

= Self Made Man (Terminator : The Sarah Connor Chronicles) =

" Self Made Man " is the 20th episode (11th of the second season) of the United States television series Terminator : The Sarah Connor Chronicles (T : TSCC) . Aired on December 1 , 2008 (2008 @-@ 12 @-@ 01) , " Self Made Man " explores Cameron 's nighttime activities of enlisting help to research a Terminator 's presence in the past , as well as John Connor 's continuing relationship with Riley Dawson .

= = Plot = =

Written by Toni Graphia , the plot of " Self Made Man " consists of two separate storylines .

While the Connors sleep , Cameron (Summer Glau) secretly visits the library and her friend , bone cancer survivor and nighttime library attendant , Eric (Billy Lush) ; it 's revealed that Cameron has been doing this regularly to improve her human disguise and infiltration capabilities . After discovering the 1920 photograph of a T @-@ 888 model Terminator (Todd Stashwick) , Cameron uses the library 's resources to deduce that it time travelled to the wrong date . The T @-@ 888 , having accidentally killed the architect of a downtown landmark (Pico Tower) crucial to its original mission of assassinating the governor of California in 2010 , it invented a new identity : 1920s Los Angeles realty magnate , Myron Stark . As Stark , the T @-@ 888 funded and designed the building itself before ensconcing itself inside a wall to wait for New Year 's Eve 2010 . Returning to the library after finding and tending to Stark , Cameron damages her relationship with Eric by revealing to him that his cancer has returned ; the following night however , Eric is missing , but Cameron is unconcerned and succeeds in wooing the new attendant with the doughnuts she had brought for Eric .

Simultaneously with Cameron 's escapades , John (Thomas Dekker) also sneaks out of the house , responding to a phone call from Riley Dawson (Leven Rambin) . Meeting her at a house party in Van Nuys , they leave after John beats up the host (Oren Dayan) for accosting Riley ? who stole his lighter . Driving to a vista overlooking Los Angeles , John and Riley discuss their relationship and supposed foster family backgrounds . The official T : TSCC blog revealed that John Connor 's fight was written knowing that he 's still dealing with posttraumatic stress disorder and having killed Margos Sarkissian earlier in the season .

= = Production = =

" Self Made Man " is the third T : TSCC episode written by Toni Graphia , whereas it was director Holly Dale 's first foray into the Terminator franchise . Graphia vetted the episode 's historical information alongside T : TSCC department heads , and History for Hire , a prop house specializing in period pieces . All of the 1920s scenes were shot on the Warner Bros. backlot , which itself was inaugurated during the same era . " Myron Stark 's " meeting Rudolph Valentino (Branden R. Morgan) at the premiere of The Sheik is the first occasion of the series referencing a real @-@ life person . The fictional Pico Tower was written at the intersection of Pico Boulevard and 3rd Street , despite the two roadways running parallel in real life . Costume designer Amanda Friedland created the flapper @-@ themed wardrobe for " Self Made Man " . Production wrapped on " Self Made Man " on October 15 , 2008 .

= = Reception = =

Reviewing the episode for IGN , Travis Fickett extolled Summer Glau 's performance , and held it up as an example of her acting ability keeping the whole series from failing . Fickett also explained that " Self Made Man " received better ratings than the preceding episodes of the series ' second season . At the website Television Without Pity (TWoP) , the staff review rated the episode a " C " , and specifically took issue with the suspension of disbelief required for Cameron 's ability to find anything and everything about the Myron Stark storyline in a closed public library ; as of January

2010 , 757 of their readers awarded it an average grade of " B + " .

Though the series never specifically explains the three dots written on the Connors ' basement wall in " Automatic for the People " , reviewers (including IGN , TWoP , and Total Sci @-@ Fi 's Owen Van Spall) attributed them to this episode 's revelation of the Terminators ' temporal triangulation ability . Van Spall and TWoP also noted the plot point of the T @-@ 888 's mission to kill the Governor of California . Stark 's assassination mission was to take place on New Year 's Eve 2010 , at which time Arnold Schwarzenegger would still be the Californian Governor (leaving office in January 2011) ; Schwarzenegger is the star of the first three Terminator films in the franchise , having premiered the role in 1984 .