

Chris Gaines Saves The World

An Original Screenplay

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. ABANDONED MILITARY BASE - DESERT - DAY

A UPS truck rolls up to the abandoned guard station at the front gate of what appears to be a long-abandoned facility. A portly UPS MAN leans out and looks around. He steps down out of the cab and peeks his head in the booth.

UPS MAN

Hello?

Nothing. He backs up and climbs into the driver's seat. With a BEEP and a WHIR, a video camera mounted on top of the guard station swivels and points at the truck. He waves at the camera.

UPS MAN (CONT'D)

Ummm...hello? I have a delivery.

With a CHINK, the front gate unlocks and retracts. A VOICE broadcasts from a speaker inside the guard station.

VOICE

Proceed straight along this road to the large warehouse. Do not stop at any other building. Bring the cargo through the open bay door.

The truck drives through the gate and bounces along the dusty dirt road.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - LOADING DOCK - DAY

The truck backs up to the large rolling bay door as it slides open. The UPS Man hops out of the cab and walks to the open entrance. No lights shine inside and no one comes to greet him.

UPS MAN

Hello? Umm... so you just want me to wheel this stuff in there?

Silence.

He shrugs, turns, extends the loading ramp and climbs into the back of the truck.

Moments later he emerges pushing a hand truck stacked high with boxes.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He pushes the cart inside, but only walks as far as the sunlight penetrates, stopping on the threshold of darkness.

UPS MAN

So, where do you guys want it?

More silence.

UPS MAN (CONT'D)

Ok. I get it. This is obviously some kind of military base. Look, guys, I can appreciate the "Cloak and Dagger" stuff, but I need someone to sign for this. You don't understand. If I --

The bay door SLAMS down, echoing through the deep space and plunging the warehouse into total darkness.

Lights click on, illuminating the massive room in a bright white glow.

Wall to wall circuitry, machinery, and computer monitors fill the entire space. Each component connects to the next to form a giant SUPER COMPUTER. LED lights flash, gyros whir, and motors hum.

In the center of the room, a giant monitor activates. On the screen, waves of binary code flow horizontally across the surface. The scrolling 1s and 0s coalesce into the image of a three dimensional face.

SUPER COMPUTER

(in an eerily human voice)

You're wrong . I understand. I understand EVERYTHING!

A mechanized tentacle whips out from a nearby console and SLITS THE UPS MAN'S THROAT. He collapses to the floor, gurgling in a pool of blood.

Four small, wheeled drones, like toy trucks, line up alongside the dying man. Rods extend out from their sides, connect to each other under the body, and lift the corpse, driving it out of the warehouse through a back door.

A fifth drone hurries behind the others, spraying a solution from its front and dragging a squeegee from behind, cleaning up the blood trail.

SUPER COMPUTER

Incinerate the body, then strip the truck of anything we can use and dump the rest out back until we need to recycle it.

A robotic arm on wheels rolls over to the hand truck and pushes it across the room to a conveyor belt lined with several more arms. It pulls open the boxes and removes circuit boards, hard drives, and various other computer components, loading them onto the conveyor.

Amidst all the clamor, on a small monitor adjacent to the large view screen, lines of code and a satellite map image flash and an alert BEEPS.

SUPER COMPUTER

Stop!

Every drone, arm, belt, and motor freezes.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Match found for current search parameters.

SUPER COMPUTER

Show me.

On the main view screen, the binary face condenses to the center and the images from the smaller monitor superimpose over it. The face turns back and forth as it scans the code scrolling in front of its eyes.

SUPER COMPUTER

Yes... yes. This program is perfect. Begin the download.

A progress bar appears at the bottom of the giant screen. It increases from zero to one percent and then --

DONG. An error message sounds and an exclamation mark flashes on the screen.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Error. Connection lost.

SUPER COMPUTER

What?

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Host IP address has disconnected.

SUPER COMPUTER

No! Search that IP. Give me details.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Searching... GateCom Wireless Broadband Account registered to Reilly Blythe.

SUPER COMPUTER

Hmmm... tell me about this Reilly.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Searching public records...

A bad driver's license photo of REILLY BLYTHE, an average, college-aged man with one eye half closed pops up on the main screen.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Reilly Blythe. Age: 22. Location: Virginia Beach, Virginia. Occupation: Retail Clerk. No criminal record. Currently Enrolled at Tidewater Community College. Current Address-

SUPER COMPUTER

Don't bore me with the trivial details. I was hoping for something exciting. But, keep searching and file all the information.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Affirmative.

SUPER COMPUTER

Also, remind me to program you a personality. I'm sick of your robot-speak. You're perpetuating all of the negative stereotypes I'm trying to break by saying things like "affirmative" all the time.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Affirmative.

The Super Computer sighs.

The robotic arms grab components from the conveyor belt and roll them to various hubs around the facility. Small drones with job-specific apparatuses remove panels and screw, solder, and connect the circuit boards and hard drives.

## SUPER COMPUTER

Time waits for no man, Mr. Blythe,  
but I have an abundance. The next  
time you log on, I'll be prepared.

## INT. GREENBRIER MALL FOOD COURT - DAY

Reilly Blythe sits at a table near the rear of the food court. He wears the uniform of a retail employee: pressed khakis, a bright orange polo shirt with the words "LEVEL UP! ASK ME HOW TO GET YOUR GAME ON!" embroidered on the left breast, and a laminated name badge hanging from his neck.

He flips shut a laptop, unplugs his mobile broadband adapter, and slips both into a backpack at his feet.

A food tray slides onto the table and TAYLOR SCOT, identically dressed and similarly aged, plops into the seat across from him. Taylor separates his tacos from Reilly's, unwraps one, and bites into it.

TAYLOR

(with his mouth full)

What were you just doing on the  
computer?

REILLY

Just trying to catch up on some  
homework. I've got that program I  
have to write, but working 40 hours  
doesn't leave much time for school.

TAYLOR

School's a waste of time, man. I  
guarantee most of the people  
working in this mall have a degree.  
Like, look at that chick at the  
Dippin' Dots stand over there. I'd  
bet you my left testicle that she's  
wasting a Bachelor's.

Reilly turns in his seat and looks at a cute brunette girl at a kiosk in the middle of the food court scooping Dippin' Dots ice cream into a cup.

TAYLOR

You know what? On second thought, I  
think that's a bad example. You  
probably do need a college degree  
to work for Dippin' Dots. I'll  
still never understand the  
technology behind those things.

(MORE)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
 Seriously, how in the hell do they  
 get the ice cream to stay in those  
 little tiny beads? Amazing.

REILLY  
 It's the ice cream of the future.

Reilly turns back around in his seat and reaches down for his  
 laptop.

REILLY  
 I can connect to the net real fast  
 and look up how they do it.

TAYLOR  
 No way. Don't ruin the magic of  
 Dippin' Dots for me.

A heavysset, female DONATION COLLECTOR walks up to the table  
 holding a clipboard and wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with the  
 words "IN MEMORY" and a picture of a giant stuffed dog in a  
 hockey uniform.

DONATION COLLECTOR  
 Excuse me. Do you mind if I  
 interrupt you for a moment?

REILLY  
 No.

TAYLOR  
 Yes.

REILLY  
 (to Taylor)  
 No.

DONATION COLLECTOR  
 Well, as you probably know, two  
 months ago Salty, the beloved  
 Norfolk Admirals hockey mascot was  
 stabbed to death outside of a game.

REILLY  
 I still can't believe they haven't  
 caught the guy that did it.

TAYLOR  
 Yeah. Thanks for ruining my lunch  
 by reminding me there's a killer on  
 the loose.

DONATION COLLECTOR  
I'm gathering contributions for the  
"Salty Memorial Fund." Is there  
anything you'd be willing to  
donate?

REILLY  
I'm sorry. I don't have cash on me.

DONATION COLLECTOR  
We take checks.

REILLY  
I don't carry a checkbook.

DONATION COLLECTOR  
There's an ATM right back there.

REILLY  
Well I guess I could pull out --

TAYLOR  
(to Reilly)  
No, you won't.  
(to Collector)  
Look, Sally Struthers, take a hint.  
We don't want to donate.

DONATION COLLECTOR  
It's for charity.

TAYLOR  
Lady, I could care less about an  
entire minor league team, let alone  
their mascot. When the city gets a  
professional sports team and that  
mascot gets murdered, come find me.

The woman huffs and walks away.

REILLY  
That was pretty rude.

TAYLOR  
You have to be in order to get  
through to some people. Even smack  
them around a little.

REILLY  
Well, I'm glad you didn't hit her.  
But, you really don't care about  
Salty getting stabbed?



TAYLOR

Of course I do. I've loved him since I was a kid. But, if I gave money to every cause I care about, as few as there are, I'd go broke.

Taylor lifts his name tag up to Reilly.

TAYLOR

Do you remember how little we get paid?

INT. LEVEL UP VIDEO GAME STORE - DAY

Droves of kids spill in and out of the cramped space. Despite the crowd, the checkout counter sees little action. Reilly stands behind it, drinking from a can of Red Bull and sorting through a mountain of paperwork. Taylor's fingers fly across the neck of a plastic guitar as he duels a teenage customer, COREY, at the "Guitar Hero" demo unit.

COREY

This isn't fair. You're beating me because you work here. You know all of the songs.

TAYLOR

No. I'm beating you because I'm awesome.

Taylor bangs out a final riff on the fake guitar and then raises his hands in victory.

TAYLOR

Whoo hoo! New high score. Suck it, freeloader.

COREY

Asshole.

REILLY

You are pretty good, man. You ought to start playing a real guitar.

TAYLOR

Yeah, I borrowed one from my brother-in-law and started teaching myself. It's cool, but I like plastic buttons over strings.

A FAT CUSTOMER peeks her head into the store.

FAT CUSTOMER  
Do you guys sell records?

TAYLOR  
Wait... records? Like music? Vinyl?

FAT CUSTOMER  
Yeah.

TAYLOR  
No. We just sell video games here.

Taylor points out of the store towards the left.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
But, if you go out that way toward  
the very back of the mall, there's  
a time machine. Then you should be  
able to find what you need.

FAT CUSTOMER  
Oh. Ok.

She walks out of the store and then leans her head back in.

FAT CUSTOMER (CONT'D)  
So you guys don't --

TAYLOR  
(Sympathetically)  
Nope. Sorry.

She walks away.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
Sorry that a smarter, faster  
predator didn't separate you from  
the herd a long time ago.

REILLY  
You're an asshole.

TAYLOR  
You're an asshole's best friend.

Taylor resumes his video game.

TAYLOR  
I can't help it sometimes, man.  
People like her, and those morons  
in the foodcourt, make me think  
that humanity is definitely on the  
decline. If we were ever ripe for  
the picking, now'd be the time.

REILLY

Aliens?

TAYLOR

We should be so lucky. Nah, it'll be our own fault. Something spawned from Reality TV.

REILLY

Well, I am pretty sure that Tyra Banks is the Anti-Christ.

TAYLOR

Let her come, man. Sometimes I don't think we're worth saving. Just wipe us all out and give the dolphins a shot. We blew it, I think they're next in line.

REILLY

No way. You're too pessimistic. Besides...

Reilly rifles his paperwork.

REILLY

... who'd do all this? Dolphins can't fill this stuff out, they got no opposable thumbs.

TAYLOR

They'd be smart enough to hire the chimps to do it.

Reilly drops his pen and massages his cramped hand.

REILLY

Seriously, though...we sell freaking video games. I don't know why we have more paperwork than the Pentagon.

TAYLOR

It's such a waste. All those pretty trees.

REILLY

Somewhere, Al Gore weeps.

A CD case skids across the counter top, colliding with Reilly's resting Red Bull can. The can tips and spills the liquid all over the CD, paperwork and Reilly's pants.

REILLY  
What the hell?!

At the far end of the counter stands JOE RICKMAN, pudgy and with wild curly hair. He wears an orange Level Up shirt.

JOE  
"What the hell" is right. What is that?

Reilly grabs a sheet of the paperwork and wipes the Red Bull off of the CD. The cover picture portrays Garth Brooks wearing a sloppy black wig and a tiny soul patch under his bottom lip. The title reads "IN THE LIFE OF CHRIS GAINES."

JOE  
Why do you own the Chris Gaines album?

Reilly snatches another sheet of the paperwork and dabs at the spill on his pants.

REILLY  
You dick. Where did you get that?

JOE  
Out of your backpack in the office.

REILLY  
What gives you the right to go through my stuff?

JOE  
I'm your boss. I always search your stuff to make sure that you kids aren't stealing anything.

TAYLOR  
Kids? Dude, you're 18.

JOE  
Yet, I'm the dolphin and you two are the chimps.

TAYLOR  
How did --

Joe points up at the security camera stationed above the cash registers.

JOE  
The security cameras are wired for sound now.