

# Karaoke Soul

*DayIn*

Achievement in Vidding: Shortlist 2009

The review below may contain spoilers for Terminator: the Sarah Connor Chronicles.

**Nicky:** When it comes to AU ships, I'm particularly drawn to vids that not only show unlikely characters together in a romantic setting, but also why this particular ship makes sense in the source's wider context.

**Brad:** I think we agree, that's the defining quality for our favorite AU shipper vids. It has to "feel like the show" in terms of the show's themes and overall personality. It has to show us why it fits.

**Nicky:** Karaoke Soul is just such a vid - the idea of Derek/Cameron is incongruous at first, but DayIn managed to create a wholly believable vid whose AU narrative finds a firm foothold somewhere between canon and constructed backstory.

A large part of this is because there is a sound basis on which the story unfolds. Through the use of desaturated video composite flashbacks in the 0:25 - 0:27 segment, the viewer is immediately led to understand the vidder's altered version of history, where Derek used to have a relationship with Alison, the human resistance fighter on whom the Cameron model is based. When the vid flashes back to the present day, Alison is dead and gone, and only "karaoke soul" Cameron stands in her place.

**Brad:** DayIn's constructed shots for the backstory are very convincing, but I think a big reason why it works for me is because the vid is so grungy and unflinching in presentation. It feels like the show and feels like the characters, especially on lines like "paint the walls" at 0:43. DayIn gets across the sense of loss and desperation in the AU relationship by using the original emotion of the source.

**Nicky:** Here, as in the show, Cameron displays distinctly ruthless robotic tendencies, but skews just human enough to be confounding. From her dramatic on-beat entrance at 0:15, to the quietly confronting pancake scene from 0:49 - 1:02 and her flow-on emotionless head tilts at 1:16, she is clearly very different to Alison, whether in the constructed reality clips such as 0:26, or in canon source where she tearfully faces a mimicking Cameron at 0:55.

**Brad:** And again the latter is a scene to which the viewer can connect in exactly the way they did when they saw the episode - no AU required - and through that you open the door for them to connect to the emotion of the AU.

**Nicky:** For a wholly vidder-constructed backstory, the triangular nature of the Alison/Derek/Cameron dynamic certainly packs a punch and leads us to the key theme of the vid that is also found in the heart of canon: just how human is Cameron, and does her level of

self-awareness change the answer to this question? Derek spends the length of the vid pondering this, haunted by the memory of loving Alison on one hand, and his hatred of "metal" on the other.

**Brad:** The song is so tense and dramatic, and the way in which DayIn uses the song really drives home the feel of the relationship. It's violent and torn, but with moments of quiet questioning, and that feel permeates the entire vid.

**Nicky:** The vid is edited together with a lovely sense of musicality, focusing primarily on source motion to carry the visual flow. The show at times has fabulous slow-motion shots, and DayIn uses these to great effect such as in the 1:10 - 1:15 segment, and again at 1:57.

**Brad:** I love the way the vidder uses the quiet moments, not just in terms of taking a moment to linger on the characters in an intimate way, but in terms of coloring and lighting. These moments feel warm and honest, which contrasts so incredibly well with the rest of the vid. When it explodes back into motion, it's always jarring. In the good way.

**Nicky:** I particularly love DayIn's use of the strings in the music, from the eye scan and zoom in at 2:14, to the flaring of the lights at 2:15 and Cameron dancing at 2:18, each moment is fluid and feels incredibly intuitive.

As the climax to the vid, the strings also serve to emphasise the differences and similarities between the past and the present, where an increasingly humanistic Cameron is left the sole survivor of this strange love triangle. As Derek and Alison respectively fall at 2:27, the focus remains on Derek's astounded and emotional expression as he watches Cameron dance.

**Brad:** I'm particularly struck by the connection between Cameron raising her hand during her dance and the machine choking Derek at 2:22. It's a striking parallel that says so much about the core concept.

**Nicky:** As soil is tossed into Derek's grave, the camera pans up into an enigmatic future and, much like the show itself, the viewer is left with chewy philosophical questions for which there is no easy answer.

THE FOURTH WALL

---