

ONCE

by

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**Shooting Script
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FADE UP:

1. EXT. BUSY PEDESTRIAN STREET - DAY

People walk by camera left and right. Business men and women, shoppers, etc. Through the passing throng we track in to:

A GUY (30) standing with a beat-up acoustic guitar in a doorway of a shop. He is handsome, with stubble and woolly hat and jacket to keep out the crisp, winter cold. He isn't playing yet, he's tuning his guitar and watching this scene -all the people passing furiously by. He thinks about what to play...

He begins playing a version of "??" by Van Morrison.

He sings and plays well.

BEGIN TITLES.

A hectic Week In The Life of a Busker...

2. EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

A MOTHER (45), inner city Dublin, with two kids passes him buy.

MOTHER

That's beautiful, son. Will you watch these fuckers for a minute while I go into Dunnes? Ta.

She stands her two KIDS (6 and 8), next to our GUY, who continues playing, trying to stop them from running away. It is like a juggling act.

3. EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

A DRUNK, carrying numerous plastic bags, wearing an IRELAND tee shirt and jeans, with three-day stubble and a fabulous beer belly, passes our Guy, noticing him.

GUY

(mutters to himself)
Give us a bit of Lizzy there, man.

DRUNK

(shouting)
Give us a little Lizzy their, Bud!

The DRUNK wobbles up to our GUY, who smiles, patiently, trying to play on. He works a few bars of "The Boys Are Back In Town" into his song to the delight of the Drunk, who dances around his guitar case, threatening to fall over, but propping himself up against his shoulder, and singing along. A crowd of on-lookers watch, laughing.

4. EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

A line of Hari Krishnas wind their way up the street, drowning our busker out with their irritating cacophony of rattling and chanting. The HARI (30) at the end of the line approaches our GUY.

HARI

(in soft London accent)
Hey friend, could you look after my books for an hour or so? We've got prayers in the park.

GUY

Really? I'll be heading on soon...

HARI

Thanks so much.

Without waiting for a response, the HARI leaves a huge pile of books at our GUY'S feet.

5. EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

A ROCKER (35), with long hair and glasses, and carrying a 'Flying V' electric guitar, watches our man and nods appreciatively. In a flash, he has plugged in his own guitar, and is playing a searing and very inappropriate guitar solo over his music. Our Guy smiles reluctantly to himself, wishing he'd piss off.

6. EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

A SERIOUS KNACKER (25), skinny but tough, walks past our GUY a couple of times, checking him out, surreptitiously eyeing his guitar case. On a third pass, he makes a grab for the money in his case and legs it. Our man gives chase, guitar in hand.

7. EXT/INT. BUSY STREET/BROWN THOMAS - DAY

A high speed chase down Grafton street. It continues in one door of Brown Thomas department store and out the other, as our GUY relentlessly pursues the KNACKER.

8. EXT. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN PARK - DAY

They leg it in through the front gate of the park. He finally catches the KNACKER up and jumps on him, retrieving his money, coin by coin, out of his pockets. A small group have gathered. Our Guy is thinking about punching him. The KNACKER lies on the ground, pleading.

KNACKER

Don't hurt me man, I have drug issues. Please.

Our GUY looks at him contemptuously. He gives up and turns back, out of breath...

9. EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

Arriving at his spot to find another busker playing "I Remember That Summer In Dublin" very badly to a bunch of delighted tourists. Our Guy gives up, takes his case and heads off down the street.

END TITLES.

10. EXT. SMALL SHOP - AFTERNOON

This is a small vacuum cleaner repair shop in a dilapidated suburb of Dublin.

11. INT. SHOP - EVENING

Inside the tiny workshop, various vacuum cleaners and parts are scattered about. An ELDERLY MAN (75), sits at the work bench repairing a part. He is dressed in a V-neck and shirt and tie. This is the type of place that the changing city has left behind. It'll probably be closing down after the owner dies. Our GUY appears from the back of the shop carrying his guitar case and putting on his jacket.

GUY

That job's ready for collection now, da. I'll see you later, yeah?

MAN

(Dublin accent)
Okay son.

Our GUY leaves, looking at the OPEN/CLOSED sign on the way out. It says open.

GUY
Will I turn this around?

MAN
Who cares? Nobody ever fucking
comes in anyway.

He looks at his dad, who begins a worrying-sounding
coughing fit, until he is red in the face.

GUY
You alright?

His father nods, returning to his work.

GUY
What'll I get for dinner?

FATHER
Whatever you like, son. A bit of
fish maybe?

GUY
Okay. See you later.

FATHER
And twenty Johnny Blue if you
want.

Our Guy shakes his head, exiting and turning the sign to
"closed". His father continues working away meticulously.

12. EXT. GRAFTON STREET - EVENING

The crowds have gone home, and shops are closing up for the
evening. Our GUY stands in a doorway off Grafton street,
taking out his guitar and tuning it. It's kind of peaceful
now. He takes out a piece of paper with some notes on it
and rests it on the crook of his guitar. He begins a song.

FIRST SONG
This is his own song. It's called
"Say It To Me Now". Singing his
own compositions, this guy really
comes into his own. The heartfelt
song reverberates down the empty
street. The camera will make a
slow track across the street,
from very wide shot to extreme
close-up over the course of the
song.

He finishes it, his eyes closed. The camera tracks back to
reveal

An audience of one. A YOUNG GIRL (20). She is wearing a flowing dress, a well-worn man's corduroy jacket, and carrying some 'Big Issues' magazines. She is very pretty and delicate looking, and is impressed by his song. She claps. He opens his eyes and is surprised.

GUY

Oh. Thanks.

She deposits ten cent in his case. He smiles at it.

GUY

Ten cent? Great.

GIRL

What do you want? I have nothing.

She speaks in a strong, non specific East-European accent. She stands there watching him.

GIRL

Big issue?

GUY

I couldn't afford it.

She comes a little closer.

GIRL

This song you just play? You write this one?

GUY

I'm working on it.

GIRL

(surprised)

It's not an... (thinking of the word) an established song?

GUY

No, it's not an established song.

GIRL

How come you not play it during the day? I see you every day.

GUY

I know. I've seen you. Because nobody would listen to it. They like to hear songs they recognise. (know)

GIRL

I listen.

GUY
You gave me ten cent.

GIRL
You do it for money then? This
playing?

GUY
Why else.

GIRL
Why not you get a job in a shop?

GUY
(smiling)
I have a job in a shop.

More silence. She's just not going anywhere and he would
like to continue.

GUY
Anyway, I'd better get back to
it.

GIRL
Who do you write this song for,
please?

GUY
Hah?
(beat, lying)
No one.

GIRL
Bullshit? (beat) Where is she?

GUY
Who?

GIRL
The girl in the song. She is gone
away?

GUY (EVASIVE)
Maybe.

GIRL She is not dead?

GUY (LAUGHING)
No. No, she's not dead.

GIRL
You love her still?

GUY
No, I'm over her.

GIRL

Rubbish. No one who write this song is over her. I listen to you play every day, the REM, The Van Morrison, the David Grey man. They are all good. You are as good. I can hear it.

GUY

(laughing/frustrated)

Am I now?

GIRL

I am telling you. I have good ears. You play this marvellous song to her you get her back.

GUY

I don't want her back.

GIRL

If this song you write was for me I would die. You will get her back with it. You are very talented man. I know. Because I know music.

GUY (GROWING TIRED)

Do you really.

GIRL

Yeah. You make a record?

GUY

No no. This is just a pastime.

GIRL

What is "pastime"?

GUY

You know. A hobby.

GIRL

Ah. This should not be your hobby. Your work in shop should be hobby.

GUY

My work in shop pays the bills.

GIRL

What shop you work in?

GUY

A Hoover-repair shop.

GIRL
Hoover?

GUY
Vacuum cleaner.

GIRL
Ahh! Yes. Very good. I have
broken vacuum cleaner. You fix
it?

GUY
Sure.

GIRL
Okay, see you tomorrow.

She walks off. He watches her, smiling.
Fade to black.

13. EXT. CITY - MORNING

The city is alive again, with crowds of people.

14. EXT. STREET - DAY

Our Guy is playing "??". The Girl approaches, pulling a
vacuum-cleaner behind her. Today she is selling flowers.

GIRL
Hallo.

He nods. She listens to the song. He finishes.

GIRL
Here is my hoover. When can I
pick it up?

He looks at it.

GUY
What's wrong with it?

GIRL
It doesn't suck up the dirt.

He stands there watching her.

GUY
I was just going to take a break.
I'll bring it with me.

GIRL
I come on break too?

GUY

Do you?

GIRL

If you want me to.

He puts his guitar in its case and they wander off, pulling the vacuum cleaner behind them.

GUY

Are you hungry?

GIRL

I am always hungry.

A number of other buskers nod to him as he passes. He is clearly quite popular on the street.

15. INT. CAFÉ - DAY

The Guy drinks coffee. The Girl eats soup. He watches her.

16. EXT. CAFÉ - DAY

They exit and walk down the street together.

GUY

So you know about music then?

GIRL

My father teach me the piano. He play violin with big orchestra at home. Then he gets arthritis and kills himself. Before he go he learn me piano instead. Not so hard on fingers he say.

She wiggles her fingers.

GUY

I'd like to hear you.

GIRL

I don't have piano.

GUY

So how do you play?

GIRL

I can't get one in Ireland. It's too much money. A little man in a shop lets me play. For one hour per day. At lunch.

GUY

Where?

She stops.

GIRL

You want to see me play the piano?

GUY

Yes, I believe I do.

17. INT. SMALL PIANO SHOP - DAY

This is a small piano shop made up of two rooms. A reception area, and a room with seven or eight pianos behind a partition. The Guy and Girl enter. A SMALL, FAT MAN (50), sits at the desk eating a sandwich and reading the paper. They look around.

GIRL

This is the man. He is a real gentleman. Hiya Billy. Okay for me to play today?

BILL

(checking his watch)
Okay love. Not the baby Yamaha though. She's sold.

GIRL

Okeydokey.

The Guy and Girl look around the back room. There are some lovely pianos here, and the shop is atmospheric.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Now, which one today... I think we will try the Petrov. From Czech Republic.

They sit at a very fine baby grand. She opens it. The Guy sits at another stool, putting his guitar down. The girl looks at the keys, touching them, but not playing yet.

GIRL (CONT'D)

This is beautiful piano. First we say hello to it. "Hello".

She gestures for him to say hello to it.

GUY (UNCERTAIN)

Hello?

GIRL

I am serious. You must always say hello to the piano. Like any relationship.

(beat)

Now. What would you like to hear?

GUY

What do you play?

GIRL

Bach, Bartok, Brahms, Mozart. You name it.

GUY

I don't know much about classical music.

The girl thinks.

GIRL

I also compose. Okay. I got an idea.

She begins a piece. She has a very light touch and plays beautifully. He is taken aback. She finishes the piece and there is a silence which is hard to break.

GUY

Wow. That's beautiful. You composed that?

GIRL

What? No. Chopin did.

GUY

(embarrassed)

Oh, right. He's good.

She nods, laughing. They sit there. He is very impressed with her.

GIRL

Play me another of your song, please?

He looks around, and then takes his guitar out and a sheet of paper with some music written in it.

GUY

Can you read this? Can you improvise?

GIRL

Improvise?

GUY
You know - play along.

GIRL
Of course I can fucking
improvise.

They look at the sheet.

GUY
It's in G.

GIRL
Yes, I know. I can read.

She plays a few chords, he instructs her a little and she gets it very quickly.

GUY
There's some words there. Just
ideas.

She looks at the words.

SECOND SONG
[See TRACK ONE on enclosed DVD.]

He begins playing "Falling Slowly". She plays along. He sings a verse and then the beginning of the chorus, encouraging her to join in. He sits next to her. She sings, harmonising, very instinctively. The camera begins circling them.

It is like a form of courtship.

Inside in the next room, Bill looks up from his paper, impressed. When it is over, they sit there in silence, knowing a connection has been made.

They look at each other closely...

GIRL
(gently)
You write this song too?

GUY
Yes.

GIRL
For the same girl?

GUY
With her in mind.

GIRL
Have you played it to her?

GUY

No.

They are silent, she sizes him up.

GIRL

You can be very successful.

GUY

Can I?

GIRL

You don't think so?

GUY

I've never given it much thought.
I'm just a busker.

Bill knocks on the glass, pointing at his watch, waking them from this connection.

18. INT. VACUUM CLEANER SHOP - DAY

The Guy is mending her hoover. His father sits at the work bench fixing another hoover. The girl is sitting in the corner watching them. They're quite sweet together.

GIRL

Your son is a very talented man,
sir.

FATHER

(not pausing from his
work)
Well I trained him meself, so he
should be.

GIRL

No, I meant at songs.

FATHER

Oh, right. Is he?

GIRL

Yes.

GUY

Okay. This is done. I replaced
the belt. It's working now.

He screws the lid back on her vacuum cleaner.

GIRL

Thank you. How much do I owe you?

GUY
That's okay. It's free.

GIRL
Nothing is for free. How much?

His father watches her, liking this attitude.

FATHER
Say five euro, love.

She puts the money down, getting up.

GUY
We're going up stairs, da. See
you later. Do you want a hand
with anything?

FATHER
No thanks. I'm grand.

She smiles. She shakes the old man's hand.

GIRL
A pleasure to meet you, sir.

19. INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

The Guy and Girl sit in a small bedroom above the shop. There's a couple of guitars, some posters, and the room is full of books, tapes and CDs. There is a bass guitar and a drum machine. A small four-track recording machine, sits on a desk with a set of speakers and a small keyboard. She looks around the pokey room and single bed.

GIRL
This is your room as a child?

GUY
Yeah. I moved back in a while
ago. Sad isn't it?

GIRL
You record stuff here?

GUY
Yeah, on that four track.

She looks at a pile of mini-disks on the table.

GIRL
And all these songs you write?
(looking at them) For her?

He is silent.

GIRL

There is nothing like a broken heart for inspiration. When did she go? Why did she go? Why didn't you accompany her?

GUY

Okay. She got restless here. We weren't making any money. Not really going anywhere. I was supposed to go with her. But I didn't. Then I was meant to follow her over. But it didn't work out.

GIRL

Why not?

GUY

I don't know if she was worth it. (beat) I speak to her on the phone.

GIRL

How is she?

GUY

Lonely. But she's met someone.

She sits on the bed next to him.

GIRL

Why don't you kill him?

GUY

Will you help me?

GIRL

I'll do what I can. (beat) He is just a passing guy. You are the man for her. I can tell. What you hanging around here for? Living in a little boy's room?

He laughs.

GUY

My ma died last year. My da's getting on. So I moved back in for a while. He needs help around the place. It's only temporary.

GIRL

He's a grown man.

GUY
He needs someone to help him do
stuff.

GIRL
And what about you?

GUY
What about me?

GIRL
You are going to stay here all
your life? Working in a Hoover
shop?

GUY
Maybe. I don't know what I'd do
over there.

GIRL
Record songs and become famous.

GUY
That simple eh?

GIRL
It's that simple.
(beat)
Can you transfer more songs for
me on to CD so I can listen? I
must go.

GUY
What's your rush?

GIRL
What do you mean?

GUY
Why don't you stay here?

GIRL
What?

GUY
Stay the night here.

She looks at him. He moves in to kiss her. She pulls away,
disappointed. She gets up.

GIRL
Fuck this. Thanks for the Hoover.
See you around.

She exits quickly. He sits there, a little guiltily. He
gets up and calls to her from the window, but she has gone
around the corner. He sits back on the bed.

GUY

Fuck it.

Fade to black.

20. EXT. STREET - EVENING

Another day. The girl walks up Grafton street selling flowers. Behind her, we see the Guy. He is walking behind her. He taps her on the shoulder and she turns around. He produces a bunch of CD's.

GUY

Here. These are my songs. I burnt them for you. The quality is shit, but you'll get the idea.

He hands them to her, by way of apology. She looks at him for a moment. He is sincere. She takes them.

GUY

I'm a bit lonely at the moment. And you're beautiful. I'm sorry.

She smiles, letting him off the hook.

GIRL (A BEAT)

You have CD player?

GUY

Yes. Here.

He hands her a portable CD player.

GIRL

Thank you. I will return them. I must go now.

GUY

Where are you going?

GIRL

Home.

GUY

Let's go for a coffee or something.

GIRL

No thanks. I have responsibilities.

GUY

Like what?

GIRL
See you around.

GUY
Let me walk you home.

She looks at him, thinking about this one.

GIRL
Okay then.

They walk on.

GIRL
Today is good day. I get job
cleaning in big house in the
mornings. Very happy.

GUY
Congratulations.

21. EXT. STREET - EVENING

The guy and the girl approach a crumbling Georgian house on Mountjoy square. A number of people hang about smoking or talking or listening to the radio. All refugees. She says hello to a few of them. They pause at the stoop.

GIRL
This is where I live.

GUY
Okay.

GIRL (APPARENTLY MEANINGFULLY)
You want to come in?

GUY
Yes I do.

They climb the steps and enter the open hall door.

22. INT. HOUSE - EVENING

At the top of the stairs, they enter a small room.

23. INT. FLAT - DAY

This two-room flat is basic and tiny, and there is very little in the way of furniture; just a few bits and pieces of circa 1970 mismatched stuff salvaged from skips. Their life is pretty shit. The girl's MOTHER (late 50s), is sitting on an armchair asleep.

A TODDLER (2 and a half), sits on the floor playing. She runs up to our girl as she comes through.

GIRL
Oh my little precious! How are you baby?

Her kid screeches in excited tones. The Girl picks her kid up and kisses her. The kid looks at the Guy over his shoulder. He smiles, surprised that she has a child.

GIRL
(to her Mother)
Mama, wake up! Some babysitter you are!

She wakes up.

GIRL
This is a friend of mine. This is my mother.

GUY
Pleased to meet you.

They shake hands.

GIRL
And this is my daughter. Ivona.

GUY
Hello Ivona.

MOTHER
Dala?

GIRL
That's dinner.

GUY
Oh... em...

GIRL
Would you like to stay to dinner?

GUY
Yes.

24. INT. FLAT - LATER

The Guy and Girl sit on the couch eating beans on toast. The little girl is sitting very close to the Guy, plucking the strings on his guitar. She is very cute. The Girl's mother sits across from them knitting. They talk in their language. The mother laughs.

GUY
What did she say?

GIRL
She says you are very handsome.

GUY
Oh. (to mother) Thanks.

MOTHER
Dlocha.

GIRL
That's "You're Welcome". Try to
speak a little English, mama.

MOTHER
No thank you.

They eat. The little girl strums the guitar, smiling,
looking around.

GIRL
Be careful, Ivona.

GUY
She's alright. (beat) So, where's
her da?

GIRL
He doesn't live here.

GUY
Oh. (beat) Why?

GIRL
He is at home.

Three large men enter the room and sit down, turning on the
telly. They nod at the stranger.

GIRL
These are from next door. They
come in to watch the telly. Hi
guys. There is only one telly in
building. We watch "Fair City"!

MAN 1
Fair City! We love!

They all smile, nodding.

OUR GUY
Great.

MAN 2
We learn English with Fair City.

MAN 3
Yes. It's good.

MAN 1 (IN DUBLIN ACCENT)
"You are not pregnant!?"

MAN 2
"Let's have a nice cup-o-tea!"

MAN 3
"See yous in McCoy's later for a
pint!"

Our guy laughs. They all laugh as Fair city comes on. They all watch. Our Guy and Girl look at each other.

DISSOLVE TO:

25. INT. BEDROOM - LATER

The Girl opens the door to a small bedroom. Our Guy is carrying her little girl who is fast asleep. He sets her down in a little cot. She wakes and looks at him. He smiles. She falls back asleep. The Girl watches him from the doorway.

GIRL
She trusts you.

26. EXT. STOOP - NIGHT

They sit on the stoop taking in the night air. She is drinking tea and listening to a song on headphones. She taps along with it. She is wearing his hat.

GIRL
(shouting)
You have no lyrics for this one?

He looks at the track number on the machine and shakes his head.

GIRL
(shouting)
It's a really good one. I like
it.

GUY
I have a few ideas.

GIRL
(shouting)
Hah?

He takes one of her earphones out.

GUY

I have a few ideas. Why don't you write some words for it?

She pauses the machine and they sit there.

GIRL

I can keep machine? And write words? You are sure?

GUY

Yeah. I'm having trouble with it. It's too optimistic for me.

She smiles.

GIRL

It's romantic. You have a romantic streak.

GUY

I don't feel romantic. I used to be.

GIRL

When?

GUY

I don't know- when I was your age.

GIRL

Now you are old man?

He smiles.

GIRL

You have to go home now. Thank you for hoover. And food and songs.

GUY

You're welcome. Thank you for the company. I needed it.

GIRL

Me as well.

They sit there for a moment looking at each other. She looks very beautiful.

GUY

Would you like to go for a walk, maybe? Or get a late coffee somewhere?

GIRL
I can't. See you.

She gets up. She puts her hand out to shake. They shake. She smiles and he walks off down the street. She watches him go, pressing play on the machine.

27. INT. FLAT - NIGHT

The Girl clears away stuff and sits on the couch staring at the wall. It's a lonely sort of life.

28. INT. FLAT - NIGHT

The Girl lies in a small single bed in the semi darkness. Her child is asleep in a cot. The girl listens to the song on the CD player, writing words down with a pencil, and rewinding over and over again. The "BATT" light flashes.

GIRL
Fuck you batteries!

29. INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

The girl is in her dressing gown. She opens the remote for the TV but there are no batteries in it.

30. INT. ROOM - NIGHT

She picks up a piggybank, looking guiltily at her sleeping daughter. She shrugs and opens it, stealing a few coins.

GIRL
(to sleeping daughter)
I pay you back.

She puts on her shoes and her coat over her pyjamas.

31. EXT. 24HR SHOP - NIGHT

The Girl exits a twenty four hour shop, opening a pack of batteries and putting them in the mini-disk player.

32. EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The Girl walks home up a quiet street in the dead of night. She is looking at her pieces of paper with lyrics written on them. She presses play on the machine and begins speaking the words to the song, reading from the sheet.

THIRD SONG

We hear her voice and the song from the machine as she tries out her lyrics. She sings very well. The lyrics speak of a chance encounter between two people. The camera tracks with her in one complete shot from the shop to her door, as she sings to herself- this is a nod to the older musical numbers of the forties and fifties; the moonlit street, the singer, and an occasional passer by, who look at the singing girl quizzically. She ignores them. The lyrics are hopeful and optimistic, hinting that she could have feelings for this new person, but that it is unlikely they would ever be consummated.

It ends as she reaches her door. She is smiling. She takes her headphones off and creeps in.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE UP:

33. INT. LARGE HOUSE - MORNING

The Girl dusts and polishes in a large, well appointed suburban home. A large Mercedes and 4x4 sit in the driveway. It is very boring work.

Cross cut with

34. INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

The Guy cooks steaks for himself and his dad in an old fashioned little kitchen. Afterwards, he washes up. It, too, is kind of dull.

35. EXT. STREET - EARLY EVENING

The city is jam-packed. The Guy plays in his spot.

The Girl walks up the street with an urgency in her step. She comes straight up to him and interrupts him mid-song.

GIRL

(excited)

I have crazy idea.

(MORE)

GIRL (cont'd)

Let's make a demonstration tape of some of your songs. Of four or five of them. But I mean properly. With good sound, and musicians. Then you make copies of it, and send them around. I'll play piano on them. And you can take it to London, and meet with your girl and live with her there and have children and make something of yourself. You're wasting your time here. It's crazy. What do you think.

GUY

(smiling, looking at her)

Okay.

GIRL

(surprised)

Really? I thought you'd tell me to buzz off.

GUY

Why would I do that. I think it's a great plan.

GIRL

(excited)

I've been thinking it through all day. You want to hear all about it?

36. EXT. SUN STUDIOS (TEMPLE BAR) - DAY

They walk up the street. Music plays over. The girl appears to talk enthusiastically, the guy watching her, enjoying her enthusiasm. They arrive at a small recording studio and enter.

37. INT. OFFICE - DAY

This is a grungy, lively office. Posters for bands cover the walls. Sound of bands rehearsing and recording fill the place. Our Guy and Girl sit across the desk from a STUDIO MANAGER (29). "BOB", reads a sign on his desk.

MANAGER

Okay, so basically, we run a training course upstairs during the days, and we rent out our studio when it's not busy at a reduced rate with our student engineers.

(MORE)

MANAGER (cont'd)

Gives them a chance to clock up some studio hours, and un-signed bands to get recording.

GIRL

How much is it costing, Bob?

MANAGER

Well that depends on the size of the session. How many days. Are you hiring our gear or bringing your own. That type of thing. I'd suggest a lock-in, if you're strapped for cash.

GIRL

What's a lock-in, Bob?

BOB

You can take the whole recording room for the weekend. Day and night. We'll supply the engineer. In Studio one. I'll show it to you.

They all get up.

38. INT. STUDIO - DAY

The three of them stand in a nice, large studio looking around. Bob stands at the desk.

BOB

There's your live rooms. New desk. Tape machine in there.

For something like this we're talking about four grand for a weekend lock in.

GIRL

Four grand! No way!

BOB

'Fraid so.

GIRL

You have got to be joking with me. We'll give you two. Have you heard this guy's songs!? Two or we walk.

BOB

(laughing)

I don't mind if you walk. I can fill the place in an hour.

GIRL
Two and a half is my limit.

A beat, then...

BOB
We could talk about three.

GIRL
No. We don't talk. We shake on
three. Shake, now?

BOB
You drive a hard bargain.

She puts out her hand. Bob likes her style. He shakes her hand, bewildered.

39. EXT. STREET - DAY

The Guy and Girl walk along the street.

GUY
Three grand!? I might as well do
it at home.

GIRL
We will go to bank. For the small
loans. My mother borrow some
money from a good man at a bank
when we first come. She pay it
all back, so we are in good book.

GUY
That's crazy. I have no.. what
you call it.. collateral.

GIRL
You have the suit?

GUY
A suit? No. Why?

GIRL
Follow me.

40. EXT. SECOND HAND CLOTHES SHOP - DAY

They enter a run-down second-hand clothes shop called BOGART'S. The logo reads- "Wear it again, Sam". They enter.

41. INT. SHOP - DAY

Our Guy is in the dressing room in his shorts. This is a very musty old shop. He is pulling on the trousers of a cheap, old man's suit. The Girl stands outside.

GIRL

This is where I buy all my clothes. Good bargains and nice fashions.

She peeks in over the curtain.

GIRL

Nice legs.

GUY

Piss off. This is ridiculous. I look like a paedophile.

He exits the dressing room wearing a VERY tight brown suit which is too short for him. She laughs, handing him another one.

GIRL

Okay. Try this one.

She hands him another suit. "Old Town" by Phil Lynott plays on the radio.

GIRL

Oh I love this song. It is a classic.

GUY

Is it?

GIRL

If you don't think it is, then you are an idiot.

GUY

I've never really been much of a Phil Lynott fan.

GIRL

Then you are an idiot.

She potters about, singing it. The Guy watches her, smiling, as he changes into the suit. "Old Town" continues to play, loud.

42. EXT. STREET - DAY

Another day. They walk down the street together. He is wearing a silver, pleated, baggy suit with a very eighties cut to it. He looks foolish, but kind of cool. She is carrying a small tape recorder.

43. EXT. BANK - DAY

The Guy and Girl approach a bank. She combs his hair outside like a mother at the school gates. She flattens it down, and parts it. He enjoys this.

44. INT. BANK - DAY

We are in a small office in a bank. The Girl is sitting next to him the Guy. She has put her hair up. Across the desk is the SMALL-LOANS MANAGER, a man in his early thirties, a little overweight, with a goatee beard, suit and tie. He looks at this pair, bemused.

GIRL

This is a friend of mine. He is song writer. He is very good. We are recording a demonstration tape for record companies who wish to hear him.

MANAGER

Right. And which companies are they?

GIRL

(avoiding this question)
Yes. We pay back when he acquire the deal. With interest. I would say within the year.

MANAGER

And you're, what, his manager?

GIRL

No. I am friend. He is very good.

MANAGER

I'm sure he is.

They all sit there in silence. The MANAGER looks at them. They look quite ridiculous.

MANAGER

Do you have any collateral?

GIRL

Good question. Do you have plug socket?

She takes out a small tape recorder from her bag and plugs it in. The MANAGER smiles, checking his watch.

MANAGER

Em, would you have anyone to go guarantor, sir?

GUY

Guarantor? Em, no?

The Girl struggles under the desk with the plug, knocking into his legs.

MANAGER

Look, guys. I'm sure I remember your mother, miss, and I can see here that she made good on her loan, but this is different. I'd need some real assurance of recuperation if I was to even ask my boss to approve a loan like this. I mean, there are countless bands and singers out there - I'm sure you're very talented and everything, it's not about that, it's...

The Girl interrupts him by pressing play on the machine. They listen to the opening bar or two of a very catchy song. The Manager is obviously a nice guy, and very patient. They listen for a minute. It is obviously very good.

GIRL

Good, eh? But the quality is poor. If we can get a professional tape, I am very satisfied he will secure a lucrative deal.

They listen. She presses stop and gives him the tape.

GIRL

Take home and listen. You can definitely get your boss to approve this, and you know you can. This is Ireland, land of plenty. It's a tiny loan. And this guy is going to be a famous songwriter. And give you much business. And you will be responsible. Think of it like that!

They are silent.

MANAGER
(to the Guy)
It's a nice song. Do you have
many like this?

GIRL
(interrupting)
Very many.

The MANAGER sits there, tapping the tape on the desk and looking at them. They look a little pathetic on the other side of the desk.

MANAGER
Great voice.

GUY
Thank you.

MANAGER
What kind of guitar do you play?

GUY
Hah? A Taylor.

MANAGER
Nice.
(beat)
Why is it that I have confidence
in you two?

GUY
I have no idea.

Silence.

MANAGER
Can I show you something?

He gets up and opens a large cabinet behind his desk, revealing a beautiful Takamine acoustic guitar, still in it's case, and hardly used.

MANAGER
Look at this baby.

He takes it out, showing it to our guy, who approves.

GUY
Beautiful.

MANAGER
It should be. Cost me a grand.

The Manager sits at his desk, rolling his chair over to them and tuning the guitar.

MANAGER

Can I play you something? It's kind of a pastime. But you've got to tell me the truth, okay? Don't bullshit me.

He takes a breath and begins playing, to the surprise of the Guy and Girl.

The song is a sub-standard Garth Brooks effort, with very cheesy lyrics about war and peace etc. He has a very poor voice, but sings with conviction. It is hard not to laugh. He is appalling.

Finally, the song ends.

Silence. The MANAGER sits down, looking at them, a little out of breath and sweating, waiting for a response. Our Guy doesn't know quite how to react.

MANAGER

Well?

A beat, then...

GUY

(sheepishly)
You're shit?

The MANAGER pauses for a moment, smiling, knowing he's right. He suddenly pushes his chair back, resting his guitar against the desk, and putting on his glasses. It's as if the meeting is over.

MANAGER

Okay, so how much are we talking about?

GIRL

(surprised)
Three thousand.

He starts filling out a loan application form. The Guy and Girl look at each other, amazed.

GUY

Actually, could you make that for four thousand?

The MANAGER looks up. The Girl kicks our Guy under the table.

GUY

Ow.

MANAGER

Four?

GUY

Yeah. I mean while you're at it.

The manager changes the figure and stamps the paper. The Girl looks at the Guy, a little puzzled.

45. EXT. STREET - DAY

The Guy and Girl walk quickly down the street in top form.

GIRL

What do you want four for? You almost blew it. You are greedy.

GUY

You were fucking great in there! I can't believe he bought it. Let's go out for a drink.

GIRL

No. You Irish are "drink, drink, drink! Let's get drunk!" This is about work! Not fun. We can't start getting drunk.

GUY

(laughing)
I just wanted one pint.

GIRL

No. Now the next thing we have to do is get some musicians.

GUY

Okay.

GIRL

Do you know any musicians?

GUY

No. Musicians cost money.

GIRL

You must know loads of guys on the street, no? That busk? They would be happy to play on a tape.

GUY

Sure, but they're all nutcases.

GIRL

They will be fine. The songs talk. Bring me to your musicians.

Over music, the Guy and Girl recruit three musicians on the street. They are

A LEAD GUITARIST (65), an aging Django Reinhardt-style guy with moustache and grey pony tail.

A FEMALE BASS PLAYER (18), kooky, pencil-thin, a little like Ms. White Stripes.

A DRUMMER (16) in a school uniform who they see practicing in Music Maker shop.

DISSOLVE TO:

46. EXT. STREET - EVENING

The Guy and Girl home walk down a street at night. They pass a sign outside a pub which reads "SINGER SONGWRITER NITE. 9 O'CLOCK".

GIRL
Hey. Let's go in.

GUY
For what?

GIRL
I don't know. For a drink. We deserve it.

GUY
Jesus, you Eastern Europeans are "Drink Drink Drink!"

She laughs.

GIRL
I haven't been out for a night in months. But first I have to ring my mother and ask her to look after Ivona.

47. EXT. PHONE BOX - NIGHT

The girl makes a call from a phone box. Our Guy watches her from across the street. She hangs up and exits, linking his arm as they walk.

They pass the statue of Phillo outside the Westbury Hotel. She regards it.

GIRL
He was fucking cool.

GUY

Yeah. You mentioned that.

GIRL

He had to go away to make it big too. And now look at him. Give me your plectrum.

He hands her one of his plectrums and she inserts it into the strings of Phillo's Fender, where there are a number of plectrums.

He smiles, looking at the statue. They walk on.

48. INT. UPSTAIRS OF A SMALL PUB - NIGHT

A large, lively crowd are gathered. A small stage in the corner of the room with a couple of microphones and guitars. An MC (30) announces acts.

Now there's a FEMALE SINGER/SONGWRITER on stage, a kind of Joni Mitchell clone, singing her own composition. The audience listens appreciatively. A few Hecklers shout abuse.

Next, a rapper with a Dublin accent, rapping about Mountjoy prison. The song is called "All Screws Are Bastards", and you might have seen this act on Grafton street. He is accompanied by a guy doing percussion on a mike. The audience cheer him on. We focus on our Guy and Girl enjoying this act, and having a good time.

The MC applauds him as he gets off. He announces the next act from a sheet of paper.

MC

Okay, great stuff. "All Screws are Bastards", there, by John Hartigan. Fair play. Next up we have "Hooverman" on acoustic, playing one of his own tunes. Where are you, Hooverman?

He looks out into the audience. Our Guy looks around. He realises that this Girl is looking at him.

GUY

What?

GIRL

You're on.

GUY

What? What are you talking about?

GIRL

I put your name down. On the way
in. Go!

MC

Where is he? Hooverman? You're
on, man. Let's go. Let's rock.

GUY

I'm not getting up there. You're
kidding me.

The Girl laughs, and claps, drawing attention to him.

GIRL

Go on. You'll be great. You've
got to get use to it.

He gets up reluctantly. A few crowd members clap as he
makes his way to the stage, putting on his guitar. He
stands there in the spotlight, nervously tuning up.

GUY

Right. I wasn't planning on doing
this. What'll I play you?

FEMALE HECKLER

(drunk)

Look. It's your man out of Simply
Red!

A few laughs and "Shhhhs".

MALE HECKER

Give us a song there Mick.

FEMALE HECKLER

(singing)

If You Don't Know be My Now...

The two drunken HECKLERS crack up laughing.

GUY

(into mic)

Never put your parents on the
guest list.

The crowd laughs, silencing the hecklers. He plays a bar of
"If You Don't know Me By Now", impersonating Mick Hucknall.

GUY

Right. Here we go.

He begins playing a song.

FOURTH SONG

"Leave". This is a big, full-on song. Lyrically, it has no specific relevance to our story, and its purpose here is to establish that our central character has all it takes to captivate an audience, and that any stage fright is short lived.

The song ends. The audience cheers enthusiastically, some shouting for more. The Guy unplugs his guitar and gets off stage, relieved. He sits next to the Girl, who is clapping. She is thrilled for him. She kisses him.

49. EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The Guy and the Girl walk down the street. They are a little drunk and in top form, opening an envelope and counting the cash inside.

GUY

Right. Two hundred quid! You take it.

GIRL

No. Keep it.

GUY

No way. It's half yours. I would never have done that.

GIRL

It's your money. You won it.

GUY

I'll take you out for dinner then.

She checks her watch.

GIRL

I shouldn't. It's too late. We've had enough fun.

GUY

Have we? Come on. A few more drinks.

GIRL

I have responsibilities. I cannot.

They arrive at her front door. She puts her hand out to shake.

GUY
Come out.

GIRL
Go home.

She pulls away and climbs the steps. He watches her, and then shrugs, walking off.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE UP:

49A. INT. LARGE HOUSE - DAY

The Girl polishes and dusts in the dining room. THE WOMAN OF THE HOUSE rushes about, locating her keys.

WOMAN
I'm late! See you later, dear.

GIRL
Okay.

[The WOMAN OF THE HOUSE exits and sits into her jeep.]

Inside, the Girl continues cleaning. She pauses at a large grand piano in the corner and decides to take a break, sitting at it. She opens it and stares at the keys. She plays it. It is a very warm sound. After a few bars, we notice that the WOMAN is at the door, watching her. The girl notices her and freezes, stopping playing.

GIRL
Oh I am so sorry. I couldn't resist.

WOMAN
(short)
That's an antique, actually.

The girl sheepishly closes it.

GIRL
I am sorry.

WOMAN
(patronisingly)
I think I'll have to keep an eye on you, won't I?

She hurries out, annoyed, and speeds off down the road. Our Girl goes back to work, suitably chastised. In a moment, she has sat back down at the piano and is playing an up-tempo Hungarian Waltz VERY loud, humming along.

Dissolve.

50 EXT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The girl climbs the steps to her house. She hears a little "beep" and looks over. Our Guy is sitting on a beat-up Vespa, parked across the street. She crosses the road.

GIRL

Hey. What are you doing here?

GUY

Just passing by. Want to go for a spin? I've just got this thing repaired. It's a nice day.

She looks at his wrecked bike.

GIRL

I have to go to work.

GUY

Okay. Another day.

GIRL

Can you have me back by afternoon?

He produces a second helmet and she gets on. He starts it up after a couple of attempts, and they take off in a cloud of smoke.

51. EXT. BIKE (MOVING) - DAY

They drive through town, shouting to each other.

GIRL

So where to?

GUY

I don't know. You want to get out of town? Head for the countryside somewhere?

GIRL

I'd love to. Do you think it'll make it?

GUY

Sure it will.

He accelerates off, backfiring. She laughs. It looks like fun. She holds on to his waist.

52. EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The bike motors along a leafy country road. Music plays over. It's a crisp, sunny winters day. They take the turn for Killiney hill.

53. EXT. WALK-WAY - DAY

The two of them amble up hill.

GIRL

Have you called her yet? And told her you're going to be coming over?

GUY

No. I'll wait until we finish this tape. See what it's like. It might be crap.

GIRL

You're nervous of seeing her?

GUY

What if it doesn't work out? What if she's happy with this other... fucker?

GIRL (LAUGHS)

"What if, what if!" What if the world blows up tomorrow? Cut that shit out and get this done. You must get in focus.

They are silent.

GUY

Why are you doing this for me?

GIRL

It's fun, no?

GUY

Yeah, but what's in it for you?

GIRL

If you make it, I would be happy to have had a little part.

He puts his arm around her, and for a moment, she moves into him, forgetting herself. She slowly moves away. They walk on. He wonders why.

GUY

Why are you so reluctant to hang out with me?

GIRL

Because of my husband.

He stops, surprised.

GUY

You're married? (a beat) You're fucking kidding me.

GIRL (SMILING)

That surprises you?

GUY (LAUGHING)

Yes! When did you get married?

GIRL

When I find out I am pregnant with Ivona. Two year ago.

GUY

And so why isn't he here with you?

GIRL

We are on break. Before we come, we have big row. It is finished. I come here on my own.

They arrive at the top and sit down, looking out to sea.

GUY

So what are you going to do?

GIRL

I don't know. There is such a distance between us. We are so different. He is so much older. Sometimes I am very happy on my own, but I don't want her to grow up without a father.

GUY

You're so young to be married.

GIRL

Here, young. At home is okay. Everyone in Ireland wait until older to marry, after spending much time with wrong persons. Then they get only short time with person they love, then death. Crazy.

GUY
I guess they want to wait until
they're sure.

GIRL
They must WORK to make sure.
That's what love is to me.

GUY
Do you love him?

GIRL
Now you must drop me back to
town. This has been very
pleasurable.

He looks at her, smiling, trying to figure her.

GIRL
But first you teach me how to
drive the bike.

GUY
Okay.

They get up.

54. EXT. THE CAR PARK - DAY

He is teaching her how to drive the bike. She is not getting the hang of the gears. Finally she takes off, screaming, trying to change gears. He laughs, sitting on a bench watching her enjoying herself, driving around in circles.

We hold on his close up watching her...

55. EXT. LARGE HOUSE - DAY

They pull up outside the large house on the leafy street where she works. She gets off and gives him his helmet.

GIRL
See you tomorrow for rehearsals.

She shakes his hand and enters the house. He drives off.

56. ~~INT. SITTING ROOM~~ ^{GUY'S BEDROOM} - EVENING

The little motley crew rehearse in the Guy's sitting room. The Guy and Girl, the Drummer boy, the weird bass and guitar duo, and the bank manager. It is comically cramped in here, a little like the video for "Close to Me" by the cure, where the band are playing in a wardrobe.

SIXTH SONG

This song is called "Once", and is about someone who is crippled by always putting things off. It is about that streak of fear in all of us, which makes it hard to get things done and realise our ambitions. It is clear that the band work very well together, and confirms this guy's talent for hit-making and intelligent song writing.

The Girl accompanies on backing vocals. Our Guy watches her, now completely taken by her.

The Guy's Dad enters as they play, with a tray of tea and sandwiches on his lap. They take a break and eat and drink their tea.

Dissolve

INT. CONTROL ROOM, STUDIO 1. - DAY

Our GROUP stand in a row in Studio one. Bob introduces the group to their engineer for the weekend, EAMON (29), a typical music-type, in leather jacket, pony tail and stubble sitting at the desk. He looks at them incredulously. They don't look very convincing.

BOB

This is Eamon. He'll be looking after you for the weekend. The kit is set up, there's a piano in the live room like you asked, tea and coffee up in the kitchen. We usually order meals in from the little Burrito place across the road. So the place is all yours. I'll leave it to you. Good luck.

He exits.

EAMON

Okay, guys, good to meet you. Have you done much recording?

GUY

No. None.

EAMON

Okay. Well, not to worry. Let's get cracking.

NO STX 1

58

59
INT. CONTROL ROOM - LATER

The band are set up in the live room, and communicate with Eamon in the control room over speakers. They are checking each of their instruments separately and sound very discordant. Eamon is on the phone to a friend on the other side of the glass. They cannot hear his conversation unless he presses the Talk-back button.

EAMON

(into phone)

I can't do it. I'm stuck in the studio with this bunch of fucking oddballs. (beat) I don't know. Some busker who's written some songs. It's a total pain in the ass. One of them's a school boy. They're like some weird cult.

CROSS CUT
WITH:

60. INT. LIVE ROOM - SAME

It's chaos in here, with everyone playing out of sync.

GUY

(shouting)

Okay everyone. Will we go for one? Let's try track one. "Leave". Timmy, I think you should sit back until the second verse, just play the high hat until then.

TIMMY

Gotcha!

Our Guy looks in and sees Eamon on the phone, laughing. He taps on the glass. Eamon makes a "in a minute" gesture.

GUY

(into mic, annoyed)

Whenever you're ready, Eamon.

EAMON

(into phone)

Okay, I'd better go. They're ready for a take. I might fake an illness to get out of this! Later.

He hangs up.

EAMON

Okay, we're ready for one?

GUY

If you're sure you're finished.

EAMON

Listen out for the click track everyone. And here we go. Take one, track one.

He starts rolling the tape, sitting back in his chair, uninterested, leafing through a magazine. Our Guy shakes his head, annoyed.

SEVENTH SONG

The first verse is just guitar and vocal. It is very nice.

In the control room, Eamon's ears prick up. He leans forward in his chair and looking through the glass. We track into him as he listens, not expecting anything of this quality.

After the first verse, the Guy is joined by the other musicians. They work very well. Eamon starts working the desk, becoming interested in his work. The song is obviously top-class. It plays out until the end. Eamon is amazed.

There is a long silence. He presses stop, coming over the talk back.

EAMON

Wow. That was... nice. Did you write that?

GUY

No more phone calls while we're working, okay?

EAMON

No problem.

He turns off his mobile. The Girl looks at our Guy liking his standing up for himself.

EAMON

(enthusiastic)

Right, let's go for another take. I think the tempo's great, I just want to E-Q the piano, and I think the bass player should come in with the drums, what do you think?

GUY

Good idea.

They prepare to go for another take.

Dissolve

61. BRIEF MONTAGE (OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS)

The group sit around a table in the foyer eating and cracking open some beers. It's a lively atmosphere, and Eamon is having a laugh and getting behind this little outfit. The Girl's mother has come in with Ivona, who is having a great time in this unfamiliar environment, playing instruments and generally being doted over.

The group work hard the next day in the live room. They have been joined by the BANK MANAGER, who is dressed in ripped jeans and a bass ball hat, and has a touch of the David Brents about him.

The Guy writes lyrics over a coffee break. The Girl sits next to him watching him. People get some shut-eye on the couches. Eamon is asleep at the desk. It's obviously been a gruelling day.

The weird guitarist and female bass player play playstation in the TV room as the others watch. They are playing the "Dukes of Hazzard" and everyone is placing bets. It is a laugh.

Dissolve

62. INT. STUDIO TWO - NIGHT

People are taking a break from work. Eamon is asleep. Others read magazines and doze off.

63. INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The Girl potters about the studio, passing Studio Two, a big live room with the lights off. This is the main studio, and very posh. She notices a large, grand piano in the corner, with a dust cover over it. She turns on the light and creeps in, sitting at it and tinkling the keys.

Our Guy passes with a beer and looks in. He watches her. She looks up and smiles. He enters, looking at the piano.

GIRL

I don't think we're supposed to be here!

She tinkles the piano.

GUY
What a beauty.

GIRL
It's a Steinway. Probably the
most perfect piano in the world.

GUY
Let me here one of your own
songs.

GIRL
No.

GUY
Please.

GIRL
No. They're silly. They're just
ideas. Next to your ones they are
embarrassing.

GUY
Please. Just one.

She thinks.

GIRL
Okay. This is only half written-
I'm not sure if I even remember
the words. And they're really...
how you say - Naïve.

GUY
Just play it!

She pauses and begins playing.

EIGHT SONG
This is a very simple, but very
beautiful love song. The lyrics
can be about anything. She sings
very well. Our Guy is transfixed
by her playing it. Again, like
much about this girl, the
performance is practical, almost
cold, while the subject matter is
sensitive and heartfelt. It is
like her feelings are wrapped in
an outer shell of pragmatism.

She finishes a verse and chorus and then stops abruptly.

GUY
Why did you stop?

GIRL

I don't know. I feel self
conscious.

GUY

(amazed)

But it's beautiful. Did you
really write that?

She nods. He is amazed.

GUY

For who?

GIRL

For him. But he not like it.

GUY

He's an idiot.

She starts laughing.

GIRL

Yes he is.

GUY

I'm glad you broke up with him.
(beat) Why don't we write
together? Come to London, and
we'll try and get a deal
together.

She laughs, but goes with this for fun -

GIRL

Okay. When do we go?

GUY

After this. Bring Ivona. We'll
get a place.

GIRL

No one will find us.

GUY

And we'll form a band. I know
some great musicians over there.

GIRL

And we'll write an album
together.

GUY

Right. People would love that.

GIRL
Of course they will. And I'll do
backing vocals.

GUY
Definitely. Are you on? I'm
serious.

GIRL
Can I bring my mother?

She smiles at him. He is kind of serious about this.

GIRL
We should go back to work.

GUY
Will you come?

GIRL
I thought you said you had lost
your romantic streak.

GUY
I had.

GIRL
Shhh.

She takes his hand and leads him out of the studio, turning
off the light.

Dissolve.

64. EXT. CITY - DAWN

The sun is coming up but the city still sleeps.

65. INT. STUDIO - DAWN

The group sit together in the control room listening back
to their work. They all look tired, and our Guy and Eamon
have a couple of day's stubble. The song ends and they sit
around looking at each other.

GUY
What day is it?

They all laugh.

EAMON
It's Monday. Let's do the car
test.

GUY

What's that?

EAMON

Well we've been listening back on these big studio speakers. We'll go for a drive in my motor and see how it stands up on a domestic machine, before I do a final mix. Are you right? We'll clear up later. Let's go for a spin.

66. EXT. STUDIO - DAWN

Eamon is sitting in his rusting Merc Estate. Everyone piles in and they set off through the empty streets of Dublin.

67. INT. CAR - DAWN

The group listen to the songs. They sound pretty good, and very professional.

GITARIST

Where are we going?

EAMON

I don't know. Let's go the beach or something? Get some air? We deserve a break. Anyone?

Nods of approval. They drive on as the sun comes up, out of the city and along the coast road. They sing along with the songs, the atmosphere is infectious, and a little like the 1979 video by the Smashing Pumpkins.

68. EXT. BEACH - DAWN

The six of them sit on a deserted beach beside the car. The doors are open and they are listening to the songs.

Timmy and the Girl play Frisbee. The Guy watches her closely.

DISSOLVE TO:

69. EXT. STUDIO - DAY

The city is now alive. Over music, our bleary-eyed little group exit the studio. Eamon locks up. He gives a bunch of the CD's to our Guy.

EAMON
Here you are, man.

GUY
Thanks.

EAMON
Good luck with them. You deserve
it. Believe me.

They all shake hands, saying goodbye, and disperse. The Guy
and Girl walk off together.

GUY
So this is it.
Holding up the ten CDs.

GIRL
Can I have a copy?
He gives her one.

GIRL
I'd better get home. I haven't
seen my daughter in two nights!
They reach Dame street.

GIRL
I go this way.

GUY
Can I walk you home?

GIRL
No thank you. I want to walk
alone. I'll see you before you
go. You've got to get things
organised. Make some calls.

GUY
Are you not coming?

She stands there, shaking her head.

GIRL
I speak to my husband on the
phone last night. He come over
soon.

GUY
Oh.

GIRL
We try and work things out. It's
for the best.

GUY
Okay. (beat) Do you love him?

GIRL
What?

GUY
Do you love him? Are you happy?
A beat, then...

GIRL
He is my husband.

GUY (ANGRY)
Yeah, but do you love him?

GIRL
He is my husband. He is the
father of my child. He is a good
man. And I am his wife.

They stand there.

GIRL
This would go no where - you and
I. You have a lover.

GUY
I don't know what she means to me
anymore. I haven't seen her in
months.

GIRL
You're meant to be.

GUY
(becoming frustrated)
How do you know?

GIRL
Your songs.

GUY
I could write a song for you.

GIRL
You hardly know me.

GUY
How will I ever get to know you?

GIRL
You won't.

They stand there. He looks confused and a little depressed. But he understands her. He leans in and kisses her. She hesitantly reciprocates. They kiss briefly.

GIRL
I'll see you soon.

GUY
Come home with me. Check in on your kid and then come back with me.

GIRL
You are crazy.

GUY (pleading, gently) Come. Be with me.

She stands there, thinking, looking at him closely.

GIRL Where would we go?

GUY
Anywhere. I don't care.

GIRL (AFTER A LONG PAUSE)
I will think about it. I will call to you tonight.

GUY:

I'm serious.

GIRL
I know.

She turns and walks off, smiling. He stands there watching her. They both watch each other.

Dissolve.

70. INT. ROOM - DAY

Our Guy lies on his bed looking up to the ceiling and thinking. He looks wrecked, with a three-day beard. He looks around his little room, and then at the pile of CDs on his desk. He gets up and looks out the window- no sign of her.

*****NEW SCENE

70A. EXT. THE HOOVER SHOP -NIGHT

He stands outside the shop, looking up and down the street.

*****NEW SCENE

70b. INT. HIS ROOM -NIGHT

He returns back into his room, checks his watch and then sits back on his bed, realizing she isn't coming. We hold on him.

Fade to black.

71. INT. SITTING ROOM - DAY

This is a small little living room. Our Guy sits at a tape machine playing the CD to his father, who sits on the couch listening and smoking a cigarette. He taps along. It ends. His father is moved.

GUY

Well?

Silence.

GUY

You don't like it?

More silence.

GUY

It's just a demo. I...

FATHER

(interrupting)

It's fucking brilliant.

GUY

(surprised)

Really?

FATHER

Fantastic stuff. It'll be a hit. There's no question. Even I can hear that.

Our Guy smiles.

FATHER

When are you off?

GUY

What?

FATHER

I've got a few hundred quid for you. For a deposit on a place.

(MORE)

FATHER (cont'd)
 And I'll come over and see you
 when you get settled. When do you
 think you'll go?

A beat, then...

GUY
 Tomorrow.

FATHER
 Good man. About time.

GUY
 Will you be alright?

FATHER
 How do you mean? I was alright
 for years before you came along,
 wasn't I? Miles and Mary from
 next door can look after me if I
 need anything.

GUY
 (vacillating)
 Maybe I'll leave it for a
 while...

FATHER
 Go! Are you going to hang around
 for the next ten years looking
 after me? I don't fucking want
 that. I don't want that on me
 conscience. Get your fucking act
 together. And the best of luck to
 you. Make your ma proud.

They sit there.

FATHER
 Now play it again.

He smiles. His son re-plays the CD. We hold on his close
 up.

72. INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Our Guy sits on his bed on the phone. We hear a FEMALE
 voice on the other side.

VOICE (O.S.)
 (over the phone)
 How have you been?

GUY
 (into the phone)
 Okay.

VOICE (O.S.)
I haven't heard from you in a
while.

GUY
I'm sorry. I've been busy. I've
been recording some songs.

VOICE (O.S.)
(excited)
Really? Excellent! Will you send
them to me?

GUY
I might.

VOICE (O.S.)
Are you happy with them?

GUY
They're okay. How's your man?

A beat, then...

VOICE (O.S.)
I don't know.

GUY
How do you mean "you don't know"?

VOICE (O.S.)
He's fine. He's not you.

They are silent.

GUY
How would it be if I showed up
there, soon?

A beat, then...

VOICE (O.S.)
Don't say that unless you're
serious.

GUY
I am serious. How would that be?

We track into a photograph on his desk. It is of a
beautiful young girl, presumably herself.

The camera tracks into it as he looks at it.

Silence.

GIRL
I'll believe it when I see you.

The Guy smiles.

GUY
I'll be seeing you...

VOICE (O.S.)
Okay.

He hangs up and sits there, looking at her photograph.

73. EXT. THE STREET - DAY

Over music, the Guy is talking with the drummer boy, and the bass and guitar player dudes.

GUY
So if anything comes of it, will
you play with me on it?

BASS PLAYER
Love to.

GUITAR
Just call us.

They shake hands and he heads off with his case and his guitar.

74. EXT. STREET - DAY

Our Guy knocks on her door. In a moment or two, her mother answers. She is carrying the kid.

MOTHER
Ah, hallo handsome!

GUY
Oh hi. Is herself in?

Her mother shakes her head.

MOTHER
No no.

GUY
Oh. Okay. Do you know where she
is? I wanted to see her.

MOTHER
Ah no. She back in evening? She
is working.

GUY
Oh. Damn. Well... I am going
away. Tell her I'll call her. Do
you have a telephone number?

MOTHER
No telephone here.

GUY
Okay. Well... I write?

He makes letter-writing gesture.

MOTHER
I got you! You write a letter.
Bye.

She waves goodbye. The Guy stands there. He shakes hands,
and kisses the little girl on the cheek, looking at her
poignantly. He walks down the steps and stands around for a
moment.

75 EXT. GRAFTON STREET - DAY

He walks down Grafton street looking out for the Girl.
There is no sign of her.

*****NEW SCENE

~~75~~ INT. THE PIANO SHOP - DAY

76 He enters the piano shop and looks about. No sign of her.
He sits at an up-right piano, and plays a note or two of
Falling Slowly. He pauses, recalling her. The actual track
begins, and we cross-cut between his close up and a montage
of scenes between them from the film.

77. EXT. AIRPORT BUS - DAY

Our Guy rides the bus to the airport. He looks out at the
passing city. Music plays over.

78 INT. AIRPORT - DAY

He enters the airport and checks in, checking his flight
time and watch.

79. INT. CAFÉ - DAY

He drinks a coffee at the café. He gets up, checking his
ticket and heading off.

80. INT. ARRIVALS AREA - DAY

As he goes towards the escalators, he passes the arrivals area, and notices the Girl sitting waiting. She smiles, getting up, very pleased to see him.

GIRL

Hey there!

GUY

Hi. What are you doing here?

GIRL

My man come. I am picking up!

GUY

Okay. Great.

GIRL

So! You're off! Cool.

GUY

Yeah. I called around to say
goodbye to you, but you weren't
there.

GIRL

I know. I am at the airport.

He laughs. They stand around looking at each other.

GIRL (CONT'D)

So you will write to me, from
London. And let me know how
you're getting on?

GUY

Of course I will.

GIRL

I'm sorry I didn't call other
day, but/

GUY (STOPPING HER)

I understand. You were right not
to.

GIRL

Nicer like this.

GUY

I really don't know if I want to
go.

GIRL

Why the hell not? You're just nervous. Changing city like this. And making a go. It's hard. I should know. But you will relax the moment you are there.

GUY

No I won't.

GIRL

Yes, you will.

They stand around.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I have to go to meet my husband now.

GUY

You're lovely.

GIRL

Shhh. What time is your plane?

GUY

Now. I'm late. What'll you do here? Will you be okay?

GIRL

Of course I will be okay. I am big girl.

(beat)

You go now, please. And when you get recording contract call me, and I will play piano and sing on a couple of tunes, okay?

GUY

Okay.

He really doesn't want to go. She smiles at him.

"Old Town" by Phil Lynott fades gently up on the track.

They stand there. He steps in and kisses her. She kisses him back, passionately. Then, they separate.

GIRL

Go, you idiot.

GUY

I love you.

A beat, then...

GIRL
I Love you.

She smiles, pushing him away. He turns and heads off. She watches him, smiling, trying not to cry.

He smiles, and turns.

The song fades up fully.

DISSOLVE TO:

81. INT. HEATHROW AIRPORT - DAY

Our Guy walks down the long walkway amidst the throngs of people. He is carrying his guitar. He walks at a mid-tempo pace, lost in thought.

Phillo sings:

"She plays it hard, she plays it tough.

But that's enough of love it's over.

She's broke his heart and that is rough

But in the end he'll soon recover..."

As the music continues...

Our Guy appears to brighten up somewhat, as he speeds up his pace, reflecting on the past few days, and all the possibilities of his future. He even smiles. We track with him the ENTIRE length of the walkway.

At the end he exits frame, swallowed up by the crowd.

DISSOLVE TO:

82. EXT. STREET - DAY

The song continues.

A sunny day on her street. The camera CRANES from high as a removal truck pulls in at her house. Two HUMBERS unload an up-right piano.

83 EXT. STOOP - DAY

Our Girl opens the door, surprised to see two men with a chit of paper and the second-hand piano. One of them is BILL, from the little piano shop. Her frown is replaced by a smile as she realises the extra thousand pounds was for this.

84. INT. LONDON UNDERGROUND - DAY

The Guy sits with his guitar-case and rucksack.

He smiles.

85. INT. ROOM - DAY

The piano is in the corner of the room.

"Old Town" continues on a little old-fashioned record player.

The Girl plays along to the up-beat piano solo as her kid runs around in circles and her HUSBAND (30s) chases her, laughing, her grandmother knitting on the couch. The Three men sit watching "Fair City". It's a lively atmosphere. Our girl smiles to herself, lost in the music.

The camera cranes past her, and out the window holding on a shot of the Dublin rooftops as...

Phillo sings:

"I've been spending my money in the old town,

I sure miss you honey, now you're not around.

I've been spending my time in the old town,

I sure miss you honey, now you're not around; now you're not around this old town..."

THE END.

John Carney, October 2005