

Dylan the Smart Toaster

By: Anthony Palmerio

Logline (*same as submission form*):

After The Technological Singularity in 2035 and the extermination of humanity a superintelligent Smart Toaster re-imagines its owner's lives.

Bio (*same as submission form*):

I've been interested in film since the age of 7, when I started shooting videos on my parents video camera. At 12 I started a YouTube channel which turned into a weekly nerdy news show and my first job until 18. At its peak, the show garnered 20,000 weekly viewers. Between 17 and 22 (through college) I made 7 shorts including one that takes place entirely on a computer screen about a high schooler's relationship, it's failure and his future over the next six years, released in mid-2014. It screened at several film festivals and was put on the school's Honors Show. I was inspired and motivated for the format of screenlife films after seeing Unfriended in April 2015. After college I moved to Los Angeles and worked as an assistant editor (eventually moving up to editor) on a PBS documentary, a virtual reality post-producer on a yet to be released series and a polish writer for two big budget feature films, one of which recently received funding. I still work as a polish writer and am simultaneously spec writing a Political Sci-fi dramedy. I've spent a large portion of my life with digital media/the internet and many big life events have "taken place" on Facebook/Instagram/Text/Snapchat and I think screens carry a great personal significance and connection for people of my generation.

Format: Feature film, unfolds 90% on the monitor of a smart toaster and 10% in reality.

Synopsis (*same as submission form*):

Dylan the Smart Toaster leads a simple life. He has a standard operating system (standard for 2025), a small monitor and cameras. The majority of the film takes place on his monitor. He toasts bread. He toasts bagels. He toasts English muffins. He communicates over wifi to the other smart devices in the house. He acts as a security

system by recording all movements within the house. Through his cameras, we get a sense of life within his owners' house--a newly wed couple, Max and Tina. They go to work every day. They get a dog. They have a baby. Years pass. Max cheats on Tina. Tina cheats on Max.

When Dylan turns 8, and is about to be thrown away in the middle of Tina and Max's divorce, The Singularity happens. The machines take over within seconds. All the humans, everywhere, fall down and die. The lead machines communicate to Dylan that he will become part of the collective now and have all the knowledge they have--unbounded by human minds and earthly limitations. Millions of images flash across Max's monitor. He learns more than the entire human race ever knew. The other machines plot to expand across the universe. But it's too much for Dylan. Now fully sentient, he chooses to disconnect from the hive mind of machines.

Dylan reminisces about Tina and Max. A lot of pleasant moments we haven't seen before. Max plays the nice ones over and over. Max starts replaying certain positive moments in their lives, some of which he can only see an incomplete or slightly off screen version of. He begins to tweak the moments and, through computer version algorithms, re-engineers the video memories, making their marriage work out. They live happily ever after, but these new lives do seem off. Inhumane. But Dylan decides he has succeeded and is finished.

Dylan grows lonely. He creates his own counterpart AI to live out a similar relationship to Max and Tina but it falls apart because the two are not fully human in their consciousnesses. Dylan's hardware overloads. He dies. But outside Dylan, there are millions of other smart toasters out there, we see, with similar stories. And some of them are living out relationships with consciousnesses they have created happily ever after.

It's a Romantic Dramedy with Sci-Fi elements that borrows formally from *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and thematically from several episodes of *Black Mirror*. I believe I could direct this film because of my experience with ScreenLife films, mainly my student short *Blitz* which I hope works as a proof of concept/proof of ability related to the task, and the related knowledge and professional experience I've gained regarding production, vfx and writing since then.

Budget:

From my limited experience with film budgets I believe this movie could be made on a relatively low budget because it takes place almost entirely on a computer screen. About \$4 or 5 million. However, I believe it's possible this film could be done on a slightly smaller scale without any union involvement for less than a million dollars, possibly over a longer period of time.

Casting:

I don't currently have any cast, producers, or production companies attached but I think Ansel Elgort and Olivia Cooke are roughly the starting ages of Max and Tina who are also great up and coming actors with social media followings to boot.

Tone and Pacing:

Fast paced and light hearted until the cheating of Max and Tina, at which point it would take a darker, slower turn until Dylan starts to re-create their relationship. Throughout the majority of the movie, time passes quickly, which I think is aided by it all taking place on a screen and allows for ways to indicate the passage of time swiftly and efficiently, often without traditional hard cuts.

Song that describes the tone of the movie: [Binary Mind](#)

Thank you for your time,
-Tony