

MOVIE OF THE WEEK

written & directed
by

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Last draft

1. **CHANNEL ONE (INTRO)**

INT. THE LISTENER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A dimly lit room. On a wooden table, a VHS TAPE sits, its label reading "MOVIE OF THE WEEK."

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP of the VHS TAPE being pushed into a VCR by THE LISTENER.

THE NARRATOR (V.O)

The audio for The Channel One intro was taken from a VHS tape I bought from a second hand store. Its a 3 hour long Twilight Zone marathon recorded off of KTLA 5 in 1988. There was something insanely comforting about watching old commercials, something bizarre and harmless about what they were selling. No option to buy...Hell, in most cases the stores didn't even exist in this day and age. I became transfixed and wanted to have a starting point for THE LISTENER to embark from.

CUT TO:

A CRT TELEVISION SCREEN, Static fills the screen briefly. The screen changes rapidly.

CHANNEL 1: A TOOTHPASTE AD

CHANNEL 2: A glitzy commercial. A MODEL wears a luxurious MINK COAT, turning and showing it off.

CHANNEL 3: Explosions, soldiers running, gunfire. WAR IMAGES.

CHANNEL 4: A GAME SHOW

CUT TO:

2. **LIMBO**

EXT. THE UNIVERSE

A vast expanse of space. Stars, galaxies, nebulae. We see fleeting images of the past and future, manifestations fear and televised love.

SFX: The grinding sounds of the universe merge with a distant piano playing. Slowly, a dark stage materializes. A lone microphone stands in the center, illuminated by a single spotlight. Floating beside it is the ghost of DAVID BOWIE.

THE NARRATOR (V.O)

The music of Limbo was originally created during the peak of isolation in 2020. It was part of an experimental visual album produced in social isolation by 30 musicians & filmmakers over 30 days, titled 'a home unfamiliar'.

A brief glimpse of the visual album plays: (<https://youtu.be/hT6WoqEdXtk>)

THE NARRATOR (V.O., CONT'D)

Later, this recording was presented to our assembled band and was recorded in a single day, mirroring the original demo's process. The sonics of the tune are intended to introduce you to the world of the album. Rich synths and thick crunchy noises introduce the listener to the themes of the album itself: The fear of personal plateaus and the realization that many things in life can easily linger in between. Is this it?...or is this another passing phase?

3. **EVERGREEN**

Int. THE CHARACTER'S FAMILY HOME - DAY

A figure, THE CHARACTER, sleeps peacefully in bed. THE BUBBLE remains in tact, sickness unnoticed, poison coursing sweetly through their veins.

THE CHARACTER hits the snooze button, smiling, savoring the extra minutes.

THE CHARACTER tripping and falling down a short flight of stairs, glancing around to see if anyone saw, relief flooding their face when they realize they're alone.

Outside THE CHARACTER makes brief, meaningful eye contact with a stranger.

THE NARRATOR (V.O.)

Evergreen came bubbling up on an early morning in 2021, I played the demo of it on a slightly out of tune children classical guitar. the tune came out as a song about the lures of life. it is the call of the void. Also the constant urge I have to just be left alone in my daily fantasies or pleasures.

You see, my greatest moments in life tend to be fleeting at best. Sleeping in an extra three minutes, falling down a small flight of stairs while no one is watching and escaping unscathed, a shared glance, blah blah blah. The way of the world crushes these little moments down into a fine powder and sweeps them away into the corners of our minds. "Reality" comes rushing in.

I say these petty things truly define me better than any polished story arc of my own design. If this isn't love forever, at least I know it's love for the moment. If I am a fool, then let my stupid paradise know no boundaries.

Let me rest, yeah let me be, overgrown and evergreen. Please don't catch me if I fall.

The scene transitions to a scene from Disney's ill received animated musical Oliver and Company. An animated chihuahua, TITO, smokes a cigar on a lavish couch.

TITO

If this is torture, chain me to the wall.

4. **READY OR NOT (FT. SIERRA FERRELL)**

MONTAGE:

A series of snapshots: THE CHARACTER's life in a loop – parties, family gatherings, funerals. It's a routine that seems never-ending. But as time progresses, there's a sense of isolation growing in THE CHARACTER. This culminates in a grand TOWN DANCE where, despite the bustling crowd, THE CHARACTER is utterly alone, fading into the background.

THE NARRATOR (V.O.)

This song was written in the mountains with my bandmate CAMERON NEAL within the first few months of post pandemic touring. It started initially as a quiet ballad about a the passing of time. Eventually we brought it to the band and it began to change even more! It kept transforming and we began to imagine it in different forms, power ballad, 60s sunshine acid trip, etc.

In the back of my mind I was always curious what it would sound like in the style of a fully produced 80s pop duet, and upon talking to Cameron we both agreed that our recent tour mate SIERRA FERRELL would knock it out of the park.

As luck would have it Sierra appeared in Texas for a weekend and dropped me a line.

A Floating telephone rings twice before its picked up by THE NARRATOR who's face is obscured by shadow.

THE NARRATOR

Hello?

The screen splits revealing rising country musical superstar SIERRA FERRELL

SIERRA FERRELL

Heyyyy! I heard your song on the airplane!
Im coming to Austin for 24 hours!

THE NARRATOR

Oh shit! Want to record a song?

SIERRA FERRELL
Shiiiiiiiiieeeeeeeetyea!

SIERRA FERRELL disappears in a cloud of GLITTER and WEED SMOKE.

THE NARRATOR (V.O.)
I picked her up in my truck, we had a beer,
I showed her the song and she recorded her
part on the first take. And just like it had
always been, there it was.
Just as I had hoped and better than I had
imagined. Ready or not has quickly become
my all-consuming way of life.

5. **CHANNEL FIVE**

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A dimly lit room. On a CRT TELEVISION SCREEN, static fills the screen. A commercial break shatters the ambiance of THE LISTENER before giving a preview of the chaos to come.

THE LISTENER (PROBABLY)
Fucking commercials.

6. **LOWLIFE**

INT. FAST SHITTY CAR - NIGHT

Inside a FAST SHITTY CAR, city lights whiz past. THE CHARACTER grips the wheel, his eyes bloodshot, alcohol on his breath. THE CHARACTER speeds away from the TOWN DANCE, the radio plays faintly in the background, but the weight of THE CHARACTER's thoughts drown out the music. They smile with an odd sense of satisfaction, embracing the feeling of hitting rock bottom as the gas pedal hits the floor.

CUT TO:

FLASH FORWARD:

INT - HIGH TECH JAPANESE RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

FUTURE CHARACTER speaks to a PRODUCER 20 years in the future, reminiscing about "Lowlife."

FUTURE CHARACTER

Lowlife... It's an old tune of mine. Been searching for its rightful place for years. And when we were figuring out the album's pace, it seemed just right to add that jolt of energy.

PRODUCER

It's got a unique *vibe*. What inspired it?

FUTURE CHARACTER (pausing, reflecting)
It began as a dirtbag love anthem. But as the lyrics evolved, it became more... personal. It's about my troubled love for this state, this nation.

PRODUCER

How so?

FUTURE CHARACTER

This place, man... It's a disheartening shithole. But it's my disheartening shithole. And hell, I might just be the perfect shit for this hole.

PRODUCER (chuckling)

You know what they say, If the shoe shits...

FUTURE CHARACTER (smirking)

Speaking of shit, wanna know how we captured its essence? We tied microphones to birds and chased them through a field.

PRODUCER (laughing)

Only you would come up with something like that you crazy son of a shit!

FUTURE CHARACTER

Shiiiiiiiiiiiiit.

PRODUCER

So what inspired all of this? Why so low!?

FUTURE CHARACTER
Well...there was this TOWN DANCE.

7. **BIG IN THE WORLD**

Int. AFTERMATH OF THE TOWN DANCE - NIGHT

Amid the remnants of celebration, THE CHARACTER wanders. There's a dawning realization: THE CHARACTER is a small fish in an even smaller pond. This moment becomes a crossroad. THE CHARACTER begins to take large pulls off of a BOTTLE OF ALCOHOL.

THE NARRATOR (V.O.)

I started writing BIG IN THE WORLD mid 2020 while asking myself what I wanted from my future and present as a person and a musician.

Cities were on fire and ideologies were being dragged through the streets, our president was openly mocking everything I knew up to that point and the ironies turned into fear and back into comedy on an hourly basis.

The NARRATOR looks at the same CRT TELEVISION that THE LISTENER looked into in the opening credits, protests erupt in flames, sickness runs rampant. Many dead.

THE NARRATOR (V.O., CONT'D)

I considered buying a gun, I considered anti violence. I longed to leave all possessions while worrying simultaneously that I should be hoarding grains and water.

I pondered escape and looked at every way of buying in or selling out that I could muster.

I thought a lot about the repercussions of all the decisions I had made up to that point and wondered if I really wanted to change or just be perceived as making it "Big".

The NARRATOR paces around his CASTLE in a RED BATHROBE

THE NARRATOR (V.O.,CONT'D)

I started singing the chorus to myself and wrote the title down on a sheet of paper. That night I took the tune over to my friend DAN CREAMER'S house and in his back yard we fleshed out this semi dystopian/hopeful melody.

THE NARRATOR and DAN CREAMER sit on a low garden wall scribbling lyrics and giggling. As the camera turns around them the garden wall rises and turns into a massive amphitheater filled with cheering people. Their street clothes are replaced by glittering tuxedo jackets. They are joined by the other members of the band, PATRICK O'CONNOR, TAYLOR CRAFT, CAMERON NEAL, and MATT PENCE.

THE NARRATOR (V.O.,CONT'D)

I don't think that I either of us would imagine that 3 years later we would be in a 6 piece band together asking this question to audiences on a nightly basis.

THE CHARACTER (Under Their Breath)

Another way I think about this tune is by imagining as an evil Disney villain's main theme song....like, I just want to take over the world does that make me such a bad guy?

THE CHARACTER, transforms into a cartoon Disney villain, singing atop a mountain, their voice echoing, challenging the world below. We PUSH IN on the world below and focus on a small bar amongst the wreckage.

NARRATOR (V.O.,CONT'D)

I was a big fan of Drunk History since its beginnings and finally met DEREK WATERS at a friends wedding reception. We immediately bonded over our mutual love for obscure amusement park lore. When I needed someone to help me capture the tone for the BIG IN THE WORLD I knew who to call. I flew out to LA after a long tour and we spent a full day talking about MOVIE OF THE WEEK as a full concept. Each song occupying its own

unique space in the 90s-2000s consumer world
we both grew up in.

A transition to a film set: DEREK WATERS directs the crew as they set up a kitchen scene. The juxtaposition of ordinary and toxic becomes evident as glue is molded to look like cheese, oil is glossed over to mimic syrup.

NARRATOR (V.O., CONT'D)

The concept of a person slaving over food photography for a commercial really tickled us. The fact that people get paid to turn mundane and poisonous things into delicious looking food felt like a fitting analogy to this modern life.

Derek put together a great team and shot this video in his kitchen in a day.

CUT TO:

THE CHARACTER standing outside the TOWN DANCE visibly intoxicated, angry at the world. THE CHARACTER's eyes drift around lazily before finally landing on the FAST SHITTY CAR. THE CHARACTER smirks.

8. **PLAY IT WHERE IT LIES**

EXT. THE HEAVENS - NIGHT

The vast expanse of the cosmos stretches out. THE FATES, ethereal beings, observe from above. Below, THE CHARACTER crashes the FAST SHITTY CAR into a large DECORATIVE ROCK which sends it airborne. The FAST SHITTY CAR finally plants itself in a gigantic billboard, setting it ablaze in the process. Flames crackle and dance, their menacing glow growing ever closer to THE CHARACTER. The heat intensifies, and the smoke swirls around them. From the vast expanse of the night sky, THE FATES, ethereal beings of grace, begin to sing. Their voices soft, melancholic, and haunting.

As they sing, tears of THE FATES cascade from the heavens, turning into rain. The downpour intensifies, quelling the flames, producing clouds of steam. The dark night begins to clear, revealing a radiant moon that casts a soft glow upon the wet, smoldering scene.

Police sirens wail in the distance. Red and blue lights approach, painting the scene in their hues. THE CHARACTER, drenched and overwhelmed, looks up, seeking answers from the heavens. The half burned billboard becomes visible through the steam. Large hand painted words reflect in THE CHARACTERS eyes.

The sign reads: VISIT CENTURY CITY: THE FUTURE IS NOW!

The message is understood.

Suddenly, lulled by exhaustion, their eyelids become heavy, and they drift into a deep sleep.

THE NARRATOR (V.O)

I recorded this song in my house.

9. **PLAYING ALONG**

EXT. TOWN JAIL - DAY

THE CHARACTER is released from from a cell at the TOWN JAIL.

THE NARRATOR(V.O.)

We recorded all these songs in a unique way.

When we started making the music for MOVIE OF THE WEEK, we started with broad thematic elements as opposed to traditional demos.

We developed THE CHARACTER and started putting him in scenarios while thinking about the sounds around them. To stay as fluid and improvisational as possible, I decided to run as many live microphones as we could all day long so we could capture everything...stupid conversations and absent-minded jams alike.

Later, I went through an extensively long editing process that more closely resembled assembling footage for a documentary than making an album.

THE CHARACTER, cool as a cucumber retrieves their clothing and possessions from a guard. As The GUARD looks on in disbelief THE CHARACTER swiftly rips the sleeves off of their shirt and throws their ID CARD in a trash bin.

THE NARRATOR (V.O., CONT'D)

PLAYING ALONG was discovered somewhere in the middle section of the hundreds of hours of recordings we had created. When I finally showed the song to the other band members who were playing on the recording, no one had any memory of creating the song.

Eventually I invited my friend and long-time collaborator DAVID RAMIREZ over to my house to listen to some of the unfinished music. He got super excited and suggest we knock out the lyrics, so then and there we recorded the rest of PLAYING ALONG in under an hour. If you listen closely, you can hear him laughing hysterically before the first big guitar break.

THE CHARACTER walks down a LONG HALL towards an EXIT SIGN. Suddenly The laugh of DAVID RAMIREZ echos through in the air. THE CHARACTER stops and begins to react to the sound, but is unsure whether it is a real sound or a figment.

NARRATOR (V.O., CONT'D)

David and I considered PLAYING ALONG to be the theme of THE CHARACTER reaching maximum apathy in a small (minded) town.

DARK CHARACTER

Call me DARK CHARACTER.

NARRATOR (V.O. CONT'D)

Sorry. DARK CHARACTER.

DARK CHARACTER

Fuckyeah.

10. CENTURY CITY

EXT. DARK CHARACTER'S FAMILY HOME - DAY

The atmosphere is dull and lifeless. The house stands aged and worn. But amidst this dreariness, there emerges a spark. It is DARK CHARACTER, dressed in new augmented clothes who starts to dance and sing. AS DARK CHARACTER moves the surroundings transform. The home turns opulent, the street lights up, and futuristic cars zoom past. Everything touched turns to gold.

They see themselves in even newer, shimmering clothes, grasping every opportunity.

THE NARRATOR (V.O)

I lived in LA for a long stretch of my early 20s and always thought that CENTURY CITY sounded so mysterious and sleek. It gave heavy power suit vibes. Electric sidewalk vibes.

DARK CHARACTER

Maybe that's where the robot butler from the 4th Rocky movie lives.

THE NARRATOR (V.O., CONT'D)

Yeah, Maybe so.

Due to my chosen path of being an actor I only ever visited CENTURY CITY to have my dreams crushed in cold soulless office buildings.

DARK CHARACTER

What about that one time you went on that super sketchy trip with your old neighbor to buy terrible cocaine from a frat party?

THE NARRATOR (V.O.)

Not relevant. ANYWAYS...CENTURY CITY always looked closed, or like the REAL party had just ended, or like the future was coming...soon.

In doing research about the city for the song I really loved the fact that they destroyed the old fox movie lot to pave way for the city of the future.

"A city within a city" was the catch phrase...A PARKING LOT INSIDE A PARKING LOT.

DARK CHARACTER

Imagine a farmhand from Iowa in the 70s, seeing "Century City" on a map, dreaming big, and then landing there only to find...

THE NARRATOR (V.O)

Im pretty sure this is what you are about to do.

DARK CHARACTER

Not relevant.

THE NARRATOR(V.O.)

Anyways...In a bigger way Century City is the place we could have had. The place we could still have. Our cultural aspirational goal of the glistening metropolis where the future is now!

DARK CHARACTER

Basically, the Barbie movie nailed it.

THE NARRATOR(V.O.)

Yeah, pretty much. How topical.

DARK CHARACTER

Thanks.

THE NARRATOR(V.O.)

The music video for this song was created in the most futuristic way I could find. Half of it is live footage shot during one of our tour rehearsals by my friends DEREK BACK and TREVOR SMITH.

DEREK BECK and TREVOR SMITH stand on a film set and wave at the camera. They are the best of friends.

NARRATOR(V.O.,CONT'D)

And the other half is digitally rendered AI imagery generated and edited by my long time friend and futurist ward JASON 71.

JASON 71 stands in a neon editing bay and waves at the camera. He is a very well adjusted 1930s movie vampire complete with red cape.

NARRATOR(V.O.,CONT'D)

This combination, this opposing dialog between analog and digital is something that I have always fought and worked with. It seems to be a huge part of our knee jerk reactions and existential terror of growing older. Of changing.

The goal of the video was to show CENTURY CITY in the way it exists in my imagination. In all of it's blurry, futuristic, drug addled glory.

DARK CHARACTER

Blurring the lines between real and fake.

DARK CHARACTER turns and looks at their old home as dirty family members cry and beg silently for DARK CHARACTER not to go. DARK CHARACTER looks clean through them into the land beyond, and with a nod of the head is gone in an instant.

11. WAS HERE

EXT. CENTURY CITY - DAY

The city skyline looms ahead, illuminated and daunting. DARK CHARACTER arrives, weary but determined, and is immediately confronted by scenes of chaos and disorder. DARK CHARACTER's gaze darts around, taking in the new sights yet everything is all too familiar... Flashbacks of their old home flicker briefly - but everything here seems distorted, exaggerated.

DARK CHARACTER (whispering to themselves)
Is this just a mirror of what once was? Was
it all a lie?

Before DARK CHARACTER can ponder further, the dazzling façade of CENTURY CITY ARMS catches their eye. A bright NEON SIGN blinks "ROOMS FOR RENT."

THE NARRATOR (V.O.)

The music of WAS HERE was written in the mountains on a silly stereotypical musician vision quest: Fresh out of the lockdown, directly after our first bout of shows I was still a little blindsided by the whole prospect of seeing so many people and just being cool with having shows/not being dead. A jarring and overwhelming time.

I sought refuge in an old classic routine.

I drove to New Mexico (where in some ways I started my musical journey 20 years ago) and tried to get back to square one.

My mission: find a cassette 4 track, locate a guitar, and play songs from the heart. This led me on a wild quest all over New Mexico (because a 4 track is not easy to find) where I met new friends, found a guitar, had it stolen from my car, found it again and finally made my way up to a mountain retreat where I set my studio up next to a small creek.

This melody was the first song I ever played with my magical stolen guitar.

It was the same guitar that wrote READY OR NOT...it was all on the same trip.

Later in the studio we made a full band version and I started to write lyrics over it while Roe v Wade was overturned. My heart was really broken up by the cold cruelty and closed mindedness of American lawmakers. It all felt like a scam.

It all feels like a scam.

DARK CHARACTER enters their new apartment only to find it is uncannily similar to their old family home. Everything appears luxurious, but the atmosphere is sterile. The neighbors pass by without a hint of emotion on their faces – no smiles, just a lingering sadness.

Cement structures dominate every view from the windows. The illusion of happiness masks a growing discomfort.

THE NARRATOR (V.0, CONT'D)

A homeless illegal immigrant named TONY used to help my mom by randomly appearing and cleaning our house to make money for his family's survival.

There was a little chalkboard on our back porch and when he was done he would write "TONY WAS HERE."

One day Tony mysteriously disappeared, but the message stayed.

Over time someone accidentally brushed against the chalkboard erasing his name and leaving only "WAS HERE."

DARK CHARACTER

This will happen to us all.

12. **HEARTSTARTER**

EXT. CENTURY CITY - GLITTERING ARCADES - DAY

The sun casts shimmering reflections off of skyscrapers. People move hurriedly, consumed by the city's allure. DARK CHARACTER, looking out of place, walks amidst the glitz, searching for something intangible.

EXT. CENTURY CITY - MAIN STREET - DAY

The hustle and bustle intensify. THE CHARACTER hesitates for a moment, then makes a determined turn, heading down a hidden alleyway.

EXT. CENTURY CITY SLUMS - ALLEYWAY - DAY

As the glitter fades, the reality of CENTURY CITY emerges. Makeshift homes, children playing with worn-out toys, people trying to make ends meet. DARK CHARACTER's eyes scan the surroundings. These are THE DOWNCAST, THE REVILED. Faces that mirror those of his own family and friends. Faces that bear stories of hardships and dreams unfulfilled. They wash their hands on the shores of THE LAKE OF TECHNOLOGY.

THE CHARACTER

(whispering to themselves)

This... this feels like home.

A lone tear trickles down THE CHARACTER's face, a raw moment of realization and comfort.

CUT TO:

FLASH FORWARD:

INT. HIGH TECH JAPANESE RECORDING STUDIO - NIGHT

In a dimly lit room, humans collaborate with robots. Instruments intertwine with digital notes, creating a symphony.

FUTURE CHARACTER

Looking back at my time spent in CENTURY CITY it wasn't just about finding the songs. It was about discovering where my humanity met technology, where hearts met circuits... in perfect harmony. it was the beginning of something new for me. But at the time it felt like nothing short of death.

13. HEARTSTOPPER

INT. CENTURY CITY ARMS - NIGHT

The atmosphere is heavy, the weight of hopelessness hanging in the air. Dimmed lights cast elongated shadows on the walls. DARK CHARACTER, looking defeated, is centered in the room. Their eyes are a mix of despair and acceptance, coming to terms with a truth they cannot escape. THE NARRATOR emerges from the shadows, their silhouette menacing yet oddly comforting. They move towards DARK CHARACTER, their intentions unclear but their approach inevitable.

DARK CHARACTER
(whispering, tears forming)
There's no past, no future... only this moment.

The two draw closer until they meld, becoming one entity. The union is both tragic and beautiful. Suddenly, the merged form collapses, lifeless. Silence. The heart of the city, the heart of the character, has stopped.

CUT TO:

INT - HIGH TECH JAPANESE RECORDING STUDIO - NIGHT (FLASH FORWARD)
Musicians are lost in the music, playing with a fervor. Instruments and voices merge in an endless loop, enveloping the room in an intense trance. FUTURE CHARACTER looks on.

THE NARRATOR (V.O)
This song was written as the love song between two protagonists. When we recorded it we went into a trance and played it on a loop for 15 minutes, I cut from that 15 minutes this selection.

Heartstopper is a real bummer, but isn't it all sometimes?

The pain is real, the world is very much dying, there are things we can do about it, people are being awful, I'm scared, I'm being awful, the world is rebuilding itself, there is nothing we can do, I'm unafraid, I'm being amazing! Burn it down.

I am, at times so so so very tired.

Kiss kiss.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END

