

DUELERS

by

DREW DE FOUR

NOVEMBER 20th, 2018

drewdefour@gmail.com

**ACT 1**

1

**INT. STAGE - OPENING TOAST**

1

**DREW - TOAST**

A shot glass is being raised in the air by DREW (Male, 30s, rugged, intimidating, morally arrogant). He is giving a toast on stage at DUELERS PIANO BAR in front of THE CROWD (a packed house of around 200+ people).

We don't see the people or Drew, just the shot glass in hand.

DREW  
(Off-Screen)  
When I say drink, you say more.  
Drink!

THE CROWD  
(O.S.)  
More!

DREW  
(O.S.)  
Drink!

THE CROWD  
(O.S.)  
More!

DREW  
(O.S.)  
You guys have been just perfect  
tonight, so here's my favorite  
toast:  
May you  
Work like you don't need the money  
Love like it's not gonna hurt  
Sing like nobody's listening, and  
Live like your last day on earth!  
Cheers!

We hear The Crowd sparsely cheer and abundantly drink.

DREW (CONT'D)  
Alright, let's do this.

Music begins as the OPENING CREDITS roll.

2            **INT. DUELERS PIANO BAR - OPENING CREDITS**

2

**DUELERS - I'M NOT ALONE**

Montage footage of Duelers Piano Bar.

We see some highlights of a typical night of Dueling Pianos:

THE WAITSTAFF (Waitresses, Bouncers, Bartenders) set up the room for an impending night of debauchery.

The DUELERS (Dueling Pianos Performers) each sing and play various instruments like piano, bass, drums, fiddle, guitar, keytar, etc. throughout this montage/song. Each Dueler gets a verse. We see glimpses of who they are as characters.

The Crowd fills up the room. We see bird's eye view footage of the PIANO BAR going from empty to full in fast motion. The patrons are shown drinking, celebrating, dancing, clapping, getting wild, etc.

DUELERS PIANO BAR is revealed extensively: the line out the door, the alcohol, the tables, the decorations, the lights, the walls, the pictures, the instruments, etc.

We witness visuals (no audio) of some classic DUELING PIANOS bits to pay homage to the art-form that has given us this setting for our story.

3            **INT. BAR - PRE-SHOW**

3

**NOBODY ON STAGE - NO SONG**

Duelers Piano Bar is at full capacity on a Saturday night. The stage lights are dark and The Crowd is humming with anticipation.

At the far side of the club, opposite the Stage, DREW approaches the BAR and ends up right next to TYLER (Male, 20s, dashing, cool, pretentious) who is notating music onto his iPad.

BETHANY, the Head Bartender (Female, 30s, foxy, shrewd, and calculated) proceeds to lay out two shots of espresso, a shot of Jamison, and a Pint of beer.

Drew slams his first espresso shot and then addresses Tyler as the caffeine hits him.

DREW  
Wooooooh! Alright, Tyler, it's 8.

TYLER  
 (Without looking up)  
 How do you take that without sugar?

DREW  
 I just need the caffeine.

Drew motions to the espresso shot, then the alcohol shot.

DREW (CONT'D)  
 Coffee starts the fire, booze  
 puts it out. Come on, let's do  
 this.

TYLER  
 (slightly stalling)  
 Who's the girl at our break table?

We see KIN (Female, 30s, reserved, slightly bookish, pretty) sitting alone at the Duelers' break table. She smiles and waves at Drew.

DREW  
 (Caught off guard)  
 Nobody. A friend. Don't worry about  
 it. Hey, we gotta play.

TYLER  
 (Trying to be polite)  
 Please, give me a minute, I'm  
 almost done.

Tyler keeps notating. Drew grows impatient. He looks at the time on his phone and then slams his other espresso shot.

DREW  
 It's 8, man. Do that later.

TYLER  
 Recording session tomorrow morning.  
 My horns need these charts like  
 now.

DREW  
 We gotta play like now.

TYLER  
 (Still not looking up)  
 Drew, nobody cares if the show  
 starts two minutes late.

Drew grimaces, subtly shakes his head, grabs his drinks and walks away.

Bethany approaches Tyler.

BETHANY  
You want the usual? Boulevardier?

TYLER  
Nah, I'm not drinking tonight.

BETHANY  
Why? What's happening tonight?

TYLER  
All of my dreams come true.

BETHANY  
Ha. But seriously.

TYLER finally looks up, looks around, and almost betrays his excitement.

TYLER  
This guy's coming to see me tonight. Big time agent. I've been sending him my stuff for months.

BETHANY  
Wow. That's... exciting.

TYLER  
Yeah, he's only in town tonight. One of his artists is playing over at the stadium. He's stopping in after the show at Midnight.

BETHANY  
Midnight. Wow. Your big shot.

TYLER  
My big shot.

Bethany's phone rings.

BETHANY  
Congrats, Tyler. Don't forget about us little people when you're rich and famous...

Bethany checks her phone and nervously steps away, unknowingly still within earshot of Tyler who perks his ears up as this phone call transpires.

On the phone is STEVE (early 40s, consummate businessman, unapologetic, alpha).

BETHANY (CONT'D)  
What's up, Steve?

STEVE (V.O.)  
Bethany, I closed. They're gonna  
sign the papers here at midnight.

BETHANY  
Wait, what?

STEVE (V.O.)  
I sold the club, the Buyers are  
coming in later on, I am gonna need  
you to tell the Duelers after the  
show tonight.

BETHANY  
Tonight!?

Bethany says this a little loud and Tyler perks up his ears,  
so Bethany walks away down the Bar.

BETHANY (CONT'D)  
(Panicked, Trying to be  
quiet)  
Oh my god... I didn't think it  
would be so soon... how do I tell  
them?

STEVE (V.O.)  
Hey, can you handle this!? They  
haven't signed yet, Beth! We gotta  
keep this place running until it's  
a done deal. If word got out I was  
selling the club and the deal  
somehow falls through... oh my god,  
everyone would-

BETHANY  
No! No. I got this. Don't think  
twice. Have you told Jane yet?

Pause.

STEVE (V.O.)  
(Sighs)  
No, I'm gonna have to come in later  
and tell Jane myself before she  
hears it from someone else or  
she'll murder me.

BETHANY  
Good idea.

STEVE

Listen, you've been flawless this last month helping prep for the sale. Just steer this ship for a few more hours and I'll make sure you Manage the new concept. Capeche?

BETHANY

Capeche.

STEVE (V.O.)

Hey, I'm proud of you.

BETHANY

(Slightly saddened)

Yeah, me too.

Bethany hangs up, sighs, and appears heartbroken; but immediately puts on her best face, gathers herself, and returns to Tyler with a glass of water.

TYLER

Soooo... what was all that about? What's happening tonight?

BETHANY

(Caught off guard, but clever)

All of my dreams come true...

TYLER

Ha. But seriously...

Bethany looks stuck and Tyler is about to press her for a better answer when suddenly the lights go up and we hear a huge piano chord from the stage. Bethany is off the hook and visibly relieved.

DREW

(Voice from Stage)

Alright, who's ready to go?

The Crowd cheers wildly.

TYLER

(Dismayed)

Goddamnit, Drew...

Tyler starts frantically gathering his things and getting ready to go up on stage.

**INT. STAGE - DREW OPENS THE SHOW - CONTINUOUS****DREW/TYLER - BE HERE WITH ME**

Drew is seated at PIANO R (Stage Right) and has started the show without Tyler (so PIANO L is empty).

DREW

This is Dueling Pianos. It's a sing-along, clap-along, all request show. Write down your favorite song and bring it up here...

PATRON #1 brings up a request with some money.

DREW (CONT'D)

Just like that! Yes. Thank you. Someone's clearly been here before. And, look at this.

Drew holds up the money.

DREW (CONT'D)

Our first official request. This is the request (holds up piece of paper) and the green postage makes it official (holds up the money).

Tyler walks, annoyed, up to the stage with his water and his microphone while Drew is "setting up the room." He plugs his mic onto the stand at PIANO L (Stage Left).

DREW (CONT'D)

(Barely hiding his contempt)

Hey, look who decided to join us! It's Tyler. Everyone say "Hi, Tyler!"

THE CROWD

Hi, Tyler!

Drew waits for Tyler to maybe return the introduction. Tyler settles in to his Piano and doesn't, looking quite peeved at Drew for starting early.

DREW

(Melodramatically)

...and my name is Drew, how do you do?! Alright, I think we're ready to go. We're not here to play at you tonight, we're here to play with you. So let's get warmed up. Sing this back to me.

Drew performs BE HERE WITH ME, the ultimate opening song that gets the audience singing, clapping, and generally warmed up.

Some patrons bring up SONG REQUESTS with money on them to both Pianos as Drew is playing. Tyler is doing the bare minimum of what is required of him.

5

**INT. BAR - SKIP ORDERS A DRINK - SAME TIME**

5

**DREW/TYLER - (BE HERE WITH ME)**

SKIP (40s, unhealthy, substance abuser, heart of gold) approaches the Bar and gets his ritual first drink of the night from Bethany. He has what can best be described as a "co-worker crush" on her.

SKIP

First shot of the night?

BETHANY

(Slightly concerned)

Skip, I think you should cool it tonight. Especially after what happened last night.

SKIP

It's not my fault the cowboy with the Franklins also wanted to do ten shots of Jager with us.

BETHANY

But did you have to call his wife an F-ing C? On the microphone?

SKIP

You should have heard what *he* called her! Relax, it was all in good fun.

BETHANY

Yes, I'm sure the 1-Star reviews we got this morning were all in good fun.

SKIP

Oh God... come on. We can't indulge *those* people. Dueling Pianos was built on dick and poop jokes.

BETHANY

Aren't you always saying you have to adapt to survive?

SKIP

Not me; Charles Darwin. It's not the strongest or the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.

BETHANY

Good advice, right? Maybe think about that tonight...

SKIP

I'll think about it... and you think about us, baby. Do you know what I would do to you? Do you have any idea the terrible, unholy things I would-

BETHANY

Oh my god... shut up.

She pours two shots and they drink them in a very fun, personal style. Bethany starts to walk away.

SKIP

Bethany!

BETHANY

Yes, dear.

SKIP

One more?

BETHANY

(No longer a game)  
Skip, seriously. I'm not joking.  
It's not a good idea tonight.

SKIP

(Slightly insulted)  
Listen, it's either one here or three across the street. Up to you.

BETHANY

Oh my god, I hate you.

Bethany pours the drink.

SKIP

The great Socrates said that the deepest desires often come from the deadliest hate...

BETHANY

Oh, well in that case, I must love you.

She walks away. Skip looks puzzled because he knows he has been outwitted, but still isn't sure how.

6 **INT. STAGE - DREW IS JAMMING**

6

**DREW/TYLER - BE HERE WITH ME**

Drew is soloing and Tyler is backing him up without much excitement. The Crowd is getting hype. Drew gets The Crowd to start clapping and does the next verse a cappella. He grabs a wireless mic, leaves his piano and walks to center stage getting full audience participation. He sees some people taking video with their phones. He knocks a phone away demanding that The Crowd live in the moment with him.

7 **INT. BAR - JANE'S ENTRANCE**

7

**DREW/TYLER - (BE HERE WITH ME)**

Jane (Female, 30s, punk, magnetic, witty, freewheeling) enters the Piano Bar and makes her way to the Bar. She is beloved here at Duelers and has silly, friendly interactions with several of the Waitstaff and a few patrons as she joins Skip at the Bar.

SKIP

Jane!

JANE

(Playfully, motioning to  
The Crowd)

Hey, Skipper! Ready to feed the animals?

SKIP

You know it. Gotta pay that child support.

Jane, smiling and gracious, motions to Bethany to get her usual starting shot and drink. During this, a GOOFY GUY walks up to Jane and tries to hit on her.

GOOFY GUY

Hey, do I know you? You look familiar... maybe you were in my dreams or something?

Jane flips out a bit and starts barking like a dog, partly out of annoyance, partly because it's funny to her.

JANE

Arf! Arf arf arf! Arf! Grrrrr....  
Arf!

The Goofy Guy looks horrified and retreats back to his spot nearby at the bar. This is very typical for Skip so he doesn't react to it.

SKIP

Sooooo... first shot of the night?

They take up their shots.

JANE

Yeah, sure. To men and the women  
that ride them.

They do their shots.

JANE (CONT'D)

How are we doing, tonight?

SKIP

Same as always.

JANE

That bad, huh?

SKIP

(Totally playful)  
Well, you still gonna sell out and  
marry the rich guy?

Jane doesn't take it playfully and considers it with some gravity while sipping her drink.

JANE

(Mellodramatic)  
Oh Steve, Steve, Steve... to be  
honest, there has been a...  
distance, lately.

SKIP

I was just playing around, I don't  
mean to intrude-

JANE

Yes you do. Please proceed with  
whatever advice I can't stop you  
from giving me.

Pause.

SKIP

(Trying to help)

Okay, well you know, when I worked at JD's Key Club, there was an unspoken rule: don't sleep with the staff.

JANE

What did they say about owners?

SKIP

Well, I banged a bunch of Waitresses... a few Managers... some of the Bouncers if you count the Devil's Triangle... the Plumber... but I never slept with any Owners... so actually, I can't help you with any of this.

JANE

(Punches Skip)

Funny guy.

SKIP

Hey, how come we never...

JANE

I'm saving myself. But you know what, Skip? in 10 years, if I'm not married... and you're not married...

SKIP

(Hopes up)

...yeah??

JANE

Please don't ever call me!

SKIP

Funny girl.

Clearly close, they laugh a little and then look up at the Stage as Drew's song ends.

SKIP (CONT'D)

What's it gonna be tonight, Tyler?

Drew has finished his song to enthusiastic applause.

The Crowd visibly turns their attention to Tyler who is looking at requests on his piano, taking his sweet time.

TYLER

Oh cool, someone requested my  
favorite song.

Tyler takes a moment (probably too long) to gather himself before starting a deeply personal, passionate song about ambition and personal drive.

After the first Chorus, the Stage lights dim and The Crowd fades to black as Tyler is playing in his own universe, in a spotlight. For a moment, he imagines himself on a stadium stage in front of a huge crowd with camera lights flashing and raucous applause during his piano solo. His performance is beautiful.

He ends the song in silence under the spotlight, but as the house lights (and reality) come up, so does the boisterous chatter of The Crowd who have completely tuned out Tyler and the show.

Drew sits there for a moment letting Tyler soak in the lack of response from The Crowd and nods his head with the affirmation of his expectations.

DREW

Yup. So who came here to party  
tonight?

The Crowd cheers wildly.

Drew starts a DUELING SONG that re-energizes THE CROWD and will serve as background for the next dialogue.

9

**INT. BAR - SKIP AND JANE TALK SHOP**

9

**DREW/TYLER - (IT'S ON YOU)**

SKIP

That was not ideal.

JANE

(Making excuses)  
Well, he said it was a request...

SKIP

(Sighs)

No, no, no. requests don't run the show. We do. Tyler's just making more work for us now.

JANE

Yeah, well what else is new? Hey, who's that over at the Duelers' Table? Is that Drew's new girl or something?

We see Kin again. She is writing in a notebook now while watching the show and seems out of place at the Duelers' Table.

SKIP

Why Drew? Why not Skip's girl? Why did you automatically guess Drew?

JANE

Oh, I'm sorry! I didn't see any visible STDs or deformities so I just assumed she wasn't yours.

SKIP

That's fair.

10

**INT. STAGE - DREW INTERVENES**

10

**DREW/TYLER - THE TOWER**

Drew throws Tyler the solo on this song, leads The Crowd in a call-and-response to finish and then plays the final chords to enthusiastic applause. Tyler corrects Drew's ending to the song.

TYLER

That's not how the ending goes.

Tyler plays the last few chords.

DREW

(In disbelief, sarcastic)

Okay, cool. Thanks man.

Tyler vamps for a moment, leafing through some of the requests as The Crowd waits anxiously for something as engaging as what they just witnessed. He sees one that piques his interest.

TYLER

I like this one. Thank you to  
whomever requested music that  
doesn't suck. I just gotta get a  
few of the words here...

Tyler actually knows the song, but is intentionally doing things that Drew hates. He looks the song up on his iPad, then starts a beautiful, soulful rendition of THE TOWER.

This performance would be perfect for an audience that wanted to hear something dark, powerful, and passionate... but it's bombing with this debauchorous Saturday Night party crowd.

The Crowd starts to talk amongst themselves and ignores the show as the song progresses.

Drew looks on in disbelief as the room is deflating again.

Drew tries to pump the audience up by playing really loudly over Tyler on a short section and getting the audience to clap along to the song, maybe trying to energize the beat a little bit. Tyler cuts it off pretty quickly.

TYLER (CONT'D)

(Defiantly, on mic)

Woah, woah, I'm cool, man. Chill.

Tyler brings the song back into a more subdued, groovy, vibe. Drew retreats with his tail between his legs.

Drew writes "BORING" on a request slip and aggressively puts it in front of Tyler during the performance with a dollar on it. Tyler subtly scowls, grabs the note quickly with a free hand and crumples it, throwing it back at Drew.

11

**INT. BAR - JANE AND SKIP BREAK HUDDLE**

11

**DREW/TYLER - (THE TOWER)**

JANE

This isn't looking good. I think  
I'm gonna go up early for Drew.

SKIP

(Suggesting, slyly)  
So you can play with Tyler?

JANE

(Deflecting)  
I mean, someone's gotta do it. What  
can I say? He needs me...

SKIP

(Makes a sexual motion)  
Okay, I'll go "investigate" the  
Mystery Lady over here.

JANE

What would this place do without  
us? Right? Okay, ready... Break!

They high-five and Jane heads to the Stage while Skip heads to the Duelers' Table, but not before he steals a drink from Goofy Guy who is watching the show. Goofy Guy reaches for his glass and is confused when it's empty.

12

**INT. STAGE - JANE RELIEVES DREW**

12

**DREW/TYLER - THE TOWER**

Drew mocks the obvious lack of party in this song and pretends to start falling asleep on stage. The Crowd chuckles. Drew then pretends to hang himself with his microphone cable on account of how "bored" he is with the song. This gets a big response from The Crowd and Tyler looks pissed.

Jane suddenly grabs Drew from behind and kind of convinces him to let her take over. She whispers something in Drew's ear (we don't know what) and he very much agrees, making a show of it. Motioning: "Please! Be my guest! Of course you can take over. Good luck!"

13

**INT. STAGE - JANE STARTS HER OPENING SONG**

13

**JANE/TYLER - WHATYOUGONNADO?**

Tyler ends his song very quietly and then he looks up to see The Crowd is completely disengaged and talking amongst themselves almost as if there is nothing happening on stage. He smirks as if that's what he expected.

Jane has taken over on PIANO R. She is unsurprised and unfazed by The Crowd reaction (or lack thereof) and immediately begins the work of righting the ship.

JANE

Soooo... who's drinking tonight?

THE CROWD

(Cheers)

JANE  
 Raise 'em up. When I say drink, you  
 say more! Drink!

THE CROWD  
 More!

JANE  
 Drink!

THE CROWD  
 More!

JANE  
 Here's to our husbands and  
 boyfriends... may they never meet!

The Crowd cheers, especially the women. Jane sips her drink. Tyler raises an eyebrow at this particular toast.

Jane immediately starts playing a fun, engaging song that is high energy. It requires Tyler to participate in a more interactive way and he slowly smiles and gets into it (because he is into Jane).

On the first MALE part in the DUET, Tyler misses it. So Jane goads him:

JANE (CONT'D)  
 (To The Crowd)  
 Is this jackass gonna sing his  
 part?

Tyler smiles yieldingly and sings his part, mostly to Jane, but The Crowd loves it.

14

**INT. DUELERS' TABLE - SKIP MEETS KIN**

14

**JANE/TYLER - (WHATYOUGONNADO?)**

Skip approaches Kin, fully intending to hit on her.

SKIP  
 (Jokingly intense)  
 Hey, who the hell are you!?

KIN  
 Oh! I'm Kin. Drew said I could sit  
 here... and watch. I'm sorry, I, I  
 didn't know...

SKIP

(Suddenly very sweet,  
making sure to touch her)  
Oh no, no, no, I'm just kidding,  
darling. It's totally okay. I  
assumed you might be with Drew. Are  
you guys...?

Skip makes a sex gesture with hands.

KIN

No! No, no, no. We're old friends.

SKIP

(With devious intent)  
Oh, perfect.

KIN

I'm sorry, who are you?

SKIP

Oh wow, I don't know how to tell  
you this, but I'm the most talented  
and handsome Dueler here.  
(Pythonism) There are some who call  
me... Skip?

KIN

(Excited)  
Skip! No, I've heard about you.  
Drew speaks very highly.

SKIP

Oh, that's sweet. Yeah, we came up  
in the gig together. And your name  
is... don't tell me... Kim was it?

KIN

Close. No, I'm Kin. With an "N."  
Like family.

SKIP

Kin. Nice. I like your look, by the  
way. Sexy librarian. Very hot.

KIN

(Nervous, Deflecting)  
Haha, well you're not far off.  
Until very recently, I was a high  
school choir teacher.

SKIP

Oh yeah? What do you do now?

KIN  
(Points to stage)  
This.

SKIP  
(after a pause)  
Come again.

KIN  
Drew is teaching me the gig.

SKIP  
(Confused)  
Drew is teaching *you* Dueling  
Pianos?

KIN  
Yeah. The school system was  
screwing me - more students, less  
pay, no respect... so Drew  
convinced me to quit and give this  
gig a try.

Skip is getting nervous and trying to keep the banter light while he internally freaks out about the possibility that this girl might be here to take his job.

SKIP  
(Nervous)  
Well, yeah, teaching kids to sing?  
Drunk adults? It's the same thing!  
Ha! You'll do great.

KIN  
(Laughs)  
Thanks, Skip. So do you have any  
advice for me? Any tips for a  
newbie?

SKIP  
(Distracted)  
Be yourself; everyone else is  
already taken. Oscar Wilde said  
that.

KIN  
That's beautiful. Let me write that  
down. Anything else?

Skip is starting to gather himself, looking for where Drew might be in the Bar at this moment.

SKIP  
Anchoring.



They watch the show a little. Tyler is chugging along.

KIN

Now *he's* really good. I like him.  
Tyler is it? He plays so  
beautifully.

DREW

(Shocked)

Tyler? No. No, you can't be  
serious.

KIN

Yeah, why not?

DREW

He has completely lost The Crowd.

KIN

Well, he must be making somebody  
happy.

DREW

This gig isn't about making  
somebody happy. It's about making  
everybody happy.

KIN

That's not possible.

DREW

The Beatles did it.

KIN

I've met some people who hate The  
Beatles.

DREW

They're called sociopaths. We don't  
cater to them here.

Tyler takes the song to another level, but still it's mostly  
for him, and maybe Jane who loves it, but sees the effect it  
is having on the room.

DREW (CONT'D)

I think Tyler hates The Beatles,  
actually.

KIN

You seem strangely upset with  
him...

DREW

(Triggered)

He's just so selfish. He wants what he loves to be so important to these people. But it's not! They don't care that he thinks this is cool. To them, it's just... fast math. It's boring.

KIN

So should he not be playing this song?

DREW

Well, not like this. Dueling Pianos is about finding a way to make every song connect with The Crowd. A bad entertainer can butcher even the greatest song, but a great entertainer can sell even the worst song. See? Jane! Look at Jane!

17

**INT. STAGE - JANE SAVES PIANO #9**

17

**JANE/TYLER - PIANO #9**

Jane is watching and kind of recognizing that Tyler's approach to the show is once again creating a lot of work for her since he keeps losing The Crowd. So, like Drew, she decides to do something about it. The exception here is that Tyler doesn't mind as much because he trusts Jane.

Jane leaps up on Tyler's Piano (belly down) and watches Tyler play the keys. Tyler smiles and puts his head down towards the keys (in a Classic, Famous cartoon pose) and The Crowd loves it.

18

**INT. DUELERS' TABLE - DREW RANT #2: DUELING PIANOS**

18

**JANE/TYLER - (PIANO #9)**

DREW

See that!? Jane gets it. She's saving it.

KIN

Yeah, Okay, I think I sort of get it. More theater than music, but don't suck at music...

DREW

Yes! Exactly! I mean, even the first two owners of the first Dueling Piano bar couldn't agree on the concept.

KIN

You mean between Entertainment and Music?

DREW

Yeah. Like Cain and Abel. One wanted more schtick and comedy. One thought it should be all about the music.

KIN

Well, where do you stand?

DREW

I stand with The Crowd. Music, when performed well, IS Entertaining. But we have so much more at our disposal.

Drew gears up for his "This is Dueling Pianos" spiel.

DREW (CONT'D)

Dueling Pianos is a hybrid of all the greatest modern elements of entertainment. We use Singing, Clapping, Drinking, Dancing, Comedy, Improvisation, Roasts, Toasts, Birthdays, Bachelorettes, we can hold people for hours... Some clubs last 3, 4, 5 years best. This club is gonna stay open for decades.

KIN

Wow. Decades?

DREW

Decades.

They watch the show and THE CROWD taking it in.

Skip is alone at BAR and approached by WANDA (40s, Female, Cougar, Very Horny, Very Fun).

WANDA  
Do you like blow?

SKIP  
I like... blowjobs?

WANDA  
How about both?

Skip's eyes get really wide. Wanda grabs him and they are off to the bathroom.

20

**INT. STAGE - JANE AND THE HECKLER**

20

**JANE/TYLER - DON'T BE THAT GUY**

Tyler finishes PIANO #9. Jane does another quick toast:

JANE  
(Messing with him)  
Well, that was just beautiful,  
Tyler. I'm sure we're all better  
people for having heard that  
performance. (To The Crowd) Okay,  
you asses, raise your glasses. When  
I say drink, you say more! Drink!

THE CROWD  
More!

JANE  
Drink!

THE CROWD  
More!

JANE  
Let's drink to men!

THE CROWD  
(Hoots and Hollers)

JANE  
That's right: men! You can't live  
with 'em..... Cheers!!

The Crowd chuckles.

HECKLER  
Hey, go make me a sandwich!

JANE

Oh, hey, it's everyone's favorite  
douchebag. What's your name again?

HECKLER

My name is Jo-

JANE

Nobody cares! And where are you  
from, douchebag?

HECKLER

Ypsilanti, Michigan.

JANE

Oh, Ypsilanti, Michigan. That's a  
lovely part of the country. But you  
know what they say about people  
from Ypsilanti, right?

HECKLER

We rock!

JANE

Nope, not that. In fact, not  
anything. Nobody cares about anyone  
who ever came from Ypsilanti,  
Michigan! So shut your stupid face  
before I kick your ass all the way  
back to Ypsilanti, Michigan!

Jane aggressively takes her seat at the piano and pretends to whip her coattails behind. A crack of her knuckles and a deep breath, before launching into a very short song that seeks to destroy this idiot heckler who tried to commandeer HER show.

21

**INT. BATHROOM - BRO OUT**

21

**JANE/TYLER - (DON'T BE THAT GUY)**

Drew enters bathroom, bumps into a very excited WANDA who shrieks with delight on her way out the door.

WANDA

Woohoo!!!!

Skip stumbles out of one of the stalls, a total mess. He is sniffing a bit and buckling his belt. We can hear Jane playing in the background faintly.

SKIP

Hey Drew, great start man, as per usual!

Drew is almost oblivious to what might have just happened.

DREW

Aw, thanks Skip. I do what I can, especially with Eeyore up there, Jesus Christ.

SKIP

(Digging)

Yeah, the kid is in rare form tonight. Soooo, what's with the girl?

DREW

Oh, you met Kin? Yeah, she wants to do the gig. I'm training her.

SKIP

Is that all you're doing to her?

DREW

Oh my god, yes! Come on, man. You know me.

SKIP

Yeah, I know. Actually, I always thought you might be gay.

DREW

(Defensive)

What? Why? Because I was raised to be a gentleman? And I don't take girls home from the club every night? And I have excellent personal hygiene?

SKIP

Cool, you see it too. Anyways, I just have to ask... you know, you're training this girl... am I doing okay? Is everything alright?

DREW

Skip, you're not the one who needs to worry about this Rookie.

SKIP

(Understands)

Ohhhhhh... gotcha.

DREW

In fact, I'd appreciate it if you even took some time with Kin.

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)

She's a sponge, man, no ego. Could use a good Dueling Tutor.

SKIP

Oh, I'll tutor her... in the butt.

Drew gives a slightly horrified facial expression as Skip goes over to the towel dispenser and it doesn't work so he starts hitting it. Goofy Guy exits a bathroom stall giving Skip a look of "What were you doing in here just a minute ago?" and Skip decides to mess with him as he washes hands.

SKIP (CONT'D)

(Loudly, across bathroom)

So, are we still on for Brokeback Mountain later on tonight? My anal lube is about to expire!

DREW

(Playing along, but slightly embarrassed)

Haha, yeah.

Goofy Guy is super confused, slightly concerned. Quickly backs out of the bathroom. Drew walks over to Skip and fixes the towel machine.

DREW (CONT'D)

Skip, I don't mean to lecture, but you gotta watch it man. It's a new era. Retard, fag, homo, racial stuff... that can't be part of it anymore.

SKIP

Yeah, yeah, yeah... the gig's changing man. We can't say anything anymore!

DREW

You're a smart guy. Find a more worthy target for your jokes. And hey, are you gonna make it through tonight?

Drew Makes a "booze" motion.

SKIP

Oh. Yeah man, I'll be fine.

DREW

Okay, cool. Just be careful. I love you man, I just...

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)  
 I hate what happened last night.  
 Please don't make me choose between  
 you and the livelihoods of all  
 these people.

Drew heads out to the Stage.

SKIP  
 (Slightly indignant)  
 Don't worry about me. I'm a grown  
 ass man.

Drew leaves. Skip stays behind and checks himself in the mirror as he dries his hands. He stares at his face and examines it. He's getting older. He hears raging TINNITUS (audio) that gradually takes over all sound (the bathroom, the background music and noise from the club, etc.)

Skip snaps out of it and pops some pills.

22           **INT. STAGE - SKIP DRINKING SONG**

22

**SKIP/JANE/DREW/TYLER - ANDY'S ALRIGHT**

Skip sings a beautiful, anthemic song on PIANO R (with Drew on drums, Jane on Bass, and Tyler on Keyboards/Melodica) and sells it extremely well. This can be a fairly artistic segment (MUSIC VIDEO STYLE) about alcohol and its place in Dueling Pianos. There will be singing, swaying, drinking, money changing hands, sex in the bathroom, body shots, chugging a beer, drugs, and ridiculousness.

23           **INT. DUELERS' TABLE - SKIP IS A GHOST**

23

**SKIP/JANE/DREW/TYLER - (ANDY'S ALRIGHT)**

Bethany checks in on Kin during Verse 2.

BETHANY  
 Hey darling, Drew said to put you  
 on his tab. Can I get you  
 something?

KIN  
 (Watching Drew)  
 I'm okay, thanks.

BETHANY  
 So how do you know each other? Just  
 friends? Or...

KIN

Just friends. Old friends. He tried to date me once. Can I ask your honest opinion; is he as good as he seems to think he is?

BETHANY

You know, he's not the most talented, doesn't have the best voice, but he does *this* gig as good or better than anyone I've ever seen.

KIN

Oh, well that's good.

BETHANY

Why do you ask?

KIN

(Proud)

He's training me.

BETHANY

Wait, what!?

KIN

(Proudly)

I'm gonna be a Dueling Piano Player!

BETHANY

(Cat almost out of bag)

Honey, that might not be such a good idea. This club isn't... this industry is always changing.

KIN

I don't understand.

BETHANY

(Suddenly nervous, trying to change subject)

Well, Piano Bars come and go. But whether it's here or at a different club...

KIN

(Slightly suspicious)

But Drew said this club would stay open for decades?

BETHANY

(Shifting gears)

Oh, he's probably right. Definitely right. Don't mind me. So what did you do before this?

KIN

I taught vocal music to children...

BETHANY

Well that's the same damn thing! You'll have no problem getting drunk adults to sing.

KIN

Ha! Skip made that same joke...

They both watch the show for a minute. The Bridge is sung in full force.

KIN (CONT'D)

(Motions to Skip)

What's his story?

BETHANY

Skip?

KIN

Yeah.

BETHANY

(Considers this)

I kind of think of him as... a ghost.

KIN

A ghost?

BETHANY

Like, someone so talented and incredible... that he should have made it. He should have been someone famous... but for whatever reason, the moment passed him by... and his opportunity died, and now he's just roaming the Earth... a shell of his former self... like a ghost.

KIN

Jesus.

BETHANY

Yeah. Jesus.

24 INT. STAGE - JANE STARTS DUELING SONG

24

**JANE/SKIP - BIT SONG**

Skip finishes his song. Tyler and Drew clear the stage. Jane starts a Bit Song which involves The Crowd doing silly, physical actions like clapping, stomping, high fiving, drinking, shouting, hugging, and kissing a stranger. This will serve mostly as the backdrop to the next dialogue.

25 INT. BAR - DREW AND TYLER TIFF

25

**JANE/SKIP - (BIT SONG)**

Tyler is at bar getting a water. Drew orders two shots from Bethany and approaches Tyler.

A GORGEOUS PATRON compliments Tyler in passing.

GORGEOUS PATRON

(To Tyler)

You have such a beautiful voice.

TYLER

Thank you.

GORGEOUS PATRON

(To Drew)

You're good too. But *you* (Tyler) are the best.

Drew rolls his eyes. The Gorgeous Patron walks away.

DREW

First shot of the night?

TYLER

Nah man, I'm not drinking tonight.

DREW

(Like a Doctor)

Come on, Tyler. You need to loosen up a little.

TYLER

No, I told you, I've got a session tomorrow morning and I wanna be present for that.

DREW

You need to be present for *this*.

TYLER  
(Condescending)  
This what? This circus?

DREW  
(Pissed, points two  
fingers into Tyler's  
shoulder)  
You're not above it.

Drew grabs the shots.

DREW (CONT'D)  
And I love the circus.

Drew walks away as BETHANY walks up.

BETHANY  
Are you two lovers fighting again?

TYLER  
God, this Agent better show. Drew  
is driving me nuts.

BETHANY  
You know, I'll never understand why  
you passed on being Entertainment  
Director after Rod left. The job  
was yours.

TYLER  
Well, that job is just good enough  
to kill your career. I'd never  
leave.

BETHANY  
So why are you still here?

TYLER  
No great work of art was ever  
created while Rome was burning.

BETHANY  
What do you mean?

TYLER  
It pays the bills. Hey, since when  
are you so candid? And what was  
that phone call about earlier?

BETHANY

Listen, Tyler, whatever you might think about me, I really do care about all you guys. But I just live my life based on how things are, not how I want them to be.

TYLER

(Matter of fact)

And that's why you're bartender.

Tyler walks away. Bethany shakes her head.

BETHANY

Not anymore...

26

**INT. STAGE - SKIP HIP HOP SONG**

26

**JANE/SKIP - CLUB SONG**

Jane reaches the climax of the song and The Crowd gives her an enormous, wild ovation.

Skip does another shot and starts his next song which is a Hip-Hop song.

SKIP

I need to get all the sexy ladies in Charlotte's Bachelorette Party to come up to the stage right now! Charlotte is getting married and we need to send her off in style!

27

**INT. DUELERS' TABLE - FIX THE SHIP**

27

**JANE/SKIP - (CLUB SONG)**

Drew approaches Kin with the two shots. He puts them on the table and vents a bit.

DREW

I'm gonna kill him.

KIN

Kill who? What?

DREW

Tyler. He's changed. We used to be a great team, friends even. Now he's... he's...

KIN

Unhappy?

DREW

We're at sea, here, you know!? Fix the cracks or abandon ship. No complaining.

Kin just nods with a bit of a skepticism at Drew for not taking his own advice. Skip is on stage leading a sexy Hip-Hop song with a bunch of girls shaking their asses.

DREW (CONT'D)

Alright. Well, first shot of the night?

KIN

I'd rather not.

DREW

Oh come on. Liquid courage. It'll ease your nerves for when you get up there later on.

KIN

No, no, no. Listen, I'm definitely not playing tonight. You never said anything about that.

DREW

I know, I'm sorry; but you have to. Everyone plays on their first night, it's kind of an initiation...

KIN

Absolutely not. I only totally know one song. I need more time.

DREW

Hey. I would take a rookie with one song who tries with all their might over any experienced Dueler that doesn't try at all... cough... TYLER... cough.

KIN

I'm not ready.

Skip is getting into an altercation on stage.

DREW

(Leaving)

Oh shit, I gotta put out a fire.  
I'll see you later. Prepare  
yourself mentally, physically,  
emotionally, spiritually, sexually,  
ecumenically... you're getting up  
there!

KIN

No I'm not!

28

**INT. STAGE - MARRIAGE SUCKS CALL DOWN**

28

**JANE/SKIP - WHY WOULD YOU WANNA GET MARRIED?**

MAID OF HONOR (20s, Austere, Entitled, Annoyingly Pretty) is harassing Skip while he's playing the song. She picks up a request on the piano and shoves it in his face motioning to play it.

SKIP

(On mic)

Sorry, I can't play your song right now. I actually can't really talk right now, either. I'm kind of in the middle of a song.

Maid of Honor starts arguing with him off mic. We can't hear her, but we see her being very difficult.

SKIP (CONT'D)

Hey, how about we have an entire conversation right in the middle of the show? I'm sure The Crowd won't mind.

Maid of Honor keeps badgering Skip.

SKIP (CONT'D)

Listen, I don't go to your street corner and knock the dick out of your mouth while you're doing your job. So back off! I'm working here.

Drew rushes up just at this moment and helps escort the girl off stage very sweetly. He motions to Jane to kind of clean this whole thing up.

JANE

Hey everyone, we need Charlotte's friends off the stage right now so we can give Charlotte some special attention! Come on ladies.

Charlotte is seated upon Jane's piano and Jane then proceeds to perform a BACHELORETTE CALLDOWN SONG ripping apart the institution of marriage. It's brutal in its critique of people getting married, but always in a way that evokes much laughter from The Crowd. It all seems in good fun.

Afterwards, as Charlotte is leaving the stage.

CHARLOTTE

(to Jane)

You're hilarious.

JANE

(Off mic, messing with Charlotte)

None of that was a joke.

Charlotte leaves the stage, slightly confused.

SKIP

That's Jane, everyone, taking a well deserved break. Let's welcome back Drew to the Stage!

Jane leaves the stage as Drew comes up, takes over for her, and starts another typical DP song in a fast country fashion.

29

**INT. STAGE TO GREEN ROOM - FAST COUNTRY SONG**

29

**DREW/SKIP - BE MY LADY**

Drew gets The Crowd riled up and it's quite a high energy, hand clapping, hillbilly, redneck dancing, manic song. We follow this a little, but we also follow Jane as she leaves the stage and makes her way through The Crowd. She takes a selfie, gets high-fives, gets a kiss on the cheek from some guy, gets a shot and a beer at the Bar, then takes her spirits all the way up the balcony to the GREEN ROOM where the Duelers have a bit of solitude.

30

**INT. GREEN ROOM - JANE'S RING PART 1**

30

**DREW/SKIP - (BE MY LADY)**

Jane pulls an engagement ring out of her pocket. She taps it on the table with a heavy dose of consideration. Her phone goes off and she checks it.

STEVE (TEXT)  
Call me immediately, babe.

Jane seems kind of confused. She puts her ring down, does her shot, and takes a sip of the beer. But before she can respond to the text, Tyler sneaks up, steals the ring, and does some sleight of hand tricks with it. Jane smiles at first and then playfully tries to grab it back from him.

It's pretty clear Tyler is flirting with her (this is usual for them), but this time is a bit more loaded.

This exchange is matched perfectly by the fast-paced country hoe-down happening on stage between Skip and Drew.

31

**INT. STAGE - DREW CALL DOWN**

31

**DREW/SKIP - SKIP CALL DOWN**

Drew has wound down the song a bit (it's still vamping in the same key and tempo), but Skip suddenly reads a request slip that says celebrate CAROL AND TOM.

SKIP  
Hey, hold on! We've got Carol and Tom here tonight! Let's get them up to the stage.

Carol and Tom come up to the stage. They seem lovely and game for whatever.

SKIP (CONT'D)  
Alright, I heard you guys are here with friends and family tonight and they want to see you do something stupid. Who's with me?

THE CROWD  
(Cheers wildly).

SKIP  
Okay, you both need to go out into The Crowd and collect as many high fives as possible. The winner gets to make the other person do whatever they want... who's ready? Say yeah!

THE CROWD  
Yeah!

SKIP  
Say oh yeah!

THE CROWD

Oh yeah!

SKIP

Say hell yeah!

THE CROWD

Hell yeah!

SKIP

Ready... go!

The music ramps up and Tom and Carol begin running through the audience to collect their high fives.

32

**INT. GREEN ROOM - JANE'S RING PART 2**

32

**DREW/SKIP - (SKIP CALLDOWN/BIRTHDAY SONG)**

We are back with Jane and Tyler who are now all out wrestling over the ring.

Jane has gotten extremely aggressive and is biting Tyler's hand, getting him to let go. She grabs the ring, hits Tyler a bunch (half playfully) and runs out of the room.

33

**INT. STAGE - PROPOSAL**

33

**DREW/SKIP - I WILL NEVER FALL OUTTA LOVE WITH YOU**

Carol and Tom are back on stage.

SKIP

Alright, I think it's clear to everyone that Tom is the winner here. You can make Carol do whatever you want now. What'll it be?

Tom motions to have Carol close her eyes.

SKIP (CONT'D)

Oh my god, things are gonna get freaky. Tom says Carol has to close her eyes.

Tom takes a ring out of his pocket and gets down on one knee. The Crowd starts to erupt as Carol opens her eyes. She sees the ring and Tom says something we can't hear. Carol shakes her head yes, full of emotion.

SKIP (CONT'D)

She said yes!! Oh my god. Okay, we gotta mark this moment. I now present to you for the first time as Fiancés, Tom and Carol!

Drew plays a love song (I WILL NEVER FALL OUTTA LOVE WITH YOU) and they slow dance on the stage.

34

**INT. BAR - JANE AND BETHANY**

34

**SKIP/DREW - (I WILL NEVER FALL OUTTA LOVE WITH YOU)**

Jane has approached the Bar during the proposal. She watches it and has a slight look of regret.

Jane approaches Bethany.

JANE

(Ordering)

Booze and therapy, please.

BETHANY

That's my job description.

Bethany gives Jane her usual drink of choice.

JANE

Am I a sellout?

BETHANY

Uhhh, are you compromising your values for money?

JANE

Well, I'm not a Stepford Wife, I'll tell you that.

BETHANY

I don't know what to say. I can't figure it out myself. Love or money?

JANE

Men have it easy. They choose money and women love them anyways.

BETHANY

(Slightly cryptic)

You know, Jane, sometimes these things have a way of working themselves out.

JANE  
 (Suspicious)  
 What do you mean by that?

BETHANY  
 (Fumbling)  
 I just mean sometimes there's only  
 one clear option because  
 circumstances beyond your control  
 are-

JANE  
 Beth, what do you know that I  
 don't!?

BETHANY  
 (Grasping)  
 Well... uhhh... word on the street  
 is that girl over there is training  
 to do this gig. If I had to bet,  
 I'd say Drew is fixing to replace  
 Tyler as soon as she is ready.

JANE  
 Are you serious?

BETHANY  
 I'm not certain, but even if I'm  
 wrong... are you really considering  
 giving up a sure thing for somebody  
 who only seems to care about him-

Jane has tuned Bethany out. She slams her drink.

JANE  
 (Referring to Kin)  
 This bitch...

Jane looks pissed and takes off towards the Duelers' Table.

BETHANY  
 (To herself)  
 Can this night please be over?!

35

**INT. STAGE - SKIP BLUES SONG**

35

**SKIP/DREW - YOU ONLY KISS ME WHEN YOU'RE DRUNK**

Drew has ended his love song and bid the newly engaged couple  
 adieux as Skip takes over show.

SKIP

Alright, that was just lovely.  
Okay, raise 'em up. When I say  
drink, you say more. Drink!

THE CROWD

More!

SKIP

Drink!

THE CROWD

More!

SKIP

To sex, drugs, and rock and roll!  
May they never take their toll  
But if I die before I'm old  
At least I lived my life with soul!

Skip drinks his drink and then looks at a request slip.

SKIP (CONT'D)

We've got a one song warning until  
it's Showtime! One. Song. Warning.  
I'm dedicating this next song to  
Bethany at the bar. This song may  
or may not be about her.

Skip starts playing a sultry blues song. Tyler joins them on  
drums.

36

**INT. DUELERS' TABLE - JANE PSYCHE OUT**

36

**SKIP/DREW - (YOU ONLY KISS ME WHEN YOU'RE DRUNK)**

Jane joins Kin at the Duelers' Table.

JANE

Listen, I know why you're here. You  
think you can replace one of us?  
You think you have what it takes to  
do this gig? Watch your back,  
sister.

KIN

I... I... I...

JANE

I'm just kidding... or am I? Of  
course I am. But you should still  
be worried...

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm gunning for you... got you again! Or did I? Or am I serious? I'm deathly serious. Oh! I just switched back. So which is it? Friend or foe?

Jane checks her phone after it rings/vibrates.

STEVE (TEXT)

Call me immediately, babe.

Jane and Kin turn their heads towards the Stage as they hear massive piano noise (Drew playing the solo with his feet) from Stage and The Crowd reacting with cheering.

Jane brings the attention right back to Kin.

JANE

(Totally messing)

Oh! Your boyfriend played with his foot!

KIN

He's not my boy...

JANE

Wait... I was just moved toward divine revelations about the nature of our existence because *Gulliver* used his foot to play an instrument that is *normally* played with your hands!

KIN

Do you want me to leave?

JANE

What are you talking about? We are very quickly becoming close friends.

Skip ends his song to massive applause and calls Showtime from the Stage.

Jane starts to leave Kin.

JANE (CONT'D)

As your best friend, I think you should know a few things about this place if you are gonna work here. The toilets all have Gonorrhoea. The women make half as much as the men.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

There's a 1 in 10 chance you will get grabbed by the pussy... every night. And everyone that has ever worked here is going to die one day. Otherwise, enjoy! Love you!

Jane hugs her, kisses her, and leaves for the stage. Kin is absolutely bewildered.

37

**INT. STAGE - SHOWTIME #1**

37

**DUELERS AND BETHANY - SHOWTIME #1**

BETHANY

Oh no! Do you know what time it is?

THE CROWD

What time is it?

BETHANY

It's showtime! Everybody stand up and dance along with the Duelers Waitstaff!

Duelers perform SHOWTIME #1 and The Crowd stands to dance along with the entire Staff at Duelers Piano Bar.

Tyler and Jane are making faces at each other. The Crowd can't see it, but Drew sees Tyler (not Jane) and scowls. He's starting to get really annoyed, but mostly because he's looking for things to get annoyed about.

The Crowd is loving the show as they are dancing, singing, and clapping. They may not notice the main plot points:

1. Drew resents Tyler for not doing things his way.
2. Tyler and Jane have fantastic chemistry.
3. Skip is really going after Bethany (dancing with her).
4. Kin is watching from the Duelers Table.
5. Bethany is singing and leading the group.

38

**INT. STAGE - TYLER AND DREW LONG SCENE**

38

**TYLER/DREW - TOAST AND CALL DOWN**

DREW keeps the show going as the STAFF is leaving the stage with a vibrant toast. TYLER is settling in on the other Piano.

DREW  
 Hey, who came here to get drunk  
 tonight?

THE CROWD  
 (Cheers enthusiastically)

DREW  
 Good, because this is a bar! Raise  
 'em up. When I say drink, you say  
 more! Drink!

THE CROWD  
 More!

DREW  
 Drink!

THE CROWD  
 More!

DREW  
 Let's dedicate this to all the  
 people who *don't* drink...

THE CROWD  
 Booooooooooo...

DREW  
 No, no, no... listen. They drive us  
 home and tell us what we did last  
 night. God bless 'em!

THE CROWD  
 (Cheers)

DREW  
 Alright, Tyler, whaddya got over  
 there?

Tyler starts playing a slower song and Drew cuts him off  
 immediately holding up a request and a \$5 bill.

DREW (CONT'D)  
 Hold up! I've got \$100 over here  
 that says we have to stop the show  
 and get Wanda up to the stage!  
 Wanda, are you out there?!? Your  
 friends paid a lot of money to get  
 you up here on your birthday!!!

Wanda screeches and starts running up to the stage.

Drew then does a call down that demands Tyler get involved with Wanda in a very sexual and embarrassing way. Tyler is reluctant and Drew is very insistent that he does all the theatrics to this song.

After the song, Wanda's friends pass up a blowjob shot to the stage and Drew makes Tyler put the shot between his legs as Wanda drinks the shot from his crotch.

Wanda then has shots brought up for the Duelers. She demands that they do the shots. Drew is all about it.

DREW (CONT'D)

In honor of Wanda:  
Birthdays come, but once a year.  
Thank god we're not birthdays,  
cheers!

Tyler doesn't do his shot (he fakes it and then puts it on the piano). Wanda notices this and gets upset. She starts getting The Crowd to chant:

THE CROWD/WANDA

Do it! Do it! Do it! Do it!

DREW

Alright, who wants to see Tyler do that shot?

THE CROWD/WANDA

(Screams affirmatively)

DREW

Alright, check it out. I challenge you to a Duel. If I win, you do the shot. If you win, I do the shot. So really, win-win... do you accept? Or are you a coward!!

Annoyed and tired of the chiding, TYLER actually wants to go up against DREW at this point and show him up in this environment.

TYLER

(Determined)

Fine.

Bethany is at the Duelers table with Kin watching this unfold.

BETHANY

Out come the dicks.

KIN

Does this happen every night?

BETHANY

Nah, this is some old school shit.  
 Dueling Pianos is kind of a  
 misnomer because the players are  
 usually working together most of  
 the night... *usually*.

Tyler and Drew have an epic PIANO DUEL that contrasts their styles. Tyler plays his brain out - more technicality, less showmanship. Drew plays his heart out - sloppily and excitedly with many mistakes, but incredible energy.

In the end, Drew wins The Crowd. Drew pushes the shot to Tyler and Tyler still refuses (leaves stage early). Drew makes a huge stink out of it - getting The Crowd to boo Tyler. It's all very fun on the surface, but obviously there is a history here exacerbating the situation.

As Tyler is leaving Stage, he shakes his head and mumbles:

TYLER

Small pond...

Tyler passes Jane who gives him a sympathetic look of "I want to hug you right now," because she recognizes the level of bullying that Drew has been throwing at him (and knows that Drew also plans to get rid of him), but Tyler keeps walking.

Jane takes over for Tyler at the piano and the show goes on.

Jane performs MARIE, a song about knowing exactly who you are meant to be with.

40

**INT. BAR - TYLER AND BETHANY**

40

**JANE/DREW - (MARIE)**

Tyler goes to the bar again to get his water even though he is supposed to be playing. Bethany knows this, but gives him a pass (and his water).

TYLER

I didn't become a musician to sell  
 alcohol.

BETHANY  
 (Slightly sympathetic)  
 Honey, if you don't sell alcohol  
 right now, you can't be a musician.

Tyler shakes his head.

TYLER  
 We're killing ourselves night after  
 night for somebody else to make all  
 the money!?

BETHANY  
 There are dozens of coffee shops  
 around town where you can play for  
 free.

TYLER  
 At least I'd be able to do what I  
 want.

BETHANY  
 Tyler, Why are you still here?

TYLER  
 I told you already.

BETHANY  
 No. I mean why hasn't it happened  
 for you yet? Think about that  
 tonight. Especially tonight.

Bethany walks away. Tyler lingers and looks up at the stage  
 watching Jane perform. She looks amazing to him.

41

**INT. STAGE - MARIE CLIMAX**

41

**JANE/DREW - MARIE**

Jane is reaching the climax of the song.

JANE  
 Alright, I want everyone to put  
 their arms around their neighbor...  
 even if you don't like them... even  
 if they smell bad... and you're  
 gonna sway from side to side and  
 sing...

THE CROWD  
 Cuz when you know, you know, you  
 know, you know... and I know, I  
 know, I know, I know...

JANE  
I know that it's you, I do, I do, I  
know that it's you'll be mine.

42           **INT. DUELERS' TABLE - STEVE ARRIVES**

42

**JANE/DREW - (MARIE)**

Jane's Steve enters the Duelers Piano Bar, walks across the room and right up to Kin at the Duelers' Table.

STEVE  
Is Jane on break soon?

KIN  
Oh hello, I'm Kin. I'm in training.

STEVE  
I don't care. When did Jane get on stage.

KIN  
(Intimidated)  
Uhhh... I don't know. I think she just started.

STEVE  
(Dryly)  
No, that won't do.

Steve walks away toward the Bar.

43           **INT. STAGE - LONELY POLKA**

43

**JANE/DREW - LONELY POLKA**

MARIE ends and The Crowd cheers with the love and passion that this song evokes.

JANE  
That's a one song warning until  
Showtime! One. Song. Warning.

Drew begins a new song.

DREW  
Hey, I know you guys are evaluating our show right now, but we're also evaluating YOU! And I have to say, you are all doing a great job.  
(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)  
 Now for this next song, I just need  
 two claps whenever you hear this  
 part...

Drew is rocking this song and getting everyone to clap.

44

**INT. BAR - STEVE BOSSES TYLER**

44

**JANE/DREW - (LONELY POLKA)**

Steve approaches the Bar where Tyler is standing.

TYLER  
 (Straightening Up)  
 Steve, what are you doing here?

STEVE  
 Heyyy, there Lancealot. Go up there  
 and get Jane for me, please.

TYLER  
 She just started her set, and I  
 just started my break.

STEVE  
 Oh, I just remembered that I still  
 own this place, so I'm changing the  
 schedule. You're on for Jane right  
 now, thanks.

Tyler is about to protest, but doesn't see a way out of this  
 that leads to anything good for him and reluctantly obliges.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
 (Under his breath)  
 You son of a bitch.

45

**INT. DUELERS' TABLE - SKIP AND KIN**

45

**JANE/DREW - (LONELY POLKA)**

Skip walks over to Kin at the Duelers' Table with two shots.  
 Kin appears to be packing up her things.

SKIP  
 Kin! How's it going?

KIN  
 Terrible. I think Jane hates me and  
 this one guy was just very rude to  
 me. I actually think I'm gonna head  
 out.

SKIP

So sorry to hear, but you can't leave now! I was just gonna bring you up on stage!

KIN

Uhhhh, I don't think so, Skip. You know, I've only got one song totally down.

SKIP

Oh, me too!

They laugh a little.

SKIP (CONT'D)

But seriously, you just gotta get up there and survive. It's the only way to learn.

KIN

Why would anyone want to watch an amateur?

SKIP

Because you still have something to offer! Your inexperience makes you interesting and exciting. You won't be like anything they are used to seeing and that by itself is valuable.

KIN

I don't know.

SKIP

Come on! We're about to do a Showtime. It's the perfect way for you to break the ice. Everybody's gonna be singing and dancing and going crazy. Nobody will even notice you. Let's go!

KIN

No, I have to insist. I'm not going up there tonight.

SKIP

Come on, Kin. You got this. It's now or never.

Skip takes her by the hand and starts to drag her to the Stage.

KIN  
 (Slightly terrified)  
 Oh my god... no, please stop!

SKIP  
 (Lets go, slightly  
 apologetic)  
 Okay, but do you want this or not?  
 Back in my day, we didn't have safe  
 zones. Your feelings didn't matter.  
 It was do or die. If you didn't  
 play on your first night, it meant  
 you don't have what it takes. If  
 you don't come up right now, you  
 might as well just walk out that  
 door and go beg for your old choir  
 teacher job back.

Kin thinks about it for a good beat, sighs, grabs her shot  
 from the table, and does it.

KIN  
 Skip, you'd actually make a great  
 teacher. You know that?

Skip smiles and they proceed to move toward the stage.

46

**INT. STAGE - TYLER GETS JANE OFF STAGE**

46

**JANE/DREW/TYLER - SHOWTIME #2 INTRO**

Tyler reluctantly approaches Jane on stage after Drew  
 finishes his song, taps her on the shoulder, and motions to  
 Steve while Drew takes this chance to gloat. She is super  
 glad to see Tyler, but then weirded out by Steve's appearance  
 at the club.

DREW  
 (about Tyler)  
 Hey, look who it is!  
 Boooooooooooooo!!!!

Jane leaves stage with a concerned look as Tyler takes over  
 for her. He is downhearted to the point of not even reacting  
 to Drew's badgering. Drew finally feels like he's pushed it a  
 bit far so he pulls back ever so slightly with a slight look  
 of remorse on his face.

DREW (CONT'D)  
 Hey, I'm just playing man. Oh no,  
 Wait a minute... Do you know what  
 time it is?

THE CROWD

What time is it?

DREW

It's showtime! Time for everyone to  
get off their seat and on their  
feet!

Music starts as Skip and Kin join the stage as does the rest of the Piano Bar Waitstaff. They begin a Showtime as The Crowd stands up and joins along singing, clapping, and dancing.

This is the pinnacle of the night and we see Duelers Piano Bar at its zenith.

47

**INT. DUELERS' TABLE - JANE GETS THE NEWS**

47

**DUELERS - (SHOWTIME #2)**

As Showtime #2 begins, Jane meets Steve at the Duelers' Table, slightly concerned.

JANE

Why are you here? You're never here.

STEVE

Alright, picture the most extravagant destination wedding in a location of your choice, your dream honeymoon in Bora Bora, a three story house with a white picket fence, college tuition for our two kids all paid for, in state of course...

JANE

What are you talking about?

STEVE

(Claps hands)  
I sold the club.

JANE

Haha. Very funny. If you want to come visit me more often, you don't need an elaborate prank to...

STEVE

Jane, I sold the club. Million bucks. I sign the papers at midnight.

JANE

No. Steve. No. How could you?

STEVE

(Slightly taken aback)

What do you mean? This is what we talked about. You said just the other day, "I can't keep doing this my whole life." And we agreed that you wouldn't keep up this lifestyle once we started having kids. Oh my god, you would have been so proud of me, babe, I crushed the negotiations! I was like Glengarry Glen Ross. Always be closing!

48

**INT. STAGE - SHOWTIME IN SLOWMO/BLUR**

48

**DUELERS - SHOWTIME**

Jane has tuned out Steve during this monologue and is looking around the room as a really genuinely great moment is happening all around her existential sadness. Smiles, memories, hands clapping, youth, *confetti*... it swirls into pitch black and we hear silence for the first time in the film since the opening (Music has been playing almost non-stop until now).

**ACT 2**

49

**EXT. ENTRANCE. NIGHTTIME - JANE'S FLASBACK**

49

**TYLER/DREW/SKIP - HIPPIE GIRL**

One Year Prior.

Jane is smoking a joint near the front of Duelers Piano Bar. She is having an existential moment to herself. She sighs and just takes in the night before she hears music and turns her head. She puts out her joint and walks inside the club all the way across the Bar, up the Stairs.

On her way, she sees late night debauchery: The Waitstaff doing body shots on the bar, a Bouncer doing a striptease for one of the Waitresses, Bartenders practicing their bottle twirling and drink making, a lot of laughs, love, and energy.

Ultimately, Jane ends up on the Balcony and happens upon a very romantic, late night jam session with a dozen of her favorite people at the Piano Bar. Everyone is clapping as the current song comes to an end.

The Duelers, amongst Staff and friends

50

**INT. BALCONY - IN MY DREAMS**

50

**DUELERS - IN MY DREAMS**

BETHANY

Tyler, play In My Dreams!

STAFF

Yeah! Come on, Tyler.

TYLER

Who's gonna sing it with me?

SKIP

Jane's here! Jane, you sing it.

DREW

Come on, Jane. Your services are requested.

Jane smiles and joins them.

Tyler performs In My Dreams, accompanied by Skip on Violin, Drew on Melodica, a friend on Cajon Drum, and Jane on backing vocals.

Tyler essentially sings the song right to Jane in the midst of this drunken haze. It's as direct as he is ever going to communicate to her (especially since they share zero dialogue in this entire movie).

As the song approaches the last Chorus, the Staff/Friends join in and Tyler/Jane get lost in a moment.

The song ends and everyone kind of cheers for themselves and glasses of Champagne are passed around and Drew calls for attention.

DREW (CONT'D)

Everyone, quiet! Our fearless leader has something to say!

Everyone quiets down as Steve addresses the party.

STEVE

Everyone, I'd first of all like to thank you for another great year of hard work, dedication, and sacrifice. Our numbers are at an all time high thanks to the new apartments and businesses opening up in the area. We are creating so much success for ourselves that it is spilling out into the community. None of this would be possible without you guys, our Duelers Family!

Everyone claps and cheers.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Now, it's no secret that I've had the privilege of being Jane's doting boyfriend for quite some time now. When I consider how happy she makes me, the success of my business after years and years of struggle and sacrifice, and the dozens of men that hit on her each week... I think it's probably in my best interest to put a ring on it... so, Jane, would you please do me the honor of being my wife?

As Jane stands speechless, she comes back to the present.

51

**INT. BAR - JANE GRABS STEVE**

51

**DUELERS - (SHOWTIME)**

Jane comes back to reality as the Showtime is ending. She hastily grabs Steve.

JANE

We have to talk.

52

**INT. STAGE - KIN TRIAL BY FIRE**

52

**DREW/KIN - KEEP A LIGHT**

As the Showtime ends, Skip grabs Kin (similar to how Jane just grabbed Steve) to hop on the Piano and join Drew. She hesitates, but the general feeling on stage is very loose and positive so she begrudgingly accepts as he kind of gently shoves her onto the bench.

SKIP  
 (to Kin)  
 Anchoring.

KIN  
 Anchoring.

Skip starts to leave.

KIN (CONT'D)  
 SKIP!

Skip stops.

KIN (CONT'D)  
 Thank you.

Skip bows and leaves.

Drew starts a song that Kin assists on quite nicely. We see their potential chemistry and Kin's potential at this gig. It's very good. Kin gets the people to clap, sings harmonies, and smiles a lot.

53

**INT. DUELERS' TABLE - SKIP AND TYLER**

53

**DREW/KIN - (KEEP A LIGHT)**

Skip approaches Tyler as a mentor and elder. He somehow has two shots again.

SKIP  
 Come on man, first shot of the night?

TYLER  
 Dude! Why does everyone need me to drink?

SKIP  
 Well, it is a bar.

TYLER  
 Do you have to be drunk to enjoy Dueling Pianos!?

SKIP  
 Tyler, just stop. For once, just stop being Tyler and listen to me. See that girl up there?

TYLER  
 Yeah. So?

SKIP

I think she's here to replace you.

TYLER

Ha. Funny. *She* is gonna replace *me*?

SKIP

(Drunk, but wise)

Listen, it doesn't matter if that's true or even possible... but what is your deal? You've been really off lately, man.

TYLER

I don't know how to tell you this, Skip, but my rocket is about to take off. There's an Agent coming in tonight that's gonna sign me. I'm getting outta here.

SKIP

Tyler, you don't get it. Do you think the world out there is any different than in here? Nobody likes a person who only cares about himself.

TYLER

I care about the music.

SKIP

Too much! It's just a medium. You've made it a religion.

TYLER

Because I won't be a clown?

SKIP

That's a crazy cynical way of looking at at.

TYLER

Alright Skip, enlighten me.

Gears up.

SKIP

Nothing exists in a vacuum. Music isn't just music. Do you think people naturally sit quietly and listen to someone make noise? There is a larger-than-life element at play here. This is a happening. This is theater!

TYLER

Well, maybe that's true, but I can't be happy if I don't like the music I'm performing. Why even be a musician if I don't enjoy it?

SKIP

I haven't enjoyed performing music in over 10 years... arthritis, tinnitus, colitis... I'm constantly in agony.

TYLER

So why do you do it?

SKIP

Because it's not about me. This is what I have to offer *others*. This is my trade. This is my value in our civil society. It's not about what I want, it's about what *they* want.

TYLER

Well, you love quotes, Skip. How about Ayn Rand: I will never live for the sake of another, nor ask another to live for mine.

SKIP

(Shaking head in disgust)  
Dude, it's Ayn Rand, and there are no children in her books! She didn't understand interdependence. You can't even exist without trees. And you can't make a living in music without The Crowd.

Tyler is put off at this point.

SKIP (CONT'D)

It takes a servant's heart to be a Dueling Piano Player. Drew gets that.

TYLER

I'm sorry, but if you're going to try and tell me to be more like Drew, I won't hear it. That guy is an egomaniac.

SKIP

First of all, you don't get to cite Ayn Rand and then call my friend an egomaniac. Second, Drew may not always be right, but he always has everyone's best interests at heart.

TYLER

Clearly not mine. Anyways, I think you've had enough to drink tonight, Skip. Thanks for nothing.

Tyler walks away. Bethany approaches and grabs one of Skip's shots, they do it together, Bethany more inclined to "loosen Skip up" being slightly concerned that the news might be out prematurely with all the emotion in the air.

BETHANY

(Digging)

Is everything okay? That looked pretty intense...

SKIP

Well, listen, this is really confidential and I don't think you're supposed to know...

Bethany almost gasps like the news has dropped.

BETHANY

I was gonna tell you, but...

SKIP

...but I think Drew intends to replace Tyler with that girl on stage right now.

BETHANY

(Relieved)

Yeah, I think everyone has figured that out by now.

SKIP

What? And you're okay with that?!?

BETHANY

Tyler's always late, his head is never in the game, he rarely smiles anymore... doesn't he seem like a person who doesn't want to be here?

SKIP

Well, maybe we could have an intervention or something.

BETHANY

Some people won't listen. It's not worth the time and energy. He's already gone.

54

**INT. GREEN ROOM - STEVE CONFRONTS JANE**

54

**DREW/KIN - (KEEP A LIGHT)**

Jane and Steve retreat to the Green Room.

JANE

So the new owners are replacing us with a Mechanical Bull?

STEVE

Yes. They think this part of town is so hot right now that anything would work in here.

JANE

(Sarcastic)

Oh, good, that doesn't demean a lifetime's commitment to my craft.

STEVE

Hey, hey, I didn't mean it like that. I'm just saying I couldn't convince them to keep the Duelers on, you guys are too expensive. They will probably retain some of the Staff, but...

JANE

This isn't really happening. This is a joke, right?

STEVE

I thought you'd be thrilled! You're gonna marry a millionaire.

JANE

How could you not tell me!?

STEVE

If the deal fell apart, I couldn't let people know I was trying to sell. They'd all quit. And come on, you'd never make it a whole month keeping this a secret.

JANE

A whole month? You've kept this from me a whole month!? What else are you hiding, Steve? Is that even your real name?

STEVE

(Dismissive)

No, no, no. This is just business. It's not personal. Besides, I'm not the one who keeps secrets.

JANE

(Accused)

Would you care to explain that?

STEVE

You know what I mean. I'm not stupid, Jane. I see the way you look at him.

Jane takes a quick beat after standing accused.

JANE

(Glaring)

Steve, you know I have never cheated on you and I cannot believe you would even suggest such a thing. I need to figure this all out. I'm gonna tell Drew.

Jane storms out. Steve goes after her, freaking out at this unexpected reaction. He genuinely thought she would be on board and immediately regrets pushing the Tyler issue.

STEVE

No! No! Wait! You can't tell anyone... the sale isn't final...

55

**INT. ENTRANCE - TYLER MEETS AGENT**

55

**DREW/KIN - (KEEP A LIGHT)**

Tyler is at a table near the Piano Bar's Entrance.

He is approached by a prominent Music AGENT (40s/50s, Most Confident Character in Film, Direct, Personable yet Unyielding), who shakes his hand.

AGENT

Tyler, what's happening man?

TYLER  
 (Caught of guard)  
 Oh my god. You made it.

AGENT  
 (Jokingly Upset)  
 Yeah, well I've come to the  
 conclusion that this is the only  
 way to stop you from contacting me  
 over... and over... and over...

TYLER  
 Oh, dude, I'm so sorry, I was, I  
 just-

AGENT  
 (Chuckling)  
 I'm just messing with ya, man. It's  
 fine. I was hungry once, too. When  
 do you go on?

Tyler looks wide-eyed and ecstatic.

TYLER  
 I'm on in about 15 minutes, can you  
 stick around?

AGENT  
 Absolutely.

56

**INT. STAGE - JANE TELLS DREW**

56

**DREW/KIN - HONEY**

Drew finishes his song and then introduces Kin.

DREW  
 Alright, everyone, this is Kin.  
 It's her first time playing here at  
 Duelers so let's make her feel  
 welcome. Give it up for Kin!

KIN  
 Thanks. Alright, here we go!

Kin plays the one song she knows and does a very solid job.  
 The crowd is responding immediately.

Jane comes up almost a little too quickly near the beginning  
 of the song and whispers something in Drew's ear. He shakes  
 his head like it's a prank. Jane insists.

DREW  
 (on mic)  
 WHAT?!?

Drew gives Kin the "keep going, you got this!" sign and promptly leaves the stage with Jane.

57

**INT. BAR - STEVE TELLS BETHANY**

57

**KIN - (HONEY)**

BETHANY  
 Steve! What's the status?  
 Everything okay? Do you want a  
 drink?

STEVE  
 Yes. And so do you.

BETHANY  
 Oh no! I haven't said anything, I  
 swear!

Bethany pours them both a drink.

STEVE  
 You've done great, Beth. It's me.  
 Jane didn't take the news well.  
 Things are about to get... messy.

BETHANY  
 Oh no! Are we gonna be okay?

STEVE  
 I don't know. If the Duelers quit  
 and everybody leaves, *that* doesn't  
 look good. If they make a huge  
 fiasco or start riot... I just  
 don't know what's gonna happen now  
 that the cat's out the bag. Loose  
 pussy.

They both take a drink.

BETHANY  
 Oh my god, Steve. This night just  
 keeps getting worse! Skip's getting  
 pretty loaded... apparently, that  
 girl on stage is training to work  
 here right now... and I think Tyler  
 is about to audition for some big  
 time music Agent.

STEVE  
 (Suddenly intrigued)  
 Really!?

BETHANY  
 Yeah, looks like they're talking  
 right now.

Steve looks around and sees Tyler talking to the Agent across  
 the Bar.

STEVE  
 (Sinister)  
 Really...

58

**INT. ENTRANCE - AGENT MONOLOGUE**

58

**KIN - (HONEY)**

AGENT  
 Well, I'm excited to see your show.  
 Knock 'em dead, kid.

Tyler is about to leave (as he knows he should), but his ego  
 gets the best of him and he begins a bit of a self-indulgent  
 inquisition.

TYLER  
 By the way, what did you think  
 about that record I sent you?

AGENT  
 (Strike One)  
 Uh, well, I'm here?

TYLER  
 Yeah, cool, cuz, you know, I can  
 play that stuff perfect, man. Front  
 to back. That's what you're looking  
 for, right?

AGENT  
 (Trying to give latitude)  
 Tyler, to be honest, man, no. I  
 didn't come to hear a record, I can  
 do that in my Tesla. I came here  
 for a goddamn show.

TYLER  
 Oh... uhhhh... yeah, but... my  
 chops are my strongest-

AGENT

(Strike Two)

A monkey can push buttons. Look, I can tell you're a talented dude, but this isn't show accuracy. This is show business. And business is about people. It's not about you.

TYLER

Yeah, but great music is-

AGENT

Who decides what great music is? You!? Yesterday's avant-garde is today's cliché.

TYLER

But all the great artists made stuff that they thought was great, not what other people thought...

AGENT

No, no, no. It was both.

TYLER

Tom Waits once said that you shouldn't listen to music through the filter of what other people think-

AGENT

(Strike Three)

Tom Waits is the greatest Entertainer I've probably ever seen. Listen to me, buddy. This is the last thing I'll say because you're kind of throwing up a red flag here.

Agent takes a beat. Tyler listens.

AGENT (CONT'D)

Yes. Some people like watching someone else jerk off, but most of the population prefers being made love to. It doesn't mean you can't get off too, but you better please your lover, or else nobody is ever gonna put up with you. On stage or off!

TYLER

I just think that's selling out.

AGENT

(Has heard this before)  
 What are you talking about!? You think it's selling out to give someone else what they truly want? That's called *love*, man.

TYLER

(Considering this with gravity)  
 I never really thought about it like that.

Tyler shows a hint of acquiescence and thus the Agent is willing to give one more argument to salvage this venture.

This is all routine for a man whose job is to find undiscovered talent. Because the Agent has been here before, he has probably given this speech on multiple occasions. He may even fashion himself as some Messianic Figure; a Romantic Wise Man who could be the key to unlocking this young Man's potential and making them both rich.

AGENT

If you do it for them, they'll show up for you. They'll buy your records. They'll pay for tickets. It's not selling out, it's commerce. What is your value? What are you trading in this world to make a living? If nobody's buying what you're selling, then you either need to change your product or you aren't selling it right.

TYLER

I don't know. It sounds right, but my gut just doesn't... I don't know.

AGENT

Listen, I believe you have it in you. But you gotta *listen* to me. All of us who made it to the other side... it's because at some point, somebody wiser than us told us what we were doing wrong, and we *listened*.

Tyler is kind of speechless, but before he can think too much more, he looks up at the Stage to see Kin struggling to keep the show going. He sprints for the Bar, but the room is very congested so he's slowed down considerably.

AGENT (CONT'D)  
 (Grins, Sees His Younger  
 Self in this Prospect)  
 These goddamn kids, man.

59 **INT. GREEN ROOM - DREW FREAKS OUT**

59

**KIN - (HONEY)**

Drew and Jane are wrapping up a debriefing of their current predicament.

DREW  
 A mechanical bull???

JANE  
 Apparently, they don't have to pay  
 the bull.

DREW  
 That's bullshit...

JANE  
 (Hits Drew on arm)  
 This is no time for puns! We gotta  
 figure out what to do here. I'm  
 gonna go find Tyler, you tell Skip.  
 Let's meet up at the Player's  
 Apartment.

DREW  
 Wait...

Jane leaves in a flurry. Drew loses his cool and starts having an emotional breakdown, trashing the Green Rooms.

60 **INT. STAGE - KIN REPEATS SONG**

60

**KIN - HONEY... AGAIN**

By this point, Kin has finished the one song she knows well enough to play in front of an audience. She pauses for a moment.

KIN  
 Soooooo... Drew? Skip? Hey, where  
 are you guys? Is this some kind of  
 a joke?

Nobody responds or appears anywhere (She can't see past the lights). So she panics for a moment, and then starts the same song over again.

**INT. GREEN ROOM - SKIP LEARNS THE NEWS****KIN - (HONEY... AGAIN)**

Skip comes into the Green Room and sees the end of Drew losing his shit.

SKIP

...Drew?

DREW

(Insistent)

I did everything right. I did my job. I'm good at my job.

SKIP

Woah, woah, woah. What's wrong man? Are you okay?

DREW

I thought I was building something for me... it was never for me!

SKIP

What are you talking about??

DREW

Steve sold the club. It's over. We're done. You're fired. The end.

SKIP

(Mind blown)

No shit...

DREW

Yeah. Just like that. We mean nothing. All our hard work. All our dedication.

SKIP

Wait, you can't be serious. We've been killing it. I've never seen a club make so much money.

DREW

That's why he's selling it! We did our jobs so well that we're losing them!

SKIP

(Shocked)

Jesus Christ...

DREW

I'm not just gonna take this... I  
don't know... I'll fight... I'll...  
aw, who cares? I'm done. I'm done.

Drew storms out of the Green Room leaving Skip dumbfounded  
and dejected.

62           **INT. STAGE - HONEY AGAIN**

62

**KIN - HONEY AGAIN**

Kin is just rocking this song (Honey) and The Crowd is really  
warming up to her.

63           **INT. GREEN ROOM - SKIP FREAKS OUT**

63

**KIN - (HONEY AGAIN)**

Bethany walks into Green Room to find a stunned Skip.

BETHANY

(Sheepishly)

Heyyyy... Skip. Where's everyone  
else?

SKIP

(Worked Up)

Did you know? Did you fff...  
mmmm...

BETHANY

Listen, it's not important. I just  
want you to know that...

SKIP

(Angry)

You knew, you knew!! You...  
goddamnit, you knew! What the hell,  
Bethany?? Why would you keep that  
from us? We're all losing our jobs!

BETHANY

(Guilty)

That's not exactly true. I... I'm  
being promoted.

SKIP

(In shock)

You're the devil.

BETHANY

I know what it looks like, but they made me do it. They said I could Manage the new club if I facilitated the transition and kept everything running smoothly until the handover. I'm so sorry, but it's double my current salary. *Double my current salary!*

SKIP

And *half* your current friends! But I guess you don't care if people think you're a stone-cold bitch. I just can't believe it. What am I gonna do? I'm already so far behind... this was the last club that would hire me... where am I gonna go...?

Skip starts to get choked up. Bethany comforts him.

BETHANY

I'm so sorry, baby. Come here. I was gonna talk to you after the night was over to see how I could help. I really do care about you...

Bethany hugs Skip and it's tender, but Skip (possibly compromised by substances and the news) tries to kiss Bethany in the moment.

BETHANY (CONT'D)

(Pushes him away)

What are you...?

SKIP

(Truly Thought He Had a Green Light)

I always thought you and I...

BETHANY

Jesus, no!

SKIP

But you said you cared about me...

BETHANY

I do, but not like that! God, Skip... I was just trying to comfort you... this isn't the time. You're disgusting, you know that?

SKIP

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Come on,  
Bethany... don't be like that.

Skip grabs Bethany's arm abrasively as she's leaving and she slaps him and leaves the Green Room in a fury.

Skip is done for. He hears his Tinnitus louder than before and he's starting to go numb just to avoid the mental, physical, and emotional pain. He takes out his pills.

64

**INT. UPPER BALCONY - STEVE AND DREW**

64

**KIN - (HONEY AGAIN)**

Drew sees Steve near Upper Balcony (same place as the Flashback jam session). Steve is looking around for Jane, Drew is looking to murder someone. Steve tries to avoid him.

DREW

What the hell are you doing, man!?

STEVE

Woah, woah, woah. Calm down. It's business, man. Nothing personal.

DREW

Of course, it's personal! You're ruining lives!

STEVE

I'm sorry you feel that way, but why don't you frame it differently? Thanks for the years of great employment?! Thanks for all the money I allowed you to make?!

DREW

Oh, cut the shit. Why would you just cash out now? Duelers is a gold mine.

STEVE

You gotta strike while the iron's hot. This club has never been and will never be more valuable.

DREW

And who do you think is responsible for that?! Without us, you'd be just another failed business owner.

STEVE

Without me, you'd be just another starving musician fighting over a street corner! Do you know how hard it is to be an entrepreneur today? There are almost no more societal needs!

DREW

Well, there are five Duelers who are in need of a job thanks to you!

STEVE

You guys are independent contractors. You could walk away at any point. You never took any risk here and thus you don't get the reward. I'm sorry, that's just how it works.

DREW

That's not just how it works. You don't do this to people, man. After all we've been through? I never took one sick day. I played hurt. I agreed to a pay cut when the numbers were down. I poured my blood, sweat, and tears into every performance because you told us we're family; but we're not family, are we, Steve? We're tools.

Drew stares at Steve and then gets in his face.

DREW (CONT'D)

You don't deserve Jane.

STEVE

(Suddenly very defensive)  
Hey, here's a million dollars and a few people you'll probably never see again hate you. What do you do?

DREW

I... I... wouldn't...

STEVE

You take the money! Every time!  
Life is too short, man. Go figure it out for yourself.

Drew is just in disbelief.

DREW  
Well have fun being rich. Rich and  
lonely.

STEVE  
Rich people are never lonely.

DREW  
Oh shut up.

Drew is done. There's nothing left to say.

STEVE  
You're pretty resilient. You'll  
land on your feet.

Steve pats Drew's back as he shrugs away from it then hurries  
away in this brief pause. Drew bolts for the Player's  
Apartment.

65

**INT. STAGE - KIN STALLS #1**

65

Kin finishes the song, The Crowd claps mildly again, and  
nobody comes to tell her what to do.

KIN  
Is this a test?? Hello?

The Crowd looks at her confused.

KIN (CONT'D)  
Uhhh... okay. When I say drink, you  
say more. Drink!

THE CROWD  
More!

KIN  
Drink!

THE CROWD  
More!

KIN  
(Looking around)  
Drink!

THE CROWD  
More!

KIN  
Uhhhhhhhh... drink!

## THE CROWD

More!

66

**INT. BALCONY - ULTIMATUM**

66

**KIN - (KIN STALLING)**

In background, we hear Kin just vamping and trying to stall.

Steve catches Jane as she's running through the upstairs part of the club.

STEVE

Where are you going?

JANE

I've got to find Tyler.

STEVE

No, that's over.

JANE

I don't know what you're talking about.

STEVE

I'm not stupid, Jane. What, do you think he's gonna take you with him? Cash and Carter? Sonny and Cher? Beyonce and Jay-Z?

JANE

Better than Ike and Tina!

STEVE

So you admit it!

JANE

No... I... I still want to marry you, Steve... but I don't know how we're gonna make it past this.

STEVE

What are you talking about? Is that a threat?

JANE

You're screwing all my friends.

STEVE

Woah, your friends aren't my type... haha.

JANE

(Hits him on chest)  
Not funny! Not funny!

STEVE

Okay, what do you want me to do?  
This is my first million. I came  
from nothing. This is all I've ever  
wanted.

JANE

Huh. Well, Mr. Millionaire, I'll  
tell you what I want you to do.  
Severance. You are gonna give my  
friends three months pay.

STEVE

What?! No! That's a lot of money!  
They can find other work. There are  
a hundred other clubs out there...  
cruise ships... private events...  
maybe they should start their own  
business and see how "easy" it is!

JANE

Three months pay or we are gonna  
blow up the sale... and the wedding  
is off.

STEVE

(Taken aback)

You wouldn't. How would you pay off  
your student loans? How would you  
pay for your Mother's medical  
bills?

Jane is really stuck here, but holding strong.

JANE

I'd manage.

Steve thinks about it.

STEVE

Three months pay.

JANE

Thank you, Steve.

STEVE

But you guys have to finish the  
night.

JANE  
No problem.

STEVE  
Without Tyler.

JANE  
What?! Why!?

STEVE  
There's an Agent here to see him  
and he's not getting his big break  
at my club.

JANE  
How could you be so petty!? Is this  
a preview of married life?

STEVE  
If he plays, no pay...

Steve leans in.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
...and the wedding is off.

Jane is incensed.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
(Almost proud of himself)  
See? I can leverage that shit too.

Jane feels totally betrayed and totally helpless.

JANE  
(Complicit)  
Fine. I'll tell the boys.

STEVE  
And just remember. No Tyler! If I  
see him on stage tonight, I'm  
shutting that shit down.

Jane walks away, crushed and conflicted.

67

**INT. STAGE - KIN STALLS #2**

67

**KIN - KIN STALLS #2**

KIN  
So, who wants to hear a joke?

THE CROWD is unresponsive.

KIN (CONT'D)

So, what do you call a piano with  
no keys? ...a locksmith!

HECKLER

Boooooo...

KIN

Uh, so hey you! What's your name?  
John? Where are you from? Michigan?  
Oh, well you know what they say  
about people from Michigan, right?  
Nothing. Hahaha.

The Crowd is totally silent, slightly confused.

KIN (CONT'D)

So how about another joke?

68

**INT. PLAYER'S APARTMENT - THE BIG FIGHT**

68

**KIN - (KIN STALLING)**

Drew enters Player's Apartment and sees Tyler.

TYLER

Drew, what the hell!? Why is that  
girl on stage right now? We gotta  
get back down there.

DREW

(Almost apologetic)  
Nah man, we're done for the night.  
I don't know how to tell you  
this... but Steve sold the club.  
It's over. We're through here.

TYLER

(grimaces, then, after a  
short pause,)  
...what? No. Listen. We gotta play.  
There's this Agent down there who  
wants to see me. This is my big  
chance!

DREW

(Pissy)  
What? What!? No. Screw you. Screw  
you, man.

TYLER

Drew, come on, dude...

DREW

Now you care? NOW you want to put on a show? Now that it matters to you??

TYLER

I'm sorry, I didn't know all of this was gonna happen tonight...

DREW

That's funny, because it's a little suspicious that you get this great opportunity on our last night while we all get the axe!

TYLER

Hey, I've been trying to get this guy in for a long time so I could audition for his agency...

DREW

Oh, well I've been "auditioning" for *The Crowd*, every night for the last ten years, because they deserve it, probably more than your stupid Agent.

TYLER

Fine, I'll go do it myself.

DREW

(Snotty)

Like hell you will, I'll shut off the lights and P.A.

TYLER

(Kind of taken aback)

Oh my god, Drew. Listen, I know we've had our differences, but...

DREW

(Angry)

Differences? No! It's your fault. This isn't equal. You're wrong, here. You're the selfish one. I'm not doing anything for you. You've been a nightmare.

TYLER

(Done pleading, now angry)

Woah, I'm the nightmare??? Do you know what it's like to be around you?

DREW

You mean around someone who knows what he's doing? Do you know how many soul-crushing rooms I've played to finally earn a gig like this? Do you know how bad it can get in this industry? Do you even care about this industry?

TYLER

I *used* to care! I used to love coming to work. You were awesome. We were awesome. Then you got promoted, became a... company man! Steve ruined you. You got more money and power... I got more dirty looks, lectures... you gave me notes *during* the show. Who does that?!? Who gives notes to their partner during the show? You are such a terrible leader!

DREW

I'm a fantastic leader! Just because I'm candid and say things you don't like to hear, just because I'm honest...

Jane has entered the Player's Apartment unbeknownst to Drew and Tyler.

JANE

Honest?!? So when were you *honestly* going to tell Tyler about how that girl out there is here to replace him?

DREW

(To Jane)

That's not cool.

TYLER

So it's true. You were gonna replace me without even telling me. Great "leadership."

Drew turns to Tyler.

DREW

(Defensive)

You won't listen!

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)

You've been making terrible decisions on stage lately and your mistakes are ruining everyone else's hard work! You're costing us money!

JANE

Guys, listen to me. I need to...

TYLER

(Ignoring JANE)

I'm sorry I don't perform with statistical considerations! But somebody has to play something besides the same 20 songs you play EV-ER-Y NIGHT! Somebody has to go out on a limb...

JANE

I have to tell you...

DREW

But you drag us all with you! This is our livelihood! It's the real world, not music school.

JANE

Will you shut up...

DREW

People come to this club expecting something polished, something that feels good, not a bunch of spoiled kids jerking off. Give The Crowd what they came for or we lose our jobs!

TYLER

Oh my god! We lost our jobs anyways! We did it *your* stupid, "polished" way and we *still* lost our jobs! What do you say to that? How do you explain that, Mr. Honest Fantastic Leader? How do you explain that?!

DREW

(Possibly defeated)

I don't know! I don't know!

At this point, at the emotional height of the argument, Skip stumbles into the room and promptly passes out. Drew, Tyler, and Jane scramble to help him.

69

**INT. STAGE - SKIP'S DREAM SEQUENCE**

69

**SKIP - SKIP DREAM SEQUENCE**

Skip dreams that he's on stage playing a beautiful song that sums up where he's at in life right now. He looks almost like a ghost and he's playing to an empty room except perhaps Bethany who is in a beautiful dress watching him perform. We can get really trippy here.

Skip leaves the piano at some point (while his Music/Voice keeps playing) and he goes through his Last Call. He sees a mirror with a younger version of himself. He takes a last shot at the bar. He dances with his past lovers and ultimately Bethany in the middle of the bar. And finally, he leaves the bar like a ghost...

70

**INT. PLAYER'S APARTMENT - SKIP WAKES UP**

70

**KIN - (KIN STALLING)**

Skip wakes up muttering. Drew is propping him up. There is a puddle of vomit, alcohol, and dozens of pills.

SKIP

I'm done, I'm done, I'm done...

JANE

Skip, are you okay??

TYLER

Dude! What were you thinking??

SKIP

I'm... I'm... I was... I was thinking... that I'm never going to have as big an impact on the world as Ghandi did...

The Duelers pause to consider this.

DREW

Fuck Ghandi!

Skip looks slightly horrified. The Duelers give Drew a strange look questioning his line of reasoning here.

SKIP

What?

DREW

Skip, you mean way more to me than Ghandi ever will!

SKIP

Hahaha, thanks man, but you just... you don't understand. This was my last rodeo. Nobody else will hire me... you are all destined for long, happy, healthy lives... I'm just... I'm... bound to...

JANE

We know, Skip, we know...

SKIP

You don't know! (Coughs) You can't go back. I... I just have to say this now, in case I never have another chance.

They pause for a moment.

SKIP (CONT'D)

Don't wait until the funeral to remember all the good things about someone.

JANE

Who said that?

SKIP

Me. I said that. Look at me, I'm a goddamn cliché... do you want to end up like me? Lonely, unhealthy, miserable? Then marry the wrong person! Keep being selfish! And keep pretending you know everything! OR... you could help each other.

They pause to consider this. They all look at each other. Tyler looks at Drew.

TYLER

Drew, I'm sorry. I never committed. I've always had one foot out the door and that's not fair. To any of you.

He especially looks at Jane while saying this.

DREW

I... I... I just want the best for all of us. I might not always go about it the right way.... but... I'm sorry too.

JANE

I have nothing to apologize for.

They laugh a little.

JANE (CONT'D)

Listen. Steve said he'd give you all three months of severance pay if we finish out the night. But Tyler can't play anymore.

Everyone looks at her.

DREW

What!?

JANE

Steve's jealous and doesn't want him to get his big break.

DREW

(Clueless)

Jealous of what?

Tyler and Skip look at Drew in almost disbelief.

SKIP

Oh my god, screw that. I'll live in my van. One of us has to win.

TYLER

Skip, I can't ask you to do that.

SKIP

No, listen to me, Tyler. If you make it, it's like we all made it.

JANE

It doesn't even matter, Skip. Steve will shut us down if he so much as sees Tyler out there. Also, he said he'd call off the wedding.

Jane looks right at Tyler. They all look stunned.

SKIP

So what are we gonna do?

They all look at Drew.

DREW

(Confidently)

We're gonna make everybody happy.

SKIP  
Wait, is that girl still out there?

71 **INT. STAGE - KIN COLLAPSES**

71

**KIN - STALLING**

Kin is on stage just absolutely one millimeter above drowning as she keeps The Crowd together doing a nonsense song.

The Duelers are dumbfounded that she hasn't been eaten alive.

KIN  
Now clap your hands!

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP!

KIN (CONT'D)  
Keep clapping!

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP!

KIN (CONT'D)  
Oh yeah! Keep going!

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP!

KIN (CONT'D)  
This was our high school fight  
song:

We are the best, the best, the best  
We are the best, the best, the best  
We don't take no shit, NO!  
Onnnnn You you you  
Onnnnn You you you...

Kin sees the Duelers taking the Stage to finally relieve her.

KIN (CONT'D)  
...oh thank god!

Kin literally falls into Drew's arms as he gets on Piano L and then takes her place at a Microphone to sing. Skip gets on drums and Jane gets on Bass.

72 **INT. ENTRANCE TABLE - STEVE MEETS THE BUYERS**

72

Steve greets the BUYERS (two men in their 40s/50s dressed in very expensive suits).

He brings them to the Entrance Table and they all sit down together. He brings out the signing papers.

73

**INT. STAGE/ENTRANCE TABLE - DREW MAKES ANNOUNCEMENT**

73

**DREW - SPEAKING**

Drew takes up his microphone as the other Duelers take up their instruments.

DREW

(With an ominous tone)

Your attention please... I have a very important announcement in regards to Steve, the owner of this fine establishment.

Drew picks up a Flashlight Gun and shines it on Steve who is absolutely mortified. The Buyers look utterly confused and skeptical that maybe they are making a mistake.

DREW (CONT'D)

He's getting everyone their drinks for free! Steve's covering everyone's tab tonight out of his own pocket! What a guy!

The Crowd cheers wildly and the Buyers smile approvingly at Steve, pat him on the back, and nod their heads suggesting, "What a great idea! You're really making this sale easy!"

Steve looks at Bethany at the Bar who gives a look of: "Are you serious?"

Steve smiles the most fake smile of his life (fuming inside) and gives two thumbs up.

73

**INT. STAGE/ENTRANCE TABLE - DREW MAKES ANNOUNCEMENT**

73

**DUELERS - THE TOWER**

Back on stage, the Duelers look at each other and nod.

Drew starts playing a piano intro to THE TOWER, a rocking song. He gives the introduction of a lifetime.

DREW

And now, to end the night, we're gonna feature the most talented performer here at Duelers. We all love this guy and know he's meant for great things... please make as much noise as you can, one last time... it's Tyler!

Tyler's name is called out as Steve is trying to push the signing papers in front of the Buyers.

Tyler enters the room with a wireless microphone singing The Tower.

Steve looks at Jane on stage who gives him the finger, or more accurately, "The Ring Finger" which is missing the engagement ring. Jane holds the actual ring up in her other hand.

Steve is furious, but must remain calm as he politely guides the Buyers back to the signing papers (away from watching the great show).

Tyler is absolutely rocking his performance like never before and makes his way to the Stage to lead the audience in singing Chorus 1. He then gets everyone clapping before singing Verse 2 with Jane.

Steve is sweating, twitching, and doing everything he can to politely get the Buyers to sign the papers while the man he hates more than anyone in the world is putting on the Audition of a lifetime.

Tyler gets The Crowd to sing Chorus 2.

The Buyers finally sign the papers and Steve is hilariously composed as he slowly shakes their hands, grabs the papers, and walks two steps away from their line of vision before breaking into an all out, manic sprint to the Bar.

Tyler has begun the most theatrical Piano Solo of his life.

Steve runs to the Bar and motions Bethany to shut down the Stage Power. She refuses, finally making a stand to help her friends, even going so far as to stop Steve from reaching the Power Switch.

Tyler takes his solo to the next level.

Steve gets furious at Bethany and he sloppily climbs over the Bar toward the Power Switch.

Tyler finishes the solo and the Duelers pause the song for a second. Tyler jumps on the pianos. Drew slides Tyler a shot which he downs and then Jane throws him a Wireless Mic which he coolly catches and starts singing Chorus 3 as the other Duelers come in right on queue.

Chorus 3 is amazing, but Steve finally makes it to the Power Switch and turns off the P.A. and the House Lights go up just as Chorus 4 is starting.

Tyler is undeterred. He leads The Crowd a cappella in singing the final Chorus. Tyler is singing over them (without a mic) and the whole place is erupting.

The other Duelers join Tyler on stage and they finish the song a cappella. It's absolutely amazing.

The Crowd (already on their feet) give an enormous and long ovation as the Duelers soak it in one last time.

Steve laughs, shakes his head, and looks at the signed papers.

Bethany smiles at Skip who smiles back.

Kin hugs Drew, both smiling.

Jane kisses Tyler.

The Agent smiles and nods in approval.

Everybody is happy.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END