

SCHOOL FOR THE STRANGE

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The Gateway Arch shines in the moonlight. CHRISTOPHER THOMAS (early - 30s, well-dressed, "swindler") walks through the park at night. He accidentally bumps into a JOGGER (early-30's female, cardinal bottom, white running top). Knocking the Jogger over.

CHRISTOPHER

I am completely sorry about that.

Christopher smiles at the Jogger and his teeth shine. The Jogger can't seem to resist. He helps the Jogger up.

JOGGER

It's no problem at all. By the way, you deserve everything that is about to happen.

Christopher is confused and loses track of The Jogger. He shrugs his shoulders.

CHRISTOPHER

(To himself)

Sometimes it's just too easy.

Christopher pulls out the wallet and looks at the ID of a KATE O CONNOR (female, 30s) and takes out the three TWENTY DOLLAR BILLS in the wallet, and throws the wallet on the ground.

JOGGER

(O.C.)

Hey! He stole my wallet. Officer.

Christopher looks behind him, paranoid. Takes a beat, before it sinks all the way in.

CHRISTOPHER

Shit!

Christopher runs towards GATEWAY ARCH.

POLICE

(O.C. Yelling)

I'm going to send my dog after you. He's faster than my fat ass, and he'll catch your skinny ass if you don't freeze.

Right under the arch, Christopher trips and falls. The dog is gaining speed. It jumps towards Christopher, and a freak lightning bolt hits the Gateway Arch.

Christopher curls up into a ball expecting the worse.

CHRISTOPHER

I give up.

Silence. Nothing. Christopher slowly gets up to discover the dog is frozen mid-jump in the air.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

What... Is... This...?

Christopher reaches out to the dog. A loud bell CHIMES.

WHITEOUT

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Lockers and various random paintings on the walls. Christopher is stunned and looks around.

VOICE

(Female V.O.)

Welcome to the School for the Strange. We are excited to have you. Please hang tight.

ANDI DALY (female, 50s, well-dressed, zany, principal) seems to jump out at him, which makes Christopher startled.

ANDI

Oh good, there you are, Christopher. Or should I say, Mr. Thomas? You're running a bit late. Come on we got to go.

Christopher's eyes sparkle. Andi and he make eye contact.

CHRISTOPHER

Look uh... Your name is...

ANDI

It's Andi. School Principal. I love a good charmer.

CHRISTOPHER

Go where?

Andi touches Christopher's face and then slaps it.

ANDI

Ha! I love a good face slapping.
Come on, move along.

Andi touches Christopher's face again. Christopher moves her hand. She points behind Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

No.

He looks behind him, turns towards her, and she slaps him, leading them to walk down the hallway.

ANDI

Hurry.

CHRISTOPHER

What's going on? Where am I?

ANDI

Ha! You are in the School for the Strange. I'm bringing you to your classroom. Mr. Thomas.

Andi stops in front of a dark and dusty classroom.

CHRISTOPHER

Andi... Honestly, I'm no teacher.

ANDI

This classroom room hasn't been used in a good six months. Well, nothing like the present.

Christopher waves at Andi and races down towards a sign that says "Exit", he turns around towards Andi.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know what this is, but I am not a teacher. No interest.

Christopher pushes through the door below the "Exit" Sign.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Christopher ends up on the other end of the hallway. He passes and bumps into Andi. She slaps him again. He races towards the exit again. Andi is standing by the classroom, looking at him.

ANDI

God, you are a charmer and comedian. I call that a double victory. But we don't have time.

Christopher runs out of the door just below the exit sign.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Once again Christopher ends up at the other end of the hallway. This time he slowly approaches Andi.

CHRISTOPHER

How do I get out of here?

ANDI

(Whispers very loudly)
You can't. Check the wallet you think you took from me.

Christopher pulls out a note card that says "No leaving" with a giant clown's smile face drawn on.

CHRISTOPHER

Uh...

ANDI

I can give you everything that you ever wanted and more!

CHRISTOPHER

Money? Lots of money.

ANDI

All I need is for you to do a little teaching for me.

Andi winks at Christopher. He hesitates.

ANDI (CONT'D)

Stuff will happen beyond your wildest dreams.

Christopher gives in.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Typical with desks and chairs, a teacher's desk in front. No windows. Very dark and so dusty that cobwebs hang down.

Christopher heads for the LIGHT SWITCH. Andi slaps his hand.

CHRISTOPHER

So how much money are we talking about here?

ANDI

All of it. Name your price.

CHRISTOPHER

Jeez. To get out of debt and be free... Two hundred thousand?

Andi slaps his face again.

ANDI

You have a lovable face. But I sense you can be a bit of a Butt... and there's a big one.

CHRISTOPHER

No butts. I'm more of a boob type of guy anyway.

Andi slaps Christopher for his inappropriateness.

ANDI

You are to protect these children at all costs. They could easily be erased from existence, as can you.

CHRISTOPHER

Excuse me?

ANDI

It's really simple, Christopher...

Andi flips the light switch on. A loud sonic BOOM is heard. Christopher covers his ears.

ANDI (CONT'D)

You get used to the noise.

When Christopher uncovers his ears the entire classroom is filled with fourth and fifth-grade students, well-lit and no longer dusty.

CHRISTOPHER

Where did they come from?

Andi writes on the chalkboard "2 plus 2 =".

ANDI

Get them to solve this equation. And all your...

CHRISTOPHER

Money.

ANDI

Wishes... will come true.

Andi walks out of the room. Christopher turns around and faces the classroom. GARDEN EVIL (Girl in middle row, ponytail, devilish smile) gets impatient.

GARDEN

You're not Miss Johnson.

CHRISTOPHER

No, I'm...

HOBBS MCCALVIN (Boy in front row, golden spiky hair, funky t-shirt)

HOBBS

It doesn't matter who you are.
Don't you want to know who we are?

CHRISTOPHER

I was just going to um... introduce myself and take attendance. Yes, that's something that teachers do.

The class all looks at him with blank stares.

GARDEN

(In Christopher's head)
Get to it, we don't have all day.

Christopher leans towards Garden.

CHRISTOPHER

Did you say something to me?

RANDOM STUDENT

We've all been waiting for you. We have been silent and good.

The entire class awkwardly laughs. Christopher is alarmed but shrugs it off. Under "2 plus 2 =" Christopher writes "Mr. Thomas".

CHRISTOPHER

I'm Mr. Thomas. Today we are going to be going over Two Plus Two.

GARDEN

No.

Christopher rolls his eyes and crosses his arm.

CHRISTOPHER

This isn't that tough of a question. All you have to do to answer it is count on your fingers.

Garden takes a giant yawn and sighs out loud. As she does, three pieces of chalk float up in the air and fly at Christopher, one hits his forehead, one hits his stomach, and one flies squarely in his mouth. He spits it out. Christopher turns pale and he backs up towards the door.

HOBBS

What's your problem?

Silence as Christopher has his hand on a doorknob.

GARDEN

(In Christopher's head)
This isn't that tough of a question.

CHRISTOPHER

What the hell? What is this? Is this some kind of sick prank?

Christopher is ready to open the door when it is flung open by KATE O'CONNOR (30's, Beauty, Smart, Sassy). Christopher falls back into the classroom and on the ground.

KATE

You alright there?

CHRISTOPHER

Your The Jogger from earlier.

KATE

Exercise is healthy for you.

CHRISTOPHER

But... I...

KATE

I just need to borrow some pencils.

Twenty pencils fly at Kate's head, and she catches them. Christopher is so distracted by Kate.

CHRISTOPHER

When you were running by I never noticed just how cute you are.

KATE
Do you need help?

Christopher puts his hand out to say no, he stands up and dusts himself off.

CHRISTOPHER
You are just... I mean wow. I'm the new teacher...

HOBBS
Oh god, he ain't going to last.

KATE
I'm Kate. The Science teacher. You look spooked.

Christopher laughs, color comes back to him.

CHRISTOPHER
No, me spooked? I um don't get spooked. In fact, I got this all under control. So you don't have to worry about...

Kate blinks her eyes rapidly three times. Everything is frozen in time, except for Christopher and Kate.

KATE
Listen very carefully. This is the third generation of kids. The other two were erased from existence by the nasty administration. Don't screw this up.

CHRISTOPHER
How is time... How does any of this...?

Kate blinks three times rapidly again. She walks out of the room.

HOBBS
You look like you've seen a ghost.

CHRISTOPHER
No, you know what. Let's try this again. Two plus two equals...

Christopher holds up his fingers. He puts a four in the air. His eyes widen.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
You can make my dreams come true...
And help me get out of debt.

Hobbs shakes his head disapprovingly.

GARDEN
We can help you be something.

Garden mischievously smiles.

CHRISTOPHER
Uh oh.

Garden levitates ceiling dust over a kid's nose. He sneezes which causes the teacher's desk to light on fire. Another girl snaps her fingers, causing it to rain over Christopher and the desk putting out the fire, and soaking Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
You all have powers, don't you?

HOBBS
Yep.

CHRISTOPHER
What's yours? And what is your name?

Hobbs looks at him.

HOBBS
Hmm... Well, my name is Hobbs. I'm the cool one.

Garden looks jealous.

GARDEN
Oh please. And I'm Garden Evil.

CHRISTOPHER
They didn't skimp with the names.

Hobbs makes eye contact with a Garbage Can. His eyes turn Green. The Garbage Can grows eyes and a mouth. Like a dog, it playfully growls and chases Christopher around the room.

HOBBS
Ha! This is very entertaining.

It bites Christopher's ankle.

CHRISTOPHER
Ouch!

Christopher kicks the garbage can. It goes flying and it lands on the ground, the eyes and teeth go back into the can.

GARDEN

This is too funny. I like you.

CHRISTOPHER

Can we just get to the equation, please...

The Door opens and GEORGE O CONNOR (30's Kate's Brother, sarcastic, prank puller) and a POORLY CONSTRUCTED ROBOT walk into the room.

GEORGE

We got a new guy who's a prankster.

George puts Christopher into a headlock.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, this is awkward.

GEORGE

(Whispering)

I heard what you said about being a boob guy. Let's get this straight, My sister, Kate is off-limits.

ROBOT

Be nice.

George releases the headlock. The Robot wanders over to Christopher, sparks flying.

CHRISTOPHER

And you are...

GEORGE

George O Connor. I'm an inventor.

Christopher wanders over and puts his hand around the Robot.

CHRISTOPHER

What's this thing's purpose?

The Robot looks dejected puts its head down.

ROBOT

I was... so... nice... to... you...
Ouch! You hurt me. Robots... have feelings too.

GARDEN
(In Christopher's head)
That's not nice.

The kid sneezes again and Christopher's foot ignites. Christopher screams. The Robot's mouth opens up and it extinguishes it with its breath.

GEORGE
Everything has a purpose man, You
have to be open. You are not only
dried off but not on fire.

George winks at Christopher and walks out. The Robot saunters with angry eyes.

ROBOT
You better watch your parts bro, I
will see you around.

The door closes.

CHRISTOPHER
Let's help each other out. Okay? We
can do this equation and then...

Christopher's stomach rumbles.

RANDOM STUDENT
I can create candy from my stomach
so you can eat it.

Christopher shakes his head.

CHRISTOPHER
That's alright. Once again...

The door swings open. Andi and JERRY O TERRI (50's, nice, generous) who looks like the Grim Reaper walks in.

ANDI
He's here.

We see Jerry's face, it radiates kindness.

ENTIRE CLASS
JERRY!

CHRISTOPHER
This is a little on the nose.

ANDI
Quiet! Don't be a jokester all the
time, Mr. Funny bones.

Andi slaps Christopher and chuckles at her own joke. Christopher rolls his eyes. Jerry points to the equation.

ENTIRE CLASS

Four.

Jerry smiles.

JERRY

That's excellent. We're going to keep everyone around.

Everybody cheers. Andi smiles and celebrates. Jerry leaves the room. Andi turns off the light switch. A reverse sonic boom sounds like "MOOB". The class is dark, empty, and dusty.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Christopher and Andi are sitting in her office, she smiles.

ANDI

I think this place will grow on you.

CHRISTOPHER

You said I get all the money.

ANDI

No, I said this place will make your wishes come true. Welcome to The School For The Strange Christopher. Your new home. And no more conning people, that's how you get erased from existence.

EXT. SCHOOL FOR THE STRANGE - DAY

A school and skyscrapers, levitate off the ground. Flying cars zoom past the buildings. And a sign "Welcome To Your New Forever Home."

END FOR NOW