

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

We hear the sound of a single piano key being repeatedly TAPPED. The tapper is IAN BOOTH (30). He is the perfect picture of disheveled -- five o'clock shadow, tired eyes, and hair that is tamed only by its recession.

Ian slouches in his chair at his work space. Surrounding him is a clutter of empty coffee cups, music sheets, and a few leafs of past due bills.

He clutches a pencil in his mouth, and rests his chin on his hand.

The other hand slowly, almost thoughtlessly, strikes the key on a synthesizer that is connected to the computer in front of him.

The tapping stops.

His eyebrow raises. Is it a eureka moment?

CLANG! Ian slumps his head onto the keyboard.

Beat.

A MELODRAMATIC SOAP OPERA tune begins to play.

Ian peevishly looks up.

IAN
(mumbling)
Oh come on.

The MELODRAMATIC MELODY continues. Ian leans in closer to the nearby wall.

IAN
(shouting at the wall)
HEY! HEY! TURN IT DOWN!

MRS. POKORNY (O.S.)
Are you talking to me!?

IAN
Of course not Mrs. Pokorny, I'm
having a private conversation
between me and my wall.

Beat.

MRS. POKORNY (O.S.)
... Okay.

IAN
That hearing aid of yours doesn't
pick up sarcasm does it?

The MELODRAMA SOUNDS continue. Ian curses under his breath and angrily grabs a pair of headphones. He plugs them in and slips them on.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

Annoyed, he turns toward his door.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

He throws the headphones down and storms over to the door.

Flinging it open reveals, KAITLYN WESCOTT, (29) thin, short and spirited. She carries a large cardboard box that appears to be leaking.

KAITLYN
Here.

She shoves the box into Ian's chest and steps inside.

He stands perplexed, clutching the box as Kaitlyn scopes out his place.

IAN
What the hell is this?

KAITLYN
A two hundred dollar, non-
refundable ice sculpture. It's an
angel with a harp.

The soaked box is beginning to pour out water at a rapid rate.

IAN
Was. Unless the angel's tinkling.
You couldn't leave it outside?

KAITLYN
Well that wouldn't have been right
now would it? It was your
contribution after all.

He dashes over to the sink, and tries to unlatch the folded cardboard box lid flaps.

IAN
I thought you canceled all this
stuff.

KAITLYN (O.S.)
That's the "non" in non-refundable.

The box's structural integrity, having been weakened by the water suddenly gives way. A torrent unleashes. SPLASH!

In an instant the floor and much of Ian is covered in water. He snaps a towel off the counter and dabs his face with it. Meanwhile, Kaitlyn grabs a music sheet off of Ian's desk.

KAITLYN
(singing the notes)
Dum, dum, dum, dum, dum, dum

Ian hearing her, sprints out of the soaked kitchen, and zips over to her.

KAITLYN
(regarding the music)
That's very nice Ian.

He snatches the sheet away from her, and clutches it protectively.

IAN
I'm a little bit busy here Kaitlyn
so -- great to see you -- thanks
for bringing me a box of water.
Now--

KAITLYN
Well, actually, I had an ulterior
motive.

IAN
Oh?

He dabs at his soaked shirt.

IAN
You mean this wasn't out of the
goodness of your heart?

KAITLYN
My check.

Beat.

IAN
Seriously?

KAITLYN

Yes. This would be the serious portion, the joke was earlier. I canceled the ice sculpture a month ago.

He gives an exasperated sigh.

IAN

This is *really* not a good time.

KAITLYN

You agreed to cover half of the expenses.

IAN

And I will.

KAITLYN

When?

IAN

Couple of weeks.

KAITLYN

You said you'd have it two weeks ago.

IAN

Well, I don't. I can either pay you or I can eat. Those are my options.

KAITLYN

The human body can go thirty days without food. And I brought you water.

He coldly stares at her. She returns his gaze with equal intensity.

IAN

This is the end of it?

KAITLYN

Yes.

IAN

We're settled after this?

KAITLYN

Scout's honor.

She produces the "scout's honor" gesture, but playfully gets it wrong, leaving a lone extended middle-finger.

She glances at the flipped bird -- GASPS in mock horror and corrects the gesture.

IAN
(not amused)
Fine. Consider it an early birthday gift.

KAITLYN
No. I'll consider it what you owe me, because that's what it is.

He crosses over to his desk and pulls out a checkbook.

IAN
You are a bitter, bitter woman.

KAITLYN
Oh please. Only you would think it's vindictive to hold you to your word.

Ian indicates the checks he's writing.

IAN
I'm putting down "spite" for the memo line.

Ian tears off the check from the book and hands it to her.

She takes the check and studies it for a moment.

KAITLYN
My middle name is Leigh, not "devil-woman."

IAN
Oh. Well I knew it was something horrible.

Beat.

KAITLYN
Well...

She holds out her hand to Ian.

KAITLYN
I hope we can be strangers one day Mr. Booth.

He shakes her hand.

IAN
Pleased to never make your
acquaintance.

With that she smartly turns and heads for the door. She mimics blowing him a kiss, but then slaps her butt, in a kind of "kiss my ass" gesture.

With that, she's gone.

Ian turns and notices the clock. He quickly moves to his...

BEDROOM

...tearing his damp shirt off along the way.

He throws open his drawer, and sifts through the contents. We see a brief glimpse of a RING BOX just before Ian pulls out a shirt and slams the drawer closed.

INT. LIMZICKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Ian sits before his agent, STUART LIMZICKI, a middle-aged, neurotic, pudgy man with a propensity for flop sweat.

Stuart has his eyes closed, and he bobs his head as he listens to a SOFT MELODY play.

Abruptly the music stops.

Stuart turns to the CD player.

STUART
Stupid thing. Sorry about this Ian.

He WHACKS at it.

IAN
No. That's it.

STUART
What?

IAN
That's all I have.

Stuart starts loosening his tie.

STUART
That you have recorded. That's all that you have *recorded*. Right? Please tell me that's not all that you have written.

Beat.

IAN
That's all I have.

STUART
OH!

Stuart jumps in his skin, like he was just shot.

STUART
WHY DID YOU SAY THAT? I SAID DON'T
TELL ME THAT!

IAN
I'm just, struggling right now.

STUART
STRUGGLING!?

Stuart starts rocking back and forth.

STUART
Oh, oh, boy, oh man, oh boy...

IAN
Listen--

STUART
We have the meeting tomorrow!

IAN
I know.

STUART
In person!

IAN
I know.

STUART
Gordan Chambers!

IAN
I know Stuart, geez, I know.

STUART
Chambers! Pitch! Tomorrow! Do you
hear the words coming out of my
mouth!? 'Cause I do, and they're
scaring the crap out of me!

IAN
I know, I know, I know. I'm just...
locked up a bit.

Stuart resumes his rocking.

STUART
Oh. We're screwed.

IAN
We're not screwed. We're going to
get the gig.

STUART
Oh they're gonna fire me. What am I
going to tell my wife?

IAN
You don't have a wife.

STUART
How am I gonna get a wife now?

IAN
Breathe Stuart, breathe.

Stuart begins wheezing in and out.

IAN
Look, I can do this. Katie's theme
is the key.

STUART
(lost in his own thoughts)
Maybe I could be a...

IAN
If I can just nail Katie's theme
for this pitch I'd have the job. I
know I would.

STUART
Oh god, I can't even think of
something I could be.

IAN
I'm close to something, I can feel
it. I'll work it out today, and
I'll lay down the track tomorrow
morning -- the meeting's not until
two.

STUART
No. They bumped it up.

IAN

What?

STUART

It's at eleven. I told you that. Oh god, I didn't tell you that? I told you that.

Ian rubs his temple.

STUART

We're screwed aren't we?

IAN

No. It's fine. I'll record it tonight.

(beat)

I can do this.

Stuart leans in close to him, staring directly into his eyes.

STUART

This is your big chance Ian. It's my big chance. If you want to score music for movies, this is it. These kinds of breaks don't come again, you know?

IAN

I'll work it today. I'll get it.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Ian stands over PHIL, a pot-bellied, unkempt sound engineer who reclines near a massive sound console.

PHIL

No refunds.

IAN

I'm not wanting a refund, I just want to move time slots.

PHIL

Dude, you rented the studio for now. You got it now. You want to rent it later, you have to pay for later. That's the policy.

IAN

Anally raping me is now a policy?

PHIL
That's always been the policy.

IAN
You don't even have anyone booked
for the rest of the day.

PHIL
Unless I book you, *again*.

Ian glowers.

IAN
Fine.

Ian pulls out his wallet and removes a couple of hundred
dollar bills. He holds up the cash.

IAN
But I want the studio for midnight.

PHIL
Dude, that's after hours.

IAN
I'm up to my eyebrows in crap I
have to do. That's the time I want
and that's the time I'm going to
get or I swear to god I'll settle
for MIDI.

He brandishes the cash. Phil ponders the offer.

PHIL
Tell you what, your lady friend
still works at Venue twenty-one?

IAN
Ex-lady friend. And yeah.

Phil pulls out an unmarked disc in a clear case.

PHIL
Get her to slip this to the DJ
there and I'll get you the studio.

IAN
Done.

Ian snatches the CD from Phil's hand and stuffs it in his
messenger bag.

Phil smiles and points at the disc.

PHIL
8 bit bebop baby. One word:
orgasmic.

Ian presses the "TALK BACK" on the sound console, and addresses a YOUNG VIOLINIST in the recording bay.

IAN
Go home. We're on at midnight.

The Young Violinist looks up, perplexed, as Ian walks out.

YOUNG VIOLINIST
....What?

INT. HOTEL - EMPLOYEE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ian, wearing a tuxedo and fastening his bow tie, hurries down the hallway, passing by the office of greasy-haired manager, ROB (40s).

Rob spots Ian.

ROB
You're late.

Ian waves a conciliatory hand, and keeps walking.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - LATER

Ian sits at a grand piano in the center of a massive lobby. The decor is well suited for this overpriced hotel, and Ian's rendition of John Dunbar's theme from *Dances with Wolves* only adds to the ostentatious ambience.

A DRUNK MAN, with beer bottle in hand, stumbles in from the adjoining hotel bar.

He flops onto a chair near the piano and listens to Ian play. He closes his eyes, soaking the music in.

DRUNK MAN
Ahhh.

Ian glances at the drunk, but still keeps playing.

The drunkard squints his eyes fiercely, as if trying by sheer might to conjure a thought.

DRUNK MAN
(trying to name that tune)
I know this. What is this? Ah...

Ian smiles out of the side of his mouth.

DRUNK MAN
It's at the tip of my brain. Ugh!
You ever have that? Where you can't
quite remember the song?
(beat)
So annoying.

The song comes to an end.

IAN
It's John Dunbar's theme. From
Dances with Wolves.

The drunkard stares blankly at Ian.

DRUNK MAN
No. That's not it.

Ian tilts his head in a sort of "what is wrong with you?"
look.

DRUNK MAN
Hey. Do you know this one?

The drunkard heaves himself up and stumbles over to Ian.

DRUNK MAN
Do you know this one? It goes, it
goes. Da, da, da, dum, dum, da.

The drunkard takes a misstep on the carpet and collides into
Ian, spilling beer all over him.

DRUNK MAN
Ooopsie.

Ian grimaces as the drunk man tries to help wipe him down.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ian, dressed in his regular clothes, steps into his
apartment. He glances at the clock. It's 9:13 pm. He still
has lots of time.

He heads to his work area and slips his headphones on.

There's a rapid KNOCK on the door, and in walks TRACY SPRATT
(20s), Ian's girlfriend. She's an unquestionable hottie, but
a firecracker as well.

She talks on her cell phone, but flashes Ian a smile as she enters.

TRACY

(on phone)

How long do we have to put up with gross incompetence? It's not my problem you're too stupid--

(beat)

I know, right? Exactly.

(beat)

Oh my god. Sweaty neck fat, that's all I can think of.

Tracy meanders over to Ian, still chatting incessantly on the cell phone.

TRACY

(on phone)

And it's not like I'm resentful.

You know me.

(beat)

Hello?

She checks the phone.

TRACY

Ugh! Goddamn AT&T, piece of shit.

She sits on the desk next to Ian and unplugs his headphones.

TRACY

You will not believe the day I had.

Ian stares at the dangling unplugged cord.

TRACY

So Jeremy comes in; *lumbering*, and he's upset -- over what? Food. Of course. He didn't like the catering for the meeting.

IAN

(feigning interest)

Oh yeah?

TRACY

He thinks it's too stuffy, too formal, too costly, he just wants pizza. Pizza, my god, pizza.

IAN

Tracy--

TRACY

I said Jeremy, look at the roster.
Steve Reider is in attendance. He's
allergic to dairy.

IAN

Tracy--

TRACY

What is he going to do, scrape off
the cheese?

IAN

Tracy--

TRACY

What?

IAN

I have a lot of work to do tonight,
for my meeting tomorrow with
Gordan.

TRACY

What the hell are you talkin'
about? Work? You're not ready!?
Damn it Ian, the meeting is
tomorrow.

IAN

I know when the meeting is.

TRACY

I put my reputation on the line,
giving your demo disc to my boss--

IAN

And he *liked* it.

TRACY

You can't be walking in unprepared.

IAN

I'm prepared. I'm ready. I'm
just... tweaking some stuff.

TRACY

Oh.

Her demeanor softens.

TRACY

Good.

She leans in and kisses him on the cheek.

TRACY
You'll do great.

Her cell phone RINGS. She snaps it up.

TRACY
(on phone)
Hey.
(small beat)
Yeah sorry about that, I'm at my
boyfriend's. Reception is crap.
(beat)
Yeah well, he's not going to be
long at this dump.

Frustrated, Ian throws off his headphones and heads to the kitchen for a drink.

He huffs over to the refrigerator. There's a pool of water, still present from the remains of the ice sculpture.

Ian slips on the water. He loses his footing and falls, he grabs hold of a kitchen cabinet handle for balance -- SNAP -- it breaks off! CRACK!

His head HITS the kitchen counter -- bounces and falls backward, SLAMMING his head HARD on the linoleum floor.

INT. WHITE ROOM - NIGHT

IAN's POV: A glossy, out of focus figure approaches. In a moment the features of Kaitlyn begin to form.

MUSIC begins, a beautiful tune -- romantic, yet strong and powerful. And just as it's about to crescendo--

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Ian wakes up in his bed. He groans and grabs at the back of his head.

Tracy storms into the room.

TRACY
Great, you're up.

We hear the sound of a TERRIFYING and IMPOSING TUNE, like the *Imperial March*.

A baffled Ian looks around for the source of the music.