

T H E D R I V E I N

FEATURE TREATMENT



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The Drive In

Written by Andrea Vestrand



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In the short version of "The Drive In", the audience is introduced to the characters Roger and Mary. Through their interaction at the abandoned Drive In Movie Theatre, we learn that Roger is a monster not quite alive but not quite dead and that somewhere along the line of their past history, he and Mary were lovers.

Their love is beyond a normal earthly love but the magic of souls joined together through out the history of time to work through their karmic issues and become stronger in each life. These two lovers are the definition of soul-mates but something happened to Roger which makes this love between them impossible to share in this lifetime.

Although only 3 pages, this short film stands alone; allowing the audience to feel the emotion of the two characters and their interaction both through the subtleties of acting and by the camera movement and lens use. This is a very intimate short film and the shots will be as long and as lingering as the love between Roger and Mary. I anticipate the final product being about 5 minutes long with a lot of use of the visual aspects to further propel the story and the emotion forward.

What the feature version will expand upon is this relationship and the events that caused Human version of Roger to become the shadowy Monster version of Roger. Unlike Zombies, Roger is technically alive. Unlike Vampires, Roger is actually very much dead. Stuck between these two worlds of life and death, it is the concept of

Roger's soul that keeps him tied to his earthly physical form and therefore tied to Mary, his soul-mate.

Roger's accidental change occurred through the process of teleportation. Why teleportation? This is a process that has taken great leaps and advancements in the scientific community during the months of June-August, 2013, when we had successfully teleported small nano-particles across great distances. Now, in 2020, we can teleport photons from space to earth! What makes for great science fiction is the essence of truth and possibility in our world. Being able to demonstrate how to teleport atoms and photons more than just a fraction of an inch, like in 2013, means that the mind can allow the suspension of disbelief to occur with the concept of teleporting a human being. So far this is way far down the road of possibility and the science community isn't even sure if human teleportation is actually an achievable goal. But if it was -- it would bring about a slew of moral issues. I'd like to focus on two of these issues but first, let's review the basic concept of teleportation.

The process of teleportation occurs like so: A atom/object (or for my story, a person) is placed into a machine that makes a "copy" of the atom/object and that copy is sent as data to a receiving machine for "printing". It's essentially a 3-dimensional fax machine, sending the electronic "signal" of the order and arrangement of the atom(s) in the object/person to the receiver for printing. The second part of this process is destroying the original to prevent having two physical entities of the same atom/object/person.

The two moral questions this brings up that I would like to explore in the feature are:

1. What happens when a person is copied over and over and over again? My assumption is that they start to degrade. Their flesh is thin and wilted. Their body is frail and weak. They are thinning towards transparency as they teleport more and more. They are a muddied, shadowy version of themselves and appears to move like a classic horror monster/character (Nosferatu, Dracula, Frankenstein, etc).

2. What happens to the soul or essence of a human being if they are a copy of themselves? Does the soul-self transfer? If not, then why does Mary still feel Roger's presence? If not, then why does Roger still feel love for Mary? If so, then what type of personality is formed as the soul wears thin? Is Roger a monster on the inside as well as the outside?

As far as the plot is concerned, I have only begun working out the details of the events of Roger's journey from Human to Monster. The options I'm exploring are fun and exciting like science fiction can be but dark and intellectual as topics of morality, like, the idea of soul or essence, and what it means to be human typically are. I can say that there are several movies that have become a point of reference for me, like the obvious "The Fly", "Frankenstein", "Dracula", "Nosferatu" but also films like "The Watchmen" and the Dr. Manhattan character. I want the Monster of Roger to also be an intelligent and enlightened human being that takes a wrong turn along the lines of technical advancements in search for spiritual meaning. I see Roger's character as being very charismatic in his human form. A energetic, positive and respected member of society. But what happens after the accident becomes a dark exploration of the idea of what is the self and what makes us not only human but also alive.

"The Drive In" at its core is a love story. A tragedy. But it is also a beautifully visual and visceral exploration of the loss of innocence and the true meaning of life.

