

STAIRWAY

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HISTORY CLASS - DAY

A bored student, LEO, is drifting off in his seat. His notebook is open but he is not taking notes.

MR. ERKER is teaching geography at the board. The class seems disinterested and are dazing off too.

MR.ERKER

Alrighty guys, Mr.Balkus isn't here today, so I'm teaching the Erker Curriculum.

The slideshow on the board switches to a new slide, that has a picture of Wisconsin and a cow.

MR.ERKER (CONT'D)

Today we're going over my favorite states, starting with Wisconsin. Wisconsin is great, because they have lots of cheese, and more importantly--milk!

Mr. Erker pauses, and takes a sip from a milk carton he had on the podium. The class groans and rolls their eyes in boredom.

Leo raises his hand.

LEO

Hey Mr.Erker, I would hate to miss the most important lesson of the year, but can I go to the bathroom?

MR.ERKER

I don't know Leo, can you? Haha!

Leo shakes his head as he gets up and walks out of class.

MR.ERKER (CONT'D)

Oh by the way--I was told the History Wing bathroom flooded again, so you'll have to go downstairs.

Leo nods without looking back. He steps out into the hallway and SLAMS the door behind him.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The hallway is empty and there is a wet floor sign in front of the bathroom. There is a missing student poster on a locker across the hall. Leo looks briefly towards both, shrugs, and starts walking towards the one-way stairs.

He is shaking his head while pulling out his phone, he looks down at it while walking down the hallway.

LEO

(muttering)

Wisconsin? Who even likes
drinking milk?

Leo turns to go down the middle staircase, and sees the janitor is mopping and dancing, with some earbuds in. He stares, confused, and keeps walking.

As he's halfway down the hallway MR.IMBUSCH comes upstairs, around the corner of the one-way staircase.

Leo glances up at Imbusch and shoves his phone in his pocket.

As they cross each other Mr. Imbusch stops him.

MR.IMBUSCH

You can't go that way. Those
stairs are only one way. They are
an "up-only" staircase.

Leo rolls his eyes.

LEO

I know. I was just getting my
sweatshirt from my locker.

Leo turns and opens a random locker next to him. It is full of My-Little-Pony merchandise. A pony plush falls out. Leo looks up at Imbusch embarrassed.

Mr. Imbusch looks at him like he had just sprouted wings.

LEO (CONT'D)

(stammering)

Uh...uh, oh, yeah, my sweatshirt.

Leo's face turns as red as a tomato and he slowly grabs a small My-Little-Pony sweatshirt from the locker.

Mr. Imbusch looks at Leo as confused as can be, then shakes his head and walks away. Leo SLAMS the locker shut.

Leo starts walking down the hallway embarrassed.

There is a slight metallic thud from a locker next to Leo, close to the stairs. Leo glances to his right and ignores it.

INT. ONE WAY STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Leo enters the staircase landing and throws the sweatshirt aside in disgust. The sweatshirt falls aside, right next to an "up-only" sign. Leo starts walking down the stairs.

As Leo's foot hit the second floor, the carpet suddenly changes.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mr.Balkus' door SLAMS behind Leo. Leo stops and is startled as if he just heard an unexpected firework. He looks around confused. Leo shakes his head and rolls his eyes.

LEO

(muttering)

Ughh... Too damn tired today.

Leo starts walking down the hallway again, passing the missing poster. He checks the middle staircase, the janitor is still there, cleaning and doing a little dance.

As he's halfway down the hallway Mr.Imbusch comes upstairs around the corner of the one-way staircase.

Leo squints at Imbusch and rubs his eyes. He and Mr.Imbusch start to pass each other and Imbusch stops him.

MR.IMBUSCH

You can't go that way. Those stairs are only one way. They are an "up-only" staircase.

Leo looks at Mr.Imbusch as if he had two heads.

LEO

Uhhhhhhh... Yeah. I know. I was just grabbing my water bottle from my locker.

Leo opens a random closest locker, and it is full of milk cartons. Leo sighs and his shakes his head. Mr.Imbusch smiles and nods.

MR. IMBUSCH

I am a fellow milk enjoyer
myself!

Leo pauses and rolls his eyes.

LEO

Oh. ...Yeah it's great.

Leo stands at the locker holding a carton of milk, with his mouth hanging open. Mr. Imbusch smiles at him and walks away.

Leo walks towards the staircase holding the milk. He is still holding the milk carton. He is even more confused now.

LEO (CONT'D)

(to no one)

Oh, so thaaaat's the milk locker
that everyone's talking about.

Leo keeps walking down the staircase, a dull metallic thud comes from a locker to the next of him, he pays no attention to it.

INT. ONE WAY STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Leo enters the doors at the top of the one-way stairway. He tosses the milk carton to the side. It lands in front of the "up-only" sign, and leaks a little milk. Leo starts walking down the stairs.

As Leo's foot hit the second floor, the carpet suddenly changes.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Balkus' door SLAMS behind Leo. Leo is standing in front of the door, he turns to face it. His mouth opens like he wants to say something but nothing comes out. He looks like he just saw a ghost.

LEO

What is going on?!?

Leo has a perturbed look on his face. He quickly walks past the missing poster, and sees Mr. Imbusch walking down the hallway. Leo glances to his left, frowning at the janitor again dancing and cleaning. As he gets close to Mr. Imbusch he is stopped again.

MR.IMBUSCH

You can't go that way. Those stairs are only one way. They are an "up-only" staircase.

Leo looks at him like he was speaking another language.

MR.IMBUSCH (CONT'D)

Leo, are you alright? You seem a wee-bit confused.

LEO

I'm, I'm, uh, just having a weird day. Yeah, that's all. I'll, uh, I'll feel better after I take a nap later.

Leo rubs his temple as if he had a headache.

MR.IMBUSCH

Ok. But remember, you can't go down those stairs.

LEO

(defeated)

I know, I was just getting my sweatshirt from my locker.

Mr. Imbusch walks away and ignores Leo's situation.

Leo opens the closest locker next to him. Inside the locker is the KID from the missing poster. The kid falls out of the locker onto the floor. He starts to get up while muttering and looking around confused.

KID

Wha? Where am I? Huh-uh-ah oh oh!

Leo watches, wide-eyed, as the kid runs away. He shakes his head and goes toward the stairs. Leo looks stressed and confused. He SLAMS the locker door.

LEO

What is going on today?

INT. ONE WAY STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Leo slowly and carefully walks down the staircase. When he gets to the last step, he jumps off the stairs trying to avoid getting sent back to earlier. But it does not work.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Leo returns to outside Mr. Balkus's room. The door SLAMS shut behind him. Leo's eye twitches and he looks like he is going crazy.

LEO

AHHHH! What is going on!

Leo sprints around the corner and runs up to Mr. Imbusch. The missing poster and the janitor are a blur as Leo runs past. Leo grabs him by the shoulders, shakes him slightly, and looks at him wildly.

Mr.Imbusch looks concerned like something is wrong.

LEO (CONT'D)

Mr. Imbusch you have to help me
something is wrong with those
stairs!

Leo points to the one way stairs behind Mr. Imbusch.

Mr. Imbusch is confused and looks behind him. All he sees is the "up-only" sign.

MR.IMBUSCH

(calmly)

Leo, it's OK. Those stairs only
go up there's nothing wrong with
them.

LEO

No! You won't believe me, but
when you go to the bottom of them
it teleports you back in time!

Mr. Imbusch looks at Leo.

MR.IMBUSCH

Maybe you just need to go see the
nurse and rest for a little bit.
Then everything will be fine.

LEO

Ugh, you don't believe me, but...

There is a loud metallic THUD in the locker next to them. Mr. Imbusch looks at it.

LEO (CONT'D)

I'm stuck in a time loop!

Muffled sounds come from the locker but they cannot tell what it is.

Mr. Imbusch goes over to investigate. He reaches to open the locker, but Leo stops him.

LEO (CONT'D)

You don't want to open that! The lockers around here have been weird.

Mr. Imbusch backs off and shakes his head confused.

LEO

Mr. Imbusch, what should I do about the stairs?

MR. IMBUSCH

Have you tried a different stair case? Like one the one you're supposed to go down?

Mr. Imbusch points towards the other staircase close to them, with the janitor doing more dancing than cleaning.

Leo looks at the stairs, realization spreads across his face, as if he just got a joke someone told 5 minutes ago.

He sprints to the stairs, rushing past the janitor, and interrupting his dance. Leo looks back at Mr. Imbusch.

LEO

Thanks Mr. Imbusch! You saved my day!

INT. THE OTHER STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

The other stair case looks like an ordinary staircase, but with a janitor dancing at the top.

Excitedly, Leo sprints down the stairs. Then, he gets to the last step. He slowly puts one foot down on the second floor and sighs a big relief because he is fine.

He smiles and puts his other foot on the ground.

INT. LOCKER - MOMENTS EARLIER

Leo is stuck in a cramped locker.

He looks around at where he is. He hears Mr. Imbusch and himself talking. His eyes widen in horror as he stares out the slits of the locker.

OLDER LEO

... I'm stuck in a time loop!

Realization spreads across Leo's face for a second time.

Leo can hear the Older Leo talking to Mr. Imbusch having the exact same conversation as earlier. Leo bangs the locker door from the inside.

LEO

Hey! In here! Let me out please!

Imbusch and Older Leo are hardly visible through the slits of the locker, but they don't seem to hear.

OLDER LEO

(muffled)

You don't want to open that. The lockers around here have been weird.

Leo sighs and looks defeated. Mr. Imbusch walks away and the Other Leo runs off.

LEO

Oh no...

Leo slumps within the locker, with a frown. He closes his eyes.

FADE OUT.

THE END