

The Passengers

Genre

Romantic Comedy, Drama, Animation

Logline

A lonely soul, introverted, an engineer has lived a life with a tragic collision, and while driving down California's greatest scenic highway, he imagines joy as he rockets towards San Diego fantasizing a new life as he collides into summer.

Theme

The story of friendship, love and finding humaneness in our connected world. The cliché "stop and smell the roses" is used to establish deeper meaning.

POV

The story is told through the voices of Rocket and Joy, the characters of his imagination.

The Pitch

The Elevator

A mere story of Tim, a thirty-five-year-old man, driving alone down the California Pacific Coast Highway. While alone in his car with his dreams, his thoughts. Tim is feeling closed in, locked and cannot move; he's physically sitting in his vehicle without a destination and going "where the wind blows."

While in his vehicle he reminisces and replays his life in a fun fictional way, his way of coping with his reality. A way for him to transform his character, and live his life, free of the past in the hope that he can find himself and love again. He finds love in his original characters Joy, Rocket, and Summer.

► It's a blend of the movies "Her," "Toy Story," "Midnight in Paris," "The Love Bug" and the "Little Prince" - "The Passengers" a loving story that pulls at your heart strings.

The Story's

The 'C' Story - Reality

Tim has left San Francisco behind him; he drives to leave the past behind him. His past full of love but haunted by the death of his thirty-year-old wife and his five-year-old son, an accident five years earlier that would have been avoided if the driver was not distracted by technology.

This incident has left Tim paralyzed and distant from the world; he drives down the coast to find himself again. As he drives down the highway, he wonders how women could love him? Would he be able to love? Would he depress her to death? As he drives, he imagines a new world, a fantasy world that brings him a bit closer to how Tim could function, how he could perhaps love, again. It's his way of coping and moving on with his life.

That fantasy world drives out these imaginary characters; Joy, Rocket, and Summer.

The Fantasy World

The Fantasy World Tim imagines two cars, two operating systems, two humans, four unique personalities and one computer virus tampering with the social technology norms of a connected world.

The ‘A’ Fantasy Story

Summer is on her way from San Diego to San Francisco on a thirty day vacation that she has planned for the past year. She has purchased the latest in self-driving car technology with Big Ben Technologies (BBT) latest Operating System Software installed. Her car fitted with Joy, a depressed Operating System that has been altered by the computer virus run amok at BBT. All she wants is a fun vacation, but Joy’s depressing attitude and Summer’s law firm continue to interrupting her trip.

The ‘B’ Fantasy Story

The imaginary Tim from San Francisco is a depressed engineer after his dog ‘Byte’ passed away also to being discharged from BBT his employer. Like Summer he too has purchased the latest in self-driving car technology, and his car altered with a new personality, Rocket. All Tim wants to do is die, he feels he’s a detriment to society and has no reason to continue living in a world so disconnected from reality. However, Rocket will not allow it and locks Tim in his car, kidnaps this mortal suicidal soul and proceeds down Highway One on a route without a destination.

The Story (One Pager)**Setup**

These four characters have the story structure until the midpoint of the screenplay to work out their differences and transform their way of thinking.

- ▶ Summer enlightens Joy during the drive from San Diego to Venice Beach with healthy reasons to enjoy life and to become an active woman.
- ▶ While Rocket convinces Tim to enjoy life and get out of this depressed state; look at the joy you have brought into the world, your accomplishments. Rocket changes Tim to look at life differently and provides insights into Tim’s introverted ways boosting his ego, his voice as they drive from San Francisco to Venice Beach.

The Midpoint Fantasy Conflict

After spending the day with Tim, Rocket and enjoying Venice Beach and surrounding areas Summer, Joy, Tim, and Rocket end the day with July 4th fireworks.

However, the very next day BBT restores many of the computer systems, and as a result, Summer finds out who Tim is. The audience as well is brought into Tim’s fantastic imaginary back story as Technology restores.

Tim is the engineer of BBT; he’s the soul responsible for the virus deployed at BBT. The very company that Summer’s firm represents and has been bugging her, the entire ride up the West Coast. She is stunned and feels ashamed of herself falling for (what she thinks) is a devious trick, now making her unable to defend BBT having to recuse herself. She’s taken back at how he could leave such an important detail from his life and expect her to understand.

Reality (Hits Hard)

The midpoint the point in the story where fantasy meets reality - Tim cannot see how he can love again, his wife and son were his worlds. He struggles to understand how to release himself from the past. He falls deeper into his fantasy world wanting to destroy this fantasy.

The Climax

Summer is devastated and angry at Tim, she continues towards Santa Cruz, and during the drive, Joy is restored to the generic ‘Siri equivalent’ and Summer is upset deeply. She has bonded to Joy - and as she reaches Santa Cruz frazzled that her friend is gone, and still dealing with the thought of Tim. Her new car is broken into and stolen - and taken on a joy ride up the coast.

While Tim is also dealing with his situation, BBT has found him and has summoned the Police. The car pursuit starts, with many car sequences as Rocket races down the coast to save Tim, only to be caught and arrested. All the while Summer’s car runs down Highway One (with Siri equivalent) the driver unable to make the bend and swerves off a cliff.

Tim’s fantasy has come to a dramatic finish while in reality, Tim is closer to reaching sunny San Diego where he stops for a bite to eat, while he finishes his day dreaming and imagines how his fantasy story will end or backup and restore.

The Back Story

Big Ben Technologies (BBT)

This newest technology company has come from nowhere taking over the majority of social networking, artificial intelligence, smart phones, virtual reality headsets and cloud based technology.

However, their claim to fame came from artificial intelligence. Their ability to customize artificial intelligence to the customer has swayed the general public. They have a strong foot hold in this market - which inevitable the software base was installed in many existing and new technologies, strengthening the company and displacing many powerful technology companies. They had a strong world wide work force and built their main headquarters in San Francisco. BBT is known for the catch phrase “it’s just a matter of time.”

It’s worth mentioning that their implementation and replacement of the generic Apple (Siri) was the game changer. Each programmer is assigned a customer and using the characteristics from data gathered; each client to be programmed a corresponding Operating System - one that knows your nuisances, your personality and adapts and changes as you do. It is a supportive Operating System and is unique to you and only you.

Tim and Summer have both purchased the latest technology in transportation - the newest self-driving car. A unique feature of this car is the car's Operating System (OS) tailored to the characteristics of the cars owners. Also, it's the first full self-driving car guaranteed. Driving one's car is no longer optional.

BBT have one of the worst days in tech history dealing with a virus that has stopped many of their public and corporate systems. They have found suspicion that their lead engineer (Tim) has caused the virus but need time to reverse the impact and damage, in which they accomplish a full restore July 5th providing Tim ample time to hide.

Characters

Two cars, Two Operating Systems

The Operating Systems Rocket and Joy are in conflicting personalities. Rocket is enjoying life with Joy overly depressed with her inability to explore her inner self. Joy reluctantly drives Summer while Rocket is doing what he does best, moving fast!

Two Humans

The same Joy situation rings true with Tim feeling sad in his life, betrayed and indirectly running away from his problems. With Summer a direct opposite loving life, her position in life and traveling a trip she's ecstatic to take. Summer is like sunshine a ray of light enlightening Joy.

Four Unique Personalities

These four unknowingly are on a collision course that will have them double booked on the most traveled day of the year; July 4th Independence Day. However, on this day they will find their independence and finally realize what is missing in each of their unique personalities.

Tim McCleod (Fantasy)

Antagonist

Tim is an overworked and depressed computer engineer. He has recently lost his dog, his best friend an accident from a teenager driving and texting at the same time. Tim's dog 'Byte' was a devastating blow to him, rethinking his career and his accomplishments as a proliferation of humanity losing connectivity to each other, humaneness being lost. With this skepticism for life, he builds a computer virus and prepares to arm it into the technologies of his employer, BBT.

Tim McCleod has caused one the worst technology disasters in the world - his name is being transformed into the urban legend and used symbolically to reference technology glitches 'The McCloud'ed.'

Twenty-Eight Year old Tim McLeod - a University student from Oxford. He once cared about his body image but since moving to America (San Fransisco) has put on some additional body weight. He talks with a British accent, is very masculine in appearance, self-aware and a loner, with a distinct technology voice for technology. Loves using acronyms to distract his colleagues.

Dramatic Need

Tim has produced one of the biggest tech events in the World the building of a computer virus after the death of his best friend, Byte. The media attention has caused him to hide. He's embarrassed, frightened and struggling to accept his fate, his future. His need is to stay hidden - escape.

Point of View

Tim has a strong sense of pride in his work, his accomplishments. He cares deeply about education, working hard, and building technology. He's content and sees personal relationships as a distraction to accomplishing one's goals. He's a loner that lives in himself writing code, playing video games and upgrading all technology.

Attitude

He is strong, fully supports and backs his work. He doesn't take no for an answer. His need to work balances his life, he wants to continue educating himself immersing himself in books.

Change (Character Arc)

Tim will change from being in control to losing himself, clamping up and wanting to die. Feeling dejected his car Rocket will change Tim from being hidden to seeing the world, become social and understand he's missing someone in his life - a friend, lover, someone to share his life.

Summer Ray (Fantasy)

Protagonist

Summer is a corporate lawyer for the biggest Technology Firms in the West Coast. She is Twenty-eight and recently been asked to move up in the Firm, a named partner. She is brilliant, loves her work and balances life and work. She feels unfulfilled in her life but is unsure what is missing. She has no love interests, no time for a romantic relationship, no kids and works hard. She's fit, a runner and loves Yoga.

Summer wants a vacation from her job, a well-deserved vacation that she has planned for the last twelve months. Her plan is to take thirty days off and self-drive from her home town of San Diego to San Francisco and back again. She has lived in San Diego all her life and has never driven the entire coast, a dream of hers since childhood. She has purchased the newest in technology a self-driving car that has the latest Artificial Intelligence software from BBT. Summer is excited and cannot wait for the trip to start having worked so diligently and hit the high point of her career with her appointment of partner at the firm

Summer Ray has planned a vacation, her bucket list trip for the past year. She is a technology lawyer for the majority of the West Coast Technical firms - her journey continually harassed by her peers and Firm - always needing her advice.

Dramatic Need

Summer needs a vacation. In the past year, she has planned an excursion to San Francisco a drive she's wanted to do for a long time. A bucket list item - she is determined to complete this journey and has taken a month off to complete. However, her firm continually haunts her with this massive case, “the McCloud’ed” case as they call it.

Point of View

Raised from a prosperous family of lawyers - a family strong on family values, work ethics, and boundaries. She sees things as black and white and will resolve any grey areas instantly by addressing them and moving into what she perceives to be correct. She is quick witted and forms an opinion and sticks to it.

Attitude

She's delighted daily (a ray of sunshine) and loves life, loves work and has a routine daily that she follows without failure. Her diet, workouts, yoga, and running habits are all

strictly followed. Her home is impeccable, clean and well furnished overlooking the ocean.

Change (Character Arc)

Summer will find emotional and spiritual love in Tim. She will realize what she's been missing and willing to change her life - freeing herself from being overworked and a daily routine. She realizes her life is laid out, tired and realizes through interacting with Tim, Rocket, and Joy that life should have companionship.

Rocket

Protagonist

Rocket the Operating System for Tim's car. A twenty-two-year-old programmer, brilliant and fully engaged in life. He loves life, loves cars, surfing, kite-surfing, skiing, sky diving - overall a real adventures guy. Also, a brilliant software programmer and problem solver.

Dramatic Need

Rocket witnesses Tim's reaction to life events around him and feels compelled to save Tim from himself. He takes him on a drive from San Francisco to Venice Beach with a stop in Santa Cruz.

Point of View

Rocket is in control - he has a presence about him that is secure. You feel safe with Rocket even though his ideas are at times scary he brings life back into those around him.

Attitude

Loves life - He will say yes to almost everything - living life freely. It's difficult to break Rocket he's happy consistently and will be your best friend instantly.

Change (Character Arc)

Rocket is constant - his only change is his love for Joy - found at the midpoint of the story. They form a bond, a relationship and he finds empathy for Joy and cannot drive away from her.

Joy

Antagonist

Joy is a very well educated twenty-two-year-old programmer with multiple degrees. She is fluent in three languages Spanish, English, and French and hates her life. Joy is the Operating System within Summer's car.

Dramatic Need

Joy wants to be terminated, deleted removed from the system. She will eventually find joy again when meeting Rocket - her goal is just to get to the next town and shut down and recharge.

Point of View

She hates life and has a very simplistic view of the world. She sees very little regarding life and living. She cannot understand why she's missing out in life - she's confused and depressed daily.

Attitude

A poor attitude. She doesn't follow convention and makes mistakes hourly. She's continually attempting to frustrate Joy and make everyone around her miserable. She just doesn't care.

Change (Character Arc)

Joy meets Rocket, and she finds herself wanting more in life. She finds a void that was missing and begins to care about herself, her attitude and takes calculated risks and enjoys life.

"Why am I the only person that can write this?"

I had a technology background and witnessed the changes in society as the technology was embraced. We became dependent on technology to "win" against the competition. Technology changed not only our way of doing business but transformed society, and embracing technology is part of this story. However, the story also references what's bad in technology and how it isolates, depresses and we sometimes escape reality. At the same time, we connect faster with old friends, purchase goods and enjoy many new opportunities that make life easier. This story bundles all these issues and places them in a fun fictional story that only the imagination can bring to life. Also, I've lived a similar story of day dreaming and wanting changes in my life. And can relate to driving down the coast with day dreaming thoughts of life in the sun, on the beach in California - escaping reality.

"Why is it relevant now?"

We live in a connected world where technology distraction happens minute by minute. Our lives are disconnecting, and we rely on social media to connect with people. Visual content is growing as people line-up at home to binge watch the latest fictional story. This story embraces those elements as Tim drives down the highway distracted by his mind but in his imaginary world, his distraction is technology, Rocket, a self-driving car that has a mind of his own.

The story embraces many social issues we are dealing with today in society. The disconnected emotional world, the technology focused world, job losses, self-driving cars and accidents caused by technology.

"What films will it sit between on my Netflix queue?"

"Her," "Toy Story," "Midnight in Paris," "The Love Bug" and the "Little Prince." Also, "Collateral Beauty," "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," "The Way Way Back, and "About Time" and the list goes on...