

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

**Original Screenplay
by
Anthony McCarten**



**THIRD DRAFT
Nov 4. 2015**

**For GK Films/ Queen Films
Producer: Graham King**

On a BLACK SCREEN -

CAPTION: **IS THIS THE REAL LIFE?**

- as we hear - the famous intro to Queen's "WE WILL ROCK YOU" - *BOOM-BOOM-CHA...BOOM-BOOM-CHA* - both band and a huge stadium audience combining to beat out the anthemic rhythm...

FADE IN...

INT. FREDDIE'S GEORGIAN MANSION (GARDEN LODGE)/ LONDON - DAY

This SOUND-TRACK fades away, shifting into funereal SCORE ("GOLDEN BOY" by FREDDIE MERCURY) as - we look down through a series of opened doors, toward a distant BEDROOM DOOR. From within, a distraught voice cries out:

JIM HUTTON (O.S.)

Freddie!

The DOOR then springs open - it's JIM HUTTON (FREDDIE's long-term partner and carer) running, heart-broken, through the upstairs rooms of Freddie's mansion, finally stopping at the top of the stairs, as -

- the front door opens. It's MARY AUSTIN (40) entering, breathless, with her own key. She looks up the stairs, at JIM, who is standing there, tearful, grief-stricken.

MARY catches her breath. Her face starts to crumple as JIM's expression delivers the tragic news. MARY puts down her bags and climbs the stairs, stopping to steady herself, until she and JIM hug, hold hands, then move together toward the distant bedroom and a big round bed lit from above by a column of daylight. On the bed, distantly, we can just make out a still FIGURE over which JIM and MARY bend...

MARY

Freddie?! Oh no, oh no!

INT. MASKED BALL/ FREDDIE'S MANSION - NIGHT

A gorgeous pageant of a party, in full flow -

FREDDIE MERCURY (in a full Venetian mask and hood, his face concealed) enters the ROOM, at his most glorious and magnificent - people calling out his name - "FREDDIE!"...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The crowd hushes as FREDDIE passes through the crowd and sits at a grand piano and starts to play the intro of "**It's A Beautiful Day**"... He is joined at the piano by a masked female SOPRANO (Montserrat Caballe?) Her unwavering, crystalline voice, as well as the beauty of the song, moves the masked guests. Song continues, over...

INT. BBC TV STUDIO - DAY

BBC ANCHORMAN

Tragic news today--for fans of the Super-group Queen--that Freddie Mercury, their iconic and renown frontman...

EXT. FREDDIE'S MANSION/ KENSINGTON/ LONDON - DAY

At the gates of "GARDEN LODGE" - votive candles burn, cards and wreathes and bouquets are laid by a large crowd of grieving fans who also -

- write messages of LOVE on every single BRICK of the lodge's 15m-long 3m-high FRONT-WALL...

MONTAGE:

ARCHIVE FOOTAGE: of GRIEVING FANS around the world - TOKYO, MUNICH, MUMBAI, BARCELONA, NEW YORK - laying flowers and messages at makeshift SHRINES to FREDDIE...

JAPANESE ANCHOR (O.S.)

...rokkusuta, Freddie Mercury...

GERMAN ANCHOR (O.S.)

...rock Gott, Freddie Mercury...

SPANISH ANCHOR (O.S.)

...súper-cantante...

INDIAN ANCHOR (O.S.)

...gayaka--Freddie Mercury -

INT. US TV STUDIO - DAY

US ANCHOR

- died today, in his home, in London.
(beat)

But while popular around the globe, not everyone approved of the man, who became synonymous with excess...

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ KENSINGTON/ LONDON - DAY

A RINGING TELEPHONE.

CAPTION: **LONDON, 1991**

Enter BRIAN MAY (44). He crosses to the TELEPHONE...

(INTERCUT as NECESSARY with -)

INT. ROGER TAYLOR'S KITCHEN/ LONDON - MORNING

...ROGER TAYLOR (42) holding a TELEPHONE in one hand, reads from the *DAILY MIRROR*...

ROGER

"a man--bent--on abnormal pleasures,
corrupt, corrupting--his life a
revolting tale of depravity, lust
and wickedness..."

BRIAN

No.

ROGER

"...for his kind his death--was a
suicide." Bastards.

Silence -

BRIAN

What do you want to do?

INT. BREAKFAST TV SHOW - DAY

The grieving BRIAN and ROGER on a couch, face an arrogant
MALE TV INTERVIEWER. We are live -

INTERVIEWER

Last week saw the death of one of the
most flamboyant and popular figures in
rock-music--Freddie Mercury, lead
singer with Queen. Joining us in the
studio to pay tribute and maybe
reflect on Freddie's memory for the
first time: two of the band members:
guitarist Brian May & drummer Roger
Taylor--thanks for coming. So--
the commentators have all had their
say about Freddie, haven't they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

For ROGER and BRIAN, so full of emotion, the words don't come easily...

ROGER

What we feel is--our friend is barely in his grave--all he ever did was try to entertain people--and some people are saying "good", "good riddance", "he deserved it." It's disgusting. Because he was actually -

MALE INTERVIEWER

(cutting him off)

(Yes, I mean) it would be wrong not to say that he has been depicted in certain quarters as a sort of decadent, wild, bisexual, irresponsible lover.

ROGER

We're here to stick up for him, coz he can't stick up for himself.

MALE INTERVIEWER

But what was the truth of that?

BRIAN

Of what?

MALE INTERVIEWER

Was he decadent, irresponsible? When you hear the stories -

BRIAN

(reacting)

Did he deserve to die, you mean? Is that the question?

MALE INTERVIEWER

But it's interesting isn't it, that -

ROGER

He was a victim of an epidemic. A plague. We lost a great artist.

BRIAN

And a magnificent human being.

MALE INTERVIEWER

And why do you think, then, some people are -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROGER

- Newspapers - let's be clear -

MALE INTERVIEWER

- newspapers--the media--have reacted in this way? Is it perhaps because -

ROGER

Because they have no shame. They want to sell papers. They don't know who he was.

MALE INTERVIEWER

- because Freddie became a symbol for a certain sort of life-style, didn't he? A manifesto of hedonistic freedom.

BRIAN and ROGER now start to become furious with this guy -

BRIAN

Did he? I don't know that.

ROGER

You asked us on this program so we could talk about our friend. We agreed that -

MALE INTERVIEWER

Well let's talk about you then, the band. What will you do now? Will you go on, or disband?

ROGER

It's too soon--it's been three days --we were together 22 years. We're in shock, I think.

BRIAN

Yes.

MALE INTERVIEWER

Because also, well, Freddie wrote most of your hits--didn't he?

This comments stuns BRIAN and ROGER -

ROGER

(to BRIAN)

Did he? Oh.

BRIAN

Oh so Freddie wrote: "We Will Rock You"--did he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ROGER

"A Kind of Magic"? Coz I thought -

BRIAN

"Radio Gaga"? (Oh I see.)

MALE INTERVIEWER

(Well let's just)--just say--a lot
of your biggest most popular hits...

Silence, and then -

ROGER

No. No, let's say--"let's just say"
this interview is over. Let's just
say that.

(to BRIAN)

(Shall we, dear?)

BRIAN and ROGER get up and pull off their microphones -

MALE INTERVIEWER

(No, no, please), guys, hey, come on -

ROGER

You're a dick.

BRIAN and ROGER walk out.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

The year is now 2016...and in a dimly lit PRIVATE
STUDIO...full of homely touches (*furnishings, books,
candles, and a telescope, etc*) the CAMERA finds... BRIAN
MAY (69), his back turned to camera, his curly tresses now
GREY, wearing HEAD-PHONES (CANS), whilst playing his RED
("RED SPECIAL") GUITAR. Only he can hear what he is
playing...

ANGLE ON: ROGER TAYLOR (67), appearing in the doorway
behind him...

OLDER ROGER

Brian? BRI!

But BRIAN can't hear this...so ROGER throws a CUSHION.
BRIAN turns, takes off his CANS...

OLDER BRIAN

Mmmmm?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER ROGER

I'm out of here. See you tomorrow morning. Got some good stuff.

When ROGER departs, BRIAN pulls his HEAD-PHONES back on, then walks to an AMPLIFIER, tinkering with the knobs...until something catches his eye...

In the doorway now stands a YOUNG MAN (early 20's), with ROGER behind him. BRIAN pulls off the cans...

OLDER ROGER

Says he's here for an interview.

BLOGGER

"BuzzMix Online"? You both agreed to an interview? David Ashcroft.

OLDER BRIAN

Buzzmix?

BLOGGER

Twelve million followers.

The BLOGGER holds out his CELL-PHONE to BRIAN - BRIAN looks at the PHONE, reading the EMAIL...

BLOGGER

Email confirmation...7 pm. You were both "looking forward to it."

BRIAN passes the cell-phone to ROGER to read...

OLDER BRIAN

...fucking Jim Beach...

BLOGGER

And I fly back to the US tomorrow morning, so--this is really the only chance. Kinda--now or never.

OLDER ROGER

I'm good with never.

BLOGGER

Ha! So--it's No? Really? I can't just get you both--quick interview? Flew 11 hours. Hotel. Cabs...

BRIAN looks to ROGER for his response -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLDER ROGER

I'm helluva late already, sorry.
Would have loved to, just can't.
Shame, I love interviews.

BLOGGER

Dr May?

OLDER ROGER

(to BRIAN)

Go on Doctor. Just give him--12
minutes--a million people a minute
aint bad.

ROGER departs -

OLDER BRIAN

You give him 12 minutes!

Silence.

OLDER BRIAN

I'm working. Sorry. No.
Can you show yourself out?

BLOGGER

Wow. Okay. Okay--alright. Jesus.
I'll um--okay...

The BLOGGER starts to go and then stops at the TELESCOPE,
examining it. BRIAN notices and watches -

BLOGGER

This is an "Orion", right?

OLDER BRIAN

(unimpressed)

It's written on the side.

Indeed, the make "ORION" is clearly visible...

OLDER BRIAN

You're interested in...(space)?

BLOGGER

My Dad, big Night-Sky nut. To prepare
for this I actually tried to read your
paper on--Jesus--"The Motion Of Zodiac
- "

OLDER BRIAN

Zodiacal Dust Particles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BLOGGER

- but you kinda lost me when you got into the high luminosity of Faber-Perrier inter-whatevers.

OLDER BRIAN

Fabry-Perot interferometers.

BLOGGER

That's the one. Anyway...

The BLOGGER smiles, until BRIAN capitulates -

OLDER BRIAN

How long will it take - ?

BLOGGER

- Not long, not at all! See, as it's the 25th anniversary Of Freddie's passing there's renewed interest, especially with Queen playing again...

The BLOGGER begins to set up his TAPE RECORDER...

BLOGGER

...to huge crowds still--and the songs, they've endured!

(sings badly)

"Bismillah, we will not let you go,
let him go...Bismillah...we will
not let you go..."

OLDER BRIAN

And the press said that song should be "sunk to the bottom of the ocean."
"The Sun", newspaper--never forget a bad review--nor did Freddie. Oh how he hated the critics.

BLOGGER

"Bismillah." What is that, by the way? There's all these theories out there. Did Freddie ever explain it?

OLDER BRIAN

Bismillah?

When BRIAN NODS...the BLOGGER smiles -

BLOGGER

Tell me. You gotta tell me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

But BRIAN smiles wistfully, shakes his head, and waves a finger -

OLDER BRIAN

Freddie wanted mystery. He needed it, you see. Ask me something else.

BLOGGER

It's just I did some research for this interview and I googled the TV interview you did at the time--wow, I mean, horrible! And you clearly wanted to tell people who Freddie Mercury really was...

OLDER BRIAN

And your question?

BLOGGER

Just that, really. Who was Freddie Mercury? Who was he? If we could start there...
Coz, I read a bunch of stuff about him but none of it really made me any the wiser...

The BLOGGER angles the TAPE-RECORDER MIC toward BRIAN...and BRIAN reluctantly sits...

OLDER BRIAN

Freddie?...(*Frowns*) Hated to talk about himself--well, truthfully about himself.

BLOGGER

Right! But you knew him.
So--how did you first meet?
Freddie Mercury? The Legend?

OLDER BRIAN

Bulsara. Freddie--Bulsara.
I heard him--before I saw him...

INT. HALLS/ EALING ART SCHOOL - DAY

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

....Me and my bandmate Roger used to hang out at Ealing Art School.
There were some pretty girls there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The YOUNG BRIAN (23) and ROGER (21) walk down the halls, which are filled with ARTISTS plying their craft, sculpture, fashion, design. ROGER has two DRUM STICKS and drums them on whatever he passes, including the odd CUTE GIRL!

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Our band was good. But we were having
problems connecting with audiences -

INT. "SMILE" GIG - NIGHT

SMILE perform - onstage, "Doin' All Right".

BRIAN, ROGER, and BASSIST/SINGER TIM STAFFELS, in T-shirts and jeans, are entirely focused on playing their instruments - no stage presence whatsoever.

The small AUDIENCE - of about 20 people - is appreciative.

INT. HALLS/ EALING ART SCHOOL - DAY

BRIAN and ROGER continue their walk through the art school.

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
We were even thinking of breaking up
and going back to our studies...

INT. LAB/ SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY - DAY

ROGER, before a human cadaver, holds a circular saw and looks at the dotted line demarking the crown which he is meant to cut open. He starts up his circular saw -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Roger was studying dentistry at
the time...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN
I?--I was in love with...

EXT. BACK GARDEN/ MAY HOUSE - NIGHT

Shot of the stars -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN
...the universe--but torn, torn
between stars -

INT. "SMILE" GIG - NIGHT

- BRIAN on-stage, breaks into a GUITAR SOLO -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
- and stardom.

INT. HALLS/ EALING ART SCHOOL - DAY

ROGER and BRIAN continue their walk through ART SCHOOL...ROGER suddenly veering off down another corridor, toward the BATHROOM - BRIAN only belatedly works out where ROGER has gone by following the sound of DRUMMING.

INT. BATHROOM/ EALING ART SCHOOL - DAY

ROGER and BRIAN are now singing "TUTTI FRUTTI" (a jazzy, slowed-down version, harmonizing beautifully with each other) as ROGER, then BRIAN, go up to the urinal in the TILED BATHROOM with its real nice echo.

ROGER, one handed, (one drum stick clenched in his teeth) still drums on the TILES as he sings (he has a very high sweet voice)

ROGER/BRIAN
"I got a girl...named Sue...
she knows just what to doooo...
I got a girl...named Sue...
...she knows just what to doooo...

As they sing and harmonise beautifully -

- a THIRD VOICE joins them, taking the 5th part harmony -

ROGER and BRIAN look at each other, and turn...

VOICE
"She rocked to the east...
She rocked to the west...
But she's the girrrllll....
...that I love the best...

The singing - which is very good - is coming from one of the TOILET CUBICLES. They move toward it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The VOICE in the TOILET CUBICLE continues to sing "TUTTI FRUTTI" very well...as ROGER and BRIAN get down on their knees and peek under the door and see FEET, pointing toward them. Before they can get up off the floor the DOOR opens and the STRANGER walks past them, right over them, moving to the WASH-BASINS.

ROGER and BRIAN stand and look at the STRANGER from behind, who is now bent over the BASIN, washing his hands as he continues to sing. The long-haired STRANGER is wearing SILK trousers, a scarf around his waist and a sheepskin waistcoat. Finally, the STRANGER straightens and his face is at last revealed in the MIRROR...

FREDDIE

(sing
"Tutti frutti oh rutti...

...a YOUNG MAN of PERSIAN/INDIAN stock, slim, with large buck teeth and long black hair. He GRINS at them, via the mirror...FREDDIE MERCURY!

FREDDIE

(sings)
"tutti frutti oh rutti...
(dramatic pause)
wop-bop-a-loo-lop...

FREDDIE turns, faces them -

FREDDIE

(sings)
"...A-LOP...BAM...
(two octaves higher)
BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!"

- FREDDIE raises his right arm, feet astride, already striking the iconic pose, eyes closed, chin raised high until he breaks out of it.

REACTION, ROGER and BRIAN: Astonished...

FREDDIE

"Smile"! Yes?

FREDDIE SMILES, but covers his buck teeth with his hand, self-consciously - the bullied little boy showing itself in this lingering mark of childhood insecurity.

FREDDIE

Saw your gig at Imperial College.

FREDDIE dries his hands with a PAPER TOWEL...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FREDDIE

You guys are brilliant but no show.
You need pizzazz, costumes, lights,
proper front-man...What you need is
lightning in a bottle! Freddie
Bulsara. So. What are you toilet
trolls doing here, with your flies
open? Gosh, it's like boarding school!

As ROGER and BRIAN see that their flies are open...

FREDDIE

Alright--fine--"When in England..."

FREDDIE undoes his fly, and pulls out his PENIS, as...

...BRIAN and ROGER hurriedly pull up their ZIPPERS and
can't believe FREDDIE is standing there with his dick out.

FREDDIE

Don't worry, you're not the first
to be speechless.

ROGER

Jesus, man -

FREDDIE

Oh, did I misunderstand?

FREDDIE smirks, as he ZIPS up...goes to exit...

FREDDIE

Okay--let's wait till "lights
out" when "Sir" is asleep...

REACTION, BRIAN and ROGER: What was that?!!!

INT. "SMILE" GIG 2 - NIGHT

SMILE play their last note of the gig to 30 appreciative
people.

EXT. ALLEY/ OUTSIDE SMILE GIG 1 - NIGHT

SMILE load their own GEAR into an old VAN...ROGER, BRIAN,
TIM.

TIM STAFFEL

"Humpy Bong."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

Humpy Bong?

TIM STAFFEL

They're going places. Gonna be big.

ROGER

Humpy Bong--are gonna be big?

BRIAN

Don't do it, Tim.

TIM STAFFEL

Sorry guys. Gotta look after myself.

TIM takes his BASS GUITAR and walks off. ROGER and BRIAN watch him go...

ROGER

What now?

INT. FREDDIE'S BEDROOM/ BULSARA FAMILY HOME - DAY

CLOSE ON: A RECORD - JIMI HENDRIX'S "ELECTRIC LADY LAND" - playing on a turn-table.

WIDE: As BRIAN reads the sleeve notes on the ALBUM COVER - FREDDIE excitedly puts his EAR to the LEFT SPEAKER then moves to the RIGHT SPEAKER of his old STEREO RECORD PLAYER...

FREDDIE

Listen to this! Hear how the guitar starts here (*left speaker*)--here-here-here!--and now comes over here! (*right speaker*) How does he make it do that?

BRIAN

Studio. They split stereo sound, two channels, left and right, pan back and forth...

BRIAN then moves to FREDDIE's desk, which is full of LITTLE PAPER BALLS, as -

- FREDDIE pulls on SUPER-TIGHT VELVET TROUSERS.

BRIAN

What's with all the paper balls?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN un-folds one of the balls - the title is "**VAGABOND OUTCAST**". BRIAN looks at FREDDIE, seeing him then as FRED sees himself...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
 "Outcast"--Yes, that's how he'd
 always seen himself. A sad, lonely
 boy, bullied--tugged from Africa
 to India to this place--this
 little room in Feltham, Middlesex!

FREDDIE at the full-length MIRROR, struggles to do up the TROUSERS...he starts to LAUGH (FREDDIE's high GIRLISH LAUGH) and turns to share the joke with BRIAN - those big BUCK TEETH flashing for a second before FREDDIE covers them with his hand. BRIAN, thoughtful, smiles back...

FREDDIE
 One has to suffer for fashion.

BRIAN
 You write songs?

FREDDIE
 No. That's why they're paper balls.
 Can't finish them.

BRIAN picks up a heavily marked scrap of un-balled paper, as FREDDIE dons a LONG BLACK COAT and covers his wardrobe before he EXITS. BRIAN remains - studying the scrap.

FREDDIE'S MUM (O.S.)
 FREDDIE!

FREDDIE (O.S.)
 I move into my first flat next week
 thank God. Smaller than this room,
 but we can hang out, play music...
 (calls)
 Coming Ma!
 (to BRIAN)
 Mind if I make a suggestion about
 our playlist on Friday?

BRIAN
 It's only a trial gig, just to see if
 you gel with the band - okay?

FREDDIE nods, exits.

FREDDIE (O.S.)
 Coming!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRIAN looks down again at -

CLOSE ON: The SCRAP: FREDDIE's curious notation method -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Here was his music. I'd never seen
notation like it. It was--different.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN crosses to the BLOGGER, with a WOODEN BOX -

OLDER BRIAN
Not at all proper. But a language
that was Freddie's own--a
kaleidoscope of influences--a nod to
one style, a genuflection to another--
melodies battling with counter-
melodies...

We hear, as SOUNDTRACK, these layers of sound, these
elements, building up...up...as - BRIAN opens the BOX.
Inside it, LITTLE PAPER BALLS.

OLDER BRIAN
...rock competing with "Uncle Mack's
Children's Favourites", competing with
Mantovani--the Laughing Policeman with
Verdi and the Billy Goats Gruff. And
what I saw, in these little bits of
paper, this confetti - was a man's
confusion--in musical form--about who
he was! A many of strange parts. And
such--cacophany!

BRIAN playfully covers his ears as the noise he hears gets
too much. And then the CACOPHONY on the SOUNDTRACK suddenly
stops - SILENCE.

OLDER BRIAN
And what could I do for him? Connect
them all, help him to tie them
together, to produce...harmony.

BRIAN picks up his "RED SPECIAL GUITAR"

OLDER BRIAN
Let me show you! In those days--he
was writing things--like this...

BRIAN sits -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN
...but he only had the first 8 bars
...but what 8 bars! Catchy...

BRIAN alone hears...(as we do, as SOUNDTRACK)...the opening PIANO RIFF of "**SEVEN SEAS OF RHYE**"...

INT. BULSARA HOME - DAY

FREDDIE, playing the PIANO RIFF on the FAMILY PIANO -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Just this riff--classical almost--
a 5-Finger-Exercise...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN
...repeating--all he had--and he
asked me "What goes now?"
(*Glint in eye*)
And I said...I said "It goes -

BRIAN raises his arms as we hear - BANGGGG! a huge CHORD of MULTI-TRACKED GUITARS with DRUMS...

OLDER BRIAN
MASSIVE...three guitars in harmony!
Guitars transformed into an
orchestra! I could give him what
he was hearing but couldn't play.

Another BANGGG! of HUGE GUITARS and then FREDDIE's voice comes in with the first lyric...

OLDER BRIAN
And then we're in.

BRIAN silences, with a snap of his fingers, the music.

But the BLOGGER is more interested in the guitar itself.

BLOGGER
The "Red Special"? That's it?
Your father made it for you?

OLDER BRIAN
This?

INT. MAY HOUSE (1970) - DAY

HAROLD MAY (BRIAN'S DAD) presents (to the CAMERA) the RED SPECIAL...

INT. "SMILE" GIG 3 - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: The RED SPECIAL, being strapped on by BRIAN, as
- the band prepare to perform their first song - to a small audience.

ANGLE ON: FREDDIE, struggling to adjust the FAULTY MIC-STAND which is set too low -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
We had no idea what to expect from
Freddie on that first night.

ANGLE ON: JOHN DEACON (20) - on BASS GUITAR.

OLDER BRIAN
And John Deacon, electrical
engineering student, had just taken
over on bass--so anything could
happen.

FREDDIE still can't adjust the FAULTY MIC-STAND -

ROGER
Ready? Freddie?

FREDDIE
Ready Steady Go.
(struggling)
Wait, wait--This--give me---Bloody-

- but then the top half of the MIC stand breaks off, and
won't go back into the bottom half -

- ROGER and BRIAN share concerned looks. Not a good
beginning.

ROGER
Come on.

BRIAN
Freddie -

FREDDIE
Fuck it. Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE will just use the top half of the MIC stand, the MIC affixed. FREDDIE comes to the centre of the stage.

For a second FREDDIE stares at the audience, the shy nervous Farouk Bulsara. But then he takes a deep breath and nods at BRIAN, who counts in the BAND -

"SMILE" strike up the intro to "**Doin' All Right**" - and FREDDIE jumps into a dramatic pose, which he holds like a statue -

BRIAN and ROGER and JOHN all share surprised looks as FREDDIE then begins to TRANSFORM THE SONG - his hugely dramatic and showy performance a million miles from what we saw Tim Staffel do with it.

ANGLE ON: The Audience reaction: Startled.

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Same old song, but it sure felt
different with Freddie doing it.

INT. BIBA CLOTHING BOUTIQUE - DAY

A trendy clothes boutique -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
...and it needed a new look.

CLOSE ON: MARY AUSTIN (19), who works in the store.

BRIAN
This is Freddie.

FREDDIE, a gentleman, proffers his hand -

FREDDIE
How do you do?

BRIAN
Mary. Mary Austin.

FREDDIE
Mary.

MARY
Freddie.

They smile at each other.

MARY
So how do you know Brian?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE
I'm his new lead singer.

BRIAN nods.

MARY
(*unimpressed*)
Oh yeah?

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON: BRIAN'S FINGERNAILS - now varnished WHITE.

WIDE: BRIAN and FREDDIE and ROGER (ROGER has a less over-the-top wardrobe than the others) are looking through the clothing racks - while MARY speaks with another customer. FREDDIE keeps sneaking glances at her -

FREDDIE
(*aside to BRIAN, re MARY*)
Details! She's your girlfriend?
Not your girlfriend? What? C'mon.

BRIAN
Sort of.

FREDDIE
Sort of Yes, or sort of No?

BRIAN
Sort of--both. We've been out a few times. It was -

FREDDIE
Kissed her?

BRIAN
Cheek only. Look, if you like her-- then just--she's had a rough time with guys. Needs someone to appreciate her.

FREDDIE
There's something really sweet and calming about her.

BRIAN
Go on then--ask her out.

FREDDIE looks at MARY, who sees him looking, and he - shyly pretends to go through more clothes.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LATER. MARY shows out the last shopper and turns to see FREDDIE, the last one in the store - BRIAN and ROGER are gone, and FREDDIE is still pretending to go through the clothes.

ANGLE ON: FREDDIE, his eye momentarily taken by a HANDSOME YOUNG MAN, who glances at FREDDIE, before leaving the store. FREDDIE watches him go, with as yet unadmitted sexual interest, as -

MARY

Closing.

MARY is standing right behind him. Conflicted, he manages-

MARY

Find anything?

FREDDIE

Might need something...louder.

MARY

You really like clothes.

FREDDIE

Fashion & Design, Ealing Arts.

(holds wide his arms)

Can't you tell?

MARY

I can now. Yes.

A spark passes between, as FREDDIE tries to pluck up the courage -

- and as MARY notices that FREDDIE's FINGERNAILS are varnished BLACK.

FREDDIE

So--right. See you. Some other time.

He leaves, but then returns -

FREDDIE

It's some other time.

She smiles at him - he's CHARMING.

EXT. KENSINGTON MARKET - DAY

FREDDIE and ROGER work their little STALL, trying to sell FREDDIE's ART-WORK (drawings of JIMI HENDRIX, ROCK HUDSON)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Right now, no buyers...And then, through the crowd, comes
MARY -

FREDDIE picks up a VENETIAN MASK and holds it over his
face.

MARY

"Smile".

ROGER

If we could find a customer.

MARY

I just had people in the store talking
about this wild new band. It's going
well.

(to Freddie)

And who might this be?

FREDDIE

Countessa! Might I perchance interest
you in my *bric a brac*? A portrait
perhaps of our Saviour, James Hendrix
rendered by own hand?

MARY

Actually, I was looking for Fred.

FREDDIE

(to ROGER)

Fred?

ROGER

Could you describe him?

MARY

With some difficulty.

FRED slides the MASK down...and then starts to sing...

FREDDIE

"He's so nervous...but he's at your
service..."

MARY

(smiling)

Hello

FREDDIE

Hello.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROGER sees that these two are smitten with each other.

CUT TO:

With MARY, FREDDIE buys an old damaged PIANO, paying CASH, but is a little short and so whispers to MARY, who has to open her PURSE and contribute...FREDDIE smiles at the PIANO SELLER over this...

CUT TO:

MARY and he watch the PIANO being loaded into a truck.

FREDDIE

Rightio. We need to stop by a chemist and buy some nail-polish immediately.

MARY

Why?

FREDDIE

Why do you think?

INT. FREDDIE'S FIRST FLAT/ 2 VICTORIA RD/ LONDON - DAY

CLOSE ON: The BRUSH of the BLACK-FINGERNAIL painting BLACK NAIL-POLISH onto - the White Piano Keys.

WIDE: We are in the tiny new flat Freddie has just rented - empty but for the piano. While he paints the White Keys BLACK...MARY paints the black keys WHITE...

FREDDIE

Let's make the poor little thing stand out...transform it, from being just another sad, completely forgettable, run of the mill... two-a-penny...humdrum...

MARY

...garden variety...

FREDDIE

...bog-standard...

MARY

...middle of the road...

FREDDIE

...a So-So piano--and make it one-of-a-kind. Famous among pianos.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY
Famous among pianos?

He steals a kiss on her CHEEK -

FREDDIE
There.

MARY
Oh.

She then leans forward and kisses him on the LIPS. When she stops -

FREDDIE
Oh.

Keeping his eyes locked on her, he blindly plays a few cheerful notes on the PIANO, which makes her smile.

CUT TO:

They have just finished making love, on the floor. He kisses her body with little love-pecks -

FREDDIE
So what are your parents like? (*kiss*)

MARY
(*giggles*)
That tickles!

FREDDIE
Completely normal I suppose? (*kiss*)

MARY
Garden Variety. Freddie! (*stop*)

FREDDIE
Run Of The Mill? (*kiss*)

MARY
(*suddenly serious*)
Two. A-penny.

INT. AUSTIN FAMILY HOME - DAY

LUNCH. While they eat, MARY communicates with her parents - both are MUTE and DEAF and communicate in sign language with MARY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tense silence. FREDDIE seems nervous, shy. His FINGERS, on the table, TAP OUT PIANO NOTES on an imaginary keyboard...

MARY's PARENTS both notice that FREDDIE's tapping finger-nails are painted BLACK.

FREDDIE
(whispers)
They're deaf and mute?

MARY
(to FREDDIE)
I just told them your life story.
Well, the little I know of it!

FREDDIE smiles at her parents, who smile back.

FREDDIE
Tell them it's nice to meet them.

MARY
I have.

FREDDIE
Okay. Then, uh--thank them for
the delicious food.

MARY
I have.

FREDDIE
Then--I dunno, then tell them their
daughter is a tremendous fuck.

MARY
They can lip read.

BOOM. FREDDIE's heart stops - mortified!

REACTION MARY's PARENTS: outrage.

FREDDIE
You're joking?

MARY
Uh-uh.

FREDDIE
Oh God.

FREDDIE lowers his head, trying to eat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FREDDIE
(to her parents)
Great food.

EXT. LONDON STREETS/ FREDDIE'S FIRST FLAT - DAY

FREDDIE, HAPPY, hurries up the street and climbs the steps to a front door, humming a TUNE, lighting a CIGARETTE.

INT. STAIRS/ FREDDIE FIRST FLAT - DAY

FREDDIE runs up the stairs - humming the TUNE -

INT. FREDDIE'S FIRST FLAT/ LONDON - DAY

FREDDIE opens the door to his FLAT, and is surprised to see -

- MARY, in their new bed, drowsily waking. (The PIANO serves as the bed's HEADBOARD)

FREDDIE
Dearie! Still in bed? Perfect. Stay
right -

FREDDIE peels off his shirt, kicks off his shoes, and then takes another HIT on his CIGARETTE...

FREDDIE
- where - you are.

MARY
I loathe that you've started smoking.

FREDDIE
I need more gravel in my voice. The
top guys now all sound asthmatic.

FREDDIE stops at the full-length mirror -

FREDDIE
(touches his hair)
Why is my hair always greasy?

MARY
It's not. I need to get up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

No. The new rule for our new life together: we have to make love at least four times a day whether we want to or not. And this number can be changed, but only increased.

He bounds into bed.

FREDDIE

And you will want to, won't you?
You'll always want to?

MARY

Always? (*Playfully uncertain*) Probably.

FREDDIE

Probably?! You little Nun! You little convent Nun!

She giggles as he tickles and kisses her -

MARY

Are all men as -

FREDDIE

- as what?

MARY

Your libido is -

FREDDIE

- We're lucky, aren't we? It's just a gift we both have to be grateful for. It astonishes me too.

He kisses her bust and she playfully pushes him away until their eyes lock and they start to kiss passionately, and make love - MARY moving on top of him, happily. Until -

FREDDIE

Wait!

MARY

(*concerned*)
What? What is it?

FREDDIE stares at her, his eyes wide (is he in pain?) and then - without raising his head from the pillow - reaches - with his right hand, up and behind him - for the PIANO keys...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FREDDIE

Wait. Wait...

Lying there, he BLINDLY plays a few notes on the PIANO...

(We start to recognise the TUNE as the opening bars of what will eventually be BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY) He likes what he hears, as his face breaks into a smile.

FREDDIE

What do you think?

MARY

Freddie!

FREDDIE

It's good, don't you think?! I'm writing a song. If Brian and Roger can do it I should be able to. And this tune keeps going round and round and round in my head- Bom Bom... Bom,Bom,Bom,Bom...but I can't finish it. Do you think it has potential?

MARY

(insulted)

Freddie -

FREDDIE

How beautiful you are.

They start to kiss and MAKE LOVE again but, as he caresses her with his LEFT HAND, his RIGHT HAND sneaks back up to the keys and plays the opening phrase of the TUNE.

MARY

Freddie! You're awful!

FREDDIE

Wait, wait, wait--what do you think of it? It's charming, don't you think? It's like a cowboy song.

MARY

I give up!

She jumps out of bed.

FREDDIE

Mary! Come back here this instant!

MARY slams the bathroom door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FREDDIE

Mary?!

He then lies back and reaches up with BOTH HANDS and plays blindly - even more recognizably - the opening bars of BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY. He tries now to hum a melody over it -

FREDDIE

Hmmm-Hmmm....Hmmm-Hmmm-Hmmm-Hmmm

(*breaking*)

Mary?

(*sings*)

"Mama"...Hmmm-Hmmm-Hmmm-Hmmm.

FREDDIE gives up, looks down, notices he has an erection, as MARY exits the BATHROOM, heading for the KITCHEN.

FREDDIE

Mary?! Uh Oh! It's happening again!

MARY (O.S.)

Use the bathroom!

He gets out of bed, adjusting himself -

FREDDIE

The bathroom?!! The bathroom?!!

FREDDIE exits the BEDROOM, hunting MARY, and we promptly hear (O.S.) HAPPY SQUEALS from MARY...

MARY

Stay away! Freddie! Arrhh! Stay away!
Help! Help!

INT. BULSARA HOME - DAY

LUNCH. It's FREDDIE's BIRTHDAY. A far noisier affair than the Austin's. Everyone is wearing paper party hats.

FREDDIE is dressed VERY CONSERVATIVELY - playing the role of the good son.

MARY meets FREDDIE's boisterous family, and sees the love they all have for him.

FREDDIE'S MUM

No, Farrokh was born in Zanzibar.

FREDDIE

(*cringing*)

Ma! None of that old stuff!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Even here, FREDDIE is nervous, TAPPING his FINGERS, playing that PHANTOM PIANO.

FREDDIE'S MUM

What?

MARY notes that - FREDDIE's tapping FINGERNAILS are no longer PAINTED BLACK - He's hiding his true nature from those who love him most.

MARY

(at FREDDIE)

Farrokh?

FREDDIE shrugs at the revelation of this family secret, as - his MUM comes to the table with a STACK of FAMILY PHOTOS and starts passing them to MARY...

FREDDIE'S MUM

His father and I are Indian Parsees.

FREDDIE

Can we please talk about something else? I'm serious!

MARY

(to FREDDIE's DAD)

Fred said you were Persian.

FREDDIE'S DAD

(defensively)

A thousand years ago the
Parsees came out of Persia
to escape Muslim
persecution...

FREDDIE

(singing)

La da da da da da da da da
da dada dadadada...

FREDDIE's sister passes bread to MARY -

KASHMIRA BULSARA

...and what's a thousand years
between friends, right Fred?

FREDDIE scowls at KASHMIRA, as -

- MARY shows FREDDIE a PHOTO of a 10 YEAR OLD FARROKH, in a village in ZANZIBAR, grinning with BUCK TEETH...

MARY

Sweet.

FREDDIE winces as he snatches the PHOTO away from MARY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KASHMIRA BULSARA
What?! What are you so
embarrassed about?!

FREDDIE
Kash! WHY DON'T YOU JUST -

FREDDIE'S DAD
Both of you!!!

KASHMIRA BULSARA
Freddie was born in England at the
age of 18.

FRED's DAD shows MARY then FRED a PHOTO of YOUNG FREDDIE in
BOXING GLOVES...

FREDDIE'S DAD
Was a good boxer actually.

KASHMIRA BULSARA
He had to be!

FREDDIE can take no more of this and bounces over to the
FAMILY PIANO, and starts to bash on the keys -

FREDDIE'S DAD
(aside, to MARY)
But his opponents went for his teeth.

FREDDIE
"Happy Birthday to Me...Happy
Birthday to Me..."
*(switching to the
style of Marilyn
Monroe)*
"Happy Birthday Mr Fred-isent,
Happyyyy..."
(and then a segue)
"Get Back, Get back, Get back to
where you once belonged!..."
(segue)
"For once in my life I have someone
who needs me, someone I've waited
so long..."

FREDDIE winks at MARY, but MARY - serious-faced - perceives
FREDDIE's game, that he's hiding his biography from her.
She then notes that the FAMILY are delighted by FREDDIE's
pantomime...

KASHMIRA BULSARA
Elvis! Elvis!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FREDDIE

"...Was a cold and grey Zanzibarian
morn, and another little chil'..."

FREDDIE'S DAD

Acker Bilk!

FREDDIE

Oh shit...umm...uhhh...
(and then remembers)

FREDDIE slips into "Stranger On The Shore" and, as he
plays, BLOWS - with pursed lips - the CLARINET part, which
gets the whole family La-la-laing the lilting melody...

MARY finally smiles at this balmy family.

FREDDIE then slams shut the lid of the PIANO.

FREDDIE

There! Concert over.

FREDDIE's DAD picks up where they left off, handing another
PHOTO to MARY -

FREDDIE'S DAD

And this is Farrokh at boarding
school in Bombay...

KASHMIRA BULSARA

(to MARY)

All on his own. Poor Farrokh -

FREDDIE explodes -

FREDDIE

FREDDIE! My name is Freddie! My
name--is FREDDIE...MERCURY.

KASHMIRA BULSARA

Freddie what?

FREDDIE

My stage name. My new stage name.

FREDDIE'S MUM

Well you're not on stage now Farrokh.

FREDDIE

Freddie Mercury! I am a professional
singer and that is now my name from
now on, anywhere, anytime, even here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Stunned silence, then -

FREDDIE'S DAD

You want your own family--to call
you Freddie Mercury?

FREDDIE

From now on.

FREDDIE'S MUM

Freddie Mercury? What is this?
(to MARY)

What is wrong with Farrokh? With
Bulsara?

FREDDIE

What's wrong with it is...
he doesn't exist anymore!

He resumes eating. The FAMILY and MARY stare at him. The
FAMILY finally resuming eating as well - accepting this.

INT. ZANDRA RHODES' CLOTHING STORE - DAY

ROGER comes out of the DRESSING ROOM - in a full GLAM
OUTFIT.

Designer, Zandra Rhodes, nods with approval as - a second
later, another curtain parts, and BRIAN comes out in
another GLAM OUTFIT, complete with a WING-SHIRT. A second
later, and JOHN comes out in a THIRD COSTUME - and finally
FREDDIE - only FREDDIE looks happy.

FREDDIE

I feel like a butterfly!

ROGER

I feel like a tosser.
We're musicians. We're not actors.

FREDDIE

It's outrageous--that's the only way
the public will realise you're on the
scene! Rock has to be a show!
Look at Hendrix. You saw him perform?

BRIAN performs a LICK of AIR-GUITAR - we actually HEAR the
LICK (intro to "VOODOO CHILD") as SOUNDTRACK...

FREDDIE

It's a show! Jimi lets the audience
in!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

Muddy Waters just sits in a chair.

FREDDIE shoots BRIAN an "Et tu Brute" look.

JOHN's costume is too tight for him -

JOHN

Is breathing allowed?

FREDDIE

And the band needs to change its name. "SMILE" is limp. We deserve something--regal...

INT. ROLLER SKATING RINK/ UK CONCERT 2 - NIGHT

TIGHT ON: The BASS DRUM, sporting it's new LOGO -

QUEEN

QUEEN play..."STEP ON ME"...but now for disinterested ROLLER-SKATERS, going round and round. The BAND looks ridiculous in their new ZANDRA RHODES COSTUMES. When the song ends they are approached by the RINK MANAGER...

RINK

You guys finished?

ROGER

No. We've just started.

RINK

Coz they (*the skaters*) want some disco, you know how 'tis. Do you play disco then? No?

FREDDIE

I fucking hate disco.

RINK

Then if you don't mind, I'm just going to put on some disco records, keep 'em happy, rightio?

The BAND stand there, stunned, as cheap DISCO comes over the TANNOY. The SKATERS go round and round.

INT. FREDDIE'S FIRST FLAT/ LONDON - DAY

FREDDIE, composing on the PIANO, CATS lying on the PIANO -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
 Roger and I continued to write songs,
 but increasingly Fred joined in...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

BRIAN finishes lighting a CANDELABRA, touching a match to the last THREE wicks...

OLDER BRIAN
 Those first three albums? We had
 small hits. "*My Fairy King*".
 Freddie's. It starts--it starts
 (blows out the match)
 ...in descending lines...

As he mimes (AIR-GUITAR) playing the first notes, we hear these notes as SOUNDTRACK...

OLDER BRIAN
 But then? I took the reels on
 the tape deck, turned them over,
 played the tape backwards...

He mimes again, and we hear the same notes in reverse, as a RISING SCALE now...

OLDER BRIAN
 You see? "Backwards guitars"...so
rising now...in three-part harmony...
 ...eight bars...then the drums!
 (the drums kick in)
 Little Richard suddenly! Jerry Lee!
 Vocal harmonies...
 (the vocals kick in)
 ...Soaring, impossibly high!
 (the vocals go even higher)
 Bending harmonies--another
 trademark--and then -

He mimes the little LEAD GUITAR FILL that bridges the next section - as we hear the SONG switch -

OLDER BRIAN
 - a nursery rhyme! What next?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE'S VOCAL (O.S.)
 "In the land where horses
 born with eagle wings
 And honey bees have lost
 their stings
 There's singing forever..."

OLDER BRIAN
(talking the lines)
 "In the land where horses
 born with eagle wings
 And honey bees have lost
 their stings
 There's singing forever..."

OLDER BRIAN
 We were reaching for something, and we
 didn't even know what it was.

The song abruptly stops being heard as BRIAN disappears his
 air-guitar...

BLOGGER
(consulting notes)
 It got you your first record deal.

OLDER BRIAN
 Could only afford to record at night.

MONTAGE OF:

A) The COVERS of the FIRST THREE ALBUMS -

BLOGGER (V.O.)
 Small label. Released your first
 three albums...

B) RAPID shots of NEW YORK (1973) - and an old TOUR BUS
 crossing bridges...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
 And we toured America, as a
 support act for Mott The Hoople-

We hear: "Seven Seas Of Rye".

C) SAN-FRANCISCO -

We hear: "White Queen " - a song off their second album.

D) the HOLLYWOOD SIGN -

We hear: "Now I'm Here" - a song off their third album.

EXT. MOTEL/ USA - DAY

ROGER, BRIAN and JOHN lean up against a waiting TOUR BUS...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN
Freddie! Fuck's sake!

ROGER goes to get FREDDIE -

INT. FREDDIE'S MOTEL ROOM/ USA - DAY

ROGER appears in the open door of the MOTEL ROOM, where
FREDDIE is still on the PHONE -

FREDDIE
(into phone)
Listen to me, I love you, yes! I
miss you sooooo much--yes I do...

INT. FREDDIE'S FIRST FLAT/ LONDON = DAY

But the PHONE is only being held up to the EAR of one of
FREDDIE's CAT's!!! - by a smiling MARY -

FREDDIE'S VOICE
(over the phone)
...Delilah? Can you hear me,
sweetheart?

INT. HIGHWAY/ USA - DAY

The QUEEN TOUR-BUS roars across the heartland -

INT. TOUR BUS/ USA - DAY

Inside, the BAND all play "SCRABBLE". BRIAN, pleased, sets
down his TILES.

FREDDIE
Could they have found a shittier bus?
Led Zeppelin insist on a plane.

ROGER
They're divas.

FREDDIE
Darling, you have to behave like a
star to be treated like one!

BRIAN
M.U.Z.J.I.K.--Musjik.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER
What the hell's that?

JOHN
MUSIC when you're pissed.

BRIAN
A Muzjik is a Russian Peasant. And
with the triple-letter score on the
Z, you English peasants, that's
worth...34, 42...

FREDDIE
Is this the most intellectual rock-
band the world has ever seen?

JOHN
Certainly the best spellers.

BRIAN
...43, 48 points.

OLDER BRIAN
And then Freddie wrote a song...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN
...a piece about a prostitute,
a hymn to hookers...

REACTION BLOGGER: Confused, as we hear...the FINGER-
SNAPPING INTRO to "Killer Queen"...

INT. TOP OF THE POPS - DAY

The band performs (mimes) "Killer Queen" on the BBC's **Top
Of The Pops**.

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
...our breakthrough song. Got us on
UK TV. "Top Of The Pops". The biggest
most popular music show there was.

What a transformation in the band! We see the young Queen
in full glam-rock glory - outlandish costumes, lights, make-
up! And Freddie, in full flamboyant flow.

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
We were changing--but Freddie?
Fred's was a metamorphosis!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
To the project of being "Freddie
Mercury"
he applied all his energy...

MONTAGE OF:

A) Arriving at TOKYO AIRPORT (1974) to adoring fans -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
We were growing our audience...
country by country...

B) Playing BUDOKAN, TOKYO, JAPAN (1975) - FREDDIE in full,
strutting, theatrical mode...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
...Asia.

C) Playing BEACON THEATRE, NEW YORK (1976) - FREDDIE in
full, strutting, theatrical mode...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
...America...

INT. FISH AND CHIP SHOP/ LONDON - DAY

The FOUR BAND-MATES count small change, but are still a few
pence short of a meal -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
But for all our hard work, we were
deep in debt, owed people for
equipment, broke.

- until JOHN finds a £5 note, and offers it! The other band-
mates kiss JOHN in thanks...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Money--may not buy happiness,
but it can damn well give it.

INT. JOHN REID'S OFFICE/ LONDON - DAY

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
The problem was--our old record deals
were rigged to make other people
money...so we switched management...

QUEEN sign their new deal and shake hands with the DAPPER,
almost dandyish, smiling, JOHN REID, among photos of his
other client, ELTON JOHN...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN REID
Let's change the world.

QUEEN also shake the hand of PAUL PRENTER, Reid's mustached assistant...

JOHN REID
Paul Prenter--he'll be assisting
me with day-to-day.

INT. RAY FOSTER'S OFFICE/ EMI RECORDS - DAY

CLOSE: on JOE BASTIN, a handsome record executive of
FREDDIE's age.

RAY FOSTER (O.S.)
So. A new album?

ANGLE ON: FREDDIE, taking a clear interest in JOE BASTIN -

JOHN REID (O.S.)
Their biggest and best yet -

RAY FOSTER (O.S.)
And most expensive I presume.

FREDDIE finally concentrates on what EMI BOSS, RAY FOSTER,
has to say...

AT FOSTER's side stand JOE BASTIN and his FINANCIAL
OFFICER. They face -

- JOHN REID, PAUL PRENTER and QUEEN.

RAY FOSTER
Well I need not tell you--that it's
make or break time. I think you have
to agree we have been patient with
you, hoping for a breakthrough that
I'm afraid just hasn't come.

JOHN REID
Yet.

FREDDIE
I want you to hear something.
It's the new concept.

FREDDIE goes to the record player and slips on an ALBUM.
Meanwhile BRIAN and ROGER and JOHN exchange nervous looks.
RAY FOSTER looks to his advisors, who shrug. The MUSIC
comes on - They all listen. It's OPERA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY FOSTER

It's--opera.

FINANCIAL OFFICER

It's opera.

JOHN REID

Opera.

ROGER

Seems to be an echo in here.

FREDDIE

Wait!

FREDDIE, as if conducting the orchestra, thrills to a particular passage (a coloratura) in the music - singing along with it -

FREDDIE

You see?!

REACTIONS ROGER, BRIAN, JOHN - nervous about how this is going down.

RAY FOSTER looks simply confused, as FREDDIE turns off the music.

FREDDIE

(quietly)

That's our concept--mix genres, no boundaries, dare to go anywhere. I can't think of anyone whose ever done that before.

RAY FOSTER

Precisely what worries me.

FREDDIE

I don't want us to repeat ourselves. The same formula, over and over--How boring! We want to capture a hurricane! Paint pictures on an enormous scale, heavy rock foundation, ethereal vocals, different voices, rhythms, keys. Deafen 'em, blind 'em, and leave 'em wanting more. We want to make the greatest fucking album ever made.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RAY FOSTER

Really? Trouble is, Freddie, that's exactly what every band who comes in here says - minus the "fucking".

(beat)

Because it's our feeling, here at EMI, that your biggest success was "Killer Queen", and it's that we'd like to see you get back to.

FREDDIE

Go backwards? It's not in our nature. You want us to go back?

RAY FOSTER

Not necessarily back, no. You stay here, we want you right here--just--bring sound...forward.

The BAND stare at FOSTER - not buying it.

FINANCIAL OFFICER 1

We really need a firm undertaking to that effect. John? If we are to take the risk one more time.

JOHN REID looks at the band, and then nods -

JOHN REID

I understand what you're saying.

FREDDIE glares at JOHN REID for this.

FEATHERSTONE

So--we are agreed? An album--in the vein of "Killer Queen"? Radio-friendly? Top of The Pops?...Good?

Silence from the BAND, until -

JOHN REID

Absolutely.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

JOHN REID and PAUL PRENTER stand and toast their deal, but QUEEN, very GLUM, refuse to stand, or join the toast.

JOHN REID

To your fourth album! Come on guys!
You got your fourth album!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL PRENTER

Fourth album!

JOHN REID

We just need 12 great new "Killer Queens." Get writing. All of you.

ROGER, BRIAN, FREDDIE and JOHN just stare at him.

FREDDIE

Boredom--is a disease--the biggest disease in the world, darling--and we've just agreed to spread it! Cheers! To Boredom!

FREDDIE raises his glass - and turns to the EMI EXECUTIVES across the room -

JOHN REID

Freddie--I'm giving Paul to you. Personal assistant. Take some pressure off. And keep you out of trouble. A good influence.

FREDDIE

Oh I have a good influence. I have Mary.

JOHN REID

You will still have Mary. Now you have Paul as well. It's a gift.

JOHN, ROGER and BRIAN all observe this -

FREDDIE

Oh well.

FREDDIE and PAUL shake hands.

ANGLE ON: BRIAN watching - suspicious -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

In hindsight, if there was a moment I should have intervened...

FREDDIE and PAUL smile at each other.

FREDDIE

I suppose the more the merrier.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
...I was worried but I didn't have
the audacity to tell him what to do.
I said--nothing.

CUT TO:

Later - REID and QUEEN confer -

JOHN REID
Royalties, profits. How do you want
to cut up the pie? How have you
traditionally done that?

ROGER
What pie?

JOHN has the best business head -

JOHN
The songwriter--whoever brings a
song in - even if we all contribute -
- gets the song-writing credit for
that song. And if the song gets on
the album, then that person gets
the publishing royalties. The rest of
the band gets -

ROGER
- what's left over.

JOHN
Brian, now Freddie, are writing
most of the songs, so...

JOHN REID
And you don't want to pool the
money, divide it evenly?

A KEY moment for the band - they look at each other for the
longest time...

BRIAN
I think--we're good with the
current arrangement.

FREDDIE
It's working.

REID looks at ROGER and JOHN, who swallow their nascent
dissatisfaction with this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHN REID

Yes? We're all good? Speak now...?
Then I'll draw something up.

CUT TO:

FREDDIE (sitting with JOHN REID)...

JOHN REID

You're happy? Being in a band?

FREDDIE

Sure.

JOHN REID

Ever think of going solo?

FREDDIE

No.

FREDDIE glances over at JOE BASTIN, who smiles at FREDDIE while raising his GLASS. FREDDIE, nervously, smiles back, raises his glass, ever careful not to bare his TEETH.

JOHN REID notices this exchange between the two men - and it appears to trouble him...

JOHN REID

I hope you don't mind but I need
you to know something.

(beat)

I'm gay.

FREDDIE just stares at John, and says nothing.

FREDDIE

Really?

FREDDIE looks at his friends, anxiously: Do they know about him also?

FREDDIE

Have you told the others?

JOHN REID

I think they know.

(pointedly)

People generally do.

REACTION FREDDIE: Concern - has JOHN REID detected his true nature?

INT. FREDDIE'S FIRST FLAT/ LONDON - NIGHT

Fred gives MARY a PRESENT.

MARY

What is it?

FREDDIE

Go on, open it up!

MARY opens the box and inside is another box. She opens this second box only to discover, inside, a third...and so on...

MARY

Oh no.

FREDDIE

Getting smaller and smaller, I'm afraid. Shrinking and shrinking, sorry sweetie.

MARY

What is it?

FREDDIE

Well it can't be very big!

(watching her)

Be more fun if the boxes got bigger and bigger, wouldn't it and you end up with a car or something.

Finally MARY takes out a RING-BOX, and opens it. Inside is a RING. She stares at him - stunned.

FREDDIE

Well?

MARY

Which hand?

FREDDIE

Left hand, fourth finger.

Her heart stops.

FREDDIE

Your turn to say something.

MARY

(moved)

Yes. Of course.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They kiss.

FREDDIE

That's alright then. Isn't it?

She nods, moved, looking at her RING. FREDDIE watches her, warmly - but conflicted.

EXT. ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

CHICKENS and COWS cross the FARMYARD. A working DAIRY FARM.

ANGLE ON: QUEEN, standing with their gear, at the gates, in the mud, uncertain if this was a good idea.

ROGER

Nice recording studio.

JOHN

Evidently the cheapest EMI could find.

BRIAN

The idea was to get away from all distractions.

FREDDIE

You forgot cow shit and roosters at dawn.

The FARMER comes out to greet them.

FARMER

"Queen" I presume?! Welcome! Shall we get you settled in then?

The BAND cross the YARD. FREDDIE, playfully, chases a CHICKEN that SQUARKS and FLAPS away.

FARMER

Only two of the rooms have windows!

This makes BRIAN and JOHN dash indoors to grab them - leaving FREDDIE and ROGER the last to enter the FARMHOUSE.

ROGER

Engaged? Congratulations'n all that. Ra Ra, very cool.

FREDDIE

Surreal you mean. You and Dominique?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

(cautionary)

Ah ah ah ah! Every man, in their own
time, in their own way.

WIDE SHOT of the YARD.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

THE YARD - LATER. ROGER now CHATS-UP a FARM-GIRL (who holds an URN of MILK) as the sound of BRIAN's GUITAR (playing ROCK CHORDS - not yet a memorable riff) emanates from the open windows.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

BLOGGER

Was there creative conflict? During those sessions?

OLDER BRIAN

Conflict? No, I don't think so. No.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO /ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

FREDDIE, ROGER, BRIAN and JOHN are shouting at the same time - ROGER's VOICE breaks through.

ROGER

I put my heart and soul into this song and you don't like it because you want your songs on the album and your royalties as writers-- that's why you don't like it!!!

FREDDIE

For God's sake. It's not that, Roger dear -

ROGER

OH REALLY?! THEN WHAT IS IT?!

Only BRIAN is brave enough to say it -

BRIAN

(picking up the lyric sheet)

"I'm In Love With My Car"? It's not strong enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

Not strong enough?

BRIAN

No. John? Fred? Is it strong enough?
If I'm on my own here...

JOHN and FRED prefer not to say...

ROGER

How fucking dare you! Oh! How does
your song go? "You call me
sweet...like I'm some kind of cheese"
Fucken Yeats! But did you hear me
(criticizing) -

BRIAN

(No, but you -) No, but you made it
very clear! Playing your drums out
of time!

ROGER

I never play out of time!
I can't play out of time!

BRIAN

Way out of time, smashing your high-
hat -

ROGER

Sometimes I could fucking murder you
May!

FREDDIE

Let's be honest--we could all
fucking murder each other! (So let's
just -)

BRIAN

You know why you're angry? Because
you know your song isn't strong
enough!

JOHN knows BRIAN has gone too far. FREDDIE too, winces,
anticipating what is to come...

ROGER looks at BRIAN - then GOES to a SHELF holding
CASSETTE TAPES. He pulls it over - **CRASH!**

ROGER

Is that strong enough?!

ROGER then PUSHES over his DRUM-SET - CRASH!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROGER
That strong enough?!

ROGER then picks up the COFFEE MACHINE...the BAND react as one:

BRIAN/JOHN/FREDDIE/ROY
NOT THE COFFEE MACHINE!

ROGER stares at them, the COFFEE MACHINE held aloft.

FREDDIE
Fuck this.

FREDDIE walks out...

INT. TACK-ROOM/ ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

FREDDIE wanders in to the RIDING-GEAR STORAGE ROOM and sees, to his surprise, behind HAY BALES, an OLD PIANO. He moves the top BALE aside and uses the remaining one as a PIANO STOOL. He tests the keys - a little out of tune in the uppermost keys...

FREDDIE
Oh dear.

IN FRUSTRATION, he bangs out a few dumb cords and then stops - thinks a moment - *what shall he play?* He sighs, alone in this little shed, letting all the TENSION out of himself, trying to rid himself off all the shit that is weighing him down...

FREDDIE
(to himself)
Come on Freddie...

He flexes his FINGERS, looks at the keys and then sets his FINGERS on the keys...trying to recall an old half-written piece...the opening "MAMA" part from BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY...

FREDDIE
How does it go?
(plays a few notes)
...it goes it goes it goes...

He remembers, and plays the opening bars beautifully on the BROKEN PIANO. Pausing again - he recalls the lyrics...then plays again, but singing now, clear, high, clean, emotional...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

"Mama...I just killed a man - "

He pauses, reflecting, with strong emotion, on the meaning of this line...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

(singing)

- "Put a gun against his head,
pulled my trigger now he's dead."

(beat)

Just like that. He'd started it years
before. You see-

(leaning forward)

- he wasn't ready to finish it then.
He hadn't been ready to own up to
what the song needed to say.

BLOGGER

And did it say? What did the song say?

OLDER BRIAN

(smirks)

Listen to it!

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

FREDDIE plays the song for the BAND on a WHITE GRAND
PIANO...

FREDDIE

(singing)

"Mama, life has just begun and now
I've gone and thrown it all away.

JOHN comes in softly with his BASS part...

FREDDIE

"Mama, ooooooh, Didn't mean to make
you cry,
If I'm not back again this time
tomorrow,
Carry on, carry on, as if nothing
really matters.

ROGER now comes in, softly, beautifully, on the drums...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

"Too late, my time has come.
Sent shivers down my spine,
Body's aching all the time...
Goodbye, everybody, I've got to go -

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

"Gotta leave you all behind and face
the truth!"

What truth? It's obvious...

INT. RECORDING STUDIO /ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

FREDDIE

"Mama, oooooooh, I don't wanna die,
I sometimes wish I'd never been
born at all.

FREDDIE plays a few more notes and then stops -

BRIAN

What happens then?

FREDDIE stops, turns, looks at BRIAN.

FREDDIE

I think that's where the Opera bit
comes in.

BRIAN looks at ROGER and JOHN.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

The Opera bit! Yes, the Opera Bit!

BRIAN goes to the PIANO, throws open the lid and starts to
play the chords of the OPERA BIT...

OLDER BRIAN

No rock song had so thoroughly changed
its very nature midway through, as if--
as if the passion of the sentiment
couldn't be contained by the existing
form and everything had to be
exploded. It shouldn't have worked,
and yet--it was sublime.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO /ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

With a CLUNK the 24-TRACK RECORDING TAPING MACHINE starts to RECORD. At the MIXING DESK -

ENGINEER (R.T.BAKER)
Two. Mark Two--version of "Fred's--
Thing."

CUT TO:

FREDDIE recording the PIANO of the OPERA BIT. The lid of the piano is covered his little scraps of paper. FREDDIE stops when he makes a mistake.

FREDDIE
Sorry!

ROGER
(over Tannoy)
Bit too fast, Fred. It's okay,
it's just a wee bit too fast.

BRIAN
(over Tannoy)
"Let the audience in." Right?

FREDDIE NODS, goes again, slower...

EXT. ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

ELECTRICAL CABLES now cross the farm toward the TACK-ROOM...

INT. TACK-ROOM/ ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

ROGER, wearing cans, plays the DRUM TRACK - which is all we can hear - amid the TACK and HAY-BALES. He's is being watched by the now ADORING FARM-GIRL.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO /ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

JOHN, wearing cans, plays the BASS track of the OPERA BIT - which is all we can hear.

CUT TO:

BRIAN, wearing cans, plays the searing LEAD-BREAK - which is all we can hear. He finishes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN
(*nonchalant*)
Something like that? Fred?

CUT TO:

The BAND listen to the PLAYBACK of the MIXED
INSTRUMENTATION of the OPERA BIT (BASS, DRUMS, PIANO,
TIMPANY) -

INT. KITCHEN/ ROCKFIELD FARM - NIGHT

The BAND is served food by the FARMER's WIFE. They all eat
silently, until -

JOHN
So, tomorrow--we start on the vocals?

FREDDIE
Don't worry my dears, it's all in
here.
(*taps his temple*)

ROGER
It's not exactly "Killer Queen". EMI's
gonna have a fucking heart-attack--
half the album's gonna be one song.

FREDDIE
Serves 'em right--for telling
artistes to repeat themselves!

EXT. ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

Morning. A ROOSTER CROWS. SILENCE, and then -

ROGER (O.S.)
(extremely high, like
a rooster)
GALILEO! GALILEO! GALILEO!

FREDDIE
Can you go a bit higher?

ROGER
Any higher and only dogs'll
fucking hear it!

INT. RECORDING STUDIO /ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

ROGER recording the HIGHEST part of the BACKING VOCAL on the OPERA BIT.

ROGER
 "GALILEO! GALILEO! GALILEO!"
(pulling off cans)
 Jesus Christ, how many more Galileos?

ENGINEER
 Freddie wants to do a few more overdubs. Gotta tell ya, the tape is wearing out, can't take much more.

The ENGINEER holds up the TAPE - almost TRANSPARENT!

FREDDIE
 But it's sounding colossal. A few more. Let's do it!

CUT TO:

BRIAN is recording his GALILEO's, but singing a BASS VERSION -

BRIAN
 "GALILEO! GALILEO! GALILEO! GALILEO!
 GALILEO! GALILEO!"
(pulling off cans,
exhausted)
 Happy?
(beat)
 Or not?

REACTION FREDDIE: A big SMILE, he knows he has GOLD on tape.

INT. RAY FOSTER'S OFFICE/ EMI RECORDS - DAY

The FULL MIXED RECORDING of BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY is played on RAY FOSTER's TAPE MACHINE, for RAY FOSTER and his FINANCIAL OFFICER and JOE BASTIN. Present, also, are QUEEN, and JOHN REID, and PAUL PRENTER.

The SONG ends. The BAND waits for a VERDICT.

RAY FOSTER
(furious)
 I don't believe it is the album you promised us. Do you? Do you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN REID
It's a great album, Roy.

RAY FOSTER
I think--that what you have made here -

FINANCIAL OFFICER
- is the most expensive album ever
made. That's official.

RAY FOSTER
And as for Bohemian -

JOE BASTIN
Rhapsody -

RAY FOSTER
What is that? It goes on forever - six
minutes! Six minutes?

FREDDIE
I pity your wife if you think six
minutes is forever. It's a rhapsody.

FINANCIAL OFFICER
It's a travesty.

FREDDIE
We want to release it as our single.

RAY FOSTER
Well, that's not possible. Anything
over 3 minutes the radio stations
won't program it. And what on earth is
it about anyway? Scaramouche, Gallileo-

FINANCIAL OFFICER 1
- Figaro -

RAY FOSTER
And all that "ISSMILLER" business--
"ISHMILLER" -

FREDDIE
Bismillah.

JOE BASTIN
(*reading lyrics*)
"Bismillah, they will not let him go"

RAY FOSTER
What is that, anyway? "Bismillah"?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROGER, BRIAN and JOHN look at FREDDIE - SILENCE. FREDDIE shrugs -

FREDDIE
(*obfuscating*)
It's nonsense. Doesn't mean anything.

This does little to appease FOSTER - and then -

JOHN REID
Actually, I agree. We do need the
BBC and their format is 3 minutes
tops. I have to agree with Roy.

FREDDIE looks at JOHN REID, furious - gives his 'Et Tu Brute' look. ROGER and BRIAN and JOHN also stare at JOHN REID, outraged.

JOHN REID
I think the single is--"Love Of My
Life." It's slow, but it's strong.

JOHN REID looks back at FREDDIE and holds up his hands -

JOHN REID
My job is to turn things around for
you. "Love of my Life".

RAY FOSTER
Play that one again. Let's hear that
one again...

The TAPE MACHINE is wound backwards -

INT. RECORDING STUDIO /ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

FREDDIE sings "LOVE OF MY LIFE", recording vocals and piano solo, as the rest of the BAND - watch from the CONTROL ROOM, (Top Lit as in the album cover, minus Freddie.)

FREDDIE sings his SONG FOR MARY, beautifully, over...

INT. BRIDAL SHOP - DAY

...as MARY shops for a WEDDING DRESS.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO /ROCKFIELD FARM - DAY

FREDDIE plays and sings - with great emotion...

INT. RAY FOSTER'S OFFICE/ EMI RECORDS - DAY

FREDDIE (O.S.)

*(on the recording)**"Don't take it away from me, because
you don't know what it means to me."*

The TAPE MACHINE is stopped.

FREDDIE

No.

RAY FOSTER

No?

JOE BASTIN

*"You're My Best Friend"? "Oooh you
make me live, Oooh you make me live
now honey..." Stronger?*

FINANCIAL OFFICER

*Or what about, what about "I'm In
Love With My Car"? An idea.*

ROGER gives BRIAN an "I-told-you-so-look" but then offers -

ROGER

No. Bohemian Rhapsody.

JOHN

Bo-Rap.

FREDDIE

There's no question.

RAY FOSTER

*"Love Of My Life"...it's hardly
"Killer Queen", but it may have a
chance...*

BRIAN

No!

ROGER

No!

FREDDIE

*Tell me one other band that has done
an operatic single? You can't.*

FINANCIAL OFFICER

My point exactly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

"MacArthur Park" was seven minutes long.

RAY FOSTER

It's the BBC. There's no way around the BBC! So let me be clear!...EMI is not--repeat NOT--releasing a six minute quasi-operatic dirge comprised of nonsense words!

INT. PUB - DAY

FREDDIE and ROGER and BRIAN and JOHN in private conference.

FREDDIE

Do you believe our own manager taking their side?

ROGER

Then let's promote Bo-Rap ourselves. Go on TV, play it live.

JOHN

Without the multi-tracking it'll sound crap. Gotta sound huge, or not at all.

ROGER

Okay. Alright, then let's film it ourselves, mime it to the recorded track, and give the film to TV to play.

BRIAN and JOHN and FREDDIE stare at ROGER, who nods and raises his pint -

BRIAN

Can we do that?

JOHN

Be expensive to film something.

BRIAN

How much?

JOHN

Have to beg, borrow, steal, friends, relations, anyone.

FREDDIE

Fucking John Reid.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

FREDDIE angrily strides down a LONDON STREET carrying a SHOULDER BAG. He opens the SHOULDER BAG and takes out a BRICK...as he stops below a certain window...

INT. JOHN REID OFFICE/ LONDON - DAY

JOHN REID introduces PAUL PRENTER to JIM BEACH.

JOHN REID
Paul? Want you to meet Jim,
Jim Beach, Queen's lawyer.

PAUL PRENTER
John just did an incredible job
handling a very tricky situation with
EMI about which single to release.

JIM BEACH
I see.

JOHN REID
Queen have great, wild ideas but
they lack any sense of the industry.

Just then his WINDOW explodes. KOOOOOSSSHHHHH! FREDDIE's
BRICK lands on the FLOOR.

JOHN REID
WHAT THE FUCK?!!!!

REID creeps to the broken window and looks down at -

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

FREDDIE, hands on hips, looking up -

FREDDIE
(*shouting*)
Don't you EVER betray us again
John Reid!!!

FREDDIE marches off down the street.

MONTAGE

A) ROGER selling his CAR, to CASH-BUYER 1

B) FREDDIE selling his WHITE PIANO (with black keys) to
CASH-BUYER 2

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

C) JOHN selling his HI-FI-EQUIPMENT to CASH-BUYER 3

D) BRIAN selling his TELESCOPE, to CASH-BUYER 4

INT. ELSTREE STUDIOS - DAY

The BAND record their VIDEO for BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY...

The CAMERAMAN is ready to shoot. The BAND wait, arranged in their now famous diamond-shaped tableau, but in silhouette at this stage, waiting...

CAMERAMAN

Camera ready.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

Remember, there was no such things
as Music Videos at that time...

INT. ELSTREE STUDIOS - DAY

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

You appeared live on TV, or not at
all.

BRUCE GOWERS, the DIRECTOR, to his ASSISTANT DIRECTOR -

BRUCE GOWERS

OK--let me see the Multi-Facet
Lens, try to make it interesting,
hold it up...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

It became the first music video of
all time and paved the way to MTV.

The CAMERA passes over -

- items on a table, firstly the famous RECORD cover of
MARLENE DIETRICH (*lit from above, hands crossed over her
collar-bone - the CONCEPT/INSPIRATION for this VIDEO*) - and
then settles on CAMERA LENSES. The CAMERA ASSISTANT picks
up one SPECIAL F/X LENS, and holds it over his face,
checking it, and we see his face fragmented into FIVE
faces, just before he holds it over the CAMERA LENS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUCE GOWERS
 Thanks. Take it away.
*(the MF LENS is
 removed)*
 Okay, standing by--"Bohemian
 Rhapsody"...Cue smoke...

The DRY ICE machine kicks in, clouding the back-light
 behind the BAND.

BRUCE GOWERS
 Roll sound.

CAMERAMAN
 Rolling.

BRUCE GOWERS
 Mark it.

The CAMERA ASSISTANT holds up the CLAPPER BOARD - on it is
 marked:

VIDEO - BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY, QUEEN, DIRECTOR BRUCE GOWERS"

BRUCE GOWERS
 And--roll the track please.
 In 5,4,3,2,1 - Music.

We hear:

ROGER/BRIAN/JOHN/FREDDIE
(singing)
 "Is this the real life,

BRUCE GOWERS
 Standby cross-fade -

ROGER/BRIAN/JOHN/FREDDIE
 - is this just fantasy, caught in a
 landslide, no escape from reality.

BRUCE GOWERS
 Cross-fade, and up you come.

The TOP LIGHT comes up as the BACK-LIGHT fades out. The
 FOUR FACES are revealed...bodies in black...FOUR Marlene
 Dietrichs (*FRED's hands crossed over his collar-bone*)

ROGER/BRIAN/JOHN/FREDDIE
 Open your eyes look up to the skies...

**(The OPERA BIT continues - Reproduce a perfect facsimile of
 the FAMOUS VIDEO - same shots and camera-angles.)**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

The video was ground-breaking but no station was going to screen it unless the song was getting massive radio airplay...

INT. CAPITAL RADIO / STUDIO 1 - DAY

Outrageously 'camp' DJ, KENNY EVERETT, sings his signature tune, then resumes interviewing FREDDIE...

KENNY

In the studio today, singer Fffred-erick Mercury! Freddie--welcome, you've just recorded your fourth album. Can you rr-reveal the title?

FREDDIE

A Night At The Opera.

KENNY

(posh voice)

Oh how marvellous.

(cockney voice)

"We love the opera round 'ere, dun't we Ena?"

(woman's voice)

"Yes we do dear."

FREDDIE

One night we were all watching a Marx Brothers movie, it was called *A Night At The Opera*, and we all thought "Oh that's rather good", why don't we just call it that?

KENNY

Queen--you're a very shy bunch, really, aren't you?

FREDDIE

Me shy? Yes I am actually. People don't seem to realise. Just because I go tearing around on stage, they think I should go tearing round life--but I don't really.

CUT TO:

OFF-AIR. FREDDIE slips KENNY EVERETT a copy of a SINGLE (45 RPM) RECORD - Kenny reads the title?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNY

"Bohemian Rrrrhapsody"? Jolly title.

FREDDIE

The BBC won't play it, so EMI
won't release it.

KENNY

Rotten dogs. Why not?

FREDDIE

It's 6 minutes long.

KENNY looks out the STUDIO WINDOW to his PRODUCERS in next room, then scrunches up his face like a naughty school-boy, and HIDES the '45' under his JACKET.

KENNY

Oooooooooohhhh!

CUT TO:

KENNY EVERETT's PRODUCERS, furious now, BEAT on the WINDOW, before trying to rattle open the door which is locked.

KENNY

And that was "Bohemian Rhapsody"
for the--what was it?--the 13th time
to-day? Gee wizz, we just lurve that
little song here at Captial Radio. In
fact, we love it so much, how 'bout
we pppplay it again!

The PRODUCER, outside, shakes his head, issuing a FINAL WARNING, but KENNY raises his INDEX FINGER HIGH and then theatrically drops it on the PLAY BUTTON. "BO-RAP" starts again...

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE the BOOTH...

FREDDIE

Tried to stop him from playing it.
So many times! Tse!

The PRODUCERS turn and see FREDDIE standing right behind them, talking to PAUL PRENTER, both looking in at KENNY.

FREDDIE

(to PRENTER)
Just wouldn't listen. Must be a
nightmare to work with.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FREDDIE grins, covering buck-teeth with hand, then walks off down the long RADIO STATION HALLWAY with PRENTER (who share a low-key HI-FIVE), as the PRODUCERS watch...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

With this one album, we became one of the biggest bands in the world. And that one song? It was the most expensive song ever made, at the time--and it didn't win a Grammy - that went to...

CUT TO:

VIDEO EXCERPT: "CHICAGO" (1976) playing "IF YOU LEAVE ME NOW"...a low-wattage song and performance...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

...something more deserving. Hell, Hendrix, Bob Marley, The Who, and Led Zeppelin never won a Grammy either! But Bohemian Rhapsody did become the third biggest-selling song of all time--and is routinely voted the greatest song of all time...so... in your face *Chicago*!

EXT. HYDE PARK CONCERT (1976) - SUNSET

A VAST CROWD awaits QUEEN's arrival on-stage, CLAPPING, in HIGH EXCITEMENT -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

Overnight, we were loved. We wanted to repay the fans--with a free concert...We played Hyde Park to 150,000 people.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

BLOGGER

What was that like? To walk out on stage in front of so many people?

OLDER BRIAN

What was it like? It was...

I/E. HYDE PARK STAGE - SUNSET

The BAND make their way to the STAGE, and as they do so, the CLAMOR of the VAST AUDIENCE actually FADES to SILENCE, to total SILENCE...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
...like nothing else. Energy like you
couldn't believe--

SOUNDLESSLY the band makes their way onto the stage, the CAMERA trailing them, until the CAMERA reveals what the band see as they step on-stage -

- MASSED HUMANITY! But silent -

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN
A tidal wave of sound, but more than
that. Of approval. Approbation.
Validation. A rush of joy. Love!
Filling your soul and washing away
your worries, fears, pain, making you
into something you never dreamed you
could be.

EXT. STAGE/ HYDE PARK - DAY

REACTION FREDDIE, ROGER, JOHN, and lastly BRIAN - Awe-struck by a sound we can't hear - CUT-AWAYS of members of the wildly gesturing (but SOUNDTRACK-MUTED) CROWD...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
When we went over our allotted time?
The police shut us down but no-one
would go home. 150,000 people stayed.
We were suddenly the biggest band in
the world. Well, we sold tickets
faster than anyone. We toured like
people possessed...

EXT. SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM/ 1976 US TOUR - NIGHT

BAND plays "TIE YOUR MOTHER DOWN"

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
America. 32 dates coast to coast.

EXT. JAPAN TOUR/ 1976 - NIGHT

FREDDIE engages the crowd with his "DAY-O" ROUTINE....

FREDDIE
Dayyyy---OOOOO!

JAPANESE CROWD
Dayyyy---OOOOO!

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Japan. Australia. UK.

EXT. ARGENTINA TOUR/ BUENOS AIRES/ 1981 - DAY

Police motorcycles lead a TANK down the CROWD-LINED street of BUENOS AIRES, with the motorcycles crisscrossing to keep civilians and cars away from the tank.

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
Then came South America. No one
had ever played that part of the
globe-- but Freddie...

Appearing out the TOP of the TANK, FREDDIE MERCURY, waving a ARGENTINIAN FLAG...

FREDDIE
*(to his band-mates
below)*
Isn't this fun, darlings?!

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
...Freddie realised that after the
World Cup there might be some nice
little stadiums not being used by
anyone.

EXT. STAGE/ SAO PAULO/ 1981 - NIGHT

FREDDIE walks out on-stage to a FOOTBALL STADIUM AUDIENCE of 58,000 (nearly all of whom waving LIT LIGHTERS!) He waves to this TWINKLING GALAXY of PEOPLE...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
There were.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Onstage, FREDDIE has his eyes closed, as if PRAYING, as - 58,000 Brazilians sing "**LOVE OF MY LIFE**"! A tremendously moving - almost holy - experience for him.

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
58,000 people. Most couldn't
speak English but they could
sing Freddie's song.

When FREDDIE opens his eyes - he has TEARS in them.

CUT TO:

BRIAN, on-stage alone, starts an extended GUITAR SOLO, as FREDDIE jogs from the stage...

CUT TO:

...Backstage - FREDDIE quickly changes into a new costume, with the help of PAUL PRENTER, as BRIAN's SOLO continues. ROGER drains a cup of water...

FREDDIE
How long has Brian been going?

ROGER
Ahh--'bout five minutes so far.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN, eyes closed, remembering, smiling, plays the RED SPECIAL GUITAR (unplugged) - as we hear him reproduce the virtuosic lead-break (mutely) on the un-amplified strings...

EXT. STAGE/ SAO PAULO/ 1981 - DAY

...BRIAN, on-stage, alone, at full volume again, still cutting loose on the RED SPECIAL -

CUT TO:

FREDDIE, now slouched in a chair, in his new costume and waiting to go back on, but awaiting the end of BRIAN's SOLO. PAUL PRENTER checks his watch -

FREDDIE
(to PRENTER)
Fuck it, let's go shopping.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL PRENTER
This is ridiculous.

Just then the STAGE MANAGER enters -

STAGE-MANAGER
Freddie, Roger - it's ending.

FREDDIE and ROGER stalk back on-stage, to a roar from the CROWD.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN
And the parties?!
(pause)
Well--I was a married man...

INT. FANCY DRESS PARTY/ BALLROOM (NEW ORLEANS) - NIGHT

A BACCHANALIAN REVEL straight from the imagination of FELLINI - we see the FUN of being one of the biggest bands in the world...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
But there were temptations...

MONTAGE A (NEW ORLEANS PARTY): of -

A) BRIAN on the BALCONY, surveys, from above the hotel ballroom, made up to resemble labyrinthine jungle swamps, swarming with -

B) Naked dancers, cavorting in bamboo cages suspended from ballroom ceilings.

C) Magicians

D) Zulu tribesmen

E) Contortionists

F) Fire-eaters

G) FREDDIE, dressed in an outrageous costume, greets (loving) GUESTS and hands out GIFTS as they arrive. Helping him to hand out gifts is PAUL PRENTER...

PAUL PRENTER
From Freddie, just a little something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The GUESTS OOOHHH and AHHHH as they open their GIFTS - WRIST-WATCHES for the MEN, JEWELRY for the WOMEN.

H) JOHN and his WIFE are served champagne by naked waiters and waitresses who carry their tips in their bodily crevices.

I) Nude models of both sexes wrestle in huge baths of shimmering, uncooked liver.

J) QUEEN's "BICYCLE RACE" VIDEO (with nude girls on bikes) is projected on to a screen.

K) FREDDIE signs his AUTOGRAPH on the BUTT of a GLAM FEMALE FAN, who has hoisted up her BALL-GOWN and pulled low her KNICKERS. PAUL PRENTER roars with laughter.

L) HERMAPHRODITE DWARVES deliver COKE on TRAYS strapped to their heads...PAUL PRENTER directs one of the DWARVES in the direction of - FREDDIE.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

BLOGGER

I heard the "Dwarves with trays of coke on their heads" didn't actually happen? So it's true!

OLDER BRIAN

It's hard to know what to believe sometimes, even when you were there.

The BLOGGER is confused - so did it happen, or not?

MONTAGE B (NEW ORLEANS PARTY): of -

M) A dwarf lies on a table beneath cold cuts of meat - he jiggles when a slice is removed. This causes a FEMALE DINER to scream with SURPRISE.

N) ROGER entertains 3 ATTRACTIVE WOMEN.

O) BRIAN watches the entire scene from the BALCONY, while being interviewed by a JAPANESE BLOGGER...

BRIAN

It's so nice to have a quiet night for a change.

He then looks down upon the world the band created.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

P) FREDDIE, climbs onto a BALCONY and prepares to DIVE on to a CHANDELIER.

The CROWD shouts to FREDDIE, trying to stop him, but FREDDIE isn't listening. He dives toward a CHANDELIER. He makes it! But the CHANDELIER collapses under his weight, and the whole thing - and FREDDIE - drops onto a CAKE-TABLE, softening his fall. **CRASH!**

The CAMERA descends on the supine FREDDIE, over -

OLD BRIAN (V.O.)

Everything changed--so why wouldn't we? How could we not? It was a dream come true. The world seemed to be unanimously saying to each of us - "Genius!" How could we resist such a verdict? We were kids!

FREDDIE, lying there, winces in pain - as JOHN DEACON comes to his rescue, helping him up...

FREDDIE

Couldn't resist--always wanted to swing on a chandelier.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLD BRIAN

But--the pressure! The expectation, night after night, that comes with such fame? That, we were not prepared for.

EXT. STAGE/ HYDE PARK CONCERT - NIGHT

The BAND at full tilt, playing the climactic CHORD/NOTE of a big song - FREDDIE dancing, SWEAT POURING OFF HIM, the BAND playing at double speed, sustaining the tension of the last chord, bathed in SWEAT also, faster, faster, faster - the vast audience climactic too...

(INTERCUT with -)

MONTAGE (GLOBAL AUDIENCES)

A) US AUDIENCE ecstatic (QUEEN in a different costume)

B) JAPANESE AUDIENCE ecstatic (QUEEN in a different costume)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

C) BRAZILIAN AUDIENCE ecstatic (QUEEN in a different costume)

D) LONDON (HYDE PARK) AUDIENCE ecstatic (QUEEN back in the original Hyde Park costume)

INT. DRESSING ROOM/ BACKSTAGE/ HYDE PARK CONCERT - NIGHT

Silence. FREDDIE and BRIAN and ROGER and JOHN collapse side-by side on TWO COUCHES after the concert. ALL are bathed in sweat, utterly drained of energy. JOHN REID nods at JIM BEACH, the band's lawyer, who -

- herds everyone else, including himself, out of the room - except for one - PAUL PRENTER.

JOHN REID

Very important gig for us.

ROGER

Almost as important as tomorrow night's, and the night after that -

JOHN

- and the night after week after month after that.

JOHN REID

Excuse me--where does it say it would be easy?

(beat)

Your four cars are waiting outside for you.

BRIAN

Why four cars?

JOHN REID

From now on, you each have separate cars and drivers.

FREDDIE

My voice is cracking up. I'm a baritone pretending to be a soprano. I need to rest my voice.

JOHN REID

What you need is to stop burning the candles at both ends.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

But the glow from both ends is so
divine.

JOHN REID

Get showered everyone. Get something
to eat. Back to the hotel. Sleep. See
you on plane at 6 am. Don't get high,
don't get drunk, you have a photo-
shoot at 9 in Berlin, interviews all
day, arena sound-check at 5, show at
8. Your next day off?

(looks at his watch)

November.

JOHN REID exits, as PAUL PRENTER clocks the tension.

ROGER

I'm beginning to hate him.

FREDDIE covers his face with his hands - he's really bone
tired, exhausted...then emerges, melancholic...

PAUL PRENTER

(to FREDDIE)

I'll run your bath.

PRENTER exits.

FREDDIE's POV of: his friends...

FREDDIE

If I ever get lost, come and find me,
would you?

ROGER

What are you on about?

FREDDIE

Really lost.

BRIAN

Course.

FREDDIE

(intensely)

Promise me.

BRIAN

Sure Fred. You got it.

ROGER

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

No problem.

FREDDIE pulls off his top and grabs a towel, going to take a shower...

FREDDIE

My throat, it's like a vulture's crotch.

ROGER and JOHN and BRIAN share a concerned look.

INT. LIMO - NIGHT

FREDDIE and JOHN REID ride in the backseat -

JOHN REID

Listen to me now. You've seen what I've done for Elton. 4% of all records purchased last year? In the world? Elton John. Who is his band? Do we care? I'm just saying, if you went-- solo--Freddie Mercury--I guarantee you could do even better. Guarantee it.

FREDDIE

You're seriously asking me--to break up the band?

JOHN REID

I'm telling you what awaits you if you go solo.

FREDDIE

You've seen what happens when we work together?

JOHN REID

I've seen what *you* do for *them*.

FREDDIE stares at JOHN REID, until -

FREDDIE

OK. I'll go solo.

JOHN REID

Yeah?

FREDDIE

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN REID

Yes! Alright! I am so relieved.

JOHN offers his hand and FREDDIE shakes it - emotional, knowing what is coming next...

JOHN REID

Coz I have been having such huge problems with that band...I don't know how you've put up with it.

FREDDIE

(to the driver)

Pull over. Pull over.

The LIMO stops. FREDDIE leans over and opens REID's door -

FREDDIE

Get out. Out. Get out, it's over.
You're fired John. You're gone.

JOHN REID

What are you talking about "fired"?

FREDDIE

Get out of the car. Get out of the car! GET OUT!

JOHN REID

Freddie!

FREDDIE pushes JOHN REID out and then uses his FEET -

FREDDIE

OUT! OUT!

EXT. LIMO - NIGHT

REID is kicked out of the LIMO by FREDDIE, who then slams the door, before the LIMO pulls away.

JOHN REID

FREDDIE!

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

FREDDIE and MARY and BRIAN and ROGER and JOHN and PAUL PRENTER and JOE BASTIN and JIM BEACH are having DINNER in a fine-dining restaurant. WAITERS hover around their star guest, as FREDDIE speaks -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

We'll manage ourselves from now on.
Mr Beach here, you'll take care of
the rest, won't you dear?

JIM BEACH

Me?

FREDDIE

"Miami" New name for you. You ever
looked after a band before, Miami?
Points deducted for hesitation.

JIM BEACH

No.

FREDDIE

All in favour of Miami here looking
after us from now on?

JOHN and ROGER and BRIAN all nod.

FREDDIE

This is fun. Who else can we hire or
fire?

FREDDIE looks at JOE BASTIN -

JOE BASTIN

What?

FREDDIE

Bohemian Rhapsody was "too long", it
would "never work as a single".

JOE BASTIN

My sincerest apologies.

FREDDIE

Funny--apologies take so long,
but criticism arrives just like that!

JOE BASTIN

But! I still think "Love Of My Life"
would have been the better choice!

Over laughter, FREDDIE picks up a bottle, as if to strike
JOE -

JOE BASTIN

Just kidding! Just kidding!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Under the table JOE pats FREDDIE's LEG as he grins at the others -

JOE BASTIN

We're all here for you, Freddie.

FREDDIE reacts to the tap on the knee and the look in JOE BASTIN's eyes like an ELECTRIC SHOCK. Did BASTIN just make a pass at him?

MARY observes this - and feels left out.

PAUL PRENTER

Tell us about your childhood?

FREDDIE

(shakes his head)

Uh uh uh uh. The future? *(pointing)*
It's that way! Fuck today, it's
tomorrow already.

JIM BEACH

Such an enigma.

FREDDIE

Oh I hope so. True stardom is the
absence of detail.
But the clues are all in my songs.
They're all...

FREDDIE eyes go back to JOE BASTIN, who is talking now with PAUL PRENTER...

FREDDIE

...in my...

As FREDDIE watches BASTIN - MARY notices. When FREDDIE, embarrassed, turns back to looks at her, he kisses her on the cheek and TAPS her on the leg in the exact same way BASTIN just did to him.

Noticing all this, is ROGER, who looks between FREDDIE, MARY and JOE BASTIN, even while chatting up a BRUNETTE BEAUTY.

INT. PARTY - NIGHT

FREDDIE and JOE BASTIN are talking. FREDDIE seems nervous, shy. JOE BASTIN then kisses FREDDIE on the CHEEK. JOE BASTIN then walks off, into the crowd, as - FREDDIE is joined by MARY and PAUL PRENTER, who carries drinks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL PRENTER

Here we go. And - Freddie?--just want to thank you.

But FREDDIE's mind is only on JOE BASTIN -

PAUL PRENTER

For keeping me on, you know?--I will live and die for you, man. Want you to know that. Freddie?

FREDDIE

Be back in a second. Paul, look after Mary, would you?

FREDDIE pushes through the crowd, going after BASTIN, and is gone.

MARY and PRENTER, who don't like each other, are stranded there, with their preposterous drinks.

REACTION, MARY: Anxious. Knows something is going on. She sips her drink and then looks at PAUL...He smiles weakly at her, INSINCERELY...

PAUL PRENTER

Pretty dress.

(beat)

Make it yourself?

MARY, insulted, stares at PAUL, her dislike confirmed.

INT. FREDDIE & MARY'S FLAT/ LONDON - DAY

MARY comes in with SHOPPING BAGS and a stack of BRIDAL CATALOGUES. FREDDIE is sleeping off his hang-over. MARY is still carrying anxiety, but trying to hide it.

MARY

Oh, not still in bed?! Come on. If you come in so late that's your fault. Get up!

She tugs at his COVERS.

MARY

Come on! I want your opinion on wedding dresses and venues--we have a choice of three. Freddie?! Freddie! We need to talk about the wedding!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

Whose wedding?

ANNOYED, she tugs off the COVERS completely - exposing him, TOTALLY NUDE. He makes no move, comfortable with nudity.

MARY

That's it! Up! Now!

MARY then opens a SHOPPING BAG and takes out a BRIDAL HAT with VEIL...

FREDDIE

Mary! You're fired. I need to sleep!
Anyway--I have to save my voice.
It's insured for a million dollars.

MARY

And it's still annoying. Now get up
and tell me what you think...
(puts on hat & veil)
...of this. Well?

FREDDIE looks at her, then lowers his head, guilty.

MARY

Say something.

FREDDIE gets up, wraps himself in a men's silk JAPANESE KIMONO.

MARY

You don't like it? Freddie?

He walks toward her - looks at her face through the VEIL and then slowly raises the VEIL. His SAD face alerts her to his PROBLEMS. She slowly takes off her HAT & VEIL...

MARY

What is it? What's going on?

He holds her hands tenderly, looks at the ENGAGEMENT RING on her finger, and then stares into her eyes...

FREDDIE

You know me better than anyone.
I want you at my side for the rest
of my life. You know that.

MARY

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FREDDIE

You know that. But -

The truth hits MARY in this moment -

MARY

(anticipating)

Say it. "But" what?

FREDDIE

Mary -

TEARS come to her eyes.

MARY

Say it. Say it. Go on. It's okay.
Freddie. It's okay. Go on.

FREDDIE

*(emotion breaking
through)*

I'm. Bi-sexual.

MARY

No. I love you--but you're
fucking gay.

EMOTION breaks over them both like an ocean -

FREDDIE

It's the Kimono?

ANGRY (at herself mainly) - but feeling CHEATED, REJECTED
again - her life once more a lonely mess!...

MARY

I'm such an idiot! So stupid!

FREDDIE

Mary--come on.

MARY

I deserve this, I deserve it!

FREDDIE

You don't deserve this!

MARY

Oh but I do! It's what I've always
settled for..."I love you, but -", "I
love you, but I've met someone else",
"I love you, but I need some space"...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARY (CONT'D)

"I love you...but I'm gay!"--that tops them all, that's the toughest, because it's not your fault, not at all...it's mine, all mine, and that's why I deserve to be alone.

FREDDIE

We're all fucking alone. Everyone's alone!

MARY

I wanted children with you.

(tears arriving)

I could see our children--I could see our children Freddie!

Your brown skin...little buck teeth...

The WRINKLE of a smile from her but this is instantly lost again under her LOSS and PAIN -

MARY

I totally understand why people kill themselves. It's too much. Oh I can't breath. I have to breath. Isn't that ironic? I have to breath even when I don't want to?

FREDDIE

Baby, darling--we have each other, in the most important way. We love each other. Without end. To the end. Okay? It's gonna be okay. We'll find a way.

MARY

Was going to be "Richard", if it was a boy. "Janey" if a girl.

FREDDIE

You want kids? We'll buy some. I think you can get 'em from Harrods--they sell everything. If you buy two they throw in a nanny.

He has TEARS coming from his eyes now too - She touches his face tenderly...lovingly...

MARY

Your life's going to be hard, my darling.

FREDDIE

I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARY

I'll move out.

MARY starts to take off her ENGAGEMENT RING -

FREDDIE

Stop. No. Don't take it off. I
don't want you to ever take it off.

MARY

What do you want from me, Freddie?

FREDDIE

Everything?
(beat)
Almost.

They embrace. It's clear - they are inextricably bound, for
better or worse.

INT. FREDDIE'S MANSION - DAY

FREDDIE is moving in to his ENORMOUS mansion. The rooms are
largely empty, except for CATS - more than we have seen
before. FREDDIE instructs the PIANO MOVERS where to put the
STEINWAY.

FREDDIE

Just there. Careful. That's good.

ROGER enters, looks around.

ROGER

Is it big enough?

FREDDIE

Just! Each cat has its own room--
it's perfect. Delilah's by the
kitchen, Goliath next door, upstairs
Romeo, Oscar, Tiffany, Miko...Lily's
room is huge, spoilt thing.

ROGER

(pacing)
Still not sure the echo is
quite pronounced enough.

FREDDIE

Mary found it for me. Isn't it
wonderful?! So I'm poor again. I don't
mind. Money is for spending. I'm
determined to be happy here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER nods - sees that unhappiness is a ghost that haunts his friend.

FREDDIE
Stay. For dinner.

ROGER
I can't. Kids. Wife. See you.

ROGER hugs FREDDIE and looks into FRED's eyes - a brotherly moment that says "You're gonna be fine." ROGER exits. FREDDIE, after a moment's sadness, turns his attention back to the placement of the PIANO...

FREDDIE
(to the PIANO MOVERS)
Not there...

INT. FREDDIE'S MANSION - NIGHT

FREDDIE pours one glass of MOET, then paces slowly between the empty rooms. Looking at his costly new things - most of them unwrapped - TIFFANY LAMPS, LOUIS XIV CHAIRS. He plays ARETHA FRANKLIN's "**Sweet Bitter Love**" on a record player. He listens intently, unbearably lonely, then picks up the TELEPHONE and goes to the WINDOW.

FREDDIE
(into phone)
Mary? Turn off your living room light, then turn it on again. Flash them on and off. Go on. I'll do the same.

FREDDIE's POV of a DISTANT APARTMENT's LIGHTS (MARY's) going on and off. FREDDIE SMILES as he turns off his own LIVING ROOM lights and turns them on again.

FREDDIE
Isn't it perfect we still live so close to each other?

INT. MARY'S NEW FLAT - NIGHT

MARY
(mournful, into phone)
I'm never going to get away, am I?

INT. FREDDIE'S MANSION - NIGHT

A CAT sits on the lid of the STEINWAY as FREDDIE composes - what will become "**Somebody To Love.**" He plays the first piano part...the INTRO... starting slowly, softly, developing it until he finds what he wants. He picks up his pen and notates the music...As he WRITES we hear (on the SOUNDTRACK) the music he is hearing in his head. The piano intro is repeated...

MONTAGE (The Search For Love)

A) RESTAURANT. FREDDIE and JOE BASTIN talk over DINNER...

FREDDIE (V.O.)

"Each morning I get up I die a little
Can barely stand on my feet
Take a look in the mirror and cry
Lord what you're doing to me

B) MARY'S FLAT. MARY frames a PHOTOGRAPH of herself and FREDDIE...alone, with FREDDIE's cats.

FREDDIE (V.O.)

"I have spent all my years in
believing you
But I just can't get no relief,
Lord!...
Somebody -

B) MANOR RECORDING STUDIO. ROGER, BRIAN and FREDDIE share a MIC and record the GOSPEL BACKING TRACK - a monumental gospel feel -

ROGER/BRIAN/FREDDIE

"SOMEBODY!!"

C) FREDDIE'S MANSION - FREDDIE at his PIANO, sings -

FREDDIE

"Somebody..."

D) MANOR RECORDING STUDIO -

ROGER/BRIAN/FREDDIE

"SOMEBODY!!..."CAN ANYBODY FIND ME..."

E) FREDDIE'S MANSION - FREDDIE at his PIANO, sings -

FREDDIE

"...Somebody to Love?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

F) ON A LAKE. FREDDIE and JOE BASTIN laugh as they try to SAIL a YACHT on a lake, and have no CLUE at first - but then they are soon underway, JOE at the TILLER, gliding along in a firm breeze. FREDDIE looks happy...

G) RESTAURANT. MARY now has a date with a BACHELOR, until she is called away by the waiter, who indicates there is a PHONE-CALL for her...

H) MARY picks up the PHONE... (INTERCUT with -)

I) ...FREDDIE, in tears on his couch with his CATS, talking on the phone to MARY, whilst watching his favorite DOUGLAS SIRK MOVIE - "**Imitation Of Life**" - specifically the climactic FUNERAL SCENE with LANA TURNER and the GOSPEL CHOIR.

J) The BACHELOR, alone, looks at his WATCH, wondering when MARY will return...

K) FREDDIE and MARY and JOE at a CLOTHING STORE CHECK-OUT all pile their clothes on the counter -

CHECKOUT GIRL
(looking at MARY and
JOE)
Paying for everyone?

FREDDIE takes out his CREDIT-CARD.

FREDDIE
Everyone in the store darling!
(to the SHOPPERS)
Attention! For the next five minutes
everything in the store is on me!

Stunned looks from the SHOPPERS...

L) Outside the CLOTHING STORE, all the HAPPY SHOPPERS, arms loaded with SHOPPING BAGS, applaud FREDDIE for his generosity as he and MARY and JOE emerge, and walk off down the street, waving them goodbye.

FREDDIE (V.O.)
"I work hard...Every day of my life...
I work till I ache in my bones!
At the end of the day I take home my
hard earned pay, all on my own. I get
down on my knees...and I...pray...
Till the tears run down from my eyes
Lord! Somebody

K) MANOR RECORDING STUDIO -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROGER/BRIAN/FREDDIE

"SOMEBODY!

FREDDIE

"Ooh somebody...

ROGER/BRIAN/FREDDIE

"PLEASE! ANYBODY FIND ME....!"

L) NEW YORK HOTEL. FREDDIE sits on the end of the BED, as JOE BASTIN ZIPS up his bag, making to go.

FREDDIE

Everybody goes...Who is it? Who are you seeing?

JOE BASTIN

I can live with a rock-star, but not one that's not ready to commit. Your work comes first. Right?

FREDDIE

(sadly)

Handsome Joe.

Kind Joe.

JOE looks at FREDDIE fondly, then exits the HOTEL ROOM. FREDDIE is tearful, but sniffs it away, straightens his spine. He stands...and goes into the BATHROOM...

M) ...FREDDIE soaks in the hotel bath, forlorn, writing LYRICS on the wall with a MAGIC MARKER:

"This thing called love, I just can't handle it, I ain't ready"

FREDDIE (V.O.)

"Somebody tooooooooooooooooooooo....
...luuuuuuuuuuuuuuuve."

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

"Grotesquery of the first order."
That's what the Music Press called our next album, *A Day At The Races*!
Grotesquery! That hurt Freddie...
He took criticism to heart. Every insult, every bad review sent him back to where he'd come from--to being that little immigrant boy.

(checking his watch)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, are we done? You said this would be quick.

BLOGGER

Couple more questions, almost there.
What was the criticism like?

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE/ NEW YORK - DAY

QUEEN on stage before a packed room of JOURNALISTS and critics.

FREDDIE, puffing on a cigarette, is in the mood for a fight!

ANGLE ON: BRIAN, concerned for FREDDIE -

FREDDIE

We know you all hate us, but it's what the public thinks that matters to us.

CRITIC 1

(female)

I don't hate you Freddie. I just wonder why you're so successful?

FREDDIE

And I wonder how big your cunt is--can you fit it over your head like a hat?

The BAND winces. So does JIM BEACH and PRENTER at the back of the room. The CRITICS can't believe their ears -

FREDDIE

Sorry, just don't like bullies.

CRITIC 3

Freddie--your private life -

FREDDIE

Next question?

CRITIC 2

Freddie--why don't you get your teeth fixed?

FREDDIE

I live in Britain--I don't want to stand out.

(laughter)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Besides, I need them--I lie through them.

(laughter)

CRITIC 3

Is it true there are tensions in the band.

FREDDIE

No. None. None at all. Never have been.

ROGER

Let's just say we are four very strong personalities.

FREDDIE

We're four cocks--fighting--roosters that is.

(looks at his annoyed bandmates)

The band don't like my answers--And frankly I don't much care for theirs.

ROGER and BRIAN and JOHN look at FREDDIE, annoyed, but what can you do?

CRITIC 4

"Bismillah". What does it mean?

FREDDIE

Nothing -

But FREDDIE then leans over to BRIAN and WHISPERS something into his ear. BRIAN reacts in a way that suggests that FREDDIE just told him what "Bismillah" means.

INT. BACKSTAGE/ US TOUR 3 - NIGHT

The BAND, just off the stage, sit for one of FREDDIE's post concert banquets.

JOHN

"We Are The Champions"? It sounds so conceited.

FREDDIE

It's not about us.

(indicating the table)

Sit. Everybody sit. Just because we're on tour doesn't mean we have to live like animals. Sit. I want

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
us all to start dining together
after every show.

JOHN and ROGER and BRIAN sit at the grandly set TABLE.

BRIAN
"We Are The Champions"? The critics
would -

FREDDIE
- Fuck the critics! It's a song for
the crowd -
(pointing)
- anyone who wants to taste victory,
who's never been allowed to.

ROGER
Then call it "You Are The Champions".

FREDDIE
Sinatra could sing "I'm A-number-one,
top of the list, king of the hill."

BRIAN
Then it is about us?

FREDDIE
(lifting lids)
Beluga caviar. Rare beef. Champagne.
Moet naturally. Eat!

ROGER
Like the champions we are.

FREDDIE
You haven't even heard the song yet.
Everybody shuttup'n eat!

They all slowly start to eat as PRENTER pours champagne.

BRIAN
So how's it go?

FREDDIE
Like all our best work it's just a
little disposable thing, like a
plastic razor...like a used tampon.

BRIAN
When we do the Rolling Stone
interview, maybe find another
metaphor.

EXT. CHICAGO - NIGHT

In concert, under a spot-light, FREDDIE sings his (public but encoded) declaration of who he is... In the presentation it should have a dramatic quality of a defendant in the witness stand, giving his testimony.

FREDDIE

(emotional)

"I've paid my dues,
Time after time.
I've done my sentence
But committed no crime.
And bad mistakes?
I've made a few.
I've had my share of sand kicked in my
face but I've come through.

ROGER/BRIAN/JOHN

"And I need just go on and on, and on,
and on.

FREDDIE/ROGER/BRIAN/JOHN

"We are the champions, my friends,
And we'll keep on fighting 'til the
end. We are the champions.
We are the champions. No time for
losers 'cause we are the champions of
the world.

(to the crowd)

Sing it! Let's hear you!

And then the CROWD take over, with FREDDIE conducting -

CAMERA picks out INDIVIDUALS - all possible OUTCASTS
uplifted by this song - a DIVERSE range of people from all
walks of life who for a moment are raised up.

CROWD

"WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS, MY FRIENDS,
AND WE'LL KEEP ON FIGHTING 'TIL THE
END. WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS...
WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS...
NO TIME FOR LOSERS 'CAUSE WE ARE THE
CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD!"

FREDDIE spins, grinning, and looks at BRIAN, who is struck
by the dialogue between band and audience that just
happened. BRIAN's expression says he has an idea.

FREDDIE

(grinning)

Told you so! It's their song!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
(turning back to the crowd)

"I've taken my bows
 And my curtain calls
 You brought me fame and fortune and
 everything that goes with it
 I thank you all!

The CROWD roars their love -

FREDDIE turns and faces BRIAN and delivers the next lines straight to him -

FREDDIE
 "But it's been no bed of roses,
 No pleasure cruise.
 I consider it a challenge before the
 whole human race
 And I ain't gonna lose!!!!

BRIAN smiles at his MAGNIFICENT FRIEND.

In the WINGS, angle on:

MARY lovingly watching FREDDIE perform. Her eyes are on FREDDIE (on-stage), but she is holding the HAND of DAVID, her new boyfriend.

DAVID notices how lovingly MARY looks at FREDDIE, and swallows his jealousy.

INT. BACKSTAGE/ US TOUR 3 - NIGHT

FREDDIE and BRIAN and ROGER and JOHN all excitedly discuss what just happened, as they undress.

(The DRESSING ROOM is now, unlike before, FULL of people we have never seen before, HANGERS-ON. JIM BEACH is there, and so is PAUL PRENTER.)

BRIAN
 That was amazing. They kept singing,
 even after we'd left the stage.

FREDDIE
 They want to join the band, darling!
 Every fan sub-consciously wants to
 join the band.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

Then let's let 'em join the band. They can sing, they can clap, they can stamp their feet. Let's write something that gets 'em even more involved.

FREDDIE

The critics will hate it. Right then--first one to write a cracking audience participation song gets -
(holds up a cookie)
- a piece of my Mr Kiplings Almond Slice. I'm now having them flown in from London to go with my cup of tea.

ROGER

(to FREDDIE)

Hey. Great song man.

FREDDIE

Why thankyou Roger.

JOHN

It's a hit.

FREDDIE

Of course it's a hit. But--muchos gracias amigos.

MARY enters with her MAN, DAVID.

MARY

Freddie?

FREDDIE turns - and looks at DAVID. FREDDIE tries to remember the guy's name.

MARY

David.

FREDDIE

David! David. Hello dear. Be very good to Mary, won't you. Sorry about this but we're all about to change--clothes.

(to MARY)

See you later.

FREDDIE kisses MARY, and holds her TIGHT, for a LONG TIME, to the point where it's embarrassing for MARY and concerning for DAVID.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FREDDIE

Right. Lovely to meet you John.

DAVID

David.

FREDDIE

David! David.

MARY scowls at FREDDIE, then leads DAVID away.

FREDDIE sighs, then looks at his BAND - his BROTHERS, just then towelling off.

FREDDIE

Gentlemen? I have an announcement.
Let's get this out of the way.
I'll say this once and then I don't
want to discuss it again.

(beat)

I'm bisexual.

Silence, then -

ROGER

You're also very mean with your
Almond Slices.

FREDDIE GRINS, then covers his teeth coyly with his hand.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO (BASING STREET) - DAY

ENGINEER (MIKE STONE)

Everyone! As many people as you can
get! Up on the drum risers! Tea
Ladies! Cleaners! Everyone!

ANGLE ON: THE CROWD in the SOUND STAGE, all clambering up
on the DRUM-RISERS.

ENGINEER

Okay. On Four. One, two, three,
four...

And all the BAND and the EXTRAS all start to do the famous
"BOOM-BOOM-CHA", as the TAPES RECORD IT.

EXT. UK CONCERT/ LONDON - NIGHT

The IMMENSE CROWD all STAMP and CLAP in time to "WE WILL ROCK YOU", until the BAND add to it, but they do not replace it - they integrate it.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

FREDDIE starts to RECORD the VOCAL, but he is ONE OCTAVE HIGHER than the version we all know - in high FALSETTO.

FREDDIE

"Buddy you're a boy make a big noise,
Playin' in the street gonna be a big
man some day -

BRIAN in the RECORDING BOOTH, hits the TANNOY button -

BRIAN

Freddie, Freddie, Jesus man! This
isn't Opera now--we want the audience
to sing along to this one and you're
the only guy in the world who can
sing that high.

FREDDIE

Drop it down? Y'think?

They start again. FREDDIE drops it all down ONE OCTAVE -

FREDDIE

"Buddy you're a boy make a big noise,
Playin' in the street gonna be a big
man some day -

FREDDIE looks at BRIAN and ROGER and JOHN who are all giving him now the THUMBS-UP, nodding.

INT. NEW YORK BARBERSHOP - DAY

HAIR falls onto the BARBERSHOP FLOOR. In the mirror we see the NEW FREDDIE, short-haired, clean-shaven, and now sporting a MUSTACHE! FREDDIE spins in the BARBERSHOP CHAIR and looks at - PAUL PRENTER, who nods his APPROVAL. FREDDIE GRINS, and then COVERS HIS TEETH with his hand coyly.

EXT. NY GAY LEATHER CLUB (MINESHAFT) - DAY

Outside the NOTORIOUS CLUB - FREDDIE and PAUL PRENTER look like GAY CLONE TWINS - mustache, short hair, leathers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL PRENTER

They all come here, all our famous ones: Rock Hudson, Robert Mapplethorpe, Rudolph Nureyev comes here, Fassbinder, Foucoul. It's absolutely without question the place in the universe for someone like you. Anything goes.

FREDDIE

You know, despite my stage persona, I'm still really a very shy boy.

PAUL PRENTER

Oh this place'll cure you of all that. Life-changing. Trust me. And!--and I can even get you your own key to the private VIP room downstairs. Almost no-one gets their own key!

They cross the ROAD and PAUL gets FREDDIE entry, straight away.

INT. NY GAY LEATHER CLUB (MINESHAFT) - DAY

A WILD PARTY. The DISCO ERA has ARRIVED. FREDDIE, in a corner, SNORTS a HUGE LINE OF COKE...

CAMERA goes into an E.C.U on his face as he whispers -

FREDDIE

...Bis--millah!

The DECADENCE in the room is pronounced. And then -

- FREDDIE is presented with a KEY. FREDDIE looks at the KEY, and takes it, and mock bows in thanks.

FREDDIE

My own key!

CUT TO:

SHOT OF: a BASEMENT CORRIDOR - the CAMERA tracks in on a DOOR at the far end...one with a LARGE KEY-HOLE...

EXT. NY GAY LEATHER CLUB (MINESHAFT) - SUNRISE

FREDDIE and PAUL and two other GAY CLONES emerge, HIGH and RAUCOUS. They head off down the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We HEAR: as SOUNDTRACK: "I WANT IT ALL".

EXT. MEAT PACKING DISTRICT - SUNRISE

BLOODY MEAT CARCASSES are being loaded into REFRIGERATED TRUCKS by burly MEAT-PACKERS.

MEAT-PACKER 1

Hey!

Six MEAT-PACKERS turn and see FREDDIE and his GANG walking toward them. The MEAT-PACKERS, some with HOOKS, move to cut off FREDDIE's path as FREDDIE's GANG stop before them.

MEAT-PACKER 2

What the fuck do we have here?

PAUL PRENTER

(afraid)

No problem. Freddie? Come on.

But FREDDIE, high as a kite, refuses to be dragged away by PAUL. A fight seems inevitable.

FREDDIE

I love it. It's like West Side story.

MEAT-PACKER 3

You guys sure picked the wrong street to walk down.

FREDDIE

Oh, I don't know about that. Lovely bunch of beefy boys like you...

PAUL PRENTER

Come on!

PRENTER pulls FREDDIE away and he and the CLONES beat it-FREDDIE, laughing, flying...

INT. HOTEL/ US TOUR 2 - SUNRISE

BRIAN, in his BOXER SHORTS and T-SHIRTS, EAR-PLUGS inserted, carrying a BUCKET OF ICE, unable to sleep because of the PARTY MUSIC leaking from other rooms, walks down the HALL, returning to his room. When he turns the T-junction corner, he looks left and right - to the left, down the hall, he sees ROGER sneaking TWO WOMEN into his room - and to the right, down the hall, he sees FREDDIE leading PAUL PRENTER and the TWO GAY CLONES into his room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN stands at the door of his room, looking for his door KEY, reflecting on what he has seen, when he see FREDDIE waving at him, leaning out of his room. BRIAN takes out his EAR-PLUGS -

FREDDIE

We're having a party. Come have a drink, brother.

BRIAN considers it - SHOULD HE JOIN HIS FRIEND? - but he finally declines, smiling as he shakes his head. BRIAN enters his hotel room instead.

INT. BRIAN'S HOTEL ROOM/ US TOUR 2 - CONTINUOUS

BRIAN enters and the room is empty. He stands there and listens to the sound of TWO PARTIES coming through the walls...Audible is the sound of Queen's "FAT BOTTOMED GIRLS"...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

Should I have gone into his room?
Accepted him and his new world?
We were worried--about the road he was
going down--we'd promised to look out
for him--but at the time we didn't
think there was anything we could do.

(beat)

Still, for all our problems, the hits
kept coming. John Deacon wrote us the
biggest hit we ever had in the United
States...

INT. STUDIO - DAY

The BAND record the VIDEO for..."**ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST**"...FREDDIE in FULL GAY CLONE LOOK for this video...camping it up, strutting around in a bright yellow tank top and shorts with a baseball cap that has bull horns coming out of it!

OLDER BRIAN

Let's just say the world in 1981 was
so square that no-one who watched
this video even guessed Freddie was
the least bit gay!

EXT. SMALL GAY BAR / LONDON - NIGHT

A TAXI pulls up and MARY gets out, WORRIED. She looks for FREDDIE who is hiding in the shadows across the road. She goes to him. He is sporting his CLONE LOOK.

MARY

What's the emergency?!

FREDDIE

I need someone to go in there (*gay club*) with me. I can't go in alone.

MARY

(*outraged*)

Freddie?! I left David in the middle of dinner!

FREDDIE

He's very short, isn't he. Five foot six, seven?

MARY

How dare you! HOW DARE YOU! You know what? Find someone else. Call your PA! I'm sure PAUL is lurking close by.

MARY walks off, looking for a new CAB. FREDDIE chases her and catches her.

FREDDIE

Mary! You're here now. Just give me five minutes. Please! Please.

(*beat*)

I'll pay you.

This infuriates her further.

MARY

What's happening to you?

FREDDIE

I can't stand being alone right now. How do I look? My hair is so horrible and still fucking greasy!

She regards him, with sympathy - and then softens.

FREDDIE

Ten minutes. Then you can go home to David in my Rolls Royce. I'm very happy for you. Really.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY
Five. Five minutes.

INT. SMALL GAY BAR / LONDON - NIGHT

FREDDIE and MARY sit at the BAR, on stools. The room is full of GAY MEN, MARY is the only woman. FREDDIE keeps his CAP on, hiding his identity, as he waits to be picked up.

MARY
(sarcastic)
Well, this feels natural.

FREDDIE
Must seem very strange to you, sorry
darling.

MARY
You do this a lot?

FREDDIE
(nervous)
Bars. Sometimes in the park, you know.

MARY
Have you heard from Joe?

FREDDIE
Love is Russian Roulette for me, with
all the chambers loaded. So here I am.
Sad, isn't it, to only trust
strangers.
(beat)
And you.
(holds her hand)
Do you love him?

MARY
He wants to have children.
(looking around)
And so you always just wait for
someone to approach you?

FREDDIE
Absolutely. I'm not a tramp, darling!
Can't have them getting the wrong
idea!

They laugh -

FREDDIE
I love you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY
That's the problem.

As FREDDIE turns and looks around the room for
CANDIDATES...a STOCKY IRISHMAN with a MUSTACHE (JIM HUTTON)
comes to the bar, stands beside MARY. Their eyes meet -

JIM HUTTON
You don't remember me? Probably the
leather. You come to my salon. Never
forget a hair-cut.

MARY
Oh hello.

JIM HUTTON
Jim.

MARY
Mary. And this is -
 (tapping FREDDIE's
 shoulder)
- this is--umm--ummm--

FREDDIE turns - FREDDIE and JIM look at each other -

JIM HUTTON
You can't remember?

MARY
He goes by many names.

JIM HUTTON
A man of mystery then?

FREDDIE
 (to JIM)
How big's your cock?

MARY- shocked - turns to FREDDIE -

MARY
And that's not giving them "the
wrong idea"?!

JIM HUTTON
I was just going to offer you a
drink and some conversation, I
don't give a fuck who you are--you
shouldn't be rude.

FREDDIE is startled to be spoken to like this -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY

I like him.

FREDDIE

I like him too.

MARY

Great. Then I'll leave you two to
get to know each other. I have a
spaghetti bolognese getting cold.

MARY kisses FREDDIE on the cheek -

MARY

Bye Jim.

MARY leaves the bar.

JIM HUTTON

So--Freddie--you wanna start again?

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

And then--at the height of our
popularity--we screwed up. We recorded
a video, dreamt up by Roger, for a new
song that John wrote, but which
everyone thought was Freddie's idea...

INT. SOUND-STAGE/ "BREAK FREE" VIDEO RECORDING - DAY

As the CREW prepare to record the VIDEO -

- FREDDIE sits in the MAKE-UP CHAIR, dressed in FULL DRAG
and WIG: false NAILS, LASHES, BREASTS, SWEATER, MINI-
SKIRT, LIP-STICK and MUSTACHE !!!

PAUL PRENTER lights a cigarette for FREDDIE, and holds it
to FREDDIE's lips so the SUPER-STAR doesn't have to muss up
his false nails, which are just then drying.

PAUL PRENTER

How are you?

FREDDIE

I'm working too hard. Sometimes I feel
I could just give it all up. Honestly.
Tour, album, video, tour, album
video...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL PRENTER

What you need to do? What you need to do--is go solo.

FREDDIE

Not you now.

PAUL PRENTER

I'm serious. It's so clear. You're the star. You're the leader of Queen.

FREDDIE

Not "leader", no. The most important person perhaps.

PAUL PRENTER

Don't want control over your life? Your schedule?

FREDDIE doesn't dismiss this...

PAUL PRENTER

When Jackson recorded "Thriller"? On his own? Not having to share it with his brothers? So much fucken money he didn't have to tour. Didn't have to tour. He toured when he wanted to tour. Only possible because it was a solo album. Freedom.

FREDDIE

(weakening)

Well...

PAUL PRENTER

I can find a band for you anywhere. CBS records has been calling Miami every day begging you to do a solo deal. Plus, alone you'd be bigger and better than ever, and you wouldn't have to deal with so many egos.

(whispering)

Freedom. To be Freddie Mercury.

FREDDIE looks tempted, but then, grabs the CIG, and looks at his "BROTHERS."

FREDDIE

Oh shut up.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

QUEEN, dressed IN DRAG, record **"I WANT TO BREAK FREE"**. All the guys in WIGS, FALSE BREASTS, DRESSES, the works...until...the image FREEZE-FRAMES. Over this stamp a BANNER that reads:

"BANNED!"

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

The video was banned. In the USA. And it was Freddie who got the blame. Never again would we tour there, or enjoy the same kind of success.

INT. CBS HALLWAY - DAY

FREDDIE and PAUL PRENTER and JIM BEACH walk toward an OFFICE DOOR...and as they do, the sound of MICHAEL JACKSON's "THRILLER" gets louder and louder.

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

We killed the golden goose--and Freddie took it hardest...and reacted the most destructively...

When a smiling SECRETARY opens the OFFICE door for them, they sweep in to meet...

INT. CBS CEO'S (WALTER YETNIKOFF) OFFICE - DAY

...WALTER YETNIKOFF, who rises from his chair to greet them.

"THRILLER" is blaring from his Hi-Fi until his FINGER stops the TAPE-DECK - CLUNK!

FREDDIE and JIM BEACH and PRENTER face YETNIKOFF (a small man with all of Manhattan behind him, who cuts hard SALAMI at his desk with a sharp knife that he routinely points at people.)

YETNIKOFF

Gentleman. Siddown. Siddown.

FREDDIE looks around before he sits - it's a SHRINE to MICHAEL JACKSON - FULL-SIZE CUT-OUTS of MJ, a POSTER-SIZED PHOTO of MJ and YETNIKOFF, MJ MEMORABILIA, DOLLS and other MERCHANDISING, etc - a huge INDUSTRY spawned by one artist!

FREDDIE

Perhaps we should kneel?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YETNIKOFF

Ha! Well, he's a reliable artist.
Gives his audience what they want,
time after time.

FREDDIE makes a little "SNORING" noise.

YETNIKOFF

That's how you build a giant brand.

FREDDIE does a little MOON-WALK and then an MJ SPIN, and
then sits, staring at YETNIKOFF.

YETNIKOFF

So--

(beat)

I'm good you're good, give it to me
straight.

JIM BEACH

A two-album deal, here at CBS.

YETNIKOFF

And you are?

JIM BEACH

Queen's lawyer.

PAUL PRENTER

Jim Beach. Freddie gets creative
control. He's the biggest act in the
world and you know it.

YETNIKOFF

Michael Jackson is the biggest
act in the world.

PAUL PRENTER

How would you like another Michael
Jackson?

YETNIKOFF

Don't try to shake me down.
I served in the US army and I've faced
down Russian tanks across Check-Point
Charlie--they blinked first.

YETNIKOFF offers them a piece of SALAMI on the end of his
knife... All shake their heads.

FREDDIE

I like my sausage warm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YETNIKOFF

And that means...precisely?

FREDDIE

What it says. Single-entendre, dear.

YETNIKOFF stares at FREDDIE - eats the SALAMI himself.

YETNIKOFF

So--what kinda albums?

FREDDIE

Disco.

YETNIKOFF

Disco? Mmkay.

FREDDIE

And opera. The second album.

YETNIKOFF

Like Bo Rhapsody? Opera. Like -

FREDDIE

No. No. Like...

FREDDIE turns on a PORTABLE TAPE DECK. We hear the sound of MONTSERAT CABALLE, the great diva, singing. FREDDIE turns it off.

FREDDIE

...pure opera. A collaboration. With that voice. Isn't she remarkable? Montserat Cabballe, the finest soprano in the world. And I.

(*STRIKING AN OPERATIC POSE*)

YETNIKOFF

Is he kidding?

PRENTER and JIM BEACH shake their heads.

YETNIKOFF

Opera? I'd rather have an album that's just the sound of two dogs fucking.

FREDDIE

Well, if you want to make it a three album deal...

YETNIKOFF is not amused. Points his knife at REID -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

YETNIKOFF

Two disco albums. And fast--disco's a bubble. Gonna pop any day, you kiddin' me? And no opera. Understood?

YETNIKOFF passes JIM BEACH a deal memo. JIM BEACH reads it...then looks at FREDDIE and PRENTER, who wait for PRENTER to speak...

INT. FREDDIE'S MANSION/ LONDON - DAY

FREDDIE is writing "I WAS BORN TO LOVE YOU" alone, on his PIANO...

FREDDIE

"I was born to love you with every single beat of my heart
Yes I was born to take care of you
Every single day of my life..."

PAUL PRENTER, enters -

PAUL PRENTER

Freddie! It's -

ROGER, BRIAN and JOHN then all burst in together, angry and hurt -

ROGER

When were you going to tell us?!
When the album comes out?!

BRIAN

Jim Beach said something. We thought he was joking. Is he joking? He said:
"You better talk to Freddie."

ROGER

A solo album?

FREDDIE

Actually, two. It's no big deal.

JOHN

Two?! So what, that's it?!

ROGER

How much? What did they pay you?
What did they pay you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE
Four million dollars.
(a proud smile)
Not bad--you have to admit. But I'm
worth it. I'll be bigger
than Jackson apparently.

The BAND stares at FREDDIE in shock -

JOHN
That's more than any Queen deal.

FREDDIE
We need a break anyway. Album, tour,
ab aeterno--it's killing us.

ROGER
No, no, you're killing us.

FREDDIE
Let's take some tea in the garden.
But first I want to play you
something new. Listen to this -

ROGER
Jesus Christ, Fred! You have to snap
out of this! We're talking about -

But FREDDIE has turned back to the piano and resumed
playing "I WAS BORN TO LOVE YOU" -

- ROGER, insulted, sweeps FREDDIE's SONG NOTATION PAPERS
onto the floor. FREDDIE glares at him.

FREDDIE
We can't stand each other right now,
admit it! And we're not touring thanks
to this fiasco in the US...

BRIAN
One video was banned. We could tour.

FREDDIE
MTV banned our video!!! The youth of
America! We helped give birth to MTV!
I'm never touring in the US again!
And! And I'm being blamed for it,
dear, not you, whose idea I believe it
was to dress up in drag!
(to BRIAN)
And not you!
(to JOHN)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Not even you, who wrote the goddamn song! No. "Crazy cross-dressing Freddie"! "Freddie The Fag" - coast to coast. "Freddie the Freak"!

ROGER

You loved the idea.

PAUL PRENTER

It's what Freddie wants. He has to move on now.

ROGER, BRIAN and JOHN glare at PAUL.

FREDDIE

Come on, you must all want a break, from the arguments--what songs get on the album, whose song should be the single, what's on the B-side, who wrote what, who gets to earn the most money -

BRIAN

We're a family.

FREDDIE

No we're not, dear. It's alright for you--Roger--John--you've all got kids, real family. What have I got down the road? I'm this or nothing!

ROGER

You were running a stall in Kensington Market before we gave you a chance!

FREDDIE

And without me you'd be a dentist playing blues on the weekend at the Crown and Anchor!

(to BRIAN)

And you'd be Dr Brian May, with a nice little PHD, winner of the faculty prize for the best hair on campus!

ROGER

You owe us loyalty! Allegiance! Even though you clearly don't feel any!

BRIAN

You really think we're nothing without you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FREDDIE

You're something--I made you great!

ROGER

Believe this guy?

BRIAN

Come on, you're better than this. You really are.

JOHN

If your album's a flop, our entire backlist gets dragged down with you, devalued. Your fate is our fate, whether you like it or not.

FREDDIE

Spoken like an accountant--sorry John, but Christ Wept!

(to them all)

You don't understand me anymore.

It's a shame.

*(to PAUL, fluttering
his fingers)*

Paul? Pick this up.

PAUL picks up the fallen PAPERS, as FREDDIE lights a cigarette.

FREDDIE

Oh don't look so glum. No-one died.

(puffing)

It's only rock and roll, for heavens sake.

ROGER

Queen is dead.

FREDDIE

Give her a kiss one day, she might wake up...

As FREDDIE smokes, looking at his BAND-MATES, egotistically brushing this off...

FREDDIE

...Who knows?

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

He ran away. Moved to Munich. We lost him.

INT. MUNICH OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT

FREDDIE watches, with PAUL PRENTER, a German-language production of "THE RING CYCLE" by WAGNER, a SCENE of TREACHERY and BETRAYAL.

The ORCHESTRA rises to a CLIMAX. The CONDUCTOR urges his players on...

ANGLE ON: FREDDIE, rapt, spell-bound -

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)
But now he had to deliver on two solo albums, two *disco* albums, that would repay the enormous advance the record company had paid, and he'd never recorded on his own before.

INT. FREDDIE'S MUNICH FLAT - DAY

FREDDIE tries to write songs - and to inspire him he knocks back vodkas.

CUT TO:

PAUL PRENTER on the phone to someone -

PRENTER
(into phone)
He can't talk now. He's working. He works day and night.

INT. MARY'S NEW FLAT - NIGHT

MARY puts down the phone - upset, as her BOYFRIEND, DAVE enters with FLOWERS. She tries to smile as he kisses her.

INT. FREDDIE'S MUNICH FLAT - DAY

FREDDIE, looking TIRED, rises from his COMPOSITIONS and goes to a silver case on the sideboard and scoops COCAINE onto the glass surface.

INT. MUNICH NIGHT-CLUB - NIGHT

FREDDIE knocks back VODKAS with PAUL PRENTER and several NEW FACES - shouting over the LOUD MUSIC...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

Listen to that! That's the sound I want! The sound of--youth, the sound of youth! It's that! Pleasure! Indulgence! Hedonism! Ecstasy! ECSTACY!

The MUSIC in the CLUB is DANCE/DISCO, heavy on synthesizers - far from the Queen sound.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO (MUNICH) - DAY

FREDDIE's new session band stands around waiting to be told what to play - Fred Mandel, Paul Vincent, Curt Cress, Stephan Wissnet...but FREDDIE is drunk.

FREDDIE

Well, let's just fucking try it again, yes? Because right now it's so bad I can't even recognise it as being the worst song I've ever written! Is any of this getting lost in translation? Mac? Do we need to hire a translator?

He turns to MAC, the GERMAN ENGINEER/PRODUCER - in the CONTROL ROOM.

MAC

Freddie. We should go again.

FREDDIE

Ja! We should go again! Danke! Then let's--jolly well--go again.

The BAND all pull on their CANS and go again - the DISCO-ORIENTED intro to "**LIVING ON MY OWN.**"

CUT TO:

FREDDIE, taking time out, COUGHING and drinking VODKA and SMOKING to sooth his throat, while the BAND records.

CUT TO:

FREDDIE tries to write lyrics in the studio, alone -

MAC

Time to go home Freddie. Let's do this tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But FREDDIE just keeps working.

CUT TO:

THE CONTROL ROOM. FREDDIE works with MAC, producing the track -

FREDDIE

No, no--completely take out the drums for the first twelve bars -

MAC

Take them out?

FREDDIE

Take them out, gone--just the vocal for the first two lines, try that. Something has to work.

CUT TO:

FREDDIE records his lead vocal - (We don't hear the backing track)

FREDDIE

"Sometime I feel I'm gonna break down and cry, Nowhere to go nothing to do with my time, I get lonely, so lonely, Living on my own..."

He starts to COUGH. He grabs a napkin. He coughs up BLOOD.

MAC

Freddie?

To the SOUND of the DISCO BACKING TRACK (minus VOCALS) of "Living On My Own", we cut to -

INT. FREDDIE'S MUNICH FLAT - NIGHT

A PARTY at FREDDIE's FLAT. PAUL PRENTER and a coterie of THEATRICAL HANGERS-ON party like there's no tomorrow.

PAUL then gets a call on the TELEPHONE - he goes to it.

PAUL PRENTER

(into phone)

Oh. Hello. (beat) Freddie, no -

PAUL PRENTER's POV of FREDDIE, partying -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL PRENTER
(into phone)
Would you like to leave a message?

EXT. PHONE BOX/ LONDON - NIGHT

JIM HUTTON on a PAY-PHONE, sets down the receiver, disappointed.

INT. FREDDIE'S MUNICH FLAT - NIGHT

PAUL leads a GROUPIE into a BACK-ROOM, where -
- FIVE RECORD EXECUTIVES are in conversation.

PAUL PRENTER
May I introduce you to our record executives. Everyone, this is Holly. She's a big fan of Freddie Mercury.

The GROUPIE goes up to the first one and gets on her knees.

CUT TO:

The PARTY is winding down. While some of the REVELLERS now sleep in each others arms, entwined -

- FREDDIE, drunk and high, tries to WRITE LYRICS and compose a new song - getting nowhere.

He stops and picks up a candle and goes to inspect the SLEEPING REVELLERS.

Down the HALLWAY comes the GROUPIE, pulling on her coat.

GROUPIE
I only missed one--he left early.

FREDDIE
Don't worry--I got him before he left.

FREDDIE winks at her, and gives a sad little smile, before she leaves. He looks tired and unhappy.

Up with - as SOUNDTRACK - the dark orchestral STRING SECTION from the opening bars of "MR BAD GUY" -

INT. JIM BEACH'S OFFICE - DAY

JIM BEACH, on the phone -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM BEACH

Is he there? Where is he? I need to
talk to him. It's one performance.
For a good cause...

On JIM's desk is a FLIER for "**LIVE AID**".

INT. RECORDING STUDIO (MUNICH) - DAY

PAUL PRENTER, on the phone -

PAUL PRENTER

No. He's not here. I'll pass the
message on. Call you, absolutely.

PAUL PRENTER's POV of - FREDDIE, alone in the RECORDING
STUDIO, feverishly trying to write music...

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

ROGER looks in the window of a RECORD STORE. "**MR BAD GUY**",
FREDDIE'S solo album, is on sale, price already reduced.

OLDER BRIAN

His solo album? Flopped. You only have
to listen to it. The darkness,
creeping in. He was hurting. Cut off
from everyone he could trust. Lost.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

1985. YOUNG BRIAN watches the TV - a news item on ROCK
HUDSON'S DECLINE...EMACIATED, clearly DYING of AIDS...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

We failed him. We promised to be
there for him.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

And where were we, his family who
should have gone to his rescue?
We were too English to tell him we
were worried about the road he was
going down, or that we felt sad, that
we were hurting. So Freddie just hid
from us, assuming we disapproved. We
didn't, but we didn't tell him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

There was a key--key--that some of these people gave him, to a room in some -

(with contempt)

- club, some deplorable basement...

INT. GAY LEATHER CLUB/ NEW YORK - NIGHT

The CAMERA TRACKS IN on a BASEMENT DOOR...

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

I heard later that every person granted the 'privilege' of getting their very own key to that door...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

...is dead. They all died.

(beat)

Want to know a secret?

The BLOGGER nods -

OLDER BRIAN

When Freddie left us, he wasn't the only one to get in trouble. Roger, John, yes me-- we were all given keys of some sort--we all ruined our relationships in basements chasing barmaids, strippers, "angels with broken wings."

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

CAMERA moves around the empty room, full of QUEEN'S MUSICAL EQUIPMENT, but no BAND....no MUSIC...end on the RED SPECIAL, in its stand - idle, silent...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN (V.O.)

(beat)

Even told ourselves we were still working!--that living dangerously - dancing on the edge of the abyss - that looking for heaven and wonder and romance in strange beds was our job, our mission as rock stars, going to the ends of the earth to places people only dream of, just to find out what it's like so we can come back and put it in a song...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

Ha!...but there were no songs. Excess just broke our hearts, nearly destroyed us, and in the end--for Freddie?...

He turns away upset...unable to continue...

UP WITH THE DARK, OMINOUS, opening bars of "The Golden Boy"

INT. RECORDING STUDIO (MUNICH) - DAY

FREDDIE and MONSERAT CABALLE sing their duet -

FREDDIE

"The boy had a way with words, he sang, he moved with grace
He entertained so naturally, no gesture out of place
His road in life was clearly drawn, he didn't hesitate

(coughs)

(to MAC)

Keep going! -

FREDDIE steps aside, and subdues a cough, as -

MONSERAT

"I love you for your passion, I love you for your fire
The violent desire that burns me in its flame
A love I dare not name...

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRENTER approaches FREDDIE during a break...

PRENTER

Queen--

FREDDIE

(interested)

Mmmm?

PRENTER

(dismissively)

--have been invited to perform, called "Live Aid", part of a line-up of other bands. Charity thing, linked to that Christmas single, "Do They Know It's Christmas", on which you were not invited to sing! Now they want to do a concert for Africa--they're desperate, need as many bands as they can get.

FREDDIE

How flattering. What--

(clearly interested)

--do the others say?

PRENTER

I'm presuming they'll do anything. They didn't want you, now they're desperate.

FREDDIE

Then tell them--tell them to use all the singers they invited to do the fucking single!

PRENTER walks off - pleased with the result.

INT. FREDDIE'S MUNICH FLAT - DAY

The DOORBELL sounds. FREDDIE (drunk, high and looking worn out) goes to it, and opens the door.

It's MARY! Her shoulders are coated in SNOW. She carries a SUITCASE.

They stare at each other. His face then breaks into a broad grin.

MARY

Hello Freddie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

What the hell? What are you - ?! Come in! Come in! My God! This is...!

He let's her in. She sees that the ROOM has been the VENUE for a PARTY of some size.

MARY

I haven't heard from you. I phoned and phoned. I was worried about you. And last night I had a terrible dream, that something bad had happened -

FREDDIE clears away a few bottles and party detritus - FEMALE and MALE clothing items (a feather boa, a carnival mask, a top hat, a mirror with residue of coke still on it) -

FREDDIE

No! Nothing bad has happened. Quite the contrary.

MARY

You look pale. And sad.

He does look unwell -

FREDDIE

I've been up all night--working, that's all. Wait till you hear what I'm doing now! It's remarkable!

MARY looks at the PIANO, which is coated in MANUSCRIPT and LYRIC PAPERS, CHAMPAGNE BOTTLES, half-filled glasses.

MARY

You look -

FREDDIE

I'm eating better.

MARY

- unwell.

FREDDIE

Do I? I wish everybody would stop saying that. It's so depressing. I'm living like a monk, actually -

MARY raises an eye-brow -

FREDDIE

- apart from the odd slip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY
(picking up empty
champagne bottle)
Some monastery!
(picking up a rolled
banknote lying on a
mirror)

FREDDIE
(with a guilty shrug)
Being human is a condition that
requires a little anesthesia.

She can't resist him - she drops her resistance -

MARY
Come back to London. I miss you.

FREDDIE
Miss you too.

He goes to her and holds her.

FREDDIE
So much. But I have to finish this
second album. I'll be done soon.
Promise. Let me show you!

He breaks from her and runs off into another room -

CUT TO:

MARY, wearing EARPHONES, listens to the first tracks off
"BARCELONA". (We can't hear what she's hearing) She looks
at him, as he paces.

FREDDIE
Well? WELL?

She takes off the HEAD-PHONES, we dimly hear "Barcelona"

FREDDIE
Do you like it?

She puts on the head-phones again, and listens, showing no
emotion, and CLOSES HER EYES, concentrating -

INT. RECORDING STUDIO (MUNICH) - DAY

FREDDIE and MONSERAT CABALLE sings the opening of
"Barcelona" -

INT. FREDDIE'S MUNICH FLAT - NIGHT

- MARY takes off the HEADPHONES. Silence. She SMILES.

MARY

I do.

FREDDIE

It's good, isn't it?! It's really good!

MARY

But I thought CBS has forbidden an opera record.

FREDDIE

Sshhh. They have. But I'll pay for it myself.

(overjoyed)

It's so great to have you here. Mary--I need you. Stay. Stay here, with me, just till I finish the album! Two months! Just you and I! Your own bedroom.

He grabs her SUITCASE and carries it into a SPARE BEDROOM and then re-appears. She still looks uncertain -

FREDDIE

Say "Yes." You can help me work, you can be my inspiration.

(tenderly)

I need the love of my life.

She melts -

MARY

Oh Freddie...

He kneels at her feet, holds her hands -

MARY

I don't want to sit here and watch you hurt yourself. All the parties, drugs, strange people -

FREDDIE

No. No, no, no. I'll work. I'll just work, that's all. Live a quiet life, we'll look after each other and become vegan missionaries until the album is done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

Work? And nothing else? Mr Mercury?

FREDDIE

I promise. Oh, and people call me
"Your Royal Highness" now.

MARY

I'm sure they do.

She smiles. He smiles too, freely, not covering his teeth.

FREDDIE

I'll show you! I'm gonna start now,
prove it to you! Just watch! Work!

He goes to the piano, while she sits on the LOUIS XIV
CHAISE LONGUE.

FREDDIE

Total dedication!

(sings)

"Just you wait 'enry 'iggins just
you wait."

He resumes work on a new song -

FREDDIE

I'm working on another piece to
suit Monserat's voice. Can you
imagine? Writing for the most
divine voice on earth?

MARY

(tired)

That's good Freddie. That's good.

FREDDIE starts to read the music of "ENSUENO", and we hear
both PIANO and VOCALS on the SOUNDTRACK as he reads -

FREDDIE

A piano introduction, in E/m...

(we hear this)

and then...change, B7B9...

(and this)

...and then, her voice...Octave
higher! E/m...

We hear MONSERAT's voice come in...Over her lines Freddie
mutters -

FREDDIE

"En mi sueno re vi..."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

- and then POUNDING on the DOOR. FREDDIE stops.

FREDDIE opens the door, and PAUL PRENTER and the REVELLERS (MEN and WOMEN) all push into FREDDIE's FLAT.

PAUL PRENTER

Sorry we're late!

(seeing MARY)

Oh! Mary! What a pleasant surprise!

PAUL goes to MARY and kisses her on the cheek.

PAUL PRENTER

What brings you here? Should have told us you were coming--What hotel are you staying at?

MARY starts to put on her COAT, making to leave again -

FREDDIE

Mary? Come on.

MARY

Bye Freddie.

FREDDIE

Mary...

(deciding who he wants)

Paul! Everyone, you have to leave.

REVELLERS

LEAVE?!

FREDDIE

Everyone out. OUT! Out, out!

PAUL PRENTER

Well you heard him. Everyone out!
Out! Out!

PAUL herds the REVELLERS out and shuts the door.

PAUL PRENTER

There. That's better.

FREDDIE looks at MARY to see if she's happy now -

MARY

Him too. *(Paul)*

FREDDIE

Mary -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARY

Him too. I'm not staying if he's here.

FREDDIE

Paul. You need to go.

PAUL PRENTER

For how long?

FREDDIE

(to MARY)

How long?

MARY

We don't need him anymore.

PAUL PRENTER

What's going on? Fred?

FREDDIE looks at PAUL - but can't say the words - so MARY steps up and confronts PAUL herself -

MARY

We don't need you. In fact, ever since you showed up you've been looking after yourself. You don't care about him.

(to FRED)

He's using you. He's been cutting you off from all the people who truly care about you. It's sick!

PAUL PRENTER

I take orders from Freddie.

(to FREDDIE)

You want this? Seriously?

(to MARY)

He's going to be the biggest act in the world. And I'm gonna help him get there. So maybe it's you who should go.

MARY looks at FREDDIE to say something -

FREDDIE

Please. It's going to be fine.

MARY goes to the BEDROOM.

FREDDIE

Fuck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

PAUL PRENTER

Freddie, listen to me, she's trying
to pull everything down we've built up-
-She's jealous.

MARY comes out of the BEDROOM with her suitcase, and goes
to the door.

FREDDIE

Mary--stop this--you're not going
anywhere.

MARY

Goodbye Freddie.

The door slams. MARY is gone. FREDDIE looks at PAUL.

PAUL PRENTER

I don't know what she was thinking,
coming here. What a scene!

FREDDIE goes to the window to see -

- MARY walking off, through the VIRGIN SNOW, with her
SUITCASE.

FREDDIE

You're out, Paul. It's over. Things
have to change.

PAUL PRENTER

You're firing me?

FREDDIE

I'm firing you! Yes! Be gone before I
come back!

FREDDIE grabs his coat -

PAUL PRENTER

With everything I know? With all the
photographs I have of Mr Freddie
Mercury?

FREDDIE

Careful! Be very careful! I used to
box in school--still have the trophy!
Do not! Mess! With me!

PAUL PRENTER

You're blaming me for everything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

FREDDIE

No, I blame myself! I made a monster, used every trick in the book on myself and I fell for it all - lights! camera! action! - because, truth is, I don't much like myself--so I made a monster--but one so damn big I don't have the strength to play him most of the time! Blame myself for something else too, for being weak--too weak to realise the first thing you attract, when you go rotten, is fruit-flies, attracted by the decay, dirty little fruit flies...

FREDDIE's face is only inches from PRENTERS now...

FREDDIE

...coming to feast on what's left. Well, there isn't much left anymore, Paul, so do what you like with your little photos and anecdotes - "Freddie did this - ", "Freddie did that - "-- Get a good price, and then make sure I never see your supercilious little fucking face again or I will knock you down and you will stay down!

FREDDIE now runs out the door...

EXT. STREET/ MUNICH - DAY

MARY gets on a TRAM and the TRAM pulls away, revealing - FREDDIE, slipping and sliding through the snow.

He can only watch as the TRAM pulls away. Up with MUSIC: as SOUNTRACK: "THE SHOW MUST GO ON"...

INT. FREDDIE'S MUNICH FLAT - DAY

FREDDIE, alone now, at rock bottom, tries to work but cannot. He paces. He goes to a GLASS COFFEE TABLE and spoons some COKE onto the GLASS, and BEGINS to CUT a HUGE LINE...He SNORTS it all. But it only makes him more JITTERY...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the EDGE of the GLASS TABLE he nervously begins to play PHANTOM PIANO...but then - for the first time - STOPS HIMSELF, looks at his tense fingers, forms a fist, and resists this nervous tic.

CUT TO:

FREDDIE is watching the GERMAN TV...when he sees his FACE on the SCREEN...

It's a NEWS-REPORT (In GERMAN) about him...PICTURES of MEN, FREDDIE doing DRUGS, PARTY SHOTS...before the NEWS-STORY cuts to -

- PAUL PRENTER, being interviewed (We clearly hear HIS ENGLISH playing under the GERMAN TRANSLATION)...

FREDDIE rubs his eyes - is this an HALLUCINATION?

Cut back and forth between FREDDIE's perspiring face and SOUND-BITES of the PRENTER interview -

PAUL PRENTER

(on TV)

"his lovers, they were countless"... "drug-fuelled parties that went on for days"... "but to me he remained a frightened little boy from Zanzibar"... "the relationship with Mary, that was just a cover"... "they paid him \$4 million for his first solo album, which of course failed"...

The item ends. FREDDIE gets up and starts to roam the room - and then he starts SMASHING THINGS, all his priceless ANTIQUES, all his acquisitions - finally even driving his KNEE into the TV (which fails to break the TV SCREEN, only making it fall over) which INJURES his KNEE. He SHOUTS in PAIN and then falls back on the FLOOR, among the ruins...gripping his DAMAGED KNEE...

...and here, after staring at the chandeliers above, he rolls onto his side and sees a LAST PILE of COCAINE, lying on broken glass. He LICKS his fingers and gathers up the COCAINE and puts it into his MOUTH.

He then lies there on the carpet, on his face...running his FINGERS through his GREASY HAIR, before his FINGERS then play PHANTOM PIANO on his chest, muttering some MELODY...

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAYS LATER. FREDDIE sitting on a chair, NAKED under a SHEET WRAPPED AROUND HIM, in a terrible, unshaven state. He gets up and crosses the room. On the PIANO lies a CD of "MR BAD BUY" - he looks at the CD, then throws it across the room...

FADE TO BLACK

INT. JIM BEACH'S OFFICE - DAY

JIM BEACH picks up the phone.

JIM BEACH
(into phone)
Hello? (beat) Freddie?

INT. RECORDING STUDIO/ MUNICH - DAY

FREDDIE cradles the phone - nervous, playing PHANTOM PIANO, humble now...

FREDDIE
I need to sue. To sue Prenter. Need you to set that up. OK?

JIM BEACH
Where are you? I've been calling you in Munich. Tell me where you are?

FREDDIE
There was this Africa concert, that wants Queen to play. What, um...Is that still...?

JIM BEACH
Too late. They've announced the acts already. Tickets sold. Fred? Are you in Munich?

FREDDIE
Miami--I need to connect again with the Mothership.
(smiles sadly)
Do you think you could organise a meeting? Would they--would they come, do you think?

JIM BEACH
They're still very upset. They don't really want anything to do with you I'm afraid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

Oh. If you ask them, they'll meet me.
Tell them I want to talk, just talk.
We're family, you know? Family have
fights...all the time...

JIM BEACH

I don't know Freddie.

FREDDIE lights a cigarette -

MUSIC UP: "UNDER PRESSURE" by FREDDIE MERCURY/DAVID BOWIE.

EXT. CAR-PARK/ MONT-PELERIN HOTEL - MONTREUX - DAY

FREDDIE's LIMO arrives in the ALPINE RESORT - JIM BEACH is waiting for him. FREDDIE is LIMPING, as a result of his KNEE INJURY. They shake hands.

FREDDIE

Are the others here?

JIM indicates FOUR OTHER LIMOUSINES. JIM and FREDDIE enter the hotel.

INT. HOTEL ROOM / MONT-PELERIN HOTEL - MONTREUX - DAY

FREDDIE and JIM wait in a room. FREDDIE is pacing, limping, nervously. We haven't seen him like this.

FREDDIE

You said they were here.

JIM BEACH

They're here--somewhere. Wait here.

JIM BEACH exits.

INT. HOTEL ROOM 2 / MONT-PELERIN HOTEL - MONTREUX - DAY

JOHN and ROGER and BRIAN sit in a LARGE SUITE. JIM BEACH enters...

JIM BEACH

He's here.

JOHN and ROGER and BRIAN look at each other -

BRIAN

Let him wait.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No-one moves.

INT. HOTEL ROOM / MONT-PELERIN HOTEL - MONTREUX - DAY

FREDDIE can't stand the pressure - he paces, until JIM BEACH enters.

FREDDIE

Where are they?

JIM BEACH

They're coming.

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - NIGHT

OLDER BRIAN

Hadn't we waited for him? We were angry.

INT. HOTEL ROOM / MONT-PELERIN HOTEL - MONTREUX - DAY

The entire BAND and JIM BEACH face each other. A brittle silence...

JIM BEACH

Who wants to go first?

JOHN

Well, I have an announcement. I'm leaving the band -

They all stare at him -

JOHN

- to become a record executive at EMI.

JIM BEACH

Thankyou John for the levity. Well, I'll start -

FREDDIE

No. I'll start. I'll start. I've been hideous. I know I have. And I deserve your wrath. I know that. I've been a conceited selfish...well, an asshole, basically.

ROGER

Strong beginning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

Now I'm happy to strip off my shirt
and flagellate myself before you or,
or I could ask a simple question.

JOHN

I'm good with the flagellation.

FREDDIE

What will it take for you all to
forgive me?

BRIAN

Is that what you want, Freddie? I
forgive you. Is that it, can we go
now?

JIM BEACH

What Freddie wants is -

ROGER

- Why don't we let Freddie tell us
what he wants.

FREDDIE

Queen. I want Queen. I tried to give
Michael Jackson a run for his money
but turns out he's faster than he
looks. I hired a great band, fine
musicians that would do exactly what I
told them, and the big problem was
they did exactly what I told them.
Without the sparks, no fire--No fire?
No magic. No surprises. Without Roger
contradicting me, I found I couldn't
concentrate. Without Brian telling me
to do it his way, I couldn't work out
what I wanted. Without John giving me
"that look" I could never reach a
decision. I need the Mothership. I
always did. I need my family back. And
right now, my dears, I need you more
than you can possibly imagine. So.
Name your terms.

ROGER

Could you step out of the room for a
second, Fred?

FREDDIE, surprised, does so. The door closes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRIAN

(to ROGER)

What?

ROGER

Just fucking with him.

JIM BEACH

Shall...I get him back in?

After a long silence, the BAND nod. FREDDIE re-enters.

ROGER

We decided...what did we decide?

JOHN

We decided things need to change.
From now on, everything gets shared
evenly. Doesn't matter who writes the
song, it's a Queen song. Four ways
evenly.

FREDDIE

Done.

ROGER

And we have a problem with the team
of people you have around you.

FREDDIE

Paul is out. I fired him.

JOHN

On what pretext?

FREDDIE

Villainy.

(to JIM BEACH)

Light me a cigarette would you Miami?

JIM lights a cigarette -

FREDDIE

What else?

BRIAN

Bob Geldoff. He keeps phoning.

FREDDIE

How did I offend him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ROGER

Wants to squeeze us into the line-up
for "Live Aid".

JOHN

As an after-thought!

ROGER

He wants an answer now. He swears
a lot.

They look at each other - lots of shrugs, uncertainty,
fear...

JOHN

Every ticket is already sold. So if
we do it, not one in the audience
will've paid to see us.

ROGER

And any fans will've forgotten who
we are anyway.

JOHN

Plus--we haven't played together
for 3 years. Kinda suicide to play
again for the first time in front of
thousands...

ROGER

...Millions.

BRIAN

Yes or no?

FREDDIE

It's a chance to remind them who
we are.

ROGER

And who are we?

FREDDIE

We--we are the most preposterous
rock band in the history of the world
--and don't you fucking forget it!

FREDDIE grins and covers his teeth with his hand.

INT. SHAW STUDIOS/ LONDON - DAY

QUEEN rehearse for LIVE AID.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER
Okay, let's try again.
(taps his drumsticks)
...two...three...

The BAND begin to PLAY "HAMMER TO FALL" - but they are too RUSTY, and only play a few BARS before they have to stop.

FREDDIE
Truly dreadful. Go again.

BRIAN
It's been a while.

FREDDIE
We have, what? A twenty minute set?
Miami, dear? They've given us a
twenty minute set?

JIM BEACH steps forward.

JIM BEACH
Everyone gets twenty. Jagger, Bowie,
Elton, McCartney. Twenty minutes to
rock the world. Just had some numbers,
guys. Listen up. 72,000 people here in
London, 100,000 to gather in
Philadelphia, watching on giant screen
via live telecast, and a global TV
audience of 2 billion across 150
countries. No pressure.

The band gulp and nod. Silence, then -

ROGER
Okay.
(tapping his sticks)
Two...three...

They START to PLAY again...

CUT TO:

FREDDIE takes a smoke-break. JIM BEACH approaches with a piece of paper.

JIM BEACH
Message for you.

FREDDIE reads it. He looks up at JIM BEACH, troubled.

FREDDIE
Miami--could you get me a car?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JIM BEACH

Now?

INT. LONDON HOSPITAL - DAY

UP WITH: "WHO WANTS TO LIVE FOREVER"...

FREDDIE and JIM BEACH are led up a CORRIDOR by a NURSE.
They stop outside a PRIVATE ROOM.

FREDDIE

(to JIM)

Wait for me here.

The NURSE walks away. FREDDIE prepares himself, then pushes open the door and enters.

INT. PRIVATE ROOM / LONDON HOSPITAL - DAY

PLAY on FREDDIE's face and emotions as he approaches a bed where a MAN (JOE BASTIN, his former lover) lies in a COMA.

FREDDIE breathes deeply.

FREDDIE

Ohhh Joe.

He sits and, finally touches JOE's hand.

FREDDIE

Handsome Joe.

Kind Joe.

CLOSE ON: JOE BASTIN, the last phase of HIV/AIDS. Skin and bone. A woolen cap on his head. Breathing assisted by tubes to his nose.

FREDDIE has tears falling from his eyes. He leans in and kisses JOE's head, then rises and leaves the room.

INT. BATHROOM/ LONDON HOSPITAL - DAY

FREDDIE washes his HANDS thoroughly...then pauses to EXAMINE his ARMS, turning them over, looking for possible LESIONS, of which he finds none.

INT. WAITING ROOM/ DOCTOR'S SURGERY - DAY

(On another day) - FREDDIE, wearing sunglasses, cap, waits nervously, beside JIM HUTTON (on one side) and a YOUNG HIV MAN (on the other).

YOUNG HIV MAN
(to FREDDIE)
Hey.

FREDDIE looks at the YOUNG HIV MAN, gives a quick smile, then LOWERS his CAP over his eyes and adjusts his SUNGLASSES, fearful of being recognised. Silence, until -

- NURSE 2 appears...

NURSE 2
Doctor will see you now.

JIM taps FREDDIE on the knee supportively, then FREDDIE follows the NURSE, until -

YOUNG HIV MAN
Day-O.

FREDDIE turns, the YOUNG HIV MAN is looking at him...

FREDDIE
(touched)
Day-O

FREDDIE enters the SURGERY, the door closes behind him.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

FREDDIE emerges - stay on his face as he processes the news...hard to tell what he's thinking, feeling...

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM/ LONDON - DAY

For their 2nd "LIVE AID" rehearsal, the BAND are now rehearsing "**CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE**" and really rocking it now. They have gelled again, but...

FREDDIE is off, troubled, in poor voice, weak...

BRIAN and ROGER and JOHN all notice and look at each other, wondering what is up with FREDDIE?

MONTAGE (LIVE AID):

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A) VAST CROWDS make their way toward WEMBLEY STADIUM.

CAPTION: "JULY 13, 1985"

B) The GATES into WEMBLEY STADIUM are opened.

C) Inside WEMBLEY STADIUM the first audience members pour into the GIANT EMPTY SPACE, heading for the STAGE, staking out their turf.

D) LIMOUSINES disgorging ROCK-STARS.

E) The STADIUM is now full, and HUMMING.

F) BACKSTAGE, POP-STARS all talking to each other.

G) BACKSTAGE, BOB GELDOFF, on the PHONE,

GELDOFF

No! Fok off! It's a focken famine!
People are focken' dying! Africa needs
this money NOW! (*Hangs up*) Fuck!

WORKER

Coffee?

GELDOFF

(*politely*)
No thank-you.

INT. FREDDIE'S MANSION/ LONDON - DAY

FREDDIE sits at his BREAKFAST table, staring out the window at his beautiful garden...where JIM HUTTON tends the FLOWERS.

MARY enters - PREGNANT - bringing a steaming cup.

MARY

Here. Try and drink this? Lemon
and honey. How is it? (*the throat*)

FREDDIE

Not good. And my knee is killing me
too. I'm not sure I can do it,
Mary-kins. I'm serious.

He touches her PREGNANT belly -

FREDDIE

How is my god-son? Little Richard?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She smiles, and makes him take another SIP of lemon water.

FREDDIE

What time's the car coming?

MARY

3.30.

FREDDIE tries to SIP the LEMON DRINK but he winces in pain.

MARY turns on the TV set.

MARY

The show starts in a few minutes.

The PICTURE shows...the waiting WEMBLEY CROWD...

FREDDIE

I'm going for a walk.

EXT. FREDDIE'S MANSION/ STREETS OF LONDON - DAY

FREDDIE emerges and walks up the street, wearing CAP and SUNGLASSES and a LARGE COAT. A lonely man.

When the SUN falls on him, he stops, turns his face toward the healing sun, closing his eyes, trying to make sense of everything...

He then looks around him, up and down the street. WHERE THE HELL IS EVERYONE? The streets of London are empty!

Suddenly - the ROAR OF A CROWD. Where is it coming from? ELECTRIC GUITARS then augment the ROAR...

FREDDIE looks around, and realises that the sound is coming from OPEN WINDOWS...

...and then from the sole PASSING CAR, which is playing the SAME ROCK MUSIC (the telecast/broadcast from LIVE AID)...

FREDDIE goes to investigate...advances up the front steps of the nearest HOUSE...Reaching the top step he sees in the OPEN WINDOW to a FAMILY - gathered around their TV - (as STATUS QUO plays "Rockin' All Over The World.")

CLOSE ON: FREDDIE's POV of the FAMILY...

REACTION FREDDIE: Stirred, reminded - by this tableau - of music's capacity to connect us all.

EXT. WEMBLEY STADIUM/ "LIVE AID"/ LONDON (1985)

STATUS QUO are playing "Rockin' All Over The World."

But the lead singer - FRANCIS ROSSI -calls to his soundman -

FRANCIS ROSSI
More volume.

MUSIC UP: **"THE SHOW MUST GO ON"**...(the pulsing
INTRO)...bleed in the sound of CHOPPER ROTOR-BLADES...

MONTAGE

A) A HELICOPTER flies over LONDON...SWOOPING MAJESTICALLY
around the SKY-SCRAPERS, over the beautiful
city...toward...WEMBLEY STADIUM...

FREDDIE (V.O.)
"Empty spaces - what are we living for
Abandoned places - I guess we know the
score
On and on, does anybody know what we
are looking for...
"Another hero, another mindless crime
Behind the curtain, in the pantomime
"Hold the line, does anybody want to
take it anymore

B) INSIDE the HELICOPTER: FREDDIE closes his eyes, his
hand protectively massaging his THROAT, clearly in
discomfort.

ANGLE ON: MARY & JIM HUTTON looking at FREDDIE, concerned.

FREDDIE (V.O.)
"The show must go on,
The show must go on...
Inside my heart is breaking
My make-up may be flaking
But my smile still stays on...

C) The HELICOPTER lands at WEMBLEY and FREDDIE MERCURY
disembarks...

EXT. MIXING DESK/ LIVE AID - DAY

CONCERT MIXING BOARD - SEVERAL SWITCHES on the MIXING DESK
have the tape over the TOP PARTS of the VOLUME SLIDERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIXER

(into mouthpiece)

Not allowed to go higher than "7" -
regulations, sorry.

INT. QUEEN DRESSING ROOM/ LIVE AID (1985) LONDON - DAY

As the BAND gets ready...a DOCTOR prepares a HUGE NEEDLE,
seriously HUGE, and goes to FREDDIE with the SYRINGE -

FREDDIE

Where are you sticking that?!

DOCTOR

Back of your throat. Small steroid
injection.

FREDDIE

Get that away from me! Christ!

(to MARY)

I need vodka and three cigarettes
right-fucking-now!

The DOCTOR looks at JIM BEACH, who shrugs, and accepts
FREDDIE's decision. As the DOCTOR exits...

FREDDIE

(tests his voice)

Ahhh---hah!--hah!

(to BRIAN)

How long do we have?

BRIAN

As long as you need then halve it.

FREDDIE

(warming his voice)

Ahhh---hah!--hah! DAAYY-O--AAYYY-O...

(coughs, winces)

Guys?! I have to cut the DAY-O's with
the crowd. My voice can't handle it.

BRIAN

Good idea. Look after your voice.

FREDDIE

Cigarettes! Ahhh---hah!--hah!

While JIM BEACH pulls out cigarettes, MARY pours a VODKA,
while JIM HUTTON fixes FREDDIE's HAIR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

So greasy! Why is it always so greasy?

JIM HUTTON

Because you wash it six times a day.

FREDDIE

That makes no sense.

JIM BEACH steps up, and holds out a CIGARETTE for FREDDIE to smoke from it as JIM holds it - but this is a new FREDDIE and, seated at his MIRROR, he takes the CIGARETTE - he will do it himself.

FREDDIE

Miami? I thank you.
I'm turning over a new leaf.
From now on I'm going monastic.

MARY passes FREDDIE a glass of VODKA.

FREDDIE

Early nights, mineral water -
(raises his vodka)
Nastrovia.

FREDDIE downs the VODKA, stands up, gargles it for a few seconds...

FREDDIE looks at MARY, who angles her face to be kissed ON THE LIPS...but FREDDIE (significantly) KISSES HER ON THE FOREHEAD FOR SAFETY SAKE! *(confirming he is HIV positive.)*

FREDDIE then continues his vocal warm ups, bouncing up and down on his feet -

FREDDIE

Come on voice come on voice come
on voice--you can do it--one more
charge--one last hurrarr...

JIM HUTTON steps up and gives FREDDIE's hair one last blast of HAIR-SPRAY, and then FREDDIE and JIM KISS each other ON THE LIPS for good luck...*(the diagnosis of Aids comes too late to change anything for them.)*

FREDDIE

AHH..HA,HA,HA, MEEE,MEEE...

ROGER then comes and joins FREDDIE. Now they are both bouncing up and down on their feet...ROGER slaps FREDDIE's butt, and FREDDIE slaps it back... Then JOHN joins them. Three of them now bouncing...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANGLE ON: BRIAN, watching, smiling, moved. He goes to join them. They link arms - brothers again - and bounce and vocally warm-up together.

EXT. MIXING BOARD/ LIVE AID - DAY

The QUEEN SOUNDMAN wearing a QUEEN T-SHIRT comes behind the MIXING BOARD, looking shifty...

QUEEN SOUNDMAN
Soundman for Queen.

MIXER
Hey man.

QUEEN SOUNDMAN
Just checking you're all set.

MIXER
Yeah, it's cool, we're all good.

EXT. BACKSTAGE/ LIVE AID - DAY

FREDDIE leads the BAND past the other POP-STARS toward the stage, where there is a growing ROAR from the crowd. The other POP-STARS clap QUEEN on the backs, wishing them well.

They are stopped, by the STAGE MANAGER, who is waiting for the CUE-CALL. The BAND are NERVOUS as hell, and it shows...they form a CIRCLE. No one speaks. Until -

JOHN
Probably not too late to cancel.

They shoot JOHN a look, then laugh - tension broken.

JOHN
Jesus Christ.

BRIAN
What a terrible job this is.

JOHN
I'm finding another line of work.

FREDDIE holds out his FIST. The band BUMP FISTS, as-

STAGE-MANAGER
(*getting word*)
Okay. Let's move to the wings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE walks to one WING (stage left) and the band walk to the other WING (stage right) and wait -

CLOSE ON: FREDDIE, and then his POV (across the stage) of: his FRIENDS, his buddies - he is enormously proud of them in this moment.

They look at each other, all NERVOUS. They nod to each other...ROGER, BRIAN, JOHN, FREDDIE.

And then we hear the announcement of QUEEN -

MEL SMITH (OS)
Ladies And Gentlemen--give a great
big Wembley and Round-The-World
welcome--forrrrrrrrr -

As QUEEN start to move, we CUT THE SOUND-TRACK - TOTAL SILENCE, as -

- QUEEN take the stage to a wildy gesturing (BUT SOUNDTRACK-MUTED) CROWD....

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - SUNRISE

OLDER BRIAN has his HEAD in his HAND, as if recalling a DISASTER...but then he raises his head and we see -

- a small SMILE forming on his face. He is recalling, in fact, a time of TRIUMPH!

EXT. MIXING BOARD/ LIVE AID - DAY

In SLO-MO....When the MIXER turns his back, the QUEEN SOUNDMAN pulls off the TAPE limiting the VOLUME and pushes the VOLUME SLIDERS way up to **TEN!**...

As he does so -

EXT. STAGE/ LIVE AID - DAY

- the CAMERA (an AERIAL/ F/X SHOT) swoops down from on high, (as the SOUND of the CROWD becomes audible at last, RISING in volume.) The CAMERA rushes toward WEMBLEY STADIUM, then flies into the stadium, then flies inches over the heads of the vast audience, gliding like an eagle, toward the stage where a MAN just now walks out onto centre stage -

- FREDDIE MERCURY, rock-star.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOUND of the crowd reaches full (HUGE) VOLUME now - as -

- FREDDIE greets the crowd, then sits at his PIANO and starts to play..."BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY."

The crowd go crazy, and when he starts to sing the crowd sing along with him and wave their hands...

So begins the greatest live set that QUEEN, or anyone else, ever performed.

CUT TO:

MARY and JIM HUTTON watch from the wings, as we -

CUT TO:

- the end of "BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY"....FREDDIE grabs his ICONIC WAND (his half-mic stand and mic) and struts his stuff as the band kick into "RADIO GAGA."

He soon has the entire crowd participating in the famous HAND-CLAP chorus...

INT. BACKSTAGE/ LIVE AID - DAY

The other POP STARS backstage realise something unique is happening and the gravitate to the wings.

BOB GELDOFF

Jesus!

EXT. STAGE/ LIVE AID - DAY

FREDDIE is now finishing "GAGA", the audience is going wild!

He then involves the crowd:

FREDDIE

AAAYY-OOOO!

CROWD

AAAYY-OOOO!

REACTION BRIAN: Admiration for Freddie.

So begins FRED's "DAY-O" DIALOGUE with the crowd...ending in - a virtuoso DAY-O climax, no hint now of the fragile voice of backstage -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE

ALRIGHT!!

This next song is only dedicated to
beautiful people here tonight.

(beat)

That means all of you.

QUEEN launch into the intro of "WE WILL ROCK YOU!". With
ROGER smashing the DRUM/CLAP intro "BOOM-BOOM-CHA", FREDDIE
prompts the crowds to join the STAMP/HAND-CLAP
INTRO..."BOOM-BOOM-CHA"...

CLOSE ON: PLASTIC CUPS of BEER and WATER (*on top of the on-
stage PIANO, left by previous performers*) as - the WATER
and BEER JUMPS with every CONCUSSIVE BEAT of the collective
DRUM-BEAT (as if the approach of a Jurassic giant!) - the
sound is that HUGE.

INT. THE BULSARA HOME / FELTHAM - DAY

The BULSARA FAMILY DRUM and CLAP to the intro of "WE WILL
ROCK YOU" as they watch, delighted, FREDDIE on TV,
conducting 100,000 ecstatic people...

INT. MAY HOUSE - DAY

BRIAN's FATHER, HAROLD, watches the event on the TV,
admiringly...

INT. GAY BAR/ LONDON - DAY

PAUL PRENTER watches, somberly, the bar's TV while the
other GAY CLIENTELE all cheer on FREDDIE's performance.

INT. CBS BOSS'S OFFICE / NEW YORK - MORNING

YETNIKOFF watches a TV, smoking a cigar, sharing an aside
with FINANCIAL OFFICER -

YETNIKOFF

And for me he writes a fucken opera!

EXT. LIVE AID/ WEMBLEY STADIUM - DAY

WIDE: HERO SHOT of the outside of the ENTIRE STADIUM...as
DUST rises like smoke inside, caused by 100,000 people
stamping their feet on dry dirt - BOOM-BOOM-CHA!...

EXT. STREETS OF WEMBLEY - DAY

PEDESTRIANS have frozen in their tracks, and stare skyward, able to hear the BOOM-BOOM-CHA in the very air, wondering where in hell it's coming from... ANGLE ON: a STORE's PLATE GLASS WINDOW, vibrating to the BOOM-BOOM-CHA!...

EXT. CAR PARK/WEMBLEY STADIUM - DAY

2 DOZEN CAR ALARMS, (on the newest cars only) have gone off, activated by this crowd-made EARTH-TREMOR...

INT. BACK GARDEN/ WEMBLEY HOUSE - DAY

A CHAINED DOG, hearing the far-off BOOM-BOOM-CHA, strains against his chain and BARKS/HOWLS.

EXT. STAGE/ LIVE AID - DAY

With the fuse lit, BRIAN blows the entire thing sky-high by launching into the famous POWER CHORDS of the INTRO, accompanied by ROGER and JOHN. The effect is orgasmic - the crowd ROARS!

FREDDIE, now at PIANO, comes in with the SOLO PIANO intro of "WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS"

FREDDIE

"I've paid my dues/Time after time.
I've done my sentence/ But committed
no crime.

JOHN comes in on BASS -

FREDDIE

"And bad mistakes? I've made a few.
I've had my -

BRIAN, fuelled with ADDED EMOTION, kicks in -as does ROGER -

FREDDIE

"- share of sand kicked in my face
But I've come through!
We are the champions, my friends,
And we'll keep on fighting 'til
the end.
We are the champions.
We are the champions.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

No time for losers
'Cause we are the champions of
the world.

FREDDIE on solo piano again - singing, intimately now -
with the AUDIENCE singing along with him -

FREDDIE

"I've taken my bows/ And my curtain
calls/ You brought me fame and fortune
and everything that goes with it
I thank you all!

The CROWD roar!

FREDDIE

"But it's been no bed of roses,
No pleasure cruise/ I consider it a
challenge before the whole human race/
And I ain't gonna lose!

FREDDIE AND CROWD

"We are the champions, my friends,
And we'll keep on fighting 'til the
end.
We are the champions.
We are the champions.
No time for losers
'Cause we are the champions of the
worrrrrrrrrrllllllldddddd!!!!"

On the thunderous climactic chord - FREDDIE closes his
EYES, chin raised, as if in prayer, then lowers his head,
and opens his eyes - SMILING, EMOTIONAL, MOVED...

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - MORNING

OLDER BRIAN

(emotional)

Write what you want. You people
always do. I need to sleep.

*(pointing an accusing
finger)*

Just don't call him "wicked" or
"corrupt"! -

(passionately)

- he lived life! To the brim! -
and perhaps -

(softening)

- yeah, over the brim -

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER BRIAN (CONT'D)

(forcefully again)

- but he was always singing for the person right at the back of the stadium, the one who doesn't fit in, the outcasts, the shy, and the pretty-damn-sure-they-don't-matter. He showed them they too could fly, fly above the haters and the detractors and the pullers-down--coz that's what rock and roll can do. It can re-define you. Dream heroic--and little Farrokh Bulsara did that.

BLOGGER

(nodding)

"Re-define you." In what way?

OLDER BRIAN

If you've never put on your favourite song and never felt it--then you'll never know.

(beat)

Freddie made you feel--better--bigger--braver...

(smiles, gently)

...happier. Now that's it, we're done! We're done.

BLOGGER

But we didn't get to the end! The end of the story.

OLDER BRIAN

You know what happened. Everyone knows what happened.

BLOGGER

Must have been very hard.

BRIAN hands the BLOGGER back his TAPE-RECORDER that long since stopped recording.

OLDER BRIAN

You ran out of battery. Do you need a taxi? Let me call a cab.

BLOGGER

Were you there at the end?
My last question. Promise.

BRIAN crosses the ROOM to the FIRE-ESCAPE DOORS and throws them open - NATURAL LIGHT FLOODS IN! Outside...
SUNRISE... COUNTRY FIELDS...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLDER BRIAN

Look at that! It's morning!

BLOGGER

Dr May?

OLDER BRIAN

Mmmm?

BLOGGER

One last question.

OLDER BRIAN

You used your last question several hours ago.

BLOGGER

Bismillah. Bismillah.
Will you ever tell anyone what
Freddie meant by that word?

BRIAN considers answering, then goes to his BOOK-CASE and takes out an enormous ATLAS.

OLDER BRIAN

Here. A gift. Now get out of here!
Out!

BRIAN now pushes the BLOGGER out of the room, and shuts the DOORS. He goes to a shelf and takes down a bottle of BOURBON...

INT. BLOGGER'S PARKED CAR (2016) - MORNING

The BLOGGER, opens BRIAN's LARGE ATLAS (on the passenger seat) at the INDEX...looking for something...

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - MORNING

BRIAN, on his SMART-PHONE, swipes through QUEEN ALBUM COVERS, and then selects "INNUENDO". As he taps the screen we hear - (bluetoothed to a SPEAKER) FREDDIE's voice, singing - **"THESE ARE THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES"...**

FREDDIE (V.O.)

"Sometimes I get to feelin'
I was back in the old days--long ago
When we were kids, when we were young
Things seemed so perfect - you know?
The days were endless, we were crazy -
we were young -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he listens, BRIAN, pours a BOURBON, and looks out the OPEN DOORS...into the garden and countryside...

EXT. FREDDIE'S MANSION/ LONDON - MORNING

CROWDS of FANS mourn FREDDIE's death, leave gifts and flowers for FREDDIE, light votive candles...PHOTOS of FREDDIE and of QUEEN. Over this...

FREDDIE

"The sun was always shinin' - we just lived for fun. Sometimes it seems like lately - I just don't know, the rest of my life's been - just a show. Those were the days of our lives. The bad things in life were so few. Those days are all gone now but one thing is true - When I look and I find I still love you."

INT. BLOGGER'S PARKED CAR (2016) - MORNING

The BLOGGER goes to the page he wants in the ATLAS, and then leans in, staring at the VERY LARGE PLATE...and then his EXPRESSION changes--he has seen something--exactly what he's looking for...

FREDDIE

"You can't turn back the clock,
you can't turn back the tide
Ain't that a shame?..."

EXT. BACK-STREETS/ ZANZIBAR - DAY

A BUCK-TOOTHED TEN-YEAR-OLD INDIAN BOY, FARROKH BULSARA, in sandals and shorts and short-sleeved shirt, runs and plays in the alleys, full of simple joy, in the springtime of his life, his whole life before him...

FREDDIE (V.O.)

"I'd like to go back one time on a roller coaster ride
When life was just a game
No use sitting and thinkin' on what you did/
When you can lay back and enjoy it through your kids
Sometimes it seems like lately I just don't know/
Better sit back and go - with the flow..."

INT. BLOGGER'S PARKED CAR (2016) - MORNING

CLOSE ON: A PLATE in the LARGE ATLAS...CAMERA shows
"ZANZIBAR" and then moves and tightens on a small town...
... "BISMILLAH"

FREDDIE (V.O.)

"Cos these are the days of our lives
They've flown in the swiftness of time
These days are all gone now but some
things remain
When I look and I find - no change."

EXT. SHIP - DAY

Young FARROKH BULSARA, stands alone at a RAIL on the deck
of a SHIP, as it enters LIVERPOOL - a MIGRANT arriving in a
new land...

FREDDIE (V.O.)

"Those were the days of our lives yeah
The bad things in life were so few
Those days are all gone now but one
thing's still true

INT. BRIAN MAY'S RECORDING STUDIO (2016) - MORNING

BRIAN looks out the OPEN DOORS - sunlight falling on him...

FREDDIE

"When I look and I find, I still love
you..." *(beat)*

And then, as if directly to BRIAN himself -

FREDDIE

I still love you.

CUT TO BLACK:

RUN END CREDITS.

Over this: roll FOOTAGE of the REAL FREDDIE MERCURY and
QUEEN, from the video of "DON'T STOP ME NOW" - an uplifting
and emotional performance of Freddie's ode to joy.

THE END