

EPISODE 050

“The Comeback” by Drew Davies - A great example of a redemption story in a song

See the show notes at storiesinsongs.com/podcast/episode-050

[00:00:00] Hi, this is Melanie from Stories in Songs - Writing the Lyrics.

Today, I wanna move away from all those love songs we’ve talked about in the past, because I recently had the pleasure to listen to the song “The Comeback” by the London-based musician Drew Davies.

As stated on metaltalk.net, this song by Davies “is a call to arms for society’s malcontents and a tip of the hat to an era of alternative greats such as David Bowie, Sisters of Mercy and Nine Inch Nails.”

And especially, as you know me, we’re gonna talk about the power of the lyrics.

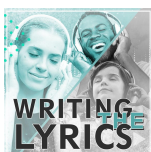
So let’s dive in and find out why the lyrics of Davies’ “The Comeback” are so powerful!

TEASER

The S.O.N.G. Framework

[00:01:19] So today, we will study the storytelling power of the lyrics of the song “The Comeback” by Drew Davies using the S.O.N.G.-framework.

This framework is the process I’ve come up with to have guidance when not only evaluating the power of the lyrics themselves, but more importantly, that framework is a revision tool. It guides the songwriter through the most important aspects of a strong lyric to find out what works in the lyrics, what does not and how to improve them.



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It's a great system to look at a song lyric, take it apart, and see if all the pieces create a consistent whole. And it also includes all the questions we need to answer when we want to find out how much the lyrics are able to captivate the listener, hook them, engage them, and, most importantly, provide a meaningful message for their lives.

As you've heard me talk about it in previous episodes, the S.O.N.G. framework consists of 4 steps: S like Summary - O like Observer - N like Narration - G like Gist.

So first, we'll summarize the song and determine what it's mainly about.

After an overview of the song, we'll get to know the song's main character.

In the third step, we look at the key components that make a story in a song work.

And lastly, we talk about the big takeaway the lyrics provide.

If this is your first time hearing about the S.O.N.G. framework and you want to hear more about it, you can always look at previous episodes with a song title in their name. That's almost always a lyric study that follows the S.O.N.G. framework.

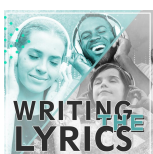
And for those of you who want to learn more about how to come up with powerful lyric ideas, and actually write and revise their song lyrics, I have an amazing online course available that takes you from idea, to outline, to draft to finished and revised lyrics. Step-by-Step, so you learn how to craft the content and what makes lyrics truly powerful.

All of that comes with lots of bonuses and most importantly, many well-known song examples that show that there is a hidden craft to writing empowering and powerful lyrics ... and in my course, the secret is revealed to you.

So head over to lyricmastery.com/masterclass and become a songwriter who writes lyrics That People Love To Sing Along To.

“The Comeback” by Drew Davies

[00:03:38] Alright, and now let's get back to the song “The Comeback” that proves that if you've truly lived through something, the secret craft of writing powerful lyrics comes quite naturally to you because it is embedded in your experience.



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Drew Davies himself has been praised by the press and has been called an “original sonic explorer” by the festival director Jack Bentinck.

Furthermore, Music News has called him “A stunningly captivating indie rock belter” and KERRANG said, he has “Monstrous vocals and more hooks than a slaughterhouse.”

So that’s Drew Davies and anyone who has not yet checked out his music, you definitely should. Especially his latest single “The Comeback” which we’re gonna talk about now.

Before we go through the lyrics, here’s what Drew Davies said about his song in an interview with metaltalk.net. He said: *“The Comeback was written as I emerged from a particularly hard time in my life. It’s a cry for freedom and an anthem for regaining control of your own destiny.”*

And now, as always, let’s read the lyrics so you know what we’re gonna be talking about. And I’m so glad that Drew himself will be reading his lyrics to you.

So give it up for Drew.

[[Video]]

https://youtu.be/OiYfrV467_c

The Comeback Lyrics © Drew Davies

*Burn, burn, burn
As the pages turn
Filled with passion and fire
I’ve spread my pain
All throughout this land
Flying higher and higher
On the wings of love
They’ve dragged me down
And helped me tie my noose
Ashes and heartbreaks
I’ve worn them as my shroud
Until life cut me loose*

*And all that’s said
Becomes undone*

*Freedom
You will know my name*



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*Freedom
I'm alive again
The comeback kid
yeah he rides again
Freedom
You will know my name*

*Yearn, yearn, yearn
As the worm it turns
Turns away from the mire
I'll cut my cord
From my overlords
And build their funeral pyre
Oh the wings of love
They've dragged me down
But watch me rise again
7/11 yeah I'll wear my crown
The old mans back again*

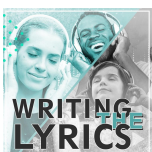
*And all that's said
Becomes undone*

*Freedom
You will know my name
Freedom
I'm alive again
The comeback kid
yeah he rides again
Freedom
You will know my name*

*I will comeback just to prove myself
I will return again just to try*

Alright, thank you Drew for providing your lyrics and reading them for my listeners.

And now, let's dive right into the SONG framework and talk about why those lyrics are so powerful.



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1. Summary (About)

[00:07:02] Let's start with getting an overview of what the song is about. This first step is laying the groundwork for our lyric study.

So the first question is:

1. What is the song about?

The song is called "The Comeback" which already gives us a clue that someone returns to do something again that no one or even themselves never expected to do again.

But more specifically, it's not just any comeback. It's a comeback from overcoming your mistakes that have dragged you down and even morally corrupted you.

So what's beautiful about it is that after hitting a moment when everything seemed lost, the character in the song did not throw in the towel and give up. Instead, he picked up the pieces of his shattered worldview and started to redeem himself by fighting the powers that once dragged him down. He's been through hell and still, he's rising again.

So that song is a wonderful and empowering redemption story because it shows the listener that no matter what hell you've been through or what you did wrong, you can always come back from it and do what's right. And become a better person.

So that's something amazing that Drew has pulled off in his lyrics.

So let's talk a little more about how he did it.

The second question is:

2. Do the song's first lines set the expectations of what the song will be about. Do they give a promise to the audience that they'll hear about a story that involves the song's main character's morality?

The reason why we specifically look at a song's first lines, is because the opening lines of any lyric decide if the listeners are intrigued to hear more about what you have to say or if they are not interested to hear more about it.

So the first lines of a song, more so, the very first line, has to hook and engage your audience. They must make them want to keep listening to the rest of the song.



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If you are not sure how you can create an attention-grabbing opening line, I have written a short book that is called: “Attention Grabbing Opening Lines” which shows you the 9 most powerful ways to hook your audience with your very first line. And the book comes with over 250 lyric examples as well as how-to explanations so you can write a strong lyrical hook right at the beginning of your song. I’ll include the link to the book in the show notes.

Now, when we look at the opening lines of Drew Davies’ song “The Comeback”, there are two things that I wanna talk about.

So, the song starts with him singing: “*Burn, burn, burn as the pages turn*”.

So that opening indicates that the song’s character is in a mess. So our attention is grabbed because the lyrics start right with a problem. And the powerful problem is one of the most used and strongest ways to hook your audience’s attention.

Added to that, the opening lines also speak for what the song will be about. They give a promise to the audience as to what kind of story to expect in the lyrics.

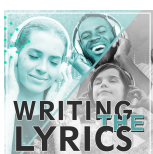
Because as we said, the song is a morality redemption story. And if you know any redemption stories, just take the famous “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens as an example, we all know that the story starts with a despicable protagonist who begins at their worst. And if they don’t manage to pull their life around, they are headed for damnation.

And what is a symbol of damnation? Hell, right?

And we burn in hell.

And so with the first lines of “*Burn, burn, burn as the pages turn*”, we are not only introduced to the song’s story content genre, which is morality, but also to the powerful problem that is combined with severe stakes. So there’s a lot at stake here. And I don’t know about you, but when I hear those lines, I definitely wanna hear more about it ... not just to know about the song’s character’s mistakes and to check if I’m heading in the same direction, so to say, to save my own ass, but more importantly, I’m so intrigued on how someone who already has come to this dark place in their life... I wanna know are they able to turn their life around? And if so, how?

So the song offers a very strong beginning that serves what the song is mainly about perfectly.



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So now that we know we are listening to a morality story in the lyrics, more so, a redemption story which is a subgenre of the morality genre, let's talk about if the song uses conventions of the morality story.

3. Does the song use conventions of the morality story genre?

Conventions are the conditions that set up the expected must-have moments of a story of a certain kind of story content genre. Every story content genre, like morality, has their own set of conventions that are typical for a story like this. They are what the audience expects to be there. Without them, the audience will be confused, unsettled, or bored and quit paying attention.

And those conventions refer to the setting, character, or circumstances that create conflict and enable solutions.

For a morality story, there are five necessary conventions:

1. A despicable protagonist begins at their worst.
2. A spiritual mentor or sidekick illuminates aspects of the problem the protagonist cannot see yet.
3. A seemingly impossible external conflict forces the protagonist to choose to share or withhold their gifts.
4. Ghosts from the protagonist's past torment them.
5. Aid is given from unexpected sources.

Now contrary to written stories that need to have all those conventions in it, for a lyric it's totally fine to only have one convention of the chosen story content genre included.

It can be more, but aim for one at least.

In the song "The Comeback" by Drew Davies, we've already mentioned that we have a **despicable protagonist who begins at their worst**.

The protagonist is just another word for the song's main character.

And let's look at the lyrics because everything we say needs to be in the lines of the lyrics.

So when we read through the lyrics, there are two lines that really hammer home that convention of the despicable protagonist who begins at their worst.



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Drew sings:

*"I've spread my pain
All throughout this land"*

So that's really something that affects a lot of people and not something we should do in life. Don't get me wrong, it's okay to share your pain. But we gotta look at the choice of words: and he says he spread his pain. So that's something that is done, to a certain extent, willingly.

Now also, we have another convention in the lyrics which is: **"A seemingly impossible external conflict forces the protagonist to choose to share or withhold their gifts."**

In the lyrics, he's talking about his overlords that have dragged him down. It got so far that those people had helped him *"tie his noose"*. So we understand that they had immense power over him. They show the seemingly impossible conflict that he's up against. And he has to choose if he withholds his gift, which is the person he once was and he will eventually die, or will he return to the person he once was, at least to his moral compass, and use this to overpower those overlords that have dragged him down.

And lastly, there's another convention in the lyrics.

And you know, sometimes the more of those conventions are used, the more powerful the lyrics become. There's absolutely no doubt what's at the heart of those lyrics of "The Comeback" because the characters in it, the world they live in, and the conflict of the story all contribute to painting a very strong experience.

So the last convention that is included in the lyrics is **"Ghosts from the protagonist's past torment them."**

And we find that convention in the lines:

*Ashes and heartbreaks
I've worn them as my shroud*

So that's something from the song's main character's past that still haunts them.

Now the next question in the first step of the S.O.N.G. framework is:



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4. When is it all happening?

We wanna know is there an indication to when the narrative in the lyrics is happening and for how long is it? And what's the choice of tense?

This question is important because it reveals ...

- if the song's story moment has already happened and therefore is just a retelling of events that already has a fixed outcome and we can just listen in and find out what the song's main character already has been through
- or if the song pulls the listener right into an unfolding event where we and the song's main character at the beginning of the song don't know how it will all turn out
- or if the song is about an imagined, anticipated, or feared future event

In the song "The Comeback" by Drew Davies, the song starts in the past tense. It's an insight into the song's main character's story of what has happened to him so far so we get a feel for him and what he's been through.

The chorus is a combination of present and future tense. He's stating what he's after. He's telling us about his mighty desire which is something many seek to gain too.

The second verse is a combination of all three tenses but we feel like we're right there in the moment with the song's main character and how he's making his plans to do what's necessary. And by that, by watching him do that, we get a sense that indeed "*the old man's back again*", which is also the last line of the second verse and just highlights what we've already experienced. So it's more like a very convincing statement that we believe because we've seen it in action before: yes, indeed. *the old man's back again*.

Still, we don't know when exactly (regarding a certain season or daytime) the lyrics' narrative is happening. But in that case it's okay, because the narrative spans over a large amount of time that can't be nailed down to a certain time. It's something that continuously progresses forward. So it's okay to leave out the exact time of it all.

5. And lastly, what's the point of view?

This question helps us know how intimate the relationship is between the listener and the song's main character. It tells us how far the audience is away from the world of the song.

It also defines the relationship between the singer and the audience and sets the context for the ideas.



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And “The Comeback” by Drew Davies uses “First Person”.

And that’s the best choice if you want to write an empowering song that aims at defeating another power.

We don’t wanna use direct address because then the listener might feel like they are being battled against. Rather, we want the listener to take our side and we can only do that if they slip in the shoes of the song’s main character. And by providing that first verse and painting the character’s back story, the listener has enough time to become the song’s main character so that, in the chorus, they are ready to claim what they want together with the song’s main character.

Now, in the chorus, we do encounter the second person pronoun: “You”. But that word is directed at freedom. The song’s main character addresses freedom, and not the listener. And since the connection between the song’s main character and the listener has already been established in the first verse, so do we as the audience also address freedom.

Now, just a note here, when you listen to the song “Viva La Victoria” by Eclipse, they use the same tactic. In the first verse, they establish the connection between the song’s main character and the listener and also the first person point of view, before, in the chorus, they use the second person pronoun “You” as well, but by then, we know it’s directed at our adversary that was introduced to us in the first verse.

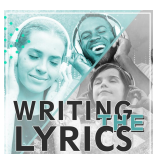
So with that said, it’s okay to mix up first and third person pronouns with second person pronouns, but only with a purpose and a pre-established sense for the audience who is talking to whom and why. That’s essential if you wanna pull this off.

Summary Step 1 - Summary

Okay, now we’ve finished the first step of the S.O.N.G. framework.

We now know:

1. The song is a morality redemption story that revolves around the morality genre’s obligatory moment of “The protagonist faces an All Is Lost Moment and either recovers their inner moral code or chooses the immoral path.”
2. And the song’s first line sets up the expectation of a morality story by indicating the damnation aspect.
3. The song uses the morality story conventions of
 - a. a despicable protagonist who begins at their worst.
 - b. A seemingly impossible external conflict forces the protagonist to choose to share or withhold their gifts



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- c. Ghosts from the protagonist's past torment them.
 - 4. The song uses past, present, and future tense and is building up to that change in tense.
 - 5. And the song is written in first person so we can slip into the character's shoes and shout their bold statement of "*Freedom, you will know my name*" along with them.
-

2. Observer

[00:21:12] Now that we have an overview of what the song is about, let's talk about the main character. As you know, a character and their actions make a story. So we must have a clear picture of who the person is at the center of our song.

The first question of the second step of the S.O.N.G. framework is:

1. What is the role the singer takes on in the song?

This helps us determine if the singer is taking on the main character's role in the song, whether he's just a bystander or an unidentified presence. But, again, this ties back to narrative distance and how closely connected we feel to the song's characters.

As we've already said as we talked about point of view, we have the lyrics written in first person. So in "The Comeback" by Drew Davies, the singer takes on the role of the song's main character, and so do we say as the audience.

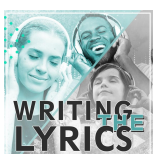
Now the next question is:

2. Is the singer referring to another person?

This question serves to list all the characters present in the song. In addition, it's to have an overview of who else is taking part in the lyrics' narrative.

So the song's main character is referring to the overlords as his adversary. And he's also talking directly to freedom itself as if it was a person.

Now let's talk about our song's main character in more detail:



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3. What does the main character in the song consciously WANT? What is his goal?

As we've discovered in [episode 29](#), your song's main character should be pursuing something they consciously want. They need an active goal, and something must be at stake if they don't go after it. Otherwise, there wouldn't be a story and no reason for us to root for the song's character to get what they are after.

So what is it that the character in "The Comeback" wants?

He wants to rid himself of the overlords and defeat them once and for all.

He sings:

*I'll cut my cord
From my overlords
And build their funeral pyre*

So that's what he's consciously after.

As you might have noticed, when we talk about him fighting those overlords, we slip into the realms of a society story that is all about the question: **"What do we do in the face of tyranny? Do we stand against it or comply?"**

And we get the answer delivered in the lyrics.

Still, the song is primarily a redemption story because what the song's main character wants, their conscious desire, is not power – as it is in a society story. But he states he wants freedom. He wants freedom to know his name. He wants to free himself of what has dragged him down before. He wants to free himself from those overlords.

And now let's talk about his NEED.

4. What is the main character's NEED? What is his internal desire?

Needs refer to a character's thought, fortune, or character. Or speaking in storytelling terms of internal content genres: Needs refer to a character's status, worldview, or morality.

When we look at the character in "The Comeback", same as when we talked about what he wants, what he needs is determined by the story's content genre. It's a morality story. And more specifically, it's a morality redemption story.



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So morality stories revolve around the universal human need of self-transcendence. And that's possible when the protagonist chooses to contribute to the greater good and leave something of value in the world after their death.

And when the character in the song of "The Comeback" manages to stop those overlords from dragging down others, he has indeed contributed in a great way. And he's gonna have to make a sacrifice in order to achieve this. And he mentions that sacrifice:

*I'll cut my cord
From my overlords*

So whatever connection they had, he is willing to sacrifice everything in order to NOT continue getting morally corrupted by them.

Let's continue with the next question:

5. Do we like the main character of the song? Does he have positive character traits? Or is it someone we despise and can't consider a role model?

This question aims at understanding how we feel about the song's main character. Do we like him? Or don't we? If we don't like that person, we'll keep our distance from the song's message. Who listens to someone they don't respect, right? But, on the other hand, if we like that character, we are more likely to take the song's message and apply it to our own lives.

Or see it like this: If we had a whiny and selfish character who doesn't care about the people around them, we would probably not identify with them, which means we'd keep our distance from them, their situation, and what's going on. If they somehow managed to overcome their external problem but didn't become a better person in the process, we wouldn't see that solution to the problem as valid because that person is still whiny and selfish.

So I like the song's main character of "The Comeback". Yes, he's done some bad things but he has turned his life around.

And I like to quote Shawn Coyne here, the creator of the Story Grid, because he says about the morality story:

"We all fall.



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We all have moments in our lives when we know in our heart of hearts that what we're doing or have chosen to do is morally corrupt. Morality stories inspire us to change course and get back to our better natures."

And that's exactly what this song, "The Comeback" by Drew Davies helps us do.

We watch the character rise again which is a beautiful opposite to the "falling" in the first verse (presumably when life cut him loose and he was dragged down).

And the chorus beautifully shows the listener that the "old man" has his "comeback", but also that he's not just any "comeback kid", but that he's even wiser and more confident than ever before. And all of that gives the lyrics lots of power because it shows the listener that no matter what hell you've been through or what you did wrong you can always come back from it and do what's right. And become a better person.

Summary Step 2 - Observer

Alright, and now we've finished the second step of the S.O.N.G. framework.

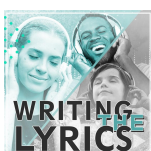
We now know:

1. The singer takes on the role of the song's main character,
2. and the song's main character shares their story
3. He wants freedom, and more precisely, break free from the overlords that have dragged him down.
4. And he needs to do what's right in order to redeem himself.
5. And the song's main character is someone we like because we witness how he returns to his better nature and regains his moral compass.

Alright, now we've got a solid understanding of what the song is about, and we are aware of who the main character is and what he wants and needs.

3. Narration

[00:28:34] Now, let's study the storytelling power of the lyrics. This is by far the most important step of the entire framework, because without a working narrative ... without something happening in the lyrics and changing from its beginning to its ending, the lyrics won't have a message and therefore, no lasting impact on the audience.



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So we gotta make sure that we deliver a great experience to our listeners.

So let's see how "The Comeback" by Drew Davies accomplishes this.

The first and easiest question is:

1. What are the characters literally doing?

We have talked about a character's literal action in [episodes 38](#) and [40](#) of the Writing the Lyrics Podcast. If you haven't listened to it yet, check out those two episodes. We specifically look at the song "I Will Survive" by Gloria Gaynor.

Now when it comes to a character's literal action, we just imagine we are a camera only observing what we can watch the characters literally do. So we think of this in terms of activities.

Using literal action in lyrics helps the audience to picture what is going on. We don't want to be too abstract. We wanna see something that the character literally does. But not just anything, what they do should be an expression of trying to get what they are after. It needs to be connected to what the song is about. So listen to [episodes 38](#) and [40](#) if you wanna find out more about this, or join the Powerful Lyrics Masterclass for more examples and ways to write powerful lyrics.

So in the song "The Comeback," there are many strong action verbs that paint a vivid picture of the internal and external struggle that the character is facing.

For example, we can picture:

- how the pages turn
- how he's being dragged down
- how the noose gets tied - even though, hopefully, that's not meant literally
- we see how he cuts the cord and builds a funeral pyre

And although some of those phrases are not meant literally, we still get strong images in our head that help us see and understand what's going on.



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2. What is the essential tactic of what the character is doing in the scene? What is he trying to achieve?

The second step moves from what we can literally observe the characters do into their internal state of mind. Now it's all about WHY are they acting the way they do?

So we think about things from our characters' perspectives. We think about what they want to accomplish, what they are thinking, and what their goal state is.

And what our character thinks and wants, their goal, and how they perceive the world around them ... that all decide how they will act to accomplish what they want. So their actions will be an expression of their essential tactic.

So the essential tactic is what the characters are doing
...because of what they want
... and because of the way they see the world.

So our song's main character is standing up against the powers that have dragged him down – that's one of his literal actions – because of what he wants: being free of them. And that's because of the way he sees the world: He has recognized how wrong it was to be dependent on them.

So he cuts his cord and builds their funeral pyre ... he does all of those things because of what he wants. And all those actions refer to his essential tactic: ridding himself of them and their influence on him.

Let's move on to the next question:

3. Is there a problem the character is facing? Does something challenge him? Or is there some kind of conflict that he has to solve? If so, what is the central conflict the main character in the song has to deal with?

As we have already mentioned a couple of times, the problem arises from the inciting incident of the narrative. Now we will talk more about the inciting incident of the entire narrative in just a moment. I just want you to know that there's a connection between the inciting incident and the problem the song's main character is dealing with because the inciting incident gives rise to the problem.



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And as we've already mentioned before, the problem the song's main character is facing is their own moral downfall and the forces that are dragging them down resulting in everything that torments and haunts that character.

Now let's see if this problem was already used at the song's beginning.

4. Do the song's first lines introduce the problem the main character will have to deal with? And thus hook us and spark our interest?

The first lines go like this:

*Burn, burn, burn
As the pages turn*

As we already figured out, the song's first line uses the opening line technique of the Powerful Problem. Again, if you wanna find out more about the 9 powerful opening line techniques, check out my book "Attention Grabbing Opening Lines" on Amazon.

So yes, the problem our character faces is already introduced in the very first lines. It's about him facing damnation.

Analyzing the scene told in the song.

[00:33:53] Okay, now that we know what the character wants, needs, and the problem he's dealing with, let's look at the five commandments of storytelling. Those five commandments are the key elements that we need to call a narrative in a lyric a working narrative.

I know they have a very abstract name, but think of them as the waypoints on a route that we have to hit in order to not only lead our song's main character from their mess to a better place, but also help our audience see the transformation from mess to message.

Now in the Powerful Lyrics Masterclass, I dedicate an entire module to those different stages that make our song's main character's journey from mess to message. And it's truly mind blowing because it allows you to look at lyrics and the way to write them in a whole different light that will facilitate the writing process tremendously.

So for this episode, I don't have the time to explain them in the detail worthy of their power but I hope you see how they work together to create an amazing listening experience for the audience.



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The first waypoint on that journey from mess to message is:

5. What is the inciting incident?

An inciting incident is an event – either causal or coincidental – that kicks off the events of the narrative and throws protagonist out of balance and creates a desire to restore balance

This event is a stimulus that your character gets. It's something unexpected that they did not see coming and don't know how to deal with it, OR they are so focused on achieving a particular goal that they are blind to everything that is going on around them. They just don't see what that particular event means to them. Or they ignore it completely.

In "The Comeback," the inciting incident refers to the song's main character's initial situation. We don't know what specific event had thrown his life out of balance. It's not mentioned what came before it all and what had thrown him on this path, but we hear about the repercussions that incident had on his life.

And they are mentioned in the first verse as they paint the song's main character's status quo situation.

He sings:

*Burn, burn, burn
As the pages turn
Filled with passion and fire
I've spread my pain
All throughout this land
Flying higher and higher*

So even though we don't have an inciting incident mentioned in the lyrics, it's okay to skip it or have it off-page. As the writer, you should always know what specific incident was the cause for everything going off the rails, but for the listener the inciting incident can be left out. The next waypoint is far more important, and that is the turning point progressive complication.



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6. What is the turning point?

The turning point is the most important waypoint in the narrative. It is why a character has to face a dilemma and make a choice to be able to move on. Because at that moment, the character realizes the true nature of the inciting incident. They were blind, but now they see what that incident truly means.

It's like when the inciting incident threw their life out of balance, they came up with an initial strategy on how to deal with that incident to regain their balance. But they fail because that strategy is ill-chosen for what they truly face.

So in that turning point moment, they see the full mess they are in or understand what has happened.

And the lyrics lead up to that moment.

At first, we get a sense of all the obstacles that further complicate the character's situation.

Drew Davies sings:

*On the wings of love
They've dragged me down
And helped me tie my noose
Ashes and heartbreaks
I've worn them as my shroud*

So all of this worsens his situation until the song's main character hits the turning point moment as he says:

Until life cut me loose

So let's talk more about the crisis, which makes our third commandment.

That's the moment that will provoke change because he sings "*all that's said becomes undone*". Now that's something the character has to learn how to deal with.

He now realizes that his initial strategy to deal with the inciting incident was not only flawed, but also does not work anymore.



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And so the turning point leads straight to the third waypoint.

7. What is the dilemma that the character has to face? What are his options?

So the third commandment or waypoint is the crisis.

So after having made sense of the inciting incident (through hitting the turning point and seeing the complete nature of the inciting incident), they now come to realize what the inciting incident means.

So think of it like this: as they were following their initial strategy, they were building out a portfolio of choice. They have different options within their initial strategy to deal with that inciting incident. But once they ran out of options and came to understand what the inciting incident truly means, after having failed and hitting that turning point, they understand they have two choices left.

So that third waypoint is a binary choice.

It's either to conform and willingly undergo the transformation that is required of them to respond appropriately to the inciting incident or to double down and deny the true nature of the inciting incident and continue to live in the flawed limited worldview they had in the beginning.

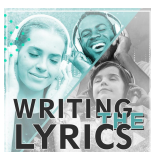
And there are stakes involved. There are potential risks and rewards for every possible choice. It's a double-factor problem. It's no easy choice. That's why it's called a crisis.

And even though the crisis does not get explicitly mentioned in the lyrics, we still get a sense for what that crisis must look like for the song's main character.

So choice #1 is:

- He could remain a subject to power.
 - That means he would continue to be dragged down by them and he would lose his authentic being.
 - And this would mean that he would cede his agency to the overlords which would result in a loss of personal cognitive power.
 - And overall, that would mean that he would risk becoming a reckless force of destruction.

On the other hand, choice #2 is:



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- He could revolt against the power.
 - This means he would risk losing their protection.
 - But that means he would differentiate but possibly, if he's doing the right thing, he might not be damned after all.

So that's his choice.

8. What's the decision the character makes?

Now the fourth commandment of storytelling is the decision. We, as the audience, must be able to observe clearly what choice the character made. That means they have to turn their decision into action.

And as the audience, we gotta know what the character decides to do. What option will they choose?

And we get his decision presented in the second verse.
He sings:

*I'll cut my cord
From my overlords
And build their funeral pyre*

9. What's the resolution?

And lastly, the last commandment is the resolution.

So what are the consequences of the character's decision? The audience needs to see whether the choice that the protagonist made in the climax and the actions that they enacted, was good or bad in the realm of the narrative in terms of their particular situation. Did they manage to go from their mess to a better place? Or did they worsen their situation? What's the outcome of their actions?

Well, we don't know, right?

We don't know if the song's main character's action will improve his situation or the world he's living in.

But what's even more important, especially when it comes to the resolution in the lyrics, is that we, as the audience, feel like the song's main character has made the right choice.



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And when he sings:

*I will comeback just to prove myself
I will return again just to try*

or

*7/11 yeah I'll wear my crown
The old mans back again*

We believe him. There's no doubt that he's made the right choice.

Because we see how he wants to redeem himself. We understand that even though he calls himself an "old man" who has his "comeback", we know that he's not just any comeback kid. Because everything we've learnt about him and the hardships he went through, we know that he's much wiser, stronger, and more confident than ever before. So when he says:

*I will comeback just to prove myself
I will return again just to try*

We have no doubt that this will indeed happen.

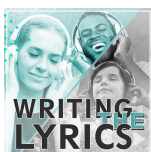
So through everything we've learnt about him, we form our own resolution in our mind. We believe that it will all turn out for the better because he made the right choice.

We believe he has turned his world from a mess to a better place.

And we can learn from him to turn our own moral failings, our own mess all around.

Change

[00:43:10] Alright, let's look at how the turning point led to a change in the character's situation or the way they look at the world. After all, stories are all about change. That's why it's good to look at the change in more detail.



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10. Did the song's main character change his perception of the world around him after going through that situation?

How a character changes internally is tied to his Need.

So as we've already mentioned, the character needed to redeem himself. And he did that by standing up against the powers that dragged him down.

So he has changed as a person from being damned to having found his way to salvation. He has found his authentic self again. And he's like an upgraded version now. One who will not fall for those evil powers again.

So yes, he has changed as a person.

11. So, to wrap it up, how did the situation change for the main character?

Well, externally, the lyrics give a sense of crime, thriller, and action and we feel like there are lives at stake. But most importantly, we have that society story baked into the lyrics.

And the lyrics are about the core event of a society story. That core event is the revolution. The revolution is when the protagonist's gifts are expressed and power changes hands. There is a distinct shift in control from one segment of society to another.

And we feel like the song's main character has regained their power and the overlords have lost it. And this is beautifully expressed in the chorus:

*Freedom
You will know my name
Freedom
I'm alive again
The comeback kid
yeah he rides again
Freedom
You will know my name*

So yes, even the external situation has changed for the better in the lyrics to "The Comeback" by Drew Davies.



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Now lastly, there's one more interesting way to see if the change in the song's narrative is highlighted in the way the lyrics are structured.

12. So we compare the song's first and last phrase. Can we see a difference between how the song started and how it ended?

Okay, here's how it started:

*Burn, burn, burn
As the pages turn*

And the song ended like this:

I will return again just to try

And yes, we recognize that change. It's not as obvious as in "I'm A Believer" by the Monkees, but still, we can see how the character's external and most importantly internal situation has changed. He was damned in the beginning, and now he's on the path of redemption. It's not easy to redeem yourself, but he's trying. And that's what counts. He has changed.

Summary Step 3 - Narration

Okay, now let's quickly summarize part 3 of the S.O.N.G. framework.

We now know:

1. The literal action of the characters is included. We have many strong action verbs that paint vivid pictures in our mind.
2. And the character's essential tactic is ridding himself of those overlords.
3. The problem that he is facing is damnation and has to redeem himself, hence we have a morality redemption story baked into those lyrics.
4. The inciting incident was not mentioned but we get the repercussions of it.
5. The turning point progressive complication was life cutting him loose.
6. The crisis was deciding to stand up against them or double down.
7. He decided to revolt and stand up against them.
8. The resolution is not included in the lyrics but the lyrics are so powerful that we know that the character made the right decision.



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4. Gist

[00:47:13] Alright, now let's talk about the song's message and if it provides a takeaway for the listener. As I love to say, powerful lyrics lead from a mess to a message. They build a bridge for the audience that leads them from their troubles to a better place by letting them go onto the journey with the song's main character and experience how that particular character overcame a certain problem and how it all turned out for them.

And thus, the lyrics offer a message on how we can deal with our own problems.

So the first question for the last step of the SONG framework is:

1. Looking back at the problem the character had to deal with in the song, did he solve it?

If you want to figure out the message of your lyrics, it's best to concentrate on the problem first and check if the character has overcome it or if he failed.

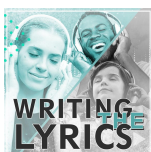
Because, after all, if we want our lyrics to make an impact on someone, then the lyrics need to include a problem that the character in the song faces that also mirrors a problem the listener might have.

And the purpose of every single line of the lyric is to shed light on that problem or show how it's dealt with, solved, or what the outcome can look like.

So knowing if the problem was solved will give us a great clue to what the song's message could be.

In the case of "The Comeback," the problem or challenge our character faced was that he faced damnation through all the bad things he had done, in particular, through spreading his *"pain all throughout this land."*

Since the character has come around and recognized that he was on a wrong path in his life and he's doing his best to turn his life around, he has already done a lot to deal with that problem. Sometimes, you know, recognizing the problem or even understanding that your



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actions hurt is the necessary first step. And the character in the song has certainly learnt from his mistakes.

So he is solving his problem, although we know it will take time. But he's doing everything right. And we believe him.

Now that we know he was able to solve the problem, we can focus on the lyric's message.

2. What is the message of the song? What can the audience take away from it?

We know our song is about the universal human value of self-transcendence. Damnation was on the line for our song's character, but so is his salvation.

Now if the song had turned out even worse, the message would have been: **"We are damned when we selfishly withhold our gifts or use them solely for our own gain in the world."**

But that wasn't the case.

Instead, the lyrics deliver a prescriptive tale. **"We transcend our own selfishness when we stand up against what's wrong and do what's right for the benefit of the greater good."**

And defeating those overlords is definitely a greater good for everyone.

So with that message, we once again see that the lyrics' narrative is a redemption story: **"The protagonist begins by knowingly doing wrong and choosing to mask their weakness with respectability, but ends by making a better choice."**

That's what we at Story Grid say about the redemption story and it fits perfectly to the lyrics of "The Comeback". And more specifically, that is what we take away from the lyrics.

It shows the listener that no matter what hell you've been through or what you did wrong, you can always come back from it and do what's right

And you know, I call this song an empowering song.

Yes, it has that strong message.

But is there another reason why exactly is it that empowering?



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Of course, we do have a very strong and empowering chorus.

Let's just listen to it again:

*Freedom
You will know my name
Freedom
I'm alive again
The comeback kid
yeah he rides again
Freedom
You will know my name*

So those words are strong. They are like a battle cry. They are a bold statement of confidence, one, that we truly believe and even want for ourselves.

Even today, as I have prepared for this episode, I have caught myself multiple times singing the lines “Freedom, you will know my name”. I just love those lines.

But more importantly, those lines are not powerful because they are a bold statement.

Those lines are powerful because we not only witnessed where the song's main character was coming from but also what they have been through and we experienced how they have changed and turned their life all around. And that is why those lines are so powerful and we sing them as loud as the singer in the song. Because we feel it, too.

And that's absolute magic, hands down, that's skill. That's the power of well-crafted lyrics.

And now to the last question of the SONG framework:

3. Does the title refer to the message of the song?

If your song's title and your message are connected, it's easier for your audience to remember your song. Once they hear the title, they'll think of the takeaway. And since the lyrics paint such a great emotional experience, the title of “The Comeback” immediately reminds the audience of that great narrative in the lyrics and the way the almost damned character changes course and gets back to his better nature.



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Summary Step 4 - Gist

Okay, now we've finished the fourth and last step of the S.O.N.G. framework.

We now know:

1. The character solved the problem he faced.
2. So the song's message is: "We transcend our own selfishness when we stand up against what's wrong and do what's right for the benefit of the greater good."
3. And that message refers to the song's title, "The Comeback" because it shows the audience you can come back from anything you've done. You can turn your life around. You can come back to who you once were. It's your choice.

What we've learned in this episode:

[00:53:44] Great. We've now talked about the four steps of the S.O.N.G.-framework and the analysis of the lyrics of the song "The Comeback" by Drew Davies.

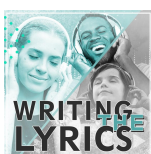
I hope you see that songs don't always have to be about love. We can draw from all our own life experience, whatever it is we went through, and still deliver a powerful song. I have talked with Drew about this topic as well.

And he said that sometimes he doesn't publish a song he's working on for a long time because that song tackles heavier emotions like depression, for example.

But you know, that's okay.

Those emotions require us to work through them and find the other side to it. You know, we can always write about how bad something is... but when we truly wanna be helpful and have a song that shows the light in the darkness, then we gotta find our own way through it first.

And if we do, we have that experience necessary to write about it. We understand where someone might be in life and the problems they face. We know what they go through. But we can also show a way out of it. One, that has worked for us. And we can lead them to a better place. We can show them a way.



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So it's okay if some songs require more time.

Take your time with them.

Sometimes, those are the songs that can save a life.

It doesn't always have to be about love.

And now, all that's left to do is, to head over to Spotify, Soundcloud, Youtube or wherever you listen to music, and give Drew Davies' song "The Comeback" a listen.

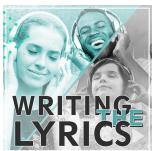
The links are included in the show notes.

Have a great day,

This was Melanie, from the Writing the Lyrics Podcast.

Show Notes

- Join the POWERFUL LYRICS MASTERCLASS here: lyricmastery.com/masterclass
- Get your copy of "[ATTENTION GRABBING OPENING LINES](#)" on Amazon.
- Listen to "The Comeback" by Drew Davies
 - on [Soundcloud](#)
 - on [Youtube](#)
 - on [Spotify](#)
- Find out more about Drew Davies here: <https://www.drewdaviesmusic.com/>



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