

The Box

by

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## **OPENING TITLE SEQUENCE**

The screen is black.

No music, no sound.

Slow fade in: white lettering:  
The Box

Slow fade out on white lettering.

The screen is black.

**THREE LOCATIONS (WE CUT BETWEEN): INT. A BEDROOM & INT. A WOODWORKING STUDIO & EXT. A STREET WITH HOUSES.**

Fade in. We are in a Black & White World.

Bedroom: A black bowler hat on a wooden table.

Studio: Hands slide across a long raw piece of wood.

Studio: Hands working: sliding a bench plane across a shorter piece of wood.

Bedroom: A hand snatches a black suit jacket from off of a wooden chair.

Studio: A saw cuts into a block of wood.

Studio: A paring chisel shaves pieces off of a small wood block.

Bedroom: Using a shoe shine brush, hands fast-sweep across a pair of shiny black dress shoes.

Studio: A mallet hammers wooden pieces together.

Bedroom: Hands slide a perfectly knotted black tie into place at the top of a crisp white shirt collar.

Studio: A lid is latched on to the top of a small wooden Box.

Bedroom: Hands button shirt cuffs.

Studio: Hands examine the Box. It looks like a small wooden jewelry box.

Bedroom: Our Man (from behind and over the shoulder), wearing the crisp white shirt and black tie, slides into the black suit jacket.

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Studio: A hand dips a cloth into a glass jar full of golden brown wood stain. Hands stain the box with the cloth.

Bedroom: Looking down at his feet, we see black suit pants and shiny black dress shoes.

Studio: we see Our Man's face for the first time: It is Tituss: he blows across the finished box.

Bedroom: Hands slide a gold tie bar in place.

Studio: Tituss holds the small Box in his hands and examines it.

Bedroom: Hands drop a white pocket square in place.

Studio: Tituss brings the Box up to his face and smells it.

Bedroom: A hand snatches the black bowler from off of the wooden table.

Studio: Tituss runs his hand across the Box's beautiful smooth finish.

Studio: Tituss holds the Box in front of his face and looks at it: the little wooden Box he has made is perfect. For a moment, he is happy.

Bedroom: Tituss's head rises as he slowly places the black bowler atop his dome, and now we see him fully, straight on for the first time.

Street: Tituss, in his black suit with black shoes and black bowler, delicately holds the small wooden Box in his hands as he walks down a sidewalk between houses.

Street: He turns and walks up the front steps to a home.

Street: Tituss rings the doorbell and waits.

Bedroom: He looks at himself in the full length mirror: he looks good. He is ready to go.

#### **EXT. FRONT DOOR**

A middle-aged African-American Woman opens her front door (but leaves the screen door shut), sees Tituss and his Box, and then slams the door on him.

Reaction shot: Tituss tries not to take it personally.

Tituss at another front door. He rings the doorbell.

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An old Asian Man answers the door, sees Tituss and his Box, and then grumpily waves the both of them off and shuts his door.

Tituss, holding his Box, walks on the sidewalk between houses.

Tituss at a third front door: he knocks.

The door opens: a Teenage Girl appears. Tituss raises his Box up so she can see it better. She is totally over him, she turns and screams for her Mom which causes Tituss's face to register the sharp high-pitched noise.

Tituss at another front door. He rings the doorbell and waits.

The door opens: a young White Father sees Tituss and politely tells him No Thank You and slowly, as he apologizes, closes the door.

Tituss at yet one more front door: an overwhelmed White Mother answers the door. Tituss once again raises his Box. The Mother doesn't have any time for him and swings the door shut.

Tituss crosses the street, to try the opposite side.

Tituss at a front door: an Asian Mother and her 8-year-old Son answer the door. Tituss shows his wooden Box to the Boy between the screen door. The Mother tells Tituss she is not interested, the Boy eyes the Box with curiosity. The door closes once more.

Tituss at another front door. A Hispanic Woman's face. Door slam.

Tituss at another front door. An African-American Man's face. Door slam.

Tituss at another front door. A White Woman's face. Door slam.

Each door progressively slammed harder and harder.

It is now late afternoon.

Tituss valiantly trudges up yet another set of front steps to a front door. He rings the doorbell and waits.

The door opens but Tituss sees no one. He is confused. Finally he looks down and sees a mixed-race 6-year-old Girl through the screen door. She smiles at him. Tituss smiles

(CONTINUED)

back and shows her his wooden Box. Then the Little Girl's Mother (White) shows up: she is on her cell phone. She sees Tituss and starts to wave him off and tell him No but the Little Girl tugs on her Mother's shirt and as the Mother moves to close the door the Little Girl vehemently won't allow her Mother to do so. The Little Girl does not want Tituss to go. The Mother, while still on the phone, looks Tituss over, sizes him up and decides he is harmless. The Little Girl opens the screen door and the Mother (not really caring) waves that it is okay for Tituss to come inside. Tituss is overjoyed and relieved. He enters through the front door as the Little Girl holds the screen door open for him.

#### **INT. LIVING ROOM**

The Little Girl sits on a living room couch. She looks across at something.

Tituss, seated on another living room couch across from the Little Girl, gives her a smile back.

The Little Girl looks at the wooden Box still in Tituss's hands.

Tituss decides to put his Box down on the coffee table between them.

Wide shot of the room: we see each of them on a couch and between them on the coffee table is the small wooden Box.

The Mother, still on the phone, stands in the space between the living room and dining room, jabbering away and keeping an eye on Tituss and her Daughter.

Tituss and the Little Girl look at each other.

Tituss leans forward and slowly his hands move to the small wooden Box.

The Box faces the Little Girl. Before Tituss opens the lid he looks to the Little Girl.

Her face displays excitement and wonder at what might be. The Little Girl leans forward.

Tituss slowly opens the Box.

A Song plays: it is an upbeat Doo-wop-type number: think Gnarl's Barkley or Bruno Mars. (This is an original song and it is sung by Tituss) But the song starts out slowly with the opening chords and verse.

Close up: Tituss's face.

(CONTINUED)

Close up: the Little Girl's face.

Close up: Tituss's eyes - he smiles.

Close up: the Little Girl's eyes - she smiles.

Tituss closes the Box. The Song cuts out.

The Mother is not paying attention, she remains glued to her cellphone.

Tituss and the Little Girl look at each other.

Tituss motions for her to open the Box.

The Little Girl likes this idea but she is hesitant: she slowly moves her hands to the Box. Tituss watches her.

The Little Girl looks to Tituss for reassurance.

Tituss's face displays calm.

The Little Girl slowly opens the wooden Box.

The Song returns: but now the Chorus erupts!

Tituss's eyebrows rise to the sky.

The Little Girl is blown away. She leaps up from the couch:

And now we see: Tituss's suit is now in Color: instead of a black suit he is wearing a white suit with red polkadots (his bowler too).

The Little Girl is now also in color: A bright yellow dress.

The Little Girl dances. Tituss smiles.

The Mother (still on her cellphone) is also now in color: her outfit bright blues and greens.

Wide shot: the whole room is now in Color.

The Little Girl dances to the upbeat catchy chorus. She eggs Tituss on to join her. He plays coy for a moment and then jumps up and dances too, each of them on one side of the coffee table.

Mother (still on her cellphone) turns and sees the two of them dancing.

But from her POV she: A. Hears no Music, and B. Sees no Color. All she sees is her daughter and Tituss, in Black & White, dancing around like fools to no music.

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Mother walks over and shuts the Box.

The room is now in Black and White with no Song/Music.

Mother tells Tituss to get out and points to the front door.

Tituss does not offer any argument, he stands a moment and nods his head, saying that he will go.

But the Little Girl is furious with her Mother. She is pleading, yelling at her Mother but her Mother just ignores her and stays on her cellphone.

Tituss reaches down and gathers his Box from off of the coffee table. Tituss is not angry, he is dejected.

Tituss holds his magical Box in his hands.

The Little Girl can't put up with her Mother's disinterest/obtuseness any longer and she Slaps her Mother across the face. The Mother's cellphone goes flying across the room, it skids across the hardwood floor and comes to rest in the middle of the kitchen.

Shot of Tituss's face: eyebrows raised, eyes large.

Mother is shocked. But before she can react, her Daughter's hands gently take hold of Mother's hand and guide her over to the couch.

Mother and Daughter sit.

Daughter motions with her head for Tituss to please sit back down and join them.

Tituss pauses a second, and then he walks back over and sits again.

The Daughter asks for Tituss to please put the Box back down.

Tituss places the Box on the coffee table again.

The Little Girl looks to her Mother and motions, "Go on".

Slowly Mother moves her hand towards the Box.

The Little Girl watches her Mother, waiting to see what her Mother will do.

Tituss also follows the Mother's hand.

The Mother looks to Tituss.

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Tituss's face offers calm reassurance.

Mother's hand slowly opens the Box:

A shot from inside the Box out: the Box's POV as it opens.

The Song erupts again: but this time it is the Bridge.

Close up on Mother's face: she looks to her Daughter.

Mother's POV: The Daughter is in full Color again: the bright yellow dress.

Close up on Mother's face: she looks to Tituss's face.

Mother's POV: Tituss is in full Color too: his white suit and bowler with red polkadots have returned.

Mother's face: she looks down to herself.

Mother's POV: now her clothes are once again colorful blues and greens.

The Little Girl is excited but she is waiting to see what happens with her Mother.

Tituss watches the Mother make the discovery and a small sly smiles starts to build across his face.

Mother's eyebrows start bouncing to the song.

Daughter is excited.

Tituss is intrigued.

Mother's shoulders start bouncing to the song.

Now Daughter is really excited.

Tituss gives the Mother a smiles that says, "Go for It!"

And as the Song hits its Chorus:

Mother leaps up from off the couch and starts dancing along to the Song.

The Daughter immediately follows suit and does the same.

Tituss hangs back for a second allowing the Mother & Daughter to have their moment. He watches them dancing, holding hands, to his song and he feels an incredible joy welling up in his heart: he almost lets out a few tears of joy but before he can, the Mother & Daughter motion for him to get his butt up off that couch and Dance!

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Tituss smiles, gives a little head flutter, and jumps up and boogies down too.

The three of them dance.

Then the Daughter leaps up into her Mother's arms and hugs her. Tituss takes this as his cue to exit, his work here is done, so he surreptitiously slides out of the room.

The Song slows down as it reaches its Coda.

Tituss looks back from just outside the living room and sees: the Mother hugging her daughter. The Mother's eyes are closed and she enjoys the moment holding her daughter (how many more moments like this will she have? They grow up so fast). There are tears in the Mother's eyes. The Daughter's chin is perched on her Mother's shoulder, eyes closed but with a big smile on her face.

Tituss looks back and takes a mental picture of this scene. This is why he made the Box, for times like this. Tituss is pleased and at peace, and for this one glorious moment in time, he is happy. He created something that led to this perfect scene.

The Mother opens her teary eyes and looks across the room at Tituss. No words are necessary. The Mother thanks Tituss with her eyes.

Tituss and Mother share a moment.

Tituss just smiles and tips his cap.

Tituss turns and goes to exit out the front door.

The Mother hugs her Daughter even tighter.

The Song reaches its completion and starts to fade out.

#### **EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE**

Tituss, with his back to it, shuts the front door. And immediately his Song cuts out entirely and he returns to Black & White: his black suit with black bowler. He walks down the front steps and walkway.

It is now dusk (magic hour).

Tituss walks across the sidewalk in front of the house.

He stops and looks in through the front bay window:

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The outside of the House remains in Black & White but inside, in full Color, the Mother & Daughter dance with each other with wild innocent fun abandon. We hear Tituss's Song (started over from the beginning) faintly playing from inside the house.

Mother and Daughter dance.

Tituss adjusts his black bowler so it sits atop his head just right, he buttons up his suitjacket buttons, and then, looking straight ahead at the camera, he smacks his hands together:

Blackout.

**CODA.**

Credits roll.

At the same time: on a small screen (split screen):

Tituss is back in his woodworking studio hard at it again, crafting another small wooden Box.

He wipes his sweaty brow with his shirtsleeve and gives a look that says "Here we go again" (but in a good way).

The small screen fades out.

Credits roll.

Blackout.