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Period 5

### **AWAKE Directors' Commentary/Film Analysis:**

WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE THE FILM TO READ THIS MR VARIEUR LOL  
I put thy references in the audio commentary :0

The THX sound intro. is kind of like the beginning of La La Land where they referenced the Cinemascope ratio in the beginning of the movie. In La La Land, the film was trying to point out to the audience that the filmmakers were referencing movies with an aspect ratio used from the early 50's to the late 60's. We thought that most people born from the late 90's to the early 2000's are familiar of the opening when in a theater or watching a film at home. (It's a fun little throwback) Hence, we included it to point out to the audience that this movie was trying to let the audience remember the sound system developed by Lucasfilms to enhance watching a film. This opening would also be quite an impact since our film will be shown on the DVD player where it is connected to surround sound in the classroom.

If you guys haven't figured out what JEJA stands for yet, it's just the first letters of our first names. Kinda like the band ABBA, the people who sung the song "Dancing Queen." VFS simply stands for Varieur Film Studies. (Soo original, we know)

The song that accompanies our opening sequence is "Anything Could Happen" by Ellie Goulding, which is meant to be our foreshadowing, because as the lyrics imply, from the very beginning, anything *could* happen as we enter this story.

Here, we show the main character of Lynn. The opening is seen to be lighthearted and cheerly. Most of the colors are saturated in the beginning of the film. We included a narration of Lynn describing who she is and how she is just a socially-awkward high schooler with a roommate Bertha. Then, once Lynn introduces herself and how she acts at school, Lynn narrates about her friend Bertha. Once Bertha is mentioned, the audience is yet again immersed in a montage of the both of them living their lives together. The montage represents the long time that Betha and Lynn have been together and they almost seem to be sisters or close siblings. Also, a fun fact is that during the montage, there is a brief cameo of my sister Rachel. She portrays to be a parent of Lynn and communicates with Lynn through a video call. Rachel was a former film studies student 2 years ago. The pair also are shown to have a special

bond with each other. Just a little bit of some background, the scene where Lynn and Bertha were playing video games was just our actors sitting in front of a couch pretending to play with their controllers, while we were flashing lights at them. We thought the lighting would trick the audience into thinking that both of them were really playing video games. At the end of the mini-montage, Bertha is seen to be the one leading the conversation more, thus introducing her more extroverted personality. We felt that it would be a good contrast to have a pair of best friends with very contrasting personalities: Lynn's introversion and Bertha's extroversion.

This entire sequence was created for the purpose of introducing exactly who our characters are and they are and what kind of world that they inhabit. Introducing characters in this way would help to build the audience's connection to the characters. Furthermore, we decided to try and make our main character, Lynn, more of a "likeable" figure with her quiriness and relatability as an awkward, quiet teenager. This way, our audience feels more emotionally invested from the very beginning. Showing the background of Lynn and Bertha's friendship in a mini-montage was also quintessential to making their relationship more believable, rather than *just saying* they were best friends...

We decided to make Lynn and Bertha live together alone, disconnected from their parents in a different setting, so that they have more freedom to do what they want; because in a more realistic sense, a lot of plot holes could occur if people knew that the parents could have prevented a certain event from happening. (ooo, that's a good point yass)

When our main male lead, named Kai, enters the room, he is accompanied by a group of friends and is seen talking to them and having a good time. This is to show off how he is somewhat of the stereotypical, "popular, cool guy". And as Lynn stares at him, it is meant to imply that she has a little crush on Kai, only to be confirmed by her embarrassment when she is noticed by him and quickly turns around in defeat. A school bell is heard and acts as a sound bridge transition into the next scene.

Now, there is a scene from school where Bertha is trying to tell Lynn about the masquerade party that she has been invited to. The invitation itself is a small nod to a previous project that our same group worked on earlier in the year in our visual analysis of "The Phantom of the Opera", with the party being a masquerade. Even Bertha's line of "You can hide your face so the world will never find you!" is a song lyric from the musical itself in the song literally titled "Masquerade". (We took the chance to add quite a few references like this in our film because this is one of our favorite films that we shared

as a group and one that we spent many hours working on) The fact that Bertha brings up the party idea adds to her character traits of being a more outgoing, sociable personality in comparison to Lynn's more quiet, reserved self. They converse, and there is a healthy dose of 180 degree shots, engaging the audience to look at both sides of the screen to be active when hearing the two talk. Once Lynn is given the invitation, to look at, there is an abrupt graphic match cut to Lynn holding a Nintendo 3DS. This can be interpreted as a little hobby that Lynn takes more interest in rather than parties, building her character even more. So thus, instead, Lynn is just trying to avoid social events and is more likely to try to not get outside of her comfort zone very often.

Bertha now comes in and rips the Nintendo DS from Lynn's hands and a heated conversation is taking place between the two of them. This is indicative of showing off Bertha's insistent and outgoing behavior. Again, there is the use of 180 degree shots when they converse with each other, to keep the audience engaged with the talking going on screen. The acting done by Amy is absolutely on spot, as she is able to portray the frustration Bertha is having at Lynn, who is seemingly ok with the idea that she can be at home playing video games. Lynn is shown to have tolerant behavior and is willing to listen to Bertha rant on about her frustrations over her anti-socialness. In the end, Lynn makes the decision to go, prompting the first event that will lead to many in the upcoming scenes. A sound bridge can be heard, it's music coming from the party scene next up.

We used an underwater camera as a cool effect to show establishing shots of the party, showing off all the cool scenery, the people, and the unique setting.(sorta like LaLaLand?) We finally end up on showing off Lynn and her character, who is also new dressed up in masquerade attire, which is noticeably a bit differentiated as her mask is black, opposed to everyone else's brightly colored masks, and also matches her semi-black dress. However, she is all alone and isolated and looking especially uncomfortable. It is supposed to be implied that she has lost Bertha in the crowd, which has left her all alone.

As she stands up and walks away, it is easy to notice how a mysterious figure, also wearing black, follows her. However, in contrast to the dark setting, a very vibrant, red cup is left in her place. This is a little bit of foreshadowing to the events that are revealed later in the film. (aka the fact that she was drugged from the contents of what she drank, causing her death from an accidental overdose. The mysterious figure, later revealed to be Kai, was watching her so her could take her over once she was affected by the drugs, but to distract from that, the following event occurs instead):

When Lynn is confronted, she tries to run away (indicative of her, shy reserved nature), but is caught again. She discovers that this person is actually her crush, Kai (because of course it is), of whom formally introduces himself to her. This friendly introduction is also a way to lull the audience into feeling a false sense of security around this character because of how nice he seems from first impressions. (little do they know that he was actually a menace all along). This prompts a series of comedic little insights into Lynn's thoughts as she undergoes an internal crisis from being caught in such an awkward state by her crush, especially when he asks her out on a date.

**\*FUN LITTLE TIDBIT\*** When Lynn introduces herself to Kai, sticking out her hand for a handshake, the actress playing Lynn (Me, Jillian), was sticking out my hand even though I had my phone in my hand, so in an awkward moment of improvisation, I decided to place my phone on top of the pizza that was on my plate, but the camera didn't catch it. Between shots, I had to move my phone so it wasn't on top of the pizza, so that's why in the next clip, it was next to the pizza on the plate, awkwardly.

Then nearing the end of the party scene, Kai's face blurs and it cuts to a peculiar event where Kai is seen urging and dragging Lynn's limp body into a house... No one knows what really happened and this is intentionally confusing since it was such a dramatic turn. (Though in actuality it is a bit of literal foreshadowing)

However, all is changed when Lynn wakes up, unknowing of where she is and she just goes home and texts Kai, nonchalant of what just happened. (At this point in the film, everything is just an illusion, part of Lynn's subconscious. In reality, she is on the road to death, as her mind is collapsing from the overdose. So as a result, her innocent, reserved mind is imagining nothing but the best, giving herself happy thoughts before her mind is put to rest. This is the implied meaning of our film, but it is really open to many different interpretations)

A happy tone is implemented again as Lynn texts Kai about her excitement about her date. This is also a way of showcasing her more innocent nature, as it seems that she wouldn't be involved in the events of romance very often, making this more a big deal to her. She passes out on the couch, and then wakes up, realizing its late. She then decides to go bed properly.

A brief moment occurs when she disappointedly looks at herself in the bathroom mirror. This is meant to showcase that something is "off" about her and how she feels, which is shown in the next segment.

In the next scene, Lynn is seen having a hard time sleeping because of her worries over the date. She questions him, herself, and especially his intentions. This is because it was all so sudden and that this is all somewhat suspicious since she sees herself as nothing worthy of her crush, either. This also is to build a sense of relatability with the audience since everyone has troubles with the worries of not feeling wholly accepted or worthy or good enough. (thus it's more down to earth and amusing). She even makes a reference to Hamlet where Lynn thinks "I'm not even pretty so why even bother. I might as well change my name to *Hulga* or something." Which is a decently obvious nod to a character in Hamlet.

In the end, Lynn finally gets herself to go to bed. However, she begins having flashes of a dream coming into view. She is seemingly awoken by the voice of a woman singing the first lyrics from the song "The Phantom of the Opera". (*"In sleep he sang to me, in dreams he came. That voice which calls to me, and speaks my name."*) The lyrics are quite literal in this sense because Lynn is literally being called into a dream by a mysterious voice.) you can hear the clock ticking to remind Lynn that she is running out of time, and we can hear the clock ticking once again when Lynn is trying to remember.

Lynn gets up and is led out the door of her room, where she is suddenly transported to an unknown place. She walks around trying to find any sign of familiarity, but is startled as she hears a sassy voice from behind her. Lynn is scared and confused as this unknown figure is quite intimidating and abrasive. In reality, this figure (we call her Goddess), is a figment of Lynn's mind and acts somewhat of a deliverer of Lynn's soul into the afterlife. Her existence is a symbol for how Lynn's world is no longer reality. Goddess acts as the reality of Lynn's mind, as that entire time that she exists in the film, Goddess is always aware of the reality that Lynn is unaware of. She always reminds her about "You think too much." or "There's no need for that". She is extremely sassy and cynical and carefree, acting as a complete omniscient being. By the end of the dream sequence, Lynn is thrown into a pool of water, causing her immediate awakening.

When Lynn "wakes up", the Goddess is still there (which also kind of signifies that she is still dreaming), and Lynn FREAKS OUT. This adds a nice bit of comedy to balance out the eerie seriousness that just occurred, In the end, Lynn decides to ignore the Goddess's existence for the sake of her sanity.

During breakfast, it is seen that Bertha has allegedly left for work. (However, the reality is that people will slowly begin to disappear from Lynn's world as a result of her approaching death in the real world. Their bodies will soon cease to exist and they will soon just be gone entirely). Lynn gives Bertha a phone call at work whilst having

breakfast and she talks about everything, all whilst trying to very blatantly ignore the Goddess sitting right next to her being all nonchalant. The goddess is then revealed that she can actually have full control over Lynn's thoughts and actions, freaking Lynn out even more so to the point that when the phone call ends, then Lynn goes into an outrage.

During this short sequence, Goddess is seen eating from a plate of three strawberries, though by the end of the sequence, the strawberry is somehow left untouched. This is meant to be a little nod to how the Goddess is not really REAL within Lynn's dream world. She can kind of do whatever she wants since she is a spiritual manifestation.

SO... as the Goddess disappears as she walks around the corner, she reverts into Lynn's mind, completely controlling and clouding her thoughts. The Goddess makes it clear that she is a part of Lynn's mind, only to have her monologue be interrupted as she remind Lynn that she is late for her date. (there is a good graphic match cut in lynn's directional movement hehe) We can hear the clock sound once again, and she is reminded once again that she is running out of time.

Lynn runs off in a frenzy to pick out an outfit which acts as the transition into the next scene, which is a cute date montage. While Lynn was picking an outfit, we made a cameo to our previous film, A Western Story, as we put the Poncho for our character Leti as kind of like an easter egg.

Kai is seen again, now dressed for the date, but still noticeably wearing black. The purpose of the date is to really get the audience emotionally invested into the cute, innocent, naive relationship that they have. (That way the ending is even MORE heartbreaking) The song we chose, called "Missing Piece" By David Choi, is good for this scene because Kai was the missing piece to Lynn's heart, but that didn't end up happening.

Afterwards, 2 days later, Lynn and Goddess have a conversation in which ends the happy times that have been in Lynn's fantasy once and for all. This marks the final few moments that Lynn is alive in reality. (assuming that maybe if she was drugged for 3 hours, 1 hour of Lynn dying in the real world would be equivalent to 1 perfect day in Lynn's fantasy subconscious...? Thus it took Lynn to die of rohypnol overdose (cuz Kai probably put too much in her drink... dumb Kai) You can hear the clock sound again.

<http://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/prescription/rohypnol.html>

“The effects start twenty to thirty minutes after taking the drug, peak within two hours and may persist for eight or even twelve hours.”

From the help from Goddess, Lynn is recalling that what she was experiencing was a flash of her last moments of consciousness before she dies. The part where she wakes up in the morning and goes on a date with Kai is totally imaginary, she thought of that while she was drugged. The part where she is about to reach to the afterlife is when she converses with Goddess is her final moments of brain activity. A montage again starts up, but now only showing parts of her imagination mixed in reality. Some scenes are shown in black and white where it signifies that those were that did actually take place, and she is thinking. There are scenes where we filmed Lynn drowning in a pool, that signifies her imagination as the truth is heavily weighing her down as her realization is starting to become more darker than she previously thought. So in thought, this whole movie is kind of like a big reference to a film we saw in class, called Stay, where a guy has experienced a car crash and basically the whole movie is the character trying to make sense of what happened when he is at the last moments of his life through a series of dream sequences. We wouldn't really call this an adaptation of that film, but more of basing the ending portion of the movie to Stay.

A abrupt jump cut to Lynn on the couch signifies that she is dead, and the audience should be able to make sense that she has passed onto the next life. However, Kai is sitting on the couch besides Lynn and realizes that she is dead because he accidentally overdosed her on drugs when he didn't even intend to. (a plastic baggie with baking soda and cane sugar)

Then, the police lights illuminate Kai's face, as he realizes that he must face the consequences of his actions. Kai is literally in a shot where it's Godfather-like dark. Only his sad face can be seen when the lights are flashing on his face. (we were able to let this happen by looking up a youtube video of police lights having a phone and laptop screen illuminate the lights at the highest brightness onto his face)

Bertha is crying in this scene, just a long take where she is just realizing what had really happened.

The silent shot of Lynn screaming as she realizes that she's dead, almost like a reference to The Artist where George Valentin is in his dream where he isn't able to talk. That shot is the very final moment in which Lynn is alive. She realizes that what she experienced was a lie.

Once that key realization point is shown, there is a shot where Lynn is walking off into the sunset. A transition where Lynn is walking and then disappears is to show that she's crossed onto the afterlife. The yellow hues that contrast with Lynn signify a bittersweet moment where a young innocent teen realizes a dark truth at the very end of her life.

The final shot is something recorded when we were filming the underwater shots of Lynn, the darkness signifies the darkness that life can have. That darkness is contrasted with the light reflecting off the water, as the water is representing Lynn who was an innocent life taken. The light is in the dark, the darkness of reality and that not everything is perfect.

Any continuity errors were made due to the fact that Lynn, in her dream-like stasis, was not thinking in the most rational, nor logical manner of way... thus, resulting in a slight mishap within the logic of her imaginative world... of her cognition... (aka, if any mistakes were made, then it doesn't matter because it's all a dream and anything can happen in a dream)