

EPISODE 004

This is how you can spark your imagination and start writing a song.

See the show notes at www.storiesinsongs.com/004

Hey and welcome back to the Stories in Songs Podcast.

This is the podcast for musicians, songwriters, and storytellers who want to change lives and create meaning through the stories they tell and the songs they sing.

Today we attack that nagging, frustrating feeling of sitting in front of an empty paper and not being able to make the pen start writing, or making our fingers hit the right keys on the keyboard. Today, we want to beat that blank white sheet of paper.

So if you want to start with a new song and wonder if you have what it takes to come up with the lines that truly matter to someone, this episode is for you. After all, you have something to say and you ought to be able to share your message with others in order to make a positive impact in their lives.

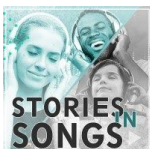
And I know what you're going through. Sometimes, when I write my stories, I wonder too if those lines have the power at all to connect with someone on a hopefully deep personal level. Then I feel unsure if I should just stop and delete everything or throw it all out of the window. Is that what I am writing just meaningful to me or also to someone else?

You know what?

It is valuable. Everything that comes from who you are, your heart, your soul, your feelings and emotions, or even from anger or some form of rebellion, is worth getting out there in the world. Because you are not the only one who feels that way.

Imagine, if no one would share how they feel or what they've gone through - or how they've overcome a challenge ... every person on this earth would feel totally lost and alone. We would become self-centered if we'd think there's no one out there who can understand us.

But you are in the spotlight. You want people to follow you for what is important to you, because you feel like it's important to so many others.



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG
www.storiesinsongs.com/004

So don't let yourself be held back by that inner resistance of doubt.

So here's what we can do.

And I'll talk about each one of those steps in this episode.

First, I'll show you why it's so important to trust the person you are and the power you have inside of you.

Secondly, I'll help you find a way to focus on one single thing that could spark your imagination and inspire you to start writing. That will burn inside of you. We'll ignite that fire. That passion. That sense of urgency and need to get it out of your system.

And thirdly, I'll give you three different types of beginnings that you can use to start filling that blank sheet of paper with words. This won't be a staring contest anymore. And you know how it ends. No matter how long you stare at that sheet of paper, you'll always lose. Except for if your computer intervenes and the screensaver goes on. But with those three types of beginnings, you'd be able to just make that paper yours. It's not your enemy. It's your friend.

So you're ready to get started?

Awesome, me too!

But here's a short reminder: Now if you haven't done so already, please subscribe to the show. If you don't want to miss out on how you can revolutionize your songwriting to make a meaningful impact in the world, then hit the button 'Subscribe' right now before you continue listening.

Thank you!

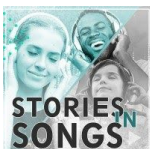
1. The power inside of you

[00:03:34] I'd love to start off today's episode with a quote from a short story I've recently read.

It's taken out of "The Truth of Fact, The Truth of Feelings" by Ted Chiang.

Here's what he wrote:

"People are made of stories. Our memories are not the impartial accumulation of every second we've lived; they're the narrative that we assembled out of selected



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

moments. Which is why, even when we've experienced the same events as other individuals, we never constructed identical narratives: the criteria used for selecting moments were different for each of us, and a reflection of our personalities. Each of us noticed the details that caught our attention and remembered what was important to us, and the narratives we built shaped our personalities in turn."

This is an amazing way of how you can see yourself and the stories you bring into this world. Gosh, it's just awesome to think that each of us shapes our story through who we are, what's important to us and what we feel and consider as valuable and meaningful. And so it's true, every single one of us has their own story to tell.

But that doesn't mean we're alone, just because the stories differ from person to person. They certainly do because a story is what makes us Us. It's what shapes who we are and who we become.

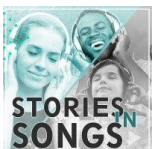
But still, if we start telling stories, we're able to connect with people who share the same values, who go through the same struggles as we did, who face challenges or are reminded of how valuable something they've got in their lives truly is. And they look to us, to the people who share their stories, because they sometimes even need us to be their guide. To help them navigate their lives, to make the right decisions and be reminded to listen to what their heart or their guts tell them.

Telling stories can do all that. And not in a preachy old fashioned kind of way. But we take our listeners on an adventure. On their own adventure, because our listeners are the heroes of their own lives. They write their own stories. But we can still participate because every hero needs a guide. Someone to trust and someone to count on when all falls apart and they have no idea how to go on.

We can make an impact. Every songwriter, every storyteller, every person can. All by sharing what we've gone through in life and making it accessible to others.

That doesn't mean I want you to spill your guts and be an open book. But I want you to tap into what's important to you and think of the things that shaped the person you've become. Start with the little incidents that made an impact on you.

I don't want you to be the hero. You don't need to be anymore. You've gone through your struggles and you've made it through. Or maybe you're still struggling, but you've already been at it for so long that you are able to let people participate and maybe even warn them in telling them what got you to that point or what you've already tried to get out of that place you're in.



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

All I'm saying is there's so much potential in the person you are and what you've already been through in life, that you just need to look at yourself or even remember what you've seen others go through - good or bad - and share it with your audience.

People connect with someone and trust someone who seems authentic to them. And you can only be authentic if you are you and stay true to who you are.

So I encourage you to not hide who you are or what makes you you. Show it to the world.

If you want your songs to resonate with your audience and let your purpose drive you - hoping to give some guidance, hope or a sense of belonging back to the people who listen to your songs, then this is your chance to create something meaningful.

2. Write about what inspires/drives you

[00:07:58] Okay, now that we've talked about how only you have the power to make an impact in the lives of the people who can relate to what you've experienced and what you share with them, it's time that we take that blank sheet of paper and draw a circle right in the middle.

Yes, a circle. Or make it a triangle, a square, a heart ... whatever shape you want. If you use a computer, turn it off and just get yourself some paper.

Remember, the idea is that we have to find a beginning so that we can write a finish a song. Where there's no beginning, there's no end. There's nothing.

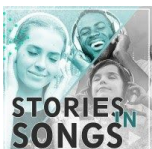
So let's draw a shape of your choice onto that paper. Right in the middle. And if you're angry, let your frustration out and scratch the pen over the paper as if you wanted to erase that blankness with all the force you got.

The idea is, that we fill that paper. No matter what.

Okay, if you got that paper in front of you now. I hope it's still whole and you haven't torn it apart entirely, we can go on. Remember, the sheet of paper is your friend.

And sometimes you let your anger off at your friends, but now be nice, slide with your hands over that paper, feel it and let's tap into the emotion you've just felt.

I know, this might seem like a waste of time. But the shape, as well as the force with which you drew the shape, tells you what you're current emotional state is. If you drew a circle,



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

very slowly, to make it really round, that means you're probably feeling balanced. If you drew a triangle with its sharp edges, three lines to do the job means you probably just want to get it done or get started. A rectangle or square shows that you're ready to organize, and just scratching over the paper ... well, you can guess what that means.

So now that this sheet of paper doesn't look that intimidating anymore, we can start with writing down words that either express what you feel right now, or if you're ready, you can also try and remember a certain situation in your life, one that you've experienced yourself or seen someone go through who had your full empathy, and write down how that incident made you feel.

On one side of the shape you've drawn, write down how you felt when it happened. Did you feel lost? Overwhelmed? Stuck? Sad? Hopeless? Devastated? Disillusioned? Resistant? Or happy? Fulfilled? Amazed? In Awe? Whatever it is, put it down on the left side of the shape.

When you've come up with those words of emotions, think about what was the cause of why you felt this way? Try to look deeper than considering just the surface. This means, if your lover broke up with you, that's the surface. That's the external force that upended your status quo and threw your life out of balance.

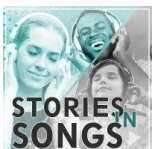
But what you need to focus on now, is what did you lose or gain at that particular moment? What did that incident mean for your life?

Did you lose faith? Did or does it bother you what others may think of you now? Is your status threatened? Did you disappoint someone and you feel like your morality is questioned? What is the core of what's bothering you the most about that incident? Do you feel like a failure? Maybe you had higher expectations? Maybe you wanted to do something good, but it backfired?

Of course, you don't have to look into a negative incident. If you feel happy right now, then what exactly makes you happy? What have you achieved for you or someone else and what valuable difference does it make to have that in your life?

If you have trouble coming up with a reason to how you feel at the moment or can't come up with an exciting memory, try to answer one of the following questions and use them as inspiration:

1. What do you secretly fear? How would you feel if what you fear would happen right now?
2. What do you wish you'd have in your life? How would your life look like if you have that one thing you wanted? What's the emotion that would trigger?



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

3. What do you worry about? What keeps you up at night? And how does it influence you?
4. What's a worst or best case scenario for something you're dealing with right now? How would it make you feel if you solve that problem? And how would you feel if the problem gets out of control?

If you still can't come up with anything, open a news portal on the web. Look at the first story that gets your attention. Without reading it, write down what kind of emotion that headline triggered.

Now that you've found out the root of why that particular problem bothers you or why an incident lifted up your spirits, it's time to think about the other side. I don't just mean the space on the right side of your shape, but more importantly, we have to focus on that problem or that positive incident now.

First.

If you wrote down the feelings of something that frustrated you or bothered you, got on your nerves, made you sad or angry, and you've identified the cause of the problem, imagine what could resolve that problem.

If you had the power to somehow deal with that problem and face that conflict, how would it look like? What would you do? What would you recommend someone else to do if they were in that situation?

What is your goal? Why would you fight to solve that problem somehow? What would your life look like if that problem is taken care of? What would you gain?

Write this on the free space on the right-hand side of your shape.

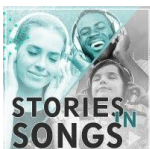
If it was a positive incident that made you feel pretty good, I want you to think about what it would feel like if you'd lose that special thing. Or simply write about the fear of losing it. How would that make you feel? What's your biggest worry or biggest fear in that context?

What would life look like losing that particular positive feeling?

This exercise helps you to see the two sides of a problem or a positive event.

And we need that contrast.

If there's nothing to lose or gain, simply put: if there's nothing at stake in the stories you sing about, the listener will not invest themselves in what you sing about.



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

The lines might still sound nice. But if there's nothing that hooks the listener and tells them what's worth fighting for or trying to be avoided, then your audience will not be interested in the lyrics.

Think about it this way: The music and the melody are the tools that you use for communicating with your audience. But in order to truly connect with someone, you need to get their attention. And memorable songs, or songs that have the power to make an impact in your listeners' lives, have a character who goes through a transformation. And the reason the character changes is by facing conflict and having to deal with what he or she can lose or gain.

Knowing what's at stake helps your listeners understand what your song is about. After all, if there's a problem, there's a goal. If there's a positive incident, there's something to lose.

Listeners can invest themselves better in a song if they are able to root for the character in your song because they want them to achieve what they want. By giving the character a purpose the listener will cheer for them if they reach their goal or be sad if something goes wrong, at least as long as the character was fighting for what they wanted.

There will be an emotional reaction.

Emotion is what triggers your listeners into connecting with your songs, and ultimately with you.

And this is what we want, right? If we want to turn our listeners into fans, this is the foundation of making that happen. They need to connect with you first because they value what you have to say.

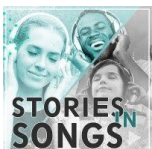
I've just recently read a short Instagram post. There were pictures of My Chemical Romance and there was one word written to each picture. It said: "*They were there for me when no one else was.*"

This is so powerful.

And that is the power that musicians and artists have.

And being generic doesn't make an impact.

But it makes an impact if we use art not only as a means to express ourselves but also as a tool that has the power to change people's lives.



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

And My Chemical Romance certainly did save a lot of lives.
Through their music.
And that is an amazing accomplishment.
They live for their fans. They want their message to get out there.
It's who they are. They are true and authentic and don't pretend to be someone they are not.

It's all them.
And their songs are not generic.

They have a purpose.
They are specific.

And they tell stories in their songs.

And that's why they have so many raving fans and they've gained even more fans even after they had split up because teenagers who feel misunderstood, alone, bullied, wrong ... they still turn to the songs of MCR because they are helping them through a difficult time in their lives.

They help them survive.

And it's true for many: "*They were there for me when no one else was.*"

This is the power of songs and great storytelling.

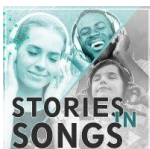
And I just think the power you have as a person of growing public interest is something important to be aware of. Especially if you have a message that you want to communicate because you feel like it's your purpose.

3. The beginning and setting up expectations

[00:18:43] Okay, so now we have that paper in front of us.
We've written our emotions on it, the root or cause of those emotions and we thought about what we have to gain or to lose.

Now it's time, to actually start with the first lines of the song.
Because as every writer knows, the first lines are always the hardest. Finding a beginning is what is so damn hard and keeps us stuck at a staring contest with that paper.

But it doesn't need to be.



So here's what you can do in order to come up with the first lines of a song so that you do not feel like you have no ideas or no clue as to how to start.

Since you know now the problem or the incident that you want to write about, the first thing you need to remember is that, same as in a story, we have to hook the listener quickly. That means the first lines of your song are there to establish what topic you're gonna sing about.

Are you singing about heartbreak or falling in and out of love? Or is it about a crime that was committed? Do you sing about life and death stakes? Does your song deal with how a person came to understand that their view of the world was black and white and they gained a better understanding? Or even meaning? Was there a question of morality? Or is it a performance story you want to tell that is all about gaining honor and respect?

No matter what kind of central idea you have for your song, you need to set up the expectations at the beginning of the song. And most importantly, you have to pay them off.

Nothing's worse than giving the listeners a promise to what a song will be about, and not delivering on that promise.

So, the first lines you write are there to establish the topic of your song. And the way to do it is by diving straight into the problem.

In "I'll be there for you" by Bon Jovi he starts with: *"I guess this time you're really leaving. I heard your suitcase say goodbye."*

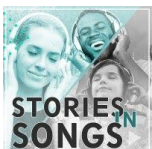
This beginning gives us a sense that this song is about love, and more so, it's about a breakup.

Or consider: *"When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie."* That line is taken from "That's Amore" by Dean Martin. And it's obvious, this song is about the magic of having fallen in love with someone.

Eminem's song "Lose yourself" starts with *"Look. If you had one shot. Or one opportunity To seize everything you ever wanted In one moment. Would you capture it Or just let it slip?"*

This is amazing storytelling because Eminem confronts the listener with a dilemma right at the beginning of the song. It's a performance story. And wow, I am so hooked! I definitely wanna find out how it all turns out for the character.

Green Day's 'American Idiot' is another great example of how you can make a statement right at the beginning of the song but also introduce a bigger scope to your song. Billie Joe just lets everyone know: *"Don't wanna be an American idiot."*



Well, who wants to be? So Green Day immediately gets the attention of the listeners for having the cojones to rebel like they do, which is also the reason why we love them so much.

So you see, no matter what context your song idea belongs to, you set up your central idea right from the beginning. And the good thing is since you know the emotions, the problem or incident itself as well as the goal, you can focus on one of those three things to write the first line of your song.

But I have another special treat for you.

4. Three types of beginning the lyrics of a song

[00:22:20] You might still not know what options you might have to implement one of those three possibilities to start writing your very first line so that you own that blank sheet and see it as your tool to let your imagination flow visibly.

That's why I want to show you three different types of how you can begin the lyrics of your song. This will help you get through this undefined vast of possibilities in which creative people so easily get lost in. Because how can we decide, if there's just so much we can do when at the same time, we're just looking for some guidance that helps us navigate.

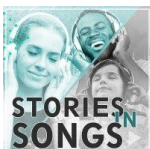
By the way, if you're in your car or somewhere where you can't take notes, don't worry. I have you covered. If you visit my website storiesinsongs.com/004 ... that is storiesinsongs.com/004 you'll find the show notes to this episode, the transcript as well as additional links that dive even deeper into the three types of beginning.

But they are easy, so I'm sure you'll be able to keep up.

So, as already said, songs should tell the listener what they are about right from the beginning because through that clarity we get a sense of what kind of song we're listening to.

And there are three ways you can start your song with. Either with action, narrative, or setting.

Let's start with the first and most common one:



Action Beginning

[00:23:45] There is the Action beginning.

As the title says, there is an action that pulls the listener right into an unfolding event.

There is no explanation as to how the character got into that situation.

We, as the listeners, feel like we're a part of the situation because action openings are immediate and close. They are easily recognizable by using action verbs like 'fill', 'fade', 'stay', 'run' etc.

For example, "What About Now" by Daughtry starts with: *"Shadows fill an empty heart as love is fading."*

Or Placebo's "Teenage Angst" starts with: *"Shine the headlight Straight into my eyes. Like the roadkill, I'm paralyzed."*

In songs, an action beginning is mostly used when you start the song with dialogue. That means when either the character addresses someone else or repeats something another character said to him.

So keep in mind, dialogue is action, too.

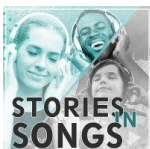
If the protagonist 'talks' to someone, that's an action. It's immediate and close, too, and it plunges the listener into a situation where he/she has to find out first what's going on.

For example, Westlife's "If Your Heart's Not In It" starts with the line *"I'm missing you, Girl, even though you're right here by my side."*

Or the song "Look at what you made me do" by Taylor Swift starts with "I don't like your little games. Don't like your tilted stage."

Or Fall out Boy with "I Don't Care" start with the following dialogue: "Say my name, and his in the same breath, I dare you to say they taste the same."

So if you want, start your song by just talking to another person. And as seen in these examples, try to include what the problem is that the character in your song deals with. After all, there needs to be a reason for that conversation or for that particular action.



Narrative Beginning

[00:25:42] Now if you don't want to plunge your listeners right into the action of an unfolding event, that might confuse them because they still have to catch up on what's going on, you can also use a narrative beginning.

That means a song can also begin with an explanation before diving into the action. It can be about the situation the characters are in or about a character himself.

Typical for a narrative beginning is when a fact is stated or the character tells us about something he/she has experienced.

Here are some examples of a narrative beginning:

"I'm only human sometimes I make mistakes." – Somebody Needs You by Westlife.

Or in "36 Degrees" Placebo starts the song by saying: *"We were tight. But it falls apart as silver turns to blue."*

Sometimes there can also be a narrative beginning by using dialogue. That's when we don't know if the protagonist is talking to someone else or talking only to himself.

Two examples from the band Westlife are:

"I can't sleep, I just can't breathe when your shadow is all over me, baby". That's from the song "Miss You".

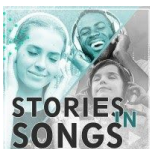
Another example is: *"Since you've gone, well it seems like everything is wrong."* - which is from the song "Change the World".

The trick about action dialogue and narrative is to find out in those examples if the couple has already separated. If she is just a 'shadow' or she's 'gone', then the chances of the protagonist talking to her face to face are pretty slim. So if she's not there, then it's the protagonist stating a fact, hence narrative. He's probably talking to himself.

Setting Beginning

[00:27:27] The third option you have at your disposal is using setting as a means to start the lyrics of a song.

Setting refers to starting with a description of the surroundings rather than character action, dialogue or narrative which creates the biggest narrative distance between the listener and the characters in your song.



You should consider that when you begin your song with setting, the environment gains more importance than the characters.

In my analysis of all the 137 original love songs of Westlife, this type of beginning was used the least. The same is valid for all the 82 songs on the studio albums of Placebo.

But here are some examples

In Westlife's upbeat song "When You're looking like that" they describe another character in the first line which serves the song well because it's all about letting this hot girl go. They say: *"She's a 5 foot 10 in catsuit and Bambi eyes."*

Or another song starts with *"Eyes like a sunrise, like a rainfall down my soul."* (Evergreen)

And I love that one beginning of Placebo's Song "Sleeping With Ghosts" because they have managed to draw a vivid picture even though they start with a description of the surroundings. But it feels alive anyway. The song begins with: *"The sea's evaporating Though it comes as no surprise. These clouds we're seeing They're explosions in the sky."*

Sometimes it's hard to determine if a song begins with setting or action when the character is telling someone about something. This could be action (dialogue) too. But if we look at the character as the storyteller, the description of a person or an emotion or a place belongs to setting.

Action, Narrative and Setting are three very useful ways if you don't know how to begin your song.

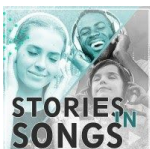
I encourage you to come up with different ideas that are action, narrative, and setting for the problem or incident that you wanted to deal with.

If you practice those beginnings, then you train your brain like a muscle. And whenever you sit down to come up with a new song, you'll be trained in this method and won't end up staring at that blank sheet of paper that tries to swallow you.

Just practice the craft of how to begin.

So try it out right now. Or, if you're still on the road, the next time you got some minutes. You can even just write some lines on your phone.

Remember, the point is that you learn to beat the resistance of being scared to start. Because there's no reason to be scared at all. You have the power. It's all in you. It's just waiting for you to release what makes you so unique. It's your story. And only you can tell your story. Everything you've been through in life, it belongs to you. It's your narrative. And



you know what's valuable and what you need to share because it's become so important to you.

How to begin a Love song

[00:30:24] Before I end this episode, I wanna give you some more examples of how much the problem a song deals with as well as the beginning can fit together. Especially when you write love songs from time to time, this addition will be helpful to you. It's a great point of reference and the next love song you'll listen to, think about how they started their song.

One of the things I've noticed, especially for love songs, it's a good thing if you make it clear at what stage the two lovers are in their relationship.

Right from the first line of the song, we should be able to tell: Have they just fallen in love? Are they taking the next step? Have they broken up? Or does their love even last after parted by death?

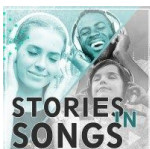
Once again, using action (dialogue) or narrative to introduce a problem the protagonist can face is a powerful way to hook the listener from the beginning of the song.

Songs, as well as stories, need to hook their audience quickly. By referring to a specific problem you not only give your audience a sense of what your song is about but more importantly you're setting up an expectation as to how to solve that problem if they ever find themselves in the same situation.

So, as we already know, the lyrics give a promise to the listener. This promise is set up in the first lines of a song.

Just look at the beginning of the following love songs:

- *"Once we had it all for the taking, love was just me and you."* – "No No" by Westlife. Narrative beginning. The couple is still together but things have changed between them. Clearly to see by using the words 'once' and 'was'.
- *"I want to know whoever told you I was letting go of the only joy that I have ever known?"* – "Swear it Again" by Westlife. Action (Dialogue) beginning. The couple is still together but one of them needs reassurance. There are people against their love. ('whoever')
- *"Baby, I know the story, I've seen the picture, it's written all over your face."* – "Fool Again" by Westlife. Action (Dialogue) beginning. The lovers broke up.
- *"An empty street, an empty house, a hole inside my heart."* – "My Love" by Westlife. Setting beginning. Someone has lost his loved one.
- *"So here we stand in our secret place where the sound of the crowd is so far away."* – "Queen of my Heart" by Westlife. Action (Dialogue) beginning. There are people who are against the relationship.



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

- “*We started as friends but something happened inside me.*” – “Obvious” by Westlife. Narrative beginning. Two people are falling in love. Love Song Beginnings of famous songs
- “Unchained Melody” by The Righteous Brothers starts with “*Oh, my love, my darling. I’ve hungered for your touch.*” The type of beginning is Action (Dialogue) and we get the sense that those lovers are gonna reunite.
- “Ring of Fire” by Johnny Cash starts with the famous line: “*Love is a burning’ thing and it makes a fiery ring.*” The type of beginning is exposition. And we feel like this song is about a first Kiss or intimate connection.

Those are just some examples of how the first lines of a song can come together.

I hope that this gives you a great tool of how you can beat that blank sheet of paper. Always remember to focus on that problem and your emotions. This will put you into the right state of mind to tap into your experience and memories.

And then just try to come up with the first lines of your song. Use Action, Dialogue, Narrative or even Setting to set up the expectations for your listeners.

If you think this exercise is helpful, please leave me a comment on storiesinsongs.com/004.

If you have any questions, feel free to ask it in the comments on storiesinsongs.com/004 or write me an email to write@storiesinsongs.com.

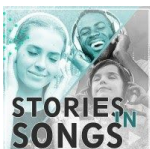
In the next episode, we’ll talk about how you can use this exercise with the shape, the emotions, problems, and goals to actually find the best way for you to finish a song you’ve started.

If you don’t want to miss out on the next episode and how you can complete a song, hit subscribe and I’ll see you next time.

Thanks for listening to the Stories in Songs Podcast.

Melanie

Note: Find out more about ‘How to Launch a Scene’ on the Story Grid website: <https://storygrid.com/how-to-launch-a-scene/>



EPISODE 004: HOW TO START TELLING A STORY IN A SONG

www.storiesinsongs.com/004

Lyrics Copyright:

- I'll Be There for You © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Universal Music Publishing Group, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.
- That's Amore © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Four Jays Music Pub
- Lose Yourself © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.
- American Idiot © Warner Chappell Music, Inc
- What About Now © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, BMG Rights Management, Reservoir Media Management Inc
- Teenage Angst © BMG Rights Management
- If Your Heart's Not in It © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC
- Look What You Made Me Do © Spirit Music Group, Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.
- I Don't Care © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Universal Music Publishing Group, Downtown Music Publishing
- Somebody Needs You © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Universal Music Publishing Group, BMG Rights Management
- 36 Degrees © BMG Rights Management
- Miss You © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.
- Change the World © Universal Music Publishing Group
- When You're Looking Like That © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.
- Evergreen © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Peermusic Publishing, Warner Chappell Music, Inc, Universal Music Publishing Group
- Sleeping With Ghosts © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, BMG Rights Management
- No No © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Peermusic Publishing, BMG Rights Management
- Swear It Again © BMG Rights Management
- Fool Again © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Universal Music Publishing Group
- My Love © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Warner Chappell Music, Inc, Universal Music Publishing Group
- Queen of My Heart © Universal Music Publishing Group, BMG Rights Management
- Obvious © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Peermusic Publishing, BMG Rights Management
- Unchained Melody © Unchained Melody Pub LLC
- Ring of Fire © Painted Desert Music Corp, Painted Desert Music Cor, Shapiro Bernstein & Co Limited

