

FRANCES AND THE WORM

Written by

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FADE IN:

1 INT. FRANCES' HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY 1

FRANCES (13), a nerdy young boy wearing a large pair of MAGNIFYING GOGGLES, sits hunched over a desk illuminated only by a lamp. He works diligently on something...

The dingy basement is covered with 80s pop-culture sci-fi references: a poster for John Carpenter's THE THING, a stack of DUNE books, STAR WARS VHS tapes.

A sizeable telescope unmanned in the corner.

Scattering the floor: a plethora of science textbooks, genome study to astronomy to QUANTUM PHYSICS.

Test tubes, beakers, random tools lying on shelves, a framed picture of L. Ron Hubbard.

Frances continues to tinker, METAL SCRAPING and tools CLANGING.

A MEOW comes from beneath the desk.

A large corkboard hanging above Frances' desk, strewn with connecting multi-colored string, images of Albert Einstein and wormholes, various mathematical equations.

Frances pauses. He lifts the goggles. In his hand- a mysterious RAY GUN.

Frances reaches below the desk and plops a CAT, in a cage, on the desk.

A stressed MEOW.

Frances opens the cage and takes a step back, taking aim.

A blinding neon light flashes and fills the room with a SCREECH and a ZIP.

Silence.

A beat, Frances reaches into the cage.

Stunned, yet villainously ecstatic, Frances holds an inch-tall black cat in his hand.

2 INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - STAIRWELL - DAY 2

CHUCK (13), a scrawny kid with mousy hair, flops down the stairs. Floral wallpaper and shag carpets.

3 INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 3

Chuck enters emitting an aura of teenage angst. A similar décor theme in the kitchen- 70s into the 80s.

Chuck's mother, PAM (30s), crafts a meal at the counter.

She watches the news on a small counter television, giving occasional smacks to fix the antenna.

PAM
(sarcastic)
Awake so soon? It's only 12:30.

Chuck gives a snarky look before gliding past, assembling the fixings for a bowl of cereal.

He SLURPS as loud as possible.

PAM (CONT'D)
Chucky, please? I'm trying to hear.

Chuck ignores his mother, also tunes into the NEWS REPORTER (40s) on the screen.

NEWS REPORTER (ON TV)
-strange reports of glowing lights
and odd smells coming from the
abandoned YMCA, Holbrook residents
are advised to steer clear of the
area until further investigation-

Pam doesn't seem too concerned.

PAM
By the way, have you seen Rufus?

CHUCK
(mouth full)
Not since he brought in that rat
yesterday.

PAM
Ugh- don't remind me. Would you
take a look outside, Chucky?

Chuck lets out an exaggerated SIGH.

4 EXT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

4

Chuck flips his hood on and pulls the strings tight- a dreary, rainy day.

He walks down into the lush, green yard.

CHUCK

Rufus!

Chucks scans the yard.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Rufus! Stupid cat!

Chuck steps into the grass, a SQUELCHING beneath his feet. He looks down: earthworms squirm in the flooded yard.

A disgusted look.

Chuck bends down closer- a solid layer of movement. All worms.

A beat.

A phone RINGS from inside the house.

PAM (O.S.)

Chucky! Phone call!

Chuck heads inside.

5 INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

5

Pam hands the corded wall phone to Chuck.

CHUCK

Hello?

FRANCES (O.S.)

Chuck.

CHUCK

Frances? What's up.

FRANCES (O.S.)

Meet me at the abandoned YMCA pool tonight. Eleven o' clock.

CHUCK

Why? Did the slingshot finally come?

FRANCES (O.S.)
Just be there.

The line CLICKS.

Chucks looks at the phone, confused, hangs it up.

CHUCK
(to Pam)
No sign of Rufus.

6 EXT. ABANDONED YMCA - OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT 6

Chuck trudges up a wooded hill towards a tarp-covered chain-link fence. The storm is gone, but an eerie aura still fills the night.

Beyond the fence, Chucks sees the intense glow of NEON BLUE AND PURPLE LIGHTS.

Faint electric ZAPPING.

Chuck clambers up and over the fence.

7 EXT. ABANDONED YMCA - POOL - NIGHT 7

Chuck lands on the expansive pool deck.

Frances approaches suddenly, wearing a lab coat.

FRANCES
Good, you're here.

CHUCK
(startled)
Jesus! Give me a heads up next time.

Frances says nothing.

Chuck scans the area, but has trouble comprehending the scene.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
Uh- so, what's going on here?

Frances smirks villainously.

FRANCES
Let me show you.

The two boys walk to the large pool edge.

Chuck stops in his tracks.

Along the sides of the pool run countless thick, black wires each connecting to a huge machine that Chuck can only imagine is akin to a transistor, a generator, a computer, something.

Around the machine sits various computer-like machines, BEEPING and glowing.

Along the insides of the pool, near the top edge, stick out many weird apparatuses. Each strange metallic device the shape of a cone with several purple coils tapering to the tip. They do not appear active, however, they HISS with electricity.

Chuck's eyes widen as far as they can.

FRANCES (CONT'D)
Magnificent, isn't it, Charles?

Chuck does not bat an eye at Frances calling him his government name, too transfixed.

CHUCK
(shaking)
Wha- what is it?

What sits at the bottom of the empty pool is otherworldly. A swirling, cosmic sea of NEON BLUE AND PURPLE LIGHT.

Chuck feels the force pulling him in. Frances stops him.

FRANCES
A feat beyond the confines of man's
genius.

Chuck looks to his friend. Frances stares at the swirling whirlpool.

FRANCES (CONT'D)
Frist, I created an ultra intense
magnetic field via the miniature
pylons on he inside of the pool. It
is invisible to the human eye, but
the force is insurmountable.

Chuck scans the pylons, mouth agape.

FRANCES (CONT'D)
With the magnetic field in place, I
created a pair of oppositely
charged blackholes with identified
horizons-

CHUCK
BLACKHOLES?

FRANCES
Calm, Charles. With the appropriate boundary conditions for the blackholes, I was then able to create... *it*.

CHUCK
Frances? What is *it*??

Frances heads over to the large transistor box and pushes up a large metal handle. The pylons lining the pool seem to SIZZLE and HISS even stronger.

The swirling mass grows faster.

Frances returns to Chuck's side, eyes stuck on the cosmic pool. His pupils reflect the glowing colors.

FRANCES
It, is a cosmic gate. A WORMHOLE! A topologic feature of the cosmos, a virtual shortcut through very time and space!

Chuck covers his mouth in disbelief. And fear.

FRANCES (CONT'D)
The pylon beam emitters create a stable quantum matter field, and with enough negative energy, the wormhole has become... traversable. The boundary conditions of the blackholes and the back reaction of the quantum matter field transformed the gate in a passageway. A TUNNEL!

CHUCK
(yelling, terrified)
Come on, Frances. Stop playing games! Turn all these lights off and let's go home!

FRANCES
I'm afraid that's not possible, Charles.

CHUCK
Stop calling me that! What the hell is wrong with you?!

The energy swirling in the pool only grows stronger.

The hair and clothes of the two boys begin to blow.

FRANCES

(yelling)

Charles! Don't you understand? My ultimate creation... it will stay open as long as I like!

Chuck holds back terrified tears.

CHUCK

But why would you want that?!
What's the point?!

FRANCES

I have replicated the confines of space! Right here in the YMCA pool! I saved the wormhole from gravitational collapse! Imagine the planes of existence we could travel to!

CHUCK

We?!

FRANCES

(quieter)

Well... you.

CHUCK

What?

Frances grabs Chuck by surprise and throws him to the ground.

On top of Chuck, Frances pulls out a small, strange device with several large needles protruding. He stabs it into Chuck's chest, above his heart.

Chuck SCREAMS in pain.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

(screaming)

FRANCES! WHAT THE HELL!

FRANCES

A jury-rigged EKG monitor- this way, if you don't survive, I will immediately see the drop in your vital signs on the monitor.

CHUCK
 (screaming and crying)
 Don't do this Frances! I don't want
 to die!

FRANCES
 My dear Charles, that's exactly it.
 You won't die... hopefully.

Frances pulls out the SHRINK RAY from his lab coat and aims
 at Chuck.

Chuck struggles to reach for a stray black wire, tangled
 around Frances' leg.

FRANCES (CONT'D)
 I forgot to mention one important
 detail. The wormhole may look
 massive, but the throat itself is
 microscopic, the size of a pea.
 Goodbye, oh pea-brained Charles.

Chuck pulls the black wire tight, pulling Frances to the
 ground with a YELL.

The SHRINK RAY flies some feet away.

In the chaos, Chuck rips the EKG monitor out of his chest and
 slams it into Frances.

Frances lets out a blood-curdling high-pitched SCREAM.

FRANCES (CONT'D)
 (screaming)
 CHARLES! YOU FOOL!

While Frances writhes, Chuck darts for the SHRINK RAY.

He fumbles a moment, struggling to comprehend the device.

Ready, Chuck takes aim.

FRANCES (CONT'D)
 (quivering)
 Chuck, old buddy, old pal?

CHUCK
 Have fun in space, nerd.

FRANCES
 (screaming)
 NO PLEASE-

A blinding ZAP of NEON LIGHT collides with the BLUE AND PURPLE of the wormhole. Chuck picks the tiny Frances up.

He then flicks the pea-sized Frances into the swirling wormhole.

Chuck runs over to the bulky computer monitor to watch the vitals. He yanks the big metal handle, shutting down the wormhole.

The dust settles...

A steady BEEP continues into the illuminated night.

FADE OUT.