

Welcome to the # WIPSoundtrack2023 challenge. This year's soundtrack is based on snippets from my YA mss, THE ROCK SHOW (formerly titled MEGALOPOLIS which follows a group of high school seniors attending an all-day music festival in 1994.

You can find the full playlist on Spotify. Search "THE ROCK SHOW Soundtrack" under "Playlists"

Day 1: Makes You Think

Track 1: The Rock Show, blink-182

Changes don't happen every day, but one day can change everything... at THE ROCK SHOW.

Outside Maddy's window, a car zoomed down the street, radio blaring: "...that was Lisa Pharnum's hit single 'Super Star.' And in case you've been hibernating in a cave for the past few months, Lisa will be performing along with four other amazing bands today at Megalopolis Music Fest. The fun starts at noon, at Smithville's very own Governor's Green Amphitheatre. Tickets are..."

Day 2: Makes You Try

Track 2: I Try, Macy Gray

Meet Chris Dean. He's been off the dating grid since breaking up with Tara, Smithville's "queen bee," last summer. But his best friend, Fletch, thinks that new love might just be waiting for Chris... at THE ROCK SHOW.

"So," Fletch grinned, "Want to go to a concert?"

Chris groaned. "Dude, I did not bust my ass all week just to go to that Woodstock wannabe. I'm going home and doing nothing."

"Well, that'll be a change of pace." Fletch clapped his best friend on the shoulder. "C'mon man. You need this. I'm not taking 'no' for an answer."

Day 3: Makes You Cringe

Track 3: On the Radio, Donna Summer

Maddy Johnson has been in love with Chris Dean for three years. She's finally going to tell him how she feels today... at THE ROCK SHOW.

The song on the radio faded out, replaced by DJ Mondo: "We're giving away two tickets to Megalopolis every hour! Our latest winner is Marla. Marla, why do YOU want to go to Megalopolis?"

Marla's voice floated from the radio, while the real Marla mouthed along: "Mondo, I want to help my best friend find true love!"

Maddy's jaw dropped. Marla looked enormously pleased.

Day 4: Makes You Smile

Track 4: Smile, Vitamin C

Tara Court is Smithville High School's "Girl Most Likely." But lately, she's been different. Like she's hiding something. All will be revealed today... at THE ROCK SHOW.

Tara slit open the unaddressed envelope with one French-tipped fingernail. A single sheet of paper with two tickets clipped to it read: "Hope to see you there."

Tara considered this.

Megalopolis.

Today.

Interesting.

She smiled.

Day 5: Makes You Nervous

Track 5: Basket Case, Green Day

Megalopolis Music Fest is the brainchild of Gordon Leffield. After today, Gordon is retiring from the Smithville City Council and taking his wife on a much-deserved and twenty-years-belated honeymoon. But first, he must survive... THE ROCK SHOW.

Gordon refused to entertain the notion that anything could go wrong today. It simply couldn't. It His wife had no idea how much of their money Gordon had sunk into this event. If anything went wrong... well, his life wouldn't be worth a \$5 bottled water.

Day 6: Makes You Wonder

Track 6: The Sign, Ace of Base

Something's in the air today... at THE ROCK SHOW.

There was a certain feeling in the air of Smithville. If Gordon were mystically inclined, he might call it a sign or the winds of change. As it was, he shrugged his brown sport jacket off in the bright morning sunlight, put on his prescription sunglasses, and hoped whatever “it” was, “it” didn’t mess with his show.

Day 7: Makes Your Heart Stop

Track 7: Today, Smashing Pumpkins

It might not be cool to admit, but Dan Leffield loves his dad. And he and his friends are ready to do whatever it takes to make Gordon’s music festival a mega-success.

And maybe, just maybe, Dan will get to meet his dream girl, headliner Lisa Pharnum, at...THE ROCK SHOW.

Dan lifted the lanyard badges off the dresser. ALL-ACCESS PASS, the big yellow letters screamed.

There were three badges; one for him, one for Lloyd, and one for Steve. These passes were the key to what Dan hoped was the biggest day of their thus-far non-eventful lives. The trio had spent the last six months preparing. They were ready.

“Today’s the day,” he told his reflection. It almost sounded like a prayer.

Day 8: Makes You Angry

Track 8: Supernova, Liz Phair

Rising star Lisa Pharnum is headlining her first music festival. She does NOT have time for her bus to break down. And she certainly doesn’t have time for some fanboy named Dan to come to her rescue. Or does she?

Turns out you can learn a lot about a person on a road trip to... THE ROCK SHOW.

Lisa Pharnum was hot. Not in the famous sense (although she currently resided on the “hot” side of every “What’s Hot and What’s Not” list), but in terms of temperature. Lisa Pharnum was an inferno. She’d never been this hot in her life.

“Miss, you are violating about fourteen different traffic laws by laying out here on the median sunbathing. You’ll need to come with me.”

Lisa raised her oversized rhinestone-studded sunglasses to stare into the reflective lenses of a policeman’s Ray-bans while horns honked around them.

Day 9: Makes You Give Up

Track 9: Barely Breathing, Duncan Sheik

Abandoned by their friends, Maddy and Chris are left to watch the concert together. After an awkward start, they begin to connect... until Tara shows up.

What happens when your ex interrupts your first date? Things are getting complicated...at THE ROCK SHOW.

Chris smiled and Maddy smiled back. “What say we take a lap and check out the vendor stalls? Maybe grab a bottle of water and let Fletch and Marla look for us for a change?”

“Sounds great. Where-”

“Christopher?”

Chris turned. Froze.

“Could we talk?” Tara asked.

Chris was caught. In front of him was the girl he’d spent last year recovering from. Next to him was Maddy, the girl he’d spent three years wondering about.

No matter his choice, he was losing something in return.

Day 10: Makes You Cry

Track 10: Brick, Ben Folds Five

Secrets don’t stay secret for long...at THE ROCK SHOW.

“Christopher!” Tara called, stricken.

“Don’t,” he said. “Don’t say anything. Don’t follow me.”

After he’d gone, Tara began walking in the opposite direction. She could see people staring at her, could feel them talking about her as she passed.

Tara walked on.

Day 11: Makes You Want

Track 11: Everybody’s Free (To Wear Sunscreen), Baz Luhrmann

It all comes down to this... at THE ROCK SHOW.

It was here. The moment Maddy had feared ever since Marla snuck through her window that morning waving Megalopolis tickets. That Maddy would put herself out there and be rejected.

But somehow, acceptance and rejection didn't matter anymore.

They were moving on, beyond the fears that had held them back for so long.

Even if they weren't together, they were no longer alone.

Day 12: Makes Your Heart Race

Track 12: I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles), The Proclaimers

Things are looking up after Dan rescues Lisa from a mob of adoring fans. Now they're running late and hearts are racing. Will Dan and Lisa make it in time...to THE ROCK SHOW?

Lisa glanced over at Dan. "You know what, Fanboy? I'm having a good time today. It's been ages since I've hung out with anyone other than industry people and talked about something other than my ratings or latest single." She paused, decided. "Let's agree that for today, at least, we'll be visible to each other. What do you say? Like the buddy system: I agree to see the real you, and you see the real me."

This time, Dan didn't hesitate. "Absolutely. You got it."

"All right then," Lisa gunned the motor. "Let's get to the show."

Day 13: Makes You Take a Breath

Track 13: Enjoy the Silence, Depeche Mode

Her secret is out, her emotions laid bare, her future before her. Tara has returned home with the one she loves...from THE ROCK SHOW.

The music exploded from the sound system, and Tara began to dance. He moved with her, his arms wrapped tightly around her, moving to her beat, while her hands stayed intertwined with his. They moved together, as one body, to one rhythm, so close that they looked like a single person dancing.

And, for that moment, they were.

Day 14: Makes You Remember

Track 14: I Melt with You, Modern English

It's over, but no one will ever forget... THE ROCK SHOW.

The concert was over.

Lisa drank in the sights and sounds, wanting to remember everything about this moment: the cool breeze lifting the hairs that escaped her ponytail and blew across her neck. The love pouring in from the crowd. The heat from the lights shining down. The raspy feel of her throat as proof that she'd sung and been heard.

She recorded each sensation, layering them into a picture that captured what she knew would always be one of the most important nights of her life.
