face them.

NURSE  
He's a bit blue. Probably due to  
the umbilical cord being tied  
around his neck. He's a playful  
bugger. Don't worry. It's just a  
precaution. The couple look  
relieved.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

SUPER: 17 YEARS LATER

The 17YO JOSHUA is sitting through a college lecture on  
statistics. The TEACHER, mid twenties settles half the class  
down by finishing off the paperwork on her desk and standing  
up, grabbing a marker pen.

TEACHER  
OK guys, settle down. Today's  
lesson is on Hypothesis testing.  
The class quietens down. The  
teacher writes Hypothesis Testing  
on the board.

TEACHER  
OK. So... we know that the  
parameters of a distribution are  
the quantities needed to describe  
the distribution. For example...

The teacher writes as she talks.

TEACHER  
A normal distribution has  
parameters micro and sigma and a  
poisson distribution has the  
parameter phi.

The teacher faces the class.

(CONTINUED)

TEACHER

OK. So does anyone know the definition of a hypothesis?

Everybody is clueless except for Joshua, who puts up his hand.

JOSHUA LEIGHTON

A prediction about a parameter?

TEACHER

Correct. A hypothesis...

The teacher writes on the board again as she says...

TEACHER

... is a prediction around a parameter. The teacher continues writing as she says...

TEACHER

Now. There are two types of hypotheses we need to know about. The null hypotheses denoted by  $H_0$ ... and the alternative hypotheses denoted by  $H_1$ .

The teacher faces the class.

TEACHER

So. Now we need to perform a test to decide whether or not we should reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative.

The teacher faces the board again and starts to write.

TEACHER

Suppose we are given a value and told that it comes from a certain distribution, but we don't know what that parameter of that distribution is... suppose we make a null hypotheses about the parameter...

EXT. OUTSIDE COLLEGE - DAY

Joshua is walking to the bus stop. He gets on the bus and takes a window seat on the right just beyond the middle. The bus is already half full. He looks out the window for a while then his friend sits down next to him.

(CONTINUED)

FRIEND  
How was maths?

JOSHUA  
Interesting.

FRIEND  
You're a weirdo.

Friend laughs as he says this. Joshua continues looking out of the window.

FRIEND  
Hey. Did you know about that party at Steve's tomorrow night?

JOSHUA  
Yeah... I can't go. Exams in a month. I've got to study.

FRIEND  
All you do is study. You need to study less.

Joshua shrugs.

FRIEND  
Come on. You only live once right?

Joshua thinks about this for a while.

JOSHUA  
OK. But I'm leaving at twelve. It's a school night.

Friend laughs and shakes his head. The bus moves off.

INT. LECTURE THEATRE

Joshua is sitting at the back of the lecture hall.

JOSHUA LEIGHTON (V.O)  
I gained a place to study Physics at University College London. Physics was interesting. Or at least... it was interesting at college. At university it was incredibly over detailed and dull. All of the great concepts and ideas that awed me as a college student were now ruined by detailed analysis and too much maths... too much maths.

(CONTINUED)

The lecturer finishes wiping off the board and writes a new heading - A quantum model of atoms. The lecture hall becomes silent. The lecturer walks to the front of his desk and starts the lecture.

LECTURER

Two years after Rutherford postulated that the atom has a nucleus... Neils Bohr proposed a model for the hydrogen atom... Although Bohr's theory was successful for the hydrogen atom, it proved less useful for more complex atoms.

The lecturer walks to the front of the board and starts to write as he talks.

LECTURER

Bohr's postulates state that... one... an electron moving in an allowed orbit does not radiate electromagnetic energy and two... when an electron jumps from a more energetic state to a state...

INT. HEAD TUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

HEAD TUTOR

So you want to take a gap year?

JOSHUA

No. I just can't... just can't do it anymore.

The head tutor nods his head in understanding.

HEAD TUTOR

You need a break. I can defer you for next years intake...

JOSHUA

No. I don't want to be deferred. I just want a normal job for a while.

The head tutor thinks for a while then proceeds to get the withdrawal form.

HEAD TUTOR

OK... But Joshua... with your grades... you must return to university at some point.

INT. UNIVERSITY ROOM - DAY

Joshua is sitting at his laptop. He is searching through the job section on the internet, making a list of email addresses and info that he should send a C.V to. He then starts sending C.V's. He logs into his email account, clicks new, and starts typing.

JOSHUA LEIGHTON (V.O)

I sent out twenty c.v's a week.  
Anybody with even the most basic  
understanding of mathematics can  
figure out that this should be  
enough to procure a job within a  
month but...

INT. UNIVERSITY ROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: 3 MONTHS LATER

Joshua is hunched over his computer. Watch this for a while then he lifts his head up quickly, a look of realisation spreading across his face.

JOSHUA LEIGHTON (V.O)

... It wasn't. I had an idea. An  
idea so brilliant that Einstein  
would leap up and jump for joy if  
he heard it. It was, like all  
brilliant ideas, simple.

Joshua starts to type.

FADE OUT AND CREDITS