

The Road Less Traveled

By

Cedric Msiza

[senoshacedric@gmail.com](mailto:senoshacedric@gmail.com)

T H E R O A D L E S S T R A V E L E D

Open on:

1 INT. WORK ROOM - UNDETERMINED 1

Dim. dusty and old looking, this might be a basement.

MOVE IN: a single table lamp rest on an ebony polished table. someone sits behind an open laptop screen, stirring. we don't know who this is yet.

A moment goes by...the laptop screen shows a blank page and a blinking cursor. a heavy sigh...

Then, the table lamp goes out. leaving the room almost dark. an empty chair swings slightly behind the table. Then someone flicks a switch

TOTAL DARKNESS

A BLACK SCREEN. voices as people chatter in the background. the sound of cutlery.

SUBTITLE-"1 DAY LATER"

FADE IN:

2 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT - 21:14 PM 2

The place is immaculate, proper and Dimly lit.

FOLLOWING: a waiter balances a tray of two glasses with his fingers...holding it up to his ear. on his way to serve a table

we hear two people conversing:

CYNTHIA (O.S)

... i like the idea. its solid. but  
you cant work with this. and also  
your characters, i feel like  
they're-how do i say this-vague,  
non human. there's nothing in here  
that makes them pop out-you know  
what i mean-they're easily  
forgettable which is the opposite  
of what you want.

the waiter arrives to a table occupied by: TYLER,late 20s'.  
and CYNTHIA,mid 20s'.

one tall glass of CHAMPAGNE for her and a glass of ORANGE JUICE for Tyler

CYNTHIA (CONT.)  
 (kindly to waiter)  
 Thanks  
 (Tyler nods at waiter)  
 and also, they all talk the same

TYLER  
 But can you sell it?

CYNTHIA  
 No. there's no story here. this is an Idea, you have to develop the idea into a story. if i get this to a producer, it'll be in the bin before i make it out of the room  
 (a beat)  
 ...A true story should be easy to develop

TYLER  
 (shaking head)  
 No

CYNTHIA  
 why not? are you scared of the truth?

TYLER  
 No, I'm not scared of anything because its not going to happen, Okay.

CYNTHIA  
 then i guess you'll never know the pleasures of writing an original story. and like most people-you will find out when its already too late.

Tyler lets out a heavy sigh and sits back on his chair defeated

3

INT. TYLER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAYS LATER

3

A CORK BOARD fills the screen. and as WE PULL BACK: it grows smaller and smaller to reveal-

Tyler...working the board. INDEX CARDS of DIFFERENT COLORS pinned by push pins. a card written: 1st scene. the next card:Open picture. more cards appear.

the rest of the board comes into view and a large heading at the top of the board written-

"THE NEXT BIG THING BY TYLER THOMPSON"

he stops to look back at the board...Impressed. he continues to plug some more cards

4 INT. TYLER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER 4

A standard kitchen. like those seen on TV, nothing too fancy. a hand pours out coffee into a cup, Its Tyler, in his robe.

he walks to a table and sits. sheets of paper rest on the table.

he grabs his phone and dials a number...then puts the phone to his ear

TYLER

hey, Remember that script you said needs fixing? this time i think i-

he gets interrupted...we cannot hear the person on the other end. His face slowly loses expression. its something serious...he bites hard on his teeth, his jaws tighten, and the phone slowly slides along the cheek.

5 INT. HOME - DAY 5

a home. we don't know where. Tyler stands by the window. he dresses in black. someone approaches to join him, also dressed in black, this is TOM.

TOM

been standing there for quite some time. you sure you don't want something to eat?

TYLER

(shaking head)

No

TOM

you alright?

TYLER

I'll be good

after a beat...

TOM  
you know i get that you need  
sometime to take it all in, but  
isolating yourself from people is  
not gonna help.

TYLER  
what are you saying?

TOM  
Talk to someone

TYLER  
There's nothing for me to talk  
about

he turns his head to see-

a framed picture of Cynthia. surrounded by candles, a hand  
reaches to put a rose next to it.

then turns back to the window

TYLER  
(quiet)  
I'll be good

BEGIN MONTAGE:

-Tyler sits in his bedroom behind his laptop. a moment goes  
by, and he starts typing:

FUCKFUCKFUCKFUCKFUCKFUCKFUCKFUCKFUCKFUCK

One word after the other

- Tyler is in his work room. he writes something down on a  
typewritten paper. he reads it...the disturbing sound of a  
chair being pushed hard against the floor. a pen goes flying  
across the room

TYLER  
(yelling)  
F-U-C-K!

- Tyler sits in the kitchen, eyes tired, feet up on the  
table, Totally at home. he chews on a pen, then turns his  
head to see an empty coffee mug. then looks down at the  
counter top to see an empty-see through glass-coffee  
container

and as per usual with Tyler, sheets of paper are laying on  
the table. too much ink on them...complicated writing.  
they're a mess

TYLER  
 (quiet)  
 fuck this

drops the pen to the table and puts his head in his hands

- in the living room. a bottle of Fine wine, uncapped. a burning cigar in between Tyler's fingers. he wears an open robe, completely exposing all that's underneath.

he rips a bad page from his notebook and writes on a clean page

- Tyler sits in a bath tub, dry and fully clothed. crumbled papers scattered around him. he writes something in his notebook...a few lines down then rips the page and crumbles it. another new clean start...and the writing has gone from bad to worse. he rubs his face in his hands

TYLER  
 why the fuck is it so hard

END MONTAGE

TOTAL DARKNESS:

FADE IN:

6 INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - WEEKS LATER

6

A pile of magazines. business, lifestyle. what ever magazine you can think of. we stop at the face of Tyler. and we pull back:

TYLER  
 I was Just sitting there. 8 cups every night just to stay awake, and still came up with nothing. for some reason every time you put pen to paper it all fades. no thoughts, ideas, nothing to remember. Its Just blank. and me drinking coffee 8 times only resulted in me deceiving myself. i didn't realise that every time i take, it was just another cup of many. all i want is to write whats in my head-on paper. and I can't  
 (a pause)  
 I guess you can't have everything you want right

DR MELA (O.S)

No

Tyler snaps to attention. he sits on a small couch and wears a black T-shirt and Blue Jeans

TYLER

No?

DR MELA

Yes. do you know why most people choose not to do what you do?

TYLER

why?

DR MELA

because writing is a time consuming Journey. one that can be very lonely at times.

Tyler silently asks himself-what? holding each others Gaze, Dr Mela moves in closer

DR MELA

what I'm saying is-stop dancing around fiction with the hopes of writing something original-but write something that you know instead, because sometime the things we want are not as far away from us as they seem

Silence...Tyler does not get the hint. Dr Mela removes her glasses, looks at her watch and waits patiently. a moment goes by...and then-

a sudden realisation...he clocks Dr Mela. only this time knowing.

A FLASH BACK:

7

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT - 21:14 PM

7

Cynthia and Tyler are having a conversation

CYNTHIA

then i guess you'll never know the pleasures of writing an original story. and like most people-you will find out when its already too late.

BACK AT THE THERAPIST'S OFFICE:

TYLER  
she tried to-  
(Dr Mela nods)

8 INT. WORK ROOM - LATER

8

The room is dark, old and dusty like we know it. someone flicks a switch, soft light illuminates the room. a silhouette of a man walking to a table.

Then, a bright light from the single table lamp. Tyler sits behind his laptop and logs in. he takes a deep breath and starts typing:

T-H-E R-O-A-D L-E-S-S T-R-A-V-E-L-E-D

he pauses, thinking. positions his finger on the keyboard-Ready-a moment goes by...a blinking cursor. he takes another breath and as he begins to type the intro,we-

SLAM TO BLACK: