

SHOWSTOPPER Synopsis

An egomaniac television showrunner makes their career-defining masterpiece.

ACT I — *“Writer’s Block”* At The Aristotle Zhang Studios on Tigersgate Canada's Vancouver film & television lots, ASTER has one month before their overall deal expires, and no next gig lined up. Their name is losing clout, their pitches get passed on, they are dying a slow-moving death. Enraged by an exec calling their passion project of thirty years a 'snoozefest', Aster blows off steam at an open mic, but again, nobody cares. Overcome with desperation for acknowledgement of their waning existence, they smash a stranger’s laptop (they’re writing a screenplay) into pieces, causing a huge public disturbance. Now they have everyone’s attention.

ACT II — *“Live from Vancouver”* Aster’s violent act earns them a primetime TV slot, but absolutely zero writers want to staff it. So they do everything themselves, getting into drag and workshopping an array of weird silly ideas including clowning, but their one-person ego project cannot come to life in isolation as much as they try. Aster has a nervous breakdown and admits to a hallucinated late night host that their lifelong fight for a psych diagnosis has left them lonely, neurotic, and paranoid. Waking up from the episode, Aster finds and hires ASSISTANT-THERAPIST to get a grip on reality.

ACT III — *“Masterpiece”* The night before their contract is up, Aster shows signs of recovery. They write, cast, direct, shoot, and edit it all in a haze of hyperfocus, super proud of an honest work well done. It’s the best ever television show Aster has damn well ever made, enough to silence all their delusional demons, healing themselves through discipline and intentional focus. It’s a beautiful hope-filled hit with a happy ending, everyone would love it for sure. Moments before its world broadcast premiere, Aster sneaks into the control room and deletes everything forever, freed by stopping the show.