

THROUGH THE FIRE

Music Note Sheet

OVERALL MUSICAL STYLE & INSTRUMENTATION

- **Ambient/Electronic Textures:** Like AppleTV+'s *Severance*, the score should rely heavily on synthesized sounds — thereby creating a sense of unease, detachment, and the surreal nature of Zoe's situation. Think slowly shifting drones, pulsating low-frequency sounds, and subtle, unsettling textures.
- **Minimalist Piano:** Sparse, melancholic piano melodies will be crucial. These should be simple, almost childlike at times but tinged with sadness and a sense of something being off.
- **Distorted/Processed Sounds:** Sounds should be manipulated and processed to create a feeling of disorientation and instability. Reverb, delay, pitch-shifting, and subtle distortion will be key tools. This reflects Zoe's internal turmoil and the crumbling of her carefully constructed world.
- **String Pads (Subtle):** Long, sustained string chords (likely synthesized) can be used sparingly to add emotional weight and a sense of tragedy, but they should never be overly dramatic or sentimental. They should feel cold and distant, rather than warm and comforting.
- **Percussion (Minimal & Unconventional):** Avoid traditional drum kits. Instead, use subtle, unconventional percussive elements: metallic clicks, distant rumbles, the ticking of a clock (emphasizing the missed recital), or even processed sounds of car parts/metal scraping (connecting to the crash). These should be used very sparingly, mainly for punctuation and to increase tension.
- **Silence:** Just as important as the music is the *absence* of music. Silence should be used strategically to highlight Zoe's isolation, the weight of unspoken words, and the harsh reality of her situation.

SCENE-BY-SCENE BREAKDOWN

1. OVER BLACK / Car Crash / Humming:

- **Start:** The car crash sounds are purely sound design. NO music during the immediate impact.
- **Humming:** As the child's humming begins (faintly), introduce a *very* high-pitched, wavering, almost inaudible sine wave or drone. This represents the innocence of the humming but also a sense of fragility and something being broken.
- **As Humming Continues:** The drone gradually becomes more complex — thereby adding a second, slightly detuned note. This creates a subtle dissonance, hinting at the underlying darkness. The humming itself might be processed with a slight reverb to make it feel ethereal and distant.

2. INT/EXT. 1989 VANAGON - Golden Hour:

- **Zoe's Phone:** A single, sustained, slightly dissonant synth note enters as the phone screen illuminates. It's cold and impersonal.
- **Bong Smoke/VO:** As Zoe inhales, introduce a low, pulsing drone – almost subliminal. This represents her attempt to escape, but also the underlying anxiety and the ticking clock (recital time). Minimalist piano enters here, playing a very slow, fragmented melody. It's melancholic but also has a hint of determination.
- **Blood/Mirror:** A sharp, metallic “ping” sound (processed) as she sees the blood, followed by a brief silence. The piano melody might become slightly more agitated with a few repeated notes.

3. Dylan's Arrival:

- **Dylan's Exit:** As Dylan gets out of the Tesla, the low drone becomes more prominent and slightly more distorted. A subtle, rhythmic clicking sound might begin — like a clock ticking, but irregular and unsettling.
- **“Three Feet”:** The music becomes almost entirely textural – drones and unsettling ambient sounds. There's a sense of building tension, but it's *internalized*. No dramatic swells.
- **Phone Photo:** A brief, high-pitched synth “sting” as he takes the photo, emphasizing the violation of privacy and Zoe's powerlessness.

4. Smoke/Van Burning:

- **Smoke Noticed:** The piano melody stops abruptly. A new, higher-pitched, wavering drone enters — representing the rising panic. This drone should have a slightly fiery texture to it (achieved through processing).
- **Dylan's Mouth/VO:** The music becomes almost completely silent, except for perhaps a very faint, low rumble. This emphasizes Zoe's disconnection from Dylan's anger and her focus on the burning van.
- **Dylan Leaves:** Silence.

5. INT. VAN - Rescue Items:

- **Rush of Heat:** A sudden but brief, increase in the intensity of the fiery drone, then it pulls back.
- **Wallet/LEGO:** A very faint, almost ghostly echo of the childlike piano melody returns, but it's fragmented and distorted — representing the loss and the shattered remnants of her hopes.
- **Photo:** As she takes out the photo, the piano plays a single, sustained, heartbreaking chord.
- **Wind/Loss:** As the photo is snatched away, a brief, swirling sound effect (processed wind and synth) underscores the loss, followed by a return to the desolate, ambient drones.

6. EXT. SIDE OF ROAD - Watching Van Burn:

- **Sirens:** The sirens are sound design, but they could be subtly blended with a rising, dissonant synth tone to increase the sense of chaos and despair.
- **Watching:** The music is primarily ambient and textural – drones, low rumbles, and the crackling sound of fire (processed and integrated into the score). A very

slow, repeating two-note piano motif might enter, representing Zoe's utter defeat.

7. EXT. WOODLAND HILLS - Phone Call:

- **"ASSHOLE"**: A single, sustained, dissonant chord as she scrolls to the contact. Her hesitation is marked by silence.
- **Dialing**: A very faint, high-pitched, pulsing sound begins as she presses dial, representing her anxiety and the uncertainty of the call.
- **Caleb's Voice**: The pulsing sound stops. Silence, except for Caleb's voice.
- **"Victory and Fallbrook"**: A very subtle, low drone returns, underscoring the desperation in her voice.

8. INT/EXT. CALEB'S CAR - Sarah:

- **Arrival**: Silence, punctuated only by the sound of the car pulling up.
- **Sarah's Reflection**: As Zoe sees Sarah, the childlike piano melody returns, but it's even more fragile and broken than before. It's almost a lullaby, but a deeply sad one.
- **"Hey, sweetie!"**: The music remains very quiet and understated, allowing the awkwardness and sadness of the dialogue to be the focus.
- **Caleb's Dialogue**: The low drone becomes slightly more prominent and dissonant during Caleb's lines, reflecting his negativity and the tension in the car.
- **LEGO Gift**: The piano melody plays a slightly more hopeful variation as Zoe presents the gift, but it's still tinged with sadness.
- **"Someone had to"**: A sharp, dissonant chord punctuates Caleb's line, followed by silence.
- **Zoe's VO and Crumbling Composure, Fade to Black**: As the voiceover begins and the streetlights strobe, the music gradually builds in intensity. The drones become more complex, the piano melody more fragmented and distorted. The unsettling ambient textures return. The music doesn't reach a climax, but rather fades out with the visuals, leaving a feeling of unresolved tension and despair. The final sound is a very low, almost inaudible hum, representing Zoe's broken spirit.