

A CHANGED HEART FOR EDUCATION

Name: Steven Swee

FADE IN:

COLLEGE DORM ROOM - DAY

MARSH, a junior majoring in mechanical engineering, sits at his desk, constantly refreshing his school's class enrollment site. He glances at the clock on the wall. The clock displays "5:28:00 P.M."

MARSH  
(anxiously)  
Got two minutes until enrollment.  
Schedule's looking clear.

The clock changes its display to "5:29:00 P.M." with the display changing each second.

CUT TO:

APARTMENT ROOM - DAY

JOHN, a sophomore majoring in computer science, sits at his desk, constantly refreshing his school's class enrollment site. He glances at the clock on the wall. The clock displays "5:28:00 P.M."

JOHN  
(sarcastically)  
I feel bad for those that enroll  
in classes after me. It's so nice  
being able to get all my classes  
with all the good professors.

ANN, JOHN's mother, calls JOHN's phone. The phone rings for five seconds, with the ringtone set to The Ramones Blitzkrieg Bop. JOHN picks up the phone.

JOHN  
(annoyed)  
Hello? Mom, why are you calling me  
again? I've told you I've got a  
lot of work to do.

ANN  
John, I just wanted to ask if you  
have helped someone out today.  
You're always busy with your own  
work, but you never seem to share  
your talents or knowledge with  
others.

JOHN

(even more annoyed)  
That's because I actually have that much more work to do, Mom. Having to balance my social life consisting of weekly night outs with friends and the massive amount of homework I have--

ANN

(interrupting)  
You mean those daily, I mean, nightly outings you go with your friends? I've been keeping track of your credit card transactions for the past few weeks and you seem to spend hours doing everything but homework and studying. You also left a copy of your last midterm at home last week, and I'm not happy with what I'm seeing.

JOHN

(to himself)  
Oh shit.

Both JOHN and ANN take a deep breath on the phone. ANN gets ready to talk first.

ANN

(sympathetically)  
Look, John. When I was your age, while I studied English Literature and not computer science like you, I struggled with my classes as well. I used to party a lot with my roommates to relieve some stress.

ANN hears JOHN whimpering on the phone.

ANN

John, listen to me. Please listen closely. How I got better at my work while still having fun was teaching other students. And I enjoy being a professor. Perhaps by helping others, you can realize the value behind a good education and do better. Of course, I will have to suspend your credit card for a bit.

JOHN stops whimpering and realizes that he should listen to his mother.

ANN

John, do you hear me?

JOHN

I understand mom, but I'm not sure where to start? How would I find an opportunity to teach kids? I'm usually very impatient.

ANN

See if you can enroll in some class that allows you to do a practicum or something. Maybe it'll be on math or something related to what you're studying.

CUT TO:

COLLEGE DORM ROOM - DAY

The clock on the wall next to MARSH displays "5:30:01 P.M." MARSH refreshes the page on his computer and manages to enroll in all but one class, named "Special Projects for Mechanical Engineers."

MARSH

(angry and confused)

Wait, what? That class is full? I've been waiting an entire year to take this course, and you're telling me that this class is full? I am not enrolled in enough classes to be considered a full-time student. Only two of my major classes that I'm interested in taking are offered this term. I need a third class quickly.

MARSH browses through the course catalog on his computer. He finds a class named "Practicum in Teaching Engineering."

MARSH

I guess I could take this class. I've always wondered what it'll be like teaching students what I've learned in engineering.

MARSH enrolls in the class and gets ready to do homework.

CUT TO:

APARTMENT ROOM - EVENING

JOHN browses through the course catalog and found that the only class that he can fit into his schedule that will get his mother's approval is "Practicum in Teaching Engineering."

JOHN

Well, I guess I'll enroll in this class, then. What use is there in teaching other kids? It's not like I'm learning anything new. I'm just regurgitating information at this point. Heck, I could just bring my textbooks, read it in front of the class like most other professors.

JOHN enrolls in the class and browses the internet, typing in the search engine, "Physics professors be like" and "Engineering professors be like."

CUT TO:

HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

MS. ELLIE, an advisor for students interested in pursuing engineering, enters a classroom with one student, ROGER.

MS. ELLIE

(excited)

Hello Roger. I'm here to introduce you to two college students who are interested in teaching you a bit about what engineering is like. Here are Marsh and John, who are majoring in mechanical engineering and computer science respectively. I've asked them to talk about the basics of electricity with you.

MARSH and JOHN enter the classroom, seeing an excited Roger. Roger rushes to the two and shakes their hands.

ROGER

(talking very quickly)

Hello! My name is Roger. It's so great to meet you. I've been waiting so long for this. To meet

college students majoring in engineering is so exciting! I wonder what secrets you can tell me. I don't know what I want to study, but I hope that you two can give me some insight!

JOHN appears disgusted at ROGER, but MARSH smiles.

MARSH

Well, it's nice to meet you too, Roger. I understand that we're going to be talking about electricity today, right John?

JOHN

(unenthusiastic)

Yeah, whatever. I have my notes with me. Where are yours?

MARSH

I was hoping to give Roger an introduction to electricity by building off on what he already knows. Things like positive and negative attracting one another like how the north and south poles of a magnet attract. I want to take things nice and slow.

JOHN

That's not what the engineering life is like. Roger, don't listen to Marsh. He's too nice to be a qualified person to teach engineering to you. Here, let me teach you everything. Marsh, you can stay in the corner for a few minutes. I'll call you when I need you.

MARSH heads to the corner with a smug. He knows that JOHN could never be a good teacher and that both ROGER and JOHN will ask for his help. Meanwhile, JOHN goes over a bunch of equations for electricity, but ROGER doesn't seem to be understanding any of them.

ROGER

I don't seem to be understanding what any of this means.

JOHN

(attempting to teach the  
cross product)  
It's really simple. You point this  
finger in that direction, then  
this finger in this direction, and  
wherever this finger points,  
that's the direction of the  
magnetic field.

ROGER

I think I want to see what MARSH  
has to say. Maybe he can explain  
it better?

JOHN

Ugh, fine. Marsh, get over here.  
This kid doesn't know anything.  
He's unteachable.

MARSH walks over to help JOHN and ROGER.

MARSH

Ok. So, Roger, do you know what an  
xy plane is?

MARSH explains the cross product to ROGER, and ROGER  
understands the information fully. JOHN appears astonished.

ROGER

Ok, I think I get it now. Thanks,  
Marsh!

MARSH

No problem, kid.

JOHN

How'd you do that? I thought the  
kid was slow!

MARSH

(to audience)

Well, you see, in order to really  
appeal to another student and  
share the value of a good  
education, you need to take things  
slow. It's not about the written  
text in the textbook, but by  
appealing to who the kid really is  
and how he learns. From that, I  
believe we both have a lot to  
learn about what it means to be a  
good teacher.

THE END

FADE OUT: