

The Theory of Lavender
By Scott Adkins

For permission to perform this play, please contact Scott Adkins at scott.adkins369 AT gmail.com.

Summary: Andy, an archeologist, is searching for answers about space Aliens in a southwestern desert in Texas. It turns out he became so obsessed with searching for evidence of Alien visitations that he never visited his mother in the years leading up to her death. His regret is so powerful he develops a viable time travel theory that is implemented in the future. Future Andrew breaks temporal law to try and convince his past self to visit his mother and is quantum-imprisoned by future bureaucrats to ensure that he never visits his mother, suffers regret, and develops the time travel theory.

The Theory of Lavender

Characters

Rancher Watts - 50's or older

Mia - young woman

Erma - late 60's

Andrew - young man

Randell - young man

Greg - young man

Settings

Erma's house and bed room.

A ridge overlooking the campsite in the hill country of Texas.
Audience addresses occur at the ridge.

A campsite near a hole in the hill country of Texas.

A cave under the campsite in hill country of Texas.

Runtime: 75 min

1

The Ridge

Open with RANCHER WATTS standing alone on an elevated area, giving the semblance that he is looking down and over a vast land. He has a guitar strapped to his back. He wears cowboy boots, cowboy hat, blue jeans, button down long sleeve shirt. His skin is leathery, like he has been in the sun for most of his life.

WATTS

I'm the rancher and my name is Watts.

WATTS pulls the guitar around and plays a Spanish style love song. Light shifts like a sunset on WATTS. MIA enters next to WATTS.

MIA sings us an old children's song. Imagine the tune for 'Hush Little Baby'. She carries a bunch of sunflowers. WATTS continues to play the guitar to accompany MIA's song.

MIA

A toy box held a big choo choo
the lamp jug made him go away
the lamp jug made her want to stay
My toy box held a big choo choo

A new day for dreams to come true
All alone no one came through
Under the Willow I felt blue
Where is dad I want to play

My brother always knew what to do
He'd play with me, laugh and hoo hoo
When dad was gone my mom would say
Go down to the Willow play choo choo

2

Erma's Bedroom

ERMA is folding laundry in her bedroom. She gets distracted by a picture of her son ANDREW. MIA carries the sunflowers and enters ERMA's house. The house is very large but the scenes take place in ERMA's bedroom and kitchen.

MIA

Mom? You here?

MIA enters ERMA's bedroom. There is a large pile of laundry on the bed. MIA lays the sunflowers on the bed next to the laundry. ERMA is standing in the middle of the room holding a framed picture.

ERMA is still looking at the picture of ANDREW.

ERMA

Look at Andy's smile. He's looks so happy in his new hat.

MIA

What's with the feather?

ERMA

He found it and and stuck it in the...the...he put it in the ring...right there.

Pause as ERMA looks at the picture.

In the ring of the hat.

ERMA puts the photo down and starts folding laundry.

MIA

I can do that.

ERMA

I get great pleasure seeing a made bed before getting into it for the night. I gave you kids a made bed so you'd have a nice place to sleep. Do you make your bed?

MIA

Sometimes, I guess.

ERMA

My mom did the same thing and it rubbed off on me. I don't sleep in here anymore.

MIA

Mom, that's not good.

ERMA

Sometimes, well it's just easier to not fold the laundry, just you know, put it here and then wear it and/

MIA

/Let me fold too.

Pause.

I met someone.

ERMA

Look at those yellows.

MIA

Flowers. Sunflowers.

ERMA

They do look like the sun don't they? Let me get you a ah, ah, a ah bowl. No. You know, a ah, ah, a holder for the sunflowers.

ERMA exits. MIA takes in the room and the disarray. ERMA returns with a green vase.

ERMA

This will do.

MIA

That's perfect. Thanks mom.

MIA places the sunflowers into the vase and looks for a place to put the vase. At some point during the following she finds moves some stuff to find a spot on a dresser.

So, yeah, I met someone.

ERMA

You did?

MIA

His name's Greg and I really like him. I never thought I would at first, you know, when I first saw him. He's not exactly my type.

ERMA

Well what type is he?

MIA

He's in business and makes a lot of money. He's handsome in his curious way but his heart is gold.

ERMA

That's what matters. The good hearts are keepers. How'd you meet?

MIA

At Coney Island, kind of. I didn't see him but he saw me.

ERMA

That's how your dad and I met.

MIA

I thought you met in the library.

ERMA

We did. He was deep into a book. He saw me but I didn't see him.

I was working in the ah ah...(long pause) ah

MIA

Cafe?

ERMA

No the ah, where the books are the ah

MIA

Stacks?

ERMA

Well yes but you just said it, why can't I/

MIA

The library mom? You were in the library?

ERMA

I was working and putting books away. He was at a table studying and I started to clear the books he was using. He moved his things away without looking up and kept reading. I heard him whisper 'I LIKE YOUR GLASSES'. In the library it sounded like a ah, ah, it was very loud...

I wrote on his note pad LIBRARY and put my finger to my lips like you know 'shhhhhhhh'.

MIA

I understand, Mom.

ERMA

But I didn't make the sound.

MIA

Yes.

ERMA

Well, he stared up at me. I remember I hadn't washed my hair in awhile. I never primped for the library but now/

MIA

You wished you had.

ERMA

Well it had been quite a few days.

I remember he, he handed me a note. I couldn't read it.

MIA

Of course.

ERMA puts a basket of laundry on the bed and is folding a large towel now. She's smells it before folding it.

ERMA

It's my favorite part.

ERMA holds the warm towel to her face and breathes in.

He was reading Hemingway, lucky dog and my, my ah...ah, the person in charge, was organizing the things behind me.

MIA

What'd the note say?

ERMA

Yes. Well?

Paul started to speak again and I shook my head. I remember this like it was yesterday, I watched him meticulously re-write the note on a new sheet of paper. I hadn't noticed him before but now, I couldn't look away. He was curiously cute like you said about your new friend.

MIA

What'd the note say?

ERMA

Oh I don't remember but we met for coffee later and I missed the rest of my shift.

Pause.

MIA

I went back to our town to visit one of my friends. I went by our old house, it looks totally different.

ERMA

I'm sure it does.

MIA

I found the Willow tree though, it's still there.

ERMA

I don't remember the willow tree.

Lights shift.

3

The Ridge

ANDREW is on the elevated area and addresses the audience. He wears a hat with a hawk feather stuck in the brim. He stands near a piano.

ANDREW

I'm Andrew.

My ears are ringing constantly and I can't hear silence anymore.

My dad complained about the same thing.

Pause

So, when Mia and I were kids, our dad left. I think he was overstimulated.

He liked it when I played piano. After he left I wrote him this song.

ANDREW sits at the piano sings the song.

WHAT HAPPENED TO DAD?

QUESTIONS COMING EVERYDAY
HE HAS SO MANY THINGS TO DO
EVEN THE DOG NEEDS TO PLAY
CAN'T EVEN WATCH THE MOON

PLEASE BE QUIET SO HE CAN SLEEP
HE HAS RINGING IN HIS EARS
ANOTHER STIFF DRINK PLEASE
CAN'T HEAR SILENCE ANYMORE

WATCH THE MOON
NEED TO PLAY
THINGS TO DO
EVERYDAY
EVERYDAY

IS HE? WILL HE? DO HIS BEST?
NO TIME TO SEE IN BETWEEN
FORGOT TO LISTEN TO HAPPINESS
UNDER THE WILLOW TREE

WATCH THE MOON
NEED TO PLAY
THINGS TO DO
EVERYDAY
EVERYDAY

WATCH THE MOON
NEED TO PLAY
THINGS TO DO
EVERYDAY
EVERYDAY

There was a devil out there, he knew it. There was a devil that came for him.

ANDREW shifts his playing of the piano.
A Bach like ode under the following.

ANDREW

I practiced my piano on cloudy days. I liked the shape of the light on those days.

Lights brighten like sunlight coming
through a window.

Where I grew up, on just the right day the clouds could move really fast. If it was the right time of the year, the sun would be coming in through the windows really intense.

Lights dim real low real fast then come
back up. The lights should simulate
clouds passing in front of the sun on a
bright day.

It's really weird right? Because our eyes are adjusted for brightness and then the clouds come and it appears really dark and then bright and then dark.

This is my life, the abridged version.

Below ANDREW where a shadow puppet play acts out his description of his life. The puppets are lit by a medium low constant light and more intensely with flashes of light for lightening. There is no thunder.

ANDREW

We moved to our town in the very beginning before Mia and I were born. It was a really cool town.

Shadow houses grow to make a town. A steeple. A downtown. Lot's of buildings now.

The people are dancing, they are holding hands and walking. The town grows around the people into a city. Smoke rising from the power stations. A boat sails by with many people.

One house stands out. Next to it a Willow tree grows.

That's our house. Was our house.

Paul, Erma, Andy and Mia go to the Willow tree and play. There is dancing and a party.

And there's my dad-- Paul, my mom-- Erma, me, and my sister-- Mia. We are all playing at the Willow tree, waiting for the fourth of July fireworks.

Shadow play shifts to show season changes and the Christmas holiday.

Christmas came every year. Mia and I loved Christmas and so did mom and dad. They were both around. Grandma, Grandpa always came. It was the best time of the year plus no school.

Shadow play continues to shift through the following, a dark time descends on the family.

I don't really remember when or even how it happened, my dad just started to change. Started by him being crabby and I thought he was always mad at me or all of us. He'd drink a lot. Nothing was fun anymore, I mean it was just him being mad or mom crying or me crying or Mia running up the stairs.

Shadow puppets show the struggle of going to church and ANDREW staying home tinkering.

They'd go to church every Sunday but it was such an ordeal they were late every time. I'd just stay in bed and hope they'd leave me, usually they would. That's when I started to tinker with things. I started with the T.V. Took it apart. Put it back together again. That sort of stuff.

Shadow puppets show the town breaking down, PAUL disappearing, the kids going their separate way and ERMA moving to her current house. ANDREW is no longer playing the piano and he has moved off of the elevated area and is looking at the puppet play.

Then Dad was gone. He didn't just disappear, there was a whole thing and a lot of tears, but he was gone. We became one of those families.

The shadow houses have nearly all disappeared. Nothing left but the Willow tree.

I can't really remember what the town looks like anymore it's been so long. When I imagine it I can't even see the houses, I just see a big open field with no people, no streets. All I see is that Willow tree.

4

The Ridge

Light shifts off of ANDREW and onto
WATTS on the elevated area. WATTS plays
a bluesy song.

WATTS

This little ditty is about how Mia met her boyfriend Greg.

I call this IN A HOLLOW MOON

WATTS (sings)

ON CONEY ISLAND
THERE'S A HOLLOW MOON

THAT'S WHERE SHE FIRST SAW YOU
ON CONEY ISLAND

DO YOU REMEMBER?
DO YOU REMEMBER?

IT WAS A REALLY HOT DAY
PEOPLE WERE OUTSIDE TO PLAY

DO YOU REMEMBER?
DO YOU REMEMBER?

JACK-IN-THE-BOX WAS BROKEN
WONDER WHEEL OVERRUN

DO YOU REMEMBER?
DO YOU REMEMBER?

ON THE BOARDWALK DANCING
YOU IN THE HOLLOW MOON
ON THE BOARDWALK DANCING
YOU IN THE HOLLOW MOON

Lights stay on WATTS but also shift to
ANDREW setting up an archeology dig and
campsite. WATTS observes ANDREW from
the elevated area.

ANDREW

About seven years ago, after grad school, after I had been on a dozen or so digs, lead a few myself, I'll spare you my whole bio, I got a grant for a dig in Texas. Nobody thinks there's anything in Texas so getting a grant to dig there, that says something. I had to sort of lie about why I was digging there.

See, I'd read this article about a guy who claimed he had found a special rock. Like a meteor or something, but it wasn't a meteor, it was a rock with unearthly qualities.

WATTS

That's my rock.

ANDREW

I'm an archeologist AND I believe in aliens more precisely, pre-human aliens. So to find the truth, I need to dig.

That's what I do is look at rocks, I look inside rocks, I look in between them.

WATTS

Get to the point Andrew.

ANDREW

This Rancher, Watts, found a rock without knowing where it was. You walk, you you you, okay you walk outside and pick up a rock, that's not my kind of rock. People write me but I don't, I can't look at every rock people find, I have a criteria - here's the, you have to limit what you follow, I can't look at all the rocks. Watt's rock, he he didn't just find it, see first he was, he already knew where the rock was before he knew he was looking for it. Like like, like it was, the rock was speaking to him. Yep.

The rock talked.

Walk outside find a rock. Not my kind of rock. Rock speaks to you somehow, weird. This is my kind of rock. Watts walks outside and walks out onto his ranch in the heart of sovereign Texas, he has a purpose, walking purposely you know not wandering, not just doh dee doh, but walking out, he's going somewhere, his body is going somewhere, he has an image in is head he has an image of a thing, some... he is walking walking and there he is he's stopped. Phhhpt. Just pphhhht...like this is it. He looks

down, tap tap tap, he he nearly shat his, he he, he nearly shat his pants. Nearly.

WATTS

But didn't.

ANDREW

I did that once, completely unexpected, I was driving along, I felt a little gassy, I was visiting a friend, this was right out of college/

WATTS

/Andrew!

ANDREW

Watts is nearly in the middle of Texas hill country, and ppphhht, what? He didn't though because tap tap tap. On his shoulder, there, right there see? The lightest little tap tap on his shoulder, the rock...floating right? Tap tap, communicating? I don't know what, a rock floating on the shoulder, off the shoulder, right? That's my kind of rock. A sentient rock, maybe, a possessed rock, Texas is a funny little, it's not little, it's big as a country, a funny state the size of a country.

The rest is boring, I applied for a grant, got it, sent a team out here to set the site up and then wind got, the committee got wind of what I was doing and the funding was pulled after the first year. All we had was a 30 yard grid a few feet deep. A couple arrowheads, a Cro-Magnon skull, I gave that to a team-member, I had no use for it. Not my thing.

I was gonna give up, but Randell. That's my best bud, Randell says "No way." Begs me to bring him out here. The equipment and shelters were still here so why not? And we did, Randell of course, doesn't know the first thing about digging.

RANDELL enters in his Indiana Jones outfit and starts digging like a maniac. Going real deep.

He digs like he's going to China.

We dug and dug. All around where Watts said he found the floating rock, there was nothing, I mean more rocks but not my kind of rocks. We found a little box. Like a music box? I sent it to my mom. Twenty feet under Texas, it's not hot down there.

ANDREW gets in on the digging.

ANDREW
See this isn't so bad.

RANDELL
Are you kidding me? Feels like the furnace is on in the middle of summer.

ANDREW
Give it a couple weeks, you'll get used to it. You have to find your rhythm.

ANDREW and RANDELL dig for awhile.

ANDREW
Hey Randell?

RANDELL
Yeah?

ANDREW
I was just thinking about when we were kids. And how we used to make drawings all the time?

RANDELL
Why are you thinking about that?

ANDREW
There was that time you used to draw eggs all the time.

RANDELL
I don't remember.

ANDREW
It was like third grade and we were all drawing tanks and planes blowing each other up. But you, you were drawing eggs with circle designs on them.

RANDELL stops digging and gets a drink.

ANDREW
Remember?

RANDELL

Nope.

ANDREW

Aw come on, you have to. I remember/

RANDELL

Maybe you were drawing the eggs.

ANDREW

No no, there was a news story and everything about all these kids drawing the same eggs and it was when the Close Encounters movie came out and everyone thought

RANDELL

What's your point?

ANDREW

Everyone thought.

RANDELL

Thought what? Huh?

ANDREW

I just, it just popped into my head for some reason.

RANDELL

Well I don't want to remember.

ANDREW

Sorry man, just making, you know its the heat and the work, just start thinking about shit.

It's nothin.

Forget it.

RANDELL stands looking over the landscape. Takes another swig and gets back to work.

5

The Ridge

WATTS wheels in a willow tree. He plays
his guitar for the talking song
parable.

WATTS

UNLIKELY AS IT SOUNDS,

ON TOP OF THIS RIDGE
A SEED HAD FALLEN
FROM WAY OVER YONDER

A WILLOW TREE GREW
DESPITE THE HOT DUST
DROUGHTS AND TEXAN SUN

AGAINST THE HARSH WINDS,
THE TREE GREW TALLER
THE TREE GREW TALLER

IN ITS LONG SHADOW
A RED APPLE SURVIVED
OUT OF THE HOT SUN.

YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED
THE APPLE HAS TRIED
TO SAY GOODBYE AND FAREWELL

MANY TIMES THE APPLE
HAS TRIED CHANGING COLORS
AS A POSSIBLE DISGUISE

GROWING WINGS WOULD NOT HELP
AND FOR YEARS THE APPLE
SURVIVED UNDER THE WILLOW

THE APPLE LOST HOPE
UNDER THIS WILLOW TREE
SO DUG ITSELF A DEEP HOLE

WELL CAN YOU GUESS NOW
A FEW YEARS LATER THAT APPLE
HAD ROOTS AND BRANCHES FULL

SEVERAL YEARS HAD PASSED
BUT EACH DAY MORE THE SAME
THE APPLE TREE KNEW SHE'D CAST

HER OWN SHADOW, HERE TO THERE
THE WILLOW CAST THERE TO HERE
TWO TREES TRADING SHADOWS

TELLING JOKES AND WATCHING THE SUN
ENOUGH TIME PASSED TO LEAVE BEHIND
THAT OLD RIVALRY FROM LONG AGO

6

The Campsite

THREE YEARS LATER

ANDREW is sitting on a packed bag
examining a dusty, rusty box.

WATTS

What cha got there Andy?

ANDREW

Oh, hey there mister Watts. It's weird. I found it in the
ground, it's the only thing I found.

WATTS

May I?

WATTS takes the box from ANDREW.

ANDREW

Sure, just ah...

WATTS opens the box with his rancher
hands, not subtle.

ANDREW

Careful--it's real old and I/

WATTS

Look here, a music box.

ANDREW

Really? Let me see.

ANDREW examines the box.

Look at that. I just don't get it.

WATTS

Looks like junk.

ANDREW

That may be but it's the only thing I've found. Isolated objects are rare.

WATTS

Hmmpf. Well you know better than me.

WATTS notices ANDREWS bag.

You going somewhere?

ANDREW

Oh, yeah, just waiting for a ride. I'm going out to visit my mom.

WATTS

Really?

ANDREW

Yeah. It's been awhile.

WATTS

Seems sudden especially after finally finding something in that hole of yours.

ANDREW

I doubt this has anything to do with your rock Mr. Watts.

WATTS

Strange things on the range.

ANDREW is fumbling with box when he hits a secret button and a dancing faerie appears. The box plays a Bach piano sonata. The same one Andrew played earlier.

ANDREW

Woa.

WATTS

Lookie at that, it still works.

ANDREW

Listen.

WATTS

Yep.

RANDELL comes out of his tent.

ANDREW

No you don't understand. Randell, listen this.

RANDELL

That thing plays music?

ANDREW

Not just music, it--it's Bach. It's the piece I played all the time when I was a kid, the only piece. My mom would-

WATTS

Looks like the girl is coming out of a cave or something.

ANDREW

Huh, you're right.

RANDELL

What's wrong?

ANDREW

I just, I don't know, it's too weird. The coincidence, it's ah, it's my mom's favorite music. A music box, from the ground, from when?

You know what? You go without me.

RANDELL

What? No way, I'm not going to visit your mom without you.

ANDREW

I can't leave now, not after this. This is big AND strange. This is why we're here. Right?

RANDELL

Yeah, I guess.

ANDREW

If you won't take it to her then can you take it to town and mail it to my mom. So she understands why I can't come.

RANDELL

Sure, alright.

WATTS

So now you're not going.

ANDREW

I can't Mr. Watts, you are - you're right, this is the only thing we've found and it is, it is, it can't be the only thing down there. We gotta keep digging. Maybe it is not isolated.

WATTS

Now you're talking. You take care boys.

7

ANDREW CALLS HIS MOM

Phone ringing in ERMA's home. She is at the refrigerator staring into it and walks to get the phone, but get's distracted by something on her way there. The phone stops ringing. She picks up a pamphlet and remembers why she was at the fridge.

ANDREW redials his mom.

Phone ringing again. ERMA goes to the phone but can't find it. She is moving stuff frantically and cursing under her breath a bit. She finds the phone and pushes the button.

ERMA

Hello?

The phone rings again. ERMA pushes the button again.

Hello?

The phone rings again, she pushes the button again.

HELLO!

ANDREW

Mom?

You alright?

ERMA

Andy!

8

SIX YEARS LATER

MIA and GREG arrive in Texas for a visit.

ANDREW

Greg grab that box please and throw 'er in the back. Mia, you can throw your luggage in the back of the jeep.

MIA

Wait, I thought we were staying at Mr. Watt's. Where are you taking us?

ANDREW

Oh crap, I totally forgot to tell you, that's not gonna work, rancher ah, he's got a lot going on apparently? So, this is way better anyway.

MIA

What's way better?

ANDREW

The dig site.

MIA

Oh no, no way Andrew. We can't stay out there.

ANDREW

Why not?

MIA

Because it's in the middle of a desert/

ANDREW

Hill country.

MIA

And scorpions, snakes? I mean/

GREG

I heard they have bobcats out here, have you seen any?

ANDREW

Oh yeah, steer clear of them if you can, they're a little surly this time of year.

MIA

A little surly?

GREG

Okay.

MIA

Andrew? Why?

ANDREW

Hey you wanted to come out. I mean, it's beautiful, get over it. Look around, come on! Deep breath, come on, all together. Good. Besides I'm here, I'll take care of you and ...

GREG

Greg.

ANDREW

Right, sorry, Greg. You ready?

MIA

Do we have a choice?

ANDREW

You're gonna love it. It's just like when we used to camp as kids.

MIA

Oh yeah, that was so great.

GREG

I've never camped before.

MIA

Oh god.

9

DAY 1

Morning, a dance

GREG enters the darkness lighting his way with a flashlight.

He is going on and on mumbling under his breath - he's been up all night he's sure he saw the moon rise but now it's dark again.

As suddenly as he appeared, after his diatribe he leaves.

Time passes. There are bird noises. The light changes. MIA enters with a cup of coffee in her hands. She addresses the audience. Describes the sun rise. She is barefoot. Finally, she tells us she is looking for GREG. Describes his curved spine, his bed is unmade and cold. She isn't overly concerned but is concerned.

GREG is wandering but we are where he is so that MIA doesn't see him. They are in two different places.

GREG is eating blueberries.

GREG

A valley. So here I am half way up the valley wall, walking on the deer path. Large boulder, as big as a, it won't mean anything. Leaves won't translate. I have called and will call. I want to go picture it, take a, like this under it. I see a house.

I heard the silence when walking, when everything goes quiet and you know that everything is waiting.

MIA

I am listening. Waiting.

GREG

I am listening to my heart beat.

MIA

There's a call. There's response from over where?

GREG

The nothing of silence is so loud.

MIA

It is, an amazing thing to hear.

GREG

The first sound.

MIA

A conversation.

GREG

A garble garble.

MIA

Or a quiet squeak.

GREG

The silence.

MIA

The waiting.

GREG

I think it's over there.

MIA

Don't walk.
Don't deviate.
I am thinking about Greg. Where is he?

GREG

I didn't see them. There was an intimidating wire.

MIA

Because there are possible hunters out there.

GREG

They might mistake me for a wild turkey or a doe.

MIA

I walked on the deer path, I was parallel.

GREG

Those are wild turkeys.
From the road.
To the road.
From the road to the road.

GREG continues to chant this until he
enters the camp, see's MIA and drops
the bowl of blueberries.

MIA

Greg!

GREG

I think it was the water. I think, maybe.

They are ever present.
The snakes.
'please don't bite me'

MIA

Did you get bit, where were you?

GREG

I haven't seen a one.
I pled silently.

MIA

ANDY! Get out here.

GREG

I think of the snakes and the scorpions.

ANDREW enters in his undies and t-shirt.

ANDREW

I heard him.
He'll be alright.
Thin walls.
Give him some water and put him to bed. He's got a touch of the dirty canteen.

MIA

What's that mean? He doesn't look good.

ANDREW

Just a little bacteria, nothing he can't handle.

MIA

Help me?

ANDREW

You brought him.

MIA just stares at him with that look she gave him when she was young and didn't get her way. Gives GREG water from her canteen and takes him into the tent.

ANDREW fixes himself some coffee. MIA eventually returns.

ANDREW

I love this sunrise. It is perfect.

MIA

What's wrong with our family?

ANDREW

Which family is that? The fractured one or you and me?

MIA

The only family.

ANDREW

We became polarized. At one point we were happy like magnets holding together and the next we pushed away like our magnetic field was inverted.

I think of you and me. We are like lavender right? A solid plant.

ANDREW picks a lavender weed.

Lavender works together but it also lives in separate independent parts, like a lot of plants. Every so often it will pool its resources and bloom a flower, like a celebration, then it goes back to doing their own thing.

That's you and me.

In relation to the "family"? I'm a dead tree branch that is still in the tree. I'm the one that died, a long time ago. You can't re-attach a dead branch but you let it hang around anyway until eventually it will fall to ground and disintegrate.

At least for now I can still feel like I'm part of the family even though I'm dead.

MIA

Jesus Andrew, what the fuck? That is not true.

ANDREW

Really? Ever since, it's just how we are, it's not gonna change, we're broken and we obviously don't want to be around each other or else we would be around each other and we only do the obligatory parental visit.

MIA

You mean I do the obligatory parental visit. When was the last time you saw Mom or Dad for that matter?

ANDREW

Like I said our magnetic field reversed.

MIA

Why can't we all go back to being lavender and make flowers again. We used to make flowers all the time.

ANDREW

When we were together but the tree trunk got split down the middle, right?

MIA

Ahg, talk normal not all this lavender and tree

ANDREW

Well, for me this is normal. It's just how I see things. I am normal.

MIA

Really, you're normal?

ANDREW

More than most.

MIA

You sent mom a music box with a note on it that said, please be gentle and speak quietly, there is a faerie living in a cave inside this box. If you're nice she will keep you company.

ANDREW

I thought she'd laugh.

MIA

Well she didn't, she called me, and asked me to come out here.

ANDREW

When did she call you?

MIA

Awhile ago, I don't know.

ANDREW

I sent that box like two years ago, I remember because I found it on one of our digs. Took you two years to come out here?

ANDREW enters his tent. WATTS plays a quiet song that MIA and GREG sway dance

to in a lovers embrace. MIA sings to
GREG.

MIA

I'LL GIVE YOU ONE TWO THREE FOUR
FIVE REASONS TO KISS ME

ONE, ONE, NOT EVERY LADY KNOWS
HOW TO SHOOT A GUN
BUT I DO, I DO
I'VE EVEN SHOT A COW
JUMPING OVER THE MOON.

Two, reason number two, I wake up early
On Saturday mornings and bake
cinnamon apple sweet cakes
that take out any surly

Three for you my sweetie
I'll ride a roller coaster anytime
No matter how fast, high, or long the line
(just as long as you kiss me)

It's no joke number four
I am ready as ever for apple pie a la mode
I don't care what they say I love it so
I love it so I'll eat the apple core

Listen closely to number five
This one's the one that matters
my heart beats fast for starters
Kiss me now or I won't survive
Kiss me now or I won't survive
Kiss me now or I won't survive

ANDREW has entered and is smoking a
cigarette and watching MIA and GREG
dance and now kiss through the
following. A slow discovering kiss, not
the messy passionate kind, the kind
where you find someone's lips, knock
their teeth accidentally but go back in
more gently, taste their sweat, a slow
rhythmic discovery that both would like
to go on forever, ebbing and flowing,

like a dance until the song
unfortunately ends.

10

DAY 2

RANDELL
How long are they staying?

ANDREW
I don't know.

RANDELL
Well did you ask?

ANDREW
No.

RANDELL
We have to get back to work.

ANDREW
We can work with them here.

RANDELL
But...

ANDREW
What? Say it!

RANDELL
Your sister is cuter. I still like her.

ANDREW
That's what you were going to say?

RANDELL
No, but it's true.

ANDREW
God man, this isn't high school, what is up with you?

RANDELL
What is up with you? Man. I mean.

ANDREW

I'm in pain alright? My arm hurts, my back hurts, my brain hurts.

RANDELL

What are we doing out here? There's nothing more here.

ANDREW

You begged me to bring you out here.

RANDELL

Yeah but that was a long time ago. I should have left the first week.

ANDREW

Then why don't you now?

RANDELL

Maybe I will.

ANDREW

Go on then.

RANDELL

Alright. What if Rancher Watts was lying.

ANDREW

Don't call him that, please?

RANDELL

Kuhhhh fine, Mr. Watts, what if

ANDREW

He wasn't, okay? He wouldn't, not for

RANDELL

Did you ever see any floating rocks?

ANDREW

No. Why all of sudden now Randell? Huh?

RANDELL

So really, in the realm of

Drops a rock.

the very possible

Drops another rock.

there are no

Drops another rock.

ANDREW

Stop! I get it alright?

RANDELL

floating rocks.

ANDREW

I got it.

RANDELL

Let me try one more

Holds rock expectantly, it drops to the floor.

Damn, I thought that was the one.

ANDREW

Stop doing that. Why would he make it up? We had a whole team out here, we had government funds backing us, you and I have been digging six years/

RANDELL

Nine.

ANDREW

What?

RANDELL

Nine years.

ANDREW

Why would he make it all up and let us keep going for nine years if it wasn't true?! And why are you all of a sudden skeptical what about what we HAVE found.

RANDELL

He could have made those tunnels and he's an old man, no T.V., no people around, I mean there's nothing out here. But for the last six years, he's got a couple college grads out here, sweating buckets digging a hole to nowhere because he said so. That's pretty fucking funny.

ANDREW

No it's not.

RANDELL

Sure it is, he's up on that ridge everyday looking down at us, he brings people with him and points at us, you see him, I know you do. What's he think we're gonna find?

ANDREW

The tunnels?

RANDELL

Really? We find a hole under our hole and that's it?

ANDREW

And the other stuff too.

RANDELL

Which is cool but getting us a lot of attention for what?

ANDREW

Fuck you Randell. Fuck all of it then, I'm going home.

RANDELL

Really? Remind me, which way is that?

ANDREW stomps into one of the tents.

Oh yeah, we are home.

11

DAY 3

ANDREW

Why do you worry so much about what I'm not doing and do something?

MIA

I'm here aren't I.

ANDREW

Sure but what are you doing about it. Did you bring him for my approval or to show him off? Not much to show off, correction there's a lot of him to show off.

MIA

You haven't even talked to him.

ANDREW

I'm not normal.

MIA

What are you doing Andy?

ANDREW

Looking at rocks, and I've found some stuff too. That's why we're still here.

MIA

You mean you and Randell? It's kind of interesting you know, you two being out here all this time with each other, have you found anything else out?

ANDREW

He's the one who had the dream about the site and this egg thing. The one he drew when he was a kid. We found some tunnels, I want to take you down to them but not Greg. I just, I can't have too many people know about them.

MIA

Greg is afraid of the dark anyway.

ANDREW

Well so am I and wait until you see these, its, I can't really explain it. We found an impression in one of the tunnels and when we cast it, this is what it came out as.

MIA

Looks like half an egg.

ANDREW

Yes and, look at the surface.

MIA

Cool. Little circles.

ANDREW

Exactly. This is the egg that Randell was obsessed about drawing as a kid and now we've found an impression of that egg in the middle of Texas, underground. And the music box. The Bach.

MIA

Wow. So...

ANDREW

It means something.

MIA

Like what?

ANDREW

I haven't figured it totally out but I think, I'm on to something but need to polish it up a bit more. There's more but not yet. I want show you slowly.

MIA

Alright.

ANDREW

Mia, I'm really glad you're here.

MIA

`kay.

12

HIGH NOON on DAY 3

GREG

I'm going out for a run.

MIA

Alright.

ANDREW

You sure about that Greg?

GREG

Yeah, not far just/

ANDREW

It's the hottest time of day you know that right? And based on a cursory scan of your girth to water weight you're gonna lose a lot of water out there and probably get sun sickness.

GREG

You just called me fat.

ANDREW

Yes.

MIA

Andy!

GREG

It's alright Mia, I am fat, that's why I'm going for a run.

ANDREW

It'll change ya!

GREG

That's the point.

ANDREW

I mean the heat, it will reconfigure your brain in an unpredictable way, that's what the sun does out here, can really/

GREG leaves.

Wow, did you see that?

MIA

Can you please be nicer.

ANDREW

I'm doing my best.

MIA looks over at RANDELL.

MIA
Are you? What's he doing?

ANDREW
Playing chess with himself.

MIA
I'll play him.

ANDREW
Don't bother, he won't. He likes to play himself, he's the only one he can beat.

RANDELL
I can hear everything you're saying.

ANDREW
And?

RANDELL
Greg shouldn't be running this time of day.

ANDREW
I wasn't joking. We don't even work this time of day, only in the mornings.

MIA
It's really windy, that'll keep him cool.

ANDREW
Why'd you bring him here?

MIA
I like him and thought it'd be good for him to meet you, you to meet him.

RANDELL
Uh oh.

MIA
What?

RANDELL

He brought the Bishop out.

ANDREW

I told you what I think.

MIA

No you didn't.

ANDREW

Well I told him then.

MIA

When?

ANDREW

Just now.

MIA

Asshole.

ANDREW

He's fat.

MIA

Meaning he's a glutton.

ANDREW

Yep.

MIA

He likes to eat/

RANDELL

You can say that again, we gonna have/

MIA

Randell, shut up!

He eats more when he's nervous and you aren't exactly a good host. Plus I don't care about the fat.

ANDREW

I'm gonna show you the cave.

MIA

Now?

ANDREW

Yep. Randell, cave.

RANDELL

I'm so close.

MIA

But I didn't think you worked in the/

ANDREW

This isn't work, and it's cooler down there.

ANDREW, MIA, and RANDELL head to the cave. From this point on the elevated area will function as the dig camp. The cave should be the main playing area.

ANDREW

So what else?

MIA

He likes to make money. That's nice.

ANDREW

Good one. This is it. Careful.

MIA

How do we get down.

ANDREW

This rope.

MIA

You're going to murder me aren't you.

ANDREW

Hey, what a great idea. The plan has finally come together.

MIA

Seriously, how do we get back up?

ANDREW

You don't.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Just kidding.

MIA

Yeah, I figured. God you're a geek.

ANDREW

We have a counter weight, so this is really important. When you get to the bottom do NOT just let go of the rope or that counter weight, aka boulder will come right down on top of you.

MIA

Wouldn't be the first time.

ANDREW

Well this time you would be dead and minced meat.

Just put the rope under your butt like this/

MIA

The way dad taught us as kids.

ANDREW

Yeah, kinda but you're repelling down and then belaying the rock back to the bottom so I can come down.

When the rock gets to the bottom go KOO-EEE! And I'll know I can come down.

MIA

KOO-EE! Who came up with that?

MIA/ANDREW

Randell.

MIA

Right.

ANDREW

It works.

MIA

Here I go.

Mia wraps the rope around herself and climbs into the hole on the elevated area. Darkness.

MIA

Andy! It's pitch dark down here.

You didn't tell me it would be dark! Jerk.

MIA's heavy breathing and grunts as she lowers the rock is echoing in the cave. Muffled voice from above.

What?

Ow! Shit.

Muffled voice again.

I can't ... KOO-EE! KOO-EE!

ANDY descends into the cave. He has a head lamp on.

ANDREW

I said turn on your head lamp, doofus.

MIA

Woa...holy shit, you two dug all this out?

ANDREW

Yeah, me and Randell. You're still pretty funny. It was already like this, we just got the hole down the first 20 feet.

MIA

How far down are we?

ANDREW

20 feet, give or take.

MIA

How far do the tunnels go?

ANDREW

We haven't reached the end yet. But here look at this.

ANDREW pulls transparent piece of paper out of his pocket and attaches it to his head lamp which turns it into a projected image.

MIA

So it's just a network of tunnels.

ANDREW

That's what I thought but look, the pattern comes out like this.

Recognize that?

MIA

Looks like a leaf.

ANDREW

And if we turn it over.

MIA

Aw, it's a heart.

ANDREW

It's, this is an arial, a concept I made based on the pattern of the tunnels. But see these little individual lines you get

MIA

The tunnel, I get it dufus.

ANDREW

No not just any tunnel, that's a core tunnel, we're in this tiny little part here which when you map it out looks like this, this I have mapped out.

ANDREW puts a new drawing over his headlamp.

MIA

A lavender plant Andy, cute. Good drawing, looks like you finally learned after all these years.

ANDREW

Randell drew it.

MIA

So he is doing something.

ANDREW

The plants on the surface aren't really lavender, I don't think they are anyway because they don't smell exactly like lavender, they must be some kind of hybrid or something.

MIA

Maybe, but different climates can make plants smell different than you'd expect.

ANDREW

Whatever? It's not important.

MIA

Whatever? Andrew - you've been out here for forever and you found some tunnels probably made by a river or volcano a million years ago and you're like whatever?

ANDREW

Millions maybe, not likely, but definitely made and formed simultaneously, like someone was able to harness the coding of a plant and use it to manipulate its environment, like using a plant design for architecture or something. What's weird is that there is no evidence of any sort of mechanical digging or cutting, it's all 'natural' or something/

MIA

You haven't mapped it all?

ANDREW

No but my formula extrapolates what i have mapped and

MIA

And you sound like a lunatic Andy. I know you're passionate about this stuff and I can tell where this is going but listen.

Mom asked me to come out here to convince you to come visit her for awhile and she misses you.

ANDREW

But we're so close and there's more I can show you

MIA

I don't want more, I don't need to...mom's not doing well.

ANDREW

What's that mean? You say that like she's dying.

MIA

She's not dying exactly.

ANDREW

You're being purposely vague

MIA

NO I'm not, the doctors don't know. It's just I've noticed some things with her

ANDREW

Like what?

MIA

She's been losing her words and takes a long time to answer the phone, she's, it's just, Andy she's getting older.

ANDREW

I know, but she's not dying, I mean she's not that old.

MIA

No but, here's the thing, they don't know exactly anything yet and are trying to do some tests.

ANDREW

She could come visit me here, why doesn't she do that, I mean if she cares about me so much why hasn't she once come here to see me, I mean, I'm not going anywhere, obviously.

MIA waits for him to finish and watches him.

Right, I mean now would be a bad time, winters not nearly as hot but then we're working as much as possible.

MIA

So come visit her now then.

ANDREW

You don't understand, we are closer than we've ever been

MIA

To what Andy? Say it!

ANDREW

It's still, it's I can't, I need to polish it out, I've got most of it written.

MIA

You're closer to proving there were and or are aliens on our planet.

ANDREW

No not exactly, it's much bigger, much weirder and very problematic.

MIA

Maybe you shouldn't come visit mom, you might actually push her over the deep end or take her with you.

ANDREW

You, your here Mia, thank you, it's I can't (sighs) I can't just

MIA attempts to climb up the rope but fails.

I mean she's not dying right? I can visit after all the, I mean I've got time.

MIA is crying a little from a slight panic attack from being under ground and the obvious.

MIA

Can you just, can you get me out of this hole. Please.

ANDREW

Oh yeah, sure, sorry I didn't, here.

ANDY grabs the rope and works it around her.

Okay when I untie this the rock will come down so now you belay yourself, you remember how to belay

MIA

Yeah.

DAY 4

On the elevated area, RANDELL and ANDREW are outside their tent sitting in chairs drinking coffee, watching GREG. GREG is going in and out of his tent repeatedly.

ANDREW

What's he doing?

RANDELL

He keeps going in then wait, there, comes back out. Touches the window and goes back to the door, wait, now back to the window then back inside for 1, 2, 3 there he comes.

ANDREW

Jesus.

RANDELL

He's done it like twenty times already.

ANDREW

I warned him about the heat.

MIA comes out of the mess tent with a cup of coffee.

MIA

Andy?

ANDREW

Mia, look at this.

MIA

Can I talk to you a minute.

ANDREW

Wait, watch this, here he comes.

MIA

What did you do?

ANDREW

Nothing. Just watch.

MIA, RANDELL, and ANDREW watch GREG go
in and out many times.

MIA
Oh my god, what's wrong with him.

ANDREW
The heat, dried his brain likely.

MIA
Really?

ANDREW
Oh yeah, happens all the time out here, the locals joke about
it.

MIA
Stop. He's acting like mom.

MIA & ANDREW
OCD

GREG
Yes! Nnnnnn yes!

GREG is jumping around in a kind of
victory.

ANDREW
Annnnd he's cooked.

MIA
Tahhh - shut up.

GREG
Fixed it. The dang window was out of whack but the little screen
thing wouldn't let me, it's all fixed.

ANDREW
Morning Greg.

GREG
Hi.

GREG leans over and kisses MIA.

MIA

You could have asked for help.

GREG

I was so close every time.

MIA

Uh huh.

GREG

I thought I had it and then I didn't and/

ANDREW

Damn.

MIA

Andy.

ANDREW

Randell? Let's put some more coffee on.

MIA

I got it.

GREG

So, what's the plan for today?

ANDREW

No plan really. Hot and dry, stay in the shade.

GREG

Yeah, I'm not running today, thought I was gonna hurl yesterday.

ANDREW

Did you?

GREG is looking at the crumpled tents
near the camp.

GREG

What's with those tents?

ANDREW

Don't need them anymore. From the other team. These tents have
some supplies and equipment.

GREG

What have you found so far?

ANDREW

We've found a few rocks.

GREG

I bet.

ANDREW

It's what we haven't found that's interesting.

GREG

Okay, I'll take your word for it.

ANDREW

No no, let me show you. It's like this, you can't just look at the rocks, you have to look in between the rocks. Tell me, what do you see?

GREG

Dirt?

ANDREW

Good point, not a good example. Don't look so close.

GREG

Kay, I see a hill, a tree on top of the hill, a guy, hey there's a guy up there. He's waving at us.

ANDREW

That's Mr. Watts. He's always up there, or usually.

You're looking too far, it's in between too far and too close, takes awhile to learn.

Try this.

ANDREW draws two squares and two rectangles with space between them to make the letter t or a cross-roads.

Look at this.

GREG

Alright, you've got four squares. No wait, two squares and two rectangles.

ANDREW

That's right, now look in between them. Pretend this is a window, you just described the panes of glass, now what shape does the window pane make.

GREG

Ahhhhhhhh. Cool. Makes the letter Tee.

ANDREW

You got it. By themselves they are squares and rectangles but together they make a crossroads.

GREG

I still don't see anything between the rocks.

ANDREW

Neither do I.

14

LATER ON DAY 4

Back in the tunnel. RANDELL, MIA, and ANDREW.

MIA

Do we have to talk down here?

ANDREW

Yes.

RANDELL

It's a matter of illustration.

MIA

God you both sound alike now.

ANDREW

Okay, so this place clearly had to have been built but at the same time it looks like it grew, right? Stones don't grow though, they are arranged. Plants grow. They grow predictably.

MIA

I guess. How long is this going to take.

ANDREW

Like an apple seed we know it will grow into an apple tree of some kind. What if you took the information inside that seed that the tree used to make itself and gave it to something that could manipulate the rocks like water or air.

MIA

Like humans.

ANDREW

Yes and no.

MIA

Uhhhh, Andy, do we have to this down here?

ANDREW

This is what I think, who ever made this used the same molecular instructions that a plant uses to make itself. But a plant needs to be pruned to keep its shape. And like keeping a bonzei tree, you have to trim it to keep it small.

But think of this as a homegrown house, plant a seed, grow a house.

MIA

Why is he doing this? You should get help Andy and Randell you're enabling him.

RANDELL

No I'm not.

I still like you.

MIA

Stop saying that, uhhhhh. It's like you guys never grew up.

RANDELL

He speaks the truth Mia, we've lived down here and you

ANDREW

Baby steps Randell.

RANDELL

Right, sorry.

MIA

You've lived down here?

ANDREW

That's not the important thing.

MIA

Are we getting to the important thing because I'm about to hi-jack your jeep and get out of here. There are so many things wrong with this and you, both of you. Just get to the point, are you saying someone is going to live down here, Aliens maybe? Huh Andy? Freak show Andy?

ANDREW

That's not necessary and I'm not talking about Aliens. And I'm not talking about the future, I'm talking about the past, someone lived down here. And when they did it was much smaller because they kept the growth under control but when they left/

RANDELL

/If they left, I still think there here, up there, Watts, for example/

ANDREW

/alright when they moved, then the growing went unchecked and the floating rocks, strange phenomena, etc.

MIA

That's nice, just bundle it all up in an etcetera - because you have no idea do you?

ANDREW

Well, actually I have a lot of ideas but it's even boring to me so no reason to go into it.

MIA

Bye Andy. See you when I see you.

ANDREW

Now you realize why I can't just go, it's a huge discovery and people have started to notice.

MIA

I know exactly what's going on here, you're having a late in life psychotic break and have convinced Randell that this all

ANDREW

People are asking questions/

MIA

You're paranoid

ANDREW

/They call Mr. Watts and ask

MIA

You have grandiose ideas

ANDREW

/They aren't from around here and they're asking questions

MIA

About what? There is nothing here but a pile of rocks.

RANDELL

The lights.

MIA

What lights?

ANDREW sighs.

RANDELL

Baby steps, right. I'm going up top.

ANDREW

No. Let's show her. Give me the thingy.

RANDELL

You said last time, you said it doesn't seem stable.

RANDELL hands Andrew the egg looking thing.

ANDREW

Let's hope it is.

MIA

What is that?

ANDREW

Just watch.

ANDREW shoves the cork thing into the wall and theres a violent shudder with a low vibrant hum.

MIA

Earthquake!

ANDREW

Wait.

The shuddering eases a little while glowing purple veins appear in the walls looking like backlit amethyst.

MIA

Oh my god. That is cool. Holy shit.

ANDREW

Come on we don't have much time. Randell no more than two minutes, got it?

RANDELL

Already counting down.

ANDREW grabs the rope and wraps it around both of them. He releases the cable and they fly up the cave, MIA screams in excitement.

15

ON THE SURFACE

At the elevated area GREG is wearing his jogging outfit and standing staring at the sky, he has a sandwich in one hand and a bottle of water in the other.

ANDREW and MIA nearly fly out of the hole.

GREG

Jesus Christ you guys, I think that was an earthquake.

The ground shudders.

GREG

Aftershock!

MIA

It's not. (Mia is looking up at the sky) That's impossible.

ANDREW

I know, but there it is.

GREG

It's beautiful. What is it?

MIA

The northern lights, an aurora borealis.

The ground shudders much more violently and rocks look as though they are floating. GREG is running in a circle saying oh shit oh shit and still holding his sandwich.

MIA

What's happening?

ANDREW

FEEDBACK! ISN'T IT GREAT!?

MIA

NO!

The shuddering stops and the aurora expands as it rises like a released bubble rising from the sea floor..

ANDREW

That's what I'm talking about. That's what I'm talking about!
Yeah! WOOOOOOOOOO!

Keep watching, it's not over yet. It's moving up into the atmosphere, like a big bubble.

Keeps getting bigger and bigger and then you thinks it's gone
annnnnnnnnd BIP!

MIA

The green flash. No way!

ANDREW

Yeah. The green flash. I can't explain that one/

RANDELL comes up out of the hole.

RANDELL

/dammit, I always miss the green flash.

ANDREW

But it feels like whatever this thing generated just expanded until it reached its limit and then boop! Just like a bubble that couldn't hold together anymore.

MIA

Jesus.

ANDREW

I know. It's crazy.

MIA

What IS it though.

ANDREW

Beats me. A house, a port, a museum? Greg it's over.

GREG stops and stares at the three of him and eats his sandwich.

MIA

Oh come on, you always have a theory. Give me the short version.

ANDREW

What if humans have figured out a way to travel through time?

Like, they've already been here. Come from the future and made this lavender bunker thing.

Darkness. This is an instant transition to scene 16.

16

The Ridge

WATTS is in a circle of light in the main playing area.

NOTE: The lingual density of this section should not intimidate. As WATTS walks through a presentation of Time Travel and Theory, where the word 'slides' appears, those descriptions should be rendered visually and as simply and as easy to understand animations.

WATTS

BAM! There it is! Right?

WATTS goes into a talky song bit over a guitar vamp.

WATTS

WHAT IF HUMANS COULD TRAVEL THROUGH TIME
GO BACK AND WATCH THE DINOSAURS
VISIT LOST RELATIVES BET ON THE CUBS WINNING THE CHAMPIONSHIP

WHAT IF HUMANS COULD TRAVEL THROUGH TIME
THEY'D CHANGE THE FUTURE
THEY'D CHANGE THE PAST
THEY'D CURE THE INCURABLE
THEY'D STOP IT IN ITS TRACKS

WHAT IF HUMANS COULD TRAVEL THROUGH TIME?

I tell you what if, we would do everything possible to prevent it. That is the future we.

I KNOW IT'S THE END OF THE NIGHT
AND Y'ALL AREN'T READY FOR WHAT
I'M ABOUT TO LAY ON YA
DON'T WORRY IT'S NOT HOSTILE

IT'S ACTUALLY KIND OF FUN

Take a moment and be ready for this final ride

I'm the only guardian of that guy down there, that's right, Andy or Andrew. I'm his guard. I keep him on his time- MY time-line.

Did you know he nearly "what if'd" my time out of existence?

I know first hand when it comes to time travel there are rules. If you break the rules you go to temporal prison, right now there is one person in the history and the future who is in temporal prison. That guy you've been watching all night. And this? All this is his cell.

Hard to believe? I know. Listen, he didn't invent a time travel machine. Hell no. He's a fixer, remember? He takes things apart and puts them back together. He fixes things. For Andy, the biggest fix for him was fixing his life, his past.

For a guy obsessed with rocks, he really is a genius. He realized after his mom died that if he wanted to travel back in time all he had to do was come up with a viable theory. Like Einstein's E equals MC squared. Think about it. Come up with the theory, that's actually correct, and in some future someone else uses that theory to make a time travel machine and BAM! Instant time-travel. Maybe that person wanted to meet young Andy and pays him a little visit and suddenly everything gets a little wonky and Andy starts asking questions like "what if I go to the future" or "what if I convince this traveler to convince future me" but he didn't need to do that. All he had to do is think it and his future self would act on it.

WATTS lets this one sink in while he lights a cigarette. He starts a slide show with the following principles and speaks over them. He does not attempt to explain them but refers to them as he talks.

SLIDE

PRINCIPLE 1

There are three kinds of time. Conscious time, physical time and present time. (an animation can show the strands weaving together)

Time is separated into three basic parts. These parts come together like a weaving to form a rigid time-line known as the past.

Present time on its own is fluid and represents the now. Physical time on its own is also fluid and is made up of the interactions of matter. Conscious time fixes physical and present time into a rigid time-line. The cause and effects of present and physical time interacting is now history and enters the collective consciousness of universe.

SLIDE

PRINCIPLE 2

Present time started with the big bang,
that is when time began.

Present time is expanding in all directions, as it expands it becomes thinner or dissipates, like light. It will go on infinitely but eventually will not be recognized as time at all. Don't ask me to explain it further than that.

SLIDE

PRINCIPLE 3

As present time expands, its trajectory
is determined by the interactions of
physical time.

Think of it like present time is like the bubble under water. As it rises it expands.

SLIDE

PRINCIPLE 4

In the present there are any number of
trajectories occurring simultaneously.

Conscious time is our collective memory of the past.

Humans perceive physical time as their individual experience.

As time passes it becomes rigid BUT and this is why we have the rules, if you send physical time into the rigid past, from that point the weave of time becomes fluid again and the previous time trajectory becomes uncertain.

The conscious time must be made again as new actions and reactions begin occurring because a new strand of physical time is introduced.

SLIDE

PRINCIPLE 5

Simultaneous trajectories occurring dissipate quickly if all times are not in balance and thus a single rigid trajectory exists for the past.

(There is a taught wire strung across the room. There is a fuse wrapped around this wire. WATTS lights the fuse in the middle so that it burns in two directions.)

SLIDE

PRINCIPLE 6

All matter has physical time.

Matter does not need to be sentient to be physical time. Imagine if we somehow transported a second moon from the future into the orbit of the earth. All of a sudden life as we know it would be completely different. The greater universe may not notice so much but we sure would because the closer you are to a temporal event the more amplified the effect.

SLIDE

PRINCIPLE 7

Any time travel will render a conscious time trajectory uncertain.

The point in time that a traveler arrives becomes fluid again and new trajectories will form from the interaction of physical time and present time until a new balance is reached and the conscious time forms.

Traveling into the future has never been attempted because the trajectory is uncertain.

Andy wrote the seven principles, published them and somehow got it right. My time, my world, where I live, my trajectory instantly contained time travel.

It could have just as easily contained the end of humanity, for example if his theory was wrong and it actually destroyed the quantum glue holding us in balance.

Listen up. This is what this is all about. The power of Andy's regret in life inspired his theory and also was his motive for breaking Temporal Law. Might be easier if he tells you.

Lights up on ANDY who is now suspended
in a tank of strange liquid. WATTS
turns a control knob and the liquid in
the tank changes color and ANDY appears
to regain consciousness and sings us a
song

ANDY

I never had regrets in life. What was the point, life happened,
there was no changing what happened so move on. Life moves fast
and living in the past solves nothing. Then one day I found
myself in the middle of a regret. A monster regret that chases
me through time and will haunt me forever.

I MADE A MISTAKE
DIDN'T LISTEN TO MY OWN ADVICE
NOW I'M STUCK NEVER GONNA DIE
HAUNTED FOREVER BY MY ONE REGRET

I NEVER SAID GOODBYE
NEVER SAID I LOVE YOU, ONE LAST TIME
DIDN'T HOLD HER HAND IN THE END
WASTED MY TIME UNDER DRY SUNSHINE

MY MOM LOST HER WORDS
WHILE I DUG HOLES IN A DESERT
MY MOM LOST HER WAY
WHILE I MADE LIGHT DISPLAYS

SHE GAVE ME SO MUCH
ALL I HAD TO DO IS GO TO HER
TELL HER ONE MORE TIME
YOU'RE A GOOD MOM, A GOOD MOTHER

SUNDAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST
LAUGH AT ALL MY JOKES
HOLD MY HAND WHEN I WAS SICK
SOFT BOILED EGGS FOR A SOUR STOMACH

MOM, YOU MADE A FULL LIFE
YOU MADE A BEAUTIFUL WORLD
YOU TOOK CARE OF US
I'M SORRY I NEVER SAID GOODBYE

I THOUGHT I STILL COULD
I THOUGHT TIME WAS A ROAD
A TWO WAY STREET I COULD
TURN AROUND FOR A SECOND CHANCE

I COULDN'T LIVE WITH WHAT I'D DONE
NOW IN HERE I'LL NEVER DIE
FOREVER HAUNTED BY MY ONE REGRET
FOREVER HAUNTED BY MY ONE REGRET

I WOULD'VE BROUGHT YOU GUMMY BEARS
WATCHED HOME MOVIES ON SUPER EIGHT
ATE BUTTER SCOTCH ICE CREAM
SANG CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN THE SUMMER

JUST ONE LAST TIME
SO WE COULD LAUGH AGAIN
YOU COULD LAUGH UNTIL THE END
DRIVE TO THE COUNTRY TO SEE THE STARS

JUST ONE LAST TIME
I COULD HOLD YOUR HAND
STROKE YOUR HAIR
SAY I LOVE YOU, YOU'LL BE ALRIGHT

WATTS turns the knob and ANDY returns to stasis.

WATTS

All that down there, the dig site, the music box, heh the music box. Andrew sent all of that back here from the future. All to get himself one simple message.

I know, why not just beam back and tell Andy himself? Because he was trying to get away with something that's why. Sending small little physical time nudges, keeping his temporal footprints as small as he could. Either way he broke the first and most important law to preserving our time line.

1) NO DIRECT COMMUNICATION OR INSTRUCTION WILL EVER BE DELIVERED TO ANY PERSON PLACE OR THING IN THE PAST.

WATTS (CONT'D)

You see this?

WATTS holds up the egg with the circle designs.

Look familiar? After he failed with the music box, he tried again with this egg.

Pretty clever if you ask me. He took a childhood moment between himself and his best friend, Randell, that was memorable but not too significant. Turned up the volume on that moment and make Randell think he's crazy.

So he placed a fake story in the past about other kids drawing these eggs. Timing was everything, right when everyone was talking and thinking about the movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

Now in the old Andy, these egg drawings and the story becomes an obsession. He becomes obsessed with aliens. He knows himself, got to give him that. He was able to keep his friend with him because of the 'alien' egg.

The quest begins, it's like a treasure hunt, the most difficult kind of manipulation to see from the future. Find the treasure, find the message. Andy is an extremely skilled manipulator.

Now here is the rub with such communications, you never really know if the person will understand the communique, right?

In fact, Andy missed his first message - the music box he dug up in the middle of Texas, he was supposed to hand deliver it to his mother NOT mail it. That way he would see his mom and likely decide to stay with her.

The lights begin to flicker a bit on the stasis tank.

But the plan had backfired a bit, the quest to find more evidence had rooted itself too deep into Andy's life motivations.

I don't think this one would have worked either (WATTS holds up the egg with mysterious lines on it) but you never know, you got

Randell down there, his sister, and the mystery tunnels, the lights, and then inside the mystery egg a message that says, GO HOME TO MOM - JUST DO IT ANDY.

Shit. If I had spent my life bouncing around the world chasing my tail after some egg and found the egg and opened it up and found this? I think I'd phhhhhpt myself, right there, I mean Andy's a genius but he lives in a spiritually volatile time, he could have really gone off the deep end.

Either way, in the end what we would have is this, Andy plus no regret equals no time theory and POOF my whole future disappears instantly.

So this is what I do from the future, it's not a bad desk job. (laughs a little) Brought my kids back here a few times on bring your kids to the office day. They had a hoot. I keep Andy at the dig site and make sure he suffers regret and invents time travel. It's the only way we can know for certain that our future will exist.

In my time this whole area has been declared a temporal dead zone and it's a museum. They set that class 9 V8 light display off every night, that aurora borealis thing - smoke and mirrors folks - all in an attempt to convince his old self to come home to his mom. It's all smoke and mirrors.

Andy is on display at the museum.

Light brightens on a suspended form of
ANDY on the elevated area. ANDY is
awake and exits the tank. He finds a
zapper gun.

WATTS (CONT'D)

His consciousness is held in suspense so he can't come back but his body is allowed to age slowly. He's out of sync, can never come back.

What if humans could travel through time
They'd change the future
They'd change the past
They'd cure the incurable
They could stop time in its tracks

They'd stop time in its tracks

and never look back.

ANDY zaps WATTS.

END PLAY

EPILOGUE

A SHORT FILM

ANDREW'S DREAM FROM WHEN HE WAS A CHILD.

SILENT MOVIE BASED ON ANDY'S DREAM

THE ALIEN MOTHERSHIP IS APPROACHING EARTH.

CUT TO: VAST DESERT HILL COUNTRY LANDSCAPE.

CUT TO: CLOSER INTO THE LANDSCAPE WHERE IN THE
DISTANCE WE CAN SEE TWO MEN WORKING.

CUT TO: CLOSER TO THE MEN. CLOSE-UP ON ANDREW AND
RANDELL WORKING ON AN ARCHEOLOGY DIG IN A
DESERT.

CLOSE-UP ON RANDELL EXAMINING A STRANGE ROCK
THAT IS FLOATING IN THE AIR.

CLOSE-UP ON ANDREW DUSTING OFF WHAT APPEARS
TO BE AN EGG SHAPE WITH CIRCULAR IMAGES ON
IT.

CUT TO: ALIEN SHIP ENTERING THE ATMOSPHERE.

CUT TO: RANDELL TAKING A QUICK BREAK AND DRYING HIS
BROW. HE TAKES A DRINK FROM HIS CANTEEN AND
SEES AND STRANGE SHAPE IN THE SKY. HE
POINTS.

CUT TO: ANDREW LOOKING UP AND SLOWLY GETTING TO HIS
FEET. HIS MOUTH IS WIDE OPEN. HE LOOKS AT
RANDELL.

CUT TO: RANDELL LOOKING AND ANDREW.

STEP BACK ENOUGH TO SEE THE WORK-SITE AND THE DUST KICKED UP FROM THE APPROACHING SHIP.

CUT TO: CLOSE-UP ON THE SHIP AS IT HOVERS HIGH IN THE SKY.

CLOSE-UP ON ANDREW LOOKING AFRAID.

CLOSE-UP ON RANDELL LOOKING CONFUSED.

CUT TO: THE ALIEN SHIP, IT IS OPENING SLOWLY. A SMALLER POD VERSION OF THE SHIP SEPARATES AND DESCENDS TO THE WORKSITE.

FROM ABOVE WE SEE ANDREW AND RANDELL STRUGGLING TO STAND. THEY FALL TO THE GROUND.

CLOSE UP ON THE POD SHIP AS IT SHAKES VIOLENTLY AND A BEAM OF LIGHT GOES TOWARD THE GROUND.

CUT TO: ANDREW HAS SEES THE EGG ON THE GROUND.

CUT TO: CLOSE-UP OF ANDREW REALIZING THE LIGHT IS ON THE EGG. HE REACHES FOR THE EGG WITH GREAT EFFORT AND GRABS IT. THE LIGHT IS TOO STRONG AND SNATCHES THE EGG FROM HIS HAND.

THE EGG RISES TO THE BELLY OF THE POD SHIP AND DISAPPEARS INSIDE. THE LIGHT FADES AND THE POD RETURNS TO THE LARGER SHIP. THE LARGER SHIP RETURNS TO SPACE.

CLOSE-UP ON ANDREW WEEPING IN CONFUSION. RANDELL ATTEMPTS TO COMFORT HIM.