

Episode (Chapter) Duration: 30-45 Minutes

Number of Episodes in a Season: 9-10

The basic structure of the episodes (chapters) are based on *literary milieu* stories common in classic scifi novels. Milieu narratives are characterized by an *observer who sees things the way the audience sees them*. Mickey observes things that interest her and is transformed by what she sees. She then returns to her world as a changed person.

Ask the question: Why did a beautiful way of life from another time come to an end? Why are all these people gone, when they were once so wise and their achievements so great?

Liminal's reality is a result of an **event** which is a common structural device in speculative fiction literature. Something is wrong in the fabric of the universe; Mickey's world is out of order. Examples in literature include the appearance of a monster (Beowulf, Ender's Game), the murder of a king by his brother (Hamlet), or the birth of a child who some believe ought not to have been born (Stranger in a Strange Land, Dune), or the reappearance of a powerful enemy who was thought to be dead (The Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter). In all cases, a previous order, a "golden age" (represented by the memories of the corpsicles in Liminal) has been disrupted and the world is in flux, a dangerous place, a dystopia (for Mickey and Bernard).

The classic **event story** ends at the point when a new order is established. In the case of Dune, Paul Mua'dib becomes the new emperor of the Known Universe. Some event stories end when an old order is restored. In the Lion King Simba takes his father's place. In a few event stories the world descends into chaos as the forces of order are completely dismantled (see Westworld's third season or Thor: Ragnarok).

Liminal's story begins not at the point when the world becomes disordered, but rather at the point when Mickey's actions are most crucial to establishing the new order and becomes involved in the struggle. Hamlet doesn't begin with the murder of Hamlet's father; it begins much later, when the ghost appears to Hamlet, engaging him in the struggle to remove the usurper and reestablish the proper order of the kingdom.

In The Lord of the Rings, Frodo, discovers that the ring his uncle gave to him is the key to vanquishing Sauron, the great adversary of the world's order. The story ends not with the destruction of Sauron, but with the complete reestablishment of the new order—which includes the departure of Frodo and all other magical people from

Middle-earth. Tolkien does not begin with an introduction recounting all the history of Middle-earth up to the point where Gandalf tells Frodo what the ring is. He begins, instead, by establishing Frodo's domestic situation and then thrusting world events on him, explaining no more of the world than Frodo needs to know right at the beginning. We learn of the rest of the foregoing events bit by bit, only as the information is revealed to Frodo.

Similarly, the viewpoint of Mickey should be our guide into the world situation. We start with the small part of the world that she knows and understands and see only as much of the disorder of the universe as she can. Over the course of subsequent episodes (chapters) she becomes more aware of the nature of her quest, her long walk to Mount Doome. By the time the explanation of Liminal's world is given, we have already seen much of the disorder for ourselves: loneliness, empty streets, homelessness, VR addiction, litter/pollution, wage slavery, head collection/murder. The audience will have also met a version of an AI that can help vanquish the inhuman monster of the AI/Scout. By the time we are given the full explanation of Liminal's world, the audience cares about the characters involved in saving it: Mickey and Gemma AI.

Some chapters will focus more on the change of characters. Mickey or Gemma or Mekkler or Scout or Bernard or Mickey's Mom becomes so dispondent, insane, sad, confused, impatient or angry in their current station that they begin the process of change. **Character focused** episodes end when the character either settles into a new role or gives up the struggle and remains in the old role. In Mickey's case, she changes from a narcissist into a revolutionary/criminal through her attachment to the corpses and her love of Gemma which propels the story into the second season.

Other narrative devices borrowed from literature:

Allusion: Often used as literary elements that help connect the reader to the works. By referencing something the reader may be familiar with in the real world, this invests them more than if you didn't have any connections. *Example:* "You don't want to go opening Pandora's Box."

Alliteration: Use in the logline.

Allegory: George Orwell's Animal Farm. The perceived story is about a group of farm animals who rise up and defeat humans but the underlying story is about the Russian Revolution.

Flashbacks

Foreshadowing: literal or thematic. In Back to the Future, one of the clocks in the opening credits has actor Harold Lloyd from the silent film Safety First hanging from the minute hand. This foreshadows Doc Brown hanging from the

Hill Valley clock tower later in the movie as he tried to send Marty McFly back to the 1980s.

Imagery

Juxtaposition: Contrasting elements next to one another in order to emphasize one or both, including words, scenes, or themes.

Metaphor/simile: In the dialogue. Gemma, a voracious reader, has a tough time understanding these concepts.

Personification: Bridges, Tunnels, Moon, River, Lab Building- Make them breath.

Symbolism: The color red, Spiders, Bridges, Trees, Crows (Bird mask).

Tone: Through narration. Show a tragic event against a humorous backdrop.

Chapter Breakdown:

- Prologue: Mickey's Routine
- Opening Credits: Mickey's Commute/Title over Bridge/Tunnel
- Part One: Scout's World
- Part Two: Mickey's World
- Part Three: Scout's World crosses over with Mickey's World
- End Credits (1 Minute)
- Epilogue: V/O Mickey resolves story. Visual cliffhanger.

Procedural Elements:

- Prologue
- Intro Credits
- Title Sequence
- End Credits
- Post credit scene: Epilogue

Story Structure for Pilot Episode "Time Capsule":

1. Weakness and need (problem):
2. Desire:
3. Opponent:
4. Plan:
5. Battle:
6. Self-Revelation:
7. New equilibrium:

Later episodes:

Funeral

Mickey finds Scout's headstone.