

SERJ TANKIAN

"The Sky Is Over"

Serjical Strike Records / Warner Bros. Records

Director: Kevin Estrada

Production Company: First Kiss Films

Overview

Life. Life is so powerful, yet all life is dependant on the Sun. What would happen to life if our Sun were gone? What would the last moments on Earth be like? What would your last moments consist of? This is the subject that we examine in this video treatment for "Sky Is Over." All life, happiness and hope relies on the powerful and warm glow that we all take so much for granted.

Style

This video is heavily stylized both in its color and in the mood that we are creating. There are a number of strong, colorized styles that run throughout – the video begins with a very oversaturated and contrasty feel...very cross-processed. As the video progresses and the story is built, we begin to lose color and warmth giving the video a very cold and de-saturated feeling. In the end, as our story is resolved, the color and warmth jump back into the video, announcing that there is indeed hope in this mad world that we live in. Serj's performance pieces vary from cold, softly focused and shadowy close ups to wide contrasty images of him traveling through a tunnel of petrified trees.

Concept / Storyline

The story begins: We see the images of leaves on a tree slowly flapping in the wind. We cut to the image of a young mother as she cradles and lays her small baby to rest in a wooden crib. A bright flash blows through the window of the small bedroom, momentarily illuminating the mother and the room she is in. We cut to a tight shot of Serj as he sings to the camera - Serj is dressed all in black, buttoned to the collar. The focus is soft all around, but sharply focused in the center of Serj's face. Serj almost melts into the shadows as a dark sky begins to hover above. As Serj sings the opening lyrics, he raises his hands slowly. A warm glow emerges in his hands and quickly blossoms into a ball of powerful light. Serj raises his hands above his head and the ball of light floats to the sky. With a burst of light, the once small glowing ball now becomes the Sun as the lyrics "...that you cradle the Sun" ring out. The dark clouds begin to clear and the sky becomes beautiful and blue as Serj continues to sing out.



As the pre-chorus sings through, we see the burning images of our consequences: Newspapers with headlines that should have warned us burn, piles of money burn, canisters of oil burn, etc. These images flash before our eyes, almost subliminally.

Leaves begin to fall more and more from the dark, menacing trees as Serj walks through a tunnel of petrified trees. The sky above Serj becomes more and more ominous and dark. Eerie clouds move in, slowly overtaking the Sun.

We see many walks of life, reacting to their final moments on earth. These are played out in quick vignettes: We once again see the Young Mother as she clinches her child, looking up at the sky as dark, menacing clouds roll in; an Elderly Couple stare at the sky as tears and mascara run down the face of the old woman as her husband holds her, terrified; a Police Officer cries as he tries to calm the panicky people on the streets; a Young Child stands frozen, crying in the street clutching her rag doll. As the tears run from their faces, we see Serj as he stares at himself in a puddle of dirty water, crying out his powerful lyrics.



As we reach the operatic bridge, we see the backs of a 10-piece choir. The feel is very surreal (imagine Marilyn Manson meets Beneath the Planet Of The Apes). The colors are extremely saturated and vibrant. Serj stands before the choir, almost conducting the singers in a hypnotic manner. The chants “la-la-la” ring out from their voices. The camera pulls around to reveal that every member of this dark choir has Serj’s face. Serj, “going crazy,” stares into the eyes of 10 Serj’s as they continue their operatic assault – “la-la-la.” while Serj’s image is projected in a carnival-like house of mirrors feeling.

Serj counters back in cold, unsaturated shots as he sings out “Not even for the Sun.” The sky is darker and darker, almost completely black. Serj is surrounded in darkness, as his voice is all that is bright and strong.

As the song builds to its climax, the cuts get quicker and quicker and the last moments of life flash faster and faster, tighter and tighter. As Serj screams out his final double time chorus, his image is countered by tight images of the lives we have been introduced to: The young mother sits in a corner holding on to her baby (tight shots of the baby crying, the mother’s mouth, her eye); The elderly couple shake as they hold each other (tight shots of their wrinkled, trembling hands, their eyes, etc); The police officer as he screams out (tight shot of mouth, etc); The little girl in the street (tight shots of her teary eyes, her hand as it clutches the rag doll’s hair, etc). We cut back and forth, faster and faster from Serj to tight image, Serj to tight image...building with the songs as it nears its end.

Just before the final notes of the song, Serj watches as a once beautiful and vibrant flower, wilts and dies before his eyes. For the first time, Serj looks to the sky. A hole begins to open in the dark clouds above; a bright light begins to burn its way through and quickly becomes larger. The ray of light shoots to down from the heavens to the earth and shines on Serj, illuminating Serj’s body. The screen bursts brightly and glows, dissolving to a bright light of hope.



END